

# THE CHRONICLE

Aston Abbotts Parish Magazine – January 2014

**Happy**

**New**

**Year**

**“May all your troubles last as long as your New Year Resolutions”**

# EDITORIAL

**THE CHRONICLE**

**Issue 338**

**January 2014**

I trust you all had enjoyable festive season, a good 2013 and are looking forward to 2014.

I'm sure you'll agree it's a fairly uninspiring cover for this 1<sup>st</sup> edition of 2014, so any budding artists or photographers out there please feel free to contribute ideas for the cover.

I'm not absolutely sure when this edition of The Chronicle will reach you but we aim to get it to you as early as possible in January, so apologies if some of the information is a little out of date.

Most publications review the past year at this time of the year. What can I say about 2013, some new people have moved in (welcome) some have moved out (farewell) some people have fallen out (unfortunate) and there are some controversial issues still rattling on.

Through it all not much has changed, the village traditions hopefully carry on, or do they?

Prepare to say goodbye to another village tradition...the Fete...I hope that's got your attention!

Seriously, unless somebody or several people take this on it won't happen. I understand that most of the essential bookings have already been made, the stall operators know what they have to do. It just needs somebody to pull it all together. I'm sure there's a template to follow and that previous organisers will give you all the guidance you need. So basically you turn up on the day and claim all the glory! (It's what I used to do at Astonbury, Ed)

The fete generates a lot of ££££s for village causes, including the Chronicle. So if remotely interested please contact Deidre Whyte 681685 to find out how easy it is.

Knowing this village as I do I am sure somebody will step up and join those others volunteers that keep these traditions going.

Finally thanks again to all our regular contributors, without whose input this would be a very slim publication indeed. To all of our readers it's your Village magazine do feel free to send in your contributions on any subject, it's an opportunity to air your views.

Phil Corrigan

## Snippets & Miscellanea

### **Strange Habits?**

Overheard recently at a local hostelry from an elder of the village:

“So I hid the vegetables in my bedroom”

Obviously this raises a numbers of questions:

- Is this a strange Aston Abbotts custom?
- A nefarious act to do with the allotment?
- Allude to something that shouldn't be mentioned in polite company?
- 

NB to avoid offense the use of elder refers to a wise man, not necessarily older.

### **The Poppy Appeal 2013**

The collections in Aston Abbotts amounted to £527.19. The area total was £2,572.59

Many thanks to those who collected and those who supported this worthy cause.

A Rawlings P.A.O.

Just a reminder of Chris Phillips' idea to commemorate the anniversary of WW1 by planting poppies throughout the village and your gardens. See previous issue (Ed)

### **Allotment Rents 2014**

Allotment Holders are reminded that

Rents for 2014 are due in January

Please pay in cash or cheque

(payable to 'PCC Aston Abbotts')

By January 25th to the treasurer at

Church Farm House, Thanks

The British Legion coffee morning on 9<sup>th</sup> November raised nearly £250 for Legion funds.

See Poppy Appeal for a great idea.

### **NOTICE BOARD**

Confusion has arisen regarding the use of the Notice Board outside the Village Hall. It had been intended for Parish Council use only, but since the other notice board in the village – attached to the bus shelter – had been locked, some villagers had begun to use the notice board at the Village Hall for private notices. The Parish Council accepts that there is a need for a notice board to be available for general use, and has arranged for the bus shelter notice board to be unlocked, and that is now available for this purpose. If any villagers wish to put notices up on the notice board at the Village Hall, instead of, or in addition to, the bus shelter board, could they please contact the parish clerk, Paul Bruton by phone on 681322, or by e-mail at [pbruton@pbfs.co](mailto:pbruton@pbfs.co).

Peter Shorrocks, Chairman of Parish Council

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Homemade soup of the day with crusty bread

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Oven roasted lamb rump served with dauphinoise  
potatoes, mint jus

Tagliatelle with olives, sun dried tomatoes, pesto &  
mozzarella served with garlic ciabatta

Pan roasted Gressingham duck breast, braised red cabbage  
& apple, garlic saute potatoes & cider jus

Beer battered cod, hand cut chips & minted mushy peas  
served with homemade tartare sauce

**PHONE : 01296 681 262**

## A Christmas Fairy Tale

by Peter Knight

Once upon a time, many years ago, the Government of the land decided that their kingdom needed to be mapped. To help them map the country Trig Points were erected at special places all over the land. One of these places was Lines Hill in Aston Abbots where a Trig Point called Trevor was placed on the very highest spot next to the road.

Trevor was happy in Aston Abbots and for years the children of the village would walk out to visit him, would climb onto him and admire the view.

