

CLAUD L. AUSTIN LODGE NO. 1450

Donnie Swango, Secretary

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February, 2014

STATED MEETING

The next Stated Meeting is Monday, February 24th, at noon in the Green Room of the Scottish Rite Cathedral. Brother Don Comedy Executive Director of the Texas Masonic Charities Foundation will be our guest and provide information on just how their program works. We will also receive R:W: Christopher D, Livingston DDGM on his Official Visit. Plan to be there. Lunch, always good, will follow.

FESTIVE BOARD

The Fall Festive Board was outstanding, and we keep on having record attendance. We continue to be doing something really good.

The Winter Festive Board is scheduled for Friday, February 21st. Let me remind you that that Zola works only on RSVP's for the Festive Boards, and cannot and will not assume that anyone is coming without a timely RSVP....which includes, more especially, all the officers of the Lodge, elective and appointed. He appreciates your understanding and cooperation. As of this Newsletter, however, there are many who have not responded. It's up to you, Brethren!

Zola Blicher zbblick@aol.com 972-661-8977

HOLIDAY BRUNCH

The annual Holiday Brunch was another outstanding event. The DAC did a great job on the set up and the food was fantastic....we have heard nothing but kudos regarding the new menu and quality. The entertainment was once again provided by "Variations"...the great choral group from Woodrow Wilson High School. Those kids put on a yet another, and lively, show.

Portrait-type pictures were again available for the asking and roses were presented to all of the ladies

present.....signature offerings by Stephen Apple, Sr. PM.

Brother Billie Cox PM received his 50-year Grand Lodge Award, aptly pinned on by his wife Linda.

Bet Ya Didn't Know

Did you know the saying "God willing and the creek don't rise" was in reference to the Creek Indians and not a body of water? It was written by Benjamin Hawkins in the late 18th century. He was a politician and Indian diplomat. While in the south, Hawkins was requested by the President of the U.S. to return to Washington . In his response, he was said to write, "God willing and the Creek don't rise." Because he capitalized the word "Creek" it is deduced that he was referring to the Creek Indian tribe and not a body of water.

....and for the ladies....

Personal hygiene left much room for improvement. As a result, many women and men had developed acne scars by adulthood. The women would spread bee's wax over their facial skin to smooth out their complexions. When they were speaking to each other, if a woman began to stare at another woman's face she was told, 'mind your own bee's wax.' Should the woman smile, the wax would crack, hence the term 'crack a smile'. In addition, when they sat too close to the fire, the wax would melt. Therefore, the expression 'losing face.'

INFIRMERY

Brother Larry Winkle PM-Treasurer continues from one episode to another - knee replacements, followed by a roto roter of a carotid artery. And now, I am told, is trying to get rid of kidney stones. Enough, Brother!

Brother HB Paksoy JD is still recovering from two surgeries on his right leg as a result of an auto accident last fall. Some things take a long time to heal and I guess his leg is one of them.

LODGE ACTION

We all wish you both a speedier recovery!

ANNUAL COMMUNICATION GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS

Though Mother Nature failed to cooperate in a big way – with ice covering the ground and frigid temperatures – the Grand Lodge convened as usual and, as written, “There were the usual recommendations and resolutions that were discussed and voted on.” Some passed, some didn’t – some things never change. Claud Austin Lodge was very well represented and we are proud of our new Grand Senior Warden R:W: Wendell Miller PM, our new Grand Junior Deacon W: Ed Kirkpatrick APM and our new Grand Senior Steward Billy Ray Dickey APM-JW. Claud L. Austin Lodge congratulates you all, Brethren.

ROSTER CHANGES

The following is current information:

Newest member:

HOWARD, H. BUCHANAN “Buck”
SPOUSE: Katharine
5907 Meadowcrest
Dallas, TX 75230
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FYI....new, updated Rosters are in the works and will be sent by email when ready. Those who do not have email capability, will receive one in the mail (with 3-hole punch should you want to get a notebook to keep it in).

THE ECONOMY IS SOOOO BAD...

- * I got a pre-declined credit card in the mail.
- * CEO's are now playing miniature golf.
- * Exxon-Mobil laid off 25 Congressmen.
- * I saw a Mormon with only one wife.
- * I bought a toaster oven and my free gift was a bank.
- * Angelina Jolie adopted a child from America.
- * Motel Six won't leave the light on anymore.
- * A picture is now only worth 200 words.

