

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Richard Brooks

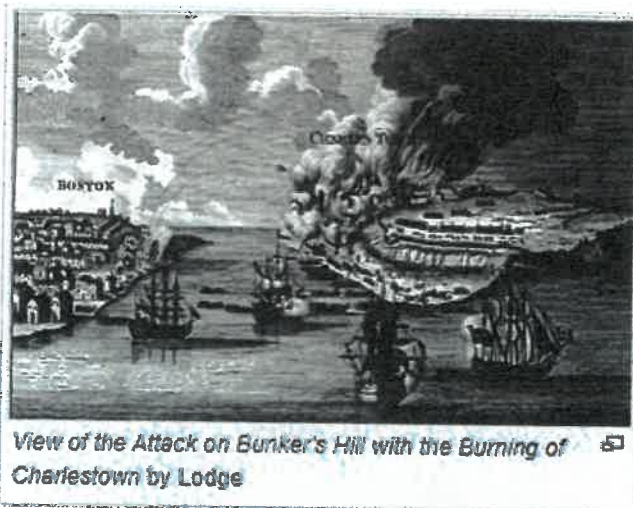
Chairman: Pat Cubitt

Vice-Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

CLUB MATTERS July 2023

There are still plenty of places available for our *visit to the Burn Valley Vineyard on Tuesday, 4th July*. It is pleasing to see wives and younger members have already signed up so please let Laurie know you can make it if you can. English wine production has been a rare success story over recent times and I'm sure there are some of us who could get pointers for a business opportunity of our own. The secluded site slopes north-eastwards from 40 m to 30 m in acombe that reaches the river Burn close to Nelson's birthplace in Burnham Thorpe; the plaque marking that spot has recently been replaced. Some of the land around Shammer, the crossroads near the vineyard, was owned by the Walpole and Spencer families and not all by the Cokes. The road between here and Burnham Market 2 miles to the north runs over Beacon Hill through the area known as Burnham Sutton. This was the name given to a wartime 'Q-type' bombing decoy with a series of lights to simulate an active airfield that was located almost on the site of the vineyard. I'm not sure how successful this was in deflecting enemy bombing from the airfield at Docking as there was a rumour that the Luftwaffe dropped a wooden bomb at another decoy site on Salthouse Heath. The North Creake Airfield that I referred to previously was itself a decoy site initially although it is now called the Egmere Airfield or Egmere Enterprise Zone. The solar park that covers most of the site was established almost ten years ago and the owners are currently seeking to extend its life from 2039 to 2052. They claim to supply enough power to supply over 5,000 homes while the adjacent AD plant generates up to 500 cubic metres of biomethane per hour as the green gas that heats the homes in Wells and Fakenham. This Bunker's Hill site is the hub of the Holkham Farming Co.'s operation and the Estate has just secured planning permission for a 2226 square metre re-development and extension of their buildings alongside a 6,600 tonne potato store. Appropriate water harvesting and treatment facilities have been incorporated along with landscaping but I thought they might have included solar panels on the acres of roof over these enormous portal frame 'sheds'.



Bunker('s) Hill might just ring a bell from your schooldays as the name of a 1775 battle in the American War of Independence. The cheeky colonials were defending a peninsula sticking into Boston Harbour which was probably still clogged with tea from the Party the previous year. The colonial generals had less ammunition than we had so they implored their men not to fire their muskets too early since they were notoriously inaccurate. It was claimed that this was when the command "*Don't fire until you can see the whites of their eyes*" originated although this is disputed. We actually won the battle but it turned out to be something of a Pyrrhic victory as things went pear-shaped in 1776 until hostilities ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. Things had improved by the time of the American Civil War with the introduction of the rifle musket but the Unionist General John Sedgwick was unlucky. He encountered Robert E. Lee's Confederates at the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House in 1864 and when sharpshooters started taking pot shots from about half a mile away he assured his men that "*They couldn't hit an elephant at this dist...*".

The progress of the pigs and poultry planning applications that I have been tracking since the first lockdown remains tectonic. The Aldborough one to revive the pig operation next to the Scarrow Beck on the southern side of the village has had nothing new listed on NNDC's planning register for fully eight months. At least the cricket club has been having a better season thus far and *The Black Boys* are now known as *The Cricketers on The Green*. By comparison the poultry application at Heydon has only been dormant for seven months – perhaps because the duties are shared between NNDC and Broadland. The applicant is entitled to feel frustrated and is following the stated “*alternatives of free range pigs and poultry in mobile sheds which he can do without planning*”. Lime Kiln Barn at the northern end of the Heydon Straight was originally part of this farm before being converted into a £1 million home. It hasn't sold over the last twelve months even though the estate agent claims that “*Lime Kiln Farm is located in unspoilt countryside*”. Talking of which those of you with £25 million to spend could buy a rather special property in 458 acres on the opposite side of the Bure valley in the form of Wolterton Hall.



Tim

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