

Acacia Lodge No. 16, A.F. & A.M.
Clifton, Virginia
2004: A year of Masonic Work.
Luis Pages, Worshipful Master

About Your Outgoing Worshipful Master:

Before I get into the details of my year as Worshipful Master at Acacia 16, I want to give you a brief idea of who I am in Masonry.

I was born in Cuba. My father was a member of the Masonic Lodge in town, Nueva Paz, Cuba. As a child I always saw some certificates hanging on the wall at my parents home. When I was able to read, I saw they were from Logia "Resolucion"; one was for Entered Apprentice (Aprendiz), one for Fellowcraft (Compañero) and a third one for Master Mason (Maestro Mason). I always thought, "When I am old enough I'll get me some of those".

With the years, my father was elected Treasurer of the Lodge. Members paid their dues in a monthly basis, and my father had to prepare receipts for those dues, and he always asked me to write them for him. I wondered if some day I would get those diplomas and if I could be Treasurer of the Lodge too.

When I was 16 years old, the Masonic Lodge in town decided to sponsor a "Logia A.J.E.F. (Youth Association "Hope of the Fraternity"). It was a group initiation of about 20 candidates, and as it was a new Lodge I was first appointed Secretary and later elected to that position for a full year term. Then, I put my name in nomination for "Perfecto Guia" (Perfect Guide) and elected as such. I served three consecutive years. Those were very active years for my Lodge, and for me, as I was always figuring out what to do to keep the Lodge and the members busy. Thus, we collected and distributed food to poor families during the Christmas holidays, collecting money and helping needy people with food or medicines, kept a constant watch on our morals, and conducted a fund raising campaign to place a statue honoring one of Cuba's patriots, who had been a Mason, in a conspicuous place in the town plaza; and I typed, edited, and printed a newsletter for the Lodge, the only Lodge to have such publication. I was elected as Secretary of the State chapter, and nominated though not elected for the national council.

In 1956 I petitioned Logia "Resolucion", my father and my brother's Lodge, and was initiated, passed and raised in said Lodge; later affiliated to Logia "Federico Valdes", Cotorro, Cuba, a town where Mercy and I had established residence when we got married. There is no dual membership in Cuba. I regret that I was not as active in Masonry as I was in the A.J.E.F. Lodge. The demands of my work as well as the political/insurrectional activity in the country in which I got involved during the government of Batista, and later with the imposition of Communism, both of which I actively opposed, kept me away from Masonic activity.

Once in the United States, I attempted, and failed, to affiliate with a Masonic Lodge in Virginia. In a conversation with Jose Aunon, my friend of many years and a member of this Lodge, he told me that he would discuss my wishes with Tom Hatcher, Secretary of his Lodge. He later said that Bro. Hatcher showed no objection to process my application for affiliation and asked me to submit whatever information I had. I did so, and the Brethren approved my application. I am glad they did and, in retrospect, I am also glad that I couldn't succeed at other Lodges. I believe I found a Masonic home at Acacia. I enjoy pure brotherhood in this Lodge.

One more thing. Acacia has given me the opportunity to do here what I was unable to do in my Cuban Masonic Lodges: work for Masonry. You can say that I was kind of proving to myself that yes, my love for Masonry is as real now as it was when I first saw those certificates, bearing my father's name, at my home in that little town of Cuba. And, I have all of you to thank for that!

I thank all for the help you have given me on re-learning the rituals and improving myself in Masonry.

The Officers of Acacia 16 in the year 2004:

Acacia 16 conducted the election of Officers on December 4, 2003, and in the open installation ceremony at Acacia's Masonic Temple officiating RW William E. Ray, Sr., PDDGM as Installing Officer, Thomas E. Hatcher, PM, Installing Secretary, RW Delbert E. Sheads, PDDGM, as Installing Marshal, and Wor Ralph W. Smith, as Assistant Installing Marshal the following brothers were installed on December 6, 2003.

