

Pytchley Village Annual Report 2009

These reports were presented at the Annual
Parish Meeting on 2 March 2009

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Chairman's report

Parish Councillors

- Peter Crane, The Glebe House – Chairman
- Brenda Hargreaves, 9 Isham Road – Vice Chair
- Cecil Brown, Dairy Farm
- Pat Hobson, 37 Isham Road
- Jill Isaac, 15 High Street
- Alan Lodge, 3 Isham Road
- Andy Macredie, 11 Orlingbury Road
- Dave Owen, 29 Isham Road
- Janet Spooner, Paddock cottage
- Clerk - Mrs. Rosie Warne

Pytchley Parish Council is responsible for a number of local services of benefit to our community and is the publicly accountable elected body representing some 370 electors in the community and a total population of about 500.

Please use your village website (ably organised by the Web Team):

<http://www.pytchley-village.co.uk/>

Report for 2008 – 9

The parish council hopes that the new format for the annual report, together with its distribution to every household will help to publicise what the council is doing.

I became chairman for the year because Councillor Owen was unable to take on the chairmanship as a result of commitments on the evenings of our meetings. I am very grateful for the help and support of the Vice Chair, the other councillors and our clerk.

Agendas for meetings and the minutes of the meetings are posted on the village website. We now have more consultation in advance between the Chairman and the Clerk about agendas, in order to highlight items that require extensive discussion.

There is room in this report only to describe the main issues and events of the year. Much work, getting drains unblocked, street lights repaired, attending meetings, and so on, goes on between the 6 parish council meetings of each year. Much of the work consists of chasing the County Council or the Borough Council, then chasing them again.

Finance

Hitherto the council's income has been in the form of an annual grant from Kettering Borough Council (which comes out of the council tax and national taxes paid by us all). This year the grant was £3590. The most recent estimate of our expenditure for 2008-9 was £4125 (I give the round figures). We are therefore drawing on reserves, not necessarily an unwise policy in the absence of any likely large items of expenditure. The sum carried forward at the beginning of the financial year was £3163. However, drawing on reserves cannot continue indefinitely.

The largest items of annual expenditure are the clerk's salary (£1320), the clerk's expenses (£815), litter picking (£636), church floodlighting (£388), insurance (£205) and a grant to assist Pytchley Post (£165). It must be borne in mind that the amounts due to our clerk not only pay for the necessary administration, but for the liaison with the County Council, the Borough Council and other bodies that forms the main part of this council's work.

The alternative method of financing this council is precepting – in other words, this council would have to levy council tax directly from residents and would lose the grant from the Borough Council. This council has so far declined that alternative, but it is likely that precepting will become unavoidable in a year's time. We are concerned to ensure that a precept is a different route for payment rather than an additional payment by residents.

Highways and traffic

The village suffers from the amount of traffic using the village as a shortcut from the A14 to the A43. It also suffers from the speed of some traffic. The council has been in constant correspondence with the County Council, often having to chase a response. However, we have been grateful for help from Councillor Jim Harker, Leader of the County Council, who has visited the village several times. We remain concerned that the County Council tends to formulate plans rather than deal promptly with actual problems. We responded to its Whole Village Approach Programme, only to see the Programme shelved, then abandoned.

Councillor Pat Hobson continues to organise sessions with the Speedwatch gun when our turn for its loan comes. Recently a temporary vehicle activation sign has been in place on the Isham Road and we await results. We have found that if a company name or registration number can be taken, managers respond with concern to complaints about the driving of commercial vehicles. Councillor Jill Isaac, our highways representative, now keeps a log of traffic incidents and accidents. Even if a direct complaint is made, she needs to be informed.

The County Council has responded to our concerns about the dangers at the Broughton crossroads in a limited way, by changes to the road surfaces and the signs. We shall monitor results, but are likely to resume our pressure for improvement to visibility, which councillors think is the main problem.

Repeated complaints are needed to keep drains and gullies unblocked. The tendency to flooding on the bend on the Kettering Road appears to have been dealt with, partly because a resident was able to point out a gully hidden in a bed of nettles nearby and unknown to the County Council.

The additional streetlight in Lower End was eventually installed. The council is reviewing the amount of street lighting in the village.

Telephone kiosk

We have opposed the removal of the kiosk on Isham Road and expressed concern about a lack of consultation with us.

