



The Occasional Bulletin

Texas Lodge of Research, A.F. & A.M.



Number 3

Fall

2010

During American Civil War

Halleran paints picture of Masonic courtesy

Michael A. Halleran offered a new look at Freemasonry during the War Between the States and the many recorded courtesies exchanged between Brothers on both sides of the conflict. Bro. Halleran, the 2010 Anson Jones Lecturer, is author of the new book, *The Better Angels of our Nature - Freemasonry in the American Civil War*, published by The University of Alabama Press.

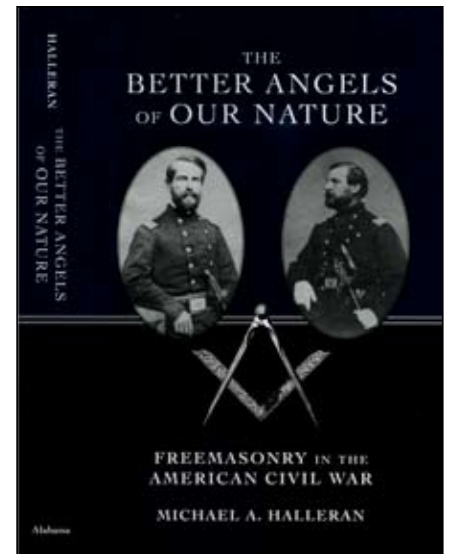
Following lunch, Bro. Halleran began a preliminary presentation before the more formal Power Point-enhanced lecture back in the lodge room.

Giving aid and comfort to enemy combatants who were Masons is part of the lore of the war. Bro. Halleran explored the major Masonic stories and found other, lesser known, but equally touching incidents. He debunked the particular myth

that Confederate General Lewis A. Armistead made the Masonic sign of distress as he lay mortally wounded during Pickett's charge at Gettysburg.

A total of 57 TLR members, wives and Masons, attended the lunch and others joined for the afternoon presentation. Following the lecture, the Worshipful Master presented Bro. Halleran with the apron of a Full Member of Texas Lodge of Research.

The Anson Jones weekend is always a high point in the TLR year, and this one was no exception.



Continued on Page 3.

The Better Angels of Our Nature *Freemasonry in the American Civil War*

- A review by Christopher Hodapp, author of *Freemasons for Dummies*

Michael Halleran is no stranger to Texas Masons. He writes the humorous "Brother Brother" stories for the *Scottish Rite Journal*, and is editor of *The Plumblin*, the quarterly newsletter of the Scottish Rite Research Society. His new book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, is an in-depth study of interactions between Freemasons during the American Civil War. This outstanding work explores the legends and long-told tall tales of the fraternity in an academic fashion, with both dispassionate analysis of the facts, and an obvious passion for the subject.

The personal accounts from both sides of the Civil War bring the experience to life for modern readers, instead of being able to hold it at a polite distance — perhaps because it was the first war that had, not just commanders, but so many enlisted men educated enough to write letters and diaries. **Continued on Page 3.**

Next Stated Communication **Dallas, Texas**

Friday, Sept. 17, 2010

4 p.m. Hospitality Room opens at the Courtyard Addison/Midway. Dutch-treat dinner.

Saturday, Sept. 18, 2010

10 a.m. Quarterly Meeting of Texas Lodge of Research hosted by John L. DeGrazier Lodge No. 1349. See back page for details and addresses.

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By Wayne Sirmon

A message from the Master

Greetings from Ft. A. P. Hill and the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. Near the end of the National Jamboree we will enjoy Masonic fellowship as Fredericksburg Lodge No.4 (the lodge where George Washington received his Masonic degrees) holds a special communication at the Heath Schoolhouse. If you see a photo of this event, I'll be the one wearing a TLR apron! Let me encourage all of our full members to "show the flag" by wearing our distinctive apron as they visit lodges, both near and far. As a visible mark of Masonic scholarship, each TLR member should consider it as one of your Masonic goals to receive one of these aprons. Put it on your "bucket list."

