



THE PRINCE HALL SENTINEL

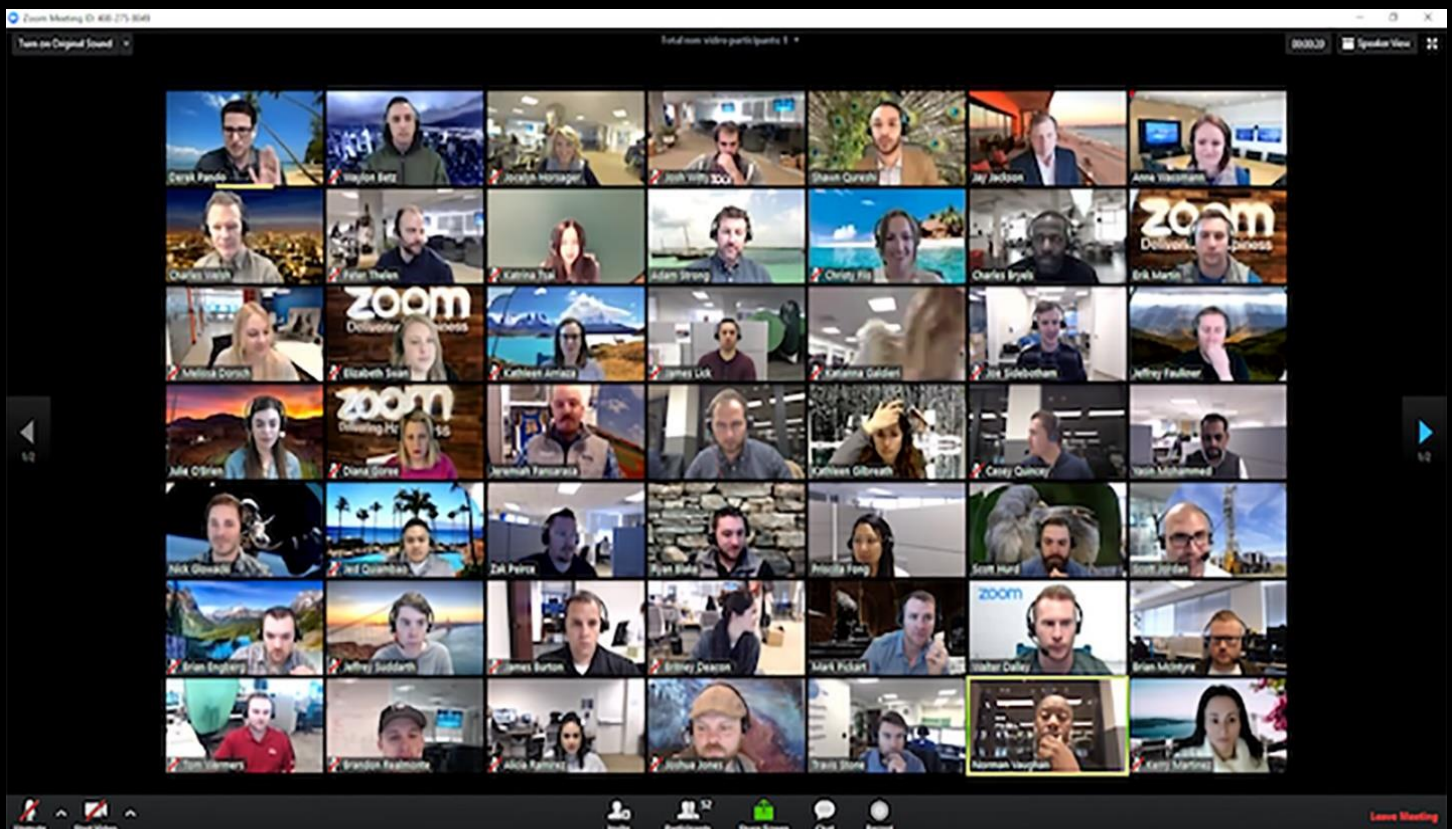
Vol. 53, Issue No.1, April 2021

The New Normal!

zoom



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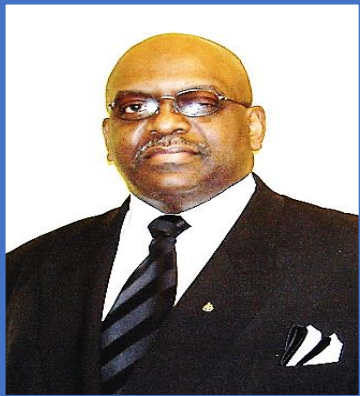
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The Prince Hall Sentinel is the official publication of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of the state of New York. However, all articles appearing in this publication express the view and opinion of the author or interviewee, and do not, unless specially stated, express the views and opinions or become official pronouncements of the Grand Master or Grand Lodge. All rights reserved.

THE PRINCE HALL SENTINEL



From The Editor's Desk

The issue of how race-related health inequities are affecting several disadvantaged groups, and black communities in particular, in the U.S. is complex and has wide ramifications. COVID-19 has only served to unmask inequities that have existed for hundreds of years.

The current climate of social unrest in the U.S. and the thousands of people protesting against

systemic racism and in support of the Black Lives Matter movement is bringing these inequities into even sharper focus, adding more political and emotional weight to a longstanding issue.

For Black Americans, Covid-19 is another brutal reminder of the racist legacy of the American healthcare system. A disproportionate number of the over 500,000 Americans who have died of coronavirus are Black. Yet African Americans and other people of color have struggled to access vaccines.

Recent data show a persistent racial disparity in Covid-19 cases and deaths. The Covid-19 death rate for Blacks is 166 per 100,000 people. The rate is 160 for American Indians or Alaskan Natives, 141 for Latinos, 132 for Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, 116 for Whites, and 87 for Asians.

Each day there is another call, text, or post about someone I know who has gotten sick or passed away from COVID-19. The grief and anxiety are profound, especially when compounded by recent news of police violence against and harassment of people of color.

I know I am not alone. Black Americans are twice as likely to know someone who has tested positive or died from COVID-19 than White Americans. Underlying health disparities and social determinants play a large role. But Black Americans have also had less access to COVID-19 testing and medical care. Our symptoms have been minimized. For too many, this has proven fatal. For others it is yet another reminder that Black Americans are not afforded the same opportunities as other Americans, even during a pandemic.

Historically, Black Americans are underrepresented in research. Why? Implicit and explicit bias are known factors. Mistrust and a history of victimization. Tuskegee and Henrietta Lacks still loom large in communities of color. But studies show that Blacks are viewed by medical professionals as more challenging, less promising research participants, have more underlying comorbid conditions, and most discouraging of all, they are often just not asked to participate. Simply put, we are excluded.

While many American lives have been merely inconvenienced by COVID-19, our community has been devastated. As I watch what's happening, I am devastated. Black Americans cannot be denied an opportunity to assist in finding solutions to COVID-19. Our inclusion is a matter of life and death.

THE PRINCE HALL SENTINEL

Official Publication of
The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge
F&AM, State of New York

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R. . W. . Kevin P. Wardally (14)

WB Guillermo "Bill" J. M. Thorne (79)

P.M. John Hudson Jr. (63)



The Grand Master



***"What you do Makes a Difference,
You Have to Decide
What Kind of Difference you want to Make!"***
- Jane Goodall

Happy New Year!

By God's Grace, A New Year is upon us. We have been blessed with another opportunity. An opportunity to do better, to be better, to make a difference. A Positive Difference!



It is said that the New Year is a time to reflect. I believe that Every Day is a time to reflect. Prince Hall Family, each day we should reflect on our words and actions. What worked and what didn't work. Ask ourselves, What can I do better? How can I be better? Did I make a positive difference?