The proposed waste site

We were alarmed to be notified of a wish by the County Council to earmark the triangle of land between the A14, the golf course and the Isham Road for a waste

recycling plant. The County Council's initial plan was changed, but it still consulted on its wish to list that site among others in the county for some kind of waste use in the future. We consider the site wholly unsuitable for any such use. Every household in Pytchley was circulated, with a draft of a letter of objection. We applaud those who put in objections. In addition, various businesses in and around the Retail Park were alerted by letters from this council - most knew nothing of the plans until we told them. It should be noted that all this delivery was carried out by parish councillors. The parish council wrote its own letter of objection, not only opposing the plan, with detailed reasons, but asserting that the consultation was a flawed exercise because of the change in what was proposed.

Other planning and the use of land

The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy was approved last summer, providing a framework for planning in our area. This council has reaffirmed its view that Pytchley should remain a village separate from Kettering and other local towns. We are pressing for the Parish Plan, although it can no longer be a formal part of the planning process, to be approved informally as a basis for planning.

We commented on various local planning applications, mostly for alterations to houses. The most extensive application was the proposed redevelopment in Butcher's Lane, which was opposed. That application stands refused by the Borough Council.

Play equipment

Disappointingly, an application we pressed for improvements on the Recreation Ground was unsuccessful. We hope at some stage to increase the play equipment.

Litter

Although the disposal of rubbish is the responsibility of the Borough Council and we should like to persuade them to carry out litter picking, the reality is that unless we arrange litter picking, it will not happen. We are grateful to the litter pickers who have until now been employed for 2 hours a week. On their resignation, we are now proposing to employ a new litter picker. Fly tipping on surrounding roads is a problem, although reports to the Borough Council are usually dealt with promptly.

Councillor Cecil Brown MBE

At the close of the council meeting in May last year, refreshments were served at a gathering to mark 50 years as a parish councillor of Councillor Cecil Brown MBE. He has had many stints as Chairman and everyone will be aware of his constant contributions to the life of Pytchley. He has also served as a Borough Councillor and as Mayor of Kettering.

Peter Crane

Neighbourhood Watch

This year the report will be very brief as mercifully there is little to say. Crime in Pytchley is thankfully very low which, of course, is no consolation for the few victims.

The information, which has been provided via e-mail to me through the Neighbourhood Watch scheme understates the actual figures. Nevertheless the figures I have for the last 12 months are:-

- House Burglary:
 - Nil
- Burglary other:
 - Aug – theft of drain covers.
 - Business premises burgled
- TFMV(Theft From Motor Vehicles):
 - July - 4 insecure vehicles in one night - there's a lesson to be learned there.
 - On the same night van window smashed for satNav
 - Number plates stolen from car
- TOMV (Theft Of Motor Vehicles):
 - Sept – car probably unlocked with keys left in (again a lesson to be learned)
- Criminal damage/vandalism:
 - None

Reported crime

No apologies made for making this point again. If you are a victim of crime, regardless of how minor it might be, please report it and get an incident number. This ensures it shows up as a statistic and we get the level of policing we need. It also means that through neighbourhood watch we get informed of trends and can be alert to the risks.

Tony Hopkins of the safer community team (see notice board) does touch base with me on a monthly basis when I feed to him any concerns the village has. Mainly associated with vehicles. i.e. speed , HGV's using the village, the safety of children around the school, parent parking and traffic dangers in High street and Butchers lane, parking on pavements causing mothers with prams to walk into the road. I understand he has also conducted village surveys calling randomly on households to listen to concerns.

N/W dedicated e-mail

There is now a dedicated neighbourhood watch e-mail address. Please tell them of anything you think unusual or suspicious. Let them make the decision as to what action to take.

<mailto:nbneighbourhoodwatch@northants.police.uk>

Alan Lodge

Village Hall Committee

Membership is from all village organisations. The chairman is Cecil Brown MBE, Dairy Farm, secretary is Carol Booker, Spring Cottage, Butcher's Lane and treasurer is Frank Stanley, 11 High Street. The committee has responsibilities for the running of the hall and its finances. Meetings are held when required, usually on Wednesday evenings.

