

Snellville Masonic Lodge # 99 History

Good Morning Ladies & Gentlemen and welcome to Snellville Masonic Lodge. I am Herbert Fowler, Secretary of this Lodge as well as Past Master (President). On behalf of the Fraternity, would like to say thank you to each of you for taking the time from your busy schedules to allow us to share with you the history and involvement of this fraternity in the Snellville Community. We are honored that you want to know more about us and we are proud to share our history with you all today.

Masonry is one of the oldest Fraternities in existence today. The fraternity has been in existence since the building of King Solomon's Temple. Snellville Lodge has been a part of this community since November 1945, amounting to 67 almost 68 years. Now let me answer that

burning question you are all thinking... Just what is that they are about and do... We are a charitable non-profit organization that's main purpose is to help those in need in and around Snellville.

The Organization has in fact been here in Snellville for over 100 years. The organization that preceded Snellville Masonic Lodge #99 that is known by today was, The Independent Order of Odd Fellows. For those of you who do not know what or who they were here is a brief explanation.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) is a global altruistic and benevolent fraternal organization derived from the British Odd fellows service organizations of the 17th century.

In 17th century England, it was odd to find people organized for the purpose of giving aid to those in need

and of pursuing projects for the benefit of all mankind. Those who belonged to such an organization were called “odd fellows”.

The order is also known as “The Three Links Fraternity”, referring to the Order’s Triple Links logo contains three links which contain the letters F, L and T. (Friendship, Love and Truth).

Many of Snellville Lodge’s members have followed in the footsteps of their ancestors and are still a part of this organization. We have gone through some of the record books of the Odd Fellows, dating back to 1913 and they stop in 1933. We can find no record of where they met for their meetings; however, here are just a few of the names of the members during that time see if you recognize any of them.

John N. Langley, W.A. Pate, G.G. Brownlee, W.S. Coleman, E.A. Clower, E.L. Phillips, J.L. Haney, M.C. Rawlins, J.J. Cofer, J.R. Cofield, G.F. Snell, W.N. Nash and J.W. Grizzard.

In 1919 Snellville Lodge #649 was chartered. This Lodge was in existence until 1935 at which time, the charter was returned to the Grand Lodge; for no clear reason and/or documentation. Some members of the L.O.O.F were also members of Snellville lodge #649. Though we have no records to support the theory that there was no Lodge of any kind from 1935 to 1948 we can show that in October of 1945, following WWII, the official charter for Snellville #99 was issued.

Some very well-known and important figures that were involved with the opening of Snellville lodge #99:

E. A. Pate, J. T. Snell, E. R. Snell, W. C. Britt,
Emmett Clower Jr., Ralph Head, Harold Britt,
P. W. Stowe, Wendell Moore, Nelson Williams
and Byron Rawlins,

were also very influential in the formation and growth of Snellville and Gwinnett County. Some of the earliest members of Snellville lodge #99 held jobs at 'The Atlanta Cotton Mills' and 'The Fisher Body Company'; working their way through the ranks to later served as Grand Master.

When Snellville lodge #99 was first formed, the fraternity gathered in the old Snellville Gymnasium and then, the Sawyer Store.

(Located at hwy 78 and 124) As Snellville began to grow, the lodge began to grow as well. The fraternity soon outgrew the Sawyer Store and began to look for a new location to meet. In 1965, a piece of property on hwy 124, owned by Wayne and Jimmy Mason, was given to Snellville lodge #99 and the Sawyer Store location was sold. The fraternity erected a two-story building on the new property and, in November of 1965, moved onto the top floor. The lodge leased the main floor of the building to various companies over the next few years; some of which include: a mortgage company, a carpet company and Brand Bank.

Now ladies, don't think we have forgotten about you all. In June 1967 the Order of the Eastern Star, or O.E.S., was formed. The O.E.S. is the Ladies form of masonry which provides the community with various

forms of assistance. Ernestine Clower Phillips has been a chapter member of that organization for 46 years and is still a very active member. A few other noteworthy members of this chapter include:

William and Lillie Mae Pate, Rubie Blankenship, Bob and Joe Lee Copeland and Bose and Martha Byrd.

In 1999 Snellville masonic lodge was faced, yet again, with having to move. At the time, the GA. DOT was proposing construction of a ramp from hwy 124 to hwy 78 that would completely wipeout our parking. Therefore, the lodge sold the building on hwy 124 and moved to its current location on Lenora Church road. The property on which the lodge is currently built was once owned by brother Marlin Moon and his mother. They sold the property to the lodge in 1999 and

construction began. In August of 2000 the building was completed and operations for Snellville Masonic Lodge #99 have taken place at this location ever since.