

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Bill Poortvliet

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Vice Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

CLUB MATTERS

Mid November 2020

Sad but not unexpected news reaches me of the death of **Richard Waddingham** at the age of 82. After being educated at Gresham's he spent 60 years at Manor Farm, Briston with his beef cattle, his flat coat retrievers and his love of nature. Most of us will have enjoyed a tour round his Cromer Ridgeland farm between the Bure and the Glaven with its famous ponds as Holt members or with any number of other organisations including schoolchildren. His quirky humour was exemplified when a man approached him after he had baled some straw opposite Astley School between Briston and Melton Constable. He asked Richard whether he could have some bales to which Richard replied "Why do you ask?". This clearly flummoxed the chap so Richard again said "Why do you ask?". The poor man, and these are poor parishes, wasn't aware that most of the locals merely helped themselves to a bale or two when Richard wasn't about. Being a kindly gentleman Richard didn't particularly mind the pilferage but he enjoyed the tease in his wry, laconic manner.

Holt lights have just gone up and, with the town almost deserted, it feels a bit like the set for a western before the outlaws and/or posse ride in. In previous years coachloads would be driving through *en route* to the Thursford Spectacular and when the lights were switched on George Cushing would be in the High Street with his wurlitzer. This year Thursford has had to make do with the Show of Pumpkins at Brookhill Farm on the A148 but **Bryan Plumbly** is still going strong at Meadow Farm in the middle of the village. His son Kevin has largely taken over but Bryan takes pride in his cattle some of which he runs at Wiveton and on other local marshes.

Holt resident **Richard Brooks** has provided me with a follow up report on "UK Food and Agriculture Post BREXIT" which was commissioned by the Worshipful Company of Farmers from Emeritus Professor Alan Buckwell who used to be chief economist with the CLA. Before the 2016 Referendum he predicted that Brexit would bring short term pain for farmers but long term gain. This time he claims too much emphasis has been put on food self-sufficiency since international trade is quite capable of ensuring adequate supplies for all. The full text may be online shortly but please contact me if you want to borrow Richard's copy.

Apparently the Planning Department at Cromer isn't working at full capacity during this lockdown so no change there. This may be why the application to reactivate the Rectory pig farm at Aldborough after 6 months and a hundred objections has yet to come to committee. The most recent of these is the **Buxton Odour Report** which to me seems a bit unnecessary since **Roger** of that ilk lives fully 2 miles to the north-west. To be serious this could prove a bellwether (sheep with a bell to lead the flock and alert the shepherd) case as Ian Pick Associates, the planning consultants for the Filby family, have a track record of winning controversial battles like this for pig and poultry operators. The local councillor is one of the Lib Dem ruling group from which there have been defections to the Tories amid alleged scandals. It will be interesting to see how local and national government policies factor into the decision which probably won't now be made before the New Year.

Tim

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