

Thorncombe Village Trust **NEWS**

DECEMBER 1988.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS * HAPPY CHRISTMAS * HAPPY CHRISTMAS

OLD LOCAL ROADS AND TOLL ROADS.

The next meeting of the Village Trust will be in the Village Hall, Thorncombe on Wednesday 11 January 1989 when Mr Len Hoskins of Tatworth will be coming to talk to us on 'Old Local Roads and Toll Roads'. This promises to be a most interesting subject, and Mr Hoskins will bring along with him his latest book on the subject which has just been published. Admission 25p. Trust Members FREE. Refreshments. Raffle. Bring and Buy.

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COPPER BEECH TREE.

A sight has now been found for the Copper Beech tree, which was donated by Mr & Mrs Battle (see June Newsletter). The Trust are to plant the tree, with kind permission of the Village Hall Committee, in the corner of the Village Hall car park behind the gate. It is hoped to do this as soon as possible now that ground conditions are more favorable.

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PARISH WALK.

The second Parish Walk of the year, attended by some 25 walkers, took place on Sunday 30th October 1988 and was a great success, the weather could not have been better if we had ordered it! Bright blue sky, warm and dry, one snag it was rather muddy under foot in a few places. The route, approx 3½ miles, from Blind Lane to Synderford footbridge (now repaired thanks to the hard work of Mike Turner) past the Woollen Mill to the Synderford road bridge, Yew Tree Farm, Sadorow Pound, the Dungeon to Wittey's Lane and back to a cream tea at the Community Room. Our thanks to all the ladies who cooked the cakes and prepared the tea.

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MY WILDLIFE GARDEN.

Colin Varndell was the speaker at the Trust's November meeting in the Village Hall and once again his talk was illustrated with slides of very high quality. After describing the conversion of the 5 acres of land around his house at Netherbury into a conservation area where carefully arranged trees have been combined with grassland and a pond to attract the widest possible range of wild life, Mr Varndell went on to show a series of superb photographs of birds, flowers, insects and animals. Although the garden is only five years old, many kinds of self sown wild flowers have already joined those he has cultivated and these in turn have encouraged a growing population of insects and butterflies. Bird breeding has been fostered by the provision of numerous nesting boxes, and we were given details of a survey of the breeding species and their territories. In this the presence and growth of trees is proving very influential and considerable changes are expected as the woodland matures. Close-ups of various kinds of dragonfly reminded everyone of their great beauty, and we were told of the special pond conditions which are essential if they are to survive. Similar factors apply to the breeding of butterflies whose caterpillars are dependant on particular food plants. 25 residents attended the meeting which included the usual Bring & Buy and a Raffle.

DID YOU SEE.....?

Unusualbird visitors to the village this Autumn have included three black redstarts, on the 27th October, these attractive birds with their flickering red tails were noted around the church yard and, in particular, the roof of Glebe House as they caught flies and insects. On the same day a party of about 15 siskins were seen feeding on the seed cones of nearby conifers. At least two of the redstarts were still present 10 days later. Although both species are normal autumn and winter visitors in limited numbers, siskins are now breeding in one or two localities in the South West and black redstarts may be following their example.

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KINGCOMBE ESTATE.

The Trust hope to organise a visit to the Kingcombe Estate in mid/late May= 1989. Miss Brotherton, Chairman of the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation, has offered to show us around this fascinating time capsule farm. In due course we shall put up a notice in the village so that those interested can put their names down and the Trust can then make the appropriate transport arrangements.

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HIGHER FARM INQUIRY 26/27 APRIL 1988.

In the June Newsletter, we gave a summary of the planning inquiry into the Higher Farm application and we are sorry that we omitted to include an account of the Inspector's report in the October Newsletter. In his conclusions the Inspector stressed that it was of over riding importance whether the development would be acceptable as regards the appearance and character of the village and its rural surroundings; he also considered the landscape and topography of the area to deserve the most careful protection.

In rejecting the proposed new building of 26 houses the Inspector cited the following:

- i) the prominent intrusion of the new building visible from many places;
- ii) the need to preserve the character and nature of the approach to the village from Turnpike crossroads;
- iii) the proposed site would be largely seperated from the village.

As regards the conversion of the farmhouse and outbuildings into 8 units of holiday accommodation, the Inspector allowed the appeal subject to a number of conditions including the protection of existing trees, landscaping, attention to the design and appearance of the altered buildings, and the provision of services, including sewage.

Overall, the Trust feels that the Inspector's Report has added considerable weight to the Trust's Objectives, coupled with an authoritative outside opinion of the character of Thorncombe and its surroundings which should be influential in the judgement of future planning applications.

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