

Welcome to our Club

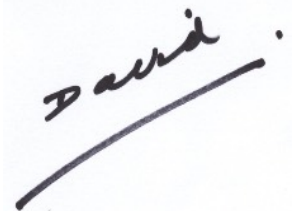
Avon Vale Tennis and Croquet Club has now been in existence for 150 years and this booklet has been compiled by Committee members, Sue Tregelles, Francesca Smith and Liz Lacon to mark the occasion. They have woven the history of the Club into a rich and colourful tapestry and we are all indebted to them.

This booklet is a valuable commentary on the social evolution of the area and I believe their work will be enjoyed not only by the members but also by a much wider readership, as they have managed to bring to memory and life, people and events - some splendidly eccentric, but all interesting.

I am honored to have been elected Chairman of the Club for this very special year and thoroughly recommend this booklet to you. I am sure you will derive much pleasure from it.

David Ashby

Chairman

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David" in a cursive script, followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.

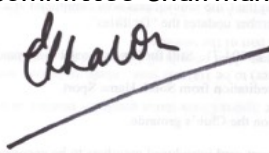
Avon Vale - 150 years, what an amazing achievement, and we are still in possession of five well-kept grass courts and a Croquet Lawn, as well as a healthy and active playing membership, on court and socially.

We felt as a Club that the membership, past and present and all who have had an association with Avon Vale, deserved to gain an insight into its fascinating history. Happily, it has been well documented throughout the years in the wonderful records we have in the form of Minute books, and other archive material. We decided as a Committee to set about creating a snap-shot and potted history through the ages up to the present day, including photos, recipes, anecdotes and the current programme of events.

Avon Vale is not only a very unique Tennis and Croquet Club but, to a lot of us, almost a way of life. We hope this booklet captures some of the enjoyment that we have certainly had in producing it, and look forward to many active and happy years ahead when we will join together with our mutual love of sport and all the companionship that brings.

Liz Lacon

15 - 0 Committee Chairman



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Liz Lacon', with a long horizontal flourish underneath. The signature is written over a faint, repeating background pattern of the words 'Avon Vale'.



**Welcome to our new
President
Margot Vickers**



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The History of the Club is so varied and colourful, it should be made into a film! (Suggestion for Committee of 2059)

Here is just a taste of the Club's wonderful life

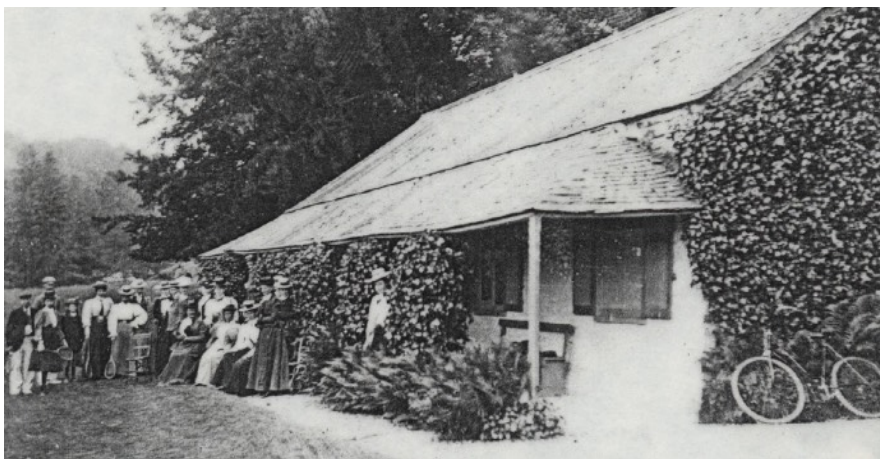
In **May 1859** a number of local gentlemen met at the Kingsbridge Road Hotel at Wrangaton and decided they would form an Archery Club. This was the beginning of the Avon Vale Club which has been at Avonwick since **1870**.

There were 17 founder members, six of whom were local parsons, and during the early life of the club the outstanding members were the Rector of Diptford, Rev. W. Cooper Johnson and the Vicar of South Brent, Rev W. Speare Cole. Between them they carried out nearly all the organisation of the Club. The first Archery ground was in a field at the back of the Hotel at Wrangaton, and the first Grand Day took place

there, with Mrs Hare as Lady Paramount*, on **18th July 1859**.

*Traditionally appointed to preside at tournaments and to present awards. If there are any disputes that can't be resolved by the judges, the Lady Paramount has the final say

Move to Avonwick - For a few years the Club was successful but then ran into difficulties and by **1870** had a debt of £30, and it was resolved to discontinue it. However, the Committee had second thoughts and contacted all members asking them if they would support the Club at Totnes, Avonwick, or Ivybridge. The voting showed 15 for Totnes, 23 for Avonwick and 26 for Ivybridge. This took place in **April 1870** and by June of that year, without any explanation in the Minutes, the Club came into being at Avonwick on land owned by the Cornish-Bowden family, (the Cornish-Bowdens helped found the Club and the family still play a very valuable part in its life as the landowners and supporters).



In the following year members showed faith in the Club by deciding to build a Pavilion. They accepted a tender for this work amounting to £109 - quite a considerable sum in those days. Their support was underlined by the fact they were building this on land which they held on just a yearly tenancy. The Pavilion was completed the same year and a dance was held in it during **September 1871**. The Pavilion has proved to be of great value not only to the Club but also to the Village of Avonwick, as it served as a village hall until 1925 when a proper Hall was built. For two years, **1876-1877**, before St James Church was built in Avonwick, the Pavilion also served as a church in which regular services were held.



No longer just an Archery Club - In **1875** the *Avon Vale Archery Club* changed its name to *the Avon Vale Club*, and it was resolved to “*extend its purposes to include badminton, cricket, croquet, lawn tennis, skating and other amusements*” as well as that of Archery. The Club was now popular and prosperous. Archery was still the main amusement but in **1879** a lawn tennis tournament was held on the annual Prize Day. In **1880** the Rev. C. J. Perry Keene, the Rector of Dean Prior, was elected a member of the Club and he is

undoubtedly the best known of the Club's Archers. He was, for many years, the Champion Archer of England and played an important part in the life of the Club, serving on the Committee for many years and holding office for a time as Chairman. He remained a member until the 1914 -18 War. He competed at the 1908 Summer Olympics in London, Keene entered the double York round event in 1908, taking 10th place with 543.

Grand Prize Days

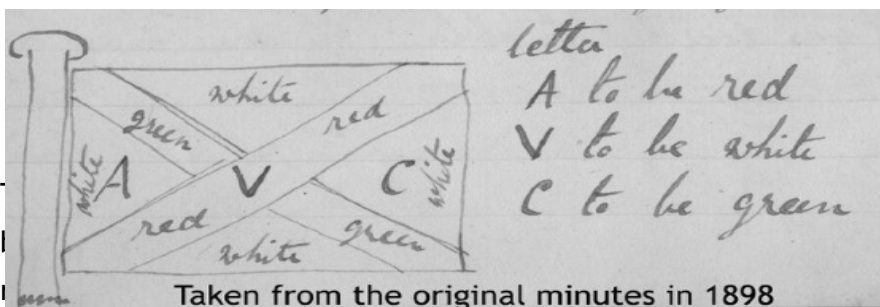
<p style="text-align: center;">AVON VALE CLUB.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Prize Day, Monday, August 23rd, 1897.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">ADMISSION :-</p> <p>1/- each for Members; 2/- each for Visitors residing more than 8 miles from Club House.</p> <p>Members are reminded that Tickets (to be obtained from the Hon. Sec., F. H. HARRIS, Esq., Yeare, Uptoncough, Wykebridge), are available for those visitors only who are resident more than eight miles from the Club House, Avozwick, or are staying at a member's house.</p> <p>The Gatekeeper will have strict orders not to admit any visitor without a Ticket, properly filled in with the name of the holder, and countersigned by a member.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">» LUNCHEON «</p> <p>will take place at 1-20 p.m., the members providing for visitors.</p> <p>An early attendance is requested in order to facilitate the arrangements of the Tables.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">» THE ANNUAL DANCE «</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Will take place from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ON MONDAY, 30th AUGUST.</p> <p>Tickets to be obtained from the Hon. Sec., as above, 2/6 each to Saturday, 29th August, after that date 1/- each.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ARCHERY MEETING</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>AND</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LAWN TENNIS TOURNAMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Open to Members and Visitors.)</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">ENTRANCE FEES FOR EACH EVENT :-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Members, 1/- each. Visitors, 2/6 each.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">ARCHERY.</p> <p>Ladies - - Highest Score. Gentlemen - Highest Score. The Best Gold.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Shooting at 100 Yards will commence at 11-20 o'Clock.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">LAWN TENNIS.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(HANDICAP.)</i></p> <p>Ladies - - Singles. Gentlemen - Singles. Mixed Doubles.</p> <p>The Tournament will commence at noon, all Entries must reach the Hon. Sec. not later than 9 a.m., on Monday, the 23rd August.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">N.B.—No Prize will be given for Archery or Tennis unless there are at least three competitors for each event.</p>
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A Carriage will be waiting at the Kingsbridge Road and Brent Stations, for the conveyance of Visitors to the Ground, meeting the 11-38 down Train at Brent, and the 9-50 and 1-20 up Trains at Kingsbridge Road.

