

# School celebrates 175 years

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SHELFORD School celebrated its 175th anniversary over the weekend, by inviting the community to attend an open day themed around the school's history.

The event kicked off on Saturday afternoon with a peal of bells from the neighbouring Great Shelford church.

Current and former pupils of the school put on a display of Maypole dancing, while children were also encouraged to try their hand at various Victorian crafts, including operating a pedal-powered Victorian sewing machine.

The school also celebrated the milestone with help from Barker Bros. Butchers – also celebrating its 175th anniversary this year – who were selling a limited edition 175th anniversary sausage at the event.

Other culinary delights included a special 175th anniversary cake, which was cut following a speech on the school's history and legacy by Bishop Stephen, the Bishop of Ely.

Key Stage 2 students also helped out with a history lesson of their

own, setting up a museum in the main hall full of memories from the past 175 years. Guests were also invited to share their own memories of the school, with further archives dating back to the 19th century on display in the Year 1 classroom.

The day ended with the planting of a ceremonial tree.

Shelford School PTA secretary Matt Bell was happy with how the event turned out.

He said: "We wanted the pupils and the community to be aware of how much things have changed since the school opened in 1843. Children were given a few weeks to find Victorian artefacts at home, to bring in to the celebration – we had everything from stone flint to prize bibles given to grandparents who attended the school, to quill pens. On Friday, children were tasked with writing cards giving information about the objects, that were then shown the next day.

"On Saturday, we continued to encourage the children to think about change, right down to the small details.

"For over 50 years, the school had no sanitation, with running water not introduced until 1900 – however, some things have managed to stay

Pupils started the event with Maypole dancing



the same, like the outer building.

"Other events, such as the Maypole celebrations, were chosen because of the historic significance to the school. One of the first photos we have in the school archives dates

back to the 1890s, and shows students Maypole dancing – a pastime we believe dates back to when the school originally opened."

The anniversary event was preceded by a special church service a

day earlier. The service concluded by visiting the front wall of the churchyard, where the grave of Shelford School's first ever schoolmistress, Susannah Hopkins, is laid. She died on May 1, 1857.