

St. Oswald Lodge No. 5170

A lodge of Distinction

The Assembly Rooms

Lion Hotel

Warrington

24th April, 1930

A meeting was held this day at 3.45 o'clock in the afternoon to witness the Consecration of the St Oswald Lodge No 5170 and the Installation of the Worshipful Master, Sir William Peter Rylands, who was Provincial Senior Grand Warden. With those words the official history of our lodge had started to be recorded. But to trace the beginning of the lodge to its origin we have to go back to 1925 and the meetings of St. Elphin Lodge No 3287.

The success of that lodge was such that its waiting list of candidates "seemed endless". It was estimated that a brother would have to be a member of the lodge for up to 50 years before he could become eligible for Installation as Worshipful Master.

Lodge meetings were so well attended that conditions were described as being "like sardines in a tin".

It was inevitable, therefore, that talk should eventually get round to the topic of forming a new lodge. Unofficially a small group of brethren held regular meetings in an attempt to establish whether there would be sufficient support for the formation of a new lodge from within St. Elphin Lodge.

It was soon realised that there was and the official Foundation Committee was established under the chairmanship of W. Bro. James Heywood, P.Pr.G.D.C. He was the Director of Ceremonies of St. Elphin Lodge and later presented to our lodge the original frame which held the Warrant and did its job until a new frame had to be purchased in 2002.

On 22 April, 1929, a letter was sent to all members of St. Elphin Lodge saying that following the request by several members for the formation of a new lodge the Worshipful Master and Past Masters had considered the matter and "decided to give the proposal their wholehearted support".

Members interested in assisting with the formation or becoming a founder of the new lodge were asked to attend a meeting in the Lion Hotel on 25 April.

Unfortunately, there is no record or any minutes of that meeting but on 27 April a letter was sent to the Provincial Grand Secretary saying that the meeting had been held and members had "expressed a desire that the time was opportune for the formation of a new lodge".

It had also been unanimously resolved at that initial meeting "that W. Bro. Sir William Peter Rylands, the Provincial Senior Grand Warden of the Province be asked to become a founder".

Four names had been suggested at that initial meeting for the new lodge and it would appear that the name most favoured at that time was "The Priory". The other alternatives were Winmarleigh, Patten and Boteler.

The annual subscription fee was set at £3:3s and the Initiation Fee £15:15s. Meetings, it was decided, would be on the fourth Thursday of the months September to May inclusive in the Assembly Rooms, Lion Hotel, Warrington.

The Brethren responsible for ensuring that the new lodge came into being put into action all the regular procedures. The only real issue which had to be resolved was the name of the new lodge. According to one of our founders, although several names were suggested, the name St Oswald met with immediate support once it was mentioned. By October, 1929, all correspondence referred to the “proposed St Oswald Lodge”.

The founders put the name St Oswald forward for official approval. The Provincial Grand Secretary wrote asking them if there were any special reasons for the choice of name. On behalf of the founders, Bro. Ernest A. Cannell (foundation secretary) wrote in response:

“St Oswald, King of Northumbria, had local interests in this neighborhood and he was, for many years, closely associated with St. Elphin, a missionary. St. Elphin has been referred to as his nephew, but no historical proof of this relationship has been available. Oswald was a Christian, and when he ascended the throne of the Kingdom of Northumbria, of which the town of Wallingtude – now Warrington – was a part, he was sorely pressed by the heathen kings. Nevertheless, one of his first acts was to vow publicly to complete the great stone Minster at York, which his uncle, King Edwin had begun.

“This vow he later successfully accomplished. When he had subdued his immediate enemies he gave his attention to the spiritual welfare of his subjects and succeeded in attracting good Christian men to preach the faith in his land. Amongst the chief of these were Aidan (later Bishop of Lindisfarne) and St. Elphin. King Oswald frequently accompanied them on their long and hazardous missionary journeys acting as their interpreter. His labours on behalf of Christianity and the betterment of his subjects rightly earned him the title of ‘Saint’.

“King Oswald was eventually slain in battle in 642 at Maserfield whilst fighting against the heathen King Penda of Mercia.

“Historians differ slightly regarding the death and burial of Saint Oswald but it is understood that they are agreed that Oswald had a palace at Winwick (Winicas), one of the suburbs of Warrington, and that here he frequently associated with St. Elphin. With regard to the death of St Oswald at Maserfield, one school of historians claim that this was where the town of Oswestry now stands. The other school – and it is believed this includes the Venerable Bede, the greatest historian of his time – states that this was not so and that he died at Winwick, being buried there. The latter view is supported by the fact that the name Maserfield is still retained in the district name of the township of which Winwick is a portion, viz, Makerfield.

“Thus we have in existence at the present time parishes in close proximity to Winwick named Newton in Makerfield and Ashton in Makerfield.

“Local history goes so far as to say that Saint Oswald is buried with his followers slain in the Battle of Maserfield under a mound approximately 50 yards by 30 yards in extent, which is still to be seen under the shadow of St. Elphin Church –the Parish Church of Warrington.

“In passing, it is interesting to note that this is the only church of its name in the country, a fact which is unique.

“The Founders of the Lodge, with two exceptions, are all associated with St. Elphin Lodge. Bro. the Rt. Rev Herbert Gresford Jones, DD, Bishop of Warrington, the first Junior Warden, is the Rector of St Oswald’s Church, Winwick.

“It is sincerely hoped that the greatest love and harmony will always exist between the Lodges of St. Elphin and St Oswald, such as existed in ancient times between St. Elphin and St Oswald, and as they were a strong combination for the good of mankind in their time, so will these Lodges named after them be in the future.”

Along with the official Petition Forms seeking permission to form the new Lodge the following “Prayer” to the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the United Fraternity of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of England, was sent:

“The Petitioners whose signatures appear on the accompanying Petition Form earnestly and respectfully request your favourable consideration of their Petition for the formation of a new Lodge. With two exceptions they are members of St. Elphin Lodge No 3287 which is one of the strongest Lodges in Warrington and is increasing in membership. It is their sincere desire to promote the genuine principles of Freemasonry and the general good of the Craft and after long and weighty consideration they have come to the conclusion that this can best be done by the formation of a new Lodge.

“They further claim that with the support of W. Bro. Sir William P Rylands, PrSGW, W. Bro. W Hodgkinson, PPrAGDC, the late treasurer of St. Elphin Lodge No 3287 and Bro. the Rt. Rev. H. Gresford Jones, the Bishop of Warrington, the permanence of the Lodge will be assured and that these distinguished Brethren will always see that the Ancient Landmarks of the Craft are faithfully observed and kept pure and unsullied.

“Every Brother who has signed this Petition has expressed his desire to actively assist in the conduct of the proposed Lodge.

“The Past Masters of St. Elphin Lodge have considered this Petition and they have given it their wholehearted support and wish it every success.

“Suitable accommodation can be provided at the Assembly Rooms, Lion Hotel, Warrington, which at the present time houses several of the Warrington Lodges.

“In view of these facts I have no hesitation in humbly asking you on behalf of the Petitioners to favourably consider their Petition and grant a Warrant.”

On 14 February, 1930, W. Bro. John A Wilson, PGDC (Eng), Provincial Grand Secretary wrote to the Foundation Committee saying that on that day a Warrant had been granted for St Oswald Lodge and that its number would be 5170.

Final arrangements had to be made quickly for the Consecration of the new Lodge.

Contact was made with Gilbert Greenall Lodge No 1250 – the Mother Lodge of St. Elphin Lodge – to see if it would allow its grand-daughter to use their Lodge furniture. Initially it was agreed that the Gilbert Greenall Lodge furniture could be used for a fee of 4 guineas per annum. A letter then followed saying that for the time being Gilbert Greenall Lodge was not only happy to give full permission for St Oswald Lodge to use their furniture but that there would be no fee involved “being direct descendants of the same tribes and families”.

It was only on 24 March that the Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master gave approval for the Consecration of St Oswald Lodge No 5170 to take place on 24 April.

The 24th day of April, 1930, finally arrived and St Oswald Lodge No 5170 was officially born. It was an exciting day for the Founders who were "all pals". They had worked hard and long, paid Foundation Fees to provide the initial finance needed to launch the Lodge and were determined that the success of St. Elphin Lodge should be continued in St Oswald Lodge.

The ceremony of Consecration and Installation was described by those who attended as "superb" with everything going not only according to plan but also with a deep sincerity which left a lasting impression. The Consecrating Officer was RW. Bro. Llewellyn C Bailey, PGD (Eng), Provincial Grand Master. The Installing Officer was W. Bro. Herbert Harrison, PGD (Eng), Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

Nearly 100 Brethren attended the Consecration. Just to illustrate how inflation has affected everything the total bill for the banquet which followed and the hire of room was just £35 10s 2d.

The first regular meeting of the Lodge took place on 1 May when, following the ballot, the Lodge's first candidate, Mr. William Jones, aged 46, a director and secretary of Crescent Villa, Great Sankey, was Initiated. At the second meeting a month later there were four Joining Members.

The October meeting was to Initiate the Hon Edward Greenall, who was later to become Lord Daresbury. W. Bro. Sir William Peter Rylands was in the Chair and the Chairs of the Wardens were occupied by the Provincial Senior and Junior Wardens.

After the ballot at that meeting was favourable for Bro. Robert Ross, a member of the Lodge of Progress 873, to join St Oswald Lodge he had to "declare in open Lodge his adherence to the Book of Constitutions" and promise due obedience to the Grand Master and Rules and Regulations of Grand Lodge because he had been Initiated into a Lodge under the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The Worshipful Master had to be well prepared for the November meeting for he carried out a double Initiation for Arthur Creighton and Thomas Parkinson and then Passed Brother Greenall.

