

Masonic Messenger



Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free & Accepted Masons

Winter 2025

Most Worshipful Grand Master William F. Shepard



Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Georgia

Grand Lodge Officers

Grand Master	Bill Shepard (717, 214)
Deputy Grand Master	Brian C. Coffey (271, 749, 710)
Senior Grand Warden	Tom D. Bruce (42, 216)
Junior Grand Warden	Scott W. Johnson (68, 376)
Grand Treasurer	Jeffery L. Anderson (200, 376, 06)
Grand Secretary	Van S. McGee (26, 70)
Grand Chaplain	Ronald H. Wise, Jr (476)
Grand Marshal	Chris D. Gabor (214, 717)
Grand Orator	Jan M. Giddens (33)
Senior Grand Deacon	Wiley Q. Forrester, III (292)
Junior Grand Deacon	W. David Baxter (35)
First Grand Steward	Jeff L. Smith (131, 216)
Second Grand Steward	Paul Carter (26)
Third Grand Steward	Danny C. Roberts (135, 768)
Grand Tyler	Charles E. Taylor (717, 214)

Publications

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*Please send changes of address to the Grand Secretary at 811
Mulberry Street, Macon, GA 31201 on your lodge secretary's
monthly report.*

*The editor does **NOT** keep the list of addresses.*

FORM FOR CHANGING ADDRESS FOR MESSENGER
TYPE or PRINT information requested and mail to the Grand Lodge address on the back cover:
Name in Full _____
Lodge Name and Number _____
If you have moved, PLEASE RETURN YOUR ADDRESS LABEL ABOVE TO THE GRAND LODGE OF GEORGIA along with your new address.
Lodge Name and Number _____
Street or P.O. Box _____
City _____
Zip Code _____
Remember, it is your responsibility to make certain your address is correct. Be certain your Lodge secretary has your correct address. Current addresses are kept in the Grand Secretary's Office in Macon. The Editor of the <i>Masonic Messenger</i> DOES NOT keep a list of addresses.



From the Desk of the Grand Secretary Right Worshipful Van S. “Mac” McGee

How to register for Grand View

Below is a link to a video that will show you how to set up your user account and the step to set up your account. If you have already created your user account and forgotten your password you can click on "Forgot your password?" under the sign-in button, enter your email address in the box and click "Send me to reset password instructions."

Video link- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ilx-WliihfcM>

Step 1. Enter the URL for your jurisdiction. <https://ga.grandview.systems>

Step 2. Click on Member Portal

Step 3. Click on Member Registration (or you can Click the "Sign up" next to forgot password) Step 4. Enter your Lodge Number

Step 5. Enter your Member ID

Step 6. Enter your Last Name - (case sensitive)

Step 7. Click on Check Membership Status

Step 8. Enter your email address

Step 9. Enter a password that you can remember (password must contain at least 8 characters) Step 10. Enter Confirmation by entering the password again

Step 11. Click on Submit

Now Available

You may now find the 2025 Georgia List of Lodges, Officers Planning Tool, and DDGM Contacts under My Portal on Grand View.

Grand View Secretary Training

The Grand Lodge Office is encouraging secretary training in all districts. Anyone can attend the training classes.

Please contact the Grand Lodge Office if you are interested in organizing a training class.

2026 District Conventions

<u>District</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Host Lodge</u>
1st District	March 28, 2026	10:00AM	Savannah	Coastal DL No. 213
2nd District	February 28, 2026	9:00AM	Pelham	Pelham Lodge No. 312
3rd District	March 21, 2026	10:00AM	Cordele	Cordelia Lodge No. 296
4th District	August 15, 2026	9:45AM	Greenville Lodge No. 321	Hamilton Lodge No. 16
5th District	September 12, 2026	9:00AM	Atlanta Masonic Center	Gate City Lodge No. 2
6th District	May 2, 2026	9:00AM	Griffin @ Meridian Sun Lodge No. 26	Hampton Lodge No. 70
7th District	May 8 & 9, 2026	9:00AM	Rome	Cherokee Lodge No. 66
8th District	May 16, 2026	9:00AM	Loganville Rock Gym	Fergus Lodge No. 135
9th District	September 26, 2026	9:00AM	Gainesville Lodge No. 219	Statham Lodge No. 634
10th District	June 13, 2026	10:00AM	Augusta	Webb Lodge No. 305
11th District	September 19, 2026	10:00AM	Waycross	Waycross Lodge No. 305
12th District	April 18, 2026	9:00AM	Warner Robins	Tyrian Lodge No. 111

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Code Section 28-104

Immediately after each annual election of officers, the Master of each Lodge shall cause the Secretary to report to the Grand Secretary the results of said election with the names of the officers elected.

It is very important immediately after the December elections (not after installation of Officers) the results are entered into Grand View. Please provide phone numbers and email addresses for Worshipful Master's and Secretaries and how you want information to be listed in the Georgia List of Lodges Digital Publication. All Lodge Officers must be entered into the election return with their contact information, including email addresses. Grand View allows the Secretary of each lodge to choose the mailing address for where he wants Lodge mail to be delivered, his contact phone number and email address. This information can be entered under Lodge Settings, then scroll to Lodge Contact Information. Remember all election returns must be entered on or before Friday, December 26, 2025.

MONTHLY CLOSEOUTS

On the first day of each month the Monthly Closeout of the preceding month must be completed. Remember, closeouts are in lieu of paper monthly reports which are no longer necessary to submit if you are properly using Grand View.

2026 GRAND MASTER FORUMS

The Grand Lodge Forums will be held as follows:

January 10th – registration 9AM/start 10AM:

Augusta – Scottish Rite Temple
Cedartown – Caledonia Lodge No. 121
Macon – Grand Chapter Building
Savannah – Hinesville Lodge No. 271

January 17th – registration 9AM/start 10AM:

Atlanta – Atlanta Masonic Center
Gainesville – Gainesville Lodge No. 219
Greenville – Greenville Lodge No. 321
Tifton – Tifton Lodge No. 47

Results of the Code Bills and Resolutions from the 239th Communication of the Grand Lodge of Georgia F&AM

Code Bill	Subject	Jurisprudence	General Welfare	Action of Grand Lodge
2025-01	Cornerstone-Add Grand Secretary	Proper Form/No Conflict	Pass	Pass
2025-02	Permanent Committees Of Grand Lodge	Proper Form/No Conflict	Pass	Pass
2025-03	Plural Membership Issues	Proper Form/No Conflict	Pass	Pass
2025-04	Withdraw from Plural Membership	Proper Form/No Conflict	Pass	Pass
2025-05	Monthly Closeouts	Not In Proper Legal Form Ruled Out of Order	—	—
2025-06	Restoration From NPD	Not In Proper Legal Form Ruled Out of Order	—	—
2025-07	Cipher Code To All Lodges	Proper Form/No Conflict	Do Not Pass	Fail
2025-08	Cornerstone-Process and Material	Proper Form/No Conflict	Pass	Pass
2025-09	Residency Requirement	Proper Form/No Conflict	Do Not Pass	Pass
2025-10	Sexual Activity	Proper Form/No Conflict	Do Not Pass	Fail

2025 Approved Bylaws

Mt. Vernon Lodge No. 22	Tilton Lodge No. 291
Montgomery Lodge No. 31	Bryan Lodge No. 303
Fraternal Lodge No. 37	Coosawattee Lodge No. 306
Waleska Lodge No. 57	Mt. Zion Lodge No. 316
Dawson Lodge No. 68	John H. Jones Lodge No. 348
Senoia Lodge No. 82	Pine Level Lodge No. 353
Pinta Lodge No. 88	Madison Lodge No. 376
Lawrenceville Lodge No. 131	Douglas Ldodge No. 386
Springville Lodge No. 153	Milan Lodge No. 393
Lexington Lodge No. 158	Centralhatchee Lodge No. 403
Roswell Lodge No. 165	Rose Hill Lodge No. 484
Acworth Lodge No. 176	Sweet Gum Lodge No. 542
Rockwell Lodge No. 191	Pace Lodge No. 558
Hickory Flat Lodge No. 205	Fort Benning Lodge No. 579
Bowdon Lodge No. 206	Stockbridge Lodge No. 691
Fulton Lodge No. 216	Walnut Grove Lodge No. 703
Cochran Lodge No. 217	Riverdale Lodge No. 709
Draketown Lodge No. 252	Azalea Lodge No. 716
Blackshear Lodge No. 270	Grovetown Lodge No. 730
Harlem Lodge No. 276	William A. Davis DL Lodge No.
Douglasville Lodge No. 289	753



Introducing the Most Worshipful Grand Master of all Masons in Georgia Most Worshipful Brother William F. Shepard

William F. Shepard was born in Hartford, Alabama on May 12, 1954, to Frank and Margaret Shepard; he has one sister Mary who still lives in Hartford. Growing up in a Christian home in a small town to parents who taught the values, joys, and rewards of family and hard work has been a blessing. He attended and graduated from Geneva County High School in 1972. In school he participated in many school activities, especially football, where as a lineman on both offense and defense. He was selected as the most valuable player in his senior year. He went on to attend George C. Wallace Technical College and received certification in heavy equipment operation.

He worked many years in the heavy construction industry as a crane operator and welder. He is currently retired from the United States Postal Service, where he worked for thirty-one years.

His early years in construction work brought him to Brunswick, Georgia in 1975. Here he met the love of his life Cheryle Ann Rhymes, who became his wife in 1977. They have one son Brett and three grandsons Dylan, Cole and Chad: also, two adopted grandsons Ethan and Archer.

Bill and Cheryle are both of the Baptist faith.

He was raised in Brunswick Lodge No. 717 on Nov. 18, 1999. He served as Worshipful Master in 2007. He received the Officer of the Year award for Brunswick Lodge in 2003 and the Hiram's award as the Mason of the Year for Brunswick Lodge in 2008. He affiliated with Ocean Lodge No. 214 in 2008 and served as Worshipful Master in 2011. He has served as Chaplain for the 11th District Masonic Convention on two occasions. He served as Counsel for Prosecution for the 11th Masonic District in 2008 and 2009. He was appointed to the Board of Custodians for the eleventh Masonic District in 2008 serving twelve years, three as chairman of that board. He received the Sam Owens award as Mason of the Year for the 11th Masonic District in 2014. Brother Shepard was appointed Third Grand Steward of the Grand Lodge by Most Worshipful Brother Jan Milton Giddens in 2017 and has advanced through the line each year.

He was exalted to the Most Sublime degree of Royal Arch Mason in Brunswick Chapter No. 66 Royal Arch Masons in 2000. He served as High Priest of his Chapter and the Eleventh Royal Arch District Convention. He was honored to be elected and serve the Companions of Georgia as Grand High Priest in 2016. He is a Perpetual Life Member of the General Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons, International. He is a Past Excellent President of the Order of High Priesthood. He is a recipient of the General Grand Chapter Bronze Distinguished Service Award, the General Grand Chapter Ritual Jewel and the Ephraim Kirby award.

He was greeted a Royal and Select Master in Ballard Council No. 16 in 2000 and served as Illustrious Master. He is a Past Illustrious Master of the South Georgia Council Convention. He is a recipient of the Ish Sodi Award. He has received the Order of the Silver Trowel and is a Past Thrice Illustrious Master and currently serves as the degree master for the Clyde Everette Griffin Council Order of the Silver Trowel. He is a Life Member of the General Grand Council Cryptic Masons, International.

