



The Ashlar



December 2020

Kempsville Lodge No. 196, A.F.&A.M.
www.kempsvillelodge.org

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The Year in Review - 2020

2020 has certainly been a unique year in the history of Kempsville Masonic Lodge, and probably for every other Lodge in Virginia due to the constraints placed upon us by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, we have had a busy year and we managed to accomplish many good things for our members and our community thanks to the generosity and dedication of our members and their families.

Our year started off normally with our annual Past Master's Breakfast and our first monthly Stated meeting in January. The Lodge Officers also attended the annual District Leadership Conference at the end of January with our 2020 Grand Master, Most Worshipful Douglas Vernon Jones. Unfortunately, we also had to replace our Lodge furnace that month, but we raised more than enough money to cover that project. On February 5th we celebrated the 65th anniversary of our Lodge receiving its charter in 1955, and we had our official visit with our DDGM during our February Stated. We also attended the official visit of our Grand Master to the 36th and 56th Masonic Districts at a dinner held at the Khedive Shrine Temple.



The month of March was when everything changed due to the COVID-19 virus. Shortly after our March Stated meeting, I directed that all Lodge events be suspended for the safety of our members. This was followed by direction from our Grand Master on March 13th to officially shut down all Lodge activities statewide, including Stated meetings and degree work. Kempsville quickly shifted to holding virtual meetings on Zoom in place of our Saturday morning coffees and began holding Monday evening Masonic education sessions online.

On April 14th, for the first time in Lodge history, Kempsville was required to cancel its monthly Stated meeting. We replaced this with a meeting held on Zoom that included over 40 Lodge members as well as our Grand Master. We were also required to reschedule and ultimately cancel our annual Bull Roast fundraiser, but thanks to the generosity of our members we still raised over \$8,700 for the Lodge, part of which was used to provide \$800 scholarships to two worthy students from Kempsville High School going into nursing programs.

The Lodge would ultimately reopen for business on July 1st, and at our July 14th Stated meeting we presented a rarely achieved 70-year Masonic pin to Brother Warren Massey. At our August Stated meeting we held our annual Hawaiian shirt night, and in September we installed two 65-inch televisions at the front of the Lodge room (as well as WiFi service) to support participation by those who could not attend Lodge in person.

In October we saw seven of our candidates raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason at the one-day conferral held at Princess Anne Lodge, and the Lodge met our goal of donating over 3000 lbs. food to the Church of the Ascension Food Bank. In just two weeks in November, we collected enough funds to provide 19 Thanksgiving dinners to needy families of students from three local schools.

Although this has been a challenging year, it has also been a successful one for our Lodge. Thank you all again for your support and generosity and we wish you all a Happy Holidays and a better New Year!

From The East



“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”

This line, taken from the opening paragraph of Charles Dickens novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, a story of contrasts and comparisons between London and Paris during the French revolution, speaks to a time of despair and suffering on one hand, and joy and hope on the other. This can be said to well characterize much of the year of 2020. We have had (and continue) to face challenges and upheavals which were unprecedented within living memory for most of us, due in great part to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Much of our normal work and routine as a Lodge came to a grinding halt in mid-March as large gatherings were shut down. Stated meetings were, for the first time in Lodge history, cancelled. Monthly Lodge breakfasts and Stated meeting dinners were put on hold, as was degree work for our candidates.

I am glad to say though that we as a Lodge met all these challenges head on. We used technologies such as Zoom to hold monthly meetings with our members even when the Lodge was closed for three months. As soon as the Lodge was allowed by Grand Lodge to reopen, we devoted two days a week to Masonic education and ritual practice. We upgraded our Lodge room audio and video capabilities to enable us to have Brothers unable to attend Lodge participate in our Stated meetings. We continued to coach our candidates and saw seven of them raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason at the one-day conferral in October. We also forged new and lasting links with our Brothers from the Lodge of Unanimity and Sincerity No. 261 in Somerset, England. I can say in all confidence that we have positioned our Lodge for ongoing success in the years to come.

I would like to express my deepest thanks for the trust and support I have received from all of you this year. Your generosity and devotion to our Lodge enabled us to provide significant support to both our own members and our community during these challenging times. I assure you that as a newly minted Past Master, I will continue to provide my full support and devotion to Kempsville Masonic Lodge No. 196. God bless all of you and God bless the United States of America!

Brother Dave Trzeciakiewicz, Worshipful Master

From The West



Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Another year has passed and a challenging one at that. Let us reflect on the past and look forward with anticipation to the future. 2020

brought us unique challenges as a Lodge and a Nation as a whole. I happily report that we have made it through these challenges relatively unscathed. As Worshipful Dave closes his year, I personally want to thank him and the line officers for persevering. Under his leadership we instituted Zoom meetings when open Lodge was closed to keep the Lodge engaged and communications open. We formed a partnership with a Lodge in England, raised seven Brothers to Master Mason, conducted multiple catechism examinations, and modified our Stated format to allow members to participate while remaining socially distanced.

Although the format may have changed, the object remains and was accomplished with great success. Fellowship and comradery remain strong at Kempsville. As the new year rolls in we will continue to meet challenges head on and continue with all the efforts that make Kempsville a desired Lodge to belong to and participate in. The future remains bright for Masonry and Kempsville.