There were many guests to see the Installation in 1931 of Bro. the Rt. Rev Herbert Gresford Jones including the Grand Chaplain of England, W. Bro. M W Myres. The following year W. Bro. Herbert Gresford Jones became the Provincial Grand Chaplain and in the next year had the honour of being the Grand Chaplain of England.

Another member of the local clergy, Bro. the Rev Wilfred Lawson Greenwood, Vicar of Christ Church, Latchford, joined the Lodge a few months later.

From the outset St Oswald Lodge was in favour of a purpose-built Masonic Temple being erected in Warrington. In February, 1931, the Lodge reaffirmed its commitment by recommending the purchase of land at the corner of Hanover Street and Winmarleigh Street for £675. At its meeting on 3 October, 1932, it was agreed to pay the 3 guineas per member requested by the new company and also that 60 guineas be transferred from Lodge funds to the Warrington Masonic Hall Company Limited "as a payment of part of this Lodge's commitment". A year later it was decided that the Lodge should be removed from the Lion Hotel to the Masonic Hall from 9 November, 1933, and that meetings should, in future be held on the second Thursday of the months September to May inclusive. At the first meeting in the new Temple members were asked for donations to give "the maximum amount of assistance to the building fund".

The first mention of a Ladies' Evening in our records was for the wife of W. Bro. Ernest A. Cannell in January 1933.

Bro. the Hon Edward Greenall was Installed into the Chair of St Oswald Lodge in May 1933 and one of his presenting officers was his father, W. Bro. the Rt. Hon Lord Daresbury, PPrSGW.

There was a "double" Initiation on 8 February, 1934, when Dr. George Alexander Sinclair and Mr. William Sudlow became Freemasons. They were also Passed and Raised together.

In December 1934, W. Bro. George Frederick Hatton (Assistant Director of Ceremonies) presented two sets of Squares and Compasses for use in ceremonies in St Oswald Lodge.

It was not only the local Masonic Temple that St Oswald Lodge supported for when the Masonic Temple at Luetta was destroyed by an earthquake in 1936 the Lodge was quick to react and sent a donation to the fund for its rebuilding.

The first major landmark in the Lodge's history was its 100th Regular Meeting on 9 October, 1941 when the ceremony was to Raise a young Brother who had been Initiated the previous April. That young man was Bro. Harold Carter whose Masonic career became an example to all Masons. Not only did W. Bro. Carter, PPrJGW, become the Lodge's Senior Past Master but for more than 25 years was the sincere and effective Chaplain of St Oswald Lodge. W. Bro. Carter was Worshipful Master of our Lodge in 1958 and also served as Lodge Treasurer for some years.

The Brethren of the Lodge were asked in September 1942, to intimate if in future they would prefer to hold Lodge meetings on Saturday nights. There is nothing in the minutes thereafter to show the exact views expressed but as meetings have continued to be on Thursdays it can safely be assumed that the move gained little support.

Another clergyman, the Rev Cecil Monkman, Vicar of St Thomas's Church, Stockton Heath was Initiated in 1942.

After serving as Foundation Secretary, W. Bro. Ernest A. Cannell, PPrJGW, who was Worshipful Master in 1932, became secretary of the Lodge and served in that position until 1943. But even that length of service cannot match that of W. Bro. George Albert Lambert Maude, PPrSGW. A Past Master of Chivalry Lodge No 3974, W. Bro. Maude joined St Oswald Lodge in April, 1948, after regularly attending our meetings as a guest for two years. In May, 1957, he was asked if he would take on the job of secretary as a "temporary" measure. He agreed to do so and carried on in that position until

1982 which must make him the longest serving "temporary secretary" of any Lodge.

The popularity of St Oswald Lodge by 1944 was such that Brethren were told to warn any candidates that it would be a considerable time before they could be Initiated as the waiting list was so long.

W. Bro. the Rt Hon Edward Baron Daresbury, who was Worshipful Master in 1933 was the second member of the Lodge to be made an Acting Officer of Grand Lodge. The March meeting in 1945 was a Past Masters' Night and W. Bro. the Rt Hon Edward Baron Daresbury had been acting as Worshipful Master. During the meeting the Lodge's heartiest congratulations were extended to him, not just for the ceremony he had performed, but on the news being released that he had been invited to become Senior Grand Warden of England. He served as Senior Grand Warden for two years. Even though his duties took him far afield he attended St Oswald Lodge whenever he could and at the Past Masters' Night in

1946 acted as Immediate Past Master. A fuller biography of Lord Daresbury can be found on another page.

In March, 1945, there was an Emergency Meeting of the Lodge to Initiate Mr. Norman Ward. The Lodge obtained special permission to have the Emergency Meeting because Mr. Ward was on leave from the RAF where he was serving as a Flying Officer and had to return to his base before the next Regular Meeting.

The Lodge decided in 1946 that "Honour Fees" should be paid by members reaching high office within the Lodge. These were fixed at 10s 6d to be paid by the Worshipful Master on his Installation; 5s to be paid by each Warden on their Investiture and 2s 6d paid by each Deacon, the Inner Guard and all the Stewards. The figures were agreed at a Lodge meeting when it was also agreed that the "fees" should be "donated for benevolence". In that year Initiation Fees were increased to 21 guineas and it was also decided to put up the annual subscription to 4 guineas. The re-joining fee was 1 guinea. It was also decided that the Worshipful Master would be allowed to invite two guests free of charge to each meeting but this practice was later discontinued. One of the first to have to pay the increased Initiation Fee was Arthur Osborne who was brought into the Lodge by his father, W. Bro. Arthur Fletcher Osborne, in December 1947.

The Brethren of St Oswald Lodge decided in September 1950 to honour W. Bro. Harry Lovatt Taylor, PAGDC, by making him an Honorary Member of the Lodge. W. Bro. Taylor had served as Chairman of the Warrington Group from 1942 to 1948.

W. Bro. William Herbert Ward, PPrAGDC, was a member of the Lodge who was also selected to be made an Honorary Member. W. Bro. Ward was a Joining member of the Lodge on 9 September, 1930. He served as Organist from 1930 to 1941 and was Worshipful Master in 1944. He was given Provincial Grand Lodge Honours in 1959 and made an Honorary Member in April 1963.

The Ritual used in our Lodge was compiled in 1927 for the use of Gilbert Greenall Lodge No 1250 by W. Bro. Fredric Rose, PPrGD. In 1950 it was decided to have a re-print of the Ritual and the Lodge agreed to incur expenses of up to £10. In 1955 the Ritual was revised for the use of Gilbert Greenall Lodge No 1250, St. Elphin Lodge No 3287, Travellers Lodge No 4679, St Oswald Lodge No 5170, Red Rose Lodge No 6007, Winmarleigh Lodge No 6101 and Warrington Lodge No 6937. Two Brethren from St Oswald Lodge were among the group who revised the Ritual, the Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro

Ernest Cannell and the Secretary, W. Bro. Robert Ross.

The 200th Regular Meeting of the Lodge took place on 13 November, 1962, when Bro. John William Pott and Bro. Walter Foden were Passed. At that meeting Mr. Ernest Bellamy was proposed for membership of the Lodge.

The Minute Books of our Lodge show that throughout our history many thousands of pounds have been donated to Masonic Charities. The 1952 RMBI Festival benefited by a total of £1,684 18s 4d from St Oswald Lodge and 27 members of the Lodge qualified as Stewards of the Festival. Apart from the donations to charity by the Lodge itself, scores of our Brethren have been presented with various charity jewels.

Bro. Ronald Hanson was Initiated into Freemasonry in India in 1944 in Lodge Jamrud 4372. Nine years later St Oswald Lodge received a special request from Bro. Hanson's Mother Lodge for our Lodge to Pass him. This was duly done and Bro. Hanson did not have to wait so long to be Raised, for that ceremony was also conducted in St Oswald Lodge six months

later. Special greetings were sent to our Lodge from Lodge Jamrud in appreciation of the ceremonies having been carried out.

With the approach of St Oswald Lodge's Silver Jubilee, it was decided in January, 1955, that the most appropriate way to mark the occasion would be with a special donation to charity. It was agreed that efforts should be made to raise 100 guineas for the Hannay Masonic Residential Trust. The target was well exceeded and 200 guineas were presented to W. Bro. T Cecil Locker, PGD, who was representing the Provincial Grand Master. The presentation was made by the Charity Representative, W. Bro. Herbert Stringer.

W. Bro. Nathaniel James Morris, PPrGW, a Founder of our Lodge and a Past Master of St. Elphin Lodge became Worshipful Master of St Oswald Lodge in 1956 because of unfortunate circumstances. During his year as Senior Warden, Bro. Frederick Arthur Rigby died and W. Bro. Morris was asked to replace him and progress to the Chair. W. Bro. Morris had been Initiated into St. Elphin Lodge in 1912 and was Worshipful Master in 1928. He was one of the seven petitioners for the Foundation of St Oswald Lodge and was its first Director of Ceremonies serving until 1933. From 1943 to 1955 he served as Chaplain. He celebrated the 50th anniversary of his Initiation into Freemasonry with a special meeting in St Oswald Lodge in November 1962. He was promoted to the rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer in 1963, a year before he died.

