



HENRY KNOX FIELD JOHN BLAIR LODGE

NO. 349 • A.F. & A.M. • VIRGINIA

TRESTLEBOARD

JANUARY 2023

Tuesday, January 3
No Lodge ritual school.

Saturday, January 7
Installation of Officers
0930 Practice for installing
officers and team
1030 Installation
1200 Reception
City Kitchen
330 S. Pickett St, Alexandria

Tuesday, January 10
Stated Communication
1830 Dinner
1930 Opening of Lodge
"On the Shoulders of Giants"

Tuesday, January 17
1830 Degree / Ritual School

Tuesday, January 24
Master's and Warden's
Association at Concord Lodge
1830 Dinner
1930 Meeting

Tuesday, January 31
5th Tuesday
Friends and Family Night
1830 Dinner



A MESSAGE FROM THE EAST

Brethren,

As I sit here on the first day of 2023, I am humbled, a little nervous, and very honored to have been elected by you as your Worshipful Master. This past year expanded our insights into the use and application of our masonic tools, and our responsibilities to befriend and support each other and our communities. Thank you, Worshipful Mitchell, for your time in the quarry, your insights, leadership, and for positioning yourself as a Giant of HKF-JB. This coming year I'd like to expand on those perspectives, and build upon the lessons of our predecessors by standing on the shoulders of giants.

To stand on (someone's) shoulders is a phrase that is associated with English scientist Sir Isaac Newton while writing a letter in 1675 to fellow scientist Robert Hooke, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants." The meaning of this is generally accepted to mean we are who we are because of the hard work of the people who came before us. Life is about standing on someone's shoulders, from our first catechism instructor to our university professors, we are who we are because of those that came before us, in Masonry and in life. We all stand on the shoulders of those who came before us; and there will be those who will stand upon our shoulders. This is an important job – perhaps the only job in life of any consequence. It is up to each of us to provide a strong set of shoulders for those who come after us.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr once said, "Good protégés have several different mentors and learn different things from each of them. The best mentors are happy to see their protégés become more famous than they are, and don't try to hold them back. Often protégés borrow ideas and words from their mentors, and good mentors are generous enough to let them do it without asking for credit." In Masonry, we are charged to be pillars of our society, to be Giants in our communities, and within our lodges.

The coming Masonic year is set to a very busy one, and to make it a success, we'll need the help of everyone. In February, the Conference of Grand Masters of North America will be held here in Virginia, there will be a reenactment of the cornerstone laying ceremony at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, and visitors from around the country and the world will fill our lodges. Most Wor-

shipful Strehle has charged us with growing Virginia Masonry substantially this year, and to do that will require us initiating many good men. There will be a one-day conferral in April that will need to have candidates prepared and mentored through the process. We will have 4 Fifth Tuesdays to host our Friends and Family Nights, and we have a calendar full of events to follow. The first of those events will be the Installation of Officers, to be held on Saturday, January 7 at 10:30am (with a practice beginning at 9:00am), and a reception to follow at a nearby restaurant – I hope to see many of you there.

While I've briefly addressed my theme for the coming year here, "On the Shoulders of Giants," what follows is a brief discussion of what that means and how we can apply that perspective in our lives. Finally, I'd like to close with a quote from Dr. King, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

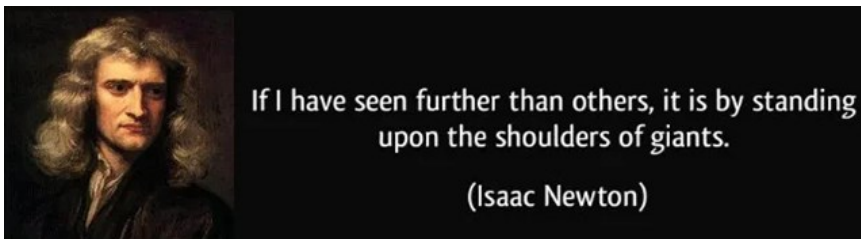


Sincerely & Fraternally,
Mark A. Boughner
Worshipful Master (Elect)
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Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

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Innovation doesn't occur in a vacuum. Doers and thinkers from Shakespeare to Jobs, liberally "stole" inspiration from the doers and thinkers who came before. Here's how to do it right.



It can be easy to look at great geniuses like Newton and imagine that their ideas and work came solely out of their minds, that they spun it from their own thoughts—that they were true originals. But that is rarely the case.

Innovative ideas have to come from somewhere. No matter how unique or unprecedented a work seems, dig a little deeper and you will always find that the creator stood on someone else's shoulders. They mastered the best of what other people had already figured out, then made that expertise their own. With each iteration, they could see a little further, and they were content in the knowledge that future generations would, in turn, stand on their shoulders.

