



**THE TOP SPOT**  
*At this very special time of the year, we wish for you, no matter what your faith, peace and happiness as bestowed by a beneficent God and as can be fully enjoyed in this great land of freedom. And we wish a special blessing for those brave citizens assigned to places of danger. May all come right with the world.*

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**Grand Master's Message  
 Ancient Landmarks**

The time of year has arrived when the officers who will govern the 392 subordinate lodges, in North Carolina will be selected for the ensuing year. This annual occurrence will again require each officer to place his right hand over his heart and repeat the following Official Declaration: "I promise upon the honor of a Master Mason that I will, to the best of my ability, conform to and abide by *The Ancient Landmarks, regulations and usages of Masonry, the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina and the laws of this lodge and that I will faithfully perform the duties of the office to which I have been selected.* (Reg. 63-13)



Bunn T. Phillips, Jr.  
 Grand Master

Just what are these *Ancient Landmarks* that all Officers promise to conform to and abide by?

As usual, all Masonic scholars are not in agreement, but it is generally conceded that they are twenty-five (25) in number. The universal language and the universal laws of Masonry are landmarks, but not so are the local ceremonies, laws and usages which may vary in different countries. To attempt to alter or remove these sacred landmarks, by which they

examine and prove a brother's claims to share in the privileges of Masonry, is one of the most heinous offences that a Mason can commit.

The first requisite, therefore, of a custom or rule of action to constitute it a landmark is that it must have existed from "time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." Its antiquity is its essential element. Were it possible to assemble all the present day Masonic authorities in a universal congress and with the most perfect unanimity, to adopt any new regulation, although such regulation would, so long as it remained unrepealed, be obligatory on the whole Craft, yet it would not be a landmark. It would have the character of universality, it is true, but it would still be wanting in that of antiquity.

Another peculiarity of these landmarks of Masonry is that they are unrepeatable. The landmarks of the Order, like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, can suffer no change. What they were centuries ago, they still remain, and must so continue in force until Masonry itself shall cease to exist.

Albert G. Mackey's list of twenty-five (25) Landmarks of Freemasonry are listed below:

1. The modes of recognition.
2. The division of symbolic Masonry into three (3) degrees.
3. The legend of the third degree.
4. The government of the Fraternity by a Grand Master.
5. The prerogative of the Grand Master to preside over every assembly of the Craft.
6. The prerogative of the Grand Master to grant dispensations for conferring degrees at irregular intervals. (THIS LANDMARK IS NOT OBSERVED IN NORTH CAROLINA)
7. The prerogative of the Grand Master to give dispensations for opening and holding lodges.
8. The prerogative of the Grand Master to make Masons at sight. (THIS LANDMARK IS NOT OBSERVED IN NORTH CAROLINA)
9. The necessity for Masons to congregate in lodges.
10. The government of the Craft when congregated in a lodge, by a Master and two (2) Wardens.
11. The necessity that every lodge, when congregated, should be duly tiled.
12. The right of every Mason to be represented in all general meetings of the Craft.
13. The right of every Mason to appeal from his brethren, in lodge convened, to the Grand Master.
14. The right of every Mason to visit and sit in every regular lodge. (PROVIDED THERE IS NO OBJECTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE HOST LODGE, IN NORTH CAROLINA)
15. That no visitor, unknown to the brethren present or some one of them as a Mason, can enter a lodge without first passing an examination, according to ancient usage.
16. No lodge can interfere with the business of another lodge.
17. Every Freemason is amenable to the laws and regulations of the Masonic jurisdiction in which he resides.
18. A candidate for initiation must be a man, free born, unmutilated and of mature age.
19. A belief in the existence of God as the Grand Architect of the Universe.
20. Belief in a resurrection to a future life.
21. A "Book of the Law" constitutes an indispensable part of the furniture of the lodge.
22. The equality of all Masons.
23. The secrecy of the Institution.
24. The foundation of a Speculative science upon an operative art.
25. The landmarks can never be changed.

As previously stated, this is Mackey's list of Ancient Landmarks. It is obvious, from the information provided by the Masonic Service Association, that the laws of the fifty (50) Grand Lodges of the United States are not uniform.

