



Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in Virginia
Grand Council Cryptic Masons in Virginia

The Keystone

August 2017



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A publication of the Grand
Chapter Royal Arch Masons in
Virginia. 500 Masonic Lane, Suite
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Upcoming Calendar

August 26, noon: Official Visit
to District 19, Fredericksburg

August 28-29: Millican Royal
Arch School, Salem

Want your articles here? Send
them to tvarner536@aol.com.



Companions and friends:

We Masons need to make the public aware of the good works that our Fraternity does. I would like to echo our Grand Master's message about our philanthropic activities. The Grand Chapter's charity is the Alzheimer's Association. We all know this but do we make it a high enough priority? I encourage you to

make a concentrated effort for the remainder of the year to raise our donations and be proud of our accomplishments. This devastating disease needs a cure!

The Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in Virginia is honored to have members who have given their leadership and example for all of us to emulate. The following companions have received their fifty-year Veterans Award thus far this year. We honor and salute these members.

Rt. Ex. Ralph S. Jones, Great Bridge #4

Ex. Robert E. Simpson, Keystone #58

Ex. David W. Brown, Waynesboro #2

Rt. Ex. Samuel E. Grove, Waynesboro #2

Comp. Robert S. Sheffer, Waynesboro #2

Comp. Harry T. Rutherford, Jr., Castlewood #34

Rt. Ex. George B. Dungan, Jr., Westmoreland #241

I look forward to seeing you at the Grand Convocation in November. If you haven't attended for a while, come join us for the great fellowship and fun! We need you there.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Dan H. Surface, Grand High Priest

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I hope that you all have had a great and enjoyable summer. It is with great joy that I am able to write to you for this issue of The Keystone. So far this year we have done a pretty good job in raising money

and awareness to help find a cure for Alzheimer's. Sometimes I think we can get so focused on our "Fun Raising" efforts that we may tend to forget why we are doing this.

In this writeup, I am happy to introduce to you a very special friend of mine, Tracy Boothe. Tracy and I have been friends for nearly 10 years and she has been a member of the Warren Chapter Royal Arch Masons Alzheimer's Walk team for the last four years. Each year Tracy has been our top donation generator, and this year she set her sights on raising \$2,000. As of last week, she met and exceeded her goal, and she has done this all by herself. A few months ago, I had asked her what her inspiration was to help find a cure for Alzheimer's. She let me know that her dad was diagnosed with this disease and she wanted to do everything in her power to help find a cure. Below is a partial interview transcript in hopes that it will inspire you to continue what you are doing to help find a cure for this monstrous disease.

Each year you have been a top contributor to our team. Can you expand on how you get others involved to contribute to our team? When I set my mind to something, I am relentless. Maybe have a challenge? Who can raise \$500 first? I have

the automatic donate to me messages on Facebook and twitter every week. I beg and plead. Not everyone can do that.

You recently had a fundraiser at Chick-Fil-A, how did you set that up? What were the obstacles that you faced and how much was able to be contributed to find a cure?

I had high hopes for the Chick-Fil-A "spirit day" but in the end I only got \$48. Very disappointing. I posted it on every Facebook page I belong to, it was shared over 1000 times, yet in the end it just didn't pan out.

This year you set a goal of obtaining \$2,000 in donations to help find a cure. Currently, you have crushed that and have accumulated, by yourself, \$2,324. How were you able to accomplish this and have you raised your goal limit? I really can't take credit for hitting my goal this year, it was a pie in the sky goal. My mother in law recently contributed \$1000 to the walk. She really likes my parents and wanted to do something special for her birthday. I upped my goal to \$2500 and I am 99% sure I'll hit or exceed that this year. I just sent in a few checks that have yet to hit and yes, I have a fundraiser or two in the works.

What is next on the agenda for you? Do you have any fundraisers scheduled? I have had a couple Facebook fundraisers and the LulaRoe one did well, because that lady also has Alzheimer's in her family and she has a huge following and donated all her profit to me. She wants to do another one in September and hopefully that will be another \$300. I'm also considering Ledo's again.

Paul Lockhart, Grand Almoner of Virginia

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First Time Visitors

Edward Tooma, Shenandoah No. 17

All too often we as members of the Royal Arch tend to drop the ball when it comes to checking on visitors to insure that they really are members of the Fraternity. Having a visitor you have never met before show you his Chapter Dues card isn't enough to give him the okay to attend the Chapter Convocation. This is where the Blue Lodge has a jump on us because in their possession they have a book that shows recognized Lodges world-wide. Where we as a Chapter do not really have such a directory. Therefore, we must be extra careful in who we admit. For example - - a visitor knocks at the door from another jurisdiction. What do we do? Pretty much the same thing a Blue Lodge does.

- (a) Check his current dues card from his Chapter.
- (b) Check to see if the visitor has received the Council Degrees. If he has - check the dues card.
- (c) If the Companion has not taken the Council Degrees, we as Virginia Companions eliminate these signs when opening Chapter.
- (d) As a safety measure of identity - also ask the visitor to show his current paid up Blue Lodge dues card. This "double-check" precautionary step protects us, and shows that we are serious when it comes to opening our doors.

In today's world we are faced with more clandestine and cowan-type activity than ever before. And with the internet revealing so much about our Order, outsiders will make every attempt to visit our Chapter or Lodge.

We cannot afford to drop our guard. The entire identity procedure only takes a few minutes. But, well worth it. First Time Visitors know and expect to be challenged. The process is to be handled in a professional manner making the visitor feel comfortable. Remember, our doors are always open to welcome visiting Companions. Let us all make identity a standing policy Chapter wide. Holiness to the Lord - So Mote it Be!

