



The Ashlar



April 2022

Kempsville Lodge No. 196, A.F.&A.M.
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Brother Fletcher Benson Porter



In keeping with “The Lifesavers” theme for 2022, the Worshipful Master has requested each issue of The Ashlar to feature an article honoring a deceased member of our Lodge who has preserved life in addition to being a distinguished community member. “Distinguished” could mean anything from notable military service, an esteemed political career, or virtually any other qualifying instance elevating that member to recognition on a local, statewide, and/or national scale. For this month’s article, we feature Bro. Fletcher Benson Porter.

Porter, as his wife and many friends called him, was born in 1926 in Lambert, MS to James & Ethel Porter. Graduating from high school in 1944, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps later that year. He served honorably as an aerial gunner and aircraft mechanic on B-24s and B-25s (respectively) in World War II’s Pacific Theater until his discharge in 1946. Returning home, Porter briefly followed in his father’s footsteps as a railroad worker before using the GI Bill to attend MS State University, where he eventually earned a BS in 1951, simultaneously becoming a

commissioned Air Force officer after completing the school’s ROTC program.

After his commissioning, while stationed at Brookley AFB in Mobile, AL, he met his wife Laura, with whom he would have four children. His Air Force career took him and his family to Florida, Hawaii, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Porter also served in the Korean War, after which he participated in the Taiwan Strait Crisis. Upon his return home, he learned that he was to be stationed in Florida, where he served as a fuels engineer during Project Mercury- helping launch “astrochimps” into space during the early years of the Space Race. At one point he was even stationed in Greenland, after which he would earn an MS in Logistics Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology shortly thereafter.

In 1967, Porter was deployed to Vietnam, where he was Chief of the 7th Air Force’s Fuels Division. The following year, he and his men were ambushed during the first wave of the Tet Offensive. He would eventually earn a Bronze Star with Valor for his heroism during the Offensive, after which he was promoted to Chief of the Pacific Air Force’s Fuels Division. In this capacity, he effectively controlled the allocation of fuels to the entirety of the Pacific-based Air Force. He would hold this office until his retirement in 1970 as a heavily decorated Colonel.

The same year, Porter began his second career in real estate. Working as a broker for the Henry-Hanson-Tucker Realty Corporation in VA Beach, he quickly became the principal broker of their main office, and was a staple in the real estate community. By the time he retired in 1988, he was an active member of the Hampton Roads Realtors Assoc., and had earned a BA in Land Development Planning from St. Leo University.

Outside of work, Porter served for many years as treasurer of Bayside Baptist Church. His remaining time was divided equally between hunting, golfing, and his family, who he regarded as his favorite hobby.

Porter was initiated, passed, and raised from 1952 to 1953 in Loop Lodge No. 895 in Mobile, AL. He affiliated with our Lodge in 1991- his signers were Worshipful Frank Creasy and Brother George Miller. He was also involved in the Scottish Rite and Amarillo Commandery No. 48. A Mason for over 55 years, he died in 2008 and was survived by his wife, sister, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

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From The East



Of the millions of past and present Masons who have joined our Craft, there are likely an equal number of reasons behind their decisions to join.

Whether the deciding factor was a need for comradery, family tradition, or the satisfaction of a need that was otherwise absent from their lives, each of these explanations behind their petitions are reputable and worthy of appreciation.

Arguably, the most common reason men elect to petition a Lodge is to experience or re-experience comradery. This is evidenced by the massive influx of members into Masonry that was experienced in the years immediately following both World Wars and the Korean War. This unprecedented and unrivaled growth culminated in 1959 at an estimated four million members nationwide. Although our numbers have dwindled to approximately one-quarter of this number, the volume of Masons in our country (and especially our Lodge) who are/were in the military at some point in their lives is staggering. This statistical reality emphasizes the importance of comradery among prospective members of our Craft.

The next most prolific factor that attracts new members to Masonry is family tradition. If the question "are you related by blood and/or marriage to any other member of this Fraternity?" were added to the petition, it is highly likely that an overwhelming majority of respondents would answer in the affirmative. The Grand Lodge's authorization of the Lewis Jewel several years ago serves to highlight this aspect of Masonry's appeal.

The final and most diverse incentive for new members to join is the one most commonly recited to those curious as to why men become Masons- to fulfill something that they believe that their lives are lacking. This could be anything from a combination of comradery and family tradition, to an interest in networking and building a friends group. In some cases, and although we do not identify as a religious order, some members have indicated that the exaltation of God, prayers, and ritual serve to satisfy and/or supplement a spiritual compartment of their existence that they would otherwise be missing.

