

The Trailmasters is the result of a resolution humbly submitted to the Most Worshipful Benevolent Grand Lodge of Ohio, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons during its annual communications in Cincinnati, Ohio August 1964.

The Rev. Ralph Bridges, Worshipful Master of Tarbel Lodge #7 and Bro. Dewell Davis, Past Master of Master Lodge #62 both of Columbus Ohio saw the need for a strong youth organization to train young men in the ways of brotherhood. These two dedicated masons made their feelings known in the language of a resolution which was unanimously accepted by the Grand Body, ILL. Clenon Lawrence, 33RD Grand Master from Youngstown, Ohio at the close of the session appointed Bro. Dewell Davis the newly elected Junior Grand Warden to investigate the feasibility of organizing such a youth organization.

Guidelines were set up and plans formulated, and in August 1965 they were presented to the Grand Lodge at its annual communications held in Cleveland, Ohio. At the session of the Grand Lodge the name "TRAILMASTERS" was accepted, an Executive Council was formed and the real work began. The Executive Council consisted of Bro. Davis as Director, Bro. Selma McKeller, Middletown, Bro. Clenon Lawrence, Bro. W.G. Scott, Columbus and Bro. Arthur Hamoc, Cincinnati.

On November 19, 1966 the "Trailmasters" became a reality with the initiation of forty-five youths between the ages of 14 and 21. This memorable event took place in Columbus, Ohio. Initiation and installation ceremonies were conducted by Bro. John Ferguson, a student at the University of Cincinnati, and a staff of officers under the direction of Bro. Hodges.

This accomplishment could not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of one Bro. Chester Hodges, of Middletown, Ohio who in 1967 in Dayton, Ohio was presented the first honorary membership in the Trailmasters.

The Trailmasters were organized in the state of Florida and accepted at the Grand Communication in April of 1968 and Bro. Roland A. Baker, Jr. served as the first state Director. Others that have served as state Directors are: Bro. Alexander H. Smith, Bro. Alfonso McDonald, Bro. Robert Nevins, Bro. Willie McDonald, Jr. and currently Bro. Arthur Jones is serving as the Grand Youth Advisor. Under Bro. Baker's leadership as State Director local fortresses were organized around the state; Foster Fortress in Apopka was the 1st to be organized. Currently there are four active fortresses across the state; Foster Fortress, Apopka; Allen Fortress #13, Orlando; Glades Fortress, Bellglade; and Foster Fortress, Jacksonville; the Fortresses Ft. Lauderdale and Winter park are both inactive; and Fortresses in Daytona Beach, Miami and Pensacola are being established.

The following youth have served as Grand Master Journeymen; Royce Jackson, William Smith,