There was some dissent in the Lodge in September, 1957, when it was proposed that the dining fee would be 4s for members and visitors. A move to have the fees paid by the Lodge as a whole failed and the new charge was introduced.

There was a change to the Lodge Summons in 1958. For the first time details were printed of Brethren who were to give the Charge or Explanation of the Tracing Board.

The Honours Board for St Oswald Lodge in the Small Lodge Room of the Masonic Hall, Winmarleigh Street, Warrington, was unveiled by W. Bro. Nathaniel James Morris, PPrGW, in November, 1958. It had cost £55 which included having the names of Past Masters gilded on it. The honour of unveiling the board was well earned by W. Bro. Morris who in 1962 completed 50 years as a Freemason in the Warrington Group on 19 November. A special presentation was made to him by members of St Oswald Lodge as a tribute to mark his outstanding contribution to Freemasonry during the 50 years.

The Lodge had an early start in April 1961 when Brothers John Michael Pott and Douglas Henry Vermand Coleman were Raised.

It was agreed in 1962 that £75 could be taken from Lodge funds to purchase new items of Regalia which were needed. In the same year the dining fee was increased from 4s to 6s and Subscriptions were increased to 6 guineas. For many years it had been the Lodge's practice to purchase a Past Master's Collar to be given to the Master at the end of his year in office but this practice ended and it has been the responsibility of the Immediate Past Master to buy his own collar for many years.

W. Bro. Arthur Osborne was Worshipful Master on 12 December, 1963 when the 300th Regular Meeting of the Lodge was held. The ceremony that night was to Initiate Mr. Harry Boscow who went on to become Worshipful Master of the Lodge when it celebrated its Golden Jubilee.

The Rev George Arnold Francis Pare, Vicar of St James Church, Latchford, was Initiated into the Lodge in 1966.

There was another "double" ceremony in March 1968 to Raise Bro. Harold Smith and Bro. William Bentley. There was another busy night in March 1970 when the Worshipful Master, Bro. Ernest Bellamy, Initiated Alfred Pearce and W. Bro. Jim Ashall then took the Chair to Pass Bro. Derek Hunt.

W. Bro. F Cook, a Past Master of St. Elphin Lodge, presented to our Lodge in February, 1967, a Past Master's Jewel which had been presented to the late W. Bro. William Jones, our first candidate, who went on to become Worshipful Master in 1943.

The first Past Master's Jewel presented by St Oswald Lodge was in 1931 to our first Worshipful Master, W. Bro. Sir William Peter Rylands, Baronet, PPrSGW, who died in October 1948. Forty years after it was presented, the jewel was returned to the Lodge. Bro. Derek Hunt discovered that the jewel was in the possession of a friend, W. Bro. George C. Rylands, who said he would like to return the jewel to the Lodge. In November, 1971, the Worshipful Master, W. Bro. Ivor Eckersley, received the jewel on behalf of the Lodge from W. Bro. Rylands. Because it was the Lodge's first Past Master's Jewel it was offered to the Library and Museum of the United Grand Lodge of England and it was accepted to be added to the national collection of Masonic memorabilia.

Soon after his Installation in 1968 W. Bro. John Pott was taken seriously ill and although he did improve he was not sufficiently well to attend to Install his successor, Bro. Ernest Bellamy. VW. Bro. the Rev Richard Kenyon Leigh, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, attended the meeting and on being invited to accept the gavel he did so and conducted the Installation Ceremony. According to the Group Year Book he conducted the ceremony "in a manner worthy of the Lodge and himself". Prior to the meeting VW. Bro. Leigh and W. Bro. Tom Howarth, the Group Chairman, visited W. Bro. Pott at his home and conveyed to him the greetings and good wishes of his Lodge.

The Honour Fees, which had been paid since 1946, were stopped in 1970 when the Initiation Fee was increased to £25. The Joining and Re-joining fees went up to £5.

The Lodge minutes became much easier to read in April 1970 when for the first time they were typed by secretary, W. Bro. George Maude instead of being hand written.

Four months after being Raised in November 1970 Bro. Derek Hunt went on to the Lodge floor and gave an Explanation of the First Degree Tracing Board.

The 400th Regular Meeting of St Oswald Lodge was in January, 1971. During that ceremony the Worshipful Master, W. Bro. Alan Sudlow, Passed Bro. John Douglas Roberts.

In 1974, W. Bro. Alan Clifford Griffiths became Master of the Lodge and marked his Installation by composing new music for the Worshipful Master's Song which he respectfully dedicated to his Masonic Brethren of St Oswald Lodge and the Lodges of the Warrington Group. The service given to our Lodge and the whole of the Warrington Group by W. Bro. Griffiths resulted in him being awarded the high rank of Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1990 and he is currently the highest ranking officer in the Lodge. His Masonic career is covered in greater detail elsewhere in this Lodge history.

In the early 1960's, VW. Bro. the Rev Richard Kenyon Leigh was a regular visitor to St Oswald Lodge and as Deputy Provincial Grand Master attended our Installation in 1965. His visits continued and the close relationship which developed resulted in W. Bro. Harold Carter proposing to the Lodge that he should become an Honorary Member. There were 147 Brethren present on 10 May, 1973, to hear the Worshipful Master, W. Bro. James Davies,

announce that the Brethren had unanimously agreed that VW. Bro. Leigh had been elected an Honorary Member and welcomed him into the Lodge. The day was also a special one for Bro. Kenneth Wilfred Foulkes for he was Installed as Worshipful Master. Honouring the Lodge with his attendance for the Installation ceremony was the Provincial Grand Master, Rt W. Bro. Sir Knowles Edge, Baronet.

Founder Member of the Lodge, W. Bro. Alexander Finlayson, PPrGW, was honoured in 1974. VW. Bro. the Rev Richard Kenyon Leigh, Past Grand Chaplain, Deputy Provincial Grand Master, attended our meeting to present W. Bro. Finlayson with a special certificate from the Provincial Grand Master in appreciation of his devotion to Freemasonry during the 50 years he had been a member. VW. Bro. Leigh also paid tribute to W. Bro. Finlayson on his own behalf and for the Lodge. The Lodge showed its appreciation to W. Bro. Finlayson by making him an Honorary Member.

W. Bro. Finlayson had been Worshipful Master in 1940 and served from 1943 to 1951 as Director of Ceremonies. Just before his death in 1978, when he was the last surviving Founder Member, W. Bro. Finlayson spent several hours providing much needed background on the formation of St Oswald Lodge which provided valuable information for this history.

Our Lodge Banner was Dedicated in February 1976 by VW. Bro. Leigh, assisted by Officers of Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge. In addition to saying the Dedication Prayer, W. Bro. the Rev. H Kirk-Smith, Provincial Grand Chaplain, gave an oration on the life of St Oswald and his connections with Winwick.

He said that down the centuries flags and banners have always stirred the hearts and fired the imaginations of men. "In the earliest days, the designs on banners were symbols of men's gods and when he carried them into battle he felt that his gods were fighting with and for him."

Early in the 20th century heraldry began to appear and the designing of flags and banners. "To this day, banners showing the pictures of Saints and other religious symbols, are still carried in procession in church or in the open streets," said W. Bro. Kirk-Smith. "Eventually banners came into Freemasonry from ecclesiastical and civic use.

"The Dedication of this banner in St Oswald Lodge is well within the mainstream of development, ecclesiastical, civic and Masonic. Its beauty will add distinction to an already distinguished Lodge."

The Banner bears the Insignia of the Lodge and a representation of St Oswald's Church. The Banner was presented to the Lodge by W. Bro. Harry Boscow when he was Junior Deacon.

The Banner was made with love, care and great skill by W. Bro. Boscow and his wife, Dorothea. For several hours each night over a two-year period Mrs. Boscow worked on the Banner. She had never done any embroidery before but readily agreed to make a Banner for our Lodge after her husband said how he admired the Banners of some Lodges. She attended special classes to learn the art of embroidery and used many yards of gold thread and thousands of beads in the making of the Banner. However, before the Banner was completed she injured her hand and it was left to Harry to complete the task. It was the start of an almost full-time job for Harry as requests flooded in for him to make banners for Lodges and various other degrees throughout the country. Mrs. Boscow died in December 2004.

The Lodge continued to show its close association with St Oswald's Church by making a donation to the church's building fund in 1977.

In 1976 W. Bro. Kenneth Wilfred Foulkes visited the Masonic Lodge in Turkey into which his uncle, Sgt. John H Moore had been Initiated in Istanbul. In March of that year St Oswald Lodge received greetings from the Lodge in Turkey. It was quite an experience for W. Bro. Foulkes for the Lodge operated under the Scottish Constitution, worked its ceremonies in the French language but asked him to give an Explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board in English! W. Bro. Foulkes has visited Lodges in many parts of the world. On three occasions he has attended Raffles Lodge in Singapore and been to meetings on both the North and South Islands of New Zealand. With his daughter Andrea living in Australia and the fact that he has taken Rugby League supporters on several trips "Down Under" it is not surprising that W. Bro. Foulkes has attended many Lodges in Australia including Perth, Sydney and Brisbane. A profile of the Masonic career of W. Bro. Foulkes, who is our Senior Past Master, can be found on other pages.

Our meeting on 11 November, 1976, was a memorable one. VW. Bro. the Rev Richard Kenyon Leigh, W. Bro. Arthur Foxton, PSGD, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro. R W Collin, PAGDC, Group Chairman, W. Bro. Arthur Osborne, PJGD, Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies and a considerable number of Past Provincial Grand Officers and Brethren attended to see the presentation of a new set of Tracing Boards by W. Bro. Alan Clifford Griffiths, a "pointer" by Bro. Dennis Wrench and Rough and Perfect Ashlars by W. Bro. Osborne and W. Bro. James Edward Ashall, PPrGDC.

