

# Anaheim or Bust – Imperial Session Road Trip

By **PETER SIMMONS**  
FIRST CEREMONIAL MASTER

*Editors Note: This is the First installment of Peter Simmon's chronicles of his journey to the Imperial Convention in Anaheim, California. Look in the coming of the Aleppo News for the next installment.*

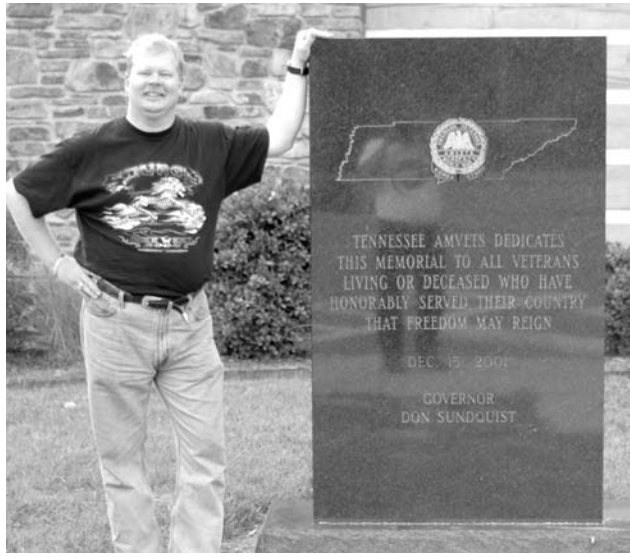
*This article is dedicated to the memory of Stephen T. Bissett, Second Ceremonial Master and Aleppo Cycles Unit member. A good husband, father and friend to everyone he met. He will always be in our hearts and never far from our memories.*

Ever since it was announced that the 2007 Imperial Session would be held in Anaheim, several of the unit members talked about making the trip across country. I can still remember the day I sat in our unit room with **Gerry Wentworth, Doug Dodge, Rob Havener** and the rest of the unit discussing what a great trip this was going to be and how eager I was to make the cross country journey.

For anyone who professes to be a "biker" or what we in the Cycles Unit prefer to be called "motorcycle enthusiast," a cross-country trip is a once in a lifetime opportunity to prove one's love of riding. It's the pinnacle of one's riding career and is not something that should be entered upon lightly. Ten to twelve hours of riding in extreme heat, unrelenting rain, heavy traffic and whatever else the road throws at you is enough to challenge anyone's mental and physical well being. Although I must confess that it took about all of thirty seconds for me to decide I was taking this trip.

After much conservation and discussion amongst the unit, three of us decided that we would be making the journey cross-country. Riding with me would be Gerry Wentworth, a veteran of a previous cross-country trip and the unit's unofficial tour guide, and Doug Dodge, who, like me, would be making his first trip cross-country.

Once we had set the roster of who would be riding, we then needed to discuss the route we would take, what stops we would make and when we would leave. Having ridden with Gerry on previous trips to Denver and Baltimore; Doug and I bowed to Gerry's experience and let him plan our route out west.



A QUICK STOP in Tennessee for a quick rest and some photos and off again on their cross-country journey are **Peter Simmons** and **Gerry Stangroom**.

After a quick stop in Arizona, we planned to travel to San Diego to visit Gerry's grandchildren and then on to Laguna Hills to visit with Gerry's brother Lenny. We would then end our journey in Anaheim, California, arriving at the Imperial Session on Saturday, June 30. With good weather and safe riding we would spend eight days traveling out west.

With the route set, we put our sights toward setting a date to begin the trip. Because of our unit's involvement with the Shrine Football Classic and the game having been scheduled for Friday, June 22nd, we set the start date for Saturday, June 23rd.

The days leading up to our departure date were spent preparing our bikes for the long trip ahead. When making a trip such as this, it is extremely important that your bike be in good working condition. The last thing you want to have happen is to be in a remote area with no cell phone service and a bike that won't run. So much of my time leading up to June 23rd was spent changing oil, spark plugs, air filter, radiator fluid and performing other essential maintenance. It even included a hastily arranged trip to the shop for a tire change and front brake replacement the day before we were set to leave.

