

Weathering the Winter Storm



**Events Manager
Laura Poppe**

The Sunday market is a vital part of the events business here at Thainstone, but it is so reliant on the weather to be a success.

In my time in this role which is now over nine years we have never had such a bad run of winter weather so much so that the end of 2010 looks like ending in the same vein as we started - under snow.

The impact on the business is huge in that even when we are open the customers can't get to us due to road conditions.

But let's not be too negative we have had many days in the summer when the site has been at capacity so positives have to be drawn from what has been a mixed year.

The snow has also had an effect on the events business, adverse weather puts people off venturing outdoors. Our most recent Irish dance featuring the ever popular Hugo Duncan was a real victim of the weather with numbers well down on previous events.

We have also had to face the possibility that bands may not be able to get to us as quite often over the Christmas period the entertainers have to travel from all over the country.

'Mission impossible'

The ABBA tribute band for our first party night made it up from Carlisle at the height of the bad weather which seemed a 'mission impossible' so much so they received a round of applause on arrival before even playing a note.

Since the summer we have seen a return of regular customers and welcomed in new. Back in July the outdoor car parks were used for two nights as the venue for an all action stunt show. Part of a national tour the 'Scott May Daredevil Show' drew in crowds from all over the North East.

The 'Imagine' youth festival once again took place over five days in August with around 2000-teenagers involved. It is now very much part of our calendar with facilities being improved on the camp site each year.

Our own series of Irish dance nights which culminated with Hugo Duncan in November also saw Philomena Begley and Declan Nerney take to the stage.

These events are more difficult to sell at the moment due to lack of disposable income, however we will look to keep these events going in 2011 keeping the Exchange as a venue known for high quality acts and shows.

Bursting at the seams

Two high profile charity nights saw the Exchange bursting at the seams. Firstly the 'Pink Ball' organised in August by a local Inverurie committee in aid of cancer research transformed the Exchange into a wonderland of balloons, ribbons and not forgetting plenty of pink. The hall looked amazing and a fantastic total of over £40,000 was raised for the charity.

The ever popular 'Harvest Home' event returned this time in aid of the David & June

Gordon Memorial Trust. The local community turned out in force for an evening of Scottish music, comedy and dancing for what was another great night and again, more than £40,000 was raised.

The Christmas craft fayre in November was a great success with numbers up on last year and with a huge selection of Christmas stalls it was a great start to the festive season.

Bonfire night success

The Inverurie Round Table again hosted the community Bonfire and firework night at Thainstone and despite the cold night a huge crowd attended for what is always a fantastic night and with all profits going back into local good causes it proved a real success for all involved.

So that's 2010 done, and it has been a successful one, the weather aside and have continued to build on our solid foundations and with planning well under way for 2011 and a number of major new events lets hope it can only get better.



Revellers enjoy the successful Pink Ball at Thainstone Exchange.



Laura Poppe (third from left) and her Sunday Market team - always willing to help.