

# ASSEMBLY LODGE

## No 4357

Consecrated 13th January 1922



### A History for the Centenary Celebration

15th January 2022

Compiled by W.Bro Duncan McGhee LGR

# Acknowledgements

First and foremost, my thanks go to the other members of the centenary committee, namely: WBros David Green, Mark Meader, Alan Williams and Brian Williams for allowing me the honour and privilege to research and prepare the history of the first 100 years of the Assembly Lodge No 4357.

Honour no doubt it is but also a privilege it must be considered to be in that this is my version of the first 100 years, researched from various sources but mostly the minute books which have survived with the exception of one book covering the period January 1930 to January 1939. One wonders why that book became separated from the other 9?

Special thanks also go to W Bro Les Whitton LGR, for the Brief History he prepared for the 80th Anniversary from which I took my initial starting reference. Also, to WBro David Green PGStdB for his advice and assistance in proof reading and correcting my errors.

Thanks also go to W Bros Ronald A Wainer SLGR Met SGD (Secretary) and Steve Brigg SLGR (Archivist and Treasurer) of Polytechnic Lodge 2847 for their assistance in providing some initial history. Also, to the Museum of Freemasonry for providing images and content, and others who have contributed and allowed copyright material to be used.

The research has been an incredibly interesting and rewarding experience, my only regret being that I didn't start the process 5 years earlier. This history has turned out to be a much bigger document than I ever envisaged and there is so much I left out not least the history of the Assembly Lodge of Instruction for which we also have minute books dating back to the 1930's - perhaps I will add an unofficial addendum for the Lodge of Instruction Centenary in 1924.

I offer my sincerest apologies for errors and omissions which will undoubtedly be discovered during the compilation of the 150th Anniversary History.

So, this is the history... what is the future?

**Duncan McGhee LGR**  
**Treasurer & Mentor**  
**Assembly Lodge No. 4357**

Footnote:

As this document goes to print in December 2021, a new variant of Covid-19, which has plagued us for almost 2 years now, called Omicron is sweeping the globe and has recently been detected in the UK. This has resulted in additional measures and restrictions being imposed by the Government that if possible people should work from home and wear face masks in enclosed public spaces, including transport. At the moment Masonic meetings are still allowed, here's hoping it stays that way so our Centenary celebrations can go ahead.

The Lodge was consecrated on Friday 13th, what could possibly go wrong now?



# CENTENARY CELEBRATION: A HISTORY

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# Foreword from our Centenary Master W.Bro Brian Williams LGR

I was initiated into Assembly Lodge No 4357 on 26th January 1963 at the age of 22. I was very apprehensive and I have to admit that being blindfolded before entering the Lodge did nothing to ease my fears. However I need not have worried

The Worshipful Master then, was W.Bro Sydney Green and his tone immediately calmed my nerves. In addition the Brother who conducted me around the Lodge was the Junior Deacon, George Riley, who had spoken to me outside the Temple and assured me that he would look after me. He was true to his word.

Having been properly prepared to enter the Lodge and blindfolded I found that George took a firm grip of my arm and said that I should follow his advice. At that stage I did relax to some extent but I still felt somewhat apprehensive.

Sydney conducted the ceremony in a most impressive manner and certainly transmitted some of his calmness to me. I will never forget my initiation ceremony.

Thereafter Sydney took on the what I suspect was the somewhat onerous task of looking after me in Masonry. He encouraged me to progress in the Craft and also the Royal Arch, today he would probably be called my mentor.

Sydney and I had a common interest i.e. the law. I qualified as a solicitor in 1965 and Sydney who worked for a well-established and highly respected publisher of law books always made certain that I received up to date copies of law books shortly after they were published.

If ever I had a problem in my masonic life, and there were a few, I knew that I could turn to Sydney in confidence and he would help me greatly in resolving the issue.

I recall Sydney with considerable fondness.

I have already alluded to George Riley the Junior Deacon at the time of my initiation. I suppose some would call George something of a rough diamond, a description of which he would probably be quite proud but to me personally he was the epitome of a person who lived according to masonic principles.

He was always willing to help a brother who was experiencing difficulties of whatsoever nature, he would frequently make a useful contribution in an endeavour to resolve the problem and he was never judgemental.

I held George in very high regard and I know that many brethren were of a similar opinion. When George departed this life he left a huge hole.

At my first festive board I was fortunate to sit next to W. Bro Charles Pratt who had been Worshipful Master of Assembly Lodge in 1939/40 and had achieved many masonic honours. In addition he was a Director of Chelsea Football Club, and went on to become Chairman in 1966. What he would make of Roman Abramovich I cannot say.

He was very kind and made me very welcome but I remember him telling me I should make the most of my place at the top table as it would be a very long time before I sat there again.

At the time of my initiation there were two very senior and venerable brethren wearing dark blue regalia which at that time meant nothing to me. They were W.Bro Stanley Finch ( WM 1933/34) and W.Bro Stanley Fisher (WM 1946/47).

Stanley Finch was Director of Ceremonies, a disciplinarian who ruled the working of the Lodge with a rod of iron. Woe betide any brother who failed to square the Lodge or salute the WM's chair in passing. I have to say however that the Brethren of Assembly Lodge were rightly proud of the standard of work in the Temple and there were frequent complimentary comments by visitors. Sadly however there was a major dispute between Stanley Finch and Stanley Fisher and despite the fact that they had known each other for many years they could not resolve their differences and Stanley Finch felt compelled to resign from the Lodge.

Stanley Fisher was Lodge Secretary for many years. He filled that office with distinction and to a very high standard, a tradition which has been carried on by his successors such as Bill Crutchlow and now Alan Williams of whom more later.

Stanley Finch was succeeded as Director of Ceremonies by Charlie Langshaw who was a very different character but that said he did do a great job in keeping the Lodge ritual on the straight and narrow.

A real character in the Lodge was W.Bro J K Howard Hall (WM1958/59) A proud Yorkshireman who frequently delivered the Yorkshire Grace with great gusto.

I well recall Bill Ramsay who followed me in the Lodge offices, he was my Senior Warden when I was first installed into the chair in 1970.

Bill was a Metropolitan Police Officer achieving the rank of Commander who took great delight in teasing me about my chosen profession. On one occasion he told me that I was not on Sir Robert Mark's (the then Commissioner) black list of solicitors who were untrustworthy.

Another member of the Lodge who was also a Metropolitan Police Officer and achieved high rank was Roy Habershon. He became Commander of the Bomb Squad at a time when there were real terrorist threats.

When together the pair of them would give me a very hard time but nevertheless we remained very close friends.

Norman Gaskin (WM1957/58) was an excellent Treasurer who safeguarded the Lodge funds as if they were his own.

There are two Brethren whom I well recall for very different reasons; W.Bro Arthur Cook who really struggled with the ritual but he was very determined and overcame his difficulties and served as Worshipful Master in 1979/80. Conversely W.Bro Ron Holder studied the ritual avidly and rarely had a word out of place when conducting a ceremony although he did have his own inimitable style of emphasis.

W.Bro Roger Russell is the only person I felt able to propose into freemasonry. We have known each for very many years having attended the same secondary school and I regard Roger as one of my closest friends.

He has made a huge contribution to Assembly Lodge and has progressed extremely well in the Craft, Chapter and Mark Masonry. I have no doubt that I made a wise choice when introducing him into Assembly Lodge.

I have developed a great respect and huge affection for W.Bro David Green. He is clearly very dedicated to Freemasonry; he has not only learned the ritual but he has also made a study of the principles of masonry and its history. In addition he has made significant progress to the extent that he is now a Grand Officer, I am sure that Sydney would be immensely proud of him.

Nevertheless, I can say without fear of contradiction that he has not forgotten his roots. He is very active in Assembly Lodge in particular as a first-class Director of Ceremonies who does not follow the disciplinarian approach

of some of his predecessors. He is always ready to assist a brother who has an issue; furthermore, he is very caring and by way of example in recent years my mobility and balance have caused me problems and in his own quiet way without fuss indicates that I remain seated when I am struggling.

I cannot conclude without making mention of our Secretary W.Bro Alan Williams and our Treasurer W.Bro Duncan McGhee.

Alan is truly a phenomenon. We have had some excellent secretaries in the past but in my opinion, he dwarfs his predecessors. I cannot recall that we have previously had a secretary who works as hard as Alan. It is not an infrequent occurrence for him to dispatch an email in the early hours of the morning addressing Lodge issues.

Duncan is not only an excellent treasurer who keeps a very watchful eye on Lodge funds and ensures that they are spent wisely, he also contributes to the welfare of the Lodge in so many ways.

With regard to the Centenary he has taken on the formidable task of preparing this Lodge History, he has arranged the Centenary Jewel, Presentation Centenary Glasses for the Festive Board and so much more.

There is no doubt that the work which has been put in by Alan, David and Duncan in putting together the Centenary meeting and celebration has been prodigious. We all owe a huge debt of gratitude to them and I firmly believe that without their input Assembly Lodge would be very much poorer.

**W.Bro Brian Williams LGR**

Centenary Master of Assembly Lodge No. 4357

## Brian Williams

Brian spent some time at the Masonic School for Boys, after his mother was left a single parent in the early 1940's. He then attended Latymer Upper Prep School and then onto the Grammar School, where he excelled not only academically but also in Athletics and Cross Country Running. It was there he met his close friend Roger Russell with whom he shared a passion for football and whom he also proposed as a member of Assembly Lodge.

Brian is, to-date, the youngest person joining the Lodge at just 22 years and a couple of months, and the youngest Master of the Lodge by a good margin being installed for the first time just a few weeks after his 29th Birthday on 28th November 1970 at the 50th Installation meeting. He was also installed as Master in November 1986 and at an Emergency Meeting in November 2021.

He qualified as a solicitor in 1965 having gained Honours and being awarded 2 distinctions in the Solicitors Final Examination.

He was in practice until 2015 latterly as a partner in Weightmans LLP acting on the instructions of insurers in the defence of catastrophic personal injury claims. He also served as a Deputy District Court Judge from 1997 to 2010.

He now uses his vast experience in assisting charities, most notably St Peter & St James Charitable Trust and the Alzheimer's Society.

He is married to his life long partner Jane, with whom he has 2 daughters who have also given him Grandchildren.

Brian developed, under his wife's influence, a keen interest in equestrian matters. He acted for some years on behalf of British Eventing and is a past Chairman of the British Show Horse Association and the South of England Agricultural Society. For many years Brian officiated at the Horse of the Year Show, The Royal International Horse Show and the Royal Windsor Horse Show.

# In the beginning:



During late 1920 / early 1921 a number of brethren assembled and decided to found a new Lodge calling it New Assembly Lodge possibly taking its name from the Café Royal culture, one of many central locations where groups of Gentlemen assembled in post war London.

On 5th February 1921 at a regular meeting of Polytechnic Lodge No 2847 it was proposed by the IPM WBro JEK Studd, and seconded by WBro FW Heale and unanimously agreed to: -

“That this lodge [Polytechnic] do support the petition of a proposed New Lodge to be called The New Assembly Lodge, and that the petition be signed by the Master, and Wardens in open lodge.”

Bro Cleuch LR, thanked the brethren in suitable terms. *[It is quite clearly recorded in the minutes of Polytechnic Lodge as Bro Cleuch LR, I wonder if this is an error and it was possibly WBro Clench PAGPurs who was actively involved in obtaining the Warrant for Assembly Lodge.]*

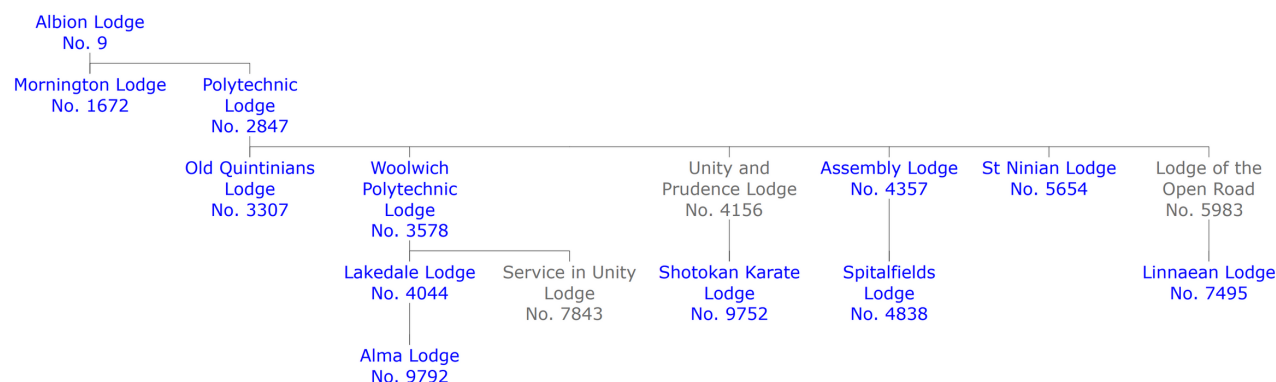
Thus, Polytechnic Lodge 2847 became our mother and sponsoring lodge. (Interestingly neither WBros Studd and Heale nor Bro Cleuch were founding members of Assembly Lodge)

The 29 founding members are listed elsewhere, only 4 of whom were members of Polytechnic Lodge 2847 which met at the other end of Regent Street to the Café Royal at the Polytechnic Institute, 309 Regent Street. At that time Polytechnic Lodge had just short of 250 subscribing members, hardly what is now known as a Lodge of Opportunity and may well be one of the reasons Assembly Lodge was founded.

The 'New' was dropped from the name before the final petition was submitted in the name of Assembly Lodge.

## Chart 9

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Compiled by W. Bro. J.G. Amos, The Earl Amherst Lodge No. 3230



There was a total of 29 founding members, of which 20 were Past Masters. From the 29 Founders, 6 were absent from the consecration meeting.

A warrant of constitution was issued and dated 2nd November 1921 and the date for the consecration of Assembly Lodge was set for Friday 13th January 1922. Invitations were distributed for the meeting to start at 5pm punctually in Grand Temple at Café Royal, Regent Street, London W1.

# The Consecration and First Installation Meeting

At 5.30pm prompt 23 of the 29 founding members along with 49 visiting brethren gathered together in the Café Royal Temple, Regent St W1 under the direction of WBro A L F Cook Dep GDC (Eng), the Consecrating Director of Ceremonies.

VWBro P Colville Smith Grand Secretary presided and appointed the other consecrating officers as follows:

Senior Warden	V WBro Sir Alfred Robbins (Pres board of Gen Purposes)
Junior Warden	WBro A D Hansell PGD (Eng)
Chaplain	V WBro Revd Canon Hubert Curtis PGCh (Eng)
Inner Guard	WBro W A Sterling PAGDC

The minutes record the consecration procedure followed was that in strict conformity with Grand Lodge itself. The order of procedure is provided on the following pages.



Ceremonial music for the consecration was under the direction of WBro Vivian Bennetto PPG Ord (Middx) and other musical brethren.

Other than those 2 paragraphs nothing else is recorded in the minutes about the consecration.

A Founders Jewel was presented to each of the founding members, this one is not engraved on the reverse side. The 2 swords in saltire would indicate it belonged to the Inner Guard Bro Walter George Scott.

**‘HIC ET UBIQUE’**  
translates from Latin as  
**‘HERE AND EVERYWHERE’**



# The Consecration Meeting

FOR USE IN THE TEMPLE.



## Order of Procedure

FOR THE

CONSECRATION OF THE  
ASSEMBLY LODGE No. 4357

on Friday, January 13th, 1922,

AT 5.15 P.M.