Eventually, about 20 years ago, the Government decided that shooting stars called satellites could do the mapping better than Trevor and poor Trevor was made redundant.

Trevor was quite happy in his home at Lines Hill, ...but, one day, a fierce Dragon from the wastelands of the North wanted Trevor to adorn his castle. The Dragon swooped down and took Trevor away. Villagers were sad and missed Trevor. Luckily for Trevor one old man in Aston Abbots saw him languishing in his captivity at the Castle to the North. The old man thought 'I will never forget Trevor. I thought of him as a friend'.

Fifteen long years passed and Aston Abbots now had a village orchard. One wise man said 'We need a focal point in our orchard. What can we do?' The old man remembered Trevor.

The old man went and saw the Dragon in the North and bravely asked for Trevor to be returned to his home – Aston Abbots.

The old man then went and saw David the Steadfast – David agreed that Trevor should be brought home and so set out with his trusty stead (tractor and trailer).

David the Steadfast, showing no fear, rushed the dragon's castle, rescued Trevor and brought him home none the worse for his fifteen years in captivity, and took him to his new home – the village orchard.

One of the three wise men went straight to the orchard to see Trevor. The wise man was amazed and wandered round muttering 'Oh my Costard! Trevor is magnificent – Oh my Costard! What a splendid thing' – and like phrases. He then went home to design a 'seat' on which Trevor could sit and survey the orchard, his new home.

Another wise man smiled benignly and said 'I say, well done, very well done!' and the old man's cup runneth over with pleasure.

Thanks to David the Steadfast, Trevor was home again!

And they all lived happily ever after.

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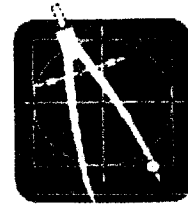
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# **Wanted**

## **Fete Co-ordinator**

**Morris Men**                      **booked**

**Silver Band**                      **booked**

**Kiddie Rides**                      **booked**

**So that's it, not much left to arrange.**

## **Reward**

**Not a lot, but you'll feel better for it.**

**Contact Dierdre 681685**



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## THE UNICORN

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Please see website for full menu and booking form or ask behind the bar.

### *Plus in December*

- Tuesday 10th**  
Live Folk Music/Sloe Gin Contest 8pm
- Friday 13th** Live Music Free Bar Fire
- Friday 20th**  
A surprise live music Christmas Special
- Friday 27th** Dinner and Jazz
- Tuesday 31st** - New Years Eve
- Restaurant** - 3 course set menu available £40.00pp from 7.30pm
- Bar** - Party in the New Year with Live Music
- Wednesday 1st** - New Year's Day  
Recovery Menu 12-3pm



**Shop open** for milk, butter and other essentials. Pre-orders required for freshly prepared produce.

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Every morning from 10.30am

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## Village matters

### WHAT'S ON IN JANUARY

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Rambling Club	meet on the Green	2pm
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10am
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Rambling Club NY party	17 Moorlands Ave	7pm
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10am
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30pm
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Mobile Library	The Green	10.30am
	(Use it or lose it)		
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10am
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10am
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30pm

**More players needed to support whist drives which have been going for 75 years.**

<b>Church Duties</b>	<b>Cleaning</b>	<b>Flowers</b>
January 4 <sup>th</sup>	Caroline / Colin	Christmas
January 11 <sup>th</sup>	Ann / Gordon	Donated
January 18 <sup>th</sup>	Alex / Anita	Donated
January 25 <sup>th</sup>	Colin / Gay	Ann Goodman

**Please note garden waste (brown bins) is not collected during January/February**

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## Letters Page

Hello..... Hello..... is there anybody out there?

I'm pleased to say that a letter has flooded into the Chronicle, (well it's a start)

Dear Sir (very respectful Ed)

For, and behalf of, The Save Our Dungheap Alliance

I write to you, with a great deal of disappointment, having recently learnt of the decision of the Orchard Committee to ask my fellow allotmenters to remove the muck heap by Easter!

The reason for this is, as yet, unfathomable, so I can only assume it's because the said heap offends the sensibilities of the good fruit growers of this parish when they visit their arboreal charges. (I only hope it's not because of 'Health & Safety')

What next! (I hear you cry) will there be further edicts issuing forth from the good Burghers of Aston Abbots. Should I expect monthly inspections as to the state of my allotment to ensure that it is weed free and raked to a fine tilth and therefore fit to be seen on the way to the fruit trees?

Will I be instructed not to grow vegetables, which are prone to develop suggestively, too close to the central 'avenue' so as not to upset those of a more sensitive nature as they pass by?

