

NORTH CAROLINA

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THE MASON

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



HOME FOR CHILDREN LOOKS AHEAD WHILE CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF SERVICE

Transou Appointed
to Grand Line

Grand Master Frazier:
2023 Is *Our* Year



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Grand Master

Kevan D. Frazier

Editorial Board Board of Publications

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Grand Master Kevan D. Frazier
grandMaster@glnc.us

Deputy Grand Master Donald E. Kehler
dkehler@glnc.us

Senior Grand Warden Robert W. Rideout
rrideout@glnc.us

Junior Grand Warden Steve M. Norris
snorris@glnc.us

Grand Treasurer Lewis R. Ledford
lledford@glnc.us

Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood
junderwood@glnc.us

Senior Grand Deacon Gilbert D. Bailey
gbailey@glnc.us

Junior Grand Deacon Michael A. Register
mregister@glnc.us

Grand Marshal Phillip R. Johnson
pjohnson@glnc.us

Grand Steward Alvin R. Billings Jr.
abilings@glnc.us

Junior Grand Steward Joey K. Transou
jtransou@glnc.us

Judge Advocate T. Marcus Browne III
judge.advocate@grandlodge-nc.org

Grand Tyler Anthony J. Rathbone
Grand Chaplain Steven A. Green
Grand Historian Steven A. Campbell
Grand Lecturer Thomas P. Dolinger

For advertising, contact **George Marut** at gmarut@mfncc.org or call 919-819-7920

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ON THE COVER: The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford Looks Ahead While Celebrating 150 Years of Service. Story on page 8.

ON THE INSIDE COVER: Photos from the 150th anniversary event at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, February 2023.



GM Frazier: 2023 Is *Our* Year

For Most Worshipful Grand Master Kevan Frazier, his year in the East isn't about him, or the Grand Line, or even personal achievements.

It's about love. It's about continuity. It's about finding the path forward.

"2023 is not my year, it's *our* year," says the Asheville native who was installed in early December. "The only way we'll succeed is together."

What does that look like? It looks like brotherly love, relief and truth in action.

It looks like lodges engaging with their communities and taking care of their properties. It looks like brothers welcoming potential new brothers of varying backgrounds. It looks like a new kind of fellowship under a redesigned district meeting format. It looks like a new format for the *North Carolina Mason* designed to attract new eyes and brothers.

It looks like a united Grand Line working and planning for the future together, one leader following the other to create a consistent Masonic reformation.

"I think it's really important that we have a continuity of leadership, that it shouldn't shift dramatically from Grand Master to Grand Master," he says. "There are many things that aren't doable in just one year. So the things I'm committing us to I'm

committing us to because I know that the guys that follow me, if the Craft chooses for them to serve as Grand Master, are on that same page. ... We're not clones of each other, but I can't launch an initiative if the guys behind me aren't into it.

"What I bring to this position is experience in higher education, and as a small business owner. My focus isn't on the front end, it's more of an in-the-trenches approach. What do our business practices and operations look like? How are we positioned to move forward? It's not sexy, but it's important."

Among his initiatives: a loan fund for lodges to borrow at a reasonable rate to repair their lodges. Details are still in the works, he said.

Brothers should also watch for a redesigned approach to district meetings. His plan: Host five regional Masonic conferences throughout the spring that will focus on teaching brothers about marketing, lodge finance, leadership and other best practices. No preaching or speechifying, he promises – just some solid education. Following that, up to a dozen more traditional district meetings in rural areas of the state. Plans were in the works to host some harmonies later in the year.

Grand Line officers also plan to visit lodges in every district – they can't hit them all, with

“We talk in Masonry about meeting on the level, which is a reference to the fundamental equality of all. And that of course, is tied to ‘love your neighbor.’ It’s a Masonic way of reminding ourselves to love each other, and to love all people.” — Grand Master Kevan Frazier

30,000 brothers and 362 lodges – but they promise to hold at least one “listening session” in all 41 districts.

Another theme of his year: Love one another.

Brotherly love tops that list of course. But it also encompasses love of neighbor, GM Frazier says.

“Brotherly love looks like the role our lodges play in their communities and in their philanthropy and in community service,” he says. “I think it can be seen by who we bring into our lodges, as we continue to bring more and more men of varying backgrounds into Masonry. I think you can see it by the way we behave on social media and in the way

we behave in our lodges and with each other.”

Speaking of social media, GM Frazier will make good use of it himself, creating a video each month to update brothers and share ideas. Check your email for the monthly link to watch.

His goal this year is to engage – not preach at – brothers.

“I don’t know that I’ve ever come across anybody who made a change because they were browbeaten into the change,” he says.

Even his Grand Master’s pin brings home the message of fellowship, friendship and love (See below.) The pin is in the shape of an antique level.

2023 Grand Master Pin Carries Important Message

Grand Masters have commissioned pins to commemorate their year – and to hand out to brothers at District meetings and elsewhere – for years. Some have collected every one of them, and proudly display them in their homes and Mason-caves.

Most Worshipful Grand Master Kevan Frazier has commissioned his own pin for the year, and it will be easy to tell this one from the others in years to come. Most pins are circular.

GM Frazier’s pin is in the shape of an antique level.

“It’s a very simple pin,” he says, adding that it was designed to carry a much broader, important message.

Along the bottom in gold against a dark bronze background are the letters GLNC (of course referencing the Grand Lodge of North Carolina).

“In Masonry, we talk about meeting on the level, which is a reference to the fundamental equality of all people and which, of course, is then tied to love your neighbor. It’s a Masonic way of

reminding ourselves to love our neighbors, and to love all people.

“And that’s what God’s calling us to do, to love all people with no qualifiers.”

There’s another message. Modern-day levels use a glass cylinder and bubble to determine if a line is level. Back in the day, level was determined by a plumb bob attached to the center of the level.

