

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Richard Brooks

Chairman: Martin Jensen

Vice-Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

CLUB MATTERS May 2024

"LET'S GO BRANDON !". For Americans this is a rather rude, party political slogan but for Holt Farmers it is an invitation for you to join us on an exciting Visit to **Frederick Hiam Ltd.'s Brandon Fields Estate** in the heart of Breckland on **Thursday, 20th June**. Jamie Lockhart is the Managing Director and a Nuffield Scholar who was recently the Chairman of Norfolk NFU. Here there is over 1,000 acres of potatoes, onions, parsnips, barley and sugar beet with reservoir and borehole irrigation as well as 12,000 tons of storage capacity. There is currently a £2.5 million modernisation scheme introducing automated machinery including Robotti unmanned sowing and hoeing vehicles. There is also 778 acres of woodland and pasture while at Tuddenham, Roudham and Ixworth Thorpe there are arable operations each of similar size plus some land in Pembrokeshire. **President Richard** points out our connection here with the late Derek Pearce having been appointed manager in 1958 to manage 8000 acres. Derek's brilliant career in some ways mirrored Sir Frederick Hiam's remarkable life from humble beginnings to becoming pioneers of the agricultural sector. Fred was born in 1872 and started marketing farmers' goods in London which enabled him to buy vast swathes of East Anglia for a song before The First World War. Along the way, wouldn't you know?, in 1895 he broke the world skating record for 220 yards (one furlong). We are being offered a barbeque and our Chairman Martin has organized the coach to **depart from Holt Rugby Club (Bridge Road, High Kelling, NR25 6QT) by 1 o'clock**. There is capacity for 40 including 10 from Gresham's and the cost should be around £25 a head to include a donation to the charity of our host's choice. I shall be glad to receive names of those who want to come on what should be 'a grand day out'.



Jamie Lockhart

Before then, this **Thursday evening at 6** in fact, there is a bonus session. Apologies for the short notice but Phil Culley, the farm manager at **Thornage Hall**, is ready to take a party round their 70 acre holding. **The Camp Hill Community** was grateful for our recent donation to help with their bee keeping in addition to which they have Red Poll cattle and practice the German Biodynamic System which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year meaning, **Michael Pollitt** tells me, that it predates our Soil Association. Mr Culley says up to 20 is a good number and that the walk lasts about 90 minutes after which we might retire to The Three Horseshoes (formerly The John H Stracey) at Briston. Please let me know asap if you'd like to come.

Unfortunately **Jack Hammond** has had to cry off from our **trip to Sweden** at the end of this month as he is getting a new knee. I don't know whether his surgeon is concerned about Jack's medical history since about ten years ago he managed to break the titanium used in his ankle operation which was meant to be unbreakable. We hope all goes well and maybe he can then celebrate with a knees-up. Those making the flight depart from **Stuart Ross's Oak Farm**, Thornage Road, Holt NR25 6SY by 8 o'clock next Tuesday morning and there are these reminders from Wing Commander **Martin Jensen** :-

1. Passport details to him a martinchurchfarm@gmail.com or 07711 180717 please
2. Everyone is responsible for their own insurance
3. Cabin Bag Allowance is 40cm x 25cm x 20cm and 10 kg



Rick, Anne and Peter Perry-Warnes

Sad news comes of **Ray Picken's** death just one day shy of his 88th birthday. He was a keen shot and ran a large poultry operation from sites around Holt and Fakenham where he was able to capitalise on the expansion of the town towards the A148 bypass. Our commiserations go out to his widow Peggy, son Paul and daughter Rosemary. The funeral will be at Cromer Crematorium on Monday, 3rd June at 2 p.m. with dress code smart and colourful; donations to Cancer Research UK are welcome.

Happier thoughts are with **Sam Clabon** and **Laurie Hill** who have both chosen The Glorious First of June for their weddings. As I have mentioned Sam is marrying **Peter Perry Warnes's** daughter Leah and we wish all involved good luck with the weather and every happiness for the future. Peter and his son Rick have been most pleased with the introduction of cover crops onto approximately one fifth of the 4,500 arable acres that they farm. Sheep improve the soil structure through improved drainage and retention of nutrients and financial support is available through the Sustainable Farming Incentive.

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