1890, the Grand Prize Day was held with a Lady Paramount and a President to grace the proceedings. The festivities began with a luncheon at 1.00 pm. In the afternoon and evening there was archery, and later tennis. At 5.30 pm a “Pic-nic” dinner was served, followed at 7.30 pm by the Annual Dance in the Pavilion. The Club continued to have a Grand Day each year up until 1914, but archery became the least important of the activities and the offices of Lady Paramount and President were dropped. (There is a note in 1905 to the effect that “*Whisky should be served instead of a cup of sherry at luncheon*”).

Club Flag

In 1897 a new building was completed at the south end of the Pavilion for storing all the Club's equipment and tools, which enabled the Gentlemen's changing-room to be cleared. The total cost of £29 11s 0d was met out of the income from the year. In the following year, the Club had a flag designed and made by Messrs Tope of Plymouth.



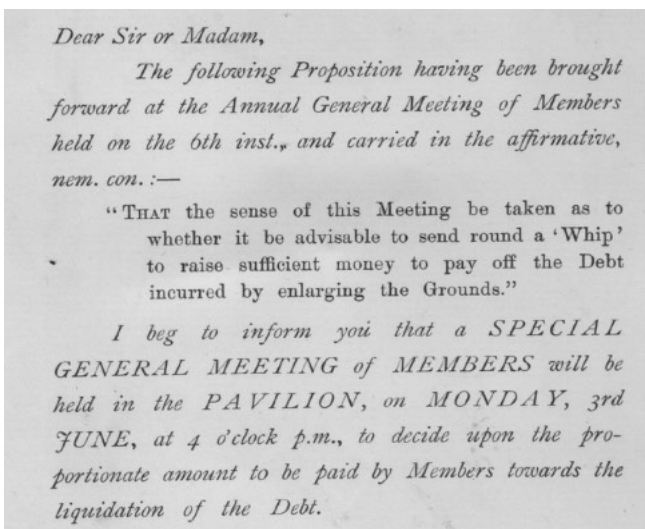
and 15 Golds. He was Champion Archer of England and went

on to win all the four major Tournaments at Leamington, Crystal Palace, Great Western and Great Northern.

‘Successful Whipping!’ - These years at the turn of the century were, perhaps, the most successful in the Club's history for membership and attendance due, to quite a large extent, to the main officers, Mr F. J. Cornish-Bowden, Chairman, and Mr F. J. Harpur, a most excellent Honorary Secretary. Mr. Harpur, in his very comprehensive minutes and records, noted that, *“in 1900, the aggregate of attendances at the Club*

for the season was well over a thousand”.

This was despite the rather threatening negative balance of the Club's funds.



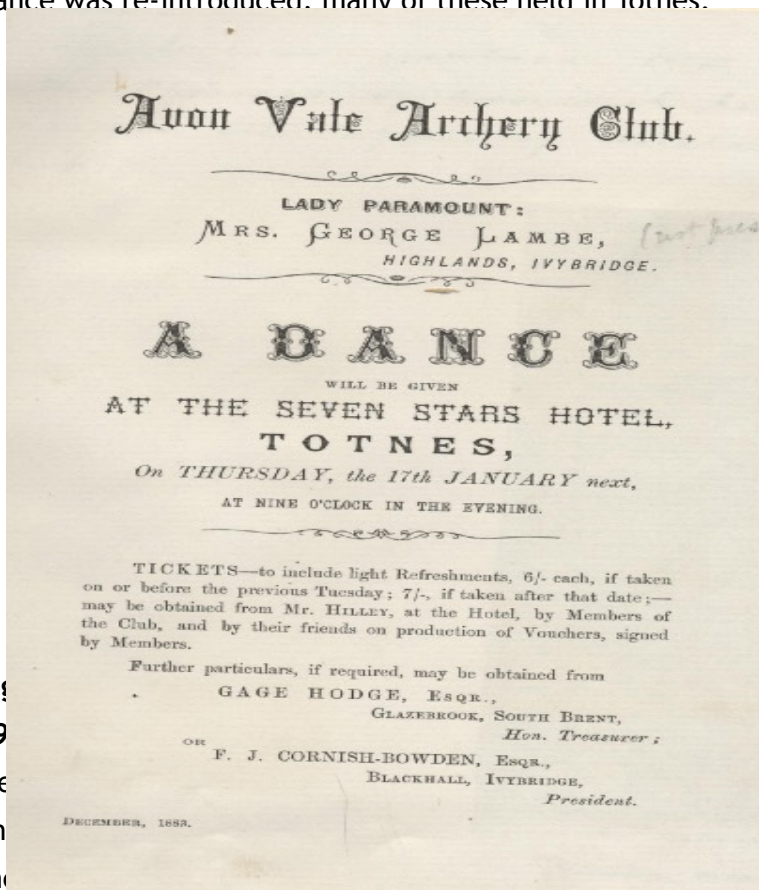
Financial Crisis - The Club continued to thrive until 1914.

New tennis courts and croquet lawns were laid down and archery continued, albeit on a small scale. In 1913 it was decided to spend up to £65 on altering the Pavilion to provide better kitchen accommodation and to build a new gentlemen's

changing room, and the work was put in hand. Unfortunately, the following year was a very difficult one in that the Club banked with the Navel Bank at Totnes which failed. This forced the Club to close in August as there were no funds to pay the groundsman. The Club re-opened in **1915** with an overdraft of £70 at Lloyds Bank. It had a successful season and was able to reduce the debt by half. The Club did not re-open for play again until **1919** so, during the War years, the grounds were let for sheep grazing. Some 20 family and four single members kept the Club alive by paying a reduced subscription. The combination of these and the letting fees for the Pavilion enabled the Club to pay all its debts off.

Good Times return - In **1919** the Club re-opened for tennis with two courts fit for play. By **1923** the Club was flourishing and had a healthy balance of £105. The Rev. A. T. Allin was Chairman and Mr B. F. T. Hare, the Hon. Secretary and, until the end of the 1920's, the Club was successful in every way. Large Open Tournaments were no longer held, but very successful American Tournaments were played and drew

entries from many other Clubs in South Devon. The Annual Dance was re-introduced. many of these held in Totnes.



token subscription of 5/- per annum. Immediately after the War a meeting was held and, by employing a full-time groundsman, it was possible to re-open for play on **6th May 1946** with four courts. After re-starting, the Club still had a balance of over £100 and, considering the many difficulties, had a reasonably good year. Owing to a rather smaller membership than in the past, it was found that four courts

were sufficient and the remaining two courts were let to the Avonwick Bowling Club.

In **1947**, owing to the continued decrease in membership numbers, due to post war financial constraints and the continued petrol rationing, the Committee agreed on a shorter season, from mid July to the end of September. Several members were unable to continue playing at the Club because of the petrol rationing but were able to retain their membership for a subscription of five shillings.

Avon Vale opens up its membership - Membership from **1951** onwards was open to all (note in Minutes of Thursday 28th September at 4.30pm held at Black Hall Manor) - *‘After much discussion it was agreed that all members should endeavour to obtain new members by invitation and that all the old restrictions as to the suitability of prospective new members should not now be enforced.’*

It was agreed in **1951** that school children should be allowed to join the Club for the summer holidays for the sum of £1 and that a net should be left up throughout the season, so members could play at any time. During this season (August 2nd 1951) it was also agreed that the Tollmarsh Tennis Club in Buckfastleigh be allowed membership following a payment of £6 for the rest of the season

At the beginning of the **1952** season, Colonel Vickers suggested that part of the Club grounds be made into a

bowling and putting green for use by Club members and South Brent Bowling Club. After extensive discussions during the year, it was agreed. Tollmarsh Tennis Club were again invited to play for a reduced subscription of £1 for all individual members for the season. A note is made in the Minutes that the keys for the Club were held at the garage in Avonwick and they also held the visitors book.

First increase in subs for 20 years! - 1952 saw an increase in members and visiting players, so the following year subscriptions were increased for the first time in over 20 years. This year also saw a reduction in the annual rent for the Tennis Club from £12 to £8, providing the Club agreed to give up the old Archery Ranges which were currently being let for grazing.

Prizes for a competition in aid of funds held during 1952 were as follows - a duck, chickens (not sure if they were live or not!), lengths of material, sherry, gin, eggs, groceries, nylons and cigarettes!

At the end of the **1953** season, although membership had risen very slightly, it was decided that the Club should advertise in the Totnes Times and the Dartington Press for new members for the following season. This was repeated in **1955** in the Totnes Times and Western Morning News.

Play permitted on Sundays - In 1955 a SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING was held to discuss play being allowed on Sundays, as several members were finding it hard to arrange a four to play week days which meant they were considering not rejoining the Club. Mrs Cornish-Bowden explained that before the War most members were able to attend on Club Days during the week, but times had changed and it was decided to allow Sunday play from 2pm.

1958 saw the beginning of the Tea and Tennis Day at the start of the season, when each member of the Club should be present and bring along one potential new member.

Surviving its Centenary - In 1959 the Bowling Club closed, due to lack of support, which meant the lease (with the landlord, not the Tennis Club) would not be renewed. The Tennis Club agreed to retain the green for at least a year before deciding its future use. The Centenary Celebrations were a huge success and raised £47:7s:0d, which was quite beyond expectations.

