

*In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth.
And the earth was without form and void; and the darkness
Was upon the face of the deep, And the spirit of God moved
Upon the face of the waters. And God said:
'Let there be light' and there was light.*

Genesis, Chapter 1: 1-2

Santa Rosa Luther Burbank Lodge 57

Our History

2014 marks the 160th year of our long established traditions here at Masonic Lodge 57 in Santa Rosa, California. In 1854 a small group of Masons brought light to Santa Rosa. On June 16th 1854 a request was made to establish a lodge in Santa Rosa. The Grand Lodge chartered Masonic Lodge 57 on May 4, 1855. Our first recorded Worshipful Master was Achille Richardson. Numerous pioneers of historical importance have been members of Lodge 57 and deeply rooted in the craft of Freemasonry. The founding members included, Julio Maria Carrillo in 1854, the son of Maria Carrillo and Edward Neblett, the first mayor of Santa Rosa in 1879. Lindsey Carson (half brother of Kit Carson) who was the first Tiler of our Lodge and later nominated to the State Assembly. Richard Fulkerson a sixty year mason, established one of the first cemeteries here in Santa Rosa in 1854, where many of our brethern now rest. Fulkerson cemetery combined with the Stanley, Moke and Old Rural Cemetery and are now known as Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery. Many of the original dozen or so founding members who helped shape our community will not be forgotten for their contributions making them truly great men setting themselves as role models for the many who have since followed.

Our first Lodge has been said to have been located at the northwest corner of First and C Streets (Now Santa Rosa Avenue.) The deed recorded on February 7, 1857, The land was purchased from Julio Carrillo for the sum of \$200, Later that same year the Sons Of Temperance purchased half interest of one of the two lots for the sum of \$200. The property was jointly owned until January 1859 when our forefathers purchased the remaining interest from the Sons Of Temperance for \$500. The Lodge building was remodeled in April of the same year. New furniture including 12 spittoons was noted to be purchased at that time. In 1862 the lower portion of the building was leased to E.P. Colgan to be used as a hotel. In 1864 the lower portion was rented to Miss Faxon to be used as a school room. This is believed to be the first school in Santa Rosa.

Many early Masonic Lodges began as Moon Lodges scheduling stated meetings on or near the full moon, *not because the moon governed the night but because it illuminated the travelers path.* Our Lodge continued meeting in this manner until 1886 when it ceased to be a Moon Lodge.

By 1867 membership had grown from 19 to 60 and several proposals for a new Lodge were considered. Then in 1872 our brethren rented the Odd Fellows hall at the northwest corner of Third Street and Exchange Avenue where we remained until 1875 when the property at First and C Street was sold and one and a half lots at the corner of Fourth Street and Hinton Avenue were purchased. This same year a new lodge hall was constructed, first being occupied in November of the same year. We occupied this Lodge until December of 1904. At this time a new 3 story Lodge was under construction at the corner of Fourth and D Street. Our brethren maintained a lease at the Hinton Avenue address until the completion of our new lodge. As our new building readied for occupancy, the great earthquake on April 18, 1906 destroyed it and all the buildings in downtown Santa Rosa. The first lodge meeting following the great quake was held in Sweets Business College. After that meetings were held on the second floor of a corrugated iron building temporarily until 1908 at Fifth and Humboldt Streets.

Following the Great Quake of 1906, with help of the Grand Lodge and donations from Masons throughout the United States, funds were raised to build a nearly identical Lodge at the Fourth and D Streets location. The new building was dedicated on June 24th 1908. Twenty years later a celebration of our final mortgage payment was made. It was the year of 1953 when some brothers of our lodge believed it was prudent to form a second lodge in part due to the large membership we were experiencing. In 1954 a request was made to the Grand Lodge to Honor Luther Burbank who was made a Mason in 1921, remaining a member here until his death on April 11, 1926. The Lodge was to be designated the Luther Burbank Lodge in honor of our past member and famous scientist and horticulturist. In 1956 Lodge 752 was chartered as Luther Burbank Lodge 752 sharing the same meeting places. The two Masonic Lodges remained at this location up until 1962 when the building at Fourth and D Street was sold. Following the sale of the building, the Lodge leased the former Elks building at Fourth and A Streets. On June 4th, 1964 we purchased the Mormon Church at Johnson and Beaver Streets for the sum of \$90,000, Today, Johnson Street is known as Seventh Street. Lodge 752 was consolidated Santa Rosa Lodge 57 on January 1st, 1998. Henceforth the Lodge has been designated as the Santa Rosa Luther Burbank Lodge 57. To this day our membership continues to practice our craft, making good men better and practicing the three tenets of masonry; Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

Passing through our doors have been three State Congressman, six State Assemblyman, one Senator, one Supreme Court Judge, three Sonoma County Superior Court Judges, one Appellate Court Judge, one District Judge, one Justice of the Peace and two United States Ministers to both Brazil and China and one very Famous Scientist and Horticulturist. Countless Physicians, Attorneys, Law Enforcement Officers, Educators and Tradesman, men from all walks of life, hundreds of good men, becoming better, making valuable contributions to the citizens of Sonoma County and the United States, are no less as important or notable for their humble contributions to the craft and mankind.

I wish to acknowledge and thank all brothers who made a diligent effort in recording the history of our Lodge in making this brief history possible.

Fraternally yours, Brother Rich

Today Santa Rosa Luther Burbank Lodge has a fraternal membership exceeding two hundred and forty and growing. If you would like to learn more, we invite all those with questions about Masonry to visit us on a Thursday evening around 6 P M @ 855 Seventh Street, Santa Rosa Ca.