Cecil Brown MBE

All Saints' Church and Parochial Church Council

The Rector the Reverend Simon Dommett sends his apologies for being unable to attend this meeting. He would like to thank the Parish Council for their hard work for the village this past year.

2008 has been a good year for All Saints church, although there were worries at the start of the year about thefts of metal, which all the churches were suffering from. All Saints has only suffered slightly and has now installed an alarm system on the roof.

The recently formed Pytchley Heritage Trust, whose objective is to improve the fabric of the church building for use by the whole community, was launched with a very successful music evening in 2007. Then with much hard work from Rosemary Eady, Peter Crane and others there followed a Heritage Weekend in the church last autumn. This was extremely well attended and showed just how this wonderful building could be used.

As a church we have hosted a Benefice Holiday club for over 40 children from the five villages that this church belongs to. This was great opportunity to share among the helpers and parents who work with children's groups among our five churches. The church is planning an even bigger club this summer called 'Pyramid Rock' look out for details coming soon.

I would like to thank Dawn Moreton, who, with help from others, for many years ran the Sunday school.

We have now started running an after school club at the school with the assistance of the head teacher Mrs Havlickova. This club called 'Pytchley Pilgrims' is open to all children and regularly has 18-20 children attending.

We have changed the name of our old 'Come & Worship' Service to be known as the 'Family Service' to reflect that it is suitable for the whole family. What you see is what you get. This is held at 11 am on the first Sunday of the month. Why not come along and see what goes on!

The church has continued to host school services, including Easter, harvest and Christmas. It was also the venue for the school Christmas play, again showing the versatility of the building.

The church now has installed an induction loop hearing system and PA to assist those who are hard of hearing.

With help from Barbara Lodge and Margaret Grieve we have continued to produce and distribute the village News letter 'Pytchley Post' Can I remind people that this is a great way of telling people what is going on in all of the village clubs and societies. My thanks go to all those who help in its production and distribution.

We have also run a successful Alpha Course for 25 people in the autumn. The Alpha Course is an opportunity to find out about the Christian faith over a meal and chat. We will be running another course in the autumn for anybody interested.

Following from discussions at our Lent Study Group, we started last summer monthly Coffee & Chat /Tea & Talk sessions which are open to all villagers who just want to come and chat and get out and meet people.

The church was open for All Soul's day so that people could have a time of prayer and reflection for lost loved ones, and we also held the annual Remembrance Day service in November

On the social side of our activities, Julie Wykes has taken over the chair of the activities committee from Pauline Middleton. Activities last year included a Coffee morning, an Afternoon tea, St David's Day evening, Summer fete in Church, Safari Supper, Evening ramble, Wine Tour, Harvest Supper & A Spirit of Christmas evening in Church. After this last event £100 was given to both the Air Ambulance appeal & to the children's hospice -Rainbows.

This year so far there has been a ramble -with more in the pipeline, a Beetle Drive - for all ages took place on March 27th, the Summer fete is planned for 12th July, a Wine Tour on June 13th, a concert on 16th December & other events are yet to be finalised.

I hope that with people's support for the Heritage Trust and the Church, it will continue to be a source of peace and inspiration for the village for many years to come.

Looking forward, this year looks to be an exciting one. We have started with the ordination of our curate Revd Christine Ostler in church on 18th January with over 300 people crowded into the church. We will be preparing more young people to receive communion and will continue with our weekly prayer meetings and services.

I would like to record my thanks to my two church wardens Diana Smith and Pauline Middleton for all their hard work this past year.

Rev Simon Dommett

Pytchley Church Heritage Trust

The Pytchley Church Heritage Trust was formed in 2007 following a desire by the Parochial Church Council to involve the village community in the maintenance of the village's most important Heritage site. Part of the spin off was a desire to see the Church building enjoyed by the wider community.

After a concert in October 2007 to launch the Trust, 2008 saw the Heritage Exhibition in the Church over the weekend of 18-19 October. There was a display of photographs, maps, family trees and other relevant items showing the history of the houses and families of the village over the years. Over 400 people attended over the weekend from as far away as Yorkshire. A lot of work went into the weekend and the Trustees were very grateful for all those who gave of their time and memorabilia to make the event such a great success.

The Trust is aiming to raise money towards the re-ordering of the area at the base of the tower in the Church, which will include the installation of a toilet. To this end the Trust has so far raised over £5000, and is very grateful to all those who have made contributions.

