

### History and Formation of Stone Golf Club in 1896

The first club was formed in Stone in March 1896 and an item in the Staffordshire Advertiser announced this on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 1896. The location was not at our present location at The Fillybrooks but on the west side of the old road at the top of Oulton Heath. The clubhouse we understand was located on the corner of the road and a foot path which still leads down to the 'Quails'. The original map below is still held at our Golf Club and is the only record of how the first 9-hole course was set out. In the right-hand corner, the small written piece shows 30-40 members formed the Golf Club. Apart from the first green which is now a lawn, little of the original course remains.



This is the map of the original course. The wording on the right hand side has been torn but we believe this to be the article printed in the Staffordshire Advertiser on the 7th March 1896 and reads ' A Golf Club has been formed in Stone and is meeting with encouraging support, between 30 and 40 members having already joined. The links will be on the left-hand side of the old road, on the hill above Oulton Grange, the Downs-banks being included.'

Close inspection shows the club house in the left corner with the first tee running parallel with the road and passing a tea House. The second hole follows which looks to be 458 yards again running parallel to the road up to the third tee which is a short par 3 of 182 yards. To play the fourth hole you must cross a path or track into the next field and then to play the fifth you drive off back over the path and safely onto the fifth green which is 245 yards. We hope you checked for passing pedestrians before doing this. The sixth follows the west boundary and then the seventh moves back into the course from the west boundary. The eighth follows the seventh back in the opposite direction back to the west boundary and the ninth heads back to the clubhouse.



This picture taken in 1996 shows the fairway of the 4<sup>th</sup> hole taken from the road.

This is an early map of the area from the website Golfs Missing Links which shows the location of the Golf Course on the west side of the Old Road at Oulton Heath. A Pavillion is clearly marked which we assume to be the Tea House (half way house) which is shown on the map above. The contours indicate it was on a hill above Oulton Grange with Wash Dale Lane on the west side boundary and



Downs Bank being included. In 1900 the professional Bob Rutherford of Carnoustie, a very good player was to leave the club after about 4 years service. He took up a new post in Devon as professional and green-keeper.



From the beginning the club prospered, however in 1916 the farmer from whom the land was rented objected to Golf being played on a Sunday and so the club closed. This would have happened within the time of the First World War years and so members would have been away fighting for their country or involved in war work. When the course closed all the original records were lost. As you will read some of the original founder members of the first club were able to join the new club

when this was formed in 1922 and they went on to locate the original Trophies which we play for today. The last connection with the old course at Oulton came to an end in 1982 when Henrietta Booth died. She was the last surviving daughter of the original green keeper Albert Booth. His home, Golf cottage is still there, see picture above. The Oulton Cup is played annually and is a tangible reminder of the Old Course.

#### Formation of the New Golf Club

We have extracted the following details from our archives, the first handwritten minute books of the Committee of Stone Golf Club. Their very first meeting took place on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1922, when a group of local gentlemen met at the Crown Hotel to form a new Golf Club. The minutes provide an excellent account of how the club was formed and amalgamated following the demise in 1916 of the old golf club located at Oulton Heath.

The social history of the time just after the end of the First World War is very much in evidence in the professions and occupations of the founder members during what was a boom period for Golf in England. The challenges they faced in forming the club from scratch are detailed and the costs of living at the time are documented. I have also provided some background of the occupations of the founder members in the local community of the town.

Golf had of course been played in Scotland for centuries with virtually no interest shown south of the border. And by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, it was acknowledged as the national sport of Scotland with the first Open being played in 1860 at Prestwick. When sports such as football, rugby and tennis were taking off in the 1870s golf was only played in England by a small minority in a scattering of places around the country. Royal North Devon being the first seaside links established in 1864 and followed by Royal Liverpool in 1869.

Then between 1890 and the start of the first world war over a thousand golf clubs came into existence, nearly one new club every week for a quarter of a century. At the turn of the century, it became one of the fastest growing recreational activities and large amounts of money were being invested to expand the sport. This growth also coincided with the prosperity being generated by the industrial revolution, suburban expansion, better rail links and the availability of suitable land. These handwritten minutes of the Committee document how our club was formed and the era in which it came into existence. Whilst not every committee meeting has been documented, those containing key events have been included over the first two years.



A public meeting was held in the Crown Hotel, Stone on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1922, with Colonel J Harding in the chair, a Director of J Joules Brewery.

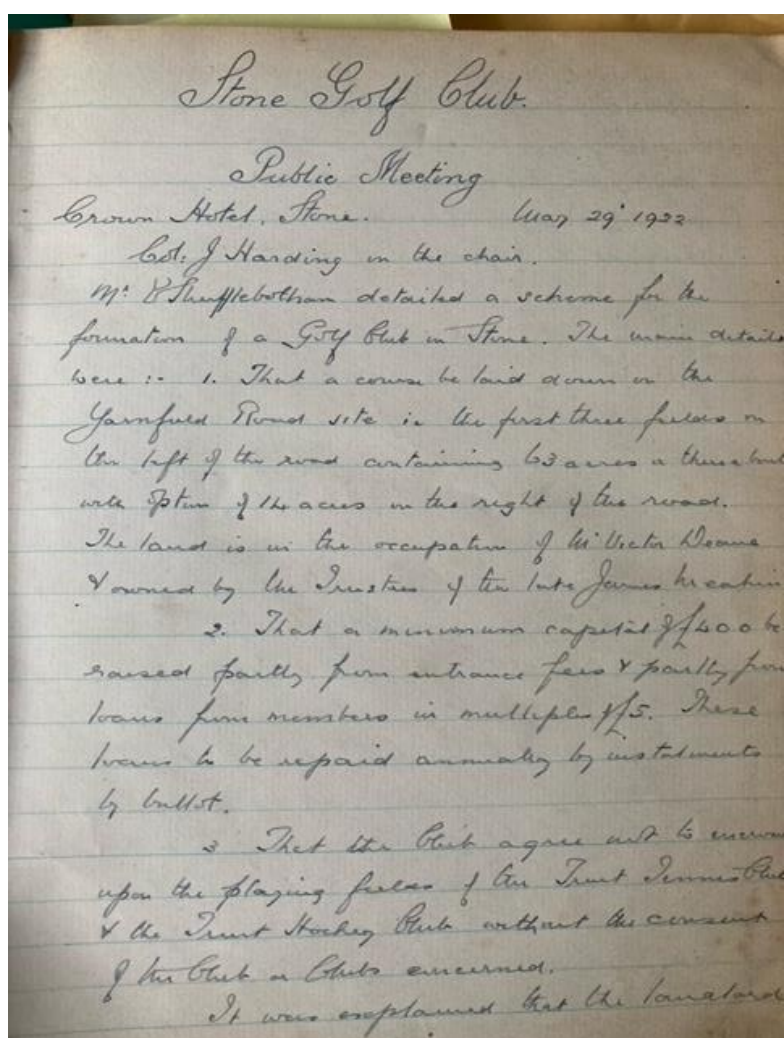
A Mr. E Shufflebotham who was the local bank manager detailed a scheme for the formation of a Golf Club in Stone. The course was to be laid down in the first three fields comprising 63 acres on the left of Yarnfield Road with the option of another 14 acres on the other side of the road.

