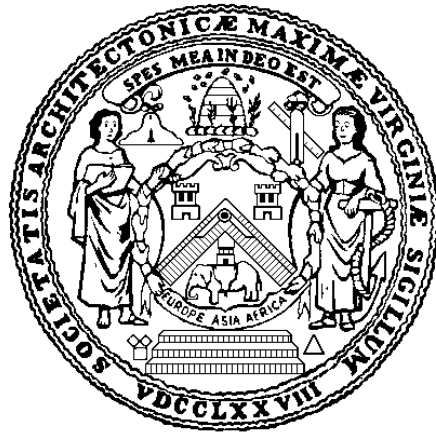


# Bring A Friend Night Program



**Grand Lodge of Virginia**

**A.F. & A.M.**

**2007**



# BRING A FRIEND NIGHT PROGRAM

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# Bring A Friend Night Program

## Introduction

This booklet contains a suggested program with details as to how you might set up a “Bring a Friend” event. You are free to adapt it to your Lodge and to supplement or change it as you choose. Also included are two sets of presentations that can be used. One presentation is designed for a single speaker; the other presentation is designed for three speakers. You can use these presentations or you can change them. Finally, a new Virginia DVD is included that you can show to your guests to give them more information about Virginia Freemasonry.

Some Masons are concerned about the non-solicitation rule. What that rule means is that a man must come to Freemasonry of his own free will and accord. There can be no coercion. But nothing in Virginia Freemasonry prevents us from discussing Masonry with others by approaching those we know and respect, who we consider to be a potentially suitable applicant, and encouraging them to consider becoming a part of Freemasonry by joining our Lodge. We can tell them we welcome good men joining our organization, but they must ask to join. We can also invite them to a “Bring a Friend Night” event where they can learn more about our Fraternity. If we get them as excited about Freemasonry as we are, they will consider becoming a part of Freemasonry and joining our Lodge.

One way to begin is to have an introductory conversation with a prospective candidate about Freemasonry, and leave them with one of the publications on Freemasonry such as: “For Your Information” published by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, and “What’s A Mason?” and “Who Are The Masons and What Do They Do?” both published by the Masonic Information Center. We also recommend that you review the Grand Lodge publication, “Share the Light of Freemasonry.”

Your prospective candidate may then want to know more about Freemasonry. You are free to tell them what Freemasonry is all about—its history, its values, and its charities. You can tell them about your Lodge and what Freemasonry means to you. If you wish, you can also refer them to other knowledgeable Brethren in your Lodge or district who can further explain what the Fraternity is all about and provide an additional perspective.

Of course, many men now get their information from the Internet and there are many good Internet sites you can recommend to them. These sites include Grand Lodge websites, such as:

**Grand Lodge of Virginia:** <http://www.grandlodgeofvirginia.org/>

**Grand Lodge of California:** <http://www.freemason.org/>

**Grand Lodge of Massachusetts:** <http://www.glmasons-mass.org/>

**Grand Lodge of Nebraska:** <http://www.nebraska-grand-lodge.org>

**Grand Lodge of New York:** <http://www.nymasons.org/>

**Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania:** <http://www.grandlodgeofvirginia.org/>

and even the **Grand Lodge of England:** <http://www.grand-lodge.org/>

In addition, there are other good sites to recommend. These include:

**American Mason:** <http://www.americanmason.com/>

**Masonic Service Association of North America:** <http://www.msana.com/>

**George Washington Masonic Memorial:** <http://www.gwmemorial.org/>

**Scottish Rite of Freemasonry:** <http://www.srmason-sj.org/web/index.htm>

**Scottish Rite Journal:** <http://www.srmason-sj.org/web/journal-files/journal-main.htm>

**Shrine of North America:** <http://www.shrinershq.org/Shrine/Default.asp>

and **the Philalethes Society:** <http://www.freemasonry.org/psoc/>

After they have some idea about the Fraternity and are interested in learning more, is a good time to let them see the Lodge and meet the Brethren. Your Lodge's "Bring a Friend Night" or "Lodge Open House Program" is perfect for doing just that.

This booklet contains all the information you will need to plan and hold a successful "Bring a Friend to Lodge" event. We suggest you have one event every quarter. Each time you hold one, your Lodge hones its ability to run these events, and the experience which the Brethren acquire in participating in such a program will help teach them how to gain members at the Lodge's other open Lodge events—because every open Lodge event should be an opportunity for the Lodge to increase its membership!

## **Eight Steps to a Successful "Bring a Friend Night"**

### ***Step One: Appoint a Committee to Run the Event***

The first step is to appoint a committee with three or four Brothers to be responsible for the event. An enthusiastic, outgoing, knowledgeable member of your Lodge should be appointed to head this committee.

### ***Step Two: Develop a Communications Plan***

The second step is to reach out to all of the Brethren to encourage their support and participation. The goal is to have every Brother bring at least one guest. This is a realistic goal that every Brother is capable of fulfilling, but the success of your program will depend on getting the commitment of a number of the Brethren to invite and bring a guest.

It may be useful to establish a telephone subcommittee to call the Brethren to remind them of the event and seek their commitment to ask one or more of their friends and colleagues to attend. The telephone subcommittee should contact the Brethren a week before the open house to remind them to contact their potential candidates a couple of days before the event to confirm their attendance. They should tell the Brethren that it is a good idea to go to his guest's home and drive him to Lodge. This courtesy not only ensures that the guest will not get lost, but that he will feel more comfortable, and probably will have a better time. As a result of these conversations, the telephone subcommittee will be able to provide a count of those who will attend so that invitations can be sent out and there are ample refreshments on hand for all in attendance.

