

The Magnus Lodge No 3441 – WBro Philip Ingall P.Pr.S.G.W. looks at the past 100 years

This look into the past 100 years of Magnus Lodge has been written, mainly from the minute books. The various secretaries have penned the going's on of the Lodge, some in clear copperplate, some typewritten and others in writing difficult to decipher. They reveal that brethren of the Lodge, during its long history, have been leading members of Newark society, many of them as mayors of the Borough and many more as prominent businessmen, clergy, medical and educationalists who helped in the town's prosperity and wellbeing. It would have been impossible to include all of the comings and goings over the period so I have contented myself with just mentioning those items which have appeared to me to be of interest. All of the minute books, apart from the current one, are in the Mace Museum at The Avenue and are available for anyone to examine.

On the 21st February 1910 under the names of F H Appleby, G Atter, Wm Bradley, B Foottit, A E Hall, E M Milthorpe, W Hepenstall, E Purnell Hooley, H Stallard, and J R Hurst, secretary pro tem. a letter was written to members of the Magnus Rose Croix Chapter and it read as follows:

"Dear Sir and Brother It has for some time been deemed advisable that a new Craft Lodge should be founded in Newark, membership of the existing institution having increased to such an extent that it has outgrown the limits of the available accommodation. In view of this fact, the members of the Magnus Rose Croix, residing in Newark, have held an informal meeting and decided to recommend the foundation of a Lodge to be named "Magnus" of which all founders and joining members should be Rose Croix Freemasons. It appears to the undersigned that such an establishment would be quite unique and of such a nature as to commend itself to the Provincial Grand Master. We therefore lay the scheme before our brethren of the Chapter in order to obtain any ex-expression of their feelings to the suggestion. It does not necessarily follow that approval would entail joining the Lodge, though any of our members would, of course, be welcomed."

Approval was given in a document from the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire, Very Worshipful Brother the Rev Henry Telford Hayman, dated 7th May 1910 and the Consecration Ceremony was authorised to take place in Newark Town Hall on the 26th of that same month. Subsequent meetings would also be held in the Town Hall. There is no trace in the minutes as to why this venue was chosen other than the fact that Magnus Rose Croix met there so it was perhaps a natural choice despite the fact that at that time the other craft lodge in Newark, Newton 1661 met in premises above Porters Bacon Shop on the opposite side of the Market Place as did the other degrees in Newark Masonry. The Magnus Lodge was consecrated with due ceremony by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire, Very Worshipful Rev. Henry Telford Hayman and following the consecration, the first installation meeting of the Lodge was held. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master installed W Bro Frederick Henry Appleby as the first Worshipful Master. Senior Warden was W Bro E F Milthorpe and Junior Warden W Bro A E Hall. IPM was W Bro W Bradley. Treasurer W Bro H W Heppenstall, Secretary W Bro J R Hirst, Senior Deacon W Bro G Atter, Junior Deacon W Bro H Stallard. Director of Ceremonies W Bro J B Foottit, Inner Guard W Bro E A Fuller and Steward W Bro E Parnell Hooley. All of the officers comprised founder members of the lodge. and all had been signatories of the original letter with the exception of W Bro Fuller, the inner guard. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire and the Provincial Grand Secretary, W Bro A E Blake were pleased to accept honorary membership of the Lodge.

Ceremonies were to be conducted according to the Nigerian Ritual which is very little different from the Emulation Ritual practiced by many Lodges. The text and teaching followed in the Nigerian Ritual

is that taught by the famous Emulation Lodge of Improvement wrote W Bro C M Brown MC OBE in 1949. W Bro Browne was a Deputy Grand Master, Nigeria and a Past Grand Deacon. Since that first consecration ceremony time has eroded several of the old Magnus practices and currently a working party has been formed to try to return back to some of the original workings.

At that installation meeting seven men were proposed for initiation and, in accordance with what was understood to be the ideals for membership of the new lodge, they were all from the professions or from the top management of businesses. They were Mr Lewis Charles Bishop Appleby of Barnbygate House (now Newark Town Club), a maltster, Mr Henry Percy Job, a physician and surgeon, Ernest Ringrose, Patrick Kymont and Hugh Fitz Neville Hine, all doctors and Mr Frank Raynor, an engineer. Mr Dennis Gabbitas Peet of the Town Hail Newark was proposed as a serving brother to act as Tyler. At the next meeting all were successfully balloted for and four of them, Appleby, Job, Ringrose and Peet, being present, were initiated on that evening. The remaining three were initiated at an emergency meeting in November and at the regular December Lodge all seven of them had the Charge delivered to them by W Bro Heppenstall. At that same Lodge all seven were passed to the degree of Fellowcraft. At the February Lodge four were raised and at another emergency Lodge in March the remaining three became Master Masons. The seven initiates all became Master Masons during that Masonic Year and all took office in the year following. It is interesting to note that when the four Fellowcrafts were raised the Lodge was opened at 5.40pm and closed at 8.00pm. There would appear to be no hanging about in those days!