The land was occupied by Victor Deane and owned by Trustees of the late James Meakin of Darlaston Hall. A minimum amount of £400 capital was to be raised from entrance fees and from loans from members in multiples of £5. These loans were to be repaid annually in installments by a ballot. The club was not to encroach upon the playing fields of the Trent Tennis Club and Trent Hockey Club without their consent.

The landlord and the tenant were willing to let the land as a golf course. Furthermore, the tenant would lay out the greens and tees, mow the fairways and erect boundaries and fences in the extent of his tenancy.

The minutes go on to say that £175 in loans was already pledged. The name of the club should be

decided upon at the first General meeting. The entrance fee was to be £2.2/- (2 Guineas). It was agreed that a general meeting would be held of members in June. A Mr. W.W Wynne brought up the question of the funds of the old Stone golf club and said he would try to arrange a meeting between representatives of the two clubs to see if an arrangement could be made for an amalgamation.



Stone Golf Club.  
Public Meeting  
Crown Hotel, Stone. May 29, 1922  
Col. J Harding in the chair.  
Mr. E Shufflebotham detailed a scheme for the formation of a Golf Club in Stone. The main details were :- 1. That a course be laid down in the Yarnfield Road site in the first three fields on the left of the road containing 63 acres & three tenths with option of the acres on the right of the road. The land is in the occupation of Mr Victor Deane & owned by the Trustees of the late James Meakin.  
2. That a minimum capital of £400 be raised partly from entrance fees & partly from loans from members in multiples of £5. These loans to be repaid annually by instalments by ballot.  
3. That the Club agree not to encroach upon the playing fields of the Trent Tennis Club & the Trent Hockey Club without the consent of the Clubs concerned.  
It was explained that the landlord

The next meeting took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1922 at the Crown Hotel with a Mr. Mark Hughes in the Chair. The minutes of the public meeting were read and confirmed.

It was resolved that the Club be called 'The Stone Golf Club' and that Mr. J L Meakin be President and Colonel J Harding and Mr. H.S Boddington be Vice Presidents. The question of Sunday Golf was deferred to the next meeting, but the temporary committee was to be formed as follows:

Mr. E J Taylor, Mr. E Shufflebotham from the new club and Messrs. H S Boddington, M Hughes, and Mr W W Wynne from the Old club. The new Committee was asked to get a definite plan of the Course. The membership was to be opened on July 31<sup>st</sup> and a further general meeting was to be held to draw up the rules of the club.

So, on July 31<sup>st</sup> a general meeting was held at the Crown Hotel with Mr. J G Adie in the Chair with Mr. E Shufflebotham as acting secretary. A definite plan of the course had been prepared by Messrs. Parrott & Hughes of Trentham and drawn to scale by local architect, J S Redman. They had also received 100 definite promises to become members of the Club. A letter had also been received from the old club agreeing to join the new club subject to the following conditions.

1. That the club be called 'The Stone Golf Club'
2. That all pre-war members of the Old Stone Golf Club may join the new club without payment of an entrance fee
3. That funds in hand of the old club be transferred to the new Golf Club
4. That the committee of the new Golf Club for the first three years be chosen half from the members of the old and half from the new Golf club.

It was resolved these conditions were accepted and a committee be elected annually.

Mr. Mark Hughes was elected secretary, Mr. E Shufflebotham was elected treasurer, and the following committee members were elected to act with the officials of the club. Messrs. E J Taylor, F W Farlow, W.W.Wynne, J.G. Adie, J.S. Redman, R.D. Bennett and E. Fletcher.

Resolved that entrance fees and subscriptions should be charged for the first year.

Gentlemen Entrance fee	£2/ 2/-	Subs	£2/2/-
Ladies	£1/ 1/-	Subs	£1/ 1/-
Family Ticket	£4/ 4/-	Subs	£4/ 4/-

Sunday play was to be allowed at any time during the day and that Rules were to be drawn up and submitted to the General meeting of members for approval.

This picture is we think one of the first Mens Dinners held at the Crown Hotel .  
 Mr. J L Meakin (spectacled) is sitting on the table to the right of the picture with Ernest  
 Shufflebotham to his left.  
 We think Col J Harding sat at the other table to the left of the picture.



This is the first plan of the course done by Parratt & Hughes of Trentham and drawn to scale by J S Redman one of our founder members who was an Architect.

#### Committee Meeting Crown Hotel August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1922

A sub committee was formed to fix a rental with the tenant. The treasurer was to collect entrance fees by 30<sup>th</sup> September 1922 and a Greens Committee was appointed.

On August 15<sup>th</sup> 1922, the subcommittee met on the course and an annual rental of £40 was agreed with the tenant who agreed to making and mowing of the greens and tees, the erection of a club house and making of bunkers. The club was to be responsible to erect stiles and repair damage done to fences by their members.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1922 the following articles were ordered – one mowing machine, one scythe, two rollers, 9-hole cups galvanized, one hole cutter board, one hole trimming scissors, one drop long handled shovel, nine flags and staffs.

The same subcommittee then went to Brocton Camp to inspect Army Hut E10 with a view to purchase. This was a 60 foot by 20-foot Hut in good condition and cost £42/10/-. A local company was employed to install the Hut with the addition of partitions and doors. Transport of the Hut was done by horse and cart. Four stiles and gates were purchased along with railway sleepers. Extra labour was hired for 2 months at a weekly wage not exceeding 25/-



This would be the type of Hut Purchased from Brocton Camp

On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 1922 the local Stone Advertiser reported -

*'A beautifully situated nine-hole Golf course of the recently formed Stone Golf Club was formally opened on Saturday afternoon and a large gathering being present to see Mr. J L Meakin, the President and Mrs. W. W. Wynne make the first drives and afterwards may of those present indulged in their first round. Prior to the official opening an interesting ceremony took place in the Clubhouse. Mr. Mark Hughes, Honorary Secretary on behalf of the old Stone club handing over To Mr. E Shufflebotham the Honorary Treasurer a cheque for £205 the amount standing to the credit of the old club since it became defunct a few years ago. Mr. Hughes said it was usual at a christening to call in the fairy godmother to confer upon the infant some gracious mark of her affection. .... cont'd*