Prince Hall Masonry is one of the oldest African American Organizations in the State of New York. We have rich history. Therefore, it is not only expected of us as an elite organization, respectfully, it is our Duty and Responsibility to make a positive difference.

We are fortunate to have a fantastic group of individuals who make up this great Prince Hall Family! Each of us having an important role. Let it be our earnest care and commitment to Grow in Good Character and Shine in Positive Light, keeping our History, Prestige and Honor intact. Proving ourselves to be who we say we are. Difference Makers!

Each of us being Kind and Forgiving, Understanding and Respectful, Accepting and Non-Judgmental. Keepers of one another. Difference Makers!

May we each spend more time with our Family and Loved Ones. Tell them often of the love we have for them. Difference Maker!

Wishing for you and your loved ones Good Health, Peace, Prosperity and God's Richest Blessings.

Fraternally,

Most Worshipful Walter C. King, Jr.,
Grand Master

MOST WORSHIPFUL PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE

*Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons
State of New York*

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R. W. Keith B Bryant Sr.



R. W. Patrick Rosene



JOINT MESSAGE FROM

M.:W.: Walter C. King Jr. & M.:W.: William M. Sardone

**Grand Master of Prince Hall Masons
State of New York**

**Grand Master of F. & A.M. Masons
State of New York**



Extending Holiday Greetings To The Craft

and emphasizing that To prevent infection and to slow transmission of COVID-19, do the following:

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or clean them with alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when in public settings or around others.
- Maintain at least six feet distance between you and people coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel sick.
- Refrain from smoking and other activities that weaken the lungs.
- Practice physical distancing by avoiding unnecessary travel and staying away from large groups of people.



How to Wear Two Face Coverings

Wearing two face coverings can provide you and others with added protection by increasing the number of layers of material and making for a snugger fit.

When wearing two face coverings, consider the following:

✔ Use one cloth face covering and one disposable mask. The disposable mask should be worn underneath and the cloth face covering on top.

✘ Do not use two disposable masks.

✘ Do not use a face covering over or under a KN95 mask. A KN95 should be worn alone.



No matter what type of covering you wear, the most important thing is to wear at least one and wear it correctly (over the nose and mouth, and snug against the face).



Operation Support the Vote Protect the Vote 2020





The 2020 election was probably the most important election of this generation and as Prince Hall Masons it was necessary for us to play an important part and support our community in exercising their legal right to vote. It was apparent that there were many forces out there who were determined on making voting in our community a difficult task by using voter intimidation tactics and long lines at the various polling places. As Prince Hall Masons and men of our community we could not let them succeed.

In response M. W. Walter C. King Jr. Grand Master of Prince Hall Masons in the State of New York put out a call to able-bodied Prince Hall Masons in the state of New York, asking them to step up and assume an active part in assisting the residences in our various communities to exercise their constitutional right to vote in the 2020 general election.

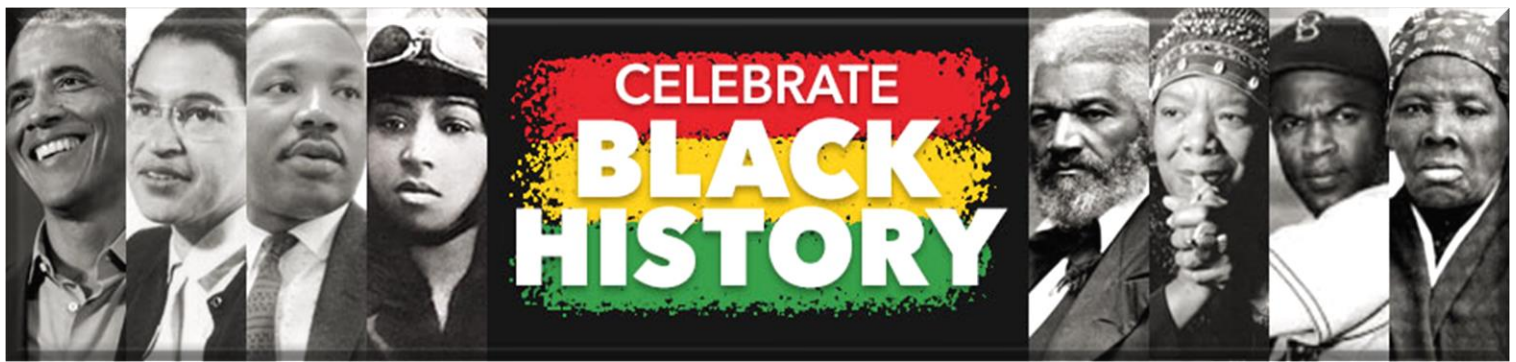
Brothers and Sisters stepped up, led by Grand Junior Warden R. W. Jean E. Apollon Sr. (63) and our Grand Treasurer R. W. Kevin Wardally (14), In Harlem they covered almost 20 voter polling sites, checking voter harassment, and giving drinks and snacks to the residents on the lines and the poll workers in the various polling sites. Some even travelled to Philadelphia along with “100 Black Men” to fight voter harassment there.

Special thanks to our Grand Master for approving our efforts, to our Grand Secretary R. W. Sandino Sanchez #14 for picking up the supplies and providing his beautiful family to help throughout the day, to our Grand Junior Warden R. W. Jean E. Apollon Jr. #63 for getting us a van with our Grand Lodge signage to travel to the sites and take seniors to the polls that needed it.

To the brothers who gave freely of their time: Bro Queen #76, Bro. Boyce #55, Bro Conyers #1, Bro Smith #97, Bro Horne #38, Bro Rodriguez #14, Bro Diaz #14, Bro Cochran #2, Bro Bey #55, Bro Addams #14, Bro Allen #14, Bro. Gardner Luciano #93, and Sis Janice Reyes Sanchez #14 and of course our Deputy G.M. R. W. Gregory R. Smith Jr. #1.







Ossian Flipper (1856-1940)



Former slave, engineer and author, He became the first African American to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1877. The following year, Flipper continued to break barriers by becoming the first Black officer in the U.S. Army to command Black troops, the buffalo soldiers of the 10th Cavalry. Flipper served with competency and distinction during the Apache Wars and the Victorio Campaign, but was haunted by rumors alleging improprieties. Eventually, he was court martialed and dismissed from the Army.

After losing his commission in the Army, Flipper worked throughout Mexico and Latin America as an assistant to the Secretary of the Interior. He retired to Atlanta in 1931 and died of natural causes in 1940. In 1994, his descendants applied to the U.S. military for a review of Flipper's court-martial and dismissal. A review found the conviction and punishment were "unduly harsh and unjust" and recommended Flipper's dismissal be changed to a good conduct discharge. Shortly afterwards, an application for pardon was filed with the Secretary of the Army, which was forwarded to the Department of Justice.

President Bill Clinton posthumously pardoned Lieutenant Henry O. Flipper on February 19, 1999, 118 years after his conviction.

Edgar R. Huff (1920-1994)

First African American U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Major. A native of Gadsden, Alabama, enlisted in the Marine Corps on September 24, 1942, as one of the first African Americans to do so. Huff received his recruit training with the 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Montford Point Camp, New River, North Carolina.

In early 1943, he was sent to drill instructors school, and upon completion of his course, was assigned duty as a drill instructor in March 1943. At that time, Montford Point Camp was the receiving point for all blacks entering the Marine Corps, and by November 1944, Huff had been assigned duty as field sergeant major of all recruit training at the Montford Point.

Gilbert Johnson, the only other black sergeant major besides Huff to serve during World War II, was Huff's brother-in-law. They were married to twin sisters.

