



# ABTALX

News from Abthorpe

October 2005

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We are all aware of the increase in house prices and regard this as either a blessing or a curse. However, it does make it much more difficult for younger people, especially those with roots here who want to remain in the area, to buy houses in the village. Once upon a time, Council houses met the needs of those on low incomes, but no new ones have been built for many years and most existing ones have been sold to their tenants.

There is a strong case for making it easier for younger people to live in the village. As well as meeting family needs, it helps to provide the balance of age groups necessary for the vitality of village life.

“Affordable Housing” is designed to meet these needs. Lower cost is achieved in a number of ways. Properties are either rented or shared equity. They are constructed by recognised Housing Associations, generally on land which would not otherwise qualify for residential or commercial development and therefore can be purchased at agricultural values.

A typical development is four to six houses. Schemes are controlled by the District Council, who maintains a list of those seeking accommodation and allocates from that list. Priority goes to people who want to live in the village. Houses constructed under this scheme must remain in the pool of affordable houses; they cannot be sold on the open market. Several schemes are in progress.

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The Parish Council is exploring the idea in more depth before deciding whether it should put Abthorpe forward for consideration by the District Council. There are several steps to be taken, the first of which is to quantify the need in Abthorpe. Those who qualify will have to demonstrate a connection with the village over a few years. Typical examples are those who have grown up here and are now looking for their own accommodation, those on low incomes who work locally, people with disabilities who have local connections.

For anyone interested in joining a list for such accommodation, a confidential questionnaire, unseen by the Parish Council, can be obtained from Cathy McCall, email: [catherine.mccall@southnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.mccall@southnorthants.gov.uk) or tel 322371. You can also contact Keith Fenwick (857083) for more information or to provide feedback.

#### CANON BRIDGET'S CELEBRATION

What more excuse for a celebration could be needed than the tenth anniversary of Canon Bridget Smith's arrival at the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, coinciding with the rededication of the church following its recent renovation. On Sunday 18 September a large choir, followed by our Curate, Pauline Reid, Canon Bridget and the Bishop of Peterborough, the Right Reverend Ian Cundy, processed across the village green from the Old School to the large congregation awaiting their arrival at the church.

Contributions from all five congregations of the benefice to the sumptuous lunch that followed the rededication and communion service were much appreciated.

The villagers were invited to view the renovations and redecorations in the church later that day.

Many a reminiscence was recounted - ask Bill Kendall about his exploits with the organ which he used to pump manually for the princely sum of 10/- (50p) a year.



*Bill Kendall seated at the church organ*

## PEOPLE

Sadly, we have learned of the death of Miss Ruth Carey, who lived at Rozel in Main Street for many years. She died on 29th August in Newbury at the age of 91.

Delightful baby Charlotte, born to Kelly Matthews and Nigel Bass during the summer, made a public appearance at the village Bar-B-Q. Her pushchair made an excellent mobile bar.



There are a surprising number of newcomers to welcome into the village.

Barbara and Phil

Wahwerit (an interesting surname, believed to have originated in Latvia) have arrived at Holly Cottage from the Buckingham area. Son Daniel has started at Sponne School this year and is already making good friends there, as well as getting together with other village lads for a spot of stunt riding (bikes, that is).

Pam and Ray Barrell are settling in to 8 Wappenham Road. They have circled the village for many years, having lived in Greens Norton, Towcester and Silverstone, before plumping for Abthorpe. Son Terry has just embarked on a trip to India, leaving them to do the work of transforming their home to their taste.

Wendy and Anthony Louw have moved into Judith and Tony Waddie's house in Silver Street. Lurgies have struck them, with chicken pox and flu in the house at present, but when they have all recovered no doubt we'll hear the interesting story of how they ended up in Abthorpe from their native South Africa.

Drs Richard and Naomi Jones, with daughter Ione, have left us for the delights of Cardiff where both are taking up posts teaching archaeology at the University. We hope to fully welcome the new occupants of Yew Tree Cottage, as well as Melanina's new neighbours, who are keeping her company now that Dave Varty has vacated 2 The Green, in our next issue.

### **CYCLISTS OF ABTHORPE**

Congratulations to Ian Dykhoff and Steve Neasham who completed a British Heart Foundation fundraising ride from Oxford to Cambridge in a little over 5 hours - during at least two of which they kept pace with a rain cloud.

