



Masons Unite for Dedication Ceremony History Set in Stone By Dianne Saison

Nearly 1,000 people watched as history was made in Lancaster County this weekend (September 11, 2010). For the first time in Virginia, racial walls came down and Masons of all colors cooperated together to dedicate the cornerstone at the new Lancaster County Courthouse.

For over 150 years, Virginia has been home to two Masonic Grand Lodges, the predominantly Caucasian Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia and the African-American based Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Virginia, F. & A.M., Inc..

Racial tensions had precluded the two organizations from even recognizing each other until a decade ago. In 2004, a compact between the groups was struck, allowing private meetings to occur that would promote growth and education between the two lodges.

However, the two groups have never publicly participated in any activities together, until now.

On Sept. 11, with the sun shining down and a gentle breeze in the air, the two Lodges, once divided by race, locked arms together and walked as equals in an ancient Freemason ceremony.

"This is a great day for Virginia," said Prince Hall Grand Lodge's Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Isaac S. Hughes. "It is a brand new day for both races. This shows that, as people of color, we have arrived and are important."

"The local Lodge Master asked if we had ever thought of having a cornerstone celebration," said Brother William H. "Bill" Pennell, Jr.. "It started out that two local Lodges would perform the ceremony together, but [after discussions with the Grand Master] the plans began modifying and growing until we had something truly historic on our hands."



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Grand Master's Address



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The Final Call

How honored and how blessed I am to have been your Grand Master and now to be able to reflect on the year, as I write this last entry into the Masonic Herald supplement as your Grand Master. How swiftly the particles of sand have flown through the hour glass of time! The five years of being a member of your Elected Grand Line has passed rapidly, but each particle of sand has given me a memory. A memory of the kindness, the graciousness, the laughs, the fun, and yes, the love you, my Brothers and Sisters, have given to me and Lady Judith during the times we have spent together. For me, the choice to take this journey was one filled, at first, with reservation, but once I accepted the challenge, I committed myself totally to the task of looking after our gentle Craft. Along the way, I can assure you that we have symbolically received the corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment, and the oil of joy and gladness, especially this year. We have been well fed with the most delicious meals, we have been showered with unexpected prizes, and your contributions to the Masonic charities have been well received. We have been graciously sheltered when shelter for the night was necessary and sometimes this was even within the hospitality of a Brother's home. I cannot have imagined before the number of Brothers and Sisters I have met or the friendships and close relationships that we have made all over the Commonwealth and beyond in these years of service.

Judith is thankful for the contributions to the *Virginia Child Identification Program* and the devotion of Lodge members and their families to double her expectations of the number of children, students, and elderly they have helped to go through this program, and for the resources they provided to buy computers to help fund future accomplishments for VACHIP. It has all been about and for the children of Virginia. Your donations to the residents of the *Masonic Home of Virginia* and the *Virginia Masonic Outreach Program* reinforces my belief in the Brethren remembering their obligations and the support of their ladies, who also are committed to helping our Brothers and Sisters in need. Donations to our other Masonic charities were also accepted with much appreciation and these will be put to the use for which they are intended.

Our wonderful relationship this year with the Grand Worthy Matron and Grand Worthy Patron and within Our Eastern Star to promote understanding, where there was misunderstanding, has been a labor of love and it is encouraging that we will accomplish a win-win solution to previous impasses. The overwhelming support by the youth groups, the Scottish and York Rites, the Shrine Centers, and their leadership have been unbelievable. They have truly shown that they know what it is to go on foot and out of their way for this Grand Master. For all these things we are both very grateful. Under the direction of the Supreme Architect, through the sacrifices of my family and by the will of Freemasons everywhere in Virginia, I have served with all of the zeal and enthusiasm I have been able to render in the years leading up to and culminating in this grand year.

