

NORTH CAROLINA

WINTER 2022

THE MASON



Official Publication of The Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina

250 YEARS OF MASONRY

ST. JOHN'S LODGE NO. 3

Our Signers of the
Declaration of Independence

Masonic Cornerstones:
Symbols of Wisdom, Strength & Beauty



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Age	Rate
60	4.5
65	4.8
68	5.1
70	5.3
72	5.5
74	5.8
76	6.1
78	6.5
80	7.0
82	7.5
84	7.9
86	8.3
88	8.7
90	9.1

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*Larry B. Thompson Jr.
Grand Master*

If we can dream...

Thanks to my mother, in 1976 I had the opportunity to see Elvis perform at the Ovens Auditorium in Charlotte. Those of you who know me well have heard me speak about that experience and what a lasting impression that it made in my life.

There are so many great songs that Elvis is known for, but one of my favorites is “If I Can Dream” which was released to the public in 1968 as the finale to what is now known as the ’68 Comeback Special. Elvis believed in that song, and it is said that during the original recording it was sung with such emotion that the backing vocalists had tears rolling down their cheeks.

Dreams... without dreams we do not have hope, and without hope, what do we have? I have carried a long-held dream of our brothers finally putting aside petty and deep-seated biases and pulling together to become true builders. Builders of character, moral fortitude, and Masonic philosophy. Can you imagine our potential and the impact that we could have on this state and the world? Again, this is a long-held dream and one that I will continue to hold onto... but, as you know, our focus for this year was much more grounded and centered upon reengaging the craft after emerging from a world pandemic.

To be honest, I have been astounded at just how well the idea of a “Masonic Revival” has resonated within our grand jurisdiction. We have seen lodges transform from ordinary to extraordinary over the past year with a record number of Lion and Pillar awards being presented. To celebrate our revival, we reintroduced a different type of district gathering by way of the table lodge, or harmony; and even though we asked our participants to pay anywhere from \$60-100 per ticket for these events, we were at capacity each time. Demand was overwhelming and, at the request of several lodges, the Grand Lodge office is now putting together guidelines that will allow your lodge to host a harmony.

We’ve had a lot of fun with our charity fundraisers this year and I am more than pleased with the results. The Revival cigar has generated in excess of \$36,500 in proceeds and will continue to be a source of charitable income now that Hiram and Solomon has introduced it as part of their main line.

Everyone has extended to me amazing hospitality and shared so many encouraging stories; examples of how one man, or group of men, made a conscious decision to effect change on the local level and set about revitalizing their lodge! This is the essence of a Masonic Revival and I have witnessed it time and time again.

This past week the cigar was released in Europe and received a 92 rating from *Cigars Lover Magazine* (the highest rated toro in this edition). Couple this with the Grand Master's Ride from Murphy to Manteo, the Grand Master's Run, and our Masonic sock fundraiser for the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and you have shown me that you have philanthropy in your hearts!

Most important is the love and brotherhood that I have experienced in so many lodges that I have visited this year. Everyone has extended to me amazing hospitality and shared so many encouraging stories; examples of how one man, or group of men, made a conscious decision to effect change on the local level and set about revitalizing their lodge! This is the essence of a Masonic Revival and I have witnessed it time and time again.

Brethren, the path forward is clear, but we are responsible for maintaining that path. We should know by now that we cannot sit comfortably on our laurels and expect that our path will lead to continuous improvement. Quite the contrary. We are builders and there is work to be done. We must maintain our buildings and plan for future maintenance needs, we must deliver quality every step of the way in our meetings, educational programs, meals, and public interactions.

We must also be selective in who we admit into our great fraternity. Trust me, if our buildings pop with curb appeal and we are following through on delivering the quality that our brothers should expect, we will not be dealing with the membership number conundrum. We will find that there are candidates who are intrigued by this historic organization and who are willing to pay for this transformative experience. I will say it again, we are the cheapest game in town and no other civic or fraternal organization offers anything close to the great philosophical study of life that we engage in!

In closing, I would like to thank you for your support and allowing me the great honor to serve as your 169th Grand Master. I have been humbled by the experience and will cherish the memories for the remainder of my life. I will continue to hold onto my dreams of a united fraternity who can all best work and best agree. The Revival experienced this year was certainly a step in the right direction and I am looking forward to enjoying a Reformation with Grand Master-Elect Frazier at the helm. It is going to be another great year filled with nothing but opportunities for our lodges – make the most of it!

The Bigger Picture

By Jonathan Underwood, Grand Secretary



Those of you who have visited the Grand Lodge and seen my office know I take lots of notes. I scribble – ideas, reminders, correspondence. It’s the way my brain works and organizes progress, and

I’ll defend my system by stating the madness does indeed contain some method. The method is that the scraps of paper and random notebooks of ideas form a bigger picture – a puzzle that makes more and more sense the longer you look at it and the pieces fall into place. But, I’ve had to train myself to take the time to analyze my notes, not just take them.

Freemasonry is no different, albeit perhaps a little more structured in its analogy of building. Consider each of us and each of our lodges as a component of a great Temple. Each of us is important and integral to the foundation and facade of the building, and each of us is composed of different material formed into different shapes. If we’re honest with ourselves, we probably think we know what our use will be in the construction of this Temple. For instance, as a rectangular ashlar, we must be a part of the foundation. As a wedge, we must be a keystone. But, is that really our point and the Builder’s intention?

As humans, we often overtax ourselves to construct edifices of our own design, not the Builder’s, and certainly not the Great Architect’s. It’s only when we view the structure as a whole that

we realize sometimes our perception of place is not what we thought it was – like the notes on my desk. A review of my scribbles often leads me toward a different conclusion or outcome than the one I thought I was working on.

While the minutia of our lives and the operation of our lodges is important, we, particularly as Freemasons, should make every effort to stand back and review the entirety of our plans as best we can see them. Though your importance appears in one corner, you must understand your conformity to that corner holds up the rest of the edifice. This realization will enable us to measure the impact of our words and deeds and benefit our brothers and sisters on earth.

The first and arguably hardest part of this exercise is breaking our use of words and thoughts that indicate ownership. “My” lodge, “my” fundraiser, “my” year in the East. None of us are the definition of Freemasonry. We are but custodians of a Great Ideal we must nurture and pass on to each new generation. I cannot help but believe all Freemasons want nothing more than to see our fraternity flourish and succeed, but we can only do that when we release our perception of control to Freemasonry’s ideology and essence. Freemasonry is, at its core, the fulfillment of Golden Rule.

