

GRAND MASTERS MESSAGE

WHERE ARE WE NOW!

A journey begins with a destination in mind or a goal to achieve. My journey to the Grand East began in 2010, when several Past Grand Masters asked me to consider offering for Junior Grand Warden, but at age of 51, I was not in a position to consider such a prestigious office. I continued to serve on committees and actively support my Lodge, Grand Lodge and the Scottish Rite, where I was serving as Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the 7th year. By 2012, I had numerous young Masons, who witnessed the positive changes that we were and still are experiencing in the Scottish Rite, approach me from all parts of the Jurisdiction to consider offering as Junior Grand Warden. After listening to my Brethren, and serious discussion with my family, personal discussion with all the Past Grand Masters, Lynn and I began what has been a wonderful journey. This is and has always been about serving the best interests of the Brethren and Freemasonry in South Carolina and to improve the experience of our members.

From my years of experience in business and The Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite, I have found opportunities to research, discuss, and most importantly, to listen to the Craft about where we are and the roadmap to a brighter and better future for those men that join, engage in and eventually, lead the Craft. I have witnessed many wonderful things on this journey from the promise of a family at a Lewis Degree for infant sons of Master Masons, to the generosity of South Carolina Freemasons at home and in the support of other Jurisdictions of so many in need, to the great joy of visiting Veterans in all of our VA locations in for a friendly handshake, prayer and humble gift to just say thank you for their service, to the hard work of Grand Jurisdictions that are literally fighting for their recognition, to the grandeur of the established Ritual and Ceremony when I see excellent Ritual at home and other Jurisdictions.

I have had the honor of visiting with grieving widows and families at the death of some of our Brethren, laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, visiting and touring Gettysburg Battlefield and visiting many with many great Lodges and presenting George Washington Portraits.

Sadly, I have seen and spoken to men who have lost their way, and unfortunately, far too many that decided by their selfish motivation to tarnish the very core of our Brotherhood, through their total disregard for their obligations and their Brethren. I have seen where the complacency of leaders has led to discouragement and disgust of members that has led to their decision to leave our beloved Craft. Most often, it is related miscommunication or poor leadership. The leadership gap that some of our Fraternity is experiencing comes from members who want status, presumed power and inexperience. This comes from misguided and even a total misunderstanding of what it takes to be a true Freemason and Servant Leader of our Fraternity. I am deeply concerned for our Fraternity, when I see men who have gained leadership roles, when their actions and personal bias has shattered the true meaning of Masonic Brotherhood.

So Where ARE We Now!

We are much better off today than just a few short years ago because of several initiatives that have been emphasized for several years including improved membership awareness, improved Lodge management tools, improving Masonic Education, and a new spirit of hope and success.

In most parts of the Family of Freemasonry in South Carolina, true leaders, who have listened and studied, are now more aware of the issues facing our Fraternity including membership engagement, listening and working to improve communication with all the members, and thus improving the VALUE of membership rather than simply talking about financial problems all the time. After all, isn't Brotherhood about supporting one another and taking time to celebrate our faith, fellowship and our successful actions with each other, the critical part of our beloved Fraternity.

Value increases when all members feel and know that they are an important part of the success of our Fraternity! All of Freemasonry, including our Appendant Bodies and Lodges, benefits by increasing membership value. If your Lodge chooses to improve value, then you must have serious discussion and civil debate to plot a course forward, instead of simply fading away.

Today, we are much better off due to the tireless efforts of MW Gerald Carver and our Grand Lodge Staff, and Lodge Secretaries that have implemented our Membership Management Tools. Thank you, MW Brother Carver, for your passion for our Fraternity. We are now using the features to review, plan and prepare our Leadership to really "lead the Craft!" Today, our Worshipful Masters, Secretaries and Wardens have the capability to connect with all members and to examine what needs to be done to improve their individual needs. But like all tools, used properly, they can improve the results of work. Used improperly or neglected, they will be of little or no use to those that have access to the tools. Are you listening to your members? Are you even trying to reach them?

We see in many places a renewed spirit and enthusiasm for our Fraternity because those that are using the tools are seeing results from listening and moving forward by implementing better meetings, better outreach to members and more visibility in our communities.

Finally, Gentlemen, my time as your Grand Master has come to a close, and it has been my strong belief, indeed, my commitment to the Craft that we must look to the future so as to prepare for success. We need to be cautious and guarded to make certain that we are working together. Treasure your membership and take a positive approach to moving forward! We have many issues facing us in the coming days, Stand Tall for what is right! Stand Tall against those that do not have the best interest of the Fraternity at heart. Eliminate fear of change by doing the work to plan based on facts and not just emotion. It has been the honor of my life to serve Freemasonry, now and in the future as well. Remember "It is not how much a man or person may know that is important, as much as the purpose for which he knows it." (MW T. Harry White, Grand Master) Thank you, my Brethren all and may God Bless Freemasonry in South Carolina!

