

ABTALK



The extraordinarily long break since the last issue can only be put down to too much jollification plus some pressing work commitments over the spring and summer. Apologies if *Abtalk* is high on your reading list; we'll try and do better in the future.

It seems fitting in this commemorative year that the cover for this issue should feature Abthorpe War Memorial, erected after WWI to honour the six men from the village who gave their lives.

The following details of those listed have been assembled from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website and other lists of casualties:

Private George Eales Basketfield, 5th Bn, Northamptonshire Regiment, died of wounds 21st May 1917. Son of Joseph Basketfield, Foscoate. Buried at Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun.

John William Jelley, Private, 6th Bn Northamptonshire Regiment, died 20th March 1917 aged 18. Son of John W Jelley, Warrington. Native of Abthorpe. Buried in St Leger British Cemetery.

Private Wilfred Algernon Knapp, 6th Bn The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), died 20th January 1917. Arras Memorial. Born and lived at Benefield, Oundle, Northants. Married Anne Elizabeth Sheppard, daughter of Alfred Sheppard, publican at the Stocking Frame, Abthorpe.

Serjeant Andrew Malsbury, Royal Army Veterinary Corps, died 3rd March 1919 aged 36. Son of Elijah and Ellen Malsbury and husband of Ellen Eva Malsbury of Abthorpe. Buried in St John the Baptist Church, Abthorpe.

Private Oliver Stephen Osborne, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, died 21st March 1918. Buried Grand-Seraucourt British Cemetery. Born and lived in Abthorpe.

Rifleman Edward Charlesworth, 1st Bn, Kings Royal Rifle Corps, died 16th February 1917 aged 34. Buried in Ovillers Military Cemetery, Somme. Son of David and Amelia Charlesworth of Sheffield. Husband of Kate Charlesworth of Abthorpe; she died in 1949 at the age of 87. Edward Charlesworth is shown as Albert on our Memorial.

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A further 43 men went to serve and returned including 10 from the Snelson family, a familiar name now with the designation of the new housing development. All are recorded at www.roll-of-honour.com/Northamptonshire/Abthorpe.html

The story of one of the Snelson family, Phillip, was recorded by John Riches on the website About My Area in 2011: www.aboutmyarea.co.uk/Northamptonshire/Towcester/NN12/Villages/Abthorpe/211917-Phillip-Snelson.

Phillip Snelson was only a teenager when he joined the British Expeditionary Force as a member of 306 Field Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery. He was serving on the Somme battlefields near the French town of St Quentin when the enemy released clouds of toxic gas that affected Phillip. But he survived the war and returned to work in the Abthorpe shoe factory opposite the New Inn. Philip's grandson, David, owns the inscribed silver cigarette case, lighter and match holder that were presented to his grandfather by his fellow workers. The inscription reads:

"Presented to Gnr P. Snelson on active service 306 Siege Battery R.G.A. - B.E.F. France for his 21st Birthday Feb 21 1919 - from his fellow workers"

The names of those who contributed to the gift are also listed: *"Mrs Burt, M A Snelson, S Barrett, P Snelson, E Flowers, W Barrett, J R Snelson, Mrs E Sewell, W Flowers, G Morris, W Warman, Harvey Rush, T Snelson, L Snelson, D Snelson, W Snelson, H Rush, H Hunt, W Timms, W Foster, A Salmons, R Reeve, Ivy Snelson."*

Two years later on 23rd February 1923 Phillip married another villager, Ruby Dodds. They lived in a cottage in Silver Street that they named 'St Quentin', now 'Wheelrights'. Sadly Phillip died from the effects of mustard gas, it is believed in 1930, when his new son, David's father, was only three years old, .

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

"Why is South Northamptonshire Council spending our money on opposing a high speed railway line that would be of great benefit to our area?"

There was a murmur of agreement from some people in the room when District Councillor Peter Davies was asked that question by Keith Fenwick at the Annual Parish Meeting back in May.

Such meetings, a bedrock of democracy, are when the Parish Council

explains how it has conducted its affairs over the past year and also gives opportunities for other village organisations to report on their activities.

Barbara Malcomson said that the Parochial Church Council was fully involved in collecting supplies for the Towcester Food Bank, whilst Jan Miles for the Old School Committee explained that £15,693 had been raised for the refurbishment of the kitchen and committee room where free wi-fi has been installed.

David Robbins in his capacity as Parish Footpath Warden highlighted the joys of our ancient and comprehensive network, whilst John Riches outlined how the Local AgeUK could help to support the elderly.