Who have we helped? Who have we benefitted? Who have we made whole? When I look at my notes and jots I often realize they concern the benefit of someone. They are not about me, but about who I can help to succeed, and how I can play my part to construct a bigger picture and a sturdier Temple.

Kevan Frazier Elected New Grand Master



Kevan Delaney Frazier has been elected Grand Master of North Carolina's 32,000 Freemasons, the highest elected position within North Carolina Freemasonry. The Asheville native has been a Master Mason since

September 2009. He was elected Oct. 1 during the Annual Communication of North Carolina Masons, the annual convention where some 1,000 Masons gather to take care of fraternal business.

Frazier, executive director of Western Carolina University Programs since 2004, is a past master of Mount Herman Lodge #118. He has honored the founders of his hometown in his book *Legendary Locals* of Asheville and is owner of the Well-Played Board Game Café – the first board game café in North Carolina. He also founded the Asheville by Foot walking tour. He is the son of Nelson Delaney Frazier and Donna Lynn Poore Frazier and lives in his beloved hometown.

In Masonry, he has served his lodge and the greater fraternity on numerous committees, Grand Lodge Committees on WhiteStone, a Masonic and Eastern Star senior community, the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. He also served terms on the board of directors of both homes. Frazier has served on the Board of General Purposes, the Grand Lodge Jurisprudence and Finance committees, and the Ad Hoc Membership Committee. He also served as representative to the George Washington National Masonic Memorial.

He was appointed to the Grand Line – the appointed and elected governing officers of Masonry in North Carolina – on Dec. 3, 2016, by then-Grand Master Bryant D. Webster of Black Mountain.

Frazier will serve as Grand Master for one year. He will be installed and begin his year of service during a public ceremony at WHERE on Dec. 3, 2022. Frazier will preside over the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons in North Carolina, which consists of some 370 lodges statewide. The Grand Lodge headquarters is located on Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh.



250 Years of Masonry

St. John's Lodge No. 3

Settled in 1710, New Bern is the second-oldest European-American colonial town in North Carolina. Perfectly located and settled on the banks of the Neuse and Trent Rivers, it provided the perfect travel ways for the many ships coming and going from its ports. New Bern has served as the first Provincial Congress in the colonies and the state capital. It was once named “the Athens of the South,” renowned for its Masonic Temple and Athens Theater, both of which are still active today.

History has not revealed exactly when Masons began to conduct their business in New Bern, but it is well documented that Masonic meetings and events were being conducted as early as 1755, 17 years before the lodge's official charter. St. John's Lodge of New Bern is the only lodge in history to hold three numerical identifiers, St. John's Lodge No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3., but that is another tale.

In the early years, after the settlement of New Bern, lodge meetings were being held wherever space could be found, one's home or even taverns, such as was referenced in recorded lodge minutes of the “Kings Arms” Tavern. In July 1794, the capital would be relocated to Raleigh, leaving behind the grand and spacious capital building, known as Tryon Palace. St. John's Lodge would soon occupy a portion of the palace and there begin regularly conducting their business. As the lodge surely began to have a sense of normalcy, members enjoying the spaciousness of the palace, on February 26, 1798, the palace caught fire and the once majestic palace was consumed. All was not lost, as officially recorded in the meeting minutes of March 7, 1798, stated, *“The thanks of the lodge was returned to Brothers McMains and Jacob Johnston for their assiduity in saving a great part of the treasures belong to the lodge from the flames on the*

27th of February.” This expression of gratitude was because Brothers McMains and Johnston braved the burning fires and successfully saved the jewels and regalia.

Being dissatisfied with having to revert back to various meeting locations, on November 7, 1798, the lodge voted to purchase the current location, on the corner of Hancock and Johnson Street. On April 15, 1801, the cornerstone of St. John’s Lodge No. 3 was officially laid and on June 10, 1809, the Masonic Temple was appropriately dedicated by a Masonic ceremony. In addition to Masonic Lodge Room, the building also contained a popular social/ballroom and a theater, which until 1974 proudly held claim to the oldest operating theater in the United States. In 1857, after an extensive renovation, the lodge commissioned a fresco artist and brother Mason named E.N. Medernach who skillfully and beautifully decorated the lodge room with indescribable, stunning Masonic symbols and artwork. Throughout the decades, past and present lodge members have taken immense pride and joy from watching the faces of new members

or visiting brethren as they enter the lodge room and become overwhelmed with its beauty and historical attributes.

In February 1862, as a result of the American Civil War, the Union Army captured New Bern. During this occupation time, the Union Army used the Masonic Temple building as a hospital for the wounded and our northern Masonic brethren used our lodge room to hold their Masonic meetings. These brethren left evidence of their occupation for many years as the southwest corner of the room bore the gouge marks from the bayonets on their rifles, as they would prop them up in the corner. The departure of the Union soldiers from New Bern would unveil a disheartening fact for New Bern Masons, as numerous Masonic articles within the lodge were stolen, one of which was graciously returned, some 130 years later. In 1994, after cleaning out a storage room in their lodge, the Schenevus Valley Lodge No. 592 in New York came upon a St. John’s Lodge No. 3 membership printers’ plate, dating back to the 1700s. Members of the lodge eagerly reached out to

then-Master Doug Soltow Sr., who arranged for the return of the plate. It is said, that only three such plates exist in the world.

St. John’s Lodge No. 3 is a beacon of historical significance to New Bern and the evolution of Masonry in North Carolina. The lodge offers one the ability to peer into the past, understanding from where we came and where we are going as a fraternity. Knowing that you are in a place that some of the most distinct Masons and Americans have graced with their presence, such as Presidents and Brothers George Washington (1791) and James Monroe (1819) or New Bern native, Caleb Bradham, founder of Pepsi Cola. St. John’s Lodge No. 3 is also proud of its contribution to the NC Grand Lodge, proudly claiming seven Grand Masters.

As Past Grand Master Kafer has stated: *“Let us never cease in our every effort to make Masonry a bulwark of moral and spiritual strength in this great land of ours. Thus, we shall be able to transmit this glorious institution, unimpaired, to those who will have every right to look at us as worthy reflectors of the indomitable spirit of those Masonic ancestors of ours who were there ‘In the Beginning.’”*

If you are ever in or near New Bern, come partake in our hospitality and brotherly love, and witness history for yourself. Fraternaly, your brethren in Masonry, St. John’s Lodge No. 3.