The following paragraphs have been taken from the South Devon Journal on Wednesday August 12th 1959 in their report on the Centenary Celebrations: *'No Wimbledon frills and fripperies at Avon Vale Tennis Club's centenary celebrations on Saturday. Not much tennis either. But what we did see was in the very latest fashion. For 1875, that is.*



Mr Kenneth Baker and Mrs Joan Traill in period costume playing to period rules

The quartet on the Avonwick court provided a pleasant interlude with their doubles match in period costume, and to period rules.

“To you Harriet,” said Miss Kerry Trench, swishing her ankle length dress skirt as she sent the ball high over the net. And “Harriet” (Miss Joan Traill), looking the perfect picture of unflustered Victorian femininity, moved not a muscle as the ball sailed past her. “Bad luck, m’dear,” consoled her partner Mr Kenneth Baker.

Later, when it was the turn of “Albert” (Capt. William Velvyn), in knee breeches, to miss a high lob “Harriet” gave her confirmed opinion that he was off form.



Miss Kerry Trench and Captain William C Velvyn

At the microphone, Mrs Baker explained some of the details to the crowd: how it was permissible to have one foot over the line while serving and how the net used to be raised to five feet at the sides. Volleying was unknown; serving was underarm. The result of the game? *“Haven’t the foggiest,” said the foursome as they trooped off.*

Fifth Grass Court Opens - In **1961** the club discussed and considered the covering of the courts due to the awful summer weather. After experimenting with polythene sheeting, it was declared impossible due to condensation. It was agreed that the bowling green should be changed into the croquet lawn. There was also a suggestion that a practice tennis wall be built, measuring 10ft x 25ft, at the north end of Court 6. Unfortunately, this didn't go ahead. In **1961** the membership stood at 48, the highest it had been since before the War. It was during this season that the 5th grass court was opened for play.

1962 enjoyed record membership since the War - 50. It was this year that the slate roof was considered to be beyond repair and the Club applied for a grant from the Playing Field Association for a corrugated iron one. This grant was turned down because the Club did not admit the general public. In this year, the Club was affiliated to the LTA enabling it to apply for Wimbledon tickets.

Electricity? - In **1963**, the Electricity Board still could not supply the Club with electricity as the Club was too far from the distribution centre.

The Club decided, in **1964**, that it would be good to co-opt two junior members to the Committee, *'in order to ensure better contact with the younger players'*. It was also the first

year that the issue of parking on the road was raised! South Brent Youth Club requested the use of the Club for one night a week, which was agreed.

Archery - In **1965** Brigadier Vickers suggested the Club pick up on the growing interest in Archery in the country, and arranged an Archery demonstration by his cousin, General Vickers. This led to Archery being reintroduced to the Club and a very successful first season. For competition purposes, the team was known as The Avon Vale Archers.

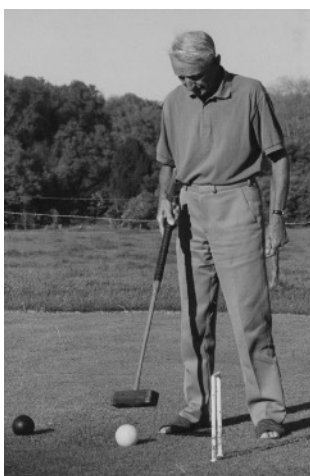


Miss Isabel Scott-Elliot became the Secretary of Archery in **1967**, taking over from Mrs Baker. They both gave instruction to the 17 Archery members. An Archery Trophy, in the shape of a 'horn', was presented to the Archer that made the most progress each season. This was kindly donated by Mr Muddeman. It was suggested that a fete be held to celebrate the Archery and that Sheep Dog Trials be



held to raise funds. This was not taken up - although the idea of Archery with Sheep Dog Trials going on behind could have added an element of moving target!!

Sue Barker! - The **1970's** was a very stable time. In July several girls from the Devon Girls Tennis Team made a very successful visit to the Club and, yes, one of the girls was Sue Barker.



Croquet was becoming more popular and Archery continued to thrive.

In **1973** a new archery Club was formed in the area offering more opportunities to progress within the sport and, sadly, The Avon Vale Archer members moved to the new club ending Archery at Avonwick. The 'Horn' trophy, however, is still held in the Club's archives.

1979 saw Brigadier Vickers gaining a Rothman's award for Service to Sport.

During the **1980's**, membership remained steady but attendance on Club days for tennis was quite poor. This resulted in croquet playing members finding they had to queue at times, and consequently, Court 1 was used as an extra

croquet lawn. A 'Holiday membership' was added to the subscriptions in the 80's following several members having relatives and friends staying during the season who wanted to play more than the allowed three times before full membership became due.

Jumble Sales during the 80's went well with the local 'Rag and Bone' man receiving any items left for a few more pounds!

Summer Time! - The summer weather in **1985** was so awful that, for the first time in living history, the courts had to be closed in August!

1986 saw the beginning of the Avon Vale Tennis Club '100 Club' which ran successfully through until the early 1990's raising valuable additional funds.

In **1986** members were set the task of raising the funds for a hard court. This resulted in a grant from the Sports Council, a low interest loan from South Hams District Council and support from members who offered interest free loans to the Club, repayable over a 10 year period through realistic, yet significant, increases in subscriptions. The final cost for the court was £6,400, plus a few incidental expenses. The SHDC loan was fully repaid by 1990.

Opening of the Hard Court - July 1987 saw the opening of the hard court and, for a few years, the 'Chairman's Chilly Challenge' took place during the winter, as well as a fairly successful Winter Saturday Club.



sports news 1987 - Opening of the hard court

Electricity....again! - South West Electricity Board were contacted again with a view to supplying the Club. The quote was £4,600! A bold attempt was made by members to obtain further grants for this, but all were unsuccessful.

The early **1990's** saw the age of the computer and, happily, the reading of the archived minutes became much easier for us archivists!! It also meant the Club had to discuss Data Protection and the handling of members' personal

information. The Club was moving in the world of technology ... without electricity!

Under Any Other Business in the Minutes of 19 September **1990**, the following was entered: *'foot faulting was discussed - it was considered as rather bad at the Club and players should tell each other'*

In **1993** the Club decided that all members should have keys ending the need for keys to be held at Cousins Garage or the Avon Inn. A further quote was requested for connection to electricity, this had now risen to £6,500.

Strict Code of Dress - During the mid 90's lots of new members joined. It was felt that the strict Dress Code of all whites should remain as it was a major part of the Club's history. It was decided that minor breaches would be accepted, if predominately white. Social events continued to play an active part in the Club's calendar during **1994**, including an Auction of

Promises, an Easter walk, a cheese and wine evening, country dancing, a Treasure Hunt and the end of season Christmas Dinner at Dartington. St Mary's Hospital, Paddington started playing their annual tennis match.



AVTC's popular Winter Tournaments at Ivybridge's indoor courts started in February and November, followed by a Supper at a member's house.

Major projects for **1995** were to properly fence the courts and resurface the hard court at an estimated cost of £10,000. A well-attended BBQ was arranged on the August Bank Holiday for the first time and has remained a firm favourite ever since.



requirements were met, the Club obtained from the Lottery, Rural Aid and Devon Playing Fields grants totalling £14,000. This 80% grant from the Lottery was the highest ever awarded to a Club in the South Hams. A Development Plan, up-date and modernisation of the Club's Constitution, and the establishment of a sinking fund for future court maintenance

was carried out and a recommendation to affiliate to the LTA were set in place.

An official opening of the completed works was held on 25 August with the presentation of a cheque by the Sports Council, followed by the cutting of the ribbon by Gay Waddams, then a few words from Peter Bayliss, LTA and a closing address by Chairman, Colin Vallance.

Membership went up to 198, 60 of whom joined in the **1996/7** season. Subscriptions income for the year was at a record £4,600.

First Lady Chairman! - Liz Lacon was elected as the first lady Chairman in the Club's history in **1999**.

Tea, Tennis & Croquet - The first Tea, Tennis & Croquet was organised to replace the Cheese and Wine evening following Members' requests to have more combined playing and social events. The Chairman's Challenge continued with an end of Wimbledon BBQ.

The Club started playing League tennis. Friendly matches and tennis coaching were introduced and Croquet interest again increased.

The Millennium - A Millennium Event was held on 16th July 2000, as well as a tennis tournament over the weekends of 2nd and 9th July. It was a very grand event starting at 2.00pm. Past members were invited and over 100 people attended on a beautiful day. Tables were laid outside and a sumptuous tea was served at 4.00pm. A tree was planted to mark the occasion, and a wonderful display of the Club's archives held in the Clubhouse. Play continued throughout the afternoon until 6.00pm when the winners of the tournament were presented with their Cups. The Chairman, Liz Lacon, made a speech in the Clubhouse and the Club's President, Mr. Cornish-Bowden, unveiled a specially commissioned painting of the Club.

The President gave an enlightening speech to members, old and new, on his memories of the Club. The day's celebrations ended with wonderful canapés made by the catering committee and a glass of bubbly.

Avon Vale at its best!

Avon Vale club look back over three centuries

THE Avon Vale Tennis and Croquet Club continued its 2000 season in great style by celebrating the new millennium with a special event.

All the grass courts were occupied last weekend on a rare sunny Sunday afternoon. At 4pm play stopped for a celebration tea and the planting of a commemorative tree by June Howell past secretary of the club.

The finale of the day was the unveiling of a specially commissioned watercolour by local artist and club member, Andrew Miller. The ceremony was hosted by Liz Lacon, the club chairman assisted by George Seager-Berry who acted as MC for the day.

