



ABTALK

News from Abthorpe

December 2012

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY

There is currently a vacancy on the Parish Council following the resignation of Jo Sharp. It has often been difficult to fill vacancies, so it would be good if volunteers came forward. You would be expected to attend meetings which are held every 6 weeks on Monday evenings. The Parish Council has certain statutory duties, such as street lighting, and gives advice to the District and County Councils on many matters. It is consulted on planning applications and provides a local voice for concern over how services are provided. If you are interested in joining please get in touch with Bob Carter, the clerk, on 857753.

Editors

Jill Tolson

jill.tolson@abthorpe.net; 857320

Keith Fenwick

keith.fenwick@abthorpe.net; 857083

SPEEDING THROUGH THE VILLAGE

The Parish Council has carried out an investigation into speed warning signs which shows that purchasing one for the village is practical. Several other villages already have these signs, which display the speed of approaching vehicles.

There are various designs: some have flashing lights, others smiling or frowning faces. Whether these are any more effective than a simple sign displaying the speed is a matter of conjecture. The sign would not be permanently in one place, but would be moveable so that it could be used at either end of the village and facing either traffic entering or leaving. All that would be required is a suitable pole to mount it, plus a licence from NCC to do so. It would be battery powered, thus avoiding installing permanent power connections which could cost more than the sign itself. Further investigation is needed before any decision is taken.

NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Snelson's Orchard is the proposed name for the new affordable homes development which is under construction off Brackley Lane. Already the site has been transformed with the surrounding hedge being removed, top soil excavated and

hard core dumped on what is to become the service road for the nine housing units being built for local people either for rent or shared ownership.

The Snelson family has a long-standing association with the village which will now be formally recognised. The war memorial records the names of 10 members of the family who fought in WWI and who returned safely to the village. Members of the family still live here.

The development is due for completion in spring 2013.

ABbA

"The community-led Tove Valley project was the first in the UK to submit a full Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF) application which is a fantastic effort and achievement." This quotation is from Northamptonshire County Council's sixth Superfast Broadband newsletter, and is a testament to the continuing hard work of the ABbA group pioneering this project.

The County Council, in recognising that as it is not viable for the commercial market to deliver to rural areas, has committed £4.08m to match the similar amount it has secured from the Government via Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK).

The Directors of ABbA decided to bid for a grant totalling £93,630 to install the new technology. To make the project financially viable the wi-fi infrastructure will be extended to cover Wappenham, Weedon Lois and Weston, 579 premises in total; hence the new name Tove Valley Superfast Broadband.



Eric Malcomson, chairman of ABbA, shows plans for Superfast Broadband to Andrea Leadsom MP.

The project has been supported by local MP Andrea Leadsom among many others, and a decision by the Government is expected shortly.

CHRISTMAS RECYCLING

As a nation we use over 16,000 tonnes of foil containers and 30,000 tonnes of aerosols every year. Over the Christmas period the amount of rubbish we produce rises by about 30 per cent - an estimated 175 million mince pie cases alone.

In just a few weeks this source of aluminium and steel can be reprocessed and back on the shelf as more food packaging, or even part of a new car. Once collected it is taken to a local depot for bulking into larger loads before being transported to a materials recovery facility. Here, the aluminium and

steel are separated from each other using a powerful magnet and baled ready for reprocessing. The material is then shredded and any printed decoration removed. The shreds are cast into ingots which can be rolled into thin aluminium sheets to be used to make more drinks cans. Aluminium foil containers are usually reprocessed separately, the resulting material often being reused in the automotive industry where its lightweight properties make it ideal for parts such as engine cylinder heads.

TRACING ANCESTORS IN ABTHORPE

Jennifer Fairbrother from Blundells Sands near Liverpool has been on a quest to find out more about her ancestors, some of whom came from Abthorpe and the surrounding area. She has her great grandmother's merit certificate, school report and completely handwritten marriage certificate to aid her research.

