## 

## Introducing Most Worshipful Grand Master



Officer
Biographies
See Page 16

From the Archives: Freemasonry Future See Page 27

> Michael A. Kessler Grand Master of All Masons in Georgia

Grand Lodge Office: 478-742-1475

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.

## THE GEORGIA MASONIC MESSENGER

Vol. 127

**WINTER 2022** 

No. 1

#### **Grand Lodge Officers**

Michael A. Kessler (216)

**Grand Master** 

**Grand Tyler** 

	( )
Deputy Grand Master	Benjamin W. Polston, II (6)
Senior Grand Warden	Mark A. Bradley (36, 766)
Junior Grand Warden	Bill Shepard (717, 214)
Grand Treasurer	Larry W. Nichols (59)
Grand Secretary	Van S. McGee (26, 70)
Grand Chaplain	Ross M. Laver (721, 216)
Grand Marshal	Jeff L. Smith (131, 2)
Grand Orator	Stanley M. Baum (216)
Senior Grand Deacon	Brian C. Coffey (271, 749, 710)
Junior Grand Deacon	Tom D. Bruce (42, 216)
First Grand Steward	Scott W. Johnson (68, 376)
Second Grand Steward	Wiley Q. Forrester, III (292)
Third Grand Steward	W. David Baxter (35)

#### **Publications**

Editor of the Messenger Daniel P. Bennett (364,154)

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Dennis W. Hewatt (165, 743)

#### Chairman of Publications Brian Coffey (271, 749, 710)

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Zip Code

### FORM FOR CHANGING ADDRESS FOR MESSENGER

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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 Massaic Massanger DOES NOT keep a list of addresses.



## From the Desk of the Grand Secretary Right Worshipful Van S. "Mac" McGee

## 2023 District Conventions

<u>District</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	Host Lodge	
1st District	March 25, 2023	10:00AM	Glenville @ Tattnall Shrine Club	Rising Sun Lodge No. 32	
2nd District	February 25, 2023	9:00AM	Camilla	Camilla Lodge No. 128	
3rd District	March 18, 2023	9:00AM	Cordele	Cordelia Lodge No. 296	
4th District	August 19, 2023	9:45AM	Greenville Lodge No. 321	Columbian Lodge No. 7	
5th District	September 9, 2023	10:00AM	Stone Mountain Lodge No. 449	Stone Mountain Lodge No. 449	
6th District	May 6, 2023	9:00AM	Griffin @ Meridian Sun Lodge No. 26	Mabel Lodge No. 255	
7th District	May 12th & 13, 2023	9:00AM	Rome	Cherokee Lodge No. 66	
8th District	May 20, 2023	9:00AM	Covington	Golden Fleece Lodge No. 6	
9th District	September 9, 2023	9:00AM	Jefferson Civic Center	Unity Lodge No. 36	
10th District	June 10, 2023	10:00AM	Sandersville	Hamilton Lodge No. 58	
11th District	September 16, 2023	9:00AM	Kingsland	Camden Lodge No. 476	
12th District	April 15, 2023	9:00AM	Eastman	Eugene Smith Lodge No. 279	

#### CODE BILLS

The chairman of the Jurisprudence Committee, MWB Clyde Griffin presented 19 requests to change the Georgia Masonic Code (Code Bills) to wit:

2019-1	Repeal Section 77-108.1 relating to homosexuality		Failed	
2022-1	Amend Section 3-113 relating to Enactment of Laws		Failed	
2022-2	Repeal Section 77-108.1 relating to homosexuality	Withdrawn		
2022-3	Amend Section 27-102 relating to who may install Officers (ame	ended)	)Passed	
2022-4	Amend Section 25-116 relating to lodge Auditing Committee		Passed	
2022-5	Add new Section 30-104.1 relating to Appendant Bodies Suspension			
2022-6	Amend Section 86-103 relating to add guidance and clarity		Passed	
2022-7	Add new Section 28-113 relating to using full names at elections	\$	Failed	
2022-8	Add new Section 42-112 relating to Balloting and Degree Work		Withdrawn	
2022-9	Amend Section 30-101 2. a & b relating to Plural Membership		Passed	
2022-10	Amend Section 86-102 relating to restoration		Failed	
2022-11	Amend Section 83-212 relating to competency of witnesses		Passed	
2022-12	Amend Section 6-101 relating to title of Children's Home Exec		Passed	
2022-13	Amend Section 23-103.1 relating to opening/closing in ample for	rm	Passed	
2022-14	Amend Section 77-122 relating to Cipher Code at Lodge level		Failed	
2022-15	Repeal Section 77-108.1 relating to homosexuality	Out o	f Order	
2022-16	Amend Section 23-102.1 relating to flags in lodges	Out o	f Order	
2022-17	Amend Sections 23-129, 31-114, 31-115 -Emeritus Masons		Failed	
2022-18	Amend Section 7-201 relating to Perpetual memberships		Passed	

## REPORT OF THE CHARTERS AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Georgia, F. & A.M.

Your Charters and By-Laws Committee met in Macon on September 14, 2022, for the purpose of receiving all By-Laws amendments and other items which had been received since the 235th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge.

This report is the result of the Committee's work on September 14, 2022 and will be given at this Grand Lodge Session.

We recommend that the following amendments to the by-laws be approved as submitted.

#### Third District Masonic Convention

Benevolent Lodge No. 3 Mt. Hope Lodge No. 9 Philomathea Lodge No. 23 Hampton Lodge No. 70 Philadelphia Lodge No. 73 Laurens Lodge No. 75 Campbellton Lodge No. 76 Stonewall Lodge No. 98 Ridgeway Lodge No. 104 Dalton Lodge No. 105 Tyrian Lodge No. 111 Allegheny Lodge No. 114 Springville Lodge No. 153 Alpine Lodge No. 211 Flowery Branch Lodge No. 212 Pickens Star Lodge No. 220

Mt. Hermon Lodge No. 304
Toccoa Lodge No. 309
Morning Star Lodge No. 349
Harmony Lodge No. 405
Griffin Lodge No. 413
Springfield Lodge No. 440
Acacia Lodge No. 452

Bremen Lodge No. 456

Mansfield Lodge No. 489

Inman Lodge No. 491

Sonora Lodge No. 221 Rabun Gap Lodge No. 265 Millikens Creek Lodge No. 302

John W. Akin Lodge No. 537

Fort Benning Lodge No. 579

Brunswick Lodge No. 717

Mickey Fuller Lodge No. 720

Amity Lodge No. 731 Metro D/L Lodge No. 743 Gwinnet D/L Lodge No. 744 Charity D/L Lodge No. 754 Georgia Mountain D/L Lodge No. 758

Battle D/L Lodge No. 764

Marquis de Lafayette D/L Lodge No.765

#### REPORT OF

#### THE CHARTERS AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Georgia, F. & A.M.

Your Charters and By-Laws Committee met in Columbus on October 24, 2022, for the purpose of a second review of returned By-Laws amendments and other items which had been received since the 235th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge and the first review on September 14, 2022.

This report is the result of the Committee's work on October 24, 2022 and was given at the 236<sup>th</sup> Annual Communication on October 25, 2022.

We recommend that the following amendments to the by-laws be approved as submitted.

Social Lodge No. 1
Columbian Lodge No. 7
Pythagoras Lodge No. 41
Bacon Lodge No. 56
Villa Rica Lodge No. 72
Quitman Lodge No. 106
Caledonia Lodge No. 121
Acworth Lodge No. 176
Rochelle Lodge No. 190
Millwood Lodge No. 198
Cochran Lodge No. 217
Pine Level Lodge No. 353
Panthersville Lodge No. 543
Dougherty Lodge No. 591
William A. Davis D/L Lodge No. 753

Robert E. McDowell D/L Lodge No. 767

Fraternally Submitted,

Donald C. Combs, Grand Master Chairman Frank F. Baker Lodge No. 46

Keith Hales, PM Pickens Star Lodge No. 220

Philip E. Harris, Sr., PM Rose Hill Lodge No. 484



#### EDICT NO. 2023 - 1

TO ALL CONSTITUENT LODGES OPERATING UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF GEORGIA, FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS:

I hereby issue this edict, to-wit:

WHEREAS, journalism is defined as the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Masonic fraternity to encourage its members to keep others informed about activities and other news; and

WHEREAS, the Masonic Messenger is currently published four times a year and distributed to each Master Mason who is a member of a lodge operating under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lode of Georgia (hereinafter "Georgia Masons"); and

WHEREAS, the brethren should be encouraged to contribute quality material to the Masonic Messenger;

NOW THEREFORE, it is my edict as follows:

- 1. An annual award to recognize high quality and well written articles contributed to the Masonic Messenger by Georgia Masons is hereby created to be known as **The GRAND MASTER'S JOURNALISM AWARD.**
- 2. The winner of the award shall be selected by the Grand Master after nominations by a majority vote of the members of the Publication Committee. Grand Lodge officers, members of the Publication Committee and the editor of the Messenger shall not be eligible to receive this award. The award does not have to be given every year but, if given, the recipient will be announced in October with the presentation being made during the Grand Lodge session.

 The award shall consist of a suitable plaque approved by the Educational and Historical Commission and such other prize as the Grand Master deems appropriate, if any.

SO ORDERED and this edict is given under my hand and seal as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of Georgia, and under the seal of the said Grand Lodge, this 27th day of October 2022.

Michael A. Kessler Grand Master

Attest

Van S. McGee, Grand Secretary

SEAL GRAND COOK SECTION OF GEORGE

## Charlie Long Hosts 10th Annual Barn Degree



As has become the custom since 2012, on October 8, 2022 Masons from all over the state of Georgia descended upon Orr Mill Road in Ranger, Georgia for what has become over the past decade, an event which not only brings joy and warmth to the heart of our worthy Brother Charlie Long and his wife Barbra, but also helps the Deputy Grand Master (and presumptive incoming Grand Master) of the Grand Lodge of Georgia.

Started in 2012 as a project to assist the Deputy Grand Master with travel expenses in his year as Grand Master, the annual event has become one which has grown over the years and in which Masons from all over the state come to enjoy the food and fellowship of the Long Farm, relax beside the creek or in a chair outside the cabin, play horseshoes, and finally watch the conferral of new, interesting, or exquisite Master Mason Degree work from Georgia or other states.

This year, Worshipful Brother Charlie's two hundred twenty-one guests were treated to an exemplification of the Master Mason Degree conferred by the Board of Custodians for the Uniform Work, and a good Brother Steven Schwartz of Sandy Springs Lodge No. 124 filled in as the Candidate for the Degree.

The Barn Degree will return again next year on October 7, 2023 for Right Worshipful Brother Ben Polston! Make plans and place it on your calendar today! I promise you'll have a great time!



## REDEDICATION CEREMONY



On March 3, 1779 a small regiment of the Continental Army led by Gen. Samuel Elbert fought the British Army at the Battle of Brier Creek in Screven County, Georgia. It was considered one of the most gallant stands of the Revolutionary War. MWB Elbert was almost killed but his life was spared when he was recognized to be a Mason. Historical markers have stood near the site of the battle including one place there by the Grand Lodge of Georgia in 1954. Those markers are being moved.