A plumb bob, plumb bob level, or pendulum is a weight, usually with a pointed tip on the bottom, suspended from a string and used as a vertical reference line, or plumb-line. GM Frazier says those old plumb bobs occasionally need to be adjusted to assure a level reading.

“So this level purposefully has the pendulum a little lower on the plumb line. It’s a sign that it needs adjustment.

As we all know, we are all throughout our lives continuing to make those adjustments.”





Piercing the Veil: What Is Esoteric Freemasonry?

By Noah Goode, Worshipful Master, Long Creek #205
Chairman, Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education

Much has been said in recent years about esotericism in Freemasonry. For many brothers, *esotericism* was a major motivator to initiate into our organization. For others, the word “esoteric” evokes images of shady folk in hooded robes, and its usage in Masonic context is actively discouraged in many jurisdictions.

I would argue that this stigma largely comes from an unfamiliarity with the word itself.

“*Esotericism*” comes from the Ancient Greek word *esōterikos*, which was used to describe the secret teachings of philosophers that were not offered to the general public. “*Esoteric Freemasonry*” simply means looking at

“*Esoteric Freemasonry*” simply means looking at Masonic ritual as having a deeper meaning than is immediately apparent and understanding that it can (and should) effect positive change in a brother’s life.

Masonic ritual as having a deeper meaning than is immediately apparent and understanding that it can (and should) effect positive change in a brother’s life.

Regardless of our perception of the word “esoteric,” we can all agree that Freemasonry should make us better men. The various lectures of our degrees introduce a multitude of symbols with the recommendation that we study them further to fully ascertain their meanings.

Early in our Masonic journey, we are told that Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, *veiled in allegory*, and illustrated by symbols. To truly understand and benefit from this system, we must pierce this veil and contemplate the symbols and allegory contained in our degrees.

Hundreds of books have been published attempting to illuminate the deeper meanings of our symbols, and programs like the Middle

Chamber encourage brothers to apply them to their everyday lives to become better men. Is this a modern invention being superimposed on our order? Quite the opposite.

We open our lodges with the Holy Bible upon the altar, inviting God to be present during our meetings and degrees. In the Entered Apprentice degree, we specifically ask God to assist us in making the candidate a better man.

Would this be necessary if Freemasonry was simply telling a candidate a story about Solomon’s Temple so that he could vote to pay the water bill? Of course not. The spiritual and transformative nature of the Craft is what separates us from other fraternal and civic organizations.

Let’s embrace this aspect of our art by engaging in the transformation spoken of in our degrees. In doing so, we will become better men and consequently help to build a better world.

Freemasonry Is Learning to Love One Another

By Jonathan Underwood, Grand Secretary



The eminent poet, author and philosopher Dr. Samuel Johnson once said, “The use of travel is to regulate the imagination with reality, and instead of thinking of how things may be, see them as they are.”

In January I had the honor of visiting Johnson’s homeland and attended the tercentenary celebration of the publication of James Anderson’s Constitutions in the Great Hall of the United Grand Lodge of England in London.

The trip was memorable for many reasons, not least of which was a better understanding of the origins of our Masonic Landmarks, rules, and regulations. Those points, of course, help me better direct the policy and procedures of our Masonic administration.

I realized sometimes we get so bogged down in the business of the fraternity that we forget that our business is each other.

The Constitutions were revolutionary in many ways and far beyond the scope of simply dictating Annual Returns forms or balloting procedures. The lectures and presentations and my own readings reinforced in me the fact that the establishment of Freemasonry’s formal governance in 1723 was intended to be fluid, flexible, and modern.

Adaptation and innovation were at all times paramount to the success of the institution’s administrative success. Its core tenets – the

Landmarks – remain steadfast: to believe in a supreme being or power; to obey the civil law, to meet regularly in lodge; that masters and wardens be properly skilled and capable of administering the business of lodge; that the brethren of a lodge be properly trained and maintain the regularity of work; and, that all members be upstanding in their behavior and deportment in society.

The United Grand Lodge of England summarizes these points in their current Code of Constitutions and summed them up with a message very close to our Grand Master’s message: love one another.

It’s a clear, but sometimes difficult, lesson to comprehend.

Freemasonry is not a building, nor a number, nor a cookout, nor a fundraiser.

Freemasonry is learning to love one another, learning to love ourselves, and through that love understanding how to make our world a better place.

In that vein, it is the duty of the Grand Lodge to simplify the business component of Freemasonry as much as possible so our members can enjoy and benefit from the true foundation of our Order – friendship.

Freemasonry is learning to love one another, learning to love ourselves, and through that love understanding how to make our world a better place.

Looking at NC Masonic History in Real Time

By Steven A. Campbell, Grand Historian



As the sun sets every day, we each become a part of history. We each live in a historical period or era. In living our daily lives we do not think of such things, for we are all too busy running here and there, making a living, studying, traveling, or

“murdering minutes.”

Yet, stand back and take a look: each of us reading this has witnessed a historic time in our nation and world’s history. What, you ask? A global health crisis that claimed the lives of countless men, women and children, whilst perhaps altering our way of life as well. Freemasonry in North Carolina encountered these challenging times. Please take 97 seconds to read about those who shepherded us through this daunting time.

As your Grand Historian I tend to dwell upon people and events of the past – long past. It is true that folks are trying to drag me into the 20th century (and yes, I recall it is now the 21st).

Our late Grand Historian Dr. Michael W. Brantley advised me to “follow your passion,” thus my intrigue with the long-ago past. However, over the last couple of years, each of us has witnessed a most unusual time in our nation’s and fraternity’s history: a global health crisis that took many lives, and ground many businesses, institutions and nations to a halt.

Yet, stand back and take a look: each of us reading this has witnessed a historic time in our nation and world’s history. What, you ask? A global health crisis that claimed the lives of countless men, women and our way of life as well.

The United States has experienced similar sorrowful events (the 1793 yellow fever epidemic, the 1918 influenza plight). But this is the first one of this magnitude we, ourselves, have encountered.

