

1270 WMPM

**"Your Voice of Eastern
North Carolina"**



Selma Jewelry **New, Remodeled Store**
Your Dependable Jeweler **THANKS to all of our customers**
108 N. Raiford St **919-965-8582**



Architect David Maurer (second from right), Scott McCall, carpenter, Brooke Tate, project manager, and Lionel Richardson, construction superintendent, at the open house of the newly renovated Masonic Hall building on North Second Street. The building, one of the oldest in Smithfield, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.



Open House Held At Newly Renovated

Masonic Hall - After extensive renovations, the owner of the historic Masonic Hall opened the newly remodeled building to the public last Thursday. Built back in 1854, the Masonic Hall is one of Smithfield's oldest buildings. Raleigh Architect David Maurer purchased the building on North Second Street last fall. Maurer said the building received extensive repairs. Having been

damaged by fire 8 years ago, the building was also leaning six inches. "I can't image any more extensive repairs structurally. The foundation was sitting on rocks," Maurer told WMPM during a two hour open house last week. Maurer wouldn't say specifically how much the renovations cost, only that the renovations were in excess of \$100 per square foot. Maurer said he has reached a tentative agreement with a general contractor to lease the entire 2,000 square foot building. He is also currently seeking to nominate the structure to the National Register of Historic Places. The building was used as a lodge meeting hall until from 1854 until 1915 when the building was moved to its present location by Judge and Mason F.H. Brooks. Brooks was the last to the Masonic Hall, on North Second Street, as his law office. The Smithfield Woman's Club met in the building from 1917 through 1933 and also operated the town's first public library from the second floor during the same time period. The building was once located at Second and Hancock Street but was moved to its present location between 1915 and 1917. Smithfield lawyer, judge, and Lodge member Frederick Holliday Brooks is credited with the move, but his wife Lelia Parker Brooks may have also had a personal interest in the relocation. Mrs. Brooks was elected first president of the Smithfield Woman's Club in 1914.