ABTALK



A Celebration Edition

There is no question that the theme for this edition of Abtalk is one of celebration. By the time the magazine has been printed and distributed around the village the summer holidays will be just around the corner and, of course, the memories of the fantastic Platinum Jubilee celebrations are still very vivid for everyone. But that's not all - there has been at least one new baby born in the village in the last couple of months, two weddings to celebrate, that 100th birthday - and even a litter of gorgeous pups. AND the first summer for three years with no restrictions - there may still be Covid, there may still be stressful travel journeys, but life is on the up!

But first, let's report on other village news....

Parish Council News

A useful and quite well attended Annual Parish meeting was held on 25th May. The main issues raised were speeding, parking on the Green, TADD and the Jubilee.

Speeding

This is probably the most important problem in the village. There are a limited number of ways of reducing the speed of drivers:

- The Parish Council are considering new signage and 'gates' at either end
 of the village to show more obviously that you are entering a
 village/built up area. This was discussed at the above meeting and
 received a positive response. We are now looking at affordability.
- We have agreed to become involved with Community Speed Watch but need more volunteers for this to happen. Please see a Councillor or our Clerk if you are interested.
- We are encouraging the use of wheelie bin stickers to show that 'It is 30 for a Reason'.
- Further signage such as '20 is Plenty' and 'Police Speed Check Area' are being considered.

Parking on the Green

We placed wooden posts on the Green last year to discourage drivers from encroaching on the sides of the Green, steadily eroding the edges and making it look unsightly. As the wooden posts have not been totally successful, we are now looking at putting kerb stones around the worst affected areas of the Green. The problem here is the cost, which we are still considering.

TADD (Towcester Area Door to Door)

TADD is a community service that provides transport to medical and well-being related appointments for the elderly and disabled in the South Northants area. The service is a lifeline for those struggling with mobility, helps them retain their independence, combats isolation and eases the stress of travel with a friendly and helpful face.

As no bus service serves the village, the Parish Council is reimbursing the TADD registration fee of £20 to those residents who have no transport of their own and use this service. If there are any residents in this situation then they should see one of the Councillors or our Clerk and see if they qualify for this reimbursement.

Meanwhile, TADD is looking for volunteer drivers.



As we emerge from the pandemic, the healthcare sector is trying to catch up and demand is back to normal with appointments now being offered over extended hours and at weekends. Over the last couple of years, many older volunteers were shielding and some have

not returned to volunteer driving. More drivers are urgently needed to meet demand and sadly membership has had to be put on hold until more drivers are recruited. If you would like to find out more about becoming a volunteer driver, please contact:

www.towcesterareadoor2door.com/
01327 810300, tadd@btconnect.com

The Platinum Jubilee

The Parish Council wish to record their thanks to everyone who was involved in the preparation of the Platinum Jubilee events and especially the Organising Committee who put on really great events and should be very pleased with the outcome.

Jubilee Mugs

We have arranged a commemorative mug for the village, which will be available within a couple of weeks at the cost of £5 each. Please see Tina our Clerk if you would like to purchase one.





Meetings

Please remember that Parish Council meetings are open to all, with the next meeting at 7.45 pm on 11th July.

The Clerk's contact details are: Tina Emerton

Email: abthorpeparishclerk@gmail.com; tel 07708 933968

News from St John the Baptist Church

Church service times – We now have just one regular service a month, held at 10.00 am on the third Sunday. So the next few services will be on 17th July, 21st August, 18th September and 16th October.

Tea & Piece - our monthly Sunday afternoon events continue throughout the summer, held in the church between 3.00 and 4.30 pm. The home-made cakes are legendary, so please come along and sample what is on offer - and you can always take a slice home with you. Future dates are 24th July, 21st August, 18th September and 16th October.

