

100 YEARS OF THE **AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB**



AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB



Welcome to the Avondale Lawn Tennis Club Centenary Day, a celebration of 100 years of tennis in Fleet and Church Crookham.

I am pleased to welcome back many former members of the Club. I know that some of you have travelled long distances to be here and I hope that you will have an enjoyable time catching up with old friends. I am also delighted to welcome our guest players and the Committee members of the Aldershot & District League which has played such an important part in the life of our Club over many years.

A celebration of this nature involves a lot of work. There is so much to do in planning the events, inviting guests and players, organising the catering, printing the programme, buying memorabilia, and not least of all tracking down former members and old photographs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Centenary Committee: Doreen Healy, Suzanne Sanderson, Chris Butt, Dave Adams, Penny Roberts and Guy Clayton for their unstinting enthusiasm and hard work over the last 12 months - without them this event would not have been possible.

I hope that you enjoy reading this programme and that the photographs bring back many happy memories and most of all I hope that you enjoy our celebration day.

Paul Treacy
Chairman

AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

AS REMEMBERED BY BILL ARCHER

My first recollection of Avondale LTC was in the year 1949/50 when I was 7 years of age and my family moved to a cottage in the grounds of “High Beeches House” overlooking the tennis club. At that time the club consisted of 2 grass courts and a red/brown hard court with a loose dressing on top, this court sported a practice wall at the far end. There was a small wooden pavilion consisting of ladies and gents changing rooms, a central area for making tea and an Elson toilet. There was no running water, no electricity and when it was time for tea, buckets of fresh water were supplied by my cottage by means of an outside tap! Lighting and cooking were by gas.

The club was reached by a grass/gravel drive from Albany Road and was surrounded by grass and bramble bushes. The 2 grass courts were mown by Saunders Nurseries of Fleet every Wednesday and Friday and were then re-lined after each mowing by club members before play could commence.

When I was 12 I made a racquet from an old piece of wood and when everyone had left the club I ventured over to the

practice wall with several lost balls and spent hours knocking up. It was also around this time that the high maintenance grass courts were replaced by 3 tarmac hard courts. Most of the membership seemed to be very professional men – doctors, dentists and accountants with very few lady members. When I was 17 in 1959 I joined the club, met Carol who was 14 and spent many happy hours playing junior tennis. At this time the club changed direction with families joining and spending the whole weekend socialising, playing tennis and eating huge teas provided by the members on a rota system.

About this time the old clubhouse was replaced by an ex-army payroll hut purchased when the Military in Aldershot was undergoing change. The new clubhouse was collected, piece by piece, by several members under the leadership of Jack Coe, a local dentist, and was erected by weekend working parties. One weekend, Jack, his 2 sons and I drove to Bishops Stortford to dismantle seats from a disused cinema, these were duly transported back and installed in the new pavilion which was erected by

members over several weekends. Working parties completed the final cosmetic touches.

At this time the club was involved in the Aldershot & District League with Mens, Ladies and Mixed teams with a growing Junior section. My practice on the wall helped me to reach the Mens Singles Final on 3 occasions, winning the title one year and with my partner Graham Temple, winning the Mens Doubles 5 years in succession – I believe still a record to this day!

The curtain finally descended on the Albany Road site in 1975 when the land was purchased by property developers for a new housing estate, now called Russets Drive. The end of an era and many happy years.

In 1975 Avondale moved to Ewshot Lane at the rear of Redfields Garden Centre, when the club purchased 2 acres of White Land and hard courts were laid and the present clubhouse was built. In the late 1970s a team from the club drove to a tennis club in Norwich to view a revolutionary new playing surface called Bioflex which slotted together like Lego and was subsequently laid by the club on some of the courts. So the new club was formed with the addition of further courts, floodlights, many more teams in the Aldershot & District and Hants &

IOW Leagues and a thriving junior section, leading to the club we all know today.



putting the white lines together for the Bioflex Courts



another block pressed into place

My personal recollections are having the honour of representing Hampshire in several matches and probably the most memorable occasion was in 1981 when a team of 4 of us played in a National Mens Doubles competition reaching the last 8 in the country, finally losing to Queens Club in London.

