



LU LU TEMPLE A.A.O.N.M.S. LEGION OF HONOR: Formed in 1921

Lu Lu Temple Legion of Honor, Plymouth Meeting, PA, was formed in February, 1921, in Philadelphia, Penna., and is recognized as the first Legion of Honor Unit in Shrinedom - the "Mother Legion". During 1996, we are celebrating our 75th Anniversary Year.

The idea to form a veterans organization in Lu Lu Temple was first mentioned in the Temple Notice of October 1919. A May 19, 1919 letter by Noble Sydney E. Bateman, M.D. suggested that men who had served in the Armed Forces of the United States in World War I should be interested in adding an American Legion Post to the Temple Units.

At the October 6, 1920 Ceremonial of Lu Lu Temple, in Philadelphia, Potentate Charles S. Bair announced:

"... An application has been made for a Charter for an AMERICAN LEGION POST OF LU LU. This movement is in line with the wishes expressed by many of our members who were in the service of OUR COUNTRY. Further details will be furnished to those of our members who desire to affiliate with the Lu Lu Post. ..."

A letter consequently was sent to all Lu Lu Nobles:

"Dear Nobles:

"...
"It is time for Lu Lu Temple to recognize the fact that over seven hundred of her sons went whole-heartedly into the service of our country in time of need.

"The service men of Lu Lu Temple are gathering together to form a Post of the American Legion.

"...
"We ask the support of this great movement by every Noble of Lu Lu Temple ... who is proud of being a citizen of the United States, proud of being a Noble of Lu Lu Temple, and proud of these members who donned the uniform at their country's need."

Sincerely, Yours in the Faith,

(signed) Clarence P. Franklin, MD
Joseph K. Nichols, Esq.
Harry S. Busby
B. Meredith McIntyre, MD. "

On October 17, 1920, a bronze tablet listing the names of the Nobles of Lu Lu Temple who had served in World War I was dedicated and placed in the office of the Potentate in the Mosque (Metropolitan Opera House). At this ceremony were three Temple Units (Band, Patrol, and Chanters) and forty men in khaki uniforms who were to become the charter members of the new American Legion Post of Lu Lu Temple.

But, at the February 2, 1921 Business Meeting of Lu Lu Temple, the following report was given:

"The American Legion has turned down the request of Lu Lu Temple to form a Post because ... Legion Posts of a Religious Order or in Fraternal Organizations cannot be formed and are not sanctioned ...".

Accordingly, the LU LU TEMPLE LEGION OF HONOR was formed, and became the first Legion of Honor Unit in all Shrinedom. Noble, and Colonel, Clarence Franklin was selected to serve as the first Commander.

'LEGION OF HONOR' was adopted as a name, because in France many World War I Shriners had been impressed by their pleasant experiences with the members of the French Legion of Honor. This honorary society had been originally formed by Napoleon in 1802 to recognize distinguished military and civil service.

Walter Schwing, a charter member of the new Legion in 1921, and Commander 1944 prepared a scrapbook of the early years of the Legion of Honor. Copies of this album are now kept with the records of the International Association Legions of Honor, and also at Imperial Shrine Headquarters in Tampa, Florida. A card in this scrapbook lists the following original "Qualifications for Membership" -

"Service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard during one of the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Mexican War | * China Campaign |
| * Civil War | * Army of Cuba Pacification |
| * Indian Campaigns | * Haitian Campaign |
| * Spanish Campaigns | * Nicaragua Campaign |
| * Spanish-American War | * Mexican Campaigns |
| * Army of Cuban Occupation | * Mexican Border Service |
| * Army of Puerto Rican Occupation | * World War I |
| * Philippine Campaigns | * Army of Occupation |

So, our original membership included Nobles primarily from World War I, but also possibly from these campaigns. Thus, we have a proud and time honored heritage. Unfortunately, no records of membership lists survive from this early date.

Walt Schwing, PC'44 and Erv Boeckle, PC'54 were our Legion's last surviving veterans of World War I: they passed away in 1993 & 1994 respectively.

An inaugural banquet was held on the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, February 12, 1921. The date was selected to honor the ideals of Lincoln. Over 1000 veterans of the Nobility from Lu Lu Temple and nationally known guests attended, and W. Freeland Kendrick, Ill. Potentate of Lu Lu Temple, presided. The Legion Change of Command Ceremony and Parade with wreath laying to honor Abraham Lincoln continued to be held each February until 1986.

During the early days of its proud history, the Lu Lu Legion of Honor participated in many memorable events. Among them: * on Armistice Day, in

November 1921, the Lu Lu Legion was represented, with two reserved seats from the General Staff of the War Department, for the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington; * in Sept 1921, LOH Rifles, a first in Shrinedom, made its initial appearance; * on March 25, 1922, Admiral Wm. Sims, President of Naval War College, was honored at the annual banquet; * in October, 1926, the Legion Field Music Bugle and Drum Corps, with 14 bugles and one bass drum made its first appearance; * on February 11, 1928, at the annual Lincoln Day Dinner in Phila., General John J. Pershing and three other Army Generals attended, along with members of Congress and City government.

Starting in 1929, Lu Lu Legion of Honor has been privileged each year to place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery. We will be continuing this honored tradition this year on Sunday, November 10, 1996. In 1931, Lu Lu was one of five Legion of Honor Units to form a national organization that has now become the International Association, Legions of Honor. Over the years, two Lu Lu LOH Past Commanders became National Commanders - James S. Cozens, and Charles F. Hess. This Association now includes 157 Legion Units with over 15,000 members.

In 1961, Lu Lu LOH joined the newly formed Mid-Atlantic Shrine Association (M.A.S.A.) Legions of Honor. Lu Lu LOH Past Commander Alfred M. Bomberger later served as M.A.S.A.L.O.H. Commander.

Following World War II, the Legion of Honor welcomed many returning veterans who had joined Lu Lu Temples; later, veterans of the Korean and Viet Nam conflicts joined. By the mid 1970s, to recognize the increasing peacekeeping missions of the military, guidelines for membership in the Legion were broadened to include Lu Lu Nobles with an honorable discharge from the Armed Services.

During recent years, Legion members have answered the call to service by supporting Lu Lu Temple with efforts in it's many projects - including: Circus, Horse Show, Rodeo, Citrus Fruit and Vidalia Onion Sales, and Hospital Paper Crusades. For many years, Legion members also presented visitation programs to patients at Childrens Heart, Veterans, and Shriners Hospitals.

Through the years, the Legion with its Color Guard has marched in parades and other functions of the Temple - in earlier years with 100 and more Legion Nobles in the line.

Although the present Lu Lu Legion of Honor no longer has the numerical or physical strength of earlier years, we now proudly celebrate this milestone of 75 years in the annals of Shrine Legions of Honor. Our theme for this 75th Anniversary Year is one of looking ahead, rather than counting back.

Walter R. West - Chairman, 75th Anniversary
October 12, 1996