Difficult, as well as unpopular, decisions had to be made regarding our fraternity in the Old North State. Three men answered the call to stay the course and to lead us forward – MWGM P. Shaun Bradshaw, MWGM R. David Wicker, and MWGM Larry B. Thompson Jr. With prudence, caution and great thought for the safety and welfare of each North Carolina Freemason, they held the line.

Now it appears that the nation, along with our fraternity, has emerged from this perilous time. Without doubt, these three most worthy brothers’ names will be etched in North Carolina Masonic history.

And yes, as in the past and present, we Freemasons, who are committed to our tenets, will endeavor to continue to make our nation and the world a better place for those who follow us.



HOME FOR CHILDREN LOOKS AHEAD WHILE Celebrating 150 Years of Service

By Speed Hallman

Chairman, MHCO Board of Directors and Past Grand Master

Gather around, brethren, for a Masonic history lesson that includes a glimpse of the future. This history is unfolding even as you're reading these words, and you have the power to write your own name in the newest chapter.

This is the story of a place known over time as Oxford Orphan Asylum, Oxford Orphanage, and the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. Its name may have changed, but it is, and always has been, a home for the children who need it most. It is a sacred place to those who know it best. And this year North Carolina's oldest children's home – the Home Masons built – is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

Two chronicles of our Home's origin and early years were written by key players and are available online: "The Story of St. John's College and Oxford Orphanage" by Creasy K. Proctor, superintendent from 1928 to 1946; and "Life at Oxford" by Nettie Bemis, who held the title of Lady Supervisor from 1897 to 1931. Two other sources reach into the 21st century. "A (Non-Authoritative) History of Oxford

Orphanage," which tells the Home's story through mid-2003, is found on the ibiblio.org website.

A new history, written for the 150th anniversary by Granville County's Lewis Bowling, will be unveiled June 24 during the Home's St. John's Day celebration.

Proctor's history opens with the 1838 resolution passed by the Grand Lodge to establish a "charity school" of higher education. After the vote, committees met. Nothing happened. In 1847 Grand Master W.F. Collins lit a fire under the delegates, sending a message that after nine years of inactivity, "the time has now arrived for action – ACTION! Let us, then, not leave to be done by others that which is our duty to perform." It was decided that the Masons would establish St. John's College in Oxford, which opened in 1858 and suspended operations in 1861 with the onset of war.

After the war, several educators tried – and failed – to operate schools on the property, which was heavily encumbered by debt. The Grand Lodge

Its name may have changed over time, but it is, and always has been, a home for the children who need it most. It is a sacred place to those who know it best.

could not sell or even lease the building and grounds, and in 1872 delegates to the annual communication struggled with what to do about the vacant school. “It was an hour for some real man to step forward with a challenging solution,” Proctor wrote. That man was John H. Mills, who presented a resolution that the former college should “be made into an asylum for the protection, training and education of indigent orphan children.”

Delegates chose sides and debated. Some lined up with Mills, others wanted to sell the campus and build a Masonic temple, and still others wanted to house homeless people there. When the question on starting an orphanage at Oxford was called, the vote was a tie. Grand Master John Nichols cast the deciding vote in favor and as long as Nichols lived, Proctor said, he saw that vote as the greatest act of his life.

At the Home’s centennial celebration in February, Grand Master Kevan Frazier recounted

MHCO 150th Anniversary Upcoming Events

JUNE
24

Celebrate St. John’s Day in Oxford or with your lodge. The campus celebration, held in partnership with the Eastern Star, features an ice cream social, car show and many other family-oriented activities.

Grand Master Frazier is encouraging lodges to hold their own lodge events, fundraisers or awareness campaigns on June 24. See the Home’s website for details.

OCTOBER
13-14

Homecoming: Featuring the state’s largest Shrine parade, the famous barbecue contest, music, fellowship and good times under the oaks. This year’s event is dedicated to the Shrine.

DECEMBER
10

Our year-long celebration concludes with the York Rite Christmas Observance in York Rite Chapel.



the arrival of the first children to enter into our care. The scene was witnessed and recorded by future Grand Master Francis D. Winston on Feb. 13, 1873:

“I ... saw Mr. Mills receive the first orphan at this institution. I shall not forget the scene. ... It was on Saturday afternoon. A dull cloud hung in the sky. A man with a one-horse wagon drove to the door. Mr. Mills, with gruff voice, asked his mission. He told it. The gigantic form of our friend shook with emotion. He lifted the pale youth from the wagon with the paw of a lion. He raised him in the air, and with melting pity and tears, let him drop upon his heart and kissed him. It was indeed the caress of the lion, but it was truly the caress of love.”

Those first children were Robert L. Parrish, Nancy Parrish and Isabella Robertson. More than 10,000 would follow.

Histories of our Home and the exhibits and multimedia displays in the Cobb Center on campus bring the story up to the present day.

What is it about the place that draws Masons back year after year? Why do others who, never having stepped onto the grounds, send their gifts and raise money for Oxford in their communities?

The easy answer is that we are obligated to assist the widow and orphan and reminded regularly to act upon our generous principles. But beyond solemn obligations and gentle reminders of what we should do, why do so many go the extra mile?


“In thinking about this, the word ‘*passion*’ keeps playing over and over in my mind,” said Dewey Preslar, past Grand Master, past chairman of the Home’s board and a stalwart supporter. “Whatever a person is passionate about, it’s contagious to those around them. Those coming to the campus probably were invited and encouraged by someone with that passion.

“For me, it is summed up in the scriptures, particularly Luke 18:16.”

Kevin Otis, administrator of the Home for 11 years, said it’s difficult to go anywhere in the state without meeting someone connected to our Home. Last year he and Alvin Billings, the annual giving officer, visited 62 lodges, attended seven district meetings and reported to the Annual Communication, telling more than 5,000 Masons about the lives touched by our Home and asking for support. This personal approach is supplemented by television and radio advertising and a robust social media presence that encourage people to give, to point a child needing care in our direction, and to encourage potential house parents to consider joining our team.

