



# *The Vale*

Newsletter of Aylesbury Vale Golf Club  
www.avgc.co.uk

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Edition 83, October 2021  
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## **Comment**

This month Neil Meldrum is the incoming Men's Captain and Keith McGoverne must be thanked for his capable and cheerful Captaincy during Covid-19 and its major restrictions. Charlie Gould is the incoming Junior Captain, replacing Abi Pearce. We welcome both new Captains.

Do take time to read the article at the end of this issue about Captain Valentine Baker MC AFC, the MB3, and how Aylesbury Vale Golf Club features in his story. We are grateful to the Wing Airfield Heritage Group for granting permission to publish this information and photographs.

In normal times, this newsletter is produced each month (except January) for all Club members. To help add interest to it, you can always send the Editor something golf-related that he can include in an issue – perhaps a review of a course that you've visited, or something that you have for sale. The Editor can be contacted at: [lanceredler@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lanceredler@yahoo.co.uk)

**We regret having to report the deaths during September  
of the following former members of AVGC, whom some will remember:**

**John Eggleton (2001 Men's Captain)  
Rowan Green  
Ray Vincent**

**Our condolences are expressed to their families.**

## **News and Updates from the Club Management**

### Retiring Captain

The management as a whole give great thanks to Keith McGoverne for his extended tenure, and consequent extended effort, during this extremely difficult period. He has steadfastly taken sensible decisions and guided the Men's Section through a potentially difficult time. He has been a pleasure to work with and we hope that he and his family enjoy the release, but look back on a job well done. Just watch his handicap drop now!!

## The Course

The September greens maintenance went ahead as planned. A good quantity of sand was added, which slowed them up initially but they are now recovering well.

You may have noticed a series of parallel slits across the tees, collars and approaches. The greens staff have hired a Vredo tee seeder, which has aerated the ground and dropped a line of fescue and dwarf rye grass seeds within the slits. The idea here is that the 75% fescue and 25% dwarf rye mix is more resistant to hot, dry conditions than bent grasses, so we are adding this mix as a precaution in case of hot spells next summer.

The government is currently running a scheme for youngsters aged between 16 and 24 years of age, and who are in receipt of universal credit, to take up certain roles. One of these roles is an assistant greenkeeper. If you know of any such youngsters then do ask them to get in touch. The winter tasks that we have include tree maintenance, renewing our fairway marker discs, building bridges and tee steps, creating new areas for recycling bins and levelling tees. Any youngsters that do want this work would form part of small project teams, with our experienced greenkeepers heading those teams.

## Removing Silt from Ponds

Please be aware that we will be hiring a dredging digger and dumper trucks to remove excess silt from the ponds, starting on Tuesday 26 October (ground conditions permitting). The dredger is large and not very mobile, so we will be moving some tee blocks to the other side of the ponds whilst the dredger is working on that particular hole. This means that the midweek Stableford that was planned for 25 October to 29 October is going to be brought forward one week and played between 18 October and 22 October.

## Breast Cancer Awareness Day

Many thanks to Jean Barnett for running the competition, Lorraine Fox for her administration and a special word of thanks to Jean Hill for outstanding fundraising efforts! We should also thank you, the membership, for completing the day despite a heavy cloudburst early in proceedings. As a result you all raised £1,860 and this sum will be so welcome by the charity, as last year was such a poor year for many charities. Jean Hill is already negotiating with the department stores for prize donations for next year!

## Membership

We now have waiting lists for membership. Those members with friends who are looking to join the Club should encourage them to add their names to this waiting list as there is no cost to do this. The waiting list is in its infancy, so we only have 15 names on it to date. The person on the top of the list will be given an invitation to join once an existing member does not renew their membership.

## Coronavirus – Opening Up

The general advice from England Golf is that procedures may return to normal, since enough time has elapsed for the population to opt for a vaccination:

Showers. We will be re-opening the showers. However, we would add that ventilation is not good in shower areas. There are four showers in the men's changing room so our safety advice would be to operate a 'one-at-a-time' system. However, this is just advice and not a Club rule, so informed individuals can now assume responsibility for their own actions.

Parties. We are now taking party bookings again for the upstairs function room. We will be retaining the perspex divide at the bar for the safety of our staff. You are welcome to call in at the office to discuss your party. We will assess each style of party and may set a maximum limit on the number of seats around each table and the total number of guests.

