



The Occasional Bulletin

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



Number 2

Summer

2009

At Hillsboro quarterly meeting

Grand Master installs new TLR officers



Next Stated Communication Richardson, Texas

Friday, June 19, 2009
4 p.m. Hospitality Room opens at the Holiday Inn Express, 1655 North Central Expressway.
Dutch-treat supper at a nearby restaurant.

Saturday, June 20, 2009
10 a.m. Quarterly Meeting of Texas Lodge of Research and Anson Jones Lecture
Hosts: Richardson No. 1214 and Eagle No. 41. 528 Lockwood Drive, Richardson, Texas
See back page for details.

Following the recent tradition of an incoming TLR Worshipful Master being installed in a "regular" Blue Lodge in which he holds membership, Jack Harper was installed the 50th Worshipful Master in Hillsboro Lodge No. 196 lodge hall.

Fifty-four Masons assembled on Saturday, March 21, for the lodge opening. Worshipful Master Truitt Bradley opened the lodge at 10 a.m. Business was conducted in short order and it was announced that the afternoon paper titled "The Battle on the Concho Plains" by Full Member James M. McCrae of Fredericksburg would precede the public installation of officers.

See THE HILLSBORO MEETING, Page 3.

**Texas Lodge of Research
Tableau of Officers
2009-2010**

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Junior Warden	Merlen Howe 2795 Westwood Road Lockhart, TX 78644-4698 b2c2@ctxu.net
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By Jack Harper

A message from the Master

Brethren, what an honor it is for me to have been installed as the 50th Worshipful Master of Texas Lodge of Research. While Texas Lodge of Research has had a fruitful past 50 years, now is no time to rest on our laurels in thinking that we have researched and written on every Masonic topic available to us. As Masons, we have a great many topics right at our fingertips on which we can write about; yet many do not write. Why is this? Perhaps some would say they do not have enough time, others might say that it is too difficult, and the list goes on and on. My concern with this is, if neither you nor I write on a topic of interest, who will?

If one goes back and examines the myriad of Masonic tomes written, the reader will note that most volumes were written from the late 1800s and into the 1930s, and then somewhat sporadically from then on. Certainly there are still

Masonic books and essays being written today, but there are far less than in yesteryear. Is this because all topics have been exhausted? Or is it that we are just too busy with life? This is all very interesting, because to me Masonry is past, present and future.

One of my many Masonic joys is to go back and read past Grand Lodge of Texas Proceedings. To me, it is fascinating to go back and read about why certain laws were passed, or to read the many fine Grand Master's messages. Furthermore, it is interesting to read about current events during a particular period such as the formation of the Republic of Texas, and later the State of Texas. To also read about the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World Wars I and II. To us, these are all historical topics, but at the time they were current events. We, as the current generation of Masons, now have the enviable task of writing Masonic articles reflective of our current events. And, it is these current events that will someday be of interest to future Masons.

In order to help facilitate our future Masonic writing corps, our own Texas Lodge of Research Editorial Committee members will begin holding meetings coinciding with our stated meetings to meet



Worshipful Master
Jack Harper

TLR Committees 2009

Anson Jones Lecture/Fellows Nomination

Pierre "Pete" Normand, PM, FMR, Chm.
Dr. William Preston Vaughn, PM, FMR
Plez Avery Transou, PM, FMR
Dr. Michael L. Wiggins, PM, FMR

Audit/Budget/Finance/Investments

James Brumit, GJW, PM, Chm.
Mark Dermit
David B. Dibrell, PGM
Wayne Sirmon, SW
Merlen Howe, JW

Golden Trowel

James G. Dougherty, PM, Chm.
Truitt Bradly, PM
Raymond Bronk, PM

Membership

Douglas Collins, PM, Chm.
Harold Collum
James McCrae

Necrology

Jerry Pingle, Chm.
Merlen Howe
Jerry Yelvington, PM

Technology

Truitt Bradly, PM, Chm.
Brad Billings
Brett Doyle

The Hillsboro meeting, continued from Page 1.

As usual, many members and wives traveled to our beautiful host city on Friday afternoon for the hospitality room "reunion." Senior Warden Jack Harper made sure we were well taken care of at the comfortable quarters of a local inn and later at a nearby Mexican restaurant's private dining room.

Among the early arrivals in Hillsboro was Past Master and former Secretary Gordon Kelso, who has been missing from TLR functions for far too long.

After a good night's sleep, members, fellow Masons, and their ladies assembled at Hillsboro's lodge hall for kolache pastries and coffee in preparation for the day's events. Past Masters Plez Transou, FMR, and Chuck Bukin, drove in from Dallas as did Jerry Kirby from Red Oak. East Texas was well represented by John Dougherty III and the southern Gulf Coast by Editorial Committee member Herb Arbuckle of Corpus Christi. Grand High Priest of Texas and PM Doug Collins, Lady Cheri and their poodle were also in attendance.

District Deputy Grand Masters who signed the register included Bob Umphrees (14-A), Richard C. Sharp (30-H), Joe Maxwell (63), Danny Rymers (68) and Max Omberg (62).

