

What follows is a more detailed review of Monterey's history, and was prepared on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the Lodge, in 1996.

### **125 Years of Masonry in Monterey**

A Masonic Lodge is, in a very real sense, people-not a building. Thus, on the celebration of the 125th anniversary of Monterey Lodge, we take the time to look back at the history of the Lodge-and in doing so we look at the men and their times.

#### **The Lodge and its Beginnings**

Monterey Lodge is a product of the desire for Masons to have the opportunity to get together as friends and develop fraternal ties-well regulated by the spirit and tenets of Freemasonry. Monterey, in 1871, was a small community centered on its excellent natural harbor-but otherwise somewhat isolated. Compared to the environment in which we live today, most small communities were relatively isolated, since distances we ignore today were much more important in the world of the 1870's, where the horse was the common mode of transportation.

The principal commerce of Monterey in 1871 was cattle, hides, tallow, tan bark and whale oil. The harbor was the center of commerce, as sailing ships bringing goods and picking up the local products were the primary means of commercial shipping. Wild game was plentiful in the hills (many now covered in homes), bears came to the outskirts of Monterey-and the ever-present wild geese had already found their refuge in El Estero.

In the 1870's, Masonry had already become well established in central California. Local Masonic Lodges included Texas Lodge No. 46 (San Juan Bautista), Santa Cruz Lodge No. 48, Confidence Lodge No. 203 (Castroville), and Salinas Lodge No. 204. But--- in a day when a Man's best transportation was his horse these Lodges were far away-especially in the winter with the wind and the rain and the ever-present mud.

Winter in Monterey, as we all know, begins to make itself felt sometime in November or December. The typical beautiful clear fall weather changes in tone-and the wind and rain make themselves felt. In 1870, without the convenience of transportation and paved roads, the weather was more than just a new season-it meant cold, wet, and mud-and quickly made travel very inconvenient. Even today-when we have one of our wetter winters; we are all beginning to yearn for nicer weather by the time February rolls around. The situation was no different in February of 1871. Thus-it is not surprising that the earliest written record of Monterey Lodge records that on February 20, 1871 a group of local Master Masons "assembled at the office of Bro. W. M. R. Parker at the County Court House in the place and on the day above written at 7 o'clock p.m. for

the purpose of taking the necessary measures for the establishment of a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, viz: Bro. W. M. R. Parker Bro. Jonathan Wright " J. R. Hadsell " Honore' Escolle " D. S. Gregory " Samuel F. Giel " Alanson Coplin " Robert B. Warren " B. V. Sargent " T. G. Lambert "On motion of Bro. Wright, Bro. T. G. Lambert was called to the chair and Bro. W. M. R. Parker was elected secretary. "The Chairman stated the object of the meeting and suggested that the first necessary measure would be the procurement of a suitable lodge-room, when after some discussion on the subject Bro. Escolle stated that he held a lease of a building well adapted for Masonic Lodge purposes, when upon motion of Bro. Parker the following named brethren were appointed a committee to secure a lease of the building and make the necessary repairs and alterations. viz: Bros W. M. R. Parker " Honore Escolle Committee on Lodge Room " T. G. Lambert " J. R. Hadsell "It was upon motion of Bro. Parker ordered that the Lodge now sought to be established be called the Monterey Lodge. "On motion of Bro. Wright it was ordered that the meeting now proceed by ballot to nominate a Master, a Senior Warden, and a Junior Warden to be named in the petition for a dispensation. Bros. W. M. R. Parker and J. Wright were appointed tellers, who having received and canvassed the votes announced that the following named brethren were chosen for such nomination. viz: Bro. T. G. Lambert; Master " W. M. R. Parker; S. Warden " Bradley V. Sargent; J. Warden "On Motion of Bro. R. B. Warren, Bro. T. G. Lambert was requested to prepare a petition for presentation to the Grand Master and lay it before the next meeting. There being no further business the meeting adjourned subject to the call of the chairman."

One of the great elements of Masonry is that it brings together men of 'every country, sect, and opinion.....Men who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.' This was particularly true of this first beginning of Monterey Lodge. Brothers Parker, Escolle and Wright were members of Texas Lodge No. 46. Brothers Lambert, Sargent, Coplin and Hadsell were from Confidence Lodge No. 203. Brother Warren was a member of Composite Lodge No. 30 (Canada). Beyond their Masonic affiliations, these men came from dramatically varied backgrounds.

