

Since we are in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, many in the news media are making comparisons to the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918. I thought I would do the same for Las Palmas Lodge.

With this thought in mind, I read the minutes of Las Palmas Lodge for 1918 and 1919. While the Spanish flu started in the spring of 1918, we know that the majority of deaths occurred in the late fall and early winter of 1918.

By the end of 1918, Las Palmas Lodge had between 400 and 425 members. Las Palmas-Ponderosa's current membership is 415 so our size today is about what it was in 1918.

In these two years, there is no mention in the minutes of the Spanish flu or the cause of deaths of our members. Deaths of members were reported at both the Stated Meetings and if Lodge opened to perform a Masonic Funeral. (Back then, Lodge had to open in the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, go to refreshment, perform the funeral at either the Lodge, funeral home, or church and then go to the cemetery. The officers then had to return to Lodge and close.) Since we were actively involved in The Great War, there is no way to tell if the deaths of two of our members were from the flu or other military related matters.

We lost the following members:

April 3, 1918: Monroe Erza Johnston

May 15, 1918: Oswald Sylvester Scholz

June, 1918: Benjamin F. Sliter

September, 1918: Herbert P. Robinson died in Canadian Army in France

October, 1918: Ernest Thomas Payne, A. O. Walthall, and R.W. Thorp

January, 1919: Burr Franklin Scott

February, 1919: Joel H. Call died in New York while in U.S. Navy

April, 1919: Charles Sheldon Pierce

May, 1919: Harry Phillips Beaser

November, 1919: Jesse E. Tarbell

While it is not possible at this time to know if any of these deaths were due to the Spanish flu, when we look at the deaths for our Lodge Members of 1915 we have 5, for 1916 we have 1, for 1917 we have 3, for 1920 we have 2 and for 1921 we have 3. From this, it is most likely that Las Palmas Lodge did suffer some deaths of members from the Spanish flu.

Let us hope and pray that with the current pandemic that we do not lose any of our members.





While on the subject of deaths at Las Palmas Lodge, I am pleased to inform you that the name marker for our Las Palmas-Ponderosa plot at Mt. View Cemetery is now installed.