Even though THE CODE, Constitution and Regulations, (which form the Book of Law in North Carolina) is silent upon the subject of the Ancient Landmarks, **all but the three (3) identified above appear to be observed.** The written laws of this Grand Jurisdiction are spelled out in REG. 7-05 of THE CODE. According to the Masonic Service Association, North Carolina is one of fifteen (15) Grand Jurisdictions who have never **formally** adopted the Ancient Landmarks into THE CODE.

I encourage each officer to review carefully the promises he is making in assuming his station or place of leadership in his lodge, while never failing to remember those other promises and obligations heretofore taken. Unfortunately, sometimes we are prone to remember being told, in one of the degrees "that it is not meant that Masonry should interfere with our other duties" but we are too quick to forget those promises we made later, when we agreed to serve as Officers in the lodge.

In conclusion, as this year draws to a close I would be remiss not to express to you, my Brothers, my profound appreciation for the support and encouragement you have given me this year. You'll never know how much your expressions of brotherly love and support have meant. May I wish for each of you a happy Holiday Season and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. May I encourage you to count and be thankful for your God given blessings and assets, for these will forever stand the test of time.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**REFERENCES:**

MSA Sixth Edition, September, 1983 "Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry."  
 Curt A. Mundstock, 330—Holy Bible Masonic Edition 1963

**Who Belongs To What Fraternity**

The following article was borrowed from the *Masonic Light*, official bulletin of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina.

When Standard and Poors, the financial statistical giant, comes out with any kind of survey or evaluation, everybody sits up and takes notice. In fact, Wall Street watches the S & P Stock Index as closely as the Dow Jones Averages.

Thus, real significance can be attached to a recent S & P survey which was titled "Who Belongs To What Fraternity?" They concentrated only on the presidents, board chairmen, chief executives and vice presidents of large corporations. Of 25,500 executives responding, the following are the 10 named most often:

Masons	10,199
Elks	3,394
Knights of Columbus	941
Lions International	415
Knights of Pythias	199
Moose	199
Odd Fellows	159
Eastern Star	88
Eagles	58
Woodmen of the World	31

It is indicative of the quality of the Masonic organization that the top executives in the country have selected Masonic affiliation 2 to 1 over all other fraternal organizations combined.



**The Care Center Honor Roll**

Most North Carolina Masons are aware of the increasing inability of Masonic and Eastern Star Home to promptly admit those the Board of Directors approves for admission. There are now 116 (as of 11/20/90) Masons, Stars, and eligible relatives on the approved waiting list.

Those at and near the bottom of the list will wait four years or longer before finally gaining admission. Some, when finally admitted, will go directly to the Care Center because their physical condition will have badly deteriorated during the long wait, and they will never experience the joys of regular Home residence. Some will die while waiting to be admitted.

These circumstances are completely alien to those prevailing over 75 years ago when Masons and Stars joined hands to found the Home. Then, and during most of the ensuing years, the Masons of North Carolina regularly came forward with their share of the funds necessary to support, improve, and enlarge the Home. It is only in the recent years that our membership has been failing to raise the funds so badly needed in order to keep pace with the ever-growing needs at the Home. No one seems to be able to put a finger on the reasons for our failures, it is only certain that we are indeed failing those who depend so heavily upon us.

In 1987, Grand Master Eddie P. Stiles sought to light a fire under our members and to somehow inspire us to take one large step which would in large measure redeem the recent past and point the way for a renewal of our dedication to the support of our aged, a dedication which had been part of our Masonic trademark for more than half a century. He never realized that goal during his lifetime.

Grand Master Stiles and the board proposed in 1987 that we erect a two-story annex to the Care Center at the Home, adding 37 beds to that facility and reducing the waiting list to a more manageable level. (An architect's drawing is shown above, and the proposed annex is shown at left.) Other benefits accruing from the expansion include an ambulance drive-through, a Chaplain's office/meditation room, a greenhouse (visible in drawing), expanded treatment areas, larger storage facilities, and 21 additional improvements.

A schedule of contributions was proposed, scope of acknowledgements varying according to the sizes of the gifts. Contributions lagged from the beginning. North Carolina Masons simply have not responded to the need in the numbers and amounts hoped for. The total contributed to date is not even half the two million dollars originally sought, standing at less than \$800,000.

