

250th Anniversary of the Union Waterloo Lodge No. 13

This short **history of the last fifty years is dedicated to those who have gone before, and made this Lodge what it is today. We will remember them with gratitude and affection.**

Before we trace the history of the last fifty years since the Bi-Centenary meeting held at Freemasons' Hall on Wednesday March 22 1961, it will do no harm to look, albeit, briefly at the origins of the Lodge and how it became No. 13. For those who want a fuller account should refer to the history prepared for the Bi-Centenary 1761 - 1961. On June 24 1717 - St John the Baptist Day, four London Lodges, No. 2 Lodge of Antiquity, No. 4 Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge and No.12 Fortitude and Old Cumberland; the fourth is no longer in existence, met at the Goose and Gridiron Ale House and formed the Mother Grand Lodge of the world.

This 'Grand Lodge' to be known subsequently as the 'Moderns', continued for a number of years, until its very existence was challenged in 1751 by a group of artisans, weavers and predominately Irish Freemasons who formed themselves into a Grand Lodge according to the Old Constitutions. They objected to the Premier Grand Lodge, who they accused of tinkering with the antient landmarks, and of altering some of the recognition signs. It must be said that the artisans were not particularly welcomed at the meetings of the Premier Grand Lodge. The upstart Grand Lodge soon became known as the Antients, and so began the dispute between the two Grand Lodges, which lasted nigh on sixty years, and was not settled until December 27, 1813, St John the Evangelist Day when the Antients and the Moderns came together under the Grand Mastership of the Duke of Sussex, and so was formed the United Grand Lodge of England.

It was the Antient Grand Lodge that issued our warrant, and the Lodge became No. 86A on their register. The Lodge was constituted on March 6 1761 at Woolwich. On June 4 1788 we purchased the vacant warrant of Lodge No. 7 (A) which was constituted on July 29 1751. We assumed its number, but not its age.

When the Antient and Modern Grand Lodges finally got their act together in 1813, a renumbering and closing up of Lodges took place. The Grand Lodges drew lots, the Antients won, and their No. 1 became No. 1 on the new register, the Moderns No. 1 became No. 2 and so on. Thus No. 7A became No. 13 on the Register of the United Grand Lodge. In 1826 No. 13 merged with Lodge No. 288 (formerly No. 230 (A) and Lodge No. 418 (formerly No. 328 (A)) to become the Union Waterloo Lodge No. 13. Not until this time did the Lodge have a name. This was not unusual, Lodges were usually known by the name of the tavern or alehouse where they met.

Union Waterloo Lodge 1961 - 2011

To write a detailed history of the Union Waterloo Lodge over the past fifty years would be to write a virtual history of the English Freemasonry since the Second World War, a task outside the scope of these notes. Suffice it to say that the Lodge followed the trends, i.e. a full membership in the immediate years after the Second World War, when two degrees were worked at every meeting, and for 100 to dine regularly, with 200 at the Installation at Freemasons' Hall. Sadly those days are long gone, but the Lodge has survived as has Freemasonry, indeed no organisation that fails to adapt will survive long in the 21st Century.