Enormous work load It was not uncommon for a lodge to take on an enormous amount of work and three ceremonies at one sitting would be considered commonplace. The ceremonies were very much production line affairs with the single purpose of either getting brethren into the Craft or quickly processing them to be Master Masons. The ceremony then bore little resemblance to a double ceremony today (the maximum allowed without special dispensation), other than that the ritual was similar, equally well delivered but to a "mass audience". Minutes show that a Lodge performing a "mass ceremony" took virtually no longer than a single ceremony and the Lodge always closed at around the same time. In those days it was not unusual for the apologies for non-attendance (letters of regret) to be sent by letter and telegram. During the second rising at the Lodge in December 1913 W Bro Hooley, the Lodge representative on the Provincial General Purposes and B & E committees drew attention to the fact that no donation had been sent from the Magnus Lodge for charitable purposes, an omission made by no other Lodge in the Province. He gave notice of a resolution for the next meeting to the effect that each member be asked to subscribe to a fund for that purpose. At the Installation meeting in October 1914 the secretary read out a letter from Provincial Grand Lodge asking for support for the upkeep of houses in Chaucer Street, Nottingham, the property of Provincial Grand Lodge, which had been placed at the disposal of Belgian refugees. It was proposed that the secretary should reply that the Lodge had already subscribed £10 to the National Relief Fund and £10 to the Belgian Relief Fund and proposed making a grant towards the Local Relief Fund.

In April 1916 the Lodge received an appeal by the Province to provide funds to build a hut at Clipstone Camp. The camp was just one of those built to train the men of Kitchener's New Army and could hold upwards of 30,000 men. The Lodge made a contribution of 10 guineas explaining to the Province that local institutions in Newark needed assistance. To illustrate this a donation of 10 guineas was also given from the Lodge Benevolent Fund to the Newark Red Cross Homes. To illustrate money values at that time the offertory at the meeting amounted to 13s 6d

At the start of the Great War, in 1914 the Lodge granted permission for a Lodge of Instruction to be formed and it first met in November of that year. W Bro Hurst, Worshipful Master of the Lodge was

its preceptor. But it was short lived. In 1923 the record shows that the Lodge of Instruction's secretary and treasurer sent a closing account to the Lodge which showed a credit balance of eight shillings and two pence.

Rents make for good reading. In 1916 the Lodge of Instruction paid six shillings for the use of Newark Town Hall but by 1919 the cost had doubled to twelve shillings. Fifty printed circulars and the envelopes to post them in cost six shillings (60p). It is interesting to note here that the cost of hiring the Town Hall to celebrate the centenary would have been £1,000.

On a more serious and patriotic note, at a meeting in 1914 two resolutions from Grand Lodge were put before the brethren. Resolution 1 read...

"That Grand Lodge take immediate steps to expel from the privileges of English Freemasonry all members who have taken arms against our Liege Lord, His Majesty King George of England, and all such who, being civilians, are directly concerned in aiding the prosecution of the present war to the country. "

Resolution 2 read...

"that every Lodge may, upon two thirds majority of those entitled to vote, exclude from its membership all present of German birth who, not having taken steps to denationalise themselves, are by reason of their Masonic Oath, potential enemies of the King".

Both resolutions were passed but there is no record of the Magnus Lodge having to take any steps to meet them.

The First World War brought many letters of sympathy and condolence on family losses and the Lodge minutes congratulated Bro Raynor on being awarded the DSO. There was also sad-ness in February 1912 when a vote was taken to show a deep sense of loss at the death of Lodge founder and its first Worshipful Master, W Bro F H Appleby.

At the meeting on 11th February 1913 a letter was read out from the Worshipful Master of the "Star of the East Lodge No 880 appealing for help for the sufferers of the earthquake of January 1912. It was resolved that the contents of the charity bag be sent to them. The charity bag raised £2 2s Od on that evening.

On 8th April 1913 the Lodge performed all three ceremonies on that evening by raising Bro Harold Brown, passing Bro H W Gabbatt and initiating Rev David Franks who was Warden of Kelham Theological College, home of the Society of the Sacred Mission of which, at the age of 46, he was director. The Lodge was opened at 6.00pm and closed at 8.30pm. They must have run round.

On 20th January 1914 an emergency meeting of the Lodge was called to consider the report of a special committee on the reconstitution of Grand Lodge and asked for an expression of opinion. Magnus gave their opinion by unanimously rejecting the report! In February of that year the communication setting out the manner in which what was now called the re-organisation would be carried out.

With few exceptions, mainly installations, during the period 1914 to 1918 the average attendance of members of the Lodge to meetings was around 12. There is only one mention of a brother of the Lodge suffering injury during the war when Bro Wilby was sent a letter of sympathy whilst lying wounded in a London Hospital.

In February 1918 the Lodge mourned the death of W Bro F H Appleby, the first worshipful Master of the Lodge.

In March 1918, at an emergency meeting, two masons were passed to the Second Degree under emergency procedures. Yves Lamontagne of Montreal, Canada and an officer based at Coddington Hall and Henry Butterfield from Rotherham and also based at Coddington Hall were duly passed under Rule 185 as their stay in the neighbourhood was of "uncertain length".

With the end of the war it was back to more mundane thoughts and deeds. In February 1919 there was talk of forming a Royal Arch Chapter in connection with Magnus Lodge but this was deferred. In April 1919 there was a Lodge proposal to increase the subscription from one guinea to two guineas (£2 20p in new money). It was referred back to the Founders and Past masters.

At the February 1920 Lodge attention was drawn to the Grand Lodge Million Memorial Fund and it would appear that £12.1/- was collected — every little helps. At the April meeting the Lodge mourned the death of W Bro Hurst, one of the Lodge founders.

At the October Lodge in 1920 a notice of motion was put forward "that the private business of the Lodge, the minutes being read, the balance sheet accepted and subscriptions discussed, be carried out before the admission of visitors. This was carried out for at the February 1921 meeting the note "visitors were admitted" followed the reading of the minutes and a discussion on subscriptions. This interesting custom in the Lodge endured until 1947, Very much a case of minding one's own business.

