

ABTALK

News from Abthorpe

March 2022



Parish Council News

Mike Greenhalgh, Chairman of Abthorpe Parish Council

Speeding through the village

This problem continues to frustrate everyone concerned, including the Parish Council.

The Council is keen to try wheelie bin stickers to be displayed reminding car users of the speed limit. These are available to purchase through the usual online retailers costing in the region of £1.50 each (often in packs of 3, 6 or more so why not share a pack with your neighbours?) We would encourage those interested and who live on the Wappenham Road to give it a go.



We are also looking to update the approaches to the village with new signage and also gateways, which hopefully will make the entrances to the village more prominent and persuade drivers who are going above the limit of 30 mph to slow down before they enter the village.

Freedom of the Village of Abthorpe

In February, towards the end of the Church's coffee morning, a further award of 'Freedom of the Village of Abthorpe' was presented. The recipient was Elizabeth (Liz) Haycock, a well-deserved and popular choice.

Liz and husband Barry have lived in the village almost 50 years. They have both been mainstays in contributing to village life and the improvement of Abthorpe. Liz was very involved with the Old School for many years, working in every capacity over that time. Fundraising activities included country fayres, race nights, bingo nights and the tote. By the mid '70s enough money had been raised to build a new toilet block, replacing the existing child-size outside toilet in the shed. This was followed in the '80s by the building of a new kitchen. These were really the first refurbishments of the Old School in living memory, and the start of the wonderful building we now have the pleasure to use for any village event.

Around the millennium Liz was very involved with the committee that raised a lot of money to erect the Village Millennium sign and to facilitate

the refurbishment of the church clock. The committee was also behind getting many villagers together for an excellent New Year's Eve celebration.

Perhaps Liz's greatest single achievement has been her association with Marie Curie. Her Coffee Event every October became very well known locally, taking place annually for about forty years. Not only did Liz raise the incredible total of £105,000, but, in so doing,



she also raised awareness of the charity and what it stands for. Many families have benefited hugely from Marie Curie, allowing those end-of-life patients with cancer to die peacefully at home rather than being admitted to a hospice or other hospital. For many years Liz herself also worked as a nurse for Marie Curie finding time in the busy farming year to do so.

Liz has shown herself to be a committed and loyal member of the village of Abthorpe. Through her charity work she has brought distinction and enhanced the village's reputation in this area. She has demonstrated innovation with all her fundraising exploits, and even participated in the physical building of the toilet block in the Old School. She has also helped those less able to help themselves through her Marie Curie nursing as well as helping to organise Christmas lunches for the elderly of the village for many years. Liz has been involved with many other causes too numerous to mention. For all these reasons Liz is truly deserving of this prestigious award of the 'Freedom of the Village of Abthorpe'.

By giving this award the village recognises Liz's great contribution to Abthorpe, and we wholeheartedly thank her for everything she has done to make Abthorpe a better place in which to live.

Village Spring Clean/Litter Pick

With the Platinum Jubilee coming up in June we need to get the village tidied up for such an amazing celebration. The date of Saturday 2nd April has now been designated for the village litter pick and general spring clean. It would be great if as many people as possible are willing to get involved and then we can really make a difference in just a couple of hours. **Please**, if you can help, come along to the Village Green at 10 am. The more, the merrier!

Abthorpe Annual Parish Meeting

The Abthorpe Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for 25th May at 7.00 pm in the Old School. All villagers are welcome to attend and participate on this occasion.

Abthorpe Illuminationsand Reflections on Candlemas

Any villager wandering through the centre of Abthorpe in January will have noticed that many houses remained illuminated by Christmas lights for several weeks after the traditional Twelfth Night. In truth, this was not quite as radical as one might think for it was a medieval tradition to keep your festive decorations up until Candlemas on 2nd February, bringing cheer to the cold dark days following Christmas.

After an especially tough year, English Heritage endorsed this idea and encouraged the public to do as their medieval ancestors did, opposing the theory that leaving decorations up beyond Twelfth Night is bad luck, which is a modern take on the tradition.