Tote - we are indebted to all villagers who contribute to the Tote, the money raised being used solely for the upkeep of the church. Recent winners have been Tim & Jenny Newton and Tim & Helen Pope in March, Maisie & Ben Holland and Keith & Monica Plant in April, Rob Balderson and Carol Baldwin in May, and Sam & Tom Bardsley and Sian & Arthur Young in June. Prize money currently stands at around £140 per winner.

Harvest - the crops may still be growing in the fields, but the dates for the annual Harvest Festival and traditional Harvest Supper are already fixed and menus are being decided. The ever-popular Harvest Supper will take place on the evening of Saturday 17th September, prior to a service of Thanksgiving in church the following morning.

Foodbank - please do not forget that there is a box just inside the church (which is open daily) for your contributions to Towcester Foodbank. We take donations down to the food bank on Tuesdays, so why not pop something extra into your shopping basket over the weekend? With prices rising steeply at the moment, the need is greater than ever. The following list shows what stocks are particularly low at the moment.



And here is an article about a new counselling scheme which the Food bank has set up.

Here at Towcester Foodbank we are not just about food, our mission is to end food poverty in NN12, which means helping people to improve their situation so they will no longer need us. To that end we are really pleased to announce that we now have a Citizens Advice caseworker with us at the Foodbank every Tuesday from 12 noon – 2pm. Steve is an experience advisor who is there to help anyone who drops in and can make appointments if necessary, so please come and see him. If he gets too busy we will have to ration his time to Foodbank Guests, but for now, he can help anyone. Another reason to visit us at the Foodbank.

#towcesterfoodbank info@towcester.foodbank.org.uk 07724 832043

Ukrainian Refugees - Although we do not have a complete picture, we do know that there are now at least a few Ukrainian refugee families and individuals in our area, and we in the Benefice church community are trying to work out how best we can be of help. As a first step we have decided to host a 'welcome event' for refugee families, their hosts and any others in the local community who might be willing to help - even if only by offering friendship. This event will take place on 29th July from 6.00 - 8.00pm in Silverstone Chapel.

We will be sending out invitations to people about whom we know, who might be interested in coming, but we are also relying on personal contacts. Please let people know about it if you think they might like to come, and let us know so that we can gauge numbers. If you would like to help, please email Kasia Roberts in Silverstone: Roberts.kasia@gmail.com.

In the meantime, the following prayer may be of interest:

A Prayer for Ukraine God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today. We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons. We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them. We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions. Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen. Archbishop Justin Welby Archbishop Stephen Cottrell

The Ordination of our Assistant Curate, the Rev George Frost

Many villagers have now met George and all have been won over by his friendliness and wry sense of humour. Sunday 26th June was a particularly momentous day for George as he was officially ordained as a Priest in a moving service in Peterborough Cathedral.



(Photo courtesy of Chris Whitlock)

Later in the day George conducted his first full Holy Eucharist service in our Benefice, held in a packed St James the Great church, Paulerspury. Following the service, the congregation celebrated this important day with a wonderful reception when George was presented with his Ordination gifts, paid for from donations from all five parishes of the Benefice.





George is a regular visitor to our Tea & Piece afternoons and enjoys both baking and sampling cakes! The following is one of his favourite cake recipes!

Cooking with the Curate

This recipe is based on one made by Croft's of Silverstone. It is quick and easy to make, and has been requested by a number of people after its appearance at Benefice events.



1/2 tsp baking powder 250g/8.5oz golden caster sugar 280g/9.5oz self-raising flour 250g/8.5oz softened butter

4 eggs

150ml pot natural yogurt

1 tsp vanilla paste or extract

1 tsp almond extract

5 tbsp Blackcurrant/Strawberry Jam

25g/1oz toasted flaked almonds

Instructions

- Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Grease a 20x30cm baking or roasting tin and line with baking parchment.
- 2. Beat the butter, flour, sugar, baking powder, eggs, yogurt, vanilla extract and almond extract together until well combined and free of any lumps.
- 3. Carefully spoon into the prepared tin and bake for 10 minutes.
- 4. Remove from the oven and very quickly dot over the jam, scatter over the almonds, then bake for a further 15-20 minutes until the cake is golden and risen and when a skewer is inserted into the centre of the cake it comes out clean.
- 5. Cool the cake in the tin and cut into squares.