Club Christmas Party. Peter Codrai is organising a Christmas Party for members on Saturday 11 December. We will use our large round function tables with a maximum of eight members around each table. This will limit entries to 64 people.

Front of House Service to Patio Covered Area. We have decided to continue with table service rather than revert to bar service. This means that members still have the option to sit fully outside, or within the patio covered area, or within the clubhouse – wherever you feel most comfortable!

### Deceased Former Members

John Eggleton – John was our ‘larger than life’ Captain back in 2001 and brought a great deal of laughter to captaincy, ceremonies and prize presentations. I know he was a big family man and our thoughts go to them now.

Rowan Green – Rowan was a cheerful, helpful, friendly individual who had a lot of time for everyone. I think he will be missed by all members that knew him.

Ray Vincent – Ray was still enjoying life and his golf at an age that the rest of us simply aspired to reach! He especially enjoyed relaxing with friends after his round, a little banter, and gently watching the world go by!

*Chris Wright*

### **Rules of Golf**

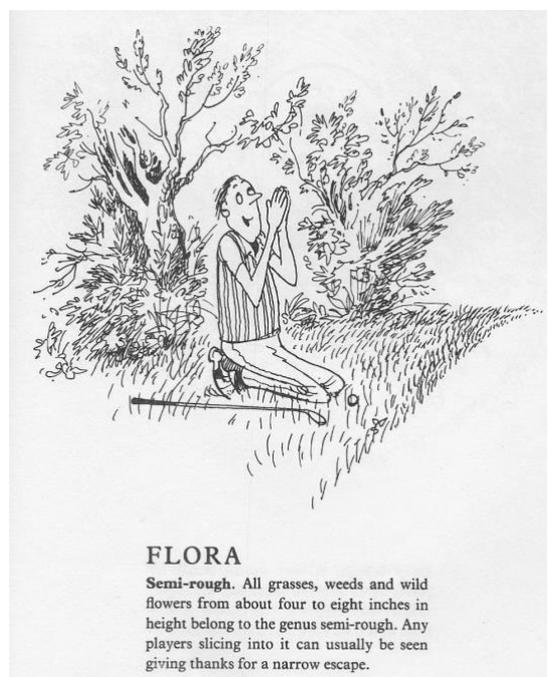
Playing from Outside the Teeing Ground\* (Rule 6.1b). The rules for a player playing from outside the required teeing ground, which would include the wrong-coloured tee, differ according to whether Match Play or Stroke Play is being used:

- a. Match Play. If a player, when starting a hole, plays a ball from outside the teeing ground there is no penalty, but the opponent may immediately require the player to cancel the stroke and play the ball from within the teeing ground.
- b. Stroke Play. If a competitor, when starting a hole, plays a ball from outside the teeing ground, (s)he incurs a penalty of two strokes and must then play the ball from within the teeing ground. If the mistake is not corrected the player is disqualified.

\* *‘teeing ground’ is the starting place for the hole to be played. It is a rectangular area, two club-lengths in depth, the front and sides of which are defined by the outside limits of two tee-markers. A ball is outside the teeing ground when all of it lies outside the teeing ground. A player may stand outside the teeing ground when making a stroke at the ball.*



From *Play It As It Lies* by Thelwell ©



## Club Championships

From the final singles Club Championship competitions of the year, we congratulate our Ladies' Midweek Champion and the two Junior Champions:

### Ladies

2021 Midweek Champion: Vanessa Bond

### Juniors

2021 Junior Champion (Gross): Alex Robins

2021 Junior Champion (Nett): Eloise Hammond



## Handicap Secretary's Report by Alan Connell

This month, the point I will cover is: **Unsatisfied Score Intents.**

This has been a much-discussed subject over the period since lockdown ended, and the latitude shown to people as we all become accustomed to the system is now ending.

On 11 September there were 539 Unsatisfied Score Intents (USI) for Bedfordshire golfers, some going back to April. These are where members have signed up to register a score for General Play and then not submitted a score after playing. There may be a number of reasons, including the marker (or attester) not having the App on their phone, or sometimes even lack of signal or lack of phone. These USIs are now being deleted, and at AVGC Kim Burnage has been a big help in keeping this up to date.

