



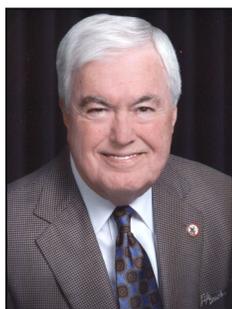
THE OCCASIONAL BULLETIN

TEXAS LODGE OF RESEARCH, A.F. & A.M.

September 2017

Number 2

From the Master's Desk



The Anson Jones Lecture was a rousing success. Most Worshipful Joe Harrison, Past Grand Master of Tennessee, presented an interesting and informative paper on "Some Numbers in Masonry." It was refreshing to hear a paper about real people and real problems and not totally focused on esoteric or philosophical issues. Thank you, Most Worshipful Joe, for a great job! Alamo Lodge provided wonderful breakfast tacos, and the lunch proved similarly enjoyable.

Although some had trouble finding Alamo Lodge on the back side of Alzar Shrine, the attendance of 27 was adequate but not like we would prefer. Seven were elected to membership in TLR. We hope they all attend the York Rite Symposium in Waco to receive their membership pins.

The September meeting in Waco will be a York Rite Symposium hosted by Baylor Lodge and our TLR Past Master Jack Harper. Baylor Lodge has recently moved to the York Rite Building at 722 Washington Avenue in downtown Waco. TLR Past Master Brad Billings is the Symposium Director and is assembling the various committees to make this a successful event. In addition to regular TLR papers, several shorter, discussion articles will be presented about the history of York Rite in Texas. Cash prizes will be provided by the various Grand York Rite Bodies. Please join us for this venture in a new direction.

September 16 is also Parents' Weekend at Baylor. Sorry about that guys. It wasn't my fault. Not a problem for most, but the hotel rates have gone sky high. Our Friday No-Host Dinner will be at Heitmiller's (where else?). Please join us on Saturday. It will be a fun day!

Next Stated Communication

Saturday, September 16, 2017
Waco, Texas

Host Lodge

Baylor Lodge No. 1235

Location

722 Washington Avenue
Waco, Texas 76701

The Lodge will open at 9:00 a.m. for coffee and donuts with the stated meeting following at 10:00 a.m.

The Grand Lodge History Project is moving forward slowly. We have three segments almost ready for review. We will meet in September to review our criteria and submit to the Editorial Committee. Hopefully the three papers will be presented in December. See a related article in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

TLR will honor our Past Masters at the December 16 meeting in Houston. This will be our first December meeting since we changed our By-Laws to meet in December rather than January.

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Texas Lodge of Research
Officers 2017 — 2018

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When Grand Lodge changed its meeting from December to January, TLR took that opportunity to change to December. A very special guest speaker is planned and we are hopeful that most of our Past Masters will attend. The TLR year will end on March 17 in the Dallas area, where it began. Mark your calendars and make plans now to attend all four meetings this year. Our Study Club in Dallas seems to be thriving while the Houston group is struggling. Please contact our Junior Warden Dodson if you'd like to join in the fun. Is there any interest in Austin or San Antonio? Our UK Study Club is still alive. They last met on May 7 and continue to meet three times a year. They have not yet set a date for their Fall meeting. Contact Dr. Alan Bell if you are interested.

The changes to the *Occasional Bulletin* have been well received. Many of you with "old eyes" appreciate the larger type fonts. The website continues to improve. Please tell us how we are doing. If you like it, tell someone. If you dislike the changes, please tell me and offer an idea for improvement.

See you in Waco.

Fraternally,

David B. Dibrell



My Year in TLR

by

Ross J. Cox, Sr., Past Master 2001-2002

Much of my personal success I owe to the TLR experience. Through TLR, I met some of the finest people and perhaps received the best advice to fuel my desire to preserve our history through the Texas Historical Marker program. To date, I have obtained six subject markers with several more planned. To obtain a marker is a very lengthy and sometimes painful process. Many applications are turned down the first time. However, when I began writing for TLR, everything I seemed to write became a successful project.

In 2001, when I served as Master of TLR, Brother Cliff Acker was my Chaplain. He was an active Freemason, a TLR Past Master, and above all one of my best friends. It was through his influence and advice that I became involved in TLR and further motivated to serve the Craft.

