

# NCMCA Golden Anniversary Celebration Series – May 2024

2024-05-31

We're celebrating the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association Golden 50th Anniversary Year by highlighting some monumental events that have taken place throughout the existence of NCMCA. Each month throughout 2024 we will have articles that will showcase the history and folks that helped NCMCA get to where it is today. Please enjoy this yearlong series with our fifth article, "Recognizing Service and Dedication"

## **Recognizing Service and Dedication**

In every endeavor, there are always those that go above and beyond. The North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association is no exception. Within NCMCA's traditionally strong supporting membership, there have always been individuals who are exceptional in their dedication to the Association's mission and success. With this article, we will explore the many ways NCMCA and the masonry industry recognize notable service and dedication to the cause. And we'll review the honor roll of NCMCA members and others with North Carolina ties that have been so recognized.

## **The Western Carolina Chapter "Founders Award"**

The first NCMCA chapter had informal beginnings in the late sixties and early seventies with masonry contractors in the Lenoir, Hickory, and Morganton area. As previously noted in earlier anniversary essays, the group predated NCMCA by a few years and was chartered as a chapter of the Mason Contractors Association of America (MCAA) about 1972. The founders of the Western Carolina Chapter took the lead in spreading chapters to other areas of the state and the eventual chartering of NCMCA in 1974. In 2012, the Chapter's leadership realized the need to formally remember individuals who had made significant contributions to the Western Carolina Chapter, and thus to the history of NCMCA. Here is the list of "Founders Award" recipients as of May 2024:

Glenn W. Sipe\*

Carl E. Moser, Sr\*

Jerry W. Eckard\*

Ivey L. Griffin, Jr.\*

Howard Rowe\*

David R. Sigmon\*

G. Alan Griffin

Larry Kirby

Warren Cockran\*

Hugh Townsend

Wayne Starr\*

R. Bruce Davis

J. Leland Eckard

Carl E. Moser, Jr.

\* deceased

The announcement of new Founders Award inductees is now a highlight of the chapter's annual January Winter Social.

According to the minute book, the Triad Chapter (The Triad Masonry Association) presented similar recognitions for its "Senior Members" in the mid-nineties.

### **The Glenn W. Sipe Presidential Service Award**

Glenn W. Sipe was the North Carolina Masonry Contactors Association first president. At the September 2011 NCMCA Board of Directors meeting, the following resolution was approved: "For his role in the creation of the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association, and in recognition his Charter Presidency of the Association, and for his innovative and ongoing support of the Association and of the Carolinas' masonry industry, the membership of the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association hereby declares from this day forward, all Past-Presidents of the

Association shall be named recipients of *The Glenn W. Sipe Presidential Service Award.*” As of May 2024, twenty-five individuals have been so recognized.

### **The David R. Sigmon Award**

In 1999, the award for finishing with the top score at the NCMCA Annual Apprentice Skills Contest was given a formal name. This paragraph appears in the registration and program for the annual competition: “The apprentice that finishes with the top score will be presented the *David R. Sigmon Award* as first place finisher of the Annual NCMCA Apprentice Skills Contest. The award is named in memory of David Sigmon, a journeyman mason from Hickory who passed away in 1998 while serving as NCMCA president-elect and who had been active in promoting this contest and other programs around the state to recruit and develop young craftsmen for masonry careers.” As of the beginning of May 2024, at least thirty-three individuals have earned the David Sigmon award. (Early records are not complete so there are probably contest winners who were not recorded in the archives.) By the end of May, a new name will be added to the list.

### **The Samuel A. McGee Memorial NCMCA Apprentice Masonry Skills Contest**

At its January 2016 meeting, the NCMCA Board of Directors passed a resolution to rename the Association’s annual apprentice contest in memory of Sam McGee. From the contest program: “Samuel Alexander McGee (1939-2015) was co-founder and President of McGee Brothers Company in Monroe. Recognized as an innovator in the industry, Sam was inducted into the Masonry Contractors Association of America Masonry Hall-of-Fame in 2014. He was inducted into the National Masonry Instructors Association Hall-of-Fame in 2012 and was among the first individuals to earn the designation Certified Masonry Executive in the NCMCA Masonry Contractor Certification Program. He had a passion for the masonry industry and for encouraging and teaching young people craft skills, especially masonry. In recognition of his contribution and dedication to masonry in the Carolinas, the annual contest is named in his memory.”

### **The Mason Contractors Association of America Masonry Hall of Fame**

The Masonry Hall of Fame was created by the Mason Contractors Association of America (MCAA) to recognize and award individuals who have dedicated their lives to the masonry industry. The first inductions into the Hall of Fame were at Las Vegas in

2012. NCMCA's first president, Glenn W. Sipe was one of four individuals inducted that first year. Among the forty-five present members of the Hall of Fame, seven have direct connection to the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association:

Glenn W. Sipe\* – 2012

Samuel A. McGee\* – 2014

Damian Lang - 2018

Robert L. "Bob" Merrill\* - 2019

Douglas Drye – 2020

Brian Carney – 2020

Gary Joyner – 2022

Calvin Brodie – 2023

\* *deceased*

A complete biography of each Masonry Hall of Fame member can be found on the MCAA website along with nomination criteria.