The years between the two World Wars saw Magnus Lodge establish itself and consolidate its position in the Province. In 1920 a link with the Magnus Grammar School was established when in May the Headmaster Rev. Henry Gorse was initiated and the link continued in 1927 when his successor Rev. Campbell Miller became a Mason.

On 22nd April 1926 The Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire descended on Newark for a special meeting in Newark Town Hall under the Masonic banner of Magnus Lodge. The summons requested brethren to appear in Masonic Clothing with the jewels their respective offices. Dress was Dark Morning Dress, Silk Hat, White Gloves. The visit was headed by the Provincial Grand Master, His Grace The Duke of Portland KG, Past Grand Warden and his deputy The Rev H T Hay-man MA, TD, Past Grand Chaplain.

The Lodge was opened at 1.00pm, called off for refreshment at 1.20pm and called on again at 2.40pm.

The Provincial Grand Master explained that the object of the meeting was to lay the foundation stone of the Hospital Nurses Home on London Road Newark (now the Deincourt Hotel). A procession was formed and walked in full regalia to the site where, with full Masonic ceremony, the stone was laid. Previous to laying the stone there had been an appeal, launched by Col Hodgkinson who was the originator of the scheme, for funds and in the course of the ten weeks of the appeal some £11,800 had been raised. Donations came from "well disposed" people in the town as well as from a former Newark resident, now in America

To digress, a long connection with the Hine family that had started with founder H Fitz Neville Hine was continued when his sons William Neville Hine was initiated in 1932 and Geoffrey Hine in 1941. Their brother Denys Hine became a joining member in 1945 and when he died the connection with the family was broken. All of them were doctors.

Other than normal Lodge business there is nothing of note in the minutes until 1932. Bro D G Peet who had been Tyler of the Lodge since 1911 and is recorded in the first minute book containing a list of members as "disappeared 13th March 1932 and his disappearance was recorded in a story in the Newark Advertiser. The cause of his disappearance remains a mystery. The Lodge minutes make no mention of it.

Arthur George Musgrove was elected as Tyler and admitted as a serving brother. Bro Musgrove lasted until the installation meeting in October when the position was declared "vacant". A new Tyler, Bro Turgoose, was selected and he was to serve for 20 years.

In 1935 the minutes were type-written and the subscription was fixed at 2 ½ guineas for members living within a 60 miles radius and 1 ½ guineas for those outside the radius. Half a guinea of each subscription to be devoted to the Benevolent Fund. Also in this year a letter was received from the Province relating to the Nottingham Hospital Pay Block the foundation stone for which was to be laid by the Provincial Grand Master. £10 10s was proposed from the Lodge general funds with a further £5.5s Od from the Charity Bag and £5 5s od if possible from individual members.

The Masonic Million Memorial Fund raised its head again in December 1935 when it was proposed to send a £5 5s donation. A letter from the Province in response to the donation stated that the amount suggested from each Lodge should be £10 10s. Having been thus chastised Magnus sent the £10 10s.

In 1936 the Lodge extended sympathy to the Royal Family on the death of King George V and offered sincere congratulations to "His Majesty King Edward VIII" with "deep and unflinching Loyalty" which history showed was to be short lived.

The minutes do not record any similar show of loyalty to King George VI although I am sure they prevailed.

Music In the Lodge was enhanced when at the meeting on 13th December 1938 the secretary announced that he had purchased a Bell Organ from Kent & Cooper of Nottingham for £3 10s. delivered. This replaced the old Harmonium which was taken in by Kent & Cooper and scrapped. The Lodge confirmed that his actions were in order".

One of the shortest meetings of the Lodge was in December 1939 when the minutes were read and signed and the Lodge closed. The Lodge continued to meet uninterrupted throughout the war. In 1941 it mourned the death of Bro John Esam who was killed on active service with the 8th Foresters in Norway. W Bro G M G Browne, serving in the RAF VR, fatally crashed in the first week of the war. At the same meeting the WM asked members of the Lodge to support the Masonic Evacuees Service. In March 1942 the Lodge was opened at 4.45pm to raise Bro Geoffrey Hine and closed at 6.45pm with the singing of the first verse of the National Anthem. The minutes are brief with no record of minutes being read or other normal business discussed. The offertory raised 6s 6d

At the Installation Lodge in October 1942 WM Hugh Hine referred to the death on active service of the Grand Master, His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent and also to the death in South Africa of W Bro H P Job, one of the first initiates of the Magnus Lodge.

Also in 1942 and indicative of war time Bro Warner resigned from the Lodge, the reason "because of living so far away and the present conditions of transport". He was asked to reconsider his decision as the reason was of a temporary nature". In 1943 the Lodge congratulated the award of an MC to Bro. W N Hine. Another honour gained during war was a DSO to Bro B J Ringrose.

In 1943 the Lodge initiated Thomas Gill, a Flt Sgt in the Royal Australian Air Force, by request of the Army and Navy Lodge No 50 in Tasmania and by per-mission of Grand Lodge. Bro Gill was killed on active service in 1945. In that same year the Grand Secretary wrote saying how much our American brethren had appreciated the welcome they had received in this country. In February 1943 W Bro Frank Rayner, one of the Lodge's first initiates, was congratulated on receiving a CBE. W Bro Rayner died on 7th December 1945.

At the Installation meeting in October 1944, there was extra business by request of Grand Lodge. Bro I G Paul of Moe Lodge No 210 Grand Lodge of Victoria, was passed to the degree of Fellowcraft.

Reflecting on the war the minute books records that not a single meeting had to be cancelled and year after year senior members of the Lodge had accepted the higher offices so that junior members away on service should not be passed over. The attendance had sometimes been very thin. Many members lived some miles away in the country and lack of petrol and other means of travel had taken its toll. The note ends

"Thus ends the second period of war that the Lodge has passed through, and we pray to the G.A.O.T.U. that peace and prosperity may now continue for many years together with Love and Harmony".