One project of Texas Lodge of Research is to increase our role in the presentation of Masonic Education. Several of our officers are working hard to add sections to our web site which will serve as a source book for individual and lodge education. This project is being driven by our Senior Warden who deserves credit for recognizing this opportunity for greater service by TLR.

Those skills taught by our high school English teachers need to be put to use as we work toward this goal: ideas – thesis statement – rough draft – revise. Then after carefully complying with the TLR *Form and Style Manual*, submit your paper to the Lodge Secretary. As you work through the process, tap into the knowledge and experience of our Full Members. They can guide you to valuable sources and serve as a sounding board as you explore possible topics.

Our June meeting was a top flight experience of Masonic fellowship and knowledge. This was in great measure due to our



Worshipful Master Wayne Sirmon presents M.W. Bro. William E. Rorer Jr. with a Masonic Scouter patch after the Boy Scout Jamboree Lodge meeting. As the President of the National Association of Masonic Scouters, Bro. Sirmon had earlier presented him with the Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award and a James E. West Fellowship. The TLR apron was a hit!

2010 Anson Jones Lecturer. W. Bro. Michael Halleran provided two excellent programs. After entertaining our luncheon guests with the exploits of Brother Brother (who's "journal" entries appear in the *Scottish Rite Journal*), Halleran gave us an overview of his work on Freemasonry during the American Civil War. TLR members and guests purchased all of the copies on hand of his book *The Better Angels of Our Nature*. If you missed out on purchasing a copy, check the usual on-line bookstores.

Join us in Dallas for our fall meeting for a wonderful time of fellowship as our members make lasting contributions to the body of Masonic knowledge. Detailed information as to our headquarters hotel and lodge

Continued on next page. 2

San Antonio

Continued from Page 1

Worshipful Master Wayne Sirmon hosted the Friday evening Hospitality room in his suite in the historic Menger Hotel in San Antonio. Members were then free to find dinner at one of the many fine eateries in and near the hotel.

Due to a scheduling misunderstanding, the previously announced dinner lecture became a luncheon, and for convenience, Alamo Lodge provided their beautiful ground floor lodge room and hosted the event.

Bro. Stephen Whitaker, a member of St. John's No. 333 in Spartanburg, SC and Past Master of the Civil War Research Lodge, was WM Sirmon's special guest.

Bro. Harold Brown, Worshipful Master of John L. DeGrazier Lodge issued a personal invitation for everyone to attend the September quarterly meeting at their lodge in Dallas.



San Antonio snapshots

More photos on following pages.

2010 Anson Jones Lecturer Michael A. Halleran discusses his book *The Better Angels of our Nature - Freemasonry in the American Civil War* during lunch in the San Antonio Scottish Rite Cathedral's new dining room.

Review

Continued from Page 1

There is a formality and love of the language during this period that has left us a wealth of material to discover. Halleran has carefully examined the most common Masonic anecdotes from the Civil War, tracking down their sources and the real history behind them. This is not a sentimental book of apocrypha, but a well-researched work, published as much for Masons as it is for academics. In some cases, he tramples on some long-cherished fables the fraternity has endlessly repeated over the years, but in others he finds the humanity and truth behind the events. The result is a stirring affirmation of the bond between warring Masonic broth-

ers, in the conflict that brought more of them together on opposing sides of the battlefield than any in our history.

The book's poetic title comes from Abraham Lincoln's inaugural address on March 4, 1861, as he argued passionately before his audience and the nation to keep the Union together.

"We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Michael Halleran is a freelance writer and practicing attorney in Kansas. He is also a

lecturer at Emporia State University.

Christopher Hodapp, PM, is the editor of the *Journal of the Masonic Society* and the author of *Freemasons For Dummies*. He lives in Indianapolis, IN.

From the Master

Continued from previous page.

meeting time and location are found elsewhere in this magazine.