Falling exactly forty days after Christmas, Candlemas (or the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary) was observed as the official end of Christmas in medieval England. The date itself was a great feast day often accompanied by a candlelit procession. This sounds like another tradition to be revived?

Evidence that decorations were kept up until the evening before Candlemas is well documented and their removal is described in an early 17th-century poem:

CEREMONY UPON CANDLEMAS EVE

by Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Down with the rosemary, and so
 Down with the bays and misletoe;
 Down with the holly, ivy, all,
 Wherewith ye dress'd the Christmas Hall;
 That so the superstitious find
 No one least branch there left behind;
 For look, how many leaves there be
 Neglected, there, maids, trust to me,
 So many goblins you shall see.

So, although in times gone by, it was not seen as bad luck to keep decorations up after Twelfth Night, woe betide anyone who left any festive adornments up after Candlemas Eve – the goblins would be after you!

Candlemas Folklore

Did you know that the weather on Candlemas Day predicts the weather to come? As the following ditty explains:

*If Candlemas Day be fair and bright
 Winter will have another fight.*

*If Candlemas Day brings cloud and rain
 Winter will not come again.*

There are many other weather rhymes associated with the festival of Candlemas but, interestingly, all have the same theme: sunny and cold is bad news (six more weeks of wintry weather), windy and wet is good (winter is on its way out).

According to a German tradition, badgers emerging from hibernation will immediately return for another sleep if it is sunny on Candlemas Day because they know the winter will



continue. (Despite the lack of badgers this tradition crossed the Atlantic and became Groundhog Day!)

The Irish have a Gaelic hag who can make 2nd February sunny so that she can gather plenty of sticks for her fire for the rest of a long winter. If she forgets to do this or oversleeps the weather is wet and windy, thus bringing winter to a rapid end because of her lack of firewood.

So what was the weather like on 2nd February this year? Well, there was just a very brief moment of sunshine but it was hardly a bright day. So, according to folklore, the worst of the winter is over.

Of course, no-one really believes any of these old folklores anymore, do they? Research will show that such observations are all completely unreliable... and yet they are surprisingly consistent across Europe and North America.

Snowdrops and Candlemas

‘The snowdrop, in purest white array, first rears her head on Candlemas Day.’

Did you know that snowdrops are also known as Candlemas Bells? They are usually the first flower that we see in the New Year. Technically there are others, but it is the snowdrop that seems to resonate. For many of us it means hope. It is the sign of new growth and new beginnings. It is the promise of Spring and that this tiny flower is surviving despite the cold and the dark. Snowdrops bring a lift in spirits.



One of the earliest legends of the snowdrop is when the first winter was on the earth and Eve was pining for the beautiful flowers of the fields. An Angel caught a flake of driving snow, breathed life into it and transformed it into a flower for her. It was said to break the spell of winter and, at the same time, offer divine mercy.

Snowdrops were gathered at Candlemas to decorate Churches in this country before the reformation. They were symbols of purity, which was connected to the rite of purification that Mary observed by going to the temple forty days after Christmas. However, it was considered unlucky to pick snowdrops before Candlemas. Rather than hope or purity, they became a representation of death or mourning. The white outer sepals were considered to be like a shroud and by bringing them indoors snowdrops may



invoke a parting or death. Nowadays, we are encouraged not to pick wildflowers anyway but why tempt fate? It is so much more preferable to see them outside. On a snowy, dull, cold or wet day, there is nothing as reviving as seeing clumps of snowdrops nodding their heads in acknowledgement of the season to come.

Out and About

Walks from the New Inn

Phil Berry has produced the first of what he hopes may be several guides detailing local walks. The initial one takes you from the New Inn (an excellent place to finish a walk!) up to and through Bucknell Wood and back. He has produced it in time for the bluebell season as Bucknell Wood produces a spectacular display from late April to mid-May. A copy of this leaflet will be distributed to every home in the village shortly for you to keep and use, and future leaflets will be available from the New Inn.



Shades of times past

A few weeks before Christmas, an unusual ‘vehicle’ was spotted at the crossroads which caught the attention of Jill and Roger Tolson. A chat with the occupiers revealed that they were on their way to Rutland Water where they spend the winter before going off on their travels once more.

