

# The Traveler



Volume 3, Issue 3

Fall 2009

## Dates to Remember

- October 3 - Albe-marle Lodge No. 703 (Live Music)
- December 12 - Greensboro Masonic Temple (Annual Meeting & Installation of Officers)



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## My Wilkerson College Experience

By: Bro. Ben Wallace

I was first asked about attending Wilkerson College last year, while I was sitting as the Junior Deacon. I was relatively new to the lodge, and the preceding year had been a whirlwind of activity. My head was still spinning from the events of the past year including having been initiated, passed, raised, and appointed to a chair. I was quite taken with Masonry, but I was simply not ready for Wilkerson College, and frankly I needed a break.

This Spring I was in my new position as Senior Deacon, and things had settled down a bit by the time I was again approached about attending. Several of my Masonic mentors knew the value of the experience and encouraged me to apply. Soon I found myself standing in the lobby of the Cobb Center on the campus of MHCO, along with 40 other members of the future class of 2009. We all muddled around, making awkward introductions, and wondering what we had gotten ourselves into. What followed were three weekends of the most useful, task-oriented training that I have been involved with in a very, very long time. Following each session, I wrote an article for our Lodge newsletter detailing the various speakers, and their messages. You can view those at our Lodge's website at [www.blackmerlodge.org](http://www.blackmerlodge.org). Since I am writing this article for "The Traveler" newsletter, I thought my focus should be more on my general observations than on specifics, since most of the Lodge's members are already familiar with the curriculum.

The first session was at MHCO and the last was at WhiteStone, it didn't take long to realize that one of the themes of the college was to teach us what the charities were really about. While the charities are important to all masons, they became much more personal to me after having spent some time at them. Meeting the staff, and the residents of each charity makes it easy to want to support efforts on their behalf. To the 40 future leaders of our fraternity that Wilkerson College produced in the class of 2009, we learned that our charities are not some abstract mission located somewhere in central North Carolina, they are real places with people that still tug at our heart strings.

The next lesson that I learned was that if there was one idea that the staff wanted us to remember, it was to plan, plan, plan. It was incorporated into every lecture of the entire course. The staff even spiked the Kool-Aid with the recurring theme of planning for our year in the East. I don't know what awaits me during my time in the East, but I know that I will enter that year with a well-structured plan.

It was somewhere in the middle of one of the planning lectures that it dawned on me that, barring something unforeseen, I was probably going to be the Master of my Lodge in a few years. I knew when I accepted a Stewards chair that was the way the line of officers usually worked, but I had not *really* thought it through. Listening to the lectures, I knew that I was wholly unprepared to make that step. But that was of course why I was attending Wilkerson College. I was comforted by the fact that I was being instructed on how to prepare myself. That led to the next logical thought, which really shook me. Knowing how dramatically unprepared I would be ascending to the East without the benefit of this college, I thought of how many men has done just that in the last 200 plus years. When I look at the pictures on the wall of the past Masters at my Lodge, as good of leaders as they were & are, I can't help but to wonder how Wilkerson College could have helped them become more prepared?

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Chaplain's Page

By: WB Rick Smith, PDDGM



Below are some Biblical passages referenced in the Entered Apprentice's Degree, which are from MWB Tom Gregory, the Bahnsen Manual, and other sources. In the next The Traveler, passages relating to the Fellow Craft's Degree will be listed. Comments and suggestions are appreciated.

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### Ruth 4:7 (KJV)

<sup>7</sup>Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor: and this was a testimony in Israel.

### 1 Kings 6:7 (KJV)

<sup>7</sup>And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.

### 1 Chronicles 22:2 (KJV)

<sup>2</sup>And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.

### 2 Chronicles 2:16 (KJV)

<sup>16</sup>And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need: and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.

### 2 Chronicles 3:17 (KJV)

<sup>17</sup>And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

### Psalms 16:1 (KJV)

<sup>1</sup>Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.

### Psalms 133 (KJV)

<sup>1</sup>Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

<sup>2</sup>It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

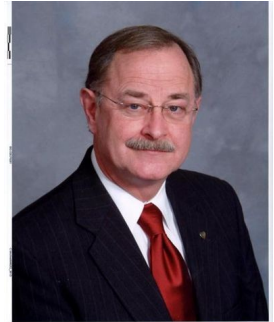
<sup>3</sup>As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

### Isaiah 9:2 (KJV)

<sup>2</sup>The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

### Matthew 7:7 (KJV)

<sup>7</sup>Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:



WB Rick Smith, Chaplain

## The Master's Word

By: WB Mark Conner, PM

" WOW"!!! Have you heard that DR.RICHARD SMITH is NOW-- {DEAN SMITH}? What an event- we need this to be clarified ASAP. as everyone knows that GRAND LODGE is set for this month, please make plans to attend. Whether you are voting or not, come spend some time with your brethren. The officers of WCL 760 ask that you come by the Hospitality room and share some [TRUTHS] or some TALL TALES. Do not forget that our next stated will be at Albemarle 703 in October. The order of business should be that of HAND CLAPPING & FOOT STOMPING. If a frog had wings, he would not BUMP his ----- trying to move ahead in this world. WHAT WOULD YOUR ANSWER BE?? I hope that everyone has had a great summer of vacation and that you are spending plenty of time with your family. See you soon and may GOD BLESS.



