

# ABTALK



## **ABTALK JULY/AUGUST 2023**

### **Introduction by Mike Greenhalgh, Chair of Abthorpe Parish Council**

The editor Alison Robbins and her co-editors Keith Fenwick and Tricia Holmes have done an amazing job over the last few years producing a quality village publication which has just got better and better. However the task of gathering information and producing such a booklet has become increasingly difficult and time consuming, and now those involved feel they cannot carry on producing the same sort of quality publication.

Instead the plan is to produce a much shorter pamphlet every 2/3 months which will concentrate on providing a diary of upcoming events in the village, as well as recording others that have recently taken place.

I would very much like to thank all those who have put time and effort into ABTALK over many years, particularly the current editor Alison Robbins but also the previous editor Jill Tolson, who, with Keith Fenwick, was responsible for starting up the magazine back in 2005.

If there is anyone who would like to get involved in this bi-monthly news sheet, please contact me, Alison or Keith.

### **PARISH COUNCIL**

We have just held our annual AGM of the Parish Council, where Mike Greenhalgh was re elected as Chairman for another year and Philip Berry became Vice Chair. The rest of the Council remains the same.

On 24th May we held our Annual Parish meeting which was attended by a number of residents, but more involvement from the village would definitely improve the workings of the Parish Council.

Do please attend meetings to find out what's going on and have your say on the future direction of the Parish.

### **COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH**

We have just completed a 4 week stint of Speed Watch. Unfortunately there were less volunteers than last year – all bar four being Parish Council members – so fewer sessions were covered. We recorded 12 cars exceeding the speed of 35 mph compared to 15 last year. It would be nice to think that this means the speeding is less of an issue, but I'm afraid to say I do not think that this is true and we have a long way to go.

We will continue to raise awareness of speeding in villages and look to do Speed Watch again when it is our turn. Thank you to everyone who

helped with the sessions this year and hopefully more volunteers will join in next year.

## **ROADS**

We continue to push WNC into earlier action with repairs to some of our roads. In particular we have concerns about the road to Silverstone from the crossroads going past Bucknells Wood where there are some bad potholes which have been partially repaired, but need more work.

Within the village itself, the surface of Brackley Lane is failing and the concrete base makes it more difficult to mend.

New potholes should be reported to Fix My Street at WNC.

## **FREEDOM OF THE VILLAGE**

At this year's AGM of the Tove Valley Broadband (also known as ABbA), Mike Greenhalgh presented the fourth Freedom of the Village – this time to Eric Malcomson. Eric and his wife Barbara have lived in Abthorpe for 46 years.

Eric has a strong and ongoing connection with the village, having been a leading light of ABbA since its conception in 2003. It was chatting in the pub with like-minded locals with an interest in computing and the internet that led to the start of the ABbA journey but there is no doubt that Eric has been the driving force in both the innovation and growth of the broadband coverage and quality, ably assisted by his team.



*Eric receiving his certificate from Mike Greenhalgh*

We are very fortunate that Eric's vision and the hard work of his group have given Abthorpe and locality such a fantastic superfast broadband service at a fraction of the usual commercial rate. Eric has raised a huge amount of money in government grants to make this happen.

There can be no doubt that Eric fulfills the criteria for the award of Freedom of the Village for he has brought distinction to the village and enhanced the parish's reputation for broadband; he has contributed in a way to improve the lives of those less able to help themselves; and lastly he has demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship which has led to broadband connection to over 700 households across 12 villages and hamlets, including schools, churches and community buildings.

Eric also works tirelessly behind the scenes helping to keep the fabric of the church and the churchyards in good order along with Barbara.

For all these reasons Eric stands as an icon for the village and it is right that he should be awarded this most prestigious honour of Freedom of the Village of Abthorpe.

Thank you, Eric.

P.S. In the South Northamptonshire Volunteer Awards in early June, Eric was given a Special Mention in the Local Hero category. Many congratulations from us all.



