



The Florida Knight

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Fraternal Greetings Sir Knights,

In thinking and searching for topics to write about, it amazes me at the amount of things that will come to mind and seem interesting, yet will leave the mind just as quickly as they came as soon as you pick up a pen to write about them. Like everything though, given time, those thoughts will resurface and may be an inspiration or fade into oblivion.

Our perception of Time is heavily influenced by a lot of different factors. Looking at Time scientifically, it is strictly regimented; seconds into minutes, into hours, days, years, etc., progressing ever forward unhindered. Looking at it historically, Time ebbs and flows. It moves in cycles of war and peace. Building and growth is replaced by stagnation and loss, just to start growing again. Looking at it the way many of us do on a day to day basis, when we are performing menial tasks it seems to stop or move slow, or speed by when we are “having fun”.

In looking back through the history of the Grand Commandery of Florida, I was astonished at some of the difficulties that they have faced and how there are similar difficulties we are facing. We have a great resource here for our history as a Grand Commandery in the form of the book: Knights Templar of Florida Grand Commanders. This book was compiled and published by the History Committee in 2000. This book is a great starting point for information into the history of our Organization within this jurisdiction, and I urge every Sir Knight that is able to obtain or borrow a copy to read through it.

Sir Knight William A. Mclean of Damascus Commandery No. 2, is credited with organizing the Grand Commandery of Florida and serving as its first Grand Commander in 1895. I will not go into his full history here as a lot of it is covered in the book referenced above. My thought is this: I wonder, did this Sir Knight, in 1895, at the formation of the Grand Commandery, have any thought that this organization he helped establish here would still be working in much the same way 126 years later? The answer is probably a resounding no. His hope would be that it would continue forever, but we as mere mortals have no real idea what the future holds for us or the society we build.

We do what we can, in the time we have, to try and build a better future for those that come after us. History is very important to building a better future. We can look back and see what worked and what didn't, what problems our predecessors faced and what they did to solve them. Sometimes we are facing the same or similar problems and can apply what we learn from their trials to obtain our solutions or avoid the same pitfalls all together.

Our last 126 years have been full of interesting things. During these years we have been through many wars and illnesses, natural disasters from flood to fire, and if you can believe it, hurricanes. Hurricanes in Florida? Who knew? We have built and chartered many Commanderies, some have withheld the test of time while some have not. Membership has always been at the forefront of thought with many years of substantial growth as well as many years of substantial loss. But still we persevere. There was even one very interesting and brief period in 1939-1940 that the official uniform was changed to an all white dress uniform with pearl buttons!

Technology has advanced through leaps and bounds within the last 126 years as well, giving us easier access to each other and making it easier to give assistance to one another. In the early years, travel from one end of the state to the other was limited by the means available and the infrastructure in place. Many roads have been added or improved, cars started becoming more readily available, and the Interstate System was added, making a world of difference in travel. Correspondence advanced from letters that took days or sometimes weeks to make it to and from their destination, to phones, then email, and now we are communicating and meeting via web-conferencing for some things.

Even with all these advances, it is still important to continue to meet together and grow our fraternity through our work and through fellowship. We need to continue to learn the work, bring new members into our Order, teach them and ourselves the moral lessons and Christian values that are contained in the Orders, and maintain the traditions we have established throughout the ages. Tradition and History make us who we are, technology and advancement give us tools to better ourselves as we put our mark on history as those who have come before us.

Where will we be as an organization in another 126 years and how will our age be observed by the members of that time?

Time can only tell.

Humilis Servus tuus in Christo,

Adam M. Bryan, KYCH
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