Bucknell Wood – *an observation by Alison Symmers*

When the felling work in Bucknell Wood finished I assumed, probably like most people, that the branches left lying across the paths were an accidental side-product of the work and that they would soon be cleared. Not so! The Forestry Commission say they have de-commissioned several of the paths. They obviously have no intention of ever clearing them. I don’t know about anybody else, but to my eye, it looks like the branches have been deliberately placed across to stop walkers using them. Gone are the days when membrane and stones were put down on the paths to maintain them and make them safer and easier to walk.

So, ‘well done’ to the anonymous man from Slapton who has single-handedly cleared one of the main paths, allowing us all to use it again. I’m certainly going to follow his example and move a few branches every time I am there - perhaps we all should?



The left-hand photo shows a path blocked by branches; the second, one cleared by a local resident.

(Note from the Parish Path Warden: Whilst sympathising and indeed sharing your views about the paths becoming obstructed, the only public rights of way in Bucknell Wood are the two main rides and the one that links them. All the other paths are 'permissive' only - the public may use them but only if the management/owners have agreed. So, tread carefully!)

Those winter storms

Since the last edition of Abtalk was issued, the UK has been visited by no fewer than seven storms: Arwen at the end of November, Barra in December, Malik (named by Denmark) and Corrie in January, and then the triple whammy of Dudley, Eunice and Franklin in February. Abthorpe got off pretty lightly at first – and certainly compared to other parts of the country - but Eunice did do some significant damage.

Lynn and Steve Neasham's summerhouse was spectacularly demolished when a huge 120-year-old walnut tree crashed down into their garden. Fortunately, no-one was hurt although Lynn and French bulldog Toby had been in the garden only a short time before.

But every cloud has a silver lining - local wood turners and craftsmen were delighted to get their hands on some lovely English walnut!



Another victim of the storms was a large ash tree (photo below) on the boundary of Spring Meadow Farm, creating a stark image and revealing the power of the wind.



But that's enough drama for now – let's hope Gladys, Herman, Imani, Jack and the rest don't come our way!



And finally, on the subject of storm-damaged trees, there is a planning application in with the local council for the removal on safety grounds of the big fir in the churchyard that was almost split in two by Storm Ciara back in February 2020.

Daffodil time

Out in the gardens and along the roadsides Abthorpe is beginning to bloom! Who doesn't feel better at the sight of these cheery bright yellow flowers that are such an iconic harbinger of Spring. A particularly lovely bank can be seen at the Stocking Frame as the photograph here shows.



And, no, 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' is not being given space here so, move over Wordsworth, here is a less well-known rhyme by none other than A.A.Milne:

Daffodowndilly

She wore her yellow sun-bonnet,
 She wore her greenest gown;
 She turned to the south wind
 And curtsied up and down.
 She turned to the sunlight
 And shook her yellow head,
 And whispered to her neighbour:
 'Winter is dead'.

Well, ok, just the last two lines from William:

'And then my heart with pleasure fills,
 And dances with the daffodils'.

Poppy Appeal November 2021

Janet Dancer would very much like to thank everyone for their generosity during last year's Poppy Appeal. The amount raised from the collection boxes, the door-to-door poppy sales, the Remembrance service collection plus other donations totalled £1,009.53 - a fantastic sum from a small village like ours.

Church News

Church services: There is just one service a month in our church now. It is held on the 3rd Sunday of the month so the upcoming dates are Sunday March 20th, Sunday April 17th (Easter Day), Sunday May 15th, Sunday June 19th, and Sunday July 17th. All the services begin at 10.00am. For information about services in other churches in our Benefice, please consult the church notice board. At least one service each Sunday will continue to be available on Zoom.

Church opening: We are now opening the church each day for anyone who wishes to have some quiet time of reflection.

Food box: Thank you to everyone who donates to the food box (for Towcester Foodbank) which is currently located in the church porch (north side). With food prices and the cost of so many other necessities going up quite rapidly at the present time, the need to consider those in need is increasingly important.

