

## True Light Lodge of Friendship No. 2963



### Consecration

The lodge started life with the name “The Lodge of Friendship No. 2963” when it was formed as a daughter lodge of The Lodge of Lights No. 148 on 14 October 1903. The consecration of the new lodge in 1903 took place at the Masonic Rooms, Bold Street, Warrington and was conducted by the PrGM, Rt.Hon. the Earl of Lathom, PGW.

W. Bro. Roger Carlton Parr, PPrGStdBr, Oxford and Past Master of lodge No. 2651 was installed as the first Master on the day. 17 members were recorded as Founders of the new lodge, most of whom were then invested as officers. The occupations of the major officers were recorded as: Gentleman, Brewer, Cab Master and Stockbroker. Including the Provincial Team, 65 people attended the consecration ceremony, after which the brethren adjourned to the Lion Hotel, Bridge Street, Warrington for a banquet priced at 10 shillings per head, including wine.

At the consecration, in October 1903, two candidates were proposed for membership and these were Initiated together at the December meeting and Passed together at the meeting in January 1904. These two were then Raised together at the February meeting and, at the same meeting, two more candidates were Initiated! This practice of multiple ceremonies in one evening was not unusual and on at least one occasion, all three ceremonies took place.

### Change of venue

At the meeting on 6 March 1911, W. Bro. Sir Gilbert Greenall, PPrGW, Baronet of Walton Hall was accepted as a joining member and at the same meeting it was minuted that a “strong committee of this lodge be appointed with powers to approach the other lodges ... to ascertain whether it is desirable and feasible to found a Masonic Temple and Club for the whole of the Masonic Lodges in Warrington”.

It was not until March 1931 that the committee joined a “Liability Company” in order to purchase and erect a Masonic Temple on the current site in Winmarleigh Street, Warrington. All founder members of the Liability Company took a loan account of 3 guineas per member and the lodge moved into the new location in September 1933.

### War years

The lodge had three members who served in the First World War (1914-1918) and they were elected as temporary Honorary members for the duration and retained their seniority and standing in the lodge. During hostilities, the lodge banquet was suspended in order to preserve lodge funds to assist with any 'deserving object arising out of the war'.

In 1935 it was proposed that the lodge should sponsor a new Holy Royal Arch Chapter, to be named Friendship Chapter No. 2963.

During and after the Second World War, the minutes' record visits by serving brethren as well as at least one who joined the lodge from Roseville Lodge No. 222 in California, USA.

### **Daughter lodge**

By the 1960s lodge membership was up to 50 with around 100 attending an Installation, when the cost of the meal was now 17 shillings and 6 pennies. By 1977 the membership was large enough for consideration to be given to sponsoring a daughter lodge and the Hillcliffe Lodge No. 8812 was consecrated on 23 May 1978.

In October 1978 a lodge banner was consecrated.

### **Centenary**

Lodge membership had declined to 25 but in 2001 there was a realisation that funds would be needed to cover the costs of the forthcoming celebration of the Centenary of the lodge and so various social events and other fund raising events were arranged. The Centenary ceremony took place at the Masonic Hall, Warrington on 17 October 2003 and was conducted by the PrGM, Rt. W. Bro. Colin Penty Wright. After the ceremony 96 brethren attended the festive board, held at the Masonic Hall, but this was a more modest affair than the banquet in 1903 and this time the cost was £18.50 per person.

### **Amalgamation**

By 2004 the number of subscribing members had dwindled to 15 with little realistic prospects of new candidates and serious discussions were being held about the future sustainability of the lodge. This was not an uncommon concern among other Warrington lodges as well at that time.

At the April meeting in 2004, W. Bro. Alf Roughsedge, Asst. PrGM was invited to address members on the options available to the lodge. The choices were to "soldier on" until non-viable, to close the lodge now or to consider amalgamating with other lodge(s).

In the meantime, at the September meeting in 2004, it was agreed to amend the by-laws to reduce the number of regular meetings from 8 to 4 to ease the problem. Subsequently, on 14 June 2006, the lodge amalgamated with its daughter lodge (Hillcliffe Lodge No. 8812) and with The True Light Lodge No. 7323. The amalgamated lodge took the name of the True Light Lodge of Friendship and retained the number of 2963 in the register of Grand Lodge – meaning that, in practice, the lodge continued but with a new name. The lodge then displayed all three warrants at its meetings as well as the Centenary Warrant and Amalgamation warrant.

To consolidate the image of a new lodge, a new banner was dedicated at a ceremony conducted by the Assistant PrGM, W. Bro. H. Dennis Rudd PSGD on 9 December 2009.

### **Looking forward**

The electronic revolution is increasingly impacting on lodge administration. Communication by e-mail, to Province and to members from the Secretary, is now expected. By December 2010 summons were issued to most members by e-mail and accompanied by electronic copies (in pdf format) of the previous minutes – these are no longer read out at length in lodge.

Ceremonies are increasingly carried out by a number of lodge members to deliberately reduce the burden on the WM so as to make his year in office a less onerous task, if he so wishes. This change is encouraged by Province in recognition of the more demanding nature of members' work patterns. The lodge meetings also now start at 7pm for the same reason.

Mentoring of new members, where appropriate, is now also expected and a mentor will normally be identified for each new candidate at initiation, where required.

A greater emphasis is being placed on more visibility for the considerable contributions made to Charities by both the lodge, and the Craft as a whole.

In 2011 there are now 37 subscribing members and 4 honorary members and the members look forward to the special event of celebrating 50 years in Masonry by W. Bro. H. D. Rudd in September 2013.

#### **Talk by Vic Charlesworth on the Founders – 12th March 2014**

[FounderJewels Talk by WBo Charlesworth](#)

#### **W. Bro.D.Pearson, Secretary**

This short, summary history was compiled in Nov. 2011 by W. Bro. D. Pearson, Secretary, using previous histories prepared by W. Bro. G. D. Mealar (period: 1903-1962), W. Bro. C. H. Coleman (period: 1962-1984) and W. Bro. C. Gray (period 1903-2003).