

Ashlar Lodge No. 98 Free and Accepted Masons

St. Augustine, FL

Chartered January 18, A.D. 1888, A.L. 5888



July, 2023



STATED COMMUNICATIONS

Masonic Temple

4 Martin Luther King Blvd.

St. Augustine, FL

1ST & 3RD Thursdays

Meal – 6:30 p.m.

Stated Communication — 7:30 p.m.

DEGREE WORK AND PRACTICE

2ND & 4TH Thursdays

CHARITY OF THE MONTH

Port in the Storm

FROM THE EAST

Hello my Brothers,

Happy 4th of July to everyone!

I am happy to report that we are halfway through 2023, and we have a pretty good number of prospective brothers showing up at the lodge, getting to know us, and hopefully one day soon, starting their journey through the three degrees.

In addition, we have several newly raised brothers who are showing up to the lodge, interested and eager to learn more and step up into the line, catechism instructors, etc. I am so happy to see these new brothers taking the initiative to get involved and help where needed.

Ashlar continues traveling around the district. We are planning on visiting Hastings Lodge on July 11th, and then attending the District Association meeting on July 26th at Bunnell Lodge. Brother Terrell and I invite any interested brothers to join us as we continue our journeys.

My understanding from some of our longtime brothers is Ashlar Lodge was a well-traveled lodge, and I would like to pick that tradition back up and get more of our Ashlar Brothers out visiting our brothers in the district with Brother Terrell and me.

If you are aware of any widows or older brothers in need of some assistance around the house, please let me know. I would love to get a group of brothers together to help one of our own. I will also be setting up a date in the Fall to work on a Habitat for Humanity home. Details to follow when available.

We hope to see you in lodge or throughout the district soon.

Fraternally,
Brother Tom Torretta

July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 OES	4 Independence Day 2023	5 RAINBOW 7:00 PM	6 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	7	8
9	10	11 Shrine Club 7:00 pm	12 District Instruction Ashlar No. 98 6:30 pm	13	14	15
16	17 OES	18 York Rite Chapter/Council 6:30 pm	19 RAINBOW 7:00 PM OPEN BOOKS PINELAND NO. 89 6-9	20 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26 Dist. Assn. Bunnell 200 6:30 pm	27 Lodge Instruction TBD	28 Fried Chicken, Shrine Club	29

FROM THE WEST

Things are going very well, and I am very happy to report that the scholarship committee will be meeting this coming Tuesday to go over the applications and have them ready to present to the Lodge at our first meeting in July.

Also, I am planning on attending the District Meeting which will be held at in Hastings Lodge on Wednesday, 28 June please if you are interested in going, let me know we can meet at my place. There is plenty of parking and we could carpool together.

Also, we will be placing an order for the shirts, polo shirts, and name tags very shortly so if you have not yet signed up, please do so.

Respectfully,
Terrell Jones. S.W.

August 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 RAIN-BOW 7 PM	3 STATED COMM 6:30 PM	4	5
6	7 OES	8 SHRINE CLUB 7:00 pm	9 District Instruction Middleburg No. 107 6:30 pm	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 RAIN-BOW 7 pm	17 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	18	19 Eastern Star Rob Morris Picnic 10 am
20	21 OES	22 YORK RITE CHAPTER/COUNCIL 6:30 PM	23 Dist. Assn. Palatka No. 34 6:30 pm	24 Lodge Instruction TBD	25 Fried Chicken Shrine Club	26 Open Books Pine-land No. 86 9—noon
27	28	29 YORK RITE COM-MANDERY 6:30 PM	30	31	28	

From the South
G.T. Maultsby — J.W.
The Tenets of Freemasonry: Mere Words or Good Guidelines
By: L.C. Addison II

Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, what fine and lofty words indeed! These are the principal tenets of our wonderful institution. They form the foundation on which our Masonic lives are founded. So let's examine what these words mean.

Brotherly Love is a combination of the philos, which means love (or philia) and adeiphos, which means brother. It refers to the type of bond that we may experience with a family member or close friend. It denotes more than just a superficial relationship but rather one of deep compassion, affection and understanding. To have Brotherly Love for someone means that we truly care about and value that individual as we would a member of our own family.

Relief can be defined as a removal or lightening of something oppressive, painful, or distressing. A synonym would be welfare. It refers to [our] genuine care in our Brother's welfare. For to be able to lift a burden from a Brother's shoulders or have one lifted from our own, would indeed a joyous thing and strengthen our bond with each other .