Continuing with family connections, in 1947 W H T Davis was initiated into the Lodge with his brother D W Davis being initiated that same year. The Davis connection was continued when W H T Davis was invited back into the chair in April 1969 to initiate his son Christopher who is currently the third senior member of the Lodge. Senior to him are W Bro i Philip Partridge who was initiated in 1958 and W Bro C H M Brown who was initiated in 1963.

Grand Lodge honours came to the Lodge for the first time in 1948 when W Bro H W Mace was promoted to and saluted accordingly within the Lodge, as a Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies. W Bro Mace, a dentist, was initiated into the Lodge in 1917. An out-standing Freemason he was to be Director of Ceremonies from the 1930's until 1956. Another long serving officer was W Bro Ted Ashcroft who retired from the post of treasurer, also in 1956, after nearly 30 years' service to the Lodge.

1949 passed without memorable moments but in 1950 the Lodge mourned the death of the Most Worshipful Grand Master the 10th Duke of Devonshire. It was announced that six months of mourning was ordered. He was succeeded by the 11th Earl of Scarborough.

In the 1970's W Bro Geoffrey Hine was the last Grand Lodge Officer to be appointed from the Lodge when he received his honour as a Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies. He joined Grand Lodge colleague W. Bro Fred Brough, Past Grand Standard Bearer who had become a joining member in 1962.

At this time, it was also the Worshipful Masters prerogative to decide whether singing should take place following the regular toasts at the Festive Board. This prerogative subsequently disappeared and today the only singing at the Festive Board is the National Anthem, the Toast to Absent Brethren and on occasions the Master's Song at Installation.

The Magnus Petition to Absent Brethren was always given at 9.00pm when the Lodge met at 5.00pm and there was time to propose the first two regular toasts before "Absent Brethren". Now that the Lodge meets at 6.00pm the nine-o'clock petition became "wine taking" with absent brethren as it is against Masonic custom to take any other toast before that of the Queen and the Craft and the

Grand Master. Currently the petition to Absent Brethren is taken when convenient on the pretext that as Freemasonry is universal the clock is always at right angles in relation to Craft.

At a regular meeting in April 1951 the Worshipful Master spoke of the death the last of the founders of the Lodge of Bro Fuller, the first Inner Guard, who had died on 18th March that year. A year later, in 1952, the Lodge also mourned the death of King George VI.

1952 was a busy year. The Lodge subscription was increased to four guineas with a joining fee of seven guineas instead of three. At the February meeting a letter was read out in Lodge regarding the wearing of white gloves. After discussion the WM requested that members should wear white gloves at future meetings.

An emergency meeting was called in September 1952 when a letter from the Master elect Bro A E Holland told the Lodge that he was resigning the office of Master Elect. W Bro H D R Hine was elected to serve a second year. Just two years later, in 1954 the Master Elect, Bro W H T Davis, had withdrawn his nomination due to "unforeseen circum-stances". In this case it was another member of the Hine family, W Bro G L G Hine who was elected to serve a second year. Bro W H T Davis became WM in October 1955 and he installed his brother, D W Davis the following year. An emergency meeting was held in the Town Hall on 5th July 1954 when it was announced that Bro Turgoose, the Tyler, had died on 18th June. He was referred to as a faithful friend and loyal servant of the Lodge and had been Tyler for 20 years. At the October installation meet-ing in 1955 Bro W S Tombs took over as Tyler and continued until April 1961. In October of that year W Bro Philip Partridge acted as Tyler and in 1963 local publican Bill Rennison was elected Tyler, having been initiated into the Lodge as a serving brother in 1962.

W Bro Charles Hart. the son of a former Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire was initiated into Magnus in 1945 and found his way into the Lodge history when, having being elected Master Elect in 1957 he was unable to attend his installation due to illness. The Lodge was opened, the minutes read and the offertory was taken. The Lodge closed at 5.50pm. A dispensation was granted to hold an Installation Lodge on 29th October and W Bro Hart was in-stalled. His year was a good one and he subsequently established himself as one of the finest ritualists in the Lodge's history. Few brethren have been able to match the dignity, sincerity and word perfect rendering of the Charge to the Master and the Charge after Initiation.

With the exception of the emergency meeting to install Bro C C D Hart in 1957 regular business occupied the Lodge for the remainder of the 1950's although in 1956 W Bro Abbott who had been Treasurer for some 30 years indicated he wished to stand down. The Office was taken over by W Bro Radley who was to serve 10 years in that office and in thanking the Lodge for their wishes said he had only missed two Lodge meetings in the whole of his Ma-sonic career and both due to illness.

The directors of the Nottingham Ma-sonic Hall Company wrote in 1959 asking for interest free loans. The secretary was asked to reply that Magnus Lodge had no surplus funds to offer. In this same year the Provincial Cricket Association was formed and the secretary proposed that the Treasurer send 2 shillings per member to the Association and debit each member with the amount. The proposal was carried unanimously. The Magnus Lodge has celebrated landmarks in its history in varying forms. Little fuss was made of the coming of age of the Lodge in 1932 with both that and the 25th anniversary being marked with normal Lodge meetings. The 50th Installation meeting in October 1959 elected Bro Rev A B Miskin as WM and went by without incident although all thoughts were on the Golden Jubilee Dinner the following April. One of 'the Bro visitors at this meeting was W B Harper. Past Assistant Grand Chaplain of the Khartoum Lodge 2877.