You can also reach into your community and publicize a "Bring a Friend" event by sending a press release (**Appendix A**) to a local newspaper or a radio spot to a local radio station (**Appendix B**).

#### ***Step Three: Prepare Invitations and a Program Agenda***

A letter of invitation (**Appendix C**) should be sent to each invited potential candidate. The invitation should contain an explanation of the event and relevant information such as dress, time, and the location of the Lodge. The invitations can be sent out by the committee or given by each of the Brethren to the friends they invite. In addition, it is helpful to have a typed agenda. It adds class to the occasion and helps everyone keep on a tighter time schedule.

#### ***Step Four: Set Up the Program***

We suggest the following tried, tested, and successful program, but you should feel free to improve upon it, or be creative and innovative and come up with your own plan.

During the course of the evening we want to expose qualified men, your guests, to a sampling of:

- Masonic History
- Masonic Literature
- A Mason's Commitment to his Community through Masonic Charity and Community Service
- The Degree System and Masonic Regalia
- The Uplifting Symbolism of the Working Tools, and,
- Masonic Fellowship

To accomplish all of this, your "Bring a Friend Night" should feature display tables, a video presentation on Freemasonry and either a keynote speaker or three speakers, speaking a total of no more than 20 minutes. The suggested program could be set up as follows:

**Receive guests in the Lodge Room** (7:30-7:45 P.M.)

**Program in the Lodge Room** (7:45-8:45 P.M.)

Welcome by the Worshipful Master and introduction of the video and speakers  
by either the Worshipful Master or a Master of Ceremonies 5 minutes

Speaker: *(Either use a single keynote speaker or three speakers – see below)*

Keynote Speaker: Who are the Masons and  
What Do they Do?

- or -

Speaker #1: Masonic History and  
Some Famous Masons 10 minutes

Speaker #2: The Masonic Lodge and the  
Degree System in Freemasonry 10 minutes

Speaker #3: What Freemasonry offers, and  
What Masons do 10 minutes

Video 10 - 20 minutes

Closing Remarks by the Worshipful Master 5 minutes

**Program in the Social Hall** (8:45-9:30 P.M.)

**Review of the Displays** 15 minutes

**Questions and Answers** 10 minutes

**Refreshment and Fellowship** 20 minutes

Welcome and Closing Remarks are important because they set the tone for the evening. The welcoming remarks should put everyone at ease and make it clear that the program will be interesting and informative, and the evening enjoyable. At the beginning, the Worshipful Master or the Master of Ceremonies should ask each person to introduce himself in a sentence or two, but there should not be long or formal Masonic introductions! Similarly, the closing remarks by the Worshipful Master should set the stage for the displays, the fellowship, and the refreshments to follow. The guests should be invited to ask questions and made to feel at home.

#### ***Step Five: Obtain the Speakers and Films***

It is extremely important that you enlist Brothers who are powerful and impressive speakers. There may be good speakers in your Lodge, but feel free to consult with your District Officers, if you need help in finding the right speaker.

The speaker or speakers from outside the Lodge should get a written invitation with the time they are to appear, the amount of time they are to speak, dress code, and clear directions to the Lodge. A contact person and phone number must be



included, and the contact person must stay in touch with the speaker to ensure that there is no mix-up or last-minute change of plans.

If you use a single speaker format, your keynote speaker may use the talk in **Appendix D**, or should be prepared to cover Masonic history and philosophy, the degree system, and the value of Masonic membership.

If you use three speakers, then speaker #1, who is to speak on Masonic history, may either use the talk in **Appendix E**, or should be prepared to touch upon the development of Masonry in Europe and its origins and influence in America. He should speak about the Masonic principles of friendship, morality, and brotherly love, and talk about some famous American Masons.

Speaker #2, who is to speak on the degree system may either use the talk in **Appendix F**, or should be prepared to explain about the Lodge and the officers, the system of degrees, the Masonic tradition that prospective members have to request to join and the petition process.

Speaker #3, who is to talk about what Freemasonry offers, and what Masons do, may either use the talk in **Appendix G**, or should be prepared to talk about the opportunities to make new friends all over the state, the country, and the world; the opportunities for service to the community; and the chance for self-improvement. He should spotlight the estimated \$2 million a day Masons contribute to charity, the charities of the Grand Lodge and the Masonic family organizations, and the work being done by your Lodge.

We have included a Grand Lodge of Virginia DVD that you can use in your program, but there are also many other films and videos – generally 10 - 20 minutes long – and which explain various aspects of Masonry in an interesting way, are available from Grand Lodge (1-804-222-3110), the Imperial Shrine Headquarters (1-813-281-0300), the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America, which is sanctioned by the Conference of Grand Masters (1-888-891-8235—toll free), and the Masonic Service Association (1-301-588-4010). These presentations include:

- **“Understanding What It Means to be A Mason”**  
Masonic Renewal Committee of North America
- **“Friend to Friend”**  
Masonic Renewal Committee of North America
- **“I’ve Heard the Name, What Does it Mean?”**  
Masonic Renewal Committee of North America
- **“Symbol of Pride”**  
Produced by the Imperial Shrine and describing the true meaning of Freemasonry

- **“Quiet Fraternity”**  
Produced by the Grand Lodge of Connecticut—describing Masonic history—from operative Masonry to today’s Lodge, and detailing Masonic concern for humanity—from youth organizations to the elderly
- **“Freemasons: Who Are They?”**  
Produced by the Grand Lodge of Oregon
- **“Brotherhood and Service”**  
Produced by the Grand Lodge of New York explaining Freemasonry
- **“Onward Brother Masons”**  
A documentary depicting Masonic pomp and ceremony in Australia
- **“The Freemasons”**  
A longer film produced by the Grand Lodge of England, which depicts English Freemasonry and answers a host of questions about our Fraternity.