WB Mark Conner, Master 2009

## Know Thyself

By: MWB Tom Gregory, PPGM

Socrates wasn't a Freemason, but he behaved like one. A moral thermometer, he prompted those around him to do the right thing. The first use of the term "gadfly" described Socrates. It was said that "As a gadfly prompts a horse to action, so Socrates prompts Athens to action". Not always popular, he stood firm in his morality.



MWB Tom Gregory, PGM

His charge to "Know Thyself" prompts us be introspective - to look inside ourselves for our habits, thoughts, motivations, and weaknesses. To try as men to discover, understand, and attempt to subdue those passions that run contrary to the stature of a Freemason.

While we'll never get that rough ashlar square and true, we can at least make an effort to polish it a bit.

Think about yourself. What manner of man are you? Are there things about your behavior you would not want the world to see? Are you the same man outside and inside your House of Worship? Your Lodge?

I know that I have a long way to go, but hopefully I can make some progress in the right direction. I am, just like you, an example - to my children, my neighbors, my business associates, and to my Brothers in Masonry. What do I contribute as an example - could I be more positive with my Brethren? Could you? Do you have a bit of gadfly in you? Stand true, my Brothers, stand true.

## Happy Birthday to the Following Members

### September

**Brandon Scott - 18**  
**David Blanton - 17**  
**James Earl Vann - 21**  
**Parker Stevens - 19**  
**Richard Prest - 17**  
**Steve McGowin - 4**  
**Wendell Powell - 4**

### October

**Dick Lyon - 17**  
**Jonathan Phillips - 2**  
**Lloyd Wilkerson - 31**  
**Walt Clapp - 27**



### November

**Bill Brunk - 17**  
**Billy Dill - 2**  
**Harry Sinclair - 19**  
**Joe Brown - 24**  
**Joe Knox, Jr. - 10**  
**Kevin Wood - 4**  
**Mark Conner - 16**  
**Mike James - 4**  
**Ray Hall - 4**  
**Ron Sortino - 13**  
**Steve Smith - 29**

## Trial of the Century Update

By: Bro. Gary Handy, Editor



On May 9, 2009 at Pinewood Country Club a monumental event in history took place. The notorious Brother Bill Bruton was finally brought to justice! Thanks to the courage of a small group of Masons, that found the strength to try to put an end to Bruton's reign of terror. These heroes filed charges at great personal risk, that led to the trial of this dark figure. A large crowd of 93 was on hand to witness the event. The trial itself was a brutal contest of wills between the defense and prosecution teams. The horrific details of his actions and that of his defense team are too graphic for this publication and the final outcome was not guilty, but definitely not innocent.

Good did come from the actions of Bro. Bruton by the way of \$10,082.00 being raised for the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. The Grand Master himself donated \$5,000.00 to see that Bruton got the punishment he deserved for his crimes against humanity. Nearing the end of the trial Bruton saw the errors of his ways and donated \$1,000.00 and agreed to join Wilkerson College Lodge, which he has been regularly in attendance for many years, mostly to cause trouble in this reporter's opinion.

A great time was had by all who attended and a very special thanks to Ill. Bro. Bill Bruton for being a GOOD SPORT in supporting our charities.

## Welcome New Members

James L. (Jimmy) Blalock - Albemarle Lodge No. 703  
 William B. (Bill) Bruton - Blackmer Lodge No. 127  
 Douglas E. (Doug) Calhoun - Laurinburg Lodge No. 305  
 Kevin R. Combs - Statesville Lodge No. 27  
 Balvin G. Dunn II - All Seeing Eye Lodge No. 1181 (New York)  
 James W. Howell - Wayne Lodge No. 112  
 John T. Hudson - Andrew-Jackson Lodge No. 576  
 Richard M. (Rich) Miller - William G. Hill Lodge No. 208  
 William E. (Billy) Phillips - Concord Lodge No. 58  
 Dwight M. (Mack) Sigmon - Catawba Lodge No. 248  
 Benjamin G. (Ben) Wallace - Blackmer Lodge No. 127



**WELCOME TO OUR LODGE BROTHERS !!**

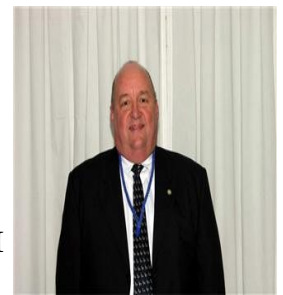
## Secretary's Corner

By: WB Ray Hall, PDDGM - PDDGL

I recently sent notices to all those who had not paid their 2009 dues. I want to thank those of you who have responded and cleared up this matter. To those of you who have not, I want to remind you that if you are dual or plural members of more than one lodge and are suspended for non-payment in one lodge you are automatically suspended in all lodges to which you belong. This is true even if you are an endowed member in another lodge. It is therefore vitally important that you keep your dues up-to-date.