Sincerely and fraternally,
Michael Smith, Grand Master

MASONIC EDUCATION CORNER

My dear Brothers, it has been a distinct honor and my pleasure these last two years writing for the Masonic Light Publication. It has been enjoyable and a challenge, enjoyable because we have studied together, and challenging because of the great questions you asked causing me to seek and find. I hope you received something out of my articles which you were able to apply.

Now is the time for us as a "Band of Brothers" to once again come together and support our New Grand Master and the Elected Line Officers. Each of these men are here to serve you and assist you in any way possible.

The past several years of working with R.W. Brother Cal, I have grown to know his heart and I can assure you he will serve us with all his energy, heart and soul with an impartial mind to make those difficult decisions that come with the duty of being our Grand Master.

The cement which binds our Subordinate Lodges as one Grand Lodge is our Code and Constitution, Rules and By-Laws, we each freely took under obligation to abide by. We must not always look to the Grand Lodge to solve Lodge problems. We must solve our problems before they get out of hand, and cease looking for someone else to solve our problems by sweeping it under the rug of complacency hoping it will go away. This has never worked because the problems remain there getting bigger and more out of hand. As Deputy Barney Fife said, "Nip it in the bud."

Some of the problems Lodges want the Grand Master to solve are personal conflicts between Brothers, budget, finances, and the question of "should we merge with another Lodge?" My Brothers, these challenges can only be solved on the Lodge Level as God fearing men who want our Fraternity to continue. We must educate, challenge, and inspire our new and old members to stand up and "*Do That Which is Right.*" Let us begin anew to enforce our laws, become one mind as our ancestors did, which made our Fraternity what it is today, this is the time, now is our place in history, and none other should satisfy us.

Our Grand Master and your elected line can only recommend, it is up to each Brother to roll up his shirt sleeves and work in his Lodge and show the community what we as a Fraternity stands for. Each of us need to stop, look and listen to the changes the world is taking. Churches are losing members, 40 percent of the population does not believe in God, crime is on the rise, and people only think about themselves. Many seek what they can get for doing nothing. My Brothers A.F.M. does not mean *All for Me!* Now is the time for each of us to demonstrate to humanity what we are made of and what we stand for, and how we are here for our neighbors and Brothers in a time of need. Now is the time, here is the opportunity before us, we shall pass through this world but once, any good; therefore, that we can do, any wisdom we can impart or any kindness we can show to any human being, let us do it now! Let us not be deterred or neglect our duty, for this world is not our home and we shall not pass this way again. Word of the Month: Destiny: the hidden power believed to control what will happen in the future.

Quote of the Month: Be all that you can be!

Thought of the Month: May God, the Grand Architect, continue to Bless our Fraternity.

O.B. Smith, Senior Grand Warden
Chairman, Masonic Education Committee

GRAND LODGE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

Saturday, May 11, 2019 A required Organizational Meeting of Elected Grand Lodge Officers, District Deputy Grand Masters, Masonic Education Committeemen and Masonic Service Association Committeemen will be held on Saturday, May 11, 2019 with Registration beginning at 8:00 AM and the Meeting beginning at 8:30 AM. Lunch will be served and the meeting will adjourn at 2:30 PM. Since photographs will be taken, the dress for the Elected Grand Lodge Officers and Past Grand Masters will be black tails with black bow tie, black vest, jewel and apron. The Dress for the District Deputy Grand Masters, Masonic Education Committeemen and Masonic Association Service Committeemen will be black tuxedo with black bow tie, black vest, jewel, and apron.

Saturday, May 25, 2019 A required Organizational Meeting of Elected and Subordinate Grand Lodge Officers will be held on Saturday, May 25, 2019 with Registration beginning at 8:00 AM and the Meeting beginning at 8:30 AM. The meeting will adjourn at Noon without Lunch being served. Since photographs will be taken, the dress for the Elected Grand Lodge Officers will be black tails with black bow tie, black vest, jewel and apron. The Dress for the Subordinate Grand Lodge Officers will be black tuxedo with black bow tie, black vest, jewel, and apron.

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DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER BREAKFAST MEETING

The Annual District Deputy Grand Master's Breakfast Meeting will be held on Friday, April 26, 2019, at 7:00 AM at the Marriott Hotel, Spartanburg. If you are staying at the Marriott Hotel for the Annual Communication, you will receive a Breakfast Ticket upon check-in that can be used. If you are not staying at the Marriott Hotel, you will need to mail a check payable to the Grand Lodge of AFM in the amount of \$18.00 to RWB Sam. Please notify Right Worshipful Brother Sam Turner, District Deputy Grand Master for the 19th District no later than Monday, April 14th if you plan to attend. Right Worshipful Sam's contact information is as follows:

Samuel H. Turner, III
District Deputy Grand Master – 19th District
605 Station West Lane • Roebuck, SC 29376-3609
Home Phone: 864-587-0133
Cell Phone: 864-590-7405
Email: samsgarage@bellsouth.net