*Step Six: Obtain Supplies and Set up the Displays*

Display tables set up in the Social Hall are an important part of the evening. They should provide interesting information to supplement the Lodge Room program, and they should stimulate our guests, escorted by the Brethren who invited them, to ask questions and seek answers. Each exhibit should have a written explanation attached to it, but knowledgeable Brethren should also be at each table to comment on the display and answer questions. The displays might include:

**Masonic regalia:** include officers’ jewels and working tools, as well as a variety of Masonic aprons (the white lambskin apron, the officers’ aprons, the Past Master’s apron, the purple district aprons, and any other aprons available to the Lodge such as Grand Lodge Officers’ aprons and aprons from other Grand Jurisdictions).

**Masonic literature:** include a wide range of old and new Masonic books and publications, for example, of the Grand Lodge, Philalethes, York and Scottish Rite, and Shrine. The display is meant to show our guests the richness of our heritage and the extent of our activities.

**Masonic Information:** include information about Lodge activities and a variety of Masonic brochures, such as “For Your Information,” should be available for the guests to take and read.

*Step Seven: Fellowship and Refreshments*

Some Lodges might want to serve a complete meal, but providing some tasty desserts in the Social Hall where the displays are set up has worked well. The time in the Social Hall is for socializing, so keep it light and introduce your guest to some of the members and let them converse together. Be ready to answer any

additional questions, but keep in mind that you are not there to give a hard sell, push your guest to join, or even give him a petition—unless he asks for one. However, if he does ask, be sure to have one with you, and present it to him for his immediate completion, if possible. Read it over and be sure to sign it as a voucher.

***Step Eight: Post Event Actions***

Have the committee and the inviting Brother follow-up after the evening is over. If you keep in contact with those who have attended the “Bring a Friend Night,” then, if they have an interest in Freemasonry, they will ask to join.

Remember, that one purpose behind any Lodge event involving the public is to seek out and follow-up on qualified prospective members who, because of our efforts, are interested in learning more about Freemasonry. This post event step is also important after other open Lodge events. Always be sure to obtain the names and telephone numbers of everyone who attends your open event. Without undue delay, contact those who are worthy of your interest. The first step can be a letter thanking them for attending the event (**Appendix H**). In addition, one of the Brethren should call the visitor, and perhaps invite him to lunch or to your next open Lodge event. Follow-through is important, and there should be at least one contact per month to give the individual an opening to ask for more information and see if he is interested in joining.



**Appendix A: Recommended Press Release**

Contact: John Smith  
Hay Market Lodge  
134 First Street  
Haymarket, VA 22069  
(703) 444-1234

**Masons Take “The Mystery Out Of Freemasonry”****At Special Friend’s Night Program**

**HAYMARKET, SEPTEMBER 7:** On Monday evening, September 25, 2006,

Hay Market Masonic Lodge will sponsor a special “Friend’s Night” program that will explain to members of the community more about the world’s oldest and largest fraternal organization. The program will begin at 7:30 P.M. with refreshments and dessert to follow.

Bob Baker, the presiding officer of Hay Market Lodge said the program would feature brief presentations on the origins of Freemasonry, its ritual and traditions, and what it contributes to the community. There will be exhibits and a chance to ask the questions you’ve always wanted to ask.

Baker noted that some of America’s most famous citizens have been Masons, like John Hancock and Benjamin Franklin—who were among the nine signers of the Declaration of Independence known to be Masons. Baker added that former astronaut and Senator John Glenn and former President Gerald Ford also are and were Masons. “I am certain that the men and their families who attend this Friend’s Night program,” Baker said, “will be surprised to learn of the many friends and neighbors who are members of the Masonic Fraternity.”

For more information about the program, phone (703) 444-1234.

**Appendix B: Recommended Radio Spots****MASONIC FRIEND'S NIGHT**

30 SECONDS

Masonry, what it is and what it stands for, will be the topic of discussion on September 25, 2006, at 7:30 P.M. at Hay Market Masonic Lodge in Haymarket.

Gather with your friends and neighbors for an evening of discovery and fellowship. Learn how the world's oldest fraternal organization continues its important work.

Call (703) 444-1234 for information.

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**MASONIC FRIEND'S NIGHT**

60 SECONDS

What is Freemasonry all about? You and your friends can learn about this ancient fraternal order on Monday evening September 25, 2006, at 7:30 P.M.

On that night, members of Hay Market Lodge will present a short but informative program, answer your questions about Masonry, and furnish dessert and refreshments.

You'll be surprised how many of those Masons have been your friends and neighbors in Haymarket for years.

Masonry is not the secret society it's rumored to be. You'll be surprised at what you will learn about the Fraternity, how community minded it is, and of the famous people throughout history who were Masons, such as General George S. Patton, President Harry S. Truman, Chief Justice Earl Warren, actor John Wayne and many, many more including fourteen U.S. Presidents.

Call (703) 444-1234 for more information about this evening of fellowship with your local Masons.

**Appendix C: Letter of Invitation**

**Lodge Letterhead**

Date  
Mr. Your Name  
Secretary  
Lodge Address  
Sometown, Virginia (zip code)

Mr. John Doe  
His address  
Sometown, Virginia (zip code)

Dear Mr. Doe:

I am writing to extend an invitation for you to join with us, and your friend, [the name of the inviting Brother] at the \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge’s “Bring a Friend Night,” to be held on month, day, year at 7:30 P.M.

An overview of Freemasonry will be presented to include a question and answer period and a tour of the \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge Hall situated at [Lodge address].

Your friend, \_\_\_\_\_, will make arrangements for your transportation to and from \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge that evening. Dress is casual.

