



## John Lycett's blog – April 2025



I am standing on the Cliffe this morning where the old Home Guard hut used to be during the war. The hut has long gone but there is a plaque here now to commemorate the spot.

In this village, along with many others, we have just had a celebration of 80 years since the war ended. Just standing here, I wonder what yarns this spot could give up if it could only talk.

Our celebration consisted of a magnificent display of memorabilia in the village hall with the WI serving a non-stop selection of cakes with tea and coffee. At the school, there was a BBQ, a tug-o-war and other events and the day was concluded at the local pub, The Dog, with food, drink and a right good sing-a-long with a singer of wartime songs.

Before I leave the Cliffe, I want to mention David Shearan, a local nature and wildlife enthusiast, who's been counting the butterflies on the farm and on the Cliffe. On the Cliffe, in particular, he has been excited by the number of different species he has found this year compared with last year. This bodes well for Earth Day.

Back to the farm, Steve, Sam, Mark, George and one or two more, have been busy sowing energy beet, drilling maize, spreading liquid and solid digestate.



At the end of the month, Sam cut the forage rye and Steve and his team harvested that. Not forgetting Luke who was busy doing dry matter tests.

Sam also cut the first field of lucerne which is now drying on the drying floors. The team are now back again spreading digestate on the land they have harvested. Most of it will be going into either maize or lucerne.

I want to congratulate Christina Dutton, Sam's wife, who came second in the whole country in the Barrie Orme Shield 2024 (BASIS) in recognition of outstanding excellence in a Crop Protection Examination.

## **Wheat**

I don't know what to say! Spot price today is £160/tonne. Forty-two years ago on this farm, the milestone of 4 tonnes to the acre was reached. Since then, the yield seems to have plateaued. In 1983, a price of £124/tonne was achieved, so forty odd years later, as I've mentioned, a price of £160/tonne spot. Wheat prices have taken a new low. What's gone wrong?

Sad news – Robbie, a local young farmer's son, who came to us to help us out at peak times in spring and autumn at the beginning of the 1990s, now having suffered for some time with a brain tumour, has sadly died at the age of 51. Robbie was always smiling, always willing to help and... always eating Hobnobs. Robert Elwyn Davies you will be missed!

## **Spraying**

I've not heard from Steven, the sprayer driver, but with all this fine sunny weather, I expect he is on top of his spray programme and liquid fertilizer spreading and so now gentle rain would be a bonus.

JL

06/05/2025