The Silverstone Schools Federation representative was delighted that the school had received an Outstanding grade from Ofsted and that it was so oversubscribed that newcomers to Abthorpe and surrounding villages could have difficulty in gaining admission for their children. More news of the Silverstone schools follows on page 18.

Local police representatives reported crime statistics for the parish. Disturbingly these included 6 burglaries and a car theft.

Eric Malcomson representing the Tove Valley Community Broadband project was proud that unpaid

volunteers had connected over 300 premises in the past year and that fibre optic cables would soon enable each village in the company's operational area to access even faster broadband and bring greater benefits to our area.

Parish Council Chairman Cllr Stephen Noble in his report gave a detailed account of the council's activities. The results of the newly purchased vehicle-activated speed sign were examined. An average of 1,500 cars a day pass along Wappenham Road. Their disturbingly high average speed is 34mph. A top speed was recorded of 73mph although Bob Carter, the Parish Clerk, explained with a chuckle that it was likely to have been a police car answering an emergency call.

Cllr Noble expressed his concern about the difficult access at Foscoote to the proposed solar farm at Handley Park. But he was delighted that if it ever became operational a community dividend of £4,000 a year would be paid to Abthorpe. (Further update on this project on page 16.)

Finally, the parish finances are healthy with a total of £4,655 in the bank at the end of March, the council having purchased the speed camera and made a donation of £1,000 towards the Old School toilet project.

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR WIND TURBINE

An application by local farmer, Mr Aidan Jones, was made some months ago to South Northamptonshire Council to erect a single wind turbine at Poplars Farm in Wappenham Parish. The proposed turbine 86.45 metres tall to the tip of its blade would be visible from the Brackley Lane area of Abthorpe. As the Council failed to make a decision within the period of time allowed an appeal was submitted to the Secretary of State.

Mr John Braithwaite an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has considered the application. He has allowed the appeal and granted planning permission for the single turbine plus a hard standing, access road, sub-station and trenching. An application for costs was made by Mr Jones but this is subject to a separate decision.

In a 14-page document the inspector explains the reasons for his decision. It is his opinion that the proposed turbine and associated development would have no material effect on the landscape within which it would be located. The only dwelling where shadow flicker caused by the rotating blades could occur is Poplars Farm itself. The inspector concludes that any harm caused by

this development is outweighed by its environmental benefits. The full report can be found at <http://snc.planning-register.co.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=68383>.

However, following this decision and the growing concern of residents, a meeting was held on 18th August to establish what courses of action remained for villagers who are opposed to this development. As a result, a group of concerned residents and householders are taking legal action to seek a Judicial Review of the inspector's decision. This action is being funded by those residents who make up the Wappenham Wind Turbine Action Group (WWTAG). It is emphasised that the action has no connection with, and is completely independent from, both Wappenham Parish Council and South Northants District Council.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Several local charities are looking for volunteers:

Tools for Self Reliance refurbishes donated hand tools which are sent to artisans in third world countries. They meet on Tuesday morning in Towcester and would like more volunteers to help with the cleaning and reconditioning of tools. Please contact Lorraine at Towcester Volunteer Centre, tel: 358264.

Northamptonshire Association for

the Blind, an independent charity helping people with sight loss, could also do with more help. Rachel Cave is their Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01604 719193/07889 411274; rachel@nab.org.uk

Happy at Home's aim is to help older, rurally isolated residents to access available local services, and as a result feel happier about living in their own homes for longer. South Northants Volunteer Bureau is looking for volunteers as home visitors, event volunteers, fire safety check volunteers and administrative assistants. More details on www.daventryvolunteers.org.uk/projects.html.

NEWS FROM THE NEW INN

The Grand Prix doesn't make the impact on the local villages that it used to do since the introduction by Silverstone of the policy of trying to keep race-goers accommodated, entertained and fed on the circuit site. However, although the impact on the New Inn is now similar to any other weekend (whereas it used to equate to an additional month's income in years gone by), the restaurant did well serving over 80 meals on the Friday evening and more than 100 on the Saturday, proof that some race-goers did venture out of the circuit to explore the local area.

Another outing of the now-famous Hooky Tour took place on 31st July. This involves a long day of exertion, starting with breakfast at the pub and an excursion to the Hook Norton Brewery. This is one of the only remaining tower breweries, still in its original listed Victorian buildings and using much of the original equipment. And of course the various Hooky brews have to be sampled before lunch and a scenic drive back via several Hook Norton pubs to see if they keep their beer as well as Rob does at the New Inn. Once returned to Abthorpe, the learning from the day has to be digested over a pint or two, before agreement can be reached that it was an excellent educational day out.