If everyone joined a Lodge for the same reason, the fellowship would be consumed by bland uniformity- such a phenomenon could potentially dissuade prospective members! As such, and regardless of

the reasons that inspired us as individuals to join, it is imperative that all Lodges understand and cherish the entire array of attractions that draw new members. Such a practice fosters a warm and welcoming brotherhood, and realizes our sacred adage- Masons receive from Masonry what they invest in it.

Brother John Settle, III, Worshipful Master

From The West



Here we are in April already! My, the year is just speeding by. I have so much more to do before assuming that 'Oriental Chair'! Kempsville Lodge is a tough act to assume; we are VERY proficient in the catechism and are a vital part of the community. We have a few candidates in the process of learning their catechism. Our most recent candidates have formed a strong bond of friendship and brotherly love with each other and are becoming active members of the lodge. They are working hard to learn positions to participate in raising new brethren. This will enhance the candidate's full experience that they themselves enjoyed. Come out to enjoy and participate in raising brethren into Kempsville Lodge and help us make it even better. The bond formed between a coach/mentor and a candidate can not be measured and will last a lifetime. Come back to your lodge and assist in bringing these fine young men along. What a joy it is!

Brother Pat Blankenship, Senior Warden

From The South



The Line! Brethren what does it mean when a mason asks to "get in the line"? What exactly IS the line? Most of you already know the answers to those questions. Yes the Appointed and Elected Officers of the lodge are all in "The Line". Some feel only the line is only comprised of the elected chairs while others feel all chairs create the line. I would like to just explain my personal feeling on "the line".

When I was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, I really had no idea of the road ahead. I knew that I enjoyed working in the kitchen as I had during my first two degrees so I dedicated myself that year to assisting our stewards at every meal as well as shopping and other duties that fell on the stewards. It was always an enjoyable time and the following year the now late Brother Dennis Eaton,

who had been Senior Steward for a number of years, retired.

Incoming Worshipful Master Chris Anders asked if I would serve as one of his stewards which I was honored to accept. I served as Jr Steward for two years under Brother Todd Moissett as Senior Steward. They were fun years of service to the lodge and my brethren. Then as David T-Rex was approaching the East he asked if I would step "into" the line as his Junior Deacon? I accepted after long consideration. Mainly because it had been taught to me that when a man accepts the nomination to serve as Junior Deacon, he is making a 5 year commitment to the lodge. Then for the next 5 years he will attend lodge regularly, attend schools, training, visitations and special events as often as he can possibly attend. It is a huge commitment and one I accepted with my whole heart.

I do not regret that decision one moment. I love every minute I have been able to spend in both service and leadership to our lodge and masonry in general. So for our younger Entered Apprentices coming into the craft now, remember masonry is a marathon, not a sprint. Spend time first in your lodge then in service to your lodge before deciding you have something to offer in asking your brethren for their support to allow you to one day Lead your Lodge. It is truly a great honor to serve in any appointed chair. Chaplain, Stewards, Marshal, Tiler and Musician. Additionally, we have men who serve the lodge who have not wanted to sit a chair but know the rituals and are there to help and serve where and when needed.

Masonry is a wide and diverse craft with many roads to travel. Not just one single road to the Great Oriental Chair.

Brother Doug Dunn, Junior Warden

Trestle Board

- April 9 Area Ritual School
Lake Drummond Lodge, 8AM-12PM
- April 11 Area Ritual School
Bayside Lodge, 6-9PM
- April 12 Stated Communication
Dinner 6PM, Lodge 7PM
- April 18 District Blood Drive, 2-7PM
- April 30 Lodge Breakfast, 8-10AM
- May 10 Stated Communication
Dinner 6PM, Lodge 7PM
- May 14 Annual Bull Roast, 11AM-7PM
- May 28 Lodge Breakfast, 8-10AM

Masonic Blood Program

The very real EMERGENCY shortage in blood supply (that is less than 1/2 days requirement) from all that has happened including COVID pandemic shutdown over 3,000+ blood drives alone, and kept volunteers locked down from going out in public for over a year. Now going to the hospital needing surgery, they may have trouble giving you the blood products you need. Besides trauma, we still have serious chronic illness, and families depending on blood products to live. Blood cannot be artificially created; it must come from volunteers who give of their lives so others can live. Therefore, when you give blood, you give time to others. One day it could probably be you. Please realize that the future needs your help. Please do our community a favor, go to RedCrossBlood.org, and encourage family and friends to do the same to help save lives.

Our Kempsville Lodge will be sponsoring the next blood drive at our lodge on April 18th, Easter Monday.