Truth ah what a word! Truth is derived from the old English word "treecowth" which means fidelity and taken closely from the old English word "treeowe" which means faithful. It can be defined as sincerity in action, character, and utterance and the fidelity of a standard. It is a reminder that our words, actions & character should be one of integrity. They should embody the highest standards of morality and the image of our Creator.

Yet, while it is nice to know what they mean, do we really need to use them as a guideline? In other words do we need to follow these very closely in lives, both daily & Masonic? My answer would be an emphatic, YES!! For how would we really be able to care for our Brother's family in the unfortunate event of him being indisposed to do so? Or, how could we care about our Brother's welfare if we didn't even like the man himself? Better yet, if we weren't sincere with one another in our words and actions, how would our Brother know who we really are? KNOW THY SELF; a common inscription found over the door of many ancient and some present ante room doorways, is a reminder that before we cross the threshold of Freemasonry, we must first possess these things in ourselves. Because Freemasonry doesn't endow us with these tenets, it deepens and gives us an appreciation for these qualities that we should already have in practice.

In closing, these words embody the basic and highest levels of humanity: They exude the qualities that our Creator implanted in us for most beneficent purposes, and that is why they form the principle guidelines of our wonderful institution of Freemasonry

The Founding and Early History of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida, F. & A.M.

Trying to establish the exact birth date of Masonry in Florida is much like trying to establish the exact birth date of Masonry in general, as many of the old historical facts were either not properly recorded, or the records were either destroyed or lost. And even the ones which survived were for many years hidden from the world, lying dormant in unmarked and forgotten files. But, fortunately in 1898, the first authoritative record of early Masonry in Florida came to light in the form of a rare and very old copy of "Preston's Illustration." It had been presented to the Grand Lodge of Florida by Dr. F.F. Bond of Thorncliff, Brighthouse, England. On the title page of this prized gift the following words were inscribed, "The gift of James Murray to Saint Andrews Lodge No.1, West Florida on June 27, 1776." This was the first reliable information that a Masonic Lodge had existed in Florida at such an early date. In 1898, Deputy Grand Master Silas B. Wright was assigned the duty to further investigate the possibility of any other existing records of early Florida Masonry. He discovered there were indeed further records being held by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania which proved the existence of Masonry in Florida during the early years of our country. These records, some covering the periods of 1768 through 1785, were graciously made available to the Grand Lodge of Florida for research and appropriate copying. A special report by R.W. Wright was included in the 1899 Grand Lodge Proceedings and many of these records are now in the archives of our Grand Lodge. These records indicated that on March 15, 1768, a Charter was issued by the Grand Lodge of Scotland to "Grant's East Florida Lodge No. 143" to be located in Saint Augustine, in the Territory of Florida. And although it is almost certain that Masonry had existed in some form prior to this date; this is the first documented Masonic Lodge that was established in what is now the State of Florida. On that same date, the "Provincial Grand Lodge over Lodges in the Southern District of North America" was created and was also to be located in Saint Augustine. The Honorable James Grant, who was presently the Governor of the Territory of Florida, was named the Provincial Grand Master. This Grand Body functioned until 1783, when it was suppressed by the Dominican Priesthood and the Spanish Government, and all the records were either destroyed or carried away. All the available information was later located either in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania or the Grand Lodge of Scotland. The fate of Grant's East Florida Lodge is not actually known but it is assumed that it was suppressed at the same time as the Provincial Grand Lodge. The records held by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania provided a much clearer picture of the operations and fate of Florida's second Lodge, Saint Andrew's Lodge No. 1 of Pensacola, which was chartered on May 3, 1771. Ten years later, Pensacola and the Territory of West Florida were returned to the control of Spain and the Masonic Fraternity was again suppressed by the Dominican Priesthood and the Spanish Government. The local Masons were forced to flee for their lives. However, in spite of the great danger, the Brothers did not leave the area until they had rescued their Lodge Charter and all the records, which included Minutes of every meeting held since their Charter had been issued. They finally reached safety in Charleston, South Carolina, and reports were sent back to the Provincial Grand Lodge at Saint Augustine detailing their plight. In 1772, they were granted Dispensation to work in South Carolina while under the Charter from the Territory of Florida. But when the Provincial Grand Lodge was suppressed in 1783, Saint Andrews Lodge No. 1 was without authority to function. The Grand Lodge of Philadelphia came to their assistance and re-Chartered the Lodge, but the name was changed to Lodge No. 40. Saint Andrews Lodge No. 40 continued to work until it surrendered its Charter in 1817, and together with four other Lodges formed the Grand Lodge of South Carolina. Lodge No. 40 then assumed the name of Saint Andrews Lodge No. 10 and continued to work until 1881 when its Charter was surrendered. It is interesting to note that Albert G. Mackey, who is very prominent in the records of Freemasonry, was Initiated, Passed, and Raised in Saint Andrews Lodge NO.10 in 1841. The local Masons were forced to flee for their lives. However, in spite of the great danger, the Brothers did not leave the area until they had rescued their Lodge Charter and all the records, which included Minutes of every meeting held since their Charter had been issued. They finally reached safety in Charleston, South Carolina, and reports were sent back to the Provincial Grand Lodge at Saint Augustine detailing their plight. In 1772, they were granted Dispensation to work in South Carolina while under the Charter from the Territory of Florida. But when the Provincial Grand Lodge was suppressed in 1783, Saint Andrews Lodge No. 1 was without authority to function. The Grand Lodge of Philadelphia came to their assistance and re-Chartered the Lodge, but the name was changed to Lodge No. 40. Saint Andrews Lodge No. 40 continued to work until it surrendered its Charter in 1817, and together with four other Lodges formed the Grand Lodge of South Carolina. Lodge No. 40 then assumed the name of Saint Andrews Lodge No. 10 in 1841.