At the November Stated Meeting, there was much discussion relating to the size (membership) of our Lodge. Because this Lodge was formed to be a “Table Lodge” holding Festive Boards to practice Masonic conviviality; and because of the physical structure of the “Table” – head table and two columns; and because of the number of Dining Members that attend the Festive Boards, the Festive Boards were becoming unwieldy, especially regarding decorum. For the past several years, as our membership was nearing or at 75, the Officers had “decided” to unofficially limit the size to 75.

At this meeting, we were presented with a Petition for Affiliation which would make the membership 76. To some, if we were to accept a Petition for an additional member at this time, we would open the door for more and our Festive Boards would grow out of hand plus we would find it hard to find a facility with sufficient room to handle our quarterly dinners.

After lengthy discussion, the Lodge voted to, in fact, limit the membership to 75 members – but allowing this one-time exception to breach that number. From now on, we will have a first come, first served waiting list for new members or affiliations.

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FEBRUARY

21 ST	Festive Board	DAC
24 TH	Stated Meeting	Green Room

MAY

9 th	PM Night	DAC
27 th	Stated Meeting	Green Room
30 th	Festive Board	DAC

JUNE

30 th	Installation	Green Room
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AUGUST

25 th	Stated Meeting	Green Room
29 th	Festive Board	DAC

DID I READ THAT SIGN RIGHT?

**In a London department store:
BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS**

THE RAILWAY MAN

This was sent to me by a close friend and Brother from Adelaide, South Australia. I thought it was interesting, as a true story, and involved an Australian Mason interred by the Japanese during WW II.

A feature length movie with the same title was released last fall – starring Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman.

Good afternoon. I was attracted to the posting on 'Pro Boards' that you were delivering a lecture on Freemasonry in Japanese POW Camps.

You may be interested in the following.

I was fortunate that when I was initiated into Freemasonry in 1976 there where a number of freemasons in Lodge St David who had served in the armed forces during the conflict with the Japanese.

They bought to the lodge many of the disciplines that were instilled into them during their time of service, many of which, as is painfully obvious in many lodges have disappeared, e.g. the delivery of ritual. The impact these people had on us as young Freemasons was enduring.

Among those members who readily come to mind are:-

- RW Bro. (Brigadier) Len Ferrar PDGM,
- W.Bro (Sergeant) Ian Kennedy PSGD
- W. Bro (Rank unknown) Chas Newman
- Bro (Captain) Don Westwood.

W. Bro Chas Newman and Bro Don Westwood where both POW's at the infamous Changi Prison. Both received 50 Year Service Jewels from Lodge St David.

In recent times I attempted to purchase the original 'Attendance Book' of the 'lodge' that met in the Changi Prison. I missed out by a day. The brother who purchased the original got it for \$90.00 and it is preserved for posterity in Canberra. The purchaser, W Bro. Neil Wynns-Morse provided me with an accurate facsimile of the document and that copy is available for viewing in the Grand Lodge Library at North Terrace. Looking through you can easily identify W. Bro Newman's signature.

Bro Don Westwood was a man who commanded great respect and I experienced many enjoyable 'cups of tea' with him and his caregiver in the latter stages of his life. One day he told me one of the most fascinating stories I have ever heard. He always described his time as a POW as 'I was a guest of the Emperor'. I have previously, verbally, shared this story with VW Bro. George Woolmer and he said at the time that the story should be recorded, so to you V.W. Bro George this e-mail is copied to you.

Captain Westwood was attached to a transport division of the Australian Army which was captured.

He was among the many unfortunate souls that spent time working on the infamous Burma Railway. The prisoners had a radio. A closely guarded secret, they kept up with what was happening via BBC Overseas service. The radio was powered by a 'wet' battery. Eventually the battery died and of course so did the radio. They devised a plan to get a new battery. That battery was the one installed in the 'rice truck'. Each day a Japanese vehicle would take a meager ration of rice to the workers in a large cauldron. It was agreed that a number of them would forgo their ration and leave enough rice to cover the battery they intended to steal. Unbeknown to the Japanese guards the battery was removed from the truck, placed in the cauldron and covered with rice to conceal its presence. There was much ado when the truck wouldn't start. It didn't take long for the Japs to work out that the truck battery was 'gone'. They forced the prisoners to push the truck the seven miles back to the camp. But, they got their battery!