MWB Samuel Elbert was a Revolutionary War general, a major general in the Georgia Militia and brigadier general in the Continental Army. He was the sheriff of Chatham County and served one term as Governor of Georgia. As Governor, he oversaw the founding of the University of Georgia. A member of Solomon's Lodge No. 1, he served as the last Provincial Grand Master in Georgia. As a member of the Council of Safety and an officer in the Georgia Militia, he is said to have

contributed as much to Georgia's independence as any other man. Elbert County and Elberton, Georgia were named after General Elbert. He is entombed in Colonial Park Cemetery in Savannah.

The historical markers at Brier Creek are being relocated in the Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area near Sylvania. On March 4, 2023 at 11:00am The Grand Lodge of Georgia will rededicate those markers. All brethren are encouraged to attend.



## The Rededication of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial's Cornerstone

### A National Masonic Event, February 20, 2023

Join brothers from around the world to re-dedicate the cornerstone of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. The Memorial is a National Historic Landmark that stands as American Freemasonry's vital tribute to George Washington and the values of freedom. Each year, thousands of museum guests visit the Memorial to learn about Washington and Freemasonry, and to become inspired by the great heritage left to us by the Father of our Country... and our nation's foremost Freemason.

The original celebration of the cornerstone was a national Masonic event. Over 10,000 Freemasons attended the Memorial's cornerstone laying in 1923. President Calvin Coolidge watched as the very trowel that George Washington once used to lay the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol was pressed into labor again.



"The centennial of that spectacular event is nearly upon us, and it is our great pleasure to extend to you a cordial invitation to a special re-dedication of our cornerstone on February 20, 2023," explained Ken Nagel, Past Grand Master of California and the First Vice President of the Memorial Association. "This will be an opportunity for supporters of the Memorial from around the world to join in a Celebration both of the Memorial's past as well as its future in the century to come."

The time is now to celebrate the Memorial's timeless legacy. Please join brethren from around the country in February 2023 and become part of the Memorial's second century of making history.

#### Schedule of Events

#### Meetings and Tours — Friday, February 17 through Sunday, February 19, 2023

The Memorial welcomes Lodges and other Masonic groups to attend and participate. Beginning Friday, February 17, through Sunday, February 19, Lodges that wish to hold a meeting in the Memorial may reserve time slots within the Memorial. Popular speakers such as Mark Tabbert and Shawn Eyer will be available to provide an appropriate message upon request.

#### Parade and Cornerstone Rededication Event — Monday, February 20, 2023

All Grand Lodges, Lodges, Masonic groups, and Freemasons in amity with the Grand Lodge of Virginia may participate in the Parade from historic Old Town Alexandria up to the Memorial's beautiful grounds. The Parade steps off at 1:00 p.m. Registration is required to march in the parade. The Rededication Ceremony takes place at 3:30 p.m. All individuals attending the events of February 20, 2023, should register on the Memorial's website. This event is free, but registration is required.

### Annual Washington's Birthday Gala — Wednesday, February 22, 2023

This elegant formal event will, as always, include a reception in Memorial Hall, entertainment in the Theater, and a Gala Banquet in Grand Masonic Hall. Tickets are available on the Memorial's website.

#### How to Register

Visit https://www.gwmemorial.org/2023 to register for any or all of the above events.

# Georgia-South Carolina Exchange 2023

Most Worshipful Grand Master Ronald C Mitchum and Most Worshipful Grand Master Michael A. Kessler invite you to the Annual Georgia-South Carolina Exchange Meeting.

This year, South Carolina will be hosting the Georgia-South Carolina Exchange Meeting on Friday, June 9, 2023, at the Blue Ridge Shrine Club located at

409 Shrine Club Road, Seneca, SC 29672.

A Bar-B-Que meal (\$10.00 per person) will be served at 6:00 pm with the meeting to follow.



## From the Desk of the Most Worshipful Grand Master Michael A. Kessler

My Brethren:

My sincere and heartfelt thanks to you for trusting me to lead the Grand Lodge of Georgia as

Grand Master. This is a tremendous honor and I intend to do all I can to earn that trust and improve our fraternity.

I would be remiss if I did not start by thanking Past Grand Master Don Combs for his skill, integrity, compassion, leadership, and hard work as your Grand Master. It was my pleasure and an honor to serve with him. He maintained our fraternity on good footing as we look to the future.

I have several goals for the coming year. In fact, more than I am likely to accomplish in a year.

Let me share a few.

Expanding participation in Grand View is essential. Grand View is a great tool for the brethren, secretaries, and the Grand Secretary. It is easy for the brethren to use. Everyone should be registered for Grand View so you can keep your information up to date and receive communications. The data for every member of a Georgia lodge is maintained securely in Grand View. Each member can update his information if there is a change such as a new address or phone number. Grand View also creates a historical record for generations to come. Many Grand Lodge messages are sent out through Grand View and lodges can do the same. Unfortunately, even though Grand View has been the official Grand Lodge membership database for five years, only a little less than 19% of our brethren have registered. Furthermore, some lodge secretaries are not using it. To address this, Grand View training sessions for secretaries are being held around the state together with the annual trial commission training required by the Masonic Code. Grand View training is in the morning and trial commission training is in the afternoon. Secretaries are encouraged to attend both. The first of these sessions was held at Greenville Lodge in November with very good attendance and participation. It is my hope that we can get 50% of our members to register for Grand View and all our secretaries to use it by our next Grand Lodge session.

Official visits will be different this year. I have asked the District Deputies to the Grand Master to set up subdistrict meetings as contemplated by Masonic Code Section 5-106. These 60 meetings should allow Masons from lodges who have not had official visits by a Grand Master to have an opportunity to meet and fellowship with the Grand Master. Meetings should be open meetings with ladies, family, and friends joining the brethren. Those good men who might be attracted to our fraternity should be invited. There will be no forums this year. The Grand Master's programs will be explained at the secretary/trial commission sessions, by district deputies, or in writing.

Membership is a primary focus. I have appointed our Grand Tyler, WB Dennis Hewatt, to lead this effort. Grand View will be used to promote membership. There will be numerous communications, written and videos, to promote membership. Solicitation is not allowed, and the membership program is not solicitation. However, if we let our communities know of good things

Masons do, we will surely generate interest among good men who want to join.

Restoring brethren who have been suspended for non-payment of dues will be a major goal. We can solicit these brethren. I am urging each lodge to pass a motion remitting the dues of those who were suspended for non-payment and then reach out to those brethren and ask them to come back. I think you will find that a great many of the brethren suspended NPD did not pay their dues for reasons other than their financial situation. Contact them and find out why they let their membership lapse and give them reasons why they should come back. Fellowship is important but it may not be enough. Interesting meetings and family events will help. There is tremendous opportunity here. If we only get 10% of the suspended members to reinstate it will mean an increase in our membership of over 2,000 active members.

The Masonic Home has been a passion of mine for years. That will continue. The new cottages are complete. Other improvements are underway. The children are well cared for. There is room for more children if you know of a child that could benefit from what the Masonic Home has to offer. Come to Macon and visit the kids. Bring your family. They want to see you. Please keep the Masonic Home Endowment Fund in mind especially when doing your will, estate planning, life insurance beneficiaries, tax planning, or charitable giving.

Communication is important. One on one, email blast, social media, a short note, print media, etc. The Masonic Messenger is a primary means of communication for Georgia Masons.

Unfortunately, the Messenger has not received rave reviews in recent years but another one of my goals is to change that and make it what the brethren want it to be. However, your help is needed. Please submit pictures with short captions, news items, and announcements. They can be emailed to messenger@glofga.org. The Messenger will also accept appropriate advertising at reasonable rates.

To promote the submission of articles to the Messenger, I issued Edict 2023-1 creating The Grand Master's Journalism Award. It will be given by the Grand Master to recognize one article submitted during the year, based on the recommendation of the Publications Committee, to be of high quality and well written. News articles covering Masonic events, brethren, community activities, and other current events will be considered.

Congratulations to Loftin Lodge No. 688 and Stephens Lodge No. 586 as they each celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary after Grand Lodge. It was a treat to be at Loftin Lodge with brethren from Alabama including their Deputy Grand Master, now Grand Master, Rusty Beck and at Manchester Lodge with Past Grand Chaplain John Kierbow who reminded us that "He loves us and there is nothing we can do about it."

Remember the lessons of charity we all heard that first night in lodge which tell us that Masonic Charity means being kind, thoughtful, considerate, and tolerant. Those lessons are not limited to our brethren but extend to all mankind. We must always keep in mind the admonition of the Charge at Closing; "Every human being has a claim upon your kind offices. Do good unto all." Please remember my saying for the year and always do right.

I look forward to meeting with you, sharing a meal and enjoying fellowship.

May the Grand Architect of the universe bless and keep you, your family, and your lodge-

## The Grand Chaplain's Message



## Are you a Lamplighter?

The following is inspired by an article from the Journal of Freemasons Victoria, Australia - Autumn 2022

Much of the magazine was devoted to the Re-Installation of Grand Lodge officers. It was October and an article "Hanukkah lighting of the Menorah – December quarterly communication 2022 seemed out of place. While the timing seemed out of place, the message raised one's curiosity.

MWB Richard Elkington, Grand Master, Victorian Freemasons had asked WB, Rabbi Richard Weinstein "to conduct the lighting of the Chanukah Candles as a step forward in recognizing the diversity of our Brethren."

Rabbi Weinstein's comments regarding the relationship of the Candle to the Great Architect and our responsibility to ourselves created a spark.

Rabbi Weinstein wrote: "As mentioned in the Volume of the Sacred Law, which is one of the three great emblematic lights in Freemasonry, we are to make ourselves into a sanctuary for the Great Architect to dwell, and also that the candle of the Great Architect is the soul of man. Therefore, just as the mission statement of Freemasonry is to make good men better, we are charged to be lamplighters, not just to light up our own souls, but also of those around us. As all good intentions should lead to action, we will now proceed with an emblematical

lighting of the menorah. Emblematical as the days of Hanukkah have already concluded, however, the message of the lights of Hanukkah are eternal; that a little bit of light dispels much darkness.

WBro. Wainstein asked the Grand Master to assist in lighting the first candle, known as the shamash, in recognition of the great importance placed on this part of the ceremony in other grand places, by people of great power and respect, for example the White House in the United States. The shamash is then used to light the rest of the candles."



The message is not so much about Chanukah as it is about a candle and the Light. It is "More Light" that we as Freemasons seek

May the spirit of the holidays kindle a light in you and that you grow your flame to light the lamps of others.



