

Packed, peaceful tribute to Dennis Brown

The Jamaica Reggae Industry Association (JaRIA), organisers of the weekly Reggae Wednesdays concert series in Mandela Park, Half-Way Tree, for Reggae Month are dubbing the first show a huge success.

It was a tribute to singer Dennis Emmanuel Brown on what would have been his 60th birthday had he been alive. The night featured stellar performances from many acts. Christopher Martin, Bushman, Warrior King, and D Major were among the standouts. Junior Lincoln, executive producer, told The Gleaner that it was executed well and that he hopes the momentum will continue. "The audience was pleased with the show and they were having fun. The point of putting on this event is to entertain people, and I think we achieved that," he said. Pleased Lincoln was particularly pleased with the magnitude of the crowd and there were no disturbances. "It was a packed night, but it was incident free. The energy inside the venue was all about love and we hope to keep things moving in that direction," he explained. "JaRIA is about showing Jamaica and the world that we can have clean, holistic entertainment and that's what we're doing." He then lamented that despite the family-oriented entertainment being offered over the years, especially during Reggae Month, JaRIA was still struggling to get sponsorship from corporate Jamaica. "We have shown Jamaica that we can execute clean, wholesome shows. The problem that we have is that the public and private sectors are not supporting the music," he said. "We have been experiencing this over the years, and nothing has changed. Why is it so difficult to get sponsorship for something as important as Reggae Month?" "Artistes give of their time and their service for free, and aside from Red Stripe, who were there last night, there isn't much support from the rest of corporate Jamaica," Lincoln stressed. "While I can understand them saying that they are not supporting a dancehall event because it might be lewd and not in tune with their brand, reggae is conscious music. So why are we experiencing these problems?" "Reggae music is not just music of Jamaica, it is the music of the world. so I'm hoping things will begin to change in the years to come," he said.