Brother Escolle was a Frenchman who came to Monterey, and was a landowner, merchant, baker, and amateur potter. Early newspaper accounts indicate that in 1871 he sent a shipment of 5000 flower pots, manufactured in Monterey, to the San Francisco market. Newspapers also indicate that at one time he held a Spanish land grant which included the whole of Carmel-by-the Sea.

Brother Parker was a native of Boston, who first came to California in 1856, traveled a great deal around the state, and eventually came to Castroville and took up farming. Later, he moved down to Monterey, and became a well known public servant, having at various time

served as County Clerk, Under Sheriff, County and Probate Judge. He eventually ended up in private Law practice, and was regarded as a highly accomplished authority on the old Spanish land boundaries, the Spanish system of Jurisprudence, and an authority on land titles in central California.

Brother Lambert (Captain Lambert) was recorded in historical and biographical records as 'One of the many interesting men of Monterey.....for years one of the potent upbuilders of this beautiful town, but erstwhile a seasoned salt with many years of practical experience upon the deep.' He was a whaler born in Martha's Vineyard. He spent over 20 years as a whaler all over the world, both about the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and in 1869, when he gave up his life at sea, settled in Monterey. He then entered the lumber business (Lambert & Snively Lumber Company). In addition, he served as the government custodian of the old custom-house for over 30 years, and, as was recorded in histories written in 1903 'He is one of the foremost promoters of a movement to erect a monument to John Drake Sloat, and meetings for the furtherance of this design are held in his home.'

Brother Jonathan Wright was a genuine pioneer-one of the early pioneers in California. Brother Wright, and another man named William Richardson, drove the first wagon train that made it way overland from the Missouri River via Salt Lake (1846). They crossed into California on the Bear River in Yuba County. After many travels and occupations, including serving under General Fremont, mining for gold, and working in the redwood timber business, he came to Monterey, became the lighthouse keeper at Point Pinos for a time, did some whaling and eventually established a ranch in Carmel Valley. He was mentioned as the "bear hunter of Robinson Canyon" in "Cathedral in the Sun" (by Anne Fisher), and historic records indicate that Robert Louis Stevenson spent a time at Wright's Cabin in Robinson Canyon recovering from a serious illness.

Brother Sargent was a highly respected businessman in the stock business, and was already a long-time resident of Monterey at the time of the forming of Monterey Lodge. In addition to his business activities, he was extensively involved in local politics, and served as a State Senator in the legislature of 1887.

Brother Geil was a highly respected Corporate and Criminal Law attorney. He fought in the Civil War, and later moved to Monterey where he opened his law offices. As a defense lawyer he had a major reputation as 'A splendid type of the strong and gifted in human endeavor, with a mind attuned to justice and broadened by association with all sorts and conditions of men,' and of forty murder cases only 6 were said to have resulted in convictions, while in defending persons accused of lesser crimes, he was said to have secured the release of more than 150 accused. On the other hand, when later serving as District Attorney, he was credited with

successful prosecution of 'the desperate Miguel Moreno' of the Vasquez band of robbers and murderers.

### **The Early Years**

The first thirty years of Monterey Lodge were a period of close fraternal ties amongst the brethren and their families. The Lodge membership slowly grew to approximately 50 members-a membership level that remained stable until just past the turn of the century. As we now look to the rapid approach of the 21st century, it is interesting to look back at a few excerpts from meeting minutes of the Lodge during its first 30 years-especially at the financial and social workings of the Lodge. The following are excerpts from Lodge meeting minutes of this period:

March 1876..... "Bro. A. Manuel gave notice that from this date the rent of this hall would be at the rate of \$15 0/100 pr. month, and Bro. H. Escolle was appointed a Committee to confer with the owner and make the best possible terms for the future use of the hall."

March 1881....."On motion, our WM Bro. B. V. Sargent was appointed as a committee of one to negotiate a loan of \$50.00 from Bro. Escolle for the Lodge, paying therefore a fair rate of interest giving as security a Lodge note. A communication from Bro. Jouson donating \$17.00 to the Lodge was read and the sec'y was instructed to forward Bro. Jouson a letter of thanks for his extremely generous donation."

