



The Trestle Board



The Voice of Franklin's Masonic Bodies

Volume 5, Issue 7

July 2010

Civil War Degree Team, Hiram Lodge #7 by Brother Art Milbert

The Civil War left our nation scarred and tattered with wounds that linger still today. But examples of brotherly charity and honor shown by Masons during and since the war have brought much healing to a nation that yearned for it. The Hiram Lodge Civil War Degree Team was created to continue the tradition of preserving our past for the generations to come.

When entering the lodge for the purpose of raising a brother, one



notices the stoic nature of the room with its columns, officer stations, and jewels surrounding the lesser lights and the three great lights amidst an altar of splendor. However, it contrasts significantly to what would have been hastily put together by Masons while in the field during a time of war. It is possible that the stations would have consisted of camp chairs or even hay bails. The stations themselves would have been fashioned from boxes from the quartermaster that previously transported ammunition or uniforms. Jewels would have been constructed by hand during lulls of a battle. The altar itself may have been made of empty crates that contained hardtack or army bread, and the staves of the deacons and stewards would simply have been their rifles with bayonets attached. Lighting would have come from candles and oil lanterns, assisted with tin plates to reflect light upon the lodge as the work was conducted. Even the aprons would have resembled those of handcrafted aprons with the common symbolism of Masonry signifying the personal attributes of its wearer. While most of the artifacts used by Hiram's Civil War Degree Team are reproductions, the lodge is able to provide an original 1864 bible in its ceremony upon which the candidate takes upon him the oath of a Master Mason.

It is important to note that, during the Civil War, lodge work was often done as a courtesy to other lodges. There are examples in which a lodge was established by federal officers and staff for courtesy work to raise a brother who happened to be a confederate in a camp opposing them. They would prepare the lodge and send for the candidate to come across the lines under a flag of truce and where proper communication would have been relayed to the pickets and brethren awaiting for him. At this point, there was no North or South, no federal or confederate. Everyone met on the level and conferred the work vested on them with no regard to politics. This example is continued by the Hiram Lodge Civil War Degree Team, which represents men

Lodge Dates

- Aug 12** 6:00 pm Dinner
6:45 pm FC Degree
- Aug 16** 6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Stated Meeting
- Aug 17** 5:30 pm Lecture Card Practice
- Aug 23** 6:00pm Dinner
7:00pm Lodge Official Visit

York Rite Dates

- July 27** 6:15 pm @ State Capitol
Nashville Council Crypt Service
- Aug 9** 6:00 pm Stated Meeting
- Aug 11** 6:00 pm Dinner
6:30 pm Degree
- Aug 18** 6:00 pm Dinner
6:30 pm Degree
- Aug 20** 6:00 pm Dinner
6:30 pm Commandery Inspection
- Aug 28** 6:00 pm Table Council Meeting
@ Holiday Inn Antioch

Williamson County Shrine Club

- Aug 19** 6:00 pm Meeting at Logan's
In Cool Springs

OES Dates

- Aug 10** 6:30 pm Refreshments
7:30 pm Stated Meeting
- Sep 18** 5:00 pm Banquet
7:00 pm Official Visit

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Franklin, TN 37064

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Civil War Degree Team, Hiram Lodge #7 (Continued)

on both sides of the conflict: federal and confederate, commissioned officers, NCOs, as well as the common private. For this reason, the lodge displays flags of both sides while conducting Civil War degrees.

To date, the Hiram Lodge Civil War Degree Team has raised 7 candidates, the last of whom was raised during the Bicentennial events in October 2009. The degree team has the honor and privilege to be featured during the annual gathering of the Cave Degrees in Kingston, Tennessee scheduled for August 2010.

The members of the degree team who are involved in living history of the Civil War have also gathered with brothers of other states and lodges at other events. Though no work is done, they meet on the square for enjoying fellowship and sharing the craft with one another as well as organizing charity events in period fashion for purposes of contributing to the Widows' and Orphans' Fund.



York Rite News

Franklin York Rite Bodies are in the middle of conferring the York Rite Degrees this summer. As of this Wednesday, we have three new Cryptic Masons! We will be conferring the Red Cross and Malta Degrees on July 7th and will be conferring the Order of the Temple individually on August 11th, 18th and 20th. Please remember August 20th is our Commandery Inspection. Companions and Sir Knights please come out and support your York Rite with your presence.

The Table Council Firing Glasses are in and can be picked up at the Lodge for those Companions who pre-ordered.

The York Rite bodies are considering a comprehensive planning meeting following the September Stated Meeting. We would like to use our post-meeting Festive time as an opportunity to discuss long-range planning and goal-setting. I implore all York Rite masons (active or not) to please come and help us.



Eastern Star News

Franklin Chapter #449 and Hiram Lodge #7 have been featured in two local newspaper articles recently. Sister Helen Meeley wrote a lovely article featuring some of the history of our Lodge for *The Review Appeal*. An article in *The Herald* featured an interview with local artist Marvin Stalnaker, who produced the beautiful print of Hiram Lodge #7. This print is featured on the cover of *Cooking with the Stars*, a cookbook compiled by Franklin Chapter #449. It features recipes from Eastern Star and Masonic members. The profits from the first run of the cookbook have been designated to be donated to the Hiram #7 building renovations.

The cookbook sells for \$15 plus \$5 for shipping and handling. For more information, please contact Sister Janet Whaley at 615-302-0720.