*It is actually 20 years since ABbA was started. Several of the volunteers celebrated this in the Old School in July when Eric was charged with cutting the cake.*



*Getting ready for the Coronation Big Lunch*

## **ABTHORPE CELEBRATES THE CORONATION**

Weeks of planning by the organisation committee, consisting of representatives of the Parish Council, the Church community and the Old School came to fruition on the Sunday of Coronation weekend, May 7th. It was wonderful to start the day with the special coronation service in Silverstone church and to be able to share such a memorable occasion with so many from the surrounding villages. This great feeling of community set us up for the rest of the day which began with the Big Lunch on the Green. Whilst caterers provided a Hog Roast and Barbecue, village volunteers supplemented this with a wide range of tasty salads, followed by a wonderful selection of delicious puds – all washed down with liquid refreshment from the bar. It was certainly a feast fit for a king and was very much enjoyed by all who came – and what a lot of guests there were. As well as many from Abthorpe itself, we welcomed others from the surrounding villages, particularly Slapton, and family and friends came too. It was heart-warming to see people from all generations celebrating this historic occasion – and the sun shone for us too.



*Well fed, villagers wait for the afternoon's 'entertainment'.*

Following the Big Lunch came a superb display by Abthorpe's elite team of 'pilots', suitably attired in red overalls and piloting similarly coloured craft, who executed some tricky manoeuvres to the delight of the onlookers. This keenly anticipated display by the Red Barrows team ended in a grand finale with the iconic red, white and blue smoke streaming out behind – see the photograph on the front cover. A hard act to follow, perhaps, but the ceilidh then began and participants joined in with enthusiasm and vigour, if not great skill. Later into the evening we were entertained by Terry's singing and guitar playing with the lighting of the beacon bringing the festivities to an end as the light faded on a fantastic day of celebration.

## **SAFARI SUPPER**

On a balmy summer's evening on Saturday June 24th a Safari Supper was held in the village. After a break of 4 years it was a particularly enjoyable event. The evening started in the lovely garden of Jill and Mike Greenhalgh where drinks and canapés were on offer, before each couple was directed to the home of their host for the starter course. The main course was then another stroll away to a new host and new companions, and the pattern was repeated for the dessert course. Everyone then wended their way to the New Inn for coffee or further alcoholic refreshment. It was encouraging to see some more recent residents taking part for the first time and the overwhelming response from everyone was "When is the next one, please?"



*The art exhibition featured some interesting subjects including (above) Highland cattle and (left) dramatic portraits.*



## **ABTHORPE ART SHOW**

Over the weekend of 10th/11th June Abthorpe artists Marna Perrigo, Helen Oates, Tina Clews and Paula Le Baigue held an exhibition in the Old School, along with two visiting artists, Rosemary Packman and Sabari San. The exhibits ranged through a whole variety of media from watercolour, oils and pastels to pencil sketches and ceramics and the subjects were equally varied. What stood out was the quality of the exhibits which drew plenty of admiring visitors.

## **DAVID VANSON**

Many in the village were shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden death of long term resident, David Vanson on April 11th. We send our condolences to his wife Jan and daughter Caroline. Jan and Caro are busy planning for a celebration of David's life in a few weeks time and, although there will be tears shed, it should also be a happy occasion remembering what a full and active life David led right to the last.

## DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 16th July	10.00am	Church	Holy Eucharist
Sunday 16th July	3.00-4.30pm	Church	Tea & Piece
Thursday 20th July	7.00pm	Old School	Parish Council meeting
Saturday 29th July	tbc	Local area	Benefice Walk
Sunday 30th July	7.30pm	New Inn	Quiz Night
Sunday 20th August	10.00am	Church	Holy Eucharist
Sunday 20th August	3.00-4.30pm	Church	Tea & Piece
Sunday 27th August	7.30pm	New Inn	Quiz Night
Monday 28th August	All day	New Inn	Al Fresco Dining with Live Music
Monday 4th September	7.00pm	New Inn	Chef's Table
	7.00pm	Old School	Parish Council Meeting
Friday 8th to Monday 11th September	tbc	Old School	Theatre Workshop (provisional)
Sunday 17th September	10.00am	Church	Harvest Festival
Thursday 21st September	7.00pm	New Inn	Fish Night
Saturday 23rd September	6.00pm	Old School	Talk by Anne Baldwin
Sunday 24th September	7.00pm	New Inn	Quiz Night
Saturday 30th September	6.30pm	Old School	Harvest Supper

### Regular Classes

Tuesdays, 9.30-10.30am	Old School	Yoga
Tuesdays, 7.00-10.00pm	Old School	Bridge

23rd September: Anne Baldwin will talk about her experiences as a Mission Partner in Sri Lanka. Tickets will be available nearer the time from Alison Robins and Carol Cummins (Anne's daughter) and will include a Ploughman's Supper.

### Abtalk Editors

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