Any USIs remain on the golfer's handicap record on WHS. The App has been updated so that golfers are now aware that there is a USI on their record, which means they have to give a reason to the Club for non-submissions.

People do make mistakes when entering scores. I am quite happy to deal with genuine errors, and am doing so on a regular basis, but can only do so when notified. I would urge all members to contact me by email if they have made a mistake and I will aim to correct it as soon as I can.

Please remember that the national guidance is that penalties may be imposed for persistent offenders, and we will start to implement that at AVGC. This can include commencing disciplinary proceedings, leading to possible sanctions such as withdrawal or freezing of a handicap index for a period of time. We do not want to do that, so ask for your help to properly submit your scores, and communicate if you are unable to do so for a genuine reason.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me ([alanconnellAVGC@outlook.com](mailto:alanconnellAVGC@outlook.com)).

# Men

## A Word from the Departing Men's Captain...

Dear Members,

My final piece as Captain gives thanks to those fellow members and the management team who supported me and the Club through uncharted waters, steering the good ship Aylesbury Vale with Captain Covid Keith at the helm. There were many changes and innovations effected within the committee, and I'm pleased to say we have a solid, dedicated group of individuals working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that competitions run smoothly, and that support is provided to all members.

As a proprietary Club, we've enjoyed a good deal of freedom over the years. My term proved a little more challenging to ensure some form of normality returned once the Club opened again (twice) after the restrictions. The staff and management have been supportive to all Sections, even though not all decisions are greeted with enthusiasm. Let's hope the Club returns to some of the old ways of working soon (restrictions permitting).

A special mention to the greenkeepers, Luke and his team, who do a fantastic job presenting and maintaining the course. I have to say that this year the fairways have been the best in all the years I've played at Aylesbury Vale. Well done, and thank you!

It's great to see Dave Lea return after his recent health scare (which has happened twice during my term). Dave's fingers are now firmly back on the pulse. It was touch and go as to whether I broke my promise to Neil and 'not' sack anyone else before his reign commenced. Dave is a very lucky person, although I believe the best form of punishment is for Dave to continue a little longer...

Joking aside, it's worth reminding members of the sheer hard work and complexity of trying to accommodate everyone wishing to play in competitions, and the endless updating of the BRS. For those not aware, HowDidiDo (Club V1) is not aligned with BRS; all changes are manually adjusted, with limited time available to ensure the updated list is ready for when you arrive at the course. The admin to run this process is excessive, so can we all please spare a thought for Dave when he's at the Club for extended hours making sure things run smoothly. Anyone wishing to drop out, please contact Dave Lea first, before removing yourself from the BRS.

The Junior Championships were completed in early September, and I'm pleased to report that the numbers involved have increased significantly, including family and friends (not the CBL!) who attended the presentation. I did ask if I could keep the trophy, as I've presented it for the last three years; I'm sure you guessed the answer, a firm NO from Kim. Well done to all those who took part. Special thanks go to Kim and Russell for enabling AVGC to enter a team in this year's Tavistock Trophy, and the support that Abi Pearce gave throughout her tenure. Good luck also to Charlie Gould, the incoming Junior Captain.

The joint Captains' charity donations have exceeded expectations during these challenging times due to restrictions, with £5,088 raised in total. The generous members at Aylesbury Vale never cease to amaze me, and I sincerely thank all those who donated. Special thanks go to Mark Mansfield, Peter Codrai, Darren Horne, Nick Bowden, and Dan Baldock for their fundraising efforts. Hospice at Home Volunteers once again proved to be the winners due to everyone's generosity with their time and money.

My final thoughts go to Neil Meldrum, your new Men's Captain. Neil joined the committee at the same time as me (Vice-Captain) and has proved to be a huge success managing the handicaps. The stars were obviously aligned that day, and it was meant to be for Neil to get the opportunity to lead this fantastic Club. Neil will have his own style of management, and I'm sure he will prove to be a huge success with his gopher Howard Matthews running all those errands I had to do for Steve Chandler, with John Barker frowning with every move. I'm joking! I do thank Steve Chandler for all his invaluable and unwavering

support during my term, and I wish Neil and Howard the very best of luck; please take the time to enjoy like I did (sometimes)...

I do now have some personal chores to complete, and my wife will be relieved for the calls to stop during the evening (and she can step down as my newsletter editor). I'm looking forward to playing golf again, safe in the knowledge that I can direct any questions to our new Captain, Mr Meldrum.

