

BROXTED AND CHICKNEY PILLBOX WALK, SUNDAY OCTOBER 21ST – On a sunny autumn day, Alf Wright took us on a third ‘Pillbox Walk’, this time through Broxted and Chickney. We started with a visit to Chickney Church, where Alf had set out an interesting display relating to its history; Saint Mary’s church, Chickney, dates from either the late 10th or early 11th century, with later extensions and additions, and has a simple unspoilt interior with brick and tiled floors.



We then headed out across the fields in search of the eight pillboxes in the area identified on Alf’s map. The pillboxes were constructed in 1940 as part of the inland defence G.H.Q.

line, and around 80 were built on the section of the line between Newport and Dunmow. The pillboxes were located 250-330 yards apart so that, theoretically, one could be seen from another. Some of the Broxted and Chickney pillboxes are now very well hidden, of course, the trees and shrubs having grown considerably over the decades. We found them all, nonetheless, whilst enjoying a walk through some beautiful countryside. As is customary, some of us then headed off for lunch at the Prince of Wales, Broxted. More information on pillboxes in the area can be found on our Website at: <http://www.tiltyhistoryprojects.co.uk/all-our-stories/places-and-events/pillboxes>



Looking across the fields from inside one of the pillboxes

OTHER EVENTS IN 2018: The Group had a display stand at the Soapbox Race Day in Great Easton, on Saturday 1st September, featuring work from some of the local projects that members have undertaken, including the history of the Maternity Home in Great Easton, and research relating to the First World War and men from local villages. We also had a display stand at the Tilty Church Flower Festival on the weekend of the 6th/7th October. The theme of this year’s festival was “Memories of Childhood”, so the display featured material relating to childhood games, and to local schools and schoolchildren. Both these events also provided the opportunity for people to peruse the excellent folders about the villages of the Five Parishes that Alf Wright has collated over the years, and so kindly shares with us.

CENTENARY OF THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR – The centenary of the 1918 Armistice and, effectively, the end of the First World War was commemorated in many different ways locally. In addition to services on Remembrance Sunday, church bells rang out in several local villages, and beacons were lit at Broxted, Duton Hill, Great Easton and Little Easton as



TALHG Display at The Gallery, Great Dunmow
“More Than a Name”

part of the nationwide “Battle’s Over” tribute. Great Dunmow was adorned with almost 8,000 knitted and crocheted poppies, and the Royal British Legion commemorated the date with a range of events, including an exhibition at the Gallery in the High Street to which TALHG contributed a display. Some members of the Group have been involved in an on-going project to find out more about the men from the villages of the Five Parishes whose names are inscribed on our local war memorials. This started with contributions to the book published by the Recorders of Uttlesford History in 2014, ‘Lest we Forget’, which compiled information about almost 80 memorials in Uttlesford. Subsequent research turned up more information, some of which has already been published on our website. There is also now a presentation folder in Great Easton church, which brings together all the material about the sixteen men from Great Easton, Duton Hill and Tilty named on the memorial; it also includes information about the construction of the memorial, including photographs, which was officially unveiled before the end of the war, in May 1918. The website will be updated in the new year, to add in information about some of the other local villages. There is also an update to the story of George Perry, of Duton Hill, who died in 1916 in the village of Aubin St. Vass in northern France. George did not die in battle, so was buried in the churchyard there, and a local resident got in touch via the website to let us know that he is commemorated alongside the French soldiers who died in the War. Indeed, on November 11th 2016 the Remembrance Ceremony was held at his graveside, his story was read out (in English, and in French), flags and wreaths were laid on his grave, and the Last Post was played. The full story, with photographs, will be published on the website in the new year with the other updates.