



Sutton Poyntz Society

Affiliated to the Council for the Protection of Rural England (Dorset Branch)

"The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright"..

It's fascinating that Percy Byshe Shelley wrote those words in his poem "In Dejection near Naples". We are reading them in contentment near Weymouth! There's a lot to be thankful for in this delightful corner of Dorset, especially with the wonderful weather of late, isn't there?

The Gardens Open Day on 27 June, organised by St. Andrew's Gardening Club and the School Development Committee, was a great success; twelve of the 16 gardens opened were in the village and the others were very close. Everyone seemed to enjoy not only the variety of gardens, flowers, layouts etc. and the teas, but also the lovely summer's day and the friendliness. The organisers have expressed thanks to all who helped in any way; in excess of £750 was raised for St Andrew's School Fund.

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Northdown Farm

Mr William Bond, the new owner, obtained planning permission (to which the Society did not object) for a new vehicular access to the farm land at a point in Preston Road opposite White Horse Garage, in place of a nearby existing access.

Several villagers and others expressed concern lest the rather wide track cut into the hillside down from the access point might be or become a roadway serving development unconnected with farming. Members of the SPS Committee, when considering the application in February, thought it not unreasonable that Mr Bond should want a new access to the farm, in order to bring in heavy equipment from his main farm near Wareham and thus avoid it trundling through Sutton Road. Nevertheless, the Committee asked the Chief Planning Officer of Weymouth Council for his comments; we can do no better than set out Mr Richard Burgess's reply of 25 May:-

"As you are aware, the only element of this new roadway which required planning permission was the construction of a new access from the Classified Road. The balance of the work can be constructed as agricultural permitted development. While I share your concern about the scar on the landscape that is being created at the moment, hopefully this should 'green in' once vegetation becomes re-established. As you are also aware, I walk footpaths in this area regularly and to date have seen no evidence whatsoever that the use of this land or roadway is other than for bona fide agricultural purposes. Indeed, it comes as something of a relief to me to see that the lands of Northdown Farm are continuing to be used beneficially for agriculture.

I do understand the fears of local residents that development could be sought on this land. I would however point out that (a) we have had no such approaches and (b) this land is not simply 'white' land but enjoys the protection of its designation as part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as well as being identified as being of local landscape importance and outside the development boundary on the Local Plan. I do therefore think

that one can have every confidence that any proposals for development of such an area could be strenuously resisted."

Heavy plant may have to use the village roads for a while, as just where the new access meets Preston Road some cables are very close to the surface and will be deepened - that will take some time; but the problem is certainly temporary. And the 'greening in' which Mr Burgess mentions will be done by Mr Bond using his own special mix of grasses.

Mr Bond also proposes to instal kissing-gates at two points on farm footpaths, which will allow pedestrian access but prevent animals from straying from the fields. And there will, subject to local authority approval, be permissive use of the new "way" down from the access in Preston Road. All these steps should be advantageous to us.

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"BRITAIN IN BLOOM"

Official judging of the village is on 20 July. We do not know when the results will be announced but doubtless the Echo will publish them.

The opportunity is gladly taken to thank everyone who has done so much in a variety of ways to make the village much more pleasant than usual. It is always invidious to single out individuals but mention should be made of a few:

- * Ten or more people worked on the Springhead garden and grounds and on the "E Saunders" wagon; Dorothy Emblen masterminded the planting; the cost of compost and plants etc has been shared between the Society and the pub; Julie White provided welcome cups of coffee and biscuits on several occasions; Devenish's provided many hanging baskets, flower tubs, etc.
- * Removal of a dangerous section of tree in Puddledock Lane by Paul Critchell and general clearing-up by Charles Dale.
- * A small seat provided by the Cartshed by Tony Eves and flowers nearby by Joy and others.
- * Tidying-up by the Brownies.

A most pleasing aspect of all this has been the co-operation between individuals and organisations - down to useful things such as the firm who are renovating the farmhouse providing old bricks to support the wagon and use in the flower containers. To you all, therefore, very many thanks.

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Social Activities

The Summer Walk was very enjoyable. Cream Teas on the Lawn on 31 July (from 3 pm at Sutton House, Puddledock Lane) will no doubt be equally enjoyable.

Sutton Poyntz's own Richard Backwell is, as we all know, on a solo sponsored walk across the Pyrenees, lasting about 50 days, in aid of the Trimar Hospice. We wish him Good Luck and a safe return. A talk on his epic journey will be a "must" for the late summer or autumn.

Arrangements were in hand for the Society to visit Whitcombe Racing Stables in September. But as this Newsletter was being prepared, we heard that for a number of reasons the Management have to postpone the visit for several months. Anyone willing to open a book on the date in 1994?!

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Wessex Water

Our Chairman has had a fruitful talk with a senior representative of Wessex Water about developments they are interested in undertaking locally,

including possibly the provision of a seat on the little knoll by the footpath up from "Wyndings", Plaisters Lane. The company are to construct a treatment works behind the existing buildings at the pumping station; it will tone in with the environs and be screened by hedges or trees. The presence of diggers near the site is to assess whether it is of archaeological significance - no cause for anxiety! Once again, co-operation has been the key-note.

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Postcards

About 150 of our general greetings card and 250 packs of the notelets are still available. The new postcard of the pond area is selling well - at only 10p per card it should be! All these can be obtained from Eve Noden-Wilkinson, 1 Old Bincombe Lane.

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Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society

The Sutton Poyntz Society is a member of DNHAS which runs the museum at Dorchester. The annual report gives an interesting account of its activities in 1992. A few of the facts mentioned are that over 250 external researchers used the museum in the year; many boxes of finds and archives were among the documents received; 46,500 people visited the museum, along with some 13,000 schoolchildren; and many literary collections were presented, among them most valuable papers from the Powys Society.

Reference is also made to the sightings in the area of birds such as fulmars, siskins and hoopoes, as well as humming-bird hawk moths. Further developments contemplated are also mentioned.

If any member is interested in reading the report, the SPS Secretary has a copy.

Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation

We also support this body. Its annual report, in referring to the Rural Arts programme launched last year by the Government, mentions the wild-life garden being made at Humphries Garden Centre off Littlemoor Road and the prominence now being given to marine and coastal issues.

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The late Don Harbour's exhibit

Mrs Harbour agreed to the Society re-making the case which held her husband's exhibits of local finds etc. and which was decayed. The wood for the new case has been provided by Jim Willis and construction is being undertaken by John Harrison. Many thanks all round.

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These boots are made for walking ...

If yours are, you may well be interested in a publication of T.D.A.P, the Borough Council's tourism and development action programme, which sets out many walks of various kinds - mostly accompanied - up to mid-September, including one on 11 August by Fredy Litschi round "historical Sutton Poyntz and Preston" - meet at At Andrew's Church at 3 pm. Other walks include the areas of Osmington Mills, Radipole, the Fleet, and Portland with its 120,000 year-old raised beaches. Details are also given of talks, exhibitions, visits to hill forts etc. and sea trips. A most useful booklet.

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