

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Bill Poortvliet

Chairman: Pat Cubitt

Vice Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

CLUB MATTERS

Blazing June 2020

You may have thought you'd finally be able to get off my interminable rail trip but no such luck I'm afraid. While surveying a Sheringham building close to the roundabout on the A149 coast road I spotted a semi-concealed black plaque where our friend William Marriott "hit the buffers" in 1947. The row of modern brick houses opposite is another Marriott's Way named after "the most outstanding figure in the history of the" MGNR which was nicknamed "Marriott's Tramway" and there is a small museum named after him at the Holt (High Kelling) Station. The Poppy Line passes Dead Man's Hill which is now wooded and perhaps an ancient burial mound. Only this April a local man hanged himself in a nearby barn and in 1984 a volunteer fell to his death when restoring the railway bridge over the coast road. Weybourne Station was used in episodes of Dad's Army and the coming of the railway in 1887 led to the short, chequered history of the Weybourne Springs Hotel. This was an extraordinary 5 storey, 36 guest room colonial style structure built in Edwardian times. It was popular initially but was requisitioned during the First World War after which it struggled, partly due to structural issues. There was a fear that it would be used as a landmark for German bombers like the distinctive barns of the East Anglian Real Property Company and it was demolished in 1940. The North Norfolk Railway has fared better although there is a perennial problem where the line climbs up onto Kelling Heath. The cinders are liable to spark fires and the neighbouring farmer is meant to refrain from planting corn alongside.

I apologise to Edgefield members if I was rude about their parish in my last newsletter. It suffered an infamous double murder in 1907 and has also had more than its fair share of field fires in recent times. Maybe this is why **Richard Brooks** has migrated to Holt although, after our recent disaster, this may be out of the frying pan into the fire. He has provided the attached photo of Church Farm at Brunstead where his family provided seed to the Beck family to which **our Chairman** is related through his late lamented father Bill Cubitt. **Michael Pollitt** uses the spelling of Brunstead with an 'n' whereas I might use an 'm' because the name derives from broom. Until old Turnip and Cokey knocked Norfolk agriculture into shape the county had vast areas where broom proliferated along with furze / gorse / whin. Hence the large number of places whose names derive from the Old English *brom* including Bramerton and Brampton not to mention Barnham Broom and Broom Green between Guist and North Elmham. Then there is Broomsthorpe, the site of a deserted village in Lorna Ross/**Alastair Wagg** territory near Tattersett. Another is Bro(o)mholm Priory – also known as Bacton Abbey and once an 'isle' in darkest Poppyland from where Bill Cubitt migrated to Bodham Manor. However Brundall is another derivative named after broom in Michael's manner; I'm venturing into dangerous territory here. On a foul night in 1874 a mail train left Brundall Station and collided with the one from Yarmouth on a single track line at Thorpe. This was the worst railway accident in Britain at the time with 25 people killed. Was it chance that this accident befell the Great Eastern Railway whereas Marriott's MGNR recorded no losses other than the gentleman in the Gentlemen at Wells? Methinks so. Coincidentally neither Melton Constable, the historic hub of the MGNR, nor Thorpe St. Andrew, the scene of this disaster, have recorded any *coronavirus* deaths whereas Dussindale next door has recorded the highest level of deaths in Norfolk and Waveney. Like the Budgens fire it is more likely luck than judgment.

Tim

Hon. Secretary: Tim Nicholson 1a Market Place Holt Norfolk NR25 6BE Tel. 01263 711167

email: tim_nicholson@ymail.com