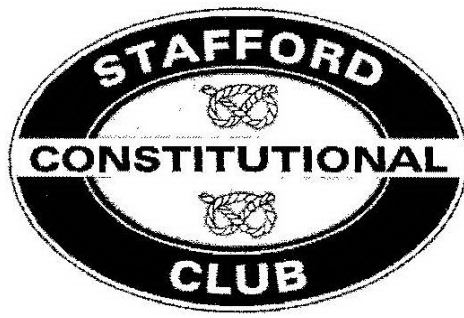




STAFFORD CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB LIMITED HISTORY

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

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Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

FOREWORD

What you are about to read takes you back to 1900 and then brings you on a journey through the archives back to the present.

It sets the scene of how life was at the time of the birth of the Stafford Constitutional Club in 1911.

We are reminded of the cost of living during the last 100 years and things that have long gone, such as smoking parties.

It takes you through the horrors of two world wars and reminds us of club members who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The history of the club is mirrored against world and national events to give the feeling of real time. It reminds us of the past officers of the club, some who still frequent the club now, and the types of membership offered. Ladies were only allowed full use of the club in 1986.

Michael Evans has worked extremely hard and dug very deeply to find as much information about the club as he could. The Stafford Constitutional Club will be eternally grateful to Michael for this contribution.

As the current chairman this history has reinforced my determination to continue with the great traditions of the club on behalf of the members.

Bob Cullen

Club Chairman
August 2014

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

1 A DECADE BACKDROP (1900 – 1910)

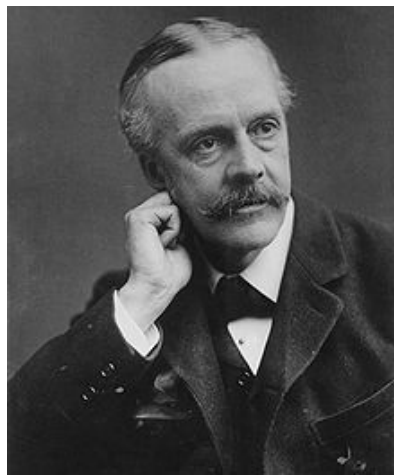
Rapid change can sometimes be heralded by singular events, but more often the changes that take place are a result of multiple causes, perhaps not appearing significant in themselves, but put together in hindsight, as this narrative of the history of the Stafford Constitutional Club is developed, they shape our path, from where we were to where we are going.

1.1 The Political Scene

The Conservatives are in power under Lord Salisbury since 1895 and due to the ill health of Lord Salisbury the party comes under Arthur Balfour in 1902 up until 1906 to merge with the Liberal Party under Herbert Asquith in the decade prior to 25th November 1911, the recorded commencement of the Stafford Constitutional Club.



Lord Salisbury



Arthur Balfour



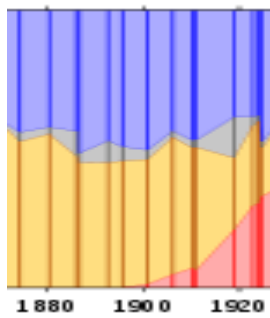
Herbert Asquith

Conservatives have the earlier name of Unionists and it may be assumed that some complacency has developed. Since 1886 the Unionists are allied with the Liberals to form the Liberal Unionists and combined, are the political force. Minor political parties are around but have little bearing on the main stream politics. However, the working classes are suffering under the economic pressures of the day and the Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies are gaining power and James Hardie gains favour. The Liberal drive is illustrated with posters, followed by similar posters for Labour.

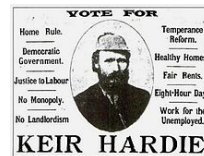
Although the Liberals and Conservatives sit together and mix freely at meetings in Stafford, the Liberal support for the Irish workers is strong and a contingency of Irish find work in the busy town. The Home Rule issue is the main division amongst them. For the influx of Irish workers there is the work offered by Bagnalls in building locomotives, the building of the Siemens Factory under Holloway Bros and a rapid expansion of electricity cables in competition with the established gas network.

Stafford plays an important part in the political scene being represented by Mr G B Thornycroft, who is closely linked with Mr Neville Chamberlain MP. His concerns are the ventilation measures provided for iron workers in South Staffordshire. Stafford town boasts Liberal support in J W Harrison representing the shoe industry, who backs Duncan M'Laren, later to become MP. A famous Stafford person, prominent amongst the Conservatives, is W G Bagnall, who supports two well known politicians, Thomas Salt and Captain Talbot. Prominent in the early days of the Constitutional Club, in support of Thomas Salt, is J Averill JP. Conservative Meetings are often held in the Refreshment Rooms at Rowley Street but combined Liberal and Conservatives often meet at the Odd Fellows Hall. Liberals are to meet in Broad Eye, Crabberly Street or at the Assembly Rooms in the Vine Hotel.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History



Blue – Conservatives
Yellow – Liberals
Red – Rise in Labour
Grey – Other Parties



The Conservative response in 1907

The improvement in medical facilities and the expansion of schools encourage the educated professional classes to reside in the town. Two prominent local politicians take their place alongside W G Bagnall who takes no part in the beginnings of the Constitutional Club due to his passing in 1907. Mr A Greatrex of 38 Brook Street and 11 Tillington Street is a well known Painter and Decorator. Mr George Dean of St Mary's Grove is a Financier. Both men are prominent in the early days of the Constitutional Club. MP for Stafford during the commencement of the Constitutional Club is Sir Walter Essex, representing the Liberals.

On a separate note, not necessarily political, is the ever strengthening Suffragette Movement.

1.2 The Industrial Scene

Shoe and Boot manufacturing at this time is a long standing traditional industry in Stafford, taking place at homes, concentrating on Managers, who have larger premises for the business of buying leather and other material and for the selling and distribution of the finished goods of shoes and boots. Small time business run from homes rise and fall depending on their fortunes. Bunting, Gattidge & Co. get into difficulties accused of copying shoes designed in Paris. Competition in this industry is growing in France and Italy, and later the boot industry competes with companies in the United States of America and Australasia. In the early 1900's, related to the Bostock's Shoe Factory, a Shoe Factory fire in Goal Square is the necessity that drove the need to build a larger Factory, the foundations of the Lotus Shoe making industry. Meanwhile smaller shoe manufacturers such as A C Dudley's in Corporation Street are forced to close. Geoffrey Bostock of Stafford in 1904 goes into partnership with Woodburn, Kirby and Page to set up a Shoe Factory in South Africa.

From the Bessemer Converter in the mid 1880's is developed the Open Hearth and then the Electric Arc Furnace. This enables the production of steel which the Stafford Engineer W G Bagnall immediately sees as a great advantage in being able to use steel sheets for the making of boilers and steel machine parts for the making of moving parts for the locomotive. The shipping industry and the transport industry grow rapidly with this new development. Britain loses out in the race to develop this industry competing with Krupp and Thyssen, which moves to Pittsburgh to set up the well known Bethlehem Steel concern. W G Bagnall is producing locomotives for the Indian railway. In 1880 Dr Siemens attends a convention of the Iron and Steel Industry in Dusseldorf. In July 1903 Messrs Siemens in London recognise the Steel Plate skills in Stafford and coupled with the identity of a major railway route and that land in Stafford was cheap, decide to set up in Stafford. An early founder of the Constitutional Club linked with Siemens is S R C Basanquet who duels with Duncan M'Laren on the political scene.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

1.3 The Economic Scene

The economic climate in Stafford for the working class is difficult but for the middle classes and upwards, if good health could be maintained, is made up of singing concerts and plays at the Lyceum. It is these middle classes who do much to improve schools and hospitals. For the working class business men who strive to make a living, many are beset with non paying customers and soon face insolvency.

The influx of industry to Stafford alongside the already established shoe industry, which is to become mechanised, raises the standard of living for many, albeit the struggling small time shoe makers are in decline. Stafford is seen to be at the centre of Industrial England. Rail travel from London to Liverpool is nominally 4 hours with but one stop at Stafford for water replenishment for the locomotive, which is an added bonus for business-men. The Royal Train is reported to run from Euston to Liverpool in 3 hours and 45 minutes.

The importance of schools and the hospital is a priority for Stafford business-men and in particular, their wives, and whilst there may be political rivalry in these areas the result is a combined effort as the success of these essential services are shared in extolled glory for all parties. Consequently, the increased business in the town make the Banks flourish.

Reading the history of Stafford in the 1900's, particularly after 1905, the wealth in Stafford is enjoyed and this leads to a rise in visits from eminent persons both for entertainment and business, attracting persons of great skill. A major financial concern is Deans & Sons, later elected to be auditors for the newly formed Constitutional Club, and remains so for many years. A major element in the economic and social scene is the printing press. The source of much of the detail in this history is obtained from the Staffordshire Advertiser by courtesy of the William Salt Library. The type setting of such a newspaper demands great skill, and this industry is yet another source of revenue, as the Newspaper covers World events, British events and Staffordshire events. Local County and Borough Council accounts are published as are major concerns.

1.4 The Social Scene

For the founders of the Constitutional Club, the Lyceum is a source of attraction and the skills of entertainment are later to become integral to the Smoking Concerts and Garden Parties used to raise funds. Opera and Plays, attributed to the London scene are a feature of Stafford. An attraction of the Lyceum is that adjacent there is the Old Blue Post, to be taken over by Eley's Brewery of Stafford.



The Lyceum in Stafford



The Old Blue Post near the Lyceum

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Teetotaler movements are growing, advocating the evils of drink and the social misery that drink brings about. Pubs are being purchased by Eley's Brewery, Stafford and J Joules & Sons of Stone.

W G Bagnall can be credited for setting up an University in Stafford. Learned speakers, allied to the Oxford University, frequent the town. Religious leaders show a wide range of knowledge from literature to gardening and scientific notions, the lectures well attended. This is known as the Oxford University Extension.

Bowls and Billiards are two sporting events which are well supported. Chess is also frequently played and exhibitions are held where up to 15 simultaneous games are played.

The Ladies Union are very active and engage in all manner of activities in the town. They raise money for schools and the hospital and when the Constitutional Club opens donate a piano to their cause.

1.5 The Religious Scene

Whilst there is a strong following for the Church of England there is an increase in Non-Conformist Churches. This is fuelled by an Evangelical approach adopted by some of the Church of England leading Theologians. Notable amongst these is the appointment of the Dean of Salisbury, Rev J C Ryle to be the Bishop of Liverpool. The teachings of this great scholar are the foundation principles of non-Conformist, Reformed and Congregational Churches, which exist in Stafford. Methodism is a rising denomination and in the Stafford area takes on a further departure in the Primitive Methodist movement.

The Stafford Ladies Temperance Society are a strong influence, supported by the Free Churches. The Salvation Army gains strength from the building and opening of the new International Hall in London, and so establishes them-selves in Stafford. The Association of Conservative Clubs are not wanting to take a religious stand but recognise the need to control the consumption of alcohol, which is recorded to be excessive in Working Man's Clubs and Public Houses.

Religion and Politics are mixed, the Liberals calling for the dis-establishment of the English Church, and whilst the Liberals have their own association they are in support of the Working Man's Club, the members of which are mostly Free Church or Catholic. The Catholic Church enjoys a mixture of Working and Middle Class and the Clubs are a means of alternative identification, whilst maintaining religious individuality.

1.6 The Military Scene

Young men in Stafford are being encouraged to join the Reserves. Training is given in Rifle Shooting and combat activities. The news is full of the fighting that is going on overseas. Unemployed men see the opportunity to be employed in the military and even volunteer rather than be out of work. The War Office decides that Military Horses can be trained in Stafford. The Siemens factory is making armoured vehicles.

Germany and the United States, and to a smaller extent Britain and France are engaged in making Steel plated ships of war in the Dockyards, and all countries are engaged in building Arms. To some extent this provides work and to a larger extent aids the economy. But it may seem not enough to quell the unemployment and a failing economy, particularly in Germany and the United States, and the threat of War appears to be looming. As in previous metal developments, steel is the new ingredient of War. All that is needed is a cause for War and the scene is set.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

1.7 The Club Scene

The North End Club and the Gladstone Club required members to declare political allegiance. In the 1900's there are two main Conservative Clubs being the Stafford County Conservative Club which met in Eastgate Street and the North End Club which met at Rowley Street. This latter Club is also commonly known as the Working Men's Conservative Club. The premises is a large house, where upstairs the three bedrooms are combined into one and the floor strengthened by iron rods to support two billiard tables. Reference is also made to the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club.Co.Ltd, the most closely linked to the Association of Conservative Clubs dating back to the 1840's. This Club has little or no reference in the local newspapers but remains separate until being wound up in January 1942 and in September 1953 went into liquidation. In January 1912 it provided furnishings to the newly formed Constitutional Club in Lloyd Street.

In addition are the Working Man's Club, the Reform Club and the strongest being the Gladstone Club which meets at Broad Eye in Crabbery Street. All of these Clubs are established Gentlemen's Clubs, where Ladies are not allowed. However the wife of the leader of the Gladstone Club was Mrs C B M'Laren who predicts by 1987 there will be equality. Mrs M'Laren is the author of "The Fallacy of the Superiority of Man".

1.8 The Association of Conservative Clubs

The Association of Conservative Clubs is an organisation associated with the Conservative Party in Britain. The Association of Conservative Clubs was formed in 1894 and its objects are to assist and encourage the formation of Clubs and to support the principles and aims of The Conservative Party. Such clubs vary from Conservative Working Men's Clubs to more prestigious elite clubs known as Constitutional Clubs.



The Association of Conservative Clubs develops Club Rules to be used by all affiliated Clubs, and by 1905 the ACC Rule Book is firmly established.

1.9 Working Men's Club and Institute

The Working Men's Club and Institute Union is formed earlier than the ACC, founded in 1862 and the initial intent was that it should be non – political and non – alcoholic.

The CIU would be inclusive of all Clubs, taking in the Catholic Clubs, the Reform Movement Clubs and in the mid 1900's the Gladstone Club, which was politically allied to the Liberals.

The CIU had initial links with the Friendly Societies, which was an Act of Parliament in 1875, introduced by the Disraeli's Government. It enabled Clubs to be Registered.



Registered societies were subject to regulation, for example they were required to submit quinquennial returns to the Registrar which gave details of their financial affairs and in-force business which could be used by the Registrar to evaluate their assets against their liabilities under life assurance, annuity and sickness business.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

2 LLOYD STREET (1911)

To commemorate, in 2011, the 100 years of the Stafford Constitutional Club, an article is inserted in the Stafford Newsletter written by Terry Gilder who edits a feature “Times Gone By”. An extract of the article reads:

It was in 1911, that the club began its life in a small building on Rowley Street – since demolished - and moved to Lloyd Street thanks to the generosity of one Colonel Nicholson. It became a place of recreation for workers in the town’s boot and shoe industry, its premises having originally been home of shoe factory owner Mr Lloyd. Colonel Nicholson added a billiards room to the premises and they remained unchanged until increasing car ownership forced the club to demolish what they regarded as the ‘old building’ sited near the present car park entrance. A bowling green was also utilised for the same purpose.

In the Committee Room of the Stafford Constitutional Club are Minute Books and Account Records of the Club which provide detail from which this history has been made. From these records it is not clear as to how the Lloyd Street property became available but the description drawn from notes suggests that the facilities were greatly improved to that of the premises at Rowley Street. There are no records of the North End Club which may have been an annex of the Rest Rooms in Rowley Street and are enjoyed by Conservatives and Liberals alike. The increase of the Labour movement is a good reason for Conservatives to identify themselves and the availability of the Lloyd Street premises would have been welcome.

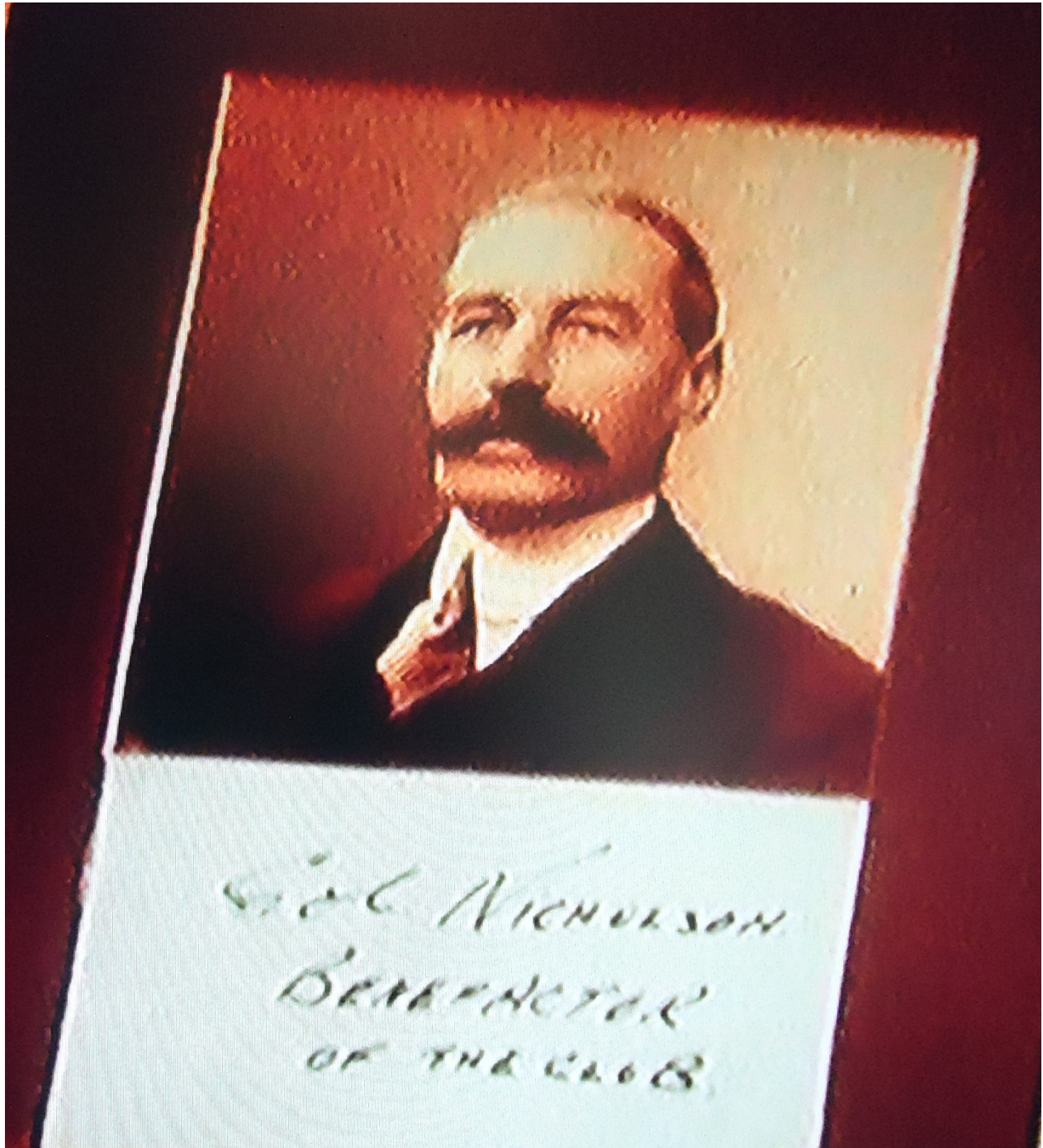
The Lloyd Street premises, in 1911, occupies an acre of land, the building offers a Bar area, a Smoking Room, a Reading Room, a Card Room and living in quarters for the Steward and his wife. Outside are gardens, with a lawn large enough to hold open air concerts and smoking parties, a bowling green, tennis court and the Lecture Hall.



The Lecture Hall is at the rear of the car park in line with the shed shown, the larger part of the car park to the left being the bowling green and tennis court and the Lloyd Street Surgery to the right of the Lecture Hall.