Sources: *The Story of St. John’s Lodge No. 3 Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons New Bern, North Carolina by William L. Dill; <https://visitnewbern.com/historic-overview/>*



From the Scottish Rite

*By A. Gene Cobb, Jr.
Deputy of the Orient in North Carolina*

The many quarries of work in Freemasonry give each one of us the opportunity to find our place to learn, to subdue our passions, and to improve ourselves in Masonry. The basic tenets are the same for all of us: brotherly love, relief, and truth.

When I began my Scottish Rite journey, I has only been raised a Master Mason for three months. My coach, the late Worshipful Brother Kenneth R. Fritts, 32° KCCH, wanted me to go to Charlotte, but there was a one-day event in Greensboro. Both were equidistant from Mount Gilead. My family of five children made the one-day deal better for me so I took it. We must do what's best for our family.

I'm so glad I did! Balancing family with fraternity and shepherding a congregation of Christians was not always easy. Yet, the teachings I learned in the subordinate lodge and in the Greensboro Valley were changing me. The wonderful secret that has been unfolding every day for me has been that I am surrounded by a group of friends and brothers who find ways to best work and best agree. Our love and respect for one another is genuine. Our understanding of the place in priorities that God and family have is unwavering. Our mission is to do all the good we can by all the means we can as long as we can.

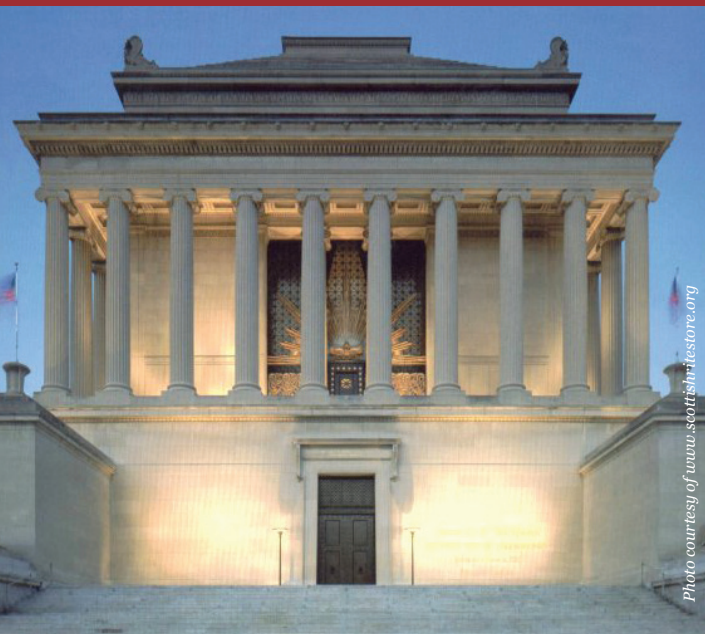


Photo courtesy of www.scottishritestore.org

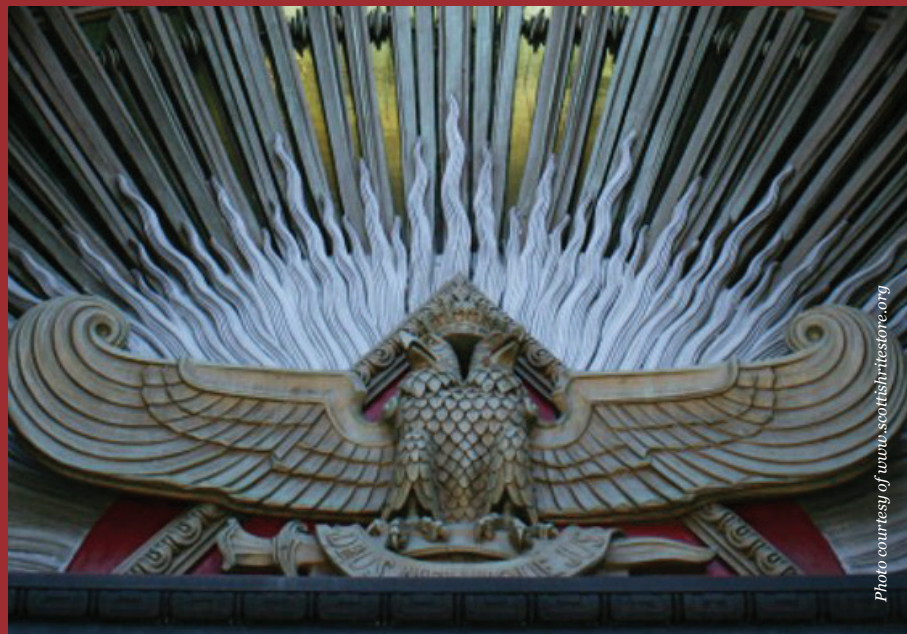


Photo courtesy of www.scottishritestore.org

The man who benefits most from Freemasonry is the man who allows the fraternity to transform him. Innovations are needed sometimes, but not always. All of us have ideas that might make something better; however, I've always viewed the rough ashlar as me, not the lodge or the rite. The vices and superfluities of life needing to be perfected are best hewn in myself before I start chiseling away at someone else or at the fraternity. The wisest master ever once said, "Why do you try to take the speck out of your brother's eye when you can't even see for the log in your own?"

The teachings of the subordinate lodge have helped me improve myself in Masonry. What Scottish Rite Masonry has taught me expands all the lessons from the subordinate lodge so good can become better. It all starts with a willingness to learn, to subdue our passions, and improve ourselves in Masonry.

It was so good to see so many of you at the 2022 Annual Communication, but we'd like to see you more often. I encourage you to reach out to one of our eight valleys – Franklin, Asheville, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Raleigh, New Bern, or Wilmington – and request a petition or online access at scottishrite.org if any of these seven items interests you.

1. You want to be a better man, husband, father, Mason.
2. You want to receive further light in Masonry through excellent educational opportunities.
3. You believe in human progress and equality for all persons.
4. You love your country.
5. You want to help children with speech, hearing, and learning disabilities.
6. You are hungry for a better understanding of masonic history, symbolism, and value.
7. You want to be surrounded by the best Masons in North Carolina.

We strive to have the "Right/Rite Heart." There's no time like the present. Let's go to work!

What Scottish Rite Masonry has taught me expands all the lessons from the subordinate lodge so good can become better.

Jack of All Trades

District 33 DDGL is a Man with a Diverse Life Story

By Thomas Pope
Stedman #730

James Hartman was a member of Ashe Lodge 594 and a Certified Lecturer, an alderman in the town of West Jefferson, and a part-time deejay at the local radio station.

In many ways, Tom Hartman has followed in his father's footsteps, but has added his own since James' sudden passing in 2000.