One of Jen's great grandmothers was Clara Salmons who was born in 1872 and lived in Slapton, attending Abthorpe School when Mr Goodhall was the Headmaster. On 1st December 1891 at the age of 19, Clara married 21 year old Edward Archer from Wappenham at Slapton Church. To ensure this totally handwritten document was legal Philip Lockton the then Rector of Slapton had signed the certificate over a penny Queen Victoria postage stamp. In 1951 Clara and Edward Archer celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, recorded in the *Mercury and Herald* newspaper of which Jen has a cutting. By that time Edward had worked as a farm labourer for 65 years. When they first married he earned eleven shillings a week (55p) but somehow they managed.

During her visit Jen visited Rene Balderson who has lived in the

village all her long life and has an excellent memory of people and events in past years. Both Jen and her mother had the same godmother, Mrs Connie Timms, whom many of today's villagers remember. Jen's grandparents' surname was Snelson (*see article on the new housing*) and the family lived in the thatched house in Main Street. They had four children: Winnie, Donald, Edwin and Grace. It turns out that Jen is Grace's granddaughter.

THE OLD SCHOOL

*Jules Dyckhoff, Chair,
Old School Committee*

Our first fundraising event after the summer break, in conjunction with the PCC, was the John Cleveland Band evening. The church was packed to the gunwales with villagers, family and friends, enjoying an eclectic mix of music that raised an amazing £537.82 each for the Old School and PCC.

After the disappointment of having to cancel our Family BBQ in July due to the weather, the sun shone gloriously on our Clay Pigeon Shoot on Saturday 27th October. Our thanks go to Tim and Helen Pope for hosting the event at Oxbridge Meadows Stables and to Clive Wright

for organising the excellent tuition. The event was well supported by both adults and children from Silverstone and Bradden, as well as Abthorpe. The shooting and bacon rolls were thoroughly enjoyed by all and raised a fantastic total of £357.68. The general consensus is that there should be another one, so watch this space.

Our final big event of the year was our very noisy and competitive Race Night on Saturday 24th November that raised an astonishing £1,029.06. Our thanks go to all those who sponsored races, bought horses and came along to enjoy an evening at the races, but especially to Phil Berry for expertly acting as both compere and auctioneer and to Sheila Andrews for organising the smooth running of the Tote.

Forthcoming dates for your diary are:

- ◆ Wednesday 12th December 10 am to 12 noon
Christmas coffee morning at The Old Reading Room, The Green
- ◆ Friday 11th January - 10am to 12 noon
New Year coffee morning at The Elms, Wappenham Road
- ◆ Thursday 24th January - 8pm
The Old School AGM at The Old School

The popular plant sale will be returning in May, so don't forget to add a few extras when you get going in the greenhouse or outside in spring.

Our fundraising total to date now stands at just under £11,100.00 - a huge thank you to everyone who has helped us reach this incredible figure.

With the closure of the Nursery School in July, the Old School is now available for hire during the day as well as evenings and weekends. Upholstery classes are taking place every Monday and we are keen to attract other regular activities, as well as the hall being available for villagers to hire for parties, etc.

If you would like to book the hall, know of anyone looking for somewhere to hold a regular activity, or would like to see a particular activity taking place in the village, then please get in touch with our Secretary, Jan Miles: 857427, jan.miles@abthorpe.net

PEOPLE

We reported the sad death of David Darling of Leeson House in our last issue. He and his wife, Angela, had lived in Abthorpe for 46 years, arriving a year after they were married. David's funeral service took place on 4th October in the church overflowing with family and his many friends. It was a lovely celebration of his life with poems read by four of his grandchildren as well as one of his daughters. His long standing friend, Peter Nutting,



provided a glimpse into David's earlier life: of his business career as managing director of a textile company that employed over 100 people and of another company that manufactured jodhpurs.

David was active in village affairs, as Chairman of the Old School Committee for over 30 years and as a long serving member of the Leeson Trust.

Mr Nutting also commented on David's prowess as a fisherman and described how even four weeks earlier he caught more fish than anyone else in his group of fishermen friends. Many must have echoed the final words of Peter Nutting's tribute: "What a character! He will never be forgotten."