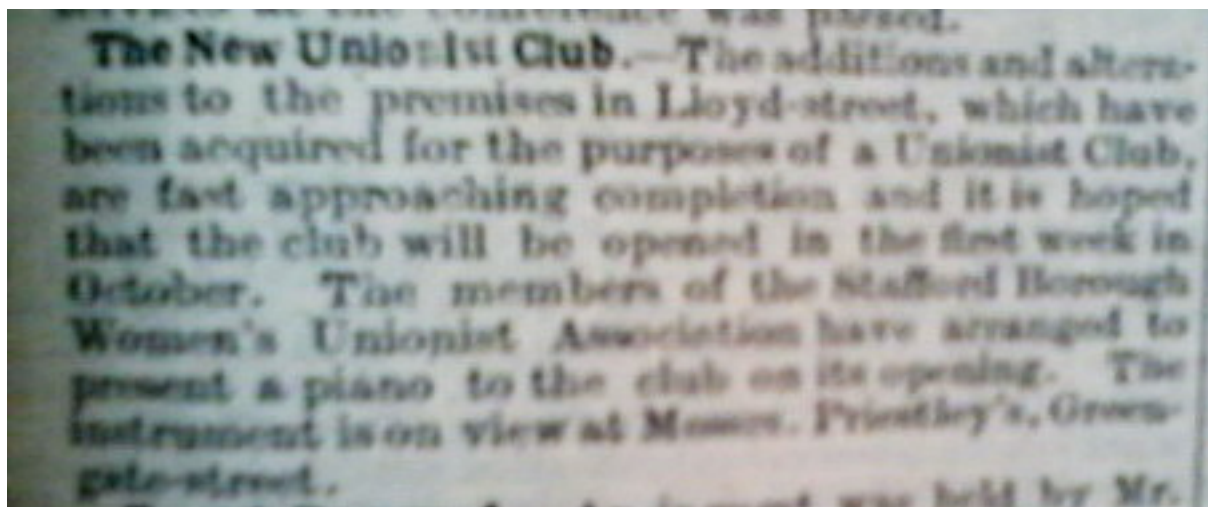
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In the Staffordshire Advertiser, dated February 1911, a report is made of the Women's Institute meeting at the Siemens Institute with Mrs Levett in the Chair reflecting strong views and in March the Suffrage Movement is visited by Miss Adela Pankhurst who spoke of a break away with Liberals because "they were not liberal enough". Colonel J S Nicholson later thanked the ladies for their staunch support and presented them with very desirable pens and announced that premises had been obtained in Lloyd Street with expansive gardens. Architects (L E Sandy) have been set to work to modify the building. It is hoped the opening of the Club could be achieved by the Coronation and hopefully persuade Austin Chamberlain to open the Club, this arrangement in the hands of the Agent Mr J H Buck.



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A later entry in the Staffordshire Advertiser on 11 September 1911 reports the gift of a piano by the Ladies to the New Club in Lloyd Street.



A large entry in the Staffordshire Advertiser on 9th December 1911 reports that it is intended to have the Club opened by Mr Walter Long MP, but Mr Long is unable to attend, never-the-less the Club have an open day on the last Wednesday of November under the chairmanship of Mr W Barton and the official opening takes place on 14th December 1911. The premises are a Boot Factory, run by Lloyd & Sons, and is bought by Colonel Nicholson in February 1911. Messrs Brookfields design and supply the furnishings. The premises lay in an acre of land. Two entries are provided from Lloyd Street and Marsdon Road. The gardens have a bowling green and tennis court and a large outbuilding is used as a lecture hall accommodating about 300 persons. The club has electric light and sanitary facilities. The Manager is Ex-Colour Sergeant Norton and the secretary is Mr T Emberton. The Billiard room is described as the most attractive feature, worthy of the game. Rooms have portraits of His and Her Majesty the King and Queen and portraits of Club Officials.

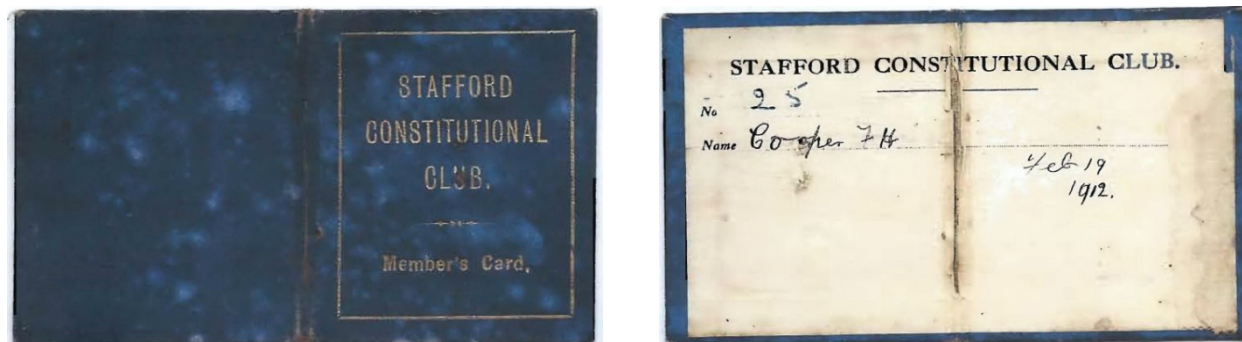
The first recorded meeting on 25th November 1911 at Lloyd Street is to determine the format of the Club, chaired by Mr W Barton, the Club tariff is based on those of the Odd Fellows Hall, the constitution registered at the Stafford Unionist Office and the Club business conducted in accordance with ACC. With Mr Barton are Messrs W C Wilson, W J Lane, S Johnson, W S Edwards, Colonel Clarke and Colonel Nicholson. Mr S Johnson is elected Chairman and Mr C A Slaney is elected Secretary. The name of the Club is established as the Stafford Constitutional Club opened on 14th December 1911. They resolved that there is a forum and that the Secretary, Mr C A Slaney, should be paid £20 per annum. Membership for a full year is set at two shillings a year.

The Lloyd Street premises become available for purchase in April 1939 for £1500 through Hand Morgan, Solicitors, and a deposit of £150 is made by Messrs A Simpson and Herbert Owen. The Deeds of the property are handed to Mr Thomas J Averill in June 1939 and deposited in Barclays Bank. Mr Averill is to pass away in September of that year.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

3 FIRST DECADE (1911 – 1921)

By March 1912 club membership grows to 328 full members, 155 half year members and 226 new members. Honourable memberships are offered at ten shillings and sixpence, of which six are taken up but are not paid. Blue cloth cards are issued to members. By May 1913 membership grows to 1045 with 265 unable to pay and by June 1913 membership is recorded as 950. Unpaid persons are declared non-members. Blue cloth cards are issued to 1030 members by November 1914.



The Steward / Manager is a Mr Norton, employed for One Pound a week with a half day off and working hours 08:00 am to 11:00 pm. A lady is employed for cleaning for Ten Shillings a month. A request is made for One Shilling a month for washing of towels, which is refused but an Assistant Manager is agreed at Twenty Five Shillings a month.

A barrel of beer is Forty Two Shillings and beer is sold at Four Pence a pint. A Saturday evening pianist is employed for Two Shillings and Sixpence for a night plus an occasional drink or two.

The Steward's wife is ill and a months notice is asked for with a Five Pound payment in lieu of notice. An advert is made for a new Steward between eighteen and twenty years of age having a good appearance.

As the Club prospered it was decided to change the membership cards to red stamped 1913 in gold indented letters. In 1912 the Club Secretary is paid twenty pounds per annum.



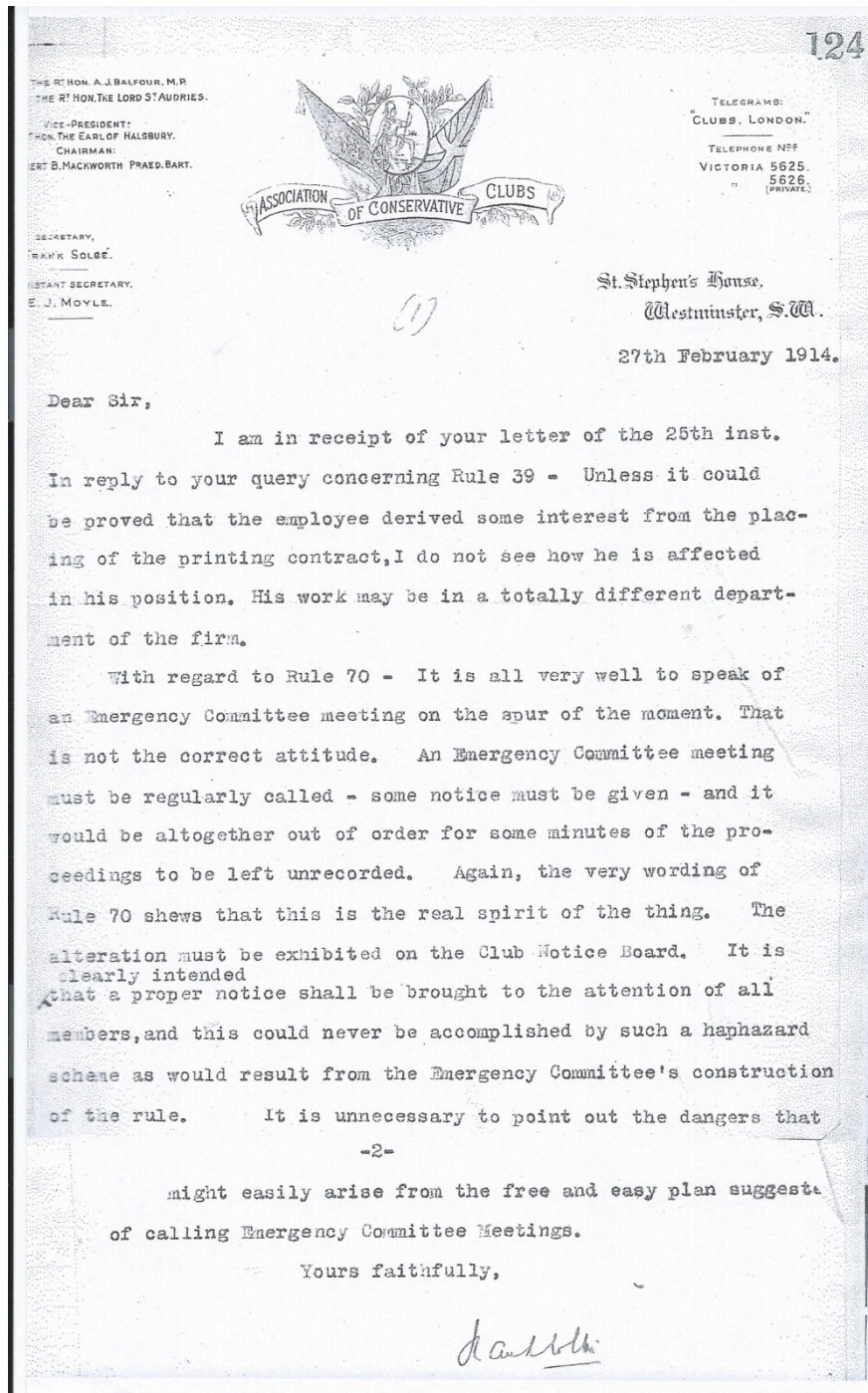
A picture of the Committee in the first ten years.

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Mr W Ward of Rowley Park donates four volumes of books for the Club library and a Christmas tree is donated by Mr A Andrews on behalf of the Siemens Institute. A 1913 Christmas party for the children is followed by a Smoking concert on the Lawn to which ladies are invited.

Siemens is a significant factor in Stafford, being engaged in armaments and the making of parts for tanks in the war years of 1914 -1918. In addition the electrical developments in the making of sheet steel for transformer and motor laminations allowed these two electrical machines to develop, which under the future English Electric is to become one of the main suppliers of these components.

A letter is received from the ACC on the misuse of Rule 70 to call an Emergency Committee meeting.



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Smoking concerts are established for the first Saturday in the month, with a pianist engaged, the concerts to commence at 08:30 pm.

Gentlemen who had enrolled in the Forces are offered Honorary Membership.

In March 1915 Mr Geo Worrall is employed as Steward who claims thirty five shillings a week plus five shillings for cleaning. This is accepted. A rule is made that dogs must be on a lead. Closing hours for week nights and Sundays is set at 10:00 pm and 11:00 pm for Saturdays.

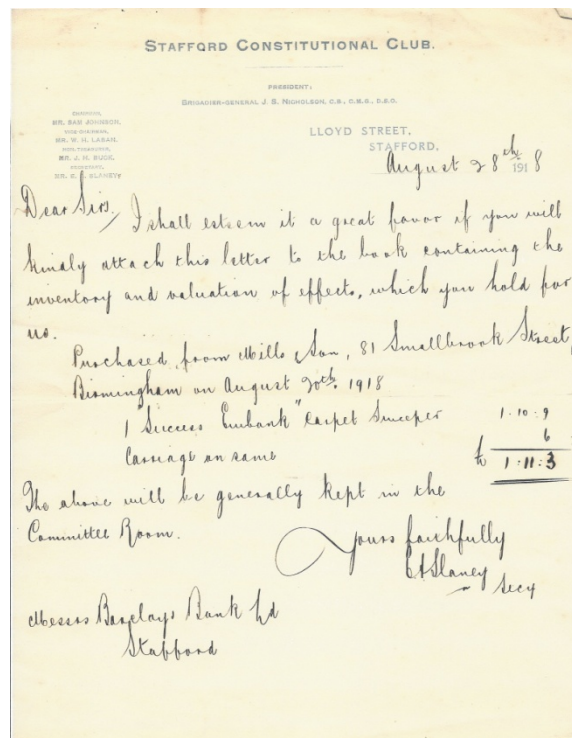
The Club decides to have its accounts audited separately from the ACC. A Rule is resolved that subscription arrears will be posted on the notice board and that after three weeks the member is struck off. However, the Committee are keen not to lose members and a Committee member is paid two shillings and sixpence in the pound to collect funds. (12.5%)

In March 1917 the Club suffers a shortage in the supply of beer and the Club closes on Sundays. Gold Flake and Players cigarettes are five pence for a packet of ten. Woodbine cigarettes are one and a half pence for a pack of five.

On 12 July 1917 news is received of Club member, Mr Frank Paskin, who dies on active service in France. In 1918, the intended renovation of the premises is postponed because of a National Service Ministry directive to avoid all unnecessary work. and the Smoke Room is closed due to the limited supply of coal. A limit is placed on the supply of drinks to two pints of beer per day, or two bottles of stout or cider and a limit of three glasses of wine or spirits. Rationing is withdrawn on April 1919 and the ACC sends a message to the Prime Minister to remove War time Restrictions.

September 1919 saw two Club members, Messrs Walter Green and I Till, elected as Billiards markers and a Billiard clock is introduced. A Charge of three pence per player is levied and a charge of three pence for two cues to play Snooker. The Billiard markers take their duties on alternate weeks. A petition is received from ACC to control liqueur.

The Club is careful in all matters of administration as seen in the letter from Mr C A Slaney to Barclays Bank declaring the purchase of a Ewbank Carpet Sweeper.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

A Roll of Honour is made and is placed at the entrance port, which is there to this day (August 2014).



On 04 August 2014 the Nation holds an hour vigil from 10:00 pm to 11:00 at Westminster and in Belgium to remember the outbreak of World War 1 when the Foreign Minister said that the Lights of Europe will go out. A war, which was anticipated to last only a short time, went on for four years with a loss of 10 million military lives, 7 million civilian lives and 20 million casualties.

This war did not prevent the economic failure of the 1920's to the 1930's, the massive use of steel in Germany in the building of infrastructure and armaments, as also in the United States and to some extent the industry in the United Kingdom, and again, as in the 1900's, the scene was set.

At this time however steel is also being put to good use in the manufacture of Generators, Transformers and Switchgear to build the electrical infrastructure of which Stafford is to play an integral major part.

The War has severely depleted the male population and even while males are away on the battlefields females are learning how to work in agriculture and industry. This in itself is to have a significant effect on the society of the future,

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

4 TRANQUIL YEARS (1921 – 1931)

In 1920 it is proposed and accepted that the Secretary should receive forty pounds per annum. It is agreed to send a subscription of two pounds two shillings to the Stafford Unionist Association and that one pound one shilling is as much as should be given to the Association of Conservative Clubs. Collecting subscriptions from members is becoming increasingly difficult as some members lost work.

Gambling in the Club is prohibited, card playing restricted to Whist, Solo Whist, Cribbage and Don.

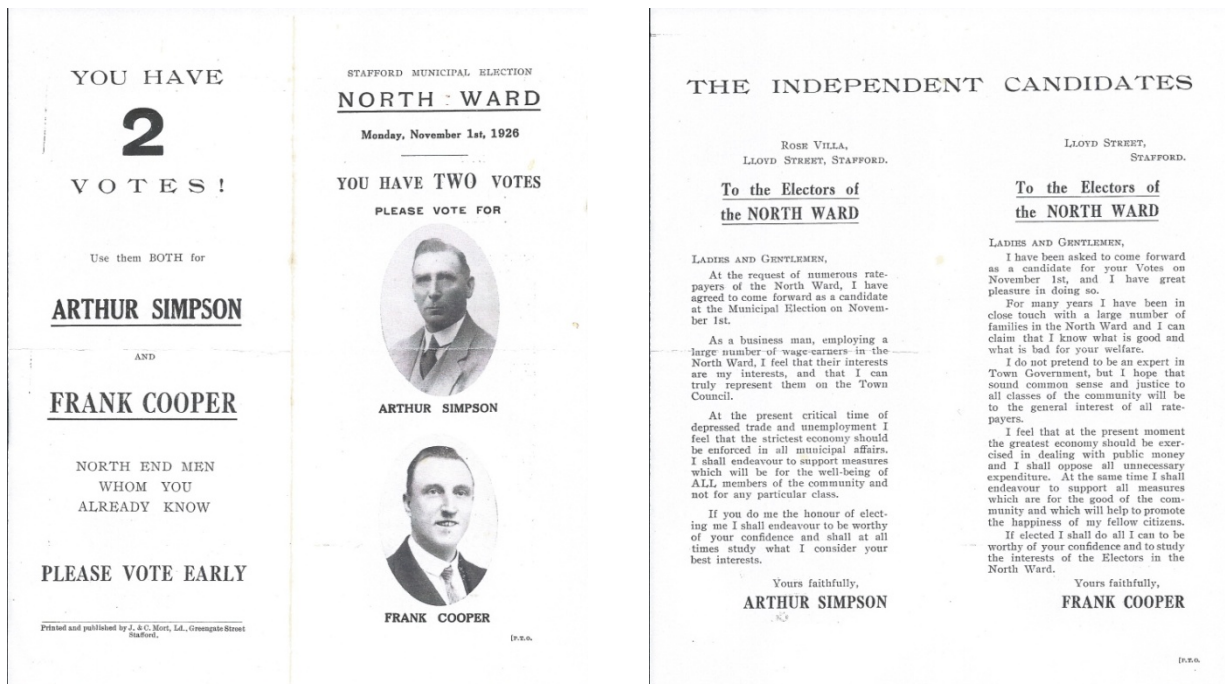
In 1921 Brigadier General R Nicholson, the benefactor of the Club, contests the Abbey division of Westminster which he holds from August 1921 to his death in February 1924.

A letter is sent from Mr C H Dibb of 24 Victoria Street on 10 July 1921 objecting to the refusal of the Club to his membership application. Mr Slaney pointed out that refusal was due to Mr Dibb's socialist views.

The Stafford Corporation Electric Department installed electricity in the Lecture Hall in November 1921, the electricity supply accepted by Mr Simpson.

The Club prospers, and in 1924 is able to donate five pounds five shillings to the County Conservative Club and in 1928 is able to donate four pound four shillings to the Cannock Miners Distress Fund, in the meantime awarding bonus payments to the Stewards, Mr & Mrs Cooper and provides Christmas Festivities for the members and families. The Secretary also receives an additional five pounds per annum.

Two Club members put themselves up for election in the North Ward in 1926.



The Club places a Deed Box in the Barclays Bank in 1928 to store Treasury Bonds and Stocks. There is a dispute regarding Tax Refunds because the ACC is not in the Industrial and Provident Society.

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The Club Members have gardening skills and the Lecture Hall is used to exhibit products in 1926.



The Club is experiencing good years with one exception, that of retaining good Stewards and a search is on to find suitable Stewards resulting in the selection of Mr and Mrs Frank Cooper who are to serve the Club for thirty years.

English Electric takes over Siemens towards the end of 1919 and is elsewhere engaged in aircraft and tank manufacturing. The utilisation of electrical machines emerged with the development of sheet steel manufacturing. Many of the Lloyd Street Club members are involved as middle and senior management posts in the previous Siemens Works and the new English Electric attracts many skilled personnel who are to enjoy the facilities the Lloyd Street Club offers. Both Politics and Billiards are factors drawing gentlemen to the Club.

The Shoe and Boot Trade for the individual shoe maker is diminishing fast but the industry offered by Siemens and followed by English Electric deflects the depression that many suffered in the aftermath of the War.

Steel production in the United States continues but there are no monies in the public purses to utilise the use of steel and by the end of the 1920's the Great Depression hits the States and affects Europe.

The Club enjoys the political years of 1922 to 1924 with the Premierships of Andrew Bonar Law and Stanley Baldwin. The latter is to lose a vote of confidence and Labour forms a Hung Parliament under Ramsay MacDonald, relying heavily on Liberal support, losing again to Stanley Baldwin.

Engineering in Stafford is to take a twofold direction in addition to the already expanding electrical industry of motors and transformers. The steam engine has long become the traction force but a German inventor introduces the Diesel Engine, which is to replace steam as the Prime Mover of Traction and Low Power Electrical Generation. Dorman Diesel becomes a major industry in the town, the diesel engine having a constant speed characteristic being far more suitable for haulage vehicles than the petrol engine, which is a variable speed machine. English Electric in Stafford are working hard at developing Large Power Direct Current with the Mercury Arc Rectifier, this current being used to drive trams and trolley buses to replace the rapid growth of cars using petrol engines. This technology is later to develop to drive our present day locomotives.