And finally - it's been emotional...

*Keith McGoverne*

### **A Word from the Incoming Men's Captain...**

Dear Members

I start my first entry in The Vale on a sad note, with the unexpected passing of a past member, Rowan Green. Those who knew Rowan will remember a somewhat larger than life tea drinking member, who would literally do anything for you. We were sorry to see him leave the Club a few years ago but he lived on in our memories and the stories we told. I'm sure we all extend our deepest sympathies to his family and loved ones.

It is great to see that our Competition Secretary Dave Lea is slowly returning to the Club, and I would like to thank Mark Mansfield for his help running competitions and supporting Dave. Having been involved in running a recent competition in Dave's absence, I now have a greater appreciation of what he does and I'd like to say that as members we all owe him a massive debt of gratitude and thanks. I am keen that Dave continues his role for as long as he wants to, but we (all members) need to help him with this. To this end, if any member would like to help out on a competition day please let a member of the committee know. The reward for this? Just knowing you have helped a great bloke and Club, but seriously - we are happy to reward people who help out with free entry into the competition on the day, albeit in one of the last slots of the day.

So, some other key points that would help:

- only sign up for a competition if you are fully committed to playing;
- always turn up at least 15 minutes before your tee time;
- don't make us chase you for entry fees or to the tee;
- if you need to cancel please give as much notice as you can (that it looks like, or is, raining is not an acceptable reason to cancel - golf is an all-weather sport).

Just a polite reminder that whilst the Club itself does not have a strict dress code, there is an expectation that members adhere to the dress policy outlined in the Men's Committee Code of Conduct during formal competitions. As a reminder, we have put up a couple of posters to help people who have any doubts.

On a lighter note I'd like to thank (COVID) Keith McGoverne for his extended Captaincy. I am grateful that Keith has set an extremely low bar and secured the trophy for 'Worst Captain Ever'! All future Captains and the previous holder of the trophy, Andrew Bond, owe Keith a debt of gratitude as I am confident the trophy will remain in Keith's possession for many years to come. In all seriousness, Keith has done a fantastic job in difficult circumstances, and all with a smile (or grimace) on his face.

So what will the next year or so hold? This is still a little up in the air as we head into winter and await a surge (or not) in COVID and a change of rules or not. This said, Howard and I had a very productive meeting with the Club management and we will be working with them to return golfing activities to as normal as we can. To this end we will be looking to bring back Club matches during 2022, including Scratch, Mid-Handicap and Friendlies, although these are all likely to be later in the day to ensure that members playing social golf can get access to prime tee times. We will be looking to reinstate the

‘Captains Project and, whilst we have a couple of ideas, if any members have an idea that they feel will enhance the golfing experience for members please feel free to come and have a chat.

It has been a tough time for charities, but thanks go to our fantastic and generous members who have once again dug deep to give generously, I have decided to continue with ‘Hospice at Home Volunteers’ <http://hospiceathomevolunteers.org.uk> as our charity for the next year.

To kick start the fund raising for this year, two of our members, Brian Smith and Matt Green, will be doing ‘Sober October’. Those of you who know these gentlemen will know how challenging it will be for them, particularly for Brian, who is still in mourning for losing to Wales in the recent Four Nations competition. Details on how to support their stupidity/bravery will be on the Facebook and WhatsApp groups and also the Men’s Section website. I hope you will join me in supporting them and enjoying the opportunity to offer them countless alcoholic beverages, safe in the knowledge that they can’t accept them.

Finally, stay safe and enjoy your golf.

*Neil Meldrum*

## Competitions

Medal 4 September	Div 1 1 <sup>st</sup> : Michael Pearce nett 66 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Gary Lee nett 67 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Ian Lawson nett 67 Div 2 1 <sup>st</sup> : Tom Davies nett 68 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Andrew Bond nett 69 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Steve Royffe nett 69 Div 3 1 <sup>st</sup> : Ian Pullin nett 64 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Gavin Procter nett 65 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Martin Shefferd nett 68
Moorlands Cup 12 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Nicky Bowden/Binzy Bowden 48 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Martin Arnold/Oliver Knight 47 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Anthony Kearns/Gary Stephenson 47 Pts
Medal of Medals 18 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Declan Hull nett 67 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Neil Meldrum nett 69 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Nathan Chandler nett 70
Four Nations 25 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Wales 88 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Scotland 86 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Ireland 74 Pts 4 <sup>th</sup> : England 72 Pts
Burcott Trophy 26 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Nicholas Davies/Colin Welch nett 76 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Martin Arnold/Oliver Knight nett 74 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Graham Lowe/Will Bond nett 71