I also fear that I shall have to keep a bottle of Windolene handy in my shed to ensure that the green house passes muster.

If we can't have a pile of manure in its present position, whereabouts should one be placed?

That piece of land has been tilled by the good folk of this village for many a year and has seen its fair share of "soil improver" as can be seen by the excellence of the produce grown by all my fellow gardeners. After all, we do live in the countryside and I can't think of a more natural thing than seeing a good size pile of dung steaming gently in the winter frost just waiting to be distributed amongst the vegetable patches.

It is a sad day when this is not allowed to happen.

Yours, up to my neck in it

Simon

That should cause a stink! (Ed)

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**Aston Abbotts Parish Council**  
**Summary of Parish Council Meeting**  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2013

**Present:** - Cllr's P Shorrock (Chair), C Higgs, Mrs K Curry, Mrs J Hardcastle, R Clarke, P Bruton (Clerk), District Cllr. P Cooper and one member of the public. Apologies were received from Cllr B Carvey and County Cllr Mrs N Glover.

**Matter arising** - Cllr Hardcastle asked that following the application for the mobile home at Norduck Farm we had requested a meeting with AVDC Planning to review the Chicken Farm planning permission situation and to date this was still outstanding. District Cllr Cooper advised that he had agreed with AVDC that a meeting should take place before the end of December and it was agreed that Cllr Hardcastle would represent the Council at this meeting.

**Parish Councillor Vacancy** – The Clerk reported he received an email from Cllr Perkins formally resigning from Council. Mr Perkins wrote that he would like to thank the Council and Clerk for the opportunity they provided him with to learn and support the village. He was sure that their positive work will continue to help Aston Abbotts remain a wonderful village to live in. The Clerk would post the necessary Notice of vacancy and any interested residents should contact any member of the Council or himself.

**Parish Council Notice Board** – Cllr Shorrock advised the meeting that he had received a letter concerning the use of the Parish Council Notice Board. It was obvious that residents believed this was a Notice Board for general use, probably because of its location and the fact that the Board by the shelter appeared locked and was difficult to open. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Clark would obtain a quote for an additional Notice Board to be funded by Council for the use of residents for general notices. Residents would still be able to use the Board by the bus shelter in the interim and if they wanted a notice put in the Parish Council Board they should make a request to the Clerk.

**District Councillor Cooper** reported that it looked like AVDC would be increasing their share of Council tax by 2.5%. The Arla Dairy was operating at around 25% capacity and was expected to be fully operational by the end of January at which time we would see the impact of any additional traffic along the A418 and other routes to the site.

**Village Plan** – Cllr Shorrock reported that a meeting had been held to review the Plan and minor amendments were needed, however he was having difficulty opening the pdf format of the document as he did not have access to the necessary software.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014 at 7:30pm in the Church Room.



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## **CELEBRATION EVENT**

**The Trustees would like to show villagers the suggested  
plans for the proposed extension  
and improvements to our Village Hall.**

**The meeting will be held on  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January – doors open at 2pm.**

**The Trustees will be on hand to hear your comments and ideas and to explain the  
progress made and the future efforts necessary  
to raise the funds to carry out the work**

**All villagers are welcome – young and old**

**Please come; there will be a glass of something to enjoy  
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## Village Orchard Annual Meeting

In December, in the Village Hall, there was a very well attended annual review when Peter Knight reported on progress and news

A few more trees have been planted including a Blaze pear tree. This sapling has proved to be very vigorous where other saplings taken from the host tree have not survived.

Spring was late in 2013; this delayed the first mowing and hence the amount of grass cuttings gave the impression of a hay crop. It was noticed that a few tips of trees had been snapped off – the prime suspects were jackdaws who were using the posts as convenient perches. Nails were hammered into the top of each post and this seems to have solved that problem.

16 trees flowered and some fruit was set, notably on greengages, mulberries and Neil Chesher's apple tree. Two trees have died – they were in full leaf and then collapsed – it was felt that their rootballs were pot bound; they have been replaced.

In total 111 trees have been planted to date; there are 90 different varieties. There is room for approximately 30 more. It is not the intention to fill the orchard instantly – there should be the opportunity for new people to the village to have the chance to plant a tree if they wish. A few trees are available now for sponsorship at a cost of £30 with an additional £3 for the cost of printing a permanent label recording the variety of fruit tree and any dedication.

As some of you will be aware Wendy Bentley is moving away and we are very keen to find someone, or a group, who would be willing to co-ordinate some family events in the orchard. We had a really successful event two years ago and we would very much like to repeat that and make it a permanent date/s on the calendar.

