

On January 5, 1961 Las Palmas Lodge opened for the first time in our new Temple. The purpose of this meeting was for the installation of officers for the Masonic year of 1961. It wasn't long before we started to make use of our new kitchen facilities for dinners before our Stated Meeting. The following appeared in one of these early Trestleboards which were mailed out on a monthly basis.



The "Dates" were the wives of our members and it was very common to fill our entire banquet room for these dinners. In the early days we did not have round tables like we have today, we had tables that were 3' x 8' and when not in use were stored under our stage. (Next time you are at Lodge, look at the stage in the banquet room and below the stage are doors that are just over 3' wide so the legs to these tables could be folded up and several tables could be stored in each of these several compartments.)

Mary Perch, the wife of Javon Perch, was soon put in charge of these dinners. For some months there were theme dinners like Ham for the dinner before Easter, Turkey for November and Ham for Christmas with Santa Claus. Past Master's Night usually had a BBQ steak or, better yet, shish-kabob. A definite favorite of Mary was her Salisbury Steak. To give Mary and the Dates a break, dinners were not served during July and August.

To give the wives something to do while their husbands were in Lodge, programs for the wives were arranged in our card room. Once the Stated Meeting was concluded, the member and his wife could drive home together.

Over the time of several decades, it became common for some of our members to leave with their spouses after the dinner and not attend Lodge. As the average age of our members increased, more and more of them stopped participating in our monthly dinners or attending our Stated Meetings.

Five or six years ago, I remember our Inspector telling us that many Lodges were no longer serving dinners before their Stated Meeting as it no longer gave an incentive for members to attend the actual Stated Meeting. At the time, your officers thought this was ridiculous. Well, for us, what we thought was ridiculous several years ago has turned out to be applicable to us today.