*It was his proud duty that afternoon as treasurer of the old Stone Golf Club, to act the part of the fairy godmother, and present Mr. Shufflebotham with the cheque from the members of the old club. Nothing had given him greater pleasure and he hoped the new club would have a bright, happy, and long continued career.*

*Replying Mr. Shufflebotham said it would be useless for him to try and hide his gratification, because that was the final episode in the negotiations which had been going on for six months to bring about an amalgamation of the two clubs. There was one thing that gave him great pleasure and that was the way in which the members of the old club had rallied to the support of the new club. The old club had a membership of about 60. Some of those had passed away and others left the town but of the remainder no fewer than 46 had joined the new club. They would make a point of using the money in the improvement of the course, and if the committee were given a fair chance they would put their backs into it, and in 12 months' time they would have a right down good golf course.*

*Mr. Meakin announced that he would give a cup, to be known as the Gosdales Cup to be competed for annually. It was also decided to make application for authority to sell refreshments at the Clubhouse.*

*Designed by Messrs. Parrott & Hughes of Trentham, assisted by Mr. J S Redman, an enthusiastic member of the old club the new course is splendidly situated at the Gosdales within a few minutes' walk from the town and the railway station, and adjoining the main road from Stafford to the Potteries, the Clubhouse standing within 20 yards of the road, whilst there is ample accommodation for motors. When completed the course will be 2400 yards in length. Not yet completed the course is not in the condition that it will eventually be but work on it will be continued through the winter, and there is no doubt that it has the making of one of the best courses in North Staffordshire, the greatest possible advantage having been taken of the land in laying it out. With a membership already totaling 150 the success of the club appears to be fully assured.*

*The club will be well served by two keen and efficient officers in Mr. Mark Hughes as Hon. Secretary and Mr. E Shufflebotham as Hon Treasurer, and by Mr. H Boddington as vice president. The committee consists of Messrs. T G Adie, W W Wynne, J S Redman, E T Taylor, F W Farlow, R D Bennett, and E Fletcher. '*

#### Committee Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> October 1922.

151 persons had joined the club of whom 46 were members of the old club. In total £249 had been received in fees with £56 spent on kit and £127 on the hut. 24 lockers costing £18 had been installed. Rent of these would be 5/- pa.

#### General Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> October 1922 held in the clubhouse on the new links

The new rules were adopted. That the Golf Club be registered as a club so facilities may be provided for the supply of alcoholic drinks to members and guests. The cheque for £205 from the old club was handed over. Mr. Shufflebotham accepted and asked for the loyal support of the club members. Immediately afterwards the President Mr. J L Meakin drove off from the first tee and Mrs. Wynne drove from another and thus the links were formally opened.

#### Committee Meeting 31<sup>st</sup> October 1922

The gas company had made a formal offer to lay a gas main to the clubhouse if the golf club would pay interest of 5% on the estimated outlay of £130. Discussion followed to get water laid at the same time and left that the secretary would make enquiries. Mr. Redman was to get further particulars of a groundsman from Trentham Golf club and another applicant, Mr. J G Castle an ex-army officer.



#### Committee Meeting November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1922

It was Resolved that a groundsman /professional be appointed at a weekly wage of £2 and that he be allowed to give lessons on Mondays and Thursdays from 2pm at the rate of 2/6 per hour. Both applicants were interviewed, and Mr. J G Castle was appointed.

#### Committee Meeting December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1922, at the Crown Hotel.

Resolved to accept the Gas Company terms and to ask water company for their terms to lay water at the same time. Damages to hedges by members had happened and wire netting was needed to put in front of certain hedges. Colonel Harding announced that Messrs. J Joules & Sons would give £10 towards the cost of the bar. It was resolved that the clubhouse be open from 9am to 10pm and for the sale of intoxicants on weekdays from 11.30am to 2.30pm and 7pm to 9pm, on Saturdays and bank holidays from 11.30 am to 2.30pm and on Sunday from 11am to 2pm.

A house Committee was appointed with a brief to appoint a caretaker. It was resolved that a hut be erected for the groundsman and tenders be invited for the same.

It was also resolved that a visitor residing 3 miles or more out of Stone may be introduced by a member and his name entered in the guest book and he may be supplied with refreshments providing these refreshments are paid for by a member or members of the club.

#### Committee Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> December 1922 at the Crown Hotel.

The bar had been opened on Saturday & Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>. Damage to hedges - Members were instructed to cross over into adjoining fields by the stiles and not go through gaps in the hedges. Treasurer reported a member had played with his brother who had not got a ticket and was in breach of the rules of the club. Subsequently this member provided a cheque for 2 Guineas asking that a family ticket might be issued. This cheque was dated after the offence took place. Resolved that the honorary secretary to write to the member supporting the actions of the treasurer and asking the member to adhere to the rules in future and that a family ticket would be issued to him.

#### Committee Meeting 26th January 1923 held at the Crown Hotel

The secretary reported he had written to various people about the cups formerly belonging to the club but could not as yet report on their whereabouts. Steps were to be taken to drain the land around the Pavilion with iron spouting to be installed with down spouts at the road end. It was agreed to accept the offer to get the gas and water laid on from the Stone Gas Co. The Greens committee was asked to get a scoring card out and fix bogeys (now known as pars)

#### Committee Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1923 at Crown Hotel

A letter was received from a Mr. Dunbar-Bush stating he was the last winner of the Oulton Cup in April 1914 and that he had given it Mr. N P Barkshone for safe custody. Also, that the Meakin Cup was won by R R Glynne Jones in April 1914. The President's cup was won by EBH Soame. The secretary was instructed to write to all with view of getting possession. Dunbar-Bush went onto express his wish that the new club continue the competition for the Oulton Cup on the same lines as before over a 36 holes medal, with 18 on Easter Eve (Saturday) and 18 on Easter Monday. Scoring cards were provided by local printer T G Adie and it was decided to sell these at 1d each. Mr. Adie was also to provide a box in which they could be placed and that any member desiring a handicap should put 3 cards into the box. It was also decided to close the Greens and tees from the morning of Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February until Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March due to bad weather. As the funds from the old Golf club had been exhausted an appeal was made for funds to enable land to be rented to park motors adjacent to the Tennis Courts.

#### Committee Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> April 1923 Held at the Pavilion

The Oulton Cup was now in possession of the club. There was still no movement on rental of land for car parking where the tenant refused the offer. Darlaston Park was to be investigated as alternative. Matches were to be arranged with Stafford Artisans GC. There was considerable discussion about sanitary conveniences at the Club House with a subcommittee formed with the strong recommendation that a WC be used instead of earth closets. Washing accommodation was to be provided as soon as possible. To report back at next general meeting. A set of horseshoes to be purchased for use on the links. Notices were to be put up calling to the attention of members that visitors must not play without previously signing the visitors' book. Four cards of 9 holes or 3 cards of 18 holes to be submitted for handicapping purposes. Entrance fee for the Oulton Cup to be 1/- .