Fellowship and refreshments will be served in the social hall after the presentations.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at [phone number].

Sincerely,

Your name  
Secretary

cc: [the name of the inviting Brother]





**Appendix D - Recommended Talk for Single Speaker Program****Who Are The Masons and What Do They Do?****“Bring a Friend Night”**

I am very pleased to be here with all of you tonight to talk about Freemasonry.

I thought I'd start out by telling you a little bit about our history and then talk about Freemasonry on a more personal note, and finally throw it open to questions.

We are here tonight in \_\_\_\_\_  
Lodge No. \_\_\_, one of more than 300 Lodges in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

These Lodges are part of a state-wide organization known as the Grand Lodge of Virginia, and there are Grand Lodges in each of our 50 States and in many foreign countries as well.

The full name of our Grand Lodge is the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As I explain a bit about our history, I'll also explain that funny sounding name.

Freemasonry can be traced back through the centuries to the Middle Ages when artisans and builders worked in guilds. In the England of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, most workers were under bond to the owners of the land on which they worked—the so-called feudal system. But this system did not apply to Freemasons who had skills

that were deemed indispensable to the welfare of both Church and State. For this reason they were not placed under the same restrictions applicable to other workers and were “free” to pursue their labors, “free” to travel, and “free” to live their lives in a manner that befitted their importance as craftsmen. So this is where the use of the word “free” comes from.

The word “accepted” also has a special meaning and its connection with Freemasonry goes back to the days when Masons went through years of apprenticeship to learn the secrets of the builder’s art from a Master of the Craft, and then had to demonstrate their ability as craftsmen, before becoming Fellows of the Craft, and able to travel and work on their own. Not only did they have to prove their operative skills, but each workman also was bound by certain ethical standards in the general conduct of his life, and as a workman. There developed certain signs and words that enabled these traveling craftsmen or Masons to prove or identify themselves to the Masters of the Craft. These signs and words are the so-called secrets of Freemasonry.

The practice of admitting non-operative members into the Craft probably originated when some of the guild companies admitted the patrons for whom they were building, and the practice grew with the passage of time. The few honorary or “accepted” members joined the lodges for their social benefits, as the workmen observed many feast days and holidays with entertainment and other ceremonies. With succeeding generations, the operative members

decreased while the accepted members increased, until some time in the eighteenth century when the balance shifted with “accepted Masons” becoming predominant—as is the case today. So this is how we derive the word “accepted.”

Sometimes instead of contrasting “operative” Masons with “accepted” Masons, we contrast “operative” Masonry with “speculative” Masonry to emphasize the intellectual or philosophical bent of modern Freemasonry. That is to say, today most Freemasons are not in the Fraternity to learn to be builders, for example, of cathedrals, but rather to build character—that is to acquire self-knowledge about art, life, manners, and morals, that help us to be better men, to live better lives, and be better respected in our communities.

Although there are historical records of Lodges earlier than 1717, the first Grand Lodge under our system of speculative Masonry was organized in London in 1717 when four London Lodges met together and formed what is now known as the United Grand Lodge of England. Incidentally, His Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent, is the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England.

Freemasonry was brought to the United States by European Masons, and our early American Lodges held their Charters from European Grand Lodges. With the Revolutionary War, American Lodges became independent, with each of the colonies, setting up a separate Grand Lodge. The first Grand Master of Masons in Virginia was Judge John Blair,

Jr., of the Williamsburg Lodge, who was elected by a convention of delegates in October 1778. And the Grand Lodge of Virginia has continued uninterrupted since then, so this October will be our 229th year.

Many of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were Freemasons. George Washington was a Mason. Indeed, while serving as President of the United States, he also was Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22. No other Mason simultaneously served as President and Master of his Lodge, but a number of Masons have been President, including Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Gerald Ford. And, of course, many other well-known Americans joined the Masonic Fraternity—from Will Rogers to Red Skelton, from Gene Autry and Roy Rogers to John Wayne, from Burl Ives to Roy Acuff, from Barry Goldwater to Bob Dole, and from Reverend Norman Vincent Peale to Astronaut and Senator John Glenn. I could go on and on.

Freemasonry has flourished in many parts of the world bringing together men who otherwise would have never met, much less become friends. American Masons fighting both on the Union and Confederate sides, brought a measure of humanity to war, treating Masonic prisoners of war with compassion, and treating Masonic wives and widows on the “enemy” side with kindness.

And, in a rigid and highly structured colonial setting in India, it was only in the Masonic Lodge where

British soldiers and officials, and Jewish merchants met on the level with Indians of Moslem and Hindu backgrounds. Here the distinctions of politics or religion or ethnicity did not matter. Indeed, matters of politics and religion have no place in a Masonic Lodge.

Totalitarian regimes have made it a first order of business to oppose Freemasonry, and this was the case in Nazi Germany and behind the Iron Curtain. However, Freemasonry thrives in any environment that is open to the principles of friendship, morality, and brotherly love. And, in recent times, Masonic Lodges have reopened in Germany, Russia, and in many of the former Communist Bloc countries.

Well, with this historical background, let me tell you why I think Freemasonry continues to be important.

I've met so many men who are not happy in their lives. There was something missing, and I suggest that whatever the problem, Freemasonry is the answer. Why?

Well, women seem to make "best friends" all their lives. They seem to set the social calendar for the family, and they have so many girl friends with whom they can spend time, but men don't make friends as easily. They made deep and lasting friendships in high school and college while they were having dating adventures and in the Service when they had real adventures. However, later in life they didn't seem to bond with each other, and now they have no one really that close who they can trust or in whom they can confide.

Put Masons together though, and even if they don't know each other, there is a bond there that makes conversation easy. It's pretty remarkable, and I guess that's why we say that visiting Masons are not strangers, they are just friends you haven't met before.