And we have to say farewell to Angela Darling as she moved to Priors Marston at the end of November. Angela has always supported

the village, and the church in particular, serving on the PCC and as a church warden for many years. The church fête at one time was always held in Angela and David's garden. Her legendary fish pie at Harvest Suppers will be missed! However, she does say she will keep in touch and be back at times for services.

Angela was presented with a picture of the church so that she could take a little piece of Abthorpe to her new home, where we hope she will be happy and healthy.

Sadly we say goodbye to another of our elderly residents. Dorothy Swan died in Duncote Residential Home on 23rd November at the age of 89. She held one unique distinction which is unlikely ever to occur again in that she lived in the same house at the junction of Main Street and Wappenham Road throughout her life, apart from wartime service in the ATS and the final couple of years in Duncote.

Dorothy came from one of the well-known village families - her mother was a Snelson. She attended Abthorpe School then moved to Silverstone School, after which she went to secretarial college in Northampton. This led to work at Grooms Garage in Towcester and, for a short time, the Shoe Factory in Abthorpe. Dorothy was called up in 1943 and joined the Auxiliary Transport Service (ATS). Her service lasted until 1949. Most of her working life was spent at Towcester Police station, for which she received a long service award. Marriage to Frank Swan came in December 1968 and they had 28 years together before Frank's death in 1996. Dorothy, or Dot as she was known, lived an independent life thereafter until she needed full time care.

Apparently, Dorothy was one of the more mischievous types in her earlier years. Nothing wicked, but she got up to lots of little escapades. She lost a finger trying to recover a coin which had fallen down a drain; the cover was a bit too heavy for her to lift.

Although she had no children of her own, Dorothy was well known in the district and will be sadly missed.

In the photograph Dorothy is seen sitting in a corner of the New Inn explaining that she was actually in the pub on VE Day. Then aged 24 years she was serving with the ATS at Castle Ashby as a member of 21 Vehicle Reserve Depot but was allowed a day off to celebrate. She hitchhiked to Towcester and stopped for a drink at The Wheatsheaf pub. A friend spotted her and insisted that he gave her a lift to Abthorpe in time for the celebrations.



Tony Dancer, sitting close by, reminded us that the war did not end on 8th May 1945. He had been serving in India as part of the fight against the Japanese and travelled on to Singapore in the troopship Britannic, a sister ship of the Titanic. Tony celebrated his 21st birthday on 13th June 1945 in Singapore accompanied by his friend and close neighbour Fred Balderson. "I was drunk for three days!" he said laughingly. Tony's wife, Audrey, remembered that she was working in the Manfield Hospital, Northampton, at the time and went to Victory celebrations in the market square.

MINI FARM

No decision has yet been received on the appeal by the owners of Mini Farm against the rejection of their planning application last year.

TRADING STANDARDS WARNING ON COLD-CALLERS

County residents are being warned about cold-callers following complaints received by Northamptonshire County Council's trading standards service. Quotes are being offered to remove moss from roofs, often followed by tiles being painted in order to prolong the life of the roof. Both procedures are unnecessary according to the National Federation of Roofing Contractors. The advice, supported by Northamptonshire Police, is always don't buy goods or services from someone who cold-calls at your door: 'if you're unsure, don't open the door'.

Instead use the Buy With Confidence scheme, which is operated by trading standards. Traders who are part of the scheme are stringently vetted and continuously monitored for legal compliance: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/approvedtraders or email bwc@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

Trading standards can supply a double-sided 'No Cold Calling' sticker: tradestd@northamptonshire.gov.uk

POPPY APPEAL

This year's Poppy Appeal in Abthorpe raised £411.41, a record for the village, which is renowned for being generous to charities. Unfortunately the Wappenham District branch of the Royal British Legion is due to close because of a lack of younger members coming forward, but there is a possibility that the local Poppy Appeal will continue. If so no doubt Janet Dancer can be persuaded to continue doing her rounds of the village.

