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News from Abthorpe

December 2007

The Christmas celebrations organised by the Abthorpe Fund Group have now become an established annual event for the village, with lunch for the older residents on Thursday 13th December at the New Inn, and the children's Christmas party on Saturday 15th December. The children will then gather on the village green at 5.00 along with as many of you as possible for some lusty carol singing, with the usual glass of seasonal wine and mince pies in the church afterwards.

CAROL SINGING

This year will see the resurrection of carol singing round the village. Please come and add your voice on Friday 21 December, meeting at the Old School at 6.00pm and finishing in the pub where singers will be rewarded for their efforts with mince pies. All proceeds will go to Crisis, who work year round to support homeless people but have a special role at this time of year with their Open Christmas project from 23 – 30 December. Learn more about the charity at <http://www.crisis.org.uk>, and please support the carol singers.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

And if you happen to be at a loose end on New Year's Day, come down to the village green where you will be able to see a gathering of vintage cars while partaking of a glass or two.

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REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Abthorpe war memorial was the focus for the parade of members of the Wappenham Branch of the Royal British Legion, many of them battle hardened veterans, on Remembrance Sunday. Tony Abbott read the names of those who died serving their country in both world wars and recited the familiar eulogy. Then the Legion joined a



packed congregation in church for a humbling and memorable service led by the Rev'd Vic Read. With their standard safely shrouding the altar, the war dead and injured were remembered, hymns sung and prayers offered for unity and love.

John Riches

MORE BUSES FOR ABTHORPE?

Proposals have been put forward by NCC for improved bus services in this area. Increased Government funding from 1 April means that over 60s and disabled people will be able to travel free on any local bus service throughout England, but more excitingly is the suggestion that from September Abthorpe could have 13 buses throughout the day, Monday to Friday. We would benefit from being the last call from and to Towcester as the circular route through surrounding villages passes through Abthorpe. New buses which would operate on the route would be fully accessible, including for wheelchairs. And the current Jeff Amos bus from Towcester to Banbury on market day would not be affected by these proposals. Is this the renaissance of sensible public transport at times it's needed to Northampton and Milton Keynes - and therefore to the world?

WAPPENHAM POST OFFICE

Tony and Evelyn are delighted that The Post Office has identified Wappenham as one of the offices they propose to keep open in their plan for this area, announced on 20 November. However, confirmation of the reprieve depends on the results of a six-week consultation period. So if you value having this 'local' service do keep an eye open for the consultation and respond positively.

COUNCIL HOMES TRANSFER

For some time now there has been consultation on whether local Council properties should be transferred to a housing association. Tenants have now voted for such a transfer, with 57.2% of those who voted being in favour. A new not-for-profit organisation called South Northants Homes will be formed, to include Aragon and MacIntyre Housing Associations, the Council's chosen partners. The object of the exercise is for South Northants Homes to inject £46m over the next five years into improving the condition and facilities of these homes, bringing them up to the Government's 'Decent Homes' standard. Transfer should be complete early in 2008.

SILVERSTONE CIRCUIT DEVELOPMENT

Although the time for comment on the draft development brief for the massive project planned for Silverstone Circuit is now closed, undoubtedly there will be further opportunities as the planning process proceeds.

A summary of the objectives behind the plan are to:

- retain the British Grand Prix at Silverstone
- create a centre of automotive and high technology excellence for the UK
- create employment opportunities
- provide leisure and hotel facilities
- provide residential development within Silverstone village and logistics and business development to the west of the Dadford Road

This will be achieved in four phases:

Phase 1: Development of the pit and paddock complex due for completion in June 2009; further development of the advanced technology park and business park; residential development.

Phase 2: Showrooms and grandstands, and the Academy Centre attached to the pit and paddock complex. This could include the conference and leisure activities. Hotel development.

Phase 3: Education campus development. Subject to the Traffic Impact Assessment this element may trigger requirements for additional infrastructure and flood mitigation measures.