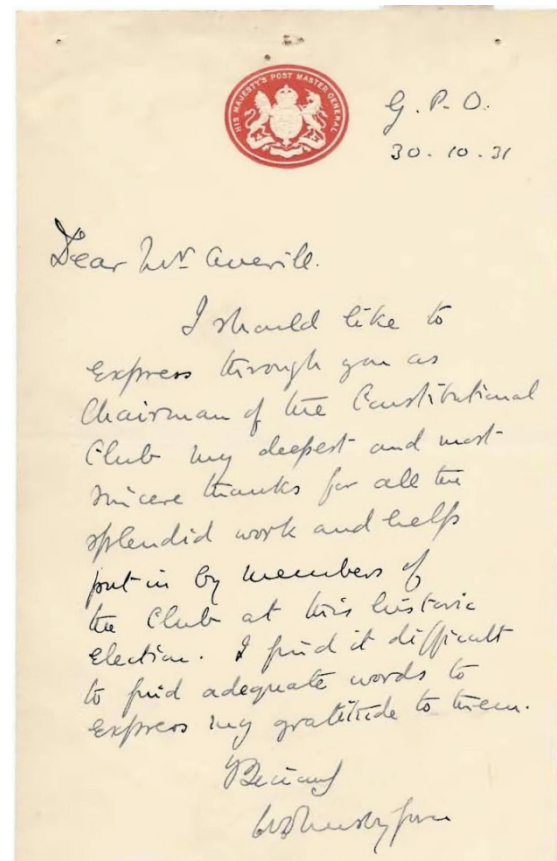
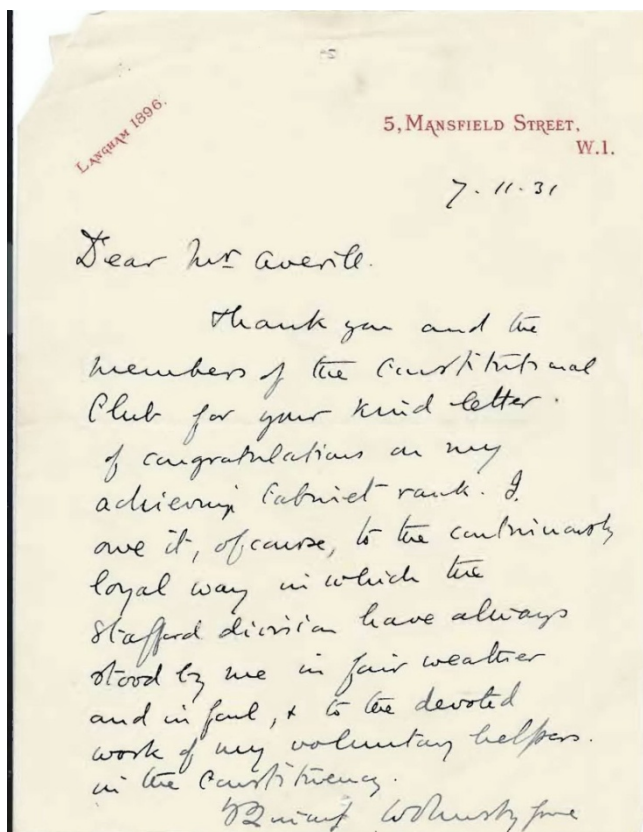
Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

5 SUCCESFUL YEARS (1931 – 1941)

Associated with the Conservative and Unionist Office at the Unionist Office in Crabbery Street is Mr W G A Ormsby-Gore, who becomes increasingly involved in the Stafford Constitutional Club and is eventually, elected President of the Club.

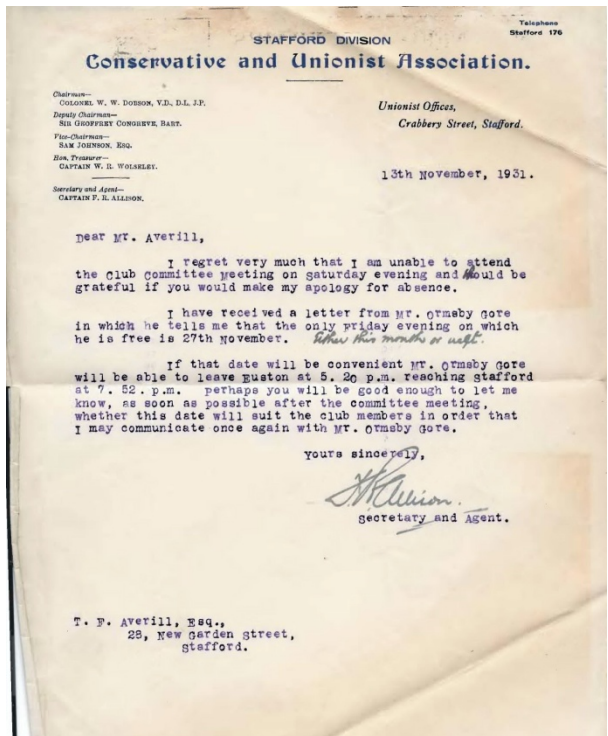
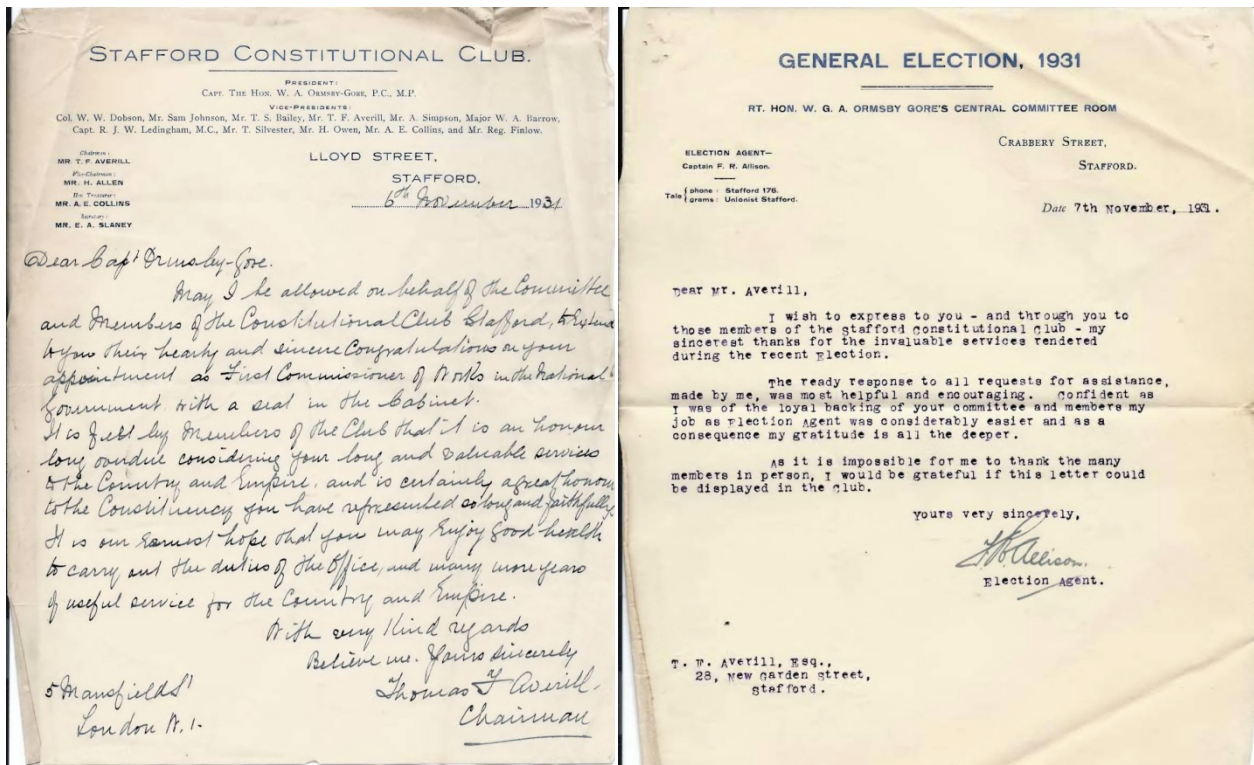
Mr W G A Ormsby-Gore was Member of Parliament for Stafford from 1918 to 1938. He is the 4th Baron of Harlech and in 1948 is awarded Knight of the Garter

Correspondence relating to Mr Ormsby-Gore is recorded.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Further correspondence in 1931 is recorded in the Club records:



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

There is bound to be some unrest, but with the high profile that the Club is enjoying, the unrest is dealt with politely and firmly. In 1935 the following correspondence is recorded.

30/12/1935

To The Secretary & Committee
of the Stafford Constitutional Club Company Limited

It is with great pain as I now have to ask
you to except this notice as finally finished
as your servant of the club after about
nine years. as I never want to stand in
anyones way of doing things better than
I have always tried to do. if as you know
I was a little late of arriving on some
evenings to do my duties and told that
Mr. Lee would carry on I only acted wise
and allowed him without any interference
As you know in your letter in answer
to mine. when I wrote to you to try and
do something better for me you have not
kept your word but put jobs which I have
always tried to do for years to try and save
experiences. but how many times as the
Steward had Days and Half days off while
you have payed someone else to carry on
his duties. I have never knew any other
Steward to have the privileges and writing

on since it as been a club. I think
myself it is time the committee woke up
well I cannot help letting you know
just what I think, as I am soon cut
in my little bit of pay if I am not able
to act up to time. believe me all the
same as a lover of Justice and will
try and live happy as a member with
you after all is said and done
I am yours
Faithfully
T. F. Sutton

STAFFORD CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB

PRESIDENT:
CAPT. THE HON. W. G. A. OGBURN-GORE, P.C., M.P.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:
Col. Sir W. W. Dubson
Mr. T. A. Bailey
Mr. T. F. Averill
Mr. A. Simpson
Major W. A. Barrow

VICE-PRESIDENTS:
Captain F. R. Allison
Mr. E. Cotton
Mr. S. G. Evertson
Mr. Tom J. Evertson
Mr. T. Silvester

VICE-PRESIDENTS:
Mr. H. Owen
Mr. A. R. Collins
Mr. Reg. Pinlow
Mr. W. J. Lloyd
Mr. F. Riley

CHAIRMAN
MR. T. F. AVERILL

VICE-CHAIRMAN
MR. H. ALLEN

SEC. TREASURER
MR. A. E. COLLINS

SECRETARY
MR. E. A. BLANEY

Telephone—STAFFORD 811

LLOYD STREET,
STAFFORD.

11 January 1936

Dear Sir

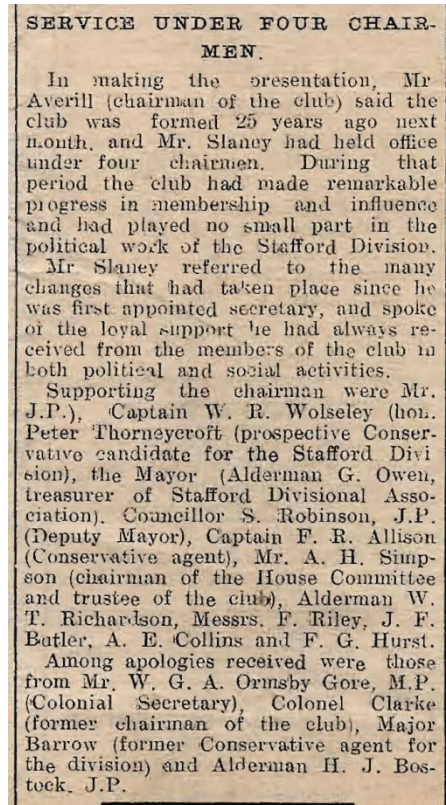
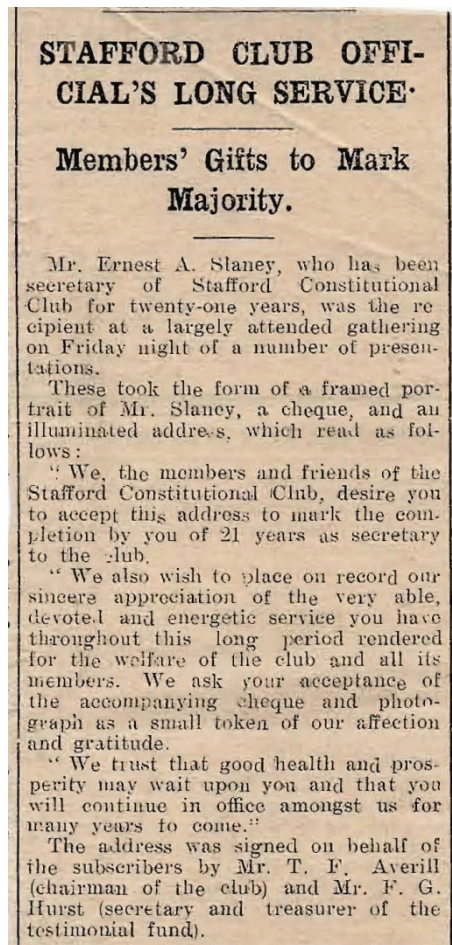
Your letter of the 30th ulto was duly
submitted to the Committee at the meeting held this evening
the contents therein makes it obvious that you are dissatisfied
this being the case they instructed me to write you to say
they have no desire to lose members, but if you are not
satisfied you have the alternative of sending in your resignation
and in the event of you so doing they further wished me
to say it would be accepted forthwith.

Yours faithfully
E. A. Blaney Secy

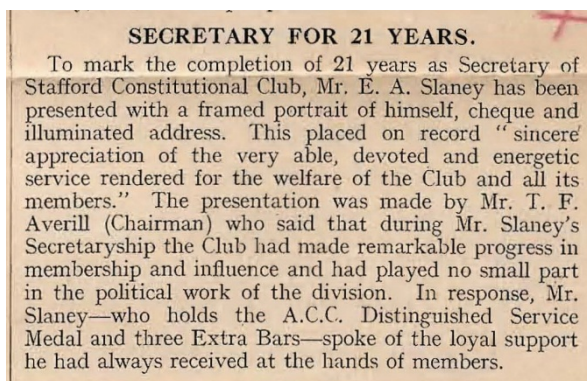
Mr. T. F. Sutton

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Tributes are paid to Mr Slaney, Club Secretary and recorded in the local press.



The ACC are to also acknowledge the service that Mr Slaney had given. The framed certificate hangs in the Club Committee room.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

A founder member of the Club was Mr J F Averill who achieved his 70th birthday, recorded in the press.

A CONSERVATIVE STALWART

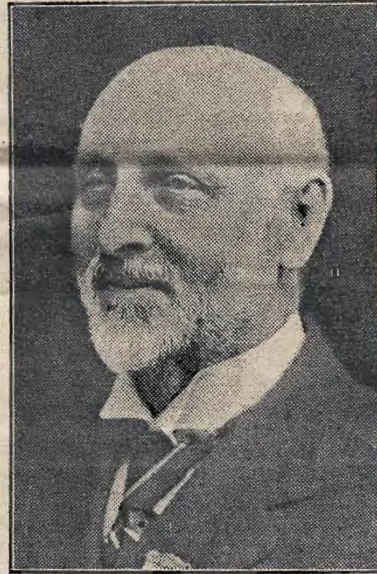
Recognition of Mr. T. F. Averill's Services

Recognition of the services rendered by Mr. T. F. Averill, of Stafford, in the cause of Conservatism, and especially in connection with the Constitutional Club, of which he has been chairman for six years in succession, was made when at a smoking concert held at the club on Thursday evening he was presented, on watch. Mr. Averill, who came to Stafford 20 years ago, is a native of Stoke-on-Trent, where his father, the late Mr. Thomas Averill, was prominently connected with the Conservative party, being chairman of his ward. Mr. Averill has worked with great enthusiasm for the Stafford Constitutional Club, of which he has been a member since its foundation. He has been a member of the committee for 18 years, and holds the club's long service medal. For several years he held the position of chairman and vice-chairman of the house committee, and the great interest that he has always evinced in the affairs of the club has won for him the personal affection of all the members. Mr. Averill, who is in his 70th year, is connected with the painting and decorating trade in the town.

A large number of members attended the smoking concert on Thursday evening, the chair being occupied by Mr. H. Allen, vice-chairman of the club. Among those present were Mr. Arthur Simpson (trustee), Messrs. S. Johnson, R. Finlow, A. E. Collins (vice-presidents), W. J. Lloyd (chairman of the Finance Committee), Capt. Ledingham (Unionist agent), A. J. Averill, T. W. Averill, W. T. Lane (vice-chairman of the House Committee), Clare Simpson, T. Hubble, T. J. Everton, S. G. Everton, J. H. Ward, J. Lymer, R. Jackson, and E. A. Slaney (secretary).

Mr. Ormsby-Gore's Tribute

A glowing tribute to Mr. Averill's services was contained in a letter written by the Rt. Hon. W. G. A. Ormsby Gore, F.C., M.P., in which he expressed regret that he would not be present as he was that evening reading a paper on Foreign and Colonial Administration at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. The club, wrote Mr. Ormsby Gore, had always been fortunate in having the guidance of Mr. Averill, who was universally respected. Letters of apology were also received from Col. W. W. Dobson (chairman of the Stafford Unionist party), Col. W. E. Clarke, and Mr. T. S. Bailey (ex-chairmen of the club), Mr. Herbert Owen (former secretary of the club), T. Westhead, T. Waters, J. B. Waugh, S. J. Paskin, and A. Mitchell.



Mr. T. F. Averill

In making the presentation, Mr. Allen said it was a pleasure to serve under a chairman like Mr. Averill. The club had had its ups and downs, and it had not always been in the position it was that day. Mr. Averill rendered splendid service to the club during those difficult times, and he was still doing good work as chairman. (Applause). The esteem and regard in which Mr. Averill was held by the members was evidenced by the fact that everyone who was approached subscribed most willingly towards the presentation. The inscription on the watch was as follows: "Presented to Mr. T. F. Averill, chairman of the Stafford Constitutional Club by the members in recognition of services rendered, July 1950." Mr. Allen added that Mr. Averill could always depend upon the hearty support of the committee and all the members of the club. The chairmen of the different branches of the club took a pattern from Mr. Averill by conducting their business on the same lines as he always adopted. (Applause).

Mr. S. Johnson said as vice-chairman of the Unionist party in the Stafford Division, he wished to pay his tribute to the work done by Mr. Averill. He recalled that Mr. Wm. Barton was the first chairman of the club, and he (Mr. Johnson) was chairman of the Finance Committee. He did not think there was a club or institution in the county that had more willing workers than the Constitutional Club, and he was pleased to see among those present several of the original members, including Messrs. Simpson, Lane, Collins, Golding, Lloyd, and Lowe.

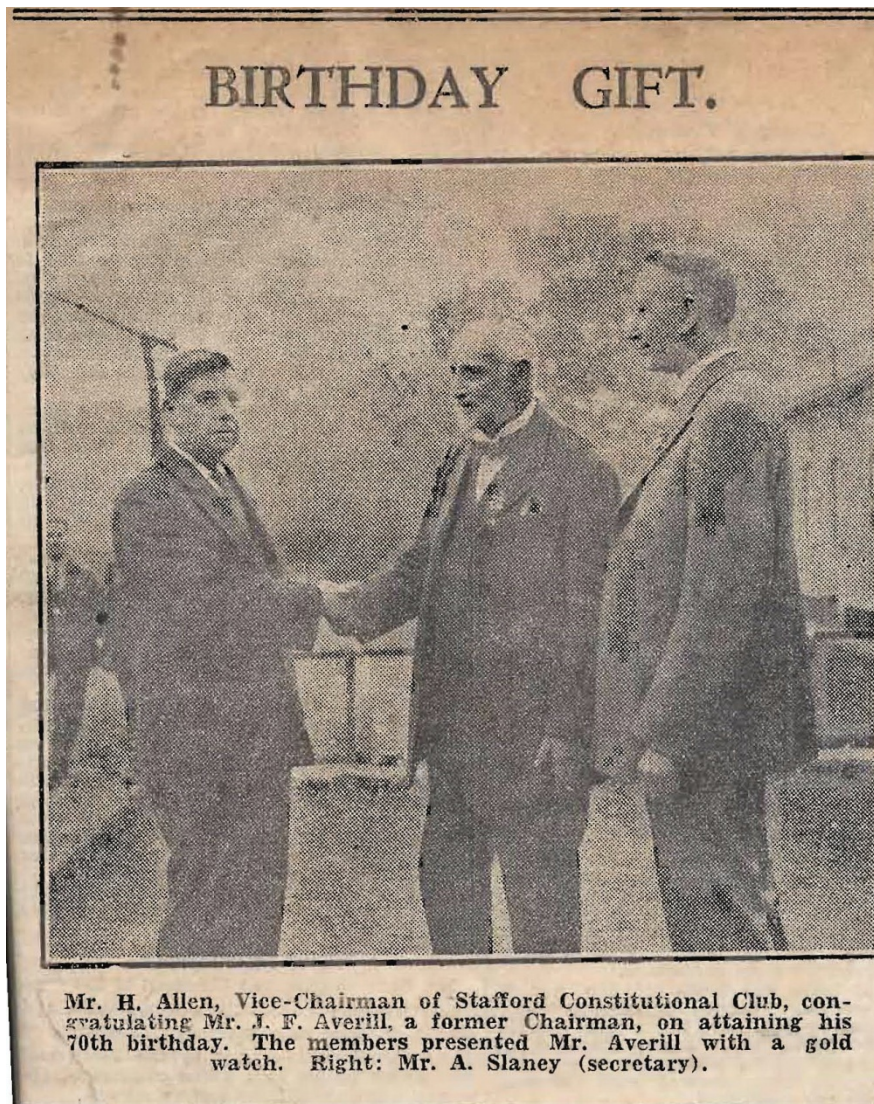
Chairman's Gratification

In acknowledging the presentation, Mr. Averill said he felt proud to think that any service he had been able to render the club had been recognised in such a handsome manner, and he was proud to think that he had won the esteem of so many gentlemen. It had always been a pleasure to him to take part in the work of the club, and it was gratifying to feel that he had given them satisfaction. No chairman could wish for a more loyal and hard-working committee than it had been his pleasure to preside over. Having commented upon the satisfactory financial position of the club, Mr. Averill expressed his warm appreciation of the gift made to him, and said he hoped the club would continue to flourish for many years. (Applause).