## Seniors

### A Word from the Seniors’ Captain...

September came and went very quickly. It is hard to credit that the Summer Season is now at a close, the daylight hours shorten and the colder days return. Let’s just hope it is a little less wet than last year (and lockdown free) so that we can play through to spring!

At least in 2021 we managed to complete most of our competitions and, as of the end of this month, complete the Summer Six series and the Order of Merit.

The Seniors played out three competitions this month, namely the Memorial Trophy won by Dave Friend with 45 points, the September Medal won by Bob Phillips with a nett 68 , and the final round of the Summer Six won by Richard Braithwaite with 39 points.

We enjoyed our second AwayDay at Bicester on 8 September in what proved to be excellent, albeit unusually hot, conditions. This was rounded off on 13 September with the prize presentations of this, and the previous AwayDay, back at AVGC. It was a pleasure to see a good representation of Seniors to collect their prizes and for the presentation of the Memorial Trophy to Dave Friend, which preceded it.



We have also played our first inter-Club match since 2019. The Winter League has recommenced and our first match was played at Home vs Oakland Park. The result was a draw and it was a very creditable result considering the shot advantage enjoyed by the opposition.

Looking forward, we have a couple of competitions to complete in October, namely the Lawson Shield and Trafalgar Salver. Beyond that we have the Winter Eight, which starts in October, and as just mentioned, the Winter League inter-Club matches. The Winter Eclectic also commences from 1 October. There will be regular Stablefords and team games scheduled throughout the winter.

During 2021 our golf hasn't been the same as it was before, and that goes for the succession of Captains. The Men's Captaincy changes from 1 October and I would like to offer my congratulations to Neil Meldrum, as the incoming Men's Captain. On the Seniors' behalf we wish him an enjoyable and successful Captaincy. Of course, one cannot overlook the considerable endeavours of the outgoing Captain, Keith McGoverne. He has held the post for an extended period of 18 months, virtually all of which has been impacted by the pandemic. Many of the issues that he had to face were unique and were met with resilience and good humour. It has been a great pleasure working with Keith and, as he hands over to Neil, he leaves the Men's Section in great shape.

See you at the Vale.

*Keith Loxton*

### **Winter League** by Peter Nightingale

It was great to play again in a competitive inter-Club match in the Winter League.

On Wednesday 15 September we entertained Oakland Park Golf Club, for our first match in 20 months since the Covid restrictions came into force. Everyone had been looking forward to the match and it turned out to be an extremely difficult one. The reason was that for the 47 shots our 12 players were getting, we were giving our opposition 147 shots. This meant that in four of the six games, one of our players was giving at least 18 shots to one of theirs, hence the scene was set for an extremely difficult match.

What was in our favour was the excellent condition of our course, with brilliant fairways and great putting greens; if we had any advantage, it was home knowledge. Our Clubhouse staff played their part in making it an excellent day with their catering skills and it was an all-round excellent day.

Match 1 was Peter Nightingale and Dave Needs, with Dave was giving 18 shots to one of their players. It was a great match ending in us winning 5&4. Match 2 was Richard Braithwaite and Neil Brinklow and Richard was giving one of their players 20 shots. For most of the game they were behind but managed to fight back on the last four holes and win by one. Match 3 was Nigel Handyside and Jim Gales - whom you would normally call our rookies. But most people know Nigel's reputation with any club, and they managed to get a 6&5 win.

Match 4 was David Dean and David Friend (both had been hit badly - from a competition view - with handicap reductions in the past week) and 18 shots were given to one of their players. This match resulted in a loss. Match 5 was Andrew Bond and Tom Hobbs, with Andrew giving one of their players 19 shots, a very tough and draining match which they lost. Match 6 was Keith Minor and Ken Slatter, who had on balance the fairest handicap group, but as sometimes happens one of their players played exceptionally well, meaning another loss.

In all the result was a 3-3 draw, a match hard fought and a point gained. Well done team.