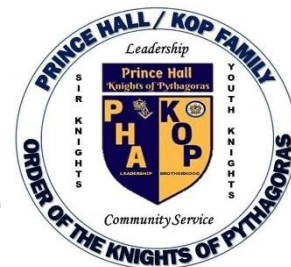
Huff served in the Western Pacific area during WWII Saipan, Okinawa, and in North China. Following World War II, he served as Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of Recruit Training at Montford Point Camp until May 1949. He served in The Republic of Vietnam (May 1967 – June 1968); (July 1968 – October 1970) & (October 1970 until October 1971).

Huff died on May 2, 1994, at Camp Lejeune Naval Hospital.





ORDER OF THE KNIGHTS OF PYTHAGORAS



By Brother John Hudson Jr.

Hello Brothers, Happy New Year's I Pray for Peace , Prosperity, Love and Good Health. I am Looking for Brother's throughout the State of New York in the Prince Hall Phamily from The 1st,2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th District that are willing to become a part of the Knights of Pythagoras youth Mentoring Program. Sponsored by The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New York State M.W. Walter King Jr. Grand Master at Present presiding.

No Man Stands so tall as when he stoops to help a boy. In 2021 Let's get serious about the work in which we are engaged to save our son's Its a Phamily affair invest your son's, Nephew's, Cousin's, and Neighbor's in our youth Program.

Any Lodges or District's willing to Sponsor a Youth Council in your respective Communities contact us
KOPNYSPHA@GMAIL.COM or Jfhudsonkop@aol.com



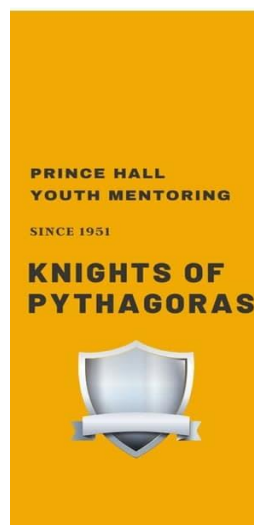
ORDER OF THE KNIGHTS OF PYTHAGORAS

WANTED: Master Masons YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Join our Youth Program!

ARE YOU INTERESTED?
CONTACT US: **John Hudson**
TO SIGN UP! **JfHudsonkop@aol**

KOPNYSPHA@GM .com
AIL.COM



"The Knights of Pythagoras youth mentoring program focuses on youth needs by developing their skills relevant to adulthood success. The vital aspect of youth development is leadership. Building the next generation of leaders is critical."

“

Mentoring is
about giving our
youth the tools
they need to
succeed...

Leadership & Community Service

KNIGHTS OF PYTHAGORAS



Hello Phamily:

This is an appeal to Help our New York State Knights of Pythagoras youth program to raise funds to help our young knights Summer youth Encampment 2021 @ Rosco New York at Camp Eureka at Home of NY Prince Hall Mason Retreat

We ask that you Purchase one of our coins of your Choice with donation of 35.00 or 25.00 which includes shipping or if you just want to make a pledge please use our link:

paypal.me/kopnyspha

Thank you. KOP4LIFE💙

Bro John Hudson

State Director NYS

New York State K.o.p Fund Raiser

35.00



25.00

Please Support The Paul Robeson
Venerable Grand Council youth
program

KOP4LIFE



NEW YORK PRINCE HALL MASONS IN THE NEWS

R.W. Shawn Stradford of Sliver Lake Lodge #59

Compiled by R.W. Robert B. Hansley (93)

From an article

By Michael Anderson | Staten Island Chamber of Commerce



R.W. Shawn J. Stradford Sr., president and CEO of West Brighton's Stradford Funeral Home for Funerals and Cremations Inc., For his accomplishments is being honored with a Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Award, which he will receive in the Established Businessperson category. The award, which is presented by the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce and the Staten Island Advance, honor the memory of Louis R. Miller, a businessman and West Brighton resident who was also a community leader. Recipients of the Louis R. Miller Awards are recognized as effective business leaders and for their outstanding contributions to the local community.

R.W. Stradford's mother, the Rev. Yvonne Stradford, envisioned her son in a profession that would make a difference. Rev. Stradford believed her son could provide a fresh perspective and contribute to the local community, which was and still is woefully underserved. Years later, Rev. Stradford's vision came to fruition. In 2020, Shawn Stradford, president and CEO of West Brighton's Stradford Funeral Home for Funerals and Cremations Inc., celebrated 20 years of dedicated service.

R.W. Stradford attended SUNY-Farmingdale and studied veterinary science before transferring to The University of the District of Columbia (UDC). He graduated UDC with a Mortuary Science degree, with honors.

"When I was at UDC, I guess that's where you could say that the spark ignited. I had awesome opportunities to work in D.C. funeral establishments. At that time, D.C., unfortunately, was considered the 'murder capital,' and every case I encountered was definitely complicated. My experiences and training in D.C. mortuaries, while difficult for this young 20-something, combined with the education and mentoring I received at UDC, became an invaluable Masterclass. I never looked back when I realized just how much the funeral business is me."

After graduation, Stradford remained in the Washington, D.C., area and continued honing his skills at a local funeral home. He then moved back to Staten Island, looked for work in area funeral establishments, and was rejected repeatedly.

"Instead of being defeated, I relied on the tenets of my faith and the keys of my Masterclass, resilience, preparation and vision. I then reinvented myself to a wider market," R.W. Stradford started employment as a forensic pathology assistant for the Nassau County Medical Examiner's Office (NCME), becoming only the second African-American appointed to that office. Years later, Stradford encountered a tragic case involving a severely abused child. The case disturbed him, and he said he saw it as a sign to move on and start something new.

"I am a religious person, and I knew at that point that God was preparing me for His next plan. In my heart, God spoke to me and revealed my next assignment by telling me, 'This is not all that I have for you. There is so much more to do,' I submitted my resignation documents, remained at NCME for three more months, and then came to Staten Island in 2000 to open up Stradford Home for Funerals & Cremations Inc., in a small location in Mariners Harbor. After one year and just eight funerals, Stradford relocated to Tompkinsville. Stradford said he knew the key to long-term

success was in establishing relationships and building trust. “You have to earn the trust of every family. We are entrusted to the final care for someone’s loved one, and that is an obligation to each family that I take seriously. I treat each family as if they are the only persons grieving at that time. We never rush any family, and everyone is given the utmost respect and dignity as if they were my own family. As we know, death is final, so we strive to make that final chapter as pleasantly memorable as possible. Every funeral requires a copious amount of time and dedication from myself and staff from beginning to end, in order to provide a family a proper and dignified Homegoing for their loved one.”

As the funeral home and its owner developed a strong and trusted reputation within the community, more families relied on Stradford to handle their family services. “The funeral home could only hold about 50 people and, as time went on, I realized when there were funerals, so many people would come from the community. When someone from the community dies, you would have 200 to 250 people showing up at your door,” As the home’s reputation grew, it came time to expand once again. In 2015, the business relocated to its current address at 1241 Castleton Ave. in West Brighton. The new and significantly larger location was a Godsend, especially during the height of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, when the home found itself inundated with deceased loved ones of grieving families.

“As COVID-19 ravaged New York City, conducting church funerals became almost non-existent. We were limited to what we could do on-site. The timeframe that families could have, and then the influx of all the cases coming in was almost like someone just turned a light switch on, and the phones did not stop ringing for months. Had it not been for the size of this building, we never would have been able to accommodate as many families as we did, which were well over 200, “We soon realized just how crazy and out of control things were when funeral homes from other boroughs, Westchester, New Jersey and Connecticut called us to help.”

