

The Occasional Bulletin



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

P. O. Box 684684 • Austin, Texas 78768-4684



Number 2

Summer

2007

From the East

— By Worshipful Master Raymond Bronk

Anson Jones Weekend 2007 was a memorable event. Members gathered for hospitality at the host hotel Friday afternoon, and after conversation and conviviality, almost everyone headed to the Tree House Italian Restaurant for dinner. Thanks go to owner/host Brother Fred Bakshi for giving our members great attention, outstanding food and service to match.

Members were on their own to explore Austin prior to the 3 p.m. stated meeting on Saturday. Several visited the Bob Bullock Texas History Museum where they were provided with a tailored-for-them tour of that exciting museum, a venue that is rich in Texas history displays and artifacts. Bro. Bullock's 33rd Degree Scottish Rite cap and ring, along with other Masonic items, are proudly displayed.

The stated meeting was gavelled by Worshipful Master Raymond Bronk and was attended by a good crowd of members and guests. WM Bronk immediately gave honor to the memory of Past Grand Master, Fellow in Masonic Research and PM of TLR, the late John E. "Jack" Kelly. His Grand Lodge of Texas obituary was ordered entered into the minutes of the meeting. Brother Herb Arbuckle read a remembrance he penned relating to his long friendship with Brother Kelly.

Senior Warden Brother Truitt Bradley gave a report on all approved research papers and of those "in the hopper" requiring some modification.

There was spirited discussion on a half-dozen subjects, details available in the minutes. Discussion was initiated on the sale of Transactions on CDs. A committee will be formed to study the

matter. The Budget Committee was ordered to meet and to report at the September meeting.

Members were reminded that our 50th anniversary will occur in 2008. Suggestions on how to celebrate should be forwarded to Senior Warden Bradley.

Various presentations were made by Worshipful Master Bronk. Brother Michael Wiggins was presented with the TLR Fellow jewel. The award of his honor had been announced at the College Station meeting last January. Presentations of endowment certificates were made to TLR Past Masters Jerry Yelvington, Douglas Collins and Jim Dougherty and also to Oscar Orum.



Worshipful Master
Raymond Bronk

Brothers Jim Daniels and TLR Treasurer Roy Harris were not able to attend.

A beautifully calligraphic proclamation created by TLR Past Master Ross Cox Sr. was presented to immediate Past Master Dougherty.

Members and guests were impressed with the beauty of the Austin York Rite Temple. The temple, which has been redecorated and refurbished in many of its public areas, was a wonderful venue in which to hold the stated meeting, lecturer reception and Anson Jones Lecture dinner.

Immediate Past Master and new TLR Secretary James Griffis Dougherty shouldered the brunt of the work with his coordination in obtaining permission to use the York Rite Temple. He is Secretary/Recorder for the Austin Bodies and manages the beautifully restored three-story building in downtown Austin. University Lodge No. 1190 Worshipful Master Derek Seal, his officers and members were our hosts for the stated meeting.

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Next Stated Meeting: Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park

Friday, September 14, 2007

Hospitality room opens at 4 p.m., Best Western Inn of Brenham
1503 Hwy 290 East, in Brenham

Saturday, September 15, 2007

9:00 a.m. quarterly meeting of Texas Lodge of Research, Independence Hall,
Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park. Host: Washington Lodge No. 18
11:30 a.m. luncheon followed by open meeting and presentation of paper:

View the *Occasional Bulletin* in color at the TLR website:

www.texaslodgeofresearch.org

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2007 – 2008**

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John E. "Jack" Kelly, PM, FMR

1921 - 2007

Past Grand Master John E. "Jack" Kelly died in San Antonio on May 13, 2007.

During his long and distinguished Masonic career, he was a member of Blue Bonnet Lodge No. 1219 in San Antonio, Master of Texas Lodge of Research in 1983-84, Grand Master of Masons in Texas in 1986-87 and made a Fellow in Masonic Research in 1991.

As Grand Master, he oversaw the centennial celebration of Freemasonry in Texas and ushered in a fresh era for the fraternity in the state.