BY

V. Wors. Bro. P. COLVILLE SMITH  
(GRAND SECRETARY).

Assisted by other Grand Lodge Officers,  
IN

THE "CAFÉ ROYAL" TEMPLE,

68 REGENT STREET, LONDON, W. 1

## Order of Procedure

1. The Brethren assemble in the Lodge Room.
2. The Consecrating Officer, having entered in procession with the Grand Officers, takes the Chair and appoints his Officers.
3. The Lodge is opened in the Three Degrees.
4. **Opening Hymn.**  
Hail Eternal, by whose aid  
All created things were made,  
Heaven and earth, Thy vast design,  
Hear us, Architect Divine.  
  
May our work, begun in Thee,  
Ever blest with order be;  
And may we, when labours cease,  
Part in harmony and peace.  
  
By Thy Glorious Majesty,  
By the trust we place in Thee,  
By the badge and mystic sign,  
Hear us, Architect Divine.  
So mote it be.
5. The Consecrating Officer addresses the Brethren on the motive of the Meeting, and calls upon the Chaplain to give the
6. **Opening Prayer.**
7. Chant (*Omnes*): "So mote it be."
8. The Director of Ceremonies addresses the Consecrating Officer.
9. The Consecrating Officer replies and gives directions.
10. The Brethren of the new Lodge are arranged in order.
11. The Director of Ceremonies reads the Warrant.

12. The Consecrating Officer enquires of the Brethren if they approve of the Officers named in the Warrant.

13. The Brethren signify their approval in Masonic form.

### An Oration

14. On the Nature and Principles of the Institution, by the Chaplain.

### Anthem.

15. Behold how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity.

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard, even unto Aaron's beard, and went down to the skirts of his clothing.

It is like the dew of Hermon which fell upon the hill of Zion. For there the Lord promised His blessing, and life for evermore.—So mote it be.

16. **Dedication Prayer** (*First Portion*).

17. Chant (*Omnes*): "So mote it be."

18. *Musical Response*—GLORY BE TO THEE, O GOD.

19. The Brethren turn towards the East, whilst the Consecrating Officer pronounces

### The Invocation.

20. Chant (*Omnes*): "So mote it be."

21. The Chaplain reads II. *Chron.*, chap. ii, verses 1 to 16.

22. The Consecrating Officer directs the Lodge Board to be uncovered.

### The Consecration.

during which the elements of Consecration are carried round the Lodge.

23. The Chaplain reads *Psalms* lxxii., verse 16.

24. The Brethren sing—  
When once of old in Israel,  
Our early Brethren wrought with toil,  
Jehovah's blessing on them fell,  
In showers of Corn and Wine and Oil.

25. The Consecrating Officer scatters Corn—the symbol of Plenty.

26. *Musical Response*—GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH.

27. The Chaplain reads *Nehemiah*, chap. x., verse 89.

28. The Brethren sing—

When there, a shrine to Him alone  
They built, with worship sin to foil,  
On threshold and on Corner-stone  
They poured out Corn and Wine and Oil.

29. The Consecrating Officer pours Wine—the symbol of Joy and Cheerfulness.

30. *Musical Response*—GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH.

31. The Chaplain reads *Exodus*, chap. xxx., verses 25 and 26.

32. The Brethren sing—

And we have come, fraternal bands,  
With joy and pride, and prosperous spoil,  
To honour Him by votive hands,  
With streams of Corn and Wine and Oil.

33. The Consecrating Officer pours Oil—the symbol of Peace and Unanimity.

34. *Musical Response*—GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH.

35. The Chaplain reads *Leviticus*, chap. ii., verse 13.

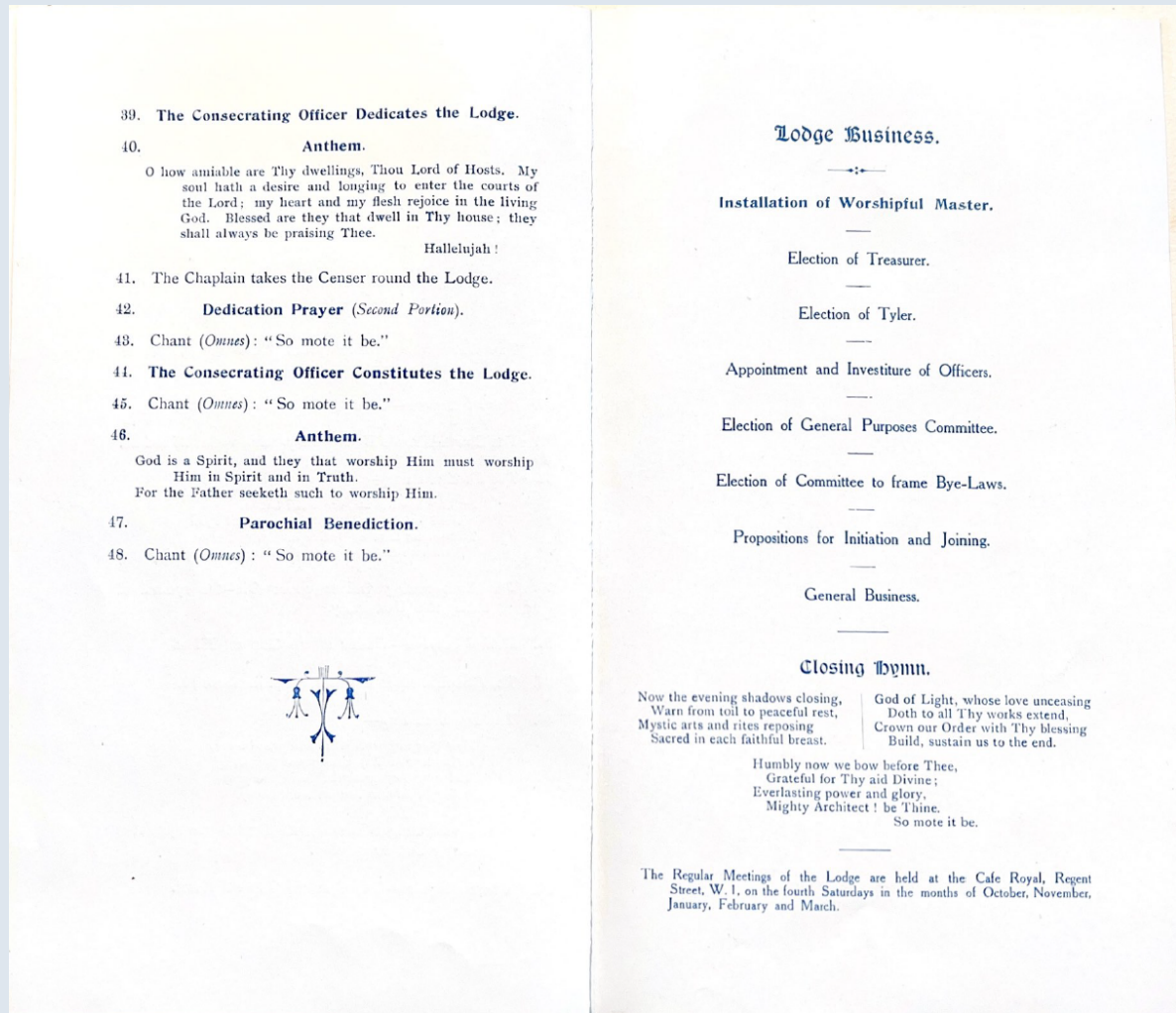
36. The Brethren sing—

Now o'er our work this Salt we shower,  
Emblem of Thy conservant power,  
And may Thy presence, Lord, we pray,  
Keep this our Temple from decay.

37. The Consecrating Officer sprinkles Salt—the symbol of Fidelity and Friendship.

38. *Musical Response*—GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH.

# The Consecration Meeting



From consecration in 1922 up to and including January 1968 the scroll for the lodge crest on the summons had been incorrectly printed

**‘NIC ET UBIQUE’**

which has no real translation from Latin. This was corrected in February 1968 to

**‘HIC ET UBIQUE’**

meaning ‘Here and Everywhere’. This change was not recorded in the minutes.



# First Installation Ceremony



Following the completion of the consecration ceremony the consecrating officers immediately proceeded to install the WM Designate, WBro John Collingridge as the First Worshipful Master of the Assembly Lodge No 4357 according to ancient custom.

WBro John Collingridge then proceeded to appoint, and invest WBro John Sullivan PAGStBr as his (acting) IPM.

The lodge was resumed in the 3 degrees, interestingly there were no Fellowcrafts or Entered Apprentices in attendance.

The warrant of the Lodge was presented by V WBro P Colville Smith, the installing master, which was received with considerable pleasure by the first WM.

The WM appointed and invested his officers, the election of treasurer was left in the hands of the WM who immediately elected and invested WBro Herbert Langridge PGStBr. WBro S Gallop PGT (Bucks) was elected and invested as Tyler. The full list of officers are included later.

It was proposed, seconded and carried that a committee be formed to 'frame the By-Laws'. The WM proposed that Assembly Lodge declares its intention of endeavouring to become a Hall Stone Lodge in connection with the Masonic Million Memorial Fund, which was seconded and carried.

After the First Rising the WM proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Consecrating Officers for their grand and beautiful work that evening asking them to accept honorary membership of the lodge which was duly accepted. He also presented them each with a small souvenir present of a silver cigarette box on behalf of the Lodge.

Details were read for 2 joining members and 8 candidates for membership. Letters of regret for absence were read and the meeting closed until Saturday 28th January 1922. Emergencies excepted.

**WBro John Collingridge was not originally destined to have the honour of first Master of Assembly Lodge. It was originally intended WBro R C Clench would have that privilege. However, he had to relinquish the position owing to the death of his wife and his own subsequent illness leading up to the consecration. WBro Clench felt a need to resign in advance of the meeting in October 1922 and was subsequently elected an honorary member at that meeting.**

# The Roaring Twenties

The first regular meeting was held just 2 weeks after consecration on 28th January 1922 at 3.30pm in the Café Royal. The lodge was opened in the 3 degrees and resumed to the first. There was a ballot for 2 joining members and 8 'Gentlemen' for membership. By dispensation given 4 of those Gentlemen were initiated in two double ceremonies.

The first set of By-Laws read, approved and adopted in open Lodge on 28th January 1922 are recorded as 'the model bylaws of Grand Lodge itself'. Lodge subscriptions were 4 Guineas, the joining fee 5 and rejoining fee 3 Guineas. The initiation fee was 15 Guineas, approx £1000 today.

It was also proposed that the Lodge form its own benevolent fund with 5% of the subscriptions being allocated thereto, it was also proposed that the reigning WM of our sponsoring lodge, Polytechnic Lodge No2847 be an Honorary member. Both propositions being carried at the next regular meeting.

At the second regular meeting those 4 initiates were passed to the second degree and 2 more gentlemen initiated. There was also a resolution to hold a ladies' night during the year.

At the third regular meeting in March 1922 Bro Thomas James Foster the JD was the first member to be presented with his Masonic Million Memorial Fund Medal having donated the required sum of 10 guineas, almost 2 weeks wages for a Manager or Clerk.

During the summer months there were 3 Emergency meetings held at the Polytechnic Institute.

By pledging to raise the required sum of £236 / 5 / 0 the Lodge was awarded Hall Stone Lodge status by October. Polytechnic Lodge No2847 reciprocated the honorary membership to the WM of Assembly Lodge No4357 for the time being.

At the installation meeting on 25th November 1922, which started at 3.30pm the outgoing WM passed 2 brothers to the 2nd degree and the JW took the chair to raise 2 brothers to the sublime degree of Master Mason. Following the subsequent installation and appointment of officers the WM immediately proceeded to initiate 2 gentlemen into the mysteries and privileges of ancient freemasonry. Along with other business.

The Installation Banquet was scheduled for 7pm, it is not recorded what time it actually started but the banquets seemed to be quite grand affairs with musical entertainment by non-masons and ladies, so I feel it must have been at least 'about' on time.

The outgoing WM was presented with a Past Masters Jewel and a Loving Cup by the Lodge. His initiates for the year also presented him with a 'Fine Barometer'.

The first set of lodge accounts show total receipts of £694 / 4 / 11 which is approx. £40,000 today based on inflation or £145,000 based on average earnings.

# The Roaring Twenties

By the end of the first year there had been 5 regular and 3 emergency meetings, a total of 14 Gentlemen initiated, 12 passed to the second degree and 10 of them also raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. They were all done as 'doubles' meaning a total of 18 ceremonies carried out at 8 meetings, plus an installation.

In January 1923 it was proposed and carried that the Lodge meeting place be changed to the Hotel Great Central at Marylebone, this was presumably in response to the proposed refurbishment works to be carried out at Café Royal. Only 2 meetings were held there, (1 emergency and 1 regular meeting), before moving back to Café Royal. The bylaws were however amended in 1923 to reflect the change before being amended by hand and signed by V Wbro P Colville Smith on 21st March 1924.

January 1923 also saw the Lodge subscriptions be reduced from 5 Guineas to 4 Guineas, by majority vote there being 4 dissensions recorded.

At the same meeting the WM was granted the sum of 10 Guineas towards his expenses in providing musical talent at the banquets.

January 1924 saw the Lodge approval for a Lodge of Instruction be sanctioned by the Lodge to work under its aegis and authority.

The WM proposed a Tontine\* scheme at the rate of 1 shilling a week to raise the necessary funds for the Masonic Million Memorial Fund.

November 1924 the LOI was given consent to be mentioned on the summons and the WMs' grant for providing musical talent at banquets was increased to 14 Guineas.

January 1925 the Lodge summons changed considerably to include for the first time the List of Officers, Subscribing Past Masters, Honorary Members, Regular Meeting Dates and of course the Lodge of Instruction which was meeting weekly on a Monday evening, Bank Holiday and the months June to August inclusive excepted, at 7.30 pm at the Thurlow Arms, West Norwood.

November 1925 it was proposed and carried that Assembly Lodge become a founding Lodge in the Freemasons Hospital and Nursing Home.

January 1926 a special jewel granted by Grand Lodge was presented to Bro Thomas Maynard (the Lodge JD) for the first 250 guineas collected from the Lodge for the MMM Fund.

The first Lodge Chaplain was invested on 27th March 1926, Bro the Rev William Ernest Clemens. He was initiated, Passed and Raised in the previous 3 meetings. He held this office until 1948.

March 1926 also saw the Lodge become the sponsoring Lodge supporting the petition for the new Spitalfields Lodge, WBro C Knights the WM designate of Spitalfields Lodge warmly thanked the brethren.

*\* A tontine scheme was similar to the original building society concept that everyone pays in weekly, the jewels were then collected every 10 guineas raised and distributed accordingly until every brother had one.*

# The Roaring Twenties

At an Emergency meeting in May 1926 it was agreed the Lodge would loan £23 / 2 / 0 to the MMM Fund so the WM could be presented with the Hall Stone Jewel at quarterly communications. The jewel was presented to WBro Charles John Pratt in Grand Lodge by The MW the GM, HRH the Duke of Connaught and Strathern.

WBro Charles John Pratt also reported at the October meeting he had the pleasure of being one of the consecrating officers for Spitalfields Lodge No 4838.

27th November 1926 in front 93 assembled brethren Bro Frederick William Arthur Ballam become the first new WM of the Lodge, he was a founding member of the Lodge having previously been initiated in Bucks in 1906.

A postscript note in the minute book records that at the banquet that followed the chorale 'Absent Brethren' composed by WBro Secretary [Alfred T Burgess], was sung for the first time at the 9 o'clock toast.

1927 continued in a similar busy fashion with 8 double ceremonies being performed in the first 3 meetings of the year along with much other business.

The Almoner Bro Frank Fenton Banister presented to the Lodge a very handsome case for the warrant. I assume the one still used today as no other presentation has been recorded.

In March 1927 10 Guineas was given to the Royal Masonic Institute for Girls from Lodge funds. A Lodge Banner fund was established to be funded by the proceeds of Ladies' festivals. The £8-15-0 being 'profit' from the recent ladies festival was a good start toward the expected costs of 15 Guineas.