Worshipful Master.....	Luis Pages
Senior Warden.....	George Richard May
Junior Warden.....	Scott Ross Call
Treasurer.....	Robert Ward Mitchell, III
Secretary.....	Wor David Carroll Morris
Senior Deacon.....	Jerry L. Cassidy
Junior Deacon.....	Felix Pages
Chaplain.....	William E. Ray, Sr., PDDGM
Senior Steward.....	Robert Stanley Keener
Junior Steward.....	Joseph Carl Kincheloe, III
Marshal.....	Fred B. Rankin
Tiler.....	Charles Alfred Selby

During the year we held three Officers' meetings and new programs and plans for activities were discussed. These meetings are an important part of the good governing of the Lodge, and I encourage future Worshipful Masters to convene them often, to obtain the advice and cooperation of his officers.

Meetings:

During the year Acacia # 16 held twenty (20) meetings with a total attendance of 440, including our own members and visiting brethren. These totals include the stated meeting of December 2, 2004, with an estimated attendance of 35 brothers. These meetings are as follows:

- 12 regular meetings. With a total attendance of294
- 03 Entered Apprentices called communications, with..... 45
- 02 Fellowcrafts called communications, with..... 30
- 03 Master Masons called communications, with..... 71

The above numbers give us an average of 22 members per meeting, which is the same average recorded in 2002, under the leadership of David Carroll Morris, PM.

August was step-up-month, and our line officers stepped up to the plate and performed really magnificent under the guidance of Bro. Dick May in the East, who gave us an idea of what it will be under his direction as Master in the year 2005. In addition to the Step Up Month, Bro Dick May also occupied the East for the Master Mason Degree work at the called communication of November 22.

We are grateful for the generosity of several of our brothers who have provided food at the stated and special meetings, and some more than once. This was most helpful to the Worshipful Master, as he could devote more of his time to the preparation of the meetings. They were all recognized on our Trestle Boards.

FINANCES:

As of November 2004 our financial situation is a sound one. We have covered the obligations with the Grand Lodge, insurance and repairs. We are at this time in the process of collecting dues. Our checking account balance is a bit lower than at the beginning of the year, and our savings account for the building fund has increased as compared to last December, in spite of related expenses.

Masonic Education:

Acacia # 16 hosted two District Classes during the year, and attended all other District Classes at different Lodges in the District, conducted by RW William E. Ray, Sr., District Instructor of Works, with our officers participating as required.

Acacia Lodge # 16 participated in the Division Education and Leadership Conference, convened on January 24 at Middletown, VA and most of our line officers were in attendance in spite of the snowy weather.

Acacia was also present at the C. A. Sinclair, Jr. Ritual School, held at Manasseh 182. We took part on School with the exemplification of the Entered Apprentice degree. The performance of all Lodges was such that all participant Lodges were tied on first place. This is the second consecutive year that Acacia has tied for first place in these contests.

Our officers were also present at the two Subordinate Lodge Officers Training program (S.L.O.T.), conducted by the District Education Officer, Wor. Donald Leo McAndrews, member of Acacia. These SLOTT programs continue to be educational and informative and ought to be attended by officers and members alike.

Visitations by Acacia:

We attended and in some instances assisted at the installations of Officers in all Lodges in our District. We were also present at all of the District Deputy Grand Master Official visits, as well as those of the DDGM District Team.

Several times during 2004, Acacia brethren visited all Lodges in District Four. We recorded Fraternal Visits to Henry 57, Herndon 264 and Manasseh 182; also visited Haymarket 313 and Mt Carmel 133 on several occasions. We enjoyed the Strawberry Night at Manasseh 182, highlighted by the presence of MW James M. Searce, Jr. Grand Master of Masons. SW Dick May also assisted with Master Mason Degree work at Henry 57.

On April 24, The Senior Warden and I attended the official visit to District 2, 3 and 4 by MW James M. Searce, Jr. Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, in Winchester, Virginia. I had the opportunity to join other Worshipful Masters who met with the Grand Master to discuss matters of great importance to the Craft, and he encouraged us to bring our questions to future meetings

In August we attended the Blue Lodge Visitation Night sponsored by the Alexandria Scottish Rite, and our members, RW William E. Ray, Sr., George Richard May, SW, and David C. Morris, PM, Secretary, participated on the Master Mason degree.

