

Tour Guide - ABOUT MASONRY - HISTORIC TRENTON MASONIC TEMPLE
Joseph Francis Seliga - Dec 13, 2007 - Revised Dec 17, 2007

WHAT FREEMASONRY IS:

Freemasonry Is a Fraternal Organization for Men.
Freemasonry Is Governed by its Ancient Charges, Constitution and By-laws.
Freemasonry Teaches Lessons of Social and Moral Virtues.
Freemasonry Are Required to Practice Brotherly Love, Mutual Assistance, Equality, Secrecy and Trust.
Freemasonry Encourages its Members to Think.
Freemasonry Teaches Tolerance of the Beliefs of Others.
Freemasonry Teaches That All Men Are Equals and Deserving of the Respect of Others.
Freemasons Have Secret Means of Recognizing a Brother Freemason.
Freemasons Meet in Lodges.
Freemasons Must Believe in a Supreme Being.

WHAT FREEMASONRY IS NOT:

Freemasonry is not a Religion with Its Own Dogma - But a member must believe in a Supreme Being.
Freemasonry is not a Charity - But it contributes more than \$2 million dollars a day to charities.
Freemasonry is not a Political Movement - But its members have been political and social reformers.
Freemasonry is not a Science - But teaches its members to value learning and experience.
Freemasonry does not have a single governing Body - Every State in the USA has a Grand Lodge.

LODGE ROOM CONTENTS:

Lodge Rooms - Usually oriented East to West - Worshipful Master sits in the East.
Altar - Location of the Three Great Lights of Masonry, Sacred Book, Compass and Square.
Sacred Book - It is a Bible, a Tanach, a Koran or other book of Sacred Law depending on the faith of the members.
Three Candles - Symbolizes man's reason, his physical senses and his psychic senses.
Two tall pillars topped by Globes - Joachin on right - celestial globe and Boaz on left - a terrestrial globe.
Illuminated G suspended in the East over the Worshipful Masters chair - Represents Geometry and God.
Lodge Charter - Identifies Lodge as a Regular and Duly Constituted Lodge under the New Jersey Grand Lodge.
Gavel - Used by the Worshipful Master in the conduct of the meeting.
Pedestals - Three, one in front of the WM, the SW and the JW.
Seats Around the Room for all members so that all can participate equally.
Wooden columns - The SW and JW have columns on the pedestals before them. When the column on the SW's pedestal is upright, the meeting is in progress. When the column on the JW's pedestal is upright, the meeting is in recess or refreshment.
Rods - Six, one each for the SD, JD, SS, JS, SMC and JMC. All are carried during meetings and ceremonies.
Door Ring - Raps are used by the Tyler and Junior Deacon to permit visitors to enter the Lodge.

MEETINGS - CALLED COMMUNICATIONS BY FREEMASONS:

Meetings are held throughout the year; letters are read, bills paid, new members voted upon, guest speakers are heard.
A meal occasionally is served prior to or after a meeting for social interaction between members.
Meetings are conducted by means of rituals.
New member ceremonies are held.

PUBLIC CEREMONIES:

Cornerstone Laying
Funeral Services - Prayer by a Chaplain, laying on of an apron and a branch of acacia.

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SYMBOLS - AROUND CEILING OF LODGE ROOM:

Winged Hourglass - Emblem of mortality, wings add emphasis that time is fleeting.

Beehive - Hard work and teamwork. One bee can do nothing, they need each other to accomplish tasks.

Incense Pot - Allegory of a pure heart and the prayers that arise to heaven, symbolized by rising smoke.

MEMBERSHIP PROCESS:

Application Completed and Submitted with endorsement of two members.

Three Member Investigating Committee Appointed by Worshipful Master.

Investigating Committee Meets with the Applicant.

Three character references are required and reviewed by the Investigating Committee.

Investigating Committee reports to the Entire Lodge

Application Reviewed by Grand Lodge.

Vote is Taken at an Official Lodge Meeting - Black Ball System Used.

Applicant's Name is published in the Lodge's Newsletter called a Trestle board.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Man of Good Character and Sound Mind.

Belief in a Supreme Being.

Male - Age 21.

OFFICER STATIONS OR POSITIONS, WHETHER ELECTED OR APPOINTED AND DUTIES

Worshipful Master - East - Elected by Lodge - Presides over meetings, Confers degrees, Governs the Lodge.

Senior Warden - West - Elected by Lodge - Assists the WM..

Junior Warden - South - Elected by Lodge - Is in charge of the Lodge during recesses and refreshments.

Secretary - Left of WM - Elected by Lodge - Keeps records and minutes of the Lodge, communicates with other Lodges and the Grand Lodge, collects dues.

Treasurer - Right of WM - Elected by Lodge - Maintains the financial Records of the Lodge, pays bills by order of the WM and with the consent of the Lodge.

Chaplain - Front of Secretary - Appointed by WM - Gives non-denominational prayers for the opening and closure of meetings, during ritual ceremonies and before meals.

Marshal - Next to Chaplain - Appointed by WM - Makes Proclamations, Leads candidates during degrees.

Senior Deacon - Front of Treasurer - Appointed by WM - Attends the Inner Door, Acts a Messenger for the WM, Introduces visitors, Escorts visitors and new candidates.

Junior Deacon - Right of SW - Appointed by WM - Attends the Outer Door, Acts *as* a Messenger for the SW.

Tyler - Outside of Meeting Room - Appointed by WM - Ensures that only Masons attend the Meeting.

Senior Steward - Right Front of SW - Appointed by WM - Is in charge of refreshments.

Junior Steward - Left Front of SW - Appointed by WM - Assists SS with refreshments.

Senior Master of Ceremonies - Right Front of SW - Appointed by WM - Prepares candidates for degrees.

Junior Master of Ceremonies - Left Front of SW - Appointed by WM - Assists SMC

Historian - In side seat - Appointed by WM - Maintains a history of the Lodge.

DEGREES

First - Entered Apprentice.

Second - Fellowcraft.

Third - Master Mason.

Each Must Be Done Sequentially.

An Oath or Obligation Is Taken in Each Degree.

Proficiency Must Be Proven Before Taking the Next Degree.