



## From Wellington to Abba, it's the Waterloo carnival!

The origins of the Farnham Carnival may be lost in the mists of time, but it is known that there was a carnival parade in Farnham as far back as 1923.

Subsequently the idea of a town carnival in Farnham faded away, maybe due to the outbreak of war in 1939, but in the 1960s Farnham Town Council - then Farnham Urban District Council - ran the Farnham Show, an annual event which took place in Farnham Park.

Around 1969 or 1970, Farnham Lions became involved and discussed with the council the idea of bringing back the concept of a town carnival. The Lions seized upon this exciting new opportunity to create a major high-profile event for the whole town, and all the fun and colour of carnival was quickly re-established as an annual event.

Then as the town show ceased, Farnham Lions also took on the running of the carnival fair, now held in Gostrey Meadow.

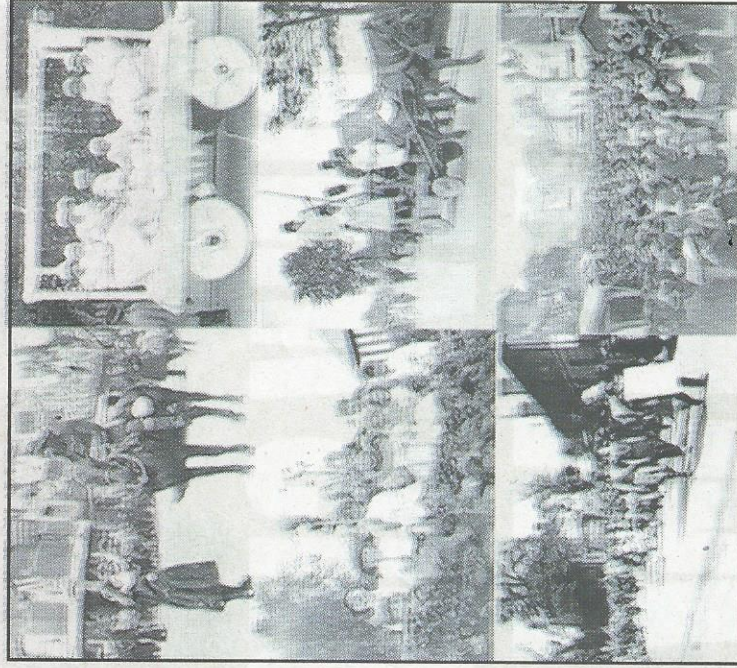


*Above: Modern carnival action. Right: Memories from 1923, the earliest recorded carnival. Photos: Farnham Carnival Committee.*

In 2000, The Hedgehogs joined forces with Farnham Lions to help run the twin events. Since then the two service clubs have continued to be the main drivers of the Farnham Carnival Organising Committee, which puts on the biggest event in the town calendar.

In the 1960s the procession started in Upper Hart Car Park, went around the town and up Castle Street before finishing in Farnham Park, the site of the Farnham Show. It now starts and ends in Upper Hart Car Park.

Another thing which has changed has been the desire to add greater excitement by giving the carnival a different focus each year. Back in 1923, it is not clear if the carnival had a theme, other than for "everyone to



have a good time!", but since 2000 the committee has come up with innovative themes, providing wide scope for them to be interpreted creatively.

There has been no shortage of dynamism and enthusiasm, with entrants devising inspired ways to interpret the theme. With *Waterloo* the theme for 2015, the organisers are sure the carnival will be as colourful, varied and enjoyable as ever, for participants and spectators alike.



**PRIDE'S**