Accompanied by JD Felix Pages, visited Ashburn-Sterling Lodge No. 288, in Ashburn, and assisted with the Business meeting.

Visitations to Acacia:

We are satisfied with the steady attendance to our meetings throughout the year. We have had visiting brethren from other Lodges in our District Four, mostly from Henry # 57, Herndon # 264 and Manasseh # 182.

We were honored with the presence of the Grand Junior Deacon of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. RW Edmund Cohen was the guest speaker at the installation of officers in December 2003, and in two other meetings visited our Lodge.

Although unable to visit our Lodge, in April we had the opportunity to meet with Leonard Mick, PM, and his lady Arlene, now residing in San Antonio, TX, while visiting the Washington area. Several brethren got together for dinner with Leonard and Arlene at Anthony's Restaurant in Manassas for some fraternal fellowship.

Wor. Thomas Wickman, president of the C. A. Sinclair Jr. Ritual School visited our Lodge at our June Stated Meeting and presented Thomas E. Hatcher, PM, Secretary Emeritus, with the Chalmers Custer Award certificate, for his contributions to the Sinclair School, and Masonry in general.

At the August Stated Meeting, Wor Ralph Smith, of Henry # 57, presented an interesting program entitled "The cost of King Solomon's Temple"; at the September Stated, Wor Rhey Solomon, of Herndon # 264, presented an interest program entitled "The Morgan Affair"; and at the October Stated Bro. Jay Patterson, SW of Herndon 264, had a program entitled "The Eyes of History".

We are thankful to brothers from other Lodges that have assisted with our several degree works. At the risk of omitting some names, I want to express our thanks to Dallas Brumback, Wor. Ralph Smith, RW Bill Sheads, Wor. Robert Williams, Wor. Paul Kulp (of Henry 57), Wor. Rhey Solomon (of Herndon 264), and of course to our own RW William Ed. Ray, Sr. and Wor. Donald Leo McAndrews.

Membership of Acacia 16:

Acacia 16 started the year with 90 members in good standing, one Fellowcraft and one Entered Apprentice. Although we are ending 2004 on the plus side, we sadly report that our Bro. John Campbell Hunter, III, was called to the Celestial Lodge above in the month of February.

During 2004 we raised three new Master Masons: John Stanley Wilcox, Robert A. Fisher, Jr. and Todd William Wolfe, and we welcome them to our Lodge and hope they start their journey to the East real soon.

Additionally, our membership increased by affiliation of Wor. William Leroy Johnson, William Franklin Hendricks, James Henry Myers, Wor Donald Leo McAndrews, Wor David Charles McAndrews, Wor Dennis Sherman Lavery, Jon Vernon Shelton, Joseph Justin Jones and Robert Wayne New. These nine brothers are experienced Master Masons with a vast knowledge and experience and will be very active at our Lodge. We have had no demits and no suspensions as of the time this report is prepared, and thus the membership of the Lodge stands at 101 members in good standing, and these brethren accumulate a substantial 2,324 years of Masonic experience, with October as the month of most experience with 364 years.

Acacia's Lifetime Membership is composed of Bro. William Baumbach, II, John S. Lusk, Sr., PM, and Conley S. Tilson, Jr., and they have received certificates accrediting them as Lifetime Members of Acacia

16. This is a good program and our participation is of a long time benefit to the Lodge. Those interested in joining the program should contact David C. Morris, PM, Secretary for further information.

Acacia members, Thomas E. Hatcher, PM and Paul V. Longerbeam celebrated their 60th Masonic Birthdays this year and received their 60-year pins and certificates. Our 50-year members are Bro. Douglas Detwiler, Bro. Richard O. Hurt, Wor. Charles H. Rowell, DDL, and Bro. Carter Saunders.

The Honorary Membership roll of Acacia is made up of Thomas E. Hatcher, PM, William Edward Ray, Sr., PDDGM, Wor William C. Robinson, and Charles H. Rowell, DDL.