Grand Lodge officers included Grand Photographer Don Comedy, Grand Senior Steward Clyde Kenneaster, PM, FM, and Grand Junior Warden and TLR PM Jim Brumit.

Incoming Worshipful Master Harper who, by the way, is also City Manager of Hillsboro, had arranged special tours of the historic Hill County Court House and Hillsboro's Outlet Mall for

the ladies.

Worshipful Master Bradly, as the business of the lodge was coming to an end, called for the election of officers for the coming Masonic year. The following were nominated, seconded and elected unanimously: Jack Harper, Worshipful Master; Wayne Sirmon, Senior Warden; Merlen Howe, Junior Warden; Mark Dermit, Treasurer; Jim Dougherty, Secretary.

Following the morning tiled business meeting, the lunch crowd almost doubled and enjoyed a tasty barbecue meal. The afternoon's open meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. for a paper presentation and installation of officers.

As the lodge reassembled for the afternoon session, many more chairs had to be brought into the hall to accommodate another 40 or so Masons and guests.

Full Member James McCrae presented his second research paper, which was a great tale of late 19th Century Texas Rangers, the Indian skirmishes in

West Texas and the Masonic connection.

Grand Master and retiring TLR Marshal David Counts assumed the East and, assisted by Past Grand Masters David Dibrell, Installing Marshal and Leonard P. Harvey, Installing Chaplain, installed the 2009 lodge officers.

Newly installed Worshipful Master Harper called attention to the close ties between Freemasonry, Hill County and its county seat of Hillsboro. He mentioned the fact that when the historic court house was burned to a shell, then Lt. Governor and Hill County favorite son Bob Bullock, furnished recycled wooden flooring from the also fire-devastated state Capitol to restore the district courtroom. The \$12 million restoration project was also aided by another Hill County favorite son, legendary singer-songwriter Willie Nelson, who organized two benefit concerts for the court house restoration.

Worshipful Harper then intro-

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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 packing.



Hillsboro snapshots

Photos courtesy: Pete Martinez, Douglas Collins and Art Mann, News Editor, Hillsboro Reporter

Photos clockwise from top left: The Friday evening hospitality room offers a relaxing environment for those who arrived early. PGM David Dibrell congratulates newly installed Junior Warden Merlen Howe. Installing team joins new Worshipful Master Jack Harper after installation. From left are PGM Leonard Harvey, PGM David Dibrell, WM Harper and Grand Master David Counts. Hill County and Hillsboro city officials, Masons all, salute new WM Harper by their presence. James McCrae presents his second research paper during the open portion of the Hillsboro meeting. Past Grand Master and Fellow in Masonic Research Leonard Harvey, who served as Installing Chaplain, prepares to pray for the new Worshipful Master. More photos on Page 6.







Hillsboro

Continued from Page 3.

duced city and county officials, Masons all, including District Judge Bob McGregor, County Judge Justin Lewis, County Attorney Mark Pratt, Sheriff Jeff Lyon and Hillsboro Mayor John P. Erwin Jr, M.D.

Grand Master Counts was afforded the floor in order to present retiring TLR Treasurer Dr. Roy Harris with the Grand Master's medal of appreciation for his services to Freemasonry.

Worshipful Master Harper invited everyone to attend the June Quarterly Meeting and Anson Jones Lecture to be held the weekend of June 19 and 20 in Richardson. Host lodges for the event will be Richardson No. 1214 and Eagle No. 41. See details on the back page of this *Occasional Bulletin*.

See you there!

More Hillsboro snapshots

Above: Young Jake Harper joined mom Julie and dad Jack at the Friday evening dinner at a local Tex-Mex restaurant. Below: Grand Master David Counts presents EA Bro. Bryan Chamberlain, Hillsboro Streets Director, with a Grand Master's lapel pin.



MOVING?

Please save your lodge unnecessary postage and printing costs by reporting any changes of address.

Transactions Vol. XLI was mailed the last week in March. If you didn't receive yours, e-mail the Secretary.

with interested Brethren. The committee will spend a great deal of time going through the Criteria and Style Sheet, highlighting some of the more common mistakes as well as overall writing techniques. Brethren, while we cannot write your paper for you, our goal is to be as “customer service friendly” as possible. Our goal is to help you succeed, not to hinder you from writing and submitting your paper. These meetings will start at our June stated meeting and continue so long as there is interest. The Editorial Committee also plans on asking you, the potential author, what are some things that we can do better? What are some things that we can do to streamline the submittal process? We want you to know that this is YOUR Texas Lodge of Research and that we are here to help!

Please know that I welcome any questions, comments, or suggestions; you will find my contact information located in every issue of the *Occasional Bulletin*.

P.S. Do not forget to check the last page of the *Occasional Bulletin* for the dates and locations of our upcoming meetings. We will be in Richardson in June, Lufkin in September, and Nederland in January. I hope to meet as many Brethren as possible during this year.

Editor's Note

Dr. William P. Vaughn, Editor Emeritus of the *Transactions*, was hospitalized in Mount Pleasant after suffering a stroke. He is now at an assisted living facility. Please keep our Brother and Fellow in Masonic Research in your thoughts and prayers.