News from the New Inn

Everything is ticking along as normal at our favourite local, so just a few reminders of what is on offer:

Pub Opening Times:

Monday 5.00 pm - 11.00 pm Tuesday 5.00 pm - 11.00 pm

Wednesday Noon - 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm - 11.30 pm Thursday Noon - 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm - 11.30 pm

Friday Noon - 11.30 pm Saturday Noon - 11.30 pm Sunday Noon - 11.00 pm

Meal Times:

Monday No Service

Tuesday 6.00 pm - 8.30 pm

Wednesday - Saturday Noon - 2.30 pm, 6.00 pm - 8.30 pm

Sunday Noon - 5.00pm

Gourmet Dining - Chef's Table: First Monday of the month from 6.30 pm for 7.00 pm (but this month on Monday 11th July, not 4th due to Grand Prix).

Fish Box Delivery service - Excellent selection of fresh fish from Billingsgate every other Thursday, £35 a box.

Live Music and Entertainment

- Open Mic session every second Sunday of the month from 4.00 pm.
- Quiz Night last Sunday of the month from 7.00 pm. Won in June by Four Counties who donated their winnings of £187 to Towcester Foodbank.
- Darts the New Inn team are currently second in the local league!

This is a **Family and Dog Friendly Pub** run by Family and Dog Friendly Staff! See Abthorpe New Inn on Facebook for further information. July 2022

Abtalk

Old School News

Due to the Jubilee events occupying the bulk of volunteers' time and energy over the past few months, fundraising events for the Old School have necessarily been restricted to the ever-popular plant sales. The first of these was held on the last day of April when the Old School throbbed with villagers. It was good to see it being used to its full capacity at long last. The sun was shining, the plants were glowing and the bacon was sizzling. There was a lovely buzz both inside and out with a lot of chatter as we all caught

up on each other's news and snapped up some bargains for our gardens. A healthy profit of over £1158 was made.

A big thank you to Bill and Chris Lamb as ever for their kind donations of



plants and their time. A shout out to Tom Elwell too, who was our chef for the day and did a sterling job with the bacon butties. And as always thank you to all the volunteers and our cakemakers of Abthorpe.

A second successful plant sale was held on Saturday 4th June on Platinum Jubilee weekend.





Further fundraising plans are in the pipeline, including a Race Night in the autumn and a Truckers Breakfast - but everyone just needs to get their breath back after the Jubilee celebrations!

On to those celebrations.....

Bet's 100th Birthday Bash

Back in April - on Tuesday 26th to be precise - Bet Rush's Bracklev Lane home was bursting at the seams as many villagers dropped in to wish her Many Happy Returns the incredible reaching milestone of 100 years of age. Bet is a supreme example of someone who never gives up. Life has dealt her a series of misfortunes in recent years, but Bet has coped remarkably well and the huge number of visitors on her special day is a testament to the respect and admiration with which she is held. Bet is the first to admit



that she couldn't have coped without the unstinting support of her neighbours. One of these - Trish Jones - had put on a truly amazing spread and the photo shows Bet cutting her cake, which we all sampled with enthusiasm.

The Jubilee Celebrations

As long ago as last November, an Abthorpe Platinum Jubilee WhatsApp group was set up as tentative ideas began to be discussed as to how best to celebrate this incredible once-in-a-lifetime event. A group of volunteers exchanged thoughts and met up regularly and slowly ideas became plans and plans became detailed arrangements. Fast forward six months and what a wonderful village occasion it was! For a village with barely 300 inhabitants, it was incredible that almost 200 people supported the two main events. But it was not the sheer support that was so heart-warming

what struck everyone who was there was the genuine and flourishing community spirit that pervaded not just the events themselves but the preparatory, organisational and clearing up operations as well.

The following photographs show glimpses of villagers playing their part in the preparations.