I can honestly say that I have given all that I had to offer to the Craft in time, resources, and my gifts from the Lord that I was able to give during these wonderful

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Grand Master's Calendar

OCTOBER

- 15-17 Grand Lodge of Ohio
- 19 Clay Shoot, Providence Forge
- 21 Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 120
- 23 Wreath Laying, Arlington Cemetery
- 28 Eureka Lodge No. 195
- 30 Khedive Fall Ceremonial, Chesapeake
John Stuart Dunn Memorial Grand Lodge Convention
Reunion, Williamsburg Lodge No. 6

NOVEMBER

- 1 Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4
- 4-6 Grand Annual Communication, Richmond

Rt. Wor. John Chambliss' Tentative Schedule

- 11 Homecoming, Lakeland Lodge No. 190
- 15 Pleasants Lodge No. 63
- 18 Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 120
- 19-20 Grand Royal Arch Chapter, Williamsburg
- 22 Richmond Scottish Rite Bodies, Reception



Forget Not The Duties

The Final Call

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years that you have given me. My Brothers, know that this year, I have served with a smile on my face and have spoken and acted from my heart. All the decisions I have made, even the toughest ones, were made to the best of my ability for the benefit of our gentle Craft in the Commonwealth of Virginia. All things that had to be carried over into my year from the past have been taken care of in ample form. My message has been consistent and my actions, in my mind, have been fair and equitable. I have sincerely tried to live my theme to ***“Forget Not the Duties.”***

A back-to-basics approach with a purpose was stressed, to reclaim and to continue the best practices of the past and to implement the invitations of the present. Also, I endeavored to raise the standards and spirituality of Freemasonry and to restore the worth and value of our Fraternity through our thoughts, actions, and deeds and in the upgrading of the edifices in which we meet to labor and work. The targeted results would thereby enable us to shine the brightest possible light on Freemasonry in Virginia, in the present and in the future, we possibly can so we, the Freemasons, are again looked up to as an excellent example of how all people should live their lives in the communities in which we dwell.

William E. Rowan

Grand Master

Mission and Vision Statements of The Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia

The **mission** of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is to teach and perpetuate a way of life that promotes the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God and to assist its Lodges to grow and prosper.

The **vision** of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is to be the premier organization composed of men of integrity and character, who are honest, true to their word, believe in God, are devoted to family, charitable in their community, and courteous and helpful to each other.

Masons Unite for Dedication Ceremony

(Continued from Page 1)

According to Brother Pennell, County Administrator for Lancaster County and a Past Master of Henry Knox Field Lodge No. 349 (Alexandria), it took countless hours of dedication and cooperation between the two Grand Lodges to organize the affair.

“This is truly an amazing thing, it is a first for both Lodges and we are proud that it is happening in Lancaster County,” said Pennell.

Most Worshipful Alan Wayne Adkins, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Virginia could not agree more.

“This is a historic occasion to come together with our counterpart,” said Adkins. “We have always had mutual respect, but now we go into fraternal relations.”

Most Worshipful Adkins also noted out that the ceremony was especially important for both Most Worshipfuls William Rorer, Jr. and Larry Christian, the Grand Masters from the two Virginia Lodges.

“[Rorer and Christian] grew up together and have known each other since childhood,” said Adkins. “This event brings them closer together in brotherhood.”

For the Masonic order, nothing is more important than those bonds of brotherhood.

“The basic things about both organizations is that we have a firm base in our personal faith and the characteristics of the bible,” said Hughes. “We want to enable and give opportunities so that people can improve their lives.”

For over a century the two Lodges in Virginia separately funded local charities through scholarships, humanitarian efforts, and disaster relief funds, as well as donating to many important medical charities including the Shriners Hospital for Children.

With the increased cooperation between the two Grand Lodges, Masons hope to be able to reach far greater audiences.

“I think that we can now look to share ideas and do things together in the future,” said Adkins.

Hughes agreed, adding that the events of the day would have far-reaching effects.

“Generation after generation will remember Saturday, Sept. 11, as a defining moment in history when black Masons stood united alongside white Masons, with no differences between them,” Adkins said.

Society of Secrets

While Freemasons are often regarded as cloaked in mystery, they are a nation of Brotherhood.

Despite depictions by various media outlets, members maintain that they are not part of a clandestine organization.

“It is a society of secrets, not a secret society,” said Pennell. “Throughout history, very good men have belonged to the Freemasons.”

Some of the more notable Masons include Voltaire, actor John Wayne, Jazz musician Wm. “Count” Basie, Duke Ellington, Benjamin Franklin, Harry Houdini, George Washington, and countless monarchs, heads of state and influential businesspeople.

Freemasonry is the world’s oldest fraternal organization. Its body of knowledge and system of ethics is based on the belief that each man has a responsibility to improve himself while being devoted to his family, faith, country and fraternity.

