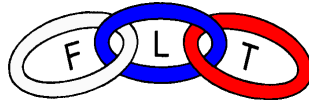


Established 1987



Members Stories

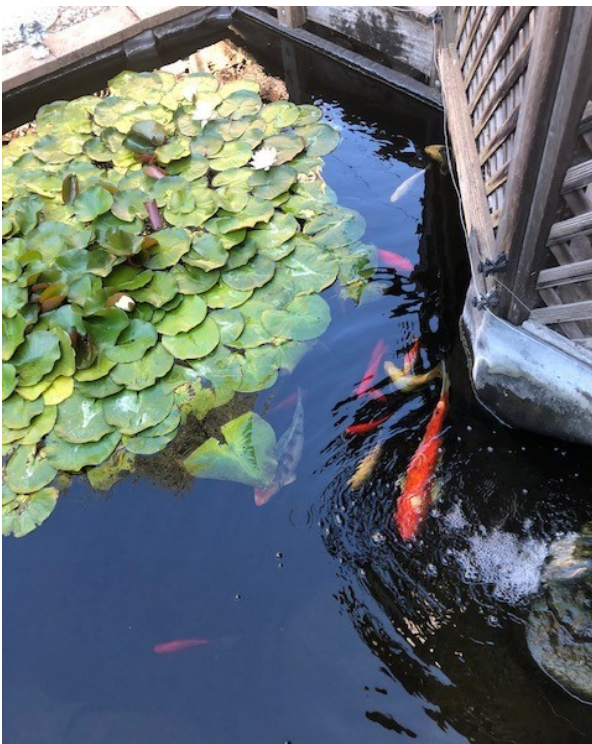
I have asked our members to share their stories of what they have been doing during the Coronavirus. The following is what I got.

From Jackie and Ed Brown

We have been watching the bird-bath and the Robins. They love to splash multiple times before letting any other bird in. One time one splashed at least 13 times. They we watch the gopher snake go down the gopher holes and when he comes back out, he looks like a stick sticking up in the air. Then there is the Jack Rabbits that come underneath the fence at the Golf Course. They come and eat the leaves on our rose bush. And the squirrels who also like the bird-bath for a small drink. They have been eating the green pomegranates, darn, won't have any at the end of the year if the squirrels keep it up.

From Don Lang

I have been spending a lot of time feeding my hungry fish and also with my tomato and zucchini plants.



Members Health

Don Moody:

We received this email from his son David both members of Cupertino Lodge 70.

"I would like to inform you now why we were asking about when dad first became a member of IOOF.

Dad has been in and out of the hospital and skilled nursing for the past couple of weeks. He is now at Saratoga Retirement's (the Odd Fellows retirement community) Skilled Nursing facility in Saratoga. Dad's current condition is not positive but we are hopeful he can gain back enough strength to move to Assisted Living. Dad is working through issues of prostate and pancreatic cancer's as well as cirrhosis of the liver. He does have a phone in his room, **408-741-7391** and though no one can visit his room number is 57.

I am sure he would want his friends at the lodge to know.

David"

Wally Patapoff:

Wally recently went through many different types of tests, mainly in his stomach area. The results came back with bad news, he has stomach cancer. There are several procedures he could go through, but none of them looked promising. He figured that any surgery or Kimmo he would go through would just weaken him, with very little real chance of success. So he is wishing for your prayers. His cell phone is **650-272-1960**

Jacquita {Jackie} Meierdierks

Sister **Jackie Meierdierks** a member of Hermania Rebekah Lodge No. 49 died on Saturday, July 18. Please keep Brother **John** in your prayers.

Jackie joined Theta Rho in 1956; *Jackie* was Initiated into Hermania Rebekah Lodge No 49 in 1982 and served graciously as their Noble Grand. She was Musician for Rebekah Assembly for President Margaret Oleson and a Director of the Children's Home in Gilroy.

In F. L. & T. *Jackie Brown*

The following 3 pages, is a interesting history story I found while cleaning out my garage. It was written by **Geri Rush**, Assistant Administrator of the Odd Fellow Home in Saratoga . It was written in May 1992, but goes back way before that..

By *Don Lang*

Silicon Valley News

A Little History

When our Administrator, Clyde Vaughn, first asked me if I would like to read a little history of the Home at our 80th anniversary shindig, I eagerly agreed. "What fun! I'd love to," I told him, with no small amount of confidence. Little did I know what I was getting into.

The next day I began my research. Some of our residents, hearing of my assignment, began offering advice and even instructions: "You will have to dress as the Matron dressed back in 1912, to be authentic!" they all agreed. Some started digging in old books to find out what was worn 80 years ago and we even had a couple "older" residents who **remembered** what was worn in 1912. Other helpful residents came up with old books from various lodges and the Saratoga Public Library. The Museum at Grand Lodge was a treasury of material. Down in the Vault, we found some old faded blueprints showing details of the Main Building - how thick the walls were and what they were made of; for those of you who like details, the answers are: 12 inches and concrete. I found myself wondering where the building materials came from and how they got here. I imagined a 40 mule team hauling tons of rock and sand and lime and gravel, perhaps even with a Ronald Reagan-type cracking a whip over the team as they struggled up the hills - or was it down the hills? The marble used so liberally throughout this magnificent building, could it have come from ship around the Horn? Or was the Panama Canal built by then? I wanted to know! I found some old Journals of Proceedings dating 'way back. I started reading.