Texas established a large number of military lodges during the 1860s. Only a few of these have been studied in any detail. Perhaps one (or more) worthwhile papers on this subject will find their way into future TLR *Transactions*.



Above: James D. Carter Literary Excellence Awards were presented to Junior Warden James McCrae for his paper “Masonry in Gillespie County,” to be published in Volume XLIII, and Monty McMinn for his paper “Baron Von Steuben, Masonic Brother and Revolutionary War Hero,” published in Volume XLII. Past Grand Master Brian Dodson was not present and his award will be presented at a future meeting. Left: Junior Past Master Jack Harper received his Endowed Member and Past Master’s Certificates during the morning meeting.

San Antonio snapshots



Worshipful Master Sirmon presents Past Master and *Transactions* Editor Raymond Bronk with a hard bound version of Volume XLI, the “Bronk” volume.



Worshipful Master Sirmon receives a lapel pin from Stephen Whitacker, of Spartanburg, SC, Past Master of the Civil War Research Lodge, (VA) and Past President of the South Carolina Masonic Research Society.

SW Howe elected National Sojourner Third Vice President

Texas Lodge of Research is well represented in the officer line of National Sojourners, Inc. following their just concluded convention in Bloomington, MN.

TLR Senior Warden Merlen Howe was elected Third Vice President of the organization and joins Second Vice President Keye E. Perry Sr. in the leadership of the organization for Masons who were, or are, senior NCO or officers in the military.

Bro. Perry is in the process of completing a research paper on the history of Parsons Lodge No. 222 in Austin, during its centennial year. Past National President Andrew J. McVeigh III, is also active in TLR.

Should tradition prevail, Bro. Perry will lead the group in 2013, followed by Bro. Howe the following year.

Congratulations to both of these highly respected Masons and members of Texas Lodge of Research.

Form and Style Manual only available on website

Texas Lodge of Research's Form and Style Manual is available to authors at the lodge website: www.texaslodgeofresearch.org for downloading. The document is 23 pages, so make sure you have plenty of paper.

The Editorial Committee and Senior Warden stress that authors who follow the very user-friendly manual will have far fewer corrections to make.



TLR Secretary Jim Dougherty delivers remarks prior to presenting copies of *Transactions Vol. XLI*, containing research papers authored by Herb Arbuckle and Pete Normand about the Masonic pedigree of singer Jimmie Rodgers. He is assisted by TLR member Laurent Sorell (left). Foundation Director Kathleen Hudson (in poncho) and two of Rodgers' great-grandchildren are at right.

TLR to return to Kerrville for Jimmie Rodgers tribute

Our late Bro. Jimmie Rodgers enjoys a special place in the annals of country music; being considered the "Father of Country Music" and the Mississippi Blue Yodeler. The Texas Heritage Music Foundation headquartered on the campus of Schreiner University in Kerrville will hold its annual tribute on Friday, Sept. 24. Texas Lodge of Research has accepted an invitation to return and have a prominent place to promote Freemasonry and our respect for our famous Brother.

This year's event will attract school children and music lovers from throughout the nation during the day-long event on the campus near downtown Kerrville. Texas Lodge of Research will present a Certificate of Appreciation to the foundation reading, in part, "as a token of our esteem for the continuous honoring of our Brother Mason."

Last fall, TLR's information booth was front and center as bus loads of school children stopped to hear about "the Masons." Then-Grand Senior Warden "Gene" Carnes displayed his collar, jewel and apron for the children to inspect. Editorial Committee veteran Herb "The Professor" Arbuckle, yodeled a greeting to the kids as numerous area Masons joined in on the fun.

All Texas Masons are invited to attend and information is available on the foundation's web site: texasheritagemusic.org. Bring your aprons!

TLR has a presence at Scottish Rite statewide event

Texas Lodge of Research was one of several Masonic and Scottish Rite related entities invited to participate the first Philip C. Tucker Legacy Scottish Rite Convocation on July 31 and August 1st at the Lee Lockwood Library and Museum in Waco.