Community singing was led by Mr. Vic Pickstock's jazz band. Mr. R. Carr was at the piano, the other artistes being Messrs. F. Hurst, C. H. Dibb, E. Clewlow, T. F. Sutton, F. H. Cooper, and A. T. Harris.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Mr Averill's 70th birthday is acknowledged by the Club in a presentation



It is seen that an income is to be gained from letting out the Lecture Hall for a fee of seventy five pounds per annum, and this is agreed. Mr A E Slaney, the Club Secretary manages this arrangement. The Unionist Association agrees to rent the Lecture Hall. The heating of the Club and particularly the Lecture Hall is becoming increasingly expensive. In 1935 ten tons of coal cost twenty eight shillings and six pence.

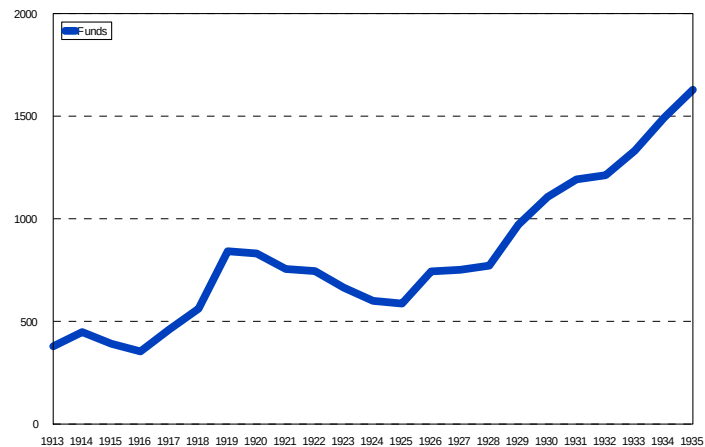
The ACC announces the introduction of the new game of darts into Clubs in 1937.

POPULARITY OF DARTS.

Many Clubs have introduced Darts as an indoor attraction for the first time this season. The universal popularity of the game, and the interest it creates amongst members, fully justifies the small outlay. The A.C.C. supplies Elm and Bristle Dart Boards and has a large stock of Darts of all kinds. Illustrated Price List on request.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Investments are made in Stafford Corporation Bonds in 1932 and deposits are made in the Stafford Railway Permanent Building Society in addition to more Treasury Bonds and in 1936 the Club invests in the Stafford Building Society. Cash in the Bank is also healthy. In 1938 the Club Landlord offers to sell giving the Club first refusal. Some exchange of cash and investments enabled a cheque to be issued for one thousand three hundred and thirty five pounds, which secures the premises.

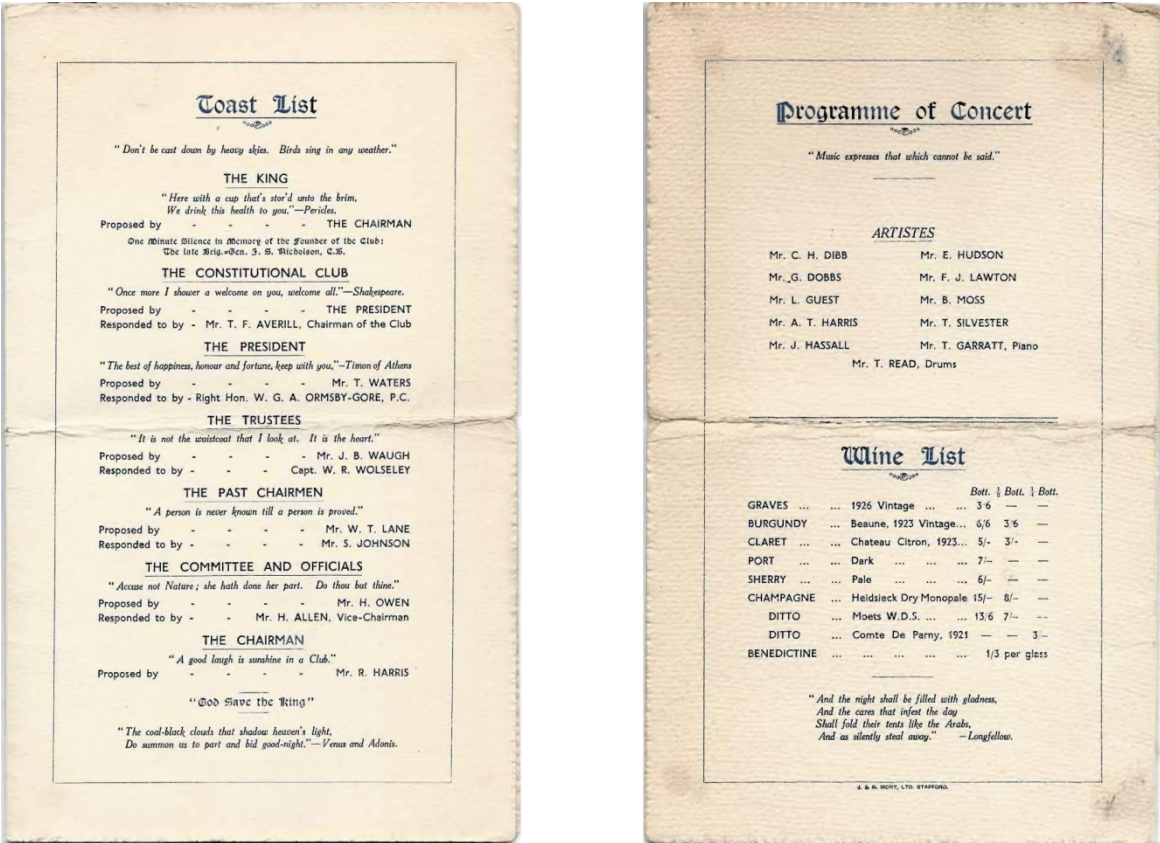


The graph above reflects the fortunes of the Club over the first twenty years.

The twenty first year of the Club is a call for celebration and a dinner is arranged. The dinner is probably held in 1932. The menu of the day is shown.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History



In 1938 Captain Ormsby-Gore is elected to the House of Lords, raising the profile of the Club and separating it from the other Conservative Clubs in Stafford. In 1939, one of these is the Constitutional Club Co.Ltd, which has serious liabilities and needs to be wound up, its shares and dividends to be distributed. This process took a long time, the club goes into liquidation in 1953. The County Conservative Club is situated opposite the St Mary's Collegiate Church. The County Club is closed in the mid to late 1980's after which the building became an extension of the Soup Kitchen. The owner of the Soup Kitchen, Mr Duncan Sandy, has the historical details of the club which can also be obtained in a 19 page booklet written by Dennis Gilbert, available in the Stafford Records Library. The extension of the Soup Kitchen did not alter the outward appearance of the County Conservative Club.



The County Club St Mary's Place
Stafford – formerly
The County Conservative Club
1977 – 19 Page



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The Earl of Shrewsbury, John Chetwynd-Talbot (21st Earl) and the Mayor of Stafford the Honourable Horace Jaynes join the Lloyd Street Constitutional Club in 1938 and in 1939 Mr Thorneycroft, club member, writes a letter voting against the Clubs Registration Bill.

As can be seen, politics took a high priority in the Lloyd Street Club activities and the members of this gentleman's club had an influence, both locally and in Central Government.

The Depression of 1929 in the USA and in Britain in the 1930's hit the lower working classes but not so much the medium to wealthy classes that the Lloyd Street club membership enjoyed.

However, the political situation in the country is becoming serious. Whilst the USA had a stock pile of steel in Europe Germany are busy building reinforced concrete roads and building armaments. This had not gone un-noticed by those that worked at English Electric, for they too were engaged in heavy industry production.

In general however, the economic climate in Britain is not good and Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald seeks advice which resulted in unpopular resolutions. He offers to resign but is persuaded to form a coalition government of which 85% were Conservatives. By 1935 Stanley Baldwin becomes Prime Minister until 1938 when he was succeeded by Neville Chamberlain. The Lloyd Street Club members are very actively involved in this scene.

In September 1939 Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain reluctantly acknowledges that Britain is at war with Germany to honour the Anglo-Polish Treaty. Failure of the Norwegian campaign forces Neville Chamberlain to resign and Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister in 1940.

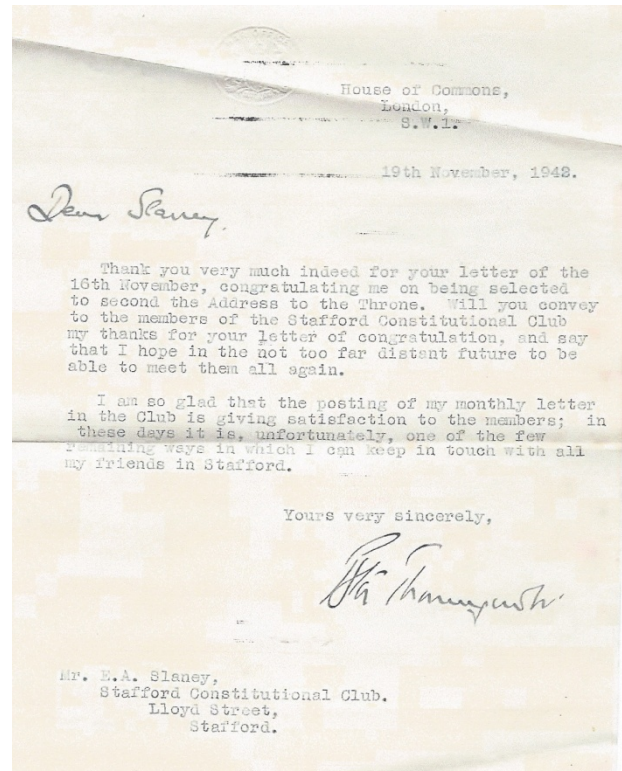
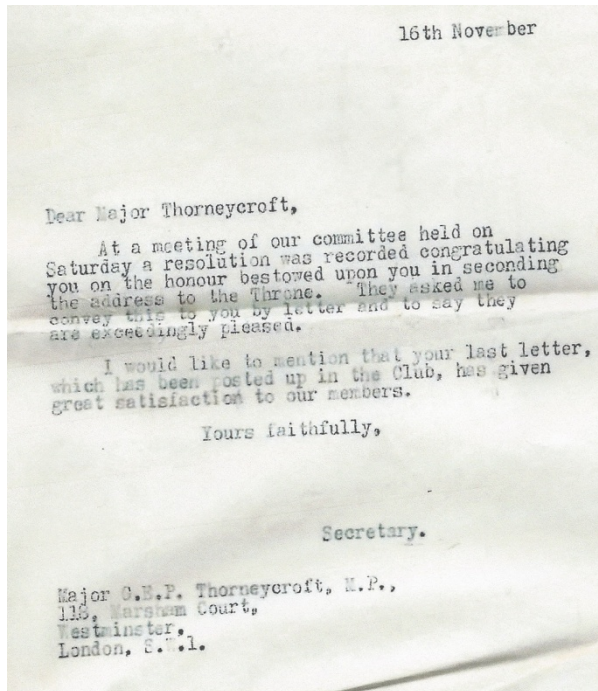
Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

6 WAR AND PEACE (1941 – 1951)

The Second World War rages, which is unrecorded in the Club documentation except to mention that the Lecture Hall is used by the Ministry of Food.

An attraction at the Club in 1942 is the exhibition of Billiards by Mr A Randle, who has only one arm.

Mr Thorneycroft becomes a regular contributor to the Club, keeping in constant touch even though having a very committed parliamentary life. Letters to and from Mr Thorneycroft and Mr Slaney are on record.



In 1943 a visit to the Club is made by Colonel Mitchell with Lord Clanwilliams, the chairman of the ACC. In 1945 Lord Clanwilliams addresses the Lloyd Street Club. Lord Clanwilliams, is the 5th Earl, known as Arthur Vesey Mead and is the chairman of the Carlton Club in London, succeeding Lord Kintore. He has a brilliant military career and is a prominent political figure.

The electrical infrastructure is growing rapidly. Throughout cities and towns electrical distribution is expanding and with it the need for transformers to convert the High Voltage of a growing electrical grid to the domestic Low Voltage. In addition Hydro and Steam electrical power is developing to meet the demand of the grid. Industry can not rely on the grid to sustain their demands and the diesel generator units are a necessity to maintain all round the clock production. Stafford benefits enormously from these developments,

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

In 1943 notice is given that Rule 33 and Rule 65 are to be changed.

STAFFORD CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB.
LLOYD STREET,
STAFFORD.

Notice is hereby given, that a Special General Meeting of the members, will be held in the Smoke Room, on Saturday, the 30th day of January, 1943, at eight (8) o'clock, for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, adopting, with or without modification, the sub-joined additions and alterations in the Rules of the Club.

Ernest Adams
Secretary.

13th January, 1943.

(1)
STAFFORD CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB.
LLOYD STREET, STAFFORD.

Alterations to Rules, to be submitted for consideration, to a Special General Meeting, to be held on Saturday, the thirtieth day of January 1943, at eight (8) o'clock precisely.

RULE 33 THE COMMITTEE

The following shall be substituted for the existing rule :-

" The Committee shall consist of 24 members (exclusive of the Officers, the Chairman, vice-chairman, and Hon. Treasurer, who shall be members of the Committee, ex-officio and have power to vote.) (Constitutional)

The twenty-four members shall be appointed as follows:-

(a) Seventeen to be elected annually by the members of the Club.

(b) Seven to be appointed by the Conservative and Unionist Association, Stafford Division, or its successors.

In the event of this Association being renamed, the privilege of election to pass to its successors, provided it is a Constitutional Parliamentary Authority, and represents the old Conservative and Unionist principles.

The election of the former seventeen members of the Committee shall be by ballot, to be held during the week preceeding the Annual General Meeting, held in February. (How to be elect)

Rule 71.

The following shall be substituted for the existing rule:-

No new rule shall be made, nor any of the rules herein contained, or hereafter to be made, shall be amended, altered, or rescinded, unless with the consent of a majority of three-fourths of the members present at a General or Special General Meeting, called for that purpose, and approved by the Conservative and Unionist Association, Stafford Division, or its successors.

Rule 62.

Visitors.

Every member shall be permitted to introduce a friend as a visitor, but a visitor residing in the Borough shall not be admitted more than once within a period of one calendar month, or such less period as the Committee may, by resolution, determine.

Note:

The following words in the present rule have been omitted:-

" Unless special consent be obtained from the Committee."

and the following substituted:-

" or such less period as the Committee may By resolution, determine."

Rule 25. VACANCIES.

The following shall be substituted for the second paragraph of this rule:-

Any vacancies occurring amongst the seventeen members elected by ballot shall be filled by the Committee. Any vacancies occurring amongst the seven members appointed by the Conservative and Unionist Association, Stafford Division, shall be filled by that Association or its successors.

New Rule 65a.

Every member shall be permitted to introduce a Lady Guest.

Lady Guests to have the privilege to use such part, or parts, of the Club, on such days and between such hours as the Committee may from time to time determine. Such guests shall not be entitled to membership of the Club or allowed to use, or be permitted to have access to, any room or rooms, other than as determined by the Committee.

A member introducing a Lady Guest, must accompany her, be responsible for her good conduct and for the payment of any refreshment with which she may be supplied.

A Guest Book shall be provided and kept in the Entrance Hall, or in such other place as the Committee may determine.

A member introducing a Lady Guest must enter her name and address and sign his name therein on each and every occasion the guest is admitted to the Club.

A fee of one penny shall be paid by the member whenever a Lady Guest is introduced by him.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

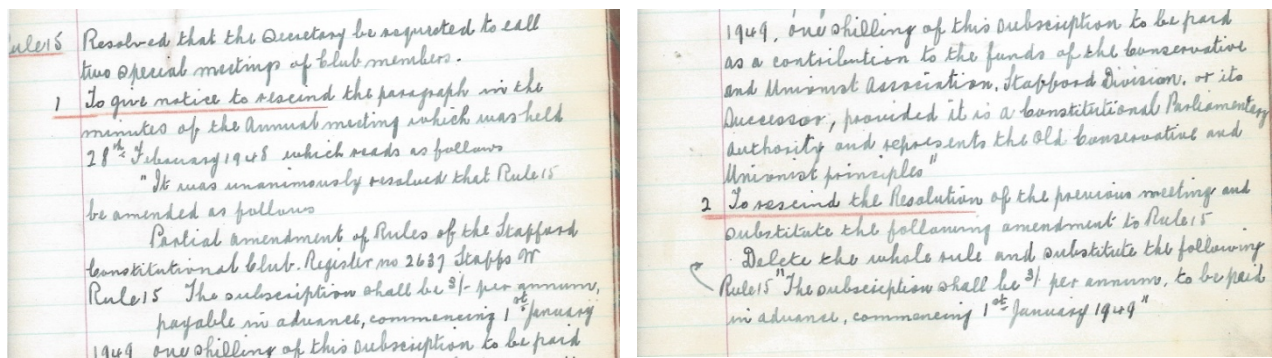
In 1944 Mr Arthur Rhead, who runs a Jeweller's Shop in Greengate Street, presents a Darts competition silver cup.

In 1945 Winston Churchill receives the Freedom of the Borough of Stafford.

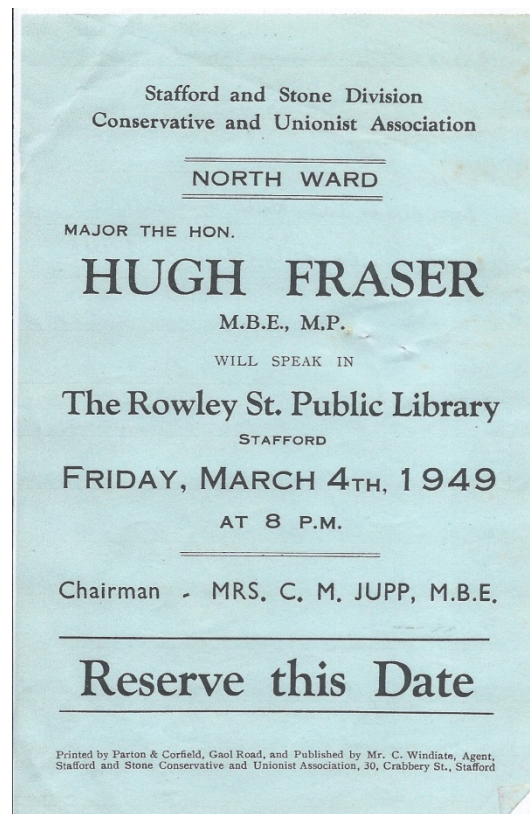
In 1946 the Junior Conservatives progress and are noted to make Stafford a Conservative Stronghold, whilst a Club member, Mr M People of 101 Tixall Road writes a letter in the Stafford Newsletter expressing socialist views. The Club strikes off his membership.

In 1947 to 1949 the Stafford Constitutional Club activities are frequently reported in the local press, and notably was a testimonial given to Mr Harry Allen.

An example of the 1949 Minutes kept is in the copy of the Rule 15 change to set the subscription to three shillings.



An important notice on the Club notice board announces the visit of the Honourable Mr Hugh Fraser.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

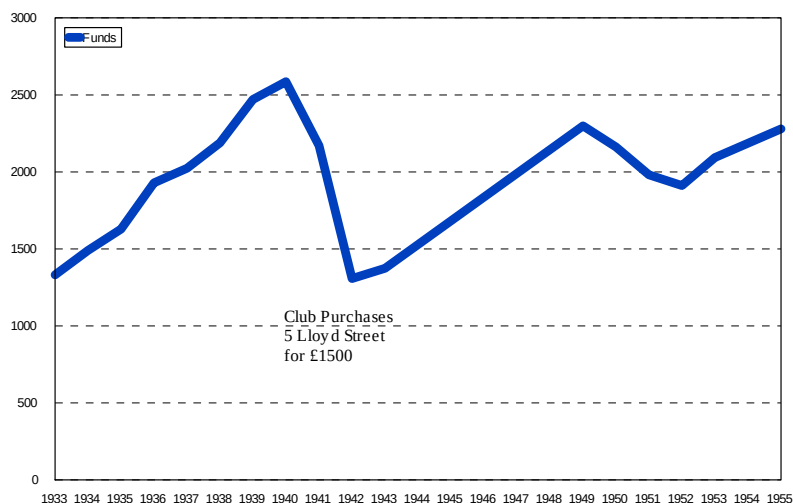
From the onset of the Club, members of over five years receive a medal from the ACC and a bar for one or two year's service. It is traditional for these medals and bars to be worn on special days.

