



In January of 1981, Brother Gary Starr was installed as the 77<sup>th</sup> Master of Las Palmas Lodge. Jim Kleinknight was our new Sr. Warden and Eldon Cole was Jr. Warden. To me this seems like it was just yesterday. Actually, it was 40 years ago.

A lot has happened in those 40 years, especially with Masonry. I am afraid that most of what has happened to Masonry has not been for the best. If Ponderosa and Clovis Lodge had not consolidated with Las Palmas, the current membership of Las Palmas would only be about 20% of what it was just 40 years ago. Back then, our newly initiated candidates eagerly learned their work and we heard candidate proficiencies several times each month. We had sufficient candidates to hold degrees just about every Thursday night except for our Stated Meetings. Lodges all over the United States are now having problems with candidates learning their proficiencies. In some jurisdiction, proficiencies are no longer required. I hope that never happens in California.

Attendance at Lodge meetings was somewhat better than today but just about every issue of the Las Palmian had some officer pleading for members to attend a meeting. Our Lodge was filled to capacity at our installations. The Fresno-Clovis area had a total of 6 Masonic Lodges and today we have only 2. Our Grand Lodge has made some effort to solve the problem of candidates not wanting to spend the time and effort to learn their work. The candidate proficiency has been substantially reduced in length. There are two problems with this. If a newly raised Master Mason wants to become an officer, he has to learn the long form 3<sup>rd</sup> degree proficiency as well as much of what he should have learned in the long form proficiencies for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degrees. Thus, we do not have a good pool of potential officers to keep our Lodges alive and well.



On May 21, 1981, Bro Bill Wharton received the Hiram Award from Las Palmas Lodge. I am sure that some of you will remember Bro Bill. He was a true masonic scholar and regularly gave talks to our candidates about the history of masonry and how it applied to Masons today. Bro Bill was also our Treasurer for many years.

In July, Bro George Posson PM got the ash wood and Bro. Ed Carpenter PM made the picture frames for our Past Masters in our club room. In 2015, I purchased more ash wood and together with a friend made the picture frames for all of the Past Masters of Clovis Lodge.