My whole family has been involved with Avondale for many years and enjoyed many happy hours socialising and making numerous friends. Congratulations to you all – enjoy the Centenary celebrations and here's to the next hundred years.



Construction of the new Bioflex Courts started in early 1981 with the OPEN DAY on 12th July 1981.



AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB



Third from left is Moira Newman (Junior Organiser) and on her left is Tony Farmer (Chairman).

▲ THE IBM CLUB OF THE YEAR COMPETITION.

As Avondale established itself in our new premises and in search of further countywide exposure, the club entered the IBM Club of the Year competition. This aimed at recognising achievements in development of tennis clubs nationwide. In the late 1970's, Avondale won the prize for the club with the greatest increase in membership.

Elaine Lietch and Sue Adams ►



Pam Brown and Sue Adams 1974



Tony Farmer presents Dave Adams ▲ and Tony Cohen Mens Doubles trophy



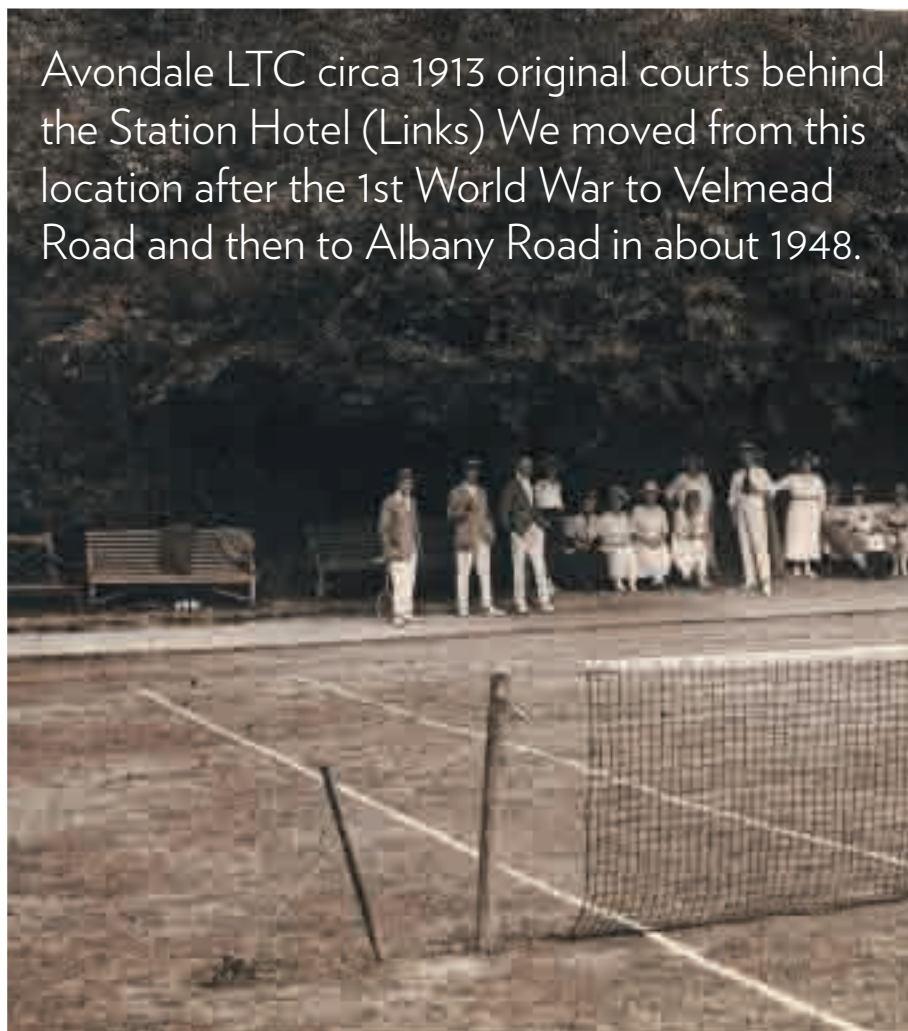
Dave Adams, Tony Cohen, ▲ Roger Cox and Steve Woon

