



News from Abthorpe

September 2006

ABTHORPE VILLAGE FUND

The Fun Day seems to have been judged an overwhelming success from the lunchtime BBQ onwards: a relaxed opportunity for everyone to get together, made even better by the perfect late summer weather. The entertainment - in the form of a dog show, various static games and gorgeous face painting - was complemented by the races which from the point of view of the starter at least were hilarious, particularly two adults in a sack attempting to keep the rhythm going to the finish line. The culminating race - a Chariots of Fire-style romp around the outer walls of the churchyard to a 15-stroke chime of the clock - proved a fitting finale.

During the afternoon the church was open for tea and cakes. Visitors were treated to a display of the beautiful new altar fontals as well as the kneelers stitched by dextrous villagers.

Hopefully this type of day can be repeated next year.

The large white marquee that sheltered the food and some diners from the sun has been bought by the Fund for use at village events, and also by anyone in the village who would like to hire it for their private use. A modest fee of £20 a day will be charged and of course the accompanying

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instructions need to be followed - for instance, it must be put away perfectly dry. Contact Tim Pope (857364). Also you may have noticed the new bunting, which similarly can be hired for a donation to the Fund.

Two winners of the programme draw are still sought: numbers 18 and 67 on the flyers delivered before the Fun Day. A box of Ferrero Rocher chocolates and a bottle of sherry are with June Willsher (850575) waiting to be claimed. *[And I must say these prizes sound more alluring than the picture of the grumpy salmon that I won recently. JT]*



Still smiling after all that cooking



Three-legged race (not quite) winners romping home, but spare a thought for the team in a heap on the grass

The Village Fund is holding its first AGM on Thursday 2 November in the Old School. Please come along to hear the chair's and treasurer's reports, and contribute your comments on the Fund.

A repeat of the very successful Quiz Night is planned for Saturday 18 November in the Old School. In this case, repeat refers to the

general format (with a surprise thrown in) but not the questions! Come as a team of 8 or make up your own team. Tickets at £5 will include a

ploughman's supper. As usual they will be sold door to door from 21 October, but can also be bought from June Willsher, 850575.

MORE ON DOG MESS

It's sad to have to return to this subject yet again, but there is still a problem in the village, particularly this time in Silver Street and Church Lane. There are a lot of young children in the village now and we do have a duty to ensure they can play safely and healthily. Please, if you walk a dog, make sure you carry the means to clear up after it – and do so.

PENSIONS INFORMATION

Jenny Osborne has been appointed to a new post of Pensions Information Worker, based at the South Northants Volunteer Bureau (tel: 358264; jenny.osborne@snnvb.org.uk). Jenny's role is to give free, understandable pensions information and help with retirement planning to employees or employers in voluntary or community sector organisations by either one-to-one sessions, workshops or presentations.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH - CRIB FESTIVAL

Richard Tomalin

On Saturday and Sunday December 2nd and 3rd, the church is planning a Crib Festival. This will take the form of a display of cribs and nativity scenes in the church. We are hoping that this will be a lovely start to the Christmas

festivities.

To be a success, we need to borrow as many cribs and nativity scenes as possible - and that's where the villagers of Abthorpe come in. We need cribs of all types, shapes, sizes and ages. Maybe you have one that you made as a child, or that your children have made (or maybe your children would like to make one specially). Maybe you bought one on holiday or you have one with an interesting story. We are making sure that everything will be secure and everything that we borrow is safe.

So please have a think and let us know as soon as possible if you would be prepared to lend us anything for the display. All contributions will be documented and kept track of.

Contact Richard on 858316 or richard.tomalin@abthorpe.net

STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

More free practical advice is available to anyone thinking of starting a business or has established one within the last three years which could do with financial or marketing advice to give it a boost. Business Support Northamptonshire is at Sheep Street in Northampton and appointments can be made by calling 0845 456 8281. Home and out-of-hours visits can be arranged. It's not just for high fliers, but any self-employed person trying to increase the impact their business makes on the local community.

