



ABTALK

News from Abthorpe

March 2005

Our first issue in January seems to have been well received and comments started coming in on the day it was delivered, which was excellent. It's good to know it was read.

The response generated has prompted us to make this issue larger, but the 8-page format will only be used when there is enough material that won't wait until the following issue.

The road to Towcester provoked the most comment, with concerns about its increased width producing a 'race track', albeit with built-in speed bumps which has the peripheral effect of slightly slowing the traffic. Latest update on this inside.

Please do respond to anything that strikes a chord (good or bad). As well as providing a way for the Parish Council to get to know your views, which we can share with others, it also lets you put your views across to everyone else in the village.

Jill Tolson
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PEOPLE

The recent death of Mr Eric Kelcher at the age of 80 will be mourned by many. He had lived in Abthorpe since 1948; a full appreciation of Eric's life can be found on the Abthorpe website under News. Our thoughts are with his wife Elsie and son Stewart.

A warm welcome to new residents in Abthorpe. Kelly Matthews and Nigel Bass have moved into The Cottage in School Lane (with some interesting tropical fish!). Although they both work in Dunstable, the rural pleasures of Abthorpe make the commute worthwhile and Nigel has already had time to get to know the New Inn between project work on their new home.

The thoughts of their many friends in the village are with Liz and Rob Capurro in their sad loss.

UPDATE ON LAST ISSUE....

WAR MEMORIAL

The format of the plaque recording the names of those mentioned on the memorial has been agreed and the plaque will be ordered shortly, completing the War Memorial refurbishment in the next few weeks.

ROAD CLOSURES

Representatives of both the County Council and their partners, WS Atkins, attended the last Parish Council meeting on 7th March to hear our concerns at first hand and to explain what is going to be done. This had already been the subject of a heated meeting at Wappenham on 15th February, fully reported in WIZNews (contact: Clive Watt,

wiznews@onetel.com).

Our County Councillor, Ben Smith, explained that the County Council had formed a Partnership with Atkins who in turn had employed sub-contractors. He questioned whether the County Council was getting good value from that relationship.

Tony McFadden, Chief Design Engineer at WS Atkins, apologised that the work carried out on the road to Towcester was not up to standard. The sub-contractors are responsible for undertaking remedial work. The Parish Council pointed out that the road surface is uneven and there is no proper camber. Mr McFadden assured us that roads are designed these days with a camber. Atkins' sub-contractors will decide what work has now to be undertaken, but hopefully they are aware of the strength of local feeling about the disruption which all this is going to cause.

Several other points

were raised. The closures had been badly signed; Mr McFadden explained that this had now been made



someone's specific responsibility, both to ensure that the initial signposting is clear and that it is maintained that way. There are holes in the surface at the Silverstone Road crossroads where the old and new surfaces meet; some of these were filled two days later.

The Parish Council has been promised details in advance of the remedial work and will pass these on either in the next Abtalk or via the Notice Board and the village website.

DOG FOULING IN THE VILLAGE

Keith Fenwick, Chairman, Parish Council

This is a problem which has been around for a long time, but recently it seems to have got a lot worse. Several people have spoken to me over the last few weeks about the dog mess left on pavements and verges in the village. Not only is this mess offensive but it is a danger to health.

Dog mess must not be left anywhere within the village and anyone

responsible for a dog is obliged to remove it. Failure to do so can result in prosecution. If you want to complain about someone's dog leaving a mess contact the District Council Dog Warden, Debbie Sheppard, on 01327 322277, but be aware that you will be asked to identify the offending owner by name. If you are walking a dog, make sure that it does not leave any mess or clear it up yourself.

Sorry if this all sounds officious, but we have to remedy the problem somehow.

VILLAGE CHRISTMAS CARD

June Willsher is hard at work on the Abthorpe Christmas card which will be first on sale at the Summer Fete on 25 June. After a sneak preview, it can be highly recommended!

June has also been asked to participate in a local exhibition being held at Sibford Gower Primary School near Banbury from 18 to 20 March. The six pictures she has created for this event have contemplative overtones: Candlelight, Blue Moon, Moonlight at Sea, Bright New Dawn, another featuring a stream, and lastly a handsome hare.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

It's worth a visit to the church to see the Victorian tiles in the choir which were revealed when the carpet was removed. A coat of polish, given under expert guidance, has restored their brilliance, enhanced by the work done

on the Lady Chapel floor. The external stonework restoration is also now complete.