◀ Jenny Newberry and Doreen Healy Ladies Handicap winners 1977

THE HISTORY

The Club was founded in 1908; originally a cycling and tennis club the court was behind the Oatsheaf Inn, then at the Fleet Station Hotel about 1913. Moving via premises in Avondale Road, where the club acquired the name, to an acre site in Albany Road, which was sold to the club by the Calthorpe Family in 1925 for £100, which was borrowed from Barclays Bank! The three grass courts were converted to tarmacadam and an army hut purchased and fitted out as a pavilion. This site was sold for £51,000 in 1973. Two acres of grazing land was bought for £12,000 in Ewshot Lane, the five courts etc. cost just £15,000; the pavilion, car park and landscaping took another £17,400; and after settling the capital gains and Corporation Tax liability, only a small sum was left to furnish the pavilion and improve the facilities. This was finally completed in 1976 with the installation of floodlighting on two courts and the building of a practice wall and half-court behind the pavilion. In 1978, the difficult solution to the problem of deterioration of the courts, which had suffered subsidence after the heat waves of 1976 was found, members subscribed to £50 bonds, in order to replace the courts. The Bonds were re-paid within 2 years. The bioflex courts followed in 1981 on courts 1 & 2 with tarmac remaining on courts 3 – 6. In 1992 courts 1 & 2 were replaced by the present artificial grass, with the remaining courts following in subsequent years. Floodlighting of courts 3, 4, 5 & 6 was completed by 2005.

Avondale LTC circa 1913 original courts behind the Station Hotel (Links) We moved from this location after the 1st World War to Velmead Road and then to Albany Road in about 1948.



Avondale LTC old Clubhouse in Albany Road circa 1960



Fleet carnival circa 1955-1960

Since moving to our present location, Avondale L.T.C. has been involved in many different undertakings. On the playing side one of the highlights was the club's appearance in the National Finals of the Silk Cut Tennis Challenge in 1990. The finals, held at Queen's Club, were for teams of non-county players. Sean Wilkins and Claire Blackman had made significant contributions in the early rounds, but it was our team of Howard Moseley, Dave Henderson, Sue Adams and Elaine Leitch [Perryman], who eventually came fifth in the whole country. Success in the Slazenger sponsored Club Tournament Competition found Avondale again playing at Queen's Club on two further occasions, as well as reaching rounds up to the Regional finals. A Junior team reached the quarter-finals of the National En Tout Cas Club Championship. A "young" Simon Seymour, was one of our quartet which also included Claire Blackman, Helen Eckersley, and Howard Moseley. For several years during August, Avondale hosted a VW Ratings tournament which drew players from right across the country. This two week event required considerable commitment from our organisers, helpers and general club members, but it did raise substantial funds for the club, as well as heightening its profile. The last tournament, under its eventual L.T.A. banner was held in 1994.

CURRENT CLUB CHAMPIONS

The trophies currently used for our Mixed Doubles Handicap event, date back to 1934, and are of considerable value. They were presented to the club by Mr. F. Hamilton-Bells and initially awarded to the Club Championship Mixed Doubles winners. In the inaugural year these two silver trophies were won by Mr. R. Wright and Mrs. G. Anderson.