The monthly Sunday charity quiz has continued over the summer. On 27th April another magnificent sum of £113 was raised. The winning team, Pam's People, decided to donate it to Smile Train, a charity which helps children born with cleft palates to access life-changing operations: www.smiletrain.org.uk.

Because of the May bank holiday the next quiz was on Sunday 1st June, won by No Eye Deer who sent £132 to World Vision in Ethiopia. The next was still in June, on the 29th, to put the schedule back on track. No Eye Deer won again and and this

time the £100 raised went to the local branch of the Alzheimers Society, to be used in Greens Norton.

On 27 July Not ABBA swept the board and donated the winnings of just over £100 to Northampton Hospital's chemotherapy unit.

On the last day of August, the Barflies were runaway winners. The total raised from the evening of £84 will go to Relate. 28th September is the date for the next quiz.

Looking forward to Christmas the quiz, with some seasonal twists, will be on 21st December, so do make a date in your diary.

THE DELIVERY MAN

He quietly sneaks into Abthorpe during the early hours of the morning. Few villagers have ever seen his face. Some may have heard a faint 'plop' whilst he is with us, but he is

most likely to have disappeared by the time anyone has got out of bed and pulled the curtains to observe his passage.

Before anyone starts fretting about this silent, unknown-to-us figure, there's nothing to worry about. It is Ian Gilkes a delivery driver for Smiths Newsagents from Banbury who makes sure that each day our newspapers are available for delivery. Robert Schlachter the proprietor of Smiths Newsagents tells us Ian Gilkes has recently joined his team. Born and bred in Banbury, Ian spent many years as a bulk milk collector from local dairy farms. He is very familiar with the route and many of the farmers themselves, so he's been a perfect fit.

It never fails to amaze that we can watch, for example, a football match on television that ends just



Ian Gilkes

before 10 in the evening and then over breakfast next morning we can read a quality, considered report of the match in the sports pages.

Ian Gilkes and Robert Schlacter are just two of many important cogs in a super-efficient machine which ensures that even here out in the countryside we can enjoy the delights of reading a daily newspaper. If you would like a delivery: 01295 268499; info@smithsnewsagents.co.uk.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH

Barbara Malcolmson 857066

What an amazing summer this has been, although I cannot believe that we are heading into autumn already and a particularly successful harvest

for our farmers.

Patronal Festival: It was lovely to see so many people at the Patronal Festival at church in June which celebrated the birth of St John the Baptist. Thank you to everyone who supported us.

Cream teas on the Green: We had a very enjoyable afternoon with really lovely weather. Richard Tomalin's sock, cleverly disguised as a rat, suffered a bit in 'Splat the Rat' and the other games went down well too. Also going down well were home made scones and cakes! It was good to see The Green being used for this family occasion and we made £267.40 for the church.



Harvest 2014: This is a very important date in the church's calendar. Living in a lovely village as we do, surrounded by fields, we are well aware of the different crops growing around us. We celebrate the time of harvesting the crops with a Harvest Thanksgiving service. Traditionally, we also share food at this time and donations of food, either fresh fruit and vegetables from our gardens, or tins are brought to church at the service. In recent years we have supported the work of the Hope Centre in Northampton by passing this food on to them. The Hope Centre gives hope to local people who have fallen on hard times and supports and encourages them to rebuild their lives.

The Harvest Thanksgiving will be held on Sunday 12th October at 11am. This will be a Holy Eucharist Service and donations of food can be brought to the service.

As well as our service, we have held a Harvest Supper every year. We are having a change this year though and are organising a 'Cobblers and Tarts' Harvest lunch on Sunday 5th October 12.30 for 1pm in the Old School. (For those who do not know, a Cobbler is a dish with a savoury or sweet filling covered in such as a batter, biscuit or pie crust before cooking). A two course meal will be provided followed by coffee and a

bar will be available. Families are welcome and tickets will be sold door to door in Abthorpe. Please contact me if you live outside the village and would like tickets.

Everyone is welcome to both the service and lunch.

Services for September and October:
 14th September, Holy Eucharist
 11am
 21st September, Holy Eucharist
 10am
 12th October, Harvest Thanksgiving
 Eucharist 11am
 19th October, Holy Eucharist
 9.15am
 9th November, Remembrance Service
 Holy Communion 10.55am

Please note the change of time to our service on September 21st. We are delighted that Rev'd Vic Read will be taking this service on the anniversary of his ordination.

