The 1970s began with some of the darkest hours in the club's history - but within three years we had bounced back and entered another fabulously successful era of cup and league success. Our financial future was secured and Wilderspool Stadium was transformed into a multi-purpose venue.

Still on the books in 1969-70 were Parry Gordon, Warren Ayres, Willie Aspinall and Brian Brady, while goal-kicking full-back Derek Whitehead had been recruited. However, a 14th place league finish and an early Challenge Cup exit against Leeds were disappointing. More than 12,000 attended the tie but crowds were falling and reached their nadir the following season, averaging 2,900.

Results didn’t improve and as we lay fifth from bottom in a 30-club table in October coach Joe Egan departed and Brian Glover was transferred to St Helens. Egan was replaced by Peter Harvey but with little money available we managed only five wins and a draw before Christmas 1970. Salford defeated us 50-0 at Wilderspool and only 1,700 turned up for the next home game against Oldham.

Chairman Walter Challinor issued an appeal for townsfolk to make donations to keep the club afloat. The request failed and closure was threatened, followed by the resignation of the directors - but in anticipation of the club’s salvation.

Lymm businessman Oswald Davies (later Sir) took over and set about transforming our fortunes. We ended the season in 22nd place, our lowest, but change was under way.

The legend of Alex Murphy was appointed player-coach and brought in a host of stars: Dave Chisnall and Geoff Clarkson from Leigh, Bobby Wabon from St Helens and union stars Toby du Toit from South Africa, and Frank Reynolds from Aberavon.

We defeated New Zealand and reached the semi-finals of the Challenge Cup, losing to St Helens in a replay 10-6. More stars came in: Kevin Ashcroft from Leigh and Welsh union players Clive Jones and Denis Cuning and a man from the Valleys who would become an honorary Warringtonian, the great Mike Nicholas. Everything almost came right again in 1972-3. We won the League Leaders’ Shield, amassing 56 points from 34 games, but lost a home play-off to Dewsbury.

In 1973-4 it really did come right: from fifth in Division One we won the Club Championship, defeating St Helens 13-12 at Wigan, we won the Challenge Cup against Featherstone Rovers 24-9, triumphed in the Captain Morgan competition, also against Rovers 4-0, lifted the Players No.6 Trophy beating Rochdale 27-16 and won the pre-season Locker Cup for the first time in six years.

Our stadium hosted a Great Britain v Australia Test match for the first time. The brilliance was back, attendances were climbing - and a new Bevan came on board. John, who had been capped by Wales and the British Lions, would score more than 200 tries for us.

In 1974-5 we were back at Wembley but lost to Widnes 14-7 and also reached the BBC2 Floodlit Final but after a draw at Salford lost the replay 10-5. Inspirational Murphy played his last game in September and a couple of months later Steve Hesford joined us; he would kick 1,112 goals over 10 years and was Man of the Match when we defeated Widnes 9-4 in the 1978 John Player Final.

Newcomers in 1977 included half-back Ken Kelly, signed from Bradford, and prolific try-scorer forward Bob Eccles; both would serve us mightily well into the 1980s.

Success eluded us in the season’s Premiership Final, losing to St Helens 32-20 at Swinton. Tommy Martyn had to withdraw from Great Britain’s World Cup squad because of injury but would make the 1979 touring team.

1978 brought another Challenge Cup semi-final but St Helens defeated us 12-8. Alexander the Great left us that summer (only temporarily!) and was succeeded by Billy Bemony. Autumn brought us victory over Australia 15-12. Only Widnes also defeated them and no club has beaten them since then.

Later in 1978-9 we reached another John Player Final but succumbed to Widnes 16-4 and finished second in Division One.

The decade ended with the departure of Oswald Davies; he was succeeded by Brian Pitchford.