W. Bro. Griffiths presented all the items to VW. Bro. Leigh for use in St Oswald Lodge and in accepting them on behalf of the Lodge he commented on their excellence and advised members of the Lodge on the use of Tracing Boards by our ancient Brethren.

After the presentation Bro. James Anthony Hayes was Passed and W. Bro. Griffiths then used the new Tracing Boards to give an explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board to him.

W. Bro. Griffiths was responsible for painting the Boards while Bro. Wrench was responsible for their construction to W. Bro. Griffiths's design.

The Lodge was honoured by the presence of RW. Bro. Sir Knowles Edge, Baronet, Provincial Grand Master; VW. Bro. the Rev. Richard Kenyon Leigh and W. Bro. Arthur Foxton again at its meeting on 12 May, 1977. A total of 147 Brethren were present at that meeting to witness the Installation of Bro. Douglas Henry Vermand Coleman as Worshipful Master.

Things were obviously going well with the Lodge at the start of 1978 as it was decided that it was necessary to perform "double seconds" in order to "reduce waiting time" and although it was thought an increase might be needed in the near future it was decided to keep the dining fee at £2. Less than a year later the dining fee was increased to £2. 50 and in September 1979 it went up to £3.50.

In 1978 St Oswald Lodge qualified as a Patron of the RMBI 1981 Festival.

As the Lodge's Golden Jubilee approached arrangements were made to celebrate that special landmark. Bro. Derek Hunt, a journalist by profession, offered to write a history of the Lodge covering its first 50 years and Bro. Bill Evans worked tirelessly as Social Secretary to continue raising money to donate to charity to mark the special anniversary.

Lodge funds became the subject of consideration towards the end of 1979 and following the recommendation of a special committee set up to look into finances it was decided to increase subscriptions to £30 while the cost of the Installation meal would have to be £5. One of the main causes for concern over finance was the increasing difficulties being faced by the Masonic Hall. Lodges were told that the levy for each member per meeting was to be increased from 17p to £1.50 and that the standard meal price would be £2.74 plus VAT.

At the Lodge meeting in April 1980 RW. Bro. the Rt. Hon Edward Baron Daresbury the Provincial Grand Master of North Munster attended, as he often did on Past Masters' Night. He saw W. Bro. John Douglas Roberts, the Acting Worshipful Master, Pass Bro. Stewart Umpleby. Successful ballots were taken for Eric John Main as a candidate to join the Lodge and for Bro. Derrick Lodge to become Worshipful Master in May.

The Golden Jubilee was celebrated by Special Dispensation at an Emergency Meeting on 25 April, 1980. By this time more than 150 men had been Initiated into Freemasonry in St. Oswald Lodge and its membership on the day stood at 61, making it one of the largest Lodges in the Warrington Group.

The principle guest on the day was VW. Bro. Alan Fletcher Ferris, Grand Director of Ceremonies of the United Grand Lodge of England who was to become the Provincial Grand Master for the Province of West Lancashire the following year. As Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro. Arthur Osborne attended in his official capacity as well as being a member of the Lodge. The Lodge Room was filled by many Grand and Provincial Grand officers as well as members and guests to hear Bro. Derek Hunt, the Junior Deacon, give a history of the Lodge taken from the booklet he had written after long research into Lodge records. The minutes show there was "long acclamation for his work" before the next item took place, the presentation of regalia (Master's Apron, gauntlets, collars and jewels for the Senior and Junior Wardens, Fellowcraft and Entered Apprentice), gavels, blocks and a ballot box. Other Lodge jewels had been re-silvered.

The fund-raising efforts resulted in a cheque for £1,000 being handed over by the Worshipful Master, Bro. Harry Boscow, for the RMBI 1981 Festival.

After hearing in Lodge that the Consecration room hire and banquet at the Lion Hotel had cost £35 10s 2d, W. Bro. Bill Medland PPrGSuptWks (Cheshire), the owner of the Lion Hotel, presented a cheque for that amount to the Lodge.

The return of the original dining fee no doubt helped Lodge funds as at the Installation of Bro. Derrick Lodge just a few days later another £200 was handed over to the West Lancashire Charities Fund. The dining fee for the cocktails and anniversary dinner (Fresh Grapefruit, Consomme Julienne, Grilled Trout, Roast Beef, Fruit Cocktail, Cheese and coffee) was £7.50 so it is unlikely that the Masonic Hall will refund that amount when the Lodge celebrates its Centenary. As the special meeting was attended by 107 Brethren, the account from the Masonic Hall for the food was £802.50.

A couple of small social events had been organised to help pay for the printing costs of the Lodge History but at the Committee meeting before the celebration it was announced that individual contributions from Lodge members had totally covered the cost. On the suggestion of Bro. Hunt it was agreed that the money raised should be used to start a special Centenary Fund with the aim being that when St Oswald Lodge No 5170 celebrates its centenary in 2030 at least £5,170 should be donated to charity from the fund.

Eric Main must have been overawed when he was led into the Lodge for his Initiation in November 1980 for there were 116 members and guests present including the Deputy

Provincial Grand Master and many other Grand and Provincial Grand Officers. It was, however, explained to him that the second part of the proceedings for that night was something extra special, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Lord Daresbury's Initiation into St. Oswald Lodge. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master read out a certificate from the Provincial Grand Master, RW. Bro. Sir Knowles Edge, Baronet, congratulating Lord Daresbury on his 50 years of enthusiasm and dedication in Masonry. At the Social Board W. Bro. Harold Carter presented Lord Daresbury with a rolled gold pen and pencil set as a gift from the Lodge members.

Although it is believed that St Oswald Lodge had already been sending Christmas cards and gifts to widows for many years the first official mention in committee minutes was in 1980 when it was decided that along with the Christmas card there should be a cheque for £10.

Two months before his death W. Bro. Jim Ashall had received a beautiful gold pen from his sons Jay and John and at the meeting in December 1980 they asked if the Lodge would accept the pen in memory of our former Director of Ceremonies. The Lodge was delighted to do so and the pen is still used at every ceremony for the signing of the Minute Book.

It was decided in 1980 following the suggestion of Charity Steward W. Bro. Charles Shand that a raffle should be held at the Social Board to swell funds. After a few meetings there was some dissent but a vote was taken and it was agreed that the raffles should continue. There was good news and bad news on the financial front during the year with the dining fee having to go up to £4 but the cost of wine was reduced from £2.50 to £2 per bottle.

It was during 1980 that W. Bro. Harry Boscow and his wife refurbished the Lodge cushion and Bible.

One of the accidental amusing notes in the Lodge committee records shows that in November 1980 everyone was pleased to hear that W. Bro. Ivor Eckersley was to receive "Provisional" honours.

W. Bro. Arthur Osborne made his first appearance in the Lodge as an Assistant Provincial Grand Master on 14 May, 1981 when W. Bro. Derrick Lodge Installed Bro. Doug Asbury as Worshipful Master. Membership meant that more Stewards could be appointed at the Installation but there would not be enough collars so W. Bro. Lodge and another member purchased the additional collars and jewels necessary. Among the donations to charity on that night was one for £100 to make the Lodge a Patron of the Royal Masonic Hospital.

Before and throughout his time as Provincial Grand Master, RW. Bro. Alan Fletcher Ferris had a close association with St Oswald Lodge and at the meeting on 10 September, 1981 he was made an Honorary Member.

Members could be assured that increasing Lodge Subscriptions to £35 was nothing to do with conferring Honorary Membership on RW. Bro. Ferris.

For quite a time the Masonic Hall had been experiencing difficulties and Lodge members were asked to vote in 1981 on

plans put forward to extend the building. Seven were in favour of a two-storey extension while three thought it should only be single-storey and another four voted for no change. The remainder of the Lodge membership did not vote and this was fairly representative of the remainder of the Group. No alterations took place.

It was also in this year that for the first time it was agreed that our Lodge Tyler should become a paid position. Finances must have been in a fair state because the Christmas gift to widows was increased by 50% to £15.

The January meeting in 1982 saw the official start of St Oswald Lodge becoming the Sponsoring Lodge (Mother Lodge) for a new Lodge of Installed Masters. Members heard that there was to be a meeting on 5 March at which there would be representatives not only from the Warrington Group but also from Leigh and the St Helens and Prescott Groups with a view to forming the new Lodge which was the brainchild of W. Bro. Arthur Osborne. St Oswald Lodge was delighted to agree, following an invitation from the Foundation members, to become the Sponsor for the Mersey Valley Lodge of Installed Masters which would be Consecrated the following year. A more complete story about our daughter Lodge appears on another page in this history.

The 500th meeting of the Lodge took place on 11 February 1982 when the Worshipful Master, Bro. Doug Asbury, Passed Bro. David R Blizzard and was delighted to announce that W. Bro. Ken Foulkes was to be reappointed Provincial Grand Pursuivant while W. Bro. Charles Shand, already a Provincial Officer in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, was to be appointed as a Past Provincial Senior Grand Deacon of the Province of West Lancashire.