Most of the youngsters we envision when we think of the Home are in Direct Care, for children between infancy and 18 years old. They live in cottages with house parents. The Independent Living program meets the needs of older children and young adults




Oxford Orphan Asylum
W. J. HICKS, SUPERINTENDENT

OXFORD, N. C., Aug. 1, 1910.

Dear Sir and Brother:--

Each month we publish in "The Orphans' Friend and Masonic Journal" a list of the Orphanage Committees of the local Masonic Lodges of North Carolina.

Since the annual election of Officers and appointment of these important Committees, we are seeking to revise the list as published in our paper. Will you kindly, on enclosed postal card, give the names and addresses of your present Committee? If no change has been made, please so state and return card. Whenever a change occurs, please notify us promptly.

May the brethren to whom is given this special obligation and privilege to put forth effort for the cause of the homeless child, be truly prospered and blessed in earnest, faithful labor. May your Lodge be a greater and greater power for good.

Fraternally yours,
W. J. HICKS, Supt.



*Top: Main building of the Oxford Orphanage: During Colonel Hicks' administration porches were constructed on the former St. John's College.
Bottom: 1929: Photo of Dunn Cottage shortly after completion*

for a safe and nurturing environment that prepares them for success on their own. The Transitional Living cottage, a part of the Independent Living program, helps young adults learn and practice the independent living skills they need, in a family-style setting, before stepping out on their own.

These programs do not replace families – they add to family support. For many children the Home is a safe place to live while their guardians tackle personal issues related to health, finances, homelessness or domestic violence. For others whose circumstances require longer stays, the Home’s resources help them rise as far as their dreams and hard work can carry them. Many of our children are the first in their families to earn high school diplomas and we see them excel academically, win honors in athletics, pursue higher education, enter trades and join the military. Our children gain confidence in themselves and learn to take care of themselves and their families.

Their care is guided by a philosophy known as CARE (Children and Residential Experiences), developed by Cornell University. Every employee on the campus receives CARE training, which helps adults understand the traumatic effects of loss, neglect, rejection and hardship on children. By understanding these effects, and particularly the ways trauma may influence children to act, caregivers and staff can help children heal. Otis said that since the campus implemented CARE three years ago, the residents are more successful

in staying with the program, with fewer unplanned discharges needing to be made.

Looking ahead, the Home continues to build relationships with community leaders, agency partners and other children’s homes as it seeks new ways to serve children. Development of a new Community Support Center is underway, powered by a desire to help even more children and families through outreach and on-campus services. And raising funds to ensure that the Home can continue to do its work is a constant. Otis and the board are committed to raising enough in annual support to meet the Home’s annual operating budget. The wills and bequests the Home receives from generous donors, which today are crucial in balancing the annual budget, could then be added to the endowment, providing a strong and permanent base of support.

“The 150th anniversary is our opportunity to salute the multitudes who worked so hard to build and maintain a safe haven for children in need,” Otis said. “We look back only to salute them and to be inspired by their example. I’m very excited by the opportunities we see ahead – to help more children and families – and to work hand in hand with our North Carolina Masonic brethren to make good things happen for new generations of children. Join us! And add your name to the roll of those who have made a difference.”

“The 150th anniversary is our opportunity to salute the multitudes who worked so hard to build and maintain a safe haven for children in need.”

– Kevin Otis

Q&A with Dan Rice

Past Grand Master and alumnus of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

WHAT IS IT ABOUT OUR HOME THAT DRAWS MASONS BACK TO CAMPUS YEAR AFTER YEAR?

I believe that everyone has a deep-down desire to help others. As Masons we have made a commitment to help the widows and the orphans. Oxford is the perfect place to be able to help needy children. If anything demonstrates the historical charitable giving of North Carolina Masons, it is our Home in Oxford. It was started totally on faith as it certainly did not have the means to survive when it opened in 1873. Every time the Home was against what appeared to be impossible financial issues, the Masons and the citizens of North Carolina have always come through and helped.

The Masons of North Carolina come back year after year because they want to be a part of this great charity that has been doing God's work for 150 years. It is obvious to anyone who spends any time on the Oxford campus that great things are being done there every single day. We may not be building any pyramids or great edifices, but we are helping save children.

WHAT IS THE DRAW FOR ALUMNI? IS IT THE PLACE ITSELF, OR THE CHILDREN THERE TODAY, OR IS IT AN OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW THE BONDS THAT ALUMNI HAVE WITH ONE ANOTHER?

The Home in Oxford is from whence we came. We have walked that sacred ground and lived there, and for many of us it is the only real home we remember. We didn't just live there. We went to school, ate there, played ball, worked there and even worshipped God there. We are a band of brothers and sisters who are wound tightly together by the shared experiences we had at Oxford. It could be a hard place to live, but we are survivors and we are tied together by a love and a set of experiences that most other people would struggle to understand. Most of us alumni want to help the Home in any way possible, because that means helping the children who live there now and will live there in the future. The Masonic Home for Children is our home and always will be.

WHY DO SO MANY WHO HAVE NEVER SEEN THE HOME SEND THEIR GIFTS AND RAISE MONEY FOR US IN THEIR COMMUNITIES?

We have the perfect story to raise money. We have children who need help. We have a wonderful and beautiful campus.

We have a historical foundation built on 150 years of helping children. Eleven thousand children served during that 150-year period is an amazing story. Our Home has a proven record of maximizing any gifts they receive to help children. We have a wonderful staff and strong leadership at the board level. The alumni of the Home and their children and grandchildren have lived in almost every community across the state. The real story is about each one of the children living there. Each child at Oxford has a different reason for being there now. Each child has different needs and each one has something special to offer the world when they leave the Home. Our Home in Oxford is a winner and almost everyone wants to help a winner!