In October 1944 a long established member, Mr A H Simpson, passes away and Mr Hurst is called to sign cheques for the Club. Mr Slaney, the Secretary for many years, receives several increases in payment and in March 1947 this was established to be seventy eight pounds per annum, further increased to ninety one pounds in May 1948, on request by Mr Slaney.

In 1946 the Club receives an anonymous letter complaining the Steward is taking bets, which matter is dealt with quickly. Older members need pay no subscription and ladies may use the reading room by invite only. Card playing in the Bar is prohibited.

In 1949 proposed alterations to Bar and Billiard room and an application for a Catering licence are both deferred until 1950.

The Club continues to prosper in the second twenty years, a drop in 1940 / 41 reflecting the purchase of the Lloyd Street premises.



1945 saw the political victory of Clement Attlee, the implementation of the atomic bombs in Hiroshima followed by Nagasaki and the founding of the United Nations headed by Winston Churchill, Franklin D Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin.

Lloyd Street Club membership in 1944 is just over 460 with 50 members involved in the War. Records of the Constitutional Club in the period from 1945 to 1950 are scarce, relating only to minor issues.

Membership averages 450 in the ten years peaking at 660 in July 1945.

After the leadership of Winston Churchill, who formed a caretaker government in 1945, Clement Atlee is elected. The National Health Service is born, but the Cold War has begun and Britain is to get involved in Korea. Locally, the Lloyd Street Constitutional Club are in strong support for Mr Hugh Fraser who is MP for the neighbouring constituency of Stone,

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

7 RECOVERY YEARS (1951 – 1961)

Richard Harris, past Chairman, resigns after 25 years and a framed photograph was presented to be hung in the Club. Mr F S Jenkinson takes over as Chairman.

In the Billiards Room hangs a picture of the 1952 Committee.



Top – Left to Right:

F G Hurst, Finance Chairman; H Lovatt, House Chairman; C E Pover, Vice President; L Horton; P Cotterill, Political Chairman; L G Phillips; F Wood; E Gallacher; S Perry, Vice President; G A Binnersley;

Middle – Left to Right:

J W Moore, Conservative Agent; P R Anderson; S J Brandrick; F H Baker; J Mayer; F H Cooper, Steward; A J Wells; W Northwood, Vice President; W J Silvester;

Bottom – Left to Right:

G H Smallshaw, Vice Chairman; H Allen, Trustee; R Finlow, Vice President; A E Collins, Treasurer; F S Jenkinson, Chairman; E A Slaney, Secretary; R Harris, Vice President; G Tagg, Vice President; W T Lane, Vice President.

Mr Marlow is offered a “Badge of Honour” but the ACC wants three pounds three shillings for the badge and so Mr Marlow refuses, as it is thought to be free.

Mr Walter Harris, who is Assistant Secretary, resigns. The Club offers forty pounds per annum to applicants, but this offer is not taken up.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Lord Moulton writes a letter to the Club encouraging them to be more active politically.

Lloyd Street neighbours lodge a complaint about members creating noise and disturbance and accused some members of pilfering. This reflects resentment of the well-to-do Lloyd Street Club Members.

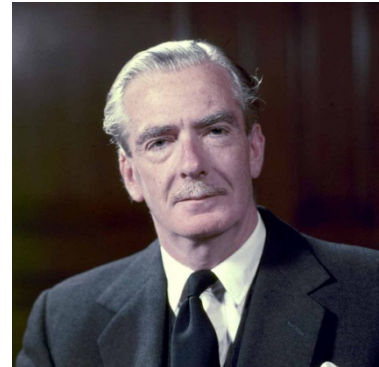
Photos are produced of Colonel Nicholson, Mr E A Slaney, Mr R Harris, Mr H Allen and Mr A Simpson to be hung in the Committee room.

The aftermath of the War left Britain needing a pick-me-up and the Festival of Britain was a means to achieve this. Street parties and décor are familiar sights. Many homes hoist often un-tuned piano's into the street for a sing song and accomplished pianists, often playing by ear, pounded the keys and play the instruments into tune. Children dress in costumes in carnival spirit, and all Clubs become the focal point for these festivities. The Lloyd Street Club records make no mention of these Festivities.



In 1951 the Conservatives won the Election and Winston Churchill returns to power.

In 1955 Anthony Eden is elected and retired due to ill health after being dominated by US policy over the Suez Canal.

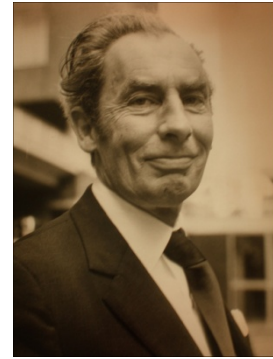


Sadly King George VI passes away and Elizabeth II becomes Queen of Britain and of the Commonwealth. At the same time as the Queen is crowned Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay reach the summit of Mount Everest. These events are almost the first widespread coverage on television.

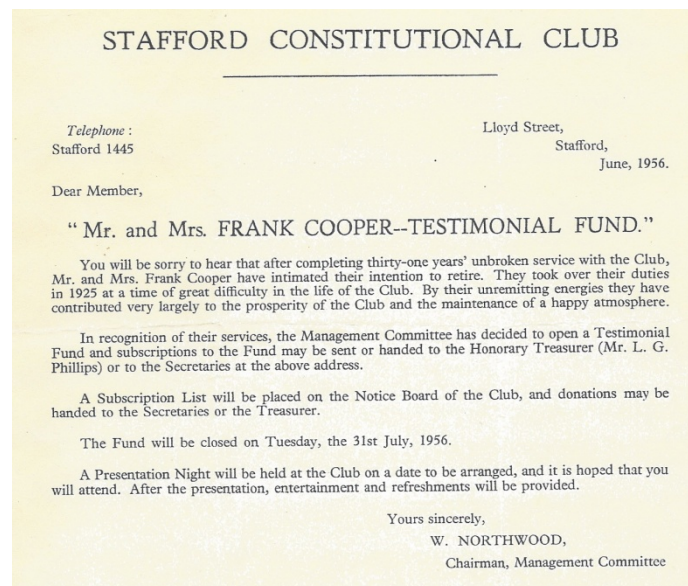


Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

A revised constituency combining Stafford and Stone made Mr Hugh Fraser, Member of Parliament for Stafford, and he assumed Presidency of the Lloyd Street Constitutional Club, however his active political life precluded frequent involvement. He later became Sir Hugh Fraser and was to remain MP for Stafford for more than thirty years.



A testimonial fund was arranged for the retired Stewards.



Mr Frank & Mrs Winifred Cooper

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

Alongside taking the Lloyd Street Club into the 1960's was the often quoted "You have never had it so good" era of Harold Macmillan from 1957 to the early 60's. These were the years the United Kingdom applied to join the European Economic Community, which caused a split amongst the Conservatives.

The BBC opens the Television Centre, the Cold War had begun and the News Media is becoming available to everyone.

Unrest develops in 1958 with the Commonwealth Immigration and in particular the Notting Hill Riots. The Wind of Change speech in South Africa also fuels a fire that was already burning.



The Committee in the 1950's are David Clive Hipless, Raymond Timmis, Harold Middleton, Richard Stanley Weller, John Mitchell, Herbert Wilkes, Richard E Hughes and Alexander Way.

In 1959 Ladies are allowed in the Lloyd Street Constitutional Club on Sunday afternoons, but confined to the Card Room. The Ladies are however allowed to sit in the middle room instead of the large room when the weather is cold.

The game of "slosh" (a form of Billiards played by the Colonials in India) is allowed for half hour periods at the cost of one shilling.

A Mr F J Hughes of 30 Rowley Grove is refused membership because in answer to what political views he holds, the reply was none. The Steward is reprimanded for discussing Club business at the Bar and for being rude.

English Electric go into light industry in addition to the heavy industry, making instrumentation requiring the skills of jewellers and watchmakers from nearby Birmingham. Electrical Power requires protection in the event of electrical faults and English Electric manufacture relays to detect faults and soon become world leaders in this new emerging technology.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

8 ESTABLISHED YEARS (1961 – 1971)

The Lloyd Street Constitutional Club is by now well established, enjoying close liaison with high ranking politicians. In the public view some politicians are suspect, the Profumo scandal hitting the headlines in the early 1960's.

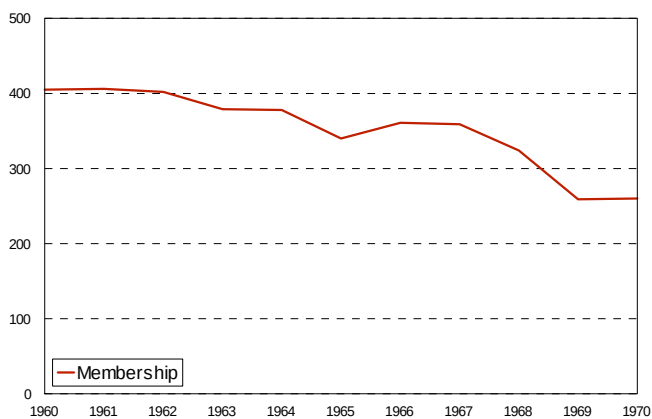
A Club Member, Mr W J Silvester, reminds the Club that the current year is a notable event to celebrate 50 years. Ladies are allowed to visit the Club on Sunday afternoons, using the Card Room. A Club Member, Mr Blackburn, brings in a visitor and uses a fictitious name for the visitor. A letter is sent to Mr Blackburn to say his visitor “was not at this address”, and it is made clear that such behaviour is not acceptable.

For the 50th Anniversary the Club records show a receipt for the outlay.

<u>50th Anniversary</u>					
36 Gals. of "E" @ 14/-				25	4 .
19 Bass @ 12/-				11	8 .
44 Jokes @ 10/-				22	. .
Dinner for helpers				2	8 1/2
Dinner for Secret ary				7	11
Pianist				1	10 .
Soda Refreshments				40	. .
Goodwill for moving pictures.				6	. .
<u>Whiskey</u>	98	2		£108	18 .
	2	1	6		
	<u>£96</u>	0	6		
	58	12		Recd.	10 16
	10				<u>£98</u> 2 .

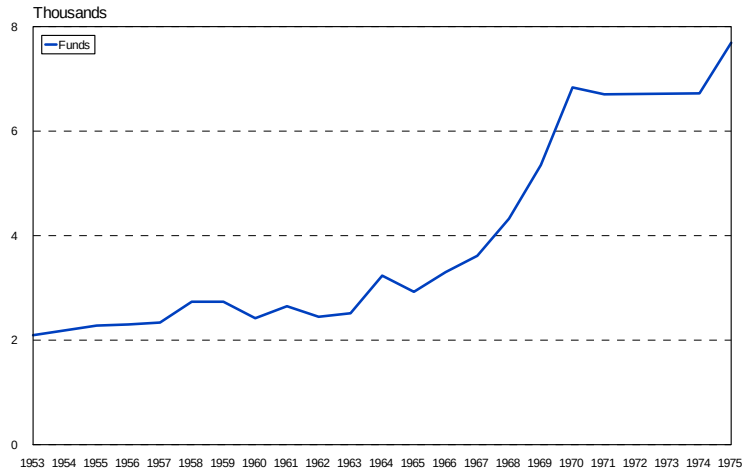
In May 1961 the Secretary is bought a typewriter. The Prison Commissioners acquire ground next to the bowling green.

The records in the Club Committee Room give very little information except to provide figures of membership and financial detail. Membership shows a decline and yet the Club prospers financially.

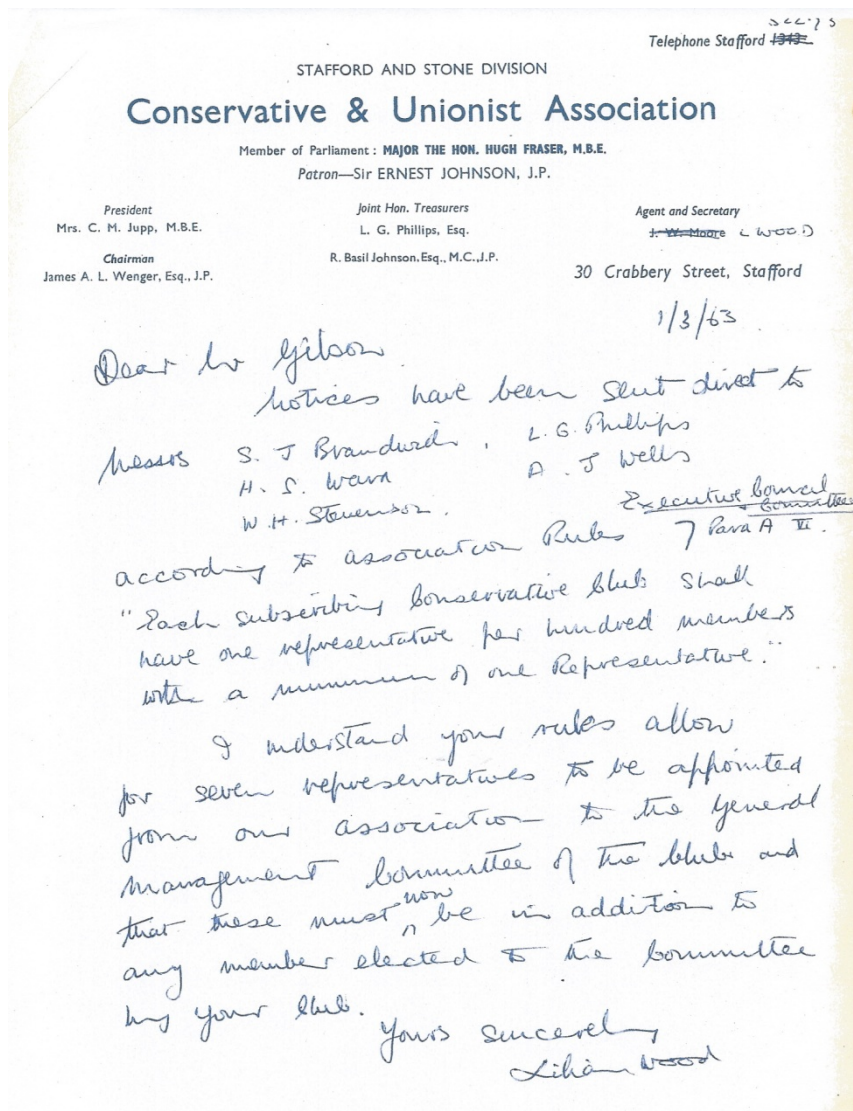


Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

For the third period of twenty years (1953 to 1973) the Club finances continue to improve.



The Constitutional Club receive correspondence from the local Conservative office detailing the expected membership representation expected.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

In every AGM from 1966 it is stated that Ladies use of the Lounge is permitted on Saturdays and Sundays if accompanied by a Member.

Every membership application requests the applicant to state their political views. Mr Bernard Loveys is the Chairman to be succeeded by Mr H Cade in February 1967 and Mr Loveys is Vice-Chairman. The Secretary is Mr G A Dean.

In 1968 the Treasurer is paid twenty pounds rising to twenty five pounds in 1969. The Steward, Mr Riley resigns in 1969 and a Mr Aukland is appointed.

An extension telephone is added to the bar in November 1968.

Mr Gage supplies 1050 numbers for a raffle including a gift of 50 cigarettes.

The Stafford Constitutional Club is on the verge of change. It has clearly become affluent and almost exclusive, however, as a gentleman's club it is beginning to relax its policy on allowing Ladies into the club.

On the national scene Mr Harold Macmillan continues in office until 1963 and is succeeded by Sir Alec Douglas-Home, renouncing his peerage to stand for the House of Commons.

In 1964 the Labour party wins the Elections and the rest of the 1960's see Mr Harold Wilson as Prime Minister.

English Electric dominance in the heavy and light electrical industry is expanding and for the meter and relay light electrical industry there is a need to expand. At St Leonards a new factory is to emerge to be commonly called the Meter Relay and Instrument (MRI) Works or the St Leonards Factory. This is opened in 1964. An emerging company, General Electric Company (not to be confused with General Electric in the USA) in Birmingham are to compete in this field and the technology that went alongside is used in the weighing and measurements industry. This develops into the Avery Scales division, which moves away from Stafford but because English Electric are so heavily involved in the heavy industry with Associated Electrical Industries in Trafford Park Manchester the take-over by General Electric Company is not prevented. By 1969 this take-over is complete.

However, at the English Electric Main Works the Mercury Arc technology of the past is being used by a new invention called the Thyristor which had developed from an earlier invention called the Transistor. This heralds the electronics industry for which the Nelson Laboratories becomes well known. On the military side this develops further by the use of control equipment which moves to Kidsgrove. Besides military electronics the transistor, and later the operational amplifier are developed at the Nelson Laboratories and at Kidsgrove this becomes the corner stone design centre of the domestic electronic music centre and electric organ. The electronics is used in the MRI for relays and instruments and became the foundation for the Stafford Technical College. By the mid 1960 electronics has developed to bring about the integrated device called the micro-processor and the Stafford College becomes the centre for developing this technology led by Intel. Stafford is eventually to become a computer centre.

It is not clear if the Stafford Constitutional Club benefited from the growth in Industry or the changes in population. The Irish influx from the early Liberal Party support had their own Club, the mechanised Shoe Industry of Lotus had their own Club, English Electric Main Works had their own Club, the MRI had their Club and Doman Diesels had their own Club. Snooker is on the rise as it becomes a televised sport, but Pool being played on a half sized table was easier set up in Clubs and Public Houses. Snooker was regarded as an elitist sport, as was golf, and Stafford Constitutional Club boasted high quality well maintained Billiard and Snooker tables.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History



Stafford Constitutional Club Billiards and Snooker Team

Not only in Billiards and Snooker, but in all aspects of sport. The Members show off their trophies.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

9 CHANGING YEARS (1971 – 1981)

This period in the Club history brings the Club membership to within range of what members may recall. A frequent claim made by long-standing Club Members after the year 2010 is that they have been members for forty years, which of course takes recall to 1971. The Club membership register details membership commencing in 1973, but some preceding that date with no joining date are recorded.

On the 20 July 1970 the Club agreed to accept Ladies for Saturday, Sunday and Thursday evenings, but a request for Tuesday nights fails. After many years with Barclays Bank the Club are not happy with them and transfer their Accounts to Lloyds in March 1971.

The boiler fails and a Club Member, Mr Alan Perry, comes to the rescue. A request is made for glasses without a marker, but this is refused as the glasses with marker avoid spillage on the carpet. Club refurbishment is considered at an estimated cost of nearly £2400.

The Lloyd Street Constitutional Club celebrates the sixtieth anniversary on 14th December 1971. Turnover for the year was £17285 and cash in bank £6704. Income from the gaming machines is the main source of income and Mr and Mrs Harrington are the Stewards.

In the 62nd AGM of 1974 Mr Hugh Fraser MP is elected Club President and this AGM is one of the few occasions when he was able to be present. Chairman is Mr M D Abels, Secretary is Mr C G McSpirit and Treasurer is Mr L G Phillips. Committee Members are Mr A F C Botterill, Mr S Bowen, Mr L Lake and Mr D Court. There are two Vice Presidents in Mr F G Hurst and Mr R P Stockhouse.

The Club is in strong support of Mr Edward Heath, elected as Prime Minister in 1970 to 1974, who had been challenged for Leadership of the Conservative Party by Sir Hugh Fraser.



For two years Harold Wilson comes back into power to hand over to James Callaghan up until 1979.

The 1975 AGM is very poorly attended and very little recorded except the election of Officers who are:- M D Abels, Chairman; C G McSpirit, Secretary; A W Perry; R C Couture; H J Gage; V Lake and A Bints. Messrs S Greedy and P Andrews qualify for Life Membership. Special mention is made of the long and valuable service given by Mr H S Cade.

It is not clearly defined but it may appear the Club at this time changed the name of the Club to become The Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club. From the onset of the Club in the 1900's it is understood that the term "Constitutional" applied to the elite of the Conservative Gentleman's clubs and therefore the addition of the word "Conservative" is perhaps to stress the stronger support of the Conservative, or otherwise called the Unionist Party.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The 1976 Committee are listed as:- M D Abels, Chairman; A F C Botterill, Vice Chair; D G Blundell; H J Gage; A Burns; B Evans; J H D McCourt; A Hobson; V Lake; A W Perry; J A Boulton; H W McCabe; S Bowen; C G McSpirt, Secretary. The Committee proposes and agree the medals and bar decorations are to cease. It is noted that the Billiards League are playing at the Lloyd Street Club but the Club did not have a team in the League. This left the Snooker and Billiards bookings full and a resolve is made to enter a team in the League. The ACC express concern that the Club is not adequately represented at ACC meetings, and this is to be addressed. Rules 7, 8 and 11 are to be reviewed and subject to change. New members are to be proposed by a member of 2 years or more and seconded by a member of 1 year or more. A L Wiggins applies for Honorary Life Membership on the basis of being over 65 and having been a member for over 15 years, which is accepted.