Like his dad, Tom is a part-time deejay at WKSK, a.k.a., "The Farm," which boasts a strong local flavor. Like his dad, he's a member of Ashe and a Certified Lecturer – plus, he's served as District Deputy Grand Lecturer multiple times. Tom was an alderman in West Jefferson, too – and in 2019, was elected its mayor.

"Nobody ran against me," he said. "I don't know if that was good or bad. They might have known what I was getting into better than I did."

Even so, he's helped the town of 1,800 in the state's northwest corner get past the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, then forge ahead despite the current economic state.

Downtown bustles with dozens of small businesses, including a cheese factory; numerous restaurants; Life Store Bank's corporate headquarters; a first-run, twin-screen cinema whose ticket and concession prices are surprisingly affordable; and the renovation of the West Jefferson Hotel is progressing toward a 2023 reopening.

Hartman's family moved to West Jefferson

when he was a second-grader. He attended Appalachian State University and majored in banking/finance. Ironically, town hall occupies former bank building.

Taking a job in Hickory after graduation, Tom joined Hickory No. 343 at age 24. He was its Master in 1984 during his 10 years in Hickory before he moved back to West Jefferson. He was Master of Ashe Lodge in 1998.

"I got all of my formal education, if you will, at the Hickory lodge," which boasted five lecturers at the time, he said. "They caught me and taught me whether I wanted to learn or not. ... It's always easier to learn when you're young, and I thought I'd get it while I could. I was single at the time and had time to study and practice. I figured I might as well go ahead and get started. I was Certified when I was 26."

Back home in Ashe County, Hartman held a job in middle management with Gates Rubber, a manufacturer of fan belts, radiator hoses and the like. When Gates left town in 2014, Hartman hired on at GE Aviation and ran a computer-operated



lathe that made parts for jets. He didn't consider working on an assembly line a step down as much as "I was 60 and tired, so I thought I'd take orders from somebody instead of giving them."

Those are parallel duties to those he's had in 43 years as a Mason in the roles of two-time Master and as DDGL. The latter, he said, gives him ample opportunity to meet with Masons in Wilkes and Ashe counties, and to discuss ritual work and topics that affect the fraternity.

"I just enjoy meeting with the members and getting questions and answers," he said. "Some lodges are sticklers for the ritual and won't change and ask, 'Why do they do it this way at this lodge and don't do it the same over here?' Just trying to get everybody on the same page and teaching them where to find it.

"There are different ways to look at a problem. Being a supervisor in a manufacturing facility that hires three or four hundred people, you get a lot of different viewpoints," he added. "I don't see things as 'problems,' but 'opportunities.' Just like having been the master of two lodges and being a DDGL gives you a lot of experience with people of opposing views," he said.

And then there's his morning role as a DJ of "Hymn Time" at the radio station. Tom began working part-time at WSKS as a high schooler, and when he moved from Hickory back to West Jefferson, his father was serving as the host of "Hymn Time" – which features church standards and Southern gospel tunes – until his death.

"I had always wanted to keep it going," Tom said, "and when I retired I had time to do it. So a couple years ago, I went and begged for my old job back. I sit in the studio and push two or three buttons: I know to turn the microphone on and off, and turn the music on and off. That's about all I know – and all I need to know.

"It's a good way to do God's work. I can't preach or sing or anything like that, but I can pick out good music to play for other people."

"I got all of my formal education, if you will, at the Hickory lodge. They caught me and taught me whether I wanted to learn or not. ... It's always easier to learn when you're young, and I thought I'd get it while I could. I was single at the time and had time to study and practice. I figured I might as well go ahead and get started."



We the People

The Grand Historian's Courier Case

Hewes, Hooper & Penn: Our Signers

By Steven Campbell, Grand Historian

No, not members of a law firm, though two of these fellows were barristers. In June 1776 five men – John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston and Roger Sherman, members of the 2nd Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia – were assigned to a committee to “draw up a declaration.” Well over a year prior, American Colonists had become embroiled in open, armed rebellion against the British government of his Majesty King George III. Keep in mind that these thirteen colonies, stretched along the Atlantic coastline, had been part of the British Empire for 169 years! Each of the colonies had selected men to serve as representatives in hopes of finding a path of peaceful reconciliation with the Crown. However, with the appointment of Brother George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, hopes for a peaceful solution melted away. Whilst many favored separation from

the Mother country, not all did, and as a result the members of Congress spent countless hours, weeks and months debating and resolving as to what direction the colonies should take. Initially talking openly of independence was kept quite “hush hush.” However, when a Royal decree from King George was read to the members of the Congress, there was little doubt of their fate if the quest for independence failed: “a traitor’s death.”

Hour upon hour, days upon days were spent on penning the document. Ideas and thoughts from men like John Locke and Virginia’s George Mason, coupled with others, influenced the final declaration, nominally written by 33-year-old Thomas Jefferson. The content of this detailed declaration of beliefs, grievances and professed rights would prove to sever any connection between the British Crown and the American Colonies. Upon presentation of the document, debates ebbed and flowed, yet finally a vote was taken and the Declaration of Independence

The content of this detailed declaration of beliefs, grievances and professed rights would prove to sever any connection between the British Crown and the American Colonies.

was approved by 12 of the 13 colonies on July 4, 1776 (New York would “join the club” soon after). a Contrary to folklore, myth and allegory, the actual document was signed in Congress on August 2, 1776. This brief background sets the stage explaining who our signers* were.

North Carolina was represented by three men in the 2nd Continental Congress. Yet, far too little is remembered about these men – Brothers in the Freemason fraternity. Affixing your name to the Declaration of Independence could prove to be your death warrant if independence was not achieved. These three Brothers declared that they would give their “support of this Declaration with firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.” I ponder how many people today would risk their very lives and everything they treasure and own for an idea or a belief?

Our Brothers and Signers



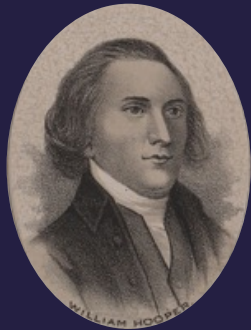
Joseph Hewes was described by his peers as “one of the best and most agreeable men in the world” (so it is etched into his headstone). Brother Joseph was born near Kingston, New Jersey, on Monday, January 23, 1730. His Quaker family had moved from Connecticut

to avoid Native American attacks. As a young man he received a basic education and would later attend Princeton. Developing a talent in trade and merchandise, he apprenticed with a merchant and became quite knowledgeable in the shipping and mercantile business. Between 1756/60 he relocated to the lucrative port of Edenton, North Carolina, whereupon he purchased his first ship and named it in honor of his mother, *Providence*. Known as a conscientious man and somewhat of a “workaholic,” his business thrived as did his involvement in Colonial North Carolina government. As the tensions rose between the Colonies and the Mother country, Hewes served on North Carolina committees expressing their feelings and positions on taxation, legal matters, commerce and self-governing. (He would sign the Halifax Resolves.) Joseph Hewes was elected to represent North Carolina in the 1st and 2nd Continental Congresses in Philadelphia.

