

To: The Officers and Members of the Constituent Lodges of Texas
From: The Texas History Committee – Grand Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M.
Date: January 7, 2008

Brethren,

You will find attached to this letter, an inventory and assessment form that has been developed by the Grand Lodge Texas History Committee. This form has been developed for your use as a guide to begin the process of identifying those documents and artifacts, owned by your Lodge, that are, or may be, of historical value.

With this in mind, we recommend that you discuss this form at the next Stated Meeting. This can be a valuable process – one which will likely draw some of your oldest and newest members together for a tremendous learning experience. We believe that this can be a very effective way to pass the history of your Lodge along to the next generation of Texas Masons.

While not every Lodge will have artifacts from the time of the Texas Republic, every Lodge will contain within its archives, a slice of the history of its own community. Future generations of Masons in your community will find great benefit from a clear and thorough documentation of your Lodge's history.

A few ideas might be to place a label, or attach a sheet of paper listing the names of all of the men in the installation photos that are in almost every Texas Lodge. Is there a name engraved on the Tiler's sword? Whose was it? Is there a member of your Lodge who remembers that man? Maybe he was the town mayor, or the blacksmith, or a Past Master who served with distinction as the Lodge Secretary.

This would be an excellent time to examine the Lodge Minute Books, and make sure that they are well-protected from the elements, leaky water pipes, bugs and varmints. Brethren, this form is intended to draw your attention to the rich legacy of our beloved Masonic Fraternity that exists in each and every one of our Texas Lodges.

If you find that you need some professional assistance in the areas of document preservation or restoration, or would like some suggestions on how to best care for various items of paper, wood, metal, etc., some of the members of the Texas History Committee have experience in these areas. In these instances, all you would need to do would be to contact any member of the committee, and request some assistance.

Rest assured that Grand Lodge has no desire for the documents and artifacts of the Constituent Lodges. This project is being developed by the Texas History Committee, and is a work-in-progress. Your ideas and suggestions for how this Committee may best serve the Lodges of Texas are eagerly solicited. Your Texas History Committee would love for you to share your stories of treasures found, and lost history recovered.

Kindest Fraternal Regards,

Harold Collum, Jr.

Project Coordinator

Lodge Historical Document & Artifact Inventory