



**SADDLE STREET COTTAGES.** These cottages after being derelict for many years have now been replaced by Ferndale, fortunately built in the traditional style of flint and brick so typical of many of the cottages in Thorncombe.

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## 50 YEARS IN THORNCOMBE.

Sir Raymond and Lady Firth, who bought 2 Holway in 1937 and have used it as a rural retreat ever since, were the speakers at the Trust's meeting on 12 July. Sir Raymond set the scene with quotations from an abstract of the 1851 Census of the Parish which then had a population of about 1300. This included large numbers of tradesmen and craftsmen and nearly 100 farm labourers, the majority employed on farms which still exist such as Grighay, Sadborow, Yew Tree and Forde Grange. While a few of the big family names of those times are still found in the Parish, the bulk have moved elsewhere, emphasizing the constant movement of families which has accompanied the changes of the past 150 years.

Lady Firth compared the simplicity of the pre-war village life and housekeeping without main services to the much more sophisticated existence she lived in London. The Bonfield Stores provided nearly every necessity, there were very few cars and people either walked or cycled if they visited the surrounding towns or, for instance, the cinema in Winsham. She traced some of the changes which have occurred since the War, including the closure of the three "hotels" in the village.

The talk was well attended by about 40 residents including several with life-long recollections, some stimulated by the interesting selection of photographs brought by Lady Firth which further added to everyone's enjoyment of the evening.

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## SEPTEMBER MEETING - THE MARSHWOOD VALE.

The talk and slide show on the 13 September will be by Mrs Sylvia Creed-Castle, on the Marshwood Vale on which she has recently written a book entitled - 'Dorset's Western Vale'. The meeting will take place in the Village Hall, Thorncombe at 8.00pm. and will be followed by a raffle, bring and buy and refreshments.

## DID YOU SEE.....?

On the 2nd June, a Trust member was surprised to see a hoopoe searching for food on the grass outside his workshop in Holditch. Small numbers of this glamorous bird which in flight and colouring resembles a small jay, with cinnamon body, boldly marked black and white back and tail, a large crest and a long curved beak, reach the British Isles each Summer; on average there are about six recorded sightings in the Devon Bird Report annually. The L.P.O., the French equivalent of the RSPB, has recently reported a marked decline in numbers of hoopoes breeding in France since the early 1970's, and the reasons for this decline may well lie in the man-made/climatic changes affecting many species which migrate from Africa to Europe each Spring.

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## CAR BOOT SALE.

Following misgivings about possible lack of support due to the large number of fund-raising events in the area this Summer, the Committee has decided to cancel the event planned for the 19 August.

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## KINGCOMBE VISIT.

A party of more than 30 members and their families visited the Dorset Trust's Kingcombe Estate in perfect weather on the 27 May. The party was divided into two halves, one being given a conducted tour by Paul Comer, the Trust's stockman, the other by Nigel Spring, the principal of the Kingcombe Centre. Members gained a lively impression of the old-fashioned way in which the farmland had been managed and were shown such features as old withy beds and double hedgerows as well as the work the Trust is undertaking to make the Estate viable. Some interesting birds, butterflies and flowers were seen and an informative and pleasant afternoon was concluded with refreshments at the Kingcombe Centre. We are indebted to Peggy Montague for her painstaking organisation of this enjoyable outing, which it is planned to repeat next May.

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## PARISH WALK.

It has been decided to hold another Parish Walk, followed by tea in the Community room, on Sunday 22 October 1989. Further details will appear in the next Newsletter.

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## TALK IN ST.MARY'S SCHOOL.

Mrs Pat Mills visited Thorncombe School on 6 June to talk to the children about WATCH, which is the junior wing of the Dorset Trust for Nature Conservation. Mrs Mills explained most skilfully to her audience how they could take an interest in the countryside and in how to protect it. She certainly planted seeds of conservation in the minds of the young who heard her. The Trust, under whose auspices the visit took place, is grateful to Mrs Mills for the trouble she took in coming to Thorncombe, and would also like to thank the Headmaster for finding time for the talks during the School's busy timetable and for giving the project his support.

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## STOP PRESS .....PLANNING.

Members of the Committee attended the meeting of the Western Area Planning Committee in Bridport on 20 July and noted the following recommendations:-  
(a) Fry Plan - refused o/a area housing target already met, road access and overall sewage problem; (b) Quinn Plan - refused o/a outside envelope, access, sewage and housing target already met; (c) Higher Farm - (5 houses)- deferment for further opinion re access and sewage; (d) Hamlyn - refusal o/a parking and access difficulties, over development and sewage problems.  
These recommendations will now go forward to the Development and Planning Committee meeting in Dorchester on the 2 August.