Many members, past



Mr J H Cornish-Bowden

and present, attended and everyone was particularly pleased that the club president, Mr J H Cornish-Bowden was able to be present and perform the unveiling of the picture.

His association with the club has been lifelong with members of his family helping to found the club in 1859.

In his speech, Mr Cornish-Bowden was

able to give present day members a fascinating insight into the club in past years.

On display were club minute books from 1859 with other club and tennis memorabilia. These illustrated the life of the club from the 19th through the 20th and now into the 21st century bringing the club to the present time with the club entering the new millennium with a strong and active membership.

The winners of the millennium tournament were Lorette Logie and David Da Costa.

Avon Vale are the current leaders of division two of the South Devon Summer Tennis league with the ladies team taking part in the inaugural season of the ladies doubles league.

The Lawn Mower Fund appeal raised £1,396. A major problem was located in the Clubhouse with fungus growing on a panel and seating by the serving hatch. Dry rot experts were called in. Estimates received were too much for the Club funds to stand, so a sub-committee was formed to do the work by

members. Thermos flasks were brought for the hot water in order to continue serving teas. Working parties cleared the rear of the Clubhouse, gutters were replaced, the whole kitchen area was demolished and all the floor joints were replaced. After a fantastic effort, the work was completed followed by the kitchen being refitted with “modern units”, decorated and the whole area made open plan.

Fundraising for the renovation work raised £1,000 at an evening of dancing and a buffet at Rattery Village Hall.

A generous gift of crockery was made by the Avon Inn in **2003**. New Croquet hoops were obtained. Final work was completed on the Club renovations at a cost of £1,871, including a new loo donated by a member. The Club was awarded Bronze status accreditation from South Hams Sport which has just **(2009)** been lifted to a Silver status.

The Committee decided to continue the rule that no dogs are allowed on the Club's grounds (despite vet, Colin Hair's dog showing a clear talent as a budding ballboy!). The introduction of the Events Diary helped members plan their season at the Club. This led to many more successful events including a wonderful musical evening held in the Clubhouse.

CASC- Community Amateur Sports Clubs - status was granted in **2004** enabling the Club to claim 28p/£1 donation. Nan Dare (member, Malcolm Dare's mother) turned 100 and was made

an Honorary member with a tea party to celebrate the event. Nan attended all Club sessions, enjoying Club teas enormously and became an intrinsic part of Club weekends.

The tragic death was announced of Simon Vickers, a valuable and extremely talented player with a very long association with the Club. A tournament is played each year to honour his memory.

A new Groundsman was taken on in **2004** to significantly improve the condition of the courts. Tournaments, cricket match, social and Club events were all extremely well attended. The Club was in very good heart with 28 new members ratified in the year.

In **2005** a much-needed Croquet coach was appointed and a new Tennis coach for the juniors was found reinstating the Junior section of the club after several years without anyone.

**150 and STILL love doing
it on grass!**

Car Parking!! - By now one of the Club's most pressing issues was the parking on the road; many an afternoon was

interrupted while players rushed to move their cars for the farm machinery carrying out the harvest. The proposed new car park was put in the Development Plan and in **2006** was approved and a Supper and Reeling evening was arranged to raise funds for it.

All the Tennis League teams had a very successful season with the 'A' team top of their division and the 'B' team 2nd.

The website was launched in **2007**. A successful Quiz Night saw the appearance of a long-eared owl on Court 1. Two new Cups were donated - Kingsley-Jones for Doubles and Malcolm Dare for Mixed. Polo shirts were designed and went on sale with the Club logo.

MORE hard work for the members - The entrance to the Club was in need of major attention. A £2,000 quotation from contractors to re-surface the entrance proved too expensive so, with an enormous amount of hard work by a few, the entrance was dug out, re-laid and replaced with hardcore. Awful weather in the summer months meant most matches had to be re-scheduled or cancelled but croquet continued to thrive.

In **2008** three W.I. Croquet events were hosted at the Club. The All England Tennis Club played a friendly match on 7 June, followed by a Lunch - they described the Club as "a gem". The Annual Dinner and Presentation was held at the Clubhouse

again at the end of the season raising a great deal of funds. Despite awful weather conditions, the Tea & Tennis, Quiz Night and Wednesday evening Suppers were well supported.

A sub-Committee was formed in **2008** to organise the Club's 150th celebrations - the "15-0 Committee".

We hope that you have enjoyed reading through the history of this wonderful Club. We have tried to be as accurate as possible based on the information we have in the archives and from members sending in their memories. We would welcome any additional information, archive photographs or newspaper cuttings which we can arrange to have scanned. But most of all we would love to hear about your own special memories.

The last year has been a real pleasure, honour and treat working with members of the 15-0 Committee, discovering the long lost treasures of our very special Club. Long may it last in its funny, quirky ways - including playing in bare feet!





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*Over the years, there have been some interesting
Groundsmen: a Mr Blank, only referred to as “Blank” in
the Minutes books, as well as a Mr Barrow and a
Mr Trundle. One of the last two, I am reliably informed,
was a Hangman!*



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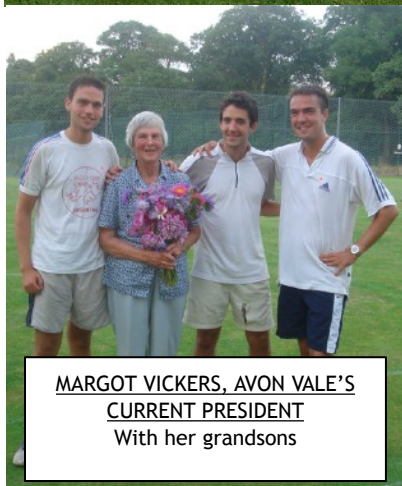


NAN ON HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

Nan with her son Malcolm celebrating her



Juliet and Diddie



MARGOT VICKERS, AVON VALE'S

CURRENT PRESIDENT

With her grandsons



'The BBQ Boys'

Dick and George



Nick, Nigel, Liz, Richard and Michael

Gay Waddams

TOURNAMENTS, MATCHES &



BANK HOLIDAY TOURNAMENT 2006

Ollie Tregelles, Jane Gent, Clive Venables, Nick Newton, and



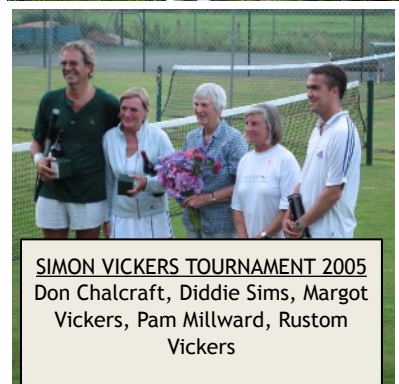
2004 LADIES DOUBLE FINALISTS

Caroline Newton, Bobbie Barclay,



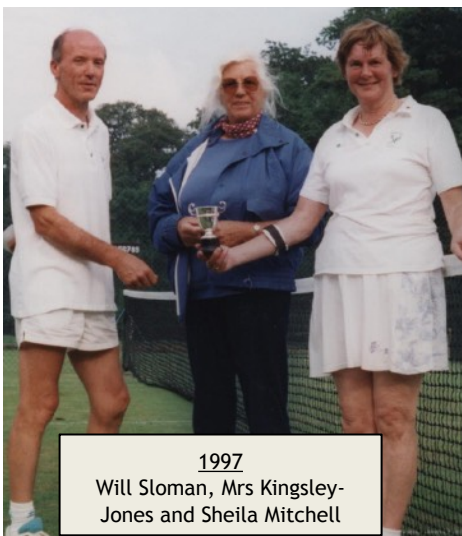
BANK HOLIDAY OPEN TOURNAMENT 2000

Visitor to the Club, Jane Gent,



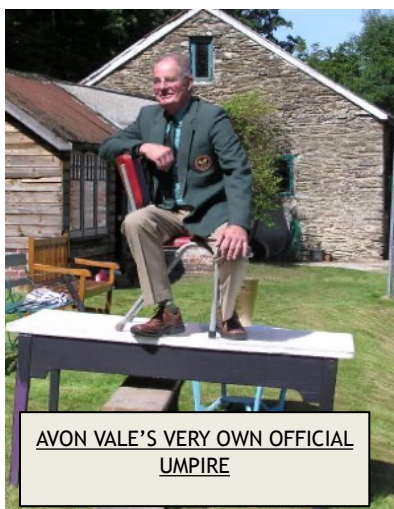
SIMON VICKERS TOURNAMENT 2005

Don Chalcraft, Diddie Sims, Margot Vickers, Pam Millward, Rustom Vickers



1997

Will Sloman, Mrs Kingsley-Jones and Sheila Mitchell



AVON VALE'S VERY OWN OFFICIAL UMPIRE

CHAIRMAN'S CHALLENGES



Caroline Newton and



nvaletennisandcroquet.org.uk

CRICKET MATCH
Michael Hart and



CHAIRMAN'S CHALLENGE 1971



EAT, DRINK & BE MERRY - THE AVON VALE WAY!



CROQUET

'It is believed that Croquet began in Ireland with formal rules established here in 1851. The game developed rapidly, perhaps because it gave the ladies of that time the novel experience of being able to play a game in the open air in the company of gentlemen. Croquet Clubs were established, the most famous being Wimbledon in 1870.'