**GREAT SOUTH RUN, SUNDAY 22ND
OCTOBER 2006** *Caroline Kellner, 25
Brackley Lane, 857195*

I am taking part in this run in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care and I'm looking for sponsors. The run takes place in Portsmouth and is 10 miles long – I might add that I will not be running all the way! Any donations would be very much appreciated; please place them in a marked envelope through my door. You can make more of your donation by making it gift aid – for every £1 that you give, Marie Curie will receive an extra 28p from the Inland Revenue. To do this, you need to include your full name, address and post code with your donation.

BRAMBLING *Keith Fenwick*

The bramble season is well and truly here and this year there is plenty of fruit to pick. Some people call them blackberries, but I think that 'bramble' better conveys the dangers that catch the unwary picking these unctuous fruits. You always finish with a few pricks and scratches.

Brambles can be used in several ways: to make jelly, in a pie, under a crumble or just on their own. Nothing is better for an autumnal pudding than brambles and apple, gently simmered with sugar and then topped with cream or ice cream, even if it does not have the complexity or attractiveness to satisfy the masterchef judges. All you need to do is to take a good sized

plastic container and wander along the hedgerows; it won't be long before you come across some brambles.

There are also plenty of elderberries and sloes this year. The problem with sloes is knowing what to do with them? Everyone has heard of sloe gin, but gin was made for tonic and not to form the basis of that sickly sweet concoction (sorry if that is your tippie!). However, there is a website http://www.overtthegardengate.net/garden/herbs/reci_hedge.asp of 'Hedgerow Recipes' which includes Sloe Jelly, with an alternative at www.uktvfood.co.uk. There is even one for an interesting chutney.

Sloe Chutney

2.5kg sloes

2kg granulated sugar

500g golden delicious apples

Place the sloes in the deep freeze until fully frozen. This is to soften the harsh flavour that some sloes have. Place in a bowl of hot water and leave overnight. Wash and grate the apples into a large saucepan, add the sloes and cook until soft. Add the sugar and cook until reduced by a quarter to concentrate the flavours. Taste for sweetness.

For a smooth jam pass through a sieve using a wooden spoon.

Jar up and seal well.

QUINCES

And to add to the bumper harvest this year, we shall have a good crop of quinces when they come ripe in October. If you would like some for jams, pies, etc (lots of recipes on the Internet), just give me a call on 857320 – *Jill Tolson*.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ON WHEELS (NOW)

Another initiative to help young people get to college or work is the NOW project. Advisors help with travel plans which can lead to the loan of a moped for 6 to 12 months with safety equipment and training. This gives time for saving through the local credit union to finance your own transport. Lots more detail is at the project's website: www.northamptonshireonwheels.org.uk or phone David Bengé on 07711 926154.

ANOTHER VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY

The disability charity, Leonard Cheshire, is looking for volunteers for their Enabling Scheme which links adults with learning difficulties to volunteers with similar leisure, social or educational activities which they can enjoy together. It is looking for volunteers to give as little or as much time as they can fit in with work and family commitments, and cite such activities as shopping, swimming, going to the gym, gardening and visiting garden centres, cinema or

theatre, arts and crafts. Expenses are reimbursed. Karen Allsop on 07903 823045 has more information, or email karen.allsop@LC-uk.org

TADD

TADD has recorded 61 journeys from Abthorpe during the period April 2005 to March 2006. It's a popular and useful service for those needing to get to medically-related appointments, and the Parish Council has decided to pay the subscriptions for anyone wanting to join the scheme in place of the old bus tokens. Contact is Gail Coombs, 857901

And if anyone needs photocopying done, TADD offers such a service at its offices from 9.00 to 2.00 Monday to Friday for 5p a copy. It is located on the ground floor, Museum House, White Horse Yard, Towcester. Tel: 351716

RURAL YOUTH CAFÉ COMING TO TOWCESTER

This project is being organised and run through the Millennium Volunteers and Connexions Partnership, The café will be a safe place for young people to hang out and have fun, receive training and get involved in the local community if they are so inclined. Any young people who want to get involved, or local businesses who could offer support, can get more information from Zoe Hale, 07703 022303 or Paul White, 359080.