Tote: Recent winners of the tote have been Stephen and Fi Noble last November (£285), Dave and



Sylvie Coleman in December (£285), Peter Newcombe in January (£280) and Bet Rush in February who also won £280. It has been decided to split the tote winnings from March onwards into two equal prizes to increase the chances of winning!

Coffee morning: The first fundraising event of the year took place in February when Jill and Mike Greenhalgh hosted a very successful coffee morning in their house. Over £450 was raised. There was a tangible feeling of neighbourliness as well as relief that at last we could mingle without too many restrictions and there was much chatter as we all caught up on each other's news and well-being. The event culminated in the granting of the Freedom of the Village of Abthorpe Award to Liz Haycock (see Parish Council news).

Tea & Piece: This popular Sunday afternoon event is restarting now Spring is on the way - and the first one will be on... a Saturday! As the following day is Mothering Sunday and we have no church service, we thought it would be appropriate to celebrate this special day by hosting the first Tea & Piece event of the year. So please come along to the church on Saturday 26th March between 3 pm and 4.30 pm to enjoy a cup of tea and a piece of home-made cake. If you are a mother, have a mother, or simply hold a mother in your memories, come and celebrate! Future dates for Tea & Piece will all be on Sundays as usual - 24th April, 22nd May, 19th June, and beyond.

New Inn News

The monthly Quizzes are back! They are held on the last Sunday of the month beginning at 7.30 pm. There is a small entrance fee of £3 per person which also entitles you to a simple supper such as sausage and chips. The first quiz of 2022 was won by Tows on Tour who donated their prize money of around £150 to the Anthony Nolan Trust. In February the winners were the Bar Flies who just pipped the Calverters, with their £180 winnings going to the British Red Cross Appeal for Ukraine. The next quiz will be on Sunday 27th March, then Sunday April 24th, Sunday May 29th and so on. If you would like to take part, either make up a team with your friends or just come along and join a group and enjoy simple food, great companionship and plenty of laughter and fun.

The Open Mic session has also seen a revival. This takes place from 4 pm on the second Sunday of each month and allows local singers and musicians to “have a go” in friendly non-threatening surroundings. It is well worth turning up for – either as a participant or as audience.

The Chef’s Table is as popular as ever. This takes place on the first Monday of the month with guests gathering from 6.30 pm for a 7.00 pm start. Diners are treated to 5 courses of gourmet food, each accompanied by a quality wine, all carefully prepared and selected by the chef. March was fully booked and places for April (Monday 4th) are going very fast.



Don't forget that Rob gets up at a ridiculously early hour every other Thursday to drive down to Billingsgate fish market to buy fresh fish not just for the New Inn menu, but also for the fish boxes.

An advertisement for fish boxes. The background is a dark blue, textured surface. At the top, the text reads: **Order a fish box selection, delivered...** followed by **We travel every week in the early hours to billingsgate fish market and hand pick all of our fish.** and **We are delighted to offer a fresh fish box delivered to your door.** The central text lists the contents: **2 x 6-7oz salmon fillets steaks**, **2 x large sea bass fillets**, **16oz x king prawn crevettes**, **2 x 7-8oz cod/haddock fillet**, and **2 x 6-7oz sea bream fillet**. Below this, the price is **£30** with **(no delivery charge)** underneath. At the bottom, it says **We will be collecting at 4am Thursday mornings for delivery to you the same day** and **Please pre-order your box on 01280 630010**. Images of two sea bass and two king prawns are arranged around the central text.

The new menu is out - and totally mouth-watering it is too! A reminder that food is served from 6 pm to 9pm, Tuesday to Saturday, and from 12 noon to 3 pm on Wednesday to Sunday. No meals are served on Sunday evenings or any time on Mondays.

