

My first actual meeting as Master of Las Palmas Lodge was our Stated Meeting on January 17, 1980. Back then, we had a sick committee which made a report at every Stated Meeting. Melvin Weber was the chair of our sick committee. Mel had recently moved from southern California to Fresno after he retired as the head honcho of a Ford Mustang assembly plant and became quite active in Las Palmas and Tehran Shrine Temple.

Back then, as well as today, it was hard to find out if a brother was sick, or in the hospital, unless the brother or his family notified the Lodge. If you were in the hospital, it was common for the Lodge to send a flower arrangement to you. Also reported in open Lodge was the names of three brothers who had passed to the Celestial Lodge above. The brethren stood for a moment of silent meditation in honour of the memory of our fallen brothers.

This being the first Stated Meeting for the newly advanced officers, the outgoing Master, Bobby Bingham, surrendered his Master's lapel pen to me, I then surrendered my Sr. Warden's lapel pen to Gary Starr and Gary Starr surrendered his Jr. Warden's lapel pen to Jim Kleinknight. At that time, the Secretary's salary was \$250 per month and the organist and Tiler were each paid \$25 per meeting for their services. The Tiler set up Lodge and then broke it down.

Our Brother Secretary, Bob Paden, had to post in our Trestleboard the following: Three potted plants disappeared the night of installation and they were loaned to the Lodge to be returned to the florist. We believe they were taken by persons thinking they were part of the table decorations which were to be paid for at \$4.00 each. We would like to have the plants back so we can return them, or we will take your check for \$18 each. It is not polite to mention the names here, so we will expect to hear from the three people soon."

After conferring a second degree on Bro Gene Raymond Page, Lodge closed at 9:45 p.m. and refreshments were served in the banquet room by Bro. Peter Rebensdorf. Bro Page is still alive, but in a care facility. Bro Rebensdorf was a retired baker and had a small bakery in his garage where he specialized in wedding cakes. For Lodge, he made sandwiches, pastries and cakes.

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, we raised Brother Louis Putney. Bro Putney worked with me as an investigator in the DA's office. During the first refreshment before Lodge resumed, Bro Vernon M. Walker sang a solo selection from an opera by Mozart entitled "O Lord, Our God." I have only heard a vocal solo sung at this point in the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree a couple of times, but it is very impressive. The Secretary's minutes indicated that I gave the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree Master's lecture in only 16 minutes. Today it takes me about 20 minutes.