Taken from the History of Association Croquet

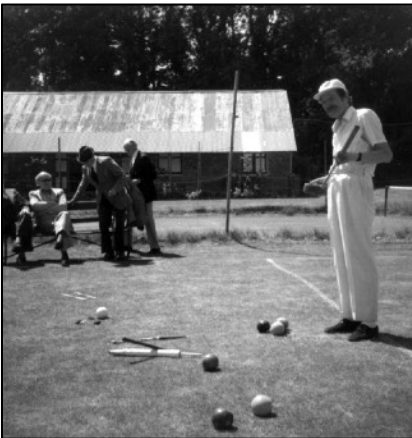
1875 saw the introduction of Croquet to the Club when it was included in the additional purposes of the Club. On 10th August **1897** the first Croquet Tournament was held at Avon Vale. The following has been taken from the **1897** Minutes:

'10th August - The first Club Croquet Tournament was held today, the Club giving two prizes value 30/- . There were 16 entries @ 1/-, play began about 12, the three lawn tennis courts were used, being specially marked, as well as the Croquet ground, rain fell in the afternoon, but the game was carried on all the same.'

(1st Prize - a silver belt clasp and a scarf pin, 2nd Prize - two croquet mallets bought with the entrance fees)

In **1903** the Croquet Tournament entry numbers meant that it was played over 3 days. Avon Vale also played Croquet and Tennis matches against Stoke.

Croquet (and Archery) ceased at the Club in **1919** as reported in the Minutes discussing the Centenary Celebrations in **1958**. Both sports were then reintroduced to the Club as part of the Centenary Celebrations.



The **70's** and **80's** were some of the most successful years for Croquet at the Club, and so during the **80's**, when the Croquet players needed a second lawn, they took over Court 1.

Croquet can be played by anyone of any age and of all

abilities. For the

'Croquet is one of the most vicious and exciting games ever invented. Horrid frustrations and family tensions could be resolved with one cunning thwack of the mallet'



novice getting the ball through

each hoop, in sequence, in the correct direction and then to hit the centre peg is quite an achievement. For the more skilled player additional elements of hindering your opponent come into play, the *roquet* or *croquet* shot, *wiring* your opponent or *making a break*. Close, exciting games between players of different levels of skill can be played by using the *bisques* handicap system. Most recently the Club has invited WI groups to try their hand which has been a great success and three further dates have been arranged for this year. Last year 20 ladies from Blackawton, most complete novices, came and had a lovely day.

At Avon Vale, this year, we are delighted to be able to offer expert tuition from Brian Wainman again. Brian is currently ranked in the top 100 players in Ireland and the UK, and in the top 200 players worldwide. Brian will be at the Club every Wednesday through the season from 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm.



ARCHERY

As you will have read at the beginning of this booklet, in **May 1859** Archery was the sport that started this Club 150 years ago at the Kingsbridge Road Hotel, in Wrangaton, before moving to its permanent home in Avonwick in **1870**.



Archery at Avon Vale - 1897

Archery remained the most popular sport at the Club for 30 years, until tennis took over with Archery continuing on a modest scale up until the First World War. It was not re-introduced again until **1965**.

The most famous of Avon Vale's Archers in the **1880s** was the Rev. Perry Keene, the Rector of Dean Prior, (see the History section for details).

Isabel Scott-Elliott also played a pivotal role in the Club's Archery section from the late **1960s**. She became an Instructress at the Club in her early 60s, having only taken up archery four years earlier. Asked why she became hooked, she

replied: *“It’s rather like golf, you can go away and practice on your own. You can see yourself improve and you can carry on your sport all your life.”*

A Grand Open Tournament was held at Avonwick in **1967** after a lapse of 50 years. Mrs Cornish-Bowden presided as Lady Paramount, giving away the prizes which were all presented by Club members. These included a Horn, for the highest score by a lady archer, and the Sir John Cole Tankard, for the most golds scored by a resident man or woman member of the Club. These continued to be shot for each year. (Sir John Cole, Knight of Nethway, Brixham, Devon was in the *“retynew of the Duke of Gloucester at the Battell of Agincourt on Fryday, the XXVth day of October in the yere of our Lord God 1415 ...”*).

A report on the Open Shoot held *“on a perfect day of sunshine and no breeze at all”* in **September 1967** reveals the true story behind its preparations, which included: *“members cutting a sufficient area of grass for the placing of 11 targets ... mostly done on rainy days with every sort of equipment ... from tractor, through to lawn-mowers, to hay rakes and pitch forks ... the guests could have had no suspicion of the heartache and blisters that had gone before.”*

Three suggestions were put forward for the design of Avon Vale’s Archery colours and badge.

- a) a quarter of the Cornish-Bowden armorial bearings;
- b) a tree with an arrow;
- c) a hunting horn.

By a show of hands, a majority vote chose a) and c) and the Club colours of black and silver.

In **April 1970**, the Lady Paramount presented the Avon Vale Tankard to Mrs Baker, on behalf of all the Avon Vale Archers, in thanks for all she had done to re-start the Archery section of the Club.

Sadly, in **1973** members were tempted to a new Club in the area which offered more opportunities and so Archery ended at Avon Vale yet again.

On Sunday, **17 May 2009**, the Club re-lived its Archery days with a demonstration by Archers from South Brent and members had the opportunity to have a go themselves. Maybe it will herald the start of Archery again at Avon Vale.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN ...?

A handful of members -

George Seager-Berry, Tim Sheldon and Gay Waddams -
reminisce about their exploits and memories at the Club.

“Rolling” together on the courts

Before the courts had more professional management, the last players to use the courts were required to roll them. Although the roller could be pulled by one person it was much easier - and more fun - to do this tedious job with two people, particularly when having to haul the roller back up from court No. 4 to court No.3. The line taken was always along the length of the court until it was suggested that a diagonal line would be beneficial, but this did not catch on as it took longer to roll the courts.

The “key” to the Clubhouse

Before the security locks were put on the doors to the Clubhouse, net room and hard court, a big metal key was kept at Cousins Garage, Avonwick, and had to be collected before the main door to the Clubhouse could be opened. This presented problems when the garage was closed because, attached to the key was an even bigger wooden tag reminding the last player to return the key to the garage which, by that time, was usually shut. Consequently, the key had to be put through the letterbox, but it was not always re-hung on the appropriate hook at the garage. Several times the key went missing so someone had to break into the Clubhouse.

Keeping tabs on the “tags”

Often Committee members found people playing who were not members or were guests playing without the member paying the visitors' fee - probably hoping to get away without paying. To prevent this blatant dishonesty a shoe tag system of

identifying members was introduced. Anyone not wearing a tag was questioned if they were a visitor and whether they had paid the visitor's fee. When I (George S-B) was Hon. Treasurer, few people escaped my eagle eye and several heated conversations occurred! Sometimes tags were "lent" so the player escaped paying the visitor's fee. In order for Committee members to know if the tag wearer was a paid-up Club member, each year a new colour-coded, dated tag was sent out on receipt of that year's subscription. Sometimes the tag escaped from the envelope before arriving at the member's home. By the time the system was abandoned we had run out of new colours for the tags!

George and the Brigadier

I first joined the Club in 1967. On arriving, Brigadier Vickers, realising that I was a potential new member, asked if I would like to play a singles game against him, which I did and managed to beat him. He never invited me to a singles match again.

Start of the "Chairman's Challenge"

Shortly after joining the Club I (George S-B) challenged the Chairman, Commander Tony Sanderson, to a tennis and croquet match. He wrote out the rules, one of which was that anyone striking their opponent with a croquet mallet would be disqualified. Tony Sanderson arrived wearing a straw boater, blazer and long white flannels, while his wife Jenny wore a big

hat held on by a large white shawl, a white blouse and voluminous white skirt.

The Chairman's Challenge match continued for a number of years, with Lunch introduced a few years later. I tried to encourage the Chairman's team to eat a stodgy, heavy steak and kidney pie while encouraging my team to take a light lunch. One year I made the mistake of cooking my team a rice pudding which did not help their subsequent standard of play. While we were on court the remains of the rice pudding was eaten by Mrs Fox's dogs which I think were whippets. They survived this gastronomic orgy.

The Archers' "contraption" ... and the cows

In the 1960s, an important but small part of the Club was the Archery section. One of the prominent members was Miss Isabel Scott-Elliott from Crabadon. The archers had a cumbersome piece of equipment comprising a rectangular metal frame mounted on two small wheels which they used to carry the two targets and stands from the Clubhouse to the far side of the fields beyond the oak tree. Access was through a narrow gate between the croquet lawn and court No 5. They would set up the targets and then walk back to the firing line. Occasionally, on the shoot a cow would decide that a target

made a convenient object to rub against causing the target to fall to the ground.



Rev. C J Perry Keene at Avon Vale 1897

This problem was solved by getting a child, who remained well clear of the targets, to be responsible for keeping the cows clear of the targets by waving their arms and blowing a whistle.

Unfortunately, accuracy was not always great and a number of arrows would miss the target resulting in the archers spending a frustrating amount of time searching with their bottoms in the air in the long grass to retrieve their arrows. At the end of the shoot the contraption was used to return the targets and stands to the Clubhouse.

“Knot” the Navy!

The decision was taken to renew the old oak-pegged slate roof on the Pavilion. This was largely done by Club members and I well remember seeing two ladders tied together straddling the roof. For some unknown reason Brigadier Vickers decided to walk down the ladder and I heard him say:

“I hope the ladders were not tied together by the Navy!”