Chef's Specials

Starters

- Whole Baked Camembert, Toasted Ciabatta & House chutney £10.95*
- Pan Fried Crevettes Served With, Garlic Butter Sauce, Toasted Ciabatta £6.95*
- Homemade Salmon Fishcake, Mixed Salad & Tartare Sauce £7.95*
- Pan Fried Scallops, Served With Sautéed Chorizo And Rich Tomato Sauce £7.95*
- Tempura Battered Billings gate soft shell Crab, Dressed Salad, Garlic Mayonnaise £7.95*
- Tempura Battered Green served with Humous & Pitta Brad £6.95*

Mains

- Slow Cooked Pork Belly, Seasonal Vegetables, Buttered Mash, Apple Cider Sauce £14.95*
- Salmon fillet, Sun-dried Tomato Cream, New potatoes, Roasted Asparagus £15.95*
- Pan seared calf's Liver & Onion, Seasonal Vegetables & Red Wine Sauce £14.95*
- 8oz Angus beef burger, Pancetta, Monterey Jack Cheese and chunky chips £14.95*
- Pan fried sea bass, parmentier potatoes served with a cray fish and Spinach butter £15.95*
- Pan Fried Sword Fish, Served With Caper, Cherry Tomatoes, sautéed New Potatoes £15.95*
- Beetroot & Butternut Squash Wellington, Seasonal Vegetables, Red Wine Jus £13.95*
- Pan Fried Halibut, Served With Spicy Pea Risotto & Charred Lemon £17.95*
- Billings gate Whole Lobster, Garlic Butter Crevettes, Mussels In Rich Tomato Sauce £25*
- 8oz Rump Steak ½ Lobster, Served With Mushroom, Tomato, Chunky Chips £23.95*

7oz Fillet £21.95
 8oz Ribeye £16.95
 8oz Rump £12.95

8oz Sirloin £16.95

All our steaks are served with sautéed mushrooms, whole baked tomato, chunky chips

Sauces (£2.95)

Peppercorn ,Diane ,Blue Cheese, Garlic Butter

News from Tove Valley Broadband

Tim Newton

The team and volunteers from Tove Valley Broadband are very pleased to report that membership continues to grow and the service has now reached 700 properties. We estimate that there are over 5000 devices connected to the internet through our network at any one time - with speeds that are world-beating.

The team has been busy during the winter months planning upgrades to the village infrastructure and we are eagerly awaiting feedback on our applications to deploy more fibre around Abthorpe.

We have a 'support ticket' system which works very well for both our volunteers and members.

Remember that you should only contact us by opening a ticket on our website or using the support line phone number (which automatically opens a new ticket) as there is always someone watching the system.

Better this way than personal phone calls or emails to someone who might not be a position to assist, plus we get to keep better records and this will, in turn, improve the system.

***If you need to contact us
use our support phone number - 08432 898 350
or open a ticket on our website***

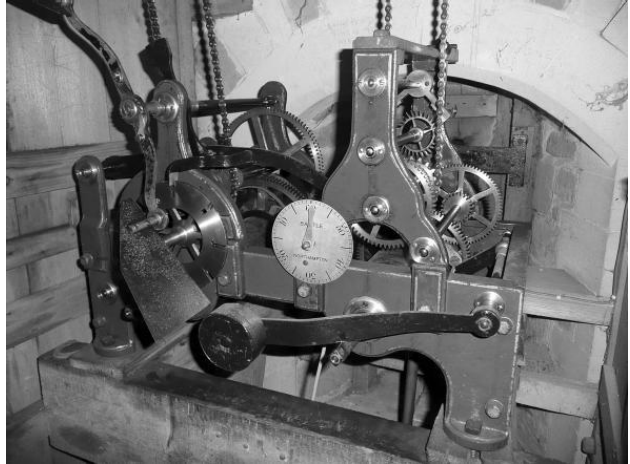
Clocks and Bells

Thanks to the research done by Alison Symmers and Jill Tolson

The church clock and the Old School bell both have interesting histories linking present-day Abthorpe residents who can still hear or see them regularly with village residents of the past.

The church clock: Presumably because we all had other things on our minds in 2020 we missed a very important anniversary - the 150th birthday of the church clock! The clock was added to the church in the 1870s, some time

after the church (in its current form) was built. Although it worked well for nigh on a hundred years it then fell into disuse. It is rumoured that a previous clerical incumbent decided to paint the clock face and that is what caused it to stop working!



However, twenty-two years ago it was restored to mark the millennium and now runs smoothly keeping pretty good time for a mechanical contraption of its age.