In his personal life he became engaged to Isabella Johnston, daughter of North Carolina’s first Grand Master (to be), Samuel Johnston. Sorrowfully, just before their wedding day, Isabella perished. Though Joseph would attend social events, he never wed and remained a confirmed bachelor for the rest of his life. In Colonial America many Lodge records were: never kept – lost – destroyed – stolen – misplaced. Yet, it is known that Brother Hewes attended Unanimity Lodge No. 7 in Edenton and has been accepted to be recognized a Freemason.

Whilst in Congress he had hoped a peaceful solution could be reached between the American Colonies and the Crown. His skills in shipping were evident in that he proved essential in creating the fledgling United States Navy, along with seeing to the appointment of (Brother) John Paul Jones. Upon signing the Declaration, Brother Hewes was quoted, “It is done and I will abide by it.” No doubt the grief felt for the loss of his beloved Isabella, coupled with endless hours of work, contributed

to Joseph's unexpected death. He would die far away from home in Philadelphia on Wednesday, November 10, 1779, and be laid to rest in the graveyard of Christ Church. Brother Joseph Hewes was 49 years old.



William Hooper entered upon the world's stage on Wednesday, June 28, 1742, in Boston, Massachusetts. Channeling his energies toward the study of law, William would graduate from Harvard, "reading law" with the learned James Otis.

As tensions rose between the American Colonies and Britain, his family voiced loyalist sentiments. Between 1764/67 Brother Hooper would relocate to the less volatile colony of North Carolina. Here, in Wilmington, he established a most successful law practice as well as achieving the appointment of Royal Governor Tryon's Deputy Adjutant General. It was during this time that disgruntled Colonists, known as Regulators, voiced their displeasure with the Crown's policy. In 1771 Governor Tryon utilized military force to suppress this movement, and did so at the Battle of Alamance (somewhat a precursor to the American Revolution). William Hooper was involved in this campaign to end the Regulators' quest.

With his law practice thriving, William would wed Anne Clarke, and their union would result in the birth of a daughter and two sons. Again, with Colonial records being somewhat "sketchy," it is widely accepted that Brother Hooper began his Masonic journey in Hanover Lodge (extinct) in Masonborough, NC. This Lodge was established mainly by French & Indian War veterans and successful men in the Wilmington area. Some say it was a precursor to Wilmington's St. John's Lodge No. 1, which Brother Hooper probably attended.

Smoldering tensions continued and Hooper's feelings diverted from loyal subject to those of

a patriot. He would sit in the North Carolina Provincial Congress, and then be elected to serve in the 1st and 2nd Continental Congresses. It is reported by John Adams that Hooper's oratory skills rivaled Virginians Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry. Reportedly Hooper had no reservations about signing the Declaration, making known his feelings for personal liberty. Later when British troops under Brother General Charles Cornwallis landed in Wilmington, William Hooper's home and goods were burned and his assets seized. He and his wife and family fled Wilmington and stayed in Hillsborough, NC. Unfortunately whilst fleeing and living in harsh conditions, William contracted malaria.

It is reported by John Adams that Hooper's oratory skills rivaled Virginians Richard Henry Lee & Patrick Henry.

With the war's conclusion, William returned to his once lucrative law practice. Yet, with his fortune lost, he and his family spent more time in the Piedmont of North Carolina. In hoping for unity between Americans, he called for leniency toward Loyalists. Seeming to be in fair health, he retired from his practice, yet on Thursday, October 14, 1790, he unexpectedly died at the age of 48. Some say it was as a result of his never-ending bout with the malaria he contracted fleeing British capture.

Viewed by his contemporaries as a "squared away" man, Brother Hooper was remembered as "...essentially an aristocrat, cultivated, fearless, aloof... distinguished by his directness, speech and clear judgement." Initially he was laid to rest in the Old Town Cemetery in Hillsborough (where his wife would join him in five years). In 1894 tribute was rendered by reintering his remains upon the

Guilford Courthouse Battlefield in Greensboro, North Carolina. Sadly it would appear that his beloved wife's remains did not share in the honor.



John Penn's short life was epitomized by what he said and wrote: "My first wish for America is to be free." Given that he was born a British subject in Caroline County, Virginia, on Wednesday, May 17, 1741, that was a strong and later

decreed treasonous sentiment. Basically self-taught, he would "read law" under one of Virginia's most august attorneys, Edmund Pendleton. He thus began practicing law and in his early 20s decided to move to the colony of North Carolina, Granville County to be exact. The reason he moved was that the cost of living and owning property in North Carolina was less than in the Old Dominion. The relocation of his practice proved successful. His marriage to Susannah Lyme would result in the birth of three children, two of whom, William and Lucy, would live into the 19th century.

As for John Penn's Masonic career, no clear records have been recovered, found, nor discovered. However, validation of his being a member of the Freemason fraternity was provided by the venerable and well-known Brother Colonel William L. Taylor in that he and Brother Penn attended Lodges numerous times in several locations.

As the rift between the Colonies and Britain grew, Penn would become involved in local government matters. His position for liberty was well known. He served in North Carolina's early (1774) Provincial Congress, and then would be called upon to serve in the 2nd Continental Congress, filling the seat vacated by (Brother) Richard Caswell. Without reluctance Brother Penn signed the Declaration of Independence. Returning to North Carolina, he undertook actions

"My first wish for America is to be free." - John Penn

opposing British activities of Brother General Cornwallis. John served on North Carolina's Board of War as well. Upon the conclusion of the Revolution, Penn was named as the Receiver of Taxes for North Carolina. As a result of a dispute with North Carolina's state government he resigned his position. It is reported that he returned to Caroline County, Virginia. Yet, now "the plot thickens." His place of death on Sunday, September 14, 1788, is listed in two locations: Caroline County, Virginia, as well as Granville County, North Carolina. Records prove elusive. Yet, in Granville County, near the town of Stovall, NC, sits "The John Penn Cemetery." Within this small graveyard is the marker for his wife Susannah. However, what were thought to be the remains of Brother John Penn were moved and reinterred, as those of Brother William Hooper's had been, and laid to rest upon the battlefield of Guilford Courthouse in Greensboro, North Carolina.

