

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Bill Poortvliet

Chairman: Pat Cubitt

Vice-Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

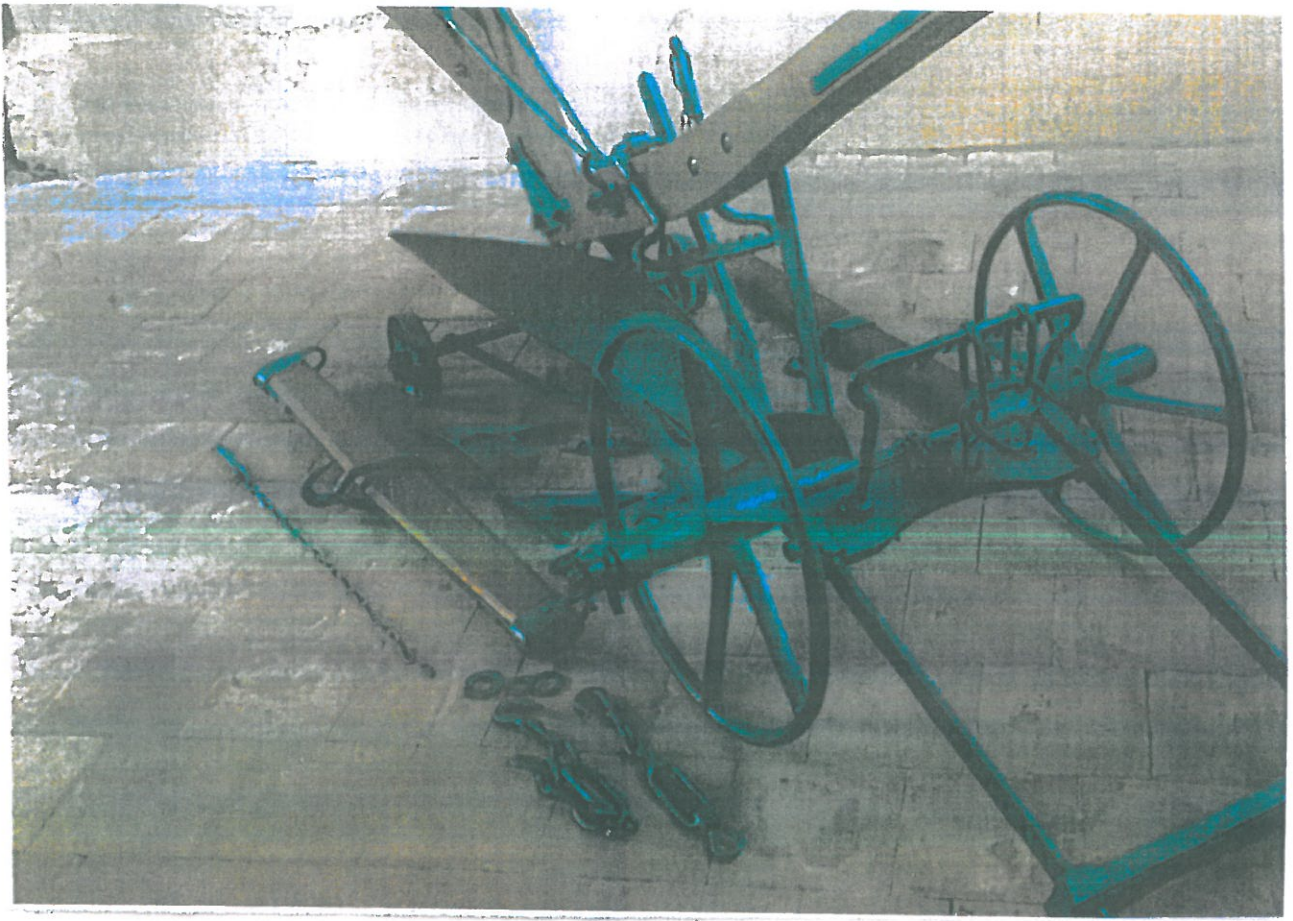
CLUB MATTERS

SEPTEMBER 2021

It's been a frustrating harvest with the dismal weather but our President is most grateful for your co-operation in collecting barley samples for this year's competition. Numbers are markedly up on last year and I hope the delayed season has not affected quality too markedly. Well done to **Bill Poortvliet** and **John Cragg** for their efforts in this. We expect **Chris Borrett** will have **Bob King** back to judge the entries and give his commentary on these as well as on the local, national and global grain trade at next month's *A.G.M.* This is still planned to be held on *Tuesday, 12th October* more of which anon. We've got one or two candidates for the committee but I'm hoping anyone else interested will get in touch with me.