To provide those extra services and keep his family and staff safe, R.W. Stradford spent his nights sleeping at the funeral home. Notably, since his mother and cousin, the funeral home’s cosmetologist Carolyn Jackson, were older and within a higher risk bracket, he said he decided to keep them away from the facility and take on the extra duties himself. “In my 20 years of owning this funeral home, my mom and cousin always attended and served at every single funeral service, They have both sustained me, and I always knew that I was never alone, no matter what. I would never have been able to get to my 20th year without them. They were very instrumental in this business. I would also be remiss if I did not acknowledge the dedication of my team during that unprecedented time, namely, Maritza Rivera, Serena Robinson-Williams, Compton Richmond, Doug B., Tanisha, and Kima,”.

Needless to say, R.W. Stradford pushed through those intense times and provided families the closure they needed, even as many other funeral homes closed their doors. “Looking back at it now, 20 years later, unbeknownst to most, I ran a marathon of sacrifice and pain, but nonetheless, the reward of standing with a family during a dark time in their lives is absolutely priceless and will forever be cherished, These 20 years have yielded such fulfillment for me, my family, the families I’ve been honored to serve, and my community.”

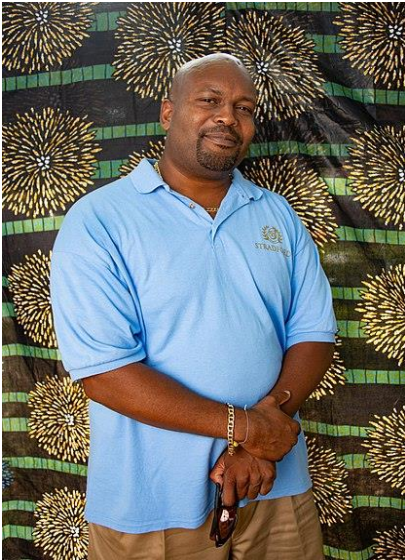
As a West Brighton native, R.W. Stradford maintains a strong belief in helping his community, as evidenced by his contributions to school supply and clothing drives, and turkey giveaways throughout the years. To extend his reach even further, he created the Stradford Family Life Foundation five years ago and held his first-ever toy drive this past holiday season. While R.W. Stradford is ready to assist anyone in need, he remembers those families that walk into his funeral home.

“I do believe in giving back. Not every family has insurance. Not every family has the financial means. Funeral services are by no way cheap or inexpensive. We’re always here trying to find ways to assist that family as much as possible.”

R,W, Stradford takes pride in knowing that due to others’ benevolence, the Life Foundation has been able to stand in the gap to assist families in meeting funeral expenses.

R.W. Stradford is also a founding member of Occupy the Block, a group aimed at deterring gun violence and street crime on the North Shore. While some people may not recognize his face, many are aware of his tactics. Stradford sends a powerful message when he shows up with a hearse and coffin. “When a homicide happens in a community, it sends such a big ripple effect across the entire borough because Staten Island is so communal, It starts with a community base. Someone has to come out and say, ‘I care, and I’m here.’ You can’t just tell individuals to put their guns down. You have to give folks a reason.”

During these times, Occupy the Block members review academics, distribute information about gun violence and employment opportunities, or simply play a game of chess. Also, members of the New York Police Department attend and engage “on a relaxed level, which is another way to bridge the gap between the community and police department.” R.W. Stradford expressed how some of the kids out here have never left Staten Island, or left the state they don’t know that there’s something bigger than what you see or what you’re doing out here.



R.W. Shawn J. Stradford Sr. is a member of Silver Lake Lodge #59 M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, State of New York, and Silver Queen Chapter #43; Eureka Grand Chapter Order Eastern Star, Prince Hall Affiliation.

Some of my life goals include: Seeing my son become a better man than me and watching him pay it forward.

The best part of my job: To be able to offer some level of comfort to the families we serve. Understanding that as funeral directors, we are charged with trying to help our families through a dark time so they can begin to grieve.

The most difficult part of my job: To date: Helping families during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and shut down. Many families were inconsolable, mostly due to the inability to be with their family members when they passed away. Then the limitations on gatherings at the funeral home, which certainly impacted the community grieving process.

My life philosophy: We will all die one day. So the goal is not to live forever, but to create something that will.

I am most proud of: My son, Shawn J. Stradford II.

Something that no one knows about me: The nickname my mother gave me!

Personal interests and hobbies: Golf, sitting by the water, thinking, and thanking God for my life and family. My interest is certainly community uplift.

I laugh at: Myself.

I am really good at: What God has blessed my hands and heart to do as a funeral director.

I admire: My parents, Rudolph, and Rev. Yvonne Stradford.



STADFORD

H O M E F O R F U N E R A L S & C R E M A T I O N S



Worshipful Master Steven W. Ellis of Sons of Kings Lodge # 123 out of Brooklyn, New York was inducted into the New York State Veterans Hall of Fame in 2020. Brother Ellis was born in Guyana, South America in 1965, the eldest of four boys and migrated to Brooklyn in 1974 at the age of eight, where he has lived since. In 1980, he proudly became a citizen of the United States of America.

Brother Ellis proudly served in the United States Army from 1984-89 and was honorably discharged as a Specialist E4.

He graduated from Midwood High School Class of 1983 and represented the track team as the New York City High Jump Champion 1982 and 1983. He continued his Olympic track and field aspirations by competing on the All-Army Track team.

Bro. Ellis began a career with the New York Telephone (now Verizon) in January 1990 and grew with the company for 19 years. Starting as a Business Representative, he was promoted to Sales Manager with a team of 23 representatives. He was then promoted to training and marketing manager serving 23 offices nationwide. While managing his career and a family, he was able to complete his Business Management Degree at New York University where he graduated in 1999.

After his retirement in 2009, he formed his contracting and consulting company, Business Resource Solutions Group LLC.

Bro. Ellis formed the United Football League Inc. He served as Commissioner and owner for over 23 teams from Connecticut to North Carolina for 15 years.

As Worshipful Master of Sons of Kings Lodge # 123 of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the State of New York, he leads various community and charity initiatives. This includes, but is not limited to, mentoring young men and women, providing college scholarships, and caring for NYC homeless as well as addressing food insecurities of the senior citizen communities.

Mr. Ellis is a survivor of the World Trade Center attack and was rescued from the burning building by our brave first responders.

He has been married for 35 years to his high school sweetheart Maribel. They have two children. Alex, a highly intelligent and hardworking young man with special needs and Lexie his 11-year-old sister, mature beyond her years.

In his free time, Mr. Ellis enjoys spending time with his family traveling. He can also be found on one of many golf courses throughout the tri-state area.



Beacon Light #58

**We have been through some tough times, but it is a great feeling to come together
for a good cause. City Harvest on the Eve of Thanksgiving**





Silver Queen Chapter No. 43

Staten Island, New York

Member of

Eureka Grand Chapter

Order Eastern Star, Prince Hall Affiliation, State of New York

By Alexandra Salmieri
| asalmieri@siadvance.com

Project ‘Loving up on the Elderly.’ spreads love just in time for Valentine’s Day.



Kelly Ethridge, Worthy Matron Dr. Marylin Brown, Chaplain, Cynthia Willie, Trustee, Jacqueline Lopardo Esq., Conductress, , and Josephine Tucker, Past Matron gather to prepare care packages that will be sent to seniors in the community. Stapleton, Feb. 11, 2020.