# Most Worshipful Brother MICHAEL A. KESSLER Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Georgia Free and Accepted Masons

Grand Master Michael A. Kessler was born in Atlanta on September 12, 1948. He attended Morningside Elementary School and, what was then, Grady High School. He has lived in the Brookhaven area for 38 years. Grand Master Kessler attended Vanderbilt University earning a degree

in mechanical engineering and then attended Woodrow Wilson College of Law passing the bar exam in 1975. He has practiced law in the Atlanta area for 47 years.

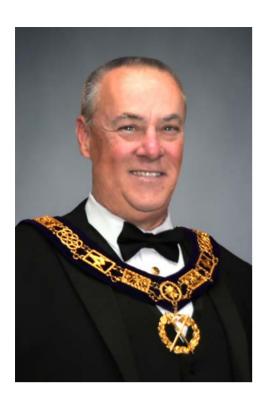
The Grand Master was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in Fulton Lodge No. 216 in 1973. He served as Worshipful Master in 1981 and as Secretary of the lodge for nine years. He chaired the Lodge Budget and Finance Committee for many years.

MWB Kessler served as counsel for the defense in the Fifth District for ten years and as trial commission chairman for an additional ten years. He has served as a member of a number of Grand Lodge committees including the Endowment Fund Committee, the Jurisprudence Committee, the Laws Committee, the Development Committee, the Youth Council, the Masonic Home Board of Trustees, the Committee on Recognition, and the Property and Investments Committee. He is a 33° Scottish Rite Mason and a member of the Valley of Atlanta where he chairs the Executive Committee and heads up the Third Degree Team. He also serves on the Scottish Rite Foundation board of trustees and served as president of the Foundation from 2018 through 2022. Grand Master Kessler is a member of the Atlanta Masonic Temple Company board of directors and serves as the President. He is also a member of Yaarab Shrine.

The Grand Master has served as parliamentarian for Grand Lodge sessions since 2011. In 2013 he received the first Rupert H. Bramblett, PGM Award from the Grand Lodge of Georgia and received the Distinguished Service Medal in 2015.

MWB Kessler comes from a Masonic family. His father, David Moses Kessler, and his uncle, Max Harold Kessler, were members of Macon Lodge No. 5. He had cousins who were members of Fulton Lodge No. 216 including Seymour Kessler who was Worshipful Master in 1951.

MWB Kessler is a widower having lost his wife Shery in 2013 after 29 years of marriage. They had 3 stepsons and 6 grandchildren. Sheryl's father, Tollie Edgar Fussell, was a 58 year member of Frank F. Baker Lodge No. 46.



# Worshipful Brother Dennis Hewatt Appointed Grand Tyler



At the 235th Session of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Georgia F&AM, Worshipful Brother Dennis Hewatt was appointed to the position of Grand Tyler for the Grand Lodge of Georgia by Grand Master Michael Kessler. Let's get to know Dennis:

Dennis was born in Atlanta in November 1961, grew up in Tucker, and has lived in Alpharetta the last thirty years. He was educated in the Dekalb County School System, graduating from Tucker High School. Upon graduation, he went to the University of Georgia, where he was born and bred a "Georgia Bulldog" and was accepted into the Terry School of Business. He received a bachelor's degree in Risk Management and Insurance. Dennis later went to John Marshall Law School, where he received his law degree (Doctor of Jurisprudence) and passed the Georgia Bar Exam. Through the years, Dennis has earned the following professional designations: CPCU (Certified Property/Casualty Underwriter), ChFC (Chartered Financial Consultant), and CLU (Certified Life Underwriter).

Dennis became the youngest principal agent (at 20 years old) that worked for Nationwide Insurance Company after graduation from UGA. During his twenty-year tenure, he was promoted through Corporate Management ultimately filling the final position as National Sales Officer. Dennis owns insurance agencies in Metro Atlanta and the Florida panhandle.

Dennis was raised a Master Mason in Roswell Lodge No. 165 in 1988. He is also a Charter member of Metro Daylight Lodge No. 743, serving as Master in 2021. He served as Treasurer of Roswell Lodge from 2019 through 2022. Dennis serves on the Grand Lodge Finance Committee. Dennis is also a proud member of Scottish Rite, Valley of Atlanta and serves on the Executive Committee. He became a Noble in Yaarab Shrine in 2010, served seven years on the Divan and was Potentate in 2019. Dennis follows in his grandfather and Dad's footsteps as both of them were Masons and Shriners. Dennis is passionate about Shriners Hospitals for Children and is the current Chairman of the Board of Governors for Shriners Children's Ohio hospital.

In August 1985, Dennis married his high school sweetheart, Linda. They have two children, Michael, a graduate of Georgia Southern, working in the insurance business, and Amanda, a graduate of Georgia Gwinnett who is married to Nick and both work for Boars Head.



## Worshipful Brother Jeff Smith Appointed Grand Marshal



Jeff Smith has been an active Freemason for 29 years. He was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in Lawrenceville Lodge No. 131 in 1993 and served as Worshipful Master in 2000, the Lodge's 150-year anniversary. He has also served a lodge historian. He has been affiliated with Gate City Lodge No. 2 since 2018.

Worshipful Brother Smith is a Past President of the Gwinnett County Masonic Association and currently serves the Fifth District as Junior Deacon. He has been a member of the Georgia Lodge of Research since 2009.

WB Smith served as Prosecutor for the Ninth District from 2008 until 2018, when he was appointed to the Committee on Appeals and Grievances. He was appointed to chair that committee in 2019 and has served in that capacity since that time. Smith has also served on the Committee on Recognition and adhoc committees of the Grand Lodge. He has served as an instructor at the Leadership Conference since 2017.

In addition to Blue Lodge activity, Smith has been active in a number of appendant or concordant bodies currently serving as a member of the Valley of Atlanta Valley Executive Committee. Worshipful Brother Smith is also active in the York Rite bodies.

Worshipful Brother Smith has been a police officer for almost 35 years. He completed a Doctorate in Emergency Management and has taught undergraduate and graduate criminal justice and emergency management courses for a number of Universities.

Jeff is married to his best friend and soulmate, Katie, who has worked for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta for over 30-years. Katie, like Jeff, is very active in the local community and is involved in several activities and non-profits. She is a published author with several successful historical fiction novels centered in Atlanta, and she is also a talented painter whose work is often displayed and sold at the Monroe Walton Center for the Arts. Jeff and Katie live in Lawrenceville with their three furry children: Angus, Maggie, and Augie.



## Worshipful Brother Stanley Baum Appointed Grand Orator



Stanley M. Baum is a 50 year Mason, a Past Master of Fulton Lodge No. 216 and a 33<sup>rd</sup> Degree Scottish Rite Mason. He formerly served as Chair of the Fifth Masonic District Trial Commission.

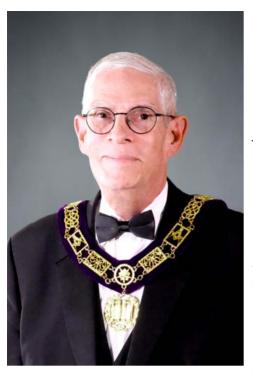
Stanley is a retired attorney, and currently serves as an Associate Judge for the City of Tucker. He is an Arbitrator for the Georgia New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Panel.

He is a Past President of the DeKalb Bar Association and of the Atlanta Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

A former member of the DeKalb County Board of Ethics, Stanley is a current member of the MARTA Board of Ethics and the City of Dunwoody Board of Ethics.

He formerly served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and as a Legal Aide in the Georgia General Assembly.

Stanley is married to Louise Iteld Baum. They have 2 daughters and one grandson.



## Worshipful Brother Ross Laver Appointed Grand Chaplain

Worshipful Brother Ross Michael Laver was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on January 10, 1947 to Jeanette and Sidney Laver.

He attended Northeast High school and Emerson College before moving to Atlanta in 1981.

In his early career, he served as News Director at WXPO TV, Nashua N.H.; WCOJ Radio, Coatsville, Pa.; WJNL TV, Johnstown Pa.

Worshipful Brother Laver married June Rivera daughter of Mary and Frank Rivera and has been married for fifty-one years. The night that he told his parents that he was going to marry a wonderful girl, his only concern was that they would object to the fact that she wasn't Jewish. The singular response from his mother was, "If you love her then we do too." Religion he learned, should join us together and not divide us. Since that time, Ms. June is the indispensable sidekick of Brother Laver as anyone who has been at any Masonic event with him present can attest to.

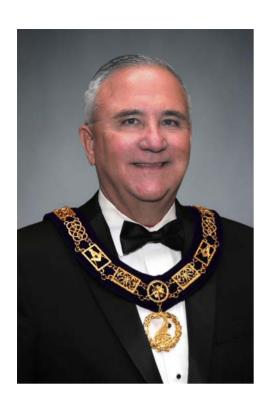
As a result of that union, Worshipful Brother Ross has been blessed with a wonderful family extending to the families of his sons, Jesse and Mica and the families they married into.

His Masonic Career started at Flint Hill Lodge, No. 371, McWhorter Georgia. March 3, 1985. In 1989, MW William Daniel appointed him to serve as District Deputy to the Grand Master, a position which he held for five years. He also served his first term as Worshipful Master of Flint Hill Lodge that year. During that time, he was appointed to the Publications Committee and was later appointed Chair of that Committee by MW James Miller. He continues to serve on that committee. He affiliated with Fulton Lodge No. 216 in June of 2007 and served as Worshipful Master of Fulton Lodge in 2008 and 2017, and has since served as Senior Warden and Chaplain of that Lodge for many years. He also served on the Credentials Committee of the Grand Lodge

In March 1986 he joined Scottish Rite and was Knighted a Master of the Royal Secret and 32° Scottish Rite Mason. In 2013 he was appointed General Secretary of the Valley of Atlanta. In October 2011 he was invested with the Rank and Title of a 32° Knight Commander of the Court of Honor and Coroneted 33° Inspector General Honorary, August 2015. Worshipful Brother Ross is also a member of Yaarab Shrine.

It has been his honor to serve for many years as the Photographer for the Grand Lodge of Georgia and in which time he states that the photos he has taken have improved greatly. He jokingly tells people that he is a Professional Amateur but also explains that "Supreme Architect sets up the image, I just push the button."

Having been appointed to serve as Grand Chaplain by Most Worshipful Brother Mike Kessler, Worshipful Brother Ross stated that it is his honor to serve the Brothers of the Grand Lodge of Georgia "with the goal of seeing that we all gather together in search of 'More Light' regardless of the Version of Sacred Law we observe."



# Worshipful Brother David Baxter Appointed Third Grand Steward



Worshipful Brother Baxter is married to his best friend Linda. They have been married for 33 years and have two grown Children. Their daughter Ashley is married to Bryan Gibson and is an Attorney in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Their son Joshua is married to Amber and is a U.S. Customs Agent on the Southern Border in Douglas, Arizona where he also serves as a First Lieutenant in the Arizona Army National Guard. Between their two children they have three beautiful Granddaughters ranging from the age of one month to eight years old. Worshipful Brother Baxter and his wife Linda have lived in Kathleen, Georgia since 1999 where they I attend Southside Baptist Church.