Following comments from the audience it was agreed that information sheets would be stored in the shed. The shed houses four chairs and a table for visitors' use. Additionally it was agreed that it would be a good idea to obtain a bench.

Many commented on why a muck-heap for use of the allotment holders has appeared in the orchard right by the gate. It was felt that this is setting a precedent that should not continue.

There was discussion regarding the encouraging of wild flowers and bees.

It will be difficult for wild flowers to establish given the vigour of the grass. Where they could be encouraged would be on the margins and under hedgerows.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to Peter for all his efforts maintaining the orchard as it is today.

John Hardcastle

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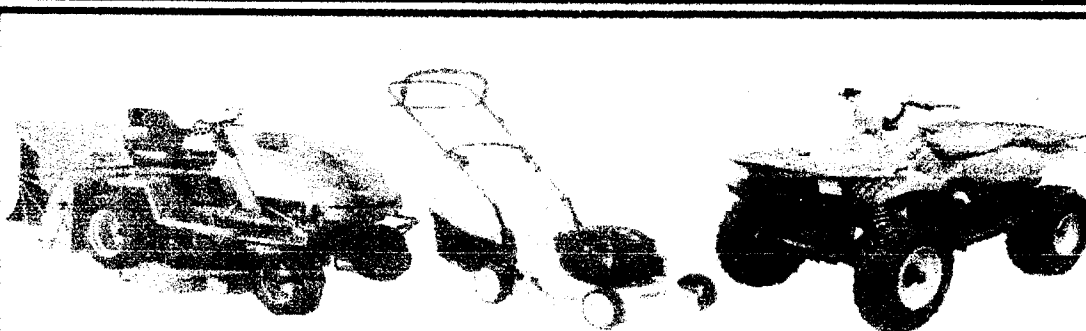
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## ALLOTMENT DIARY

As I write this article, the temperature outside is about 9°, but it has recently been as high as 12/13°, which is around double the average for the time of year. This has been causing confusion in the plant kingdom, and there are stories in the press of spring flowers like wild garlic and lilies coming into flower, and of a raspberry bush with lots of ripe red fruit. (Although there is no sign of any such activity among my raspberries). They will of course get their come-uppance when we get the first really cold spell.

I have just read an astonishing news item, which I confess to finding it difficult to believe, which is that according to a poll carried out by the BBC *Good Food* magazine, sprouts are now more popular than Christmas pudding! They attribute this to the promotion of sprouts by celebrity chefs, coupled with their alleged health benefits – and I suppose that it may also be relevant that by the time that Christmas pudding arrives on the table many people are already so stuffed, they cannot face eating it! While I personally enjoy eating Brussels sprouts as an accompaniment to turkey, in a contest with Christmas pudding there is only one winner, so far as I am concerned.

Quite apart from very much enjoying the taste of a good Christmas pudding, I have a strong nostalgic attachment to it. In my childhood I was always told that the pudding had been cooked with sixpences hidden in it (*for the benefit of any younger readers, this was a small silver coin that was worth about 2½p*), and every so often one of the grown-ups would produce a sixpence that he/she had discovered. I now realise that I was being conned, and that my mother or grandmother had not cooked the pudding with and coins in it, because of the twin risks of metal poisoning or some unfortunate diner choking on a coin, but I can still remember the excitement I had of searching through my pudding looking for an elusive sixpence. The grown-ups were of course slipping a coin into their helpings of pudding while my attention was distracted – and sometimes, if they could distract me sufficiently, a sixpence would get hidden in my pudding while I was not looking, so that I could have the fun of discovering it. Ah, happy days!

Meanwhile, on the allotment, the foliage of each of my new vegetable plants, the oca, has all withered away after the first frost, which meant that the tubers were ready for harvesting, and I have dug up the tubers of three of the six plants. You probably don't remember what I have told you about the plant in earlier editions of this diary, and so, to recap: the oca is a vegetable grown in the Andes of Peru and Bolivia. For some reason it has never previously been brought over to Europe like the potato, and the only other country where it is grown commercially is New Zealand, where it is marketed under the name "*New Zealand yam*". The plant is a member of the *oxalis* family, of which the best-known here is the wood sorrell. One can eat the leaves as a salad vegetable, but it is grown for the tubers, which grow underground like potatoes.