STATEN ISLAND N.Y. — In honor of Black History Month and Valentine’s Day, the Prince Hall Order of Eastern Stars (OES) wanted to give back to the seniors in the community. The Staten Island-based chapter, Silver Queen Chapter No. 43, is solely made up of women of color however, other chapters around the country are made up of men and women of all backgrounds. Dating back to the late 1800s OES is one of the oldest Black organizations for women to participate in social, charitable, and fraternal activities. “We are immersed in everything, politics, education, and economics,” said Dr. Marylin Brown, Chaplain of the Silver Queen Chapter No. 43. Members of the group donated money to mail Valentine’s cards and sweets to let seniors know that “someone is thinking about them.”



Members of the Order of Eastern Star, Silver Queen Chapter No.43 prepare care packages that will be sent to seniors in the community. “Not just because it’s Valentine’s day weekend, but during COVID-19, it’s good to check on the elderly,” said Dr. Brown. “And then also we’re modeling for the youth, how we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors,” she added.

Trustee Cynthia Willie of Sunnyside holds Valentine’s Day cards for seniors as a part of the Order of Eastern Star’s “Loving up on the Elderly” project.



Staten Island members met at the Post Office in Stapleton to prepare and ship the care packages via USPS. Sister Brown highlighted that many seniors love to receive mail and reminded people that “the post office is alive and well.” She also explained that right now, mail is a safe way to connect with people who have a higher risk of getting the coronavirus.



Each package included a Valentine's pen, chocolates, and card with \$10 inside as a part of the Order of Eastern Star’s “Loving up on the Elderly” project. Together they mailed out over 40 care packages.

“We’re just doing what we’re supposed to do, Prince Hall Eastern Stars love up on the elders and take care of our community,” said Dr. Brown.

How does the “Book of Laws” affect us as Freemasons?



WB Guillermo “Bill” J. M. Thorne, 33°

The past year has been extremely stressful, and at times depressing. However, allow me to offer the following argument; as Freemasons, we are encouraged to take our time in trying to understand the world about us. I believe it is safe to say that we possess the appropriate tools and strategies to deal with the daily issues we face. Why do we not just embrace the lessons taught to us on first being accepted into the fraternity – ***“Let no man enter upon any great or important undertaking without first invoking the aid of Deity.”*** Freemasons, regardless of their spoken language and location on earth, have been greeted with those words; on his first entry to the Lodge. In my case, this was a proclamation as to how my life should be conducted, beyond that moment. I have tried to live a life obeying and honoring, this part of our teachings.

The introduction further tells us, ***“The Trust of a Mason is in his God, as a basis which can never fail and a rock which can never (Sic) be shaken.”***

In case you had any questions about the likelihood you would follow the premise presented, you quickly heard, “Nor is this belief a mere empty profession, for it is (Sic) borne out and illustrated by our practice.”

To make it correctly, understandable to the initiate, we were told, “We open and close our Lodges with prayer; the same formula is used at the initiation of candidates; no business of any importance is transacted without invoking Divine assistance on our labors; and [-] the blessing of God cannot be expected to follow any man’s profession it be [is] verified by a good and virtuous life.” Why just the Lodge, and not your daily life?

After considerable discussion with fellow Masons, I believe, as does many of them, that this introduction is vital to those of us who have embraced these words, making them an integral part of our lives.

Those of us who embrace the spiritual teachings and are practitioners of the faith have the vast content of the **Holy Bible (“Book of Laws” or “Great Light in Masonry”)** to consult and serve as our guides. The following explanation has been offered in the use of the Holy Bible, among us, ***“However men differ in creed or theology, all good men (sic) are agreed [agree] that within the covers of the Holy Bible are found those principles of morality which lay the foundation upon which to build a righteous life.”*** I do not believe we will find too many who will disagree.

Most are familiar with the story of Moses. After Moses’ experience with the burning bush, he asked, *“Who shall I say said this?”* From the bush came. *“...the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”* After Moses hid his face in shame, the Lord God said, *“I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters.”* As God shared His observations, Moses then asked God, *“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”* And the Lord answered, *“I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”* Moses responded, *“If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’*

‘What shall I say to them?’” The Lord responded, “...I AM WHO I SAY I AM,” but Moses hesitated. The voice continued saying, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’: “This is my name forever and this my title for all generations.” Man’s nature being what it is; we all will ask the same question (the times were perilous for those who claimed an unseen or idol – God); it is our nature, and the spirit will always question what has been presented.

In later teachings and following the crucifixion of the Lord Christ, we find the Apostle Paul (Paul who was known as, Saul, a hoodlum whose purpose in life was to destroy Christians; he met Jesus on the road to Damascus, he was converted and his name changed to Paul) a true believer and one who had experienced the horrors of men’s cruelty to each other, he himself having been persecuted and jailed preaching the Gospel; in this example, a letter to the Romans, I believe we can see a parallel to our teaching as Freemasons and should serve as a reminder to all of us...The troubles and tribulations of 2020, are no difference from other similar periods in history. We have a tendency to complain and argue about the troubles we are presented with as opposed to accepting the changes and finding solutions. Paul reminds the Romans in a gentle manner how to take care of themselves.

“Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this, you will heap burning coals on their heads.” Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:9-21

In reading Paul’s admonition, I believe that every Freemason, who is indeed a dedicated student of the Craft will find, these words do not vary much from the teachings of his Master’s, Jesus Christ’s. Keeping in mind that Freemasonry is not a religion and my intent not to promote any specific religious belief...however, you will find similarities in those of the Obligations have taken; let’s examine what Paul had to say with the intent of reviewing and comparing the differences, however subtle they may be. It does not include the texts from Rituals and other Catechisms, for apparent reasons. However, I do encourage yourself or group to study:

“Let love be genuine” – Be honest, be sincere, be truthful...

“Hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good” – Shun that which is evil, do not embrace it; hold unto what is good... “Love one another with mutual affection” – Love each other with openness and sincerity...

“Outdo one another in showing honor” – Do and treat each other the same, to your face as well as your back...

“Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.” – Don’t hesitate with a genuine response, step up in a fervent spirit, serve the Lord ...

“Rejoice in hope,” – Assume a standard of hope ...

“Be patient in suffering,” - be patient in the sufferings that you may be experiencing ...

”Persevere in prayer.” - pray, hold fast in your belief of prayer ...

“Assist in support of the needs of the saints;” – Help in support of the needs of the saints ...

“Extend hospitality to strangers.” – Be hospitable to strangers ...

“Bless those who persecute you;” – Bless those who persecute you ...

“Bless and do not curse them.” – bless and do not curse them ...

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.” - Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep...

“Live in harmony with one another;” – Live in harmony with one another...

“Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;” – Do not believe yourself better than another, do associate with those of lesser status...

“Do not claim to be wiser than you are.” - Do not claim to be wiser than you are.

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.” - Do not repay ANYONE evil for evil, do stop, and think about what is noble in the sight of others...

“If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.” – If you can live peacefully with others...

“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, (“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”) – Beloved, NEVER avenge yourself, always leave room for the wrath of God, it is so written.” ...

“If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all Sic (N), “if your enemies are hungry, feed them;” – If possible, and you are able.

Be diligent, prudent, temperate, [and] discreet. Remember that at this altar you have promised to o remind him, in the most tender manner, of his failings, and aid his reformation...Vindicate his character.

