

History of Table Rock Lodge

Table Rock Lodge #680 has a very unique and colorful history. Kimberling City, Missouri is situated on Table Rock Lake and is known for its tourism and a great fishing area. Many people retire to this area with 35% of the population being over age 65. There not being a Masonic lodge in Kimberling City, the story of its beginning is quite different than what you might think.

In the Summer of 1995, two strangers, who lived in Kimberling City met at a building supply store. One of the men noticed the other man was wearing a Masonic ring, and asked him where his lodge was, and he answered Virginia. The other man said that he was from Arizona and asked where the Kimberling City Masonic Lodge was? The answer, there is not one. After talking for a while those two brothers decided they would get busy and correct that situation as soon as possible. Both began keeping an informal list of Masons they met and asking them if they would like to have a lodge. As might be expected, in short order the list grew to sufficient numbers to indicate a lodge was feasible.

An organizational meeting was held on December 26, 1995 to discuss and plan the formation of a new lodge. There were seven brothers present at that first meeting! Four past masters were selected to act as officers during the organizational phase. Worshipful Master, W.B. Lee Saalfeld, Senior Warden, W.B. Charles "Dick" Davis, Junior Warden, W.B. Lee Faust and Secretary, W.B. Robert Sheets. A second meeting was held on January 10, 1996 and 29 brothers were present. The other offices filled at that meeting were: Chaplain, Brother George Gilbert, Senior Deacon, W.B. Charles O. "Chuck" Pittman, Junior Deacon, Brother Joe Bechthold, and Junior Steward, Brother Darrell Stokes. The other offices were left vacant for a short time.

The mayor of Kimberling City agreed to allow them to meet in the Community Center and the petition for Dispensation was read at that next meeting. At the Third organizational meeting, held on March 26th, 1996 the petition for Dispensation was submitted to the Grand Lodge of Missouri A.F. & A.M. with 21 names on it. By now there were 67 brethren, who had attended various meetings and indicated they would support the lodge!

On April 22, 1996, M.W.B. Donald E. Scott, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri, granted the Dispensation and Table Rock Lodge U.D. was set to work. At the next meeting, R.W.B. Lloyd "Tony" Root was elected treasurer. On October 23, 1996 Table Rock Lodge U.D. received their charter, and a full slate of officers were installed, at which time there were 54 active members. The installed line officers that night was W.B. Leland A. Saalfeld, Worshipful Master, W.B. Charles R. (Dick) Davis Senior Warden, W.B. Sidney Lee Faust, Junior Warden. From the first meeting the brethren worked hard to raise money to build a new building. They held Pancake Breakfasts, Golf Tournaments, and Auctions all raising money for a building one day. On June 8, 1999 the brethren voted to purchase property to build a lodge building. The Brethren of the lodge cleared, graded the land, and constructed the lodge building where the meetings are held. There were many brethren and families who contributed many long hours of their time and their money to construct this new building.

On August 1, 2006, M.W.B. Donald Scott Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri A.F. & A.M and District Deputy Grand Master R.W.B. Tim Thomas proclaimed the new building an official lodge and made the proclamation approving the new lodge building for occupancy of Table Rock Lodge #680. Then on August 8, 2006 the first official meeting was held in that new lodge building.

On June 29, 2008, M.W.B. Bruce R. Austin, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri A.F. & A.M opened Special Communication of the Grand Lodge on the third degree of freemasonry with 40 brethren present. M.W.B. Austin then conducted the ceremony of dedicating Table Rock Lodge #680's cornerstone.

On October 18th, 2008, Kimberling Chapter #164 of the Grand Chapter of Missouri Order of the Eastern Star received their Charter and now meets at the Table Rock Masonic Lodge building.

Currently, Table Rock Lodge remains active with 123 members and growing. Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 P.M.

The story of Table Rock Lodge's beginning shows that Masonry is anything, but a dying art and it also proves that each of us **can** make a difference, so, wear your ring and other insignia and wear it with pride. You never know who will notice it and what may come out of an encounter with someone you have never seen before in your life but in whom burns the flame of Masonry.

The two strangers mentioned in this article, were Brothers Ken Ordiway and Charles O. "Chuck" Pittman.

Pieces of this article was taken from an article written by Charles O. "Chuck" Pittman P.M. Table Rock Lodge #680 on April 30, 2002 for the Missouri Mason Magazine.

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