

GATE CITY HOSTS
GRAND MASTER'S FORUM

Gate City Lodge No. 2 was selected to host the Grand Master's Forum for the Fifth Masonic District on Saturday, January 14, 2006. The event was a chance for our Lodge to shine - and we did, but it wasn't quite as easy as had been expected!

The purpose of the Forum is to provide the Most Worshipful Grand Master, F. Ray Jackson, an opportunity to meet the members of the District and discuss with them his objectives for the year.

In preparing, it was known that our two Wardens would not be available (SW Don Sawyer was observing the Sabbath and JW Doug Hrabe had an engagement in New York), and that Past Master Joe Brooks would be with his ill wife and SS Walter Bishop would be with his ill Mother in Savannah. Then, Secretary WB Tom Lawrence had to attend the funeral of a cousin and Chaplain WB Harold "Archie" Cox became ill and could not make it.

As is traditional in Gate City, others stepped up to take the burden. Richard Turner made himself available after playing a late night show, and Donald Hall, just in from Chicago, volunteered. WM Beaux Pettys, Treasurer WB David Johnston, SD Mike Bjelajac, JD Chris Wilson, and Tyler were all ready to fill their normal stations, while WB Dan Genson was slated to stand in as Chaplain, Mark Bohn was to take the role of Senior Warden, and WB Larry Sullivan was ready to come - in uniform! - from his job at the Midtown Blue Police Precinct to occupy the Junior Wardens spot. Even Joe Upshaw, the Master of Palestine Lodge, offered his services, for which we are very grateful.

So, despite all the hardships, Gate City was ready to greet the Grand Master and our brethren of the Fifth District ... when ...

Without warning, the schedule was sped up by two hours because Most Worshipful Brother Jackson's wife was released from the hospital after surgery. Rather than just excusing himself, our Grand Master felt that it was his Forum and he had to be there, so he chose to adjust his schedule and asked that the 1:00 opening be advanced to 11:15. The change in schedule became known to our Worshipful Master at 10:25 that morning. The only two of our officers present at the opening were WM Pettys and SD Bjelajac. Tyler Hayes, arriving plenty early, just missed participation by about two minutes.

The Forum opened before 212 Masons in the Scottish Rite Auditorium with Brothers Pettys and Bjelajac in their stations, and other seats occupied by members of the Fifth District. They floor work was crisp, the parts were well done, and essentially not a beat was missed.

The Forum ended with the Most Worshipful Grand Master recognizing Gate City for our manner of dress, our floor work, the new floor in our lodge, and our cooperative spirit in working with him, the Fifth District, and the Brethren present.

Meeting Notice

There will be a regular stated meeting of Gate City Lodge No. 2, F. & A. M., will be held on February 14, 2006, at 7:30 p.m., in the Masonic Center.

There will be a regular stated meeting of Gate City Lodge No. 2, F. & A. M., on February 28, 2006, at 7:30 p.m., in the Masonic Center.

Don't forget to visit www.gatecity2.com. It's terrific and worth your time.

LAWRENCE APPOINTED

WB Tom Lawrence, our esteemed Secretary, has been re-appointed to the Grand Lodge Jurisprudence Committee. Our records may not be complete, but he has filled this important function since at least 2001.

WOFFORD AND COX PASS AWAY

We note with sadness the death of two our Brothers, Charles A. "Chuck" Wofford, II, on October 20, 2005, and Dallas B. Cox, Jr., sometime last year.

Bro. Wofford, the son of our beloved Past Master and long-time Treasurer Charlie Wofford, was born October 26, 1944, and raised in Gate City November 23, 1965. He was in the Craftsmen's Club and on several committees.

Bro. Cox, born April 25, 1953, in Rockingham, NC, was raised in Gate City September 13, 1977. He served as Chaplain in 1980. His father, Bruce Sr., and his brother David were both Gate City men.

PRO TEM OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

With Senior Steward Walter "Ski Bo" Bishop spending his time with his ill Mother in Savannah, WM Pettys has appointed Bro. Donald Hall to move up one step on an interim basis. In turn, Bro. Richard Turner has been appointed to fill Bro. Hall's position as Junior Steward until the middle of March. The Worshipful Master was very pleased to see Bro. Turner show up dressed and ready to go at the first meeting of 2006.

100 YEARS AGO

In February, 1906, sixty-seven members of Gate City Lodge No. 2 were among those petitioning to form Palestine Lodge No. 486, which became one of Atlanta's outstanding Lodges.

Five men were raised on February 16, 1906, including John A. Brice, who became Worshipful Master in 1911. John Brice, born in 1876, was President of the *Atlanta Journal* from 1939 until his death in 1946. At least three other Masters of the Lodge – John Simmons (1899), Royal Daniel (1909), and Raymund Daniel (1912) - also helped "cover Dixie like the dew." Another Gate City man, John S. Cohen, a U.S. senator in 1932-33, was President, Editor, and Publisher of the *Journal* from 1917 until 1935. (Henry Grady, another Gate City man, was owner of the rival *Constitution*.)

SICKNESS AND DISTRESS

It is reported that Joyce Brooks, wife of our Immediate past master Joe, is gravely ill. She had been in and out of the hospital for the last year and a half due to knee trouble and mobility issues, but was back home and seemingly doing well. After a short time, however, she was readmitted to the hospital.

DEGREE WORK AHEAD

Two candidates have been initiated and will soon be ready to be passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft. Another Brother has passed the examination on the Fellowcraft degree and is expected to be raised at the first meeting in February.

WALTER BISHOP

Walter Bishop's mother, Joyce, passed away in Savannah in January. As we have previously reported, Bro. Walter, our Senior Steward, had been in Savannah for nearly two months taking care of her.

In addition, his grandfather, William Stuckey, whom Bro. Walter had recently taken to Solomon's Lodge No. 1 (for what was Bro. Stuckey's last meeting), also died during that time. Bro. Walter and his grandfather were pleased that at that meeting Solomon's Lodge conducted a raising with a full depiction of the Hiram Legend.

Bro. Walter's daughter, who was involved in a car wreck prior to his going to Savannah, is doing well.

DUES INCREASE DISCUSSED

The second communication of 2006, on January 24, was one of considerable importance to the future of the Lodge. A discussion on the issue of Lodge finances and how to support the fraternal activities of the Lodge was begun. After hearing some of the pros and cons of increasing the dues it was agreed that there is a need for more talk and consideration as the year progresses.

There was also discussion about potential fund-raising activities that might be appropriate and gain the support of the Masonic community.

BJELAJAC ON POLICE HONOR GUAARD

SD Mike Bjelajac is a member of the City of Atlanta Police Honor Guard and was in the funeral this week of Coretta Scott King. Very impressive, Brother Mike!

MASONIC MANNERS

Our esteemed Treasurer, WB C. David Johnston, has been presenting short talks in Lodge that he calls "Masonic Minutes." With his permission and assistance, we will present some of the series from time to time.

Let the Lodge come to Order! One of the beauties of Masonry is the order we maintain in our Lodge. Without it we are disorganized – with it we are united and can get a tremendous amount of work done, both within the Lodge and without.

1. Always stand to address the Worshipful Master – and continue to hold your salute until recognized by him.
2. Audible conversation about the Lodge – particularly on the floor among officers – is disorderly – and a sign of disrespect to your Worshipful Master, your brethren and your Lodge!

“May the Lodge humbly reflect that order and beauty which reign forever before God's throne!”