WHY DO YOU INVEST YOUR TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE THERE?

The campus in Oxford is my home. It was the only real home that I remember. I love to go back and walk the campus and just let my mind wander through those times so many years ago when I played, worked, cried and prayed on the campus. They were the best of times and also some of the hardest times. I believe that God teaches us through both the ebbs and flows of life.

My life and the lives of all my orphanage brothers and sisters were totally changed because of the experiences we had at the Home. We were able to live there because the Masons were willing to share their resources to help take care of us. We grew up on the receiving end of Masonic charity. By the example set by the Masons, we quietly learned what it means to give.

It is a blessing to be able to give my time and whatever limited talents that God has blessed me with to help Oxford. I have been trying to make a positive difference in the lives of the children at Oxford for a very long time. I have always wanted to give back financially whenever I could. I recognized a long time ago that whatever treasure or financial resources I was holding onto were not really mine. In the end everything belongs to God and He can give and take it away with equal speed. We are really just caretakers of material possessions. I have always given back to my home in Oxford and have been blessed for doing it. It is just an old orphan boy paying ahead for the next child in need.

Q&A with Kevin Otis

Administrator, the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

WHAT IS IT ABOUT OUR HOME THAT DRAWS MASONS BACK TO CAMPUS YEAR AFTER YEAR?

PGM Dan Rice describes it best: These are sacred grounds. I have had many Masons echo that sentiment. While they cannot actually describe the emotional draw, they can certainly feel it. The campus is pristine, the children and staff are pleasant to be around, and the understanding of the impact that the program and supports have for children in dire circumstances engage Masons with a sense of pride, accomplishment, and spiritual connection.

WHY DO SO MANY WHO HAVE NEVER SEEN THE HOME SEND THEIR GIFTS AND RAISE MONEY FOR US IN THEIR COMMUNITIES?

Some Masons have shared that their connection is directly related to their own life experiences. Empathy extends from similar situations they faced in their youth and had to overcome. Their journey was difficult and they want to help children on their travels. For others, they know a child or alum who received care and support from the Home. What they witnessed through the success of others is motivating and inspires them to support the Home's mission. For others, it is their obligation. While they may not have had direct relation to the children's experiences, they knelt at the altar and took the same obligation to support orphans and widows. Their obligation fulfillment is realized in the life-saving work being done at the Home for Children.

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE WHEN YOU DROVE ONTO CAMPUS FOR THE FIRST TIME?

I had traveled all day to get to Oxford. The first time I was on campus was at 11 p.m. I drove onto campus and the first words I said to myself were, "Oh wow!" I called Ms. Kevin and said, "You are not going to believe this place." As I drove around campus I described how the lights were shining. I said, "It just keeps going. Oh wow!" I believe many have a similar experience. However, it became very clear that the real beauty of the campus is the people. The kids, staff, alumni, Masons, community, and friends of the Home are what gives you that feeling of "this is what God intends for people to do to help those in need."

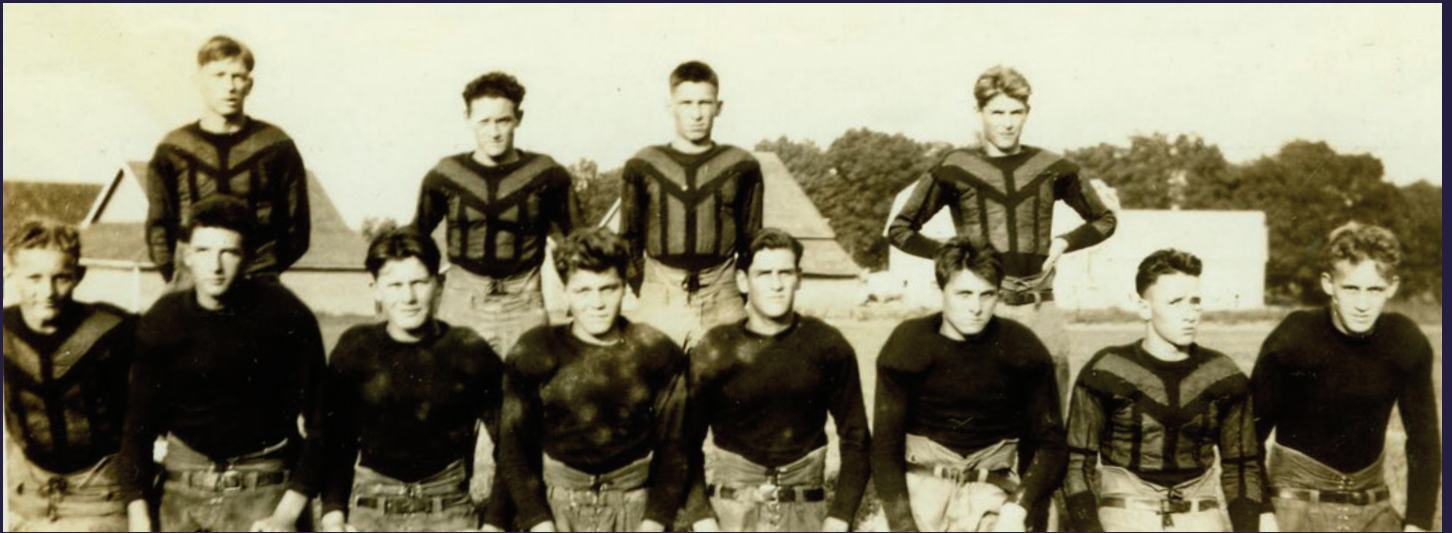
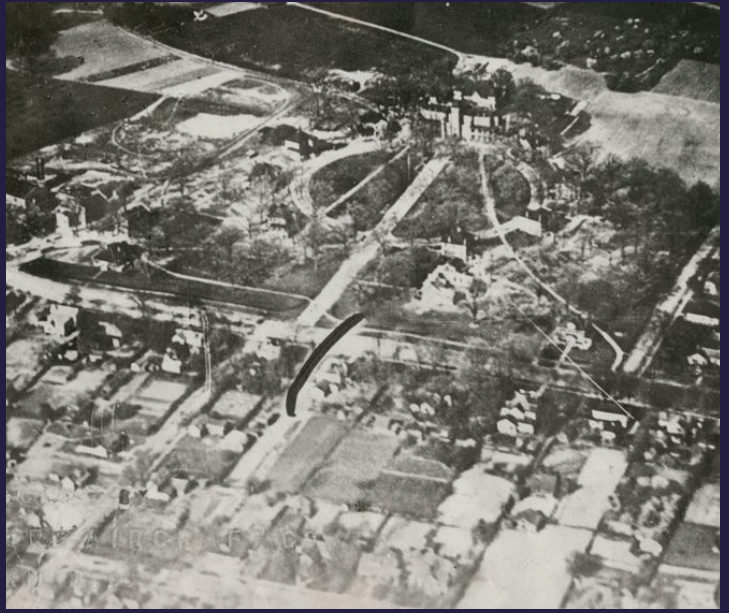
WHAT IS YOUR FEELING WHEN YOU WALK ONTO CAMPUS EVERY MORNING, OR RETURN AFTER BEING AWAY FOR AWHILE?