In 1994, while visiting Cold Spring Lodge No. 37, I first saw a TLR apron. When I inquired about the apron and what it took to earn one, I became more than curious. After making a few phone calls, I discovered that Brother Acker lived just a few miles from me in Liberty. I called him and by blind luck, the next meeting was to be held in Liberty. I attended that meeting and from that point I was hooked.

Cliff and I spent many a “windshield hour” together on the road while attending TLR and other Masonic meetings. Until I met Cliff, I was not much interested in working the chairs or becoming involved in things outside my own Lodge, Trinity Lodge No. 14. Cliff was an old newspaper editor, and he was good at pushing my buttons. Because of his influence and encouragement, my TLR journey began. More importantly, my service to the Craft took flight. My year as Worshipful Master began in 2001 in Stephenville, where the officers were installed. Probably, the man who was most responsible for organizing that meeting was the next Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge, Tommy Guest. I was certainly glad that I made his acquaintance, because little did I know that I was destined to become the Secretary of San Saba Lodge, a position which I still occupy today. As a new and rather raw secretary, I would call upon Brother Guest’s counsel many times. My TLR experience was beginning to pay off.

The June meeting was held in Austin. The Scottish Rite Bodies there were our host for that meeting. There are two main things that stand out in my memory. First, the Anson Jones Lecture was given by Brother Robert L. D. Cooper, Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library. He spoke on the “History and Origin of the Order of Free Gardeners.” The second was the presentation to James R. Beeler of his certificate as a Past Master of TLR, which I will explain a little later.

Our September meeting was held in Brownsville. There was some push-back from some of the brethren for choosing such a far, exotic, and out-of-the-way location. I had examined the previous meeting places and decided that we should make TLR available to that remote part of the state. It was a great meeting and well-attended. Most noteworthy was meeting Brother Arturo de Hoyos, the Grand Archivist and Grand Historian of the Scottish Rite Supreme Council in Washington DC.

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Another surprise was the visitation of six Mexican Freemasons from Matamoras. Brother Douglas Collins was good enough to translate, and I was presented with their handcrafted, painted Masonic apron and sash, which I still possess today. This really made the event all the more special.

The January 2002 meeting was held in Hillsboro. There always seemed to be a surprise at each meeting. This time, the Worshipful Master of the Oklahoma Lodge of Research was our guest. Although the meeting went well, it was perhaps one of my saddest memories. My dear friend and mentor was not there. Brother Acker passed away the month before after complications from surgery.

My last meeting as Master of the Lodge was in March 2002. We met in Kingsland, where the new officers were installed. Although I was ready to leave the East and focus on my historical marker research, nevertheless it was a great ride.

Those Texas Historical Markers I mentioned earlier were: CONFEDERATE SERVICE OF ALABAMA & COUSHATTA INDIANS, SAN SABA LODGE NO. 225, SAN SABA CHURCH OF CHRIST, UNITED CONFEDERATE VETERANS – WILLIAM P. ROGERS CAMP NO. 322, THE TEXAS RANGERS & THE SAN SABA MOB, and SAN SABA LODGE NO. 612. It was the TLR “Form and Style Manual” that made these a reality.

Perhaps something that all TLR Past Masters come to appreciate is their certificate. Some have unduly credited me for the workmanship and style. However, the real inspiration and credit belongs to Past Master and Fellow Plez Transou. Plez was the real artist that hand-drew each certificate for every Past Master. In 2002 Plez decided to drop the project, and I took it from there.

I borrowed Brother Acker’s certificate, made a copy, and hired an artist in Austin to produce a suitable blank. I had them printed, and each year I simply hired a local artist to fill in the information. From there, only two trips are required: one to the frame shop in Goldthwaite and the second to a Scottish Rite meeting in Austin, where I hand it off to the TLR Secretary. So, to be accurate, the certificate’s inspiration and style came from Brother Transou.

There is another item that I became partly responsible for: the traveling TLR Charter case. When I joined TLR, the old case was old and worn. In fact, it was coming apart and was unattractive. I took some measurements and using my official pull visited one of the prisons in Gatesville. There the current charter case was crafted by inmate labor. Brother Acker paid for the project, as he wanted it to be his gift to his most cherished Masonic affiliation.

