

**ARIZONA
SUPPLEMENT**

Peter H. Johnson, Jr., KCT, PGC, Editor
1501 Sunset Drive
Holbrook, AZ 86025
(928) 524-3248

johnson618@cableone.net



A Masonic Trip for You

Last fall I read an article about Chapman Lodge #2, A. and F.M. in Las Vegas, New Mexico, in the Rocky Mountain Mason magazine. This is the second oldest Masonic Lodge in New Mexico and has the distinction of meeting in the oldest Masonic Temple in the state. This three story structure, dating from 1895, is Romanesque in style and is reminiscent of the designs of architect H.H. Richardson of Boston.

The entire town of Las Vegas is a magnificently preserved city of the old west with over 900 historic buildings. The oldest structures date from the 1830s. Las Vegas was the link between the American frontier and old Mexico for much of the 19th century. It was also a major supply point in the days of the Santa Fe Trail and later became an important railroad hub in the 1870s. Nearby Ft. Union was also of vital importance and was the distribution point for supplying all manner of food and general merchandise to the various army posts in the Southwest. At present, the old adobe ruins of Ft. Union are part of the National Park System and are a fascinating, if not melancholy, place to visit.

My wife and I boarded Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* at 5:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 19th from La Posada in Winslow. The seats in the *Chief* are very comfortable and the high desert scenery is beautiful and impressive. Past Albuquerque, the elevation increases as the train travels through mountainous red rock country covered by evergreen forests of pinion and juniper trees. There is a stand of ponderosa pines as the *Chief* approaches Las Vegas. We arrived in Las Vegas about 3:00 p.m. and were greeted by a stalwart of the local lodge, WB Rudy Laumbach. Bro. Rudy is from a prominent family of the area and is a veritable encyclopedia of all things pertaining to this historic community; he is also a veteran of the Korean War and three generations of his family have been members of Chapman Lodge.

On Thursday, Bro. Rudy showed us all around Las Vegas and took us out to Ft. Union. The ranger on duty at Ft. Union, Greg Baker, was also a Mason and serves as lodge secretary. It was a cold day, probably not breaking above the freezing mark, but the companionship of the Brothers definitely warmed things up with a bit of good cheer. I learned that soldiers, already Master Masons, at Ft. Union founded Chapman Lodge in 1862 and that they received their original charter from the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

I attended Lodge that evening and WM Valentin Tenoria did everything he could to make sure that my visit enjoyable and comfortable. Chapman Lodge #2 meets twice a month on the first and third Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. There is a dinner before the meeting of the first Thursday. The brothers showed me the "mock up" of an office on the second floor of the Temple used as a backdrop in the A & E series "Longmire." The lodge was also featured in the film, "All the Pretty Horses." Many movies and TV show have been filmed in Las Vegas due to its well-preserved old west appearance. After lodge, it was back to our cozy room at the historic Plaza Hotel. There is also a recently restored old Harvey House Hotel, La Castaneda, next to the train depot that looks like another terrific place to stay.

WB Dean Scoggins took time out of his day at the ranch to give us a ride to the train station the next day on Friday, February 21st. The westbound train arrives around noon and you are back in Winslow about 8:00 p.m. This trip was a "blast." You might enjoy it too! If you plan to go to lodge at Chapman #2, be sure and contact them ahead of time. One last word of warning, the Mexican food is pretty hot in Las Vegas!

--- Editor

Arizona Grand York Rite Sessions for 2020 will not be a face-to-face meeting. Unfortunately, this means that the Holy Land Pilgrimage Dinner has also been cancelled. However, the funds raised by the dinner are still needed in order to send Arizona ministers to the Holy Land. Please support this AZ Grand Commandery philanthropy by sending a donation to chairman SK Bob Richards, PGC, 6613 E Via Algarde, Tucson AZ 85750, or contacting him at rc-richards@msn.com.