It is said not to be affected by blight, and is disease resistant, but when I dug up my crop, I found that it does have one drawback, which is that it is clearly a tasty meal for some pest, which had been noshing away on a number of the tubers. Research on the internet suggests that the pest in question may be slugs. The tubers, although prolific, are much smaller than potatoes. I found I had two different species of oca: one a pinkish colour, with the tubers looking very like large, flattish, prawns. The other was cream-coloured, and the tubers were knobbly, like globe artichoke tubers. The skin is waxy, and one does not need to peel them: simply wash the soil off. One can eat the vegetable raw in a salad, or cook it in most of the ways in which one can cook potatoes. I have so far only had them boiled, and found them perfectly pleasant to eat, but thought the flavour was a little bland, with a slight lemon taste.

Will I grow them again? Yes, I will. I'll keep some of the tubers to plant next spring. They are not a replacement for the potato, but an interesting alternative vegetable.

It only remains for me to wish you all a Happy New Year, and to hope you have a successful year's gardening.

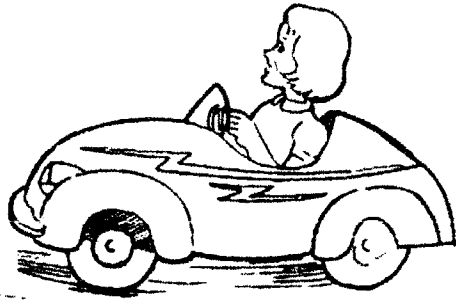
Peter Shorrocks

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<b>5<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Evensong</b>	<b>Rev. Annie Cooper</b>
<b>12<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Rev. Peter Binns</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Rev. Roger Hale</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Rev. Roger Hale</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> February</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Evensong</b>	<b>Rev. Philip Derbyshire</b>

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## **Countryside Matters**

Whatever your views on shooting, whether in favour or not, it has much in common with say, playing a new golf course or being a member of the National Trust. You can visit some superb places with old houses, gardens and grounds and you also have the opportunity to see some wonderful places that the 'general' public are unfortunate enough not to be able to see for themselves for free.

A case arose last week when I was invited to go shooting on a farm in Falcutt near Helmdon. The last drive was with our backs to an ancient oak woodland, with beech and even some old ash. It looked like it had been there for a couple of hundred years, possibly more. We stood out on a permanent pasture field, looking into the quickly fading sun; we were invited to move forward into the deep old gradual ditch, about 200 feet across, probably a remnant of the ice age. This made the shooting difficult to near impossible, but that of course is the challenge.

After the drive was over I stood watching the gun dogs working and was totally in awe of my surroundings. The shoot captain approached me and saw I was fascinated by the beauty of the place. It was then that I came down to earth with a bump. He informed me that I was standing on the Northern line of the proposed HS2. I was dumfounded! He pointed out the planned route in the fading light, stretching up to 3-4 miles away in either direction from where we stood. He explained how his next door farmer was going to lose 200 acres of his 780 acres to the new railway line, leaving him to farm 13 triangular fields, which would make the holding untenable and this after six generations. It cut his farm exactly in half; he would find it impossible to farm the other side of the line. What about the other poor souls who if more than 150 meters from the line would be lifelong prisoners in their unsalable properties and any retirement dreams shattered.

The Government and the HS2 followers must be stark staring mad to back this devastating white elephant, guaranteed to come back to haunt us for decades, and all this is just to save 20 minutes off the journey to Birmingham and beyond. Surely someone must see this is criminal and vandalism of some of our beautiful villages and irreplaceable countryside. What with the advent of superfast broadband and virtual offices, this is a dreadful mistake by vain politicians of all parties. At what cost shall this stupid project go ahead. We are a small island, for goodness sake, not a continent like France.

James

### **The Names Bond ...James Bond**

You may have heard recently of some research by a group of Academics!! Who analysed all of Ian Flemings novels to calculate Bonds alcohol intake.

They concluded that given the level of his drinking he would be unable to undertake most of his duties especially those of a more recreational nature!

It does give the opportunity to rename some of the films:

- You Only See Twice
- Liver Lets Die
- Licence Tequila
- The Spy Who Loved Meths
- Double Diamonds are Forever
- The Man With The Gordons Gin
- From White Russian With Love

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## More Countryside matters

Last Summer I remember sitting through a TV documentary about urban foxes, I was amazed that some people in the cities actually feed these animals nightly on cat food, chicken supreme, leftovers and bread and milk. The rest of the time these vermin hunt out K.F.C. MacDonald's, Pizza, hot dogs, kebabs and any other discarded fast foods. The foxes repay these sad people by digging up their gardens and under sheds to provide "Earths" for them to raise a litter; defecating all over their patios and lawns, keeping neighbourhoods awake with their incessant barking and howls for weeks while they carry on their prolonged and noisy and sometimes violent mating. Furthermore some folk are so short sighted that they let these mange ridden creatures into their homes and sometimes inadvertently near their children. They are wild animals, for goodness sake. They are sometimes repaid by the killing of their pet cats. Trust me foxes like nothing more than a juicy moggy.