The Trust invites anyone who has an interest in supporting its work to become a Friend of Pytchley Church.

The present Trustees are Sir Peter Crane (Chairman) Rosemary Eady, Janet Spooner, Professor Shaun Tyson, Michael Walsh (Treasurer) and Michael Walker (Secretary)

Michael Walker

Pytchley School

Pytchley School has had a successful year in many ways. Our Ofsted inspection in June 2008 deemed us Satisfactory with Good in parts and quoted "pupils develop good values and thoroughly enjoy school; they are delighted with their new classrooms and are polite and friendly. They contribute to the community well through the school council and frequently take part in village activities."

As a Church school we are inspected by the Diocese; this is called a Section 48 inspection. Our RE and collective worship are inspected and these findings are reported to the school and parents. Our inspector deemed us Good.

We have once again achieved our Active Mark for sports education and in the Autumn Term gained the Healthy Schools Award.

The William Aylworth Trustees kindly support the school in financing the schools contribution towards the re-development. The impact of the new site has been huge; everyone feels that the school has a more modern look and better facilities for learning to take place. The trustees continue to support the school with generous donations towards enhancing the curriculum and are presenting an award at the end of the academic year to a pupil in each year that has made good progress or attainment. These will be presented at the End of Term service in July.

The official opening was well attended with everyone enjoying the church service led by the Bishop of Brixworth and the reception lunch. It was delightful to see many old and new faces in the school and I know that everyone enjoyed coming in to see how the school had developed.

The school is grateful to Simon and the PCC for the use of the Church for our Christmas Concert and the continuing termly services held there, which give parents and members of the community the opportunity to join us in our celebrations.

The Governing Body welcomed 2 new Foundation Governors to the school in September Mr Geoff Blurton and Mrs Tracy Lynch, both have met with Simon to discuss their role. Appointments have been confirmed by the Diocese with 1 vacancy remaining.

In September a new after school club was set up called Pilgrims, where pupils study aspects of Jesus life and teachings. The club is run by Simon with assistance from Debbie Darling, Caroline Walker and staff.

Worship takes place in school daily and is supported by our Bishops Visitor John Weaver and Simon who takes a weekly assembly. The SCAT team (Schools Christian Assembly Team) visit monthly to take assembly also.

Our annual residential trips will be to the Frontier Centre at Irthlingborough and Caythorpe Court in Grantham with children from the junior classes.

Many fundraising events have taken place co-ordinated by the FOPS members to include McMillan Coffee morning, RNLI SOS day, Red Nose Day and World Book Day. We thank the team for their continued support.

Overall it has been a successful year and the links between Church, School and the Community continue strengthen. There is still much work to be done and we look forward to sharing these with you in next years report.

Julia Havlickova

Friends of Pytchley School

Katy Owen joined us this year and brought FOPS into the 21st century with her computer knowledge and we can now all chat in our own FOPS chat room and FOPS also has an email address friendsofpytchleyschool@yahoo.co.uk

Our first event this year was our Mufti-Day. This though was different and was an idea that a parent had suggested to us. The children could bring in either a raffle prize or £1. We have been able to use the resulting raffle prizes at all our other events.

We held our first ever tea party for the children in aid of Children In Need. The children paid £1 and we served them hot chocolate and they iced a cake and then ate it. Fun was had by all. We also held a raffle after school. Special thanks to Leanne for a wonderful Pudsey cake which was donated. Thank you also to Pam & Carol for the hand knitted Pudsey bear which was donated and raffled.

We also supported McMillan coffee morning, which is always well supported by the village community.

For Christmas, we produced the Christmas cards and Calendars using the children's artwork. These proved to be very successful: to the tune of £710. Special thanks go to the calendar advertisers for supporting this new venture. Feedback has been good. Parents especially like the school events put on the calendars. I am sure these will be available again for this Christmas. All orders most welcome.

Debbie T had a great idea to have a Jumble Sale prior to our very successful Bag2school. This has raised over £220 on top of what we normally receive.

Tuck Shop continues to be very successful and profitable. This also provides a service to the community, as there are no sweetshops in the village. A special thanks to Mrs Macredie & all the year-6 pupils who work so very hard on this on each Friday afternoon. Tuck shop has raised over £200 this year.