ABTHORPE IN WINTERS PAST

Some Christmas cards depict scenes of carol singers in the snow, often outside brightly lit churches. Eighty years ago the reality was different with stronger memories of frozen pipes and digging out snow drifts. There were no bright lights in the church as electric lights were not installed until 1933, and then they were used very sparsely, all but one being turned off during the sermon.

However, there are a few fond memories of church celebrations, particularly a nativity tableau which was performed by the school children in the 1930s in great excitement as they stood very still during the scene

poses then rushed back to the Reading Room to change costumes for the next scene, the number of characters far exceeding number of children taking part. At that time children had a small present and an orange off a Christmas tree in the school.

Cottagers did not have Christmas trees but the children made long paper chains from strips of crepe paper joined with flour paste. Another popular decoration were long branches of ivy taken from tree trunks then tacked along picture rails. The idea of it being bad luck to keep up decorations after twelfth night could be cancelled by keeping them up until end of January. The ivy stayed fresh all that time and after the effort of gathering it and putting around the room on Christmas Eve people felt justified in leaving it there for a month. Revd. Smythe led carol singers around the village in the 1960s but it was nearly twenty years later before the tradition was started again by enthusiastic newcomers to the village. The building of seventeen houses in early 1970s rejuvenated the village which previously had a larger proportion of mature rather than young families.

Even when electricity was first installed in the village most houses were lit by candles or paraffin lamps; reading under the bedclothes with a torch was a luxury which came later. Some people had stone hot water bottles to warm the bed but others made do with glass squash bottles which occasionally shattered when filled. The frozen ice patterns inside the bedroom windows fascinated children because they changed according to the outside temperature. Viewing a snowflake through a simple microscope and finding that each snowflake was a different shape was some children's first experience of science, but the most fun for them was in the years of heavy snow. 1947 was very special. It started to snow on January 22nd then continued every day in one part of the country or another until March 17th. During most of that time the temperature hardly rose above freezing. A few children who normally walked a mile or so to Abthorpe school did not go for two months.

When the snow first began Fred Balderson had just been demobbed but could not get transport past Towcester so he struggled on foot through the snow, reaching Abthorpe late at night. Bert Penn's car became stuck in a snow drift at the Delf and by the time he reached the nearest farmhouse he had hypothermia. On 16th March a huge gale blew, removing Mile Oak

barn roof, Handley, in one piece and dropping it in the yard just missing the cattle sheltering under the hovel. Then the thaw of two months of snow started, and combined with heavy rain there was terrible flooding and loss of life in the fens in East Anglia. However, with no TV coverage it was later forgotten by the rest of the country whereas equally devastating floods in 1953 in the same area was well recorded on TV and film.

In 1963 with an even colder February the snow had to be dug out from some villages. Plumpton road from Weston was partially excavated by village teams digging at two levels. In the end they abandoned the road and cut across the fields to reach Plumpton. The same team cleared the road from Lois Weedon to Ellis's cottages (now the site of the large new house on the Wappenham to Lois Weedon road) to meet up with the Wappenham team who had dug from Wappenham towards Weedon. Parish Councils designated a snow leader in each village to organise snow clearance which came in useful at Abthorpe in later years when part of Main Street had to be dug out for an ambulance to get through. Normally the Abthorpe to Wappenham Road was kept clear of ice and snow because one gritting gang, including Jim Keen, lived at Wappenham and needed to get to their depot at Towcester whatever the weather. There were more hard winters later: in 1983 the snow drifted to fill Brackley Lane below Grafton View so children walked along the hedge tops. Then snow drifts in Sid Rowell's field (on the left going up Brackley Lane) were piled

high against the hedge, the last remnants remaining under the hedgerow well into spring.



Brackley Lane in December 2010. Will we have the same this winter?