The sixth Emergency meeting was held in May 1927 at the Polytechnic, but due to another function dining would be at Restaurant Frascati, Oxford Street, the cost being 5 Shillings excluding cigars and wine.

Also at that meeting it was approved that a Royal Arch Chapter be attached to the Lodge, the necessary forms being signed in open Lodge. The Chapter was subsequently consecrated on 21st December 1927 at the Holborn Restaurant with EComp Charles James Pratt (Snr) PAGDC, PPGSoj (Bucks), the outgoing IPM of Assembly Lodge, as the First Principle.

25 Guineas was donated to the Polytechnic Masonic Building Fund to be paid in equal installments over 5 years.

On 22nd October 1927 we saw the first appearance on the summons of a request to wear Masonic Mourning : 3 Black Rosettes on Apron, Black Ties and White Gloves in respect for WBro John Cayley PPDGDC (Surrey) an honorary member of the Lodge and Preceptor of Assembly Lodge of Instruction.

Also at that meeting a Masonic Charities Association was attached to the Lodge.

# The Roaring Twenties

112 Brethren attended the November meeting for the installation of Bro Walter George Scott, who was a founding member of the Lodge and the first WM to have completed a full year in each office from IG to WM.

26th November 1927 also saw the unveiling of the Lodge Banner by Wbro Percy George Mallory PGD, DPGM (Bucks), Sec RMIB who subsequently became an honorary member at the next meeting.

1928 continued in a similar manner with a total of 10 ceremonies in the first 4 meetings of the year, and the Assembly Lodge Masonic Charities Association by-laws were approved by the Lodge. A further 10 Guineas was placed on the Masters List for the RMIB bringing the Masters List total to £302 / 8 / 0.

In October a letter from UGLE was read in open Lodge advising 'Secretaries and Almoners of Lodges are especially urged to exercise great caution in giving casual relief to persons who travel over the country, stating they are poor and distressed Freemasons. Many are imposters or undeserving, and no relief should be afforded without full proof that the applicant is worthy of aid.'

By 24th November 1928 installation meeting the Lodge had grown to a membership consisting of 3 Country members and 67 regular members, 62 of whom attended the installation meeting along with 57 visitors. The Café Royal had afforded Assembly Lodge for the first time use of their Grand Temple for the Installation of WBro Mortimer John Miller a founding member and PM of Rickmansworth Lodge No 2218.

In January 1929 the Lodge accounts were adopted. They show the unpaid dues had risen from £10 / 10 / 0 the previous year to £45 / 3 / 0. Although this was some months before the Great Depression officially started on Wall Street times were clearly tough and Freemasonry was a strain on personal finances. As a result there was only 1 initiate during the year, in February. By October all members were Master Masons.

The minutes for the November Installation meeting are in Book 2 which has been misplaced for the time being, but the summons shows the meeting took place in Café Royal Grand Temple again and that 2 Gentlemen were to be balloted for and if successful initiated before the installation, bringing total membership at the end of the 1920's to 79.

It was customary in this first decade in the Lodge for the Lodge to present a PM's Jewel and Loving Cup to the outgoing WM. The initiates of the year also clubbed together and presented the WM with a gift at the end of his year, these gifts included a 'fine' barometer, a 'handsome' clock, a gold fountain pen, a 'smokers companion', a 'useful' letter wallet and an engraved sterling silver letter weight. In 1927 the tradition seems to have changed to a gift of Past Masters' Collar and Jewel engraved with the names of the initiates in his year. I wonder if that happened in 1929 when there was just the one initiate, did he pay for the gift on his own?

# The Depressing Thirties



Sadly, the minute book covering the period January 1930 to January 1939 has been temporarily misplaced. A search is, however, on for its discovery.

Other records indicate that membership over this period slowed, with a total of 20 Initiates, 9 Joining members and 1 re-joining member over the decade. 14 of whom had resigned before 1940.

Records indicate that the lodge went through a lean patch with only one new member being recorded in 1935, 36, and 1937. The slow down did not however abate the Lodge's appetite for putting their WM under pressure as they carried out 11 multiple degree ceremonies.

There was also the 7th Emergency Meeting called on April 22nd 1939.

## Assembly Lodge Banner

The Lodge banner was originally purchased with surplus funds from Ladies Festivals in the 1920's. It was unveiled in November 1927 and has been added to over the years with two side wings to include the names of past masters once the original central columns had been filled.

The banner was left behind when the Lodge moved from the Café Royal in 1972. It was later discovered by builders in a dilapidated condition and this discovery reported to Grand Lodge.

The banner was in a sorry state of repair, WBro Ron Holder took on the challenge of having the banner cleaned, repaired and refurbished by the Royal School of Needlework. The work being completed at a cost of £550. It was rededicated by WBro John Richards PAGDC in October 1987.

By 1993 the original silk backing had started to disintegrate and it was considered to be beyond repair. However with the cost of a replacement Banner being in the order of £4000 that was out of the question.

The Banner was fully restored and framed by Gordon Pfyffer and Past Masters updated.

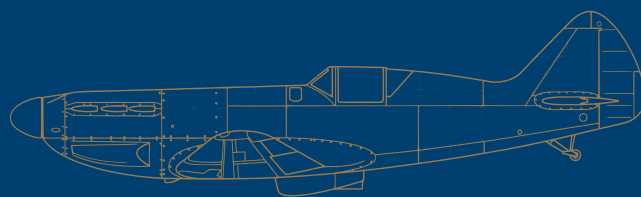


The cost was between £500 and £1000 and paid for by individual members of the Lodge on a voluntary basis. The restored banner was framed in a glass fronted case which folds and was re-dedicated in October 1994 by WBro Sydney Green. WBro David Green also gave a presentation of his thoughts on the design of the central motif.

It is now stored at Mark Masons' Hall, it is quite heavy and so it is not always brought from the basement for every meeting anymore.



# The War Years



For me, the most noticeable thing about the war years in the minutes of Assembly Lodge 4357 is the complete lack of mention of the war. There is no mention of our brethren who joined the armed services or indeed those who made the ultimate sacrifice for King and Country.

The only mention of the war is a letter dated September 1939 from UGLE appended to the October summons with temporary directions and amendments to the Book of Constitutions. From the minutes and the summonses, it is clear that proceedings were not carrying on as normal. Attendance was considerably down with only 24 member and just 2 visitors attending in October 1939 when a double Raising was performed.

Meetings had been moved to earlier in the day with a 3.30pm start and dinner at 5.30pm.

Dinner was no longer guaranteed with the direction from Grand Lodge that 'after proceedings where, held should be brief and simple' it is not clear from the minutes if dinners were actually held. By Christmas 1939 there had been 2 resignations and 7 brethren placed on the non-dining list.

The new WM was installed in November as usual but with an attendance of just 30. A past masters Jewel and Collar were presented to the IPM and for the last time he also received the traditional Loving Cup. The initiates gift seems to have been dispensed with as a tradition.

The lodge accounts remained in good order in 1939 with a total balance of £633/14/6 (approx. £42,000 today) of which £122/7/0 was outstanding dues.

In January 1940 the lodge performed a Raising on behalf of Kynaston Studd Lodge 5416 and in February a Passing and a Raising at the request of River Lodge 5126, the passing being performed by the WM of River Lodge 5126.

The March 1940 meeting summons was printed in memoriam of the Lodge's first WM WBro John Collingridge PAGDC who had died on 24th February 1940.

WBro F W Ballam having been promoted to PAGDC was presented with his Grand Lodge clothing by the members of the Lodge.

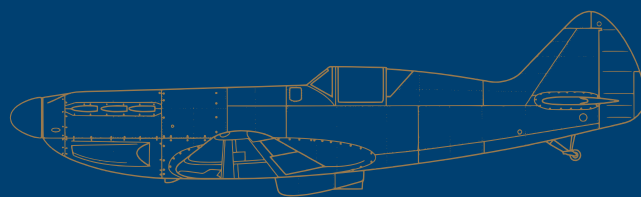
WBro S Finch spoke of the great advantages of Lol and appealed to all members who could, join and also requested the full details of Lol be printed on the summons once more.

The WM also spoke of a Ladies night although it is not clear if one took place.

With London having being bombed every night from 7th September to 2nd November 1940 it's no surprise the October and November meetings were both cancelled. As the Blitz continued into 1941 the January and February meetings were also cancelled.

At the March 1941 meeting, with just 18 members and 4 visitors present Bro T H Maynard was elected and installed as WM for the 1940/41 season. It was proposed that a PM Jewel and Collar would be presented to the IPM at some future date.

# The War Years



There was 1 nomination for initiation, 2 resignations and 2 memberships ceased for non-payment of dues.

All brethren were placed on the non-dining list, with the proviso that if a meal is held then those attending will share the cost.

There was an initiation in October 1941 and Bro A E Evans became WM elect.

November, is usually installation but it was instead scheduled to be a Passing, however a telegram was sent advising that Bro Eric Storry Rogers was too ill to attend. The Lodge was opened and closed in the 3 degrees.

In January 1942 the brethren stood in silent respect for HRH The Duke of Connaught and Strathearn who passed to the Grand Lodge above on 16th January 1942. UGLE entered into a period of 6 months mourning, however in view of the need to conserve materials and labour, it was commanded that brethren do not wear usual masonic mourning dress, which consisted of 3 black rosettes on the apron.

Bro Rogers having recovered was Passed to the second degree.

February saw a Joining member and an initiation in addition to Bro Rogers being Raised to the third degree, and a further 3 resignations.

In March 1942, with the war being more concentrated in Africa and the East, numbers rose to 36, including 13 visitors as Bro A E Evans was installed as WM. Having installed his officers he immediately set to work and performed a ceremony of Passing.

In October WBro A E Evans carried out a third degree ceremony before installing his successor, Bro H Ailles, in November after just 1 full meeting in the chair and receiving his PM Jewel and Collar. The November meeting having moved by dispensation to the Holborn Restaurant, which was demolished in 1953 and many of you will now know the location as a glass fronted Sainsbury Local supermarket.

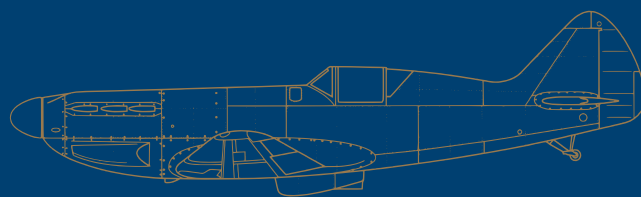
January 1943 was the first time (assuming it didn't happen in the 1930's) that no ceremony was scheduled and instead a lecture on Masonic Ritual was given by WBro A S Jenkinson LGR, which Bro Secretary recorded as 'very interesting' and 'much appreciated'.

The February and March meeting having been cancelled at the October meeting it was proposed the Permanent Dining list be re-instated and dues revert back to 4 Guineas and that the lodge should once again meet on all the days named in the by-laws.

At the installation meeting in November the IPM was presented with his PM Jewel and Collar in addition to a PM Gavel.

January 1944 recorded the first time since 1939 of donations to charity consisting of 3 Guineas to the Royal Wanstead School and 25 Guineas to each of the RMIG, RMIB, RMBI and the RM Hospital.

# The War Years



Salutations were also read from Lodge Ionic 212 New Zealand, a connection with Bro Smout, possibly as a result of units preparing for D-Day which had started in December 1943.

The remainder of 1944 consisted of an Initiation, and Passing in February and March with a Raising and an Initiation at the October meeting followed by dinner on the balcony of Café Royal which seems to have been the norm in 1944.

Bro Jupp was installed as WM at the meeting in November, when a further sum of £25 was donated to the memorial of one of the honorary members RWBro Sir Kynaston Studd PGW PGM (Cams). WBro Finch was presented with his LGR clothing by the Lodge, which is recorded in the accounts as costing 17 Guineas, approx. £800 today!

1945 started with a Passing and Initiation in January, followed by a Raising and Passing in February and a Raising in March.

At the March Meeting WBro Finch gave notice that Lol would start on 6th April at a new venue, the Kings Stores in Wingate Street, Spitalfields which is still a public house today.

28 members along with 26 visitors attended the installation meeting in November 1945. A letter from RMIB was read out informing the brethren that the son of the late Bro Chester had been retained at the school for a term beyond his due date of discharge.

At the end of 1945 the lodge had 57 subscribing members, the lodge accounts stood at £579/6/1 of which £43/1/0 was dues in arrears and £22/2/6 'House bills' in arrears.

**The Assembly Lodge 9 O'Clock Toast was written by the Lodge Secretary, W.Bro Alfred T Burgess and first sung at the Festive Board in November 1926, to the tune of Melita. It still continues to be sung today.**

## Absent Brethren

“ Great Architect, to Thee we raise  
With one accord our hymn of praise:  
Our "absent ones," at this lone hour,  
O may they feel Thy gracious pow'r  
Preserve them, whereso'er they be,  
Then shall we sing glad songs to Thee ”

# The Post War Years



1946 started with a total of 57 members listed on the summons, of which 14 were Past Masters, along with 5 Honorary members including the current WM of Polytechnic Lodge 2847.

The attendance numbers remained quite low for the first 3 meetings of 1946 with an average attendance of 22 members and just 3 visitors, who witnessed the only Initiation of the year in January, he went on to be Passed and Raised in February and March. There was also a joining member in January 1946.

October 1946 saw the usual elections; Bro S S Fisher as WM progressing from SW, the Treasurer and Tyler being re-elected to office. The annual reading of By-laws in open lodge took place followed by the details of 5 applicants for initiation. Past Master Jewels were presented to WBro A E Evans (1941/42), WBro H C Ailles (1942/43) and WBro F C Jupp (1944/45)

Bro Secretary reported to the lodge that one of our founding members, WBro T J Maynard, had failed to pay his subscriptions for 5 years and asked for a special letter to be sent !

The November 1946 Installation meeting started on a somber note in pious memory of one of our Honorary member WBro Percy Mallory PGD DPGM (Bucks) and Secretary of the Boys Masonic Institution for many years.

The installation was conducted in usual form and ceremony with 28 members and 36 visitors present. At this installation it was recorded for the first and only time that the WM declared all offices vacant.

The ballot of the 5 applicants for membership proved unanimous on all counts. There were 61 who sat down for the festive board in a private dining room of the Café Royal.

The minutes for January 1947 record only 19 members plus the Tyler as present, the signing in book notes an additional 3PM's, 7 members and 14 Visitors who witnessed a double Initiation including that of Mr Charles Edward Irvine Beer the father of our current longest serving member Bro Gordon Beer.

Bro Treasurer presented the accounts which were still in very good order with a total balance of £537-9-0. The average price of a house in 1947 was just £620-0-0. Brother Treasurer must have been busy during the year to reduce the outstanding Dues and House Bills from £65-3-6 in 1946 to £31-10-0. (I know the feeling!)

February 1947 was a busy meeting starting at 4pm with dinner booked for 6.30pm. There was a joining member, a double Passing and a double Initiation all carried out by the WM. One of the initiates was Mr Aubrey Robert Mills, Managing Director of the Die Casting Machine Tools Co, the other was his Production Manager Mr Joesph William George Roden. Information on Mr Mills is included elsewhere in this booklet.

Also in February 1947 Bro Treasurer was after more money increasing the Initiation Fee to 20 Guineas, Joining Fee to 6 Guineas, Annual Subscriptions to 5 Guineas and the Banquet Fee for Visitors to £1-5-0, which was carried unanimously.

March 1947 was again a busy meeting with a double Initiation, Double Passing and double Raising.

# The Post War Years



The notice of motion printed in the summons March 1947 'that until further notice the lodge shall donate three guineas annually to the Royal Wanstead School' was withdrawn at the request of the Grand Secretary.