The Golden Jubilee (50th) meeting was held by special dispensation in Newark Town Hall on 5th April 1960 in the presence of the Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire Rt W Bro Lt Commander G J Mackness CBE, DSC, JP, DL RN retired. The Provincial Grand Master for Derbyshire also attended together with the Nottinghamshire Provincial Deputy and Assistant Grand Masters and the Deputy Grand Master of Derbyshire. There were 73 other guests which are recorded on two full pages in the minute book.

The Lodge transacted its normal regular business but as there was no candidate the Worshipful Master. Rev A B Miskin, explained the First Degree Tracing Board. The Festive Board included Hors d'oeuvre, Cream of Asparagus Soup, Steamed Turbot with Shrimp Sauce and Tomato, Roast Norfolk Duckling and Apple Sauce, Green Peas and Roast Potatoes, Peach Melba and Stilton Cheese with Wafer Crackers and Coffee. All washed down with Fino Sherry, Pouilly Fuisse and Volnay 1952, Cockburn's Vintage Port and Whisky. Still Orange and Lemon was also available for the more abstemious brethren.

At the Installation meeting on 10th October 1961 a letter from W Bro Mace, apologising for absence through illness, said he regretted that this was the first Installation he had missed for 44 years! The December Lodge that year celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the initiation of W Bro Robert Abbott PPrGW who was invited to take the chair for that meeting. W Bro Mace (initiated 1917) occupied the Senior Warden's chair and W Bro Radley (initiated 1926) that of the Junior Warden. In addition to the minutes of the previous meeting the minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 1911 were also read.

The December Lodge in 1962 had no ceremony. p W Bro C G Greenwood. Past Deputy District Grand Master of British Columbia gave a talk on the development of Freemasonry in British Columbia.

There was no ceremony at the Lodge of 9th February 1965 but a paper was given by W Bro W A G Edwards Past Master of the Newstead Lodge, No 47 entitled "The Broken Column" which dealt with Masonry practised while in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. At the October Installation meeting of that year a letter was read at the first rising stating that "certain songs should no longer be sung in Lodge" There is no indication of which songs were being referred to.

At the December 1965 Lodge the Brethren stood in silence in memory of W Bro H W Mace who had died since the last Lodge, aged 81 years. W Bro Mace had been a strong influence in the Lodge and particularly in his long term role as Director of Ceremonies.

At the Lodge on 13th December 1966 the secretary reported on the receipt of the Commemorative Jewel of the 250th anniversary of the founding of Grand Lodge, awarded because every member of the Lodge had subscribed £1. At this meeting W Bro Phillips, of the Newton Lodge, gave a lecture on the significance of the letter "G".

In 1967 His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Duke of Kent was installed as Grand Master and has continued in that post to this present day.

In 1968 a candlestick, which W Bro G L was presented to the G Hine had converted from an inkwell, was presented to the Lodge. He suggested it should be used at the Festive Board. Thus commenced a tradition that the candle would be lit to signify the brethren had permission to smoke. It was used continuously until smoking became banned in public places in 2007.

In October 1969 the Lodge mourned the death of W Bro George Branston, a member of the Newark brewing family. He had been a member of the Lodge for 49 years.

The remainder of the 1960s was relatively uneventful apart from discussion regarding the tenure of the Lodge in Newark Town Hall. The uncertainty regarding the availability of the Town Hall due to Local Government re-organisation and, perhaps just as important, the closing of Oldham's Restaurant in Newark Market Place where the Lodge had enjoyed its Festive Board, were given as the prime reasons for the move which came in 1974.

In February 1973 the Lodge stood in silence to mark the recent death of Bro Bill Rennison who had tyled the Lodge for the past ten years. Bro Reg Longden o tyled the Lodge for the remaining stay at Newark Town Hall and for several Years following the move to The Avenue.

On 11th December 1973 the subscription was raised £10 for those living within a 60 mile radius and £2.50 for those outside that limit. Here is the first mention of decimal currency which came in February 71.

The last meeting at Newark Town Hall was held on 9th April 1974 and was a short one with the WM proposing that "in view of the difficulties which might occur at The Town Hall" the Lodge should move to The Masonic Hall, The Avenue, Newark for all future meetings.

With the move from Newark Town Hall Magnus also ceased having their Festive Board at Oldham's Restaurant, just a short walk across the Market Place. Oldham's had been the venue for the Festive Board for many years and the property has since been demolished to form an entrance to the St Mark's Lane Shopping Centre.

The Past Masters had recommended that the Lodge should move its meeting place to The Avenue where all the other Masonic activities in the town were situated. The exception was the Magnus Rose Croix Chapter which continued at the Town Hall for several more years. The Lodge Byelaws were amended to read The Masonic Hall Newark instead of Newark Town Hall and were passed without dissent.

The first Worshipful Master when the Lodge moved to The Avenue in October 1974 was W Bro John Bamford and one of the first to be initiated by W Bro Barn-ford, at a special dispensation meeting, on 11th March was Bro Philip Ingall, the writer of this history. Both W Bro Barn-ford and W Bro Ingall served as Lodge Director of Ceremonies for several years after their time in the chair.

At this point it is interesting to comment that throughout the minutes there are several mentions of saluting officers of Grand Lodge in accordance with their "exalted" rank. It is worth recording that officers in the Craft do not qualify for "exalted" status. One is exalted into Royal Arch Masonry. A special dispensation meeting was held in September 1975 when the Master Elect Bro C V Hutt unexpectedly resigned. He was the third Master Elect to not go on into the chair over a period of 23 years. Junior Warden at the time, Bro Gordon Hull, was elected Master Elect.