As well as the many father/son relationships in the Lodge there have also been many blood brothers as members. Bro. Derek Hunt saw his brother, Bro. James Hunt (who was a member of Red Rose Lodge No 6007), join the Lodge in March 1982 in time to be a member and a Presenting Officer at his Installation in May. W. Bro. Derek's first Initiation ceremony as Worshipful Master in November 1982 saw what was said to be a first in Warrington Freemasonry for he not only Initiated David Street into the Lodge but also gave an explanation of the First Degree Tracing Board. Since then W. Bro. Hunt has performed his "party piece" by giving an explanation of the Tracing Board at more than 30 Lodges throughout the Province.

An idea put forward by W. Bro. Hunt that the wives of members should form a separate social committee so that the ladies could get together more often met with widespread approval. The first chairman was his wife, Jean, and for several years thereafter the wife of the Worshipful Master became Chairman of the Committee. Apart from enjoying many social gatherings, to which the men were often invited, the ladies raised considerable funds and for many years a feature of the cheque presentations at our Installations was the handing over of money from the Ladies' Committee. The committee became inactive for several years but was revived again in 1998. It then went quiet for a couple of years but in 2003 Jackie, the wife of the year's Worshipful Master, Bro. Ted Murphy, thought the Ladies' Committee should become active again. A barbecue was held at the home of W. Bro. Eric Main whose wife Lynda and Colette Coster (the wife of W. Bro. Les Coster) still held the building society account for the Committee.

What has now become a regular and popular feature of St Oswald history also started in 1982. W. Bro. Harry Boscow was given permission to produce occasional booklets containing historical and other items of Masonic interest. The Lodge Newsletter, Compass, was born and W. Bro. Boscow produced the same until his death. Publication of this popular document was revived in 1996 by W. Bro. Alan Griffiths who still continues to pen and print Compass on a bi-monthly basis for the benefit of St Oswald members at no cost to the Lodge.

Lodge finances had to again be looked at in 1983 for although the dining fee had been increased to £4 losses were being incurred. Capitation fees payable to the Hall increased to

£2.10 in January 1983 and by another 10p in September. Subscriptions were increased to £40 but the cost obviously did not deter prospective candidates for there were five men waiting to be Initiated. However, some members must not have been happy with the increased Subscriptions for at the September committee meeting it was reported that 22 members were in arrears (owing a total of more than £1000) and that seven members were actually two years in arrears. All Warrington Masons were also to face additional costs the next year for the Hall's Capitation Fee went up by another 30p per member per meeting and the Temple Building Fund contribution for Initiates which had been £5.25 since 1970 was increased to £10. In 1984 the Hall needed to be re-wired at a cost of up to £13,000, new carpets would cost £1,000 and to renew the cookers in the kitchen required another £3,000. In the mid-80s St Oswald Lodge decided that the Masonic Hall should become a regular recipient of donations at its Installations to help with the financial situation it faced and thousands of pounds have been given since that time.

Although the finances of Freemasonry in the building were not too good St Oswald Lodge decided to increase the Christmas gift to the 18 widows of members to £20.

More than 100 Brethren attended the gathering on 9 January 1985 to help W. Bro. George Albert Lambert Maude celebrate his 50th anniversary in Freemasonry. W. Arthur Osborne accepted the Gavel of the Lodge from the Worshipful Master, Bro. Derek Hart, and the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro. Tom Blackburn placed W. Bro. Maude before him. W. Bro. Osborne said it was the Provincial Grand Master's wish to "recognise W. Bro. Maude's outstanding work" over 50 years and the Provincial Grand Secretary, W. Bro. R W Davies read out the Patent promoting W. Bro. Maude to the rank of Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

The gavel still used in the Lodge by the Worshipful Master was presented at the meeting on 11 April, 1985 by W. Bro. Osborne. It had been given to him when he made his first visit to a Lodge as an Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

There was an addition to the Lodge "Ritual" in March 1985 when a new cushion was presented so that the Aprons for the candidates could be carried from the Worshipful Master to the Senior Warden for presentation.

There were more than 110 Brethren from many parts of the Province at our meeting on 14 November 1985. St Oswald had been selected as one of the few Lodges in the Province to demonstrate how the new Obligation was to be conducted without the inclusion of the traditional penalties. Nearly 90 visitors were able to return to their own Lodges to fully explain the new workings approved for the Craft.

The changes to the Ritual meant that new pages had to be printed and inserted in all books.

The attendance at St Oswald Lodge again topped 100 to see W. Bro. Charles William Shand, OBE, BEM, Installed as Worshipful Master.

Another happy occasion was at the meeting in April 1987 when W. Bro. Shand had the pleasure of announcing that W. Bro. Ken Foulkes was to be made a Past Grand Standard Bearer and that a visitor to the Lodge on that night, W. Bro. Frank Starkey was to be made a Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies. W. Bro. Starkey served the Group between 1982 and 1994 as Secretary and Vice Chairman.

There was a move during 1987 to try to retain some members by having "Country Membership". It was thought that the reduced membership fees for those who did not attend

regularly might tempt them to remain in the Lodge instead of resigning as some had done. The idea was dropped as it was thought so few people would be affected.

The number of members wanting to attend the Group Dinner was so great that a draw had to take place for the available tickets, a practice which continues to this day.

There was good news for the Lodge when Provincial appointments were announced in 1988 for W. Bro. Derrick Lodge became the Provincial Grand Sword Bearer, which is one of the highest ranks that any Brother can be given as a first appointment to Provincial Grand Lodge. If, as it appears, the appointment of the Provincial Grand Sword Bearer is conferred on a member of a different Lodge each year, then it will be somewhere about 2,518 before the next St Oswald Lodge member to be made Provincial Grand Sword Bearer is appointed! It was also announced that W. Bro. Ken Foulkes would continue as Provincial Grand Tyler and that W. Bro. Shand was promoted to Past Provincial Junior Grand Warden.

Bro. Harold Main made the trip from Canada in May 1988 so that he and Bro. Frank Main could be the Presenting Officers for their blood brother, Bro. Eric John Main, at his Installation which was attended by 33 members and 119 guests. Later that year Eric and his father-in-law, Bruin, made the trip to Canada to see Harold Installed as Worshipful Master of Trillium Lodge No 724. When Frank was Installed as Worshipful Master of Birchwood Lodge No 8861, Eric and Harold occupied the Wardens' chairs for the ceremony.

An increase of £5 in the membership fee to £50 was approved by the Lodge in 1989 when Joining and Re-joining fees went up from £5 to £20.

Bro. Leslie Robert Coster was Installed in the Chair in May 1989 and he went on to occupy the Chair of the Lodge again in 1997. W. Bro. Coster, PPrAGDC, has also served the Lodge as Assistant Director of Ceremonies and Director of Ceremonies. One of the highlights of W. Bro. Coster's first year in the Chair was at the Lodge's 600th meeting in December 1989 when he Passed his brother-in-law Bro. Norman Taylor and the Senior Warden, W. Bro. Arthur Osborne, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, presented the Working Tools of the degree "the long way". It was also at that meeting when W. Bro. Osborne proposed that W. Bro. Ernest Barrington Cockburn Saunders be made an Honorary Member. W. Bro. Saunders was Worshipful Master in 1965 and Treasurer from 1973 to 1976. Illness had prevented him from attending regularly for some time.

There was sadness and joy at the meeting on 8 March 1990. The first announcement made was that Lord Daresbury had died. It was later reported that W. Bro. Alan Griffiths was to be promoted to the rank of Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies and that W. Bro. Derek Hunt was to become a Provincial Grand Steward. St Oswald Lodge was well represented when a Service of Thanksgiving for Lord Daresbury – 'Toby' Daresbury – was held at St John's Church, Walton.

During the Masonic years 1990 to 1994 our Lodge lost 15 members – more than any other Lodge in the Warrington Group. This is not surprising when we realise that no less than 10 passed to the Grand Lodge above while W. Bro. Ivor Eckersley died only a few months prior to this period.

The Lodge's 60th anniversary year, 1990, was celebrated with the Installation into the Chair of St Oswald Lodge for the second time of W. Bro. Arthur Osborne. Among the 113 guests were the Provincial Grand Master, RW. Bro. Alan Fletcher Ferris, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, VW. Bro. Kenneth Moxley, PGSwdB, two Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master for Cheshire, the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, the Provincial Grand Secretary and the Provincial Grand Senior and Junior

Wardens. There had to be a Special Dispensation for W. Bro. Osborne to be Installed as he was at the time also Worshipful Master of Lathom Lodge No 2229. W. Bro. Osborne was presented by W. Bros Carter and Maude and the Address to him was given by the Provincial Grand Master.

When the ceremony of Installation was completed W. Bro. Osborne offered the gavel to the Provincial Grand Master who accepted and took the Chair of the Lodge. He then asked for W. Bro. Harry Boscow to be placed before him. He spoke about the outstanding contribution made by W. Bro. Boscow with the many banners he had made for Lodges throughout the Province. In recognition of this and his many other Masonic activities the Provincial Grand Master announced that he was promoting W. Bro. Boscow to the rank of Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden. More about W. Bro. Boscow can be found elsewhere.

Throughout its history St Oswald Lodge has always attracted Joining Members so the application in 1990 from Brother Owen Richard Bruce Dixon came as no surprise – even though he was a member of Swan Lodge No 38 in Western Australia.

St Oswald Lodge decided to donate £100 to St Oswald Church in 1990 when members heard that the Church was in need of costly repairs.

For many years Bro. Eric Roberts had served St Oswald Lodge and many others in the Warrington Group as Organist. He had decided to progress up the ladder and was Senior Warden in 1990 and looking forward to being voted as Master Elect at the April meeting in 1991. Unfortunately, the night before the lodge meeting Bro. Roberts died and it no doubt cast a shadow over what should have been a night of celebration.