ABTHORPE WALKS*David and Katie Robbins***Getting Started**

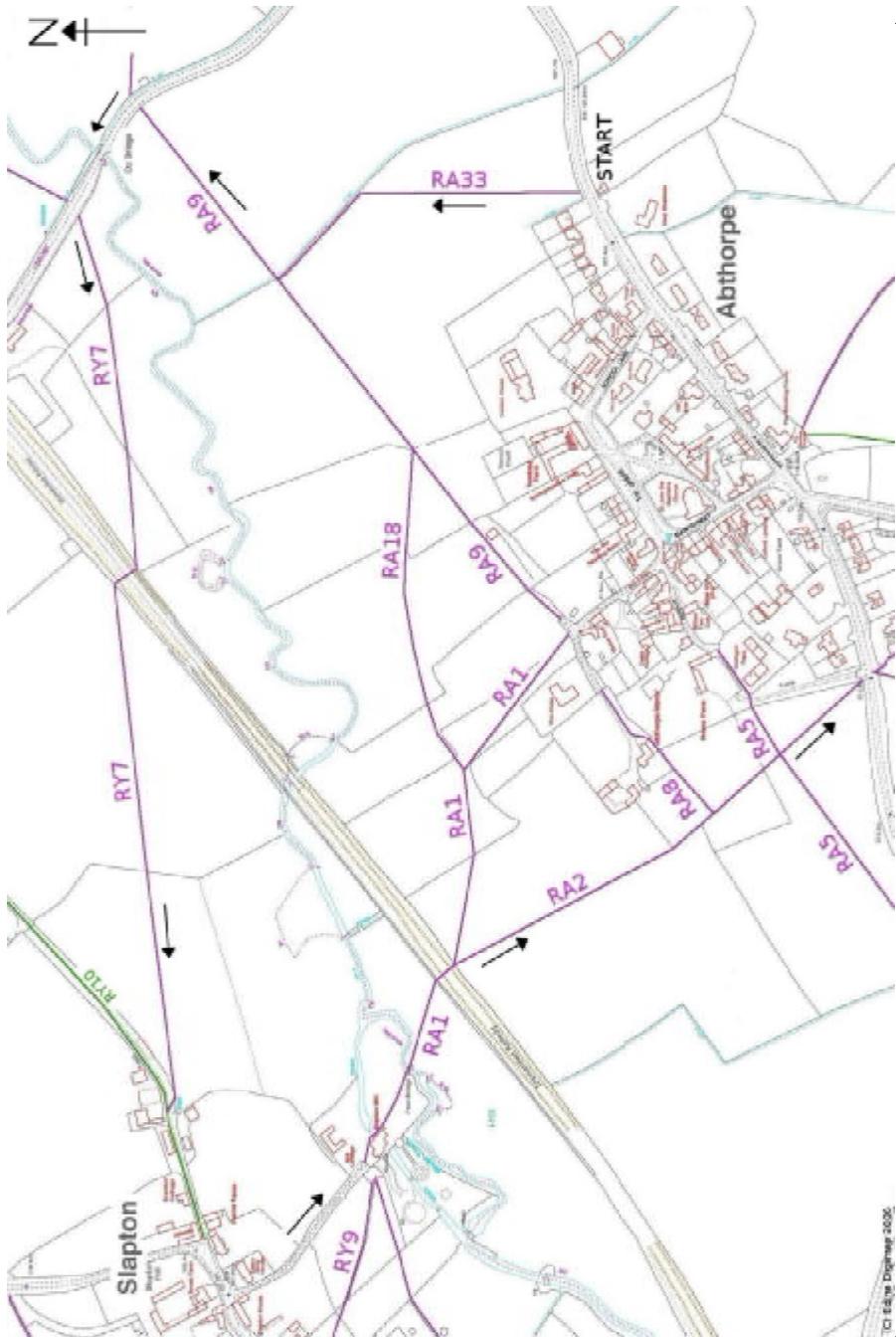
Abthorpe parish offers a wide variety of walks: lane, field, river and woodland, but Northamptonshire is built on clay and nowhere is that more apparent than along field paths and in Bucknell woods. So remember, stout/waterproof footwear is advisable for much of the year. Many of the fields contain livestock, so please take care and close gates behind you. The first walk introduced below is short, is capable of many minor variations and will be well known to more established members of our community, but it is one of my favourites nonetheless. The second ranges slightly further afield to Handley Barn offering pleasant views over the Tove valley.