Finally, the day arrived, and after a quick shower and some last minute packing, I kissed my wife

goodbye, hopped on the bike and headed out to meet Gerry and Doug.

It was 5:20 AM, a cool 52 degrees and sunny on that first day. It was a perfect morning for the start of our journey. I arrived fifteen minutes before the appointed hour only to find Gerry had already arrived. Much to my surprise, Doug rolled up a few minutes behind me and after a quick cup of coffee and some orange juice we headed out down the Mass Pike with nothing but miles of open road ahead of us.

After a delicious breakfast, we were eager to get some serious miles under our belts and quickly headed down I-84 through Connecticut. Little did we know that in just a short few hours we would experience a serious bit of bad luck!

One of the things you find when traveling long distances on your bike is how quickly you become in tune with the road and your surroundings. With every mile and each sweeping turn the bike slowly begins to become an extension of you. There's no other feeling than gently swaying in the turns, moving effortlessly through the traffic, listening to your favorite music, the wind whipping past your helmet and the sun gently warming your face. I had just begun to get this feeling when suddenly the reality and risks associated with motorcycling

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## Noble Harry Tembenis Computers to Cash to Children

By **HERMES BOYATIS**

REMEMBER our last issue of Aleppo Temple News, when we described Noble Harry and hippotherapy? Three proud, caring Hellenes met recently at Noble Savvas's Manor Restaurant in West Boylston. Harry fervently described the wonders of therapy performed at ForgeWorks Farm in Rutland, owned by **Ted** and **Christine Mahan**. A computer specialist at State Street Bank,

Boston, Harry's work takes him to banks all over New England. When he is not on the job, he uses all of his free time to spread the word and seek funding for the Mahans. Harry promised to tell us in a few days how the miracles reached his wife **Gina** and their autistic son, **Elias**, personally. He announced a gathering of miracles would take place at ForgeWorks Farm in Rutland on July 28.



FORGEWORKS FARM had an Exhibition Horse show to showcase the miracles they work with special needs children and adults.

We were there, ready for an Exhibition Horse Show for riders, trained horses and horsemen, children, their families, a happy day for all! At the start, rain was falling, and we waited under protective gazebos. At last, when it cleared we witnessed the demonstration.

Politicians were there, as well, including still another caring Greek, State Representative **Lew Evangelides**, who unsuccessfully included a line item of \$25,000 for such helping horses and helping children. However, the Governor vetoed it. We hope for better luck next time.

Aleppo Shriners, all of us are ready to saddle up, mount our steeds for the Mahans and the Children's Transportation Fund! More to come, next issue.

## October 6, 2007 Ceremonial Arch Degree

By **CHARLES "BUCKY" BUCHANAN**

THE October 6, 2007, Aleppo Shriners Ceremonial will be privileged to witness the revival of the symbolic and entertaining "Arch Production." This Masonic stage show was last performed at the January 27, 2001, Aleppo Ceremonial.

The purpose of the Arch Production is to dramatically give a modern explanation of the Shrine philanthropy and the enormous charitable contributions that Freemasons and Shriners are making every day. It is also intended to elevate the Shrine image to a level that others will recognize as the most prestigious organization in the world in which to belong.

Noble **Harlan L. Woods**, Director of the Aleppo Ritualistic Degree Team, has put together a super cast for this performance. The actors will appear in the costumes appropriate to the attire worn in ancient times and will use wooden sleds to transfer the huge stones to the unfinished arch.

The 12-foot arch is constructed, stone by stone, while the cast narrates the script. The stage work combines, orchestrates and highlights Masonic, York Rite, Scottish Rites and Shrine quality values into a unique educational and entertaining story of the Nobility.

The main attraction at the end of the performance is the welcome arrival of a patient who has been treated at the Shriners Hospital for Children.

Don't miss the October 6, 2007, Ceremonial.