Though the children kept warm whilst at play outside, the school inside was often cold. On 14th October 1925 the school log book recorded that the temperature was only 39°F (4°C) in the room because the grate was faulty. Miss Abberley, the Headmistress, instructed the children in PE to warm them up but by afternoon it was still only 43°F (6°C) so parents kept their children at home until the temperature improved. A tortoise stove was installed with hot water pipes in the main room. The header tank was topped up by Mr Kendall, Rene Balderson's grandfather, who had to climb a ladder into the roof even when he was quite elderly. This coke stove was surrounded by a large fire guard which was well used: Slapton children walked across the fields to school often arriving in wet coats which were hung on the fire guard to dry. They used the footpath bridge by Slapton mill and did not come to school when the stream flooded - no-one suggested they might walk the much longer distance round by the road! In December 1938 Miss Abberley recorded that she had written several times to the managers to ask for broken windows to be mended but had received no reply. The vicar, Mr Clowes, was one

of the managers and as long as any vicars participated in teaching they were entitled to any spare Leeson charity income after school repairs were carried out. Could there be a conflict of interest here? This arrangement was started in 1737 when the Leeson trustees agreed that surplus income should be paid to a vicar so long as he was also the school master. At that time the village could not afford to pay for a vicar when it had become a separate parish instead of having a Chapel at Ease within Towcester parish. Many years later lessons in religious instruction was considered sufficient to trigger the payment. By that time the school had been enlarged by the LEA who were responsible for payment of staff, so the school no longer relied on a vicar to be head teacher.

Heating in the church was by a coke fired boiler under the floor from which smoke often poured through the gratings making singing very difficult. When there was no-one available to stoke the boiler and electric heaters were installed it was hoped that at last the church would be warm, but after a large winter electricity bill the Church Council decided in April 1963 not to use the heaters in the side aisles

and only to switch on the remainder a short time before a service, rather defeating the point of installing the heaters.

Nowadays schooling is not normally affected by inclement weather although during the cold winters of the 1980s the children were allowed to miss

school if the bus was held up by snow beyond a certain time. They would count down the last remaining minutes then immediately disappear from the bus stop.

M E H and R B

MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE

Each October since 1983 Barry and Liz Haycock have opened their home for a coffee event to raise funds for Marie Curie Cancer Care. This wonderful organisation supplements the work of the NHS and provides end of life care for terminally ill patients in their own homes or in one of the charity's nine hospices.

Over £5,200 has been raised this year, and Liz and Barry would like to thank everyone who helped at the



Liz Haycock in action

event and supported it. Over the past 29 years they have raised around £85,000 for their favourite charity and have given few indications that they wish to retire.

NEWS FROM THE NEW INN

The pub is gearing up for Christmas and bookings are rolling in for the festive period. The Christmas menu can be picked up at the pub. The bar will be open on Christmas Day from 12.00 to 3.00.

The extended restaurant opening hours are doing well, and offer an opportunity for more special evenings. For a good start to the working week: bangers and mash on

Monday for £5; 2 steaks plus a bottle of wine for £10 on a Wednesday, and takeaways every night except Sunday: fish, scampi or battered sausage and chips is £4.75. Each Sunday there is a choice of three roast meats at lunchtime. And not to be outdone, the bar has a Friday special of Hooky or Carlsberg for £2.50 (3-6pm).

As mentioned in the last issue, the monthly charity quiz has moved to a Sunday to accommodate the additional restaurant hours. Unsure how the move would appeal, the first was a test to see how many people would come. Any concerns were unnecessary as a good turnout saw Never On Sunday donate £87 to the Northamptonshire & Warwickshire Air Ambulance. The following month the quiz was cancelled as it clashed with a couple of village events, but it will return for its Christmas edition on 16th December. But note the earlier start time of 7.30pm.

TADD SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Parish Council has agreed again this year to pay the subscriptions to TADD for anyone signed up for that service. The Clerk will be getting in touch with those concerned in due course.

FILM ABTHORPE

There won't be a film in December because, strangely enough, most people are busily engaged elsewhere at the end of the month. The next showing will be on 17th January which will feature *The King's Speech*. Watch out for the flyer and do give it a go; it's a light and easy-going evening.