WB Guillermo “Bill” J. M. Thorne, 33°



1. *Tappan Zee Lodge No. 79, F. & A. M., MWPHGL-NY*
2. *Three Square Chapter No. 23, H.R.A.M., MEGC-HRAM-(PH)-NY*
3. *Pentecost Consistory No. 98, A.A.S.R., PHA, NJ, Inc.*
4. *Poinsettia Chapter No. 76, EGC-OES-PH, Inc.*
5. *Elejmal Temple No. 185, A.E.A.O.N.M.S., N. & S. America & Jurisdictions, Inc.*

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New York Prince Hall Family



Spotlight On the Craft



ALPHA CHAPTER # 1 & BOYER LODGE # 1

By Sis. Valerie Roman-Ramsey



Prince Hall

Words cannot express how good it feels when a team come together, and we bring smiles to many!! Alpha Chapter No 1 and Boyer Lodge No 1 teamed up and gave out close to 200 toys and gift cards in Harlem this afternoon. The kids also enjoyed my personal favorite Krispy Kreme doughnuts. Sister Nicole Barker, Sister ParrisRise Brown, Bro Nate Higgins, WM Tremaine Bunche, PM Carlo Smith Ramsay, PM Laura Daniels thank you for all your help making this happen!!





BOYER LODGE # 1

The Mother Lodge of Prince Hall Masonry in the State of New York

On February 16, 2021 we celebrated a historic moment, the birthday of Boyer Lodge No 1. The Mother Lodge of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the State of New York, over which, Most Worshipful Walter C. King Jr. at present, presides....

On February 16th, 1812, a contingent from African Lodge #459 made a trip to the Great State of New York to Mother Zion A.M.E. Church. These Brothers initiated, passed, and raised a number of Brothers from that Church who then formed a Lodge styled after a Haitian Statesman named Jean Pierre Boyer...That Lodge was called Boyer Lodge No. 1... At present Brother Treymaine Bunche serves as Boyer #1's Worshipful Master! We congratulate all of the great Brothers of Boyer Lodge #1, both past and present!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BOYER LODGE # 1!

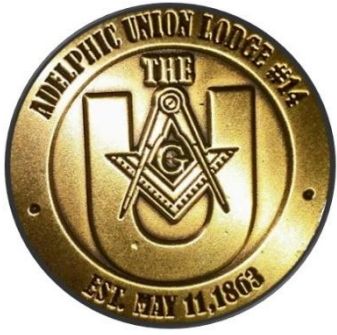


Boyer Lodge #1 knows that our strength lies not only in the words we stand by, but most importantly through the actions of our initiatives. Back in 1812, our Volunteer Organization realized that by working together, along with our fundraising arm "The Universal Square Club", we could overcome our challenges much more efficiently, and that is why we ultimately decided to become Boyer Lodge No.1.

Worshipful Master Treymaine Bunche

I had the pleasure and honor of being elected and installed as the Worshipful Master of the oldest continuously operating Prince Hall Masonic Lodge of the State of New York, the Mother Lodge, Boyer Lodge #1, MWPHGL of the State of New York... I only hope to emulate just a fraction of what my Predecessors have accomplished and I'm looking forward to leading this Lodge to greater heights.... It's an accomplishment I have long sought... I would like to thank my Brothers of Boyer Lodge for having the confidence in me and seeing my potential, whispering wise counsel when needed... I will do my best to serve you to the best of my abilities.... Let's work Brothers!





ADELPHIC UNION LODGE #14



THE "U"

And so a new era begins....world behold our Worshipful Master Raul Rodriguez for 2021 of the U... the newest Officers of The U and a special s/o to my CT who is now the Pandemic PM...2020 was/is an unprecedented year and you lead well. Salute to my good brothers and the leaders of the mighty Adelphic Union Lodge #14 for the year of 2021....WM Raul Rodriguez, SW Rodney Hunter, and JW Sean Baldon. May the year be a great one and I look forward to your leadership.





MASTER LODGE # 99

HARLEM, NEW YORK

Brothers of Master Lodge No.99 in conjunction with the 30th. Pct Community Council, President and Past Master Len McTier. serving Mrs. Browns Christmas Dinners. Also hard at work with City Harvest mobile market Prince Hall Family hard at work PM Chadwick, Hill, Moe, Allen our WM Michael Trahan, and Brother Tito Olivero.



Brothers of Master Lodge No.99 Black Fish Trip, Great Day






DORIC LODGE # 53

Hempstead, New York


The Brothers of Doric Lodge #53 F&A.M. PHA were honored to be recognized by the Village of Hempstead during Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration for our community service during the pandemic.

Congratulations to fellow honorees Clariona Griffith Candace Aguirre Holley and Doric 53's own, Deputy Mayor Brother Charles Renfroe. Also honored was the Honorable David Patterson former NYS Governor, Hempstead native and member of Boyer Lodge#1 and in attendance was the Honorable James A. Garner, former Hempstead Mayor, and member of Doric Lodge #53. Thank you, Mayor Don Ryan, and the Village of Hempstead, for this great honor. Congratulations "Men of Distinction!"

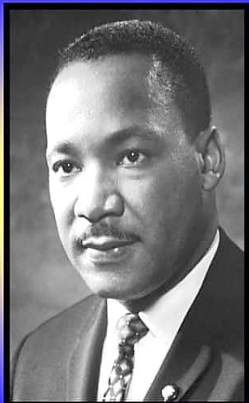


THE VILLAGE OF HEMPSTEAD

Cordially Invites You to Attend A Virtual
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY CELEBRATION



*Honoring
the life and
legacy of
Dr. Martin
Luther King
Jr.*



with a special presentation to New York's First African American Governor & Hempstead Native, Hon. David A. Paterson

Additional Honorees Include:
Doric Lodge No. 53 F&A M.P.H., Deputy Mayor Charles Renfroe, Clariona Griffith, and Candace Aguirre Holley

When: Sunday, January 17, 2021, at 2 p.m., Where: Village of Hempstead (Virtually)
Join Via Facebook at Hempstead Vil



Kudos to the Community Service Committee and all of the Brothers of Doric Lodge #53 F & A.M. PH for a year of service to the community and all of your charitable works despite the pandemic.

On Saturday 12/19/20 the “Men of Distinction” hosted a Coat Giveaway with the Tribe Council of LI and also delivered toys and gifts to local shelters and families.

On Tuesday 12/22/20 we partnered with the Village of Hempstead in their Toy Drive and Giveaway. Special thanks to Hempstead Chamber of Commerce President Clariona Griffith for your assistance and support. Job well done Team Doric as you continue to be “Better Every day in Every Way!”





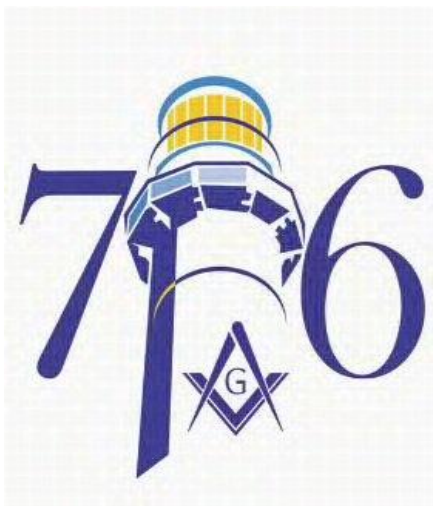
CELESTIAL LODGE # 3

Harlem, New York

By W.M. Marcus Paynes

By the casting of a unanimous ballot, I was elected and installed Worshipful Master for the ensuing year... So many people I could thank who've helped and inspired me along my journey... I will instead dedicate this night to 2 people that I know would've loved to be here... To the late RW Edward Swire (38), I cherish your wisdom til this day... Stay focused, stay ready, go to sleep with a vision & wake up with a purpose... I wouldn't be the man I am today without you... You are truly missed... To my late grand patriarch, I miss you... I know you're watching over me... I will continue to make you proud... Congratulations to all elected & appointed officers... I look forward to a prosperous year.