The 8th Emergency meeting in April 1947 was a double 2nd and a double 3rd degrees. WBro E J Dubber was presented with his PM Jewel (WM 1943/44)

In October the Lodge stood 'in pious memory of a great leader' the Most Worshipful Grand Master, Henry Lascelles 6th Earl of Harwood GM 1942-1947.(Brother-in-law of HRH George VI by marriage to his sister Mary, only daughter of HRH George V). Also in memory of our member Bro A E G Harris who joined in February 1938.

The new WM was installed in the usual manner at the November meeting, which also included 2 joining members Bro H Warman of River Lodge 5126 and Bro A McKechnie of Sydney & St Andrews Lodge No 7 UGL of NSW Australia.

It was also proposed and unanimously accepted at the November 1947 meeting that the 1st Principle of Assembly Chapter No 4357, if not already a member of Assembly Lodge 4357, be an Honorary Member of the lodge for his year in office.

1948 started off with a larger than average attendance for a January meeting with 55 of which 52 dined at the Café Royal. The WM presided over a double initiation and WBro Sandham conducted a Passing.

The First Principle of Assembly Chapter 4357 made his first visit as an Honorary Member, he was also joined by the WM of Polytechnic Lodge 2847 also an Honorary Member.

Bro R Ames was accepted as a guest of the lodge having retrieved the books of the Lodge from Bro Secretary, bringing them to the meeting. Bro Secretary was recovering from illness and as a fraternal gesture now he was convalescing a gift of fruit was sent to him.

Parts of the UGL Quarterly Communication of December 1947 were read out including that shortage of paper and binding material had very considerably delayed the production of further supplies of the Book of Constitutions.

In February 1948 the lodge hoped to carry out a double Initiation, double Passing and a Raising in under 3 hours! The meeting start time scheduled for 3.00pm and dinner at 6.30pm

Presumably due to early Easter holidays the March meeting was delayed to April 10th by Dispensation and an earlier start allowed 4 Hours to complete the Initiation, double Passing and double Raising carried out.

The Rev C E Clements had cause to resign, the reason is not recorded but it may well have been ill health. Proposed and carried unanimously that in recognition of the very great service rendered to the lodge over the past 20 years Rev C E Clements become an Honorary Member. Rev Clements accepted the honour and thanked the brethren.

# The Post War Years



Bro Secretary assured the Lodge that the Freemasons' Hospital was NOT being taken over by the Government as part of the new National Health Service being founded on 5th July 1948.

The Summons for October 1948 has no Chaplain recorded on the summons and the Rev C E Clements on the Honorary members list. He did however sign in as Chaplain in the signature book.

The November Installation meeting was attended by 45 Members and 41 Visitors. Bro Harold Bradford who joined the Lodge in February 1942, served 2 years as Steward, Inner Guard in November 1945, Junior Deacon in 1946 and Junior Warden in 1947 was Installed as WM in November 1948. That was incredibly fast promotion in those days, many members never made it to the WM Chair. The WM welcomed Bro E T Deane from Ionic Lodge 212 Grand Lodge of New Zealand.

The January 1949 meeting was even better attended than the previous year with 46 members and 17 visitors who saw 2 joining members, a double Passing and a double initiation.

Bro Treasurer WBro J C Poole was congratulated on two counts, first being appointed to Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the Kings New Year Honours list for his work as Assistant Timber Controller at the Board of Trade. Secondly for his appointment to LGR.

I noted that on the February 1949 Summons the WM of Polytechnic Lodge 2847 nor First Principle of Assembly Chapter were no longer listed as Honorary Members. It was reported at that meeting that the Rev C E Clements was seriously ill. Unfortunately the next meeting in March was in memorandum of our first Chaplain who died on 4th March 1949.

In October 1949, 40 Members and 10 Visitors witnessed a double Raising followed by a double Passing.

Bro Assistant Secretary read the report on Grand Lodge Proceedings entitled 'Aims and Relationships of the Craft' in its entirety.

There was then some discussion regarding amendments to the by-laws proposed by Bro Treasurer most notably to increase the subscriptions from 5 guineas to 6 guineas and the visitors dining fee to 2 guineas. This proposition had been drafted at a prior meeting of 9 Past masters, a Warden and 2 lodge Committeemen.

Notwithstanding the proposed increase in subscriptions, it was then further decided to discontinue the provision of wines and spirits during refreshments except at installation meetings.

WBro S S Fisher moved an amendment that the subscriptions be increased to 7 Guineas on the understanding it implied the continuance of wines at all ordinary meeting and wines and spirits at installation meetings. The amendment was seconded by WBro S F Finch and carried by a majority.

The whole motion including the amendment was then carried unanimously.

The WM informed the Lodge he had sent a pair of compasses to Ionic Lodge 212 NZ via Bro Tresice as they were apparently unobtainable in New Zealand.

# The Post War Years



The Installation in November 1949 was proceeded by a double Passing with WBro S F Finch occupying the WM chair.

The WM, WBro Harold Bradford, then installed the JW Bro Norman Alfred Tilley into the chair, who appointed and invested his officers in the usual manner. The Chaplain's office being left vacant once again for the first time since 1926.

WBro W J Smout tendered his resignation due to ill health.

At the end of WW2 there was surge of new members into Freemasonry in general and Assembly Lodge in particular with 22 new initiates and 12 joining members. By the end of the 1940's the lodge had grown from 57 members at the start of the decade to some 78 members and 2 Honorary members.

The Lodge accounts still stood in good order with a balance of £504-7-1, however unpaid House Bills had risen to £28-15-0.

## Links with New Zealand

**In January 1944 salutations were recorded from Ionic Lodge 212, Grand Lodge of New Zealand, there is no recorded explanation nor reason. It is possible brothers met in preparations for the D-Day Landings and exchanged greetings, whatever the reason was, the friendship and brotherly love grew between the two Lodges and lasted many years.**

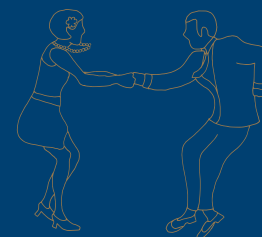
**The WM sent a gift in 1949 of a pair of compasses to Ionic Lodge with a brother, apparently these were unobtainable in New Zealand at that time. Visitors from Ionic Lodge 212 were welcomed into Assembly Lodge meetings in November 1948 and again March 1951. I assume reciprocal visits were also made.**

**The Ionic Lodge 212 History in 1969 recorded that 'in March 1947 the brethren of the lodge contributed to a fund for the purpose of sending food parcels to members of Assembly Lodge No 4357 which meets at the Café Royal, 68 Regent Street, London W1. The parcels were sent to supplement the stringent rationing being experienced by people in the old country following the Second World War, and were continued at intervals for several years until the need became less apparent. The many letters received from the brethren of Assembly Lodge are evidence that the parcels were much appreciated and the contents most useful to those charged with the responsibility of keeping house.'**

**Ionic Lodge 212 returned its Warrant in 1988, and at the final meeting the friendship between our two Lodges was once again remembered.**

**My personal thanks go to WBro Keith Knox, Honorary Grand Librarian, Grand Lodge of New Zealand for finding the Ionic Lodge 212 history for me.**

# The 1950's



The 1950's carried on where the Post War Years had left off, in the first half the decade in 19 of a possible 24 regular meetings (exc Installation meeting) multiple ceremonies were performed. Most of those also had double candidates too. The rate of joining slowed down from 1956 and there were only 2 further occasions where multiple degrees were worked at the same meeting, one in 1958 with single candidates and again in 1959 with double candidates. There were a total of 41 new members joining over the course of the decade. Retained membership had risen from 77 members in January 1950 to 84 in December 1959.

Ronald Edwin Green was initiated into the Lodge on 28th January 1950 who was the longest serving member when I joined the lodge in 1997.

There was no regular meeting in February 1950 and no explanation in the minutes. However, the minutes do record a notice of motion that the By-laws No 1 be altered by inserting the word 'February' between 'January' and 'March' on the 4th line. We don't have a copy of the by-laws from that time. By-law No 1 would state the place and times of meetings so 'February' was possibly inadvertently omitted from the approved By-laws which had been redrafted in Nov 1949 following alterations to the subscriptions. The motion was carried at the March meeting and the regular February meeting reinstated the following year.

A motion was passed in October 1950 that the Charity Box will be passed in Lodge instead of the Festive Board from now on, as is still the practice today.

The passing of greeting between Assembly Lodge and Ionic Lodge 212 GL of New Zealand continued with Bro H G Smout receiving a 'most hearty welcome' as a guest of the Lodge in March 1951.

In January 1952 Bro Assistant Secretary read a letter from WBro Ballam (Secretary) thanking the Lodge for the basket of fruit but in view of his continuous ill health he was unhappy to ask the WM to accept his resignation as Secretary. This was accepted with regret. (I can concur as Bro Assistant Secretary's writing is not so legible.)

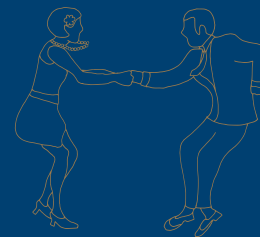
Also, in January 1952 the Lodge had received a letter from Mrs Amelia Clemens (widow of our late Chaplain) in distressed circumstances and in need of financial help in settlement of a long outstanding building account. As a genuine and deserving case the sum of £25 was paid as an immediate grant. In March the Board of Benevolence made a further grant to Mrs A Clemens of £200 via the Lodge.

A letter enclosed with the March Summons requested contributions of up to a max £1/0/0 for a presentation to WBro Ballam as a token of esteem and appreciation for his service as Founder, Past Master, Secretary and Festival Secretary over 30 years. Sadly, WBro Fred Ballam passed to the Grand Lodge above before the presentation could be made and donations were returned to each member's individual account.

Mr Sydney Alfred Green was initiated in October 1952, he was the longest serving regularly attending member of the Lodge when I joined, and I do have many memories of Sidney particularly from Lol.



## The 1950's



Also in October 1952 and to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Lodge Bro Treasurer proposed that the Lodge raise its status from Life Governor to Vice President of the three Masonic Institutions RMIB, RMIG and RMBI. The total cost would be 130 Guineas (approx. 4 months man's average wage). Unanimously approved.

The Charity box for the February 1953 meeting was to be donated to the Lord Mayor of London Flood and Tempest Relief Fund. This was in response to the tidal surge of 1st Feb which left over 300 dead and 30,000 homeless in coastal towns from Lincolnshire to Kent. This event ultimately led to the building of the Thames Barrier opened some 30 years later. There is no record in the minutes, nor the accounts, of what the figure was.

Installation meeting of November 1953 provided the first record in the minutes of what the Alms collection in Lodge was, on this occasion it was £7-10-5

January 1954 Bro Treasurer had some explaining to do in regard the item on the accounts for Income Tax of £57-16-10. This was a considerable sum however the minutes do not record what the explanation was.

The summons for January 1954 also recorded the WM of Polytechnic Lodge 2847 and First Principle of Assembly Chapter 4357 as 'Honored Guests'. They had previously been Honorary Members but had not appeared on the Summons since January 1949.

Bro Norman Braun who was due to be Raised at the October meeting of 1954 sent his resignation as he had been received into the Roman Catholic faith the proceeding week.

The Lodge had been without a Chaplain since the retirement of The Rev Clemens in Oct 1948. At the 1954 November Installation meeting Dr T Core-Porter was appointed and invested as the first Chaplain not to be a member of the clergy. He remained in that office until passing to the Grand Lodge above in June 1966.

The Visiting Brother from the District Grand Lodge of Egypt and Sudan was duly saluted in February 1955, there is no record in the minutes, nor signature book, of who it was.

A double initiation in January 1956, included Mr Harold James Ross FRCS, who features elsewhere in this booklet. 50 Guineas was also placed on the master's list as a donation to RMBI.

Mr Edward Roland Ruthven Fox was initiated into Freemasonry in February 1957, he went on to become a respected political journalist for the BBC, more on him later.

January 1958, Bro Treasurer made known his concern regarding the amount of Dues outstanding being £113-8-0. WBro Cyril James Askew DGStB Hong Kong & South China became a joining member.

## Assembly Lodge No 4357 - Officers 1922

Worshipful Master	WBro John Collingridge LR
Immediate Past Master (Acting)	WBro John Sullivan PAGStBr
Chaplain	Vacant
Senior Warden	WBro Cecil Campbell LR PPGD (Bucks)
Junior Warden	WBro Walter Wall PPAGDC (S Wales)
Treasurer	WBro Herbert Langridge PGStBr
Secretary	WBro Alfred Burgess LR PPAGDC (Bucks)
Director of Ceremonies	WBro Charles Pratt PAGStBr
Senior Deacon	WBro Albert Thurston LR PPGStBr (Middx)
Junior Deacon	Bro Thomas Foster
Ass Director of Ceremonies	Bro Ernest Foster
Almoner	WBro John Sebire
Organist	Bro Edward Dubber
Ass Secretary	Bro Frederick Ballam
Inner Guard	Bro Walter Scott
Stewards	WBro Mortimer Miller
	Bro Thomas Maynard
	Bro Thomas Knight
	WBro Samuel Gallop PGT (Bucks)
Tyler	

## Assembly Lodge 4357 - Founders January 1922

WBro Owen Clark DPGM (Suffolk)	Bro Frederick Ballam
WBro George Booth PPSGW (Suffolk)	Bro Walter Scott
WBro Thomas Hunt PPSGW (Suffolk)	WBro Mortimer Miller
WBro John Collingridge LR	Bro Thomas Maynard
WBro John Sullivan PGStBr (Eng) *	Bro Thomas Knight
WBro Cecil Campbell LR PPGD (Bucks)	Bro Robert Clench PAGPurs (Eng) *
WBro Walter Wall PPAGDC (Wales E Div)	WBro Alliance Page PPGSupWks (Suffolk)
WBro Herbert Langridge PGStBr (Eng) *	Bro Thomas Smith
WBro Alfred Burgess LR PPAGDC (Bucks)	Bro Harold Perkins
WBro Charles Pratt PAGStBr (Eng) *	Bro Donald McLean
WBro Albert Thurston LR PPGStBr (Middx)	Bro Charles Stern
WBro Thomas Foster	Bro Charles Simond
WBro John Sebire	Bro Edward Morris
Bro Ernest Foster	Bro Arthur Thomson
Bro Edward Dubber	* (Eng) appears to denote Grand Rank

## Assembly Lodge No 4357 - Officers 2021 -2022

Worshipful Master	WBro Brian Williams LGR
Immediate Past Master	WBro Mark Meader
Senior Warden	WBro Roger Russell LGR
Junior Warden	WBro Robert Batt
Chaplain	WBro Mark Meader
Treasurer	WBro Duncan McGhee LGR
Secretary	WBro Alan Williams LGR
Director of Ceremonies	WBro David Green PGStdB
Almoner	WBro Stephen Batt LGR
Charity Steward	WBro Logan Subramaniam LGR
Membership Officer	WBro Steven Howes PPGJW (Bucks) *
Mentor	WBro Duncan McGhee LGR
Senior Deacon	Bro Chess Olde Scheper
Junior Deacon	WBro Samuel Wilberforce
Ass Director of Ceremonies	WBro Logan Subramaniam LGR
Inner Guard	WBro Kevin Allen
Stewards	WBro Raj Gajebasia SLGR *
	WBro Neil Gambell SLGR *
Tyler	MMH Grand Tyler appointed

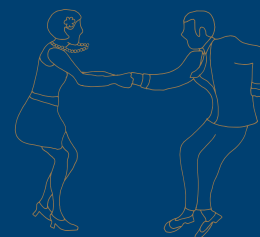
\* To be appointed after joining in January 2022

## Assembly Lodge 4357 - Members December 2021

1958 Bro Gordon Beer	1994 WBro Neil Lavelle
1963 WBro Brian Williams LGR LGCR	1997 WBro Duncan McGhee LGR
1968 WBro Roger Russell LGR SLGCR	2001 Bro Christopher Jacobs
1968 WBro Les Whitton LGR LGCR	2001 WBro Robert Batt
1973 WBro David Green PGStdB PAGDC (RA)	2003 WBro Alan Williams LGR
1988 WBro Roger Batt LGR	2005 WBro Kevin Allen
1991 WBro Logan Subramaniam LGR SLGCR	2012 WBro Samuel Wilberforce
1992 WBro David Jerome	2013 WBro Mark Meader
1993 WBro Stephen Batt LGR	2018 Bro Chess Olde Scheper

Honorary Member : WBro Clifford Davies LGR LGCR

# The 1950's



After 20 years in office Bro Treasurer WBro J C Poole, indicated his wish to retire from office. Bro Secretary started a fund for member contributions not exceeding £1-0-0 for a presentation to WBro Poole as a token of esteem and appreciation of his long and valuable service to the lodge.