The clock was originally wound by hand, with the clock keeper, recorded only as Tom, being let off work half an hour earlier on a Friday to perform this duty. Coincidentally, the current keeper of the clock, aka Roger the Clockmeister, lives in Tom's former house.

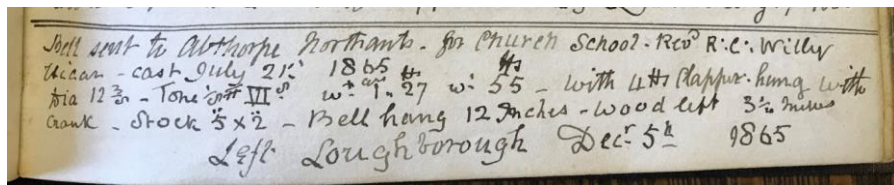
As the photo shows, it is a flatbed turret clock assembled by Bartle of Northampton who would have bought in the various components from other factories. The clock is linked to a single bell which, as those living in the vicinity of the Green will know, chimes on the hour. What the photograph does not show is the graffiti which adorns the inner walls of the tower, signatures and dates going back at least a hundred years!

The Old School bell: The Old School bell was cast in 1865 and put onto the 'new' extension in 1866 but the story goes further back than that. Those who have read the book on the Old School will recall the notorious school master, Rev Pryce Jones who was overfond of drink, imprisoned for debt and from whom the School Trustees withheld 10 years of annual salary payment for failing to teach the pupils. In 1825 Rev Jones's daughter,

Amelia, married John Taylor in Abthorpe Church. John was a bell founder working in Oxford with his brother William where, in 1823, they had recast the tenor bell for St Lawrence Church, Towcester. After their marriage John and Amelia settled in Loughborough and, in 1839, set up a foundry there. It was this foundry that cast the bell that now stands on the Old School roof.



The entry in the John Taylor Foundry daybook records that the bell was cast on 21st July 1865 for the Rev R C Willy, and left Loughborough on 5th December 1865. It has a diameter of 12³/₈ inches and weighs 55lbs with a 4lb clapper. Its tone is 1¹/₈th of tuning fork VI which probably means that it was intended to be aligned to tuning fork VI but was just slightly out - but as a single bell it didn't need to be matched to others in a peal and was probably not further tuned as such a slight variation is not noticeable.



Taylor's Foundry is still making bells today in much the same way as they did in 1854. Based on the bell founder's experience of the right shape and weight for sound required, a shaped 'crook' or wooden sweeper board is made to provide the exact profile needed.

Two moulds - an inner core and an outer cope or shell - are made from red sand, chopped straw and horse manure (which acts as a binder) using the crook to carve out the exact shape. The inner core is stove-dried at about 150°C and carefully aligned with the outer cope which is made in a

perforated cast iron shell. They are clamped tightly together and buried in a pit of sand.

Years of experimentation have shown that the best metal to use - called 'bell metal' - is 77% copper and 23% tin (today other metals are also used although the sound quality is different in the finished bell). This is melted to a temperature of around 1200° C (2200° F) and poured into the mould. It is then allowed to cool and solidify. Once cold, the mould is uncovered, the core broken up and the bell extracted and tested for sound.

Bell tuning is a highly specialised art. It must first be in tune with its own harmonic across its five principal tones; and then in tune with the other bells in its peal ring. Nowadays a computer is used to help the process rather than relying on the craftsman's ear and his tuning forks, but the process of tuning is still done by shaving off a small amount of the metal from the inside of the bell at specific places until the correct resonance has been achieved. Fortunately, once tuned, bells do not deteriorate or become inharmonic of their own accord. So, if we were able to ring the Old School bell today it would sound just like it did when it was calling children to school in 1866.

If anyone is interested in finding out more, a visit to the Taylor Bell Foundry in Loughborough is highly recommended. As well as a museum, it is a working foundry open to the public and a tour allows you to see work-in-progress and talk to the craftsmen. (Taylorbells.co.uk).

Old School News

The first fundraising event for over two years was held recently - a Soup Lunch. A variety of homemade soups and other snacks were on offer and were enjoyed by a goodly number of villagers. Just over £200 was raised.





