



# The Ashlar



January 2021

**Kempsville Lodge No. 196, A.F.&A.M.**  
**[www.kempsvillelodge.org](http://www.kempsvillelodge.org)**

Volume 68-01

## Happy New Year to 2021

For as long as can be remembered people have looked at the beginning of a new year as a time to "Turn over a new leaf", a chance to start anew. Losing weight, quitting a bad habit, or trying to better themselves have always been popular resolutions on the new year. While many of these resolutions fall to the wayside by February, many people are able to make life-altering changes to themselves by sticking to their resolution and either prolong their life or give themselves a better quality of life.

I know the thought of creating New Year's resolutions for a Masonic lodge, at first blush, might seem to be a bit crazy. Under normal circumstances, the words "lodge" and "change" go together like "oil" and "water" but the events of this previous year may have possibly given us the ability to consider the possibilities. The previous year, if anything, has been nothing but change.

I'm sure each one of us, if we were honest, could think of some issues our lodge could resolve to change in the upcoming year. Just like a human could develop bad habits over its life, there are practices the lodge could adopt that would prolong its life. These issues could be anything from resolving to increase membership, to getting more membership to learn the ritual well enough to assist during degree work instead of relying on the same degree teams, or do specific repairs and upgrades to our building. As much as I can't tell you what you should resolve to do for yourself in the coming year, in like manner, only our Brethren know what our lodge needs to resolve to work on. It might be worth a discussion since this is OUR Lodge, not the Worshipful Master's or the Officers'.

It won't be easy and we all know there might be push-back among some members but it's worth a try. If we get one thing corrected, we are on your way to improving our Lodge. Stay positive and don't give up! We are in this for the long hall. Just like it may take a person several attempts to quit smoking when they finally do drop the habit it changes their life. The same thing applies to our lodge. Just keep trying.

It may sound silly but I believe that our Lodge has an impact in Freemasonry and has the ability to be a beacon for the District. We all look to Grand Lodge for general direction and policy but we are the ones that hold the keys to our future. Individually, we are the ones that affect change for ourselves and I feel it is the same for our Lodge. Let your voices be heard and give me or any of the Lodge Officers a call. Take advantage of the new year and let's make things happen internally and throughout our community!

I wish you and all the Brothers of Kempsville Masonic Lodge nothing but success and prosperity in the upcoming year.



## From The East



Thank you, Brethren, for the opportunity and privilege to serve as the 67<sup>th</sup> Worshipful Master of Kempsville Lodge. This honor comes with some mighty large shoes to fill and I will do my best to not only preserve the history and reputation of Kempsville but strive to move it forward and grow. To make your Lodge not only the best Lodge in the District but one of recognition throughout the state of Virginia. I plan to do this through service to you and opportunities for Brethren to be active.

My theme is of service. You will see this theme represented in my coin with the emblems of all the branches of service, firefighters, police and health providers. Our Lodge is steep in membership of service and our membership understands selfless service for the greater good. This service will extend not only within our organization through fellowship and brotherly love but also the community as a whole.

I believe service is paramount throughout our country and world especially through some very trying times of late. Service starts with the individual locally and we should not stand by and wait for some larger entity to pick up the effort for us.

Today it is more important than ever to stay connected and supportive. Communication will be paramount and technology will be used and expanded to get our message of goodness out and keep us connected.

This year, like last, will continue to evolve and I accept the challenge. For it has been said, "If you are not moving forward, you are falling behind." We will keep our ritual strong, look out for one another, and provide opportunities for Brothers to actively participate within the Lodge and the community at large.

Brother Mike Denning  
Worshipful Master

## From The West



At the end of 2019, we all anticipated that the start of the new decade would inspire a time of peace, prosperity, and promise. The name of the year itself, "2020" perhaps owing to its comical similarity to a clear view, was far from true. Instead, this year has been fraught with turmoil generated by a fluctuating economy, civil

unrest, natural disasters, and the largest pandemic in recent memory

Our Craft has not been spared from the challenges presented in 2020. Regulations to combat the pandemic have impeded day-to-day operations of our lives and Lodges. Our Masonic journeys have been interrupted and denied many Brothers their well-deserved rites.

In an effort to maintain a semblance of a normal routine, technology presented alternatives in the way of Zoom, FaceTime and on-line conference calls. These methods, previously forbidden from use in Masonic settings, are now widely embraced by the Craft. Our Lodge Brothers, many of whom we have not seen or heard from in many months, have begun to embrace these tools to reconnect with their Lodges—thereby being better enabled to rekindle a fading fellowship.

As we look ahead to 2021, we see a light of hope in the way of a vaccine to save our tomorrow. In the meantime, we must continue to use technology to carry us through the pandemic. Although their use is inconsistent with tradition, which is perhaps our most cherished ingredient, fellowship in Freemasonry. Brother Theodore Roosevelt once said, "There can be no life without change, and to be afraid of what is different or unfamiliar is to be afraid of life."

Brother John Settle, Senior Warden

## From The South



I feel privileged to commence my year as your new Junior Warden. I look forward to working closely with many of you with training and advancement of the young minds in our Lodge as they seek Light. Remember that YOU ARE that light, a treasured source of experience, knowledge, and the power to influence a new mason along his path to becoming a better man. I hesitate to think where I would be today without the patience and tutelage of Senior Masons like Right Worshipful Roger Cort and Tom McGowan, Worshipful Brothers Dave Trezeciakwicz, Robert Stanek, and Bill Nelliger, and Brothers Joe Salt, Hank Foiles and Bud Marchman who taught me to be a better man. Lest I forget my hard-working Brother and study partner Doug Dunn, who helps me greatly as we pursue that Oriental chair! You may never know

when your words or Masonic guidance may have a profound effect on a young mason to fulfill that cabletow requirement to guide a young Mason to Masonic Light.