February 1886..... "Brother Hadsell's bill of 1.00 for washing aprons was referred to committee. ....Whereas this lodge has been presented with a beautiful and costly alter cushion by Mrs. N. W. Spaulding, designed and ordered by her, as a mark of her fraternal regard for the members of this lodge, therefore be it resolved that we, as a lodge and as individual masons hereby tender to the generous donor our sincere and heartfelt thanks for her elegant and appropriate gift ever hoping that she will be safely guided by the great light of the fraternity now being supported by this magnificent work of her design."

January 1891....."The committee to whom had been referred the funeral expenses of Brother George L Harris reported that the widow asked nothing from the Lodge but if the Lodge saw fit to pay the funeral expenses they would be accepted....."

December 1895....."(on the death of a brother Mason) Resolved: That we tender his afflicted children and relatives our sincere condolences, and our earnest sympathy in their affliction at the loss of one who was a kind and indulgent father, a good citizen, and upright man, and a zealous and useful member of this fraternity....."

February 1896....."A bill of \$6.00 was presented bro. Brother Hilly for medicine furnished Mrs. Brown of Seaside, the widow of a Master Mason....."

April 1897....."Brother S. S. Boyle offered the following preamble and resolution, which was unanimously adopted: Whereas: A petition for the issue of a dispensation to form and open a new lodge at Pacific Grove, in the county of Monterey, has been presented to this lodge for its recommendations, and Whereas: It is known to this Lodge that the signers of said petition, 13 in number, are all Master Masons in good standing, and that a safe and suitable Lodge room has been provided for their meetings, it is resolved: that the establishment of said new Lodge is of manifest propriety, and will conduce to the good of the order, and that this Lodge recommends to the Grand Master the granting of the dispensation prayed for in said petition."

October 1901....."We, your committee appointed to prepare suitable resolutions of sympathy in respect to the death of our late Brother, William McKinley, President of the United States, beg to present the following resolutions and recommend their adoption.....our heads are bowed with shame that he whose heart beat responsive to the cry of the poor, whose hand was ever outstretched to help the people of his beloved country, whose watchword was "Liberty and Fraternity", should, in free America, be stricken down by the hand of an assassin....."

The First thirty years of Monterey Lodge was also the end of an important era for the lodge-for it was toward the end of this period that many of the founding members laid down their tools-among them brothers Hadsell (1893), Escolle (1895) .

### **Into the 20th Century**

The dawn of the 20th century was a time of prominence and growth for Monterey Lodge. Under the able leadership of our first Master, Capt Lambert, -- and with tremendous support from many Masonic and non-Masonic organizations and individuals -- the Sloat Monument was conceived and erected (for more on this, see the foreword to this commemorative booklet). IN the same time period, the membership of Monterey Lodge undertook to at last move from rented quarters and build their own Masonic Hall-which we still occupy and revere today.

Work on the Monterey Masonic hall was commenced in 1912, upon appointment of a committee of brothers R. H. Maddock, H. A. Olmstead and H. Severance to look into the possibility of erecting a hall. Eventually, the Lodge purchased a lot from the David Jacks Corporation upon which the current hall was erected. Plans for the hall were prepared in 1914, and the new Masonic Hall was finally completed in 1915. Those of us who love the unique and inspiring design and artwork of our Lodge room owe a special debt of gratitude to Brothers Severance, Lacy and Roberts, who among them designed some of the furniture, as well as the marvelous decorative designs on the walls. We also owe a great deal to the perseverance of the

brethren in paying for the new hall-which cost approximately \$10,000 to build (a tremendous amount in 1915), and which the brethren successfully paid off by late 1945.

The Growth of Masonry in Monterey One of the great topics of interest in many Masonic lodges these days is declining membership. Our perceptions of membership are fascinating- largely because we are all so heavily influenced by our own history and experiences. On this, the occasion of Monterey's 125th anniversary, we became curious about the membership history of the lodge and did some membership research. What this research shows is probably not unique to Monterey Lodge-and dramatically shows how events of our lives shape our organizations and our perceptions.