As time went by they discovered that many of them were to be shipped out to another camp on an Island in the region. They dismantled the radio and some of the prisoners were given a part of the radio to conceal and get it to the next destination. They each knew who had what and the plan was to remove the component from anyone who died on the journey so that the radio would not be lost.

All of the components arrived at their next destination but alas, they could not source a battery.

Eventually a POW arrived at the camp who knew how to hand wind a generator. This was done and the first news they received was the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Bro Westwood continued the story. He told me that the Camp Commandant

had received orders from Tokyo that all of the prisoners were to be machine gunned. Even in these horrific times the Commandant refused to obey the order. Why? Prior to the war he had received a higher education at Methodist University, North Carolina U.S.A. It appeared that some of the Christian teachings of that institution had remained in his mind. But unfortunately for some, not enough. he was tried for War Crimes and executed by the Australian Tribunal system.

In private life and when he returned to Australia (Adelaide) Bro. Westwood was a successful Insurance Broker. In his latter years he resided in an aged care complex at Erindale. His unit contained a large library and was very comfortable. He owned a maroon Rolls Royce. Unable to drive he allowed his teenage grandson to take him for drives. He laughed when he told me that this grandson always went down streets where he knew his mates would be and he took great pleasure in waving at them from Grandpa's Rolls.

Lodge St David regretted the passing of this great man and ensured that he was well cared for by his family who gave wonderful support to a wonderful man.

R.K. Casson PGM
PM Lodge St David

THESE DAYS AND TIMES

Only weeks after leaving office, Barack Obama discovers a leak under his sink, so he calls Joe the Plumber to come out and fix it. Joe drives to Obama's new house, which is located in a very exclusive gated community where all the residents make "more than" \$250,000 per year. Joe arrives and takes his tools into the house. Joe is led to the guest bathroom that contains the leaky pipe under the sink. Joe assesses the problem and tells Obama that it's an easy repair that will take less than 10 minutes. Obama asks Joe how much it will cost. Joe checks his rate chart and says, "\$9,500." "What?! \$9,500?" Obama asks, stunned, "But you said it's an easy repair!"

Joe says, "Yes, but what I do is charge those who make \$250,000 per year a much higher amount so I can fix the plumbing of poorer people for free," explains Joe. "This has always been my philosophy. As a matter of fact, I lobbied the Democrat Congress, who passed this philosophy

into law. Now all plumbers must do business this way. It's known as 'Affordable Plumbing Act of 2014.' I'm Surprised you haven't heard of it."

In spite of that, Obama tells Joe there's no way he's paying that much for a small plumbing repair, so Joe leaves. Obama spends the next hour flipping through the phone book calling for another plumber, but he finds that all other plumbing businesses in the area have gone out of business. Not wanting to pay Joe's price, Obama does nothing and the leak goes unrepaired for several more days. A week later the leak is so bad that Obama has had to put a bucket under the sink. Michelle is not happy, as she has guests arriving the next morning. The bucket fills up quickly and has to be emptied every hour and there's a risk that the room will flood, so Obama calls Joe and pleads with him to return.

Joe goes back to Obama's house, looks at the leaky pipe, checks his new rate chart and says, "Let's see, this will now cost you \$21,000."

Obama quickly fires back, "What! A few days ago you told me it would cost \$9,500!" Joe explains, "Well, because of the 'Affordable Plumbing Act,' a lot of wealthier people are learning how to maintain and take care of their own plumbing, so there are fewer payers into the plumbing exchanges. As a result, the price I have to charge wealthy people, like you, keeps rising. Not only that, but for some reason the demand for plumbing work by those who get it for free has skyrocketed! There's a long waiting list of those who need repairs but the amount we get doesn't cover our costs. This unfortunately has put a lot of my fellow plumbers out of business, they're not being replaced, and nobody is going into the plumbing business because they know they can't make any money at it. I'm hurting too, all thanks to greedy rich people like you who won't pay their fair share."

Obama says, "Joe! This is really bad. If all the rich people learn how to fix and maintain their own plumbing and you can't charge the poorer people, you'll be broke! What will you do then?"

Joe replies, "I may have to run for office!"

"You get the best efforts from others not by lighting a fire beneath them, but by building a fire within."

-Bob Nelson