BEACON LIGHT LODGE # 76

Harlem, U.S.A.

**ON DECEMBER 8, 2020, THE BROTHERS OF BEACON LIGHT LODGE # 76
CELEBRATED THEIR**

90th ANNIVERSARY!

CONGRATULATIONS





ST. JAMES LODGE # 98

HAPPY

ANNIVERSARY!

Warranted on March 5, 1960, the Brothers of St. James Lodge No 98 celebrated their

61st Anniversary

Marking 61 years of existence....





SONS OF KINGS # 123

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

“Kingsmen”

Past Master Patrick Fuller & Steven Ellis distributing holiday food packages





David W. Parker

Lodge # 72

Huntington, New York

CONGRATULATIONS

Once again David W. Parker Lodge #72 of Huntington New York has elected Brother Lawrence Spearmon McMillian Worshipful Master for the year of 2021.



Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing

The Story of John Rosamond Johnson

By PGM Ludwick S. Hall (47)



John Rosamond Johnson along with his brother James Weldon Johnson, were members of what was known as the “Harlem Renaissance”, the intellectual movement that was centered in the African American community in the City of New York in the early 20th Century. He was one of the most creative and prolific figures in the development of the black music genre during that era. While he is chiefly remembered as the co-composer with his brother James, of “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,” ordinarily known, as “The Negro National Anthem”, he had a varied career as a pianist, songwriter, producer, singer, and actor.

Born in Jacksonville, Florida, on August 11, 1873, he was a son of Helen Louise Dillett, a native of Nassau, Bahamas, and James Johnson of Jacksonville. His maternal great-grandmother, Hester Argo, escaped from Haiti in 1802 during the Haitian Revolution, along with her three young children, one of which was Johnson’s grandfather Stephen Dillett. Although originally headed to Cuba, the boat they were in, was intercepted by privateers, and they were brought to Nassau, Bahamas, where they settled permanently. Although originally raised in a Prince Hall Lodge in Philadelphia, when slavery was abolished in the Bahamas, Johnson’s Grandfather, Stephen Dillett affiliated with Royal Victoria Lodge No. 649, a subordinate Lodge of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Bahamas, which was a subordinate of the United Grand Lodge of England. He served Royal Victoria Lodge as its Worshipful Master in 1847, and in 1857 he became the first person of African descent to be appointed a Provincial Grand Master by the United Grand Lodge of England, when he was designated the Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Bahamas.¹

John Rosamond Johnson began playing the piano at the age of four. As a child he attended the segregated Stanton Public School, in Jacksonville, where his mother was a teacher (She was the first woman of African descent to teach in a Public School in the State of Florida). He ultimately attended and graduated from Atlanta University,¹ was trained at the New England Conservatory of Music, and later studied with Samuel Coleridge-Taylor in London. He began his storied career as a public-school teacher in Jacksonville, Florida,¹ and served as the Supervisor of Music for the Jacksonville Public Schools System from 1894 to 1900.¹ Around 1900 Johnson, along with his brother, James Weldon Johnson wrote “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing, which he taught to his students.” The song became so popular as a source of racial pride and inspiration among persons of African descent, that it eventually became known, as the official, “Negro National Anthem”.

Also in 1900, as a part of the “great migration of African Americans from the South to northern cities, he, and his brother James, moved to New York City where they became a part of the intellectual activism of the Harlem Community. Immediately after arriving in New York City, he wrote a song for the Bert Williams and George Walker’s Vaudeville show, “Sons of Ham”. He then began writing songs and creating vaudeville acts with Robert Cole. Occasionally they were assisted by his brother James Weldon Johnson, until Cole’s death in 1911. On May 2, 1911, shortly after Cole’s death, Johnson performed as a pianist in James Reese Europe’s “Clef Club Symphony Orchestra’s”, “A Concert of Negro Music” at Carnegie Hall.¹

The Concert was put on as a benefit for the "New York's Music School Settlement for Colored People", which was founded by violinist, David Mennes of the New York Symphony Orchestra. Although African American artist had appeared at Carnegie Hall since 1892, the first time African American themed music was played there, was during this Concert. Johnson also performed in many Negro spiritual concerts with the Emmanuel Taylor Gordon Ensemble, at many less notable venues, including the now defunct Aedion Hall in Manhattan.

In 1912 he went to London, writing musical scores for several theatrical productions while there. He returned to the United States in 1913 and became a part of the administration of the "New York Music School Settlement for Colored People". There he served as its director from 1914 to 1919.

Also in 1913 Johnson married Nora Ethel Floyd, one of his former students. Together they had two children, Mildred, and Donald.¹



Nora Ethel Floyd

In 1916, his brother James Weldon Johnson began working as the field secretary and organizer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which had been founded in 1910. James subsequently rose to become one of the most successful members of the organization, opposing race riots in northern cities and the lynching of blacks that were frequent in the South during, and immediately after the end of World War I. It was during that period, that James organized mass demonstrations to end lynching and other racial violence against African Americans. Notable among those demonstrations, was one that occurred on July 28, 1917, when James, along with WEB DuBois, John Nail and Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., organized a Silent Protest Parade of more than 10,000 African Americans on New York City's Fifth Avenue to protest the still-frequent lynching at the time, of blacks in the South.¹ During that historic protest, John served as his brother's first Deputy Marshal.



The July 28, 1917 NAACP Silent Protest March Against Lynching

At the onset of World War I, John enlisted in the United States Army, and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the 15th Regiment. After the War, the Regiment was de-federalized, assigned to the State of New York, and renamed the 369th Regiment of the New York National Guard.¹ In the years after the war, he toured with his own ensembles, "The Harlem Rounders and The Inimitable Five". In 1935, he sang and played the role of a lawyer in the original production of George Gershwin's Porgy and Bess.

A Prince Hall Mason like his brother James Weldon Johnson, and his father James Johnson, he was raised in Paul Laurence Dunbar Lodge No. 219, of the MWU Union Grand Lodge of the State of Florida. Upon moving to New York in 1900, he demitted to Hiram Lodge No. 4, of the MAPHGL-NY.¹ He was also a member of King David Consistory No. 3, and a 33rd Mason in the United Supreme Council, AASR, F.M., N.J.¹ A Shriner, he was a member of Medina Temple No. 19, Ancient, Egyptian Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.¹ In addition to his Masonic affiliations, he was a member of Zeta Boule' of the Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity.¹

John Rosamond Johnson died on November 11, 1954 in New York City of cardiac arrest. His widow Nora E. Floyd Johnson, died on January 26, 1969. They are both buried at Mount Hope Cemetery, in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York.

¹ Snell, Susan, "Curator of the Museum and Library, United Grand Lodge of England"

¹ "Who is Who In Colored America," Vol. 6, Pg. 287

¹ "Who is Who In Colored America," Vol. 6, Pg. 287

¹ "Who is Who In Colored America," Vol. 6, Pg. 287

¹ Library of Congress "James Reese Europe, Biography

¹ "Who is Who In Colored America," Vol. 6, Pg. 287

¹ Wilder, Craig, Steven, ""In the Company of Black Men", Pg. 194

¹ "Who is Who In Colored America," Vol. 6, Pg. 287

¹ Revauger, Cecile, "Black Freemasonry, From Prince Hall to the Giants of Jazz", Pg. 124

¹ Revauger, Cecile, "Black Freemasonry, From Prince Hall to the Giants of Jazz", Pg. 124

¹ Revauger, Cecile, "Black Freemasonry, From Prince Hall to the Giants of Jazz", Pg. 124

¹ The Boule' Journal, 1930 issue, Pg. 10



P.G.M. Ludwick S. Hall
Carthaginian Lodge # 47



CONGRATULATIONS

2021

WORSHIPFUL MASTERS



W.M. COREY GARRETT
Crispus Attucks # 60



W.M. TARAS JONES
SAMSON LODGE # 65



W.M. MATTHEW A. MAYO
Prince Hall Ashlar Lodge #94.