A member of almost every Masonic body, he was a 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason and retired as Personal Representative of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Texas to the Valley of San Antonio.



Past Grand Masters Jack Kelly (right) and Leonard Harvey share a moment at the 2005 TLR meeting in San Antonio.

He is survived by his widow, Helen, and a grandson.

Research papers in the pipeline; more needed

Senior Warden and chairman of the Editorial Committee Truitt Bradly reports that his committee currently has five papers under consideration. They are: "The Influences of Freemasonry and Environment on the Texas Declaration of Independence" by Raymond Bronk, "Freemasonry in the Panama Canal Area 1977-2000" by Donald Garrido, "Baron von Steuben: Masonic Brother and Hero of the American Revolution" by Monty McMinn, "Dal-

las' Mystery of the Masonic Cornerstone" by Bobby Lynn Shehorn, and "Kabbalah's Path and Influence in Freemasonry" by Ron Lawrence.

Prospective authors should thoroughly read the TLR Criteria and Style Sheet before beginning their paper. The printed version of the C&SS is available from the Secretary or may be obtained by emailing the Webmaster.

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Raymond G. Bronk: TLR's 48th Worshipful Master

Raymond George Bronk was born in Custer, Wisc. on 23 April 1933. He began first grade at the age of 3 in a two-room school. He was sent back to fourth grade (the other room) for being "immature" at the age of 8, and graduated at age 12. He finished high school at 16.

He worked in various jobs for several years and joined the U.S. Air Force in 1952. He qualified for flight training as an Aviation Cadet and began training in class 53-G at Columbus Air Force Base, Columbus, Miss. He soloed his first aircraft, the T-6 Texan, that same year and his first jet aircraft the next. He graduated as a 20-year-old second lieutenant and

received his silver USAF wings in November 1953.

His USAF career lasted for over 20 years, and he retired as a major and command pilot in 1972. His career took him to Texas, South Carolina, Guam, Florida, North Carolina, Germany and Thailand.

He married Marjorie Ann Warner in 1961, and they have two children, Mary Beth and Timothy Raymond, both of whom were born in Hof/Saale, Germany. During his USAF career he amassed 3,800 hours of flight time, about 135 hours of combat flight and various flight honors. He amassed college credits worldwide during his career, finally obtaining his degree in Texas.

After retirement, Ray formed a construction corporation and was its president until he retired in 1997.

He is a free-lance writer, with articles sold to such national magazines as *Field & Stream*, *Catholic Digest*, *Country Woman*, *Bowhunting* and about 25 others. He has self-syndicated two different newspaper columns that have been printed in about 135 markets in 13 states. He has written and published two nonfiction books, *50 Secrets of Writing for Magazines* and *Guns, Guts, and Gumption on the Texas Colorado*, has written two novels, *Bent Wings and Closed Caskets and Millions!* and is working on *Massacre!* He has had his work published in two other books, *Poetography* and *The Noble Generation*. He has been published in the *Scottish Rite Journal* and in *Texas Lodge of Research Transactions*. He has published the popular four-page monthly newsletter, "Views From the Valley" for Valley Lodge, for over two years.

Ray has taught writing at University of Texas Informal Classes for about 20 years, as well as at Austin ISD, Round Rock ISD and Marble Falls ISD high schools. He is a life member of the Austin Writers League (now Writers League of Texas) and was on the City of Austin Cultural Arts Grant Committee for three years.

Ray was raised a Master Mason on 8 November 1998 in Kingsland Lodge No. 1424. He later affiliated with Valley Lodge No. 175 in Burnet, serving as Worshipful Master in 2005-2006. He is charter Chaplain of the reactivated Robert Burns No. 127, Round Rock.

He has been awarded the Past Master Mason degree. He is a 32° Scottish Rite Mason of Valley of Austin and a charter member of the Knights of St. Andrew Order of the Thistle. He is a 2007 designate for the Rank and Decoration of Knight Commander of the Court of Honor. He is a member of Anson Jones Chapter No. 507 of the National Sojourners and is a member of Major General Samuel H. Parsons Camp, Heroes of '76. He has been President of the 49th District Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association, and President of the Llano Scottish Rite Club. He is a member of the Scottish Rite Research Society. He is a longtime member of Burnet Chapter No. 425, Order of the Eastern Star and Kingsland Chapter No. 1118, Order of the Eastern Star.