In former years we would have been holding our Annual Ploughing Match around this time. A recent visit to Northrepps – neither via the International Airport nor to the pub - alerted me to an interesting legacy. A new housing estate has been built on the site of the old Cherryridge Poultry complex opposite The Foundry Arms. This is called Gallus Close after the plough that was developed at the Northrepps Foundry in the 1830s and continued in widespread use into the 1920s. A fine model is displayed in the parish church while another one made in Besthorpe is on view in Elsing church. I'm unsure of the origin of the Gallus name; there was a Roman Emperor and a Governor of that name which is also Latin for chicken. There could have been a local chap called Gallus or, more fancifully, could it be a corruption of 'gallows' – answers by email please – there are plenty of local smuggling stories. We have used a plough as our club emblem but it is debatable whether it is appropriate any more with the rise of min-till and doubts over whether ploughing is still generally necessary. I'm not sure whether **Jack Hammond** has a gallus plough in his father's collection of farm machinery that **Simon Evans** of ArnoldsKeys is auctioning on Wednesday, 15th September. Apparently it was only in middle age when Billy started to meaningfully indulge his passion for the tractors and equipment that he had grown up with. There are over 500 items including combines, American tractors and a thresher - maybe the one that was featured in the photos in my last newsletter so get there if you can – 10.30 at Manor Farm just off Aldborough Green.

This is a quarter of a mile downwind of the site where the controversial application to introduce a 1900 pig unit is still undetermined after 18 months. Here it is the noise and odour problem that is the principal concern and the same applies with the poultry application at Heydon. Again it is the neighbours downwind who are objecting as they "have experience of a similar poultry site in Itteringham". Apparently the manure would be taken to Foxley but waste management, flies and dust pollution still need to be addressed.



Rob Hughes, our much missed Student Day supremo, has alerted me to free support available from DEFRA's Future Farming Resilience Fund. This is being run in anticipation of the adverse impact of the loss of BPS by 2027 and seeks to help you mitigate the likely income loss through ELMs, diversification and other initiatives. I can forward the information Rob has provided or you can contact him direct on 01553 778055. Otherwise you can register at defraffr@brown-co.com or call 01480 598875.

Finally I must inform you of the passing of Robin Combe who was a good friend of our club and guest speaker at our 51st AGM in 2000. He inherited the Bayfield Estate in middle age as the grandson of the Fourth Earl of Leicester and his mother Lady Silvia was sister of the Fifth Earl. It was he who had three daughters so that the title passed to Anthony Coke, a South African cousin, who became the Sixth Earl and was father of Thomas, the current one. The eldest of those three daughters is Lady Anne Glenconner who, but for male primogeniture, would have become Lady Leicester. **Roger**, the eldest of Robin's four children, brought her to our Annual Dinner in 2018 where she provided a spicy foretaste of her bestselling memoirs including her time as *Lady in Waiting* to Princess Margaret. Since then she has followed up with a couple of lively novels: *Murder in Mustique* and, due out in November, *A Haunting at Holkham* (also available as audio-books I believe).

I hope you can follow the genealogy and Robin had a fine sense of *noblesse oblige*. Part of his inheritance were the distinctive cottages in Glandford with their shaped gables between the sweet little church and the ford. In the 1980s these became a major part of Holt & Neighbourhood Housing Society's stock of properties let to deserving local tenants. Having succeeded Lady Harrod as Chairman Robin increased the portfolio significantly and latterly Roger has taken over and continues the good work. Another benefaction has been the public access for walkers and riders that Robin afforded through the magnificent Bayfield Woods between Letheringsett, Saxlingham and Wiveton. Here he was instrumental in the River Glaven Conservation Area Group's project to reintroduce meanders and riffles into the stretch that runs past Bayfield Hall and through the lake. A less welcome American import than Billy's tractors was the signal crayfish and the Group has had some success in eradicating these to preserve the native species.

There is history everywhere on the estate. A ruined church above the hall, a folly, Bayfield Brecks (now named Brecks House) where a Zeppelin bomb did damage and the fine complex of barns where beer and pies are produced. Roger has relocated his farm buildings to here and Baker Brothers' / Roger Newton's free range pigs destined for Waitrose can be found on these free-draining fields. There are further craft uses at Manor Farm in Glandford including Cley Spy. Exactly two hundred years ago Cobbett on his *Rural Rides* claimed that the Glaven valley was almost devoid of trees and the 1912 flood undid a lot of planting in the Victorian period. Nevertheless there are sufficient mature oaks and other trees to justify a visit with Natural Surroundings close to the hall. Robin won't be driving round in his old Land Rover anymore but his lovely legacy lives on.