W.M. LAWRENCE SPEARMON MCMILLIAN
David W Parker Lodge #72



By R. W. Kevin P. Wardally
Grand Treasurer = MWPHGL of NY
Past Master – Adelpic Union Lodge #14



I do not honestly believe we understand the total range of the damage that Covid has done to our Craft and Order. The truth is many of our members are not coming back, period.

Whether it be for one of the varied reasons why:

- a. whether Covid caused them to rethink their priorities,
- b. some just will not feel safe in group gatherings,
- c. some have just decided that life is too short for the BS many in the craft put you thru,
- d. some will have passed on and gone to be with their creator, and
- e. after a year of uncertainty some will just choose to use their time in a different way, to stay closer to family or loved ones.

I have heard from many of our Phamily that the Craft did not do enough for the community during this crisis, I cannot say we ever do enough, but I would argue that the craft was continually active during this period. Our Grand Lodge and many of its subordinate lodges and chapters did the following but were not limited to:

- a. distributing PPE to the community (several times around the state)
- b. participated in the preparation, and distribution of food to and for the community, both at our temples, and in partnership with known food banks.
- c. lodges and chapters took food and supplies to hospitals, firehouses, and police stations to support our 1st responders and essential personnel who were hard at work serving our communities.
- d. OES chapters created handmade cards and sent them to seniors in need of contact and to let them know that folks still care.
- e. The Grand Lodge put together an effort to be a force in the especially important election season of 2020 which included 1. registering folks to vote, 2. sending folks to battleground States to fight voter suppression and to defend the right to vote of our people and 3. supporting the vote by assembling care packages for poll workers and for voters to encourage them to stay on long lines on election day.
- f. toys were distributed to young people to help make a difficult holiday season a bit easier and
- g. Coats were distributed to the needy during this horrible time.

Throughout New York State our craft found ways to be of service to those most in need in our communities and we also found ways to be creative and stay in touch and take care of our phamily in new and innovative ways including:

1. The craft used zoom to connect with one another, check on members, conduct weekly study classes, hold Stated communications, attend lectures hosted by Masonic scholars all around the world, and attend The Grandmaster's Town Hall meetings and the 2021 Virtual Midyear Session
2. we have had virtual parties, virtual bingo, virtual paint and sips and virtual beer tastings to help us raise money and to socialize together.
3. more than ever we bought masonic challenge coins and flavored popcorn.
4. we have rallied virtually to help brothers in dire need of our assistance.
5. and let's not forget the strategic use of Facebook, Instagram, websites, tik tok, email, YouTube, and others to share information, knowledge, sickness, and distress, announce the loss of a dear brother or sister, or just to share a funny joke, story, or meme.

All these things have meant the world to us and we are thankful for them.

But as we begin to turn our attention to the hopeful end of this pandemic, we must begin to address the real issue of what will our craft look like and what does it need to not only survive but hopefully use this challenge as fuel to grow...

I believe we must embrace wholly 5 principles for our re-emergence if we are to truly rise from this pandemic.

1. Keep Practicing Masonry

We must stay true to Faith, Hope and Charity, it is what we are good at.

2. Technology is Here to Stay

Online innovations toward membership education, awareness and communication are inevitable now and they are needed to grow so we must embrace them wholeheartedly.

3. Help and Support Your Brothers

Physical, mental, monetary, and spiritual charity have never been needed more in our community.

4. Better Utilize our Resources.

We must better use our buildings and our members as beacons of light when our communities are most in the dark

5. ADJUST...a new normal is and always has been...normal.

This pandemic has proven more than ever that we miss and need each other. Our Brotherhood is more than just stated meetings, it is our actual physical and mental wellbeing. We are Phamily, to most of us that means something. We cannot be afraid of innovation and change.

All that was before will not survive into this new future, but it's ok, we can't be afraid of that. Lodges and Chapters will fold, Lodges and Chapters will merge, and new ones will rise. It is Freemasonry and Freemasons will still be here, willing, ready, and able to meet this call.

If we embrace all that has happened and all these principles, I believe our beloved fraternity will emerge more educated, better informed, more caring, more brotherly, more focused, more savvy, and more ready for the changing modern post pandemic world we find ourselves in.



Masonic Funerals

Every Master Mason should commit the ritual to memory.

*Compiled By
R. W. Robert B. Hansley (93)*

The ceremonies which are observed at Masonic Funerals and for the interment of the dead are highly appropriate and impressive. They are performed as an imperative yet melancholy duty, and as a token of respect and fraternal affection to the memory of a departed brother. The correct dress for a Masonic Funeral service is Black or dark suit (no tuxedos), white shirt, black tie (no bow ties) black shoes, white apron, and white gloves. (NO JEWELS).

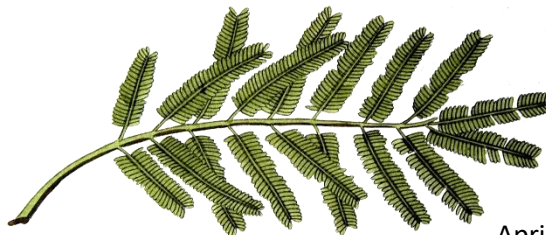
The Masonic funeral rites are usually performed completely from memory by a deceased Master Mason's lodge, so that he can be honored by those who have known him and his works. It is one of the few ceremonies performed in public.

When a Master Mason dies a Masonic Funeral becomes an important part of the grieving process. It reminds the family members, as well as the Masonic brothers, of the important characteristic of the individual's life, his morals, ethics, and his commitment to God. Even though Freemasonry is not a religion, and has no plan of salvation, it offers eternal truths of friendship, morality, and brotherly love. As Masons, we believe God is in control of his world, and He has provided a life beyond the grave which is symbolized by the evergreen.

A proper Masonic service can bring comfort to the family. It will enhance and not take away from any religious funeral service. It is important to note however, that Masonic services should be done only at the family's request. Most of the time this is handled by the funeral director. It is their job to see to it that the family's wishes are carried out. Family members usually know how important the Masonic Lodge has been to their loved one. A word of caution! Not all religious leaders, clergy, rabbis, and priests are receptive to having a Masonic Service, especially in their facility. Therefore, this matter must be handled very carefully. Perhaps it should not take place at all if there is going to be a problem over this issue. It is better for us as Masons to be gracious, preventing any discord, rather than insisting that a Masonic service be held. It harms our Fraternity by offending anyone over this matter.

Most religious leaders do not mind having the Masonic Services the night before at the funeral home. I find this to be a special time when Masonic brothers can convey their sympathy to the family members. The Masonic Funeral can be a very meaningful worship service during the visitation hour. If this is not possible, I then prefer to have it at the cemetery after the committal service. Again, this adds another new dimension to the religious service. I have had Masonic services after the religious service in the funeral home as well as in the church. However, sometimes this may not sit well with the membership of that church. Here again, a word of caution! Be sure the communication lines between the Worshipful Master and the Religious Leader remain open.

It is proper and necessary for the Worshipful Master to contact the family regardless of whether or not a Masonic Service will take place. The brother will be missed by his lodge members, and the membership is grateful for his contribution to the Fraternity. Remember, the grieving family members need to receive as much comfort as possible during their loss. Whether or not the Fraternity cares about one of their members does make a difference. This act of kindness leaves a lasting impression of Freemasonry.





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