The Junior Sponsored Swim money, which was buried deep for a time in the schools vaults, pleasingly surfaced, raising £251. The Infants' Sponsored Silence was a welcome relief to all! One pupil raised £130.

We celebrated Mothers Day and World Book Day. While we did not raise a lot of money, the children and mothers enjoyed the events.

For the School Opening, Tina had a wonderful idea of producing our own Jute Bags. The satchels proved an instant success and sold out immediately. Thanks especially to the staff for supporting this fundraiser. If you have not got a carrier, there are some in the office at £5 each.

Our May Fayre this year was "Come dancing". We had wonderful weather and a great time was had by all. The children especially loved the inflatables. We raised £735. Thanks to all involved. Special thanks go to Rachel who came-up with the theme, designed our programme and wrote our press release. Next year our May Fayre is on May 9th 2009

We have all had fun putting on these events, raising funds and watching how the money is spent. Scenes like the children's awe-struck faces when they saw the markings on the playground make it all the more worthwhile.

A huge 'THANK YOU' TO EVERYONE who has supported the FOPS events this year. Everyone has been very generous with their financial contributions but also with their time and most importantly their support. Without any of this, we would not be able to raise the money or bring the School community together so enjoyably.

Marie Simons

William Aylworth Trust

The Trust has sold the Schoolhouse to release funds to pay the Governor's Contribution of 10% for the school remodelling. The Trust avoided placing funds in the Stock Market but the credit crisis has now reduced interest rates substantially and whilst the capital has been retained the income will be down. The purpose of the Trust is to assist the School and former pupils.

Brian Smith

Bell Ringers

Friday night is bell-ringing night in Pytchley. We have a dedicated band of ringers from the village and friends who support us from as far away as Northampton. As in all villages we are looking for new ringers to learn to ring on our 5 lovely bells – only one stipulation – you need a head for heights as there is a rather daunting ladder to climb up to the ringing chamber! Practices on Fridays are from 7 – 8.30 p.m. and we ring on most Sundays at 10.30 a.m. before the service.

Margaret Pridmore

Cricket Club

The Cricket Club was founded in 1963 by village inhabitants, and is now situated in the field in Orlingbury Road by courtesy of the Spooner family and Pytchley Farms. The ground and pavilion are maintained by club members, with only occasional use of outside contractors. It is an idyllic village setting for cricket, where both home and visiting teams enjoy playing, despite the limited facilities. The club only plays friendly matches, although the possibility of joining a Northants league has been contemplated, and we have a team (8 members) taking part in indoor cricket at Wellingborough.

The 2009 season will start on April 19th with a home match against Lubenham, and we will provide Barbara Lodge with a complete list of fixtures for inclusion in the Parish newsletter. In preparation for the new season we will be holding indoor nets at Montagu School on Sundays from 8th March to 5th April 6-7 p.m. We are very keen to encourage new players, and would therefore be pleased to welcome young or experienced potential cricketers who might wish to join us in these informal sessions. Pytchley residents would be particularly welcome, and anyone wishing to play should contact the club captain Craig Chambers, Chris Weston (01536 485164) or any club member.

Presently the club is carrying out some substantial repairs to the pavilion, which was acquired second-hand from McAlpine over 25 years ago, and is now showing its age. Thus the purchase of a new structure is under serious consideration, although this would need a great deal of finance. We have recently held our annual Quiz night in the Village Hall, which was again most successful, with a full hall, and full participants after the half time buffet! We are grateful for the support that this major fundraising event has enjoyed in recent years. We are now registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC), which gives us charitable status, and consequently we are eligible for relief under the Gift Aid Scheme.

I hope this report is of interest to the Parish Council and the village in general. We feel that the Cricket Club is a valuable aspect of village life in Pytchley and is worthy of Parish Council's support if required.

Alan Hargreaves

Film Club

Chairman Cecil Brown MBE, Dairy Farm, and secretary Alan Lodge, Isham Road. The film club meets at Pytchley Village Hall each Wednesday, 8 – 10 p.m., except June, July and August. Viewing of members' homemade videos and instruction given. Membership is £6 per year, plus weekly £1.50 to cover expenses, coffee and biscuits etc. The club has a small membership of approximately 12 members. All welcome.

