

# Neatishead, Irstead and Barton Turf Community Heritage Group

## AGM, Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024. Chairman's Report.

Following our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations last year we turned our attention back to WW2 with the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day and the Normandy Landings. Our anniversary exhibition on 9<sup>th</sup> June centred around the four men from our villages who were involved in D-Day, Edward Cossey, Clifford Hemp, Eric Clitheroe and David Coleman. The display highlighted life in the villages during WW2 but more notably our research on the 82 men and women from Neatishead, Irstead and Barton Turf we are currently aware of, who served their country either at home or abroad during this time. We were overwhelmed by the number of people who attended the event, all of whom were full of pride and admiration on seeing photographs of their relatives on display together with information bringing their stories to life. There was also a display explaining more about D-Day and the Normandy Landings the largest seaborne invasion in history, and I should like to thank Duncan for his meticulous research and the production of this display.

Our walk around Three Hammer Common in August and research into its name sparked some interest and I should like to thank Stephanie for introducing us to Manorial Records and where they can be accessed online. These can be helpful in learning more about land ownership prior to The Enclosure Acts of the late 1700s – if you can decipher the handwriting – and we should like to explore this further. We have in fact purchased some books from the British Association of Local History – who we hold our insurance with - which we hope will help - Reading Early Handwriting and Manors and Manorial Documents.

We should like to thank the Baptist Chapel for the continued use of The Stable next door. This is where we hold committee meetings, organise our displays, store reference archives, undertake research, drink coffee and eat biscuits. Much of our research material is held digitally, as we prefer not to keep original archive material, which came from the Barton Turf History Project, one of village groups before the formation of NIBCHG. This contains digital copies of all census and parish records, maps, newspaper cuttings and many other documents relating to the three villages. ***This can all be accessed at our Stable Open Mornings which we started this year– the next one being on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November, 10-12noon.***

We are very pleased to be able to continue to display some of our research and information relevant to our own events at the monthly NVH Community Markets and thank them for this opportunity. If you were at the Community Market in September, you may recall the Broads Authority were there to consult on their Neatishead Conservation Area Planning Document. Having pointed out a few historical inaccuracies, we were very pleased to see their suggestion of a Heritage Interpretation Board to be placed at Neatishead Staithe. I hope you are all familiar with the Barton Turf heritage interpretation board in the telephone box on the side of The Common and may remember at our last AGM I mentioned our aspiration to have

something similar in Neatishead (and Irstead).

You will be aware of research which Michael, Carol and I undertook about the staithe of the villages as part of the 'Water Mills and Marshes' project which began in 2019. One of the aims of this project was to produce a book drawing on all the new research. Finally, this new book by Tom Williamson and Alison Yardy, with other contributors, 'Broadland – Shaping marsh and fen' has been published and contains some of our research. *(Details had been sent to NIBCHG Friends)*

Another book that has been published this year and with which we have connections is 'Hell in Paradise' about the massacre of 97 members of the Norfolk Regiment at Le Paradis on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1940. Originally it was believed that George Yaxley of Irstead was one of those men, but subsequent research has revealed this not to be so, though both he and his brother Horace were members of the Royal Norfolks who both lost their lives bravely holding back German troops during the Dunkirk evacuation and are mentioned in this book.

In addition to all these events, our evening presentations have been very well supported – thank you – and have covered a very wide range of topics including: 100 years of farming, medieval tapestries and the great herring industry of Great Yarmouth. Our last talk of this year is entitled 'GI Brides and Wartime Sweethearts' by Orla Kennelly of the American Library on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November and we hope to see you there.

My report each year is just a snapshot of all the group does and has achieved and on the reverse of the flyer you will see a list of the many tasks the committee has been undertaking over the past 10 years which includes: publicity, research, website editing, displays, refreshments, grant applications, cataloguing, copying, photographing and transcribing documents, printing, oral recordings, producing newsletters and copy for both local parish magazines.

So as we come to the end of this year I should like to thank each member of the committee, Barbara, Gail, Maria, Michael, Monica and Susan for their tremendous support and ask you to consider joining us in helping us to continue community interest in the history of our villages and help to preserve its heritage for future generations. Sadly we are saying goodbye to Barbara and Gail who have decided to hang up their committee hats – both who have been on the committee since its formation back in 2013. Thank you both for the tremendous work and support over the years. I hope that we may still call on your expertise to lend a hand from time to time.

**Claire Penstone-Smith, Chair, 2024**

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