Walk 1 (2¼ km)

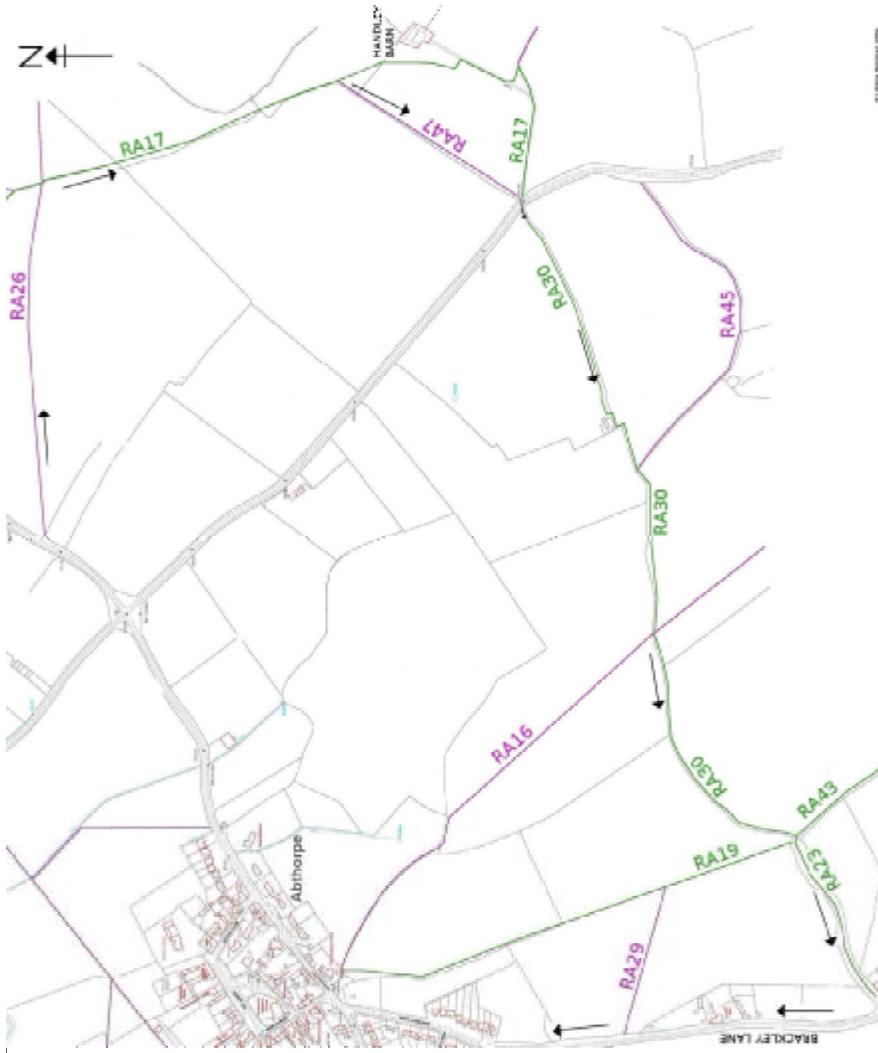
Starting at the eastern (Towcester) edge of Abthorpe, following the line to the left indicated by the finger post, the path cuts diagonally across the field following the old line of vanished ponds (RA33) towards the river crossing at Ox Bridge. The new stables on the north side of the Tove have complicated the crossing of the meadow a little (RY7), but use the gates to reach a stile at the line of the disused railway. The Northampton & Banbury Junction Railway was opened in 1872 to transport ironstone from Blisworth. The disused railway itself is private property and not a right of way; it is also quite boggy. Cross directly over and after a couple of fields and a green lane you will arrive in Slapton. Take the first lane to the left to reach Slapton Mill. The footpath is to the right of new and imposing gates, and the right of way thereafter to the left of the millhouse. After crossing the Tove via a smart wooden bridge you are back once more at the railway line where several options present themselves. RA1 offers a pleasant amble through the old meadows to Main Street, whilst the RA2 follows a direct line back to the Wappenham road.