#### Committee Meeting May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1923, held in the Clubhouse

It was resolved to accept offer to rent the field to the rear of the clubhouse at annual rental of £3/10/-.

It was resolved to make Mr. F G Castle, Groundsman, an honorary member of the club  
Trent Tennis club were to pay £10 so that they could connect to the gas and water pipes.

#### Committee Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> May 1923 held at the Clubhouse.

Mr. Deane, the tenant of the land had asked for a meeting with the Committee. He stated he was dissatisfied at the amount of mowing on the fairway which had been cut down to the roots three times on some holes and complained his cows could not find no grass to eat. The Groundsman agreed to raise the knives on the horse cutter and leave more grass on the fairways. Mr. Deane should leave the matter with the committee and come again to them in 3 months' time if his grievances still remained. Estimates from Leigh & Poole were submitted for the conveniences of £55 and Messrs. Smallwood of £48/ 7/7. It was resolved to accept Smallwood's offer. More members were proposed and seconded. Handicaps for the Oulton Cup were assigned.

Mr. Castle complained to the committee of the uselessness of raising bunkers and building tees while the cattle were allowed to do such mischief. The General Committee advised the greens Committee to make further arrangements with Deane whereby this damage might be ceased.

#### Committee Meeting 13 June 1923 held at the Clubhouse.

Meakin Cup – notices were to be put up for entries, must be in by 8 o'clock Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> June and would be drawn by the committee. The competition would be a knockout and entry fee was 1/-  
Gosdales Cup - It was decided to recommend to the President that the only those people to be eligible to compete for this cup were those whose handicap is 16 and over and all ladies. That the entrance fee be 1/- and 36 holes be played, 18 on each of two Saturdays in September, these to be decided on by the Committee later on.

Monthly Medal, it was decided that a competition for a monthly medal be held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July and each successive first Saturday in the month. That 18 holes be played Strokeplay, commencing 2pm entrance fee 1/-

More members were proposed and seconded. Treasurer reported a capital account of £181 and liabilities of £168 were being met and he had only received £75 in loans. A further circular to be sent inviting more loans. He was also asked to report any members who had not paid their subscription for the current year at the next meeting.

There was discussion on the costs of mowing the fairways and it was decided that as soon as possible a horse be secured for the links.

#### Committee Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> July 1923

There was considerable discussion about the state of the tees and Greens and the course following the breakdown of the mowing machine. The Groundsman, Mr. Castle had borrowed a 24-inch horse mower from Darlaston Hall, and a horse had been bought from Mr. Deane for £7 to cope with the emergency.

The matter of the unkind criticism of the greens committee was discussed in this emergency and the general committee expressed their full confidence in the Greens committee.

It was reported that the canteen had been open earlier on Sunday morning than the stated time within the rules and this altercation be reported to the local police with a copy given of the club's rules.

It was proposed that initialed balls found on the links be placed in a box and the owner could reclaim these for a price of 2d.

#### Committee Meeting Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 1923 held at the Crown Hotel

More discussion took place on the state of the course. Mr. Castle, the groundman had been given leave of absence. He was in fact trying to obtain another position and so the Greens Committee had advertised for the post. Also, a burglary had taken place at the Golf House with 8/6 having been stolen. Considerable discussion then followed on the state of the links owing to persistent wet weather, breakage of mowers and the absence of Castle had aggravated the difficulties. It was agreed a new cutter be ordered from Bamford's.

The General Committee had before them the resignations of the Greens committee and the Treasurer. These resignations arose because of the difficulties of the state of the course. The chairman asked that they withdraw these pending the fast-approaching General Meeting of members and they agreed to do so. The committee also provided their vote of confidence in the Greens Committee and deplored the unfair criticism launched at them; the Honorary Secretary was asked to post this Vote of confidence in the club house.

#### Committee Meeting September 21<sup>st</sup> 1923 at the Crown Hotel

They had received 28 applications for the post of Professional/Groundsman. A short list of three was drawn up for interview.

The hockey Club had asked for permission to use the clubhouse on their match days for the purpose of having tea. Permission was granted in a fee of £2/ 2/- for the season.

#### Committee Meeting October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1923, at the Crown Hotel

They had interviewed the 3 candidates and McDonald had been appointed and would be paid £2 per week with same teaching fees available to him. He had been told he would be entirely responsible for the condition of the course and for the efficiency of his sub-ordinates. The greens committee were empowered to get a shed erected for the mowing machines and sand and fertilizers for the greens. It was decided to raise the wages of the boy employed on the course from 12/- per week to 15/- per week. Various small accounts were passed for payment. New members were proposed and seconded.

#### First Annual Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> October 1923 held at the Crown

Col J Harding in the Chair.

There were 70-80 members present. The chairman congratulated the officials of the club upon their successful results of their year in office. The cups were presented.

Oulton Cup – Mr. A Wright

Gosdale Cup Mr. J Shufflebotham

Meakin Cup Mr. Frank Farlow

Officers for the coming season were elected

President Mr. J Lionel Meakin

Vice Presidents Col J Harding & Mr. H Boddington

Captain Mr. E J Taylor

Secretary Mr. M Hughes

Treasurer Mr. E Shufflebotham

Committee Messrs Adie, Farlow, Bennett, Fletcher, Wynne, Redman, & Wright.

It was decided to have an annual Dinner, with arrangements left in hands of a number of officials.

Mrs. Redman was appointed The Hon Sec of the ladies Golf Committee and she was asked to call together the ladies and get them to elect their own Committee.

Finally the meeting ended with vote of thanks to the chairman for presiding.

#### Committee Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1923 held at the Crown Hotel

A letter had been received from the tenant of the land - Mr. Deane saying his brother's farm at Walton had Foot and Mouth disease and asking the Golf club to close for a while. The course had been closed but the secretary had subsequently written to a vet and asked about the infection being carried from Walton. He advised there was no risk of infection after 3 days of closing the course and that the committee then should agree to re-open on the 6<sup>th</sup> December, the course having been closed for 6 days.

A letter was received from a member asking for part of his subs back.

Balance Sheet was agreed to be published and new members were proposed and seconded.

#### Committee Meeting 24th March 1923.

A Note of sympathy from the club to the wife and family of Mr. Harry S Boddington who had passed away.

Letters were received from other Golf Clubs asking for matches to be arranged. Stafford Castle, Meir, Newcastle & Kingston Hill (who played on Stafford Common Golf Club) and these were to be arranged.