Helpers Sam, Emily and Elliott







Setting up was well supported by volunteers from the village



But what of the events themselves? On the first evening of the extended Bank Holiday weekend there was an amazing turnout for the Ceilidh and

Fish & Chip evening. Two Fish & Chip vans took a good two hours to serve everyone.

The ceilidh was great fun and residents and family members of all ages and ability took part with zeal and enthusiasm, if not great dancing prowess.





Two youngsters enjoying their fish and chips!

With appetites sated courtesy of the Howes Fish and Chip vans, we eagerly awaited the climax of the evening - the lighting of the beacon and the Grand Proclamation. Our very own town crier,

Alun Stevens, read out the Proclamation written especially for the occasion.





The lighting of the beacon - the honour being given to a resident who also shares her Platinum anniversary this year - took several attempts but we got there in the end!









Meanwhile, the village looked on before Phil Berry led us in singing a Song for the Commonwealth, written especially for the Platinum Jubilee, followed by us giving a mighty rendering of 'Jerusalem', then a toast to the Queen and a heartfelt National Anthem. What a night!



But that of course was just the first of the celebrations, for 3 days later, came the Big Jubilee Lunch. Although the weather tried its best to dampen everyone's spirits, it was to no avail and, once again, large numbers turned up for a truly splendid spread: a huge number of assorted salads were enjoyed with the beautifully prepared ham, coronation chicken, salmon, turkey, quiches, pork pie etc. This fare was followed by a splendid array of puddings including the Platinum Jubilee Trifle and





dishes of excellent English strawberries and finally, for those still with a little space, there was cheese and biscuits to round off the feast.

These photos capture the spirit and atmosphere that pervaded this wonderful village celebration.



And the final photograph to round off this pictorial record of very special celebration? Nothing less than a portrait of Her Majesty painted by Abthorpe resident professional artist, Peter Newcombe.

Wedding Celebrations

2022 is turning out to be a popular year for weddings as couples have been forced by Covid restrictions to postpone their big day - sometimes several times. All four local weddings that have or will be taking place this summer fall into this category, so the



celebrations are perhaps particularly joyous and certainly anticipated with both excitement and a certain amount of relief!

Ben Robbins and Madel Abetacion

On Saturday 28th May, the wedding ceremony to mark Ben and Madel's marriage took place. Ben was brought up in Abthorpe after his parents Alison and David moved here when he was just 17 months old. He and Madel live and work in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and there

were both travel and visa hurdles to overcome before this much awaited event could take place. As it was, the bride received her visa just five days prior to her flight to the UK, which was a mere two days before her wedding day, and her three bridesmaids - all



also living and working in the UAE - were granted their entry visas just 36

hours before the wedding!

The wedding took place in the Old School and took the form of an ancient hand-fasting ceremony with the children of the guests playing their part in winding ribbons around the bride's and groom's hands. The celebrant then 'tied the knot' signifying their union.

Following the ceremony, guests took part in a village quiz and a variety of lawn games before the reception in a marquee in Tony and Peta Travis's Meadow. As the evening light began to

fade the surrounding trees were highlighted in beautiful colours which lit the way to the bell tent - Ben and Madel's 'hotel' for the night.

But May 28th also saw another Wedding!

On the very same day, at a very similar time, a second wedding took place just a stone's throw away. Sam Smith,





daughter of our New Inn landlord Rob, married James Ison in St Botolph's chuch, Slapton, followed by a reception at Manor Farm, Sam's home. Sisters Jackie Balfe from Slapton and Janet Dancer from Abthorpe had decorated the church beautifully in very much a country style with pink and white

flowers, much appreciated by the many guests from the local farming community and beyond.

More Wedding Bells

And that's not all! On 6th August, Helena Pope, daughter of long-term Abthorpe residents Helen and Tim Pope, will be marrying William Aprahamian in our church here in Abthorpe. Once again, this is a wedding that has been postponed due to Covid, but at least that means that Helena and Billy will have the extra joy of having their baby daughter Ophelia present on their special day.