The 1977 Committee are listed as:- C G McSpirt, Chairman; A Hobson, Vice Chair; D Blundell; H C McCabe; L G Phillips; H Gage; L J K Painter; W R Way; M Bond; P T Chatterley; E D Todd; A J Perry; J A J Boulton. Replacement Stewards Dan and Rowena Andcliffe resign and Mr & Mrs Denman are selected. The Stewards rate is £46.03 a week and £15.31 a week. Because the Lounge is being decorated the Ladies are allowed in the gentlemen's Bar. The Club donate £150 to the local Conservative office. The Secretary Honorarium is £350 and the Treasurer £250 per annum. Each Club Member has 25 pence taken out of subscription for the local Conservative party, the Member fee £5, Retired Member fee £1 and Associate Member (Ladies) £1.25 per annum. A loss of 73 members is made because of non-payment. Rule 14 is enforced, that being that only Conservatives can be Members.

In January of 1978 Mr Cade donates a picture of the Queen to be hung in the Lounge. A new piano is to be purchased and the Stewards, Mr & Mrs Denman resign to be replaced by Mr & Mrs Moss, Messrs Rowney supply a music centre for the extension. The extension to the lounge is estimated at £7349 and furnishings at about £5000. Enthusiasm for Mrs Margaret Thatcher is growing and in July it was decided to purchase a portrait measuring 24 inches by 30 inches at a cost of £78.30. When delivered it was seen to be larger than that of the Queen, and a replacement was ordered. Mr L G Phillips resigns as Treasurer and a presentation to Mr Phillips is planned for October at which Mr Hugh Fraser will preside. The Ladies Social Section is inaugurated in September and in November the Stewards, Mr & Mrs Moss resign. New Stewards selected are Mr & Mrs Avery and are paid £62.86 for 62 hour week and £21.60 for a 24 hour week respectively. By December this was increased to £64.48 and £28.22 respectively. Bar staff are paid £1 an hour. Mr W R Way resigns from the Committee. Mrs J Dalgarno and Mr C G McSpirt attend to the Christmas arrangements.

In January of 1979 it is resolved the bar stools in the alcove are to be removed when the bar is busy and taxis are to be encouraged not to go round the wrong way in the car park and a piano is to be purchased for £450, however there is strong feeling than an organ would have been preferred. Mr C G McSpirt resigns from the Committee. Bingo is arranged by the Ladies and Mr Blundell considered this would lower the tone of the Club if it became a regular feature. In April 1979 the pianist brought a drummer to accompany, and without hesitation this is not allowed. It is agreed that the Ladies have a separate notice board which Mrs J Dalgarno will supply. When this notice board is hung in the Lounge there is objection and it is moved to the Hallway.

The July 1979 count of Membership stood at 674 of which 452 are Full, 56 Honorary Life Members, 44 Old Age Pensioners and 122 Associate Members being Ladies. The Apathy of Members in canvassing for Elections was deplored.

Membership at December 1979 is 698 comprising of 470 Full, 56 Honorary Life Members, 47 Old Age Pensioners and 125 Associates (Ladies).

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The decade ends with a surprise and yet confident victory in May 1979 for Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the first female Prime Minister.



In August 1979 the pianist insults Mrs Todd and Mr Blundell's daughter, who Mr A Hobson ruled is completely out of order and the pianist is banned from the Club. This led to the purchase of an organ instead of the piano with a maximum spend of £650. One is obtained for £722 with a discount of £57. Mr Badfish is appointed to play the organ. The Ladies want to have a raffle but this is disallowed but bringing toys and other gifts is accepted. Honorarium payments to Secretary and Treasurer are agreed at £400 and £275 per annum respectively.

The Constitutional Conservative Club prospers with substantial investments made in Building Societies and in Bonds. Towards the end of 1979 the Banks are offering a more favourable rate of interest and £20,000 is invested in Lloyds rather than a previous Building Society account. Because there are frequent deposits in investment accounts throughout the 1970's the cash in hand is being kept to running costs and no longer reflected the wealth of the Club. Recording the current wealth of the Club is no longer clear.

Many times in the history of the Club the question is asked as to whether the Club is a Political or a Billiards Club, accepting that it is always a Gentleman's Club. The answer at the end of 1979 is not straight forward. The Club Members are not entirely enthusiastic about the political scene, the Billiards and Snooker activities confined to but a few, acknowledging that the game is attracting young people and amongst them, even below the age of 18, some remarkable players. This creates a twofold dilemma, when playing visiting teams who had under age players, in the relaxing of Rules to allow under age honorary members and the admittance of children. The 67th AGM meets these questions and from it came the lack of representation at the Conservative Association meetings, the acceptance of visiting team members who had 14 year old competitors and a vote was taken on the use by Ladies of the Gentleman's Bar on Saturday and Sunday evenings. This latter motion is defeated. Clearly the Club is bursting for change but reluctantly in the case of the general membership, the Committee, in the present climate are pushing for politics as being the main agenda.

Some remarkable developments were in hand, the notable development being in Sir Clive Sinclair's personal computer. In addition the BBC and others, such as IBM had also developed a personal computer, and most of these required a cathode ray dedicated screen. Sinclair came up with a device which could use the already commercial television screen and in 1982 the ZX90, as illustrated, was available in most homes where program writing in basic could be done, besides games. Amstrad were to take over in 1986. The PC battle had begun.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

10 POLITICAL GRANDEUR (1981 – 1991)

The Committee Members in 1980 are:- A Hobson, Chairman; C Bough; D G P Blundell; G A Dean; E D Todd; A Galley; L G K Painter; G F T Williams; S P Millward; M D Abels; H S Cade; R Dorsey; A W Perry; E Chatterley; G C McSpirit; A W Burns.

It is approved that the Young Conservatives can meet at the Club to hold meetings. Billiards are to be given greater consideration in providing free lighting for tournaments and a planned extension will provide more table room and an office for the Treasurer and Secretary. Member's daughters are accepted as well as Members wives. Mr N V A Coghill application for membership had been lost under the bar since May 1979, and is now accepted as is the application for Honorary Life Membership for Mr A F C Botterill. Access to the Club car park could be made from Crooked Bridge Road and Victoria Street.

A resolution is made to enforce Rule 5 to read "Applicants shall be subscribing members of the Conservative Association" and further, "Club Subscriptions shall include the membership fee of Stafford and Stone Conservative Association" The vote is 25 for and 15 against. This is referred to the Conservative Head Quarters in Castle Street which is newly and officially opened in April 1980.

On the 70th year of the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club a tribute is paid to Frank Cooper who had served 68 years in the Association. Rules 14, 15, 16, 35 and 79 were reviewed. In particular Rule 79 is to make Ladies, Associate Members. A Special General Meeting is called to discuss a proposal affecting Rule 50 which is to resolve whether the Club was more Political than a Snooker Club. This resolution is defeated by 30 for and 65 against the Club having a Political emphasis. There were no abstainers. From a Club Membership of about 690 this represented only 13% membership and the Club Committee were committed to the success of Margaret Thatcher. However, the leaning towards Snooker was noted and Ray Reardon is booked to give an exhibition in September 1980. Two teams are formed for Billiards competition, the second team comprising prison officers. The two teams won 62/20. The Club Rules are examined in detail and confirmed with the Industrial and Provident Act 1965 under which the Club is registered as number 20628 at 27 North Audley Street, London W1Y 2AP.

The cost to the Club of Ray Reardon's appearance was just over £200 and Peter Shelley is elected to play a match game against Ray Reardon. Sixty members attend and a photograph of the event held on 26 September 1980 is available on the Club premises in the keep of Jim Watson. (2014 Committee Buildings Chairman). Two framed pictures are hung in the Billiards Room for some time and prints are available at a cost of £4. One Club Member, Mr A Brassington becomes over enthusiastic and needed to be curtailed.



Honorarium payments to Secretary are set at £425 with £175 mileage allowance and for the Treasurer £325 with mileage allowance of £125 per annum. The Gardener rate is set at £6 per week in spring & summer and £3 per week in autumn & winter. Access to the Club is enabled from Victoria Street and Lloyd Street is pedestrianised. The ACC approve all Rules except Rule 23 and Membership is recorded as 722. Two teams had entered for the Stafford and District Billiards and Snooker League without the permission of the Committee and Mr Harry Richards is suitably reprimanded. A Viscount Organ with Loud-speaker was purchased, for £1600, emphasising the importance of the growing social and entertainment aspect of the Club.

The 1981 Committee Members are:- A W Burns; H S Cade; C G McSpirit; A Hobson; E D Todd; W S Apedaile; G F T Williams; G A Dean; S P Millward; D G P Blundell; M D Abels; L G K Painter; A N Scarratt. Club Registration is renewed for a further ten years. The Ladies Section is disbanded from April due to poor support.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The Club invests £15000 in Exchequer Bonds and £15000 in Transport Stock. Cash in the Bank stood at £9754. £500 is donated to the Conservative Association and in addition 25 pence per Member.

Ribald jokes on the public address system are scorned and Mr Green is asked to apologise. A proposal to have pairs snooker games after nine in the evening is rejected. The use of Christian names to book Billiards / Snooker is to be stopped, names in full to be used. The inclusion of a Pool Table is rejected. The Park Lane gaming machine is considered unacceptable and the Colossus gaming machine is considered worn out. These are to be replaced by the Valentine and Eclipse gaming machines. An extension to the Billiards room is considered at an estimated cost of £32000.

The big event in 1981 on 29th July is the Royal Wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer. Celebrations at the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club are open to Members wives.



For the 1982 Annual General Meeting Sir Hugh Fraser will not be able to attend, but is proposed as President. The Membership is reported to be 704 of which 146 are Associates. The Steward is reprimanded for lack of cleanliness and quality of beer.

Three plans are considered for the Club. Phase 1 is for the Bar at an estimate of £9639 to be completed by Christmas 1992. Phase 2 is for the Lounge at an estimate of £16935 to be completed by Easter 1993. Phase 3 is for the Billiards Extension at an estimate of £40000, to be held in abeyance. These plans are allocated a space in the Stafford Newsletter.

The Travellers Rest guest house has proposed plans to convert to a public house, to which the Club raises an objection. The Stewards, Mr & Mrs Amery create a problem in that Mr Amery is 65 and has to retire. The question of transferring the contract to Mrs Amery was considered.

For 1983 it was proposed that Rule 48 be changed to alter the Club financial year end to 30th September instead of 30th December. The Ladies are allowed in the Bar on Saturdays and Sundays and every Lunch-time from Monday to Friday and the Chairman can open the Bar to Ladies at any other time.

Subscriptions are raised from £5 to £10 for Full Members and Associate Membership from £1.25 to £2.50. Associate Membership for Ladies over 65 and five years membership is reduced to £1. Mr Cade thought that the increase would lose members. An appeal "Millions for Maggie" is responded to with a contribution from the Club of £50. A function arranged for 29th April 1983 is arranged for the re-opening of the Bar to which the Mayor of Stafford and the Club President would attend.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The Committee consider the shortage of young people and questioned if this was due to the dress code. Mr J Proudlock and Mrs S Collinson are admonished for drinking after hours. Mrs Collinson apologised suitably but Mr Proudlock is adamant it was his right and subsequently is suspended.

A donation of £500 is proposed for the Sir Hugh Fraser fighting fund. A revised proposal to reduce this to £300 is defeated. The Chairman apologises for allowing Black Label instead of Harp. Mr & Mrs Amey resigned as Stewards and new Stewards Mr & Mrs A H Burton are appointed. Visitors who attend more than twice in a month is not allowed.

The shock event of 1984 is the death of Sir Hugh Fraser in March.

The Club congratulates Mr Bill Cash on his election to the Stafford and Stone seat.

In April 1984 the Membership count was a total of 691 made up of 418 Full, 40 Life, 55 Senior Citizens, and 170 Associates. An experiment to have a pool table on the Lounge dance floor for three months is proposed, but no record is kept as whether this took place. The issue at large is that the fruit machines are not paying out as expected. New Stewards are required as Mrs Burton had walked out on her husband. New Steward selected was Mr D W Harper.

The second shock of 1984 is the bomb outrage at the Conservative Conference in Brighton.

The inauguration of Bill Cash as President of the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club is arranged for the 15th December 1984. A gift offered by Bill Cash is a Trophy but the Club preferred a portrait of the Royal Family.

In 1985 a vote taken on Ladies using the Club facilities is for Wednesdays, which lost 20 for and 22 against; and for Sunday lunch, won 33 for 5 against; and for Bank Holidays won 31 for 9 against. A visit by Mrs Thatcher is discussed. In October 1985 Mr R Palser damaged his suit in the Club and a claim is made on the club insurance which is fully reimbursed in January 1986. Members complain that there is little margin between the price of draught beer in the public houses as compared with the Club. The Ladies enjoyed the newcomers:- Mrs P West, Mrs K E Rogers and Mrs I Hardy, who are powerful allies. Dr Patterson agrees the use of the Orchard car park after evening surgery.

Difficulty is being experienced with the Steward who in the past had been a senior Naval officer and expected a level of respect which he felt is not offered at the Club. Discussion at Committee level considered moving the Steward to external quarters so that the Club could use the space of the Flat. A bungalow on the lawn is considered. Miss J M Bishop resigns because her quiet at the Club is being disturbed because of the Bingo. Subsequently, following the decision made in 1986 Mrs Bishop is asked to reconsider as she is to be allowed in the Bar. Correspondence was passed between the Steward and Messrs W Stevenson, R K Palser and B Wood. Later discussions are to take place with the Steward and the Club's solicitors. The outcome is not clear except that a mutual understanding has been agreed. Mr M J Freeman writes to say that he cannot support present Government policies and his letter is passed to Mr Bill Cash.

In 1986 the AGM voted on Ladies to have full access to the Club's facilities. This was a year earlier than the prediction by the Liberal Leaders wife, Mrs C B M'Laren in the 1900's. The Committee set their intent to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club. ACC ties were offered but with little response. The 75th Anniversary celebrations were set for 21st June 1986. The organising Committee are:- H S Cade; M D Abels; F A Lingard; G F T Williams; E J Burrows; B Shipley; N H Read; J D Callbeck; V T Aldis; J E O Clayton.

Guests are:- The Club President Mr Bill Cash and Mrs Cash; The Mayoress and Guest; Chairman of the Local Conservative Party and Guest; Mrs Frank Cooper; Representatives from Banks Brewery; Representatives from Bass Brewery; Dr Patterson; Reverend Father Fisher.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The programme for the event is set out:

Afternoon	
2:15	Opening by Mr Bill Cash
2:30	Clog Dancers
2:45	Celebrity
3:00	Juggling Act (Eddie Idris)
3:20	Clog Dancers
3:40	Barber Shop Quartet
4:00	Juggling Act (Eddie Idris)
4:30	Punch and Judy
5:00	Barber Shop Quartet

Evening	
7:30	Trent Valley Stompers
	Magician
	Duo (Rick Marlyn)
	Barber Shop Quartet
	BBC

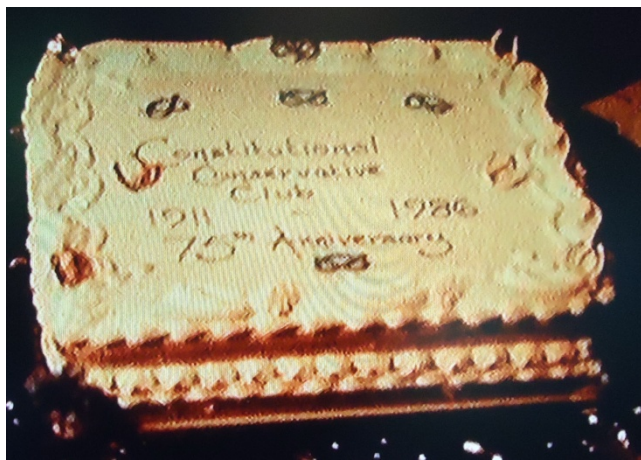
The event is publicised in the Newsletter in the 7th June and 14th June edition and a Sentinel reporter is booked for the event. An Anniversary cake eighteen inches square is made with a back-up cake for a cost of £75. Mr Frank Cooper Junior is elected to cut the cake. Mrs Cooper was too ill to attend.



Mr A Hobson introduces Mr W Cash MP



Mr W Cash MP Opens the Event



The 75th Anniversary Cake

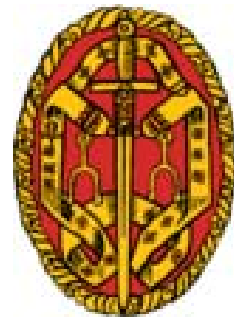


Mr F Cooper Jnr & Mrs Cooper

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The Steward is reported to have done very well throughout these celebrations but only four days after the event wrote a letter to the Committee, which was to dig a big hole for him self. The Committee decided that under Rule 36 there was no alternative but to dismiss the Steward, Mr D W Harper. However, the situation is not clear cut because the Steward musters support amongst the Members and gains 44 signed petitions in support, led by Mr A W Burns and Mr G Blackhouse. The outcome is that Mr Harper takes his case to an Industrial Tribunal at Wolverhampton. The support gained from Members is not backed by the ACC, who rule that in this case the decision of the Committee must stand and that Members otherwise had no say. His case is lost and costs were attributed to Mr Harper, which the Club retrieved through insurance. Mr A W Burns is expelled from the Club and Mr G Blackhouse is given the opportunity to retract whilst his membership was frozen and restored after a reprimand in December 1986. Some of the 44 signatories resigned and most of the others apologised for going against the Committee. New Stewards selected are Mr and Mrs Riley. Mr Bill Cash chaired the 1986 AGM.

At the time of writing Mr Bill Cash is awarded a Knight Bachelor in the 2014 Honours List and is now Sir William Hugh Paul Cash, Member of Parliament for Stone.