*Kingston Hill and Meir not now in existence along with Rudyard - see Golf Missing Links website*

A letter from Macdonald asking if Committee would allow him to sell clubs and balls to the members to which they acquiesced. He was also now acting as the steward in the clubhouse.

The Greens Committee was to formalize a list of rules regarding the etiquette on the course.

#### Committee Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> June 1924

It was resolved to call an EGM on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June at Crown Hotel Assembly room to consider the purchase of the course. Col J Harding was asked to preside, and a sub-committee was appointed to get details of mode of raising the money to purchase.

#### Sub- Committee Meeting at Joules Brewery office. June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1924

It was resolved that Mr. E Shufflebotham should submit to the General Meeting the Committee recommendation for raising money for the purchase of the land and that the outside price should not exceed £2500. He should be empowered to bid for the land and Col Harding and E J Taylor should accompany him for consultation if necessary.



#### EGM 18 June 1924 held at the Crown Hotel

Between 50 – 60 members attended. Col J Harding in the chair. Three schemes by which the links may be purchased were discussed one by one and eventually it was proposed that 6% Debentures should be raised in multiples of £5 to purchase or part purchase the links. The rest of the money was to be raised on a mortgage. That the club be converted into a Limited Liability Company, that each member be asked to take of enough ordinary shares to cover the cost of this conversion and to run the club for the time being. The price that was expected has not been disclosed but it was something of the order of £1000 would have to be raised in debentures and ordinary shares.

It was resolved the Committee purchase the Golf links and that they have the power to act.

It was decided at once the approval for funds through a circular letter to each member. Informal promises in the room realized sum of £500- £600. All the members supported the idea of purchase.

Mr Shufflebotham gave notice that at the next meeting that subs would be.

Men - 3 Guinea, Ladies 1 and a half Guinea, family £5 Guinea.

It was resolved that former loans of £95 ranked as 6% debentures.

(The original Limited Company Seal is held in the office at Stone Golf Club and is in full working order)

A week later they had applications for debentures of £1115 and ordinary shares £118 and decided to proceed with the purchase.

#### Committee Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1924 at the Crown hotel

It was Resolved that Mr. Shufflebotham purchase of the course for £3000 be approved. It was resolved that qualification of a director of the new company was to hold 5 ordinary shares and the following gentlemen were appointed as the first directors of the company. Col J Harding, J L Meakin, F W Farlow, Dr S M Murray, G W Harris, & H Platt. Secretary and Auditor to be appointed.

Subsequently it was agreed to take up a mortgage from the vendors (sellers) for £2000 and to issue debentures for £1500. It was resolved that the Treasurer be empowered to sell the club's water main to the local district council.

The new company to take over the assets and liabilities of the present club and to undertake to indemnify the members of the club from any claims in respect thereof. Members were asked to use their influence to appeal to other members to take up more ordinary shares.

#### Committee Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> Sept 1924 held at the Crown Hotel

The district council had decided not to buy the water main from the club.

New members were appointed and seconded.

#### Second Annual General Meeting held at the Crown Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 1924

40 members present. Club membership had remained constant at 200 and now the links had been purchased it was hoped to see a termination of the damage done by cattle. The club had sustained great loss by the death of Vice president Mr. H S Boddington and Col J Harding, two important committee members. Mr. Noel Parrington was elected a Vice president (and like Col J Harding he was a director of J Joules Brewery) and Dr S McMurray.

Mr. M Hughes retired from his post of hon secretary. The Captain Mr. E J Taylor presented to the golf club two large photos of the opening ceremony on 21 October 1923. These were of the President Mr. L Meakin and Mrs. W Wynne in the act of driving off the first tee.

Club fees were agreed Gentlemen 3 Guineas, Ladies 1 and a half Guineas, Family 5 Guineas.

This is the updated course plan done in 1929 which shows the links as they are today



### Founder Members and Committee Members in 1922

**Mr. James Lionel Meakin (1873-1940) – President of SGC in 1922 – 1927, Director of Stone Golf Club Limited 1924**



Major James Lionel Meakin was educated Uppingham School and was a Major in the 5<sup>th</sup> North Staffordshire Regiment. Lived in Stone at the Laurels, Mount Road up until 1924, then moved into the family home at Darlaston Hall when his mother died in the same year. He was JP in Stone and married to Constance Evelyn Meakin in 1908. She was a County Councilor for 37 years from 1920. She was also a member of the Urban District Council. She was well known for her work in support of nursing, health visiting and hospital provision in Staffordshire. She was born at Hartwell Hall, Barlaston in 1875.

The Meakin Family were Pottery Manufacturers and owned J & G Meakin & Sons who manufactured Earthenware ceramics in Stoke On Trent. This was done at Eagle Pottery works and Eastwood Pottery works, the company was well known for its Ironstone China and white granite dinner and tea ware much of which was sold in America through mail order. In 1968 J & G Meakin joined Midwinters and in 1970 it was taken over by

Wedgwood. Eastwood pottery still stands today on Lichfield Street Hanley and is now Emma Bridgewater. The factory is situated next to the Cauldon canal as narrow boat transport was an efficient means of receiving raw materials and delivering finished goods avoiding the breakages of road and packhorse transport which pre-dated the canal network in the time of Josiah Wedgwood who with James Brindley were the founders of the canal network.



The Darlaston estate was owned by Burton Abbey, but during the Reformation the estate was sold to James Collier. The estate was sold to William Jervis of Meaford in 1655, and it remained in the Jervis family until it was sold in 1880 to James Meakin, a pottery manufacturer. The Hall remained in the Meakin family up to 1951. The hall is now demolished, and a bungalow now occupies the site.

This is a postcard printed by J G Adie & Sons of Stone.

### **Colonel J Harding – (1849-1924) - Vice President of Stone Golf Club**

Joules Brewery was sold in 1873 to John Parrington, Thomas Harding and John Harding, three brewers from Liverpool. Under his guidance as Managing Director the Brewing Premises were modernized and extended. He lived variously in Stone 1881 The Mount, 1891 Oulton Rocks, 1901 Mansion House, 10 Lichfield Street, and in 1911 in 17 Northesk Street. He was reported to have lost considerably on the stock market in the 1900s. Besides being Managing Director of Joules Brewery, he was chairman of the Urban Council, he established the Voluntary fire brigade, was Chairman of the Town Committee. He was Officer commanding the Stone Company and became second in command of the 1<sup>st</sup> North Staffordshire Volunteer Battalion retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was awarded the Volunteers Officer Decoration in 1900. He was also instrumental in defeating a project of a private company to supply Stone with water, instead he insisted the town itself should provide the supply and his efforts were rewarded with the town having its own water supply with its surplus used for the relief of rates.



