

THE HISTORY OF MESA LODGE NO.55

The first meeting of Mesa No.55 AF & AM on June 21, 1883 was in a small hut with a dirt floor, dirt roof, one small window and one doorway with a bear skin or blanket as a door. There was no heat and no furniture. The members sat on the floor or stood. The Tiler, outside the cabin, both tiled the Lodge and watched the horses of the visiting Brethren.

The first petition received was from one of the original founders of our city, J. C. Nichols. All three founders of Grand Junction became members, O. D. Russell and Wm. K. McGinley being the other two.

On Sept. 18,1883 the Charter was granted. There were 16 charter members.

During the early years the Lodge moved often, each time to larger quarters. The minutes show that most of the time during the early years, the treasury was depleted as funds were given freely to distressed brethren, widows and orphans.

In 1898 Horace T. DeLong was elected Grand Master. Guy V. Sternberg petitioned for the degrees early in 1903. He became Grand Master in 1916. For a third time a member of Mesa No.55, Casper S. Desch, was elected Grand Master in 1931.

In 1885 Lodge was held in a building on Colorado Ave. The rent was \$15 per month and didn't include "coal oil" for the lamps. The Lyons Building, located on 4th Street between Rood Ave. and Main St., was purchased in 1905 and was the first permanent home of Mesa No.55. In 1923 the "Old Temple", located at the site of the present Alpine Bank, was dedicated. This remained the home of the Lodge for the next 49 years.

On May 31,1972 the present home of the Lodge at the Masonic Center at 2400 Consistory Court was dedicated. Many of the furnishings and Egyptian motif were moved and are an integral part of the new Temple.

Fees for the degrees were \$40 in 1883. The dues were \$6 and remained at that level for the next 37 years. During the first 75 years records show that the Lodge averaged 50 meetings each year. A rather unique study club was organized in 1963 with Bro. Thomas Charles as moderator. It was in the form of a quiz program with various brothers asking questions and having them answered by knowledgeable brothers.

The formation of a new Lodge is a notable event. It is especially notable when the meeting to form the new Lodge is presided over by the Worshipful Master of the other Lodge in the same town. Such was the case on Nov. 3,1950, when a group of Masons met to discuss the possibility of forming another Lodge in Grand Junction and the presiding officer was the Worshipful Master of Mesa No.55. On Feb 2,1951, a dispensation for Grand Junction No.173 was granted by MW C. Wheeler Barnes. On April 12, 1952 with MW Olin P. Lee presiding, the Grand Lodge met to constitute Grand Junction No.173; there were 92 charter members of whom 15 had been raised under dispensation.

Every man who has knocked at the door of the Lodge has made his great and lasting contribution to the Fraternity. All of our Brethren make the attainment of our great purposes possible.

YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT RECENT EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF
MESA NO.55.