### **The Eleanor F. Upton Outstanding Associate Award**

The NCMCA Outstanding Associate Member award was first presented in 1981. (If it was ever presented prior to 1981, the information about the recognition was not found in the archives.) In 1998, the award was renamed in honor of NCMCA's first Executive Director, Eleanor F. Upton as she stepped away from managing the Association when NCMCA moved to a fulltime director's position. As noted in earlier NCMCA Anniversary articles, Ms. Upton and her husband Bob owned and operated Upton Associates in Raleigh, specializing in meeting/event planning and association management. Upton Associates managed NCMCA from about 1976 until late in 1997. The Upton Award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated long-term service and have made exemplary contribution to NCMCA and/or the Carolina's masonry industry. The award is designated for associate members of NCMCA but individuals outside of NCMCA membership have been considered for recognition, as was the case for Ms. Upton when she received the award in 1998. Nominations for the Upton

Award are formally made from local NCMCA chapters and are approved by a committee of past NCMCA presidents and previous Upton Award recipients. The Upton Award has never been an annual presentation but rather only awarded when an individual clearly worthy of the honor is identified. In NCMCA's fifty years, the award has only been presented thirteen times.

*Upton Award recipients:*

Ray Holyfield, 1981, The Riverton Corporation

Billy Walker, 1985, Santee Cement

John Cramer, 1997, TriSure

Eleanor Upton, 1998, Upton Associates

Jimmy Wall, 1999, Adams Products Company

Danny A. Batten, 2001, Lafarge North America

Freddie McMahan, 2005, McMahan Insurance & Employee Benefits

Paul A. LaVene, 2011, Carolinas Concrete Masonry Association

Herman A. "Butch" Hardy, posthumously 2012, Adams Products Company

Kenny Duncan, 2013, Holcim (US) Inc.

David McQueen, 2018, Adams Products Company

David Bass, 2020, Adams Products Company

Dwayne Bryant, 2024, Palmetto Brick Company

These are the most prominent among the recognitions NCMCA and the industry have made and continue to make in any given year. There are others, including the recognition of past local chapter presidents and officers, "Life" membership status, "Member Emeritus" status, local chapter "Excellence in Masonry" architectural awards, golf awards at local, state, and convention tournaments, and the Convention Annual Safety Awards compiled in partnership with TriSure Corporation. NCMCA participates in recognition and award presentations for students and instructors who

have success in regional and state SkillsUSA masonry events, and for many years, took the lead in determining and presenting the “Douglas Drye Masonry Industry Award” for the school masonry program of the year. Masonry Hall of Fame member Doug Drye retired from Mount Pleasant High School in 2009 as the most successful high school masonry instructor in the country.

Within the common denominators found among all the individuals mentioned in this article is that none of them ever gave evidence that they served the Association and industry seeking awards and recognition. Each one recognized the value and satisfaction of giving back to an industry and to a way of life that has served all of us so well.

Article Written by Lynn Nash

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President Dickey Robinson (1983-85) presents President Red Brookshire (1979-81) his past-president’s plaque in an undated photograph. The past president’s recognition is now named “The Glenn W. Sipe Presidential Service Award.”

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In 1999 as President of the Western Carolina Chapter, Hugh Townsend presented Jane Sigmon with the letter from the Western Carolina Chapter that recommended the NCMCA Board of Directors name the top-score recognition for the Annual NCMCA Apprentice Skills Contest in memory of her late husband: “The David R. Sigmon Award.”

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Past Upton Award recipients joined the celebration as Paul A. LaVene received the award at the 2011 convention. Left to right, Jimmy Wall, Paul LaVene, Freddie McMahan, Danny Batten, and John Cramer. Mr. LaVene had recently retired as President of the Carolinas Concrete Masonry Association at the time of the presentation.

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At the 2012 Western Carolina Chapter Winter Social, Glenn W. Sipe and Carl Moser, Sr. were recognized as “Life Members” of NCMCA as approved by the NCMCA Board of Directors. Also at the dinner, it was announced that outgoing presidents of NCMCA would henceforward be recipients of the “Glenn W. Sipe Presidential Service Award.” Top, left to right, Steve and Beverly Sipe, C.E. and Donna Moser, and Kevin and Lisa Moser. Bottom, left to right, Jeff Sipe, Glenn W. Sipe, Carl Moser, Sr., and Carl “Trey” Moser, III.

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Past NCMCA President Calvin Brodie is the most recent NCMCA member to be inducted into the Mason Contractors Association of America Masonry Hall of Fame. Calvin was recognized at the 2023 MCAA Mid-Year Meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

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At the April 2024 convention, Past NCMCA President Doug Burton (left) introduced Dwayne Bryant as the newest recipient of the “Eleanor F. Upton Award.”

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