He was knighted a Knight Templar in St. Elmo Commandery No. 21 in 2000 and served as Commander and received the Knight Crusader of the Cross and is currently serving as the Knight Crusader of the Asylum. He is a recipient of the Knight Commander of the Temple and the Knight Templar Cross of Honor.

He is a member of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Valley of Savannah, coronated as a 33° degree honorary. He is a past Commander of the Council of Kadosh and is a Past Venerable Master in the Lodge of Perfection. He is part of the degree teams for the 14th and 21st degrees also the Wise Master and Degree Master for the 18th degree.

Brother Shepard is a Past Prior of Georgia Priory no. 39 Knights York Cross of Honor and has served as Registrar and Treasurer since 2020. Knight Shepard has served as Personal Representative to the Grand Master General for District 25 since 2022.

He is a Past Preceptor of the Upper Room Tabernacle # XLV Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests and is serving as the Registrar and Treasurer. Knight Commander Shepard received the Order of Holy Wisdom in 2024.

He is a member of Oglethorpe Conclave Red Cross of Constantine in Savannah and Past Puissant Sovereign. He is a Past Governor of Herman E. Freeman York Rite College and the recipient of the Purple Cross. He is a Past Sovereign Master of Savannah Council No. 328 Allied Masonic Degrees; he has received the Red Branch of ERI, Man at Arms, Esquire, Knight, and Knight Commander. He has received and is a Life member of the Masonic Order of the Bath. He is a member of the George Washington Chapter Order of DeMolay and a Life Member of the International DeMolay Alumni Association. He is a member of Crowned Martyrs Council No. 120 Knight Masons. He is also a member of Oglethorpe Chapel No. 21 and Wesleyan Chapel No. 45 St. Thomas of Acon. He is also a Past Grand Tall Cedar of Savannah Forest No. 217.

Brother Shepard is a member, IX° grade, and Past Celebrant of the South Georgia College Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis and is currently serving as Secretary.

He is a member of Alee Shrine Temple in Savannah and the Brunswick Shrine Club.



Introducing Third Grand Steward Worshipful Brother Danny Roberts

Worshipful Brother Danny Roberts has been a proud and active Freemason for 19 years. He joined Fergus Lodge No. 135 in 2006, where he quickly moved through the degrees of Masonry. Danny became a Master Mason on June 15, 2006, and later served as Worshipful Master of the lodge in 2013. Today, he continues to serve on several committees and helps guide others in their Masonic journey.

In 2023, he was chosen to serve as District Deputy to the Grand Master. He is also Junior Warden of the Eighth Masonic District and helps manage the Masonic Home Endowment Fund.

Brother Roberts is also active in other Masonic groups. He joined the York Rite in 2009 and is part of the Covington Chapter #71 Royal Arch Masons, Covington Council #41, and St. Bernard Commandery #25. He was recently named to a leadership role in the Eighth District's Royal Arch line. He became a member of the Scottish Rite, Valley of Atlanta, in 2023 and also belongs to the Allied Masonic Degrees and W. Joe Clarke York Rite College #203.

Outside of Masonry, Danny has served his hometown of Loganville for over 30 years. He began as a volunteer firefighter in 1991 and transitioned to a full-time position in 1998. He earned many certifications in emergency medicine, hazardous materials, and fire safety. In 2008, Danny became the City of Loganville's Fire Chief. He also served as Chief Logistic officer for Georgia Mutual Aid Group and worked on Georgia's Type III management team.

Danny studied at Columbia Southern University and holds a Fire Science associate degree. In 2015, he became Assistant City Manager of Loganville and was subsequently promoted to City Manager in 2017, a role he still holds proudly.

Danny is married to Kelley, an emergency room nurse who has worked at Piedmont Walton Hospital for more than 15 years. They reside in Monroe, Georgia, and enjoy camping and attending concerts with their daughters, Kayla and Kinsey, who attend college in Athens.

Through his years of service, WB Roberts has shown that Masonry is more than meetings and titles; it's about being dependable when it matters most. His quiet example reminds us that real leadership often speaks through action, not applause. In every sense, he continues to build with purpose.



Introducing Grand Chaplain Worshipful Brother Hue Wise, Jr.

Ronald Hue Wise, Jr., age 68, was born on November 12, 1956, in Fernandina Beach, Florida, to Ronald and Christine Wise. He was raised in St. Mary's, Georgia, and has made Kingsland, Georgia, his home for more than five decades.

He is blessed with one sister, Ann Bryson, and her husband, Robert Mansel Bryson, who is a proud member of Ocean Lodge No. 214.

Brother Wise attended Calvary Baptist Church throughout his youth and graduated from Camden County High School in 1974. During his formative years, he participated in the Cub Scouts, midget league football, and Little League baseball, developing a lifelong love of teamwork and service.

In 1975, he married his beloved wife, Shirley Parker Wise, and together they recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Professionally, Brother Wise devoted the first 22 years of his career to the automotive field, progressing from apprentice mechanic to mechanic, shop foreman, and store manager. For the following 28 years, he served as Fleet Services Director for the City of Kingsland, where his leadership and dedication earned the respect of colleagues and the community alike. He retired from this position in 2024. Additionally, he owned and operated a barge service to Cumberland Island for 20 years, providing an essential connection to one of Georgia's treasured coastal landmarks.

Brother Wise has been deeply involved in civic and community life. He served on the Camden County Board of Education from 1996 to 1999, has been an active member of the Camden County Quarterback Club for over 45 years, and has served as a Georgia High School Football Referee for 10 years. Additionally, he was the public address announcer for Camden County Wildcat Football for 18 years. His enduring support of youth and athletics reflects his commitment to community and mentorship.

He and his wife, Shirley, reside in Camden County, where they enjoy spending time with their family. They are the proud parents of Grant Wise and his wife, Traci Wise, and the devoted grandparents of Parker Wise, their pride and joy.

In retirement, Brother Wise enjoys camping, boating, fishing, and relaxing on the coast of Georgia.

His Masonic journey began in 1980 at Camden Lodge No. 476, where he served as Worshipful Master in 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2022. He is a Past District Deputy Grand Master for District 11A and currently serves as Junior Warden for the 11th Masonic District. Brother Wise is also a dedicated member of both the Scottish Rite and the York Rite.

Brother Wise lives by a simple yet profound personal motto:

“Love your Blue Lodge.”



Introducing Grand Marshal Worshipful Brother Chris Gabor

From the Boy Scouts to the battlefields of Afghanistan and the halls of justice, Chris Gabor's life has been defined by service, leadership, and a deep commitment to his community.

Chris grew up in Davis, California, the son of Dr. Andrew and Judith Gabor. An active and athletic child, he played nearly every sport available, with rugby becoming his favorite.

In 1983, Col. Bruce Carswell, later revealed to be Bro. Bruce Carswell, invited Chris to join Troop 111, a newly reestablished Boy Scout troop meeting at Davis Community Church. Chris went on to become the first Eagle Scout of Troop 111, participating in numerous hikes, camping trips, and even a canoe journey around Lake Tahoe. His enthusiasm for Scouting led him to work as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for three years at Camp Pahatsi, an experience that also supported his volunteer firefighting and law enforcement service.

After high school, Chris joined the United States Marine Corps, serving from 1988 to 1992 with the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines and deploying to the Gulf War. His military career continued from 2004 to 2010, during which he served with the 129th Rescue Squadron of the California Air National Guard. During two deployments to Afghanistan in 2007 and 2009 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he participated in over 100 rescue missions in the Helmand Valley.

In 2012, Chris met the love of his life, Robin, a Special Education Teacher and Board Certified Behavior Analyst. They married in 2013 after many shared adventures hiking and camping at Point Reyes National Seashore. Robin's passion for tennis soon became Chris's as well, and the two became a successful doubles team in local tournaments. Chris won her heart early on with a perfectly prepared dinner of salmon and asparagus. In 2015, they relocated with their son, Jeremy, to St. Simons Island, Georgia.

Before retiring in 2018, Chris served for over 20 years in the United States Marshals Service. His first decade, spent in Fresno, California, focused on fugitive apprehension. He later transitioned to protective operations in the San Francisco Bay Area, safeguarding U.S. Supreme Court Justices and senior Department of Justice officials. His security assignments took him around the world, from Bangkok, Thailand, to Kuwait City, Kuwait, and in 2010, he led U.S. Marshals Service security operations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in preparation for the trials of the 9/11 hijackers.

Chris was initiated, passed, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in Ocean Lodge No. 214 in 2018 and currently serves as Worshipful Master of Brunswick Lodge No. 717. He is active in many Masonic appendant bodies, serving as Eminent Grand Sword Bearer in the Georgia Grand Commandery and Assistant Expert in the Lodge of Perfection for the Valley of Savannah, AASR. Together, Robin and Chris serve as Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron of Neptune Chapter No. 153, Order of the Eastern Star. Chris is also a member of AMD, York Rite College, SRICF, Tall Cedars, Allee Shrine Temple, and the Red Cross of Constantine, while Robin participates in the Social Order of the Beauceant in addition to her OES work.

At Lakeside Community Church, Chris teaches the Adult Sunday School Believers class, a role he finds deeply fulfilling.

Throughout his life, Chris Gabor has exemplified service, leadership, and devotion to community, leaving a lasting impact wherever he serves.



Introducing Grand Tyler Worshipful Brother Charles E. Taylor

I was born in 1948 to Rose Ann and Wilbur Hale Taylor in New Albany, Indiana. I grew up along the Ohio River in Clarksville, Indiana. My first real job at the age of 15, was a fry boy at the local McDonald's. After graduated from Clarksville High School in 1966, I continued to work there as an assistant manager until I was drafted in the Army on December 7, 1967. My basic training was in Fort Knox, Kentucky and trained as a combat engineer at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. After advanced individual training, I went to Vietnam in May of 1968 and returned to the States as Specialist 5th Class in July of 1969. On July 10, 1969 I received an honorable discharge.

I returned to McDonald's as a relief manager, eventually deciding that I wanted something other than working 70-plus hours a week. I enrolled in Indiana University the summer of 1970 and graduated with a bachelor's degree in business and accounting in May of 1973. I took the CPA exam the same week as finals and received my certificate after completing the required 3-year public practice. My initial employment was with the Indiana State Board of Accounts, where I audited counties, cities, schools, and hospitals for four years, followed by a year as audit manager for the Federal Land Bank of Louisville, Kentucky. Not enjoying corporate life, I left there to work for a large regional CPA firm in Indianapolis. In July of 1980 I moved to Brunswick, Georgia to accept a position with Barger and Carmicheal, CPAs which split in 1983 and in 1985 became Carmicheal & Taylor, CPA, P.C. In 1994 I opened my own practice as Charles E. Taylor, CPA, P.C., selling it to Wendy Delacqua, CPA where I still help during tax season.