Members Pete Martinez, 32°, Herbert C. Arbuckle III, 32°, and Secretary Jim Dougherty, 33°, manned the booth to answer questions and promote the lodge.

The booth was “dressed up” with new signage and attracted much attention. Past Master Martinez’s broadside of the aprons of

Grand Lodge officers drew a great deal of interest from the over 150 Scottish Rite Masons at the event.

Several new members were recruited and one member caught up on his dues. Early and rare copies of the Transactions were on display and for sale to benefit the lodge.

Right photo: Mrs. Breta Northcutt, wife of Masonic Education and Service Chairman Dr. Robert Northcutt, stops by to visit Herb “The Professor” Arbuckle at the TLR booth during the Philip C. Tucker Legacy Scottish Rite Convocation.



From the Secretary

By Jim Dougherty, PM, Secretary and Occasional Bulletin Editor



In his latest Treasurer’s Report, Bro. Mark Dermit pointed out that a large percentage of our members have yet to pay their 2010 dues, which in the budget is our sole source of revenue. We have no return from Grand Lodge on our sizeable number of Endowed Members. It’s easy to overlook one’s dues payment, especially when one receives his card with the request for prompt payment. We are happy to report that we read membership applications for ten new members at the June meeting, and have

processed three more since that meeting. This comes on top of 29 new members we added in March from County Durham in the UK.

TLR’s budget is as lean as it can be. Thanks to less expensive printing costs for the annual *Transactions* and quarterly *Occasional Bulletin*, we have seen a dramatic drop in those expenses. However, we face increasing postage costs after the first of next year and continue to anticipate an upturn in the economy to allow all of our members to enjoy the disposable income to pay

their dues promptly.

We do not want to lose any member due to the economy. If paying TLR dues causes a hardship, drop us a note, or e-mail. We do not report a member who falls behind as “NPD” to Grand Lodge. Neither do we issue Demits. We simply drop inactive members who are in arrears for two years from the mailing list.

Finally, if you move, please let us know. *Occasional Bulletins*, which are returned, with or without an address correction, cost the lodge \$1.05 in Postage Due. *Transactions* that are undeliverable are “abandoned” by the post office and we not only lose the postage, but also the approximately \$8.00 each book costs to print.



TLR’s limited edition 50th anniversary coin has been a great hit with Masonic coin collectors since it went on sale in January 2008. The beautifully detailed and enameled coins will be available while supplies last at TLR quarterly meetings for \$10 each, or from the secretary’s office at \$11.50, including postage and handling.

Coins will be permanently retired in 2010, so get yours while they last.

Texas Lodge of Research, A.F. & A.M.
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Upcoming Meetings

September 17 - 18, 2010 Host: John L. DeGrazier Lodge No. 1349. Dallas.

January 14 - 15, 2011 Host: Harmony No. 6. Galveston.

March 18 - 19, 2011 Host: Lockhart Lodge No. 690, Lockhart. Election and installation of officers.

June 17 - 18, 2011 Host: TBA. Anson Jones Lecture

J. L. DeGrazier Lodge to host September quarterly meeting in Dallas

TLR returns to Dallas at the invitation of first-time host, John L. DeGrazier Lodge No. 1349. The lodge is located at 5300 Forest Lane in north Dallas.

Hotel arrangements have been made with the Courtyard Addison/Midway hotel at 4165 Proton Dr. Reservations are available by calling 1-888-758-0887. Please request the Texas Lodge of Research rate and **be aware that this property does not have an elevator, so if there are mobility issues, please inform the hotel.**

Worshipful Master Sirmon will again host the Hospitality Room in his suite beginning at 4 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 17. Dutch treat dinner will follow at a nearby restaurant.

The quarterly meeting will begin promptly at 10 a.m., Saturday. The Editorial Committee will be present and hold a mini-seminar for prospective authors. The lodge is not far from The Galleria, should our ladies wish to do some shopping.

It is expected that we will have at least two papers for presentation during the afternoon.

See you in Big D!