1976 and 1977 meetings were engaged aged in conducting regular business and nothing of note has come out of the minutes but in 1978 equal opportunities was suggested when it was reported that the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls was now a company and although priority of admission would be given to the daughters of freemasons who qualify for relief from the RMIG the admission of boys was being seriously considered. The fee in academic year 1978-9 for paying pupils would be £1,400 for boarding and £825 for day pupils.

In February 1979 W Bro G L G Hine presented his Past Masters jewel to the Lodge as he no longer wore it as a Grand Rank Officer. Since that time many Past Masters have given their PM's jewels back to the Lodge when they have been given Provincial honours and have thus saved the Lodge expense. In my case I inherited a "used" jewel and have passed it on to have a third inscription on it.

In October of that year the Lodge welcomed as a joining member W Bro Charles McLachlan, the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire.

In October 1978 the Lodge Byelaws were altered to read that the annual subscription shall be such amount as the Lodge may determine from time to time by resolution after due notice on the summons". Thus ended the need to change the Byelaws every time subscriptions were adjusted. The annual subscription then was £16 within a 60 miles radius and £5 outside that limit.

One of the few "double" ceremonies in the Magnus Lodge since the mass ceremonies following consecration occurred at the April meeting in 1981 when Bro Ralph Stephenson and Bro Geoff Tate were both passed to the degree of Fellowcraft.

A letter was read from the Royal Masonic Hospital stating that the "mission" over the last 10 years had been completed and that we Masons had the right of use of "one of the finest hospitals in the land. The sting in the tail was that in the future the hospital. due to ever in-creasing costs could be some £3 million short of revenue and all brethren are asked to contribute otherwise there is a possibility the hospital may close.

To catch up on getting brethren fully qualified as Master Masons and able to take office was one of the Lodges problems during the 1980's. It was not un-common to have a fellowcraft appointed as Inner Guard and on one occasion as Junior Deacon. Special dispensations were given to hold extra meetings and in May one such meeting was to perform a third degree ceremony.

In December 1981 the Lodge was saddened by the death of W Bro Fred Brough PGStB at his home in Douglas Isle of Man, W Bro Brough was initiated in the Babylonia Lodge 4362 in 1927 and passed and raised in Tesame Lodge. He was the WM of the Lodge in 1934 and received Overseas Grand Rank in 1948 and appointed PGrStB in 1963. He became a joining member of Magnus Lodge in 1962 and was Master of the Lodge in October 1967. He received the honour of PPrSGW of Nottinghamshire Province in 1971.

In April 1982 W Bro Reg Longden, mourned ceased as Tyler of the Lodge after serving for 9 years and his place was taken by Bro Selwyn Clayton who was to hold the Office for just four years. Also at this meeting the secretary reported that of the commemorative items for the province Bi-centenary in May 1983, all of the paperweights had been sold but tankards were still available.

At the installation meeting in October 1983 it was reported that W Bro Noel Venables had died on 1st July. He was initiated into freemasonry in the Porta Episcopi Lodge No 5708 in 1958 and quickly rose through its ranks. He became a joining member of Magnus Lodge in 1963 and WM in 1971. In 1973 he was appointed Provincial Grand Secretary of the Province of Nottinghamshire and 1974 saw him appointed to the rank of PPrSGW.

Grand Lodge and public relations At the 75th Installation meeting on 9th October 1984 the secretary read a letter from Grand Lodge concerning public relations. Grand Lodge thought it was time to explain to the Craft its current policy. The letter stated that although Freemasonry is not secret, it is nevertheless intensely private. The Craft has nothing to hide and certainly nothing to be ashamed of but seeks to avoid having its affairs investigated by outsiders. It would be able to answer any questions likely to be asked but experience has shown that silence is always the best practise. Comment or correction only breeds further inquiry and leads to publicity the Craft seeks to avoid. However, there are occasions when Freemasons who are members of a local authority, trade union, church or other similar body find themselves invited in discussions suggesting that membership of the Craft is incompatible with their respective occupations. If such a case occurs the individual

should feel free to rebut the incompatibility and to explain the nature of freemasonry and the duties of a Freemason with respect to his public activities. It also went on to state that there was no objection to a freemason disclosing that he is a member of the Craft but deplored the invasion of privacy by a compulsory disclosure.

The 75th anniversary held on the 16th April 1985 whilst not on such a grand scale as the Golden Jubilee is equally worthy of mention. The Worshipful Master on this occasion was again from the clergy, W Bro Charles Lord. Held during April brethren of the Lodge gave extracts from the First Degree Lecture. The temple at The Avenue was bursting at the seams when it received the Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire. Canon Robert Warburton MBE. TD. MA and other honoured guests. There was Tea and Biscuits on arrival and on this occasion the Festive Board included Florida Cocktail, Spring Vegetable Soup, Fillet of Plaice in Prawn and Mushroom Sauce, Prime English Beef with Yorkshire Pudding, Roast and Creamed Potatoes, Kidney Beans, Carrots and Peas followed by a Raspberry Pavlova. a Cheese Board with Biscuits and Celery and Coffee. A fruit basket was placed on each table. The un-named wines were Hock, Burgundy and Taylors's Port.

In December 1986 the Lodge was asked to vote on either the continuation or closure of the Royal Masonic Hospital. The last time this was discussed in Open Lodge the vote was in favour with only one vote against. This time the vote was again in favour of closure with 16 votes in favour and three against.

An interesting letter came from Bro Grainger of the Annesley Lodge 1435. He had set himself the task of visiting all 100 Lodges in the Province during 1986 starting with Dame Agnes Mellers in January and ending with Fidelis Lodge in December. His visits including Magnus Lodge raised some £2,000.