Finally, I want to close by mentioning another project I credit to TLR. It certainly paid off, in an indirect way. I refer to that Texas Historical Marker entitled THE TEXAS RANGERS & THE SAN SABA MOB. Well, that marker turned into a book and that book turned into a great Masonic charity.

The San Saba Mob was the most violent and ruthless vigilante organization in the history of the United States. Over 200 men were assassinated in a reign of terror between about 1868-1898. It took a company of Texas Rangers about eighteen months to put “The Assembly” down. It was organized like a Masonic lodge. It met by the light of the full moon and was complete with a ritual, grips, signs, passwords, modes of recognition, etc. Most

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From the South

I had the experience this last week to have been at a Lodge meeting and the topic of TLR arose. (I may be guilty of being the one to broach the topic.) No matter how it came up, the interesting result was that two of the newer brethren asked how to join and both said they would download the application from the website and get them to me.

What was interesting about this was the following:

- Most of the younger members, although they have heard of TLR, thought it was an invitation-only organization and that they had to wait to be asked.
- Some of them had not heard of it at all. When our purpose and activities were explained to them, they expressed a genuine interest.
- Some of the more tenured (older) members did not know of the many benefits of TLR, such as the annual *Transactions* that is included in their dues.

This started me thinking that maybe some of us who are involved in TLR sometimes take the advantages of being a member for granted. Those of us who do so need to step back a moment and reflect on the many benefits that we receive, not the least of which is the fellowship we enjoy at the meetings. Once we have it foremost in our minds, we should share with others the enjoyment we have in being members of TLR, especially with newer Masons. Since TLR has not had a membership push in a while, some of these members do not even know we exist. They are also the group of Masons that would especially enjoy research into all things Masonic.

So my call to action is to "talk TLR." Spread the benefits to all within your circle, not so much as a benefit to TLR but to those who are seeking what we have to offer.

Brian R. Dodson, JW

York Rite Symposium

Our September meeting will be of particular interest to those of you who also happen to be York Rite Masons. Aside from the usual business and papers given at TLR, this meeting will also include a York Rite Symposium, with essays particular to the Rite. If my Research is correct, this is the first essay contest sponsored by TLR since 1977, which honored our nation's Sesquicentennial.

Topics on any aspect of the Chapter, Council, Commandery, or other York Rite appendant bodies are welcome. Essays must be received by August 15, 2017, for full consideration, although late submissions may be considered if space is available. Certain essays may be selected to be published in the annual TLR *Transactions*, subject to approval of the Editorial Committee. No Symposium essay will entitle a writer to Full membership in Texas Lodge of Research.

We look forward to your submissions and hope all will come and enjoy learning more about the York Rite.

For more information please contact me at (806) 787-7600.

Brad Billings, PM



Future Meetings of TLR

Houston Meeting, December 16

Honor TLR Past Masters

Temple Lodge No. 4

Holiday Inn Express

(832) 371-9300

Dallas Meeting, March 17

Election & Installation of Officers

Hillcrest Lodge No. 1318

TLR in San Antone



From the West

Most members of Texas Lodge of Research have at some point thought of presenting a research paper. Upon presenting an approved paper, the member is elevated to Full Membership and awarded the distinctive apron of Texas Lodge of Research. The apron is a representation of the apron worn by members of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas. There are approximately 75,000 Masons in Texas, but there are only 93 Full Members of TLR. This distinguished group of Full Members includes members of other Grand Jurisdictions. The Texas Mason who earns Full Membership and wears the apron is a member of a group of less than 0.1% of Texas Masons.

If you would like to earn Full Membership, be awarded the distinctive apron, and become part of that 0.1%, the first step is submitting a Notice of Intent. The Editorial Committee, which is composed of three Full Members, looks for a narrowly defined topic that is relevant to Freemasonry generally and to Texas in particular. You should proof-read your Notice of Intent before submitting and list potential research sources. Being a research paper, your sources should include original works such as Grand Lodge *Proceedings*, newspapers, books on Freemasonry, etc. Internet sites are discouraged as sources unless they provide original sources. Once the Notice of Intent is approved, you can submit your paper for review by the committee. Be particularly careful not to simply copy whole paragraphs from your sources. If you are including a section from a source, be sure to place it in quotations marks and cite the source.

Completing a research paper is an accomplishment. Earning the right to wear the distinctive apron and join the 0.1% is not an easy task, but it can be done. I look forward to seeing your submissions.

