

While Las Palmas-Ponderosa Lodge is currently very fortunate to have as many candidates as it does, things were quite different 50 years ago. On September 12, 1968 a total of 4 men were initiated Entered Apprentice Masons.

Lodge opened at 7:30 and all four candidates were obligated in sequence. The order of this sequence was based upon the date when the Secretary received their petitions. Normally the officers would rotate stations for each candidate so that every officer got a chance to take an advanced station and/or keep fresh on an assigned station from a prior year. This also gave sideliners a reason to learn some of the floor ritual so that they could perform what they learned.

After the last candidate for the evening was obligated, a break was taken with "light" refreshments and for those who smoked, to have a cigarette. While smoking was not allowed in the Lodge room, it was allowed in the foyer and banquet room.

The newly obligated candidates were then returned to the Lodge room for the lecture from the appropriate officer, in the case of the First Degree, the Jr. Warden. With 4 candidates, Lodge would probably close about 11:15. After Lodge closed, everybody would return to the banquet room for "heavy" refreshments before going home. On a good night, we were home by midnight.

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, I reached a milestone in that it was 50 years since I was raised a Master Mason in Las Palmas Lodge. On May 17, at our Stated Meeting, brother Richard Hopper PGM will confer upon me the Golden Veterans Award. It is fitting in that Brother Richard Hopper was the Senior Stewart when I received my first degree in Masonry. I hope that all of you can attend and help me celebrate this occasion.