This ends the chapter of the men, none who would live to be 50, who represented North Carolina as signers of the Declaration of Independence, each man doing what he thought was right – as we all should strive to do in life.

**Historically denotes the members of the 2nd Continental Congress who affixed their signatures to the Declaration of Independence.*

Masonic Cornerstones: Symbols of Wisdom, Strength & Beauty

By Homer T. Dearmin
Pilot #493

Many Masons may recall attending a cornerstone laying ceremony during their lifetimes, but many more may not, given that these are somewhat rare occasions. Over the past two years, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina has been convened five times to perform this ceremony – twice by Grand Master David Wicker in 2021, and twice by 2022 Grand Master Larry Thompson, and once by Deputy Grand Master Kevan Frazier, including:

- October 2, 2021, to re-lay the cornerstone for Roanoke Rapids High School.
- November 12, 2021, to lay the cornerstone for WhiteStone’s Care and Wellness Center
- August 20, 2022, to rededicate the Moore County Courthouse cornerstone, 100 years since its dedication
- September 23, 2022, to lay the cornerstone for WhiteStone’s assisted living and memory care residences
- October 29, 2022 to rededicate the cornerstone at Eureka Lodge 317 for their 150th anniversary.

The cornerstone laying, or rededication thereof, is a joyous occasion, intended to celebrate the construction of a new building. This is usually a public or government building if not a Masonic property, and includes impressive language and imagery, providing a glimpse of our symbolism and ideals through a public Masonic ceremony.

Cornerstone ceremonies are a time-honored tradition. Masonic author Carl H. Claudy points to May 26, 1722 as the first recorded cornerstone laying by a Masonic body, when “King George I sent his Lord Almoner and Surveyor General... with many Freemasons in solemn procession from the palace to level the footstone” (Claudy, *Masonic Harvest*, 1948, p. 226) of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, a royal parish church in London.

Claudy elaborates on the history and symbolism of the cornerstone ceremony, and touches on related symbolism in the Masonic Degrees. He highlights the allusions in modern ceremonies to ancient sacrifices in his essay “The Corner Stone,” and draws parallels between those sacrifices and the Mason’s “sacrifice of his passions and

prejudices, his ignorance and selfishness, to the doctrine of the brotherhood of man” (*Masonic Harvest*, 227).

In his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Masonic Scholar Albert Mackey describes the cornerstone as “considered by Operative Masons as the most important stone in the edifice” (Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, 1920, p. 178), and regarding ceremonies, states that “the assistance of Speculative Masons is often, and ought always to be, invited to give dignity to the occasion” (Mackey, p. 178). He adds, “The symbolism of the cornerstone, when duly laid with Masonic rites is full of significance, which refers to its form, to its situation, to its permanence, and to its consecration” (Mackey, p. 179).

The cornerstone joins the northern and eastern corners of a building, and we are taught this when we begin our Masonic work. When we are called upon to lay a cornerstone, we commemorate the joining of operative and speculative traditions, and share with the world at large the moral principles that define the character we bear.



An Outsider's View

By C.R. Dunning, Jr.

What does North Carolina Masonry look like from the outside? At the suggestion of Most Worshipful Brother Larry Thompson, that is the question that Brother Mike Register, Chairman of the editorial board for the *North Carolina Mason*, asked



me to reflect upon. Such a question is important for any organization that is concerned with its presence in a larger community. I am honored to be asked to respond to it, and I believe the details of my perspective as a Texas and Oklahoma Mason could prove useful. It is a perspective informed not only by having participated in numerous Masonic events in your beautiful state, but also having traveled in person and virtually to many different jurisdictions inside and outside of the USA.

While my line of the Dunning family has ancestral roots in colonial North Carolina, my first visit did not occur until January 2017 when I was invited by Brother Ben Wallace to speak at Sophia Lodge in Salisbury. Ben and I had met about a year earlier at the Scottish Rite Temple in Guthrie, Oklahoma, where he was part of a contingent of NC Scottish Rite Masons visiting one of our reunions. At that time, I was Guthrie's Director of Education. Ben told me there were exciting things developing in NC Masonry and inquired if I might be willing to serve as a guest speaker and learn more about what was happening.

As noted, that first contact led to a visit with Sophia Lodge. During the same trip, I was interviewed for a video podcast by 357 Productions in which we talked about the importance of the contemplative dimension of the Craft. From there things snowballed and it seems that each year since then has not passed without

at least a couple of trips to participate in NC Masonry, enjoy many dear friendships, and make more fond acquaintances. Among my Masonic friends in North Carolina, I count several current and past Grand Lodge officers and committee members, numerous current and past officers from several different lodges, the leaders of various education and service programs, and many other brethren who embody a warm fraternal presence and charitable spirit. My relationship with Masonry in North Carolina has included the privilege to directly contribute to the development and presentation of several educational events and leadership workshops, including with groups like the Middle Chamber Program, Wilkerson College, and the NC Masonic Research Society. All this information is merely to establish that while I may rightly be regarded as an outsider to NC Masonry, I nevertheless have a very intimate knowledge of it.

It is no surprise to me that in my Masonic travels I often hear brothers of other jurisdictions referring to NC Masonry as exemplary in various ways. Your state's programs and leaders are widely known and admired. In fact, I know that the leadership in many other states are looking to you for inspiration and guidance. For example, the Middle Chamber program has grabbed the attention of several jurisdictions, some of them currently exploring how they can provide similar offerings for their own members.

But it is not only your programming that is widely noted. Indeed, the *spirit* of NC Masonry may be even more noteworthy. From my perspective, it should be the thing that gets the most attention because the development and success of your outstanding programs emerges from that spirit. It is a spirit characterized in part by a pervasive commitment to brotherly love undivided by political and religious differences. Of course, NC Masonry has its challenges in those areas, but most often I find your brethren speaking openly about the importance of meeting each other on the level, working together in harmony, and enjoying the common ground of men committed to values and virtues that transcend partisan and sectarian differences. Similarly, there is an

It is no surprise to me that in my Masonic travels I often hear brothers of other jurisdictions referring to NC Masonry as exemplary in various ways. Your state's programs and leaders are widely known and admired.

increasingly outspoken acknowledgement that this commitment not only belongs in the lodge and other specifically Masonic venues, but also in public and certainly including on social media.