Brother Baxter was born to Jerry and Agnes Baxter of Chipley, Florida. His father farmed and worked with the Department of Transportation of Florida and was a member of the Florida Army National Guard. He was a Fifty-year Mason. His mother worked as the Director of the Council on Aging for Washington County, Florida for 20 years. Both his parents have gone on to be with our Infinite Creator. Worshipful Brother Baxter has one sister who is a nurse in Panama City, Florida.

Bro Baxter was raised in a farming community. Most of his family farmed so he was raised working most of his childhood days, which he stated he "would not trade for anything as it helped mold me into the man that I am today." Growing up, he loved to hunt and run trap lines on his family's land and he also enjoyed playing Middle School and High School Football. He grew up attending Piney Grove Free Will Baptist Church where he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

When he turned 17 years old, he joined the Florida Army National Guard where he spent the next two years as a TOW Missile Gunner and Recruiter. In 1985 he enlisted in the United States Air Force as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist (EOD). In 1990 he and Linda moved to Kapaun Air Station Germany and during his assignment in Germany, deployed to Iraq where he managed a Multinational Bombing range was also the

Resource Manager and dispersed the Budget for his EOD Flight. While in Germany his daughter Ashley was born. In 1993 he moved to Moody AFB in Valdosta, Georgia. While in Valdosta he deployed several times, and he was also the Base Game Warden, and he ran the Operations Section of the EOD flight. Worshipful Brother Baxter and Ms. Linda were also involved in his daughter's elementary school where he served as the President of the PTA for Pine Grove Elementary School for one year. In 1999 Brother Baxter had an opportunity to move to Robins AFB located in Warner Robins, Georgia. This move gave him the opportunity to stand up and lead an Air National Guard Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight. Brother Baxter related that, "This was a real challenge as it took my flight nearly a year to become operational." Brother Baxter retired in 2004 after serving for twenty-one years and six months. After retirement he was hired as a Government Contractor managing the Explosive Free Contract within the Logistics Directorate. In 2009 he converted to Civil Service where he still continues to manage the Explosive Free Contract and serves as the Safety Manager for the 406 Supply Chain Management Squadron.

Worshipful Brother Baxter's Masonic career begin when he petitioned Houston Lodge No. 35 in Perry, Georgia. He was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in May 2006. He is an honorary member of Ft. Valley Lodge No. 110 and Middle Georgia Daylight Lodge No. 756. From the beginning, he quickly volunteered to sit in as Junior Stewart of the Lodge and in other stations as he was needed. He was appointed as the Lodge's Georgia Child Identification (GACHIP) Chairman and in 2008 was asked to serve as District 12 Director for the GACHIP program. Brother Baxter served as the Chairman until he was asked to serve as District Deputy to the Grand Master for Subdistrict 12-B in 2010. In 2013 He was appointed as DDGM District Leader where he served until 2022. He served as Worshipful Master of his Lodge in 2011 and District Master in 2021-2022. Currently, he holds the office of Secretary of his Blue Lodge. He is a member of the Valley of Middle Georgia Scottish Rite where he serves as the Personal Representative to the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Orient of Georgia. He also serves as a Trustee and the Treasurer of the Scottish Rite Foundation. He is a member of the York Rite Bodies in Ft. Valley, Ga where he has served as the head of Austin Chapter No. 18, H.C. Rigdon Jr. Council No. 35, and Ivanhoe Commandery No. 10. He currently serves as Captain General of Ivanhoe Commandery No. 10. He is also a member of Middle Georgia York Rite College No. 201 where he serves as Governor and is a recipient of the Order of the Purple Cross. Brother Baxter is a member of New Covenant Conclave Red Cross of Constantine where he serves as Standard Bearer. He is a member of Crowned Marty's No. 120 Knight Masons and also serves as Senior Warden in Horace Whitlock No. 309 Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees. He is a member of Al Sihah Shrine Temple and Past President of the Perry Shrine Club. Brother Baxter currently serves on the Development Committee, General Welfare Committee, and Jurisprudence Committee for the Grand Lodge of Georgia and has served on the Properties and Investments committee and Committee on Recognition. He also assists our Grand Secretary with the engraving of the Bricks in the Children's Garden at our Masonic Home.

"I am so humbled and honored to serve as your Third Grand Steward. Serving over twenty years in our United States Air Force, I always try to live by the Air Force Core Values which are: Integrity First, Service before Self, and Excellence in all we do. Summing it up it means always do the right thing. I will serve the craft, the Grand Lodge of Georgia, and the Brethren to the best of my ability! Linda and I are looking forward to representing each one of you as your Third Grand Steward."

## Masonic Home of Georgia Macon, Georgia

## Philosophy of the Home

Love, Security, Personal Growth, and Achievement are the guiding principles of the Masonic Home. Our primary goal is to prepare children and families for reunification whenever possible. In other cases our aim is to prepare children for independent living by providing a structured living environment where the children can learn responsibility for their actions and become resourceful so they can function in today's society. Since June 14, 1905, The Masonic Home of Georgia has served Children in need.

As you can see from the various pictures along with the five new cottages we have added a road and turn-round for access and have made various other improvements all over the campus.





## Masonic Home Happenings

In the last several months lodges have hosted various picnics, fundraisers and trips all for the Masonic Home. We are thankful to all the Masons in Georgia for their constant support and love.

Our web site has been redone so please be sure to visit at masonichomeofgeorgia.com. This new site includes the ability to make a one-time donation or a reoccurring donation using a credit card by clicking on the new DONATE button.

The Georgia Masonic Messenger publishes from a variety of sources and points of view. The opinions expressed in the following articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Grand Lodge of Georgia F&AM, The Georgia Masonic Messenger, the Managing Editor, or the Grand Lodge of Georgia Publication Committee but are provided for the interest, education, and consideration of the myriad of Brethren in the state of Georgia whose Masonic interests are as diverse and varied as its membership. The articles provided her are published with an interest toward providing every Mason in Georgia with something which he can enjoy when he receives this publication. Questions, comments, or concerns should be addressed to Messenger@glofga.org.

## **Es**Oterikos

"Esotericism is a Matter of Degrees"

By Worshipful Brother Arturo de Hoyos, 33°, G∴C∴

Grand Archivist and Grand Historian of Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction

Is Freemasonry esoteric, or not? The short answer is "Yes, no, maybe." Esotericism is any topic "intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people with a specialized knowledge or interest." This certainly applies to Masonry. But on a deeper level, and in a Masonic context, it's usually taken to mean that our ceremonies and rituals allude to realities and/or truths not generally understood, or which may have a spiritual component to them.

The term is tainted to some people, and acceptable to others; hence, it may not be easy to wholly accept or discard the term "esoteric Masonry." Like an onion, each "esoteric" layer successively builds upon the other. We can all agree that Masonry is intended to be understood by few, and that it's a kind of specialized knowledge.

But the question is *what kind* of specialized knowledge, and are they real "secrets?" Depending upon one's inclinations, the Master Masons Degree has been interpreted in a variety of different ways by different persons. For some, it's a story of fidelity; for others, it teaches hope in the immortality of the soul; for still others, it's a lesson in alchemy; and yet for still others, it alludes to the discovery of entheogens. Some see it as multi-faceted, or a combination of various things. But, as I wrote in a recent social media post which I called "The Private Epiphany," we should avoid trying to enshrine our interpretations as the "true" one.

Since 1717 there have been over 1000 "Masonic" degrees created. The most popular survived and are included in many of the Rites, Orders, Systems we know today. Like a meal, each degree is only as good as its creator. The recipe may include many of the same ingredients as other meals, yet taste completely different. By analogy, we may see many of the same "ingredients" (features) in a number of degrees which teach completely different things. The predilections of a degree's author affect the content as much as the taste-buds of a chef. The "flavor" of the foundational Craft Degrees in various rites, orders and systems (Webb working, Scottish Rite, York Rite, Swedish Rite, R.E.R., etc.), differs immensely, and in the "higher degrees," the differences are even more dramatic and pronounced: some are philosophical, others practical; some present allegory, andothers offer discourses on symbolism or (quasi-)historical themes. In something like the Scottish Rite, the same degree may have dramatically different rituals, depending upon the jurisdiction (compare, for example the 20th degree in the SJ and NMJ - they are nothing alike).

But, when someone describes himself as an "esoteric Mason," it quite often means someone who sees, and embraces, what appears to be aspects of the "Western Esoteric Tradition" in our rituals; i.e., some affinity to the symbolism of Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, Kabbalah, etc.

Freemasonry is an eclectic organization and, at various times, we have borrowed the language and symbols of these and other traditions. The question is, do our rituals *really teach these things* as "realities" or we use them to stimulate thought—or both? We are repeated told "not to mistake a symbol for the thing symbolized." In some cases, I believe that is what has happened, while in others, I believe we do indeed have vestiges of other traditions. But even when they are there, they may be only one layer thick on our Masonic onion.

The problem is twofold: some deny any esoteric influences at all (or assert they are just used symbolically), while others claim it's the main part of the onion. If the matter is open to interpretation (not defined by the ritual itself), who has the "right" to decide?

This much we know: many of Freemasonry's symbols were used before the modern fraternity existed (1717), and appeared in a variety of books. Some were

educational and philosophical (such as the "Choice Emblems"), others were indeed Hermetic (such as Alchemical texts). As I said, we're an eclectic organization. How many times have you seen the Square and Compasses or All-Seeing Eye used and abused in Hollywood and elsewhere because it looks "cool?" Well, I'm willing to bet that at least some of our symbols migrated into the fraternity the same way. An unknown degree maker, in the 1700s, saw something that looked cool, and dropped it into the ritual. Not necessarily bad, but 225 years later his personal predilection turns into a debate.

Certainly, there are clear examples of "borrowings" from "esoteric" texts. For example, I am aware of an older version (early 1800s) of a Scottish Rite degree which includes a large portion extracted from Cornelius Agrippa's De

Occulta Philosophia (1531-33). If asked if that degree was "esoteric" I would say "yes," while to its counterpart in a later version or in another Supreme Council, I would say, "no."

My point is to quit quibbling over such things, and find the common ground where we "can best work and best agree." If esotericism interests you, that's fine; if not, that's also fine. My personal library is wellstocked with enough material on both sides to make anyone think in favor of, or against, any position.

The important thing is to be well-educated, and understand what we **know** first.

Before you reach for the stars, make sure your feet are firmly planted on the ground. Make yourself into someone who can be taken seriously. Learn the facts about our origins based upon what we know.

I sometimes speak about "historical records" versus "hysterical documents." Before you buy into such fantasies as "Freemasonry descended from the ancient Egyptians," get a quick education.

Here are three books to give you a reality check: Harry Carr, World of Freemasonry, Bernard E. Jones, Freemasons Guide and Compendium, David Stevenson, The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century 1590–1710.

When you can speak intelligently about the Old

Charges (Gothic Constitutions), a r l y Freemasonry in Scotland, the formation of the first Grand Lodge, and how and when the degrees developed, people may be inclined to listen to you, when you start to talk about more exotic things.