It is hoped to provide a Truckers Breakfast some time in the coming weeks on a date yet to be decided; keep an eye on the Old School Facebook page and the notice boards so as not to miss out on this extremely popular event.

Another perennial favourite which will be making a welcome return is a Plant Sale, largely led and supplied by Chris and Bill Lamb. Again, the date is yet to be finalised.

As life begins to return to normal, the Old School is being hired out more once again - there are already bookings for one-off events such as a wedding and a christening, in addition to several weekly classes. These include Bridge on Monday evenings, Personal Trainer sessions and Circuits on Wednesday evenings, Pilates and Adult Ballet on Thursday evenings and, coming soon, Gentle Pilates on Friday mornings. If there is enough interest there may even be a Storytelling /Drama workshop starting up.

For further details on all of the above visit the Old School website www.abthorpeoldschool.com. Abthorpe Old School events can also be viewed on the Abthorpe Old School Facebook page.

And more Old School News



The former pupils of Abthorpe School who contributed their reminiscences of school life to the book 'The Free School in Abthorpe' gathered for a reunion tea in November. The Old School was filled with chat, exchanges of photographs and memories of their time at school, and their subsequent lives. Touchingly one lady remembered babysitting for two of the others who were much younger than her. They had few memories of their mother and they were delighted with the wonderful snippets of information she was able to give them.

Abthorpe Old School Exhibition at Towcester Museum

From the middle of March probably until the end of May there will be a small exhibition on Abthorpe Old School in the Towcester Museum shop area. Alison Symmers and Jill Tolson have put together some information and items from their book about the Old School in a new display. Do go and see it, if you are able to.

'The Free School in Abthorpe' explores the history of the school, and includes reminiscences of pupils who attended from 1926 to 1959 when it closed, details of all the masters and mistresses from 1642 when it was built, and a photographic



architectural tour of this important building. It is on sale for £8, the same as the annual salary of the first master, with all proceeds going to the upkeep of the building. Email oldschool@abthorpe.net for information or to order a copy.

Does anyone have a copy of Reg Chapman's book of Abthorpe photographs: These I have loved, Volume II, which they would be willing to sell? One of the ladies who contributed to Jill and Alison's book is a talented artist and has painted views of Abthorpe taken from the book. She borrowed a copy some years ago for the paintings and would really love to have a copy of the whole publication for herself. Please contact Jill (jill.tolson@abthorpe.net) if you are able to help.

The Platinum Jubilee

Plans are already well underway in Abthorpe for two days of festivities to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years on the throne. What an achievement! Let's all enjoy



this great opportunity to come together as a community - especially bearing in mind the limitations of the last 2 years.

A committee of volunteers from all elements of village life are meeting regularly to plan what should happen and when. Further details including venues will be made available as these ideas become reality. Current plans include:

Thursday 2nd June from 6 pm: Ceilidh with Fish & Chip Supper in the interval
Sunday 5th June from 12 noon: the Big Jubilee Buffet Lunch

On the Sunday afternoon there will also be children’s activities. Please note that this is an excellent opportunity for newcomers to the village to get more involved in the community and meet other residents. We are hoping for a really good turnout.



Just to give an idea of past Jubilee celebrations, here is a photograph taken 10 years ago of village children displaying their Diamond Jubilee mugs. Can you identify this motley crew?

Come and enjoy the fun again in June!

More to Celebrate

A Golden Couple

Congratulations are also due to Barry and Elizabeth Haycock on reaching their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 18th March. The couple generously hosted an excellent lunch for family and friends at the New Inn where their best man recalled their wedding day fifty years ago in Grimsby and paid tribute to their commitment - not just to each other, but to their family and friends, to their local community, and to their vocations in farming and nursing.



A Special Birthday

One of Abthorpe's most senior residents, Mrs Barbara Rush - or Bet as she is known throughout the village - turns 100 years of age on 26th April!