We remembered our widows and we told them so by sending personalized cards during the Easter holidays, and again in the month of October, as it had been declared by Grand Master James M. Searce, Jr., Grand Master of Masons in Virginia as "Widow Recognition Month".

Our members were always in our minds. As we mailed the monthly Trestle Board, and at random, we wrote messages to our brothers, encouraging them to visit our Lodge, special Masonic birthday greetings, thanking them for their participation and/or cooperation, or similar.

In July we honored our Past Masters, with RW James G. Kincheloe, Jr. presiding in the East, and Officers chairs occupied by Past Masters. We had the opportunity to meet several Past Masters of Acacia: Gerald Bee, our Senior PM, Thomas E. Hatcher, James G. Kincheloe, Jr., William C. May, David Diamantes, John S. Lusk, Sr., David C. Morris, and Troy Sanders Payne, Jr. We presented them with Acacia Lodge pens, a copy of the book "The Man in the Mirror" and a brief history of the Lodge and the building and a list of all Past Masters, from 1877 through 2003. It was great to meet some of them and we all enjoyed the narratives about their years as Masters of Acacia # 16. Later this year, I took the initiative of inviting some of our Past Masters to take part in our meetings, and at the October stated I asked Wor Gerald Bee, our Senior PM, and at the November stated I asked Wor Thomas E. Hatcher, PM, to assume the East and close the Lodge. Wor Troy Sanders Payne, Jr., PM, was invited to confer an Entered Apprentice degree, and David C. Morris, PM, was invited as well to confer the first section of the Master Mason degree. It is important that our Past Masters understand that we need their Masonic experience and knowledge of the Lodge's history.

Two members of Acacia Lodge No. 16 are part of the District Deputy Grand Master Team, RW William Edward Ray, Sr., serving as District Instructor of Work, and Wor Donald Leo McAndrews, serving as District Education Office.

Members of Acacia Lodge No. 16 are currently serving as officers of: the Scottish Rite, Valley of Alexandria (Wor. David C. Morris, James Myers, James Hawkins, and Luis Pages), The York Rite, (Wor. Donald L. McAndrews, Wor. David C. Morris, and Luis Pages), the Shriners (Bro. Donald L. Simmons, RW James G. Kincheloe, Jr.), as District Deputy Grand Commander, Capitular District No. 3, Grand Commandery of Virginia (Wor. Jamil Gabro); and as Captain General of Old Dominion Commandery No. 11 (Wor. David C. Morris). Any omissions are unknown to me at this time.

Lodge Activities:

Our most popular activity continues to be the First Saturday Breakfasts. Friends of Acacia, Carole Ray and Linda Morris, along with RW Ed Ray, Dave Morris, PM, Wor Bill Johnson, SW Dick May, Bro Felix Pages, Bro. Fred Rankin, and myself, worked in the kitchen or helped with the chores to provide the now famous Acacia breakfast to our brethren, members and visitors and their wives.

On Sunday, June 24 the Lodge observed the St Johns' Day. Invited by the Clifton Presbyterian Church for the occasion, several of our brethren attended. We expressed our appreciation to the Rev. Lynn Stanton-Hoyle for her invitation on this important Masonic day.

On July 17 and at the home of Gisela and Junior Warden Scott Call, we had our Lodge Picnic. It was also the day we said good-bye to our Senior Deacon Jerry Cassidy and his lady Linda, as they were leaving the area and moving to Iowa. We had a good time and appreciate the Calls hospitality.

October 11, Clifton Day Festival. As in previous years we took part on this town event. Our Lodge was open for guided tours, and the few that took advantage of it, were very impressed with the history of our building and Lodge. The child ID was not exactly a success, but it was a learning experience in preparation for 2005. Our sale of sodas, hot dogs, barbecue sandwiches, coffee and other items was a terrific success and an even better fund raising event. We thank the brothers who were there that day. Names were mentioned in the Trestle Board and I don't want to omit anyone here. Thanks to all.