Brother Pat Blankenship, Junior Warden

## Masonic Birthdays for January

L. Douglas Dunn '17	Matthew D. Pilgrim '11
Onrubio L. Florendo, Jr. '10	David W. Poirier '18
Henry L. Foiles, Jr. '59	John R. Preddy, III '07
Lucian A. Gunter, III '58	Bill Rensko '96
Gerald T. Hallal '08	William B. Ross '03
Robert A. Hughes '18	Richard B. Temple, Sr. '55
Ronald S. Melton, Jr. '04	Scott C. Vaughn '15
Francis G. Mielkey, II '98	Yancy M. Woodard '20
James E. Pearsall, Jr. '79	

The Brethren shown above have a total of 481 years in Masonry!

## To Our Masonic Widows

Happy Birthday to our special ladies in January:

Ethel Ward	January 6 <sup>th</sup>
Donna Andrews	January 14 <sup>th</sup>
Ruth Hodges Frazer	January 15 <sup>th</sup>
Barbara Cole	January 16 <sup>th</sup>
Carol Barber	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
Bonnie Jordan	January 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Dorothy Sykes	January 28 <sup>th</sup>
Doris Flannigan	January 28 <sup>th</sup>
Teresa Spruill	January 29 <sup>th</sup>

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.

## 2020 Mason of the Year

It is with great pleasure that we announce the selection of Brother Michael Dale Blankenship as Kempsville's Mason of the Year for 2020. Brother Mike has been a hard charger ever since he joined the Lodge a few years back. He has distinguished himself as both District and Lodge Blood Coordinator for the past two years, winning the Grand Lodge Lifesaver Award in 2019 for collecting the most blood donations of any District in Virginia. He has also



worked tirelessly in the Lodge itself, providing his full support to all our events such as our monthly breakfasts, which he routinely arrives at before 5 am to get things started, and remains until well after breakfast has finished. He has used his skills as an electrician to install new lighting in the Lodge and to enable us to mount two large screen TVs at the front of the Lodge room to support presentations and Zoom meetings. His unmatched dedication to Kempsville and his outstanding work ethic made him the clear choice for our 2020 Mason of the Year. Congratulations Brother "MOTY" Mike!

## 2021 Lodge Officers



Left to right: Worshipful Chris Anders, Treasurer; Dickey Cooper, Marshal; John Settle, III, Senior Warden; Doug Dunn, Senior Deacon; Mike Denning, Worshipful Master; Worshipful Scott Foxwell, Musician; Mike Turner, Junior Deacon; Pat Blankenship, Junior Warden; Tom Melling, Sr, Senior Steward; Worshipful Bob Stanek, Secretary

Not present: Dennis DiMaggio, Tiler; Kieth Ingraham, Chaplain; Pat Cooney, Junior Steward

## Checked Floor Installed in the Lodge

Over two full weekends in November, Mr. Tim Dunn and his brother (and our Senior Deacon)



Brother Doug Dunn installed a beautiful checked tile floor under the altar in our Lodge room. This floor is referred to in the lecture given to newly initiated Entered Apprentices as "a representation of the ground floor of King Solomon's Temple" and is "emblematic of human life, checked with good and evil." Our Lodge room previous lacked this important element, and we were determined to fix that in 2020. Thanks to the immense hard work of

Tim, Doug, and our Junior Warden Pat Blankenship, this vision was made a reality. Outgoing Worshipful Brother Dave Trzeciakiewicz awarded Tim with the November Beehive award for the 40+ hours of work he put in installing the floor.

## Meet Your Junior Deacon



Michael Turner has lived in the Kempsville area of Virginia Beach for the last 40 years, attending both Kempsville Middle and High School. After high school Mike attend both Norfolk State University and Old Dominion where we received his degree in

Computer Science. He currently works for Lockheed Martin as a Cybersecurity engineer and still lives in Kempsville with his Wife Christi and daughter Ilse.

He joined the lodge in 2018 and has been very active ever since. Michael is most known for his frequent travels to other lodges and is a member of Bannack Lodge 3-7-77, a historic Montana lodge. When not traveling Mike can be found in the lodge participating and volunteering for all activities the lodge is involved in.

Finally, Michael also serves as a Grand Lodge committee man, serving on the Information Technology Committee as the head of the Cyber Security Subcommittee. The goal of the IT Committee is to help bring the Grand lodge into the 21st century in a safe and secure way. This has led some to refer to him as the Grand Hacker.

## From the Secretary's Desk

Please look at your current dues card. Expiration date should read December 31, 2021. If not, please remit your 2021 annual dues now (also payable online.) Please contact lodge Secretary for questions regarding your dues.



## Lodge Officers

Worshipful Master	Mike Denning	651-0712
Senior Warden	John Settle, III	675-9695
Junior Warden	Pat Blankenship	406-6166
Treasurer	Chris Anders	635-7617
Secretary	Bob Stanek	255-8336
Senior Deacon	Doug Dunn	781-389-6557
Junior Deacon	Michael Turner	581-4239
Senior Steward	Thomas Melling, Sr.	403-8881
Junior Steward	Michael Cooney	375-3238
Chaplain	Keith Ingraham	613-5474
Musician	R. Scott Foxwell	536-1659
Marshal	Dickie Cooper	971-7347
Tiler	Roger Taylor	478-5498
Instructor of Work	Tom McGowan	497-3881
Education Officer	William Rawson	724-4867
MAHOVA Ambassador	Ray Connard	630-5797
Blood Coordinator	Michael Blankenship	438-2862
Youth Advisor	Eddie Foley	581-8144



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