GRAND LODGE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

The 282nd Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina will be held on April 25th & 26th, at the Marriott Hotel located at 299 N. Church Street, Spartanburg, SC 29306. Those desiring to stay at the Marriott Hotel, which is the Headquarters Hotel, are encouraged to make reservations as soon as possible since there is a limited number of rooms available. Elected Grand Lodge Officers, Appointed Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, and Committeemen are requested to stay at the Headquarters Hotel and to make their reservations promptly. Each person including Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, and Committeemen are responsible for making their own reservations. Reservations may be made by calling the Marriott Hotel at 864-596-1211. When calling, you must ask for group reservations and identify yourself as being with The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina (Code: GLCGLC A for King Bed and GLCGLC B for Double Queen Bed) in order to obtain the special room rate of \$159.00 plus tax per night. This will include Breakfast Tickets per person (up to two tickets per room) for each night reserved.

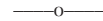
The Religious Service will commence on Thursday, April 25th at 9:00 AM and will be conducted by Reverend and Right Worshipful A. Robert Nix, Grand Chaplain. Following the Religious Service, the Grand Lodge will be officially opened at 10:00 AM by Most Worshipful Michael D. Smith, Sr., Grand Master with the assistance of the Grand Lodge Officers and Brethren. The Annual Banquet will be held on Thursday, April 25th at 7:00 PM in the Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel.

LOCAL COMMITTEE 2019 Grand Lodge Annual Communication

RWB Tommy Watson, Grand Marshal, Chm.	864-505-0497
RWB Paul McWilliams, DDGM 20th & Bonnie	864-316-4253
RWB Judd Seay, DDGM 21st	864-497-0090
RWB Sam Turner, DDGM 19th & Debbie	864-590-7405
WB Jeff Honeycutt, SGD & Sheila	864-809-0866
RWB John Marcucci, DDGM 10th & Martha	803-920-8089
RWB Trent Henderson, PDDGM 20th & Cathy Leichter	864-621-1021
RWB Douglas O' Shields, PDDGM & Neal	864-706-0050
RWB Jay Frazier, DDGM 18th & Marti	864-593-8885

ANNUAL GEORGIA/SOUTH CAROLINA MASONIC EXCHANGE MEETING

The Annual Exchange Meeting between the Georgia and South Carolina Brethren will be held on Friday, June 14, 2019 beginning with Dinner at 6:00 PM with the meeting to follow. The Exchange Meeting will be held at the Scottish Rite Center located at 2553 Washington Road, Augusta, GA 30904.



On Friday, March 15, 2019, South Carolina Freemasons gathered at St James Middle School in Murrells Inlet to participate in a ceremony commemorating the School's 30th Anniversary. During the Ceremony, the contents of a 1988 Time Capsule which included Grand Lodge Artifacts, were displayed. The Time Capsule had been placed behind the School's Cornerstone, which was laid on September 3, 1988 by Most Worshipful Tommie F. Brant, Grand Master of Masons at the time, with the assistance of the Grand Lodge Officers. The Anniversary Celebration included depositing present day items with plans to open the 2019 Capsule in 30 years. Right Worshipful Walter "Cal" Disher, II, Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC, brought greetings and inspiring words on behalf of the Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Michael D. Smith, Sr. and the South Carolina Brethren. Right Worshipful Cal presented a 2015 Ahiman Rezon, the Proceedings of the 281st Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, a Michael D. Smith Sr. coin and pin, and a Grand Master's Coin for our incoming Grand Master Walter C. Disher, II to be deposited in the 2019 Time Capsule. Right Worshipful Brother Cal was accompanied by Right Worshipful O. Bruce Smith, III, Senior Grand Warden, the Officers and Brethren of Murrells Inlet Lodge No.368, and other 29th District Brethren.

SEVENTY YEAR PRESENTATION



On June 10, 2017, a Seventy-Year Award was presented to Brother Jesse DuBois Brabham, Jr. at Hope Lodge No. 122, AFM. Brother Brabham was raised June 10, 1947 in Unity Lodge No. 55, AFM and affiliated with Hope Lodge No. 122, AFM in 1984. Congratulations to Brother Brabham on reaching this Masonic Milestone. Pictured from left to right are Worshipful Brother Madison Carter, Past Master & Senior Warden, Brother Jesse DuBois Brabham, Jr., Worshipful Brother Donnie Clayton, WM and Right Worshipful Brother Billy Breland, PDDGM, Third District.

IN MEMORIAM

JULIUS CLIFFORD "MIKE" HUBBARD, JR.
PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

February 2, 1921	Lancaster, SC
March 10, 2019	Clemson, SC

Worshipful Master, Brother Harold Blake Hamrick, current Master of Belvedere Lodge No. 388, passed away February 5, 2019.

Brother Haskel O'Neil Howell, Sitting Senior Warden and member of Union Lodge No. 75 passed away March 5, 2019.

We wish to express our deepest sympathies, to the family, friends and Lodge Brethren.

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