Church Path: Once we had completed the remaining work on the church from our last quinquennial inspection, we decided that we ought to do something about the path on the north side. This was once a tarmac path, but is now an earth track which needs constant attention in summer or it is covered in weeds. Our finances were low once the work on the tower was completed but Richard Tomalin has had some success with

grants he has applied for and we have been fortunate to receive the following grants: £1,000 from the Constance Travis Charitable Trust, £500 from the Allchurches Trust and £750 from the Historic Churches Trust. We appreciate having been awarded these grants and also the donations we have received from people in the village. We are getting very near to being able to get the work done. Ideally, we would also like to put electricity down to the gate and get the lantern returned above it with electric lighting.

A bit more fundraising I think for that!

MOBILE PHONE CHARGERS

Does anyone have any old mobile phone chargers lying around the house? A number of clients of the Hope Centre, Northampton, have older model mobile phones which are charged when they come into the centre, but there is a shortage of chargers. If you have any old ones you no longer need, please leave them in the box at the back of the church.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Although we don't have an official neighbourhood watch set up in the village as yet, there is information available which may be helpful for all to be aware of.

As a reminder of keeping vigilant, the thieves struck again in Brackley Lane in July and a bogus caller in Greens Norton in July purported to be from Anglian Water.

The homeowner denied access and called Anglian Water who confirmed that they had no-one working in the area; a timely reminder to always check identification - genuine people will encourage and expect you to do so. If in doubt always phone the company that the individual purports to be representing. Look the number up yourself and do not rely on a number given to you by the person. They could be giving you an accomplice's number.

Get a good look at the person and any vehicle they are in - the more descriptive detail you get the more likely the police are to trace them. Never be afraid to phone the police immediately; they will treat incidents like this as a priority and their response will be excellent. The more detail you pass them and the quicker they are told the better they can act.

MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library now visits the Green on the second Saturday of the month from 3.00 to 3.20.

PEOPLE**MR DAVID HUGHES**

Sadly we have to report the death of David Hughes. David, who came from Sheffield, was born in 1938 and spent his working life in banking. Soon after leaving school he seriously considered entering the priesthood, but changed his mind and went to college in Cheltenham. But he must have had an adventurous streak as early in his working life he got a job with Barclays Bank, who



sent him to Canada. This was in 1961 when travel by ship was still the norm but David's employer suggested he delayed his journey by a week so that he could travel on the maiden voyage of the *Empress of Canada*.

In 1975 he went to the Harvard Business School, where he gained banking and business qualifications. Around this time he also took Canadian citizenship. David worked in both Canada and the USA, travelling widely on behalf of his employers. He finished his career as Vice President of the Toronto Dominion Bank, for a time sharing an office building with Dr Henry Kissinger.

He retired in his mid-fifties, just before computers became commonplace at work; he never did develop an interest in what they could do. He considered moving to Vancouver Island, but eventually decided to return home to England. He came to live in Abthorpe 19 years ago choosing this village quite by chance, but settled in and took an active part in village life.

He had a particular love for the Church in Abthorpe. He was Church Warden for about 10 years. David had had heart surgery before he came here so had to exercise regularly. He made many friends on

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his daily walk, which had to be done at a fair pace, on the circle through Slapton.

David spent his time reading and gardening. Holidays took him all over the world; he was hoping to go on his first visit to Guernsey this month.

A couple of years ago his health started to fail. Poor eyesight meant he had to give up driving and he could not keep his garden in shape and so last year moved to Towcester. He always said he had no fear of dying, supported by his strong Christian faith, but just feared the process of dying. The end came peacefully in his sleep. David's funeral will be on Thursday 4th September at 1pm at St John the Baptist church in the village.

Marcos Salvador Holmes was the star at his baptism in Abthorpe Parish Church on 23rd August. Surrounded by his parents Natalie and Manolo, family members, friends and parishioners, nine months old Marcos was welcomed into the world wide church by the Rev'd Paul McLeod who apologised to the Spanish speakers in the congregation for his lack of knowledge of their language.



Y o u n g Marcos's mother Natalie Holmes was brought up in the village, attended Sponne Secondary School in Towcester and went on to study French and Spanish at Exeter University. As part of her

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degree course she spent her third year studying in Valencia and after graduating she returned there where she had many friends. She currently works as the Personal Assistant to the Director of a private college that specialises in teaching the Spanish curriculum via the medium of English.

Marcos's father Manola Salvador is a former top Spanish professional footballer who now serves as Sports Director of Levante, a major team in the Spanish la Liga, where his responsibilities include appointing the team manager and arranging player transfers.

The family, who live in Valencia, are determined that Marcos will grow up tri-lingual and be fluent in Spanish, English and Valenciano, their home city's regional language.

