

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Richard Brooks

Chairman: Pat Cubitt

Vice-Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

CLUB MATTERS Lammastide 2023

In spite of the weather some of you may have sampled the Latitude Festival which was held at Henham near Southwold in Suffolk last week. A few degrees of longitude (or 4 miles) east of there stands what is left of Easton Bavents where the constant battle between land and sea is currently being waged. I normally restrict my recommended reading to Christmas but this catchy harvest might mean you have a bit more time on your hands than you expected. My choice last year was "*Woodston - The Biography of an English Farm*" by John Lewis-Stempel who called "*The Easternmost House*" by Juliet Blaxland "a 21st century classic, just brilliant". The author is a middle aged architect who draws "a detail of the allocated dog-bed space in someone's kitchen extension" and "tries to cram another holiday let into some neglected outbuilding". She has the farmers' backs and writes sympathetically and evocatively about rural ways and practices over her lifetime in this maritime region. The MacGuffin throughout the book, written in 2018, is the inexorable approach of the sea towards her rented home. SPOILER ALERT The house succumbed within a couple of years – see attachment. The Ravine, a short distance to the south, is a family home in a similar position to that The Easternmost House was in five years ago. Having paid £202,000 for it only nine years ago the owners have now reduced the asking price to under £500,000; I'd guess they may be lucky to get back what they paid for it – if anything.



Juliet Blaxland is married to Giles Stibbe whose father Philip was Headmaster of Norwich School in the 1970s and who has had a successful career in the Household Cavalry leading to him, controversially, being awarded an OBE after being involved in an appalling traffic accident. Another Suffolk couple are Tim & Heidi Crick who each have an interesting pedigree. Tim, whose father taught at Gresham's, was a star winger in the 1980s who, after Cirencester, forged a remarkable sheep farming career. It helped that he married Lady Heidi Rous, daughter of Robert "call me Keith" Rous, the Aussie 6th Earl of Stradbroke, which meant that he had use of the pastureland on the Henham Estate. However he also established a flying flock based at Benacre (pronounced BENakker) and has a flock of thousands in spite of an extraordinary setback. At the outbreak of the Foot and Mouth Epidemic in 2001 his sheep were suspected of being contaminated through a market and 400 were culled. If his were some of the first casualties, my family's stock in the Hambleton Hills were some of the last to be 'taken out' as part of a contiguous cull in the September. In both these Suffolk and Yorkshire cases no animals were found to have been infected. The Silence of the Lambs.

