

The Thomas W. Melham Humanitarian Award

It is time once again to nominate a Shriner from the Great Lakes Association area for the very prestigious "Thomas W. Melham Humanitarian Award" which has been presented at the February Business meeting.

Imperial Sir Melham is considered the Founding Father of the GLSA. In order to honor him and those who have emulated him as a role model, the Thomas W. Melham Award was established in 1990. Some of those who have received this award are James Grebe, Robert Bailey, Gordon Boyd, Larry Sowder, Thorald Scherer, Ken Matchette, Archie Anderson, Tad Claypool, Lynn VanNess, Gary Alves and Ken LeBay.

The following criteria should be followed in suggesting names:

1. He must be a Shriner belonging to the GLSA.
2. His accomplishments should be patterned after Imperial Sir Melham.
3. He must have given great service to Shrine, Masonic, Community, Church and Family.
4. Election to this award is limited to only one or two each year.

Please give this award high priority and serious consideration.

Please read the biography of Imperial Sir Thomas W. Melham to acquaint your self to his life and career.

The Thomas W. Melham Humanitarian Award Of The Great Lakes Shrine Association

FRATERNAL: Imperial Sir Thomas W. Melham was Imperial Potentate 1957-1958, Imperial Treasurer 1966-1981 and an Emeritus Member of the Board of Trustees of Shriner's Hospitals for Children of the Shrine Of North America. Imperial Sir Melham's fraternal activities received his greatest attention beginning with his election to Kappa Sigma at the University of Wisconsin. He was also a member of Skill and Crescent an honorary inter-fraternity group.

He was raised in Silver Spring Lodge #37 in 1928 and was elected Worshipful Master in 1952. He was a member of Kenwood Chapter #90 R.A.M.; Ivanhoe Commandery #24 and Wisconsin Valley Scottish Rite in which he held several offices.

Imperial Sir joined Tripoli Temple in 1930. He served on the Divan and Ritualistic Divan and was elected Potentate in 1943. He was a member and past director of R.O.J. Court 101; member of El Hajj Court #2; Past National Emir; member of the Cabiri; member of St. Quentin Conclave #75 Red Cross of Constantine; and an honorary member of the National Sojourners.

In 1948, he was elected Imperial Outer Guard, being the first Wisconsin Shriner so honored.

During 1948, he helped organize the GLSA refusing any office. He was elected its Honorary President. In 1949 he gave full support to Illustrious Sir Herbert Mount, then Potentate of Tripoli Temple, in starting the Midwest Shrine Football Game which has raised large sums of money for Shriner's Hospitals. He became Imperial Potentate in 1957. In 1966 he was elected Imperial Treasurer and became a member of the Board of Trustees of Shriner's Hospitals. He served honourably until he elected to retire in 1980 at which time he was elected to the honorary position of Trustee Emeritus. As Imperial Treasurer, he made many contributions to many committees and was a long time member of the Investment Committee leading to much financial success of the Hospital Corporations.

BUSINESS: He received a degree in Commerce and Business Administration from U of Wisconsin and became associated with the National Cash Register Co. in Dayton then later Philadelphia. He returned to Wisconsin and entered the field of life insurance. He was one of two to receive the professional degree of Charter Life Underwriter. In 1937 he joined Prudential Insurance Company of America and in 1952 became manager of the Manhattan Agency later receiving a Presidential Citation for excellence. He retired in 1963

COMMUNITY: During his early years in Wisconsin, his civic involvement was wide and varied. He served as Trustee of Whitefish Bay, a Milwaukee suburb; as Chairman of the Whitefish Bay Finance Committee; and as Chairman of the Whitefish Bay Board of Health. He was elected as the first President of the Whitefish Bay Club and acted as Trustee in several financial capacities. After Pearl Harbor, he was appointed State Rationing Officer by Governor Heil, heading up tire, gasoline and other related activities.

CHURCH: Imperial Sir Melham was a member and Deacon of Plymouth Church in Milwaukee.

FAMILY: Imperial Sir Melham's family came first in his life. His wife, Lucia, was a delightful and wonderful lady who served at his side. They had three outstanding children: Mary Lou, John and Tom.

This biographical information provided by Imperial Sir Robert S. Bailey, 1995- 1996, Honorary President of Great Lakes Shrine Assoc.