My Masonic career began in 1985 where I was raised as a Master Mason on June 13, 1985 in Golden Isles Lodge No. 707, St. Simons Island, Georgia. I was elected to serve as Master of the Lodge for the year 1990. In 1991, I was installed as Treasurer where I served for over a decade. In 2010, I was elected Treasurer again and in 2014 served as Secretary. Golden Isles Lodge merged with Brunswick Lodge No. 717 in 2015 of which I am a Perpetual Member. I was a charter member of Atlantic Daylight Lodge No. 752 and served as Master in 2002. I affiliated as a plural member of Ocean Lodge No. 214, Brunswick, Georgia in 2000 and served as Treasurer from 2001 to 2005 and 2021 to 2025. I have served in the 11th Masonic District line and was Master for the year ending in 2015. I have served on the General Welfare Committee and Trial Commission and I am currently member of both committees.

I became a York Rite Mason in the Grand Master's Class of February 2000. I served as High Priest of Brunswick Chapter No. 66, Illustrious Master of Ballard No. 16, and Commander of St. Elmo Commandry No. 21. In 2008 I was elected to the Grand Council of Georgia line and was honored to serve as Most Illustrious Grand Master for 2014-2015.

Other affiliated bodies I am a member of are KYCH, Scottish Rite Valley of Savannah, York Rite Sovereign College where I am currently serving as Governor, Red Cross of Constantine, Allied Masonic Degrees Savannah Council No. 328 and am a Past Sovereign Master, Carl F. Lester, Jr. Council No. 65 Knight Masons, South Georgia College Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatus, as well as Upper Room Tabernacle, and St Thomas of Acon.



Introducing Grand Orator Most Worshipful Brother Jan M. Giddens

Jan Milton Giddens was born November 13, 1953 in Cartersville, Georgia. His parents met and married while serving in the United States Air Force and were discharged due to the end of the Korean conflict. The family moved to Marietta, Georgia in 1960 when his father went to work for Lockheed.

Upon graduation from high school, he worked for awhile before joining the U.S. Army. MWB Jan had the honor of serving from 1971-1978 before being honorably discharged at Ft. Meade, Maryland, his last duty being at the National Security Agency. Thanks to his status as a disabled veteran, he was hired by the U.S. Postal Service where he served for 35 years before retiring in 2013.

He was raised in 2005 in Kennesaw Lodge No. 33, serving as Worshipful Master in 2009. MWB Jan served as District Deputy to the Grand Master until being appointed as Third Grand Steward in 2012 by Most Worshipful Brother Drew Lane, PGM. He was honored to serve the Masons of the great state of Georgia as Grand Master from 2020-2021. Most Worshipful Brother Giddens is a Shriner, a York Rite Mason, a 33° IGH Scottish Rite Mason, a member of the National Sojourners and many other Masonic bodies invitational and otherwise within the state. Most Worshipful Brother Giddens feels that Masonry has given him many opportunities to serve others and looks forward to the future as a Mason and a Shriner.



From the Grand Orator

Most Worshipful Brother Jan Giddens
Kennesaw Lodge No. 33



The final gavel has sounded on the 239th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Georgia and the Masons of Georgia have come together to do the business of our Grand Lodge. MWB Mark Bradley presided over a harmonious session where the many reports and issues were handled with civil debate and proper parliamentary procedure and discourse. The many in-state and out of state dignitaries were recognized and made welcome to our grand session.

After lunch, pursuant to masonic code, the election of officers was the first order of business where RW Brother William F. “Bill” Shepard was elected Grand Master of Masons in Georgia for the ensuing year. The other officers were elected or appointed and as is custom the Junior Grand Warden elect, WB Scott Johnson, appointed WB Danny Roberts of Fergus Lodge No. 135 as Third Grand Steward.

MWB Bill Shepard’s election as Grand Master will provide our Grand Lodge with a proven leader of the craft. Our Grand Master is an incredible ritualist and has given many years of service and leadership to Georgia Masonry. I encourage you to invite our Grand Master to visit your Lodge, to hear his message for Georgia Masonry , our past, the present and our future. MWB Shepard will talk about this being the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the part the Masons of Georgia played in the founding of our country.

I hope you will invite the Grand Master to your lodge, but you should also invite the other Grand Lodge Officers as well. These Brothers are the future leaders of our Grand Lodge, you need to get to know them so you will be able to make an informed decision when it comes time to vote for them. All the Grand Lodge Officers are happy to assist your lodge in anyway they can, installing lodge officers, presenting 50 year awards, or just offering words of counsel and comfort. In 2026 the theme is “be humble and make a difference.”

Masonic Home Events

Events Held from September to November



Duluth # 480 Motorcycle Ride for Kids



Mountain Park # 729 Picnic



Lyons # 49 Steal Cookout



Ogechee # 213 Ghost Tour



Mountain Park # 729 Crocheting with Girls



Serving Ice Cream at Farmers Market

Masonic Home Events

Events Held from September to November



Rising Sun # 32 Peanut Boil



Food Donation to Macon Fire Department



Tattnall Homecoming



MDS Homecoming King



Best Costume Winners



Stone Mountain # 449 Trip



Halloween

Masonic Home Events

Events Held from September to November



Ezel # 335 Ice Cream Social



5k Winners



Our Seniors



Mount de Sales Homcoming Dance



MDS Homcoming Week



Lunch on the Lawn



Okra from the Garden

A Christmas Remembrance

Christmas Memories from Our Alumni



The real magic of the Masonic Home Christmas comes from people caring for each other. The gifts were a way of showing love, thoughtfulness and spirit of giving. That was something some of us kids never had. And the warmth of love during this time of year couldn't have been expressed better by anyone other than the Masons during this wonderful holiday.

Tabitha (Lassiter) Coley - 1998 to 2009



Growing up at the Masonic Home of Georgia, Christmas was always something special. Every year there was a big tree in the lobby, and all of us kids would gather around to open our gifts before we went on break.

The Masons and the staff always went out of their way to make it feel like home they made sure it was a fun, exciting time for all of us.

Looking back now, I realize how much love and care went into making those moments feel so magical. It wasn't just about the presents it was about feeling seen, cared for, and part of something bigger. ❤️

Shelby (Ford) Jabaley - 2005 to 2015



One of my fondest childhood memories is Christmas at the Masonic Home. We all gathered in the lobby, which felt like you stepped into a living room of an early 20th century story, with a crackling fireplace, sweet treats everywhere, a huge tree in the corner, evergreen boughs and ribbon, and mounds of gifts for all of us kids who excitedly sat or stood around waiting for our name to get called to receive a gift. For a child who never experienced a joyful Christmas before, it was magical to me. The house parents and staff were all smiles watching us. Looking back, I feel that they enjoyed it as much, if not more, than us. I honestly don't remember the gifts, but how safe and genuinely loved I felt in my "Home" family with many moms, dads, brothers, and sisters. I learned that this is how a family Christmas should feel.

Dorothy (Sheffield) Land - 1992 to 1995



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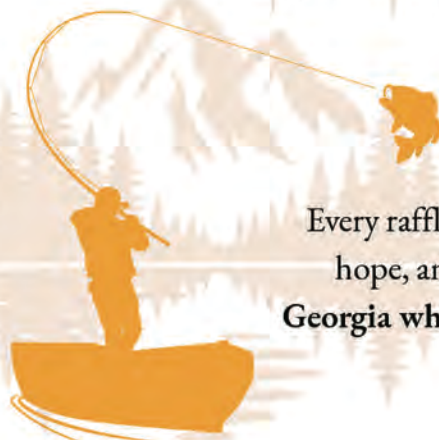


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PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

of the Grand Lodge of Georgia



Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Georgia

In an attempt to standardize publication dates and deadlines, the Publications Committee has determined to put in place the following deadlines for submissions.

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Winter (December) Issue: deadline for content- November 1

When you make a submission to messenger@glofga.org, you should receive an automatic reply noting that your submission was received. If you are submitting a 50, 60, 70+ Award, you will get a second email notifying you when your award will run in the Messenger.

IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION EMAIL, please check the email address or call the Editor at 770-608-6232 for issues.

Thoughts from a Trip Out West

By Brother Jim Rogers

Sugar Valley Lodge No. 733

We flew from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Fort Worth, Texas to visit a friend of ours. After our visit, we rented a car and completed the two-day drive to Tombstone, Arizona. Why Tombstone? Because it is my wife's favorite movie and I told her that I would take her there someday. I had been before with my dad, but this was all about her. We arrived at our hotel, unloaded the car and set out to see what we could.

As we drove into Tombstone, I saw the bright white, two story, building on my left. Right there was the familiar blue writing and Masonic emblem displayed, standing out against the white building with gold trim backdrop. King Solomon Territorial Masonic Lodge #5 1881, it said. We drove past the Lodge and turned to drive over a couple of streets to get to a parking spot, then got out and proceeded to walk the streets of Tombstone.

The restaurant we made our way into for supper, was set up like an old saloon from back in the day complete with some tables in front of the larger windows out front. A few minutes after we arrived, I noticed a couple of gentlemen come in the door, all decked out in black jackets, black pants, white shirts, black boots, and black cowboy hats. They were led to one of those tables in the windows. A few minutes later, three more gentlemen came in all wearing the same clothing as those who had entered before, and they were escorted to the same table.

I thought for sure that they were re-enactors or such, we were in Tombstone, Arizona after all. I watched as they all shook hands and appeared to be genuinely happy to see one another. It wasn't just their clothes that caught my attention but how they presented themselves, as gentlemen and their camaraderie towards each other. The waitress appeared and took our order, and I asked her who those gentlemen were? Without hesitation she said, "Oh, those are our Masons. They come to have supper with us after their meetings."

Her words took me back to my childhood. She was as proud of these Masons as I was of the Masons in my family. Both of my grandfathers were well known in Gordon County, since they were both preachers and both had reputations as being Godly, honest men, who stood in the pulpit and preached the word of God. They wore what I called "dress clothes" everywhere (except the garden of course). My maternal grandfather, my maternal uncle, and my father were Masons and active members of Sugar Valley Lodge No. 733.

My father, "Pop," was also well known throughout Gordon County. I found that out when I started driving myself to school. After school, I would drive my girlfriend home and then go to work. After work, I would come home, where Pop would ask "did you get her home ok?" I thought he was checking the mileage on the car or something. After becoming an adult, I found out that people who knew him would see me and then call him. "I saw Jim today." Then he would get all of the details.

I remember how I used to sit in the floor and look at copies of the Masonic Messenger, not knowing what it was. When it was meeting time, my grandfather and Pop would go get "dressed for Lodge" and put on "dress" clothes. No jackets or ties but still dress pants and dress shirts. I asked Pop why he had to get dressed up to which he replied, "because he wanted to." Now, before anyone gets upset, I'm not saying that a nice shirt and jeans aren't perfectly fine. I'm just relaying my experiences.

I also have become well known throughout Gordon County, mostly due to my time with the Sheriff's Office but I have also found myself becoming known as a Mason, which makes me think more about what I do and how I dress; how I present myself. I wonder what someone sitting in a restaurant, that I don't know, thinks about how I present myself and how I present myself as a Mason. I look forward to our next trip to see what thoughts come to mind.

The Tools We Carry—A Masonic Reflection

By Worshipful Brother Brad Simmons

McCay Lodge No. 423

In Freemasonry, we are taught to regard the working tools of the operative Mason as symbols of moral instruction. Tools like the **square**, **level**, **plumb**, and **gavel** are not merely symbols carved into our rituals they are reminders that our spiritual labor is never truly done.

