

THE BARTON SERIES

TYPICALLY BARTON



BY

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(Ages 8 and over)

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The Community Drive

Since Barton had left Mr Albernatty's home that evening, there was no answer from him. He had no idea of whether or not an empty piece of land that Mr Albernatty owned would be loaned for use as a place of relaxation for the people of the neighbourhood. Hope, though, sprang eternal for at least an answer.

So, it was not altogether a great surprise when Barton answered the doorbell a few evenings later and saw both Mr and Mrs Albernatty standing in front of the doorway.

Barton had mentioned his proposal to Mr Albernatty with Mom and Dad and they both found it to be a good idea.

However, Dad was curious as to whether the land would be loaned by Mr Albernatty for this purpose. Also, even if this offer was to be agreed upon, and even if some members of the community volunteered to help in removing the brush from the land, the placing of benches, perhaps a few picnic tables and bins, for example, the project would still incur a fair cost.



“Where will it come from?” asked Dad, curiously.

Only if Mr Albernatty agreed that his land could be used, would Barton suggest his plan. Dad only smiled when Barton mentioned this to him.

Mr and Mrs Albernatty were invited into the Sandiford's house and together they sat with Mr and Mrs Sandiford in the living room. The Albernattys invited Barton into the study with them and Mr Albernatty spoke first.

He had agreed, after discussion with Mrs Albernatty, to allow the empty piece of land to be used as a recreation park. Barton was relieved and very happy. Young Barton was overjoyed.

“However, there would be a high cost involved in converting this unused plot into a small recreation park,” advised Mr Albernatty.

“What are your plans to obtain this money, if any, Barton?” asked Mr Albernatty.

Barton now revealed his secret plan. He and his friends would create ‘flyers’ telling the members of the community of the plans for a recreation park. They would ask each household for any items that were no longer of much use to them.

Many families still kept, housed in their homes, equipment, and several articles of various types that may be shelved. Many may still be in good working order and some might require minor repairs. Barton was looking also at old or outgrown toys, used books, old furniture, utensils, and other such items.

“We could gather all the items that are donated at the said vacant plot of Mr Albernatty's land, clear a suitable area and have a big rummage sale on an appointed day. All proceeds will go towards the development of the park,” suggested Barton.



Mr Albernatty smiled and thought this to be a good idea and this was seconded by Mr Sandiford. However, the old man was pensive.

Dad laughed and said that people would all pay to have unwanted items just shifted from one house to another.

It was great when adults think you have a good idea, thought Barton.

Both Mom and Mrs Albernatty just listened, added no comment, but both swore full support.

Dad suggested that he would help with the copying of the flyers if Barton and his friends would create one.

On the next day, Barton and a few friends from the neighbourhood gathered and set to work on a simple flyer to give to Barton's Dad. This is what they wrote:

Dear Members of the Community,

Mr and Mrs Abner Albernatty have kindly consented to allow the use of a vacant plot of land owned by them, to be used as a recreation park. The plot, which is approximately 400 metres by 300 metres, is overgrown with brush, large trees, and vines. It would require much work to have it converted into what we wish.

If this project is realised, we hope to have a beautiful, scenic and relaxing park for all of us to enjoy. It should be a place where we can spend a quiet, restful morning or evening, have small picnics, socialise, or just relax and enjoy the cost-free pleasures of nature.

We can enjoy watching the flora and fauna as well as the beautiful birds and other animals that are seen in abundance within this area.

We beg your support by donating any items that are not very useful to you anymore but may be so to others. We speak of items such as

old books, appliances, toys, utensils, etc so that we may have a grand rummage sale on Saturday 25th February. All are also invited to this sale and you may further help by contacting as many people as you can to support this venture.

Should you be willing and supportive in this venture, we have asked two of Mr Albernatty's workers to collect all donated items on the day before the sale, Friday 24th February, to have them tagged, priced and in readiness for the sale.

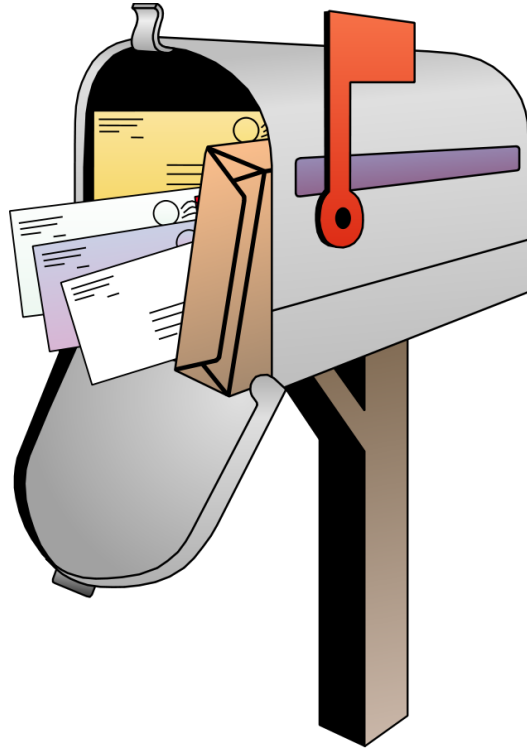
We thank you in advance for all your donations and your support, as together we strive to improve and to uplift our community.

Signed,

Barton and friends

Dad thought that the flyer was well-written by the group of young boys and had several copies made.

And so it was that Barton and his friends spent a few busy evenings in placing one flyer in each mailbox of all the houses in the area.



Dad had printed one hundred and fifty copies and the boys had distributed each one of them. This was done two weeks before Friday 24th February and the boys hoped for many helpful donations as well as great community involvement.

During the days which followed, it appeared that their request had gained great support. For as the day drew close, neighbourhood members were seen placing items close to their gates or home entrances, to facilitate an easy pick-up by Mr Albernaty's crew. Many of them were even heard talking about the sale to be held on the next day.

As planned, Rufus and Malcolm, two of Mr Albernaty's workers, spent an extremely tiring Friday in collecting all the donated items from these homes. Many members of the various households helped the two men to load items onto their truck. Some even accompanied them to the sale site and offered help with the unloading of the heavier items. As the men off-loaded items, Dad and a few other gentlemen were there to receive them.



This group of men quickly assessed each item and placed a price tag on each one. A large tent was erected to accommodate all that was donated. Amazingly, the number of items seemed to be far more than was anticipated.

The men, together with Dad, quickly cleared another area near the erected tent and arranged to affix another tent. The truckloads kept coming and the men kept working, arranging and tagging all day long, having only short and limited breaks.

Finally, it was a tired Rufus and Malcolm who announced the last truckload of donations. Shortly afterwards all seemed ready for the great rummage sale to be held on the next day.

However, it was the next day, the day of the rummage sale, which surprised and shocked Barton, his friends and all those who attended the sale.