On another note, if you have not been receiving your summons for lodge meetings by e-mail then I do not have your current e-mail address. If this is the case please send me your current e-mail so that I can update my records. Each time I send out a summons I get about five kicked back for incorrect address. You may send it to me at [se-cy76@yahoo.com](mailto:se-cy76@yahoo.com).

Thanks for your help with these matters. I hope to see everyone soon



WB Ray Hall, Secretary

## An American Mason in Scotland

By: WB Larry Thompson, DDGM

Those of you who know me well enough know that I like to travel to Scotland any chance that I get... and you would also know that something crazy usually happens to me when I take "holiday" in Scotland.

In 2005 I left my wallet in a cab and, once I realized what I had done, I almost had a panic attack! Imagine my surprise when I discovered my cab driver in the lobby of our hotel in the process of trying to track me down. It turns out that the cab driver was a Freemason and, after finding my wallet in his cab, it quickly became his mission to return that wallet to its rightful owner!

In 2007 I had the distinction of getting kicked out of the Grand Lodge of Scotland building by W. Brother Robert Cooper when W. Brother Bill Bruton, my traveling companion, decided to ignore certain signs and roam randomly through the building. Later, during that same trip, I had no less than five intoxicated Freemasons argue over who was going to drive me from Mother Kilwinning Lodge, where I was visiting, back to my hotel in Glasgow. Fortunately for me, the Grand Bible Bearer of Scotland stepped in and settled the dispute by pointing out the simple fact that, besides being sober, he clearly outranked them all (thank God!). And, if you were to think that this was enough excitement for one trip, you are wrong! I also managed have my laptop, cell phone and new digital camera stolen before the trip was over!

Regardless, I am a brave soul and I decided to return to Scotland this past July to fulfill my duties as President of the Clan MacTavish Society at the International Gathering of Scottish Clans and Families. During my travels I befriended Brother Dick Boyd of New Hampshire who was accompanying his fiancé, Sherry Thompson, our National Commissioner. Brother Dick and I hit it off immediately and my sister, who joined me on this trip, fell in love with his gregarious personality.

Brother Dick and Sherry had decided several months prior to our trip that they would be getting married in Edinburgh and, as that day approached, I found myself appointed as Dick's guardian. It was my job to make sure that he made it to the wedding! On the day of the wedding Brother Dick was being interviewed by both television and radio stations who were covering The Gathering. After one of the interviews I reminded Dick that "it was time" and that we should be going. Dick then turns to me, hands me Sherry's wedding band, and says "let's get going and, by the way, you are my best man"!

As I attempted to get my head around what Brother Dick just told me, he then states that our piper was missing and that I needed to find a new one and fast (the bride and the media were at the right spot at the right time and I was ready to have another panic attack!). I grabbed the first piper that I ran into, an Anderson, and I must say that I really hit the jackpot. This guy had to be a world champion piper and he spoke "the Gaelic" to boot! I knew I had hit the jackpot when Col. Boyd looked at me during the ceremony and winked.



Oh well, another crisis averted and another eventful trip to Scotland!

**The author at the wedding of his cousin**

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### Wilkerson College Lodge's Mission Statement

*The mission of Wilkerson College Lodge is to foster a flame of brotherly love and friendship that will surpass all differences, envelope all similarities and consistently travel that level of time in search of how to make good men better. As speculative Masons, education will be our greatest tool, so as to instill in our future Masters qualities of leadership, responsibility and compassion.*

### My Experience .....Con't

The final lesson I learned was that, as Masonry moves into a new era, Wilkerson College along with its staff and alumni are going to be leading the way. The declines in membership, the issues with Generation X, the Prince Hall recognition, and many other challenges will face the future leaders of our fraternity. Wilkerson College provides a stable platform from which to dive into these opportunities. In addition to the excellent training, we also have developed an invaluable cache of contacts. Former Grand Masters, lecturers, legal experts, historians, Wilkerson College's staff, and our classmates are all resources from which we will draw much needed insight as we advance in our Masonic careers.

I know I speak for my classmates when I say that we will never be able to return the debt that we owe to the staff of Wilkerson College. Our class was very motivated, and took all the lessons to heart. What started off a few years ago as an attempt to give line officers a little advice and wisdom is fast turning into a first class management-training program. I was especially impressed by the effort the staff put into student evaluations. The staff is continually trying to make the class better, by changing any aspect of a lecture that does not work. Looking to the future, there is talk of some form of graduate program. As word gets out about the quality of this program, keeping the class size manageable is going to be a challenge. The consensus I get from talking to my classmates is one of a general endorsement regarding anything that promotes and advances the cause of Wilkerson College. The good work being done by our college is invaluable to the fraternity in general, and the future Blue Lodge Masters specifically. Please help me in supporting them in any way possible.