During the late 19th century, Monterey Lodge held a fairly stable membership of just under fifty brethren-without showing any appreciable growth. As the Lodge entered the 20th century it began a slow period of growth, doubling its membership by about 1920, and finally leveling off at about 140 members by about 1940. In recent years the membership of Monterey Lodge continues to be in the range of 150-160 members. This is not particularly remarkable. But-what is remarkable and thought provoking, is the changes that Monterey experienced immediately following World War Two. Immediately at the end of World War II - and the span of years extending through the Korean War, Monterey Lodge experienced an unprecedented rate of growth-nearly doubling its membership in less than a decade, and finally growing to over 300 members by the late 1950s. Interviewing members who joined in this period, we learn that brotherhood seems to have been the key. Many of the men who lived through the second world war seemed to have a great appreciation for brotherhood-and Monterey Lodge became not just a place of meetings and ritual-but a place where men gathered to play cards, socialize and simply enjoy the fraternal atmosphere of the membership. Today, unfortunately (but perhaps inevitably) we see our membership gradually returning to the Pre-WWII levels, as our many fine brothers from that era 'travel upon the level of time to that undiscovered country from whose borne no traveler returns....'

### **The Post-War Years**

The period immediately following WWII was indeed a time a dramatic growth for Monterey Lodge. Members who became Masons in that period related that the Lodge was an important part of their social lives outside their own families. One of the brethren who contributed to this history related that he became interested in Masonry when a friend (who was also a Mason) used to drop by his home after work every now and then and invite him out to have dinner and socialize with some of his buddies.

'He came by my place, picked me up, and we walked down to the Masonic Lodge. The fellows had dinner cooking in the kitchen [which was on the third floor of the building back then] and they welcomed me right into the group. We all pitched in and had a good dinner, and I met lots of really nice fellows. After dinner, we cleaned up the kitchen and had a great evening. Some of the guys got a card game going, some of the rest of us played ping-pong. It wasn't long before me and several more of my friends joined the Lodge.'

This was the heart of the matter in those days just after the war-a place for buddies to get together, socialize and have good healthy fun. Television was still unusual and expensive, and the Lodge was a genuine alternative for Men who wanted to get together and have fun. While this was a period of dramatic growth for the Lodge, it was also a time when the brethren were very much intent on ensuring that the growth of the Lodge did not occur at the expense of the quality and integrity of Masonry. While the Lodge had an unprecedented increase in the number of applicants for the degrees of Masonry, all applicants were scrutinized and many were turned away as well.

On June 12, 1946, the Lodge was the scene of a major celebration, as more than 100 members, families and friends gathered to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of Monterey Lodge. The following year, the brethren turned their attentions to assuring the continued preservation and improvement of the Lodge facilities. In August of that year (1947) a committee was appointed to develop and implement building renovations. These included addition of a fire escape to the Lodge room, new central heating, and a plan to renovate the ground floor (which up to that time had been used as rental property, instead of for Lodge activities). The highlight of the downstairs renovations was the creation of a new kitchen and banquet room, on the ground floor, which was dedicated on October 27, 1948 (the banquet room we still use today, although further renovated and improved over the years).

The late 1940's was also a time of greater awareness of the importance of seeing to the legal and financial status of the Lodge and its facilities. The first Temple Corporation was formed as a non-profit organization in late 1947, and the ownership of the Lodge building was officially transferred to the Monterey Lodge Temple Corporation in April 1948. This same year the brethren voted to increase their annual dues to \$20 to help offset the costs of the many repairs and improvements being made to the building. This increased attention to the necessity of ensuring the long-term health of both the Lodge building, and the Lodge itself continued on into the 1950's. On October 18, 1955 the Lodge received a generous bequest from brother Ernest Scholze in the form of 200 shares of PG&E stock (This stock remains to this day as a permanent investment of the Lodge, with earnings from this investment contributing to the operating expense of the Lodge).

The Early 1950's saw yet another interesting development, as Monterey Lodge approached its postwar peak in membership-Company Degrees. On several occasions brethren who were all employed by the same company joined to fill the stations of the Lodge and confer degrees on one of their co-workers. Two notable "Company Degree" teams that presented degrees in Monterey Lodge were from Pacific Express, and PG&E.