Men complain to me that they don't have the social interaction and the relationships they'd like. This is not surprising either. In this age of the TV and the DVD they can entertain themselves without anyone else being around. They can converse on the Internet with someone who lives in Australia, while never bothering to talk to their next-door neighbor. It reminds me of the initial enthusiasm for telecommuting and working at home. At first, people are so excited about being able to "go to work" without leaving home, without shaving, and while still in their bathrobe, but soon they start to miss the face-to-face contact with coworkers, and come to realize that the social interaction they had in the office meant a lot to them. They end up craving the face-to-face contact we take for granted in Freemasonry.

Even when they do not telecommute, many men complain that their social interactions are so very superficial. They may see someone at work for years until one or the other leaves, and then they may never see that person again. It's a one-dimensional relationship that just doesn't translate into a friendship, but Masonry is a life-long engagement and you make life-long friendships.

You know as well, even when they do join an organization, so many men complain to me that it just doesn't meet their needs and that they don't meet interesting people. They say that they meet the same kind of people again and again; there is no variety and no excitement. The people are all old or all young, all jocks or all businessmen.

But in Freemasonry I've met people who were older and who were younger, men who were wealthier and others who were poorer, men who worked in factories and men who worked in offices, men who were good with words and others who were good with tools, and I've learned a lot from all of them.

Men also complain to me that the organizations they DO join are so single focused and limiting. This observation is not surprising. They join a trade or professional organization and find that it's just an extension of work. Or they join an organization because of a particular interest and then develop other interests. They outgrow the organization and then have to start over again.

But Freemasonry is not a single purpose organization. It has a long and inspiring history and impressive traditions, a beautiful and meaningful ritual, and a value structure and philosophy worthy of emulation. There is enough in Freemasonry to keep you engaged for a lifetime, and our Lodges are free to work on projects that interest their members. When member interests change, the projects change.

There is another type of man that I meet who says he is TOO BUSY to join our Fraternity. That

surprises me even more because very often these are the very men who should join!

Now I don't question that they are busy, and we don't want them to neglect their families or their jobs, but so often the issue is not how full your day is, but how full your life is.

For too many men their day is busy, so busy that they feel that they are on a treadmill with no way off. As busy as they are, they know there is something missing in their lives, but exactly what is missing is often elusive.

But we know what it is, they are missing the camaraderie, the fellowship of a circle of friends that they might not have had since high school or college. Frankly these busy, tense, stressed-out men would benefit from membership in our Order, perhaps even more than their more relaxed colleagues.

Yes, Freemasonry can be an oasis of calm in a hectic world, and a balm for the stresses of the day. I've seen so many of my Brethren during their working years come to Lodge after work—tired, uptight, and on edge, and leave Lodge later that evening calm and relaxed, happy and at peace with themselves and with the world. No, Freemasonry was not an added burden; it was not any part of their problems, but being at Lodge and being with their Lodge Brethren certainly was part of the solution.



I've also seen how Freemasonry has helped to fill the time and provide fellowship and companionship for our retired Brethren and our widowers.

- So I think you can understand why I have found Freemasonry to be important to me.
- I've made so many friends.
- I've met so many men and their ladies.
- I've enjoyed the fellowship.
- I've treasured the opportunities for service to our Brethren, to the Masonic widows, and to the community.
- I've had speaking opportunities and leadership opportunities.
- But most of all I've become a better person.

Well, so much for what I get out of Freemasonry, but what do Masons do, and what is it all about? Well, I think I can sum it up in three brief statements: Freemasonry is a way of life. It is a universal brotherhood, and it is a force for good.

First and foremost, Freemasonry is a way of life. We stress respect for God and country, respect for others—the golden rule.

In our first degree, the Entered Apprentice Degree, we teach moral principles. We stress one's duty to God, in never mentioning His name but with reverential awe, and in seeking His aid in all of our laudable undertakings. We stress a duty to others in acting upon the square and doing unto them as we

wish they would do unto us, and we stress a duty to ourselves, in avoiding all irregularity and intemperance, which would debase our dignity.

In our second degree, the Fellowcraft Degree, we stress the study of every useful art that would make us good and peaceful citizens, productive and useful to our families and our community, and bring honor to our Fraternity, our country, and ourselves.

And, in the third degree, the Master Mason's Degree, we are concerned with the spiritual values that separate man from other creatures and make us worthy of our Creator.

Much of this would find broad acceptance around the world, but giving lip service to great principles is not what Freemasonry is about. We seek to incorporate these principles in our daily lives.

- We are not merely concerned about morality, but about being moral.
- Not merely interested in ethics, but about being ethical.
- And not merely talking about friendship, but being a friend.

We work at this every day. It is not easy to live up to our Masonic obligations, to do what is right, rather than what is expedient, but we try hard.

Second, Freemasonry is a universal brotherhood. We reach across the great religious traditions to join together men who would otherwise remain at a

perpetual distance. We reach across social and economic lines to build life-long friendships, and to strengthen and improve our character. We do not compete to be better than one another; we compete to be better than we are.

Third, Freemasonry is a force for good. We live in troubled times, when hatred seems to triumph over reason, and even good men are content to sit on the sidelines allowing injustice and intolerance to triumph. Freemasonry stands as a beacon of hope in a troubled world, a standard of integrity that confronts the corruption that is far too prevalent, and a model of courtesy and caring in an ever more hostile and impersonal world. We fight for democratic values, for freedom of expression, and for religious toleration. Rather than promoting strife and divisiveness, we seek to unite men of good will. We are a force for good in our communities.

That is why, as much as I value the social aspects of the Fraternity, I am attracted by its values – and by its charitable endeavors.