E d u c a t e yourself well enough to argue both sides of the argument.



Take due notice thereof and govern yourselves accordingly.

## From the Archives

#### Freemasonry: Future

By Walter H. Winchester, Florida General Grand High Priest, R.A.M

Editor's Note: This writing is the third in a three-part series focusing on the past, present and future of Freemasonry, delivered at the Southeastern York Rite Conference, held in Dothan, Alabama, on August 22-23, 1986. For "Freemasonry: Past" see issue 124, Spring 2022. For "Freemasonry: Present" see Issue 125, Summer 2022.

Early in my Masonic wanderings, I heard that Freemasonry was a speculative science. Now it is my turn to speculate.

Thank you, J. Benny Allen, and your friends. Though I may give you the impression of comfort in speaking from this platform this morning, I suggest that all may not be as comfortable within my breast as it was in Benny Allen's when he assigned me this topic.

So, I'll stick my neck out.

When I was very young and innocent, my peers huddled around Ouija boards, and I was trained to believe in their messages implicitly. During World War II, I shared a train ride with a spiritualist medium who told me some of the secrets of slate writing, and table thumping, and gazing into the depths of crystal balls.

In those days, our nation used to listen to the news on Sunday evenings presented by Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, with their famous "predictions of things to come." Their announcers would often tell of the accuracy of the predictions made the week or two before, with percentages of eighty, ninety, and even ninety-five percent. Today, predictions can be made with even greater assurance.

The Gallup Poll has been around now for forty years. Their highly sophisticated and accurate sampling techniques are used by pollsters for every sort of analysis. The Neilson Ratings do the same. Millions of dollars ride on their predictions.

But, to do this in the area of an allegorical science brooks upon disaster. I choose therefore to go back over some of whence we came and where we are—not in Freemasonry, but as a nation.

So follow along with me, if you will, as I hit a few of the high spots of the kind of people we used to be; what we are today; and what we might be later on. In the short time allotted to me, it is impossible to discuss all the points, but others have covered them, and occasionally I'll quote from them.

You know the story of the first pioneers. Men who had been imprisoned, who were fiercely independent, who looked ahead rather than backward. Men who had the confidence to be resolute, yet wary at the same time. Daring sailors crossed the Atlantic and carved out a new life upon rocky shores, amid strange and alien people. They set up a representative form of government with widespread participation of the colonists, and submitted to a local ruler (Governor John Winthrop) whose guideline was "moderation." And they set up a church to indicate their belief in a Supreme Being, and to provide an umbrella of moral law over the people.

A century later, Freemasonry came to our shores. Ben Franklin lived to publish *Poor Richard's Almanac*, filled with little moralistic sayings such as, "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise," and "God helps those who help themselves." [Author's note: He also printed and published the first Masonic book in America.] And, his aphorisms touched upon many other topics, such as chastity.

George Washington, our universal father, probably the wealthiest man in the colonies, was a *revolutionist* and a dreamer. You recognize him as a firebrand when he spoke before the Continental Congress, and when he assumed command of his poorly trained troops. Another dreamer, Thomas Jefferson, told us that all men are created equal, by which he meant that we were each fundamentally politically equal. He urged that the country be divided into small wards of no more than a hundred, so that each person could

participate in his local government. Note how English Freemasonry tries to keep their ideal Lodge membership to two hundred or less, with every Brother required to be present at their stated meetings – demonstrating their equality.

The American experiment in life was recognized by Alexis de Tocqueville, who wrote a classic description of the American character about one hundred fifty years ago, titled *Democracy In America*. Let me commend this internationally recognized benchmark to you. You can find it in nearly every library, and it is also available in paperback in many stores.

One of the phrases that appears in that book is "Habits of the Heart," meaning that so many habits or activities that we Americans were into right after the War of 1812, and the French Revolution, and the Morgan Affair, were governed by our feelings and spirit – that yearning to open up new territory, to carve out a new life, to help the neighbor when in distress, to be independent, to have a deep belief that "I can be successful," and "I can make it possible for my children to have a better life." And they were *moral* people.

That phrase, "habits of the heart," forms the title of another book, published in 1985, written by a small group headed by Robert. N. Bellah. Newsweek magazine described the book as a "national bestseller," as a brilliant analysis and the most readable study of American society today. He talks about the individualism shown in current American life, and the degree of our commitment. It is the best study since another classic book of thirty-five years ago, *The Lonely Crowd*. Let me commend "habits of the heart" to you as an excellent route to the American character today.

Another very important recent study, that was on the bestseller lists was by John Naisbitt – a book called *MegaTrends*. Many of you in this room have been exposed to and studied it. Naisbitt was not interested in Freemasonry, but in the two hundred forty million Americans and the forces that are inexorable in their influence upon us.

Last year he wrote a sequel called *The Year Ahead: Ten New Trends That Will Shape the Way You Live, Work and Make Money in 1985.* Some of these trends I would like to touch on once again. Our population is moving south and west. Recent census figures show the growths of California, Florida and Washington.

Let us look at who the people are. Hispanics now outnumber Blacks in the country. Of all the citizens in the western and southern part of Texas, two-thirds are Hispanic, now! By the year 2000 – only thirteen years – California will be fifty percent Hispanic. It is from them you'll be finding our Masons at the beginning of the Twenty-First Century. Miami has a huge number of Hispanics, and white "Anglos" are already a minority race. The Hispanics already have Lodges – though not yet in amity with the Grand Lodge of Florida. They are increasing in New York City, and are potential members of our fraternity. The great American melting pot is once again changing.

Naisbitt points out another significant major trend. We will not be retraining workers, but retraining *managers*, during this decade. Networking is now important in the field of management, where people learn from each other. The old hierarchal form of management is decreasing. The microchip has revolutionized our total communications industry, both locally and globally. No longer do our school-children have to memorize as much, for the computer can do it for them faster and more accurately. These young people, should they come into the fold of Freemasonry, may feel they do not have the time to spend in rote memory work.

Industry and corporate management are moving out of downtown metropolises in favor of suburban or rural America, where families can spend some time in the outdoors. Not only has it proved less costly to these companies, but more productive. These changes come from the hearts of thinking and feeling people, and are made possible, in-part, by the computer, by communications satellites, by rising taxes, and the shifting economy.

So, today we live in a different world from that which de Tocqueville observed one hundred fifty years ago. Health-wise we are different. We live longer. We work less. We have more auto accidents but fewer runaway horses. We drink more. We are into serious problems with drugs. We reap the effects of polluted environments. In our spare time, we watch a lot of such things as football and baseball, but we do not actually participate very much in team sports, as in Europe where soccer is rampant. Recently you have seen some of us with our tongues hanging out

while we wear our most doleful expressions as we jog from here to there. We are victims of the "big eye" as we sit passively trying to be amused. Our children are captives of the all-pervasive advertising for the "good life."

Madison Avenue has raised our expectations for our standard of living so that we can keep up with the Joneses. And we need two incomes to support it even as it takes one of the homemakers away from the home. Nationally, we have mortgaged the next century and told our kids that they will have to bear the brunt of our materialistic desires. We have gone to war at regular intervals, and slaughtered others and our own as well. Prisons are overflowing. Our courts are confused, and it is impossible to even read, let alone interpret, all the laws that our Congress enacts each year.

We've become a litigious society and not a very well-educated society at that. The cream of America's youth fought the Second World War for us and with us. The major reading matter they had during those four years were comic books. Certainly not very edifying. Our educators tell us that the level of reading continues to fall. Twenty million Americans cannot even read warnings found on labels of over-the-counter drugs today. We are less literate as a nation today than we were twenty-five years ago. Some of us get the distinct feeling that our universities are unrealistic in assessing the potentials for academic accomplishments. Remedial activities in teaching at all levels are necessary. Our literacy in Freemasonry has steadily fallen, decade by decade.

If Masonry is to survive, our future depends upon those who are not yet members.

Let us look for a moment or two at those young people. Our American adolescents are unique in this world. They are the only youth in the world with a great pressure for approval by their own peer group. Drugs are a horrendous problem, and may well be the undoing of the country. A loss of our young people as the result of greed on the part of sub-cultures alien to our way of thinking.

Sex has always been popular, and today's youth are becoming sexually active far earlier in their teens than when our pioneers came to these shores. Because it is well-nigh impossible for them to find marriage practicable so early in life, sexual mores have changed dramatically within the past fifty years, and particularly in the last twenty.

Three-quarters of male college students have had intercourse, the vast majority even before entering college. The same experience is observed in females, with only slightly lower incidences. Last year, 1985, Americans approving pre-marital sex topped fifty percent for the first time. Yet teenagers today express a significant wish to be married, and they disapprove of divorce. However, half the marriages of today end in divorce. These are your Masons of tomorrow.

Of teenagers of driving age, more than one in four have admitted driving an automobile after using drugs or alcohol. We hope they will survive long enough to become the Masons of tomorrow.

In choosing a career today, teenagers recognize they may need two incomes. Even more than high income, they want jobs that will permit them to have time with their families, or opportunities to meet new people, or more important, the chance to help the disadvantaged.

There is little difference in the ethical views of those who go to church and those who don't, when it comes to lying, cheating, or non-reporting of theft. Potential Freemasons of tomorrow are forming their values now - sometimes copying their teachers and sometimes not. Ninety percent favor more respect for authority, more emphasis on self-expression, more emphasis on traditional family ties, more technological improvements, more acceptance of sexual freedom. Morals are altering from those with which we grew up. Our society is changing faster and faster. It used to be that many generations passed before change became apparent. Now, as we approach the Twenty-First Century, it seems sometimes that the changes come with the speed of light. Let's look once again at some statistics.

In numbers, in the U.S.A., we are down to about three million members. Just twenty-five years ago we had a third more Masons than now. Our average age has risen dramatically in the past generation. And, how many Masonic "structures" do we have? Temples? Cathedrals? Libraries? Museums? Masonic Homes? Office buildings? What is our total investment in property? Who provides their upkeep? For the most, the upkeep is provided by the living, dues-paying members, not those who have died, demitted or been suspended. How much upkeep do they have to provide in dollars, plus people time? I do not know, but just in the past decade, with the high rate of inflation, the amount must have increased several-fold

– paid for by fewer and fewer. Frightening, isn't it? It might make some of our more northerly members, who used to make snowmen and roll snowballs downhill, think about the gathering size and speed as they went. Just how long do we have before the storm gets worse?

One final observation that I'd like to make before taking that fatal plunge into "Freemasonry Future" concerns evolution or change. We have lived in a world that has changed very slowly, but there has *been* change. Arthur Schlessinger reminded us all some years ago that "nothing stays the same." We have some Landmarks. Mackey postulated some twenty-five, and his last was that "there could be no additions nor subtractions." Then, in his very next publication, he added some more!

Our Landmarks can change. Our methods of operation can alter. But our *basic tenets* are not likely to change; or at least not so rapidly as perhaps our administrative methods or ritualistic practices.