In February 1958 the motion was carried for the lodge to contribute 25 Guineas to the fund.

Bro Gordon Beer, the name at the top of the members list on the summons and our longest subscribing member was initiated on 22 March 1958 in a ceremony conducted by his father WBro Charles Beer. Gordon was a professional dancer and dance teacher so he was busy elsewhere on a Saturday evening rarely attending Lodge meeting. I'm not sure any of the current members have ever met Gordon.

October 1958 the newly installed Master of Polytechnic Lodge 2847 was warmly welcomed as an Honored Guest.

November 1958 after installing his successor, the IPM WBro N S Gaskin was invested as Treasurer. WBro J C Poole was elected an Honorary Member and presented with a cheque (of an undisclosed sum) for his services to the Lodge as Past Master and Treasurer over the last 35 years, 20 of them as Treasurer.

In October 1959 the motion was carried to increase the Initiation Fee from 20 to 25 Guineas, the Annual Subscriptions from 7 to 8 Guineas and the Visitors Fee by 5/- to £1-10-0.

At the end of the 1950's the lodge had 84 Members an Honorary Member and 2 Honored Guests.

The lodge accounts were extremely healthy with a balance of £986-7-1. Of that £138-0-5 was unpaid Dues and nearly £14 in unpaid House Bills.

## Aubrey Mills joined the lodge in 1947. Founder and Managing Director of Die Casting Machine Tools Ltd.

**Guns of the Stars**  
FOR A HAPPY XMAS AND AN ADVENTUROUS NEW YEAR

Here are the guns used by Steve Larrabee, THE LONE STAR RIDER and ACE HART, Space Squadron Commander in "The LONE ★ STAR MAGAZINE" and Dan Dare and Jeff Arnold in "Eagle", all specially made for YOU.

**TOP: EAGLE "LONE ★ STAR" Range Rider Six Shooter with revolving chamber.**

**CENTRE: THE "LONE ★ STAR RIDER" Six Shooter with revolving chamber.**

**LEFT: ACE HART "Sonic Beam" Gun. It buzzes and flashes the Morse Code, plus 11 science-fiction features.**

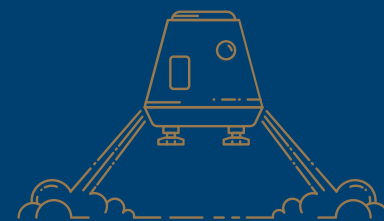
**RIGHT: DAN DARE "Atomic Jet" Gun. Fires 50 shots of water at one filling.**

Designed and made in the Armouries of  
**DIE CASTING MACHINE TOOLS LTD.,**  
London, England.

From all good Toy shops everywhere.

This advert is from November 1952

# The 1960's



Although there were a total of 28 new initiates in the 1960's the appetite for multiple degree ceremonies had waned slightly with only 10 being carried in the whole decade, three of those in 1969. Nonetheless most ceremonies were still carried out as doubles.

Despite also having 5 joining members in the decade the overall number of retained members fell from 84 in January 1960 to 79 in December 1969.

As the lodge had not celebrated its 25th anniversary it was decided they would have a 40th celebration in January 1962. Following the usual lodge business PM's were placed in the Wardens Chairs. The minutes of the consecration and first installation meeting were read. WBro H D Weller PAGDC, the preceptor of Polytechnic Lodge of Instruction No 2847 was invited to occupy the WM chair and a team of 4 of his students gave a demonstration on various parts of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd lectures, recorded as being 'wonderful and interesting'.

The lodges' great application was record and Bro Secretary was congratulated on the success of his efforts for the excellent arrangement to mark the 40th Anniversary of the lodge was subsequently recorded at the following meeting February 1962.

WBro S F Finch's proposition was approved that the lodge should present to a candidate on completion of his 3rd degree a copy of The Ritual of Craft Freemasonry (London West End Working) at the March 1962 meeting.

In November 1962 WBro Ronald Green, who had 2 years previously declined the progression from SW thus enabling him to install his blood-brother Bro Sydney Green into the WM chair.

January 1963 our current Centenary Master, WBro Brian Williams was initiated into the secrets and mysteries of the first degree.

In February 1963 a donation of 100 Guineas was approved towards the 1964 RMIB festival qualifying the Lodge as Vice Patrons.

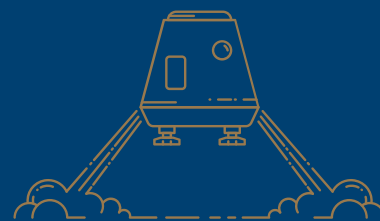
WBro A E Blackburn, Tyler, presented the Lodge on 28th November 1964, with an embroidered cushion on which to rest the VSL. The WM warmly accepted this very fine and generous gift. There is no subsequent mention of it being replaced so I assume that is the one we still use today.

In October 1965 the lodge voted unanimously to increase the Lodge joining Fee from 25 Guineas to 30, the Annual Subscription from 8 Guineas to 12, the visitors fee from £1-10- to 2 Guineas. By-law 5 line 22 was increased from 2 Guineas to 3 which I assume was country membership. At the same meeting the lodge controversially and by a majority decision defeated the agenda item proposed by WBro C Langshaw and seconded by WBro S Green to adopt the new 'permissive variation of Penalty in Obligations' as approved at United Grand Lodge on 9th December 1964.

Owing to the sad death of WBro Jeffrey Poole in October 1965 the subsequent November summons was the first time the Lodge had no Honorary Members.

It was approved in January 1966 that the Lodge become members of the Association of West End Lodges at an annual subscription of 2 Guineas and the Preceptor of LOI be our representative.

# The 1960's



In October 1966 a letter was read expressing the MW Grand Masters gratitude to the Lodge for the very satisfactory response to his 250th Anniversary Appeal, also enclosing the Commemorative Jewel which is still worn on the WM Collar. The 250th Anniversary Appeal was for each English Freemason to give £1 toward 'the betterment of human health and happiness'. The fund was made available to the Royal College of Surgeons (and still is under the guise of the Freemasons Fund for Surgical Research). This was the first Masonic Charity with exclusively non-masonic objectives.



February 1968 the Lodge Tyler, WBro A E Blackburn, presented the Lodge of Instruction with 3 gavels and sounding blocks.

The February 1968 summons corrected the error that had been on the Lodge crest on every summons since consecration, NIC ET UBIQUE which has no translation from Latin was corrected to HIC ET UBIQUE meaning Here and Everywhere. The change was made surreptitiously there being no records or announcement made.

The decade rounded off in November 1969 with another first for the Lodge, WBro Herbert Daniel being presented with a Past Masters Collar to which was added the appropriate bar recording his second year of mastership of the Lodge. The First member to occupy the chair twice.

Reading through the minutes of the 1960's there were more names which are familiar to me both already in office and also joining in the 1960's; Sydney Green, Dinky Dent, Brian Williams, Malcolm Pearce, Roger Russel and Les Whitton.

At the end of the 1960's the lodge has 79 Members and 2 Honored Guests.

The lodge accounts were still extremely healthy with a balance of £1224-7-6. Unpaid Dues were still a cause for concern at £113-13-0 and nearly £35 in unpaid House Bills.



**More on Aubrey 'Bob' Mills later, founder of Die Casting Machine Tools Ltd who made children's toys. You've got to wonder where his mind wandered during some of the Lodge meetings.**



# The Café Royal



Daniel Nicholas Thevenon, a French wine merchant, declared bankrupt and fleeing his creditors and a likely prison sentence in 1863 arrived in Britain with his wife, Celestine, with just £5 in cash.

He anglicised his name to Daniel Nicols and just two years later in 1865 conceived and established the Café Royal, his vision for a Parisian style meeting place in the heart of London.

It was then a small café – restaurant set up in an old oilcloth warehouse at 19 Glasshouse St behind Regent Street. With Nicols's history as wine merchant he set out to acquire the finest wines and with the help of his cousin Eugene Delacoste, regarded as an expert, hand-picked the wines for The Café Royal. In the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth the Café Royal wine cellar was generally considered to be the best in the world.

From its inception Café Royal was seen as the epicenter of fashionable London and with patrons such as Oscar Wilde, William Yeats, George Bernard Shaw, Winston Churchill, Rudyard Kipling and later the Princes Edward and George (both future Kings) the establishment boomed and soon spread into surrounding buildings at 15 and 17 Glasshouse Street and by 1875 Nicols had bought George Bailey's Tailor shop at 68 Regent Street - the current official address. Over the next 20 years Nicols slowly took over the Regent Street frontage and expanded into Air Street behind. By the time of his death in 1897 his tiny café had become a legendary London institution. From his original £5 he had amassed a half million pound fortune when he died. His wife carried on running Café Royal until her death in 1916.

Masonic meetings were a staple of Café Royal life. Founder Daniel Nicols was himself a mason and had a masonic temple built in Café Royal.



*Café Royal, Regent St. W.1. Grand Temple*

Grand Temple at Café Royal Regent Street London W1. Reproduced with kind permission of Museum of Freemasonry ©

# The Café Royal



In 1922 it was announced the Café Royal was to be demolished and rebuilt. In the end it was remodelled over a period of almost 5 years during which the Café Royal remained open throughout.

It was here on 12th April 1928 Prince George, later to become the Duke of Kent, was initiated into Navy Lodge No 2612 and later his son on 16th December 1963 [Formerly Prince Edward] The Duke of Kent was initiated into Royal Alpha Lodge No16.

By the 1960's more than 400 Masonic Lodges were meeting in the special air-conditioned masonic rooms in the basement.

In 2008 Café Royal closed its doors for the last time and auctioned off much of the interior fixtures and fittings including a full-sized boxing ring used by the likes of Cooper and Bruno and a curious item described as a electroplated duck press sold for £4200. It reopened in 2012 as a modern grand hotel called Hotel Café Royal.

After 50 years Assembly Lodge moved from the Café Royal to The Angus Steak House in 1972.

## Assembly Lodge No 4357 Meeting Places

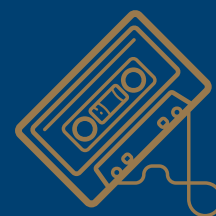
1922 -1924	The Café Royal Regent Street W1 *
1924	The Great Central Hotel Marylebone NW1
1925 - 1972	The Café Royal Regent Street W1
1972	Angus Steak House Regent Street W1
1972 - 1980	Piccadilly Hotel Piccadilly W1
1980 - 1985	National Liberal Club Whitehall SW1A
1986 - 2012	Butchers' Hall Smithfield EC1
2012 - 20**	Mark Masons' Hall St James's SW1A

**\* The original intention was to meet at the Great Central Hotel, London NW1 as written in the original set of By-laws. The by-laws were not changed until February 1924 and approved by the Grand Secretary W.Bro P Collville-Smith on 21st March 1924 as a hand written amendment in the original By-laws.**

**The lodge incorrectly met at Café Royal without dispensation from 1922, ironically a dispensation was issue to hold an Emergency Meeting on 11th May 1923 at the Great Central Hotel. This must have drawn attention to the error in the by-Laws as the 1923 October meeting was held at the Great Central and a dispensation was issued to meet at Café Royal for the Nov 1923, Jan and Feb meeting 1924 before being regularised at the March 1924 meeting with the Grand Secretary's signature.**



# The 1970's



Throughout the 1970's the Lodge managed to maintain its level of intake as in the 1960's with 26 new initiates, the appetite for multiple degree ceremonies continued at the same pace with 10 being carried in the whole decade. Most ceremonies were still carried out with double candidates.

In addition to the 26 initiates there was also 2 joining members however during the course of the decade the overall number of retained members fell from 79 in January 1970 to 73 in December 1979, plus 2 honorary members and 1 Honorary Guest.

Brother Secretary may have acquired a typewriter for Christmas as the minutes are typed for the first time in January 1970, much to my relief!

The Lodge joined the London Masonic Bowlers Association in January 1970. WBro Langshaw requested the minutes record the 1000th meeting of the Assembly Lodge of Instruction on 15th January after which those attending had retired to the nearby Marlborough Tavern for a cold buffet and a good time was had by all.

The minutes of February 1970 record thanks to the anonymous lodge member who had generously subscribed to the purchase of a cushion on which to present aprons. Then in April Bro Treasurer presented the lodge with 2 alms bags which had embroidered in drawn thread by his wife.

After nearly 50 years at the Café Royal notice of motion was given in October 1970 that the meeting place be moved to the Angus Steakhouse, virtually next door at 74 Regent Street W1, with consequential changes to the meeting dates to 2nd Saturday in October, 4th Saturday in November (inst), January, February and April.

The first meeting at the Angus Steakhouse in November 1970 was also the 50th Installation meeting at which our Centenary Master WBro Brian Williams LGR was first installed as master of the Lodge. The first mention in the minutes of a silver gilt Past Masters Breast Jewel, purchased at a cost of £10-12-6 for presentation to WBro R Hudson, unfortunately he was not present at the meeting having been posted abroad for work and wouldn't return for 3 years. His collar, jewel and breast jewel were posted on to him. This may be the first mention but there are certainly breast jewels older than this date in existence.

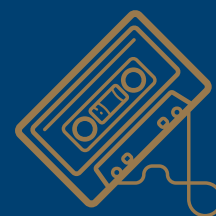
23rd January 1971 was the last time alms were recorded in £-S-D before Decimal Day on 15th February 1971.

The ballot for new members was unable to proceed in April 1971 due to a lack of ballot balls.

The 50th Anniversary meeting on 22nd January 1972 followed the same format as the 40th Anniversary save that the demonstrations of sections of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd lectures were given by Assembly Lodge of Instruction members under the direction of their preceptor WBro C T Langshaw.

During the 50th Anniversary meeting £25 was donated to each of the following charities RMBI, RM Hospital development fund and the RM Hospital general fund. Allowing for inflation £25 was just under the average weekly wage for an adult male.

## The 1970's



February 1972 Bro A C Terry was thanked on his presentation of an excellently made ballot-box.

25th November 1972 WBro S S Fisher, secretary of the lodge for 20 years, was elected an Honorary Member for the very great services rendered to the lodge.

The meeting on 23rd January 1973 coincided exactly with WBro S C Freeman's 50th anniversary of initiation into Freemasonry on 23rd January 1923.

The 250th regular meeting on 24th February 1973 passed without recognition nor incident.

The annual Subscriptions were raised to £15 and Visitor fee to £3 in November 1973.

The Lodge approved the purchase of new gauntlets for the principle officers in January 1974

12th October 1974, Bro R G Northey was presented with his Australian 50 year constant service certificate. Annual subscription were increased again to £20 and the visitor fee to £4, the Initiation fee to £40, joining fee to £10 and Country Member to £4.

An increase in the Tyler's fee from £4 to £5 was approved in January 1975. Then in February it was agreed to make an annual donation of £1 to the London Grand Rank Association to assist with the running of the Visiting Brother's Welfare Scheme.