W Bro Geoffrey Hine mourned In May 1987 the Lodged mourned the death of W Bro Geoffrey Hine PGStB of the United Grand Lodge of England. W.Bro Hine who was the son of one of the first initiates of the Lodge had devoted much of his life to Freemasonry and received honours not only in this Province but also in Leicester and Rutland where he was a member of the Round Table Lodge of Leicestershire. He was WM of Magnus Lodge in 1953 and Provincial Junior Grand Warden in 1969.

This was also the year when the Lodge reviewed the office of Tyler and it was decided that in the future the office would be taken by the IPM following his year in that office.

In October the Lodge demonstrated its commitment to local causes when the offertory was sent to the Newark Talking Newspaper for the Blind. Since then local charities have featured strongly as benefactors from the Lodge Charity Purse, in particular the Newark Beaumont Community Hospice, the county's Air Ambulance, Newark Hospital and Cancer research.

From the time the Lodge was formed it was not unusual for members of the Lodge to provide new regalia or other items. W Bro Snowden Housley had provided new minutes books and in 1988 he presented the Lodge with new collars to be worn by the master and his wardens. In later years W Bro Gordon Jacobs was to present the Lodge a copy of the Grand Lodge Video on Freemasonry and copies of the Emulation Ritual to give to newly made Master Masons. W Bro Philip Ingall gave the Lodge a case containing a set of the working tools in all three degrees.

In February 1990 the Lodge had the unusual task of raising a Fellowcraft who had been initiated and passed in Whetu Kairangi Lodge No 201 Miramar, Wellington, New Zealand. Bro Donald Grant was a joining member of the Lodge and was the licensee of the Willow Tree at Barnby in the Willows. A copy of his Grand Lodge of New Zealand certificate is in the Mace Museum.

The Years 1991 and 1992 passed without incident other than performing all three ceremonies each year and it was similar in 1993 with the exception that the Centenary Fund, started in 1986, should be augmented by an "entirely voluntary levy of £1 on Lodge subscriptions. Everyone "volunteered" and it was hoped the by the time the "great occasion" arrived all costs would be completely defrayed. History shows that was not to be the case.

1994 also passed without incident worth recording, other than resignations, an exclusion and the regular business of initiating, passing and raising The Treasurer proposed, and it was carried, to increase the subscription to £45 for those living within a 60 mile radius and £25 for outside that area.

W Bro Capeling had been elected as WM of the Lodge at the Installation meeting in October 1994 and due to the ill health of the Senior Warden, W Bro Denner he was elected to serve a second term. W Bro Denner was installed into the Chair of King Solomon in October 1996 and like his predecessor he too was to serve two years in the Chair.

In February 1996 the Lodge was due to perform a second degree ceremony but due to both the Worshipful Master and the candidate not being able to be present at the Lodge practice it was decided to have a lecture instead. W Bro G C Bond of the Royal Sussex Lodge gave an interesting and entertaining talk on Ancient Masonic porcelain and glass.

In February 1997 the Lodge was in-formed of the death of W Bro Snowden Housley who had died in December 1996. W Bro Housley was initiated into the Corinthian Lodge in 1948 and became a joining member of Magnus Lodge in October 1956 and its Worshipful master in 1962. During his time in Freemasonry W Bro Housley had been a generous benefactor to the Craft at both local and national level. It was disclosed, in his will he had left £75,000 to the Widows and Sick and £50,000 to the Masonic Girls and Boys funds.

A milestone not often achieved occurred in February 1999 when the Provincial Grand Master sent a letter of congratulations to W Bro George Barker on his 65 years in Freemasonry. He was presented with an illuminated scroll and, in addition, an engraved goblet from the Lodge with a bottle of Cognac to go in it. He was initiated into the Thorseby Lodge in Yorkshire where he spent most of his Masonic time. He was also a member of The Certified Accountants Lodge which meets at Great Queen Street. He became a joining member of Magnus Lodge in February 1998. Sadly W Bro George died in 2007 at the age of 98 but his smile and presence in the Lodge will always be remembered.

On 8th February 2000 the Lodge received a Ceremonial Visit by the Provincial Team led by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Graham Aitkin PSGD. The Magnus Worshipful Master W Bro John Clarke, offered his gavel to the Assistant Provincial Grand Master who, on this occasion accepted it. The Lodge was opened in Due and Ancient Form by the Provincial Team and the minutes of the last regular Lodge were read by the Provincial Secretary W Bro R H Green and duly signed by the Asst PGM and the Magnus Lodge WM, W Bro John Clarke. The WM was then invited to resume his Chair and Bro Peter Slinger was passed to the Second Degree. In April 2001 it was with great sadness that the Lodge stood in silence to hon-our W Bro Norman Smith PPrSGW who had died on 16th March. W Bro Smith, a joining member from Corinthian Lodge, had been secretary of the Lodge for many years and will be well remembered for the assiduous manner in which he undertook his duties. In December 2003 the Lodge performed another double ceremony when Brothers C J Dring and J J McAfee were passed to the degree of Fellowcraft.

Fifty years in Freemasonry was marked in April 2005 when the Magnus Lodge Liaison Officer W Bro Barry Fawcett, PAGDC presented a certificate to W Bro W.S. Tombs who was initiated into the Magnus Lodge on 14th December 1954.

There was no ceremony at the Lodge in February 2006 due to the indisposition of the candidate and W Bro Ingall gave a talk on what is described in the minutes as "the derivation of the name on the left hand pillar at the entrance or porchway of King Solomon's temple".