But let us pause and consider something often overlooked: these tools, in their original form, were not always cast in sturdy metal or modern steel. In the early days of operative masonry, tools were often fashioned from **wood or stone** materials far more susceptible to wear and decay. **Squares** were hand-carved, and over time, they could warp. If they became even slightly out of line, a wall could lean, a structure could crack, and a foundation could fail.

So, let me ask you this, my Brothers: **What happens when our square is no longer square? When our level is not level, and our plumb no longer plumbs true?**

The answer is simple **We must replace them.** Because if we continue to build with faulty tools, our character, our lodge, and our Brotherhood becomes compromised.

In speculative Masonry, this speaks to the importance of **self-examination and constant moral renewal.** The **square** teaches us to square our actions with virtue. The **level** reminds us that we are all equal in the eyes of the Great Architect. The **plumb** encourages us to walk upright in our dealings with others. And the **gavel** teaches us to chip away at our own rough edges the vices and superfluities of life.

But when we stop growing when we stop reflecting, refining, and re-aligning **what do we do?** We must be honest with ourselves. **We must inspect our tools.** If they are no longer accurate if our judgment has dulled, our tolerance has warped, or our intentions have veered off course we must **adjust, repair, or replace** them. We must ask: *Am I still building with integrity? Am I true to my Masonic obligations?*

There is no shame in acknowledging that a tool has worn out. The shame lies in continuing to build with it, knowing that it no longer measures true.

So, brethren, I leave you with this:

Every day offers the chance to check your square.

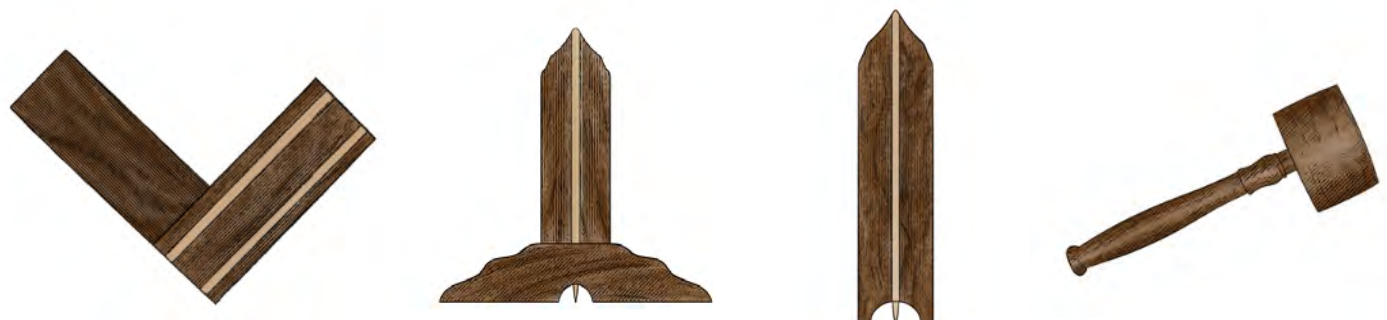
Every trial allows you to test your level.

Every decision reveals the truth of your plumb.

The most important stone you will ever set is the next one.

And the most important tool is not the one in your hand it's the one that shapes your heart.

Reflect. Rebuild. And always remain worthy of the title “Master Mason”.



East to West, West to East

By Brother Barry Stinson

Mount Zion Lodge No. 316

He was born two months prematurely on Christmas Eve of 1809 in Madison County, KY. His parents named him Christopher. A year later, they travelled east to west when the family moved to Missouri. Chris was the 11th of 15 children, common in those days – more hands to work the farm. His first interactions with American Indians came during childhood when he was playmates with kids from the Sac and Fox tribes.

To clear farmland, his father was burning trees when a large limb broke off and killed him. Chris was just shy of his 9th birthday at that time. Four years later, his mother remarried, and Chris rebelled. The new husband put up with the behavior for a year, then apprenticed 14-year-old Chris to a saddlemaker. Chris hated being cooped up in a shop and grew to admire the trappers and traders who would frequent the business on their way west. They had long beards, dressed in animal skins, and told fascinating stories about the frontier.

Two years later, Chris signed on as a laborer for a merchant caravan, broke his apprenticeship and, once again, travelled east to west on the Santa Fe Trail.

That began his life on the road to becoming an early American hero. Over the years, he became a trapper, scout, mountain man, guide, soldier, Indian fighter and one of the most admired men west of the Mississippi River.

Through his frequent travels, he became known as the go-to guy for Western expeditions. In December, 1846, Chris was working as a guide for the Army during the Mexican War. The Battle of San Pasqual had all the makings of a disaster for the American Cavalry, beginning with miscommunication. When the commanding officer gives the command, “Trot,” and a captain hears, “Charge,” you’re in for a bad day.



After a series of bad decisions, the commanding officer realized he needed to send for reinforcements, and no one was better at accomplishing that critical task than Chris. He, along with a Navy Lieutenant and a young Indian, were given the life-or-death mission and they set out in the dead of night.

The terrain was loose gravel. Their boots made too much noise, so Chris and the lieutenant removed them and tucked them under their belts. Their canteens were sloshing, so they were left behind. The three had some close calls, but made their escape. Unfortunately, the two men lost their boots

along the way and had to make the trek in their stocking feet, with the Indian not much better off in thin moccasins.

The ground wasn't frozen, but covered with cactus barbs and needles. With bleeding feet, they pressed on. To ensure the message got through, they split up at dawn, with Chris taking the longest path of around 20 miles. All three miraculously made it to the Army camp in San Diego. Chris hadn't eaten or had water in 30 hours, and his feet were in such bad shape he couldn't walk for a week.

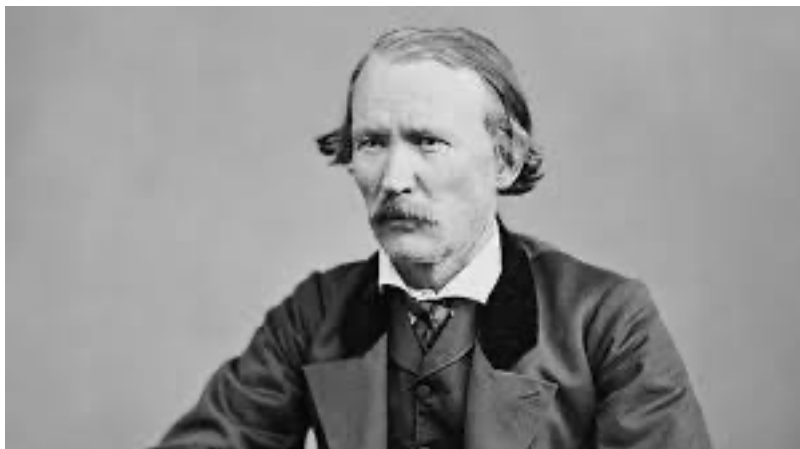
But the mission was a success, reinforcements were sent and the force at San Pasqual was saved from certain death.

In typical modesty, Chris' description of the adventure in his memoirs read, "Finally got through, but had the misfortune to have lost our shoes. Had to travel over a country covered with prickly pear and rocks, barefoot. Got to San Diego the next night."

"Chris" is our Brother Freemason, Christopher Carson, better known as Kit. He was on the leading edge of Manifest Destiny, the belief that US boundaries would expand westward to the Pacific Ocean, an initiative championed by another Mason, President James Polk. Kit's travels took him from East to West, West to East, and back again several times.

This giant of a man stood 5'5 1/2" tall, weighed 140, and could neither read nor write. However, while spending time around campfires with Army officers, he learned two things – how to read and write his signature of C. Carson, and he was introduced to Freemasonry.

Kit was initiated on April 22, passed on June 17, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on December 26, 1854, two days after his 45th birthday, in Montezuma Lodge No. 109 in the Santa Fe Territory. Five years later, he was a charter member of Bent Lodge No. 204 in Taos. Kit was the first Junior Warden and second Senior Warden. Due to his travels, he never sat as Master of a Lodge. He died at age 58 from an aneurysm and is buried in Taos. He's regarded by many as the face of Freemasonry in the Western US.



A Call for Unity in the Craft

By Brother Ken McKuen

St. Mary's Lodge No. 109

Worshipful Masters, Wardens and Brethren:

There's a phrase we've all heard in our lodges, so often that it might pass us by unnoticed: "Peace and Harmony being the strength of all well-regulated institutions, more especially this... of ours." But let us pause and reflect on what that truly means—because Freemasonry cannot survive on ritual alone. It depends on something more fragile, more sacred, and harder to build than stone:

Brotherly Love.

Which, got me to thinking about the dangers of division.

Brothers, no lodge was ever destroyed by poor memory of ritual. No lodge ever went dark because of a mispronounced word. But many have fallen because Brothers turned against Brothers. When we argue over power, politics, pride, or personal grievances, we forget that we are all working men in the same quarry—rough ashlar striving for perfection. We were not made Masons to be perfect. We were made Masons to practice virtue—especially when it is hardest to do so.

Freemasonry is bigger than us. This Fraternity existed long before any of us, and it will continue long after. What will not survive is the spirit of our Lodges if they are poisoned by gossip, prideful ambition, petty arguments, or cold shoulders political factions within the Lodge. We must never confuse rank with righteousness, or office with ownership. You see, the Working Tools teach us:

The Plumb - reminds us to act uprightly.

The Level - teaches that no Brother is above another.

The Trowel - spreads the cement of Brotherly Love and affection.

These tools are not symbolic decorations. They are instruments of peace. Now, we all know disagreement is natural—but hear me now, division is a choice. We are men with opinions. We will disagree. But how we handle those disagreements defines us more than the disagreement itself. Can we disagree and still pray together? Can we challenge each other with respect? Can we forgive when it's not easy? That is what makes us Freemasons and not just men in aprons. Finally Brethren, let us be quicker to extend a hand than point a finger. Let us remember the charge to aid and support each other, not only when it's convenient—but when it's most difficult. Let our lodge be a place where men become better, not bitter.

Scripture tells us in Psalm 133, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." If we are to be true to our obligation and to the light we have received, then peace among us is not optional, it is essential. Let us work together—not perfectly, but harmoniously.



Phileo - Brotherly Love

By Worshipful Brother Robert L. Anglin
Fulton Lodge No. 216

Brethren, I want to write on something that the Great Architect of the Universe has laid on my heart.

In the Reception of a Master Mason, we were taught that between the points of the Compasses when properly extended lie the three most important tenets of Freemasonry: Brotherly Love, Morality, and Relief.

And in the Working Tools Lecture for the Master's Degree, we were taught to use the Trowel for the noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of Brotherly Love and Affection.

We say these words, but are they merely empty utterances, or do we truly understand and mean what is being said?

As Freemasons, we are all Men. It is an Ancient Landmark that we so be. Not all of us are big, burly, blue-collar men. And there is no requirement that we be so. Men come in all shapes and sizes, colors and creeds. Fulton Lodge is proud of the diversity of thought and background that our Brethren bring to our fellowship.

There is what I see as a problem in our society an expectation that men must be hypermasculine and avoid showing care and concern towards other men. But if we are to spread the cement of Brotherly Love and Affection, we must shed this way of thinking. We should not be ashamed to tell another Brother that he is loved. Nor should we be afraid to hug his neck.