He was the chairman of the Stone bench of Magistrates in 1924 living at 50 High Street which were the offices of Joules Brewery, now a B & M shop. He was also initiated a Mason and was a founder member of the St Michaels Lodge being one of the first Masters. He was twice married with three daughters from his first marriage, his wife predeceased him and re married and had a son. The Staffordshire Weekly paper reported on his death and described him as being one of the most prominent men in Stone who had exercised a greater influence in the public life of the town than any other man. He died aged 75 on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1924.

I have included below some history of the Brewing Industry in Stone which was very much its main employer at the time and core business.

Brewing in Stone started in an Augustinian priory where the monks brewed pale ale from the excellent local waters and were known to bless each barrel marking it with a red cross to identify its superior qualities up until 1749. John Joule skillfully adopted this sign of the red cross for his ales, and it was later after his death registered as this famous trademark. This simple red cross became the symbol of Joules and rivalled the Bass Brewery of Burton on Trent mark. Both these Staffordshire brands became regional giants with much rivalry between the two with Joules winning many more awards and medals than their rival. They successfully exported beer to India and the US.





Joules was also more successful in creating a giant warehousing facility along the Stone Canal Wharf, to service the Liverpool and Hull Docks. This still exists today. Joules ales were recorded as stock on the Titanic. The red cross was later adopted as a symbol for aid, however, Joules with its pre-dated trademark had the individual right to use this commercially, if it was flanked with the words trademark. The Joules family originated in Bakewell Derbyshire and two brothers, Francis and William both brewed ale. One moving to Lancashire with Francis moving to Stone and expanding the business in 1780 alongside the Trent and Mersey Canal. One of their most notable family members was James Prescott Joule, the famous physicist who gave his name to

the unit of energy, a Joule.

Francis's son, John assumed management of the brewery in 1813 and devoted the next 45 years to the brewery until his death in 1858. The brewery continued for another 100 years successfully after his death with Thomas Harding, John Harding and John Parrington from Liverpool purchasing the business in 1873. Joules thrived in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Local deliveries were made by dray and the company owned forty shire horses and twenty drays. The Trent and Mersey canal enabled deliveries to other parts of the country. Incidentally Stone had the largest dry dock in the country in its boatyard. Transport by barge eventually gave way to railway and from 1920s drays were replaced by lorries.

Brewing in Stone continued to be very much the Town's core business until Bass Charrington in 1970 purchased the shares from a confused widow of the family. They were ruthless in closing the Brewery and demolishing sites and put the entire Joules workers on the street along with the board of Directors. Eventually in 2008 the red cross trademark fell into the hands of Molson Coors. In 2017 after much negotiation Joules again gained independence of their name and paid half a million pounds to Molson Coors and they now totally own the Red Cross Trademark.

**\*Mr. Harry Stewart Boddington -(1857-1924) Vice President of Stone Golf Club**

Family firm of canal carriers originally from The Brampton, Newcastle Under Lyme and then in 1911 the family lived at Oulton Grange. Served as a JP in Stone.

Their son Lieutenant Oswald William Boddington of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment died age 26 at the assault in WW1 on the Hohenzollern Redoubt on the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> October 1915 and the last day of the Battle of Loos. This was the final assault which failed and resulted in 3643 casualties, mostly in the first few minutes. The Staffordshire regiments were the one of the main forces involved and suffered 500 casualties. The 1/5 North Staffords which recruited from the Potteries suffered the heaviest losses of all of the units, about 700 men entered the line on the night of the 12<sup>th</sup> October and barely 200 marched out.

It was known as Hellfire corner. The Hohenzollern Redoubt was a German position near the French village of Auchy-les mines. The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who fell in the area with no known grave alongside the few who have graves at Dud Corner Cemetery. There were six sets of brothers from Staffordshire who died on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 1915 and 400 men who died on this day have no known grave, although some lie unidentified in cemeteries in the area. Many lost their lives in the first ten minutes of the assault to the machine gun fire. They went over at 2pm shouting Potters forever in support of their industry and their beloved Stoke City FC.

*Official History of the war Military Operations in France and Flanders -1915, Vol2 comments as follows. 'the fighting on the 13-14 October had not improved the general situation in any way and had brought nothing but the useless slaughter of Infantry'*

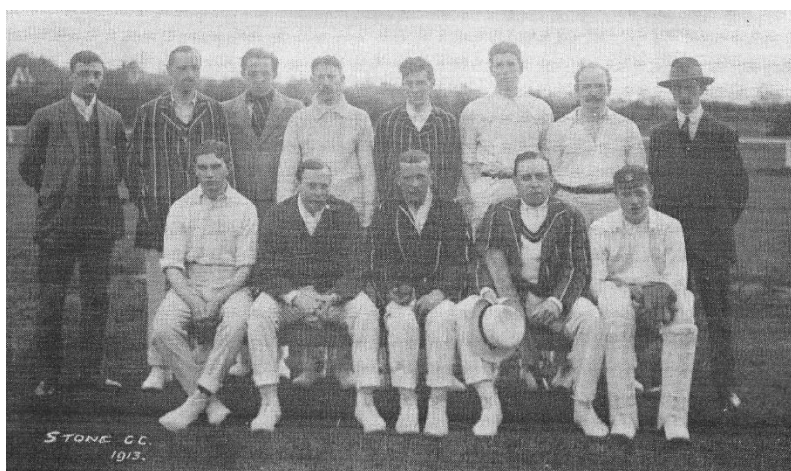


This football team taken between 1910 and 1914 were probably playing in a Pottery Manufacturers social game as most of the men are involved in the management of ceramic factories. From the left is Lieutenant Oswald Boddington and the picture also includes members of the Meakin and Johnson families.

**Mr Ernest Shufflebotham – (1878-1949) He was Treasurer of Stone Golf Club**

A Bank Accountant with the Manchester and District Bank in 1911 living at Hilcott, Meaford Avenue In 1924 records show he was living at 18 Granville Terrace. In 1928 he was manager of the District Bank Ltd High Street, living at Bank House High Street Stone.

In 1928 he was Treasurer of Stone Urban District Council and also Treasurer Guardians & Urban and Rural District Council and Joint Hospital Board, Stone Education Committee & Stone Fire Engine Joint Committee. He was secretary of Stone Cricket Club in 1913 and later in 1938 became the first president of the newly formed Stone Rotary Club He was Captain of Stone Golf Club in 1927 He retired as a Bank Manager in 1938 at lived at the Woodlands.



Ernest Shufflebotham was the secretary of Stone Cricket club shown here at their Lichfield Road ground standing to the right with the team in 1913.