Bet was born in Northampton and lived there until 1937. During the Second World War she went to Leicester to train as a toolmaker to help with the

war effort but then came to work in Abthorpe's shoe factory. On Easter Monday 1943, her 21st birthday, she married Ron, an Abthorpe man. When the houses in Brackley Lane were completed in 1946 Bet and her husband moved into number 8 and Bet has lived there ever since!

We all wish Bet a very Happy Birthday and send her many congratulations on this incredible milestone.



Welcome to the world

Ben and Maisie Holland of Wappenham Road are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their first baby Miles Tristan Holland who was born at Northampton General on 25th January 2022 at 6.54 am weighing 7lb 6oz. He's the first



grandchild on both sides of the family, has six great grandparents and one great-great-grandmother. (No chance of being spoiled then.) Maisie remarked 'You'll probably see

us doing laps of the village in the yellow buggy or sling to get some fresh air until we are brave enough to venture further afield'. Now even the hardened souls among us have to agree that Miles is one cute baby!

And who can resist smiling as we see the first lambs appearing in the fields?



Miscellaneous Bits and Bobs

Emergency Service Cadets Wanted



Do you know a young person who would like to join the Northamptonshire Emergency Service Cadets? Recruiting is now underway for the September 2022 intake so now is the perfect time to apply!

This is an opportunity to learn new skills, make new friends and get to grips with the way all three blue light services work. All applicants need to be 13 before 1st September to be included in this year's intake.

Cadets meet once per week as follows:

Northampton and Wellingborough Units on Thursday evenings

Kettering, Daventry and Towcester Units on Monday evenings

If you would like to apply for this year's intake, or know someone who would be interested, please complete the form available from Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Alert before the closing date (8th April).

'Time to Talk' Helpline

The helpline manager for the Anne Robson Trust charity, Paula Kerswell, has sent this email:



The Anne Robson Trust is a pre-bereavement charity that passionately believes that no one deserves to die alone. We work alongside NHS hospitals to train Butterfly Volunteers, who sit with end-of-life patients in order to provide company and comfort to people in their last days and hours of life. However, due to COVID restrictions the volunteers were forced to withdraw from the hospitals, and in response to this, we decided to set up a free National helpline so that we could continue to offer comfort and support where needed. As restrictions have lifted the volunteers are gradually starting to return to hospitals and in addition the introduction of the helpline is showing to be a valuable resource for anyone in the community to access support from the comfort of their own home.

The helpline is for anyone who is struggling to cope with a terminal diagnosis or the imminent death of someone they care about. Whether they are family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, or even a member of the care staff who may just need someone to talk to; we understand the pressures of working and caring for people who are end of life. Helpline no. 0808 801 0688.

If you would like to contribute to Abtalk or comment on any articles in it, please contact Alison Robbins: robbins@abthorpe.net; 01327 857795

Diary: March - June 2022

- March** Saturday 26th Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**
Sunday 27th Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**
Tuesday 29th Annual Parochial Church Mtg, 7.00 pm - **Old School**
- April** Saturday 2nd Village Litter Pick & Spring Clean, 10.00 am - 12 noon - **Village Green**
Monday 4th Chef's Table, 7.00 pm - **New Inn**
Sunday 10th Open Mic, from 4.00 pm - **New Inn**
Sunday 17th Easter Day Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am - **Church**
Sunday 24th Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**
Sunday 24th Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**
- May** Sunday 8th Open Mic, from 4.00 pm - **New Inn**
Monday 9th Chef's Table, 7.00 pm - **New Inn**
Sunday 15th Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am – **Church**
Monday 16th Parish Council AGM, 7.45 pm – **Old School**
Sunday 22nd Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**
Wed 25th Annual Parish Meeting, 7.00 pm – **Old School**
Sunday 29th Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**
- June** Thursday 2nd Ceilidh and Fish & Chip supper, 6.00 pm - **Old School**
Sunday 5th Big Jubilee (buffet) Lunch, 12 noon - **Marquee on the Green**
Sunday 12th Open Mic, from 4.00 pm - **New Inn**
Sunday 19th Holy Eucharist service, 10.00 am - **Church**
Sunday 19th Tea & Piece, 3.00 pm - 4.30 pm - **Church**
Sunday 26th Quiz, 7.30 pm - **New Inn**