

## **The History of the Watford Association of Magicians – Myles Sinclair – From 1996**

In 1996 WAM celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by holding a one-day magic convention. This was held at what was then the Dean Park Hotel in Watford. The convention was a complete sell-out with just over 200 magicians attending. The day was ended with a full evening show that featured Billy McComb, Fluke, Kovari and Kovari Jnr, John Peake, Alan Shaxon, John Wade, and the great Xar, all compèred by Terry Seabrooke. It was at this event that Billy McComb provided a Trophy to be awarded each year to the WAM member who had contributed most to the club throughout the year.

Towards the end of the nineties the club had grown in size, and it became obvious that we would soon need bigger premises. There was also one other deciding factor in the decision to move. The Church had started conducting marriage guidance counselling in the adjoining room to WAM. It transpired that as people were opening their hearts and describing how difficult their lives were, they would hear much cheering and applause coming from the next room! The writing was on the wall.

So reluctantly, although it had been our home for many years, the Watford Association of Magicians packed its bags and moved to the North Orbital Community centre. It was a good venue, but with ever increasing costs the decision was made in 2002 to move to our present location the Bricket Wood Social club. We moved in at the beginning of 2003 and it has proved to be a great venue for WAM.

At the beginning of 2006, WAM celebrated its 60th anniversary by holding a Gala Dinner at the Metropolitan Police club in Bushey. The event was attended by over 130 people. They enjoyed not only good food, but also a great cabaret. The show was opened by Scott Penrose, and was followed by Michael Pearce, a very funny juggler with an unending stream of one-liners. We were then treated to an illusion act called Safire, and the show was closed by Wayne Dobson. The entire show was ompèred by our very own Tim Shoesmith, who did a brilliant job of bringing it all together.

Sadly, on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2011, following several months of ill health, WAM lost its much beloved President, Terry Seabrooke. Terry was a great ambassador for the club during his many years as president, and he remains much missed by the membership.

The Watford Association of Magicians continues to be an important club within the world of magic, and many members have gone on to win recognition at national and even international level. It is also renowned for being a friendly club, and I'm sure that this plays an important part in its continued success.