



FESTIVAL ENTERTAINS THE CROWDS

But organisers fear it does not appeal to local community

By MARC JOHNSON

THE second Moira Folk festival entertained the crowds and brought the area's folk scene to the public's attention.

But organisers are still worried that the event isn't fully appealing to the local community.

The event featured traditional folk acts including concerts, civil war reenactments, morris dancing and offered people the chance to sing and play their own instruments.

According to festival secretary Colin Grantham, the gigs were all well attended and the feedback was very good, but there is still work to be done in engaging local people and drawing in a new type of audience.

The festival's founder, Dave Johns, said: "Friday night's Ceilidh band went down a storm, Saturday night's concerts went down a storm, but what went down best was the amateur musicians, who played around the pubs in Moira right down to the early hours."

He went on to discuss the issue of engaging the local public, which continues to concern festival organisers: "We're on a learning curve, a massive learn-

ing curve. You know that you can't please all of the people all of the time. What we were worried about was that we weren't getting the local families involved as we wanted."

Despite increasing financial support from local authorities and a loyal fanbase, organisers of the event — which ran from Friday, August 20, to Sunday, August 22 this year — felt that keeping future festivals small was important to retaining the atmosphere that has made the festival a hit with audiences.

Mr Johns said: "We don't want to grow too big, we want to keep it small but profitable in order to be able to plan the next festival with confidence. We are a not for profit organisation so all of this year's profit will be used to fund next years activities. As well as the 2011 festival which was being planned before the 2010 event took place, we will respond positively to the constructive feedback that has been given and look towards increasing the involvement of the local community by a range of strategies and initiatives."

Colin Grantham shared these sentiments, saying: "Not bigger, just better."

For more information on how to get involved either e-mail colingrantham@gmail.com or phone 01543 480960

