

Any group or organisation is likely to benefit in the long run from a close questioning of its aims. The experience may often prove an uncomfortable one at the time, but such a review can help to bring into closer focus the intentions of a society's founders. At a recent meeting of the Sutton Poyntz Society's committee, this issue was raised again when members began to compare notes on the different views they had received from people in the village concerning the Society and its aims. Perhaps these two opposing but quite typical responses will help show the matter in perspective:-

- " You say you are a conservation society, but there's not much conservation round here. Lots of new houses where there used to be open country."
- "What right has the Society to interfere with the way people want to develop their own property?"

Put like that, the dilemma is obvious. The only adequate answer to hand is a re-statement of the broad aims of the Society printed on our membership card -

- 'To make every effort to maintain and improve upon the natural beauty of the village and to liaise with the Council for the Preservation\* of Rural England and with the Weymouth Civic Society, in an effort to protect the area from unnecessary and ugly development.'

(\*since renamed "Protection")

It is worth repeating that we are not the planning authority. Weymouth and Portland Borough Council has the duty of approving plans, but we are asked for views on proposed development within the conservation area. We cannot (nor can any organisation) prohibit housing development in areas zoned for such in the County Development Plan, although we are able to influence design, appearance and so on.

With these reservations in mind, a brief list of some of the Society's positive achievements might be in order. We have:-

- been instrumental in getting at least part of the village designated a conservation area.
- preserved the area round the pond and looked after the nearby seats.
- helped with improving plans for the development of the Mill and other properties.
- encouraged and helped tree planting.
- frequently tidied up the village roads.

As has been said from time to time in other Newsletters, the Society tries to look ahead to see what the general appearance of the village will be in years to come. When major schemes have arisen in the past, such as the building of houses in Old Bincombe Lane and the early plans for the Mill, the Society has been able to make constructive proposals in accordance with the aims set out above. Needless to say, we welcome the views of everyone in the village on these matters and on the prospect of future development in Sutton Poyntz.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

Successful and well-supported social events this summer have included - a walk led by Mr Ernest Saunders to Bincombe via Came Down; afternoon tea at Cob Cottage; a coffee morning at Bellamy Cottage; a talk with films entitled "Camera in the Countryside" given by Mr M. Shepherd of Dorset C.C. Our thanks to all concerned.

### SOME DATES FOR THE DIARY.

1. Arising from considerable interest expressed at the Shepherd talk and at the Craft classes launched earlier in the month, a newly formed HISTORY GROUP will meet weekly on Wednesdays at 7.30pm in the Mission Hall, commencing on Wednesday 27th October. Cost 75p per meeting.
2. On FRIDAY 26th NOVEMBER at 8.0pm in the Mission Hall there will be a talk by Mr T. Hearing (Chairman of the Dorset History Society) on the work of the "MARY ROSE" TRUST, with a collection in aid of the Trust.
3. Plans are in hand for starting a water colour painting group after Christmas.

If you are interested in 1 and/or 3 above, please contact Mrs Margaret Brown at Cob Cottage - Preston 83

Do all come along to item 2 above, the "Mary Rose" talk, on 26th November.

### CHRISTMAS CARDS

We regret that, owing to ever increasing costs, it has not been possible to produce another water colour of a scene in the village, but an alternative has been found. The local artist Mr Peter Toms has prepared a black and white sketch of part of the pond and surrounding cottages, which the Committee believes will prove very popular. This card should be available for sale by the end of October, at 20p. Keep an eye on the Notice Board, or apply to Mrs E. Wilkinson, 1 Old Bincombe Lane, for your requirements.

### CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Please also keep an eye on the Notice Board for alternative arrangements we hope to make for singing carols before Christmas.

POSTSCRIPT - CHANGE OF DATE. Since this Newsletter was prepared, it has become necessary to change the dates of the History Group meetings (see 1 above). There will now be six lectures on History by Mr T Hearing BA, MA(Ed), JP on FRIDAYS, commencing 5th NOVEMBER from 2.30 - 4.30 pm. Topics to be covered will include Roman and Saxon Dorset, Medieval Houses, Castles and Abbeys, and 17th century Weymouth. Everyone is welcome. Please help to publicise these talks.