Masonry provides opportunities for fellowship, charity, education, and leadership based on the three ancient Masonic tenets: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

The Grand Lodge of Virginia was established in 1778 and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge was established in 1847. It is not known how long these Lodges had been functioning prior to establishment, however, both Lodges were chartered by the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland.

Freemasonry exists in various forms all over the world, with current membership estimated at around 6 million people, including approximately 48,000 Virginians.

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Masons Unite for Dedication Ceremony

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Although the origins of the cornerstone ceremony are unclear, the custom dates back more than 5,000 years.

“This was an opportunity for the public and our members to engage in a ceremony that used to happen all the time,” said Adkins. “We are practicing today what our ancestor’s trade was.”

According to Masonic Cornerstone Ceremony, the actual placement of the cornerstone on the north-east corner of a building is also an ancient tradition. The north location stands for darkness while the east location represents light, thus highlighting man’s journey from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge.

Cornerstones are traditionally engraved with the date, the name of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master and the Masonic Emblem. Often included will be a time capsule, in this case commemorating various local officials, judiciary members and county employees.

Cornerstone ceremonies are considered a great honor and help instill civic pride while acting as a celebration of community involvement. They have also played an important role in history. George Washington laid the cornerstone in our nation’s capitol and Benjamin Franklin laid the cornerstone at the State House in Philadelphia.

For more information about the history of Freemasons, or about either Lodge, visit <http://www.mwphgl-va.org/index.html> or <http://www.grandlodgeofvirginia.org>.

(Edited from an article written by Dianne Saison for the Northern Neck News in September 2010.)



Various scenes from the opening of the ceremony, making sure the cornerstone is true and just, and the actual emplacement of the cornerstone by Masonic masons!

Items from the Grand Secretary

POTPOURRI

Alan W. Adkins, PGM, Grand Secretary

Each year during the months of September and October, I traverse around the Commonwealth conducting conferences for Lodge secretaries. At these conferences, I share information beneficial to the attendees, and of course, receive valuable feedback from them.

Listed below is a summary of a few of the topics discussed and/or presented:

1. The average age of Masons is 53.31 years old and the average age at raising is 33.14 years old. The total number of memberships on file is 39,013 with 4,724 listed as Masonic Veterans.
2. The average amount of Lodge dues, including Grand Lodge dues and assessments, is \$71.68 and the average amount of fees is \$140.36. Ten Lodges have included a cost of living adjustment (COLA) in their by-laws.
3. The web site link for the Lodge activity page is being modified to incorporate a single login for electronic monthly activity including supply orders and annual forms for delinquent members, Lodge officers, proxy information, real estate and veteran awards.
4. Besides the three printed issues the Masonic Herald is posted on the web site as an electronic supplement (eight pages) the remaining nine months.
5. Form 990-N must be filed for all Lodges with less than \$25,000 in gross receipts each year. Lodges who have not filed since 2008 have been granted a one-time extension until October 15, 2010 to file or lose their tax-exempt status. The Grand Lodge office will provide assistance to these Lodges, where applicable.
6. In order to avoid problems following the December stated communication Lodges must insure an Audit and Trustees report is presented, the nominee for the office of Junior Warden has received the Past Master's Degree, and the incoming Worshipful Master has obtained a Warden's Certificate.
7. Every Lodge has a web presence on the Grand Lodge web site. Select the Lodge Locator link to review and verify the accuracy of the Lodge webpage.

In addition to these topics, I stressed that a significant number of subordinate Lodges are not complying with Masonic law and Executive Orders from the Grand Master. Obviously, there are Lodges that are not attempting to comply with these and other portions of our Masonic law. The Worshipful Masters and Secretaries are encouraged to become familiar with the Methodical Digest and orders of the Grand Master to insure that their Lodge is in full compliance.

(See Page 8 for Lack of Law Compliance numbers.)

MAHOVA Family Day

On a beautiful Saturday morning, October 9, 2010, the Masonic Family of Virginia converged on the Masonic Home grounds for fellowship, friendship, and need I even mention, food. This year's King and Queen for the Masonic Home are Walter and Yvonne Olphin. The day was enjoyed by thousands as the parade route was lined with many participants and observers. Most of the appendant bodies participated in this year's parade. There are pictures of some of the day's events on pages 8 and 9.

Make your plans and invite your family and Lodge Brethren now to attend next year's event which occurs on the 2nd Saturday in October which will be October 8, 2011.