LADIES SINGLES WINNER ►
Jane Dow



LADIES VETERANS ►
SINGLES WINNER
Sally Stow





◀ LADIES DOUBLES WINNERS
Jane Vincent and Jane Dow



◀ LADIES VETERANS
DOUBLES WINNERS
Elaine Leitch and Sue Adams

CURRENT CLUB CHAMPIONS

MENS SINGLES WINNER ►
Peter Grant



MENS VETERANS ►
SINGLES WINNER
Keith Ward



◀ MENS DOUBLES WINNERS
Dave Pharo and Simon Seymour



◀ MENS VETERANS
DOUBLES WINNERS
Mel Budd and Ivan Catchpole



CURRENT CLUB CHAMPIONS

MIXED DOUBLES WINNERS ►
Keith Ward and Nikki Oldham



MIXED VETERANS ►
DOUBLES WINNERS
Jon and Maureen Clackett



PREVIOUS WINNERS

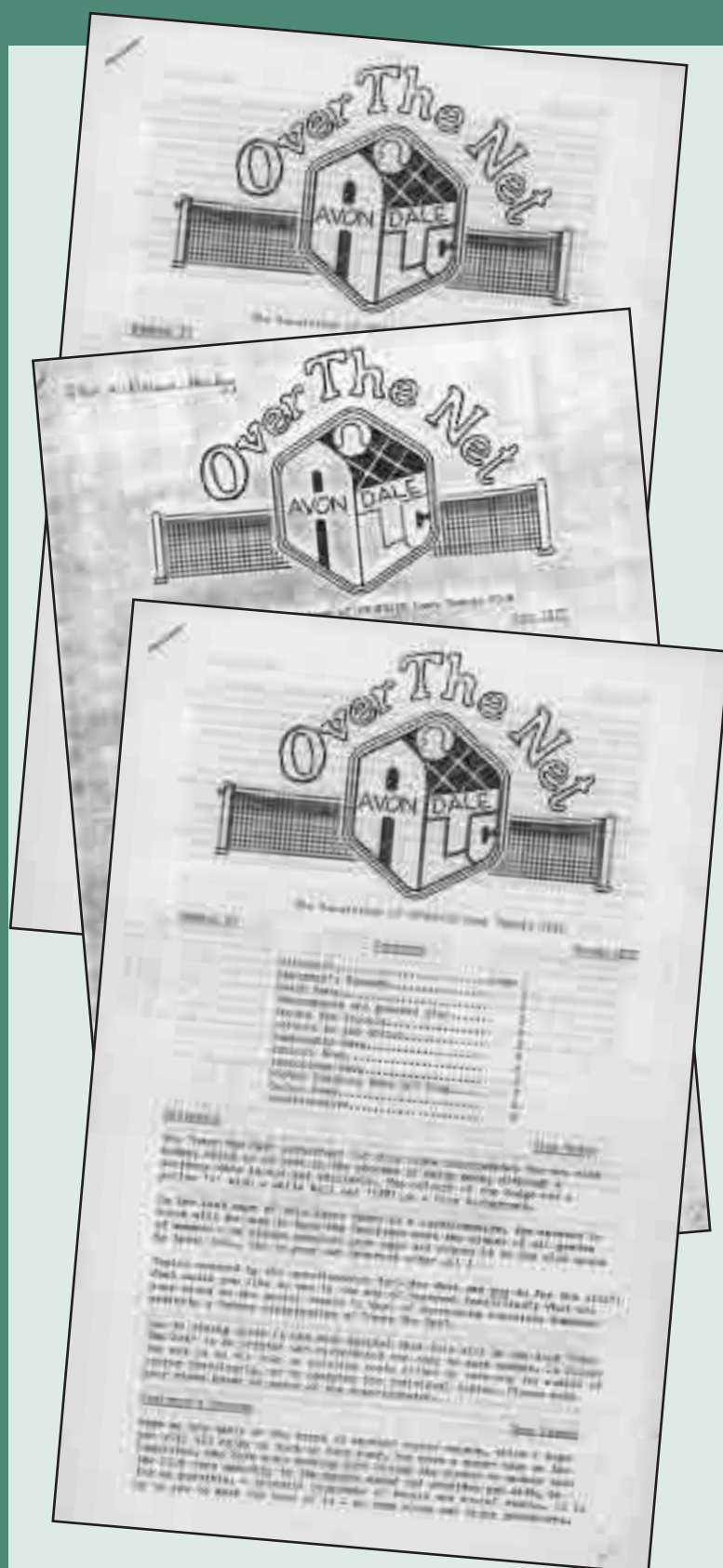




THE JUNIORS

This section of Avondale has been an ever developing area of the club since its move from Albany Road,, and many stalwarts have had a hand in its ongoing progress. Our thanks goes to them and that of all the Juniors, throughout the years.

At present Kathy Charles, a past junior herself, leads this section as it continues to go from strength to strength. Approximately 200 junior members, ageing from 8 to18, regularly either undertake coaching and/or enjoy the opportunity to play on their own allocated evening, as well as many other times throughout the week. This summer three under 13 and three under 16 teams are playing in the Aldershot League, and hopefully they will enjoy as much success as last year. Thanks are due not only to Kathy, but also Maureen Clackett who ably assists with the club coaching duties and the numerous parents and other club members who support and encourage our vibrant Junior section.