- I am proud to be a part of an organization that cares about children and takes care of children who are crippled and children with language or eye disorders.

- I am proud to be a member of an organization that cares about the elderly and works hard to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease and to help the families of those afflicted.
- And I appreciate how Masons all over the country support homes for the aged, blood programs for the sick, and scholarships for the youth.

I am extraordinarily proud of what our Lodges and our Masonic Family organizations are doing. These are activities that make a difference, and we **are** making a difference as a Fraternity.

I think that if each of the Masons here tonight tried to put into words what Freemasonry meant to them, they would all express it somewhat differently, but there would be many points of agreement.

- They might say that they particularly love the ritual and relish a particular role they play—in a degree, on a committee, as an officer, or in charge of a particular project or event.
- They would probably tell you how much they love their Lodge, and value the fellowship and all the friendships they've made.
- And I'm sure at the top of all of our lists would be the moral and social virtues that are the essence of Freemasonry, and that the ties that bind us together would be of particular value and comfort as well.

They also would tell you that what they get out of Freemasonry is in direct proportion to what they put into it. I think they would tell their friends that this is an organization with a great deal to offer.

Now, having told you a bit about our history, what we are about and what we do, let me try to answer any questions you might have.



**Appendix E: Recommended Speaker #1 Talk in 3-speaker program**

**A few facts about the history of Freemasonry**

I am very pleased to be here with all of you tonight to talk about Freemasonry.

I thought I'd start the program by telling you a little bit about the history of Freemasonry.

We are here tonight in \_\_\_\_\_  
Lodge No. \_\_\_, one of more than 300 Lodges in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

These Lodges are part of a state-wide organization known as the Grand Lodge of Virginia, and there are Grand Lodges in each our 50 States and in many foreign countries as well.

The full name of our Grand Lodge is the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As I explain a bit about our history, I'll also explain that funny sounding name.

Freemasonry can be traced back through the centuries to the Middle Ages when artisans and builders worked in guilds. In the England of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries most workers were under bond to the owners of the land on which they worked—the so-called feudal system. But this did not apply to Freemasons who had skills that were deemed indispensable to the welfare of both Church and State. For this reason they were not placed under the same restrictions applicable to other workers and were

“free” to pursue their labors, “free” to travel, and “free” to live their lives in a manner that befitted their importance as craftsmen. So this is where the word “free” comes from.

The word “accepted” also has a special meaning and its connection with Freemasonry goes back to the days when Masons went through years of apprenticeship to learn the secrets of the builder’s art from a Master of the Craft, and then had to demonstrate their ability as craftsmen, before becoming Fellows of the Craft, and able to travel and work on their own. Not only did they have to prove their operative skills, but each workman also was bound by certain ethical standards in the general conduct of his life, and as a workman. There developed certain signs and words that enabled these traveling craftsmen or Masons to prove or identify themselves to the Masters of the Craft. These signs and words are the so-called secrets of Freemasonry.

The practice of admitting non-operative members into the Craft probably originated when some of the guild companies admitted the patrons for whom they were building, and the practice grew with the passage of time. The few honorary or “accepted” members joined the lodges for their social benefits, as the workmen observed many feast days and holidays with entertainment and other ceremonies. With succeeding generations, the operative members decreased while the accepted members increased, until some time in the eighteenth century when the balance shifted with “accepted Masons” becoming predominant—as is the



case today. So this is how we derive the word “accepted.”

Sometimes instead of contrasting “operative” Masons with “accepted” Masons, we contrast “operative” Masonry with “speculative” Masonry to emphasize the intellectual or philosophical bent of modern Freemasonry. That is to say, today most Freemasons are not in the Fraternity to learn to be builders, for example, of cathedrals, but rather to build character – that is to acquire self-knowledge about art, life, manners, and morals, that help us to be better men, to live better lives, and be better respected in our communities.

Although there are historical records of Lodges earlier than 1717, the first Grand Lodge under our system of speculative Masonry was organized in London in 1717 when four London Lodges met together and formed what is now known as the United Grand Lodge of England. Incidentally, His Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent, is the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England.

Freemasonry was brought to the United States by European Masons, and our early American Lodges held their Charters from European Grand Lodges. With the Revolutionary War, American Lodges became independent, with each of the colonies, setting up a separate Grand Lodge. The first Grand Master of Masons in Virginia was Judge John Blair, Jr., of the Williamsburg Lodge, who was elected by a convention of delegates in October 1778. The Grand

Lodge of Virginia has continued uninterrupted since then, so this October will be our 227th year.

Many of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were Freemasons. George Washington was a Mason. Indeed, while serving as President of the United States, he also was Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22. No other Mason simultaneously served as President and Master of his Lodge, but a number of Masons have been President, including Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman and Gerald Ford. And, of course, many other well-known Americans joined the Masonic Fraternity—from Will Rogers to Red Skelton, from Gene Autry and Roy Rogers to John Wayne, from Burl Ives to Roy Acuff, from Barry Goldwater to Bob Dole, and from Reverend Norman Vincent Peale to Astronaut and Senator John Glenn. I could go on and on.

Freemasonry has flourished in many parts of the world bringing together men who otherwise would have never met, much less become friends. American Masons fighting both on the Union and Confederate sides, brought a measure of humanity to war, treating Masonic prisoners of war with compassion, and treating Masonic wives and widows on the “enemy” side with kindness.

And, in a rigid and highly structured colonial setting in India, it was only in the Masonic Lodge where British soldiers and officials, and Jewish merchants met on the level with Indians of Moslem and Hindu backgrounds. Here the distinctions of politics or

religion or ethnicity did not matter. Indeed, matters of politics and religion have no place in a Masonic Lodge.