I was walking to the office the other day, looking at the St. John's building in the morning sky and smiled to myself. It was peaceful. I felt right with the world. I imagine the children get the same experience. For many their lives are full of chaos, violence, and discord. On campus I watch them ride bikes, skateboard, play basketball, and sit on the swings talking. The campus environment provides that calm, peace I often experience.

I will say that different locations on campus bring a different perspective. Coming back from the farm provides a beautiful view of the campus, and when the sun is setting just right the campus is engulfed in a glorious light. In addition, you cannot go to God's Half Acre without feeling your connection to those who have gone before us, knowing we are preparing the path for the children to realize their own spiritual connection with the world.

Finally, this year especially, I feel an overwhelming sense of being a part of history. When you connect all that has transpired over the Home's 150 years of helping children, you see how important today's work and building on this storied foundation is for more generations of children. The feelings can be overwhelming, but the mission is too important to lose a step forward. Let's all travel together for the benefit of children and to fulfill our obligation. So mote it be.





Top left: Shrine swimming pool, Oxford Orphanage, Oxford, NC **Top Right:** 1923: First aerial photograph taken of the Orphanage campus
Middle: 1929: First 'Red Devils' High School football team coached by Mr. Eli Regan. **Bottom Right:** 1985: York Chapel

Transou Appointed to Grand Line

Sometimes, a lunch isn't just a lunch. For Joseph Kirkman Transou, a third-generation Mason known statewide for his dedication to the Craft and his philanthropic barbecue skills, a recent lunch became so much more than a quick meal.

Then-Deputy Grand Master Kevan Frazier called out of the blue one day to ask Transou – better known to his brethren as “Joey” – to join him for lunch to talk about Frazier’s plans for Masonic charities during his upcoming year in the East.

“About 45 minutes into the lunch,” Transou said, “I thought we had hashed out all the concerns and ideas we had, when he said, ‘There’s one more question I’d like you to consider.’”

And with that, he asked Transou to accept appointment to the Grand Line as Junior Grand Steward.

After he recovered from the shock, “I began to list all the reasons why my selection would be a bad idea,” he said with a laugh. He asked for some time to streamline his schedule and plans, then accepted



with humility.

Generally, junior Grand Line Officers are more involved in travel and attendance at functions these days than they were years ago. The position is entirely voluntary and unpaid. They do the work for the love of the Craft. As officers move up in the line, responsibilities increase.

Transou was raised in 1982 by his father, Billy, at West Bend #434. He is now an endowed lifetime member there and at Hiram #40 where he affiliated after graduating from North Carolina State University with a bachelor of science in computer science. He was master at Hiram in 1989. He is also a member of Salem #289.

After graduation, he worked for EMC Corp. as a software

developer and manager for operating system software development supporting hardware platforms until 2003. He moved back to his hometown of Winston-Salem in 2003 and joined his father in real estate brokerage. The elder Transou died in 2011, and Joey continues to operate Transou Realty. He was instrumental with introducing computer technology to numerous projects supporting Masonic projects.

He has served on numerous Masonic board and committees, including the board of directors at the Masonic Home for Children and WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community. He has been a major successful fundraiser for both charities and for his church.

“There’s an element of fellowship and camaraderie that you don’t have in some other kinds of fundraising. Barbecuing takes a long time. It affords an opportunity to have deep, fun, nice conversations around the pit,” he said. It also helps when kids get involved. Learning to barbecue pays things forward, he says. The time and effort it takes can help form their adult lives.

Transou is all about helping others in his Masonic and faith lives. He was baptized and confirmed in the New Philadelphia Moravian Church in Winston-Salem and has served on the Board of Trustees at churches in Winston-Salem and Raleigh. He has played weekly in the Moravian Church band since 1989 and served a term on the board of trustees for the

Moravian Music Foundation.

Stepping onto the Grand Line will be a different approach to his Masonry.

“I try to be a servant leader,” he said. “I like to accomplish things in the background and support others who are in the lead. We always need apprentices in the quarries, and I’ve tried to be that.”

He knows, up the line, he may

be front and center in the Craft. That was one reason he needed time to think before accepting his new role.

“The important thing is that in each of these roles on the Grand Line, it’s not me, it’s not the individual ... It’s the office you’re fulfilling. It should never be about the individual. But about the office.”