Committee on Membership Report

Time to Celebrate and Time to Plan

By Rt. Wor. William E. Hershey, Chairman
Committee on Membership

As I prepare for the Grand Annual Communication, I am also reflecting on events these past months. I am encouraged with the interest I have seen generated in membership development and retention, but I am also concerned with the amount of work yet to be done. To address membership development and retention for the coming year, I want to address this message to all of the Brethren reading this letter collectively; but there are also select groups of you my Brethren that I want to address this message to individually.

To the incoming District Deputy Grand Masters (DDGM): In September, I had the privilege of addressing you at the DDGM Conference. I hope I left you with the message that the sooner we begin to address issues associated with membership development and retention, the sooner we will begin to see growth in our membership and with that a reduction of demits and suspensions for non-payment of dues. I encourage you to reach out to your District Membership Coordinator (DMC) and work with him to promote membership in the District. If you have questions or need help, please contact me.

To the DMCs: I hope you will continue to serve as the DMC and, in that position, help me in my efforts to promote the Grand Lodge Program to “Grow the Craft” in the areas of membership, development, and retention. You can do this best if you will just use the tools I have provided you and continue in your position as DMC. I am using this article as my personal encouragement to you to reach out to the incoming DDGM and Senior Wardens and Worshipful Masters. If you have questions, let’s talk and let me or your Region Committeeman help you be a success in your District.

To the incoming Worshipful Masters: I know you want your Lodge to be successful in the areas of membership development and retention. Along those lines, I want to insure that you know there are District and Grand Lodge resources available to you if you just ask for assistance.

Finally my Brethren I want to say a few words about **2B1ASK1**. It has come to my attention that men interested in becoming Masons are contacting the Grand Lodge and Lodges directly seeking information about becoming a Freemason. They are initiating these inquiries via the internet and telling us they want to join a Lodge. They want “to be one” and they are “asking” us. And yet, there are Brethren who believe we cannot provide these men with a petition because “we do not know them.” We need to do something to correct this disconnect. Why not form a Membership Team in your Lodge? Appoint a Lodge Membership Coordinator and team him with the Lodge Instructor of Work and Lodge Education Officer and let this team work with that man seeking membership to get to know him, bring him to the Lodge, introduce him to the Lodge members, find out more about this man who is seeking to become a Freemason, and do our part to take another good man and make him better. Let us “Forget Not the Duties” and remember that every human being has a claim on our kind offices.

Contact me, I want to help, wehershey@comcast.net , 540-972-1692 (H) or 540-270-9665 (C) and let me know what I can do to assist you.



COMPLIANCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDERS AND MASONIC LAW

NUMBER OF LODGES FAILING TO SUBMIT REQUIRED REPORTS

<u>MASONIC YEAR</u>	<u>DDGM NOMINEE</u>	<u>DELINQUENT REPORTING</u>	<u>PROXY FORM</u>
1998	78	50	NA
1999	83	132	NA
2000	24	78	NA
2001	78	104	NA
2002	37	100	NA
2003	64	97	NA
2004	46	120	NA
2005	24	112	90
2006	75	123	91
2007	70	126	137
2008	58	151	167
2009	54	170	19
2010	111	161	77
AVG.	62	113	92

ASK HIRAM

How many times do I stand to be introduced?

According to Masonic Protocol, a person should ONLY be introduced ONE time. The same is true in public and tiled introductions.

If you serve as on the Grand Lodge Committee on Work (COW), you are Worshipful Master of your Lodge, you are serving as DDGM (which makes you a Past Master), you are a Grand Lodge Representative, and you are serving as High Priest of your local Royal Arch Chapter; **you are still only introduced one time.**

- You would NOT stand to be introduced as a Past Master's & Past District Deputy Grand Master's
- You would NOT stand to be introduced as the Head of an Appendant Body
- You would NOT stand to be introduced as a Grand Lodge Representative
- You would NOT stand to be introduced as a Grand Lodge Committeemen
- You would NOT be presented at the altar as a Worshipful Master
- YOU WOULD BE** presented at the altar as a DDGM, received in the East, introduced, and saluted accordingly.

That is your highest office.

We all have numerous titles, so please be courteous and follow Masonic Protocol. Be introduced only one time, resist the urge to stand. Don't let your less informed Brethren pressure you into standing. Show them by your good example the proper way to be introduced.





Photograph by William J. Baumbach, II



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Photograph by William J. Ba