From the East

Continued from Page 1

Access to our unique and interesting Anson Jones Lectures are an important requisite of TLR membership, and one that we sometimes take for granted. In the past decades we have been treated to a series of carefully chosen, skilled speakers, who passed on to us their unique and important views and information, neither regularly nor easily available to the non-TLR Mason. We then, as an organization, offer this information — in our *Transactions* — in printed form to all members who could not attend the meeting in person. The Anson Jones lectures will continue to excite our members as we enter our next 50 years, help to maintain the excellence of our Lodge's reputation and credibility, and to attract like-minded Masons to our organization.

This year's featured speaker was Mark Tabbert, Director of Collections, George Washington National Masonic Museum, Arlington, Va. In recent months this distinguished Mason, with impeccable credentials, has spoken to the Blue Friars and was published in *Philelathes Magazine*.

Brother Tabbert brought an interesting look at the future of Masonic research, describing already approved projects that involve digitizing of Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge information and making this product available for research. One project will provide an online searchable database of all duly constituted U.S. Grand Lodges and local lodges ever chartered. This resource will

allow instantaneous access to authentic Grand Lodge facts and figures, statistics, reports, and activities by rank and file computer users. Some of these fascinating records go back as far as 1733!

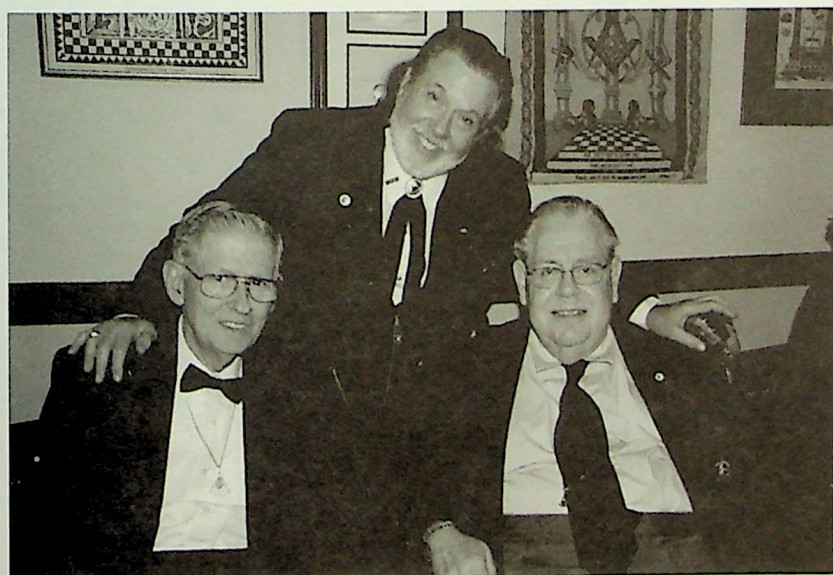
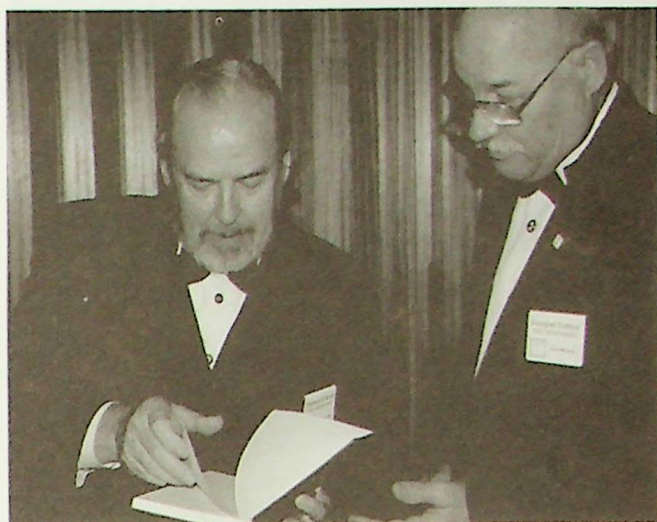
Another project will allow researchers access to photos and audio and video recordings. This increase in the reach of researchers is exciting. Brother Tabbert gave an easy-to-understand presentation and fielded questions following the lecture. He was then presented with his Full Membership documents and the distinctive, replica of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas apron. We are proud to have Brother Tabbert as one of us.