The main item of business for that evening was to be the celebration of 50 years as a Freemason of W. Bro. Harold Carter, PPrJGW, who had been Worshipful Master in 1958 and was the Senior Past Master. Group Chairman, W. Bro. Ken Leslie, presented W. Bro. Carter with a special certificate from the Provincial Grand Master to mark his outstanding service to Freemasonry in general and St Oswald Lodge in particular. Initiated in 1941, W. Bro. Carter served as Assistant Director of Ceremonies from 1963 to 1965 but it was in the office of Chaplain that he is best remembered. He served in that role for 26 years from 1965. Another item of business that night was to ballot for as a candidate William Wainwright. At the Social Board a cut glass vase and a cheque for £100 were presented to W. Bro. Carter from members of the Lodge. He immediately donated the cheque to the West Lancashire Charities.

The death of Bro. Roberts, of course, presented a problem of succession and W. Bro. Ken Foulkes agreed to step in at short notice and take the Chair again. W. Bro. Foulkes, who first served as Worshipful Master in 1973 was Installed by his greatest friend, W. Bro. Arthur Osborne, PSGD, Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

The subscription fee was increased to £60 in 1991. Lodge Ritual Books were running low so 100 new copies were ordered incorporating all the changes to the Obligations which had been made earlier. A revision and reprint for the several Lodges concerned was organised by W. Bro. Alan Griffiths.

Another long serving member of the Lodge, W. Bro. Dr. Gordon Jamieson Summers was made an Honorary Member of the Lodge in November 1991. "Doc" Summers had served the Lodge in many positions including Director of Ceremonies, a position he also held for many years in Great Sankey Lodge No 5939.

Members heard in October 1991 that contributions by the Lodge were such that it had become a Patron of the Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys 1997 Festival.

The mid-90s saw many problems with the management of the Hall and an Emergency Committee Meeting was called in 1992 when it was decided that St Oswald Lodge would not support en-bloc selection of the proposed eight members of the Board as it was totally dissatisfied with communications from the Board. The Lodge proposed a vote of "no confidence" in the Board.

Like many Lodges, St Oswald found that younger members were not wanting to progress through the Chair and the situation was generally made more difficult by the lack of candidates.

For the third successive year a Past Master was Installed again. This time W. Bro. Alan Griffiths, who had been Worshipful Master in 1974, returned to occupy the Chair.

March 1993 was one of the saddest meetings recorded in the annals of St Oswald Lodge for three deaths were reported, W. Bro. Arthur Osborne, Bro. Martin Nee and W. Bro. Reg Ross who was Tyler.

That meeting should have been an extremely happy one for W. Bro. Derrick Lodge for he was to act as Worshipful Master to Initiate his son, Anthony Stephen Lodge. Stephen had just taken his Obligation and the ceremony was about to proceed when there was a Report. The Tyler announced that the Deputy Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro. Derek Walmsley, PAGDC, was outside and sought admission. When he entered the Lodge there was great surprise as he announced that the Provincial Grand Master was without and demanded admission. RW. Bro. Kenneth Edward Moxley was admitted. He was not wearing his regalia as Provincial Grand Master but in respect for and in memory of W. Bro. Arthur Osborne was dressed in the white apron of an Entered Apprentice Freemason. RW. Bro. Moxley said that as a great friend of W. Bro. Osborne he felt he had to attend the Lodge to give his condolences at such a sad loss not only to St Oswald Lodge in particular but to the Province of West Lancashire and Freemasonry in general.

After the Provincial Grand Master left, W. Bro. Lodge continued with the ceremony and also gave an explanation of the First Degree Tracing Board to his son. The final item in the general correspondence at that meeting was a letter which had been received from W. Bro. Osborne just before his sudden death thanking the members of St Oswald Lodge for all the cards sent to him during his illness and for the flowers sent to his wife Pam.

It was not the first time that W. Bro. Lodge had been stopped in his tracks during a ceremony. On one occasion a senior member of the Lodge suddenly took ill during a ceremony. W. Bro. Lodge stopped and administered basic first aid until an ambulance arrived to take the Brother to hospital. He then continued the ceremony from the word where he had stopped. It was good to see the Brother who had been taken ill back at the next Lodge meeting.

Inflation and addition costs caught up with the Lodge again in May 1993 when subscriptions were increased to £90.

The good news, however, was that a Master Mason was to be Installed as Worshipful Master and there to assist in the Installation of Bro. David Kenneth Woods were the two Provincial Wardens, W. Bro. David Mills, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden, Warrington Mason W. Bro. Ray Baines who went on to become our Group Vice Chairman and then Chairman for six years, retiring from the position in 2003. W. Bro. Mills, PAGDC, is now

chairman of the Wigan and District Group of Lodges and will represent the Provincial Grand Master at our 2005 Installation.

The bad news was that at the Installation meeting the resignations of four members were read.

The lack of candidates resulted in many evenings being filled with lectures and demonstrations instead of ceremonies of Initiation, Passing and Raising. W. Bro. Shand gave several lectures including ones on military Lodges, critics of the Craft and the connections between the Greenall family and Freemasonry while W. Bro. Griffiths gave talks on Women and Freemasonry and Music and Freemasonry. There were also lectures by former Group Chairman, W. Bro. Ken Leslie, PAGDC, who spoke about Freemasonry in America and others from a list drawn up by the Group as many Lodges were in the same position. W. Bro. Leslie has also assisted the Lodge on many other occasions. He and W. Bro. Jack Forsyth who now hold the rank of Past Junior Grand Deacon are the two most senior Grand Officers in the Warrington Group and have assisted by acting as Senior and Junior Wardens at our Installation meetings since 1996 and will be doing so again next month.

The Past Master's Jewel which had been presented to W. Bro. William Herbert Ward, PPrAGDC, our Master in 1944 was returned to the Lodge in September 1993 after it came into the possession of W. Bro. Gordon Peers, a member of Great Sankey Lodge No 5939.

Another Master Mason, Bro. Mervyn James, was Installed as Worshipful Master in 1994 but for the next three years Past Masters, W. Bro. Derrick Lodge, W. Bro. Derek Hart and W. Bro. Les Coster were called on to again occupy the Chair.

Deaths, resignations, low attendances both in Lodge and at social functions and the lack of candidates meant that finances were being affected. The Charity Account was unable to fully meet the costs incurred of providing £25 Christmas gifts to widows and had to be supplemented from general funds. At the Installation the previous year £900 was handed over for charity but in 1993 it dropped to just £300.

Investigations into the prospect of selling the Masonic Hall and buying the Co-operative Hall on Winwick Road (where the Vauxhall garage now stands) to convert it for Masonic use were dropped.

The April meeting in 1994 was to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Initiation of W. Bro. Charles Shand. W. Bro. John Stanley Eastham Holker, PSGD, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, attended to outline the "long and distinguished career" of W. Bro. Shand. The Group Chairman, W. Bro. Roy Dutton, PAGDC, read out the wording of a special certificate for W. Bro. Shand from the Provincial Grand Master. More about W. Bro. Shand's distinguished career can be read elsewhere.

Unfortunately at this meeting the resignations of four Brethren were read and there was also an exclusion which meant that the size of the Lodge was heading for one of the lowest points in its history.

Costs, particularly in relation to the Masonic Hall, were ever increasing and in May 1994 subscriptions rose to £100. It was decided that in future only two Masters should be invited to each regular meeting while all Warrington Masters should still receive an invitation to the Installation. There were another three resignations from the Lodge and membership was further reduced with the deaths of W. Bro. George Maude and Bro. Jim Hunt.

However, in September, 1994, a candidate was proposed and there were two more propositions for membership a couple of months later. A ray of light was being spotted at the end of the tunnel even though attendance at Lodge meetings were reported as very low because many members were having to work long and difficult hours.

The Lodge was again delighted to welcome back as a visitor Harold Main in February 1995 especially as he was now Right Worshipful Brother Harold Alan Main, District Deputy Grand Master in the Province of Ontario, Wellington District, under the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Canada.

He returned to Canada but in 1996 decided to again make England his home and applied for membership of St Oswald Lodge. Once a member of St Oswald Lodge it meant that under the English Constitution he was no longer entitled to the rank of Right Worshipful Brother and reverted to the rank of Worshipful Brother.

There were two more Joining Members in 1996, Bro. Steven James Ward, a member of Holmes Lodge No 2708 and W. Bro. John Norvell Jameson. Bro. Ward went on to become Worshipful Master of his Wigan Lodge in 1998.

W. Bro. Jameson had been a "Permanently Invited Guest" of his next-door neighbour, W. Bro. Eric Main for many years. He enjoyed his visits to St Oswald so much that he decided to join. He had been Initiated into Woodend Lodge No 5303 in Liverpool in 1956 and then when he changed jobs and moved to work in Prescot joined Antient Manor Lodge No 4511 of which he was Worshipful Master in 1978. He was made a Past Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies in 1987 and promoted to PPrSGD in 1995. Norvell was the longest serving Freemason in the Lodge and was looking forward to celebrating his 50th anniversary in 2006. He has served the Lodge on many occasions as Chaplain and when needed held the office of Junior Warden for a year. With his great friend W. Bro. Eric Main agreeing to again go in the Chair in 2004, W. Bro. Jameson was only too pleased to accept the position of Chaplain.

Our gift to widows was increased to £30 and it was also decided that the Lodge should bear the cost of purchasing the Year Book produced by the Warrington Group so that every member would have a copy.