Brother Mike Blankenship
56th District Blood Coordinator

Masonic Birthdays for April

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| Charles R. Bateman, Jr. '14 | Todd C. Moissett '11 |
| David E. Boyd '88 | Michael R. Moseler '72 |
| Allen K. Chandler '87 | Thomas A. Niedermeier '80 |
| S. Ray Connard '91 | Brian E. Parton '01 |
| Louis P. Dunn '77 | Emmett R. Reynolds '11 |
| Aaron J. Dyer '12 | G. Frank Roberts, Jr. '64 |
| Thomas C. England '11 | Alaric J. Roche, Jr. '64 |
| Christopher M. Favata '10 | Cristian C. Rodriguez '04 |
| Justin A. Flowers '12 | John R. Settle, III '12 |
| L. David Foxwell '75 | Charlie B. Taylor, Sr. '59 |
| John A. Gabor '92 | Robert J. Tidwell '77 |
| George L. Gunter '69 | David M. Trzeciakiewicz '15 |
| James K. Ingraham '19 | Thomas G. Webber, Sr. '63 |
| Warren C. Massey '50 | Sean R. Wills '16 |
| Terrence P. McNally '78 | |

These Brethren have a total of
904 years in Masonry!

Brother Fletcher Benson Porter

(cont'd from page 1)

Porter's funeral was well-attended by elements of both his Air Force and real estate careers. His survivors were amazed at how members of each career were unaware of the other! Perhaps as fate's gesture of appreciation towards his industrious nature, his military ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was recorded by

esteemed videographer Jerry Werthman- it soon thereafter received the 2009 Creative Excellence Award.

Porter's extensive commitment to his community, country, and fellow servicemen set him aside as a staunch patriot and a tireless family man and neighbor. Over the course of nearly five decades and two careers, he invested his education and skills with those of his fellow airmen, coworkers, and other professionals to make certain the prosperity of his family, friends, neighbors, and country. These noble aspects solidify his celebration in this series as a genuine lifesaver. If you're aware of a deceased member of our Lodge who may fit "The Lifesaver" criteria, please email johnrs4@vt.edu.

To Our Masonic Widows

Happy Birthday to our special lady in April:

Cheryl Farrer	April 2 nd
Patricia Quinton	April 4 th
Teresa Boogades	April 5 th
Judith Naprsteh	April 7 th
Denise Bement	April 20 th
Paigfe Mason	April 28 th

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.

38th Annual Bull Roast

What's this BULL about? So many have asked over the years "do you guys actually serve BULL MEAT at the Bull Roast"?

Well, considering a bull is a male cow, I guess we might! We serve beef! Brethren start preparing the meat 24 hours prior to cooking. The meat is first cleaned of any ligaments or coverings that would make it tough or prohibit the flavors from developing throughout the beef while it slowly cooks. Then each piece is towel dried and kept at room temperature. After approximately an hour, the special blend of spices are applied to each and every shoulder. They are then wrapped to allow the spices time overnight to be absorbed by the drying meat. The salt in the blend also assists the beef in drying out as well as absorbing more spice flavorings.



The Kempsville Masonic Lodge Annual Bull Roast

sees up to 200 lbs of meat being unwrapped, prepped, spiced up, wrapped, and when the time comes, put on the smoking grill for up to 4 - 6 hours per shoulder. Over the years different brethren have tried different temperatures, cook times and seasonings. However everyone agreed that last year's post pandemic Bull Roast yielded by far the most delicious meat ever. As such, this year it will be prepared and cooked the same exact way.

The brothers of our lodge have been working for several months preparing for this years roast and hope to outperform last year! Now! It is YOUR TURN to help make this happen! Please buy your tickets. Buy some for your neighbors and friends. Let's make this years attendance the story everyone remembers after talking about the incredible food!

Remember, May 14th is the date this year!

Commemorative Display



Soon to be displayed in our lodge room commemorating the fellowship and friendship with our good brethren of The Lodge of Unanimity and Sincerity 261 in Taunton, UK.

Lodge Officers

Worshipful Master	John Settle, III	675-9695
Senior Warden	Pat Blankenship	406-6166
Junior Warden	Doug Dunn	781-389-6557
Treasurer	Chris Anders	635-7617
Secretary	Bob Stanek	619-7646
Senior Deacon	Michael Turner	581-4239
Junior Deacon	Keith Ingraham	613-5474
Senior Steward	Todd Moissett	604-3085
Junior Steward	Scott Sherman	597-1150
Chaplain	James Boone	515-0131
Musician	R. Scott Foxwell	536-1659
Marshal	Dickie Cooper	971-7347
Tiler	Dennis Dimaggio	582-3320
Instructor of Work	Dave Trzeciakiewicz	620-8311
Education Officer	William Rawson	724-4867
MAHOVA Ambassador	Ray Connard	630-5797
Blood Coordinator	Michael Blankenship	438-2862
Youth Advisor	Eddie Foley	581-8144