Grand Master Bunn T. Phillips, Jr., in speaking to Masons all across the state this year, has been urging individual Masons and lodges to hold a special fund-raiser for the Care Center this year, this in addition to their other fund-raisers. He directed that a coupon for Care Center contributions appear in *The North Carolina Mason* each month for the convenience of our members. He views the need at the Home and the Care Center as terribly critical and is striving diligently to finish what Grand Master Stiles started.

Home Superintendent Tommy Jones reports that contributions from special fund-raisers have indeed increased, but are still far below the volume needed.

Some lodges have sent details and pictures of their Care Center fund-raisers to *The North Carolina Mason* for publication. Most have not. We would like to publish an account of each Care Center fund-raiser — the lodges involved deserve the publicity and other lodges need to be encouraged to emulate them. So we will begin publication of a "Care Center Honor Roll" next month, adding to it each month as information is received from the lodges. So please do this: If you have already held a Care Center fund-raiser, it does not matter how long ago, and it does not matter if an account of it has already appeared in the paper, please send us a simple postcard with the following information on it: Name and number of lodge, city or town, date of Care Center fund-raiser, type of fund-raiser (dinner, auction, yard sale, etc.), and the amount netted for the Care Center. If your lodge has held more than one Care Center fund-raiser, send us separate information on each and we will list each separately on the honor roll. Events will be listed on the honor roll in the order in which we receive your cards.

Then, when you hold Care Center fund-raisers in the future, send us the works — details and photos (black-and-white if possible). We will run it as a separate article and will also add that event to the honor roll.

We will also run a separate listing of individual Masons that have raised Care Center funds on their own, or who have made contributions substantially larger than average — if you let us know about it.

Address the postcards and other material to: Reynold Davenport, PO Box 578, Plymouth, NC 27962.

**JUST WHAT IS  
 The Masonic Service  
 Association of the U. S.?**

Some Masons know about the Masonic Service Association of the United States (MSA) and about some or all of its activities and services, but many — if not most — do not.

Those Masons who have been patients in Veterans' Hospitals remember a Brother Mason who introduced himself as a Hospital Visitor from MSA and who did so much to assist them and to enhance their comfort.

Other Masons have seen and used copies of the *Short Talk Bulletin* and know that these are published monthly by MSA.

Then there are Masons whose areas have experienced disasters and who discovered that MSA was one of the agencies providing relief to their areas.

But by and large, the number of Masons who have a real awareness of MSA and all it does is relatively small. So a brief outline follows:

First of all, MSA is headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland. Its Executive Secretary is Richard E. Fletcher, who was Grand Master of Vermont during the two-year term 1983-85. MSA is supported by annual dues of the member Grand Lodges (our Grand Lodge budgeted \$3,300 for MSA this year). It also receives contributions from Grand Lodges, lodges, individual Masons, and others for use in its Hospital Visitation Program, for disaster relief, etc.

The primary functions and activities of the Masonic Service Association are: Education; Information; Hospital Visitation Program; Distribution of Disaster Relief; Service to the

**New Appointees**

Rockingham — Grand Master Bunn T. Phillips, Jr. has announced the following appointments:

Fred L. Sherrill, Jr., Conover Lodge 709, has been appointed to the Board of General Purposes, replacing Wade H. Fox, who recently died.

James E. Stratton, Meridian Lodge 728, has been appointed to the Board of Publication of *The North Carolina Mason*, replacing John R. Stegall, who has moved from the state.

Masonic Community. Probably the most visible of these efforts is the Hospital Visitation Program.

This visitation program is currently active in 152 VA Medical Centers, 25 State Veterans Homes and several Military Hospitals and extended care facilities around the nation. Heading the program is Thomas R. Dougherty, who was Grand Master of New Jersey in 1972. Representatives of MSA contribute over 500,000 hours annually and MSA provides thousands of dollars in equipment and comfort items. In 1989 alone, MSA spent \$360,587 in its Hospital Visitation Program, receiving \$330,900 in contributions for that purpose.

Although MSA helps any patient who needs assistance, it seeks out Masons and contacts their families and lodges, keeping them posted on condition and progress. Official Hospital Visitors and other volunteers, in assisting patients, write letters, read newspapers and the Bible to those blind or paralyzed, help with feeding, shave patients, wheel them to chapel or therapy, talk to them, play games with them, and in many other ways cause their hospital

(Continued on page 2)