Tina and Steve Clews moved into Middle Cottage in Main Street a while ago and are busy preparing for their wedding in Rushton on 12 September. Tina originates from Yorkshire but Steve has more local connections being a Northamptonshire man. Gardening is one of Tina's favourite pastimes and they both enjoy walking and exploring the many local paths. We wish them the very best in their future life together.

We would also like to welcome Debbie and Dave Chatt who have moved into 44 Wappenham Road after a long search for the right place to put down some roots. Although Debbie is a seamstress, specialising in curtains and alterations, she loves decorating and is making great strides in refurbishing their new home. Dave is an Operations Manager for a local firm, and probably more importantly, a keen golfer. You may well encounter them walking their two well-loved Jack Russells.

We hope Tina, Steve, Debbie and Dave have many happy years in the village.

MARIE CURIE COFFEE DAY

This is a must in the diary for Autumn and it wakes us all up to think about Christmas.

This year Liz and Barry Haycock will be opening their home, Highfield Farm, on Thursday 30th October from 10 am to 3pm and 4 to 8pm. The farm is just outside the village on the road to Wappenham.

Last year more than £5,300 was raised and over the time that Liz and Barry and their team of helpers have been holding these events, they have raised a staggering £89,600 for Marie Curie.

It is an opportunity to buy some Christmas cards and gifts, and take part in the raffle. And while you're there you can have a spot of lunch, or cup of tea and cake.

TOTE WINNERS

Just to emphasise how long it has been since the last issue, there are six tote winners to record:

March: Mrs Audrey Dancer - £225

April: Arthur and Sian Young - £227.50

May: Mrs Dancer again (her lucky year) - £227.50

June: Ian and Sue Atkins from Wappenham - £227.50

July: Rob and Liz Capurro - £227.50

August: Janet Dancer - £227.50 (keeping it in the family.)

Congratulations to all and thanks to everyone who supports the tote.

BLUE BADGES AND BUS PASSES

Applications and renewals for blue badges and bus passes can now be made online at any time.

Bus Pass: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/buspass

Blue Badge: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/bluebadge

On the websites you can find out if you are eligible for a blue badge and we are assured assessment should be made within 6 weeks. Bus passes should be issued within 10 working days.

TOVE VALLEY BROADBAND CELEBRATES

Keith Fenwick

Expanding on the report to the annual parish meeting, TVB now has 346 members with 328 connected, a strong advance on the planned 200 members within two years of commencing operations.

At peak times such as when the children get home from school the speed drops, but as the increased membership has ensured the company's financial security and we have finally been awarded a government grant, we have embarked on a major programme to ensure that everyone gets at least 30Mbps.



The drilling machine (above) about to start work at Wappenham. A pit had to be dug first so that the head (right) could enter the ground at the necessary depth. The head can be steered round gentle corners.

To achieve this, we will be getting a much faster connection to the Internet and will lay fibre cabling between the villages.

The fibre cabling will generally be laid across fields but inevitably some roads have to be crossed. A heavy duty plastic pipe is laid first, and the fibre cable is then blown through it.

Work started in earnest on 19th August, when a directional drilling machine swung into action in Wappenham to install a tube up the church path. The machine was then turned 90 degrees to drill to the junction with Highbridge Road and on to the field beyond. The process took only a few hours, but installing manholes and making good took much longer.

A mole plough will be used to cross the fields and this work should start shortly, taking a few weeks to cover the complex patchwork of fields.

Once the fibre cables have been laid, they will be commissioned and then



brought into use. Pictures will be posted periodically on our website: www.tovevalley.com.

It's all very exciting stuff. Within a short while the Tove Valley Project, still known legally as Abthorpe Broadband Association Ltd, will deliver some of the fastest broadband speeds in Europe to our area, thanks to the generosity and co-operation of landowners who have granted wayleaves for fibre optic cables to be installed under their land and the work of countless enthusiastic volunteers. Thanks everyone - it is appreciated and is surely history in the making.

Unfortunately, this issue has come too late to alert everyone to look out for the video camera that Eric Malcomson had placed in a bluetits' nest box at the back of his house and streamed the video live on the TVB website. Members have watched enthralled as a pair laid their eggs, hatching them and raising their family. The chicks finally flew the nest on 29th May. Maybe he will do something similar next spring.

POLICE CHAPLAINCY

Vivien Baldwin is the Force Lead Chaplain for Northants Police working with a team of eight chaplains from a number of Christian denominations as well as one Muslim chaplain, all of whom provide volunteer support

for about two hours a week. Each chaplain is given a particular area to support so that they get to know the people and the work well.