The Warrington Group was invited to host the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge in Blackpool in May 1987 and St Oswald Lodge played a major role with W. Bro. Charles Shand being Captain of Stewards. He was again Captain on Stewards when the group hosted Provincial Grand Chapter in 1966. The Lodge donated £25 towards the costs the Group would incur in hosting the meeting.

The Past Masters' Night in April 1998 saw Naeem Abbas Sheikh Initiated into St Oswald Lodge and he was the first member of the Lodge to take his Obligation on the Koran. The Acting Worshipful Master on that night was W. Bro. Eric Main, who practices the Jewish faith. An association demonstrating the true spirit of Freemasonry!

In a move to encourage members to invite more guests it was agreed in October 1996 that while members would have to continue to pay a dining fee of £10 there would be a reduced charge of £8 for guests.

There was still some difficulty in attracting new members but even so members were surprised when a father and son who had been successfully balloted for decided not to proceed with their applications to join. Another man decided not to proceed further shortly

after his Initiation ceremony. There was also another instance where a man who had applied to become a Freemason in St Oswald Lodge decided to withdraw his application.

To involve newer members of the Lodge more it was agreed that all members could attend Lodge committee meetings but that only official committee members could vote on issues.

For the 1997 season it was agreed that the dining fee for members should be reduced to the same level as guests, £8, so that those dining did not have to also finance official Lodge guests.

The run of Past Masters having to again go through the Chair ended in May 1998 when Junior Warden, Bro. Peter Craven, who was Initiated in October 1992 was Installed as Worshipful Master. The decision to involve newer members more in Lodge ceremonies was highly successful at the Installation meeting, for the Second Degree Tools were presented by Bro. Paul Roberts who had only been Passed a few months before and the First Degree Tools were presented by Bro. Richard Brian Pilling who had only been Initiated in the January.

However, by the following May there was still a shortage of people willing to advance and Peter was called on to remain in the Chair for a second year. His second year got off to a good start with a successful ballot at the Installation meeting for Bro. John Elwyn Woodward, a subscribing member of Holmes Lodge No 2708 to become a Joining Member. There was spontaneous applause during the ceremony when Bro. Naeem Abbas Sheikh who had only been Raised in the January presented the Worshipful Master with the Third Degree Tools. In all W. Bro. Craven occupied the Chair to Initiate seven men into St Oswald Lodge as well as carrying out many Passing and Raising ceremonies. The ceremony in September 1998 was a special one for Peter as he Initiated Paul Raymond Doherty who is married to his daughter Juliet. Peter also Passed and Raised his son-in-law. At Peter's second Installation the First Degree Tools were presented to him by Paul. From the time he was Worshipful Master, W. Bro. Craven also acted as Charity Steward for eight years. W. Bro. Craven's work in Lodge and on the social side was spotted and in 2002 he was made a Provincial Grand Steward. In April 2003 he was appointed as Secretary of the Warrington Group of Lodges. The only other member of the Lodge to have occupied this role was W. Bro. Osborne.

Brother Sheikh had the pleasure of seeing his brother Naveed Abbas Sheikh Initiated into St Oswald Lodge and delivered the Charge after Initiation, only five months after his own Initiation. His work was again met with applause.

In late 1998 and early 1999 the Lodge was delighted that after several extremely successful years on the social side several men expressed an interest in joining the Craft by being Initiated into St Oswald Lodge. There was also much new interest in the Masonic Hall with a £250,000 extension to provide another Lodge room and more space for dining and social activities. There was concern by some Brethren within the Group that the Hall proposed to allow Lady Freemasons to use its facilities following the loss of £8,000 a year rental when Mormons transferred their Sunday meetings to their own new church. A ballot of St Oswald members proved in favour of allowing the ladies to rent the Hall for their meetings.

Although Lodge members have many talents there was no Brother capable of being our regular organist. W. Bro. Peter Blease, a member of Academy Lodge and its Master in 1990, agreed to become our Musical Director in 1999 and still holds that position. He has enhanced the ceremonies of many Lodges with his music and has also played at many special celebration meetings as well as at the Group's Carol Service. Peter has also been organist for many churches in the Warrington area.

Christmas 1999 saw an increase to £40 in the gift to widows and members dipped into their pockets to the tune of nearly £1,000 to contribute to a "Millennium Appeal" instituted by W. Bro. Griffiths to renew the Lodge regalia, have the Lodge jewels re-silvered and provide new wands.

The interest of men wanting to become Freemasons blossomed to such an extent that an application had to be made to Provincial Grand Lodge to hold an Emergency Meeting in August 1999 to Initiate Kenneth William Small. By that time one Brother was waiting to be Passed and three other men were awaiting Initiation.

There was another Emergency Meeting on 30 September to Pass Bro. Mark Andrew Webster and Bro. Kenneth William Small. W. Bro. Craven and W. Bro. Derek Hart shared the work of the two ceremonies.

Even when far away from Warrington, members still think of St Oswald Lodge on the second Thursday of the month and when W. Bro. Ken Foulkes was touring with the country's Rugby League side he sent a fax conveying fraternal greetings from Australia.

The new Millennium saw another new dawn for St Oswald Lodge. Bro. Naeem Sheikh was asked to put the questions to both Bro. Dean Brian Imrie and his brother Naveed when a "Double Second" had to be staged in January because of the growing list of candidates. W. Bro. John Roberts shared the ceremony with the Worshipful Master, Bro. Peter Craven.

The following meeting saw ballots taking place for two Initiates and two joining members. Another Emergency Meeting was held on 30 March to Raise Bro. Kenneth William Small.

There was unanimous support in April 2000 when it was proposed that for his special service to St Oswald Lodge Honorary Membership should be conferred on W. Bro. Charles Shand.

There was no doubt that Bro. John Sawyer would enjoy a busy year when he was Installed as Worshipful Master in May 2000. The new "tradition" of inviting recently Initiated members to participate in ceremonies continued with Bro. Andy Webster, who had been Raised in the February, presenting the Third Degree Tools. At the meeting there was a ballot for two more candidates and on 31 August another Emergency Meeting was approved by Provincial Grand Lodge so that Bro. Dean Brian Imrie could be Raised. At this time there were still four men awaiting Initiation into St Oswald Lodge after being successfully balloted for.

The 700th Regular Meeting of St Oswald Lodge took place on 14 September, 2000 when Julian Thomas Royle was Initiated and W. Bro. William Alfred Walker became a Joining Member. There was another Initiation two months later when Anthony Daniel McLinden was welcomed into Freemasonry.

To mark the 175th anniversary of Freemasonry in West Lancashire the Provincial Grand Master launched a special appeal in 2000 and St Oswald Lodge received a commemorative certificate after raising the £525 which RW. Bro. Colin Penty Wright had asked each Lodge to donate.

The Lodge was honoured with a visit from W. Bro. Albert Spence, Past Grand Sword Bearer, Assistant District Officer of the Transvaal, South Africa, who was a guest of W. Bro. Eric Main following their meeting during a holiday in South Africa. With such a high-ranking visitor from another Province, our own Assistant Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro. Alf Roughsedge, PSGD, attended to welcome him to West Lancashire.

When John Le-Cheminant was Initiated at the Regular Meeting in November the Lodge gained more than just another

member for John has a fine baritone voice. He sang the Master's Song at several Installations and the Ladies' Song at Ladies' Evenings. As well as being a member of the Group Choir, John also used his vocal talents to entertain at social events.

Such was the waiting list that there were two more Emergency Meetings during Bro. Sawyer's year as Worshipful Master – 30 November to Pass Bro. Joe Royle and 29 March 2001 to Raise Bro. Neil Thomas Pinder.

A member of St Oswald Lodge was honoured by the Province of Cheshire in 2001. W. Bro. Jim Cartledge had become a Joining Member after visiting the Lodge on a number of occasions. He had been Initiated into Ringway Lodge No 6024 in the Province of Cheshire and was its Worshipful Master in 1995-96. His appointment as Past Provincial Junior Grand Deacon was to mark his work in Ringway Lodge. At the Installation in May 2004 W. Bro. Cartledge became Treasurer of the Lodge, a post he is familiar with having been Treasurer of St. Elphin Chapter for several years. Jim continued in that role for several years and it was only in 2012 that he gave a year's notice that he wanted to retire from being treasurer. Jim had just completed a fabulous, but extremely busy year, as the Province's Acting Junior Deacon.

When Bro. Ray Thompson was Installed as Worshipful Master the Working Tools of all three degrees were presented by the Lodges newest recruits. Bro. Joe Royle who had been Raised in the March presented the Third Tools, Bro. Neil Pinder who was Passed in January presented the Second Degree Tools and Bro. John Le-Cheminent who had been Raised the previous month presented the First Degree Tools

The fact that Freemasonry was actively opening its doors was proved in St Oswald Lodge in September 2001 when wives, families and friends were admitted to the Lodge Room to hear a talk by W. Bro. Alan Griffiths on Freemasonry. This talk followed the successful public Open Day which had been held in the Masonic Hall and in which St Oswald members had taken some of the leading roles.

The start of the 2002 season saw the Lodge subscription rise to £120.