TIM CRICK

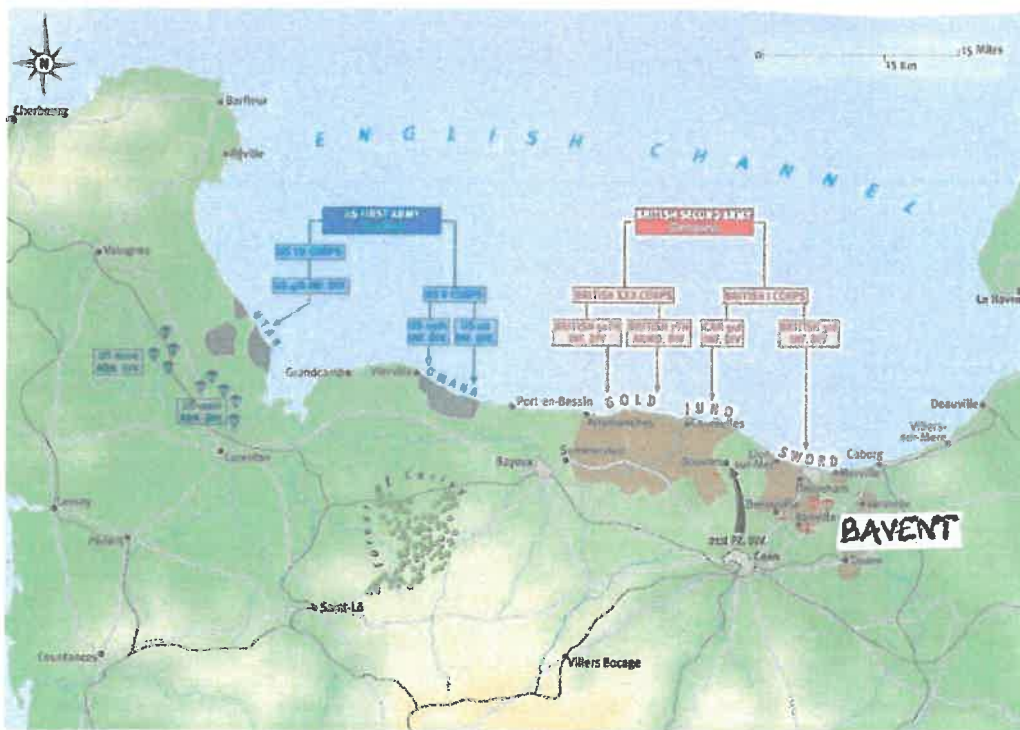


Suffolk Coastal was the constituency held by John Selwyn Gummer when he was MAFF Secretary and a good negotiator around the time of the MacSharry reforms. As Lord Deben he has moved towards the Monbiot camp while Therese Coffey, the beleaguered DEFRA Secretary, is now the local MP. The Greens are strong in Suffolk concentrating on local issues and, in May, Mid Suffolk became the first local authority they have ever controlled. Sizewell C is further down the coast and The Greens are challenging the approval that was granted last year. The drama has also been offshore in the 1672 Battle of Sole Bay, familiar to some of us through the Adnams Broadside bitter that was introduced 50 years ago to commemorate the 300th anniversary. Our friend Willem van de Welde the Elder was the official artist for the Dutch Fleet who captured the scene of the narrow Dutch victory; he subsequently entered into the service of Charles II and lived in London for the rest of his days. Incidentally the name Bavent derives from a feudal award in the fourteenth century to a Norman nobleman from a small place between Caen and Sword Beach which was another troublesome coastal encounter for our men.



The Battle of Sole Bay
1672

Willem van de Welde
The Elder



D-DAY

6th JUNE
1944

Tim

Hon. Secretary: **Tim Nicholson** 1a Market Place Holt NR25 6BE 07464 991741 tim_nicholson@ymail.com

Hon. Treasurer: **Laurie Hill** Summerhill House 1 Sculthorpe Road Fakenham NR21 9HA 07811 034215 laurie.hill@larking-gowen.co.uk

Home | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture | Tech

More

England | Local News | Regions | Suffolk

Easton Bavents: Farmer's cliff-top cottage demolished

🕒 27 February 2020



MIKE PAGE

The pink house can be seen on the left in 1998, in the middle in 2009 and on the right in December 2019, when it teetered on the cliff edge

By Charlie Jones

BBC News

A farmer is "devastated" after being forced to abandon her cliff-top cottage because it was falling into the sea.

Anne Jones's family had owned the property in Easton Bavents near Southwold in Suffolk since 1925.

A storm destroyed a large chunk of the cliff in December, leaving the building 30ft (9m) from the edge.

It has since been demolished over a number of weeks, after being deemed unsafe by engineers, and the cliff has eroded by another 10ft (3m).

"The whole family is incredibly sad, my father won't even go down the lane because he can't bear to look at it. There is so much history there and we have rented it out to so many local people over the years," said Mrs Jones.

"It's quite depressing, it makes me angry. It feels so unfair that we have lost hundreds of acres of land and we just have to accept it, whereas more prosperous, populated areas get protected."



MARTIN BARBER/BBC

Anne Jones was told her cliff-top house would be demolished as it was no longer safe



MIKE PAGE

The demolition took several weeks, as the family wanted to preserve and sell some of the bricks to make back a tiny portion of their losses



MARTIN BARBER/BBC

The house in Easton Bavents is now rubble

Peter Boggis, who is Mrs Jones's mother's cousin, started building his own sea defences nearly 20 years ago to protect the area but **was ordered to stop** after losing a court battle.

A **government-funded scheme**, which was approved in 2012 to help them relocate, did not work out and the landowners have been left to fend for themselves, Mrs Jones said.

A spokesman for East Suffolk Council, which is part of the Coastal Partnership East group that manages the coast in the area, said it had "worked hard... with

property owners in Easton Bavents over the last 10 years to try and find ways to alleviate the challenges of losing your property to the sea”.

He added they supported those who lose their property to erosion with a planning right to build elsewhere in the district.



JULIET BLAXLAND

| Author Juliet Blaxland rented part of the property from the family for 12 years, but was asked to leave before Christmas

Find BBC News: East of England on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). If you have a story suggestion email eastofenglandnews@bbc.co.uk

More on this story



Juliet Blaxford and her husband Giles, Easton Bavents, Southwold, Suffolk | CREDIT: TONY BUCKINGHAM