Vivien would like to build her multifaith team across the county and is looking for a faith leader of lay person who feels able to offer their services. It is important to note that the role specifically forbids any form of proselytising as those of all faith and belief systems, and those of none, are supported by police chaplains.

Please contact Vivien if you would like more information: 07720 811477; Vivien.Baldwin@northants.pnn.police.uk

FILM ABTHORPE

Unlike many activities which stop over the summer months, Film Abthorpe has continued, showing *Philomena* in July and *The Eagle Has Landed* most recently. September will be the lean month as the organisers take a break, but a date has been pencilled in for October: Thursday 23rd. So do make a note and watch out for the flyers announcing the film.

PROPOSED SOLAR FARM

The planning application for the construction of a solar park at a site at Handley Park Farm has been rejected by South Northamptonshire Council's Development and Control Committee. The site immediately

borders Abthorpe parish and very few local people will have actually set foot there. The application was for an installed capacity of up to 12 mega watts, enough to meet the electrical needs of at least 26,000 average UK homes (when the sun shines).

Handley Park Solar Array was rejected because its scale, unbroken mass, number of buildings, security fencing, CCTV, access tracks and topography will appear very prominent and incongruous in its rural setting and will have an adverse visual and industrialising impact on the area and the surrounding landscape, and the enjoyment of the well-used and valued public rights of way in the vicinity. The harm is made worse by the nearby Shacks Barn Solar Park.

Abthorpe Parish Council had also considered the application as the suggested site access from Wappenham Road at Foscoate is within the parish council's jurisdiction. The PC submitted an objection as it believes that vehicular access to the site at Foscoate was unsafe as the line of sight is very poor. Access should only be through the existing Handley Park Farm entrance.

We wait to see if this will go to appeal.

RESEARCHING ANCESTORS

Entries in the church's visitors book show a surprising number of people who visit Abthorpe to carry out research into their family's history, two of the most recent being Mary Wills Fulton and her husband Jerome who came from Portland, Oregon, in the north west of the United States.

One of Mary's ancestors was Thomas Wills who worked as a brewer here in Abthorpe but once he emigrated to the state of Ohio he became a gardener. His son George Wills, from whom Mary is descended, was born in Abthorpe in 1843 and accompanied the family when they emigrated. George learned to be a



potter and served in the Union army during the American Civil War.

During their visit Mary and Jerome explored the local area and visited the churchyard extension to find the graves of members of the Wills family who had stayed behind in the old country. Mary was grateful that Abthorpe church's records are now available online for anyone to investigate. And they particularly enjoyed the village's hospitality and assistance with ancestor searches.

COUNTY CONNECT SERVICES

Following a review of the service based on usage data, from 1st September there will be some changes to the County Connect services which cover Welland Valley, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley.

In summary, there will not be a reduction to the services available at peak commuting times, but it will now no longer be possible to travel directly between Towcester and Daventry. Passengers who do wish to make this journey will be advised to change in Woodford Halse or Northampton

The bus which operates to and from Banbury will be increased in size to carry 24 seated passengers to meet demand.

In an attempt to further increase usage and reach of services to Brackley, three additional parishes

in Buckinghamshire will be added to the Brackley/Towcester service.

The telephone number has changed to 0345 456 4474, and the operator of the service will be Kier. More information: 01604 364439; www.mgwsp.co.uk

SILVERSTONE SCHOOLS

The Headteacher and Governors of the Silverstone Federation of Schools were recently shown plans by Northamptonshire County Council for a new school for the community.

This new school in Silverstone should be ready for occupation in September 2016. Although there is much to do over the coming months and many processes to undergo, the results will be a fully functioning, modern school for the 21st century. Governors and staff are currently being consulted about the design.

Residents of Silverstone and the linked area villages of Abthorpe and Wappenham were able to view the plans and comment on them at a public display and consultation in June when the architect, project managers and representatives from the schools and County Council were there to answer questions.

Additional primary school places are required at Silverstone Infant and Junior Schools due to new housing in the village and the increasing demand within the linked area for

places at the current schools. The County Council is planning to build a new school on land that it owns on Towcester Road (the site is part of the area known as New Rookery Farm). This is part of a proposal to formally amalgamate the Infant and Junior School into a single primary school, and double the capacity from 210 to 420 places to meet the increasing demand.