The chaotic Entertainments Committee

Fairly soon after I joined the Club it was decided that an Entertainments Committee should be set up, comprising Mary Patterson, Mary Webster, Tim Sheldon and George Seager Berry. We met in the Avon Inn, fortunately before the breathalyser became law. We started off the first event with a wine and cheese party, undercharged and were over-generous with the wine and made a loss. However word got out about the successful social events and membership increased.

We put on two cabarets comprising Club members and friends. George, clad in tailcoat and opera hat, played the role of master of ceremonies. The performers changed in what was the ladies changing room. Lighting was provided by a hurricane lamp. There was no order of play. Whoever was ready in the cramped conditions would emerge and perform their act. No rehearsal had been possible. It was all very chaotic but a success. An old curtain had been hung on the rail

under the beam nearest to the ladies changing room. When sweeping the curtain open a cloud of rust fell down almost rendering me temporarily blind, much to the amusement of the audience which we had locked in to prevent them escaping.

The following year things were better organised with an electric light powered by a generator. The cabaret included Vic and Jane Hares performing “The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God”, Vic Hares and George doing “Dr. Livingstone, I presume”, and the Patterson and Freeman families performed as “The Freepats”.

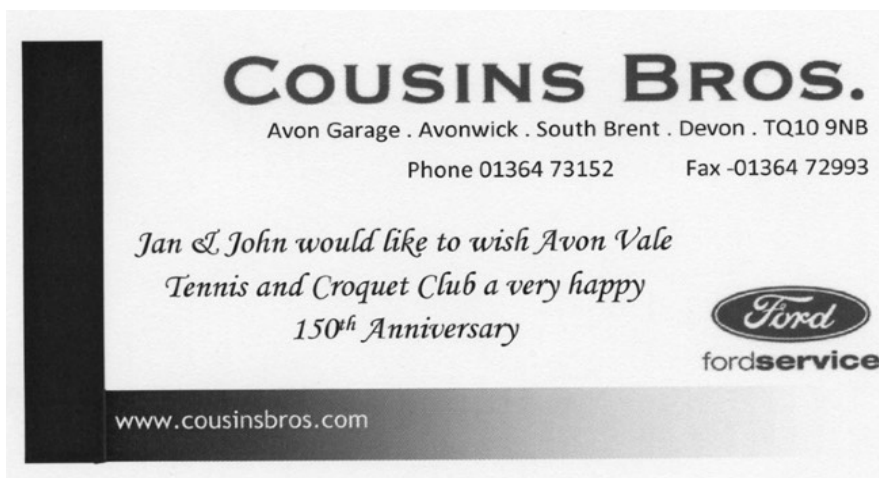
The Club’s on Fire!

A barbeque was organised using three barbeque sets sited on the veranda in front of the Clubhouse. Someone locally, seeing the fires, thought the Clubhouse was on fire and called the fire brigade which arrived, much to the surprise of those attending the barbeque.




Gates ... bows ... black balls and leather shoes!

As part of the repairs to the Club, Tim Sheldon and George S-B re-hung the entrance gate but, due to shoddy workmanship, it only lasted about thirty-four years! Sadly some interesting and historic items have gone missing from the Club, one of which is the Lady Paramount's bow which used to hang above the door of the ladies changing room. Also missing is the black ball box. But we have found the set of four leather shoes and "undersoles" which used to be worn by the horses when



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Mike Durrant remembers the bowling club moving from the Avon Inn to Avon Vale's Court No 1, when a new Licencee wanted their bowling green. The Bowling Club folded when a herd of cattle got into the grounds and made deep hoof marks in the green. The match scheduled against Kingsbridge was cancelled and the bowling abandoned.

Lambing stops play!

It has not been unusual for play to stop in mid-game at the sound of a distressed 'Baaaaaaaaa' - rackets and mallets were dropped, tea cups and cakes abandoned and members raced across the courts and over the stiles to the aid of a pregnant

ewe having trouble lambing. Amazingly, there was always at least one member who knew what to do!

Snippets from Liz Lacon, our first lady Chairman

- Summing up **Archery** from reading and listening, Liz came up with a few descriptive words: **long grass, bottoms, and cow pats!**
- We think we have had a **bad summer so far**. I was amazed at the amount of times the Minutes recorded “**an extremely wet season**”. One always tends to look back and think it was wonderful.

RECIPE CORNER

The Club is renowned for its fantastic food and some of our members have kindly agreed to share their recipes, so everyone can enjoy in the future

“the tips on the member’s nibbles”.

Canapés

Smoked Salmon Ruggelash
Yorkshires and Roast Beef
Parmesan Shortbreads
Cheddar Crisps

Starters

Chestnut Stuffed Mushrooms
Goat’s cheese baked in a Spicy
tomato sauce with garlic
Crostini
Salad Cream

Main Courses

Curried Cottage Pie
Spicy Rice Salad
Chicken, Roast Pepper,
Chickpea & Lemon Salad
Hearty Sausage Casserole
Chicken with Yoghurt &
Spices
Spinach and Almond Flan
Aubergine Bake
Pheasant Casserole
Malaysian Chicken Curry
Almond Chicken salad

Puddings

Chocolate Mousse
Sticky Toffee Pudding

Tea Time

Flapjacks a la Badworthy
Scones
Carrot Cake

Canapés

Smoked Salmon Ruggelash - *Liz Lacon*

8oz Puff pastry (bought works well)
7oz smoked salmon slices (trimmings are good)
1 tbsp lemon juice
Black pepper
1 tbsp chopped dill
1 egg yolk beaten with 1 tbsp water

Divide pastry into two equal sizes. Roll out each to 9in round. Cover with smoked salmon. Cut each into 16 even sized triangles. Sprinkle with lemon pepper and dill. Roll up starting at the long edge and ending with the point. Place on oiled baking sheet. Curl ends in to make a crescent. Tuck point in to prevent unraveling. Put in fridge until firm. Brush with beaten egg. Bake at 200 C about 10 minutes. Cool on rack.

Yorkshires and Roast Beef - Liz Lacon

Make ordinary Yorkshire pudding batter. Use very small patty tins or muffins tins. Fill base with oil and get really hot in the oven - roasting oven in Aga or 200C - 220C in conventional cooker.

Put in batter and cook until well risen and firm. You can then leave all day! Once taken out of the oven of course! To finish off top with very thinly sliced rare roast beef with a blob of horseradish on top. Parsley to decorate.

Parmesan Shortbreads - Liz Lacon

Ideal for canapé bases if made into 1" diameter rounds

2oz plain flour

1.5oz cold butter - diced

Salt

2oz Parmesan grated

Cayenne pepper

Put all items into food mixer and pulse until it becomes a smooth dough. Roll to 1/4" thickness and stamp out shapes. Put on baking sheet in fridge for 30 minutes. 8 minutes at 180C, 350F, Gas 4

Cheddar Crisps - Penelope Watson

Less fuss than cheese straws, these crisps are lovely with drinks or served with a creamy soup.

120g (4oz) finely grated farmhouse Cheddar

4 rounded teaspoons plain flour

Flaked almonds, pistachio nuts or paprika

Heat the oven to 230C/445F/gas mark 8. Place a sheet of greaseproof paper on a baking sheet. Combine cheese and flour, and spoon small circles of mixture on to paper - each one and 5cm wide and just 2mm deep. Bake for five minutes or until the crisps are golden at the edges. Lift them off the paper carefully with a palette knife. For variation, add a pinch of almonds, chopped pistachios or paprika to the surface of the crisps before cooking. Makes at least 24 crisps.

Starters

Chestnut Stuffed Mushrooms - *Andy Coombs*

4 large Portobello mushrooms
3tbsp olive oil
2 rashers of unsmoked back bacon, snipped into small pieces
1 finely chopped shallot
Leaves from 2 sprigs of thyme
1tbsp chopped parsley
100g ready-cooked chestnuts, crumbled
60g fresh breadcrumbs

Pre-heat oven to 220C/450F/gas mark 6. Clean the mushrooms, remove & chop the stalks. Gently fry shallot and bacon in 2 tbsp of oil until shallot is soft. Stir in chopped mushroom stalks, herbs and chestnuts. Remove from heat, add breadcrumbs, 1tbsp of water and black pepper. Arrange mushrooms skin side down on oiled baking tray. Brush the tops with remaining oil. Divide the crumb mixture between the mushrooms, pressing firmly into place. Bake for about 25mins until mushrooms are tender and the crumbs crisp and golden. Serve with salad leaves and tomato slices.

Goat's cheese baked in a Spicy tomato sauce with garlic Crostini - *Caroline Newton*

Tomato Sauce

1kg ripe plum tomatoes,
halved
4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
3 tbsp runny honey
4 garlic cloves, finely

chopped

2 tsp dried crushed chillies
5-6 thyme sprigs
3 tbsp tomato puree
Salt and pepper

Crostini

1 large French stick, cut

into 16 thick slices
50 ml extra virgin oil

1 whole garlic clove, log, with rind on
peeled
250 g fresh goat's cheese

Preheat the oven to 200 C/400 F/Gas 6. Place the tomato halves in a shallow baking tray. Drizzle with the olive oil, balsamic vinegar and honey, then scatter over the garlic, chillies, half the thyme and seasoning. Bake for 30 minutes.

Place the roasted tomatoes in a food processor and blend. Add the tomato puree, the taste and add more honey if needed and salt and pepper to taste.