NEWLY RAISED BROTHERS

Graham, Gavin Wyatt	31	Phalanx
Montgomery, Zachery James	31	Phalanx
Berry, Lynn Howard	75	Widow's Son
Wilson, Christopher Edward	75	Widow's Son
Agudelo, Angelo	83	Lafayette
Stadsvold, Samuel Ole	138	King Solomon
Parker, Benjamin Joseph	150	Pee Dee
Moncrief, Jay Richard	244	Monroe
Green, John Leland	262	Hibriten
Byrd, Bradley Michael	302	Lillington
Hightower, Scott Christopher	319	Wilmington
McMahan, Dennis Kevin	373	Ashler
Yandle, Kyle Monroe	381	Forest City
Dellinger, Clifton Ronald	387	Kedron
Worley, Colby Mace	397	Bald Creek
Greaves, Robert John	446	Biltmore
Rice, Anthony Dale	446	Biltmore
Hayes, Jason O'Neal	515	Whetstone
Roper, Benjamin Lawrence	515	Whetstone
King, Benjamin Cooper	576	Andrew Jackson
Shuping, Jonathan Mark	576	Andrew Jackson
Hipps, Daniel Leslie	592	Maiden
Leonard, James Clifton	657	Keller Memorial
Hensley, Chance Austin	663	Black Mountain
Bourne, Charles George	680	Semper Fidelis
Tsakarlis, Michael Nicholas	693	Charles M. Setzer
Kesler, Marcus Conway	695	Allen-Graham
Bumgarner, Stephen Glenn	709	Conover
Fowler, Danny Scott	749	Truth
Spradlin, Mark	749	Truth
Klein, Robert Evan	753	Federal Point



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150th
ANNIVERSARY!

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Join us at the NASCAR Hall of Fame, 400 E. MLK Blvd., Charlotte, at 11 a.m. May 17! Be the first to see the Jeremy Clements #51 race car, sponsored by generous friends of MHCO, wrapped in MHCO colors for the Xfinity race at Charlotte Motor Speedway on May 27.

For the story of love and friendship behind this generous donation honoring the 150th anniversary of the state's first and oldest children's home, details of the unveiling, and how to donate to MHCO and participate in an exciting online auction of the hood, helmet and the firesuit and other amazing items, check us out:
www.mhco51.com



The Tercentenary of the 1723 Constitutions

By Dr. Ric Berman

If anyone doubts that Freemasonry as it is practised today was derived from the Grand Lodge of England, let him compare the new Charges with those of an older date. He will find that the severance from any and all pre-existing connections was as fundamental and complete as was the severance of the American colonies from England after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. ... The history of Freemasonry begins with a declaration of principles. These are set forth in the New Constitutions promulgated by the Grand Lodge of England and form the basic law of the Fraternity throughout the world. Indeed, the story of Freemasonry is merely the working out of those principles.

- Ossian H. Lang, History of Freemasonry in the State of New York (1922)

2023 marks the tercentenary of the publication of the first Constitutions of the Freemasons.

But what is less well understood is that one section – the key section of that document, Desaguliers’ Charges of a Free-Mason – underpins what we regard today as Modern Freemasonry. This is true not only for England, but for all those grand lodges around the world that followed England’s lead.

The Charges set down moral and intellectual foundations for Freemasonry. They are a product of an Enlightenment philosophy and their adoption a function of intellectual, political and religious imperatives that included “the Glorious Revolution” of 1688, which with the Bill of Rights ushered in a constitutional monarchy in Britain. Other influences encompassed the threat to the newly installed Hanoverian king, George I, and his Whig ministry from “the king over the water” James Stuart; and

the legacy of almost 200 years of religious conflict in Europe, not least the state-sanctioned persecution of Protestants in France.

The Charges require Freemasons to adopt several fundamental principles, among them:

- Religious tolerance – “that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves;”
- Respect for civil law and constitutional government – a “supreme legislature” rather than a divinely anointed absolute monarch; and
- Meritocracy – “preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit.”

The Charges also advocate a teleological (“be all that you can be”) approach to personal development, and an enjoinder to improve oneself and society through education.

Alongside the Charges sits George Payne’s General Regulations, which govern the operation of Lodges

and Grand Lodge. The Regulations introduced a new framework to Masonic governance, creating a federal structure and advancing democratic ideas: “all matters are to be determined ... by a majority of votes.”

Article 10, for example, states that a “majority of every particular Lodge, when congregated, shall have the privilege of giving instructions to their Master and Wardens ... because the Master and Wardens are their representatives.”

Remarkably, the principles set out in the Regulations were adopted not just by Freemasons but by virtually every club and society that followed, nationally and internationally, and created what has been described as a school for government.

The ideas set out in the Charges and Regulations were radical at the time. Indeed, they remain progressive ideas today.

Modern Freemasonry started with the 1723 Constitutions. Its ideas were adopted by Grand Lodges across Europe and in America, where in 1734 Benjamin Franklin reprinted the Constitutions verbatim and distributed them, not just in Philadelphia but from Boston to Charleston.

The ideas the Constitutions advocated and endorsed propelled and sustained the growth of Freemasonry across the world, and their underlying principles continue to challenge and inspire Freemasons today.

The book was translated into French, Dutch and German. It was the model for the Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, as well as the

foundation for *Ahiman Rezon* and, following independence, the constitutions of America’s State Grand Lodges.

In this way the 1723 Constitutions helped lay the foundations that shaped local, state, and national governance in America. Indeed, its Enlightenment principles are recognisable in the United States’ founding documents, most clearly in The Declaration of Independence.

This is not a coincidence. The transformation of Britain’s American colonies into the United States of America was a tangible expression of Enlightenment philosophical ideas:

That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. – That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Authors of the 1723 Constitutions

Although Freemasonry's 1723 Constitutions are known as Anderson's Constitutions, the authorship was not the sole effort of James Anderson but of a triumvirate that included two others: George Payne and Jean Theophilus Desaguliers, with Desaguliers the driving force behind the endeavour.