And lastly, Amy Spirito and Robert Scott are due to be married in Abthorpe church on 10th September. Congratulations and best wishes to all these couples.

New Arrivals

On 8th May, a new couple moved into Abthorpe - Zac Osborne and Chloe Roe have taken up residence in Sunnyside on Wappenham Road. They bring with them their friendly dog Alfie. Both Zac and Chloe are Project Managers, Zac working for a fire protection company and Chloe for an exhibition stand design and build company. The move went smoothly but what Zac and Chloe will remember most vividly about it all is that only two days later baby Henry Benjamin decided now was the time to make his appearance in the world.



Baby Henry obviously approves of his parents' decision to move to Abthorpe. He even came to the Jubilee Ceilidh but decided against the fish and chips!

We also extend a warm welcome to Sophie Penrhyn-Lowe, who is finally moving in to her house on Wappenham Road, having purchased it in October last year. Sophie writes by way of introduction: 'I have been teaching Maths and living/working at Stowe School for seven years. When I'm not at work, I can usually be found watching Liverpool FC or walking my mad cocker spaniel Chaz. I have already had the pleasure of meeting some of you in the Thursday night ballet class, and at the village Jubilee celebrations. Thank you to those who have welcomed me so far and I am looking forward to being part of the Abthorpe community.'

A Celebration in the Making?

Less than eighteen months ago Abthorpe resident Keith Burnet achieved the amazing feat of rowing across the Atlantic with friends three (see March 2021 edition of Abtalk). Not



content with ticking this off his bucket list, Keith and the same team of friends have now embarked on another trip covering a few extra miles around the globe - but this time on land and on bikes. However, this is no ordinary cycle ride - it is officially known as the Trans Am Bike Race (TABR) and is the longest ultra-distance cycling race in the world. The route is about 4,200 miles (6,800 km) long and runs from the Pacific coast in Astoria, Oregon to the Atlantic coast in Yorktown, Virginia, passing through ten states. There are 69,000m of elevation, which means that over 50% of the race is spent climbing. The clock never stops from the moment the riders leave the start to the moment that they reach the finish, so it is essentially a long individual time trial. Riders must therefore strategically choose how much time to devote to riding, resting, and refuelling each day. Being 100% self-supported means not receiving any form of support from friends or family; all food, accommodation, repairs, etc, must be purchased from commercial sources along the way.

Since this is a race, the team are out to meet targets. They set off on 15th June and their stated aim is to cross the entire continent in no more than thirty days, which means averaging a staggering 140 miles each and every day. In order to achieve this they will each have to spend at least fourteen hours each day in the saddle.



Keith commented before he started the race that for him personally this will be a particularly big challenge "as I had resisted getting on a bike for a long time primarily because I (and others) just couldn't face the lycra, so I only started cycling 6 months ago". However, what motivates both Keith and his cycling companions is the cause that they are raising money for. Keith explains: "We are taking on this monumental challenge to raise money for Trees for the Future (trees.org). It would be truly amazing if you can get behind us by donating to this worthy cause."

The team reached Ellington, Missouri on 5th July with about 10 days to go and remarked on a tough day with the heat and hills.

Keith adds: "You can follow our adventure @4aFitterPlanet on Facebook or Instagram or track us live on DOT WATCHING, and, if desired, donate on donate.trees.org/team/421464."



And finally...

Musings of a septuplet mother called T-Cake

They say that nothing prepares you for motherhood and I feel very lucky to have had my puppies in exactly the same area of the kitchen, in front of the

Aga, where I was born, as was my mother.

Being a modern girl, I did not want to have any Hooman intervention, so I had them by myself whilst they were snoring (yes, we can hear them snoring in their bedroom above ours). My mother, being the bossy whippet she is, of course needlessly got involved, which I suppose was useful. It did make us laugh when the man Hooman came down and started squeaking about how clever I had been. Then the commotion



really started as the other *Hooman* raced round grabbing my babies to weigh them, wanting to cuddle them and generally making a noise, as is her wont.