In the Volume of Sacred Law resting upon our Holy Altar, the original Greek references three types of Love, one of which is Phileo, or Brotherly Love. If the Holy Bible and our degree work direct us to love one another, it would be a wise practice to do so.

In this spirit, I want to say that I love each of you, and may the Great Architect who reigns supreme bless you and keep you. May Brotherly Love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us. Amen.

Love in Masonry

By Worshipful Brother William Campbell
Greenville Lodge No. 321

There are several key ideas in Freemasonry that are often implied but have few or no mentions in our Ritual. One of these that we should embrace in our day to day lives is love. There are three types of love which we should strive to practice. These are:

Worldly Love
Fraternal Love and
Brotherly Love.

Worldly love refers to love that is focused on worldly matters, often it is related to personal desires, attachments, and relationships. This kind of love encompasses familial love, romantic love and other forms of affection that are everyday experiences of life.

Fraternal love, here, means a literal love of the fraternity. A love of the study of Freemasonry, a love of our ritual and the desire to learn more, to search for more light. It is the thing that drives us to become more perfect in our stations as Freemasons. It is also the love of sharing our knowledge with our fellow Freemasons and working with our brothers to accomplish the simplest of tasks as a unified group.

Brotherly love refers to the concept of treating fellow members with kindness, respect, and compassion. It signifies the bond of friendship and unity among Freemasons, regardless of their backgrounds, beliefs, or differences. This principle is an aspect of Freemasonry's teachings and emphasizes the importance of being tolerant and supporting one another on a personal and moral level. Brotherly love encourages the brethren to extend their love and affection not only within the Masonic community but also in their daily interactions with the profane community.

As you can see, Love is one of the most important concepts of Freemasonry. It is one of the most basic instructions as taught by the Grand Architect of the Universe, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another (John 13:34)."

Freemasonry: The Ultimate Sacred Knowledge Geocache

By Worshipful Brother Phillip R. Chafin, II

Mt. Zion Lodge No. 316

Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity, in which participants hide and seek containers, called ‘geocaches’ or ‘caches’ at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world. You can find the general locations on a map but must go and search to find what you are looking for. This is remarkably like my experience in Freemasonry and my search for “Light.” In all the degrees we are given instructions that we can use to find this knowledge; however, it does not tell us what we will find just where to start looking. A Mason must practice these teachings in his daily life and look deep to find what those sacred caches hold for him.

Now my first entrance into the Fraternity was a much greater shock than realizing there are millions of hidden geocaches all over the world. I did recognize a correlation in that Masonry offered knowledge caches hidden within their work. In the Entered Apprentice degree, we learn our first instructions and that the first caches to discover are within each of us. In the fellow craft degree, we learn about multi-caches of 3, 5, and 7 and that there is much more to study and work to do within and outside of ourselves. Many times, one cache simply leads you to the next cache where the real prize is or possibly another deeper revelation.



Obviously, the final degree is one of great symbolism and is the ultimate step in membership. In the Sublime Degree, we are taught of the ultimate final cache that every human will discover one day, that of the white rock with the new name. As life is a constant school, we as Masons should be continually striving to learn the meanings behind the lessons that we were taught earlier and strive to be better men tomorrow than we are today. The last degree is not the end of the search, it simply reminds us that we too may not complete our temple in enough time. Still, to this very day, the most amazing knowledge cache I ever discovered happens in the first degree. Outside of all the beautiful lectures and ritual work, there is a tiny but amazing cache. The candidate is asked multiple times “Is it of his own free will and accord” to which he answers, “It is.” After lodge prayer he is asked “In whom do you place your trust” and he answers, “In God.” Before taking his obligation, the Worshipful Master asks, “Are you willing to proceed” and the candidate responds, “I am.” Finally, before removing the candidates hoodwink, he is asked, “What do you most desire” and is given the appropriate answer “Light.” To find this cache you must forget about all the other words and focus on the seven words the Entered Apprentice says.

“It is, In God, I am, Light!”

So mote it be.

The Importance of Masonic Mentorship

By Worshipful Brother Matthew Fischer

Landrum Lodge No. 48

Throughout my Masonic journey, I have realized that Masonry can be a fraternity with difficult and complex teachings. While many Masons are content with a lack of understanding of the teachings and history of the Craft, many Masons truly take these topics to heart. Those Masons, who genuinely believe in the teachings and history, have shaped my understanding and contribution to the Craft. Those brothers have been my mentors.

Coaching

The lessons taught on degree night can be overwhelming. Not only are the lessons cloaked in symbolism and allegory, but the regalia worn by a candidate and the complete unknown add more complexity and confusion to the teachings. During my time as a student and a coach, I was lucky to have instructors that were truly knowledgeable about the teachings of the Craft and were always there to help clarify anything they could assist with. I also find new Masons appreciative of my willingness to expand on the teaching while coaching.

One last thought on coaching and mentoring, while coaching does provide a platform for mentoring new Masons, coaching also creates bonds between the coach and the new Masons. This is a bond that will last forever.

Learning From the Past

We have all heard the phrase “standing on the shoulders of giants.” I submit that this also applies to Freemasonry. We have heard names like Albert Pike, Albert Mackey, Malcolm Duncan, etc. While these men set the foundation for us, we have been able to expand on those throughout the ages. Even though we are a fraternity rich in history and traditions, Freemasonry has evolved. Mentors who share the original practices and ancient usages to help keep the new guard aware are invaluable.

Helping New Masons

Keeping with the two areas explained above, we all must understand that Freemasonry is complex, and symbols and allegories may not readily be apparent for new or older Masons. With the membership declining over the past several years, we must mentor new Masons to make sure they see Masonry as something other than a place to open and close a lodge. We must ensure we are setting new Masons on a path of success where they genuinely learn about Masonry.

I often hear visiting brothers talk about how much they enjoy our lodge because we perform lectures at every meeting. Due to this, many of the same brothers come back for multiple sessions a year and bring other brothers with them. We never turn away a brother who is hungry for knowledge.

I could author a small novel on this. I would not be where I am in Masonry had it not been for the exceptional mentors I have had. Mentoring new Masons is paramount to the success of Masonry, and I give my mentors a large amount of credit for my success.

The Importance of Masonic Education and Mentorship in Lodges Today

By Worshipful Brother Phillip Spake
Draketown Lodge No. 252

Lodges today, across the country, are suffering from reduced membership, and lack of participation. Our numbers in Georgia shrink every year, as we are not making Masons at a rate fast enough to overcome the processes of the Dread Messenger Death. In years past, Freemasonry was a very attractive organization that provided men the ability to join together with other like-minded men, away from the work and labor of life. Men traveled by horse and buggy and some on foot to attend Lodge as they felt it is something that they needed, just as with attending Church.

While Lodge still offers this today, we are at odds with other means that provide Men with the “escapes” from our daily labor. The addition of televisions into most homes in the mid to 1900s started our free-fall of membership. As our lives have become more driven by computers and mobile devices, our tendency is to stay at home, rather than mingle with our Brethren. The increased technology deeply impacts today’s generations (late Generation X and younger). These men in these generations are not seeking out religion in vast numbers, much less Freemasonry.

While increasing new membership is not within the scope of this essay, retention is, and that is where Masonic Education and direct and strong Mentorship takes precedent. We are all guilty of coaching a candidate through the degrees and Catechisms, but what are we offering after that? Time and time again, we initiate, pass and raise new masons, only to see them waver and stop becoming because we are not valuing them nor ourselves. As the Bible teaches, the lessons of the Bible are started out by small sips of its “milk” and as we improve in faith, our diet of its teachings become profound as “meat.” Freemasonry is no different. We give our candidates “milk” in the form of coaching Catechisms, but we are failing to offer the “meat” that is needed to make strong Masons. Our meetings consist of business items, such as bills and letters. We offer prayer to the sick and afflicted, and often times leave, having not offered the sustenance that we all, but especially new members need and crave.

As Kirk C. White stated in his book “Operative Freemasonry,” we must commit to employing Freemasonry’s teachings daily (White, 2012). This daily study can be in the form of our rituals and becoming proficient or more importantly, in learning who we as Freemasons are. The lessons of Freemasonry are broad and diverse, with a plethora of sources to use as research.

Mentorship is arguably the most important facet that we as Lodges should be imploring with not just new Masons, but old as well. We do an outstanding job in mentoring candidates through the degrees. Most people remember and cherish the hours spent coaching and learning for the remainder of their lives. The coaches become lifelong friends and are looked up to as guiding figures. But why do we stop mentoring and coaching after the Master’s exam is complete? This should be the starting point of Masonic Education, not the finish.

The examination on the Master’s Catechism is currently the pinnacle of our mentoring endeavors. However, these candidates have just now got to the point they are ready for the “meat and potatoes” and the mentoring stops. Why? Why do we stop? Most likely, it is because we stopped being coached ourselves at that point. Not many are well versed enough in our Craft to continue Mentoring and teaching. I would venture to say that most men in Lodges today are not familiar with any of the lectures found in the Masonic Manual past those that are part of our Degree work.

In years past, the Mystic Tie of the obligations and brotherly love held lodge membership together enough to survive. Today, with all of the competition that men have for their time, it is not enough. Continued education and Mentorship past the catechisms is the key to our future success. We must feed our members the knowledge of our Fraternity, just as our churches must feed us the bread of life! Any organization that is not striving to improve its members and itself, is destined for failure.

To Learn...

By Brother John G. Morrow III
Gate City Lodge No. 2

Challenge: "What come you here to do?"

Response: "To learn....."

The first thing we are prompted and challenged to do as an Entered Apprentice Mason is to learn. This, then, has been important to my unusual and, so far, short journey in Freemasonry; unusual in that I was raised to the Sublime Degree in 2022, two days after my seventy-fifth birthday.

I have been taught that there are four progressive levels of learning: 1) Rote; 2) Understanding; 3) Application and 4) Correlation. The catechism, both challenges and responses, for the three degrees require a significant amount of rote memorization. I was fortunate to have a coach and mentor who used examples to illustrate some of the salient issues as he helped me memorize the catechism for proficiency. He encouraged me to attend other lodges as well as to attend rituals for the three degrees whenever possible. It was not until I was completing the MELD courses that I realized he had taught me more than just memorized words, he was teaching me how to become a Mason. Additionally, I have attended the Fifth District Lodge of Instruction. The assistant custodian of works for the Fifth District helped me to become a catechism coach. I have delivered the "Apron Lecture." All of these helped me to move my learning of various facets of Freemasonry to the next level: understanding.

I understood my grandfather, a 50+ year Mason who I never heard raise his voice in anger, who I never heard curse or blaspheme and who I never saw lose his temper. I understood why General Oglethorpe formed a lodge of Freemasons in 1734, a little over a year after arriving to establish the Colony of Georgia. I understood why my grandfather would prepare gift baskets of candied and other fruits and distribute them on Christmas Eve to the Masonic widows in my hometown. And reading helped me to understand better some of the symbology, allegories, and hidden mysteries of Freemasonry.

Further application of that which I have memorized and understood will require that I, myself, will need to both introspectively and internally begin to pray for myself, to accept the finality of life in the body, to realize the immortality of the soul and to actively apply the basic tenets of Freemasonry in my daily life. I hope to apply the second challenge we are prompted as an Entered Apprentice, subdue my passions, to be more like my grandfather.