Another key element of the NC Masonic spirit is its growing attitude of faith and hope for a bright future in the Craft. I hear and see many of your leaders stepping forward, both locally and nationally, to declare that it is time to stop wallowing in the mud of lamentations about membership losses. They are challenging Masons to recognize that this is not merely a tragedy to be exacerbated by wild and desperate attempts to make new members at any cost. Instead, they highlight that ours is a time of great opportunity in which we can return attention to our ritual's high callings and profound teachings for our transformation into wiser, stronger, and more beautiful souls. They know that being true to the actual mission of the Craft is centrally vital to ensuring that Masonry remains attractive, meaningful, and worthwhile to good men who want to be better men. In this regard, North Carolina is on the crest of a wave that is picking up momentum.

All the previous points about the spirit of NC Masonry are significantly punctuated by the fact that numerous NC Grand Lodge officers and committee members have openly stated their personal interests in the esoteric aspect of the Builder's Art, which is to say its philosophical, psychological, and spiritual depths. It must be in the dozens of times now that leaders in other jurisdictions have spoken to me about how much they respect and are inspired by that courageous example. Not very long ago, such statements were sadly, often bitterly, unwelcome in most Masonic circles, largely due to ignorance, intolerance, and fear. But the more Masons study the meanings of what our rituals and monitors actually say, the men who wrote

them, and the historical contexts in which they were written, the more obvious it becomes that the life of our Fraternity is nurtured and nourished by attending to its esoteric light. In this vein, it is also highly commendable that your leaders have also made it clear that our Craft should continue to be welcoming of brothers whose Masonic priorities are elsewhere, such as in the joys of good fellowship and philanthropic service. Even the most esoterically inclined among you know that workers of all specialties are needed in building temples of Truth, Relief, and Brotherly Love.

Finally, I am happy to say that I may have had some part in spreading the word about North Carolina Masonry. In my travels, as I urge brothers to understand and do the work spoken about in our rituals, I am frequently asked where I have witnessed the most exceptional examples of the Builder's Art being developed, implemented, and supported by the officers and committees of a jurisdiction's lodges and Grand Lodge. "North Carolina" is always my first reply. There are certainly other places I can and do reference, but I hope that now you can understand why I praise your jurisdiction first and foremost. It is also my wish that you can take healthy pride in your growing glowing reputation, and feel encouraged to continue leading the way, giving hope, motivation, and direction to countless Masons in other jurisdictions. Thank you for letting me be a witness to your brilliant light.



Gaga Ball Pit

Eagle Scout candidate Mason Welch with BSA Troop 226 chose MHCO for his project. On Sept. 24, several Scouts camped out on campus as they built a gaga ball pit. Mason mowed lawns, approached businesses and lodges to raise the funding to put the gaga ball pit into place. They did an outstanding job and the kids really like playing! Mason's father is Bryant Welch with Holly Springs #115. We want to say thank you to Mason, all the Scouts at Troop 226, and all their sponsors for providing a fun activity for our kids to enjoy.

Special Thanks to Fuquay #258 and Grandfather Johnny Welch, PM of King Solomon #704

MHCO Homecoming 2022

MHCO was blessed to return to host the Masonic Homecoming Festival this year. By all indications the weekend was a great success. The nice weather brought out a crowd of 3,500 or more to enjoy music, food, the biggest and greatest Shrine Parade in NC, and more. Thanks to everyone who made this year's Homecoming a great memory for our kids and Alumni.

Join us next year on October 13-14, 2023 as we celebrate 150 years of caring for children.



Thanks to everyone who made this year's Homecoming a great memory for our kids and Alumni.

Carolina Panthers Game



On September 25, 2022, MHCO staff and kids were treated to a day at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, North Carolina to watch the Panthers play the Saints. At 6:30 that morning, everyone met at the Main

Building to board the chartered buses that drove us that day. Some of the children mentioned that they had never ridden a charter bus before, so it was a new experience for them. The charter buses' first stop was the Metrolina Shrine club in Charlotte to tailgate and have lunch. The lunch menu consisted of homemade macaroni and cheese, wings, chicken nuggets, and cookies! The children were able to play corn hole and play some arcade-style games. They enjoyed a nice lunch and were each given a gift card to spend at the football game. The charter buses dropped the group off at the game and the kids were able to get snacks, drinks, and their Panthers gear before the game.

The stadium section was filled with our MHCO kids, and it was like seeing a sea of black and blue with Panthers gear. Some of the house parents got a well-deserved nap in while support staff helped get the residents to and from to their seats. When the game ended and the Panthers got us that win, we headed back to the Metrolina Shrine Club. Dinner was provided with all the fixings. A very special thanks to all the lodges that helped make this event happen. Our sincere thanks go to Matthews Lodge No. 461, Newell Lodge No. 739, Knights of Solomon

Lodge No. 764, Amran Shriners AAONMS, Phalanx Lodge No. 31, West Gate No. 738, Allen Graham No. 695, and the Metrolina Shrine Club. Without these lodges, the event couldn't have been possible. The children had an awesome time and will carry that experience with them for many years to come.

Annual Communication



MHCO was honored to have two Alumni and one ILP resident speak on behalf of their appreciation to all Masons for what you have provided for them. Yancey Otero, Thomas Boyd, and Jaheim Hartsfield all presented on Friday. Their messages shared how much the Home has helped them through difficult times. Yancey and Thomas are employed by MHCO as Financial Development Assistant and Print Shop Manager, respectively. Jaheim is working with WB Steve Owen learning to be an electrician. Their success, positive approach, and kind demeanors come from all you have provided for them. Thank you for everything you do for all our children to keep them safe, help overcome challenging situations, and become great success stories – just like Yancey, Thomas, and Jaheim!

MHCO Alumnus Becomes Print Shop Manager

By Thomas Boyd

Some of the most defining moments of a person's life start when they are young. Up until the age of 11, I lived in abusive and broken households. At that time, I was placed into a residential facility in South Carolina. It had the structure that I needed, but at the time didn't realize. My time in South Carolina was short, but much needed. It started me on the path that would help shape my future.

At the age of 13 I was placed at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford (MHCO). Like the residential facility I had previously come from, this one too had the structure and stability I needed in my life. This new facility also provided me with something I had never yet experienced, the feeling of safety, comfort, and love, a real home. MHCO is truly a great place to be a kid. It's a place that allowed me so many positive experiences. I had great mentors that helped guide and teach me; but most importantly I had a family, one that helped and supported me every step of the way in every aspect of my life.