Brother Mike Denning, Senior Warden

From The South



On Veterans' Day I read the story of the heroic rescue performed by Seaman Charles Moulthrope who was serving on the U. S. Revenue Cutter *Commodore Perry* while it was in frigid and heavy seas one-hundred miles off the Oregon coast. When a shipmate was suddenly swept overboard, the crew quickly launched a rescue skiff manned by four sailors.

The skiff was quickly compromised by rough waters and capsized sending the four sailors into the ocean. In an act of heroism, Moulthrope fashioned a makeshift sling around himself and dove into the sea. Eventually reaching the overturned skiff he tethered himself to a struggling shipmate as they were pulled to safety.

Upon reaching the *Commodore Perry*, one of the remaining sailors lost his grip and slipped beneath the ocean's surface. Moulthrope again fastened himself to a sling and reentered the freezing

waters. Now unable to use his hands from hypothermia, Moulthrope bound himself to the unconscious sailor with his arms and legs as they were both pulled from the water.

Moulthrope's efforts to save his shipmates resemble the lesson instilled in us through the cable tow. As we are taught to help, aid, and assist our fellow man if it is within the length of our cable tows, in a similar manner, Moulthrope endeavored to rescue his shipmates. In a way, Moulthrope successfully offered relief to his shipmates and effectively exhausted the abilities that were allowed by the length of his cable tow.

Brother John Settle, Junior Warden

Masonic Birthdays for December

Timothy R. Berkheimer '02	Jessie R. Ritchie '92
Lincoln Figuereo '01	James R. Smith '94
Rubin Kravitz '60	David H. Weast '87
Timothy M. Maguire '01	Ricky T. West '83

The Brethren shown above have a total of 240 years in Masonry!

Updating Your Contact Information

The Lodge maintains the name, address, phone number and e-mail address for all our members and Widows. If any of this information has changed for you in the past year, please contact the Lodge Secretary so we can update our database. If you are planning on moving anytime in the upcoming year (often the case with our active duty military members) please contact us as soon as you have your new contact information so we can stay in touch with you and ensure you get your copy of the Ashlar each month. You can email the Secretary at secretary@kempsvillelodge.org

September Beehive Award

The winner of the Beehive Award for the month of October is Brother Karl Wesseler, our 2018 Mason of the Year (MOTY). Brother Karl has been and continues to be one of the foundation stones of our Lodge. He is a regular member of our degree team, fills in when needed as Chaplain during Lodge meetings, is a regular leader and participant during our clean up the park effort at Stratford Chase park, and can be counted on to participate in Masonic funeral services that we hold for departed Brethren.



Brother Karl also always comes in to help clean up at the end of our monthly Lodge breakfasts (no small effort that). Brother Karl was a very deserving recipient of the MOTY award in 2018, and he has not slowed down since. Please congratulate him when you see him.

Our Beehive Award winners for 2020 were:

- Brother Mike Blankenship (Two-time winner)
- Brother Sean Wills
- Brother Pat Blankenship (Two-time winner)
- Brother Doug Dunn
- Brother John Gabor
- Worshipful Bob Stanek
- Brother Mike Turner
- Worshipful Bill Rawson
- Brother Dickie Cooper
- Right Worshipful Bill Knowles
- Brother Karl Wesseler

Annual Stated – Invitation Only

Due to the COVID-19 25-person attendance limit, the December 8th Annual Stated meeting is invitation only this year. Our apologies to all those who wished to attend. We will broadcast as much of the meeting on Zoom as possible.

To Our Masonic Widows

Happy Birthday to our special ladies in December:

Carolyn Harrison	December 1 st
Peggy McGuire	December 10 th
Priscella Adkis	December 14 th
Loretta Cedola	December 21 st
Sherry Green	December 21 st

If any of our ladies are in need of assistance from the Lodge, please don't hesitate to contact Right Worshipful Bill Knowles or the Secretary.

Food Bank Collection Breaks 3000 Pounds!

At our October Food Bank Donation Drive-Up and Drop-Off, we collected 307 lbs. of food, including \$60 which was used to reach that total. For the year, we collected an amazing 3,103 lbs. of food as

well as \$1,170. I want to personally thank everyone who helped contribute to this effort this year, when the need for food banks reached a record high due to people being out of work. Brother Bob Hughes, our 2019 MOTY, did an outstanding job running this program for the second year in a row, and together we helped many people in the Kempsville area.

2020 Thanksgiving Dinner Contributions

In just under two weeks, our Lodge met our goal of collecting enough donations to provide a fully cooked Thanksgiving dinner for 19 families in need.

These dinners, which are prepared by a local food store, include all the fixings, and will feed a whole family. This year we supported families identified by three schools: Kempsville Meadows, Kempsville, and Providence Elementary. Thanks to all who donated so generously to this worthy cause. Special thanks as to Worshipful Chris Anders, who started this program during his year in the East in 2018 and has helped expand it every year since.

Christmas 2020 Angel Tree

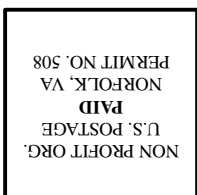
Thank you to all who contributed generously to the Salvation Army Angel Tree program this year. We were able to provide Wal-Mart gift cards to 20 children in need this holiday season. Normally, donors purchase items of clothing that are

presented to the children by the Salvation Army, but due to the COVID-19 virus the method of donation was changed this year. Regardless of how we helped, we made the holidays a little brighter for all these children and their families!

Celebrating November Masonic Birthdays



Brothers celebrating their Masonic birthdays at our November Stated meeting. Each was presented with a Masonic coin by the Worshipful Master (left; coin design shown on the front page).



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