In November 1975 Bro Treasurer was on the raid again with a £5 surcharge on all full members for dining per year.

The following November in 1976 a Temple charge of £5 per meeting was introduced by the Angus Steakhouse.

On January 22nd 1977 WBro A C Terry was presented with his 50 year continuous service certificate from the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales, Australia. The dinner that evening must have been below par as a letter was read out at the February meeting from the manager of the Angus Steakhouse apologising for the 'toughness' of the main course.

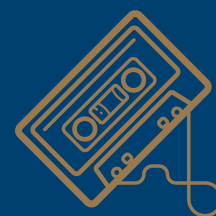
23rd April Treasurer gave notice of an increase of annual Subscriptions to £40, Country member to £10, Visitor Fee to £5 and that Grand Lodges permission be requested to increase the Initiation Fee to £60 and Joining Fee to £15. These were subsequently carried at a vote in October 1977.

8th October 1977 WBro Leslie Whitton became the first Master to be re-elected for a second consecutive year owing to the resignation of the SW, Bro P G Saywood. Bro Secretary also advised that the period for exclusion from the Lodge under Rule 148 had been reduced from 3 to 2 years.

In February 1978 Bro A W Fullick, having been a Lodge Steward from 1959 to 1975, was elected an Honorary Member.

January 1979 started with a presentation of £25 to WBro S W Painter, our Tyler for the previous 10 years, who was retiring due to ill health.

# The 1970's



The meeting on 10th March 1979 was the first one with a total attendance of less than 30, there were 24 members and 2 visitors to witness the initiation of Mr. John Penny. Bro John Penny then went on to become a PM and was regularly called upon to sing the Masters Song at installations, I particularly remember him doing so for me in 2003. The meeting was also held by dispensation at Great Queen St due to conversion works at the Angus Steakhouse. Those works were due to be complete by 16th April 1979, however there were not and the Lodge never returned to the Angus Steakhouse.

The following meeting on 28th April was also held by dispensation at Freemasons' Hall by which time the Lodge had become Patron of The Royal Masonic Institution for Boys and was on course to become Patron of Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution later in 1979 and Patron of the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls in 1980. This had been made possible by raffles, etc held at Ladies Nights and Lodge of Instruction Suppers. It was recorded the Lodge had to thank those members who organise these [events].

The October meeting of 1979 was the first one to be held at The Piccadilly Hotel and by Dispensation from Grand Lodge. The Lodge Committee had again approved an increase in fees by way of a £3 surcharge per member collected from members attending Lodge and an increase in the visitor fee to £7.50.

The final meeting of this decade on 24th November 1979 was again held at the Piccadilly Hotel, there being no mention in the minutes of a dispensation being read however. A letter from Grand Secretary was read confirming that the Assembly Lodge's request for an official visit from a Grand Officer would be arranged.

A further letter, from Polytechnic Lodge 2847 was also read stating that reluctantly owing to ever increasing costs their practice of inviting Masters of other Lodges had to be discontinued. This brought to an end our reigning master being an honorary member of Polytechnic Lodge which had existed since October 1922. Although it is not noted in any minutes Assembly Lodge also withdrew the status of Honored Guest for the Master of Polytechnic Lodge 2847.

Reading through the minutes of the 1970's there were many more names which are familiar to me but the ever-increasing fees/surcharges is the one item that stands out for me from this decade.

At the end of the 1970's the lodge has 73 Members an honorary member and 1 Honored Guest. There are no accounts for the year ending October 1979 however the lodge accounts for 1980 showed a healthy balance of £2124.89.

**There have been 2 Grand Officers appointed from within Assembly Lodge.**

- **WBro F W Ballam appointed PAGDC in 1940**
- **WBro D J Green appointed PGStdB in 2017.**

## The 1980's



The 1980's was a bit of a turning point for English Masonry in general following a lot of bad press in the latter part of the 1970's and the very public disassociation of Freemasonry by leading Police Officers in the early 1980's. Assembly lodge followed that trend and while the number of members leaving the Lodge for various reasons was similar to that in the previous decade, the number of new recruits was almost halved.

During the 1980's the Lodge initiated 14 new members, there were no joining members and a total of 34 members left the Lodge, almost half due to being called to the Grand Lodge above and approx. equal numbers of resignations and exclusion for non-payment of subscriptions under Rule 141.

There was just one multiple ceremony carried out in January 1981, an Initiation and a Passing, however there were still a few double ceremonies in the early part of the decade.

The Lodge continued to meet at the Piccadilly Hotel by dispensation in January and February before confirming the move and amending the By-Laws at the March 1980 meeting, with change of dates to 1st Saturday in October and 4th Saturday in November (Inst), January, February and March.

It was announced at the October 1980 meeting that the Lodge had qualified as a Patron of the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution. Bro T H Bourne also presented to the lodge a very distinctive Masonic Plaque, its current whereabouts are a mystery.

In October 1981 the Lodge Subscription scheme was overhauled to exclude dining which would now be paid per meeting thereby doing away with the Country List. The new Subscription rate was set at £17.50 per annum. Allowing for inflation that equates to approximately £60 today, however the average price of a house in 1981 was under £21,000 compared to £255,000 today!

At the 60th Anniversary meeting in January 1982 sections of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd lectures were presented by members of Assembly Lodge of Instruction under the direction of the Preceptor WBro S A Green PM LGR.

A Letter was read from Royal Masonic Institution for Girls at the October 1982 meeting thanking the lodge for the contribution to the Girls Festival, Assembly Lodge was the 9th highest contributor from the London Lodges. At the same meeting Bro Secretary confirmed the Lodge had made sufficient contributions to receive the honor of Grand Patron.

February 1983 brought a further rise in Subscriptions and the re-introduction of Country Members paying £17.50 while full members increased to £25 plus dining costs. In March the Initiation fee rose to £100 and joining fee to £25.

In February 1984 the Lodge was advised that the Piccadilly Hotel was terminating meetings in their temple and March would be the final meeting as this location.

The 1984 October meeting was held under Dispensation at the National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place SW1. At that meeting the motion was approved to amend By-Law No 1 for future meetings to be held at the Club on the 3rd Saturday in September, October, November (Inst), February and the 1st Saturday in April.

## The 1980's



In February 1985 WBro K Quinton and Bro Slater-Mason members of Lodge of Assembly 5747 from Birmingham visited the Lodge and brought a letter from their Secretary suggesting that as we shared the same Lodge name we should make some kind of link. This link lasted for many years with regular visits between the two lodges, less so since the death of WBro John Penny, who retired to Warwickshire and joined Lodge of Assembly 5747. Unfortunately Lodge of Assembly 5747 returned its warrant in 2017 due to falling numbers.

In March 1985 Bro D J Green was congratulated on the new long presentation of the Fellowcraft Apron.

October 1985 a motion was passed to amend By-Law no 1 again and move to Butchers Hall, Bartholomew Close, EC1. The November 1985 installation meeting being the last one to be held at the National Liberal Club.

Bros Rawson and Penny were thanked in January 1986 for the purchase of a shroud to be used for the 3rd degree.

In March 1986 'displaying the warrant in accordance with rule 101 of the book of Constitutions' was recorded for the first time. At that meeting WBro C M Batham O St J, PAGDC gave a talk entitled 'some unusual masonic ceremonies' which was received with much appreciation.

WBro S Green gave an explanation, in October 1986, of the new proposals regarding the penalties in the ritual and stated the Lodge would conform from the November meeting and all ceremonies thereafter.

There was a secret ballot among lodges in November to vote on the future of the Royal Masonic Hospital, the eventual result being NOT to sell.

In March 1987 members from Lodge of Assembly 5747 occupied the principle officers chairs to close the Lodge.

In April 1987 WBro D J Green gave a demonstration of the 1st Degree as amended with the symbolic penalties.

In October 1987 the restored banner was unveiled, WBro J D Richards PAGDC then dedicated the banner concluding with a short address and the Patriarchal Benediction.

In November 1987 WBro W Ramsey was congratulated on receiving LGR and was presented with the appropriate regalia. It had been the custom of the Lodge since the 1920's to gift the appropriate clothing on a brothers promotion, this was however the last time that was to happen. You had to pay for your own going forward.

In March 1988 the Lodge continued it's association with Australasia by sending a letter of congratulations to United Grand Lodge of New South Wales on their Centenary.

# The 1980's



On the October 1988 summons for the first time, if you folded it in half Roger Russel appears on the top half of the page, something that has bothered him for as long as I can remember!

Annual subscriptions were again increased to £30 for full members and £20 for country members.

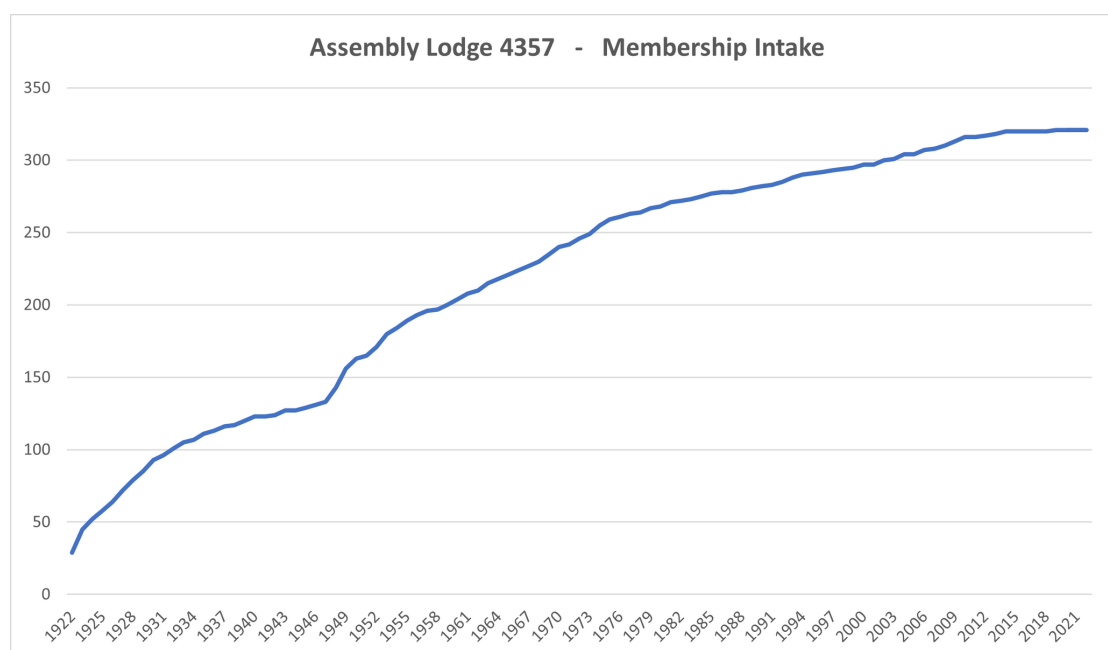
March 1989 WBro A C Terry presented a Volume of the sacred Law to Bro P Walsh on behalf of Bro R G Northey who had received it at his initiation into Shaw Stuart Lodge No 133 United Grand Lodge of New South Wales in 1924.

In April Bro Northey was presented with a letter from the Grand Secretary and a suitably inscribed silver salver from the Lodge in recognition of his 65 years service as a mason.

At the end of the 1980's the lodge had dropped to 53 Members an Honorary Member and 1 Honored Guest.

The reduction in membership also had an effect on the lodge finances which ended the decade with a cash balance of £1100, about half of the decade opening balance.

**Over the last 100 years Assembly lodge has had a total of 321 Initiates or Joining Members. The initial rate of joining was very steep in the first 10 years before slowing down during the depression of the 1930's and the War Years. It then took off again at some pace immediately after the war up until the mid 1970's. The rate of joining has slowed down considerably since then and has now stagnated. Although we have 3 Brothers expected to become joining members at the Centenary meeting in January 2022.**



# Some Notable Members



## Charles James Pratt Snr & Charles James Pratt Jnr

One of our Founding Members WBro Charles James Pratt (Snr) was WM of Assembly Lodge for 1925/26. He was a Director of Chelsea Football Club from 1922 until 1935 when he was appointed Chairman until his death a year later on 19th February 1936.

His Son Charles James Pratt (Jnr) was initiated into the Lodge on 27 February 1926 and listed his profession as Antiques Dealer. He went on to be WM in 1939/40. He took his father's position on the board as a Director of Chelsea Football Club in



Dave Sexton (left) and Charles Pratt Jnr 1967

1935 through to 1966 when he also was appointed Chairman until his death on 16th March 1968.

## Harold J Ross FRCS

Harold James Ross was born in Cults, Aberdeenshire and graduated in medicine at Aberdeen University in 1932 and obtain FRCS in 1937. He subsequently worked at various London Hospitals and went on to work at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica following which he acted as ship's surgeon on the Cunard and Union Castle Lines. He retired as surgeon in the early 1960's for health reasons and spent most of his retirement in back in Cults.

Harold was initiated into the Lodge on 28 January 1956. He never took office and resigned in November 1967, having moved away. He never married and died at the age of 72.

## Roland Fox

Roland (Roly) Fox joined the BBC in 1948 and was the BBC's Political Correspondent throughout the 1950's, the second person to hold the post. He joined the Lodge in January 1956 by which time he would have been a well-known face on TV having covered the last years of Churchill's premiership, the news of his resignation first breaking on BBC due to a newspaper strike. He went on to cover the Suez debates, the first televised State Opening of Parliament and accompanied Harold Macmillan on his 'Wind of Change' tour of Africa.

The BBC Parliamentary reports in the early 1950's were not quite the same operation they are now, facing resistance from established newspaper journalists the BBC initially operated from a telephone booth in the Palace of



Westminster's Central Lobby before moving to Alexandra Palace in 1954. Fox was the first broadcaster to be elected Chairman of the parliamentary press gallery in 1958. He was also responsible for the first ever live TV broadcast fed in by remote control. Fox helped pioneer the coverage of party conferences in Blackpool, Brighton and other seaside towns and took part in the coverage of the 1959 election, the first to be fully reported in TV news bulletins.

# Some Notable Members



## Roland Fox

Before he left parliamentary coverage in 1960, he accompanied Harold Macmillian throughout his six-week tour of Africa including reporting on the historic 'Wind of Change' speech from the Cape Town Parliament. Fox went on to perform behind the scenes for the BBC as deputy to the head of publicity, and to the editor of news and current affairs before retiring in 1974.

Roland was initiated into Assembly Lodge on 23 February 1957. He was appointed Steward in 1961 and 1962 but never took any further office. The last time he signed into the Lodge was in April 1974. Living in Hove and no longer working in London he resigned from the Lodge in October 1978. He died 12 May 2010 at the age of 97.

## Aubrey 'Bob' Mills

Aubrey Robert Mills designed and built his first Die-Casting Machine in a garage in North London in 1939, he reportedly sold it at £100 profit. He registered the company as Die Casting Machine Tools Ltd or DCMT.

During the war DCMT made zinc-alloy casting for the Ministry of Defence. After going into partnership with Sidney Ambridge they continued to make diecasting machines as well as taking on diecasting jobs. These were printed with just 'Made in England' rather than the company name. These were often made for Crescent Toys and led Mills to venture in to the toy market as a manufacturer in his own right.



Rodney Smith and John Odell met whilst working for DCMT. Seeing the profits to be made from the post war toy market, in 1947 Odell joined Smith's company Lesney Products manufacturing toys under the Matchbox name using DCMT supplied diecasting machines.

DCMT might not be the household name that Matchbox still is today, but it was very successful in its own right having moved to larger premises to produce toys under the name Slikka Playthings their toys included models of a mobile crane and a cement mixer very similar to the early Lesney/Matchbox designs.