There is also another venture in the pipeline: an occasional matinée performance. The first will be held on Thursday 20th December at 2pm showing *Nativity*, a film about a primary teacher's attempt to mount the school's musical version of the nativity - the biggest challenge of his life. Just turn up, or for more details or to arrange transport contact Eric Malcomson, 857066; malcomson@abthorpe.net.

HAPPY AT HOME PARTNERSHIP

A new National Lottery funded project has been launched which hopes to help isolated elderly people feel less lonely. The Happy at Home Partnership project aims to recruit volunteers to spare as little as an hour a week to befriend elderly residents who may be in need of company, or to inform them about what local services are on offer and how to arrange the transport to get to them.

Project Officer, Nicola Toms, said: "We are hoping to find people who have a little bit of free time on their hands to come forward and help elderly neighbours who may not be as fortunate and able as themselves. The project aims are simple: helping people who live on our doorsteps or not far away to improve their health and wellbeing through their contact with a volunteer. We hope this will be very effective in reducing the feelings of loneliness experienced by elderly people living isolated lives in our villages by helping them to find out about and access local services, and brightening their day with a cup of tea and a chat."

A number of statutory and voluntary bodies are partnering the project to help people make their lives a little more comfortable. If you

would like to get involved in becoming a volunteer, please get in touch. Just one hour a week free is all you need. Nicola Toms: 01327 300614; Nicola@daventryvolunteers.org.uk

CHURCH NEWS

The John Cleveland Band returned to Abthorpe to give one of its inimitable concerts to an audience packed into the church. The approach path was adorned with bright fairy lights.

Eric Darlington the conductor welcomed everyone. Very loud was a description that could be given to the two vibrant and stimulating opening pieces with six trumpeters parading along the aisles of the church blowing for all they were worth.

There were arrangements of *Rock around the Clock*, *Singing in the Rain*, *Lord of the Dance*, Strauss's



Tales from the Vienna Woods, coloured lights in profusion, smoke machines, imitation flames and much more besides. During one pause in the first part of the concert Eric introduced 13 year old Georgia, the percussionist, but he omitted to say that she is his grand daughter and that his daughter and son, who run Darlington's restaurant at the Heart of the Shires, are also members of the 25-piece band.

During the interval supper was served in the Old School

The whole evening was a delight and great fun. The event made a profit of £1,075 to be shared by the Old School committee and the church.

Thanks are also offered to everyone who helped with and supported the Harvest Supper. The proceeds for that evening were £547.47. The Harvest Service was a thought-provoking service on the theme of water. It is amazing how much seems to have fallen on us recently but how little is actually available, so it needs to be used carefully. A donation of £50 has been sent to Wateraid and the harvest produce went to the Hope Centre in Northampton.

If you have not been round to the churchyard Extension recently,

do pop along to look at the beautiful new gates at the entrance. They have been erected with money donated in memory of the Kendall family. Richard Tomalin's son, David, made them and he really has done a fine job.

Congratulations to Lorraine Salmons who won £222.50 on the church tote in September. Lucie and Paul Grimes were October winners of £230, and in November Ann Cunningham was lucky in time for Christmas winning £235.

Services for Christmas, December and January can be found in the diary on the back page. Those for February will follow the pattern of an 11am service on the 2nd Sunday and a 9.15am service on the 3rd Sunday. Check the notice board for details.

Members of the Church wish you a joyous Christmas and a happy, peaceful and healthy 2013.

REMEMBER WHEN...

An interesting new group has started in Towcester, arranged by Banbury Museum. Over 55s are invited to a Reminiscence Group to share stories, knowledge and memories of times gone by on the last Wednesday of each month on a specific theme (for instance, the first was on childhood). There is no need to book, just turn

up at Towcester Volunteer Centre, 10.00 to 12.00. A small charge of £2 includes refreshments.