In 2010, I graduated from J.F. Webb High School; that very same year I began classes to receive my Associates Degree in Automotive Systems Technology at Vance Granville Community College (VGCC). I graduated with this degree in 2013. During my time attending VGCC I became a part-time intern at The School of Graphic Arts Print and Design Center (SGA) (*formerly known as The Oxford Orphanage School of Printing*), located on the MHCO campus. Shortly before my internship began, SGA Pressman Wayne Roberson informed Administration that he would be retiring in a few years.

I was still a resident at MHCO during this time, living in the Independent Living Program (ILP), when I was asked about my interest in possibly becoming the next Pressman of the print shop; to learn all the knowledge that Wayne had accumulated over his 40 years in the printing business. I accepted the challenge and wouldn't have changed it for the world. Through this internship I gained valuable life skills and knowledge about printing from all the staff at SGA, especially Wayne. After a few months I became a full-time employee of SGA and over the course of the next 10 years I was guided from Pressman to Assistant Manager to now Manager of the shop.

As an alum of MHCO and now Manager of SGA Print and Design Center, I plan to uphold and maintain the goals and initiatives that initially started MHCO and SGA so many years ago. Goals and initiatives that help children and young adults learn valuable skills and build a strong work ethic that will prepare them for their future as was done for myself, so many others, and will continue to do for many years to come.

MHCO Sesquicentennial Celebration in 2023



On February 13, 2023, MHCO will turn 150 years young! Please mark your calendars to join in the year-long celebration. Special events include a kickoff Black Tie Dinner on February 11. Admiral Bill



Sizemore will be the guest speaker. The evening will include special events including an auction of art items related to MHCO's history and singing "Happy Birthday" with the kids.

On June 24, 2023, MHCO will have an ice cream social on campus. Highway 56 will perform. Other highlights include a special ice cream made to recognize the Orphanage's history, games, and the unveiling of the renovations to the gym. Several special activities are being finalized.

Homecoming will be the weekend of October 13-15, 2023. If you enjoyed this year, be ready for a spectacular event including an expanded Shrine Parade, additional bands, and much more.

Finally, MHCO will conclude the celebration in the York Rite Chapel on December 10, 2023. The York Rite will conduct their Christmas Observance Ceremony along with MHCO's Candlelight Service. Join the kids and let your light shine all year!



Doric Lodge #30

Over the past several years Doric Lodge #30 has participated in the Pig Jig and Homecoming BBQ competitions. Last year Brother William Diefenderfer IV passed away unexpectedly. The memorials that have come to the Home from his family and friends has been tremendous. SGS Alvin Billings and PM Kevin Otis were able to visit the lodge last month. This month they once again participated at Homecoming. A special BBQ cooker was built by PM Steven Mills in honor of Brother William, affectionately known as Peach. MHCO designated a new BBQ award in Peach's Honor for People's Choice. A memorial service was held on grounds and four peach trees are planted in the garden. The Charity Foundation of Delaware presented a \$5,000 check to MHCO in memory of Peach and to celebrate that Brotherly Love transcends borders.



The Closing Charge

Brethren, we are about to quit this sacred retreat of friendship and virtue, to mix again with the world.

Amidst its concerns and employments, forget not the duties which you have heard so frequently inculcated and so forcibly recommended in this Lodge.

Be diligent, prudent, temperate, discreet.

Remember that around this altar you have promised to befriend and relieve every brother who shall need your assistance;

You have promised to remind him, in the most tender manner, of his errors, and aid a reformation.

These generous principles are to extend further.

Every human being has a claim upon your kind offices.

Do good unto all.

Recommend it more especially to the household of the faithful.

Finally, brethren, be ye all of one mind, live in peace, and may the God of love and peace delight to dwell with and bless you.

Life at WhiteStone:

Creating Community the Masonic Way



Robert DellOrfano doesn't hesitate to tell you moving to WhiteStone changed his life. "The only regret I have is that I didn't come sooner," he states. A Mason himself, DellOrfano knew that for a sense of community, an active retirement, and his health, the choice to move to WhiteStone made for an easy decision.

"I'm a Mason from Berne Lodge #724 A.F. & A.M., and I was responsible for running two charitable events. One of the events was to benefit The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and the other was to benefit WhiteStone, so I had an opportunity to come visit," says DellOrfano. "And when I visited, I fell in love with it. So that's how I came to know WhiteStone, and I knew it was the right place for me."

Founded in 1912 as a Masonic and Eastern Star senior living community, WhiteStone was the first Masonic Fraternal Home in the U.S. created solely to care for older adults - as well as being the first Continuing Care Retirement Community in North Carolina.

"While not all residents are Masons or Eastern Stars, WhiteStone does embody the beliefs of the Masons," shares DellOrfano. "We look to support others. One of the great things here is the number of residents who are Masons and the willingness of people to help each other. The helpfulness tends to rub off on you and others."

An Active and Fulfilling Retirement

Wellness activities are fundamental to life at WhiteStone, with the goal of helping each resident live happier, healthier and longer.

"Chair Yoga, Tone and Balance, and Fit and Fabulous are three fitness classes I enjoy regularly," DellOrfano shares with a smile. "There are a lot of activities that keep you both healthy and physically and mentally active."

Call 336-422-0223 to RSVP for our next quarterly Fraternal Presentation and Luncheon.

No matter your needs, WhiteStone is here to enhance your life and your health. Robert was able to take advantage of the Care and Wellness Center after a medical procedure. He remarks, "They have a doctor, nurses, CNAs, and their own culinary staff, so you are well taken care of until you're cleared to go."

Plan Your Visit to WhiteStone

Are you ready to see how WhiteStone can enrich your life, just as it has for Robert? Come learn more about our proud Masonic history from our leadership team, and experience the excitement of our expansion for yourself.

While you're here, get an inside look at our community, including our newly renovated Care and Wellness Center. You'll also get to see the new expansion construction that will include 67 new independent living residences, 24 assisted living residences, and 12 memory care suites, allowing us to offer a full continuum of care for our residents.

"I'm glad I came, really. I think it's lengthened my life," shares DellOrfano. "I can get back to all my activities and lodge meetings. Being at WhiteStone is like living the life of royalty; it's worth every penny."

WhiteStone is open to everyone who desires an active retirement lifestyle and peace of mind for the future. Reserve your space or learn more today by calling 336-422-0223.

WhiteStone

A MASONIC & EASTERN STAR
COMMUNITY  EST. 1912

Founded on fellowship. Inspired by you.

NORTH CAROLINA
THE MASON

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HAPPY 2023! As a new year dawns, we look forward to *The Mason* continuing to celebrate Masonry in North Carolina.