Standing on the shoulders of giants is a necessary part of creativity, innovation, and development. It doesn't make what you do less valuable. Embrace it. Everyone gets a lift up.

Ironically, Newton's turn of phrase wasn't even entirely his own. The phrase can be traced back to the twelfth century, when the author John of Salisbury wrote that philosopher Bernard of Chartres compared people to dwarves perched on the shoulders of giants and said that "we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their gigantic stature."

Mary Shelley put it this way in the nineteenth century, in a preface for *Frankenstein*: "Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void but out of chaos."

There are giants in every field. Don't be intimidated by them. They offer an exciting perspective. As the film director Jim Jarmusch advised, "Nothing is original. Steal from anywhere that resonates with inspiration or fuels your imagination. Devour old films, new films, music, books, paintings, photographs, poems, dreams, random conversations, architecture, bridges, street signs, trees, clouds, bodies of water, light, and shadows. Select only things to steal from that speak directly to your soul. If you do this, your work (and theft) will be authentic. Authenticity is invaluable; originality is non-existent. And don't bother concealing your thievery—celebrate it if you feel like it. In any case, always remember what Jean-Luc Godard said: 'It's not where you take things from—it's where you take them to.'"

That might sound demoralizing. Some might think, "My song, my book, my blog post, my startup, my app, my creation—surely they are original? Surely no one has done this before!" But that's likely not the case. It's also not a bad thing. Filmmaker Kirby Ferguson states in his TED Talk: "Admitting this to ourselves is not an embrace of mediocrity and derivativeness—it's a liberation from our misconceptions, and it's an incentive to not expect so much from ourselves and to simply begin."

There lies the important fact. Standing on the shoulders of giants enables us to see further, not merely as far as before. When we build upon prior work, we often improve upon it and take humanity in new directions. However original your work seems to be, the influences are there—they might just be uncredited or not obvious. As we know from social proof, copying is a natural human tendency. It's how we learn and figure out how to behave.

In *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*, Nassim Taleb describes the type of antifragile inventions and ideas that have lasted throughout history. He describes himself heading to a restaurant (the likes of which have been around for at least 2,500 years), in shoes similar to those worn at least 5,300 years ago, to use silverware designed by the Mesopotamians. During the evening, he drinks wine based on a 6,000-year-old recipe, from glasses invented 2,900 years ago, followed by cheese unchanged through the centuries. The dinner is prepared with one of our oldest tools, fire, and using utensils much like those the Romans developed.



Much about our societies and cultures has undeniably changed and continues to change at an ever-faster rate. But we continue to stand on the shoulders of those who came before in our everyday life, using their inventions and ideas, and sometimes building upon them.



The Most Worshipful Grand
Lodge of Virginia,
A.F. & A.M.

fraternally invites you to
participate in the
**George Washington National
Masonic Memorial Cornerstone
Centennial Celebration**

as part of the
2023 Conference of Grand
Masters of
North America

*Monday, February 20, 2023 at
1:00 P.M.*



EARLY BIRD! 2023 Parade

Unit Registration

Parade Registration Fee is \$50



www.grandmastersva23.com





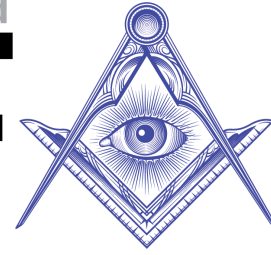
January Masonic Birthdays

Leonard Adler January 30, 63 years
 George Amick White January 30, 63 years
 Charles Jerry Mouser January 31, 56 years
 Samuel Moseley Jones January 4, 48 years
 Gerald John Connelly III January 19, 35 years
 Ryan Bradley Huston January 6, 24 years
 William Ryan Ware January 18, 18 years
 John Joseph Murawski II January 29, 12 years
 William Raymond Dunlap Jr. January 16, 9 years
 Antoine Philippe Issa January 17, 8 years
 Elhrick Joseph Cerdan January 26, 7 years

henry knox field

HKF

A.F. & A.M.



JBL

NO. 349

john blair lodge

2023 OFFICERS

Mark A. Boughner

Worshipful Master

Ronald E. Markiewicz

Chaplain

Jonathan Summers

Senior Warden

Bradley J. Watts

Steward

Steven Aguilar

Junior Warden

Wor Clayton J. Mitchell

Tiler

Wor. Kenneth R. Reynolds

Treasurer

Wor. Robert Hook

Asst. Treasurer

Wor. Daniel E. Froggett

Secretary

Wor. T.J. Fisher

Asst. Secretary

Xavier Mariscal

Senior Deacon

Wor. JH Flores

Webmaster

Arnold McNeal

Junior Deacon