The first Regular Meeting under the Mastership of Bro. Bill Wainwright was a colourful one for it marked the first occasion on which our Lodge Summons was produced in full colour by W. Bro. Alan Griffiths. The Lodge Badge, Pillars bearing the names of the Founders and the Ashlars were all in full colour. There was undoubted pleasure for the Worshipful Master for he was Installed by his proposer, W. Bro. Derek Hart and two of his candidates, Bro. Tony McLinden and Bro. Dean Imrie presented the Second and First Degree Tools to him. It was a busy year with W. Bro. Wainwright Initiating, Passing and Raising Guy Morris and David John Smith. It was also a very busy year on the social scene for W. Bro. Wainwright and his wife, Brenda. One of their social events, a Line Dancing evening, was so successful that there was a full house and many people were disappointed when they could not obtain tickets. W. Bro. Wainwright also took the Chair on several occasions when he was Immediate Past Master. W. Bro. Wainwright became a well-known figure in the Warrington Group and acted as Tyler for several lodges as well as taking office in many lodges when visiting as a guest. His talents were recognised by the Province in 2008 when he was appointed as the Acting Provincial Assistant Grand Sword Bearer.

The success in attracting candidates continued and in addition there were many Joining Members including several Past Masters of other Lodges – W. Bro. William Alfred Walker (3799), W. Bro. Harry Gerrard Hall, PPrJGD (7836), Frederick Ivan Muzik PPrDGSuptWks (3299), W. Bro. Michael Ernest Gouldsbrough PPrAGDC (8812) and W. Bro. Christopher Millington (9382). This meant that by the start of the 2003 season St Oswald had become

the second largest Craft Lodge in the Warrington Group with 48 members. The largest Lodge was the Lodge of Lights No 148 with 50 members. The biggest Lodge is, of course, the Mersey Valley Lodge of Installed Masters but it gains its members from three other Groups despite being a member of the Warrington Group. At the start of 2003, Mersey Valley had 233 members including several from St Oswald Lodge.

When Bro. Ted Murphy was Installed in May 2003 the summons showed that three candidates were awaiting Initiation. With another two applications submitted during early summer it was obvious that to accommodate all the ceremonies it would be necessary to arrange additional meetings.

Provincial Grand Lodge gave its approval for St Oswald Lodge to have three Emergency Meetings between October 2003 and September 2004.

One of the candidates was George Warburton who had been Mayor of Warrington in 2002-2003. During his Mayoral year the Warrington Group of Lodges had decided that the proceeds from its annual Gentlemen's Evening should be donated to the Mayor's Charity Appeal which was to benefit St Rocco's Hospice and the Warrington Branch of the MS Society. The evening was a huge success and £5,000 was handed over to Councilor Warburton for his appeal. He was then invited to attend the Group's Annual Service of Rededication. Cllr Warburton became not only the first Mayor to attend the service but also agreed to read one of the Lessons. Afterwards he and his wife joined the rest of the congregation in returning to the Masonic Hall and he was shown round the building, including the Lodge Rooms, by W. Bro. Alan Griffiths. During the course of the afternoon he expressed an interest in finding out more about Freemasonry and details were supplied by W. Bro. Griffiths. Shortly afterwards, W. Bro. Griffiths received a letter from him expressing his wish to become a Freemason and naturally proposed him for membership of our Lodge. He was Initiated by W. Bro. Griffiths at the November meeting. Just a couple of weeks later Bro. Warburton was not only singing as a member of the Group Choir at the annual Carol Service but was also a featured soloist.

In addition to the five candidates Initiated in the 2003-2004 season there were more propositions for Joining Members at the September meeting including W. Bro. James Tony Leviston, Past Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works (Staffs) who was Initiated into Bavaria Lodge No 935 under the American Canadian Provincial Grand Lodge in United Grand Lodges of Germany but who had joined a Staffordshire Lodge on returning to this country before moving to live in Warrington. The Lodge was also delighted to welcome back Bro. Leslie Stanley Healey, a member of Ringway Lodge No 6024 in the Province of Cheshire. He had previously been a member of the Lodge but pressure of work resulted in him decided to give up his membership but he rejoined in September 2003. Another Joining Member was Bro. Christopher Charles Andrews, a member of Fellowship Lodge No 3799 who was proposed by another of our Joining Members, W. Bro. Bill Walker.

It meant that with five Candidates and six Joining Members an extremely busy session lay ahead. Worshipful Brothers Bill Wainwright, John Sawyer, John Roberts, Alan Griffiths, Derek Hart, Eric Main and Peter Craven all played their part by taking the Chair for some of the ceremonies while many of the newer members of the Lodge gave explanations of the Working Tools and delivered the appropriate Charges.

The October meeting in 2003 saw a change in proceedings within the Lodge. It had always been the custom for the Deacons to take the Minute Book to the Worshipful Master, the Senior Warden and then the Junior Warden to be signed after members approved them as a correct record. However, with the amount of business – especially ballots – having to be

carried out it was decided that an appreciable amount of time could be saved if only the Worshipful Master signed the Minute Book.

With an Initiation and two Joining Members at the October meeting, St Oswald Lodge became the largest normal Craft Lodge in the Warrington and District Group and by the end of the 2003/2004 session membership had risen to 58.

The continued growth of the Lodge over the preceding difficult years during which a number of Lodges experienced difficulty in recruitment, was a clear indication of the pride and enthusiasm of members of the Lodge for the Craft and for St Oswald Lodge in particular.

Even with the Emergency Meetings and a “double” Second, ceremonies had to be carried over to the following Masonic year.

Two work colleagues Gregory Robert Snape and Craig Lee Harper – who were both proposed by Bro. Andy Webster – were Initiated at meetings in November 2003.

Bro. Trevor Leslie Wildman who was Initiated into Freemasonry in South Africa in Lodge Neerandia No 31 became a Joining Member of the Lodge in December 2003. He was born in Warrington but moved to South Africa with his parents when he was about 10 and remained there for 40 years. On his return to Warrington he met Bro. Naeem Sheikh at work and it was not long before he visited St Oswald Lodge and was proposed for membership by Naeem.

Even with such a large membership the Lodge faced a couple of problems at its meeting on January 2004. Because of illness and work problems several people who were due to take an active role in the ceremony had to be replaced at the very last minute. Junior members of the Lodge have always been encouraged to take part and Bro. Dean Imrie was scheduled to present and give the long explanation of the Second Degree Tools. Dean suddenly found himself with two more jobs – asking the candidate the questions before he was Passed and acting as Senior Deacon for the ceremony. Dean performed all three tasks to perfection and there was spontaneous applause when he completed his explanation of the Tools. W. Bro. Mike Gouldsbrough took his first active role since joining the Lodge and gave the Charge.

The last meeting of 2003 saw the Initiation of Geoffrey Balshaw and his proposer, Bro. Alan Dixon, enjoyed taking the role of Junior Deacon for the ceremony. Bro. Dixon also delivered the Charge. Bro. Dixon had been Initiated into Combermere Lodge No 603 at Birkenhead in the Province of Cheshire in 1965 and today is not only our Junior Warden but also Charity Steward. After working in Liverpool for many years he moved to Penketh and soon recognised that his next door neighbour, Joe Royle, was going out regularly to Masonic meetings. It was not long after he paid his first visit to St Oswald Lodge that he became a Joining Member. Alan well remembers his Initiation, Passing and Raising for they were unique occasions. Acting as Worshipful Master for the three ceremonies was W. Bro. Stan Tipper, his father-in-law. Alongside Alan for all three ceremonies was his brother-in-law John Tipper so it meant that W. Bro. Tipper was Initiating his son and son-in-law at the same meetings.

It was unfortunate that midway through the season our Tyler, W. Bro. Les Brough, decided that because of ill-health he would have to give up the job. Despite the fact that he was extremely busy serving as Worshipful Master of Ashmole Lodge No 5128, W. Bro. W Keith Wilson, agreed to complete the season and is now our regular Tyler. At the Installation in May 2004, W. Bro. Wilson entered the Lodge as a Visiting Master and left having been invested as Tyler.

The March meeting in 2004 provided quite an unusual sight. When W. Bro. James Cartledge gave an Explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board there were four of our own Fellowcrafts on the opposite side of the boards to hear his explanation. The four Fellowcrafts were Brothers John Eric Cunliffe, George Warburton, Craig Lee Harper and Geoffrey Balshaw.

When the opportunity arose for a Past Master to take the Chair of the Lodge for its 75th Anniversary Year, W. Bro. Eric John Main offered his services. Eric, who first served as Worshipful Master in 1988, took on the job he "had always wanted to do" – Chaplain – in 1995 and held the position until his second Installation. He was honoured by Provincial Grand Lodge with the rank of PPrJGD in 1997. As at his first Installation, W. Bro. Main was presented by his brothers, Harold and Frank. The Master's Song provided an unusual duet. Brothers John LeCheminant and George Warburton sang a verse each and then shared the third verse. In 2011 W. Bro. Main was promoted to the high rank of Past Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works

The death of one of the Lodge's longest serving members, Bro. Roy Gorst-Unsworth, was marked with respect at the September meeting.

On a happier note two more Brethren were proposed as joining members – Bro. Raymond Gordon Griffiths a former member of Marlborough Lodge No 1620 and Bro. John Joseph Pelly, a former member of Red Rose Lodge No 6007.

With three more candidates being successfully balloted for the future of St Oswald Lodge looked bright with a full programme already for the 2005-2006 season.

Our Lodge meeting on 14 April 2005 was devoted to celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Consecration of the Lodge, celebrations which were described by our numerous guests as "superb", "excellent", "brilliant" and "magnificent".

Additional rows of chairs had to be put in the large temple to accommodate more than 140 members and guests which included two Assistant Provincial Grand Masters and 14 other Grand Officers. Several visitors and former members had travelled from as far afield as Scotland and the South of England to be present.