For those who enjoy more leisurely recreational cycling, some of the slightly more mature males of the village have started going out at weekends for an hour or so in the morning. Anyone else who feels moved to join them - and offset the effects of an hour or two in the pub the previous evening - would be most welcome. It has been Sunday morning about 9.00 am, but Saturday now seems to be favoured (although some of their non-cycling partners think both mornings would double the health benefits!). If you're interested call Philip Berry (857531) or Roger Tolson (857320).

### **CHURCH FABRIC APPEAL**

The financial results from the fete and pig roast were reported last time, but the generosity of the village continued with £815.25 being raised for the Church Fabric Appeal at their recent Bar-B-Q attended by around 80% of villagers. It was a good day. The swansongs of the hardworking committee before the appeal closes in December are listed in the Events section.

### **VILLAGE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION**

You will remember that, back in May, we entered the Village of the Year competition, successor to the Best Kept Village competition (in which Abthorpe had several successes). At an interesting awards evening, Keith Fenwick accepted a plaque on behalf of Abthorpe as runner-up in the IT section of the competition, a fitting tribute to all who have worked so hard on setting up the village website and the Broadband Association. Although we were not successful in the main competition, we had an opportunity to talk to the judges and learned much about how we could put over a more positive picture for their consideration next year. So we'll try again ..... In the meantime, the plaque will be on display in the Old School before too long.

### **TOWESTER AREA DOOR TO DOOR**

Although we have highlighted the work of TADD before, this charity, which provides transport to health-related appointments for people who have no other way of attending, is urgently seeking volunteer drivers in our area. Even offers of occasional help would be gratefully received. Fuel costs of 40p a mile (the highest non-taxable rate) are paid. Please do think carefully about whether you could spare even a short amount of time and call 351716 if the answer is 'yes'. By the way, the Parish Council supports this worthwhile cause by making an annual donation of £50.

**CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY?**

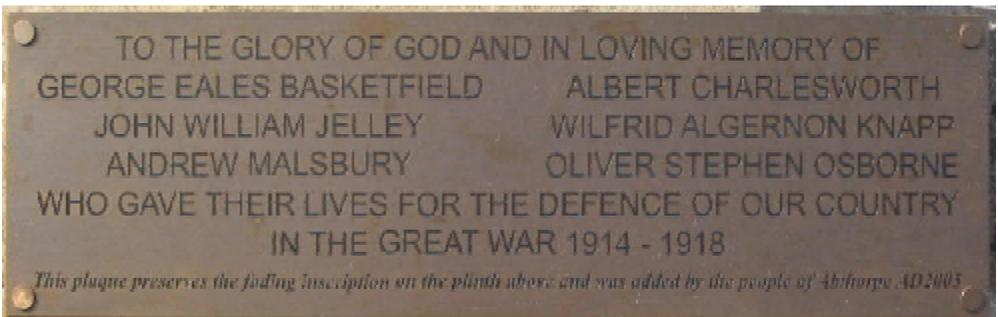
We've already touched on the generosity of the village, and the Tsunami appeal was no different. As a continuing support for that beautiful area, Gordon Duncan, director of the charity *The Friends of the Galle Project*, which received this church's donation, suggests Sri Lanka if you're thinking of booking a Christmas holiday. He particularly recommends taking in the Wijaya Beach Cottage in Dalawella. How good does this sound?: 'Sit in the comfy seats looking out at the ocean, sipping a cold Lion beer and all will be well with the world...'. See [www.galleproject2005.co.uk](http://www.galleproject2005.co.uk); [www.srilankatourism.org](http://www.srilankatourism.org).

**WAR MEMORIAL**

You will recall that, using the money left over from the Millenium Fund, the War Memorial was cleaned last year. Nothing could be done to restore the fading names of the fallen of the First World War and therefore a bronze plaque has been obtained to preserve these names. This was finally fitted a few weeks ago.

However, after the village Bar-B-Q on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the plaque was found hanging off. At first, it seemed to be a deliberate act by someone trying to remove the plaque, but it was later found that three of the screws had been sheared off. It appears that this damage was accidentally caused by children playing around the Memorial and standing on the plaque and its wooden mounting. Alternative methods of fixing the plaque will be investigated before it is replaced.

