

## WILLOUGHBY SOCIETY SECRETARY'S REPORT 1992

I have written this report with the thought very much in mind that 1992 has brought us our thirtieth anniversary. We have already celebrated our 21st and our 25th anniversaries but this one is surely the most noteworthy yet.

Some of us feel that, at this time, we are passing through a crucial period when our future may be in question. I have been re-reading our constitution and thinking about the aims that were laid down thirty years ago. There has been some suggestion that we have departed from these aims but I do not really agree with this view. In the early days, we heard talks from several speakers on the history of Willoughby, including some by our own members. But we are only a small village and our history is necessarily limited in scope although there could be a case for repeating some of those earlier talks.

As for the beautification of the village, this was attempted, in good faith, many years ago and, in the matter of trees, with the full approval of Mr. Peter Chadwick who was then Borough Surveyor. That this attempt has to some extent misfired does not detract from its good intent.

We have kept a record of our natural history on a day to day basis (courtesy of Mrs Cook). During 1992 we have continued to express concern for our local environment. Many letters have been written urging action to preserve our local canal tow-paths and we have recently sought information on behalf of our area with regard to prospecting for sand and gravel.

We have continued to record events in the life of the village over thirty years and from long before that. You will surely agree that our archives are something to be proud of and sincere thanks are due to Mr. Troman for carrying on the work started by the archives sub-committee and carried on brilliantly by Roy Whitfield.

But, having done all this, we cannot stand still - and, in order to retain interest, I have attempted to widen the scope of our talks while keeping within the broad framework of our constitution. But we are living in different times and it is no longer possible to have a speaker for free or just for expenses. Consequently, the social side of our activities has become vital for our survival although we must not lose sight of its intrinsic value as a source of enjoyment and friendship.

Accordingly we hope you will all come to the Christmas party and have a lovely time.

As for the rest of 1992, we have welcomed a variety of speakers. Miss Christine Oddy (M.E.P.) was unexciting but sound and also free. Mr. Wagstaffe paid us a second visit with another entertaining and interesting talk on canals. Mr. Jack Johnson gave an outstandingly good talk on the Shetlands, where he was born. Mr. Anthony Newman, a former actor and TV extra was refreshingly different and held his audience completely. Mr. Martin Turner showed slides of old Rugby and was much enjoyed and those of us who went to the museum at Newbold Revel had a fascinating evening. The session was completed by Mr. Macneile, manager of Warwick: Racecourse, who was a real hit in September and by Mr. Moon, photographer and naturalist who is always a hit. The social events that were held were very enjoyable. The Strawberry Tea was a delightful innovation enjoyed on a glorious June Sunday afternoon. thanks to Mrs. Hubbard for letting us use her garden. The Barbecue and Ramble had a very

damp night but was a success financially and socially. Congratulations to Mr. Wright's team for winning the car rally.

Thanks to all tea-persons and proposers of vote of thanks.

My thanks to the Chairman and committee who always give me such great support.

Sadly Mr. Troman has come to the end of his term of office. So we must all thank him for being such an excellent chairman and so great to work with.

M.F. Ivens