Walk 2 (4¼ km)

On leaving Abthorpe towards Towcester the RA26 strikes out to the right from the Wappenham road via a stile through a deep hedge just beyond the Silverstone cross-roads. The route is diagonal across the pasture, with medieval field strips underfoot. The stile at the other side of the field is hidden by the rising ground, but stick to the diagonal line and it soon comes into view. This path opens up a wide range of options for longer walks but a pleasant short loop can be achieved by turning right at the stile up the RA27 and heading up to Handley barn and back along the bridleway (RA30). Cross the Silverstone lane, the gateway



Route of Walk 1



to the bridleway is on your right. The only point of caution is to make sure you cross through the gate at the cow shed at the end of the first field, as the path follows the south (left) side of the hedge for the rest of the way. Again several possibilities for the return route present themselves, in each case you end up walking directly towards the church spire as a guide. RA16 (the old road to Silverstone) cuts across the fields to the Stocking Frame, as does the bridleway (RA19) while if you want something firmer underfoot keep going along the green lane (Hog Lane) to the top of Brackley Lane.

PEOPLE

Frederick Huggins was landlord of our pub, churchwarden and secretary of the Parochial Church Council for 16 years, following 24 years' service as a soldier during which he rose to the rank of sergeant major and saw service in Northern Ireland and the Falklands War.

Fred died recently and was laid to rest, with full military dignity, in our churchyard after a moving funeral service in the church packed with family, friends and colleagues from near and far.

Paul Wallis Scott, one of his many army colleagues present, read a tribute that described Fred's readiness to push himself forward to do things that needed doing. Fred was one of the crowning characters in Paul's life - devoted to the military like a stick of rock that has "Army" emblazoned right through. Tim Pope's anecdotes described with humour the fond memories of those who knew Fred - especially the theme parties at the pub. The Wake that followed in the New Inn was a fitting send off to a generous friend and interesting individual.

Sadly we also have to report the death of Mrs Betty Glover who had lived at Yew Tree House on The Green for many years. Our sympathy goes to her sons Michael, David, Andrew and Paul.



And on a happier note, a warm welcome to new arrivals in the village Debbie and Colin, who have moved into 1 The Green with their young spaniel, Isabella, from Marston St Lawrence. Debbie has a studio at home making designer curtains and continues her artistic enjoyment into her leisure time taking painting classes. Colin restores antique furniture, travelling each day to Beaconsfield - Abthorpe must have its attractions to embark on such a daily journey.

NORTHAMPTON GENERAL HOSPITAL NHS TRUST

NGH is apply to become a foundation trust. It would remain fully within the NHS but would be "given the freedom from the controls of government to develop services to suit the needs of the local community". As part of the application it must undertake a full public consultation and recruit trust members. If you would like to get involved, more information on the plans and process are at www.northamptongeneral.nhs.uk; 01604 523894.

NEWS FROM THE NEW INN

From 3 October the New Inn will begin a new venture which Jane and Robbie hope will be of benefit to all in the village. They will be opening each day from 10.00 to 12.00, Tuesday through to Friday, for coffee, tea, home-made cakes and pastries. A library is being set up where you can borrow a book, sit and read or just come and chat with friends. Everyone is welcome, young and old alike.

Another offering will be a Senior Citizens' menu, available on those same days (Tuesday-Friday) from 12.00 to 2.00; two courses for £5.00.

Other events in the offing: a quiz night in October; Halloween night celebrations will be on Saturday 28 October, and Bonfire Night should be one to remember with a bonfire, fireworks and BBQ on Saturday 4 November. Christmas is fast

approaching and the Xmas fare will be on the menu from 27 November until Christmas Eve. And one for the future: New Year's Eve will herald 2007 with a pig roast and masquerade party.

Jane would like to offer her thanks to those of you who supported the Bank Holiday festivities. Over £400 was raised for the Chemotherapy Unit at Milton Keynes Hospital from Saturday's karaoke and the games on Sunday. (We'll pass over the sad lack of knowledge displayed in the quiz about Abthorpe!)