Preheat a hot grill. To make the Crostini, brush each slice of bread with olive oil, then grill until golden and crispy. Rub the clove of garlic over each slice.

Place the tomato sauce in a medium-sized, ovenproof baking dish or 8 individual ramekins. Slice the goat's cheese into rounds and place on top of the sauce. Drizzle a little olive oil over, strip the leaves from the remaining thyme sprigs and sprinkle over the top with some black pepper.

Bake at 200 C/400 F/Gas 6 for 10 - 15 minutes until the cheese turns brown on top and the sauce is warm. To serve, place the dish in the centre of a large plate and arrange the garlic Crostini around the edge.

Salad Cream - *Caroline Newton's mother-in-law's recipe*
Delicious with salmon

1 heaped tsp dry mustard	mayonnaise or salad cream
1 heaped tsp caster sugar	Wine vinegar
Cream or top of the milk	
1 large bottle of	

Make a paste of mustard and sugar with the cream. Add the salad cream and wine vinegar until the consistency you want.

Main Courses

Curried Cottage Pie - Jane Hart

Serve 6

Olive oil	500 mls beef stock (water and cube is ok)
1 onion chopped	1 kg potatoes, peeled, boiled, mashed and seasoned
2 cloves garlic chopped	50g butter
250gm chestnut mushrooms chopped	Salt and pepper
750 gm lean minced steak	
1 tblsp plain flour	
1 tblsp tomato puree	
1 tblsp curry powder	

Heat oil in large nonstick saucepan. Add onion and stir fry until softened, add garlic and mushrooms, stir-fry for about 5 mins add meat and cook until cooked through. Stir in flour, tomato paste and curry powder and seasoning. Add stock then transfer to covered saucepan and simmer gently for about 1/2 hour. Heat oven to 200C /Gas mark 6. Transfer mixture to oiled shallow ovenproof dish and spread mashed potato on top. Dot with the butter. Bake for around 30 minutes or until potatoes are golden and crispy. Serve with peas and mango chutney.

Spicy Rice Salad - Liz Lacon

Boil some long grain rice. 1lb will make enough for a large bowl, about 20 servings as a side salad. Fry two large onions in olive oil with garlic if you wish. Mix the onions, garlic, oil into the rice, season well. Add almond slivers, and sultanas. As many as you like. Add Curry paste, slowly at first 2 to 3 teaspoons and mix well into the rice. Taste! Can be as hot as you like! Chopped up coriander goes well with this too. Good at the barbeque events.

Chicken, Roast Pepper, Chickpea & Lemon Salad

Penelope Watson

For 6 people, served on a bed of salad

Dressing

3 cloves garlic

40g pine nuts

85ml olive oil

½ lemon - juice

Salt & pepper

6 chicken fillets

2 x 200g jars piquillo

peppers, drained (or
roasted peppers brushed
with oil)

Olive oil

salt & pepper

410 can chickpeas, drained,
rinsed

1 preserved lemon (jar of
sliced lemons)

Handful of coriander leaves

Put garlic & pine nuts in food processor, with motor running add oil & season. Cook chicken on a griddle until cooked. Slice chicken, and toss with chickpeas, peppers, lemon, coriander and some dressing. Serve on salad with rest of dressing.

Hearty Sausage Casserole - Pam Millward

This is actually a prizewinning recipe devised by my mother about 40 years ago.

1lb decent sausage meat

8 oz sliced carrots

2 peeled, chopped onions

3/4 lb peeled roughly

chopped tomatoes

1 1/2 lb sliced potatoes

2oz plain flour

2 oz butter

3 oz cheese

Stock cube and water or

approx 1/2 pint homemade
stock

Salt and black pepper

Spread the sausage meat over the bottom of a Pyrex or cast iron casserole dish. Layer onion carrots tomatoes and potato until the dish is full, ending with a layer of neatly overlapped potatoes, seasoning each layer well with salt and pepper. (You

can also add any other winter vegetables to hand E.g. Swede, celery, beans out of freezer, oversized, or even dried up, runner bean pods).

Make a cheese béchamel with the remaining ingredients using enough stock to make a sauce of pouring consistency. Pour over the potatoes, making sure that some of the sauce goes down to the bottom of the dish. Cover and put in the oven for at least 2 hours at 160 C.

NB None of these quantities are precise, nor is the timing or the temperature.. The dish improves with re-heating/slow cooking.

Chicken with Yoghurt and Spices - Andy Coombs

Simple, satisfyingly spicy & creamy without being too rich.

900g skinned chicken legs & thighs
Large tub of natural yoghurt
3 tbsps curry paste (e.g. Patek's Korma)

Mix the yogurt and curry paste. Put the chicken pieces in a roasting dish and pour over the yogurt mixture, turning the pieces to coat them. Cover with foil and leave to marinate for at least half-an-hour or up to a day. Heat the oven to 220C/ 450F/gas mark 8.

Roast the chicken for 35-40 mins, removing the foil for the last 5-10 mins so that the chicken colours. Serve immediately with rice or couscous or baked potatoes.

The sauce may look a bit curdled, so liberally scatter the top of the dish with fresh coriander. Any leftovers are great eaten cold!

Spinach and Almond Flan - Ros Allen

One bag spinach (250 g)	8" short pastry flan case
4 oz tasty cheddar, grated	
4oz ground almonds	

Cook spinach lightly, drain well, chop.
Combine all three ingredients and add a little salt and pepper.
Use to fill 8" pastry case. Put whole almonds on top.
Bake 180 deg or so for about 30 mins until beginning to brown.
Serve hot or at room temperature.

Aubergine Bake - Hilary Churcher

3 Aubergines, sliced across, brushed with olive oil & baked.
Turn, repeat oil, bake.
3 onions
Garlic, slice and fry till soft
2 x 350g Lloyd Grossman Tomato & Roasted Garlic pasta sauce.

Layer aubergine/onion/sauce twice. Cover with grated cheese. Bake 350.
Can be frozen.

Pheasant Casserole - Angus Dunn

This all goes in one heavy bottomed dish.

2 pheasant	Tomato puree
Some decent bacon	Third of a bottle of red
Mushrooms - large flat ones	wine
6 shallots	Stock
Fat clove of garlic	Herbs (I never use rosemary
A bit of butter	because I think it is vile!)
Olive Oil	Salt and Pepper

Brown both sides of the seasoned pheasant in a mixture of butter and olive oil. Remove. Throw in the shallots, garlic and chopped bacon and sauté until they look a decent colour. Remove. Add some more butter and sauté mushrooms until they are dark and black and almost crisp; this really makes a huge difference to the taste. Remove. Add some stock, herbs, tomato puree, the wine and seasoning to the pan and then put back the pheasant, bacon, mushrooms and shallots and cook in a moderate oven for 40 minutes. There should be

enough stock and wine mixture to cover the birds but don't drown them.

When you think it's done whip out the birds and strip the meat in as large a pieces as you can. (I do this because I think pheasant bones are as unpleasant as they are lethal and if you are blind like the rest of us you won't see them until it's too late.) Return the meat to the pan and you can freeze or refrigerate till needed.

This is lovely with mashed potato (especially lovely with a mixture of potato and celeriac cooked in a mixture of milk water and butter and mashed in the liquid.) Broad beans are good too. Have you ever tried M and S broad beans? They are beyond belief delicious and bear no relation to any other.

This is comfort food at its best.

Malaysian Chicken Curry - Caroline Newton

Chicken

1 kg chicken thighs (or prawns)
2 tbsp groundnut oil
2 onions, peeled and thinly sliced
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 kaffir lime leaves
1 cinnamon stick
3 star anise

400 ml coconut milk
100 ml chicken stock
1 tsp palm sugar (or soft brown sugar)
2 tbsp light soy sauce
2 tbsp fish sauce
400g green beans, trimmed and cut into 5cm lengths
Handful of coriander leaves, roughly torn

Curry paste

5 garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped
4-5 long, red chillies, trimmed, deseeded and roughly chopped

3 lemon grass stalks, trimmed with the outer leaves removed and thinly sliced
5cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled and chopped

4 large shallots, peeled and
chopped
1 tsp ground turmeric

2-3 tbsp groundnut oil

Coconut rice
300g jasmine, Thai fragrant
or other long-grain rice
200ml coconut milk

5 cm piece of fresh ginger,
peeled
Pinch of sea salt

First make the curry paste. Put the garlic, chillies, lemon grass, ginger, shallots and turmeric in a food processor and whiz to a paste. With the motor running, trickle in a little groundnut oil and blend well, scraping the sides of the processor several times. (Or you can pound the ingredients together in batches using a pestle and mortar).

To make the curry, cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces. Heat the groundnut oil in a large cast-iron casserole or heavy-based pan. Tip in the curry paste and stir over a medium heat for a few minutes until fragrant. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes until they are beginning to soften.

Season the chicken pieces with salt and pepper. Add to the pan and stir to coat them in the spice paste. Add the lime leaves, cinnamon stick, star anise, coconut milk, stock, sugar, soy and fish sauces and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook gently for 30-40 minutes until the chicken is tender.

For the rice, rinse the grains in cold water to get rid of any excess starch. Drain and tip into a heavy-based pan. Add the rest of the ingredients with 200ml water, stir well and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and gently simmer for 10 minutes. Leaving the lid on, remove the pan from the heat and leave to stand for 5-10 minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork and serve while still hot.

