



# F E S T I V A L

*by Ian Deavin (organiser)*

Well on Day 1 of our first Community Festival I woke up wondering if the events would run as programmed and if people would turn out – and if the weather would hold.

So quickly helping to set up our own stalls for the Garage Sale Trail on the front verge with my partner Lesley who organised it together with Country Properties, I then set off to open up the Community Hall for our Open Day. Well I needn't have worried lots of exhibitors came including the WI, the Coffee Club, the Art Society, Line Dancing, Pre-school Learning Alliance, Barnwell Music and of course me doing Tai Chi – generating a gentle buzz in the hall.

Actually the Community Festival seems like an idea whose time has come – and as explained to me by Jenny Dann at St Michaels church – this is a traditional time of celebration running up to Michaelmas - so how appropriate.

I somehow managed to get around quite a few activities such as the library where stalls included Sheffield Saints football, the Scout group, the WI, Walkers, Good Neighbours and of course







the library itself focusing on their role as a community resource. A short walk from the Library I found the Shefford Tidy group assembling for their litter pick together with our Mayor Paul Mackin in the council offices. Just round the corner I came across Shefford and District Bible Society Action Group in St Michaels Church along with the History Group and the church café which was running most days throughout the festival. On display was a special bunting chain drawn and coloured by children at the church as their contribution to the festival.



One disappointment was that the Shefford Olympics did not materialise, but I am assured that the organisers will carry over the idea to next year – so please support this ambitious project for next September as many people have asked me about it and I am sure it will be a winner.



A delightful end to the day was an evening music recital by Barnwell Music, hosted at the Baptist Church with music and singing by the talented adults and young people of the school.



Through the day I was asked “how do you think it has gone?”



Well I think that for the first day of the first Festival it was a brilliant start on the part of everyone – participants and visitors – I hope it keeps up and look forward to enjoying the week’s activities ahead.



Sunday saw rain – almost continuously from the previous afternoon – so although the Bowls club turned up they wisely







postponed play to the afternoon when the sun came out and everything dried up so that a brisk start could be made at 3.00pm.

Our final weekend saw the Art Society Exhibition (where I actually bought some pictures!) with a lovely display of work by our local artists – a well attended event on a day of lovely sunshine. In fact such a lovely day that our local unicyclist was seen practicing – was he going like us to see the display at St Michaels Church who were building to their own Sunday main event of Michaelmas Patronal celebrations.



All-in-all the feedback to our first Community Festival has been very positive with good attendance at events and a great enthusiasm to repeat next year – to the point that people seem to be already planning what more they can do to expand and extend their activities.



The dates for next year have been set for the 21<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September so if you would like to participate please contact:

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