Totalitarian regimes have made it a first order of business to oppose Freemasonry, and this was the case in Nazi Germany and behind the Iron Curtain. However, Freemasonry thrives in any environment that is open to the principles of friendship, morality, and brotherly love. And, in recent times, Masonic Lodges have reopened in Germany, Russia, and in many of the former Communist Bloc countries.

Next let me ask Brother \_\_\_\_\_ to tell you a little bit about what you are seeing in the Lodge and the Degree system in Freemasonry.



**Appendix F: Recommended Speaker #2 Talk in 3-speaker program**

**The Masonic Lodge and the Degree System in Freemasonry.**

Thank you Brother \_\_\_\_\_.

My task is to tell you a little bit about the Officers, the Lodge, and the Degree system in Freemasonry.

As you look around the Lodge room, you will notice that chairs have been placed in specific locations. These chairs are for the officers, so let me start with the Worshipful Master, Worshipful Brother \_\_\_\_\_, who has addressed you from the East, where he presides when the Lodge is open.

Worshipful Master is a medieval term. The title indicates courtesy and respect, similar to the way we currently address judges as “Your Honor.” The Office of Worshipful Master is the highest honor the Lodge can bestow on any of its members. He is responsible for the well being of the Lodge. It is his duty to conduct the business of the Lodge, initiate new members and perform various rituals. The jewel of his office is the Square—suspended from his collar. The Square was used to test the work of the buildings that had been completed. It teaches us that we, as Masons, must square our conduct with the principles of morality and virtue.

The Senior Warden is the officer next in line to the Worshipful Master. In the absence of the Worshipful Master, he is in charge, and he normally succeeds the Worshipful Master in the following year. The jewel

of his office is the Level. The Level was used to ensure that every stone was laid correctly, and that the walls of the building were perfectly horizontal. It reminds us that all men are equal and should be dealt with as equals.

The Junior Warden is the third principal officer of the Lodge, and he works closely with the Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden. He follows the Senior Warden in officer progression. His jewel of office is the Plumb, which was used to ensure that the walls of the structure to be virtually true. It reminds us that a Mason is to walk upright and not to be swayed too greatly in any direction.

As you would expect we have a Secretary, and a Treasurer, we also have two additional elected officers, the Deacons. The Senior Deacon sits to the right of the Worshipful Master and the Junior Deacon to the right of the Senior Warden. It is their duty to attend the Worshipful Master and to assist the Wardens in the reception of candidates and during the degree work.

We have Stewards, who also have certain responsibilities during the degrees and are generally in charge of refreshments. We have a Marshal, who conducts official processions, and a Tiler, who is positioned outside the Lodge Room to ensure that none but Masons enter.

Above the chair of the Worshipful Master you see suspended the letter G, which represents God or Geometry, the basis of our Craft. In the center of the

Lodge room is the altar, and on it is the Volume of Sacred Law.

Let me also explain the Masonic term, “The Volume of Sacred Law.” This is not a historic or medieval name for the Bible, but rather it represents the fact that while every Mason is required to declare his belief in One Supreme being, the Creator and Ruler of The Universe, Freemasonry is open to men of all faiths. So for the Christian, the “The Volume of Sacred Law” is the Bible; for the Jew, it is the Torah, corresponding to the first five books of the Old Testament; for the Moslem, it is the Koran; and for the Buddhist, it is usually the Theravada. Regardless, no Masonic meeting may be held unless the Volume is open on the altar. In international Masonic meetings there could be five or possibly more Volumes of Sacred Law on the altar. But it is central to Masonry. Its open pages are a reminder to each Mason to make it the rule and guide of his daily conduct through life.

Now, I have mentioned the candidate and the degrees a couple of times, so let me conclude by telling you a little about the Degree System in Freemasonry.

Many of you may know there are three degrees: Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason, and from the previous speaker you can understand their historical derivation.

In the first degree, the Entered Apprentice Degree, we teach moral principles. We stress one’s duty to God, in never mentioning His name but with reverential awe, and in seeking His aid in all of our

laudable undertakings. We stress a duty to others in acting upon the square and doing unto them as we wish they would do unto us. We also stress a duty to ourselves, in avoiding all irregularity and intemperance, which would debase our dignity.

In the second degree, the Fellowcraft Degree, we stress the study of every useful art that would make us good and peaceful citizens, productive and useful to our families and our community, and bring honor to our Fraternity, our country, and ourselves.

Finally, in the third degree, the Master Mason's Degree, we are concerned with the spiritual values that separate man from other creatures and make us worthy of our Creator.

You can appreciate from this explanation that Freemasonry is nothing like a college fraternity. There is no hazing, and our purposes are more serious.

How do you become a member? Well, since we do not solicit membership, you first must ask a Mason. He can give you a petition, which you fill out. Two Masons who know you sign the petition. It is brought before the Lodge and then a Committee of three Masons will visit you – tell you more about Freemasonry and find out a little about you. The petition is then brought up for a vote in the Lodge and, if the vote is favorable, you will be asked to come to Lodge to receive the degrees.

Now, it is my pleasure to present to you Brother \_\_\_\_\_ who will tell you a bit about why men tend to become Masons.



**Appendix G: Recommended Speaker #3 Talk in 3-speaker program**

**Why Join Freemasonry**

Thank you Brother \_\_\_\_\_.

You now have some historical background and have learned a little bit about the Lodge, its officers, and the petition and degree process. So now let me tell you some of the reasons so many men are attracted to Freemasonry and join our organization.

I'd start by saying that some men join because their fathers and grandfathers were Masons. They grew up knowing a lot about the Fraternity and wanted to join when they were old enough. But many are attracted because they want to make new friends and are looking for a worthwhile organization to belong to.