W Bro John Sentance who had been WM in 2001 was to take the chair again at the Installation meeting in October 2006. A massive rise in subscription was mooted in December 2006 when the Treasurer, W Bro Dick Capeling, pro-posed a rise to £72 for the year 2007. He also proposed a contribution of £29.20 from each member to clear a shortfall 'Which has latterly come to the Lodge's attention. Both proposals were carried at the February 2007 Lodge.

At the December 2007 meeting the secretary read extracts from a letter from the Provincial Grand Master, Rt Worshipful Robin Wilson expressing his de-light and thanks on the results of the 2007 Festival Appeal. The "Big Day", celebrating the Festival was to be held in Nottingham at the Ice Stadium on 10th June 2008.

The Provincial Grand Secretary, W Bro W J Bradbury, PAGDC, reported that the Grand Master had approved the request that the 2007 Festival Jewel shall be a permanent for the Brethren in the Province of Nottinghamshire. Magnus Lodge achieved their Festival target and received the Paul Bootherstone gavel which is now used at the Festive Board.

During the past decade the Lodge had restricted its double ceremonies to the Second Degree and this was again the case in February 2008 when Bros Bryan Hammond and Christopher Mitchell were passed as a Fellowcraft.

With the object of ensuring greater safety to Freemasons in need the Lodge was informed that the Masonic Hall Company were buying a defibrillator for use at the hall. Brethren were invited to be trained to learn how to use the unit.

At the Installation meeting in October 2008 a letter from the Provincial Grand Master asked all brethren to wear the small square and compass lapel badge to signify they were members of the Craft These were available from the Secretary.

In June 2008 the Lodge mourned the passing of W Bro Stan Denner PPrGJW who died after a prolonged illness that had seen him in three hospitals, having his leg amputated and with many other problems, all of which he tackled with great fortitude. W Bro Denner was a joining member of the Lodge and served as its WM as well as secretary and almost every other position in the Lodge during his time. He was also of member of St John's Lodge and often their differing ritual would creep into Stan's mind when he performed ritual in Magnus. He was also very active within Freemasonry in Newark in general and was for many years editor of the Newark Masonic Password in which he indulged from time to time in his passion for Turkey, its language and its customs. The tribute by his son described him as an extraordinary man and it was no exaggeration!

For the first time in 2008 the Lodge decided to give "meaningful" donations to local charities. The generosity shown by members of the Lodge resulted in £500 each being given to Newark Beaumont House Community Hospice, The Alzheimers Society and Prostrate Cancer Research

Plans were being laid for the Lodge Centenary celebrations in May 2010 and it was felt that it would be appropriate to have these celebrations in Newark Town Hall where the Lodge was consecrated. There was much discussion within the Past Master's meetings but it was finally decided that due to the extremely high cost of renting Newark Town Hall (some £1,000) and the other expenses of transferring furniture etc into the Town hall, together with the capacity there of only 120 guests it

would be prudent to hold the celebrations at The Avenue where the smaller number of 100 guests could be accommodated.

At the installation meeting in October 2009 officers for the Centenary year were installed with W Bro Chris Dring to serve a second year in the chair due to the indisposition of the proposed Master Elect W Bro Trevor Thomas due to ill-ness. W Bro Philip Ingall PPrJGW was to be the Centenary year Senior Warden and W Bro Ken Pike PPrGSwdB Junior Warden. It was suggested that other Past Masters could be invited to take these positions during the course of the year. A booklet was proposed to mark the occasion and this would contain a history of the Lodge together with other historical content.

Following the suggestion that other Past Masters should occupy senior positions in the Lodge W Bro John Sentance took the chair for a raising and at the February 2010 Lodge W Bro Dick Capeling took the chair for an initiation.

In April 2010 W Bro Trevor Thomas occupied the Senior Warden's chair and W Bro Brendan Haigh that of the Junior Warden when the Lodge conducted a second degree ceremony.

At this same meeting a letter was read from United Grand Lodge authorising the wearing of a Centenary Jewel by members of the Lodge and they will be able to do this during the Centenary Celebration meeting on 26th May 2010.

The scene was set for the Centenary celebrations and it was decided that, in the unavoidable absence of the Worshipful master, W Bro C P Dring, W Bro Trevor Thomas should occupy the Chair of King Solomon for the all important meeting on 26th May 2010 when, led by Provincial Grand Master Rt W Bro Robin Wilson, the Nottinghamshire Provincial Team will make their Ceremonial Visit to rededicate the Lodge Banner and present the Lodge with its Centenary Charter

,So, with the Centenary celebrations well in view, the significant happenings over the past 100 years as recorded in the Lodge minutes, have brought to light many interesting and absorbing details to make up this history. Not all the dealings of the Lodge are here recorded as this would take up far more than the number of pages you have just read.

The brethren present at the Centenary celebrations heard members of the Magnus Lodge read excerpts from the history that mark some of the significant happenings over the years

Suffice it to say that Magnus, although a relatively small Lodge has, over its hundred years, been a happy Lodge. It has played its part in the Province and has produced some outstanding Masons during that century of existence. Over that century of time the face of Freemasonry has changed radically and, under the influence of our current Grand Master, it has become a more open society which, although still cherishing its unique proceedings, is one that the members can now be proud to admit they belong and to embrace the slogan "A Force for Good"

To start their next century it is encouraging that, currently, the Magnus Lodge is attracting a significant number of younger members to join the Craft and, when we hear of Lodges in parts of the country having to close, this influx of a younger element is contributing to the Lodge being able to progress with confidence into the future. Who what that next 100 years may bring?

Philip Ingall, May 2010.