Phase 4: The internal circuit development for the exhibition and conference facilities, and leisure uses.

Here's where you can find more information:

<http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/library/1584.htm>

WHIST AND CRIBBAGE

The monthly whist sessions at the New Inn continue, and a table of cribbage will be added. It's light-hearted and good fun; do come and see what it's all about, novice or seasoned player. The next is 2pm on 8 December.



Elsie Kelcher, Ann Lewis and Francesca Wright discussing the finer points of the game

TOWCESTER AREA DOOR TO DOOR (TADD)

TADD has moved its office to Paulerspury and has a new contact number – **01327 810300**. The old number will still be in use for 3 months to allow TADD to notify all of its 800 past users. Its address will now be: Ground Floor, Suite 3, Plum Park Estate, Watling St, Paulerspury NN12 4LQ.

TADD is a service for people who need help to get to medical appointments. Driving is provided by volunteers, who are paid mileage by

the client. Do contact the office if you need their assistance or can offer driving time.

CPRE

Living in such a beautiful area as we do, you may want to take a look at the work of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, which works to defend the local countryside from development which it sees as inappropriate.

www.cprenorthants.org.uk is their website which will tell you more.

VICTIM SUPPORT

Abthorpe Parish Council contributes £50 each year to help Victim Support Northamptonshire. It does an impressive job supporting people affected by crime and anti-social behaviour. It is projected to receive over 15,000 referrals this year and make an average of 7 visits a day. Other services it offers are supporting witnesses in court, including children, and helping to secure financial compensation after violent crimes. All this is done on diminishing funding from the Government, so additional help, such as the Parish Council donation, is essential.

RECENT PLANNING OUTCOMES

Permission has been granted for a new house to be built in Stanhill Row, next to no.1.

HOME HEATING OIL – YOU COULD SAVE MONEY

Yelvertoft (Northants) Oil Buying Consortium started 25 years ago when 20 neighbours got together to purchase heating oil. With more and more people joining the scheme from an increasingly wide area, the combined buying power means the best possible bulk discount prices can be achieved. It also offers other benefits such as boiler servicing, tank replacement and a monthly payment system. Find out more at www.yobco.co.uk; 01788 824236.



Swans and their cygnets swim in a beautiful lake only just over a mile from Abthorpe Church. Do you know where this scene is? A pot of home made marmalade goes to the person with the

FREE COMPOST BIN

If you can find a good use for a green 8 cu. ft. plastic compost bin please let me know. It's sitting waiting for a good home.

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CHURCH TOTE

Barbara Malcomson scooped the October tote win of £245.00, and David Hughes was the lucky winner in November.

THE OLD SCHOOL AGM

The Committee that manages The Old School held its Annual General Meeting on 22 November. £13,000 has been taken forward to finance the committee's main objectives



which include replacing some of the ridge tiles, purchasing additional crockery so that 100 sets can be available plus 150 sets of cutlery. Improvements are to be made to allow disabled people to use the building more easily, and the fire exit signs replaced. £4,683 remained on deposit from the old tote, and it was agreed that some of this money would be used to upgrade the kitchen.

The elected committee is: Julie Dyckhoff, Chairman, Lynn Neasham, Secretary, and David Darling, Treasurer. Members are Janet Dancer, Richard Gladdle, Tracey Holdway and Helen Pope.

NEWS FROM THE NEW INN

The evening of Caribbean food, specialities of Gladys Benjamin who took over the kitchen of the New Inn back in October, attracted a good number of people; the goat curry seems to have been a particular favourite. Hopefully it will be repeated before too long.

The Brie, The Bullet, and The Black Cat murder mystery night on the 10th November was great fun, as you can see for yourself:

Cast: Back row, Seamus O'Hack (Dave), Kirk Ransom III (Colin), Otto Von Pinklewurst (Charles), Pierre Paysanski, (Peewee), Monsieur Oily Carte (Mark), Cherie Boot (Roy), Pia Fedora, (Louisa). Middle row, Hughes Le Grandbutte (Bunny), Countess Bogov (Fi).