So, here it is – Freemasonry Future.

Our Fraternity will not adjust to changing society. Men will not continue to petition the Lodges, nor support their structure, nor devote time away from their families, to mouth some words in a ritual which they understand only incompletely. The Fraternity is in its death agony, grasping at straws, whistling in the dark. It will be fading away just like MacArthur of old. It is time for the black crepe. We need a musician to write a dirge appropriate for the occasion, and a choral director to lead the plainsong chants. And, make-up a list of mourners for the ceremony, after all, we always have a ceremony for everything in Freemasonry. It is time to choose the inscription to place upon the tombstone to mark the occasion. It is time to place our history on the dingy shelves of libraries, to collect our working tools to present to museums who save the artifacts of forgotten ages. That is, it is that time, providing all of us, as leaders, try to shut-out the world and live in the past. Providing we stay the same, avoid trying new tactics to keep up with changing life, ignore the lessons of history, pretend that the psychology of "people motivation" has no meaning when it comes to Masonic membership, providing we run away from our minority problems until the Supreme Court steps in like the proverbial camel's nose. Then, if we do all this, the odds for our survival are but poor indeed.

So long as you leave it to Joe to solve, then just so long will you be deemed the guilty parties, and be required to attend, and perhaps preside, at the funeral. YOU ARE THE KEY. I really think you are in a unique position today. You have time before the bicentennial of the General Grand Chapter (1997) really to begin the difference in each of our many jurisdictions. YOU ARE THE KEY.

You can't wait for Joe to do it. He won't do it. You are the ones who have the imagination and the guts. You'll have to put the shoulder to the wheel and work like you never did before. It will be nearly fulltime work. You'll have to do it in your grand lodges. You must become evangelists among your brethren. Recruit activists to our cause. Masons must begin to follow you, just as the Greeks followed Alexander the Great, and Black Americans followed Martin Luther King, Jr. You, too, must have a vision. No longer can we be amateurs who just "dabble" in Freemasonry. With a loss of more than a million in the last twenty-five years, there isn't much time. We cannot afford to go fishing or to the ballgame. It won't be much fun. YOU ARE THE KEY.

Close your eyes for a moment. Go ahead, close them, right now. As your eyes are closed, you can imagine ahead of you a dusty road out in the country. In your pocket, you have a map that shows the road forks up ahead, one to the left and one to the right. While your eyes are still closed, think on the consequences of your choice. You can have a *dream*. Will it be the left or the right? Will you go forward or backward? What would your Masonic obligations tell you to do?

You are the KEY.

You are THE Key.

You ARE the Key.

YOU are the Key.

## Oldest Lodge in Georgia, Still Meets in Original Building

By Brother Jim Robinson Dallas Lodge No. 182

From the outside, an unassuming all-white wooden building, stands alongside a quiet street in Fulton County. Its shuttered windows, trimmed in blue, protect those inside from the intense Georgia summer sun, storms, and eavesdroppers, outside.

The structure's bones were crafted by hand, without



power tools, and from wood harvested from the land that was cleared 174 years ago.

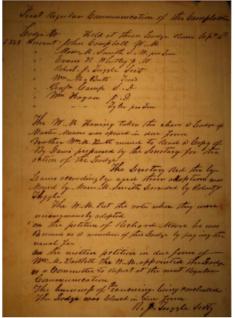
The early days of the Lodge's journey into existence are documented in hand-written notes from simpler times. An excerpt from a few of those first pages, taken by its founding members, set the course for the new Lodge, including their plan to submit a petition to the Grand Lodge of Georgia:

"On motion of Thos. A. Latham, Robert J. Tuggle was to act as secretary. The following committee was appointed to examine all those who could not be vouched for by Master Mason as being Master Masons. Col. Wm. Morgan, Devine, Isaac N. Smith was said committee upon the election of the following gentlemen, Evans B. Whitley, John Campbell, and Moses M. Smith. It was determined that as Master Masons all becoming satisfied that all the above-named Master Masons at a motion of a member ordered unanimously that the name of John Campbell was by the secretary in the petition first made. Thomas A. Latham, Senior Warden and Evans Whitley as Junior Warden all the above Master Masons decreed the petition prepared to sending to the Grand Lodge at this place to be called Campbellton Lodge. The Lodge adjourned to meet on Saturday night the 4th."

You could almost imagine the utter excitement of a brand new Lodge coming together and laying down roots of early Masonry in Fairburn.

Saturday, September 4, 1848, marked day one for the Lodge, as Brethren met and gaveled the first regular communication to order.

But the story doesn't end there. The building is a time capsule from a bygone era, when horses



and buggies were the modes of transportation versus the pickups and SUVs of today.



Beneath its portico, patrons entered the building when it was shared with a post office and store.

Inside and up a flight of stairs, members and travelers are

greeted with a life-sized portrait of Grand Master Hiram Abiff. It was purchased in 1851 by New York artist James Whitehorn. Upon completion, the painting was shipped to Savannah aboard the steamship "Florida." A skilled Brother had it beautifully framed in 1966. A light illuminates the portrait from behind and brings a unique, lifelike appearance to the more than 170-year-old work of art.



Walking into the Lodge room is a step back into 19th-century life, where much of the original furniture is still used. The Brethren have worked hard to preserve the original form of the room and its furnishings.

"We claim to be the oldest Lodge in the state that still meets in the original building," said Worshipful Brother Tommy Croy, who served as Master of Campbellton in 1985, 1989, and 1997.

The building wasn't completely immune to the devastation of the bloodiest war in American history when the Southern States seceded from the

Union in January of 1861.

the Lodge roster, including Brethren who were called to arms.

More than a century and a half later, different rifles are being fired at Campbellton Lodge, but for more benign reasons these days.

Just before the Thanksgiving holiday, Brethren aim at paper targets, for a donation, with the hope of winning a frozen turkey or ham. It has been a tradition here for more than 25 years. It reminds the community of the Lodge's long history, heritage, and deep ties within the community with no immediate plans to shut its doors.



WB Croy recalls a story regarding at least one battle scar the building received, saying, "the rumor is, a minie ball came through the wall while the war was fought here. The Chattahoochee River is over here; the North was on the other side."

Another artifact capturing that period in time is held safely inside the building. A copy of the 1863 Grand Lodge of Georgia Communication booklet containing



## Brethren of Georgia, Alabama Lodges Work Across Lines

By Worshipful Brother Russ Sanders Senoia Lodge No. 82



On Thursday, November 10th, with proper dispensation from both the Grand Lodge of Alabama and Grand Lodge of Georgia, members of Valley Lodge #516 were received by Senoia Lodge #82 to exemplify the second section of the Fellowcraft degree. As a plural member of both lodges, it was an honor and a privilege to host

the Brothers from Valley #516 for this purpose to shed light upon 3 Master Masons and 4 Fellowcraft Masons that had not yet been invested with the lectures encompassed in the second section.

As the work under the Grand Lodge of Alabama differs slightly from that under the Grand Lodge of Georgia, it was a treat to host the brothers of Valley Lodge #516 for this purpose. In kind, the brothers from Alabama were delighted to be able to come and share 'light' in Georgia. The brothers of both lodges visit each other from time to time to watch each other's degree work. This was the first time that the work was able to "cross lines".



In attendance were distinguished guest Right Worshipful Grand Chaplin Ross Laver of the Grand Lodge of Georgia as well as brothers from several area lodges. The members of Valley Lodge #516 in



were WB John Hall III, District the Lecturer for District 33 GLoAL, WB

John "Jay" Hall IV District Lecturer for District 31 GLoAL, WB Mark Hall, Worshipful Master, Valley Lodge #516, and WB Russ Sanders, District Deputy to the Grand Master, Subdistrict 4C GLoGA and plural member of Valley #516 and Senoia #82.

This was also Senoia Lodge #82's regular Past Master or Old Timer's night. Many of our members were dressed in overalls for the occasion. Our Junior Warden provided a wonderful meal and great fellowship was shared by all in attendance. It is always a great pleasure to host traveling brothers to Senoia Lodge #82. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings with the exceptions of November and December for Thanksgiving and Christmas.



### Mighty Ninth District Holds Annual Communication

By Worshipful Brother Bryan Linder Senoia Lodge No. 82

On Saturday September 24th, the Mighty Ninth Masonic District held its 117th Annual Communication. The Convention was held in memory of Brothers John "Big Jim" Callahan & Herbert Jackson Denny Jr. The Convention was hosted by Ducktown Lodge #572. District Master Larry Bennett was the District Master for 2022 and had big success with the District Golf Tournament and Clay Shoot. Master Bennett was honored to present 24 scholarships to deserving young women & men to advance their education. The District also honored Bill Lewis for his 23 years of service as secretary to the district on his retirement. The new slate of officers were installed with Mark Bradley taking the helm as District Master. WB Mark remarked

'It is an honor for me to follow in the footsteps of some of our Masonic giants by being elected and allowed to serve this year as Worshipful Master of the MIGHTY Ninth Masonic District Convention! With changing times, we must look to improve our fraternity while maintaining the integrity of our sacred institution. As Masons, we must also continue to invest in ourselves in a way that enables us to invest in others. The Ninth Masonic District Convention officers are committed to doing just that. In addition to a renewed focus on our Schools of Instruction, facilitated by our Ninth District Custodian, WB Steve Ballard, we will continue to invest in our youth by offering college scholarships. As we move forward this year, I pray that each of us will exercise good stewardship by using what our creator has blessed us with in our efforts to help others."



## GCMA Places VA Med Center Tree

By Worshipful Brother Bill Lord Grayson Lodge No. 549

On Saturday, 12/03, we set up the Gwinnett County Masonic Association (GCMA) Christmas Tree at VA Medical Center-Atlanta in Decatur. We've been doing it every year since 2009 I believe. We have the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) cadets decorate the tree and we buy them lunch afterward.

Photo 1 - Back Row L-R: WB Bill Lord, WB Steve Carson, and Brother Hugh Woodruff, with the CAP cadets.

Photo 2: Officers in Back Row: Left-1st Lt. Amy Bright, Right- Lt. Col. Deb Schmid of the CAP along with the cadets.



## Grand Master Kessler Honors Gov. Roy Barnes

By Worshipful Brother Jeff Smith Lawrenceville Lodge No. 131



On November 11, 2022, Grand Master Kessler met with Brother and Governor Roy Barnes, a 53-year member of Latham Lodge #12.

The Grand Master presented Brother Barnes a silver coin for his service to the craft and the community.

### Masonic Eagle Scout Awards Presented

By Worshipful Brother Larry Lynn Rabun Gap Lodge No. 265



Masonic Eagle Scout Awards were presented to three new Eagles from Cleveland, Georgia at Yonah Lodge #382 on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Pictured L-R are Tyler Long, Wiley Allen, Elijah Nix and DDGM Larry Lynn

## Lifesaving Award Presented to Brother of Rabun Gap



Corporal and Brother Andy Beck believes that being in public safety is all about helping people, and Brother Beck follows the belief that "every human being has a claim upon your kind offices." Brother Beck was awarded the Rabun County Sheriffs Office Lifesaving Award "For outstanding performance and heroic life saving actions for helping others in an extreme time of need. Brother Beck received the award for his role in helping save a man's life following a vehicle crash on Oct. 8, 2021 where a Jeep overturned in a creek. Thank you for representing Rabun County and Rabun Gap Lodge Brother Beck.