If rabies did manage to get a foothold in this country, (as they have in France), God forbid, the urban foxes would pose some serious questions about how the disease is transmitted and it may lead to their extermination.

So when the local game keepers recently reported an increase of foxes caught in traps, I started to wonder what was going on. I then discovered these foxes often have shaved areas on their flanks and sides embroidered with stitches. Had they been run over, spayed, or suffered an accident, then repaired, stitched up and released into the countryside? What on earth is going on?

Have these animals been taken out of an urban environment, then carted miles up the A41 on a dark night and released into a strange, cold countryside with no food and no hope, no idea of how to catch and kill an un-caged rabbit and no young lambs to eat? Pheasant and partridge are too alert, the fox is unable to find enough road kill and no dustbins, and they start to starve to death. Is this the fate those misguided people in the cities, who seem to have no brains whatsoever, realise will happen? They, in my opinion, have watched too much Disneyfied television.

James

## Good Causes

Aston Abbots Good Samaritans Bingo has had another successful year raising money for good causes:

- £60 RNLI
- £60 Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Service
- £165 Cancer Research UK
- £60 Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
- £236.10 Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity
- £60 Movember Foundation (prostate & testicular cancer & mental health)
- £541.10    Total**

**Join us again on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014** for the start of a new season, with the usual cash prize bingo, reverse bingo, accumulator snowball (recently won at £42), raffle prizes and refreshments. Bingo can be fun for all ages and it all takes place from 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

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## **The Arty Bits... Books...Music and Theatre**

### **Aston Abbotts Book Club**

#### **November**

The Book Club reviewed Terri Daniel's book 'Passport to Hell'. Terri is known to many of the group through connections with Wingrave and The Royal Oak; other local places are also mentioned in her book.

Terri went to South America with a Tenerife nightclub manager and, on their return, they were both arrested by the Spanish Authorities for carrying drugs. Although Terri states she had no knowledge of the drugs and protested her innocence, under Spanish Law she was guilty by association. Hence Terri was jailed for 18 months in the none too pleasant confines of a Spanish prison

The book produced much lively discussion. Sympathy was expressed for Terri and her family. The group considered Terri to be brave in including some very personal details of her addictions admitting that on occasions these addictions had clouded her judgement of other people and responses to situations in which she had found herself.

We all felt compassion for Terri's mother who steadfastly stood by her daughter and supported Terri throughout. We recognised it must have also been a very trying ordeal for her over a lengthy period of time.

It is our understanding that Terri has used this book to raise awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol addictions and gives talks on this subject to pupils in schools. Members of Book Club much admire Terri for her work in this area and wish her every success in the future.

Pam Hewitt

#### **Music**

##### **Paul Carrack**

Thanks to John 'have I got a deal for you' Hardcastle I used the free tickets to see Paul Carrack.

He is one of the journey men of music, having been with Genesis, Mike and the Mechanics, Squeeze, Roxy Music as well as Clapton and Elton John.

He is a man with a wonderful voice and also good on guitar and keyboards. Most recently he was one of the artists to record a track (Misery) when the Beatles 'Please Please Me' album was re-recorded at Abbey Road in less than 24 hours. He is also well known as a songwriter and has his songs recorded by the Eagles, Tom Jones, Jools Holland and Diana Ross. (is this a concert review or biography? Ed)

He had a seven piece band that produced a very full, rich and well rehearsed sound. (that's better Ed) There were some outstanding performances but the sax player was amazing. I'm sure the way he was playing was illegal. Unusually the band had two drummers.

The vocal harmonies were really good but not overwhelming (says a Chunkee! Ed) with the emphasis being on the music. Famous songs written by Carrack were The Living Years, Somewhere over My Shoulder, How Long (has this been going on) Love will Keep us Alive.

They managed to turn pop songs into show pieces with How Long becoming a 15 minute progression of excellent solos and huge audience participation.

The Theatre was full on a Sunday night and we were all treated to a professional show by a talented performer. I just wish he didn't feel it necessary to wear a stupid hat.

Neil

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## **Theatre**

### **Ha Ha Holmes**

We went to see what can only be described as an adult pantomime, full of innuendo and jibes. Part of the fun of the whole brilliantly silly story is that Joe Pasquale frequently steps out of character. In the main, he does this at the start of each half – not so much stand – up as sit down, as he leisurely engages with the audience and gently insults front rowers who happen to catch his eye.