By the end of the 1940's and fueled by Western Films and TV series, a 'Wild West' craze began in the UK and there was a keen demand for Cowboy products, especially authentic looking die-cast rifles and pistols. In 1949 they produced their first cap pistol calling it the 'Lone Star'. It sold very well and the Slikka brand name was dropped in favour of Lone Star.

By 1956 DCMT/Lone Star moved to a new purpose built factory in Hatfield to cater for the ever increasing demand for its toys and models both here and in America. By now they were competing with Matchbox, Corgi and Dinky in the diecast model road vehicles market, if you have any Lone Star toys left from your childhood they are now rarer than their rivals.

Sadly the 1980's saw the demise of DMCT/Lone Star with the company entering receivership in 1983 due to the recession and competition from cheaper imports. Rescue bids and takeovers followed until the doors finally closed in 1988.



# Some Notable Members



## Aubrey 'Bob' Mills

Bob Mills grew quite a group of companies including the International Junior Aero Club, Eaglets Industries, Treble-0-trains, Father Christmas Workshop, Angelion Arts and California Screen Blocks Ltd. One of his Sales Directors described him as a brilliant man but as fast as the company made money, so it was spent on far-fetched ventures. Steve Larradee (DCMT's staff cowboy actor) and the Lone Star Road Show were expensive ventures as was as the Lone Star comic.

Aubrey Robert Mills was initiated into the Lodge, along with his Production Manager Joseph Roden, on 22 February 1947, he never took office and resigned in October 1961. He died in 1973.

## Roy Habershon



In the book 'Edward Heath Made Me Angry' author Stuart Christie describes Detective Chief Superintendent Roy Habershon as *a man in his mid-fifties, Roy Habershon looked like Eric Morecambe morphed into Adolf Eichmann and was forever adjusting his thick framed Buddy Holly glasses in the same way as his comedian doppelganger. He had a dour jowly face and the blotchy, florid, complexion of a stressed-out gamekeeper.*

Following the bombing of the Employment secretary, Robert Carr's, house in 1971 by a group known as the Angry Brigade pressure was put on

Scotland Yard by the Government. Detective Chief Superintendent Roy Habershon who was leading the investigation was given extra powers, he immediately recruited a team of about 30 officers from the Flying Squad and Special Branch. The group would later become known as the Bomb Squad and headed by Commander Roy Habershon during a period of intense IRA activity.

Roy was initiated into the lodge on 9 October 1971, appointed Steward in 1973 where he served for 3 years before being appointed Junior Deacon in 1976. From there he progressed through the offices being installed as Master in 1980. He was elected Treasurer in 1987 and served in that office until his death on 18 March 1992.

## J K Howard Hall

I've included John Kendal Howard Hall here because he was a proud Yorkshire man and when appointed Chaplain in 1966 he brought the Yorkshire Grace to our festive boards.

This has been continued through the years and is now our traditional grace given before dining at our Festive Board.

## The Yorkshire Grace

**O'Lord above send down a dove  
with wings as sharp a sickles  
to cut the throats of greedy men  
who grudge pore men their vitals  
we at this festive board are of generous heart  
and so the Lord we thanketh  
then let all men of generous heart  
enjoy their festive banquet.**

# Australian Links



In addition to the links previously mentioned with Ionic Lodge 212 in New Zealand, Assembly Lodge also had links with Australia.

This started with Archibald McKechnie who described himself as a Company Secretary visited the Lodge 3 times in 1947 before becoming a joining member in November 1947, a MM of Sydney & St Andrews Lodge No 7 UGL of New South Wales, Australia.

In November 1949 Edward Glover, proposed by A McKechnie, joined the Lodge a MM of Sydney United Lodge No 620 UGL of NSW. Then in January 1951 Richard Northey, a MM of Shaw-Stewards Lodge No 133 UGL of NSW joined Assembly Lodge, a steward for the Orient Steam Navigation Co. The Orient Line cruise ships travelled between the UK and Australia.

The following month Charles A'Court also of Shaw-Stewards Lodge joined Assembly, proposed again by A McKechnie.

In November 1952 Reginald A'Court then joined also of Shaw-Steward Lodge.

Kenneth McKechnie was initiated in to Assembly Lodge in February 1953 and a telegram was sent from onboard the Orient Line Cruise ship, SS Oronsay by proud father Bro A McKechnie '*Greetings and proud thanks to the WM and Brethren*'.

These Australian links then also tied in with the Merchant Navy with the Initiation of Malcolm Pearce in February 1964, and his friend Patrick Walsh in October 1987.

Further Joining members from Australia, and merchant seamen, were Arthur Terry in March 1965, a MM of Robert Burns Lodge No 21, Arthur Smith in January 1966 a MM of Sydney & St Andrews Lodge No 7, and Thomas Rees of Shaw-Steward Lodge No 133, all in the UGL of NSW.

Followed by Alan Wallbank in 1975, a Port Captain. In 1980 Keith Sinden a Master Mariner and John Christie a Port Engineer. Ricard Matta in 1984 a Purser and Catering Officer.

50 year certificates from the UGL of New South Wales were presented in Assembly Lodge to Bro R G Northey in 1974 and WBro A C Terry in 1977. In 1988 Assembly Lodge sent a letter congratulating the UGL of NSW on their Centenary.

## Assembly Lodge of Instruction

**Assembly Lodge gave approval in January 1924 for a Lodge of Instruction (LoI) to be sanctioned to work under its aegis and authority. The LoI has generally met in various Public Houses in London as well as at Masonic Rooms at Clerkenwell, Broad Street and Mark Masons Hall.**

**My first encounter with Assembly Lodge was at the 1996 LoI Supper Night at the 'Doggetts Coat & Badge pub at Blackfriars Bridge. They were gentlemen only evenings with entertainment, usually a comedian, and a good meal and plenty of wine. These were essentially recruitment evenings, I helped to organise some in the noughties they were incredibly entertaining evenings and raised a lot of money both for Charity and also for our Centenary Celebrations Fund.**

**We have a lot of minute books from LoI meetings and I hope to research those by January 2024.**

## The 1990's



The 1990's carried on in much the same direction as the previous decade. The Lodge initiated 13 new members in addition to 2 joining members but a total of 31 members left the Lodge, 15 being called to the Grand Lodge above.

There were 4 multiple ceremonies carried out in 1993 and 1994 and a double Initiation in October 1992.

The Lodge continued to meet at Butchers Hall throughout the 1990's

The decade started off with the Treasurer advising there was a bad deficit in 1989 and forecast worse, as a result he proposed increasing the subscriptions to £50 for full members and £30 for country members. Subsequently in October 1990 it was agreed to abolish the Country Membership and set subscriptions at £40 for all members.

In March 1991 approval was given for the Charity Steward to open a relief chest for the Lodge at Grand Lodge.

Subscriptions were increased to £50 in October 1991.

At the 70th Anniversary meeting in January 1992 the Senior Past Master present, WBro Ron Green PM, LGR, PPGD (Middx) read the minutes of the Lodge Consecration and First Installation meeting dated 13 January 1922. The Lodge was then entertained by a Prestonian Lecture entitled 'The Role of the Inn Keeper in Freemasonry' by WBro Christopher Gotch PAGSuptWks.

Our Bro Treasurer, WBro Roy Habershon MBE, sadly passed away in office just before the March 1992 meeting. Resulting in the SW, WBro John Penny, resigning at the next meeting in May to be elected Treasurer. In October he carried on the good work and increased subscriptions to £55.

In November 1993 WBro Ron Holder gave a report on the Lodge Banner, which he felt was beyond repair. A new banner would cost £4000 with PM's names or £2000 without. This was left for further discussion, and in April 1994 Bro Treasurer advised the Lodge does not have the funds to pay for one.

By October 1994 the Banner, having being repaired, was enclosed in a glass fronted wooden frame was presented back to the lodge and WBro S Green read the Patriarchal Benediction. The banner remains in the same case to this day, although due to it's weight it is not very often brought from the basement of Mark Masons Hall to the Lodge Room.

In October 1995 a donation by Mrs Langshaw, in memory of her late husband WBro Charles Langshaw, took the Lodge over the sum required to be granted Patron of the New Masonic Samaritan Fund.

In November 1995 WBros; L Whitton, F Dent, B Williams, R Green and R Holder were presented with inscribed firing glasses for serving a second year as WM.

Under Dispensation in October 1996 the Lodge met at Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall, Cloth Street EC1, this was arranged at short notice and was probably due to emergency works being required at Butchers' Hall.

# The 1990's



The 75th Anniversary meeting in January 1997 was an event I attended previous to joining and remember it well. The Lodge having being opened and closed guests were then invited into the Lodge Room in the basement of Butchers' Hall for a talk on Rudyard Kipling by WBro John Webb PGStB followed by a white table dinner in the Great Hall.

15th March 1997 I was Initiated into Freemasonry, Passed in May and Raised January 1998.

In October 1997 subscriptions were increased from £60 to £65. Also at that meeting for the first time recorded in the minutes there was a ballot between competing candidates for WM. The Senior Warden, David Ewing receiving 8 votes whilst a PM, Roger Russell succeeded with 11 votes.

At the Installation meeting in November 1997, it was proposed and approved to purchase a new set of Principle Officers Gauntlets at a cost of £160.

In October 1998 the minutes record that the daughter of our late WBro G Riley had return to the WM, Roger Russel, a box containing 2 Wardens Columns and a broken column with a plaque inscribed 'To Assembly Lodge from WBro John Collingridge' who was of course our Primus WM.

WBro Arnold Gentry an Honorary Member of the lodge now finding it increasing difficult to get to meeting resigned as 'Acting' Organist of the Lodge in October 1999. Unfortunately, he has never been replaced on a permanent basis, however there have been the occasional guest who has played from time to time

At the end of the 1990's the lodge had dropped to 37 Members, an Honorary Member and an Honored Guest, being the First Principle of Assembly Chapter No 4357.

The lodge finances had been brought back on track over the course of the 1990's ending the decade with a cash balance of over £5000, including over £2750 in the Benevolent Account.

## Assembly Lodge Emergency Meetings

**Assembly Lodge have had a number of Emergency meetings over the years, these are to transact specific business that it is considered cannot wait until the next Regular meeting.**

**There were 3 Emergency Meetings in 1922 alone, at which a total of 9 Gentlemen were initiated, 2 initiates Passed and 8 Raised. The 9 Gentlemen were also balloted for at the Emergency meetings, something not allowed by the Book of Constitutions today.**

**A further 3 in 1923, 1926 and 1927 when 5 Passing and 6 Raising Ceremonies were carried out.**

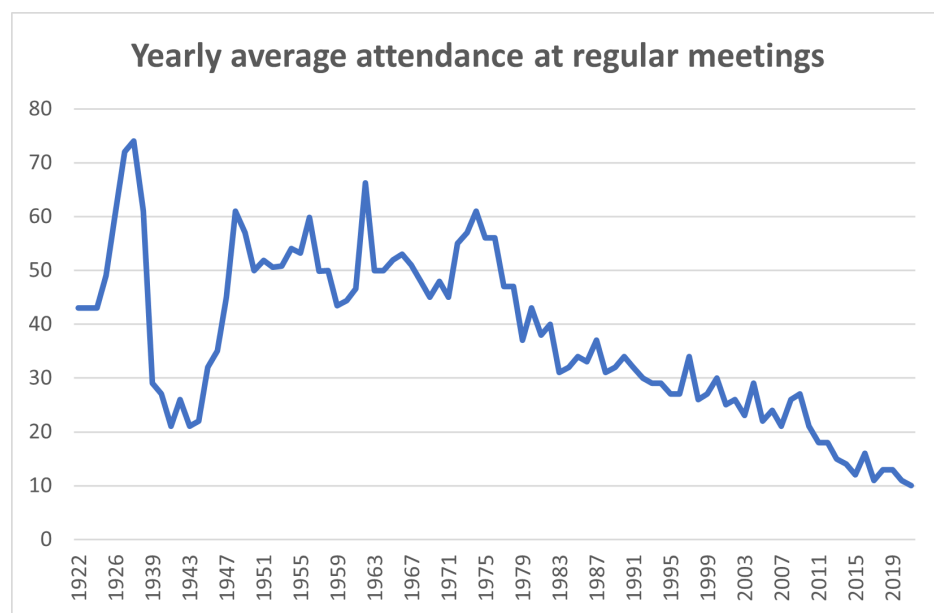
**1939 when 2 Initiates were Passed to the Second Degree, and 1947 with a Passing and double Raising.**

**The next one was 74 years later in 2021 to Install the Centenary Master following disruption from the Covid Pandemic.**

# Attendance Records



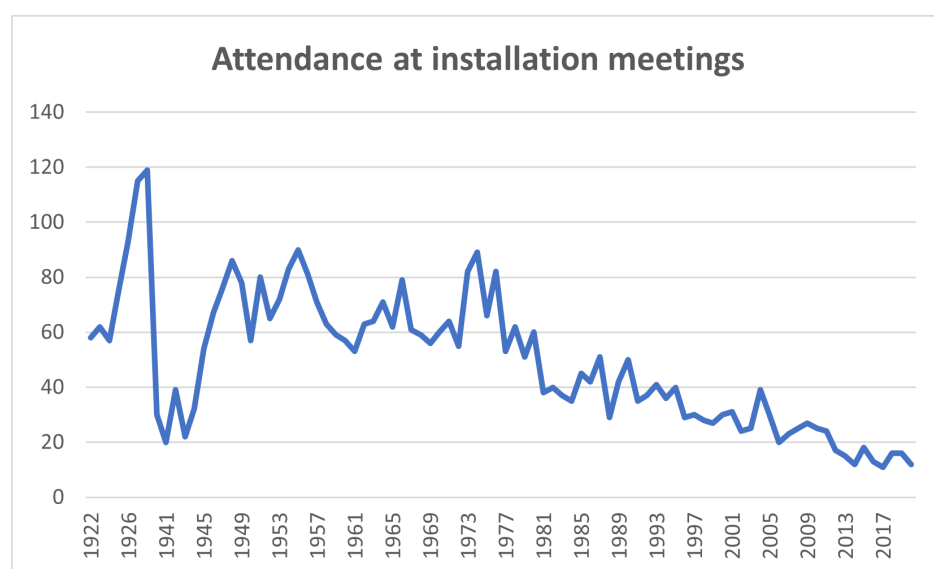
In a similar fashion to the lodge intake, shown earlier, the 'average attendance at meetings' over the year declined in the 1930's with a surge after the War Years. Popularity then fluctuated for a period but has been in steady decline since the mid 1970's.



The maximum attendance at a non installation regular meeting was 109 in January 1962, the Lodge 40th Anniversary.

For the Centenary Anniversary we currently have 58 Masonic Guests booked plus an additional 43 Friends and Partners for the Banquet.

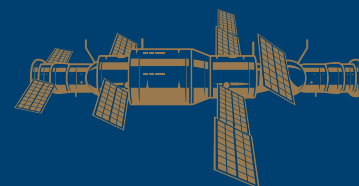
The attendance at the Annual Installation meetings follows a similar pattern.



The maximum attendance at an Installation meeting was 119 in November 1928

**From 1922 up until the mid 1970's the only person to serve as Master twice was W.Bro Herbert Daniel in 1964/5 and 1968/9. From then until the turn of the century a further 6 were 'recycled' and added to the list. In the last 22 years previous Masters have been 'recycled' in 12 of those years, W.Bro Stephen Batt having taken the Chair for the first time in November 2000, currently holds the record, having now served 4 terms as Master of Assembly Lodge No4357.**

# The 21st Century



Since the turn of the century, masonry in general has suffered with falling numbers and Assembly Lodge is no different. In the last 22 Years we have had 17 new Initiates and 7 Joining members, of those 24 new members only 7 remain members today.