Old style Newsletters from the 70's



Avondale Lawn Tennis Club Badge up until 2000

AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

ALDERSHOT LEAGUE

Aldershot League records, which date back to 1948, show Avondale winning their first team title in the Mixed Doubles league in 1950. The Ladies gained their first honour in 1958, with the Men winning three years in a row, beginning in 1970.

THE ASSOCIATES

The Associates section of Avondale L.T.C. continues to thrive. A large membership sees regular Monday morning mix-in sessions and the courts are rarely completely empty midweek, during the day, with "fixed fours" always in action throughout the year. Since 1973 many club members have lead the Associates and represented their interests on the committee. Activities have included numerous tennis playing events, trips out and informal meals and gatherings. These continue today under the watchful eye of Pat Styles and Gill Pooley.



Chris Butt and Ian House with the new club badge on the new sweatshirt

Avondale has a friendly and thriving junior section for all abilities with over 150 school-age members from the age of 8 upwards.

Junior coaching takes place on Saturday mornings from 9am onwards in 5 groups based on ability and age.

Some after school coaching groups are also available.

Junior social sessions take place on Monday nights.

Boys', Girls' and Mixed Summer and Winter Junior League tennis is available with other clubs from the local area.

Summer tournament for all junior members with Singles and Doubles events for Under 10s, Under 12s, Under 15s and Under 18s.

For more information about junior coaching contact

Kathy Charles on 01252 850948

AVONDALE CLUB DATES FOR 2008

Easter Monday 24th March	1st American Tournament
Tuesday 1st April	Handicap tournament starts
Friday 4th April	Inauguration of Centenary Clock
Week beginning 21st April	Aldershot Summer League matches begin
Saturday 26th April	Men's Smith Cup
Sunday 27th April	Ladies Smith Cup
Monday 5th May	2nd American Tournament
Wednesday 7th May	Club Championship probable start date
SUNDAY 18th MAY	CENTENARY DAY
Whit Monday 26th May	3rd American Tournament
Sunday 15th June	The Fayers Cup
Sunday 13th July	Handicap Finals Day
Sunday 20th July	Reserve Handicap Finals Day
Monday 25th August	4th American Tournament (The Archer Cup)
Saturday 6th September	Junior, Veterans and Club Championship Finals Day
Sunday 7th September	
Saturday 13th September	Reserve Junior, Veterans and Club Championship Finals Day
Sunday 14th September	
Sunday 28th September	Senior/Junior Tournament (The House Trophy)
Week beginning 29th September	Aldershot Winter League matches begin
Friday 10th October	Centenary Jazz Supper
Sunday 12th October	5th American Tournament (The Albany Cup)

ORDER OF EVENTS FOR CENTENARY DAY

COURTS	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.00 - 10.45	Junior Demo with Kathy Charles Avondale's Senior Club Coach Licensed CCA		Avondale Associates Social Play		Visiting Aldershot League Clubs Social Play	
10.50 - 11.40	Another Junior Demo with Kathy Charles		Avondale Associates Social Play		Visiting Aldershot League Clubs Social Play	
11.00 onwards	LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE IN THE CLUBHOUSE					
12.00 onwards	BAR OPENS					
12.00 - 1.00	Avondale Club Members try your arm with the Service Speed Gun, Ball Machine & other coaching aids		Visiting Aldershot League Clubs Social Play			
1.00 - 2.00	Speed Gun & Ball Machine continues	Avondale Club Members coaching drills lead by Maureen Clackett. Avondales Assistant coach Licenced DCA			Club Visitors Social Play	
2.00 - 4.00 approx	INTER - AVONDALE SOCIAL CLUB MATCH				PWP Tennis Shop will have available some rackets for Avondale Club members to try	
5.00 approx	HOG ROAST BEGINS					

CAR PARKING will be extremely difficult. PLEASE use 'AVENT' parking in Redfields Industrial Estate OR Redfields Garden Centre (Only 10.00 - 5.30 Gates Shut) OR Zeborn Copse area.