



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

March 21, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

I have often said that our Lodges, to survive in the 21st Century, need to be three dimensional. And you have heard me often speak about the second and third dimensions which - in most Lodges - are anemic and need to be re-emphasized. Those second and third dimensions are: Reaching outside of the Lodge into the community to do good community and charitable works. Having fraternal fun within the Lodge with good fellowship activities.

But today, I would like to talk about an aspect of the first dimension of our Order: The great history, traditions, and ritual of Odd Fellowship.

Earlier this week, my wife, Lea, and I visited the Apollo #123 in San Francisco, at the historic San Francisco Odd Fellows Lodge Hall, accompanying Grand Master Rick Boyles at an official visit to Apollo Lodge. This is a great and noble building on the corner of Market and Seventh Street. The Lodge room used by Apollo is beautiful, and Lea and I had occasion to meet many of the members at a dinner and Lodge meeting. The Lodge members looked great in their regalia and conducted a well-run meeting in form and following the ritual of our Order. Plus, the dinner and meeting were well-attending. It was a pleasure to see a full Lodge room. And it was a pleasure to see a correctly run meeting. I commend the members of this Lodge.

But what I really want to talk about is the Museum that is found on the second floor of the San Francisco Lodge Hall. Lea and I received a tour of the Museum from Peter Sellars. Peter, as you may know, is one of the charter members of DMC, and he serves as the Grand Instructor of our Grand Lodge, and Chair of a very active Membership Committee for the Grand Lodge. He has achieved numerous high offices in Odd Fellowship, including the position of Grand Patriarch, and he is the spark plug who has increased the membership of his own Lodge and other San Francisco and Bay Area Lodges. Peter has taken charge of restoring the historic San Francisco Odd Fellows building, inside and out. More to the point, Peter is the guiding force for this remarkable Museum. If you have not had the opportunity to visit this museum, you should definitely make a point of doing so. Bring some of your Lodge mates! It is well worth it. You can contact Peter to make an appointment for a guided tour at ioofsf@earthlink.net. Peter Sellars and Nancy Johnson are the co-chairs of the Historical Committee of the Grand Lodge and have done much in the way of recovering and restoring the items that trace our historical IOOF lineage.



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If history interests you, this is the place to be. The museum is jam-packed with costumes, regalia, rings, photographs, memorabilia, jewels and badges, gavels, musical instruments, fezzes, dishes, swords, scabbards, headgear, ribbons, historic prints, chimes, golden uniform tassels, books, books, and more books, and all things Odd Fellows. It is a trip down memory lane, and a journey through the history of our Order and of California. The thousands of items of historical and fraternal interest were lovingly accumulated by Peter. Many of these items would have disintegrated, or rusted, or been lost had it not been for the efforts of Peter Sellars. But because of those efforts, they have been restored and are on display for all to see.

I suspect many Lodges in California have rooms with historical artifacts and papers, or boxes taped up and stored with these items. It's time to check out those rooms and unwrap those boxes. The history of our Order should be on display to members and to the public. Bring 'em out and enjoy them. Display them in your Lodge, or if you have no room for them, let Peter know so he can take custody of these items for the historical archive. The great history, traditions, and ritual of Odd Fellowship are the first dimension of our Order and are what make us unique as "Odd Fellows".

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Dave Rosenberg
Grand Warden