You will have noticed by the time you get to this column dramatic changes in your TLR *Occasional Bulletin* ... eight pages and all in glorious color!

The transition to this new format came as bit of serendipity. For many years, the *Transactions* of Texas Lodge of Research were typeset, proofed and printed by the Masonic Home and School Press in Fort Worth. A couple of volumes were even “farmed out” to the Masonic Home and School in Oklahoma. Those were the days when our charitable activities not only took in students for general public school education, but also taught practical trades. Printing was a big part of that trade school mission.

Unfortunately, the MH&S print shop closed and TLR had to enlist other printers to produce both the annual *Transactions* and the quarterly *Occasional Bulletin* newsletter. With time and a changing economy, the leadership of TLR found that producing and mailing of these periodicals took an increasing and then onerous toll on the TLR budget.

In late 2008, it was called to our attention that the Austin campus of the Texas School for the Deaf has a trade and technology department (print shop.) This print shop needs publications to train its students. Several local Masonic lodges, as well as the Grand Royal Arch Chapter and Council of Texas, and other nonprofits, now utilize the Deaf School to produce their publications. These nonprofits benefit from less expensive newsletters, while the students benefit from actual, real-world experience.

Our *Transactions* are another issue. Printing, binding and mailing of the annual report of research papers presented, meeting

proceedings, necrology and membership roster evolved into a project that amounted to more than half of the former annual dues collected from each member, or associate.

Worshipful Master Bronk, followed by Worshipful Master Bradly concurred that the membership list of over 1,200 needed to be examined. The rolls included about 500 “members” who had not contributed a dues payment for two or more years.

As a “Special Lodge,” TLR does not report members NPD (Non-Payment of Dues) to Grand Lodge, which would jeopardize one’s membership in his other Blue Lodge affiliations. When a member of TLR discovers he hasn’t paid dues and wants to reaffiliate, no harm done, and the current year’s dues will be all that’s needed to be reinstated.

The formerly excessive press runs and postage for those members who have not been contributing to the lodge have been eliminated. Our membership has stepped up and contributed the moderately increased and much needed dues support, TLR has returned to the financial “black” for the first time in several years. Prospective new members are filing applications at a great rate thanks to several of our Full Members. Thank you, one and all.

At the Hillsboro quarterly meeting, a great, young leadership was installed. Texas Lodge of Research is in good hands as we enter our next 50 years.



Jim Dougherty
Secretary

Fletcher to be Anson Jones Lecturer at Richardson meeting

Texas Lodge of Research and the Annual Anson Jones Lecture return to the Metroplex on June 19-20. Host lodges, Richardson No. 1214 and Eagle No. 41, have promised to roll out the red carpet at their beautiful lodge hall located at 528 Lockwood Drive in Richardson.

Richard E. "Dick" Fletcher, P.G.M. of Vermont, has been selected as the 33rd Anson Jones Lecturer of Texas Lodge of Research. He is best known internationally as the Executive Secretary of the Masonic Service Association, headquartered in Silver Spring, Md., a position he has held for 21 years. His duties in that office include the role of Editor of the *Short Talk Bulletin*, *Emmessay Notes*, and all other publications of the M.S.A. Brother Fletcher regularly visits Grand Lodges throughout North America, speaking and representing the M.S.A. His extensive knowledge of Freemasonry makes him a good representative of the fraternity, and he is frequently interviewed for documentaries produced for various cable television channels.

Brother Fletcher is a native of Maiden, Mass. He attended public schools in Jeffersonville, Vt., and later served in the U.S. Navy. He is a Past Master of Burlington Lodge No. 100 and served as Grand Master of Vermont, 1983-85. He is a 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason (N.M.J.) and a member of the York Rite in Vermont. Bro. Fletcher's lecture is one not to be missed.

Hotel accommodations have been arranged at the Holiday Inn Select at 1655 North Central Expressway. Call them at (877) 786-9480 for reservations and mention you are with Texas Lodge of Research.

The hospitality room will open at the hotel on Friday afternoon at 4 p.m. for members and spouses to mix, mingle, and relax after the traffic on Central Expressway. A Dutch-treat dinner at a nearby restaurant is also planned.

Saturday's activities begin with coffee and doughnuts at the lodge at 9 a.m. followed by the Call to Labor at 10 a.m. Immediately upon adjournment, members of the Editorial Committee will have an open forum on writing a research paper.

A catered luncheon will be provided at the lodge followed by presentation of the 2009 Anson Jones Lecture. Cost of the meal has yet to be determined.



Richard Fletcher

Upcoming Meetings

September 18-19, 2009 Host: Lufkin Lodge No. 669. Lufkin.
January 15-16, 2010 Host: Nederland Lodge No. 1368.
Nederland.

Due to school summer holidays, the next *Occasional Bulletin* (before the Lufkin meeting) will be published in late August. Please check the website (www.texaslodgeofresearch.org) for up-to-date meeting details in the online *OB*.

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