Changing Society and the 1960's

As the Lodge approached its 90th year of existence, change continued to be seen. In 1958, the Lodge appointed a committee to investigate the possibility of purchasing a television for the entertainment of the brethren. The committee spent some time investigating, and in November 1958 the Lodge appropriated the (then) large sum of \$220.70 to purchase a television for the Lodge. The time period of the late 1950's and early 1960's saw additional significant changes. An Assembly of Rainbow Girls was sponsored and began to meet regularly at the Lodge. The early 1960's also saw changes both subtle and significant in the Lodge itself-as the title of the guardian at the door of the Lodge changed from "Tyler", to "Tiler"-and, in 1961, brother Bill Maxey was installed as Tiler-a post he faithfully discharged for an incredible 27 years!

The late 1960's were a time of growing attention to the Family of Masonry, with many activities not only among the Lodge Brethren, but also the Rainbow Girls and the Monterey Eastern Star. The activities included not only meetings, social evenings and the like-but also annual barbecues and outings (in reviewing records, the writer came across an interesting note that Worshipful Master George Reed announced on that the Monterey Lodge and Monterey Eastern Star joint barbecue would be held at the Water Company filtration plant on Sunday June 8, 1969-our very same brother George Reed, PM, who, with his lovely wife Louise, continue together in their strong support of Masonry and the Eastern Star to this date, 27 years later).

### **The Lodge at 100 Years**

In June of 1971, the following was entered into the records of the Secretary of the Lodge: "Special Meeting of Grand Lodge F&AM of California Hall of Monterey Lodge #217 F&AM --- ---- June 26, 1971 "The GRAND LODGE, F&AM of CALIFORNIA, assembled in the Monterey Masonic Hall on the date above written at 1:30 p.m., and there were present - The MOST WORSHIPFUL HERBERT A. HEUBNER, GRAND MASTER, and other GRAND OFFICERS, who filled the various offices. "The MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER announced that GRAND LODGE had convened to commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of MONTEREY LODGE #217, and to officiate at the Cornerstone Laying Ceremony of the new Del Rey Oaks City Hall. This to be followed by an Anniversary Banquet at 7:00 o'clock P.M.

"Following the Cornerstone Laying Ceremony, the GRAND LODGE was closed in due form. "The One Hundredth Anniversary Banquet held at the Mark Thomas Hyatt House, was very well attended. The WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER and GRAND LODGE OFFICERS were honored. Also, Brother Howard D. Severance - Worshipful Master of Monterey Lodge for the years 1900, 1910 and 1916. Also honored was Brother Horace W. Wardle who served as Master of the LODGE in 1938. "The first meeting of MONTEREY LODGE, while under dispensation, pending the granting of a Charter, was held on June 28, 1871. The LODGE HALL was at that time located in the McKinley House, a two story building on the Northwest corner of Pacific and Jefferson streets. Worshipful Master Thomas G. Lambert presiding. On October 25, 1871, the GRAND LODGE OF CALIFORNIA Officially granted the Charter"

One of the great values in celebrating the major milestones of an organization is not only the look backward, the celebration of the great things which have been accomplished, but also that such celebrations generate new interest in ensuring the continued health and vitality of the organization. This was precisely what happened after the 75th anniversary of Monterey Lodge, and, again, after the 100th anniversary celebration. In the years following, the attention and efforts of the brethren of Monterey Lodge showed a renewed focus on again raising and appropriating money to again make repairs and upgrades to the Lodge facilities. Improved electrical wiring, roofing repairs and other significant efforts to extend the longevity of the facilities were implemented as the Lodge invested thousands of dollars in the facilities. The brethren also continued in the quest to assure the long term financial stability of the Lodge through added purchases of PG&G stock to be held as a source of earnings for future Lodge expenses.

### **Youth, Frog Jumping, an Acacia, and Brotherhood**

Support to family activities continued to grow, and in the 1970's a highlight of summer activities because the Annual Masonic-Knights of Columbus steak barbecues. The growth of family activities continued, and by 1975 the Monterey area was fortunate to have a strong involvement in youth activities supported by all the local lodges, including Monterey, with simultaneous successful operation of Jobs Daughters Bethels, Rainbow Girls Assemblies, and the Order of Demolay. And-for those who might be concerned that Masonry could be too dry and informal, it is comforting to note that on August 6, 1975, Monterey Lodge formally voted to authorize the gigantic sum of \$2, and to create a committee, to enter a Frog Jumping contest, said contest to be held on August 30 (Minutes of September 3 indicate that "A report on the Frog-Jumping Contest was made by the assigned committee" - but there is no indication of how our Masonic Frog performed).