I have been a member of the Editorial Committee for several years and am impressed by the wonderful quality papers submitted by our members. They never cease to show how, through the dedicated work and research of our members and with the assistance of the Editorial Committee, the quality of the papers shines through. We can be very proud of the impressive papers that are submitted. Most of them are submitted by "just plain us," and few are the result of the labor of members with graduate degrees. You don't have to be a "scholar" or "Ph.D." to produce a quality paper, one that could be proudly presented at our meetings. Keep them coming!

Our September meeting at Washington-on-the-Brazos should strike a nostalgic chord in Texas historic researcher's hearts. We will gavel the Lodge open on Sept. 16, in the replica of Texas' Independence Hall. Later in the afternoon we expect to have several interesting papers to be presented at the open meeting.

We hope to see you there!

Austin meeting snapshots



Clockwise from top left: Travis Wiggins and Fellow in Masonic Research Plez Transou. Worshipful Master Bronk presents a specially bound edition of *Transactions Volume XXXIX* to Past Master Douglas Collins. WM Bronk congratulates Mark Tabbert, the 2007 Anson Jones Lecturer, following presentation of his TLR Full Member apron. TLR webmaster Pete Martinez, Herb "The Old Professor" Arbuckle and Dr. William P. Vaughn, editor of the *Transactions*, enjoy each other's company at the pre-lecture reception. Anson Jones dinner is served in the newly redecorated dining room of the Austin York Rite Temple.

Carter Awards announced for Volume XL (40)

Transactions Editor Dr. William Preston Vaughn announced at the Austin meeting that the soon to be published *Volume XL* (Yelvington) will include the James Carter Award of Excellence winner "Pat Morris Neff: Texas Quiet Legend," authored by Bro. Mark Dermit. The outstanding research paper traces the life of Gov. Neff, who was the long-time president of Baylor University, and his great dedication for the Masonic Fraternity, in general, and the Grand Lodge of Texas, in particular.

Dr Vaughn added that final edits were being made to the galley proofs for the book and, when the index is complete, the volume will be ready for publication late this year.

From the Secretary

Reminder postcards have gone out to TLR Associates (lodges, libraries and individual subscribers) who had not yet paid their 2007 annual dues. Response to the reminder has been outstanding and we thank our Associates for their continued support. Unfortunately, almost 400 members are in arrears for 2007. We sincerely do not want to lose any member for nonpayment of dues, but we must face the reality that the costs of producing of the annual *Transactions*, the quarterly *Occasional Bulletin* and sponsoring the prestigious Anson Jones Lecture have escalated.

Transactions, Volume XXXX is scheduled to be published late in 2007. Those on our rolls who have paid their 2007 dues before publication will receive their copy of the *Transactions* as usual. To keep down costs, the press run for this volume will be slightly scaled back and a limited number of books over the number of paid membership will be printed. After January 1, 2008, a member catching up on his 2007 dues and paying for 2008 will be required to pay an additional \$15 for the printed volume of *Transactions XXXX*.

Please check your TLR dues card, and if it is expired (2006 or earlier), please send your payment as soon as possible.

Back issues of the *Transactions* available

We have soft-cover volumes of several older *Transactions* available at a deep discount, for those wishing to round out their TLR library. Volumes available are listed on the order form, at \$7.50 per volume, or five or more, at \$5 per volume, plus a flat \$10 shipping and handling charge, per order. Supplies of some volumes are limited and are on a first come, first served basis. Refunds will be given should an ordered volume not be available.

Jim Dougherty

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