Grand Master Kessler Visits Grave of Grand Master Max Meyerhardt

By Worshipful Brother Jeff Smith Lawrenceville Lodge No. 131

Prior to an official visitation at Cherokee Lodge #66 in Rome, Grand Master Mike Kessler stopped in a small, well-kept cemetery in South Rome – the Rodeph Sholom Cemetery. This cemetery is the final resting place of Grand Master Max Meyerhardt. Grand Master Meyerhardt was Grand Master from 1900-1907 and was Grand Master when the Masonic Home was built. He was also the Master of Cherokee Lodge from 1884 to 1923. He also began the Seventh Masonic District Convention – the first district convention in the state – and was Master of it from 1897 to 1923. Grand Master Meyerhardt served in all three capacities at the same time!

While visiting the grave, Grand Master Kessler left a small stone on the grave. It is a Jewish custom to leave small stones on the gravestone. While the precise origin of the practice is debated, one meaningful explanation describes the



permanence of the stones and the permanence of our love and/or admiration and respect for the departed. Five Hebrew letters are seen on Grand Master Meyerhardt's gravestone. These are taf-nun-tsadi-bet-hey, and they represent the phrase "teheye nishmato tsrurah b'tsror ha-chayyim" which is often translated as "May his soul be bound up in the bonds of eternal life."

There is no doubt that Grand Master Meyerhardt left an indelible mark on Freemasonry in Georgia. He was a great leader and is respected by members of the Craft to this day – especially Grand Master Kessler.

#### Brother Bill Fountain of Rabun Gap Presented Honor



Recently the city of Mountain City in Rabun County was designated a Purple Heart City. Brother Bill Fountain, a forty-year member of Rabun Gap Lodge, Veteran of the Vietnam War, and Purple Heart Recipient was presented with the Proclamation by Mayor Grace Watts. It was presented to Fountain in

honor of .all the men and women who served In the Armed Forces. Members of the community attended the meeting where local decorated and Purple Heart veterans were honored with kind words from the mayor, council members, and other city officials. Brother Fountain serves as the Clerk of Court for Mountain City.

#### Sincerity Lodge No. 430 Raises Five

By Brother Roger Hawke Sincerity Lodge No. 430



Pictured (left to right) Mark Lee Pinnell, Dustin Allen Stark, James Dawson Gordon, WM Kenneth Bradly Honneycut, Joshua Adam Mock, Robert Allen Moody.

### WWII Veteran Presented Lifetime Achievement Award by Murrayville Lodge No. 30

By Worshipful Brother Andrew Clark Murrayville Lodge No. 30



Murrayville Lodge No. 30 recently recognized their oldest member Leon White. He's one of the few WWII veterans left in Hall county. He was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award from Murrayville Lodge No. 30. This year's current Worshipful Master, Mark Caruana (a Marine veteran himself) was honored to present this award to Mr. White.

Leon has been a pillar Murrayville Lodge No. 30. Leon has helped coach numerous members, when they were working their ways through the first three degrees. Leon has been the head pancake chef up until recently. Leon has always been quick with a joke, no matter the occasion.

#### Police Chief and Brother Honored

Lavonia Police Chief and Brother Bruce Carlile of Lavonia Lodge was honored with the receipt of the Arthur M. Kaplan First Responder Award from the Valley of Atlanta, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Bro. Carlile said that it was a great honor to receive the award, stating "I'm very humbled and honored to receive this award. Any time that I step outside of the City of Lavonia and receive any type of recognition or represent the city, I keep in mind that

I am representing the city of Lavonia. It's been such an honor to be here in the city, and we have such great people, and I'm just grateful that I've been given the opportunity to put Lavionia on the map a little bit outside of our area and statewide. Like I say, this is not just something for me. It's for the whole city. It represents who we are and how far that we have come in the field of public safety here in the city. I'm just honored and humbled to be a small part of it.



Prayer Works!

If you ever think that the part of each meeting where we ask for prayer for our sick and afflicted is routine, here is an honest testimony that prayer works.
-MW Brother Jan Giddens

Hello, my Brothers, my name is Poppy Nelson, I have been a Master mason, Scottish Rite Mason, York Rite and Shriner for over 50 years. I am writing this to you to say thank you for your thoughts and prayers. I had major heart surgery, which went well, but I crashed and if anything else could go wrong it did. Fluid around my heart, blood clots in the lungs and other complications made for a serious lifethreatening situation. They had to crack my chest open again to relieve the fluid and clots, which was the first time I died. They had to give me CPR for twenty minutes until they could get me on a heart-lung machine to take over my body functions. I was placed in an induced coma for ten days to relieve the stress that my body was going through. I was in such a weakened state that the doctors called in my family and told them I had about a 10% chance of pulling through. But I pulled through, and the only I can think of is the thoughts and prayers of my family and you, my Masonic Brothers. I cannot thank you enough for what you did for me.

I know that many of you do not know me, but you offered up prayers on my behalf. I am so proud to be a Mason and to call each of you Brother. I truly love each of you.

## 10th District Traveling Gavel Does Some Traveling!

Brother Hadi Poustchi, Treasurer, and WB Brian Coffey present the 10th Masonic District Traveling Gavel to WM Barry Davis and the Brethren of Grovetown Lodge 730 on behalf of WM Jarrod Kayne Coffey of Clarence H. Cohen DL Lodge 749. An enjoyable evening with the Brethren.



WM Marc Shinault of Fleming Lodge presents the Traveling Gavel to WM Brian Coffey of Martinez Lodge.



WM Brian Coffey and Brethren of Martinez Lodge 710 present the Traveling Gavel to WM Shane Truett of George Walton Lodge 699.





### Saturday, February 11, 2023

9:00am Registration, 10am Program

Tyrian Lodge No. 111, 650 Tallulah Trail, Warner Robins, GA 31088

SPONSORED BY THE SCOTTISH RITE ORIENT OF GEORGIA AND THE GRAND LODGE OF GEORGIA

### CONTINUING YOUR MASONIC JOURNEY

The SGIG, Orient of Georgia and Grand Master Of Masons in Georgia invite all Master Masons to Continue Their Masonic Journey. Join us for an informative day where you will learn about the Grand Lodge of Georgia Membership Initiative from our Membership Chairman and hear two world-renowned Masonic speakers:



**ARTURO DE HOYOS** 

GRAND ARCHIVIST AND GRAND HISTORIAN FOR THE SUPREME COUNCIL 33°, SJ, USA



**DEAN ALBAN** 

DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP SERVICES FOR THE SUPREME COUNCIL 33°, SJ, USA

RESERVATION REQUIRED - LIMITED SEATING \$20 PER TICKET - MEAL PROVIDED REGISTER BY SCANNING QR CODE





For Questions Contact Your Local Valley Membership Chair





**FOLLOW THE LIGHT, SHARE THE LIGHT** 

2601 Parkwood Dr. P. O. Box 6 Brunswick, GA 31521

## 100 MASON MEETING Monday April 10, 2023 Eat at 6pm, Lodge opens at 7:30pm

#### Brethren,

Ocean Lodge #214 F&AM is hosting the 5th annual 100 Mason Meeting. All GA/FL Master Masons are invited and encouraged to attend. We anticipate a wonderful evening of fellowship with good food, an engaging program, raffles, and a possible visit from Most Worshipful Grand Master Kessler.

Last year's meeting was held at Amelia Lodge in Florida with a turnout of 260 brothers so, to get a rough head count for meal planning, we are asking that lodge secretaries please email our secretary (Worshipful Brother Ken Pipkin tabaka45@gmail.com) with an approximate number of brethren who will be attending from your lodge. \$10 donation per plate requested. We look forward to seeing all!

## VETERANS CORNER BY WORSHIPFUL BROTHER JACK FISHMAN

I have been asked by Grand Master Michael Kessler to take the lead in the Georgia Grand Lodge Veteran's Committee. I am proud to undertake this endeavor, as my commitment to both the Masons and to veterans is deep indeed.

I have been a Mason for forty-nine years and service to the Masonic community has been a hallmark of my family as well. My father Sidney Fishman and my father-in-law Arthur Falkenstrom were both active Masons, as were several of my uncles in Augusta. My brother Steven Fishman is a repeat past master Webb Lodge No. 166 in Augusta, and his son Alexander is also a Mason. I am a Life member of that lodge, a Perpetual Member of Fulton Lodge No. 216 in Atlanta and a 32° K.C.C.H. Scottish Rite Mason and a Life Member of the Valley of Atlanta. I am a Past Master of Fulton Lodge No. 216 and I currently serve as the Lodge Secretary. In addition, I am serving as the Secretary of the Fifth Masonic District Convention and I am counsel for the Prosecution in the Fifth District. I am the co-founder of the Georgia Masonic Blood Drive and I have been a multi-gallon blood donor.

My commitment to veterans is no less profound. During the Viet Nam war I served in country during 1968 – 1969. My exposure to Agent Orange has resulted in my status as a disabled veteran. I am a strong advocate of veteran's rights. There are many initiatives that we can pursue to assist brother Masons who are veterans. Foremost I will encourage and offer assistance to veterans to register with the Veteran's Administration as the benefits offered to veterans are available only to those who register with the VA. In the upcoming months I will be discussing the benefits available to veterans and their families and I will be establishing a network of Masons who can help other Masons in applying for their VA benefits. I will explore and pursue other areas where we can offer support and assistance to our veterans. There is much we can do.



#### Georgia ChIP Communication Corner

### By Worshipful Brother Cabot Rohrer

Happy New Year and Congratulations to all the newly elected officers for 2023! As the leadership team of your Lodges, you have in front of you a great opportunity in this New Year to expand your Lodge sponsorship of GACHIP Events and I encourage you to meet with your GACHIP District Director. Your District Director will assist you in promoting the Program to your communities to schedule a GACHIP Event. No time is better than the present to invite your District Director to visit your Lodge, promote the program, distribute brochures, and demonstrate how easy it is to ID a Child.

As you will see we have some new faces on our Team. During the Grand Lodge week, many of our District Directors were able to attend our Annual GACHIP Leadership Team and conference. Over the course of the past several months, we have welcomed several new members. We are delighted that Walter Pelton has joined our Team from District 1. As well as Dereck Roberts for District 7. In addition, we were honored to award a GACHIP Past Masters Apron to our long time District 10 Director David Winkler.

Many thanks to those Brothers who were able to attend our Annual GACHIP Leadership Team Conference. It means so much for Brothers to meet in person and share opportunities for the Program and their plans of visitation to Lodges and community organizations. As always, we look forward to you reaching out to us to join our 'Winning Team'!