The pups were quite happy in the paddling pool with the Aga belching out heat for a few weeks and at least we knew where they all were. 1 have been able to have some rest as my mother has been happy to clean up after them and give them cuddles and I have been pretty laid-back,



although I still feel particularly bad about giving Alison *Hooman* a nip when she came to visit; if I had known it was two days before her son's wedding I might have held back. The best thing has been the amount of food I have been given but I am always ravenous and am pretty sneaky about snaffling up the puppies' meals if the *Hoomans* are not watching. My *Hoomans* are saying I'm looking particularly thin, but I have not yet made them understand that if they gave me all the food they eat, I would get my figure back and they would lose weight so we would all be happy.

I have to say that five weeks in I am getting a little tired of having the nippers around, so I make sure I go into the sitting-room for some quality time with my own mother. The sofa is so perfect and we can both stretch out and sleep. Our other favourite place is the swing hammock outside especially as the pups are still too small to jump up with us.

Something I feel I should pass on to all new parents is how babies can have a lot of fun without having lots of expensive toys. Plastic flowerpots, empty

water bottles and small containers filled with rice ensure endless playtime, as do the *Hoomans'* shoe-laces.

I'm not sure how I will feel when they all whizz off to their new homes in a few weeks' time? At least Mabel, one of the 2 Friesian-coloured puppies will be staying here at Mulberry Cottage, although three generations of bitches in the house could cause some angst! Another of the pups is also remaining in the village and, as I haven't yet been told her name, we call her Miss Abthorpe. Minnie, who is blue and white, is off to start her life with a charming young couple who have just moved to Watlington from London. Panda is also going to live in Buckinghamshire and will be joining two dog whippets - I'm sure she'll keep them on their toes, and Whisper will go and live in Wiltshire with my husband Wiggo. She is black with a white-tipped tail, which are apparently the same markings as my mother-in-law, Willa, whom I never met. Of course, that leaves Pumpkin, and the last pup who is so lovely, I know mums shouldn't have favourites, but it is hard not to.

Well, I must be off as I am a trifle peckish and I'm sure if I look hang-dog enough man *Hooman* will find something rather delicious; rather fancy some steak or rabbit or possibly some salmon. I'll probably be given what he calls 'Stinky' which will have to do for a very exhausted first-time mum who can't open the fridge.



Stop Press: Saturday 10th September

Support Northamptonshire Historic Churches with this annual event. Over 350 stunning churches and chapels can be visited - many of them open and welcoming from 10am to 6pm. Challenge yourself to visit as many churches as possible or just have a leisurely day out, visiting fewer churches and taking more time at each. There is no age limit - it is a great family activity - and you plan your own route. See www.nhct.org.uk/index.php/bicycle_ride for further details or contact Jill Greenhalgh, jill.greenhalgh@abthorpe.net, tel 01327 858102.

Diary: July - October 2022

July Monday 11th Parish Council Meeting, 7.45 pm - **Old School**

Monday 11th Chef's Table, 7.00 pm - New Inn

Sunday 17th Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am - **Church**

Sunday 24th Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**

Friday 29th Ukranian families 'Welcome Event' 6.00 - 8.00 pm -

Silverstone Chapel

Sunday 31st Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**

Aug Monday 1st Chef's Table, 7.00 pm - New Inn

Sunday 21st Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am - Church

Sunday 21st Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**

Sunday 28th Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**

Sept Monday 5th Chef's Table, 7.00 pm - **New Inn**

Saturday 17th Harvest Supper, 7.00 pm (tbc) - **Old School**

Sunday 18th Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am - **Church**

Sunday 18th Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**

Sunday 25th Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**

Oct Monday 3rd Chef's Table, 7.00 pm - New Inn

Sunday 16th Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am - **Church**

Sunday 16th Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**

Sunday 30th Quiz, 7.30 pm - New Inn

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