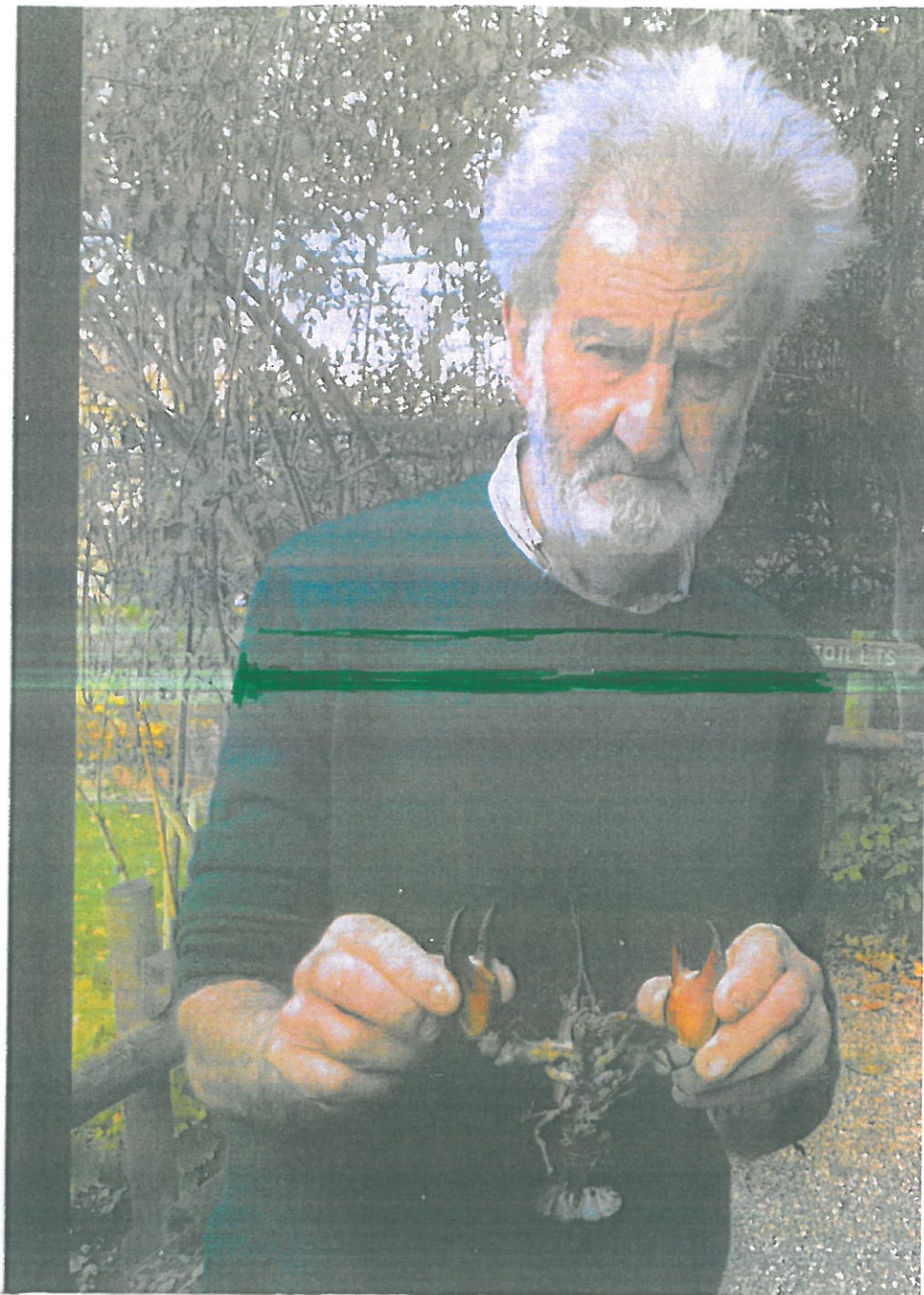


Hon. Secretary: Tim Nicholson 1a Market Place Holt Norfolk NR25 6BE Tel. 01263 711167 (work)
email: tim_nicholson@ymail.com

Hon. Treasurer: Tony Williams Red Roofs Ipswich Road Newton Flotman Norwich Norfolk NR15 1PN
Mob. 07818017864 email: tony.williams@brandiston.co.uk

ROBIN COMBE

2ND January, 1934
to
28TH August, 2021



Bayfield Hall - a listed Georgian-style manor house - overlooks the lake and 'new river'