I read about the first Odd Fellows Home in California. That was in Thermolito, 3 miles from Oroville. It opened in 1895 in the old Bella Vista Hotel on the banks of the Feather River. Much of the food used in the kitchen was raised there and livestock was kept on the "farm". Inmates (as that is what the residents were called then) milked the cows and helped in other chores, feeding the hogs and sheep and gathering the eggs.

As I read along, I fantasized about life in the remote area of Butte County in those days...the isolation, the harsh weather extremes, the lack of modern conveniences as we know them. The automobile was a rarity.

I pictured being with the Grand Master in February of "ought 9" when he tried to visit the Home in Thermolito after heavy rains had washed out the roads and, as he reported, "...in many places, the water ran over the top of the buggy bed".

I envisioned sitting with the old Brothers on the porch in 1907 as they read the weekly newspaper which announced that Rudyard Kipling had won the Nobel Prize for Literature...that the Lusitania was launched...and back East in Philadelphia, the second Sunday in May was established as Mother's Day.

I journeyed in my imagination with the Committee of stalwart Odd Fellows appointed in 1906 to search for an ideal site for a new, modern, Odd Fellows Home. Grand Lodge was held in Santa Cruz that year and was six weeks late due to "The Great Calamity", the earthquake and fires in San Francisco in April. Over the next almost two years, the Committee investigated over 80 locations throughout eleven counties. Strict guidelines had been established by Grand Lodge: the property, in order to be considered, had to contain not less than 40 acres, nor more than 120 acres. The land must be fertile and tillable. The water must be pure, the conditions healthy. It must be near good markets and close to a population center. Last, but not least, it must be within 3 hours travel time of San Francisco, but they didn't specify by what means of transportation.

My imaginary time machine transported me magically to 1908. Names flashed by me: Isadora Duncan, Wilbur Wright, General Motors, "Wind In The Willows" and "Anne of Green Gables". I went with the negotiating committee when the "Final Four" locations were selected. One was in Napa County, but it was considered too expensive and the owner refused to give an inch. The other three were in Santa Clara County, considered the garden spot of California. One turned out to be too small; one had been sold by the time the Committee got there. That left the Sellinger place near the unincorporated village of Saratoga. We, for by this time I was considering myself to be a member of the committee, felt this property was suitable and went so far as to have samples of water sent off for analyzing. But before the report was returned, another property was offered for our consideration.

Near the Sellinger place was another place, 82 acres of rolling hills, over 60 acres of which were orchards: apricots, pears, prunes, plums, apples and citrus. There was a beautiful avenue leading to the place, on either side of which contained large Eucalyptus and Cypress trees. The property was known as Oakwood Farm. We bought it for \$16,000. The deal was finalized in March 1908, just as Henry Ford was rolling his first Model T out the factory doors.

I read eagerly of the competition held for designing plans for a new Home to be placed on the Oakwood Farm site. Less than a year later, the \$400 First Prize was awarded to a firm of San Francisco architects. The plans called for an Administration Building of two stories and basement, containing offices, reception room, parlor, library, smoking rooms, dining room, kitchen, storerooms in the basement, and rooms on the second floor for 75 residents. There was to be a hospital building for 40 patients, separate buildings for laundry, stables for six horses, wagon and buggy sheds, and a cow barn for 20 cows. Promissory notes totaling \$150,000 were sold at 6% interest payable in 10 years; these were quickly snapped up by Odd Fellow Lodges and members of the Order.

On October 7th, 1911, the cornerstone was laid for the Administration Building during a massive ceremony with over 1,500

members from all over the State in attendance. Previous to the ceremonies, a genuine California-Spanish barbecue was prepared by the lodges of Santa Clara County. Beef, lamb, beans, coffee and lemonade were served in abundance. Could this have been the forerunner of our annual state barbecue held each year in August? Elsewhere in the country, Irving Berlin was writing his soon-to-be-famous "Alexander's Ragtime Band".

I found very little in the journals between the laying of the cornerstone and the dedication of the building one year later in May 1912. I did learn that John McLaren of Golden Gate Park fame laid out our grounds for us at no expense to the Order; he was a Brother Odd Fellow. I learned that our big bell that signals our mealtimes daily came from the ship, Pensacola, compliments of the Navy Department.

I would like to have talked to the construction men, the excavators, graders, mule skinnners, skilled and unskilled laborers who worked on this massive project to get their impressions of what must have been an exciting but difficult and dangerous job. Each must have felt some pride in later years as he was able to point to what became a Saratoga landmark and say, "I helped build that".

The orchards are gone now. There are 32 Brothers and 184 Sisters who call this "home"; their average age is 83. The cottages have been torn down, a new modern villa built and some property sold off for other purposes. Talk today is of another facility in Napa County and maybe building or making some improvements to the Home here. But no matter what happens in the future, nothing will be quite so exciting as finding "Oakwood Farm".

After the Home in Saratoga had been opened a few years, an Odd Fellow from up North came to visit a resident Brother for the first time. Looking around, he gasped, "Seth! You've got a \$50 room and a \$500 view!". The price has gone up, but it's still a beautiful place and we all love it.

Geri Rush, Assistant Administrator
Odd Fellows Home of California
May 1992