William B. Millican Royal Arch School

The Committee on Work will hold the William B. Millican Royal Arch School at Taylor Lodge in Salem August 28-29. All Royal Arch Companions are encouraged to attend. Please promote this event in your districts. You will need to make your own hotel arrangements. A list of hotels was sent to each chapter along with the detailed School information. Grand Lecturer Randy Johnson is really looking forward to seeing each of you, and your attendance will ensure that this meeting will be a success.

Call to Grand Chapter

The Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in Virginia will hold its 210th Grand Annual Convocation at the Fort Magruder Hotel, Williamsburg, on November 17-18. Room reservation forms must be returned to the hotel no later than November 1. Early reservations are suggested, as the number of rooms is limited. The hotel's number is (757) 220-2250 and fax is (757) 221-9059. If you are eligible, don't forget the York Rite College on November 17, the Super Excellent Master Degree on November 18, and the Anointed High Priest Degree on November 19. Your Secretary has forms and a schedule for you to sign up.

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225th Anniversary of Richmond Chapter #3



On Thursday, May 4, Richmond Chapter No. 3 celebrated its 225th Anniversary. The Chapter was organized on March 12, 1792, 16 years before the formation of the Grand Chapter of Virginia, and boasts 15 Past Grand High Priests, 8 John Dove Award holders, and 2 Ish Sodi Award holders. The anniversary was celebrated in the form of a gala event, held at its long-standing home, Masons' Hall in Richmond. Companions

from across the Commonwealth joined together to celebrate, and included Most Excellent Daniel H. Surface, Grand High Priest of Virginia (Cindy's husband). The Companions socialized in the dining room of the Hall and enjoyed appetizers, while being serenaded by an outstanding classical pianist. A delicious low country boil dinner followed.

A program on the history of the Chapter was delivered by Ex. Marion J. Humphreys III, currently serving as the 161st High Priest of the Chapter. This history detailed original officer positions within the Chapter, notable Past High Priests of the Chapter, and the 32 various national flags that have flown since the Chapter was organized. Most interesting is the fact that, apart from several Chapters consolidating with Richmond in the past (Harman No. 56 & Temple No. 32), Richmond Union Master Mark Lodge, which was Chartered by the Grand Chapter in 1815, consolidated with the Chapter in 1822. Additionally, Hiram Council No. 1, Select & Royal Masters, consolidated with Richmond Chapter in 1841. Having a Master Mark Lodge and an original Cryptic Council consolidated into Richmond No. 3 truly makes this historic Chapter unique. Most Excellent Daniel H. Surface also presented further history of the Chapter, including information on the Chapter's founding members. Of course, Ex. Companion John Dove's role in and influence on the Chapter and Grand Chapter of Virginia were duly noted, Ex. Dove having served as High Priest of Richmond Chapter for 9 years (1819-22, 1833-39), and Grand Secretary of the Grand Chapter for 41 years (1835-87).

After the programs were delivered, the Companions retired to the Chapter room, and the Chapter was opened in solemn form, with Mt. Ex. Surface joining the High Priest on the dais. It was truly an outstanding night for Capitular Masonry, and one that will not soon be forgotten. Richmond Chapter is looking forward to its next 225 years.

Membership Excellence

Congratulations to Right Excellent Ralph S. Jones and District #2, who have exalted 19 new companions since the Grand Convocation, of which 16 are from Princess Anne Chapter #1607.

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Most Worshipful and Right Excellent Dungan Honored



On August 1, Most Worshipful George Bernard Dungan Jr., a Past District Deputy Grand High Priest and member of Westmoreland Chapter No. 41, received his 50-Year Certificate and Pin from Most Excellent Howard Coleman. In attendance and making well-received comments was Grand High Priest Daniel Hufford Surface, who was District Deputy Grand Master when Most Worshipful Dungan was Grand Master in 2007. Also pictured above is the Eminent Grand Captain General John Jeffrey McClelland of Urbanna Chapter No. 59.

Place of Origin of the Royal Arch Degrees

Where was the place of origin of the Royal Arch Degrees in the United States, then known as the “colonies”? Until 1751, there are no records of Lodge minutes of any working Chapter nor any references to the Royal Arch Degrees in any Masonic record. But during the next sixty years, there are many records recognizing its huge popularity, development, and recognition, including its acceptance in the United Grand Lodge in 1813 as an integral part of the Craft Degrees. The first record referring to the Royal Arch is contained in the minutes of the Grand Committee for the organization of the Grand Lodge of Ancients. These minutes were taken on March 4, 1752, and stated that “Thomas Phelan and John Mackey, known as ‘leg of mutton Masons’, had initiated many persons for a dinner or supper and those whom they had pretended to make ‘Royal Archmen’ had not the slightest idea of that secret.” The first unquestioned minutes recording the conferring of the Royal Arch Degree are those of the Lodge at Fredericksburg on December 22, 1753. The minutes state that it was opened as a Royal Arch Lodge (not as Chapter) and “shutt” as an Entered Apprentice’s Lodge. The officers of the Royal Arch Lodge were a Grand Master and a Junior Warden, not High Priest, King, and Scribe. The same titles were used by the Lodge at York and in France. The extreme simplicity of the ritual is indicated by the fact that two

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officers and one member were sufficient to confer the degree. The candidates were passed, not exalted, and there were three of them, including Brother George Washington. It is doubted that any regulation existed at that time as to the number of candidates that could be “passed” at one time. At the time of this conferral, the Lodge at Fredericksburg was not a chartered Lodge but rather a self-constituted Lodge acting under “immemorial right”.

Pictures from a District 9 Festival held on June 17