As sets are manoeuvred into position by cast members, often with deliberate clumsiness, or when volunteers are plucked from the audience to make fools of themselves – in a nice way- the presumably well planned ad – libs flow thick and fast. Men sitting at end of rows be warned unless you want to be dragged on stage.

Ben Langley is Dr Watson and Andrew Fettes does everyone else and I sure wish I had his energy.

Bob & Cora Carvey

### **Abba Mania**

We recently reviewed a very enjoyable tribute to the Carpenters at the Waterside Theatre. This was a band that rose to fame before either of us were born but that Elvina knew through her mother's tape recordings. In a similar vein but with a role reversal, we recently attended "Abba Mania" but this time it was Gavin's mother in possession of the offending tapes.

Abba first rose to fame with Waterloo in the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest but had so many hits that there cannot be anyone around that doesn't know them or secretly or otherwise love them. When Abba Mania, a tribute band, came to Aylesbury on 7 November the entertainment began before the curtain opened as diehard fans, some already clearly lubricated, made lively entrances in 1970s attire.

The performance began fairly conventionally but soon the audience was participating and dancing along with the famous songs. "Agnetha" (Carly Broome) and "Anni – Frid" (Katrina Wallis) engaged the audience superbly and gave spirited performances. However sadly for us as musicians, much of the musical backing was pre-recorded although "Benny" certainly played the role well.

Overall the performance was very enjoyable and goes to show the variety of musical performances that are available locally at the Waterside Theatre and the strong audience support they command.

Gavin and Elvina

## Aston Abbotts Telephone List

100 Club	David Gray	07935 414495
630 Club	Andy Bystra	681690
AVDC	Switchboard	585858
Baby & Toddlers Group	Kim Gayler	681123
Bingo	Pam Dixon	681626
	Sondra Dickason	682249
Book Club	John Hardcastle	688070
Bus Enquiries	Travel line	0870 6082608
Buses	L & S	415468
Chronicle Advertising	Phil Corrigan	688191
Chronicle Distribution	Marisa Abel Smith	681411
	Zandy Ayres	682419
Chronicle Editorial	editor@aachronicle.co.uk	
Church Mowing Rota	Gordon Kemp	681763
Church Room Hire	Tracy Hinds	688479
Citizens Advice	Aylesbury	0870 1264056
Bucks County Council	Switchboard	395000
County Councillor	Netta Glover	688357
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District Councillor	Peter Cooper	681250
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Fete Coordinator	Deirdre Whyte	681685
G.N.O.M.E.S.	Carol Spooner	681544
Hospital	Stoke Mandeville	315000
Ladies Club	Shirley Ford	681865
Member of Parliament	John Bercow MP	714240
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Parish Clerk	Paul Bruton	682322
Parish Council Leader	Peter Shorrock	681260
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Police Non-Emergency		0845 8505505
Police	Wing Police Station	396163/4
Railways	Chiltern Railways	0870 5165165
Ramblers Club	Colin Higgs	681343
Rector	Rev Philip Derbyshire	01525 240287
Refuse Collection	Enquiries	585510
Royal British Legion	Alan Jones	682366
Royal Oak	Teri & Gary Moulton	681262
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## **More theatre**

### **The Four Seasons by Candlelight**

On November 8<sup>th</sup> we had free tickets courtesy of the Chronicle to see the Four Seasons by Candlelight at the Waterside Theatre, performed by the Mozart Festival Orchestra.

It was so interesting to see the orchestra in their period costume, and performing without a conventional conductor. The music was directed by David Juritz the principal violin. We were also treated to performances by Soprano Rebecca Bottone and Trumpet player Crispin Steele-Perkins (a trumpet soloist who is world renowned for the quality of his performances and wide-ranging musical experience). I don't think I have ever heard a full concert performance of Vivaldi's Four Seasons, and it was really enjoyable to listen to them being played so beautifully.

Kate Curry

### **Priscilla Queen of the Desert**

What a contrast to the Four Seasons! Just as enjoyable, but in a completely different world! The Waterside was buzzing from the moment we entered the foyer to see the first night of this show in Aylesbury. Not having seen the film we had no idea what we were letting ourselves in for, and were delighted and amazed by the sheer exuberance of the performance. All I can say is WOW – the costumes, the songs, the band, the special effects and the amazing performances by the whole cast made for a truly memorable evening, and my only regret was that I couldn't go back to watch it all again the next night....

Thank you John for the tickets to both these shows. I do hope you are able to continue procuring press tickets for people from the village.