Key points of the proposals are:

- * A £6.3m building project
- * 14 classrooms; school hall, studio and kitchen; multi-purpose rooms, learning resource centre and staff facilities
- * Staff and visitor car-parking and drop-off arrangements for parents
- * Playgrounds, sports pitches and habitat areas

The outline timetable for the new school is:

- * August 2014: submission of planning application
- * September - December 2014: statutory consultation and Public Notices on the proposal to amalgamate and expand
- * February - May 2015: tendering
- * June 2015: construction starts on site
- * July 2016: completion of the building work
- * September 2016: new school opens

BUZZARDS

As recently as 2008, sighting a buzzard was a cause for excitement. Nowadays these gorgeous creatures can be seen every day if you care to cast your eyes skywards and spot them gliding around in the thermals. Their high-pitched mewling cry is another call to look for them.

According to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, buzzards are now breeding in every county in the UK. They can be seen all the year round particularly above habitats such as woodland. For centuries they were almost hounded to extinction in most of England, but in our more enlightened times have made a most wonderful come-back.

As the Welsh poet W H Davies wrote, "What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?" Just stare upwards on a warm day and you'll spot the buzzards.



Buzzard, from RSPB web site

SILVERSTONE PARK

Referring again to Silverstone we can offer an update on Silverstone Park, the development being created by MEPC next to the circuit to provide a hub for high-performance technology and motorsport engineering.

With eight Formula 1 teams in the area there is a synergy with the circuit location. Some of the statistics around the project are interesting: with 2.4m sq ft of planning consent, more than 200 companies employing 8,000 are anticipated to be attracted to the site during the next decade. MEPC has also acquired 15 new industrial units just off the Dadford Road formerly owned by F1 team owner and BBC GP pundit Eddie Jordan.

UK government funding has been awarded for a state-of-the-art Metrology Centre (that's the theoretical and practical science of measurement - one learns something everyday, even editing Abtalk!). For some very pretty pictures and more information: www.silverstone-park.com

For those of you involved with local charities, the people already working on the site have a social committee which among other things raises money for deserving causes.

EUROPEAN ELECTION RESULTS

Although it seems a while away now, the results of the European election are worth noting. These are for the South Northamptonshire district.

Confusingly the wards of the South Northamptonshire constituency that are located in the Borough of Northampton are subsumed within Northampton's figures:

An Independence from Europe	452
BNP	270
Conservative	9,565
English Democrats	216
Green Party	1,885
Harmony Party	35
Labour	2,911
Liberal Democrats	1,441
UKIP	8,749

Could the conclusion be that local people don't want Harmony here?

EVELYN GOSHAWK'S ABTHORPE HISTORY NOTES - PART I

When Evelyn Goshawk arrived in Abthorpe as a retired vicar's wife she was still full of energy. Viewed by many as a formidable organising woman, she was typical of her generation of vicars' wives. Once married and unable to pursue a career of her own she had immersed herself in every parish her husband had ministered. However she did keep up with her outside interests. She was keen on puppetry and published books on miming plays as well as a history of two Oxfordshire parishes where she had lived. Guiding was another of Evelyn's interests.

Evelyn had married in 1922 before having daughters Margaret and Bridget in 1923 and 1925. Her husband Charles became a curate in 1932 at Millfield, Durham. From then on they moved parishes at regular intervals whilst Evelyn researched and published church histories. Thus when she came to Abthorpe she set about researching Abthorpe church, not so easy in those days. Nowadays so much is published on the internet but then it meant visiting or writing to record offices and church repositories. She generously showed all her notes to others and asked opinions. Most of these notes were deposited at Northampton Record Office to be accessible to anyone. When she died in 1990, aged 94, her daughter Margaret considered publication but was dissuaded as the notes had already been incorporated into an ongoing book about Abthorpe. However all Evelyn Goshawk's hard work can still be seen in its original note form at the Record Office. It is the generosity of such people sharing their research which means history is not lost; so much about the village has been gleaned from an older generation then passed on to the next. Often notes reveal something which is of interest to others but gets discarded. This happened with the rough notes that Evelyn did not deposit because they were mostly inquiry letters to academics and other sources, including three Brackley Deanery magazines: 1906, 1907 and 1913. The magazines are now over a hundred years old so even the smallest item seems interesting.

Abthorpe vicar, the Revd. Ashwin, wrote that on the 23rd of September 1913 King George spent 80 minutes in the parish inspecting troops on manoeuvres. 'As he rode up the road we all thought the King had touched his hat to us individually. We saw airships, and aeroplanes were so frequently over us they were accounted of as nothing'. Helmdon rector Revd. Wonnacott expressed an opinion which would have been echoed by

many in Abthorpe: 'The Parish has been kept lively during the past week by army airships and aeroplanes passing and re-passing during each day. It is a wonderful eye-opener to our rural population and a science of air which should not be lost on us who have such a seldom view of these things.'

