

**VISIT TO HINXTON MILL, SUNDAY APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>** The Group has been extremely lucky with the weather conditions for our visits over the years, and on another



gloriously sunny Sunday in April we went to Hinxton Watermill. There has been a corn mill at the site for centuries, and the present building was constructed in the 17th century. The mill ceased to operate in 1955, and fell into disrepair. Local people were involved in a campaign to save it, and in conjunction with a Preservation Society managed to rescue the buildings from demolition. The mill was restored and re-opened in 1987; it is now owned by CambridgePPF, and local volunteers enable it to be opened on fixed days during the year. More information can be found on their website: <http://www.cambridgeppf.org/places/hinxton-watermill/>



The volunteers gave us a warm welcome, and we had plenty of time to look around the mill and see some of the machinery in action. There are beautiful walks locally, along the river, and around the village, and we also took advantage of the chance to explore the wider area. We ended the visit with a most enjoyable lunch at the local pub, the Red Lion. Alf and Lesley Wright have written a full report of the visit, based on Alf's presentation at our May meeting, which includes the story of Lesley's family connections with Hinxton – and a good selection of photographs. It can be found on the Group's website here <http://www.tiltyhistoryprojects.co.uk/people-places>

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Anthony Haskins, from Archaeology East, gave a presentation at our **NOVEMBER 2016** meeting. The subject was the excavation of Spitfire X4593 ('Kerala') which was flown by 20-year-old Pilot Officer Harold Penketh when it crashed in the Fens in November 1940. The presentation covered the history of the Spitfire and its pilot, who was killed in the crash, together with an account of the excavation in October 2015. The excavation was featured in BBC One's *Countryfile* on Remembrance Sunday 2015.

The AGM in **JANUARY 2017** was well-attended, and we celebrated the Group's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in style with a splendid cake cooked by Jane Pedley. The Treasurer and Membership Secretary had resigned towards the end of last year, and they were thanked for all their work for the Group. The other members of the Committee were voted in for 2017, and we formally welcomed our new Treasurer, Rebecca Fowell, who will also be Membership Secretary. Alastair Farr then gave a talk about Captain Aitchison, a notable resident of Great Easton who lived at The Garth from 1936-1975. Captain Aitchison was in charge of the SS Gothic in 1952 during its Royal Tour to the Pacific Dominions with Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh. Alastair's PowerPoint presentation is on the website, in the People & Places section.



Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
TALHG

In **MARCH 2017** we had a presentation by Peter Donovan on 'The Two Roberts', the Scottish artists Robert Colquhoun and Robert MacBryde who lived at Tilty Mill in the 1950s. Peter gave us fascinating tales of the unconventional life they enjoyed at Tilty, where they looked after the children of the poet Elizabeth Smart, together with insights into their artistic work and inspiration. This link leads to the BBC Arts page featuring their lives and work that he spoke about:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2hscrfQSYK2BrFvHXbNhW5b/the-two-roberts-love-paint-and-poverty>

In **MAY 2017** Peter Layzell gave a presentation about life in rural Essex during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, based on contemporary newspaper reports. The first part of the talk focused on the sad tale of a 15-year-old girl, reported in the papers in 1895 under the headline the 'Bradwell-on-Sea Horror'. This story provided many insights into the harsh realities of life at the time. The second part of the talk covered a variety of subjects in and around our local area, including the Workhouse, the Pest House, local opposition to compulsory vaccination, and rural crime. Less gritty themes were also covered, such as the Countess of Warwick's Cottage Garden Show at Easton Lodge.

**OTHER NEWS:** The latest issue of the Saffron Walden Historical Society Journal (No. 33, Spring 2017) has a theme linked to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Articles include Tilty Abbey {written by Rachel Clarke and Maggie Stevens}, the Quaker radicals in NW Essex and a child's experience of the Plymouth Brethren in Walden. Only £3 from Tourist Information, Harts or Waitrose in Saffron Walden.

## NEXT MEETING

**TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY:**

A PRESENTATION BY

**JANE RIDLER**

ON THE HISTORY OF

BEEKEEPING