Kate Curry

Since August this year the following have taken advantage of the press tickets offered through the Chronicle – June Cox, Judy Hardcastle, John Whyte, Gay Erskine-Walker, Melanie Smith, Neil Chesher, Jo Perkins, Gavin Watson and Bob Carvey.

I'm hoping that the Waterside Theatre will continue with their generosity in the New Year. (so am I, a lot of blank space without them Ed)

John Hardcastle



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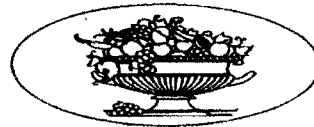
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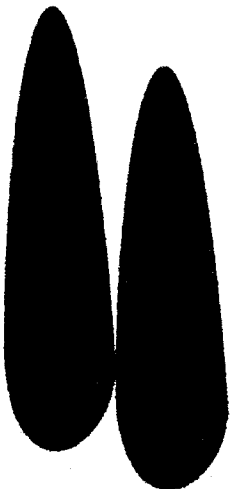
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Richard Clarke  
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- Churchwarden

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Anita Parker 681325

Gordon Kemp 681763

Caroline Lane Sec 681373

David Gray 07935414495

- Treasurer

Gay Walker 688632

## Lost

Somewhere in the village around 23rd November:

Berghaus Coat

Brasher lightweight goretex boots

Gloves & torch

Contact Phil 688191

## Pub News

After several anonymous visits by CAMRA, the Royal Oak has been included in this year's Good Beer Guide. (I can certainly attest to the quality of the beer Ed)

Coming in the summer, Chilli Cookout, demonstrate your cooking skills, or test your bravery, details in future Chronicles.

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## **630 Club**

Meets every Saturday in the Royal Oak at 6.30 pm. New members very welcome. Contact Andy Bystra if you need an introduction.

## **GNOMES**

(Girls Night Out Men Excluded Sorry) meet, usually in the Royal Oak, every Tuesday 8 pm onwards - all Ladies very welcome - GNOMES specialise in intelligent conversation over a glass of something.

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ASTON ABBOTTS

# WATCHOWER

## **New Aston Abbots Home Opens**

The Aston Abbots Home For Homeless Young Men is now open at Church Farm and is already proving extremely popular. Please contact Dave Lewis if you are seeking a place. Free bacon sandwiches and extremely low rental rates for all successful applicants.

## **John Whyte has a Leak**

We have to report that Mr Whyte had a leak on Dec 23rd. This leak was on his kitchen roof and is different to the one that he had in the hedge on his way home from The Royal Oak on Christmas Day. A Stewkley builder and an Irishman attempted to remedy both situations, with only partial success.

## **Exam Failure**

We are sad to report Mr David Lewis' failure in his Ground School flying exam. He got one question wrong and consequently only managed to score 96 out of a possible 100.

## **Christmas Disappointment**

Some will have been delighted with their Christmas surprises, but others may have been left feeling a little let down. None so let down as one-time Chronicle editor Phil Spooner, who was initially excited when his wife suggested he visit Pussy Palace in Weston Turville. However, we understand their cat Lila had a great Christmas holiday there. *(More info at [www.rabbitritz.co.uk/pussy-palace.htm](http://www.rabbitritz.co.uk/pussy-palace.htm))*

## **Mr and Mrs Whyte Do Not Drink—Official!**

That was the shock announcement made by John Whyte at Christmas. John chose to make the revelation about their long-term abstinence in The Royal Oak on Christmas morning. Now that he and Deirdre have finally come out as the teetotallers they apparently are it is expected that they will be inviting their friends to join their Aston Abbots Abstinence Society. Any takers? No... I thought not...

## **Ask Auntie Fran**

*Please send your questions to Aston Abbots' own agony aunt Auntie Fran, c/o The Chronicle*

Dear Auntie Fran,

I am at a loss as to what to do about my husband? Usually he is completely outrageous, but he has been very well-behaved all over Christmas. I am very worried about this sudden change. Do you think he needs help? Please advise me—I'm desperate!!! ~ A.I. Aston Abbots.

Dear A.L.,

This happens to many men when they reach a certain time in life, and especially as a BIG birthday approaches. I am sure that when he passes this psychological hurdle his normal behaviour will return. Hug him, love him, and be patient with him. ~ Auntie Fran

## **Position Offered**

A vacancy has arisen for an assistant to work alongside Mr Dave Lewis. Please contact the Company Secretary. She says that the successful applicant will need to be blind, deaf and have no sense of smell!

**FLACKWELL ELECTRONICS — PURVEYORS OF PLASMA SCREENS TO THE GENTRY**