Born March 12, 1683, at Aytré, near La Rochelle, to a Huguenot-French Protestant family that fled France the same year, **Jean Theophilus Desaguliers** was brought up in London in relative poverty. His father, also Jean, became one of five deacons practicing at the French Anglican church in Swallow Street near present-day Piccadilly Circus. His pay was minimal and although supplemented by fees for baptisms, deaths and marriages, this work was limited and he received little more than a subsistence wage.

Poverty and financial insecurity were not uncommon in the Huguenot community. Around 50,000-80,000 refugees had fled to England to escape persecution in France, with some 40,000-50,000 settling in London where they represented around 8-10 percent of the population.

Unable to support his family as a clergyman, Desaguliers' father left Swallow Street to establish a French School in Islington, north of the City of London, and it was here that Desaguliers received his primary education. He was exceptionally bright and went on to study at Bishop Vesey's School in the midlands before being admitted in 1705 to Christ Church, Oxford, as a servitor scholar.

At Oxford Desaguliers read divinity and natural philosophy. His tutor, John Keill, a Fellow of the Royal Society, introduced him to Sir Isaac Newton,

its president, and to the Duke of Chandos, one of England's wealthiest men. Newton's sponsorship led to Desaguliers' election as an FRS in 1714, with his fees waived "in consideration of his great usefulness to the Royal Society." Desaguliers was also made the Society's demonstrator, in effect Newton's assistant. And in Chandos, Desaguliers secured a well-connected and wealthy patron whose endorsement led to a stream of paid scientific consultancies.

Alongside, Desaguliers enhanced his earnings by giving fashionable scientific demonstrations and lectures. Science was emerging into popular culture and interest in new scientific theories had spread beyond Oxford, Cambridge and the Royal Society to coffee houses and taverns across Britain. Desaguliers entertained as well as informed, demonstrating to his audiences the effects of electricity, the physical properties of gases, optics, and the orbits of the planets. The lectures were both popular and remunerative, and Desaguliers gained a reputation as the foremost scientific lecturer of the age.

As a member of the new Grand Lodge and its third Grand Master in 1719, Desaguliers became a pivotal figure within Freemasonry. His status gave him influence and he re-worked Freemasonry's Charges and altered English Ritual to incorporate Enlightenment philosophical concepts. He also helped to develop a governance structure for Freemasonry, oversaw the introduction of lectures at lodge meetings, and introduced or, as he termed it, "revived," the "ancient toasts" at Masonic dinners and promoted Masonic benevolence.

George Payne (c.1685-1757), one of Desaguliers' close friends, was born in Chester. Although he did not attend university, his younger brother, Thomas, was a contemporary of Desaguliers at Christ Church where he was also a servitor scholar.

George Payne moved from Chester to London in around 1711 to take up a job as a clerk in the Leather

Office in St Martin's Lane, part of the Taxes Office, a position he obtained through family connections. Payne's name and address feature in classified advertisements as one of several locations where tickets to Desaguliers' lectures and copies of his "catalogue of experiments" could be obtained. The dates confirm that Desaguliers and Payne knew each other before Desaguliers moved to London.

Payne worked in the Taxes Office for forty years, eventually being promoted to Secretary to the Commissioners, a senior administrative role. He also became a senior magistrate and held several profitable sinecures, some obtained through the patronage of the Duke of Richmond, Master of the Horn Tavern Lodge and later Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England.

Masonically, Payne preceded and followed Desaguliers as Grand Master of Grand Lodge (in 1718 and 1720) and subsequently held other senior roles. He was also the Duke of Richmond's deputy at the Horn Tavern and, later, Master of the influential King's Arms Lodge in the Strand.

Credited as having compiled Freemasonry's Regulations, Payne's commitment to Freemasonry is evident throughout his Masonic career both outside and inside Grand Lodge, where he sat on the key committees and was a valued elder statesman.

The third member of the 1723 Constitutions' triumvirate was **James Anderson** (c.1679–1739). Born and educated in Aberdeen, Anderson was ordained into the Church of Scotland in 1707 before travelling to London to take up a ministry at the Glasshouse Street congregation at the eastern end of Piccadilly, and in 1710, at the Presbyterian church in nearby Swallow Street where Desaguliers' father had served.

Anderson is regarded by many as pivotal to the birth of Modern Freemasonry; however, he was not the fulcrum on which Freemasonry turned. Although often described as the author of the 1723

Constitutions, he was not its instigator nor was he responsible for its most important components – the Charges and Regulations, authored by Desaguliers and Payne, respectively. Anderson's role was to compose the faux traditional history of Freemasonry and to serve as a "hired pen" under Desaguliers' direction and that of the publishers, John Senex and John Hooke.

The preamble to the 1723 Constitutions underlines this. Dedicated to the Duke of Montagu, it is written by Desaguliers, not Anderson. Indeed, within the Dedication, Desaguliers refers to "the author" as having "compared and made everything agreeable to History and Chronology." The absence of any reference to the Charges and Regulations is significant, emphasising that these were not produced by Anderson. Indeed, Anderson is identified as "the author of this book" almost as an afterthought on page 74 of the 1723 Constitutions in a line almost hidden in the middle of the second page of the Approbations. This stands in contrast to Senex and Hooke, the publishers, whose names appear prominently on the front page; to Desaguliers, who signs the Dedication personally; and to Payne, who is acknowledged in the General Regulations.

Had Anderson undertaken a more substantive role, it would have been conventional for him to have received recognition with his name on the frontispiece and an acknowledgement in the Introduction. In fact, according to Anderson's own record, he was instructed by "His Grace and Grand Lodge" to "digest the Gothic Constitutions" on 29 September 1721, with a committee afterwards appointed to examine the manuscript. On 22 March 1722, after "perusal and corrections" by the past and current Deputy Grand Masters, most notably Desaguliers, "and of other learned brethren," the Constitutions was presented to Montagu and received formal endorsement.

NORTH CAROLINA
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