In the last issue we mentioned the January collections which were to be donated to the Tsunami Appeal. A superb total of £519.63 was raised.

Revd Canon Bridget Smith may be contacted by telephone on 01327-857996; email: quickvic@lineone.net. Her address is: St Michael's Vicarage, High Street, Silverstone NN12 8US.

The Revd Pauline Reid also serves in the parish. She may be contacted on 01327 811670; email: pauline@abthorpechurch.org.uk.

FIELDFARES

Neil Chanter has corrected our piece on fieldfares in the last issue. It seems we must be on the alert for them before Christmas. John Riches took a picture of one in his garden and although the reproduction over the page does not do it justice it gives an indication of what we should be looking for.

Neil writes: "Fieldfares arrive about November, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later, depending on how bad things have become in their summer residence, but never in the New Year - where they have come from is intolerable long before then. It might be of interest that the Fieldfare flocks usually include another migratory member of the thrush family, the Redwing. The 'red wing' can be seen in flight since it is in fact a red area at the side of the breast that is mainly hidden when the wings are folded."



VANDALISM IN THE VILLAGE

Following a number of occurrences of petty vandalism around the village in recent months, the Community Police will be visiting Abthorpe more frequently, especially late in the evenings when it seems to be more prevalent. None of us likes to think that local residents are involved. It would be helpful to the police if any incidents are reported, especially if the perpetrators can be identified, so that appropriate steps can be taken to halt this behaviour before it gets out of control. We have direct access to our Community Officer so please email or phone any information to Keith Fenwick (keith.fenwick@abthorpe.net; 857083) or Jill Tolson (jill.tolson@abthorpe.net; 857320).

EVENTS

Friday 18 March (7.30-9.00), Saturday and Sunday, 19 and 20 March (10.30-4.30)

Art exhibition at Sibford Gower Primary School, nr Banbury (see details on page 3)

Saturday 26 March

Tony Kavanagh, easy listening guitar and voice: 8.00-11.00 at The New Inn

Monday 28 March (Easter Day)

Full programme of events all day at The New Inn (see details on page 7)

Monday 11 April

Parish Council meeting: 7.45 in the Old School - open to all residents

Saturday 16 April

Church spring clean starting at 10.00 - all hands very welcome (Barbara Malcolmson: 857066)

Tuesday 19 April

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: 7.00 at the Old School

Monday 16 May

Parish Council meeting: 7.45 in the Old School

Monday 23 May

Annual Parish Meeting: 7.45 in the Old School - please do come

Saturday 25 June

Summer Fete: 2.00 on the village green

Pig Roast: 7.30 in the Old School

Sunday 11 September

Summer BBQ in aid of the Church Fabric Appeal

ABTHORPE VILLAGE WEBSITE -

www.abthorpe.net

The village website has been built and maintained by ABbA (Abthorpe Broadband Association) and is designed to give as much information as possible to both villagers and those surfing the Internet from across the world.

All of the Parish Council minutes are provided for anyone to read, plus details of all future meetings. We also have a News page that is updated with snippets of local news every week, courtesy of Big John Riches. The Church and the Church Fabric Appeal are both featured, as is everything Broadband.

There are many businesses operating in and around the village and a page on the website gives them the opportunity to promote themselves at no charge. There is also a Sport & Leisure page where you can find out how the energetic amongst us pass their time.

Finally and most importantly is the Village Notices page. This has recently been added to publicise Neighbourhood Watch bulletins and is updated several times a week. This page also contains a "What's going on in the village" section and a list of links to useful information.

Requests for inclusion on the website or any comments should be sent to webmaster@abthorpe.net

VOLUNTEERING IS GOOD FOR YOU

2005 is the Year of the Volunteer and South Northants Volunteer Bureau is encouraging more people to get involved in volunteering and to increase the number of opportunities for people to volunteer. To do this they need you to find out how you can get involved. Maybe you are not sure if you could volunteer... Well anyone can, and you'd be surprised how volunteering could change your life.

Volunteers give what time they can spare to help others and their local community; anything from one hour a week to one day a year. What surprises most volunteers is the benefits they get in return for the time they spend.

Volunteering can give you valuable work experience and skills, the opportunity to try something different, and it can widen your circle of friends. The latest research has found that volunteering can also improve your health. Being busy means you smoke and drink less and by helping others you can feel less stressed. And if you choose to work on an environmental project you might even lose weight!