The highest level of learning, correlation, will come for me later rather than sooner, because there is much more to learn, even more to experience and infinitely more to share. As I try to move my level of learning to this final tier, I am certain that it will help me, as the final challenge an Entered Apprentice is prompted to do, to improve myself in Freemasonry.

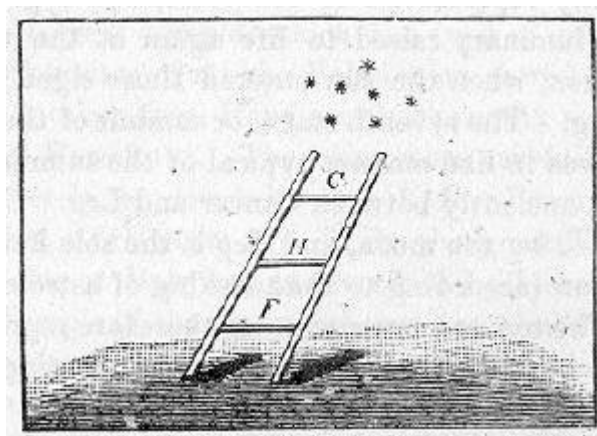
An Interpretation of Masonic Charity

By Brother David Cooper

Buford Lodge No. 292

The first word that I ever attempted to write in a Masonic Lodge was charity. The charity lecture had made an impression on a brand-new Mason, and I was eager to learn more. From the lecture, we are told “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” This is actually a biblical reference from 1 Corinthians, Ch 13, KJV.

The original biblical translation of charity is from the ancient Greek word, “agape,” which other versions of the bible have incorrectly translated in this passage to mean “love.” “Agape” was translated in other passages as “love” to represent the love of a man and his wife, love of the Deity, and love for our children among other examples. However, in the context of his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul clearly intended it to represent Charity as a manifestation of Christian brotherly love towards one another. Albert Mackey states that Charity “is exercised on earth in acts of mutual kindness and forbearance, [it] is still found in the world to come, in the



sublime form of mercy from God to his erring creatures.”

The so-called “three graces” of Faith, Hope and Charity are first revealed to the Entered Apprentice Mason when describing the covering of the Lodge and Jacob’s vision featuring the theological ladder extending from heaven, the first three rungs of which are given as “faith, hope and charity.” This reference actually comes to us from the book of Genesis, Chapter 28, Verse 12. The entire ladder will ultimately consist of seven rungs and include the additional cardinal virtues of “temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice.”

It is important for Masons to recognize the significance of Charity as brotherly love versus a charitable act or donation. Charitable acts are a cornerstone of Freemasonry around the world, however, donations to charities should be considered an outcome of Masonry, not our primary mission. Alternatively, we should consider the Masonic and biblical application of Charity for the more noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection. In essence, Charity (as brotherly love) signifies a selfless form of love and care for others, and worldly embodiment of Deity’s love through service, compassion and kindness. The charitable acts themselves are a natural outcome of practicing this Masonic Charity in our daily lives!

Masonic Lodges will ultimately support our local food banks, raise money for scholarships, make donations to the Masonic Children’s Home and participate in many other charitable activities. But as Freemasons, when we “make good men better” our core mission is on a much grander scale than simply inviting alms and donations. While living a life that reflects kindness, grace and universal love, our hearts are imbued with the “radiant spark emanating from God.” Only then as Masons do we demonstrate true Charity and reflect the idea that Charity is the “brightest jewel in the Masonic crown.”

Embracing Symbolism in the Scottish Rite: A Path to Deeper Understanding and Enlightenment

By Brother Sudhanshu Shukla

Kennesaw Lodge No. 33

Within the realm of the Scottish Rite, an intricate tapestry of symbolism weaves through every aspect of its teachings, rituals, and ceremonies. As an initiate on my Scottish Rite journey, I have come to recognize the profound significance of symbolism in unlocking hidden truths, fostering personal growth, and cultivating a deeper connection with the mysteries of existence.

Symbolism serves as a universal language that transcends the limitations of spoken words. In the Scottish Rite, symbols are used to convey complex concepts and timeless truths that resonate with individuals on a

profound level. These symbols, whether architectural, geometric, or allegorical, provide a

framework for understanding abstract ideas that may otherwise elude direct explanation. Through contemplation and study, Masons peel back the layers of symbolism, revealing deeper meanings that inspire personal insights and transformative revelations.

One of the remarkable qualities of symbolism is its ability to engage the imagination and evoke emotional responses. The imagery and metaphors found in Scottish Rite rituals stimulate the mind and heart, prompting initiates to explore their own beliefs, values, and aspirations. By engaging with these symbols, Masons embark on a journey of self-discovery, unraveling layers of their own consciousness and connecting with the universal truths represented by the symbols.

Furthermore, symbolism in the Scottish Rite fosters a sense of continuity with the past and a connection to a lineage of seekers who have come before. The use of ancient symbols and traditions links modern initiates to the heritage of Freemasonry, inviting them to participate in a timeless quest for knowledge and enlightenment. This connection to tradition provides a sense of grounding and purpose, reminding Masons of the enduring nature of the pursuit of truth.

As initiates progress through the degrees of the Scottish Rite, they encounter increasingly intricate and layered symbols. This progression mirrors the

evolution of one's understanding and awareness. Just as a symbol's meaning can deepen over time, so too can an individual's insights

and perceptions mature as they delve deeper into the mysteries of the craft. Each encounter with symbolism becomes a steppingstone on the path to greater enlightenment, encouraging Masons to embrace a lifelong journey of exploration and growth.

In conclusion, the exploration of symbolism within the Scottish Rite is a transformative journey that enriches the Masonic experience. Through the study and contemplation of symbols, initiates unlock hidden meanings, forge connections to timeless truths, and embark on a path of self-discovery and enlightenment. As I continue my Scottish Rite journey, I am reminded of the power of symbolism to inspire, uplift, and guide, and I am excited to uncover more of its secrets as I progress along this illuminating path.



Allegory and Masonic Principles

By Worshipful Brother Matthew Astin

Macon Lodge No. 5

Like many others, I was first introduced to allegory in high school, but always had a little difficulty understanding things. It was not until Freemasonry that I was able to truly connect the allegory of the building of King Solomon's temple to my life. This was further clarified through the study. Specifically, how the working tools of the Operative Mason symbolically apply to building my life as a Speculative Mason.

It begins with the rough ashlar. Using the hammer and chisel, this is honed into the perfect ashlar. This is the same as reading books for my education or working out for my physical health. The compasses are used to ensure the proper dimensions of the ashlar, just as I must use the compasses to insure temperance in my daily actions. The square is used to prove right angles on the ashlar, regulating the corners and edges. The square regulates my actions by keeping my conduct in line with my principles of virtue and morality.

Each perfect ashlar is then placed in the wall of my Temple. The level is used to prove the horizontal. For me, the level represents that we are all brothers and should be treated as equals. This should be represented in all my actions. The plumb proves the wall is perpendicular and vertical. For me, this reminds me to remain upright in my life, testing my morality before God and my fellow man. The walls of the Temple were held together with cement spread by the trowel. The walls of my Temple are held together by the trowel spreading Brotherly Love. I cannot go through this life alone. I need my God, my family, and my brothers.

By applying these working tools to my life as a Speculative Mason in the building of my Temple, I trust that I am indeed building a good life and that the Supreme Architect of the Universe will be pleased and approve.

Freemasonry and Freedom

By Brother James Pledger

Lindale Lodge No. 455

Within the Fraternity, there are several factors to which we look with grace and for guidance; truth, faith, enlightenment, and charity to name a few. I feel there is one fundamental aspect of the craft that is overlooked and known to our forefathers of this country, with values reflected from Freemasonry to our nation's constitution, Freedom.

Through our rituals, symbols, and teachings, the craft recognizes the freedoms of the individuals within its bodies and society by connecting these principles of moral and ethical development with the choices of the individual. As a Mason and a Man you are allowed the freedom to worship the Deity of your choice, continue to seek enlightenment or not, grow and progress through additional degrees of appendant bodies or not. We each have been endowed with the freedom to apply the teachings of the craft to our own lives, beliefs, and goals as long as we stay within the bounds of our obligations; sounding something similar to circumscribing parts of our lives and keeping our passions within limits.

The central idea of Freemasonry is the conviction of the absolute value of the individual. This is one of the beliefs that forms the Masonic attachment to personal freedom. Masons are inspired to seek knowledge, and

personal development, and use their skills to solve situations within the limits of morals and the maximum use of integrity. Instead of seeing it as one's alienation from the body, this pursuit is seen as a means to attain self-improvement and to be a positive influence on the community. Besides that, a sense of community is produced, where members, regardless of their different provenances, find the way to harmony, mutual respect, and common shared values. This unity, while acknowledging the individuality of each member, is set upon by the principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth. Masons are taught to combine their own individual rights with the brotherly care of their peers, thereby rendering a climate conducive to cooperation.

The element of freedom shown here emphasizes the notion that unrestricted freedom is inseparable from the obligation of care and upliftment of others in the fraternity. Additionally, Masons support the ideas of Enlightenment, equality, and the acquisition of knowledge are of utmost importance. This is freedom of thought, coupled with moral courage, both consistent with the goals of producing brothers who are both enlightened and ethical.

Celebrating 175 Years: Fergus Lodge's Cornerstone Dedication

By Worshipful Brother Jarrod Rowe
Fergus Lodge No. 135

On Sunday, November 2, 2025, Fergus Lodge No. 135 proudly marked its 175th anniversary with a special cornerstone dedication ceremony, led by Worshipful Master Michael H. Bacon. The event was a heartfelt celebration of the lodge's rich history, resilience, and ongoing commitment to the community.

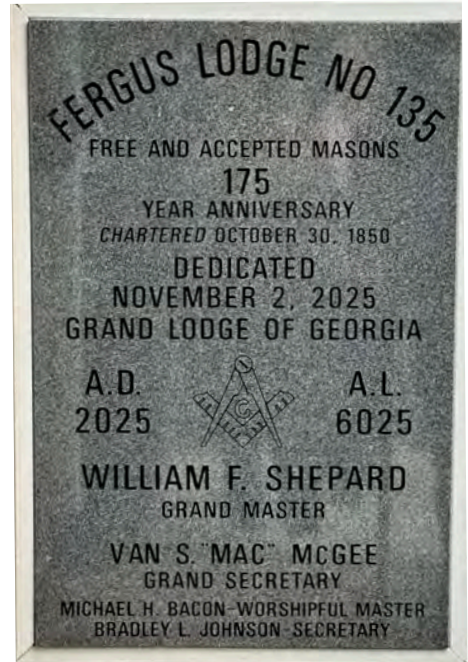
The gathering was honored to welcome local dignitaries, including Loganville Mayor Skip Baliles and City Council members Melanie Long and Brandon Whitfield, reflecting the lodge's deep roots in the community. The cornerstone dedication ceremony was performed by newly installed Grand Master Bill Shepard and the entire Grand Line Officers. Past Grand Masters Michael Wilson and Ben Polston were also in attendance.

Founded on October 30, 1850, Fergus Lodge has weathered many challenges—from war and fire to periods of rebuilding and renewal. Its first leaders, Brother William Ferguson Kennedy and Brother E.T. Hutson, laid the foundation of brotherhood and service that endures to this day. The lodge's original charter, signed by William C. Dawson, the Grand Master of Georgia, still hangs as a testament to the lodge's longstanding legacy.