Back row (left to right) C H Matthews, R C Woodcock, B C Montagon, J E Harris, H Price, D Robinson ( Professional) J Blakeman, E Shufflebotham (Secretary)

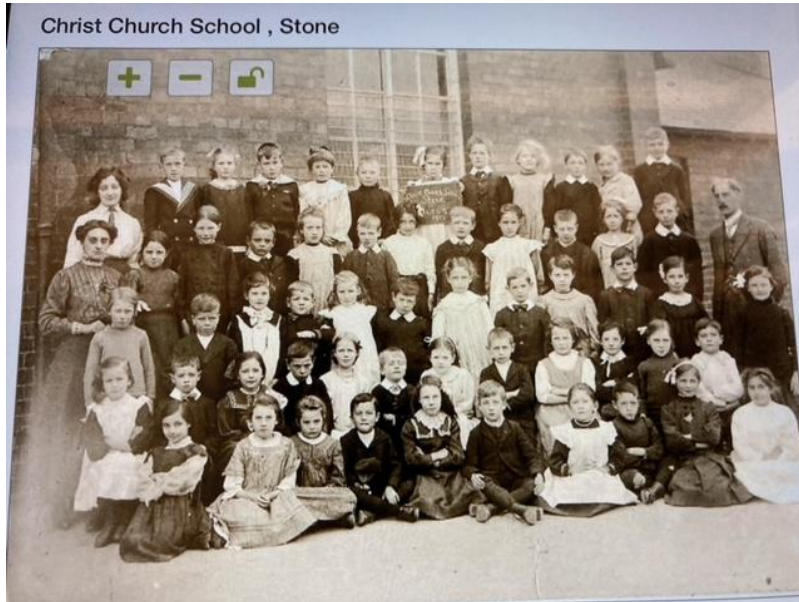
Front Row R Goodill, B Meakin, Dr J F Fernie ( Captain) , E J Johnson, A Bailey.

Bernard Meakin was a member of the Meakin pottery family and lived at Darlaston Hall and was captain of Staffordshire county cricket club 1911-1912. Ernest James Johnson was managing Director of Johnson Brothers pottery based in Hanley and was knighted in 1937 for political and public services in Staffordshire.

**\*Mr Mark Hughes Secretary of Stone Golf Club 1922 - 1924**

He was an elementary school teacher in 1904 living at Rose Hill Villas, Northesk Street and then in 1908 at Ingleside, Oulton Cross and in 1922 at Meaford Avenue.

In 1924 he became Head Master of Christ Church, an infants and mixed school in Northesk Street. He retired in 1939 to Ledbury, Herefordshire.



This picture shows him standing on the right hand side of an early school photo

**\*Mr Walter Watkyn Wynne (1869-1936) – Committee member of Stone Golf Club**

Lived 15 Northesk Street and was Solicitor BA Commissioner for Oaths, and had many local appointments including , Clerk to Stone Rural District Council, Clerk to Stone Joint Hospital Board, Clerk to the Stone Union Guardians & Assessment Committee , Clerk to the Governors Alleyne's Grammar School, Deputy Registrar & High Bailiff of the County Court and deputy superintendent registrar.

His Legal Practice was Middleton, Norris & Wynne of 64 High Street Stone. Later to be Norris & Wynne.

Freemason of St Michaels Lodge Stone 1900.

Mrs W W Wynne was Ladies Captain of Stone Golf Club 1923 and 1924. Her Christian names were Gertrude Emily but ladies used their husbands name at the time.



Walter Watkin Wynne is on the back row 3<sup>rd</sup> from the left about 1919 in this family Photograph.

**Mr. Eustace Towle Taylor (1877-1967) Committee member and President of Stone Golf Club 1933-1935**



Records show he was an operative Brewer based in Bristol in 1911. He then moved to Stone sometime in 1921 and in 1939 became the technical Brewer and Director at Joules Brewery. He then became Managing Director of the Joules Brewery in 1941.

Behind him can be seen a portrait of John Joule (1783-1858) the original founder. His son, John Joule took over his father's business in 1813 when it was renamed John Joule & Sons.

He lived at the Rowans Oulton Cross between 1921 and 1924.

He was Captain of Stone Golf Club in 1924 and 1925.

**Mr Ralph Doughty Bennett (1882- 1936) – Committee Member of Stone Golf Club 1924**

L.D.S. R.C.S Eng. Dentist of 8 Station Road.

Honorary Dental Surgeon at Heywood Hospital Burslem holding a License in Dental Surgery and a member of the Royal College of Surgeons. The LDS originated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and is the oldest continuously existing dental qualification in the UK.

Freemason, St Michaels Lodge, Stone 1918

Captain of Stone Golf Club 1932



**Mr. John Storr Redman (1863-1949) Committee Member of Stone Golf Club and Captain in 1941-45**

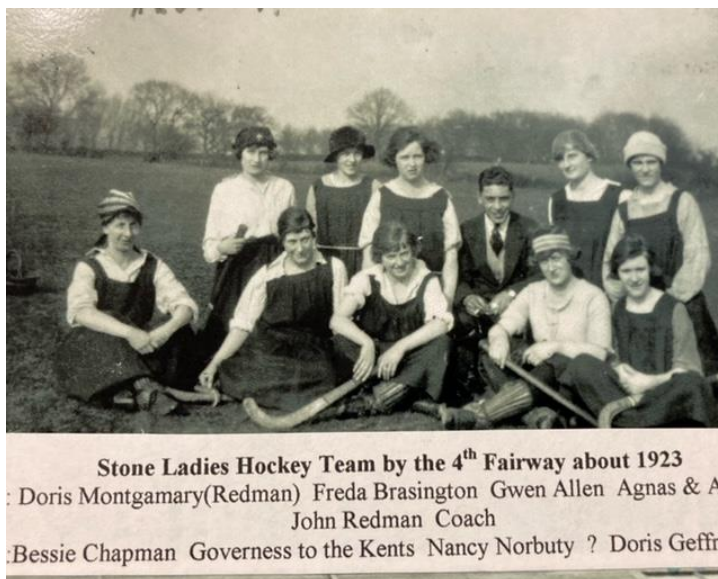
An Architect and Brewers Traveler which is possibly a salesman or marketing director. He lived at 35 Gower Street and the Stoneleigh, The Avenue. He provided the lay out for the new Golf Club shown on the plan earlier.

He was a Freemason of St Michaels Lodge Stone 1893

We think his son was J F M S Redman (1896-1986) who was Captain of Stone Golf Club 1941- 1945 and President 1950-1955.



This is a design for a poster done by John Redman for Joules Brewery in 1930. The item is part of the Staffordshire County Museum collection.



This picture below was taken from the centenary collection held at Stone Golf club and shows John Redman centre as the Hockey Coach.