Cecil Brown MBE

Indoor Bowls

Pytchley Bowls club can rightly claim to be a successful club in every sense. Since it's beginning in 1991 membership has remained strong averaging around 30 with just over 213 from the village or with village connections (relatives, past residents).

We have lost a few members but we have also gained new members.

The club meets in the village Hall (here) on Monday afternoons at 2 and Monday evenings at 7 (not when there is a council meeting!) in a friendly atmosphere providing a beneficial community asset.

We enjoy county league, local village league and friendly matches all in a very friendly atmosphere and many friends are made.

We are at present top in the 1st division with ambitions to be promoted back to the premier division where we were last year.

We have 3 members in the county team and a further 3 have been called on. New members are always welcome, young or old experienced or absolute beginners.

If you just want a sociable roll up (as many do) you are very welcome or if you aspire to club, county or national competitions you will be fully encouraged.

Club singles competition is on a Saturday with the final played on Sunday at 2.00 pm. Spectators are welcome

Frank Foulds

Pytchley Senior Citizen Tea & Outing Fund

This is an organisation that was started in 1947, to organise an afternoon tea followed by an evening coach trip for the senior citizens of the village of Pytchley, when it was started villagers were less likely to have the opportunity to travel and socialise.

A letter, with a small envelope, is distributed around the village over the Christmas and New Year period asking for donations to the fund. These donations are collected at a later date by members of the committee, who then count and bank the money. The collection is licensed by the Northamptonshire Licensing Partnership for House to House Collections.

In June of each year a tea is prepared in the village hall by members of the committee, and this is followed by an evening coach trip, usually ending at a pub where refreshments can be taken.

Donations are obtained from local businesses and with the collection from the village most years this event is self funding, all the preparation and organising of the tea and the outing is done by members of the committee who give their time and talents free of charge.

Although over the years the numbers of people who attend this event are dropping, those who come do enjoy themselves. It allows people to socialise with others from the village that they wouldn't normally see. It's an opportunity for an excursion for those who live in the village who don't have transport.

Should this no longer take place this would one of the long-standing traditions of the village of Pytchley, which would be lost, and with support it can continue.

Julie Wykes

Website

<http://www.pytchley-village.co.uk/>

The web site went on-line in April 2003 and has kept the same general format throughout. Its main purpose is to collate interesting information regarding the history, people and facilities of Pytchley Village. It is organised such that all the village organisations can have their own home page and can be regularly updated.

There are external links to local and national areas of interest including Kettering Council, Police, Travel Timetables, Local Maps, etc. The main page keeps a current list of the additions to the site to help identify new information – particularly parish minutes and major village events. The village diary is accessible from the home page and is updated every month.

There is an external link to a village forum where anyone, once registered, can voice opinions on any subject – inside or outside of the village, often leading to interesting discussions. Anyone can register and can use a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality.

Recent additions to the web site include a direct link to weather reports for the Kettering area, and a link to the Kettering Planning Application on-line site.

All village members are encouraged to contribute to the site by submitting any articles to <mailto:enquiries@pytchley-village.co.uk> Electronic format (e.g. word or openoffice) is preferred. Any suggestions for improvement would be gratefully received to the same email address, or through the Parish Council.

Steve Booker

Pytchley Parish Post

Until 1995 there was a combined 'In Touch' magazine produced by the churches of Isham & Pytchley. It was then decided to produce two separate magazines to include village as well as church news & 'Pytchley Parish Post' was born.

Pytchley Parish Post is produced ten months of the year - July/August & December/January being combined editions. Currently 260 copies are produced & freely distributed to all village households, outlying farms, twenty children attending Pytchley School who live outside the village, eleven copies to our sister parishes & the clergy, copies for ACRE, the Diocesan Office, the Parish Clerk & village notice boards. A few people with a village connection but no longer living in the village also receive a copy but give a donation.

The Post is an entirely voluntary production, the only costs incurred being that of printing the 260 copies, this is done by Stockline, London Road, Kettering.

The cost of The Post is covered by grants from the Parish Council & Church, advertising revenue & donations from villagers. At the present time it costs approximately £60 per month to print.

Currently there are 16 people delivering The Post. We would welcome more to cover for illness holidays etc. Anyone wishing to take over the actual production of the Post would also be most welcome.

Many thanks to all those who help with or support The Post in any way.

Barbara Lodge