Characteristic of the continuing bonds between concordant bodies of Masonry was an event of the summer of 1974, when brothers of the York Rite of Masonry of Watsonville presented Monterey Lodge with a beautiful Masters Pedestal cloth, entitled "Wisdom." This presentation was made in honor of the late Donald H. Smith, Past Master of Monterey Lodge, and continues to grace the pedestal in the East to this day.

The year 1979 saw yet another important contribution to the particular character and décor of the Lodge room. In that year, an Acacia in the Philippines was cut that had probably just begun to grow about the time of the formation of Monterey Lodge. A boyhood friend of our won brother, Neofito "Pete" Santos obtained the wood of this century old acacia and carved from it a set of beautiful collars for the two pillars at the entrance to the Lodge room. These collars, which are mounted near the top of the pillars, beautifully depict a design of Networks, Lilies, and Pomegranates, and continue to this day to grace the pillars of the Lodge room. Brother Pete's boyhood friend also carved a large and beautiful handled drinking mug, ornate with the Square and Compass, which for many years served to collect donations at social events, and is now on display in one of the display cases on the stairs leading to the Lodge room.

As the Lodge moved into the 1980's significant changes began to show themselves in both the demographics of the Lodge, and in the leisure time activities in general. The average age of the membership increased significantly as the membership surge of the post-WWII period approached retirement age. A key element of the history of Monterey Lodge entering the 1980's was that the Lodge grew to encompass several generations to an even greater extent than it had in the Past. Lodge activities simultaneously featured a strong contingent of retired/near retired members who first became members after the War, a second generation of men born following WWII, and continued strong involvement of the next generation-the Jo-Ra-De membership (Jobs Daughters Bethel 223, Rainbow Girls Assembly 22, and the Monterey Peninsula Order of Demolay). While the activities of the membership focused more on social evenings, concordant bodies (such as Eastern Star), and the youth activities, the activities that characterized the period following WWII - the ping pong, card games, and focus of the Lodge as a place of social evenings - disappeared as other activities and technology (the VCR among other things) changed the Society around us. At the same time, the continued support of the Lodge for youth activities began to spread into non-Masonic youth activities, as the membership looked at ways to assist in public schools and other community activities. By the late 1980's, Monterey Lodge members and their wives were actively involved in providing adult leadership not only for the Demolay chapter which met in Monterey, but also the Jobs Daughter Bethel which met at Pacific Grove Lodge. In this same time, Monterey Masons joined with other local Masons to assist in operating

food and drink concessions for the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP) as a means of earning operating funds to assure the continued success of the

### **Masonic Youth groups - Strengthening our Ties to our Community**

By the early 1990's, the Rainbow Girls were no longer active in Monterey, but Jobs Daughters and Demolay continued with strong support from Monterey. The Lodge continued also to look outward more and more to the community in general. The early 1990's saw a more formalized approach to the community, with the formation of the Monterey Lodge Community Service long-range committee. The membership of Monterey Lodge have a long history of significant involvement in activities of value to the world around us, through Masonic Youth, Scottish Rite, York Rite, High Twelve and the Shrine. The Community Service long-range committee was created to take this involvement yet another step by focusing on purely local Monterey activities where the presence of Monterey Lodge could be felt directly in the Community. Thus, the early 1990's have seen Monterey become involved in distribution of school boxes to local schools with an anti-drug message, participation in the annual Monterey Christmas tree lighting event, and support of the Annual Monterey July 4 party by providing free balloons, and by operating a booth selling the traditional "kids" summertime favorites - Cotton Candy and Popcorn. The Lodge has also given its support to various other activities such as junior lifeguard programs, and provision of newspaper subscriptions to classrooms for current events education programs.

Thus, in many ways, as we reach our 125th Anniversary of Masonry in Monterey, we look back on the past with pride, but we look forward to the future as a continued strong organization for the preservation of Masonry and all the good things Masonry stands for-and particularly our place in the Community.