So in 2005 please think about volunteering. Look at the National Volunteering database www.do-it.org.uk or contact our local volunteering centre on 01327 358264.

TRANSPORT

TADD, Towcester Area Door to Door, provides transport to take people to medically-related appointments. So if

you have problems getting to the hospital, dentist, optician or the doctors' surgery, phone 01327 351716 to find out how the service operates.

JASON, Travel for All, is a service that operates where and when people want in South Northamptonshire. It has been introduced to fill the gaps which are not covered by existing public transport. It operates between 09.00 and 17.00, Monday to Friday, and will take you shopping, to the leisure centre or to meet friends. On certain days it can take you to centres outside South Northants such as Milton Keynes or Northampton. Telephone 01604 237801 to find out more.

There is a charge for both services which are supported by Northamptonshire County Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

TWIN BIN EXPANSION 2005

The District Council is going to add Abthorpe to the twin bin and door-to-door recycling scheme during April. Each property will be provided with a green wheeled bin, the same size as the existing black one, for organic garden waste and cardboard. The new and existing bins will be collected on alternate weeks. Recycling boxes for cans, plastic bottles, glass, newspapers and magazines will also be provided. All this will enable government and county targets for recycling to be met. Hopefully, the District Council will circulate fuller details in the near future.

NEWS FROM THE NEW INN

Plans for Easter have now been released. On Good Friday lunchtime, 27 March, Ken is offering 2 adult meals for £10 (perhaps to celebrate his birthday on that day?). The following evening, Tony Kavanagh will sing 'standards' accompanying himself on the guitar. And Easter Sunday sees the arrival of the Destination Anywhere computer game bus; archery in the Orchard; an Easter egg hunt for children at 11.00; children's bonnet parade at 2.00 followed by one for Dads only! There will be a variety of sideshows in the garden and food available all day.

Mayday celebrations are also in preparation - rumour has it, complete with maypole.

VILLAGE SUMMER FETE

This year marks a change in the arrangements for the Village Fete on 25 June. Previously it has been organised on behalf of the Church, but proceeds from the fete itself will now be for the benefit of the village, with the evening Pig Roast continuing to be in aid of the Church. A new group has been formed which is enthusiastically planning the introduction of many new events and stalls to appeal to the child in all of us. Julie Dyckhoff, Jan Miles, Lynn and Steve Neasham, Tim Pope, Katie Townsend and June Willsher would love to hear from anyone willing to contribute time or ideas; help with refreshments is especially needed.

Catch any of them around the village, or call June on 850575. More details in the next issue.....

FIRE PREVENTION AND DETECTION

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has obtained funding for a scheme to install free smoke alarms.

If you would like a free home fire safety check, you will be visited by the fire service crew who will find the most suitable location for the smoke detectors (one or two will be installed). You will be asked for information about your home and be given advice on what to do to prevent fires – switching off appliances at night, avoiding using candles in dangerous places, etc. Would you be prepared if a fire broke out in the middle of the night? How would you get out of the house? These are some of the other points which will be discussed.

To arrange a free home fire safety check, call 0800 38 999 50 or e-mail safetycheck@northants.org.uk.

FORTHCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS?

At the time of writing the election date has not been confirmed, but the likelihood of it being in early May, at the same time as the County Council elections, is strong.

The candidates from the main parties for the Daventry constituency are listed below. They have provided personal statements which hopefully we can put on the village website with

more information as it becomes available. If anyone knows of other parties which are fielding candidates, it would be helpful to have them listed there too.

Conservative

Tim Boswell (current MP)

boswellte@davcons.freereserve.co.uk

Tim has a schedule of engagements in the constituency and his detailed plans will soon be available from the Conservative Party office in Daventry (01327 703192).

Labour

Andrew Hammond

andrew@andrewhammond.net;

0779 2926576

Andrew was in Towcester on Saturday March 12 and will be visiting the main towns and villages throughout April and May. For further details of his schedule, contact Andrew as above.

Andrew held a meeting in Abthorpe on 15 January at which the issue of the JASON service was raised and he would be pleased to hear from any residents of their recent experiences with the service.

Liberal Democrat

The Prospective Parliamentary candidate will be selected at a meeting in Brackley on Friday 19 March.

Details of his/her local meetings and other information can be obtained from Cllr Ian Miller, Chair of the Daventry party:

ian.miller@travisperkins.co.uk