The next match is at home against Little Hay on Monday 4 October; we have two further matches during the month:

Monday 4 October...home match vs Little Hay  
 Monday 18 October...home match vs Weston Turville  
 Thursday 28 October...away match vs Weston Turville

Sheets requesting players for coming matches are on the Seniors' notice board.

### Competitions

Memorial Trophy 13 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Dave Friend 45 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Nigel Handyside 44 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : John Crowson 42 Pts
Winter League home match vs Oakland Park 15 September	Halved
Medal 20 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Bob Phillips nett 68 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Mick Lee nett 69 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Simon Merritt nett 70
Summer Six (6) 27 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Richard Braithwaite 39 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Martin Shefferd 35 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> :

## Ladies

### A Word from the Ladies' Section...

#### Breast Cancer Charity Day

Jean Barnett, Jean Hill and Lorraine Fox (see photo) organised and ran the hugely successful 2021 Breast Cancer charity day - £1,860 was raised on the day and, with further donations, the total donated to the Breast Cancer Now charity was £2,000.



Particular mention is made of Jean Hill, who many of our members will not have met before but who will know her now! When it comes to persuading people to donate prizes and buy raffle tickets, she has no equal!! The raffle contributed two-thirds of the total raised and many members went home with amazing prizes.

The winning team was the last to come in, with an impressive 94 points (Gill Messenger, Anne-Lise Porter, Melinda and Peter Arthur). There were prizes for the best dressed team - Mary Marchant, Gina Royffe, Mary Williamson and Jennie Morton; the team who went into the most bunkers (12!) - Keith Minor, Mike Bender, Peter Nightingale and David Needs, and the best limerick - Mike Bishop, Peter Carmody, Bev Hughes and David Hill (see below). David Dean won the putting competition.

A big thanks to our wonderful members, who embraced the spirit of the day by dressing in pink, joining in the fun activities and contributing to the monies raised.

*There was a young golfer called Wright  
Whose shorts were incredibly tight  
While playing a chip  
He burst at the hip,  
Giving the Lady Captain a fright!*

*Lesley Wright*

## Competitions

Medal 1 September	Div 1 1 <sup>st</sup> : Pat Connolly nett 73 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Jane Codrai nett 74 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Jan Chambers nett 78 Div 2 1 <sup>st</sup> : Pat Banister nett 69 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Sue Goodger nett 89 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Charlotte Simpson nett 91
Medal 11 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Sheila Perkins nett 75 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Jane Roche nett 76 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Anne Bridges nett 77
Stableford 15 September	Div 1 Jane Roche 36 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Jane Codrai 34 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Anne Bridges 33 Pts Div 2 1 <sup>st</sup> : Angela Panes 40 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Jane Whigham 34 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Danka Lawson 32 Pts
Matrimonial Pairs 19 September	Carol and Jamie Carlin
Stableford 26 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Lorraine Fox 35 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Charlotte Simpson 33 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Clare Garrett 32 Pts
Autumn Cup 29 September	1 <sup>st</sup> : Eva Neve 38 Pts 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Sheila Perkins 36 Pts 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Jan Chambers 36 Pts

## Juniors

We held the Junior Championship on the 4 September, with a good field of 14 players. The gross winner was Alex Robins with a score of 74. Runner up was Joseph Langan-Hart with an 85. The nett winner was Eloise Hammond with a nett 72, beating Alex for the nett by one shot. Congratulations to the winners and to everyone for taking part.

*Kim Burnage*

## and in Conclusion...

**...the last word is...** Ever-continuing gratitude is expressed to the Martin-Baker Aircraft Company, for the thousands of lives saved by their ejection seats since 1946.

**...and a touch of humour...** When you're dead, you don't know you're dead and all the pain is felt by others. The same thing happens when you're stupid.

*Lance Redler*

Editor

cc: Club Professionals, charities

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## Captain Valentine Baker MC AFC

*(Photographs and much of the text published with kind permission of the Wing Airfield Heritage Group)*

Saturday 12 September 2021 was the 79<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death, in a plane crash, of Captain Valentine Baker MC AFC, a famous aviator and test pilot.

During World War 1, Valentine Baker served initially in the Royal Navy, then the Army where he trained and flew on operations as a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps, subsequently transferring to the Royal Air Force on its formation. He was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in the Royal Flying Corps and the Air Force Cross in the first honours list of the newly-formed Royal Air Force.