Skim off any excess oil on the surface of the curry. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Tip in the beans, put the lid on and cook

for another 3-4 minutes until the beans are tender. Scatter the coriander leaves over the curry and serve with the coconut rice. *Serves 6*

Almond Chicken salad - Caroline Newton

6 filleted, skinless chicken breasts	1 small onion
Oil	2 bay leaves
50 ml water	5 ml salt
50 ml sherry	Paprika and toasted, slivered almonds to garnish

<i>Buttermilk lemon dressing</i>	1-2 ml finely grated lemon rind
250 ml buttermilk	1 ml salt
175 ml thick cream	
50 ml reserved stock	
3 egg yolks	

Seal breasts on both sides in a dash of oil in a large frying pan - do not allow to brown. Add water, sherry, onion, bay leaves and salt, cover and simmer for about 20 minutes. Cool in the stock, remove chicken and slice lengthwise, into long, thin strips. Reserve stock.

Mix ingredients for dressing in the top of a double boiler, whisk until smooth, then stir over simmering water until mixture is slightly thickened and coats back of spoon. Adjust seasoning and then pour, while warm, over chicken. When cool, cover and refrigerate. Just before serving, sprinkle with paprika and toasted almonds.

Serves 6

Puddings

Chocolate Mousse - Andy Coombs

Melt 6oz Bourneville dark chocolate plus 2 tbsp of strong black coffee in a Pyrex dish over a pan of simmering water. When soft, stir in 3 well beaten egg yolks followed by 1oz softened

butter. In a separate bowl, whisk up the egg whites until stiff and then gently fold into the chocolate mixture. Divide the mousse between 6 ramekin dishes and chill for an hour before serving with double cream or raspberry coulis.

Sticky Toffee pudding - *Sue Tregelles*

Serves 6 - 8

Cake

100 g dark muscovado sugar

175 g self-raising flour

125 ml full-fat milk

1 egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

50 g unsalted butter,
melted

200 g chopped, rolled dates

Sauce

200 g dark muscovado sugar

approx 25 g unsalted butter in little blobs

500 ml boiling water

Preheat the oven to 190 C/Gas 5 and butter a 1.5 litre pudding dish.

Combine the 100 g dark muscovado sugar with the flour in a large bowl. Pour the milk into a measuring jug, beat in the egg, vanilla and melted butter and then pour this mixture over the sugar and flour, stirring - just with a wooden spoon - to combine. Fold in the dates, then scrape into the prepared pudding dish. Don't worry if it doesn't look very full; it will do by the time it cooks.

Sprinkle over the 200 g dark muscovado sugar and dot with the butter. Pour over the boiling water (yes, really!) and transfer to the oven. Set the timer for 45 minutes, though you might find the pudding needs 5 or 10 minutes more. The top of the pudding should be springy and spongy when it's cooked; underneath, the butter, dark muscovado sugar and boiling water will have turned into a rich, sticky sauce. Serve with vanilla ice cream, crème fraîche, double or single cream, as you wish.

Tea Time!

Flapjacks a la Badworthy - Jane Hart

8 oz Butter	or dried cranberries
8 oz demerara sugar	Dessertspoon of sesame
2 tablespoons golden syrup	seeds (optional)
10 oz porridge oats	
Generous handful raisins &/	

Heat oven to 160C, gas mark3.
Line swiss roll tin with parchment.
Melt butter in pan with sugar and syrup. Add fruit and stir in oats. Mix well, turn into tin and press flat. Bake in oven for about 35 mins or until bubbling all over and golden brown. Remove and leave to cool in tin for about 15 minutes then mark into squares and leave until cold before removing from tin and storing in airtight container.

Scones - Liz Lacon

2oz butter	cheese (finely grated)
8oz self raising Flour	1/4 pint milk
1oz caster sugar	
2oz dried fruit or Cheddar	

Rub fat into flour, stir in sugar fruit or cheese. Pour in milk and mix lightly with a knife to form a firm sticky dough. Toss lightly in flour and shape into a round - 1inch thick. (at least) Cut into rounds. I use a small water glass! Place on greased baking sheet, brush tops with milk and sprinkle with sugar or cheese. Bake for 8 - 10 mins at the top of a hot oven 220C or 425F. Cool on a rack.

Carrot Cake - Sue Tregelles

Cake	of sunflower and olive oil)
250 ml sunolive oil (mixture	225 g light muscovado

sugar
3 large eggs
225 g self-raising flour,
sifted
250 g carrots, peeled and

coarsely grated
Handful of pecan halves to
decorate

Frosting

250 g mascarpone cheese
25 g unrefined golden icing sugar, sieved

Preheat the oven to 180 C/350 F/Gas 4. Grease and line a 20 cm round cake tin with baking parchment. In a large bowl, whisk together the oil and sugar, then whisk in the eggs, one at a time. Using a large metal spoon, gently fold in the sifted flour, followed by the grated carrot, until combined. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 40 minutes, until golden brown and cooked through. To test if the cake is cooked, insert a skewer into the centre - it should come out clean. Leave the cake to cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then carefully turn out onto a wire rack, peel off the lining paper and leave to cool completely.

For the frosting, mix together the mascarpone cheese and golden icing sugar in a bowl. Spread over the top and sides of the cake with a palette knife. Finish off by decorating with the pecan halves.

Wicked Chocolate Slices - *Penelope Watson*

225g (8oz) butter
3 tbsp golden syrup
50g (2oz) cocoa

300g packet digestive
biscuits, crushed
400g (14oz) dark chocolate,
in squares

Melt butter, golden syrup & cocoa in pan on low heat. Remove mixture from heat and stir in crushed biscuits. Spoon the mixture into a greased 26x16.5cm (10x6in) rectangular tin. Cool, cover and chill for 30 min. Put chocolate in a bowl and melt, either in microwave or pan of simmering water (or simmering oven of Aga).

Stir once, pour over the biscuit base, then chill in fridge for 30 min or until topping has set. Cut in half lengthways, then cut each section into 10 slices.

Choc Brownies - *Caroline Newton*

125 g butter	4 eggs
125 g plain choc	125 g walnuts chopped
250 g vanilla sugar	

Melt the butter and choc together beat the eggs and sugar until light and pale then stir in the choc mixture. Sift the flour over the bowl and fold in stir in the nuts. Grease and flour a 9 - 10 inc shallow square baking tin and pour in the batter and bake at 180 C/ 350 F for 25 - 30 mins (pre heated) Leave to cool in the tin then cut and gobble up!!!

Nicholas and I always add extra melted chocolate to make it a bit richer!

Date and Walnut Cake - *Ruth Rimmer*

7fl oz (210 ml) boiling water
6oz (175g) dates, chopped
1/4 level tsp bicarbonate of soda
6oz (175 g) light brown sugar
2oz (50g) soft margarine
1 small egg beaten
8oz (225g) [plain flour
1/4 level tsp baking powder
1/4 level tsp salt
1 1/2 oz (40g) walnuts, chopped

Heat oven to 350F, 180C, gas Mark 4 and grease and line with greased greaseproof paper an 8 inch (20cm) square cake tin. (I often use a loaf tin!) Put the water, dates and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl and leave to stand for 3 minutes. Cream the sugar and margarine together and then beat the egg together

with the water and the dates. Sieve the flour with the baking powder and salt and fold it into the mixture, together with the walnuts. Turn the mixture into the tin, smooth the top and then bake it in the oven for about 1 hour until cooked. Turn out, remove the paper and leave to cool on a wire rack.



EVENTS OF 2009 & CLUB CONTACTS

A Jumble Sale on Saturday 9th May from 10.30 am - 1.30 pm at Harberton Parish Hall.

Tea, Tennis & Croquet Open Day on Sunday 17th May

The Quiz Evening on Saturday 30th May, starting at 7pm with supper, including a round on the Club's history.

An Avon Vale v Harberton cricket match, on their pitch starting at 6pm on **Wednesday 3rd June**.

Saturday 25th July starting at 10.30am return match against Harberton Cricket Club, but **tennis** this time, at the Club.

The return of the **Chairman's Challenge on Saturday 1st August** when those taking part in the tennis tournament, as well as spectators, will be encouraged to appear in period costume with vintage racquets (with 150 years to choose from, this covers a wide array of different fashions).

A Fun Day at the Harts (near South Brent) on **Sunday 13th September** to include tennis, mini golf, croquet and air rifle shooting, with a BBQ lunch.

Occasional **Wednesday Club Supper** evenings (see notice board for details).

The **Annual Dinner & Presentation** will take place on **Saturday 26th September at the Clubhouse** - this will be a very special event to round off our celebratory year, so don't forget to put the date in your diary.

CLUB TOURNAMENT

This year's tournament will be run, once again, by Diddie Sims with help from Committee members. The **First Round** will be on **Sunday 7th June**. The **Finals** will be held on **Sunday 19th July** and we hope many of you will come along to cheer the players on.

CROQUET

Coaching will again be provided by Brian Wainman. On Wednesday evenings from 5.30 pm throughout the season.

Want to join the Club
or find out more about us?

Email: **avtc2009@googlemail.com**

www.avonvaletennisandcroquet.org.uk

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Francesca Smith (Publicity)
Sue Tregelles (Publicity & Archives)
Penelope Watson (Social)

Croquet contact: Judy Wurr

Croquet Coach: Brian Wainman

Club Tournament: Diddie Sims

Matches: Caroline Newton (A and B Teams)
Nigel King (Mens)
Penelope Watson (Ladies)

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