

## History of Award

Imperial Potentate John "Champ" Edghill, Abu- Bekr #91, 1972-74, whose creative idea gave the LOH birth in 1973, instituted the Imperial Legion of Honor (LOH). He presented the LOH award during his administration as a way of recognizing the outstanding Nobles who had served the A.E.A.O.N.M.S. and their fellow man above self. Imperial Potentate Edghill and Noble Kermit E. Bruner, Jr., Zamora #73 were instrumental in the design and creation of our unique lapel pin. Records list charter members as Nobles: James Thomas, Mecca #10; Ivory Buck, Zamora #73; Julian Bell, Keblah #78; Willie Forte, Persian #46; Joseph B. Nichols, Syrian #49; Roy Teague, Hira #116; Douglas Parsons, Alcazar #179; Charles F. Robinson, Medina #19; Samuel J. Perry, Mecca #10; Robert Wilcox, Kazah #149; Charles E. Martin, Fezzan #26; Oscar Roberts, Koran #33; Clarence A. Armour, Egyptian #5; William T. Greene, Aleikum #96; Darrow E. Hill #38. There were only two (2) awards given per Region in the early years.

Imperial Potentate Marshall S. Johnson, Sahara #2, 1974-76, gave us encouragement and direction to establish an Imperial Council program, complete with Eisenhower type jacket uniforms. His desire for uniforms however was not fulfilled at that time. In 1976, PP Charles E. Martin, Fezzan #26 was the first appointed Imperial Commander of the LOH. The criteria for establishing a LOH program was at that time readily accepted by the Imperial Divan, but as an honorary program only. During the years of honorary status, the following officers were elected and worked diligently without any financial compensation for the program's survival and recognition as a viable body: 1st Vice Commander Kermit E. Bruner, Jr., Zamora #73, 2nd Vice Commander Eugene Taylor, Medinah #39, Scribe Lloyd Kennedy, Zem #122, Asst. Scribe/Publicity Donald C. Wharry, Fezzan #26, Treasurer Louis N. Washington, Moolah #54, Chaplain Rev. Henry Whittle, Mocha #7, Medic George H. Garlington, Jr., Aloomaa #212, Sentinel Junius U. Parker, Kadesia #135.

The LOH annually donated money to its adopted charity, the Roscoe C. Washington Student Aid Fund. "Lean on Me" and "If I can Help Somebody" was accepted as the LOH theme songs and were sung at each induction ceremony. A traveling trophy was established in 1983 to honor a Legionnaire for outstanding service to Prince Hall Shrinedom and his community. Noble Kermit E. Bruner Jr. #73 was the first recipient. Imperial Commander Martin was instructed by the Imperial Council to prepare and present operational guidelines for the LOH. A By-laws committee was headed by 1st Vice Commander Kermit E. Bruner Jr. #73. 2nd Vice Commander Eugene Taylor #39 assisted him. After many hours of this labor, the proposed by-laws that were submitted to the Imperial Council on June 4, 1985 were rejected and the LOH remained on honorary status.

The LOH program was officially renamed the Legion of Honor Hall of Fame on April 17, 1986 under the administration of Imperial Potentate Carl Wilson (1984-1986). All proceedings and customs previously established were declared invalid and all officers were eliminated except the Administrator, who was appointed by the Imperial Potentate. Noble Charles E. Martin was appointed to that office.

From January 1987 until August 1988 Imperial Administrator Martin requested and received a leave of absence from directorship of the LOH program. The LOH office has no record of any proceedings for that period.

Under Imperial Potentate David L. Holliman's, #49, (1988-90) administration, the LOH program became an official, active arm of the Imperial Council. In October 1988, Imperial Potentate Holliman requested that all criteria be sent to his office for approval. New guidelines were drawn up and forwarded to his office. We were informed immediately after, that they were accepted and we were activated with permission granted to organize LOH Clubs in each Temple. The title of Imperial Administrator was changed to Imperial Director with Charles E. Martin remaining in office. Nobles Kermit E. Bruner Jr., and Eugene (Sausage) Taylor were appointed Deputy Directors. Our first meeting as an active body was in August 1989 at the Imperial Sessions in Miami, FL. Imperial Outer Guard Oliver Washington, Jr. #165 was appointed our first administrator.