It must have been very exciting for people who probably had not seen any aircraft before. Rhoda Hindes, who lived at Thorpe End in School Lane, was eighteen in 1913. She rode around the local countryside on her bicycle looking for the manouevres and was very impressed to see some German soldiers in uniform who had been invited to join the exercise at Stowe IX Churches. The website: www.livingarchive.org.uk/content/local-history/areas/wolverton/army-manouevres-1913 has the detail.

The manouevres consisted of 40,000 men with 15,000 horses descending on the district. As it was nearly harvest time there were complaints about men trampling the crops and their horses taking hay from the stacks. This was the War Office testing the modern army which was tested for real within a few months in WW1. Later farm cart horses were requisitioned to be sent to the front, a necessity but hard to accept by their owners' children (as depicted in the play *Warhorse*).

M E H

Part II of this article will be published in the next issue

OLD SCHOOL UPDATE

The recent events have proved very successful. The return of the John Cleveland Band in May, organised in conjunction with the Church, was again a hit with those who attended and the total raised of £612 was split equally between the two organisations. The plant sale was more popular than ever this year with £608 being added to the fundraising coffers.

You will be aware that the big project this year is the refurbishment of the toilets. Apart from two grants mentioned in the last issue totalling £3,000, South Northants Council has generously awarded a grant of £8,500. The final piece of the financial jigsaw is an anticipated grant from the Big Lottery, confirmation of which is awaited. The original construction companies who quoted are in the process of updating their quotes in the light of a firmer specification.

So fundraising continues, but always with the emphasis on the social side of events. To that end, plans are in the making for a fish and chip supper with family bingo in November; watch out for the flyers with the

exact date. Also hoping to make a very welcome return in the autumn is the Saturday morning Trucker's Breakfast complete with mugs of tea and popular newspapers to read.

But there is one plea from the Management Committee: would anyone volunteer to hold one of the series of coffee mornings which are so appreciated in the winter months? If so, please get in touch with one of the committee, or give Jan Miles a ring on 857427.

FLY-TIPPING

Waste dumped in lay-bys, farmland, etc. can be a health hazard and unsightly. If you witness fly-tipping or wish to report dumped rubbish, provide as much information as possible (e.g. date, time, vehicle registration, location, type of rubbish) either via the South Northants Council online form, calling 322344, or by emailing waste@southnorthants.gov.uk.

The Council clears fly-tipping from the public highway, verges and lay-bys. If you report fly-tipping to the Council, they will try to get rid of dumped rubbish in five working days.

SAFARI SUPPER

Along with many reports in this issue, the Safari Supper seems a long while ago - it was in fact in May. But it was again a successful evening, with 64 people each enjoying five venues around the village during the course of their meal: all at the drinks reception, then splitting off in parties of 8 for first course, main, dessert and coming together at the end for coffee - and the remains of the wine, of course. There were a number of new villagers joining in this year which is a wonderful opportunity for everyone to get to know neighbours a little. Next year's outing is much anticipated.

ANDREA LEADSOM ADVICE SURGERIES

Our local MP, Andrea Leadsom, will be holding advice surgeries at South Northants Council Offices in Towcester from 3.00 - 6.00 on 5th September and 14th November. Appointments can be made by telephone: 01604 859721, email: andrea.leadsom.mp@parliament.uk or through her website: www.andrealeadsom.com

Overnight Car Parking Charges : we enjoyed the response to our article on 1st April and promise not to reveal how many people were taken in by the April Fool.

DIARY

Sunday 14 September

Holy Eucharist Service, 11.00, St John the Baptist

Monday 15 September

Parish Council meeting, 7.45, The Old School

Sunday 21 September

Holy Eucharist Service, 10.00, St John the Baptist

Sunday 28 September

Charity Quiz, 7.30, New Inn

Sunday 5 October

Harvest Supper, 12.30 for 1pm, The Old School

Sunday 12 October

Harvest Thanksgiving Holy Eucharist Service, 11am, St John the Baptist

Sunday 19 October

Holy Eucharist Service, 9.15, St John the Baptist

Thursday 23 October

Film Abthorpe, 7.30, The Old School (tbc)

Monday 27 October

Parish Council meeting, 7.45, The Old School

Thursday 30 October

Marie Curie Coffee Day, 10.00 to 3.00 and 4.00 to 8.00,
Highfield Farm, Wappenham Road

Sunday 9 November

Remembrance Service Holy Communion, 10.55, St John the Baptist

Sunday 21 December

Charity Christmas Quiz, 7.30, New Inn