

# **HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB**

FOUNDED 1948

*President:* Richard Brooks

*Chairman:* Pat Cubitt

*Vice-Chairman:* Andrew Ross

[www.holtfarmers.club](http://www.holtfarmers.club)

## **CLUB MATTERS**

### **The Ides of May 2022**

Roll up ! Roll up ! There is still plenty of space for the Farm Walk at Wild Ken Hill. Just let me know and make your way there by 2.30 on this Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> May. The farm is on the west side of the A149 Lynn Road between Snettisham and Heacham with the postcode PE31 7PQ. When approaching from the south-east travel about one mile north from the roundabout on the north side of Snettisham and take the HGV entrance on the left and not the one past the layby where there is a row of roadside cottages. Nick Padwick will meet us and offer us coffee. Apparently the Springwatch crew will be in evidence since their first broadcast is on Friday.

Further to my piece on Irmingland Hall **Peter Perry-Warnes** tells me that his great uncle Bert Laycock once owned the seventeenth century building, presumably around the time of the Second World War. David Joll has, judging by the sales brochure, been a fine custodian for the last three decades and I have mentioned how the Cornish family lived here in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ezra Cornish was the Saxthorpe ploughmaker who married his second wife at Thurning and there was a grand reception at Irmingland Hall in 1890. He moved a short distance downstream to Saxthorpe Hall (**Archie Mitchell** country) and eventually to Ormesby St. Margaret. He also acquired Trunch Hall and White House Farm for his son Ezra and his grandson Charles (first name Ezra) and the family still owns those. Before that Reverend Samuel Pitman had inherited Irmingland Hall in Victorian times and the house on the sharp bend in the B1354 at Oulton was the Pitman's Arms. He might not have approved of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, a Baptist preacher, who was said to have attracted a crowd of 5000 to Oulton Chapel. The 'do different' nature of Norfolk permeates the centuries. While Cromwell and Fleetwood were not native to the county the parts they played in getting rid of the monarchy was known as The Usurpation. The tiny Irmingland parish church was ruinous before then and the Fleetwood family were behind the movement to establish non-conformist meeting houses with Oulton Chapel being built in 1728. In fact Irmingland Hall once had its own chapel and chaplain as well as beautifully landscaped grounds and old maps show an associated farmstead on the road to Corpusty with two large fishponds. Most of the house was pulled down in 1788 and what remains was restored in the 1920s. It has retained much of the grandeur that is apparent in the painting I used in my last newsletter; I should have credited this to Miles Cotman who was the son of John Sell Cotman.

*Tim*

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