

The Nation's Festival on the National Mall

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and are seeing to it that we do not ignore our community heritages.

Reflecting earlier symposia and exhibitions, the Smithsonian Festival for the next five years will be devoted to reawakening various senses of community. For communities—whether inherited or joined—serve as a vital buffer between individuals and a world of megastates and megacorporations. They are more manageable units in which all can participate—men and women, young and old—and give some living proof of Schumacher's notion that "small is beautiful." We reaffirm that humans are important, and that we are, like plants and other animals, dependent upon communities for survival.

The Festival of American Folklife has become an important tradition on the National Mall. Thousands of Americans look forward to the opportunity to revisit this exciting program, while as many others find their first visit to be equally rich and meaningful.

The National Park Service is pleased to combine its resources and talent again with the Smithsonian Institution for another presentation. As in previous years, the Festival talks about, sings about, and dramatizes America's unique cultural story. It brings together Americans from almost every walk of life for what has been described as "the great family reunion."

This year's celebration is centered around the theme of community life. Participants reflecting a number of traditions who have made our country a strong national community give us all a more meaningful understanding of our cultural roots. On the Mall you

will find the farmer, the village tradesman, the mill hand, the poet, the artist—to mention a few who have helped to weave a unique national community.

The National Park Service is a people-serving agency. The community concept is reflected in the work of the organization throughout its history. We believe that our national parklands have a major role in providing superlative opportunities for outdoor recreation, experience in conservation education for the young people of the country, and at the same time in reminding us of our country's history and of our debt to the land of our fathers. Our involvement in programs such as the Festival which serves the entire community is typical of this commitment.

The harmony and delight that the Festival of American Folklife produces binds us together as a national community. We are proud of the Festival and what it has come to mean to America.

Welcome and enjoy yourself.



William J. Whelan is the Director of the National Park Service.