Post war, Baker became an internationally experienced flying instructor and test pilot, training amongst others the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Kent and Amy Johnson. Subsequently, in 1934 he co-founded the Martin-Baker Aircraft Company with Sir James Martin, and was the company's chief test pilot.

Valentine Baker lost his life in 1942 when test flying the prototype Martin-Baker MB3 fighter from RAF Wing. The MB3 flew for the first time on 31 August 1942. Its early flights were promising and, on 12 September 1942, the aircraft took off from Wing on a further test. The plane's 2,000 hp Napier Sabre engine failed during the initial climb and a forced landing was attempted, in a field that is now Aylesbury Vale Golf Club land. Unfortunately, the MB3 hit an obstacle on the ground, crashed and caught fire.

Provided by the Martin-Baker Aircraft Company for the RAF Wing Memorial



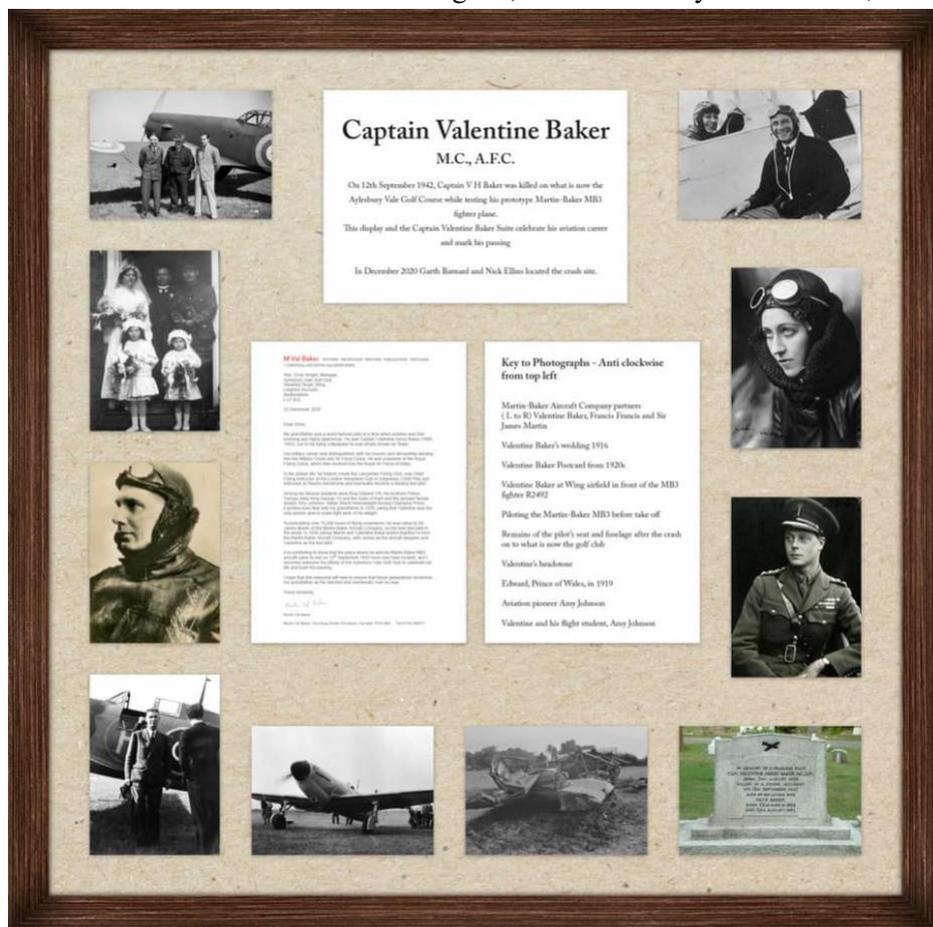
Captain Baker is now remembered - at the site of his final take off - on the new Wing Airfield memorial that was unveiled in June 2021, and also at Aylesbury Vale Golf Club, the site of the fatal crash. Recent searches on the Club's land eventually found the site of the crash, which had not previously been recorded for posterity.