It is interesting that most women seem to make "best friends" all their lives. They seem to set the social calendar for the family, and they have so many girl friends with whom they can spend time, but many men don't make friends as easily. They made deep and lasting friendships in high school and college while they were having dating adventures and in the Service when they had real adventures. However, later in life they didn't seem to bond with each other, and now they have no one really that close who they can trust or in whom they can confide.

Put Masons together though, and even if they don't know each other, there is a bond there that makes conversation easy. It's pretty remarkable, and I guess

that's why we say that visiting Masons are not strangers, they are just friends you haven't met before.

Men complain to me that they don't have the social interaction and the relationships they'd like. This is not surprising either. In this age of the TV and the DVD they can entertain themselves without anyone else being around. They can converse with someone on the Internet who lives in Australia, while never bothering to talk to their next-door neighbor. It reminds me of the initial enthusiasm for telecommuting and working at home. At first, people are so excited about being able to "go to work" without leaving home, without shaving, and while still in their bathrobe, but soon they start to miss the face-to-face contact with coworkers, and come to realize that the social interaction they had in the office meant a lot to them. They end up craving the face-to-face contact we take for granted in Freemasonry.

Even when they do not telecommute, many men complain that their social interactions are so very superficial. They may see someone at work for years until one or the other leaves, and then they may never see that person again. It's a one-dimensional relationship that just doesn't translate into a friendship, but Masonry is a life-long engagement, and you make life-long friendships.

You know as well, even when they do join an organization, so many men complain to me that it just doesn't meet their needs and that they don't meet interesting people. They say that they meet the same

kind of people again and again; there is no variety and no excitement. The people are all old or all young, all jocks or all businessmen.

But in Freemasonry I've met people who were older and who were younger, men who were wealthier and others who were poorer, men who worked in factories and men who worked in offices, men who were good with words and others who were good with tools, and I've learned a lot from all of them.

Men also complain to me that the organizations they DO join are so single focused and limiting. This is not surprising. They join a trade or professional organization and find that it's just an extension of work. Or they join an organization because of a particular interest and then develop other interests. They outgrow the organization and then have to start over again.

But Freemasonry is not a single purpose organization. It has a long and inspiring history and impressive traditions, a beautiful and meaningful ritual, and a value structure and philosophy worthy of emulation. There is enough in Freemasonry to keep you engaged for a lifetime, and our Lodges are free to work on projects that interest their members. When member interests change, the projects change.

There is another type of man that I meet who says he is TOO BUSY to join our Fraternity. That surprises me even more because very often these are the very men who most need to join!

Now I don't question that they are busy, and we don't want them to neglect their families or their jobs, but so often the issue is not how full your day is, but how full your life is.

For too many men their day is busy, so busy that they feel that they are on a treadmill with no way off. As busy as they are, they know there is something missing in their lives, but exactly what is missing is often elusive.

But we know what it is, they are missing the camaraderie, the fellowship of a circle of friends that they might not have had since high school or college. Frankly these busy, tense, stressed-out men would benefit from membership in our Order, perhaps even more than their more relaxed colleagues.

Yes Freemasonry can be an oasis of calm in a hectic world, and a balm for the stresses of the day. I've seen so many of my Brethren during their working years come to Lodge after work – tired, uptight, and on edge, and leave Lodge later that evening calm and relaxed, happy and at peace with themselves and with the world. No, Freemasonry was not an added burden; it was not any part of their problems, but being at Lodge and being with their Lodge Brethren certainly was part of the solution.

I've also seen how Freemasonry has helped to fill the time and provide fellowship and companionship for our retired Brethren and our widowers.

So I think you can understand why I have found Freemasonry to be important to me.

- I've made so many friends.
- I've met so many men and their ladies.
- I've enjoyed the fellowship.
- I've treasured the opportunities for service to our Brethren, to the Masonic widows, and to the community.
- I've had speaking opportunities and leadership opportunities.
- But most of all I've become a better person.

Well, so much for what I get out of Freemasonry, but what do Mason's do, and what is it all about? Well, I think I can sum it up in three brief statements: Freemasonry is a way of life. It is a universal brotherhood, and it is a force for good.

First and foremost, Freemasonry is a way of life. We stress respect for God and country, respect for others—the golden rule.

Much of this would find broad acceptance around the world, but giving lip service to great principles is not what Freemasonry is about. We seek to incorporate these principles in our daily lives.

- We are not merely concerned about morality, but about being moral.
- Not merely interested in ethics, but about being ethical.
- And not merely talking about friendship, but being a friend.

We work at this every day. It is not easy to live up to our Masonic obligations, to do what is right, rather than what is expedient, but we try hard.

Second, Freemasonry is a universal brotherhood. We reach across the great religious traditions to join together men who would otherwise remain at a perpetual distance. We reach across social and economic lines to build life-long friendships, and to strengthen and improve our character. We do not compete to be better than one another; we compete to be better than we are.

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Now, having told you a bit about our history, what are about and what we do, let me try to answer any questions you might have.



**Appendix H: Thank you note to your invited guests**

**Lodge Letterhead**

Date  
Mr. Your Name  
Secretary  
Lodge Address  
Sometown, Virginia (zip code)

Mr. John Doe  
His address  
Sometown, Virginia (zip code)

Dear John,

I am writing at the request of \_\_\_\_\_ the Worshipful Master of the \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge to extend the Lodge's appreciation for your attendance at the Lodge's "Bring a Friend Night," which was held on month, day, year.

We hope you enjoyed the presentations and the company of the members of the Lodge on that evening; as we certainly enjoyed your attendance.

Should you require any further information about Freemasonry, please feel free to contact me at [phone number].

Sincerely,

Your name  
Secretary

cc. [the name of the inviting Brother]