Front row, Nicole Le Grandbutte (Debbie), Edith Le Grandbutte (Rona), Ingrid Pith (Liz).



Coming up are a number of entertaining evenings: The Six String Vandals on Saturday 8th December, and Christmas karaoke the following Saturday, 15th. On Wednesday 19th December Bradden shoot will be holding their Christmas party. Mr Barwell has invited the whole village to the firework display. The subsequent

music by 'Craig' should be quieter in contrast. The New Year will be seen in with a pantomime party; come dressed as your favourite character – or not, as you prefer.

Don't forget the special Christmas lunch and dinner menu: £14.99 for four courses. And the Tuesday to Saturday 2-course meal for £6 is still on offer. Jane or Robbie are on 857306.

THE SNELSONS OF ABTHORPE

The tale of a recent visit : John Riches

Snelson is a well known family name in Abthorpe. For centuries members of the family have lived in our village. The churchyard and its extension are dotted with graves bearing the Snelson name and family members still reside

here. Our village war memorial lists ten men from the family who served in the First World War and returned safely to their homes. Robert Snelson and his brother Stafford recently visited the village to carry out genealogical research. Robert, or Rob as he is more familiarly known, described how his great grandfather Thomas Snelson was born in Abthorpe in 1872 and spent his childhood years here in the Dr Barnardo's house next to The New Inn. In his late teens, perhaps in an attempt to get away from the poverty in Abthorpe, Thomas travelled to the Canadian province of Nova Scotia for a short time but then moved to South Africa where he became involved in the Second Boer War between 1899 and 1902. When that war ended Thomas returned to England but was unable to settle and returned to South Africa. Thomas's son Harold Thomas, Rob's grandfather, returned to England for a short time in 1924 when he was seven years old. Rob describes how Harold met villager Dorothy Swann back then and now 83 years later Rob had the privilege of meeting Dorothy himself. Whilst growing up in South Africa his grandfather told Rob a great deal about our village so in later life he made a trip to England and was blown-away by Abthorpe when he made his first visit. Since that time Rob has emigrated from his birthplace in Johannesburg back to St Neots in Cambridgeshire.

POLICE IN NEW UNIFORMS

Northamptonshire Police is one of the first forces in the country to introduce new-style shirts specially designed to be worn under body armour. The traditional white shirt and black clip-on ties have been replaced with



more comfortable black short-sleeved zip-up shirts. Police Community Support Officers will wear the same style shirts in blue.

PEOPLE

We wish Bill Kendal (John to his family) well and hope that he is soon back at home from hospital.

EVENTS*2nd Friday of each month*

Towcester Farmers' Market, 9.00 – 1.00, Richmond Road car park

Saturday 8 December

Christmas Whist and Cribbage at the New Inn, 2.00, tea and home-made cake

Six String Vandals at the New Inn, 8.00

Thursday 13 December

Christmas lunch for older residents, the New Inn

Saturday 15 December

Children's Christmas party, the Old School

Carols on the Green, 5.00, followed by refreshments in the church

Christmas karaoke at the New Inn, 8.00

Monday 17 December

Parish Council Meeting, 7.45, the Old School

Wednesday 19 December

Firework display at the New Inn, courtesy of Mr Barwell and the Bradden shoot

Friday 21 December

Carol singing round the village, 6.00, the Old School – come and lend your voice

Sunday 23 December

Carol service at St John the Baptist, 4.00

Christmas Day

Holy Communion, 9.00, St John the Baptist

Short Communion Service, 11.00, at St Mary's, Wappenham

New Year's Eve

Pantomime party at the New Inn

Tuesday 1 January

Vintage cars round the village green.

Saturday 12 January

Quiz Night with fish and chip supper, Wappenham Village Hall

Monday 28 January

Parish Council Meeting, 7.45, the Old School

Friday/Saturday, 8/9 February

Wappenham Drama Group pantomime production 'Sleeping Beauty'; tickets from the shop in January.