In recognition of Valentine Baker, the upstairs function room at AVGC has been named the 'Captain Valentine Baker Suite', complementing this with a display consisting of a memorial plaque, information board and pieces of the aircraft and pilot's possessions in the downstairs dining area. The items include a badly scored and damaged 1938 half crown coin, found where the

pilot's seat came to rest.

The downstairs display includes a letter from the grandson of the pilot and another from John and James Martin Jr, who now run the Martin-Baker Aircraft Company. The company makes the world-leading ejection seat fitted in so many fighter aircraft around the globe. This seat was inspired by Sir James witnessing Valentine's death in the aircraft he designed, and has already saved over 7,650 lives.



### ***What's On This Month?***

(All-Section and Club events are in **bold**)

#### **Men**

Sunday 3 October – Medal 0645-1100

Sunday 10 October – Daily Mail Foursomes 0730-1000

**Monday 11 to Friday 15 October – Midweek Medal**

**Sunday 17 October – Mixed Pairs Club Championships 0800-1000**

**Monday 18 to Friday 22 October – Midweek Stableford**

Sunday 24 October – Waddington Shield Texas Scramble 0715-1030

#### **Seniors**

Monday 4 October – competition 0815-1000

Monday 4 October – Winter League home match vs Little Hay

Wednesday 6 October – Lawson Shield 0800-0930

Monday 11 October – Winter Eight (1) 0800-1000

**Monday 11 to Friday 15 October – Midweek Medal**

Wednesday 13 October – competition 0730-0930

**Sunday 17 October – Mixed Pairs Club Championships 0800-1000**

Monday 18 October – Stableford 0745-1000

Monday 18 October – Winter League home match vs Weston Turville

**Monday 18 to Friday 22 October – Midweek Stableford**

Wednesday 20 October – Trafalgar Salver 0800-0930

Monday 25 October – Winter Eight (2) 0800-1000

Wednesday 27 October – competition 0730-0930

Thursday 28 October - Winter League away match vs Weston Turville

#### **Ladies**

Monday 4 October – competition 1000-1100

Wednesday 6 October – Stableford 1000-1100

Monday 11 October – competition 1000-1100

**Monday 11 to Friday 15 October – Midweek Medal**

Wednesday 13 October – Scramble 1000-1100

Saturday 16 October – Medal 0915-0945

**Sunday 17 October – Mixed Pairs Club Championships 0800-1000**

Monday 18 October – competition 1000-1100

**Monday 18 to Friday 22 October – Midweek Stableford**

Wednesday 20 October – Medal 1000-1100

Saturday 23 October – Barbara Carr Plate 1000-1030

Monday 25 October – Barbara Carr Plate 1000-1100

Wednesday 27 October – competition 1000-1100

### ***Key Contacts***

#### ***Club Management***

e-mail: info@avgc.co.uk

www.avgc.co.uk

Tel: 01525 240196

**Memberships/Shop/Tee bookings:** Chris Wright, Garry Hutchinson, Jason Thornalley, Dan Lazar  
**Restaurant/Functions:** Jason Thornalley, Chris Wright

**Head Chef:** Heinz Simon

**Head Greenkeeper:** Luke Foley

**Teaching Professionals:** Russell Phillips 07843 692948 or r.phillips@avgc.co.uk

Terry Bunyan 07588 272322  
or terrygolf1965@gmail.com

#### ***Men***

**Captain:** Neil Meldrum

**Vice-Captain:** Howard Matthews

**Treasurer:** Keith Loxton

**Competition Secretary:** Dave Lea

**Admin Secretary:** John Barker

**Handicap Secretary:** Alan Connell

**5-Day Representative:** Peter Codrai

#### ***Seniors***

**Captain:** Keith Loxton

**Vice-Captain:** post vacant

**Treasurer:** Mike Boden

**Competition Secretary:** Dave Lea

**Admin Secretary:** Mike Pelizzoni

**Social Secretary:** Peter Codrai

#### ***Ladies***

**Captain:** post vacant

**Vice-Captain:** Charlotte Simpson

**Admin Secretary:** Lesley Wright

**Treasurer:** Charlotte Simpson

**Weekend Comp Secretary:** Sheila Perkins

**Midweek Comp Secretary:** Jackie Boden

**Handicap Secretary:** Jean Barnett

**Members' Reps:** Lorraine Fox, Jean Hill, Jane Roche

#### ***Juniors***

**Captain:** Charlie Gould

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