Christopher D. Livingston, SW

Officer Profile

Brian R. Dodson



Junior Warden Dodson is a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas, serving in 2006. He is also a Past Master of the following Lodges: Bel-laire, Lone Star, Eagle Lake, Gray, and Temple. He served as Master of four of these Lodges after he was Grand Master. He also serves on the Masonic Jurisprudence Committee for the Grand Lodge. He is active in all the appendant bodies. Brian is currently serving as the Senior Warden for St. Catherine of Sienna Episcopal Church for the third time.

Professionally, he is a Certified Financial Planner working for UBS Financial. He graduated from Southwest Texas (now Texas) State University. He is married to Adrienne and between them have four children: Kimberly, Cara, Mary Frances, and Rob.

Officer Profile

Christian D. Moore



Senior Steward Moore is a fourth generation Past Master of Caledonia Lodge No. 68 in Columbus. He is also affiliated with Robert Burns Lodge No. 127 and served as Master of that lodge in 2015-2016. He is currently Commander of Colorado Commandery No. 4, District Instructor of Grand Lodge District No. 33, an officer in the Austin Scottish Rite, and a member of several appendant organizations.

Professionally, Christian is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional and has worked within the public, private, and non-profit sectors for several years. On May 10, 2017, the Board of Directors of DeMolay International named him the organization's next Executive Director.

His research paper discussed the history of the Actual Past Master Degree within the Grand Lodge of Texas.

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of the research came from old Ranger reports and court records at the State Library in Austin. Overall, it took about nine years to put the story together.

Initially, the intention was to sell enough copies to fund the marker. I had no idea that there would be such interest. From 2005 to this day, the book is still in demand. I still produce and sell copies from my home, with all proceeds donated to our Scottish Rite charities.



September in Waco

The September TLR Meeting will be held in Waco on September 16 at Baylor Lodge No. 1235 for our first York Rite Symposium. The meeting will be hosted by Baylor Lodge and Worshipful Master Josh Waller promises great food and fellowship.

Baylor Lodge meets in the York Rite Building located at 722 Washington Avenue in Waco, with phone number (254) 644-6336 if you get lost. A room block is held at Holiday Inn Northwest, 1801 Development Boulevard in Waco. The room rate is \$249 to \$260. (Sorry, Baylor Parents Weekend.) Call the hotel at (254) 799-9997 and ask for the TLR Rate. A hospitality room will be open Friday evening in the hotel. The Friday evening no-host dinner will be at Heitmiller's across the freeway at 7 p.m., (254) 867-1400.

The Stated Meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 16, in the Baylor Lodge room after breakfast. We will have one or two papers and then lunch will be available for a donation of \$12. The York Rite Symposium articles will follow at 1 p.m., after which TLR will close.

Texas Lodge of Research
PO Box 1057
Georgetown TX 78627-1057



What Advice Would You Give A Brother Who Intends Writing A History Of His Lodge?

By H. C. Arbuckle III, Full Member

First and foremost, history should be interesting reading. A Masonic Lodge's history should *never* be the mere transcription of minutes. It should be vibrant and living, as were the people who made it. John E. Kelly's history of Blue Bonnet Lodge, *Behold How Good*, and Frank S. Tamsett's of Kelly Lodge, *The Good Tree*, are excellent examples. Remember the five Ws: who, what, when, where, and why. WHO organized the Lodge, were charter members, the balls of fire who kept things going through lean times and good, the outstanding members, became Grand Lodge Officers, and/or held local, state, or national office? WHAT was the reason the Lodge was organized, had it done to be outstanding, is it doing today? WHEN were the Dispensation and Charter granted, did it get its current permanent home, was it honored by Grand Lodge, did it hold unusually important meetings? WHERE was it organized, its first permanent home and homes throughout the years? Use photographs. WHY was its name chosen, were the stated communications dates selected, does it do some things different from other lodges?

Masonry in Alabama: A Sesquicentennial History, 1821-1971, by Joseph Abram Jackson, pages 207-14, will be exceptionally helpful.

The basic outline for writing a history of your own Lodge includes: Organization, Charter Members, Dispensation and Charter, Location, Finances, Important Occasions, Outstanding Members, Accomplishments, Contemporary History, Current Situation.

Adapted from *Transactions*, Vol. XIV