

An Amazing Month

As we were leaving the Moonstar Restaurant yesterday, Memorial Day, it occurred to me that Morse Lodge and San Francisco Odd Fellowship in general have put in an amazing month. On Saturday, April 20th, Yerba Buena Lodge No. 15, under coordination of Pete Sellars, hosted a Day at the Races which was attended by perhaps hundreds of Odd Fellows from all over the state. This is an annual event and the good publicity draws more and more members each year.

On May 1, 2013, Morse Lodge hosted its first ever Bingo Bonanza night. This was a well-planned and well-coordinated event headed by our vice Grand Rita Cooper and her entertainment committee. We had forty or more in attendance. The food and beverages were bountiful and very good and the ten games went quickly with good prizes and some left over for our Good Works committee.

Just three days later on Saturday, May 4, 2013, Morse Lodge hosted its 136th anniversary party at the Basque Cultural Center. Thirty-five were in attendance and we all enjoyed a delicious meal and dancing after to a great trio.

On Wednesday, May 15th, the Grand Lodge sessions in Sacramento commenced and Morse Lodge had a good representation. Past Noble Grands in attendance were Tom Bernard, Chuck Morse, Brian Schlesinger, Joe Stark and Alan Thomas. Visitors attending were Susan Bernard, Dell Conlan (Apollo representative), Rita Cooper, Jack Fullmer (audio-visual responsibilities), Marlene Fullmer, Kate Nacouzi, and Tina Phanivong (Golden West representative). A very nice photo is enclosed which shows the "Morse" table which I believe was taken by Jack Fullmer. Rita Cooper wrote a piece on her Grand Lodge observations which is shared as follows:

This was my first time attending the Grand Lodge Convention, as a visitor I was able to look listen and soak up the unique and enjoyable experiences of attending such an event. My first experience came from the first evening ceremonial dinner that made a strong impression on me, that as an organization, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows aims to provide a framework that promotes personal and social development with its different branches. I was not only able to socialize with other Odd Fellows from different lodges but also became familiar by talking with Rebekahs and chatting with a Major General from the Patriarchs Militant that I knew so little about. Morse Lodge had its own dinner table and a good time was had by all! My next experience was the following day when the convention officially opened. As a visitor you are not allowed to be part of the official opening as this privilege is for Past Noble Grands who had already had this special degree conferred on them with their special password. After approximately an hour or so visitors are invited to enter the convention to observe (but not allowed to vote). The parliamentary system is messy, political, but somehow things get accomplished for the good of the Order. The day ended with a most enjoyable buffet that included music and dancing put on by Davis Lodge in conjunction with our new Grand Warden Dave Rosenberg, who has had great success in rebuilding the membership of the Davis Lodge

and now brings his passion to help all of the California lodges to build our memberships. I encourage everyone to visit their website www.davislodge.org. On that website you will find articles under the heading "About the Odd Fellows with one article in particular entitled "10 Helpful Hints to Bring New Members into the Order" that I intend to take to heart. Finally, it was great to hang out with my brothers and sisters from Morse Lodge No.257. That in itself was worth the time and expense to attend.

Thank you, Rita, for this great condensation of your observations of Grand Lodge. On Friday, May 17th, most of the day was spent in taking and counting votes for newly elected officers. During one lengthy counting period, Charles Morse was introduced to the Grand Lodge body and acknowledged for his 95th birthday which was to follow on May 19th.

Wednesday, May 22nd a meeting of the Morse Lodge Entertainment Committee was held at the restaurant Crepevine at 216 Church Street. There were about ten in attendance. Morse Lodge has set its next social evening for Wednesday, September 4th at the hall. It will be based on an Italian theme with Italian refreshments, perhaps a strolling mandolin player as we eat, and dancing after. This event is now in the planning stages, but the date is definite. We want to have another bingo night, but feel that perhaps once a year may be appropriate for now.

The final event for May was held on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, 2013. About twenty members from Morse Lodge gathered at the National Cemetery at the Presidio of San Francisco and observed many tributes in honor and memory of our living and fallen heroes of our past wars. Charles Morse, a veteran of the U. S. Marines from World War II, was honored to lay the wreath at the monument in conjunction with the French Consul-General. Later the French Consul bestowed Legion of Honor badges on seven World War II veterans who had all fought to bring about the liberation of France. It was a stirring and dignified event and we congratulate our good brother, Chuck Morse, for being selected to participate in this event. Also in conjunction with Memorial Day, Nancy Schlesinger coordinated a large party at the Moonstar Restaurant in Daly City. Nancy coordinated a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge earlier for about fifty Girl Scouts, and the Girl Scouts and 24 Morse members and guests joined in the bountiful buffet. The accompanying photo and program cover were submitted by Tom Barton. The Morse members are gathered in front of the monument and Chuck Morse can be seen saluting just to the left of the item with the star.

I think this is what Dave Rosenberg is looking for. This write up covers several events of both a social and ceremonial nature. It is a good mix. I commented at the Entertainment Committee meeting that although we conducted a minimal amount of business the evening before the bingo games started, there was really no sacrifice in not dwelling on business at a two hour lengthy and tedious business meeting. Morse Lodge had good turnouts at every event that is covered in this message. Thanks to our membership for their interest, enthusiasm, patriotism and good turnouts. With a continued concentration of enjoyable activities, we cannot help but see our numbers grow in the near future.