Knight Bachelor Emblem

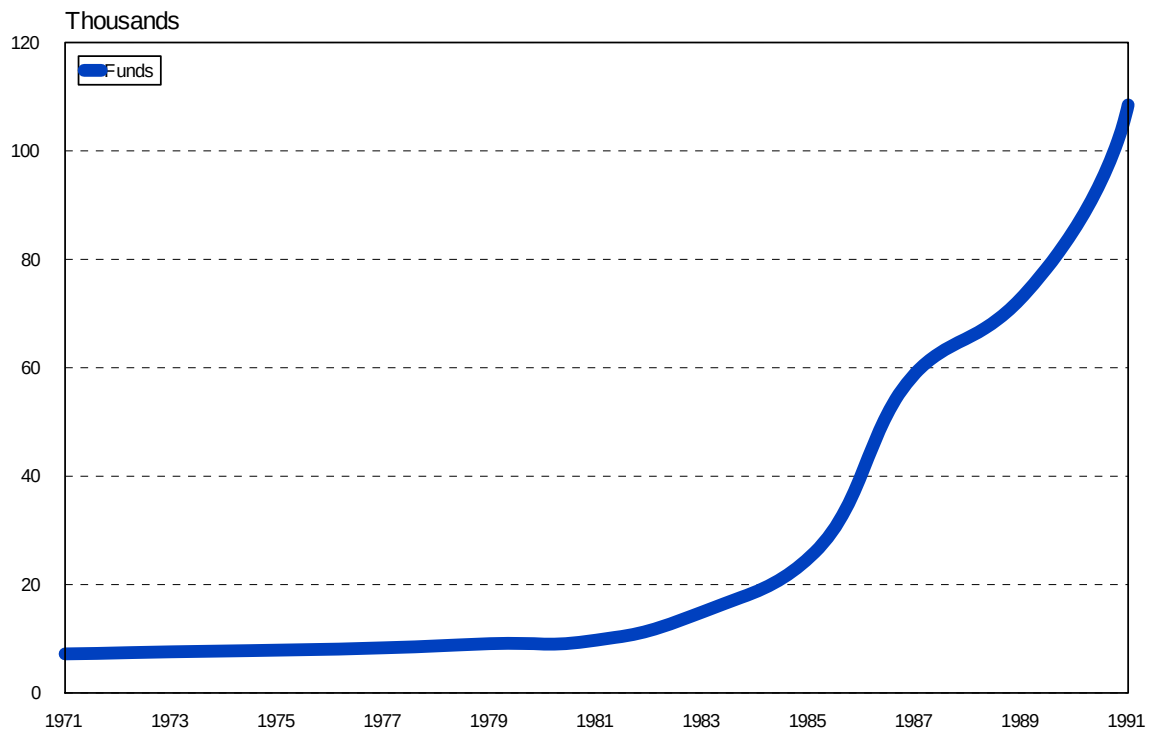
Mr Bill Cash retains his seat for Stafford and Stone in the 1987 Elections in support of Mrs Margaret Thatcher who gains her third term of office. The Committee allocates £600 to the Stafford and Stone Conservative Association and the Old Bottle Store is sold to the Stafford Borough. A long standing Committee Member, Mr H S Cade is not re-elected and the Committee allocate £75 to purchase a presentation gift to Mr Cade. A Canteen of Cutlery was selected and presented to Mr Cade by the President. The new Steward threatens to resign and the Chairman and Secretary act quickly to calm troubled waters. The Rule Book to pattern K is proposed. A Duty Officer rota is put in place to ensure Members are bona fide. Joining the elite political Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club is very important to some, and besides the arduous application and acceptance there are the occasional desperate applications. One such case is the application of a Mr J B Breakwell who had supplied reference from a previous St Neots Club, to which the Secretary wrote for confirmation to find he was not known. The Committee note that one Member, a Mr C Bough favours the Service Area at the Bar. He is politely but firmly asked to move away on busy occasions. The Secretary Honorarium is raised from £820 to £850 and the Treasurer Honorarium is raised from £560 to £600 per annum. The Fruit machines are reported to be returning £3000 a month and in over a year just over £35000. Mr N H Read succeeds Mr P A Lingard as Treasurer whilst Mr A Way retains his office as Secretary. Bar takings are £6300 a month and the Committee agree to donate £750 to the Fighting Fund, acknowledged by the Conservative Association.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The 1988 Committee are:- J P Colbeck; D G P Blundell; V T Aldis; J E Salt; E J Burrows; G F T Williams; A F C Botterill; K Lingard; A Hobson, Chairman; M D Abels; F R Goode; N H Read, Treasurer; G A Dean; B Shipley; A Way, Secretary. From the beginnings of the Club in 1911 there had always been four Committees being the Finance Committee, the Political Committee, the Billiards and Snooker Committee, the Sports and Social Committee, which four reported to the House Committee. It was decided to amalgamate these to two Committee meetings a month. The President, Mr Bill Cash MP is affirmed at the 1988/89 AGM with Vice Presidents M D Abels and A F C Botterill, the Treasurer, N H Read and Secretary A Way. The fruit machines are the main source of income at £1021 a week. Subscriptions are raised by 50 pence for Full and Associate Memberships. The Committee, represented by Mr G F T Williams and Mr Alex Way

There are but scant references to the 1989 AGM other than B Shipley is Chairman and that a vote is taken to purchase two additional Billiard/Snooker tables, which is passed by 71 for and 10 against. Consideration is given to asking John Virgo to give an exhibition of Snooker but the cost is prohibitive. An extension to the existing Billiards room is approved, the project awarded to K Hanks of Sandon

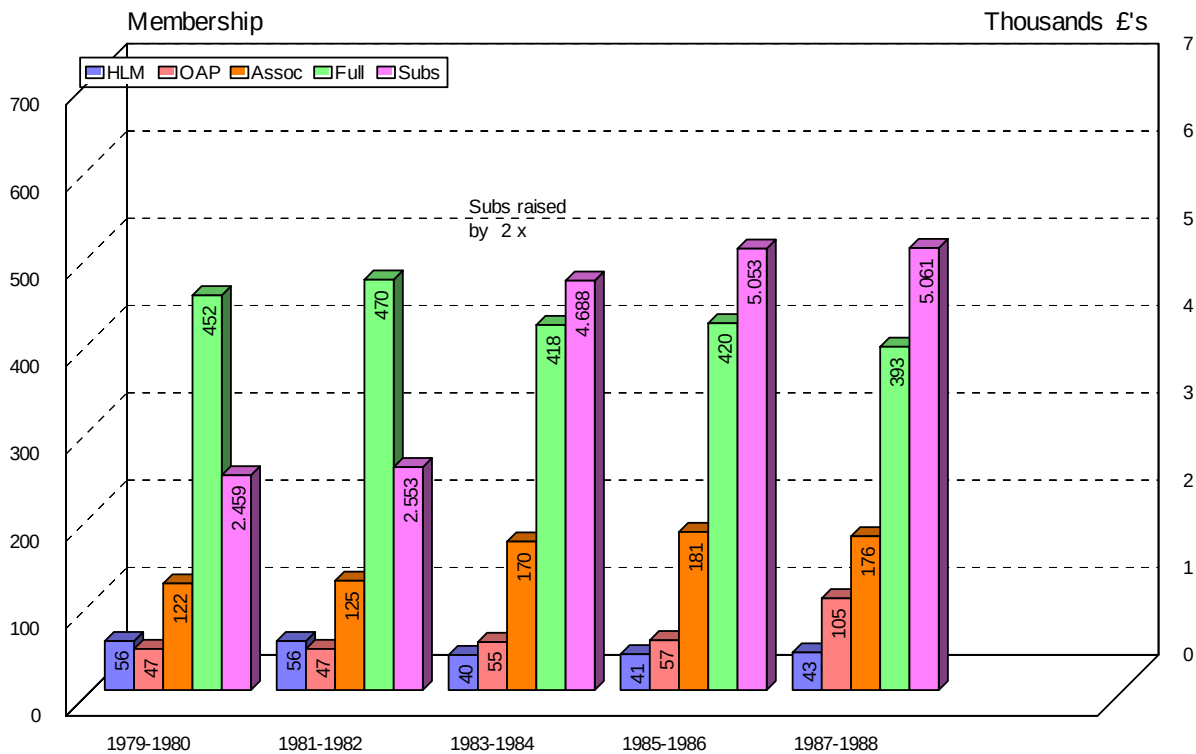
For the fourth twenty year period the finances are shown spanning the period when the pound changed value.



The ACC had developed software for Clubs providing a data base from which renewal letters and subscriptions could be recorded. This was provided by East Coast Software adapted from iBase Plus.

From 1979 the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club Limited has a four tier membership comprising Full, Honorary Life, Senior (OAP) and Associate (Female). Subscriptions in 1979 are £5.00; £0.00; £1.00 and £1.25 respectively. By 1987 Subscriptions were set £11.00; £0.00; £2.00 and £3.00 respectively.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History



The PC battle takes place in the field of software development, which similar to the earlier contest in the video world between Betamax and VHS, is won by the emerging giant Microsoft founded by Bill Gates against the now technically superior Apple products, which have fashioned in 2014 the modern interactive mobile phone.

In the 1980's software rivalry is acute and is a continuous state of development. By 1997 Typewriters are replaced by the PC and printer combination and are used in the home as well, as had been used for ten years previous in the office. Microsoft corners most of this market. The first Membership print-out in the Club records for the Lloyd Street Stafford Constitutional Club is 1996, but may have been printed out from a 5½ inch disc at an office as the print-out is on a continuous paper feed 14½ inch wide reel printer.

The ACC had developed software for Clubs providing a data base from which renewal letters and subscriptions could be recorded. This is provided by East Coast Software adapted from iBase Plus.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

11 IDENTITY CHANGE (1991 – 2001)

The only records found of the 1990's are the AGM notes, which provide brief detail. In addition a history of the Stafford Constitutional Conservative Club becomes contemporary and the public acceptance of detail becomes complex following the Cold War years of spies and espionage, leading to a defence mechanism to protect the private life of the individual and of collective bodies. This led to the often misinterpreted and misused Data Protection Act of 1998, intended to be for the protection of the individual. An Act used to advantage as a shield to hide acts not intended to be exposed.

In contrast, the internet was developing in 1991 with his introduction of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee, where data becomes Public Domain and as long as it can be considered that information is in the Public Interest, it is acceptable. The title Constitutional gives it recognition as a Public Body linked to the elite Conservative and therefore it has a public image, and an influence. Today it can be seen in the Public Domain of Facebook.

The opening of 1990 began with a Club resolution that the Poll Tax is not acceptable. It is proposed by Bob Palser that the Club should have a Supper Licence. The response is not recorded. Investments with Lloyds of £80,000 and with the Lancashire County Council of £9,000 are approved and two new Billiard Tables are purchased from Paul Reynolds. The Committee is dealing with the Stafford Borough Council affecting the acquisition of land in regard to the Sandon Road improvement. Plans are in hand for the opening of the extension of the Billiards room. The opening ceremony will be led by Mr Bill Cash MP with the Mayor and Mayoress of Stafford and Sir Marcus Fox MP on 14 July 1990.

The media are reporting dissatisfaction with the Government and in particular with Mrs Thatcher. The political commentary is that within the Conservative Party the Long Knives are out. In November 1990 Mrs Thatcher resigns to be replaced by Mr John Major and with it a Recession, the Gulf War and the Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. Mr John Major with Mr Douglas Hurd signed Britain up to the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). Subsequently, on Black Wednesday (16 September 1992) Britain was forced to exit from the European Exchange.



In 1991 the Certificate for the Club is renewed for five years. The proposal in 1987 to go from Model J to Model K Rules was accepted. Reference in the AGM is made to the good work done by the Stewards John and Elizabeth. A meeting held in March approved the Kitchen changes.

In 1992 the Secretary Mr Alex Way retires and the position is left open and reference is made to the visit of Mrs Thatcher. This year is the 80th Birthday of the Club under the Chairmanship of Mr A Hobson. The Secretary is Mike Abels and Treasurer Geoff Hulme. The Stewards John and Elizabeth are to take up a new life in Benidom, Spain. New Stewards are Stuart and Sue. At the footing of the "CONS CLUB" newsletter is an amusing misprint detail naming the Club as "Stafford Constitutional Conservation Club".

At the 81st AGM the Secretary position is offered to Mr George H Mitchell, but is subsequently withdrawn. The Treasurer is Mr P A Lingard. Full Membership is raised from £12 to £13 per annum and Associate Member (Ladies) rose from £4.50 to £5.50 per annum. Over 65 with 5 years Membership is increased from £2 to £3 per annum. New Members are to pay a £1 share in addition, which applies for the first year of joining and is a once only payment. More than one share is not allowed. The Register records 800 memberships. Balance of General Fund is £148508.

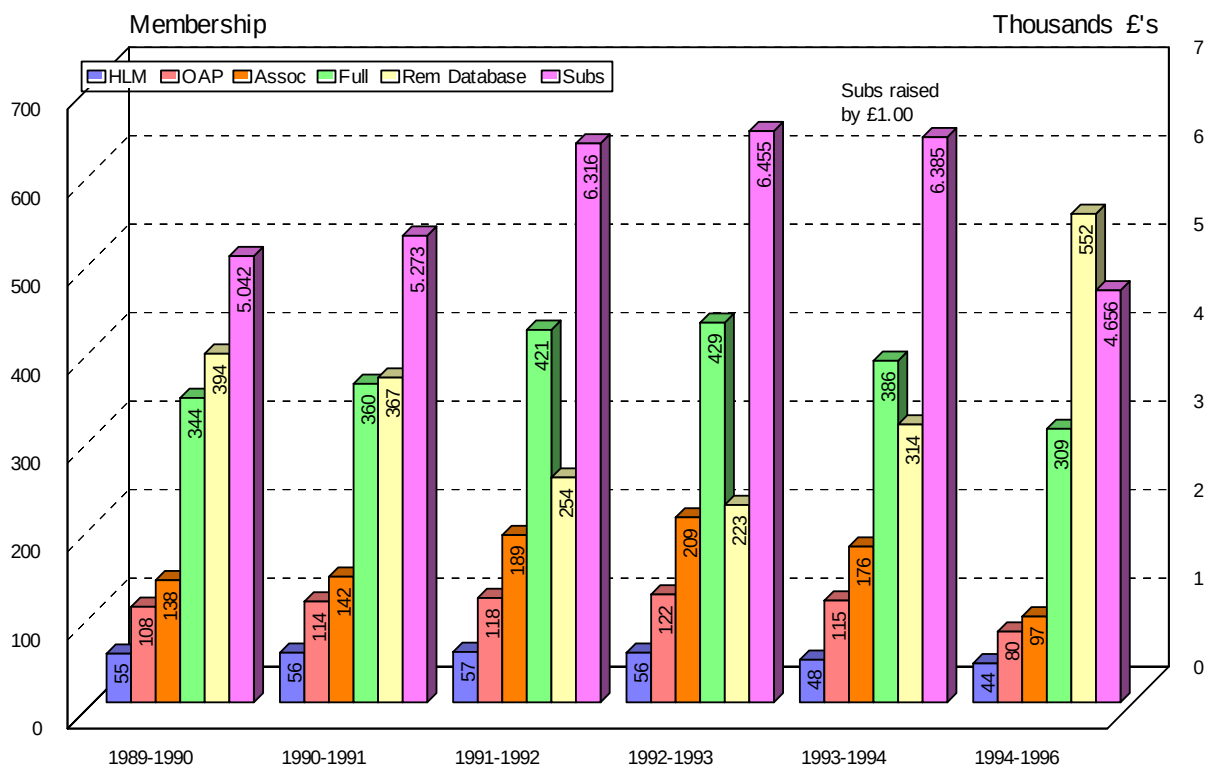
Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

In March 1994, the 82nd AGM, Mr Bill Cash MP presided and Mr R A E Gasch is elected Chairman and Mr A Hobson as Vice Chairman. Attendance at the AGM is recorded as 61. The early Newsletter in 1995 refers to 1994 as being difficult and the Stewards are unsettled with a decline in Members supporting the Club. Balance of General Fund is £156641

The decline in numbers was attributed to the poor attitude of the Stewards. For the first twelve months or so it appears the Stewards are accepted but as familiarity grew, complaints began. These came to a head when prominent members, Mr John and Mrs Judith Dalgarno and Mr F Goode write to the Chairman, Mr B Gasch. Mr Goode however intimates that the lowering of dress standards, too many Snooker Tournaments and the Interior Décor are other contributory factors besides the Stewards. New Stewards are called for.

March 1995 records 44 Members attend the AGM. A Special Meeting is called for August 1995 and 125 Members attend to discuss the falling off in attendance. Six Members are admonished later for drinking after time. In September the SCCC News is issued and makes mention of new Stewards Pat and Jane Doherty. Club Chairman is Bob Gasch, Secretary Mike Abels and Treasurer Geoff Hulme. Mike Abels is Acting Secretary as this position remains unfilled. Mr W N P Cash is elected President and Mike Abels and D G P Blundell are elected Vice Presidents. Mr A Hobson and Mr G A Nicholson resign from the Committee but other Committee Members are J M Edensor; N A Marsden; A Harding; B Tunney; H W Williams and newly elected B Coppin. The local Conservative Association is represented by Mr R A E Gasch and Mr A Hobson for the Club. Life Membership is granted to Mr R Follows and Mr W Ould. Mr Follows and Mr Ould are listed in the 2014 membership. Planning permission is given for a new downstairs kitchen. Steward salary is set at near £12,000 per annum and Stewardess set at near £5,400 per annum. Mr R Palser is requested to give his assurance in writing to accept that the Committee administer the existing Rules of the Club. Mr B Coppin is to arrange with A & D Billiards for recovering two tables and stretching cloths on the other two. Mr B Tunney is making arrangements for the Christmas festivities.

A Subscription increase is made in the 1993-1994 AGM and has an impact on membership.



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The 84th AGM is held in March 1996 and Mr Bill Cash MP presides and Vice Presidents are D Blundell and R Goode. Mr J A Glassey is not elected at this time. Mr A Harding is Chairman and Mr B Tunney is Vice Chairman. Mr B Coppin is Secretary and Mr G Hulme is Treasurer. Mr David Cameron introduces himself as the Conservative representative for Parliament. Mr Bill Cash is representing the Stone constituency. Adverts are placed for new Stewards. Mr Roy and Mrs Ann Metcalf are appointed.

Mr F R Goode presides over the 85th AGM in March 1997 and Vice Presidents are Mr D Blundell and Mr J A Glassey. The Chairman is Mr A Harding, the Secretary is Mr B Coppin, the Treasurer Mr G Hulme. The Stewards are Roy and Anne Metcalf. The following are granted Honorary Life Membership:- I P Binns; F N Bower; R E Johnson; A Lynch; W Scarratt; A Roulston; W Budd; J D Brewes; N J Lewis; A J Plant; W Stevenson; S T Wells; F V Birchall; T L Bromfield; D H Guthrie; J Wagstaff; M R George; H Wright. The 2014 member's records include the above except:- S T Wells; A Lynch; W Scarratt; W Budd; A J Plant; F V Birchall; T L Bromfield; D H Guthrie; J Wagstaff.

There are no financial records available for 1995 to 1997, and 2000 to 2002.



The Elections of 1997 for Stafford introduced Mr David Kidney as MP winning the seat from Mr David Cameron, but following the national swing to Labour which elected Mr Tony Blair as Prime Minister.

Sadly this year bore the news of the tragic accident of Lady Diana, Princess of Wales.



Mr F R Goode presides over the 86th AGM in March 1998 with Vice Presidents Mr D Blundell and Mr G A Glassey. In the Chair is Mr A Harding and the Vice Chairman is Mr B Tunney. The Secretary is Mr B Coppin and the Treasurer is Mr G Hulme. The Social Committee is led by Mr Hywel Williams and Mr N A Marsden is Finance Chairman. Mr B Tunney and Mr E A Houghton are also on the Committee. The Club name reverts back to the original, being the Stafford Constitutional Club, albeit the word Conservative slips in occasionally, even up until the mid 2000's. The Balance of the General Fund is £111,151.

The record of the 87th AGM held in March 1999 suggests that it was presided over by Mr A Harding and Mr F R Goode. Vice Presidents are not named and the Chairman is Mr G A Glassey. The Secretary is Mr B Coppin and the treasurer is Mr G Hulme. The Committee are N A Marsden; J Ramster; D L Perry; B Tuckett; T C Evans; A W Perry; A Waltho; E Houghton; A M Nowell. Nothing of significance is reported.

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Mr Harding is elected as President on a count of 43 to 26 against Mr F R Goode. A vote is held to increase the subscriptions by £3, except for Honorary Life Members. The result of the vote is: For 34 and Against 26. The vote is carried, however the AGM Notes do not state what the subscriptions are. The fruit machines are not delivering the expected income.

Life Membership is granted to the following:- L A S Hancock; J E Hucker; N H Jones; G H Mitchell; T J Reeves; W H Turnock; F T Williams. Present Club records in 2014 show the above to be HLM, except Mr L A S Hancock. Mr Goode considered that opting out of the Conservative Association is near impossible and that if the Club are considering smaller premises a 60% plan is under consideration which included the offer of 3 acres of ground to build a new club providing tennis and bowls. The present (in 1999) premises would require between £40,000 to £50,000 on repairs and improvements. It is considered that in the forthcoming elections of 2001 as much support should be given to the Conservative Party.

In June 1999 Mr A Nowell, Chairman of the Bar Committee, with Mr J Ramster, Chairman and B Coppin, Secretary approach Roy and Anne Metcalf recognising that the relationship between themselves and the Club has broken down. In July 1999 an advert was placed in the Newsletter for a full time Steward. The Balance of the General Fund is £107,792. Mr and Mrs Metcalf appeal to a Tribunal.

Between 1999 and 2001 the Club used the ACC Inter-Affiliation cards (Red) and Visitor cards (Blue) for Non Members. There is no record of prior use or post use of these cards.

N.B.—Please sign name in Ink.	
No. 491	Date.....19.....
CAUTION.	
I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I have paid my Subscription at my own Club to date and have produced for inspection by the proper authority my Club Subscription Card and Inter-Affiliation Ticket. I hereby also pledge myself to abide by the Rules and Bye-Laws of this Club and of the Association of Conservative Clubs whilst visiting it as an Inter-Affiliated Member.	
Signed	
Name of Club.....	
No. of I.A. Ticket.....	
The Door-keeper must satisfy himself that the above signature agrees with the signature on the Inter-Affiliation Ticket.	
Issued by the A.C.C.	Date
I acknowledge to have received a printed notice in which I am cautioned against purchasing any excisable articles whilst visiting this Club, and I hereby undertake not to purchase any article by payment, directly or indirectly, whilst on the Club premises.	
Visitor's Signature	
Visitor's Name	
(BLOCK CAPITALS)	
Visitor's Address	
Introduced by	

No. 491	
Date.....19.....	
NOTICE.	
You are bound by the Rules of the A.C.C. to produce your Inter-Affiliation Ticket and Club Subscription Card whenever you are requested to do so while on the Club Premises, and especially when purchasing any Excisable articles, and have pledged yourself to abide by the Rules and Bye-Laws of this Club and of the Association of Conservative Clubs whilst visiting it as an Inter-Affiliated Member.	
Date	
NOTICE	
No payment for excisable articles shall be received from any person not being an ordinary or inter-affiliated member of the Club.	
If any such person shall make such payment, he shall forthwith be expelled from the Club premises; the member introducing such person will be expelled from membership of the Club.	
The officers of the Club are required to make an immediate report to the Secretary of any breach or attempted breach of this Regulation, which will be rigorously enforced.	