Ladies Night Out, on October 14 gave us the opportunity to honor our ladies. This event was organized by Wor Morris and his lady Linda and although not as well attended as years past, due to other Masonic activities in the area, we had a good number of brethren and ladies, enjoyed the camaraderie and food. The ladies were most appreciative of the presents received from their husbands.

At the Stated meeting in October I announced the creation of two new programs. First, the "FRIENDS OF ACACIA", was created to honor those friends and members for their distinguished and continuous service to Acacia. A nice certificate was presented to Carole Ray, Linda Morris and Wor. Bill Johnson at the Ladies Night Out Dinner. Another "FRIEND OF ACACIA" certificate was presented to Brother William Baumbach, II, after the November Stated Communication, in recognition of all he has done for our Lodge throughout the years. The second program established was the " Building Maintenance and Lodge Furnishings Fund", with the hope that the same will provide the necessary funds for the fixing of smaller problems, such as door locks, window repairs, Aprons repairs, cleaning up of jewels, lights, etc. To raise the money for this fund a plaque will be placed in the Hatcher Hall, containing 60 small nameplates. Each nameplate will be "sold" at \$50.00 donations, bearing the name or names of donor(s). The brother Treasurer will be reporting monthly the total amount of money available in the fund. To participate give your check and details to Bro. David C. Morris, PM, Secretary, or Bro Ralph Bartlett, coordinator for this effort.

Improvements around the Lodge:

This subject was very much in my mind from day one. I devoted great many hours to improve the appearance of the Lodge. I have always consulted with others on whatever plans I propose. I am a firm believer that others may have better ideas or could improve those I have. In keeping with my custom, I approached brothers and they not only supported the ideas but also executed them, even better that I could have done myself. Thus, I am happy to report many of those improvements in this report, and I take the opportunity to thank all that made them possible. Our Brothers donated money, time and labor. The results, as far as I am concerned, are outstanding. So, in 2004 Acacia Lodge No. 16 received the following facelift:

- Donation and Purchase of New Bible markers
- Straightened up the carpet in the Lodge Room
- Replaced the carpet in the three Officers' stations, the Anteroom, the Tiler's Area, the Stairs.
- Donation and spreading gravel on the parking lot area.
- Re-arranged pictures in the Lodge Room
- Donations and Purchases new Altar and Pedestals covers.
- Cleaned and polished the Altar and Pedestals
- Donation and set up of a base for the Pedestal in the Worshipful Master station, enlarging the Master's floor area.
- Donation of a new box for safekeeping of Aprons and Jewels.
- Donation and Installation of doorknockers on the West gate.
- Clean up closet by the kitchen area, placed new flooring and shelves to storage kitchen utensils.
- Replaced all light fixtures in the Hatcher Hall.

- Carpeted walkway from door to stairs; re-arranged pictures, coat hanger, etc. in the Hatcher Hall
- Donation of curtain covering face of counter separating the Hatcher Hall from the kitchen
- Removed and disposed of useless stuff longtime stored in the back room across from the restrooms.
- Donation of materials and fixed and painted concrete slab at the front door.
- Donation and installation of handrail on the stairs.
- Donation of a microwave oven.

Much more remains to be done, but I am confident that following Masters will provide leadership to accomplish them. I am also sure that the brethren of Acacia No. 16 will make themselves available to provide the necessary support to future Masters to keep the Lodge looking good and help to tighten up the brotherhood that has always existed at Acacia.

We are turning over to the new Master a Lodge that has existed for 128 years and has been in this historic building for 104 years, and in absolute unity, thanks to the dedication and effort of many Worshipful Masters and numerous dedicated brothers, and if we can imitate the brothers of the past we can almost guarantee that this Lodge will continue, for many years, providing brotherly love and affection amongst men and Masons, for the benefit of future generations. To the new Worshipful Master and his Officers I offer my support. I will be a very passive Past Master; however, as an active Master Mason and member of this Lodge I will address the issues that may come up as such and not as what I "have been." I do hope that it is viewed that way. I am thankful for the opportunity to do my part, and I am looking forward to continue doing so.

December 2, 2004.

