



George W. Johnson Center

DEDICATION

*April 12, 1996
2 p.m.*

George Mason University

*If I have learned anything, it is that education,
to be education, requires a sense of the
uncertain and the unknown. All education
rests on the principle of the perennial amateur.
Its great enemy is not ignorance
but expertise.*

—GEORGE W. JOHNSON, 1978

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Consecration of the Center Fanfare

Composed by Stephen Douglas Burton,

Heritage Chair of Music

Michael Tomaro, Conductor

Welcome

Stanley E. Harrison, *Rector, Board of Visitors*

Keynote Speaker

John T. Hazel, Jr.

Presentation of Virginia General Assembly Resolution

The Honorable Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.

Speakers

Anita Taylor, Professor of Communication

Chair, Faculty Senate

Bryan Hubbard

Chair, Student Senate

Lisa Mayne, J.D. '85

President, George Mason University Alumni Association

Dedication of the Building

Stanley E. Harrison

Rector, Board of Visitors

Lilla Richards

*Chair, Board of Visitors' Land Use
and Physical Facilities Committee*

Presentation of the George Mason Bronze

Joanne Johnson

Chair, George Mason Fund for the Arts

"George Mason, the Man"

The Honorable Omer L. Hirst

Additional music is provided by the Potomac Brass Quintet,
City of Fairfax Band.

George W. Johnson Center

ARCHITECTS: MARCELLUS, WRIGHT, COX, AND SMITH (RICHMOND)

SHEPLEY, BULFINCH, RICHARDSON, AND ABBOTT (BOSTON)

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: CHAS. H. TOMPKINS CO.

317,850 square feet

Total project cost: \$30 million

(\$11.3 million from bond referendum)

The Johnson Center has a unique, multifaceted mission, to provide students with a total learning experience through interaction with books, technology, peers, faculty, and staff. The \$30-million building, with eight acres of floor space, is the first of its kind on an American campus, combining a 100,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art, open plan library facility with technology access and the meeting, programming, and food service space often associated with a student union.

Planning for the center began in 1986 and was shared by Mason students (many now alumni), faculty, and staff. Twice the size of the Patriot Center, the building took two years and five months to construct. The progressive design and large central atrium make the Johnson Center a visual landmark on campus as well as a hub of student activity.

MISSION STATEMENT

To make the Johnson Center a central focus for universitywide learning by helping to integrate students' curricular and extracurricular activities, and by strengthening relationships between the university's communities.



George W. Johnson

George W. Johnson was appointed president of George Mason University in 1978 with the mandate “to make things happen.” Under his leadership, the university has developed from a small liberal arts college to a major university, with a national reputation for innovation and entrepreneurship. In his time at George Mason, the university has acquired doctoral status, established a law school, instituted 34 new programs, including 11 doctoral programs, and

created new organizational structures for the university, including six academic institutes. Major facilities built include the Patriot Center, the Center for the Arts, a new student union, extensions to the library, student residence halls, six new classroom buildings, and a building unique to George Mason, the Johnson Center.

George Johnson’s achievements have reached far beyond the confines of the campus, however. From the first, he has emphasized the interactive nature of the institution, establishing George Mason as a focal point for its diverse and dynamic region. The university’s arts programs bring together students and the community in mutual learning experiences. The Patriot Center provides a venue for sports, entertainment, and community events. Programs such as the School of Information Technology and Engineering were created in partnership with high-technology business leaders. He established the Northern Virginia Roundtable to bring George Mason and local businesses together to foster economic growth and enhance the region’s quality of life. George Mason University, under Dr. Johnson’s leadership, has become a model for scholarship, regional interaction, and innovation.

GEORGE MASON, REVOLUTIONARY STATESMAN

Many of our American freedoms derive from the constitutional amendments known as the Bill of Rights, whose principles can be traced to George Mason and other founders of the commonwealth of Virginia. Mason, a Virginia representative to the Constitutional Convention of 1787, contributed much to the intellectual structure of the U.S. Constitution. He had been the primary author of the first Virginia Constitution and had framed the Virginia Declaration of Rights—considered by many historians the most advanced statement of human rights to date. Strongly advocating a declaration of rights for United States citizens, Mason refused to sign the Constitution when the other convention delegates failed to include one. Four years later, the first 10 amendments to the Constitution—known as the Bill of Rights—were adopted, largely because of Mason's insistence.

THE GEORGE MASON BRONZE

The George Mason Bronze is a symbolic work depicting the contribution of George Mason of Virginia to the creation of the Bill of Rights to the Constitution of the United States. The artist, Wendy M. Ross, has chosen to portray Mason presenting the handwritten first draft of his Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1776. The writing table to the left replicates an original in the study at Gunston Hall. The three volumes on the table of works by Hume, Locke, and Rousseau depict sources of Mason's thought on individual liberty. The philosophical framework of this commemorative piece is particularly striking as we continue to debate issues of individual freedom and responsibility. The dedication of this sculpture at George Mason University marks the first three-dimensional portrait of George Mason in the history of the country.

THE DONORS

Major funding for the George Mason Bronze has been provided by the Arts Gala Committee, its patrons, and other donors to the George Mason Fund for the Arts. The work was commissioned August 1, 1995, for completion in time for dedication at today's event, at a total cost of \$159,500, with patrons of the Arts Gala Committee/Fund for the Arts providing \$148,850 of that amount. Other donations to the Fund for the Arts in support of the project have come from the Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution, who contributed \$10,000; additional donations totaling \$650 included gifts from the Chi Kappa chapter of Chi Omega, the George Mason Memorial Society, and direct descendants of George Mason.

Beginning as a student project in 1987, the undertaking stalled because of the difficulty of raising money from students on limited incomes. The project started

up again in 1992, when members of the student senate asked the administration for assistance in getting underway. The Office of the Provost and Office of Student Affairs agreed to sponsor a competition to select a nationally known artist to create a proposal for a sculptural design. The work of Wendy M. Ross was selected by a vote. The cost of the project and the inability to proceed with public funds delayed the commissioning of the bronze until the summer of 1995, when the Arts Gala Committee decided to commission the work as a gift to the university community.

THE ARTIST

Wendy M. Ross is internationally known for her portraits of public figures such as Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, Senator Henry M. Jackson, Representative Phillip Burton, and former Gannett chairman and chief executive officer Allen Neuharth. Her work is displayed at the U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Capitol, National Park Service, University of Washington, Kidder Peabody Corporation, and headquarters of USA Today and the Gannett Company. Ross attended the University of Wisconsin and the San Francisco Art Institute. She earned a Master of Fine Arts from the Rhode Island School of Design.

CONSECRATION OF THE CENTER

Stephen Douglas Burton, composer

Stephen Douglas Burton wrote *Consecration of the Center* expressly for the dedication ceremony at the request of Dr. and Mrs. Johnson. Professor Burton wanted a piece that would reflect the mission of the new Johnson Center—to serve the next generation of students as they enter a new century. Because the music is to be performed in an outdoor space, he composed a fanfare—a piece for brass and percussion instruments. Many of the performing musicians are members of the U.S. Army Band. The fanfare is conducted by Michael A. Tomaro, the director of jazz studies at George Mason.

Stephen Douglas Burton is George Mason's Heritage Professor of Music. His works have been commissioned and performed by the Berlin Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the National Orchestra of France under well-known conductors such as Sir Georg Solti, Antal Dorati, and Mstislav Rostropovich. Burton studied at the Oberlin and Peabody Conservatories and at the Mozarteum in Austria. He has taught at George Mason for more than 15 years.

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