The lodge's history took a remarkable turn during the Civil War when Union troops burned its early meeting place in 1864 and carried away its charter. Miraculously, it was recovered months later from a creek bank in Cherokee County—muddy and water-stained but intact—symbolizing perseverance and faith.

In 1867, Fergus Lodge purchased property on Broad Street, positioning itself as a centerpiece of early Loganville—a community that initially bore the name Buncombe before becoming Loganville in 1887. Today, the lodge's current home on Rock Street has been a steadfast symbol of service and brotherhood since its move in 1987.

Throughout its history, Fergus Lodge has maintained its dedication to tradition, performing original ritual work from 1850, and providing charity and community support. In 2019, the lodge suffered the loss of beloved



Brother and sitting Master Cy Nunnally, whose legacy of integrity and generosity inspired the lodge's scholarship program, now awarding \$10,000 annually to local students.

Situated at the heart of Loganville, Fergus Lodge continues to give back through donations to local schools, holiday programs, and community outreach efforts—all driven by a spirit of brotherly love and service.

Many members of Fergus Lodge have risen to prominent positions within the Grand Lodge of Georgia and beyond, including Brothers Rob Wing, Brad Johnson, Danny Roberts, and Wendell Geiger. Their leadership exemplifies the lodge's ongoing influence within Masonry.

As Worshipful Master Bacon reflected, the success of Fergus Lodge is built on 175 years of faith, hope, and charity—laid stone by stone by generations of committed men. Today, as the lodge celebrates its storied past and looks toward the future, it remains dedicated to its mission: to make good men better, serve the community, and preserve the light of Masonry for generations to come.

Congratulations to Fergus Lodge No. 135 on this historic milestone. May the Great Architect of the Universe continue to bless our lodge, its Brothers, and our community.



Behold, How Good and How Pleasant...

By Worshipful Brother Jimmy Densmore
Dalton Lodge No. 105

This past summer, a historic Masonic event took place on an extremely hot July day in North Georgia. Two local Masonic Lodges came together with a local blood drive authority—Blood Assurance—which provides blood to local hospitals and first responders in the Dalton area.

This historic event, displaying unity within the community, was held at the Mack Gaston Community Center in Dalton, Georgia. At the event, Masonic Brethren from Dalton Lodge No. 105 F&AM and Dalton Lodge No. 238 F&AM PHA (Prince Hall



Affiliated) came together to conduct this blood drive as an opportunity to demonstrate brotherly love, fellowship, and doing good work in the community as Masons. At this inaugural event, the donations made will help to save the lives of 36 people in the local Dalton community. The three-hour enterprise was made possible by District Deputy to the Grand Master and member of Dalton Lodge No. 105, Brother R. Cris Lynch, and Brother Joe Bonds of Dalton Lodge No. 238. Guidance and encouragement for this event was provided by Brother Craig Raper of Tunnel Hill Lodge No. 202, who is the blood drive chairman for the Masonic district that these two Lodges reside in.

“The blood drive is a direct reflection of our commitment to service, and our dedication to the wellbeing of our community,” stated Brother Craig Raper. “We urge all eligible members of the public to join us in this life-saving effort. A single donation can make a profound difference.”

The goal of this event, and others like it moving forward, is to help, aid, and assist in the missions of the blood donation centers of Georgia while promoting partnerships within our community and hometowns. Freemasonry is a benevolent fraternity taking good men and making them better. This event displayed a sense of unity that is sorely needed, and it shone a light on how we can all come together—Regular and Prince Hall Masons—to make an impact and a difference. Keep an eye and an ear out for more of these events in the future.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” – Psalm 133:1.

Cornelia Masonic Lodge Awards Honors and Scholarships

By Worshipful Brother Richard McCoy

Cornelia Lodge No. 92

Cornelia Masonic Lodge #92 F&AM welcomed Brother Mark Bradley, Most Worshipful Grand Master of all Masons in Georgia, for an official visit. This was an Open Lodge. During his visit he gave a great presentation of Agape love (true unassuming love). Upon completion of his presentation, Cornelia Lodge honored our teacher of the year, our support person of the year, outstanding police officer, two Masons of the year, and three David Hobson Memorial Scholarship recipients.

The teacher of the year is Candice Carver with Habersham County school system.

Candice began her career in education when she was hired as an ISS paraprofessional at North Habersham Middle school. She has since been a Special Education teacher, teacher of Physical Science, RTI Coordinator. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Leadership with focus in Special Education.

The support person of the year is Ashley Webb with Habersham County school system. Ashley has served as a PTO committee member, secretary, and two years as president. She has been with the school system since 2016. She has worked concessions, chaperoned for school socials and 8th grade dance, parent involvement coordinator, parent mentor for the Habersham County Special Education department, and Special Olympics local coordinator.

Officer Ben Williams was presented a certificate of appreciation for traffic control during Cornelia's April Corner Stone ceremony. Officer Williams is the SRO for Demorest Elementary School.

Brother Lee Trotman; Senior Warden, and Brother Robert Barron; Senior Steward were chosen as Masons of The Year by worshipful Master Michael Morris.

Our Scholarship recipients are: Kathryn Stribling, Everett Rudasill, and Joshua Bowden.

Kathryn is attending Georgia Tech pursuing a degree in International Affairs. Her parents are Jonathan and Jessica.

Everett is attending the University Of Virginia-Wise. He will be playing football for Virginia and pursuing a degree in Political Science. He plans to continue into Law school. His parents are Larry and Amanda.

Joshua is attending Georgia Tech pursuing a degree in Chemical Biomolecular Engineering with a focus on GT's Biotechnology option. His professional goal will be to work in the pharmaceutical area. His parents are Josh and Amanda.

Pictured is a photo of everyone in attendance.

Pictured, seated, are from left to right are: Kathryn, Candice, Ashley, Larry and Amanda Rudasill (accepting for Everett). Not in attendance is Joshua. Brother Trotman is kneeling and Brother Barron is lost in the group. Grand Master Bradley is standing center behind the honorees.



After the publication of the Fall issue of the Masonic Messenger, it was brought to the Editor's attention that during the formatting process for an article submitted by Worshipful Brother Anthony Williams of Atlanta-Peachtree Lodge, there was a missing page of information between pgs. 26 and 27 and that the footnotes had somehow been duplicated. We have printed the missing text in this issue to somewhat rectify the issue. The Editor offers his sincere apologies to the Brethren and to WB Anthony Williams for not catching this mistake.

To fully understand the impact of these changes, there is one more topic that must be examined: the introduction of the Master Mason degree.

The first surviving record of the Master Mason degree is from the Graham Manuscript, which dates to 1725, approximately 8 years after the foundation of the Grand Lodge of London. In a divergence from today's Master Mason degree, the character at the focus of this early version of the Master's degree is not Hiram Abiff, but Noah, whose body is disinterred by his three sons, and the Mason's word is cryptically derived from his rotting corpse. Things appear to have soon changed, when an advertisement entitled "Antediluvian Masonry" was published the following year. This announcement proclaimed that the legend of Noah was being retired from Freemasonry, and that the legend of Hiram Abiff that stands to this day had been introduced in its place.

The introduction of the Master Mason degree is crucial to explaining the story of the transition from Operative to Speculative Masonry. At the same time as its introduction, the two preceding degrees were also heavily revised. With these changes, esoteric knowledge was buried in Masonic ritual: something that can still be found today, as many Masonic brethren often find elements of Hermeticism, Alchemy, Numerology, and the Kabbalah buried within the Craft (or "Blue Lodge") rituals. This is what takes the history back to the Royal Society. Ashmole and Moray may have been among the first Masons to also be involved with that esteemed society, but they were by no means the last. In 1723, half of the fifty-two lodges meeting in London had fellows of the Royal Society among their membership, and it is believed that approximately one quarter of Freemasons at the time were members of the Royal Society. Over the twenty years following the establishment of the Grand Lodge, ten Grand Masters were also fellows of the Royal Society. Perhaps the most notable figure among these, however, was John Theophilus Desaguliers, who is generally acknowledged to be the key figure in the revisions of Masonic ritual and the creation of the Master Mason degree. Desaguliers was Grand Master in 1719, and subsequently served as Deputy Grand Master on a further three occasions. Through him, the direct line

from Ashmole's interests (and those of many members of the Royal Society) to Masonic ritual may be found. This is what provides the most likely answer to why these members of high society would become Speculative members of Masonic Lodge: at a time when non-conformance to religious norms was, at best, frowned upon, and at worst, severely punished through social ostracism or capital punishment, joining a society where members had taken vows of secrecy provided a venue by which esoteric topics such as Hermeticism, Alchemy, and Kabbalah could be discussed.

Looking at what can be proven regarding the events of 1717, it seems that Freemasonry was still in a period of transition. It cannot be proven how old those four old Lodges were in 1717, as they were English lodges, based in London, and did not come under the requirements to keep minutes. They clearly existed prior to 1717 and may have been Operative lodges at some point in their history. Three of the four still exist today: the lodge that met at the Goose and Gridiron is now the Lodge of Antiquity, no. 2; the lodge that met at the Rummer and Grapes is now the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge, no. IV; and the lodge that met at the Apple-Tree Tavern is now the Lodge of Fortitude and Old Cumberland, no. 12. The lodge that met at the Crown Ale-House sadly no longer exists. The three surviving Lodges undoubtedly contributed much to the early development of Modern Freemasonry, particularly Lodge no. IV, of which John Theophilus Desaguliers was a member.

In summary, it is known that the transition from Operative to Speculative Masonry began in the mid-17th Century (both in England and Scotland), men of learning whose interests may have been considered heretical likely found the oaths of secrecy of the Craft to be conducive to leverage the venue of a Masonic lodge to discuss those interests, and those men would go on to found the Royal Society. Later members of the Royal Society would have a huge influence over the early years of the first Grand Lodge and would influence the development of Freemasonry through that influence with their own scientific beliefs, rooted in Hermeticism, Alchemy, and other esoteric traditions.

Madison No. 376 Presents Bikes for Reading Program



Members of Madison Masonic Lodge #376 in coordination with Morgan County Primary School presented the winners of the Read to Ride Program with new bicycles. The boy and girl in each grade level with the most improved reading proficiency win a new bike present by the Masonic Lodge.

Flowery Branch Lodge presents Grand Lodge Eagle Scout Awards.



DDGM, Jason Gee, presented Grand Lodge Eagle Scout awards to two members of Boy Scout Troop #228 on Tuesday, August 12. Pictured left to right is WM David Snipes, Antonio Williams, Hugh Gaines and DDGM Jason Gee.

11th District Confers EA



Brothers of the 11th Masonic District came together at Cassia Lodge #224 for an Entered Apprentice Degree.

Oostanaula Lodge and Seven Hills DL Host First Responders



Oostanaula Lodge # 113 and Seven Hills Daylight Lodge # 751 hosted their annual First Responders' Breakfast. It was an excellent opportunity to the lodges to be able to say thank you to many of the people that keep us safe in our community.