We started the new Millennium with a total of 37 Members plus an Honorary Member, that has now dropped to 18 Members plus an Honorary Member.

The Lodge celebrated the Millennium in January 2000 with a talk in the Temple for members and their guests by WBro Yasha Beresiner before dining in the Great Hall at Butchers' Hall.

The annual Subscriptions were increased from £65 to £70 in October and Bro Stephen Batt was installed as Master for the first time in November 2000. He has subsequently occupied the chair a further 3 times.... so far.

We had a difficult meeting to start 2001 with a proposition to exclude Bro David Ewing for 'unacceptable behaviour'. Following a discussion and defence the proposition was carried by 14 votes to 4. Bro Tony Power resigned in open lodge in support of his friend. That was then immediately followed with a more satisfying ceremony; the initiation of Mr. Christopher Jacobs.

In October 2001, subscriptions were increased again to £72.00, and then again to £80 the following October.

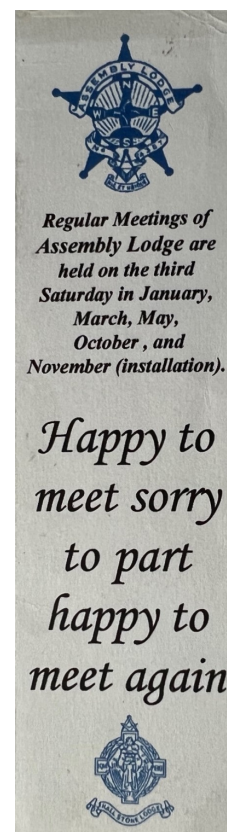
In November 2002 a Silver Jewel was presented to the Charity Steward in respect of the Lodge's donations to the New Masonic Samaritan Fund.



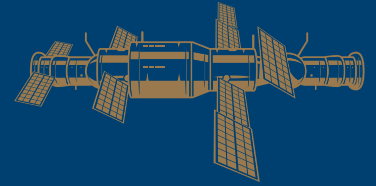
In March 2003 Assembly Lodge became a Foundation Lodge of the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London. I also attended the Consecration Meeting at the Albert Hall on 1st October 2003

At my Installation meeting in November 2003, WBro Ron Holder presented to all members of the Lodge, Bookmarks he had made which are a perfect size for our ritual books. Mine is still very much in use today.

I can recall my installation meeting quite vividly, no part of it was more moving than WBro John Penny singing the Master's Song at the Festive Board.



# The 21st Century



In October 2004, WBro David Green presented a talk on Masonic Cypher and also explained the differences between West End and Emulation workings.

At a committee meeting in 2005 it was agreed that Wine would no longer be included as part of the meal. In hindsight I think that may have been an error as pouring wine at the Festive Board fell to the newer Brethren, being Stewards/Deacons, and gave them a chance to interact with, and get to know all the members of the Lodge. Wine has since been re-introduced as part of the meal, however we no longer have the newer Brethren to pour it .... but we manage.

Annual Subscriptions were again increased, to £85 in 2005.

At the October meeting in 2006, Brother Secretary advised that the Lodge Summons will now be available as a PDF file on email for those who wished to receive it. He also provided information on the new Grand Lodge website called "Porchway", that has now been replaced with one called "Rosetta".

In May 2007 the Lodge was given a Bronze award for contributions to the RMBI.

The Assembly Lodge regularly uses the January meeting to celebrate with a white table Festive Board for partners and guests, having done so for the Millennium, the 75th, 85th and 90th Anniversaries. I can't recall what the occasion was in 2008, if there was one, when our guests were entertained to a talk by W.Bro David Green and his wife Angela on 'A Masonic Tour of London'. Afterward the Officers individually explained their roles within the Lodge. We then dined in the Great Hall.

In May 2008 the 2nd Degree Tracing Board Lecture was interrupted by a mouse running across the floor, it was too fast and evaded both the Inner Guard and Tyler. It was also agreed at that meeting to move the May date to the 3rd Saturday in April. Also due to the proposed increased costs from Butchers' Hall we would start to look for an alternative venue.

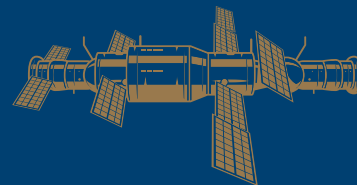
The October and November meetings were held by Dispensation at the Thistle Hotel, Bloomsbury, however the Hotel was not organised and it was recorded as 'difficult to work with' for us to move permanently, so after negotiations with Butchers' Hall we returned in January 2009.

However the proposition to Move to the Thistle Hotel still surfaced in March 2009 but was defeated by 8 votes to 2. A Committee was to look for a long term solution to our rising costs.

In October 2009 the roles of Mentor and Royal Arch representative both appeared on the Summons for the first time, both positions being occupied by WBro David Green. He was presented with a 'Mentoring Lapel Pin' by VWBro Richard Regan PGSwdB, Assistant Metropolitan Grand Master. The Lodge was also given the Silver award for donations to the London RMBI Appeal. Subscriptions were again increased from £95 to £120 due to rising costs of Butchers' Hall

In November 2009, a further proposition to change venue was withdrawn following favourable negotiations with Butchers' Hall.

# The 21st Century



In January 2010 in an effort to reduce fixed costs for the Lodge it was proposed and carried by a majority to abandon the April meetings and just meet 4 times per year.

In March the By-laws were amended further to include the Initiation fee £70, Joining fee £60 and Re-joining fee £25, these being in addition to the Registration fees payable to Grand Lodge.

I was elected and invested as Treasurer in November 2010. Once the accounts were brought up to date and taking into account the previous Treasurer had 'loaned' the Lodge £2000, the overall finances were pretty dire with a net debt position of -£860.48.

In March 2011, the Lodge was called off, and a demonstration was given of the First Degree with the ancient penalties included.

November 2011 the subscriptions were raised from £120 to £150. Owing to various cost cutting over the years they still remain at £150. Dining fees were also increased from £38 to £40 (excluding wine).

We also became a Foundation Lodge of the Metropolitan Masonic Charity. A Past Masters breast Jewel was presented to WBro Alan Williams by our visitor WBro Frank Sharp PAGDC who had purchased it on eBay.

In January 2012 WBro Roger Russell apologised for missing the Lodge of Instruction Officers night despite having offered to give a talk on techniques for remembering ritual. After the Lodge closed, it being our 90th Anniversary guests were invited into the Temple for a short talk on the Lodge History before dining at a white table dinner.

March 2012 was our last meeting at Butchers' Hall before moving to our current home of Mark Masons' Hall under dispensation for October before amending the By-laws in November.

At the November meeting WBro David Green who had been in the office of Mentor previously was now invested with the new collar of that office. Although not in the minutes, from my own records I calculated that based on what Butchers' Hall had proposed to charge, the move to Mark Masons' Hall had saved the Lodge over £1800 just in the first year.

In March 2013 we started collecting for the Centenary Fund, at the present time there is now over £7000 in the fund to celebrate our 100th Year.

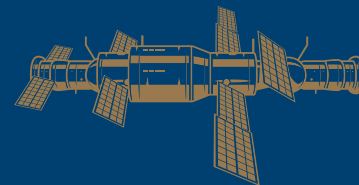
November 2015 saw the first visit of WBro Raj Gajebasia, Secretary of Spitalfields Lodge No 4838, our Daughter Lodge. This was the start a new friendship between our Lodges with Raj expected to become a joining member of Assembly Lodge at our centenary meeting in January 2022.

In January 2016 we were given Foundation status for the Metropolitan Masonic Charity Air Ambulance Appeal.

In March 2016 a Raising ceremony was performed by Grecian Lodge No 3718 for Bro David Dalton with WBro Nathan Perry occupying the chair and the traditional history delivered by WBro Adam Kennard both of Grecian Lodge.



# The 21st Century



In November 2016 WBro Stephen Batt was installed into the Chair for a record 4th time by his son Robert.

The 95th Anniversary meeting was held in January 2017 with a white table dinner at which an after dinner entertaining presentation was given by Alan Haines titled 'A kick up the 80's'.

In March 2017 WBro David Green PGStdB was congratulated on his appointment as a Grand Officer. He is only the second put forward by Assembly Lodge to gain that honour, the first being WBro F W Ballam in 1940.

In October 2017 it was agreed to move the Installation meeting to October and the November meeting to May with a view to reducing the time between the March and October meetings.

By May 2018 Bro Mark Meader had prepared a limited website for the Lodge, but needed more content before going 'live'. Unfortunately that content was never produced and the project floundered but is due to be resurrected in 2022.

In January 2019 dining was not available at Mark Masons' Hall due to works being carried by Thames Water, the brethren retired to the Oxford and Cambridge Club in Pall Mall for dinner.

January 2020 the Lodge accounts were presented showing a healthy position with a general fund balance of over £1100. Discussion regarding moving the October meeting (for 2020 only) so it coincided with the moved Assembly Chapter meeting, also for a Ladies festival in October/November.

On 17th March 2020 HRH The Duke of Kent KG, MWGM announced that all Lodge and Chapter meetings in England and Wales be suspended for a period of 4 months due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Therefore our 21st March meeting was abandoned.

For the next 18 months the the country went into and out of lockdown, restricting meetings, travel and contact between people from different households. For a short period meeting were permissible for up to 6 people, but no festive boards were allowed. Extensive cleaning of equipment was required to avoid possible transmission of the Covid virus. The ritual was adapted for Initiation and Passing but Raising and Installations were not allowed.

Assembly Lodge did not meet again until October 2021, at that meeting a long rumbling discontent with Mark Masons' Hall was brought to the fore in a notice of motion to move to Freemasons' Hall. After a long discussion the main reason for moving was the quality of food, it was generally felt that the food may not be better elsewhere and the convenience of meeting, using the bar and dining in the same building outweighed any possible gains. WBro Duncan McGhee, although not in favour, had brought the motion on behalf of those members who wanted to move, subsequently withdrew the notice of motion and it was agreed to remain at MMH.

As we had not been able to elect a WM at our usual meeting in May we had to do that in October and call an Emergency Meeting (the first since 1947) in November 2021 to install WBro Brian Williams as Worshipful Master for the Centenary year.

# Charities Supported



The Lodge has supported many charities over the years, here is a list of some of those:

Hall Stone Lodge for supporting the Masonic Million Memorial Fund  
Grand Patron of the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution  
Grand Patron of the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys and Girls  
Grand Patron of the Masonic Samaritan Fund  
Foundation Lodge of the Metropolitan Masonic Charity, now London Freemasons' Charity  
Silver Award for the London RMBI Appeal

Founding Lodge of the Freemasons Hospital and Nursing Home.  
Patron of the Royal Masonic Hospital  
Polytechnic Christmas Dinner Fund  
Royal Wanstead School  
Lord Mayor of London Flood and Tempest Relief Fund  
Hostel of God - Clapham Common & Trinity Hospice as it is now known.  
Commemorative Jewel for 250th Anniversary Appeal  
British Heart Foundation  
Alzheimer's Society  
Asthma Research  
Alone in London  
NSPCC  
Children's Hospice South West  
Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital  
Prostate Cancer  
Royal National Lifeboat Institution  
St. Bartholomew's Hospital Cyber Knife Appeal  
CLIC Sargent  
Plan International UK  
Flame of Hope - Cancer Research UK  
Wildlife Heritage Foundation  
Macmillan Cancer  
Royal Marsden Cancer Charity  
Help for Heroes  
Devon Air Ambulance  
Shooting Star Children's Hospice

At the Centenary meeting it is proposed we donate £1000 to each of the following;  
London Freemasons Charity, Motor Neurone Disease Association and Kidney Cancer UK.

Plus many others....

# The Past Masters of Assembly Lodge

Jan 1922	John Collingridge	Nov 1972	James Cowan
Nov 1922	Cecil Campbell	Nov 1973	Arthur Terry
Nov 1923	Walter Wall	Nov 1974	Charles Stavely
Nov 1924	Thomas Foster	Nov 1975	Alfred Young
Nov 1925	Charles Pratt (Snr)	Nov 1976	Leslie Whitton
Nov 1926	Frederick Ballam	Nov 1977	Leslie Whitton
Nov 1927	Walter Scott	Nov 1978	Roger Russel
Nov 1928	Mortimer Miller	Nov 1979	Arthur Cook
Nov 1929	Thomas J Maynard	Nov 1980	Roy Habershon
Nov 1930	Thomas Knight	Nov 1981	William Crutchlow
Nov 1931	Harold Perkins	Nov 1982	Joseph Pickerill
Nov 1932	Alfred Burgess	Nov 1983	Ronald Holder
Nov 1933	Stanley Finch	Nov 1984	Francis Dent
Nov 1934	Alfred Harrison	Nov 1985	David Green
Nov 1935	Reginald Minnit	Nov 1986	Brian Williams
Nov 1936	George Spriggs	Nov 1987	John Penny
Nov 1937	Jeffrey Poole	Nov 1988	Stanley Shurman
Nov 1938	Shirley Freeman	Nov 1989	Anthony Carter
Nov 1939	Charles Pratt (Jnr)	Nov 1990	David Habershon
Mar 1941	Thomas H Maynard	Nov 1991	Paul Elliot
Mar 1942	Albert Evans	Nov 1992	Ronald Green
Nov 1942	Harry Ailles	Nov 1993	Roger Batt
Nov 1943	Edward Dubber	Nov 1994	Ronald Holder
Nov 1944	Frederick Jupp	Nov 1995	Clifford Davies
Nov 1945	Richard Sandham	Nov 1996	Francis Day
Nov 1946	Stanley Fisher	Nov 1997	Roger Russell
Nov 1947	Percival Stacey	Nov 1998	Logan Subramaniam
Nov 1948	Harold Bradford	Nov 1999	David Jerrom
Nov 1949	Norman Tilly	Nov 2000	Stephen Batt
Nov 1950	Frederick Jeanes	Nov 2001	Edward Flemming
Nov 1951	Dr Thomas Porter	Nov 2002	Neil Lavelle
Nov 1952	Harry Sheppard	Nov 2003	Duncan McGhee
Nov 1953	Robert Gudgeon	Nov 2004	David Green
Nov 1954	Horace Evans-Lobb	Nov 2005	Christopher Hunt
Nov 1955	Walter Berry	Nov 2006	Francis Day
Nov 1956	Charles Beer	Nov 2007	Logan Subramaniam
Nov 1957	Norman Gaskin	Nov 2008	Stephen Batt
Nov 1958	John Howard-Hall	Nov 2009	Stephen Batt
Nov 1959	Charles Langshaw	Nov 2010	Alan Williams
Nov 1960	Haydn Harris	Nov 2011	Leslie Whitton
Nov 1961	Ronald Green	Nov 2012	Kevin Allen
Nov 1962	Sidney Green	Nov 2013	Roger Russell
Nov 1963	Ralph Potheary	Nov 2014	Christopher Hunt
Nov 1964	Herbert Daniel	Nov 2015	Robert Batt
Nov 1965	Francis Dent	Nov 2016	Stephen Batt
Nov 1966	George Riley	Nov 2017	Logan Subramaniam
Nov 1967	Charles Jordan	Nov 2018	Samuel Wilberforce
Nov 1968	Herbert Daniel	Nov 2019	Mark Meader
Nov 1969	Richard Hudson	2020	Mark Meader
Nov 1970	Brian Williams	Nov 2021	Brian Williams
Nov 1971	William Ramsey		

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased from 10.5 million to 12.5 million, and the number of people in the public sector who are employed in health care has increased from 2.5 million to 3.5 million (Department of Health 2000).

There are a number of reasons for this increase. One of the main reasons is the increasing demand for health care services. The population of the UK is increasing, and the number of people who are aged 65 and over is increasing rapidly. This has led to an increase in the number of people who are in need of health care services, and this has led to an increase in the number of people who are employed in the public sector.

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