

Willoughby Society Secretary's Report for 1987

1987 saw some changes in the organisation of the Willoughby Society. We were very sorry to lose Mr and Mrs. Brownlow and Mrs. Owen from the committee, but were glad that Mr. Sunderland, Mr. Troman, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Pettifer came forward to take their places. Mr. Sunderland became our new chairman. This was a great relief as, for a time, we wondered whether we should find a chairman at all. Mrs. B. Jones accepted the office of president, vacated by Mrs. Brownlow, and this was also a great help.

Mr. R. Whitfield continued as a care-taker archivist, a job which he does particularly well - but which he still wishes to relinquish and has done so for the past twelve months. We do appeal for a volunteer for this work. It was very sad that Mrs. Miller was taken ill early this year and so was unable to continue with committee work. In the short time that she was with us she showed herself to be a hard-working and valuable committee member.

Before I go any further I must pay a tribute to four members who are no longer here. It was with the deepest regret that we learned of the deaths of Mrs. Violet Hatwell, Mr. Joe Bussey, Mr. Pat Sheaf and Mrs. Ivy Roach. They were all loyal members of long standing and they will be greatly missed. In this respect 1987 has been a very sad year.

However we have I hope arrived at the 1987 annual General Meeting in a cheerful and hopeful frame of mind. Only last month (October) a new member, Mrs. Bryant conducted a very successful and entertaining quiz. We are very grateful to her for coming forward- and for relieving Mr. Sunderland from his task of Quiz-master. We also welcomed Mrs. Eykyng of Red House as a new member and, she was volunteered to serve teas with Mrs. Bryant almost as soon as she got into the hall. We are very grateful to all tea helpers - they are pearls of great price. October also included a successful Wine and Cheese Evening. A good deal of merriment was engendered during the sale of home-made sweets and biscuits and the experiment of Call my Bluff seemed to meet with approval.

Mr. Dick Frost of Grandborough gave a very unusual talk in September, illustrated by his Romantic Postcards. The summer break was, we hope enlivened by the Barbecue. For this we were lucky to have a fine night. The sausages and beefburgers together with plentiful onions were as tasty as ever. Games of skittles were enjoyed especially by some of our younger visitors - who carried off the prizes.

The June speaker was Mr. Paul Parker whose subject was You are paying too much tax. I am afraid his talk of investments was a bit beyond me and I shall probably go on paying too much tax. However the intelligentsia among our audience probably learned something to their benefit.

In May we had Lady Hamilton who told us about Walton Village and Walton Hall. Unfortunately the Punch and Pate evening had to be cancelled, due to lack of support. We had Mr. Dusty Rhodes for a welcome return visit in April with his talk on Traditions and Superstitions. March was a busy month. We heard Mr. Cartwright from the Lawrence Sheriff School on the Battle of Bosworth. (I was actually spurred on to visit the battle site in August) There was also the Bangers and Mash Evening on March 20th always good value and quite well attended. We also held a very

successful Coffee Evening on March 2nd. This was for the Church Restoration Fund. It was open to the village and Mr. Whitfield showed slides of Willoughby Society Archives. This made £90 for the church.

January and February made a somewhat watery start to the New Year with Mr. Gibson in January who gave a very sound historical talk on Canals and Mr. Spray of the Severn Trent Water Board in February. These two talks were both well worth hearing. I have now completed the run-through of the year backwards, I thought it would make a change, but I find I have forgotten to mention last year's Christmas Party. All I can say is that those of us who organised the "home-made entertainment had a lot of fun. We hope you had the same. Many thanks as always are due to the ladies who organised and provided the refreshments We look forward to more of the same this year.

It only remains for me to thank the Chairman and all the committee members who have helped me so much during the last year - and thank you for supporting the various meetings throughout the year.