William A. Davis Presents Appreciation Plaque



WM Gordon Ruthruff presented a plaque of appreciation on behalf of William A. Davis DL # 753 to WB Larry Rodgers for selling the most tickets in the 2025 raffle and his outstanding service to the Lodge.

Cornelia Lodge Presents MELD Certificates



Cornelia Masonic Lodge #92, F&AM recognized four members for completion of the Candidate Investigation class. All that complete the class is qualified to conduct investigations of a petitioner for the degrees of Masonry. The Brothers receiving the certificates are, from left to right; Lee Trotman, Trevor Burton, Phillip Moore, and Robert Barron. Pictured with these brothers is Worshipful Brother Gary, Dorman, 9C Meld Director.

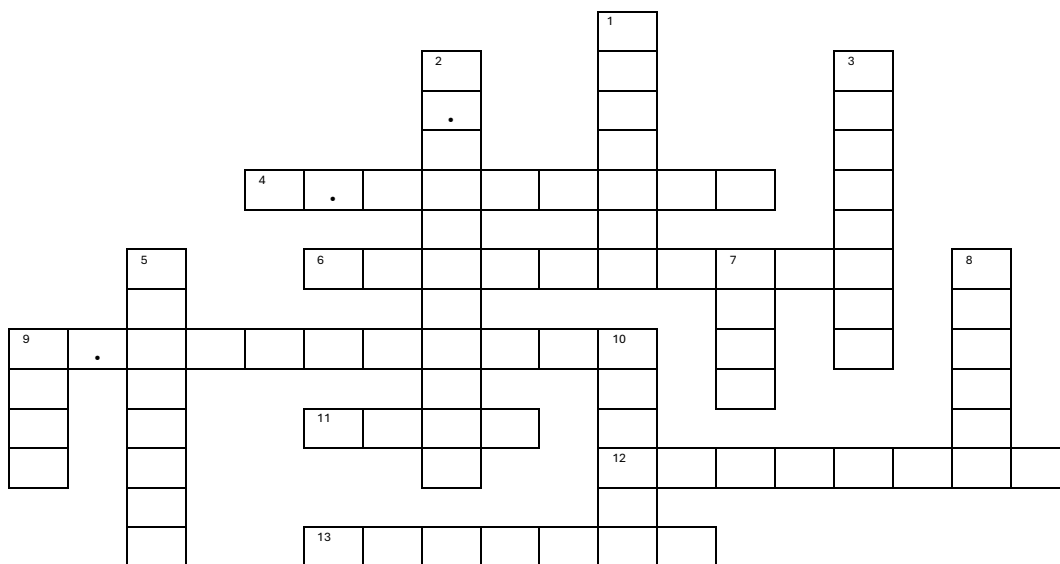
Sincerity Lodge Holds "Bingo at the Barn"



On Sep 21st, Sincerity Lodge No. 430 held "Bingo at the Barn" in appreciation of our Widows and Families. There were 8 Widows and approximately 50 Family members in attendance who played Bingo for prizes. Attendees were also treated to a Pulled Pork meal with all the fixings.

Bingo at the Barn was a great success and will probably become an annual event.

United States Presidents that attained the Degree of Master Mason



Across:

4. First President to be Impeached. A brother from Greenville Lodge within Tennessee
(First Initial Last Name)
6. Founding Father. Initiated in Fredericksburg, he became a Charting Master of Alexander lodge #22. Sat in Lodge in Savannah, Georgia.
9. Known for his New Deal. Became a Mason in 1911 at Holland Lodge #8 in New York.
(First Initial Last Name)
11. Initiated, Passed, and Raised in Columbia Lodge #31 in Columbia Tennessee in 1820. While serving as President he helped lay the cornerstone for the Smithsonian.
12. First President to be succeed a fellow Brother as President. Helped Charter Eagle Lodge #431 (later renamed in his honor) in Ohio.
13. He was initiated prior to his presidency in 1901 but did not complete his Fellowcraft or Master Mason Degrees until after he became President Elect in 1920.

Down:

1. Hero of the Battle of New Orleans. Elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee
2. The Bully President. He was Initiated, Passed and Raised while being VP of the United States. The only President to succeed and be succeed by a Masonic Brother.
(First Initial Last Name)
3. Last President prior to the Civil War. Served as WM of his lodge and a DDGM for the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.
5. This President was assassinated in 1881. He was Initiated at Magnolia Lodge in Ohio in 1861 but not Raised until 1864 when his military service finished.
7. Only President to also be the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He was made a Mason "at sight" by the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ohio.
8. Only President to be elected unopposed. He was initiated in Williamsburg Lodge #6 in Virginia.
9. The only President to not be elected by either Popular or Electoral College vote. He was initiated with his 3 brothers. In 1977 he received the Degrees of York Rite (Chapter and Council) within the Oval Office in a special ceremony.
10. The only US President to celebrate 50-Year as a Mason, he helped form Grandview Lodge #618 within Kansas. Elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

*Note: None of the answers are Lyndon Baines Johnson (he was only an Enter Apprentice)

50 Year Awards



Sam J. Peterman
Fickling #129



Larry Milton
Altamaha #227



Thomas M. Fiquett, Jr
Midland #144



Jefferson C. McElheney, Jr.
Jasper #50



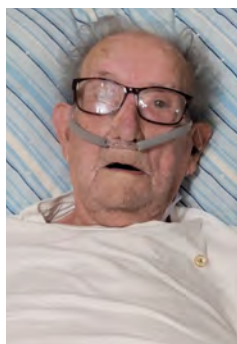
James M. McElheney
Jasper #50



William H. Norris, Jr.
Jasper #50



Larry E. Smith
Jasper #50



Cecil K. Rose
Pinta #88



Bobby N. Pittman
Pinta #88



Robert A. Mulcay
Alpharetta #235



Carl J. Shell
Cassia #224



Steve Carver
Young Cane #597



Vernon Patterson
Young Cane #597



Bill Cantrell
Young Cane #597



Jack Foster
Lawrenceville #597



Tommy E. Henson
Mineral Bluff #483



John M. Staley, Jr.
Mineral Bluff #483



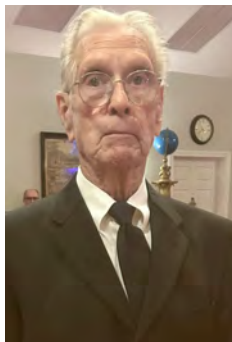
James Noe
Mountain Park #729



Larry M. Dewitt
Nelms #323



Lloyd L. Gross
Nelms #323



Pinkney H. Freeman
Nelms #323



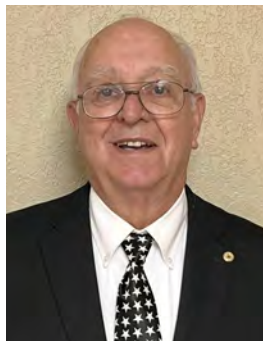
Harley Beavers
Dooly #367



Francis L. Cook
Dooly #367



David McCallar
Walnut Grove #703



Terry Eason
Loftin #688



Joel H. Phillips
Chattahoochee #61



J.T. Irwin
Mountain Park #729



Amos Bearden
Benevolent #3



Donald I. Adams
Benevolent #3



Leonard H. Tishberg
Roger Lacey #722



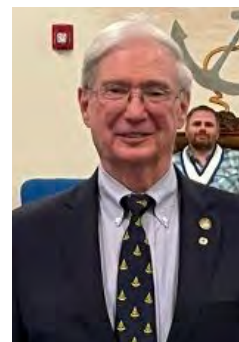
Bob Hemling
Dougherty #591



Robert M. Ashton
Dougherty #591



Daniel Carver
Gainesville #219



Jim E. Alford, Jr.
Cherokee #66



Edward F. Rainwater
Rex #251



Hugh M. Bivins
Rex #251



Michael L. Thompson
Bremen #456



James G. Scott
Roswell #165



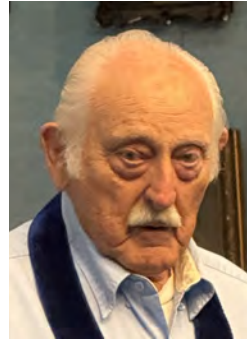
Gregory M. Hudgins
Bremen #456



Bobby Strayer
Ocean #214



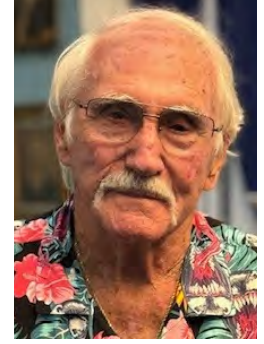
Edward C. Heath
Bremen #456



George H. Griffin
Benevolent #3
55 Years



William C. Eason
Benevolent #3
55 Years



Thomas N. Smith III
Benevolent #3
55 Years



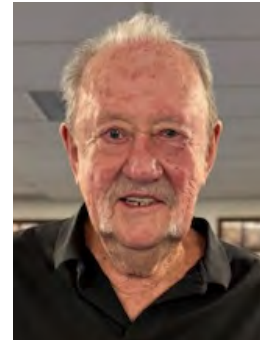
Johnny Taylor
Generous Warren #20



Thomas Carrell
Generous Warren #20



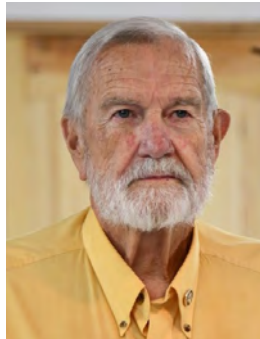
John D. Ayer Sr.
Lindale #455



Henry L. Hardin
Ducktown #572



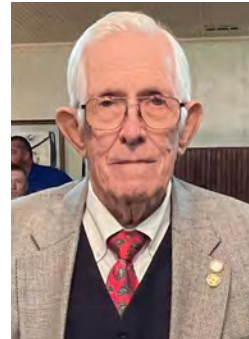
James W. Cole
Duluth #480



Douglas K. Hall
Chatsworth #664



Cas Gunter
Dooly #367



Yancy H. Findlay
Cool Spring #185
65 Years



Marvin L. Cruce
Fleming #718
65 Years



Raymond C. Merrow
St. Mary's 109
75 Years

In Memoriam

Members Reported
Deceased August 2 to
November 1, 2025

Trulock, Jonathan Lee	2
Eubanks Jr., James Allen	3
Lindsey, John Richard	3
Holcombe, Clifford Norman	6
Driver, Randall Craig	12
Puckett Sr., John Arte	15
Strength, Terry Lemuel	16
Harris, Ronald Avery	20
Hayes, Julian Brannon	20
Palmer, Robert Lamar	20
Roth Sr., Thomas Patrick	23
Mercer, James Wacco	25
Watts, James Wesley	27
Bond, Daniel Smith	31
Hall, Otis Wayne	32
Holland, Lewie Robert	33
Oxford Jr., James Russell	34
Kelley, James Rowan	42
Kenard, Steven Mitchell	48
Waters, David Leroy	54
Harris, James Elwood	58
Klopstock, William Jay	59
McNeese, Robert Joe	64
Payne, Clinton Clayborn	66
West Sr., Donald Duncan	66
McClendon, Ernest Calvin	69
Robinson, Benny Wayne	69
Fountain, Donald Hugh	75
Riggs, Ronald Lee	76
Wilbourn, Robert Ritchie	86
Rose, Cecil Kile	88
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