It would be much appreciated if those with children would ensure that they do not play on or around this rather fragile Memorial. We don't want more damage to be caused and there are plenty of more fitting places to play.



### JACKDAWS

Am I alone in wondering where all the jackdaws have gone from the village? Fewer young seem to have been apparent this year, and the numbers gathering during the evening in the trees in the churchyard are definitely down. Although they have their irritating habits of trying to build nests in every available

chimney and even dropping in (literally as far as we are concerned and wreaking some havoc in our lounge in their panic), watching them gathering in their pairs before departing to roost in the direction of Greens Norton has been a summer evening pleasure for us.

Can anyone shed any light on the mystery?  
*Jill Tolson*

### EVENTS

#### *Saturday 8 October*

Harvest Supper: 7.00 for 7.30 in the Old School; everyone welcome - tickets from Jan Miles: 857427

#### *Tuesday 11 October*

Mums, Dads, Carers and Tots: 1.30 - 3.00, 21 Brackley Lane (Gail Coombs, 857901)

#### *Saturday 22 October*

Blues Night in aid of the Church Fabric Appeal: 7.30 for 8.00 (dinner served: cajun chicken, baked beans and corn bread; American puddings); bar. Dance off your dinner to The Blues Hounds. Tickets £10 from Steve Andrews (857654)

#### *Thursday 27 October*

Marie Curie Cancer event at Highfield Farm (Liz Haycock, 860220): 10-3 and 4-9

#### *Tuesday 15 November*

Mums, Dads, Carers and Tots: 10.00 - 12.00, Mulberry House, 50 Wappenham Road (Louise Gough, 858850)

#### *Saturday 19 November*

Race Night for the Church Fabric Appeal: tickets £3 with ploughman's supper; bar

#### *Tuesday 6 December*

Mums, Dads, Carers and Tots: 10.00 - 12.00, The Old Bakehouse, The Green (Julie Dyckhoff, 858600)

#### *Saturday 17 December*

Village Christmas parties, carols and songs

#### *Friday 23 December*

Carol singing round the village, final event for the Church Fabric Appeal. 6.00 at the Old School finishing in the pub.

**ABTHORPE VILLAGE FUND**

The Village Fund group is putting the finishing touches to the village Christmas event, with a lit Christmas tree on the green providing a focal point for the seasonal celebrations. On 17 December the children will be entertained with a party in the Old School, followed by carols and songs for everyone round the tree. Then, to warm up, a simple hot meal will be served in the Old School, along with a cash bar. Transport and a helping hand will be arranged for anyone requiring it. Entry tickets (free of charge) will be distributed door to door as catering numbers will be needed.

The group would like to gather everyone's thoughts on what the Village Fund should be used for. Below is a tear-off questionnaire suggesting some of the ideas under consideration. Which do you favour? Or have you any other projects you'd like to see happen in the village?

Please do take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and add



# Abthorpe Village Fund

Which of these projects would you support? (please tick)

Regular maintenance of the churchyard extension

Flashing 30mph lights to calm traffic

Changing the streetlights to be more in keeping with the village

Your suggestions for consideration

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Are there any social events that you would like to be arranged?

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*please continue over*

you observations of the Fund. Apart from the fete, two or three social events a year will be arranged to continue the recent tradition of village social activities coupled with modest fundraising.

**COMMUNITY FUNDING ADVISORY PANEL**

This rather dry-sounding body may be of interest to anyone involved with a voluntary organisation struggling to find sufficient funds to keep its activities going. The CFAP can award grants to meet core costs if the voluntary group offers services that help the Council to meet its key objectives; there are strategic, project and capital programmes.

The 2006-7 Strategic Funding round has just opened and closes on 11 November, so anyone wanting more detailed information to see if they would qualify for a grant should move swiftly. [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/community/vssu](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/community/vssu) has some good information, or call the Voluntary Sector Support Unit on 01604 236789.

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**Any other comments**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone no. \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire will be collected during the week beginning 10 October. Alternatively, please pop it through the letterboxes of Jan Miles at Bank Cottage, Main Street, or June Willsher at 1 Cadogan Place. You can always email your comments to [jan.miles@abthorpe.net](mailto:jan.miles@abthorpe.net) or [june.willsher@abthorpe.net](mailto:june.willsher@abthorpe.net)