An advert is placed by Mr Adrian Nowell, Bar Chairman, in the Stafford Newsletter for a full time Steward with partner to assist.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

12 MORE CHANGE (2001 – 2011)

Records are scant for the start of the New Millenium. Maybe the dreaded computer bug that came with the year 2000 change did in fact erase all records. Notes however indicate that Sonny and Lynn Stewart are Stewards in 2001 and their contract was signed in January 2002. Other notes indicate that at the AGM on 31 March 2000 it is proposed to decrease the Member Subscriptions to £10 for all members. The Committee discuss adding Wi-Fi and obtaining software to enable Membership records to be made. The Visitor fee is recommended to be raised from 50p to £1.00. These recommendations are raised again in 2010 and 2014 with the exception of software as Membership Records from 2007 are maintained on Micro-Soft Access.

There are no Associate (Ladies) and no Senior (OAP's) member subscriptions. Life Membership is only available for outstanding service and the word "Conservative" is dropped from the Club name.

Committee Members in 2005 are recorded as: Mr A W Perry, President; Mr B Coppin, Seretary; Mr F Curtis, Treasurer; Mr M Harrison; Mr E Hultquist; Mr R Parsons; Mr D Perry; Mr A Glassey; Mr J Ramster, Chairman; Mr F Clark.

The Committee swells its ranks for 2006 in an effort to increase membership and increase funds. The Committee are recorded as: Mr A W Perry, President; Mr D Perry, Chairman; Mr B Coppin, Secretary; Mr F Curtis, Treasurer; Mr A Glassey; Mrs K Duke; Mr R Cullen; Mr J Watson; Mrs S Watson; Mr M Evans; Mr M Harrison; Mr D Smith; Mr R Chapman; Mr W McKinnon. The same Committee serve for 2007.

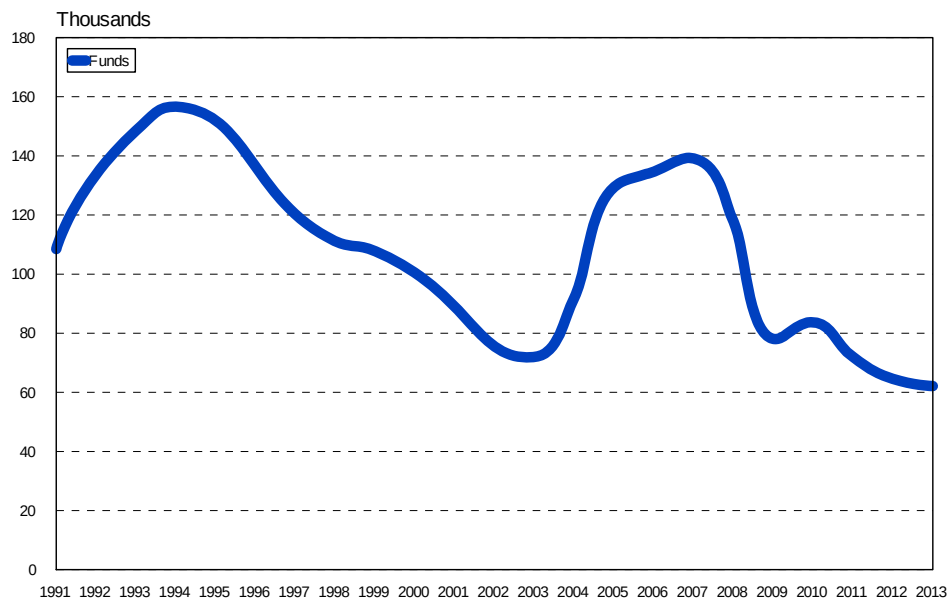
Much later, in February 2008 it is proposed that all references to the ACC be removed from the Club Rules and to forward this change to the Financial Services Association for registration. Mr Jim Ramster and Mr Brian Coppin are discussing changes to the Club Rules. Correspondence is made with the ACC and with the Club Solicitors. The Committee are Mr A M Nowell; Mr Tony Glassey; Mr A W Perry; Mr P A Archibald; Mr Alan Waltho; Mr D Perry; Mr J Ramster; Mr E Hultquist; Mr J Williams. Attendance at the AGM is 31 out of a reported membership of 640.

In the office are 3½ inch disks and it is expected that data will have been stored on them relating to the 2000 period. This demonstrates the present day difficulty of storing data electronically because the 3½ inch disks and the 5¼ inch floppy disks are no longer readable as the drivers are not supplied. In addition the programs to read the data have changed in that they are no longer 16 bit format but are now 32 bit or even 64 bit format. If data is to be kept electronically then it is necessary to keep up with the technology change and ensure the stored data is upgraded. Paperwork remains a reasonable form of data preservation.

In the mid 2000's the boundary garden wall to Lloyd Street is taken down and rebuilt. The Men's toilets are renovated and an invalid toilet is added. The bars are altered in the Function Room and the Main Bar. The floor in the Main Bar required levelling and this is achieved followed by carpeting. Present membership will recall these activities. It is agreed that the general effect is pleasing and provides a comfortable place to meet. All of this is done with a careful eye on the Club Bank balance.

For the fifth 20 year period the Club finances are illustrated. In consideration of the large expenditures in the 2007 to 2010 period, it can be seen that the Club has maintained a healthy balance, but has reason for concern.

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History



This concern warrants a Review of Business Performance meeting scheduled for May 2010. Present are Mr D Perry, Chairman; Mr T Glassey, President; Mr F Curtis, Treasurer; Mr J Ramster, Secretary; Mrs S Watson; Mr J Watson; Mr S Chambers; Mr J Bedford. An extract summary of the meeting is given:

There was an examination and discussion of the changes to both income and expenditure against historical results, based primarily upon the audited Club Accounts.

The losses have arisen by increases in costs and a fall in income and profitability of the bar.

Cash reserves have depleted by £60,000 since the peak of 2007.

A major influence on the overall performance are the costs of major refurbishment of the Club, a necessary investment for the future

In 2010 the Club Accountants, Dean Statham considered that the Club was not liable to VAT, but this is found to be not correct and for the previous four years the Club faces a £6732 payment for VAT. The boilers for the Billiard Room and the Main House require renovation or replacement and these costs are estimated to be £2100 and £2200 respectively. In the previous year near to £3400 is spent on new furniture and the Lounge improvements are approximately £80000, and the records show the deletion of 316 members. There is reference in the 2010 notes about the loss of car park fees for the year, a sum of £2700 attributed to the Clinic and £4000 attributed to Stafford County Council, a loss to the Club of near £7000 per annum.

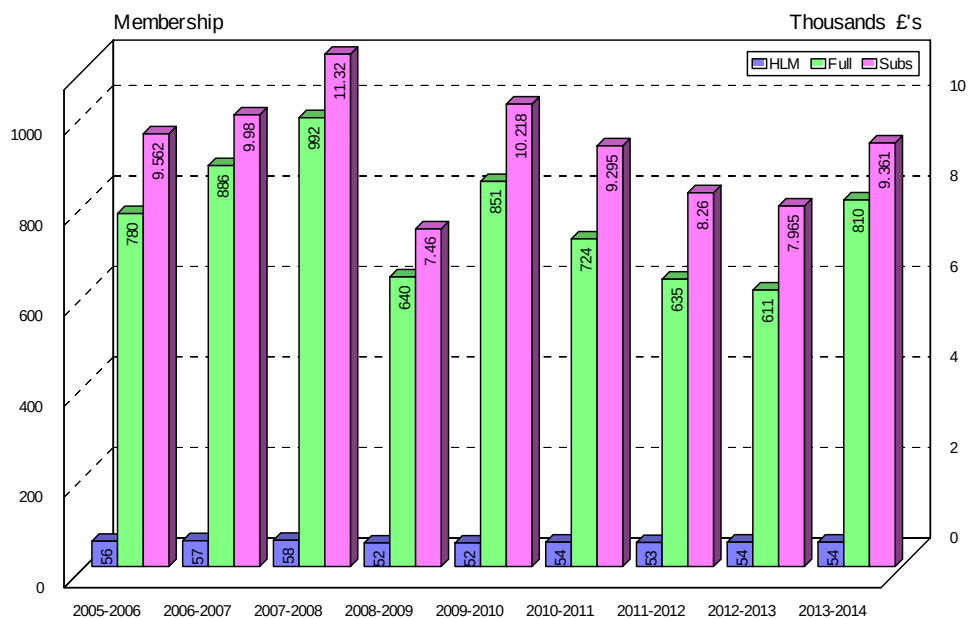
A great loss to the Club in October 2010 is the resignation of Sonny and Lynn Stewart, this amidst a dispute in the Committee resulting in the resignations of major Committee Members in the previous two months. The Club Chairman, Dave Perry, is replaced by Bob Palser, the Club Secretary, Brian Coppin, is replaced by Jim Ramster and the Club Treasurer, Frank Curtis, registers his withdrawal of support for the Committee. The Treasurer later submits a letter with his resignation as Treasurer in the second sentence and in the third sentence offers to carry on carrying out the treasurer's duties; such is the confusion at this time. With Sonny and Lynn needing replacement, Jim Ramster resigns. It is not clear, because records are scant, but it may be that Brian Coppin is restored as Secretary.

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On a brighter note the present image of the Club Bar in the Club Web site illustrates the warmth and comfort created. On the Club Web Site more views of the Club interior can be seen, and the pictures are pleasing.



In August 2010 it is proposed and accepted that the Visitor fee be raised from 50p to £1. For some unknown reason this is not implemented because it is proposed and accepted again in 2014. Subscriptions are raised from £12 to £13, the Club collecting £11 per member. Membership from 2005 to 2014 is shown:



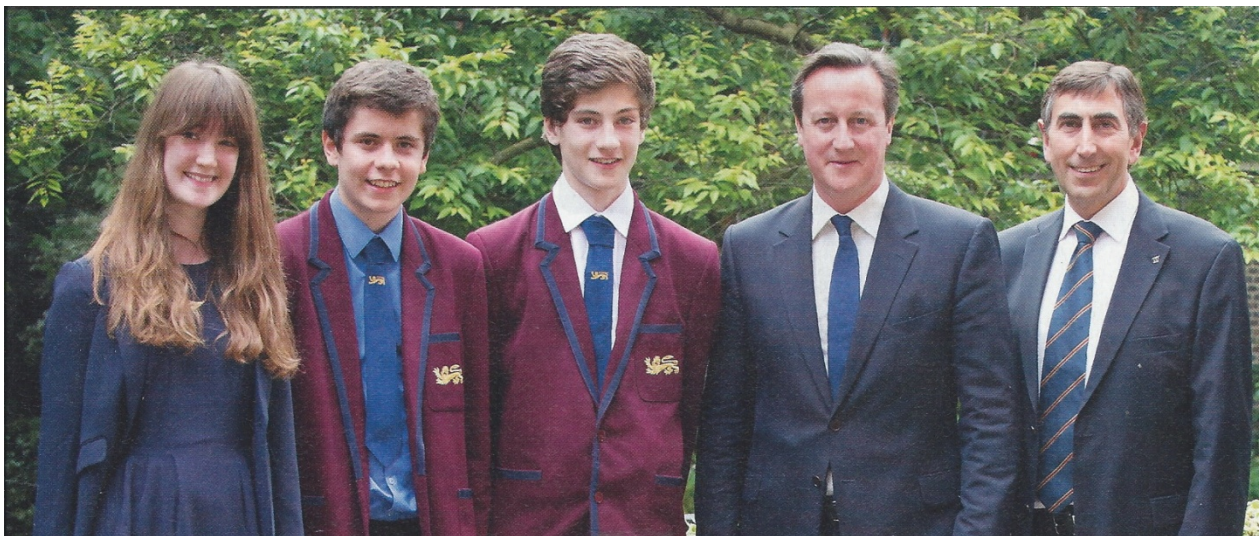
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In September 2010 an Extra-Ordinary meeting is called by Mr R Palser. Mr A Glassey is President, Mr D Perry is Chairman, Mr Brian Coppin is Secretary and Mr F Curtis is Treasurer. Support is given by Mrs S Watson, Mr J Watson and Mr S Chambers. There are 70 Member Signatures in support of the meeting. Mr R Palser calls for the resignation of the Chairman, who does so along with Mr S Chambers. Mr Brian Coppin called for a re-election of the Committee, to which present Committee Members offered their services and Mr R Palser is elected Chairman. The following Members are also elected into the Committee: Mr G Thompson, Mr R Williamson, Mr G Jones, Mr M Mitchell, Mr T Moss and Mr R Buckley.

On the wider political scene, Conservatives are depressed as Tony Blair wins a third term of office to be the first Labour politician to achieve this position. He resigns in 2007 and without election is succeeded by Gordon Brown, who when it came to election time makes a very strange remark, in that he was glad to meet the "Ordinary People". It might appear he must have spent his life only with extraordinary people. Subsequently he lost the election. During his Premiership the British economy sinks into recession after 16 years of growth. Because of the collapse of US Banks the stock market crashes and the British pound has the largest one-day drop against the dollar since 1971. The immigration figures are a concern and in many cities a religious issue is apparent as there are estimated to be over two million Muslims in Britain with a significant increase in population.



In May 2010 Mr David Cameron, who once fought an election in Stafford, is elected as Prime Minister, the youngest since 1812. Mr Cameron is seen here with young potential Engineers and Mr Nigel Fine of the Institution of Engineering and Technology, with the message of Inspiring the Young.



Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

13 A CHANGED CLUB (2011 – 2014)

One Hundred Years have elapsed and in 2011 the Club has New Rules, New Stewards and a New Committee. The New Rules and associated Bye Laws, both dated January 2011, can be downloaded from the Club's Web Site. There is no record of their acceptance but as they have been implemented up to the present time, they are now accepted by default.

The New Stewards are Barry Horton and June Key. With no Minutes of Meetings or Annual General Meeting Notes available for 2012 it is not possible to reflect on how they fared, except to observe that in 2013 the Club were requiring to recruit new Stewards. For most Club Members their departure was unexpected.

The New Committee met in September 2010 and are: Mr B Palser, Chairman; Mr A Glassey, President; Mr B Coppin, Secretary; Mr F Curtis, Treasurer; Mr J Watson; Mrs S Watson; Mr G Thompson; Mr R Williamson; Mr R Buckley; Mr S Duffy; Mr G Jones; Mr T Moss; Mr M Mitchell. They are to select the New Stewards. The meeting reports 1015 Members, 45 Rotary and 61 HLM's. Computer records, supplied by Brian Coppin, Secretary, show, that as the graph above illustrates, membership is 724 and HLM's are 54. The reference to Rotary being irrelevant as normally Rotarians using the Club are Visitors or are Members, and if Members would be included in the 724 count. The last Minutes of Meeting available in Club records for 2010 are dated December, the next meeting arranged for 11 January 2011. The Committee members are as recorded for September.

The first recorded Committee Meeting notes available are for April 2013. Reference is made to the two joint Treasurers in 2012 being Nikki and Alan Sanday, the present Treasurer being Hayley Atkinson. The Committee are: Mr R Palser, Chairman; Mrs M Palser, Secretary; Ms H Atkinson, Treasurer; Mr J Watson; Mrs S Watson; Mr G Jones; Mr P Thompson; Mr A Glassey, President; Mr R Buckley.

In April 2013 relationships with the Stewards and the Committee are reported to be difficult. The Treasurer is not available to answer questions. The Club are in communication with Hand, Morgan and Owen, Solicitors, seeking advice regarding the Stewards, Barry Horton and June Key. Committee Members are: Mrs M Palser, Secretary; Mr B Palser, Chairman, Ms H Atkinson, Treasurer; Mr J Watson; Mrs S Watson; Mr G Jones; Mr P Thompson; Mr T Glassey, President; Mr R Buckley. A rise of 10p for all drinks was proposed and carried.

In August 2013 it is reported that additional costs have arisen on the refurbishment of the flat. The Committee thanks Mr T Glassey for his contribution in this respect. The Club funds are in effect frozen for 55 days because the transfer of signatories have to be given to or from Mr F Curtis and Mr B Coppin.

Overwhelming praise is afforded to the new Stewards Alan Albuery and Kim Denton. It is reported that pipe cleaning had been a serious issue with the previous Stewards and because the present Stewards are showing incentive in their approach, it is agreed that greater responsibility is handed to them. It is reported that steak knives left by Sonny and Lynn are no longer available. It is also reported that the boiler for the Billiards Room is to be replaced. These notes record that £2100 had been spent on this boiler in 2010.

In August 213 Committee Members are: Mr B Palser, Chairman; Mrs M Palser, Secretary; Ms H Atkinson, Treasurer; Mr J Watson; Mrs S Watson; Mr G Jones; Mr P Thompson; Mr T Glassey, President; Mr G McDonagh. In November 2013 the Committee appears to be unchanged. The major issue is the lack of pipe cleaning and hence the poor quality of beer. Gas bottles are empty and no replacements obtained. The Stewards had reported that a replacement shower was required in the flat at an estimated cost of £1763. A new glass washer is required, the cost is not stated. It is proposed to leave the replacement of the Billiard Room boiler until Spring-time 2014. The Committee are maintaining vigilance of the Stewards. Signing of their contract is consequently being delayed.

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In January 2014 Committee Members are: Mr T Glassey, President; Mr B Palser, Chairman; Mrs M Palser, Secretary; Ms H Atkinson, Treasurer; Mr J Watson; Mrs S Watson; Mr G Jones; Mr P Thompson; Mr R Buckley; Mr G McDonagh. The treasurer reports that for the Christmas period of 2012 the Bar takings are £2428 and that for the Christmas past period the takings are £1274. The Stewards report that in this period there are 1000 diners recorded. The quality of the beer is discussed. The Stewards receive letters from the Breweries indicating a 13% increase, which when put to the Committee, is refuted. In February the Committee is unchanged. Income from the Gaming Machines is reported to be going down from £3500 to £2200, the car park income is no longer expected and that the Accounts could not readily be presented and the Stewards had ordered excess M & B, which is sold off at £1 a pint, and an excess of Vodka Gold, which is raffled. Mr Brian Seddon is providing Relief Steward duties and the beer is reported to be “spot on”. A report is made that the cellar is in a poor state and that six hours are spent in cleaning. The Marstons Engineer reports that approximately £3400 worth of equipment is removed without the consent of the Brewery. The Committee confirm with Coors and Marstons that potential price increases are between 3.5% and 5%.



The Burns night is reported to be a great success, the traditional Haggis piped in by a smart looking Piper.

The Annual General Meeting in March 2014 is well attended, perhaps because of concerns by Club Members that all is not well. Mr R Palser is resigned as Chairman, Mrs M Palser is resigned as Secretary and Ms H Atkinson is resigned as Treasurer. The Chairman seat is open and since February Mr B Coppin has stepped in as Secretary and Mr F Curtis has stepped in as Treasurer. Mr B Cullen is elected Chairman and the step in positions of Mr Coppin and Mr Curtis are confirmed as established at the AGM.

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Mr Bob Cullen is a longstanding Committee Member, as also his wife Kate. A recent picture on Facebook shows them in resplendent form at a recent event.



Mr Bob Cullen, as Chairman, leads a New Committee: Mr T Glassey, President; Mr Brian Coppin, Secretary, who has since retired and for first time in the Club History the Club has a female Secretary in Mrs Ann Crofts. Mr F Curtis is Treasurer. Mr Jim Watson and Mrs Sheila Watson are valiant in their service to the Club, Jim looking after the property and Sheila looking after Member's entertainment. Mr P Thompson is Bar Chairman, and presided excellently over the AGM, and for the Bar Management is supported by Mr Ged McDonagh and advised by Mr Brian Seddon. Support Members are Mr David Barker; Mr Bob Mallen; Mr Michael Evans and Mr Dave Johnson. This Committee has the task of increasing the Club funds after the last eight years of heavy expenditure.

The Facebook ABOUT page details:

We are a private members club open to members and their guests. Situated in Stafford the Club comprises a spacious bar area, with dining facilities Our bar is managed to a high standard by our new stewards, Alan and Kim, who maintain a good choice of Ales, featuring Guest Ales & lagers, ciders, wines and spirits, all at Club prices. The bar will sell anything that the members request as long as it is economical! Adjacent to the bar is a function room with its own bar area that can seat up to 70 people The room includes a Stage that is available for music, plays, private parties, meetings or discos.

The Club also has a professionally equipped kitchen able to cater for your party.

The Club also has the benefit of a large Snooker Room complete with four tables.

Outside there are laid out gardens for summer entertainment.

The Club also benefits from its own large car parking area with CCTV monitoring.

WIFI now available

Stafford Constitutional Club Limited History

The approach to the Stafford Constitutional Club into Lloyd Street is selected as the front cover illustration for the Club History because this is what is initially seen. The entrance, at the side of Lloyd Street and from the car park is the Facebook illustration and is reproduced here as the welcoming image.



It is acknowledged that the greater part of Club Membership is made up of Senior Citizens, but a look back into the history has not shown this to be any different. Membership has always been replaced and evidence of that is the present Membership where out of 800 only a quarter may attend but the rest continue to enrol and want this Club to be. What has changed is the social behaviour and impositions of Drink – Drive and Non-Smoking, which has had an impact on Clubs generally, forcing many to close. The Club must seek ways to adapt to these changes and provide a Club to which Members want to belong.

The Stafford Constitutional Club has a Legacy provided by the Founders and Leadership of the past, and the Value of the Club lies in the Membership of today and of all the tomorrows.

MJE
30 August 2014