**Mr. Frederick William Farlow (1891- 1958) – Committee Member of Stone Golf Club and Director of Stone Golf Club Ltd 1924**

Lived 18 Northesk Street in 1921 and was Assistant overseer and collector of poor rates for Stone Rural District Council. Moved to Radford Cottage, The Avenue in 1928

Freemason of St Michaels Lodge Stone in 1916.

Captain of Stone Golf Club in 1926.

The poor rate in England and Wales was a tax on property levied in each parish, which was used to provide poor relief to the less fortunate in their parish. It was collected under both old poor law and new poor law based on a series of acts of parliament. The problem of poverty caused growing concern during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These acts of parliament obligated every parish to take care of its poor. The poor rate or local tax paid by parish households was used to help the poor in two ways. Those who were too ill, old, destitute or were orphaned children were put into a local workhouse or poorhouse. Those able to work but whose wages were too low to support their families, received relief in aid of wages in the form of money, food and clothes.

During the Victorian era the rates of people living in poverty increased drastically. This was due to many factors including low wages, the growth of cities and towns, general population growth - the average Victorian family was five or six children, poor educational standards and lack of stable employment.

As most towns had Stone also had a workhouse. Feared by all, the workhouse was run like a prison with strict rules and long days of hard labour. Victorian society was full of extremes. In cities new building work and affluent developments went hand in hand with overcrowded slums where people lived in poor housing, worked long hours and died prematurely. In rural communities' labour was paid poorly and machinery was being embraced and as workers lost their jobs to the machines, they swelled the growing populations in the cities. Between 1841 and 1901 the number of people in the UK rose from 27 million to 41 million and one third of those lived in large concentrations. These social differences lead to a series of far-reaching reforms to restore pride and philanthropy towards improving the equality in society, providing better education, health and employment prospects. In the cities libraries, wash houses and swimming baths were all funded as part of a determination to provide working people with a means to improve themselves and promote civic pride.

In 1920 the poor rate was absorbed into the general rate of local taxation and has continuity in the currently existing Council Tax.

**Thomas George Adie (1869-1942) Committee Member of Stone Golf Club**



Family Business – T G Adie & Co, Printers and Stationers, proprietor of 'Stone Weekly News' also sold ceramics and leather goods and acted as Insurance agents based at 28 High Street Stone. The business commenced in 1890 and continued until Thomas G Adie's death in 1942. He lived at 2 Granville Terrance. Was a Freemason St Michaels lodge Stone in 1893. He was also Secretary Stone Cricket Club. Adie's Alley in Stone is still

there today and the building was originally a Malt House for Joules Brewery which is now Grade 2 listed. The shop was also later Hammersley Bakery. There has recently been planning permission to restore the building into gym and boutique hotel and shops along with The Crown Hotel.

**Edgar Fletcher (1881-1966) Committee member of Stone Golf Club**

Lived at 49 The Avenue in 1924. 1911 was Bank Cashier and in 1939 A Retired Bank Manager

**Josiah Victor Deane (1887-1960)**

Landlord of Stone Golf Club 1922 and local farmer.

**Dr Samuel Mc Murray (1882 -1971) Director of Stone Golf Club 1924. Vice President of Stone Golf Club in 1924**

F.R.C. S Edin, MB B.Ch.Irel. Ophthalmic Surgeon

In 1916 lived at Highbury, Airdale Road and then in 1924 Woodville, Oulton Cross.

He was President of Stone Golf Club in 1928/29. See picture below taken of the Committee in 1934.

**Thomas William Harris (1875-1950)**

Worked for Railways and lived at 19 Northesk Street in 1911. Was Honorary Secretary of Stone Golf Club between 1928 and 1932.

Retired and lived at 22 Kings Avenue and then Hamble Cottage, Kings Avenue.

**Howard Platt (1872-1934) Director of Stone Golf Club in 1924**

Lived at The Woodlands Newcastle Road.

WW1 records show their son John Kennerley Platt who was a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery died on the 4/3/2017 aged 20. Buried in Hartshill Cemetery.

**Noel Parrington (1885- 1941) Vice President of Stone Golf Club in 1924**

Managing Director and one of the largest Shareholders in Joules Brewery in 1939. John Parrington was his father who purchased Joules Brewery in 1873 with Col John Harding and Thomas Harding.

He was President of Stone Golf Club in 1930/31

He lived at Brooklands , Pipe Gate , Market Drayton.

**Gilbert Harvey Harris (1883-1969) Director of Stone Golf Club**

He lived at Elemhurst , Oulton Cross in 1924 and later at Washdale, Oulton Heath.

He was an Electrical Porcelain Manufacturer at Bullers Limited where he was Managing Director by 1939.

They made ceramic insulators which were widely used in the Electrical sector and still are today. Bullers were established in 1840 in Devon but then moved to Hanley to the centre of the ceramic industry to reduce transport costs. They built their trade globally exploiting new markets created by electrical power and by 1868 were supplying porcelain insulators complete with ironwork in large quantities to the rail and tramways network with many government contracts. Their first factory was at Joiners Square in Hanley. As they expanded a major new factory was built in 1920 in Milton near to the canal network and the Stoke to Leek Railway line. They became Allied Insulators in 1959 when they merged with Taylor Tunnicliff & Co who also had a factory in Stone.

On the war memorial in Oulton are the names of

Major David Carrington Harris , 19 field regiment Royal Artillery 29.4.1943 aged 26 son of Gilbert Harvey Harris and Mrs. Muriel Carrington Harris of Stone

42988 Pilot Officer (Pilot) Richard Waugh Harris 4 squadron Royal Air Force 7.10.1940 aged 22 son of Gilbert Harvey Harris and Mrs Muriel Carrington Harris of Stone

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The Annual Mens Dinner 1934 . This picture is held in the Stone Golf Club Archives.

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I hope you have enjoyed reading about how our Golf Club came into existence extracted from the original committee meeting notes and the history we have put together of the original founder members. Researching this local history has helped us understand how events in the past have formulated and influenced the way things are done today.

This project started off as being a small article for the newsletter but has continued to grow as more information through research has come to light. History has also brought into sharp focus the ultimate sacrifice our members and their sons made in the two world wars. The loss of young men in their prime is extremely sad and upsetting. The story of the Stafford's and Lieutenant Oswald William Boddington at the Hohenzollern Redoubt is devastating.

I acknowledge there will be much more history and stories which we have not uncovered yet and I am sure many of our current members will have their own recollections and family history and relatives who may well be part of this early formation of the Stone Golf Club story. I would ask you to share these stories with us.

Finally, I hope this history provides us all with a greater sense of identity as a Golf Club, and a greater sense of context of how things were at the time of our formation and how this has shaped our story over the years.

Philip Steele & Steve Meys