Saint Augustine seemed to be the hotbed of Masonry in the Territory and the Grand Lodge of England issued a Warrant to Lodge No. 58B, again to be located in that city, but unfortunately, in an only short while it became a dormant Lodge. However, on March 20, 1776, the Warrant to Lodge No. 58 was renewed. On January 3, 1778, the Grand Lodge of England also granted a Warrant to Lodge No. 204 in Saint Augustine but the Warrant was later ordered returned due to the necessary fees not being paid. The Grand Lodge of South Carolina provided much assistance to the Masons of Florida and issued a Warrant to Lodge No. 30, again in Saint Augustine and to Lodge No. 56 in Pensacola. Both Lodges were short lived as the Spanish Government suppressed all Masonic activities throughout its domain. In 1806, St. Fernando Lodge was chartered by, the Grand Lodge of Georgia to meet in Saint Augustine but as was the case in so many times before, the Lodge was suppressed by the Spanish Government in 1811. In 1820, Floridian Virtues Lodge No. 28 was chartered by the Grand Lodge of South Carolina but like many of its predecessors; it could not survive the politics of the day. In 1824, general public, even though they did not have recognized Lodges or a governing Grand Lodge. It was the dream of the Masons in Florida, however, to be part of a regular Lodge and operate under the authority of a recognized Grand Lodge. This dream was fulfilled and Masonry came to Florida on a permanent basis on December 19, 1825, when the Grand Lodge of Alabama issued a Warrant to Jackson Lodge No. 23 to be located in Tallahassee in the Territory of Florida. A year later, the Grand Lodge of Georgia issued a warrant to Washington Lodge No. 1 to be located in Quincy and on December 8, 1829, they also issued a Warrant to Harmony Lodge NO.2 in Marianna. At this time the political pressures had diminished and these three Lodges, which were the only three surviving Lodges in the Territory, operated under their respective Grand Lodges until 1830. In July 1830, they came together at a called conference and the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida was born. One of the first orders of business was to renumber these three Lodges and identify them as Jackson Lodge NO.1, Washington Lodge No.2, and Harmony Lodge NO.3. I am happy to say that all three of these original Lodges are still in existence and active Florida Lodges today. The convention to form this new Grand Lodge was chaired by W.: John Pope Duval, who was the most senior Past Master present. He was later elected as our first Grand Master and served our Grand Lodge for two years, 1830 and 1831. But, during the early years, our Grand Lodge was a Gypsy type Grand Lodge, inasmuch as it did not own any property and had no permanent home. For the first forty years the early Grand Communications were held in Tallahassee, but in 1870, the Grand Lodge of Florida was officially transferred to the city of Jacksonville, where it remains today. During that span of time in Jacksonville, our Grand Lodge has owned and occupied three different Grand Lodge Buildings. As the history of our Grand Lodge was recorded on the pages of time, we find the lives and actions of Florida Masons played a very important role, not only in the development of our Fraternity and our State, but our nation as well. These were many of the men of destiny who would lead our new State and Country into an uncertain future, and some were the men who would lay down their lives to make the future happen. He rose to the rank of Major and served in the army through the war of 1812. He served as our Grand Master for a total of ten years but asked not to be reelected due to health concerns. After his death in 1860, M.: W.: Coe had five different Particular Lodges named in his honor, but unfortunately, as the years they have all gone defunct. Our 8th Grand Master, M.:W.: John Bradford Taylor, being a military man in his early years, stood in defense of Fort McHenry during the twenty-four hour bombardment which inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star Spangled Banner," which would become our National Anthem. M.:W.: Thomas Henry, who was our 16th Grand Master, was the grandson of Patrick Henry of Revolutionary fame. Our 30th Grand Master, M.: W.: Angus Paterson, had a very interesting Masonic History, which began by having his petition for membership being rejected 22 times. But he was a very persistent man and each year he would re-petition the Lodge and soon after his 4th birthday, he was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in 1882.