Clubs were immediately organized with Minaret No. 174 LOH Club being the first. They instituted the "Back to Minaret" program under the leadership of Legion Club President PP Nathaniel Blackmore and Recruit, Reclaim and Retain Chairman PP Cornelius Brown. A total of forty-seven (47) Nobles were reclaimed and \$3,525.00 was generated. A portion of the proceeds was used to pay dues, taxes and assessments for Nobles who were financially unable to do so and \$200.00 was donated to the Roscoe C. Washington Student Aid Fund. The traveling trophy was changed to a Club trophy in 1990 with Minaret #174 being the first recipient. They also received a congratulatory letter from Imperial Potentate David L. Holliman. El Hasa #28 LOH Club was the first to obtain complete dress uniforms under the leadership of PP Charles Ramsey, President. They attended the annual 1990 meeting as a Club, resplendent in their full dress uniforms, complete with logo, and received special recognition from the body. An autographed picture of their club was presented to the Imperial Director.

Imperial Director Charles E. Martin retired in 1991 with sincere appreciation extended by IP Roy Moore #5, who recommended he receive the esteemed Honorary Past Imperial Potentate honors. He was presented an engraved Sphinx by the Legion members and further bestowed the honor of Imperial Director Emeritus by IP Roy M. Moore.

In 1991, under the administration of Imperial Potentate Roy M. Moore #5, the directorship was passed to PP William F. Milton, Magnus #3. His extraordinary ability to lead and manage combined with his dedication, youth and energy was a tremendous asset to the Imperial Legion of Honor. PP's Kermit E. Bruner Jr., and Eugene Taylor continued on as dedicated Deputy Directors along with PP's Floyd Washington #182, PP James D. McClain #174, PP Alvin Mitchell #20, and PP James Jones #36 as area coordinators.

During the 1992 session, the Legion adopted an official "watchword" that is expressed in Arabic. The words are pronounced "Khodetan Nekonead" and they express our motto "Service, above self." That same year, the members at the behest of the Imperial Director adopted a moniker that expresses our persona and self esteem; The "Crème de La Crème" of Shrinedom. The group is continuing to recruit, reclaim, and retain members in the local temples while advancing the proposition of contributing financially to the education of our youngsters through the Roscoe C. Washington scholarship fund. The first "meet and greet" social affair including wives and/or significant others, was instituted at the 1993 session and was a resounding success.

In 1995, Imperial Potentate William T. Pratt appointed a new Imperial Director. PP Claude Bayard, Kindah #62, will take the LOH into the new millennium. PP's Ernest W. Chester, Sr., Khufu #120, and Danny A. West, Sr., Kindah #62, were appointed as the Imperial Deputies. In 1995 the Imperial Potentate William T. Pratt, #62 announced new procedures for the LOH clubs as follows:

- (1) A motion to reinstate or establish a LOH club must be presented at a regular Temple meeting. A majority vote of the members present at the meeting is required for approval.
- (2) Upon approval, the Illustrious Potentate will forward a letter of the Temple's action to the Imperial Director. The Illustrious Potentate will sign the letter and the seal of the Temple will be affixed.
- (3) Membership in Temple LOH clubs is restricted to Nobles who have been awarded the LOH by the Imperial Council. Participation in the club is strictly voluntary, however a Noble awarded the LOH cannot be denied membership.
- (4) Members of such clubs shall not engage in the pre-selection of a Noble (s) to be nominated to receive the LOH. The right to nominate a Noble (s) to receive the LOH is inherent to the members of the Temple, therefore, any pre-selection on pre-screening process is strictly prohibited.
- (5) There shall be no annual club dues structured in LOH clubs. However, voluntary contributions for administration cost shall be permissible, not to exceed \$10.00 per member annually.
- (6) The Illustrious Potentate, by virtue of his office, can attend his Temple's LOH club meetings.

These procedures are to be strictly adhered to.

In 2002, under the administration of the 36th Imperial Potentate Reverend William F. Crockett #28, HPIP William F. Milton #3 was again appointed to the Directorship. The current goal is to build upon the successes of the previous administrations and to exceed the LOH's past performance while striving to be men of courage, sound judgment and integrity.