VILLAGE GREEN GRASS CUTTING

The green is cut by volunteers weekly during the grass growing season. Following a couple of recent unfortunate brushes with cars parked outside the north entrance to the church, it would be very helpful if cars could be parked wholly on the road and not partially on the grass in this, or any other area, of the green.

POLICE TELEPHONE SERVICE

Northamptonshire Police are asking people to help shape the future of their telephone service which handled 264,711 non-emergency and 129,349 emergency calls in the year to March 2006. They are planning a consultation forum in October. Participation in the forum, which may become an annual event, is open to any member of the public. You do not have to have had dealings with the police to take part.

If you would like to be involved contact Julie Barton on 08453 700700 or check out www.northants.police.uk

JASON

Ruth Charles has had an unfortunate experience with the new JASON service proving very unreliable. It's been pursued by Ruth and a number of other people of her behalf, and seems that it was a one-off breakdown in the service, but if anyone else has an unsatisfactory experience, please let the Parish Council know.

IMMOBILISE YOUR MOBILE

If your mobile phone is stolen it is bad enough that it is expensive to replace, but there is also the hassle of losing all the information stored on it. You can now add your phone's unique IMEI number to a national register that can stop it being used by anyone else if it is lost or stolen, and can help restore it to you if it's recovered by police. That 15-digit IMEI number, which is assigned to each phone when it is manufactured, is printed on a label near the phone's battery and also

stored electronically in the phone's handset. The number can be displayed on screen by keying *#06# into the handset. You can register your IMEI number free of charge at www.immobilise.com

RARE BUTTERFLY IN ABTHORPE

Doug Goddard, who serves as County Recorder for Butterflies for both the Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation, organised a field trip to Bucknell Wood recently. Among the 16 species observed an aberrant *obsoleta* turned up – a white admiral with distinctly different markings. Help is continually needed from gardeners to provide suitable habitats in our gardens. Don't forget them when planning your planting.

LOCK YOUR CARS

There were a number of petty thefts from cars in the village during the night of 22 September. It is unfortunate that not everyone is as honest as we'd like to believe: do remember to lock your cars overnight.

EVENTS

Sunday 1 October

Harvest Songs of Praise, 6.00, St John the Baptist

Saturday 7 October

Harvest supper, 7.00 for 7.30 in the Old School. Casserole, crumble and custard, coffee and mints. Tickets sold door to door or from Richard Tomalin, 858316

continued over ..

EVENTS (continued)

Wednesday 18 October

SNC's Animal Welfare Officer is holding discounted micro-chipping sessions for cats and dogs, Towcester Town Hall. £14 per pet. Tel: 322295

Monday 23 October

Parish Council meeting, 7.45 in the Old School

Saturday 28 October

Halloween night at The New Inn

Sunday 29 October

Clocks go back

Thursday 2 November

Abthorpe Village Fund AGM, 8.00 the Old School, all welcome

Saturday 4 November

Bonfire Night at The New Inn: bonfire, fireworks and BBQ

Friday 10 November

Dance, with SalsaOxford, Caliente Latin Night, Blakesley and Woodend Hall, 7.30, 860461

Saturday 18 November

Abthorpe Village Fund: Quiz Night, 7.30 at the Old School. Tickets £5 with ploughman's supper, sold door to door from 21 October or available from June Willsher, 850575

Saturday and Sunday, 18-19 November

Towcester & District Arts Society, Winter Exhibition, Town Hall, Towcester 10.00 – 4.30, 858093

Monday 4 December

Parish Council meeting, 7.45 in the Old School

Tuesday 12 December

Towcester Choral Society Christmas Concert, 7.30, Towcester Town Hall. 01604 859645

Saturday 16 December

Abthorpe Village Fund: children's party in the afternoon, followed by songs on the Green and refreshments afterwards in the church.

Wednesday 20 December

Abthorpe Village Fund: lunch for the older residents, the New Inn

Sunday 24 December

Christingle Service at St John the Baptist, 4:00

Sunday 31 December

New Year's Eve masquerade party at The New Inn