Evidently, he progressed rather well as he served as Senior Warden the first year he was Raised and Worshipful Master of his Lodge for the next five years. He then served as our Grand Master nine years later in 1891 and again in 1892. M.: W.: John Leroy Brandon, who was our 54th Grand Master, certainly had a unique situation during his term of office, as he served six weeks of his term as an unaffiliated Mason. He had requested a Dimit from his home Lodge which was granted and it was six weeks later when he finally affiliated with another. Our Grand Lodge, in its wisdom, has also seen fit to elect posthumously to the office of Grand Master, four additional Brothers who were called to the Celestial Lodge Above while progressing through the Grand Lodge Line. The Grand Lodge of Florida had only been in existence for a little over five years when it experienced its first Grand Lodge Trial. It seems as if the Worshipful Master of Hiram Lodge was challenged to a duel Evidently, by another Brother of the Lodge. The challenge was accepted and the parties met at the appointed time and place, and the Worshipful Master, evidently being the better shot, engaged in the duel and killed the other Brother. Masonic Charges were filed on the Worshipful Master for un-masonic conduct. But, after considerable testimony at the trial, the Craft concluded that the Worshipful Master acted in self defense and was honorably acquitted. During the history of our great Grand Lodge, we have seen 544 different Particular Lodges Chartered, along with 14 Memorial Lodges and the Florida Lodge of Research. Although during our 179 years of existence many of the Chartered Lodges have either merged with other Lodges or simply gone defunct, we still have 296 active Lodges in the State with almost 49,000 Florida Masons, serving mankind and our beloved Fraternity. We also estimate that there are approximately 225,000 sojourning Masons in the State of Florida representing almost every State in the United States and even some foreign countries. Many of these Brothers regularly attend our Lodges and enjoy our Fraternal Fellowship. For the past few years we, as most Grand Jurisdictions, have witnessed a decline of members on our rolls. But we look forward to a bright future and hopeful that an influx of new members will

once again raise our membership rolls to heights known in the decades past. And although we may never increase to that number again, Masonry in Florida is alive and well and working under the concept that Basic Masonry is the key to our future.

Special thanks to Most Worshipful Elmer Coffman for his research and collaboration

LODGE OFFICERS 2022

Worshipful Master	Thomas Torretta	602-881-3206
Senior Warden	Terrell Jones	904-669-5249
Junior Warden	George Maultsby	703-956-0228
Secretary	Troy Usina	904-451-5283
Treasurer	Oscar Patterson III	904-955-9175
Senior Deacon	Mark Williams	904-669-9694
Junior Deacon	Darrell Lindsey	904-814-7158
Chaplain	Robert Harry, Jr.	904-806-1255
Tyler	Russell Sellers	512-801-7831

OTHER 11th MASONIC DISTRICT LODGES

- Palatka No. 34**
Palatka—2nd & 4th Mondays
- Lake No. 72**
Crescent City—1st & 3rd Mondays
- Pineland No. 86**
Peniel—1st & 3rd Thursdays
- Melrose No 89**
Keystone Heights—2nd & 4th Tuesdays
- Middleburg No. 107**
Middleburg—1st & 3rd Tuesdays
- Cabul No. 116**
Green Cove Springs—2nd & 4th Thursdays
- Hastings No. 183**
Hastings—2nd & 4th Tuesdays
- Bunnell No. 200**
Bunnell—1st and 3rd Tuesdays

FRATERNAL NOTICES AND DATES

- O.E.S. Chapter #12.....1st & 3rd Mondays
- Rainbow Assembly #42.....1st & 3rd Wednesdays
- York Rite Bodies.....3rd & 4th Tuesdays