For more information telephone Suzi on 01295 753784; banburymuseum@cherwell-dc.gov.uk; www.banburymuseum.org

WAPPENHAM NEWS

The Wappenham and Weedon Lois Drama Group has a proud record of producing fun pantomimes and this year's offering is Alice in Wonderland. Performances are on 1st and 2nd February at 7.30 in Lois Weedon Village Hall, with a matinée at 2.30 on 2nd February. Tickets: 860234.

MEADWELL SPRING IN FLOOD

On the hillside just south of the Stocking Frame on Wappenham Road there is a small spring whose water flows down to the River Tove via a culvert under the road at the entrance to the village. Old Inclosure Act records dated 1826 call the spring Meadwell, although over the years the name has fallen into disuse. Before the mains supply reached Abthorpe the water was used in a tanyard for processing leather and also considerable quantities were piped throughout the village for domestic use. Now, since the dismantling of the village's own supply, all the water from the spring



is forced to pass through the culvert. In recent years after heavy rainfall the culvert under the road is simply not big enough for the volume of water, resulting in flooding across the road, which happened again during the recent heavy rains.

The reminiscences of brothers Bill and Edmund (Shen) Kendall who died in 2009 and 2010 respectively shed more light on the problem. Bill explained that the ditch taking the spring's water to the River Tove was cleared by a workman employed by Towcester Rural District Council, whilst Shen who worked for the Northamptonshire County Council's Highways Department when the culvert was built alleged that it was formed from old tar barrels surrounded by concrete.

No doubt in the fullness of time the responsible authorities will be able to solve this problematic flooding.

PLAYBUS

The Sure Start Playbus has now finished its period of visits to Abthorpe and is moving on to Silverstone. It has been a feature on the Green each Friday morning this autumn term. It was hoped that it would spawn the inception of a mums' and tots' group, but



surprisingly, given the number of little ones in the village, there appears not to be sufficient interest.

FREE ADVICE FROM VILLAGE NETWORKS

Village Networks, another project which has successfully bid for Lottery funding, is managed by the South Northants Volunteer Bureau (SNVB) and

operates a network of experts providing free, independent advice and support to residents across South Northamptonshire on such queries as:

- concerns on welfare rights: what are you eligible for and how to claim
- confidential advice on debt or other money matters
- suggestions on ways to reduce your household bills: gas, electricity, water
- job-seeking advice and support
- local volunteering opportunities

For further information call Village Networks on 01327 358264 or email villagenetworks@snnvb.org.uk

AND FINALLY.....

..... some true items from parish magazines:

Next Thursday will be auditions for our choir - they need all the help they can get.

The ladies of your church have cast off clothing of every kind . The results can be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on october 24th in the church; so ends a friendship that began in their schooldays.

At the evening service tonight the topic will be 'What is Hell?' Come early and hear the choir practice.

Low self-esteem support group will meet on Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement Friday at 7pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

DIARY

Sunday 9 December

Holy Eucharist Service, 11.00, St John the Baptist

Wednesday 12 December

Christmas coffee morning at The Old Reading Room, The Green,
10.00 - 12.00

Sunday 16 December

Holy Eucharist Service, St John the Baptist, 9.15

Sunday 16 December

Charity quiz at the New Inn, 7.30

Monday 17 December

Parish Council meeting, 7.45, The Old School

Thursday 20 December

Film Abthorpe matinée, 2.00, The Old School

Monday 24 December

Christmas Eve Carol Service, 4.00

Tuesday 25 December

Christmas Day Holy Eucharist Service, 9.15

Friday 11 January

Coffee morning at The Elms, Wappenham Rd, 10.00 - 12.00

Sunday 13 January

Holy Eucharist Service, 11.00

Thursday 17 January

Film Abthorpe, 7.30, The Old School

Sunday 20 January

Holy Eucharist Service, 9.15

Thursday 24 January

The Old School Committee AGM at The Old School, 8.00

Monday 28 January

Parish Council meeting, 7.45, The Old School

Friday & Saturday, 1 and 2 February

Alice in Wonderland, Lois Weedon Village Hall, 7.30, matinee Saturday
2.30. Tickets: 860234