It is EASY to host an Event.... Take read of some great 'selling' points:

#### GEORGIA CHILD IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

A Gift!!!!!!



From the Freemasons of Georgia. Georgia Masons provide the GACHIP program FREE of charge as a public service and as our gift to the citizens of our state. The Georgia Child Identification Program (GACHIP) is a comprehensive identification kit to be offered to parents in the state of Georgia. At a GACHIP event, Freemasons set up the equipment necessary to generate completed identification kits. Each person progresses through several stations, taking about 10 to 15 minutes for the entire process. The recorded information is presented to the child's parent or guardian to take home for safe keeping. There is no age limit!!!!!

GACHIP provides a valuable tool for the parents or guardians on a small computer disk that includes:

Full color digital photographs showing various poses of the child: These color photographs can be circulated by the police to the media in the case of abduction and can be used in the Amber Alert Program.

A complete set of digital fingerprints: Everyone's fingerprints are unique and are a well-known tool for recovery, investigation, and identification.

DNA and Scent: The swift recovery of a missing person can be aided by tracking dogs. Information about the child includes: Distinguishing features such as hair and eye color, scars, etc. The disk will also contain contact information for parents or guardians.

All of the identifying information collected at the event about the child is given to the child's family. The GACHIP program retains only the permission slip that must be signed prior to participation in the event. AII other data is permanently erased after the child's document is prepared.

MasoniCHIP International. Inc.is recognized by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) as the most comprehensive program of its type and has received a SPECIAL AWARD OF COMMENDATION from the NCMEC in February 2007.

What is the FIRST STEP? Contact your GACHIP District Director Today! Below is the District Director's Contact Information.

District 1: Walter Pelton District 7: Dereck Roberts

(912) 572-4989: <u>dd1@gachip.com</u> (706) 252-6569: <u>dd7@gachip.org</u>

District 2: Mike Rentz District 8: Jeff Ozburn

(229) 220-4277: <u>dd2@gachip.org</u> (678) 472-4307: <u>dd8@gachip.org</u>

District 3: VACANT District 9: Nathan Wade

District 4: Harold Culpepper (678) 234-9996: dd9@gachip.org

(706) 575-2139: dd4@gachip.org District 10: David Winkler

District 5: Craig Knowlton (706) 860-6060: <u>dd10@gachip.org</u>

(770) 380-2718: dd5@gachip.org District 11: John Shaw

District 6: Michael Bowman (912) 218-0125: dd11@gachip.org

(770) 480-1642: dd6@gachip.org District 12: Jimmy Johnson

(478) 542-4718: <u>dd12@gachip.org</u>



Congratulations to our newly elected and appointed Lodge Officers. It is our hope that you invite your GACHIP District Director to a Lodge meeting. Make this crucial program a top 2023 priority by kicking off your GACHIP Program promotion part of your first official meeting.





Daniel L. Brothers Chamblee-Sardis #444 Chamblee-Sardis #444



Gerald L. Bagley



Gary F. Anderson Gainesville #219



Homer W. McLeod Buford #292



C. Danny Wofford Buford #292



Albert R. Cleland Sylvania #301



Larry R. Underwood Crawfish Springs #300 Crawfish Springs #300



Dewey H. Tallent



Alfred D. Waite Zerubbabel #15



Franklin P. Peal Jr. Hapeville #590



Wayne Barnes Hinesville #271



Stephen L. Bradberry East Point #288



George Thornton Sincerity #430



Elmer E. Shoemaker Dalton #105



Thomas Ralston Rising Star #4



Joe R. Bush Gwinnett DL #744



Frederick G. Heath Atlanta-Peachtree #59



John Tyre St. Mary's #109



W.C. Sanderson St. Mary's #109



George M. Grant Clarkesville #325



Jerry L. Vandiver Emerson #738



Roy Garvin Screven #248



Billy G. Smith Screven #248



James W. House Statham #634



William Isbell East Floyd #728



Donald Gollahon East Floyd #728



James E. Blount Ocean #214



Philip L. Bledsoe Ocean #214



Marion R. Taylor Draketown #262



Lyndal C. Caldwell Blue Mountain #38



James E. Tucker, Jr. Blue Mountain #38



James W. Walden Blue Mountain #38



Hartwell D. Ricketts Blue Mountain #38



David Croy Woodstock #246



Johnnie H. Bottoms Matt #694



David Moncus Hamilton #16



Jessie Lowery Chipley #40



Reed H. Mathis Blue Ridge #67



Roy Conner Blue Ridge #67





Arthur H. Hardy Springville #153



James S. Edmonds Mt. Hermon #304



Franklin Davenport Chipley #40



Jim Schreiber Rising Star #4



Robert F. Brannan, Jr. Ancient Landmark #231



Jackie Glenn East Floyd #728



Don Spears East Floyd #728



George Williams Tyrian #111



William Waller Rising Star #4 65 Year



George Shearer Clarence H. Cohen #749 65 Year



Donald S. Osgood Chamblee-Sardis #444



Jessie G. Bell Goshen #71



John D. Etheridge Auburn #230



James E. Herring Moody #719



James D. Stowe Toccoa #309 75 Years

# Members Reported Deceased September 1 November 30, 2022

Abarr, Cecil Dale	1	Richardson III, Thomas David	60	Broglia, Robert	124
Stubblefield Jr., Leroy Stanley	1	McClellan Jr., William Edward	63	Duncan Sr., Ronald Frank	125
Woolf, Gary Allen	4	Hancock, Edward Eugene	69	Bartell, William Edward	131
Parker, Cary Eugene	5	Overstreet, Donald Lee	70	McHugh, Bobby Wayne	131
Tyler Jr., William McKinley	5	Bell, Jesse Gilford	71	Clark, James Lucius	139
Whitt, Fred Jonathan	5	Lane, Mahlon Brawner	71	Gober, Robert Douglas	139
Lawson, William Brooks	6	Gay, William Ronnie	72	Burrell, John Clayton	141
Little, Robert Ladell	7	Morris, Floyd Thomas	72	Hulsey, Phillip Jerry	141
Stapleton Jr., Walter Davenport	13	Englett Jr., Edward Eugene	76	Hunter, David Virgil	141
Powell Sr., William Charles	15	Martin, Ronald Benjamin	79	Garrisson Jr., MacK Edwin	148
Jeffries II, Charles Leroy	18	Hensley, Danny Howard	81	Venable, Johnny Alllen	148
Jones, Albert Clyde	18	McArthur, Grady Foster	81	Coleman, Larry Joe	151
Stephens, James William	18	Perkins, Raymond James	86	Bachmann, Peter Oswald	153
Adams, Sidney Gaines	25	Perkins, Paul Andrew	87	Dilbeck, Vernie Richard	153
Lewis, Marion Anthony	25	Thornton, Dennis Eugene	87	Avery, Ernest Howell	154
Veal, Royce Eugene	25	Becker, Robert Ray	88	Clark, Ernest Edward	154
Estes, Harvel Vinson	27	McGroarty, Michael Patrick	90	Cordle Sr., Herbert Eugene	160
Ray, Robert Terrell	33	Peek, Mark Stuart	99	Williams, Winston Daniel	167
Rogers, Ernest Harold	33	Richardson, Troy Lynn	103	Roberts, Thomas Leon	171
Moon, Emory Fred	34	Spier, James Thomas	103	Akins, Johnny Michael	176
Miller, Jay Dean	35	Sikes, John Vernon	104	Lund, Harlyn Leroy	178
Sessoms, James Early	35	Jones, Sammy Russell	105	Palmer, Jimmy Wayne	206
Anderson, Lloyd Eugene	38	Lindsey Jr., Jimmie	111	Eberhart, Christopher John	212
Barth, David Frederick	42	Adcock, Lonie Burton	113	Gould, John Moore	213
Brewer, Jones Foster	42	Minge, Jerry Lee	113	Barechson, Morton Larry	216
Ramey Jr., Cline James	44	Craft, Vernon Edwin	114	Mittelman, Richard Allen	216
Taylor, Richard Glenn	44	Harkins, Clyde Edward	114	Montalvo, Bismark Santiago	216
Hendley Sr., James Edward	48	Chandler, Jerry Lavon	115	Kinsey, Dwight Anthony	219
Cunard, Elwood Malone	50	House, Harold Lee	120	Fink, Daniel Eugene	220
Brooks, Richard Crawford	60	Morgan, Jackson Davis	120	Hamby II, Martin Thurman	227
Craven, Eugene Jackson	60	Broome Sr., Doyle Donald	121	Barr, John Douglas	228

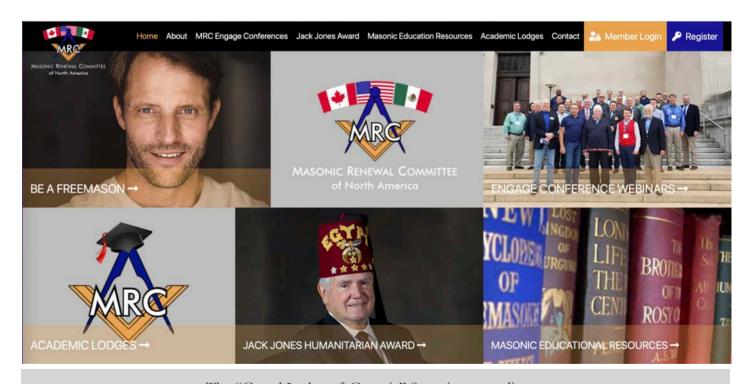
# Members Reported Deceased September 1 November 30, 2022

Powell, Thomas Earl	234	Crumpton Sr., Samuel Clayton	340	Hendry, Roger Carlton	549
Croy, Robert Leon	246	Floyd Jr., Eddie Harold	340	Corbin, James Norman	558
Fletcher Sr., Robert Alan	246	Smith, John Benjamin	340	Cowart, Charles Richard	572
Nicholson, James W.	251	Long, Johnny Clay	349	Wiley Sr., Russell Elmus	590
Crutchfield, Murray Dorris	255	Kite, Christopher James	353	Bass, William Roger	591
Williams, Danny Cleveland	255	Hall, Benny Vernon	364	McClain, Aubrey Franklin	591
Swanson, Ronald Henry	256	Pierce Sr., William Raymond	369	McDowell, James Edwin	591
Speed Jr., Richard Arthur	265	Rutland Jr., Henry Green	369	Segars, Vernon Ray	595
Adamson, Robert Walter	268	Poling, Stephen Pierce	376	Wooten Jr., William Franklin	622
Griffeth, Ray	268	Owens, Robert Anthony	382	Ait, David Rogers	634
Morris, Clayton Durelle	276	Brown, Wayne Franklin	397	Heath, MacK Warren	644
Spann, Wyatt Washington	283	Kitchens, Bobby	412	Coan, Edward Lee	652
Clay Sr., Danny Lee	288	Carew, John Patrick	414	Bradley Sr., William Donald	664
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