



THE FUTURE OF FREEMASONRY: Who We Are and What We Have to Offer

BY BRO. ANGEL MILLAR, MM

Fraternities and clubs have played a significant role in the life of Americans over the last few centuries, and chief among them has been the Masonic Order. In a scene peculiar to the USA, and perhaps Canada, signs advertising a range of civic clubs and fraternal associations with their meeting times can still be seen in almost any small town. Even into the late 1970s, two-thirds of Americans still attended club meetings. However, as Robert D. Putnam observes in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, from 1985 to 1994, there was a 45 percent drop in active participation in clubs.¹

Many American clubs have become extinct, or their membership has dwindled to insignificance, and it is no secret that Freemasonry's membership is also in decline. According to data collected by the Masonic Service Association and reported by Brother Jon Ruark in 2017 and 2018, if the present trend continues the fraternity will die out somewhere between 2027 (just over seven years from now) and 2040. Not only will there be no lodge halls, we will not have members, and possibly, fewer grand jurisdictions. Although 2027 seems overly pessimistic, there can be no doubt that we must face the

seriousness of the situation and act now. To delay is only to allow our centuries-old fraternity to die.

In 2016, Ruark organized a survey on Masonic membership, and received responses from over 2,300 members, making the findings statistically significant. Speaking in 2017 at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial's tercentenary celebration of the founding of the first Masonic grand lodge, and also the following year at the Attleboro MasonicCon, he reported that *almost one in four members* say they did *not* find what they were looking for in joining Freemasonry, or are uncertain if they did.² Ruark remarked that it was "a huge problem... almost one in four customers do not know if they like the product [we're] selling... For every new person we're getting in... one's walking out the door... And that does not count people who are leaving due to death, so we're actually losing more than we're gaining." He concluded, "But we can do something about those who are walking out the door."

The number of customers walking out the door is called "churn" or "churn rate" in business. There can be different reasons for churn. One of them is appealing to the wrong audience in the first place. Another is not providing what was promised, or not living up to a customer's expectations. Of the

two, it is the latter that seems to be the fraternity's biggest problem. Jill Avery, a senior lecturer at Harvard Business School, observed that "the goal [of a company or organization] is to bring in and keep customers who you can provide value to and who are valuable to you."³ Moreover, there is a good financial reason for that because, as the *Harvard Business Review* notes, the cost of "acquiring a new customer is anywhere from five to 25 times more expensive than retaining an existing one."⁴ To borrow Avery's term, in what ways can the Craft provide "value"?

BROTHERS, ROLE MODELS, MENTORS

If the fraternity is going to thrive in the future, the membership need to understand the situation facing men today. To be blunt, men face many serious issues that society does not want to acknowledge. Nevertheless, over the last century, men have found themselves increasingly lacking positive male role models. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, 77% of teachers at public schools are female (up from 75% around a decade ago). In the USA, where almost half of all marriages end in divorce, a majority of mothers are granted custody of their children.⁵ A large population of men come from families where the father

(Continued on pg. 3)





The Plumblime

www.ScottishRiteResearch.com

f facebook.com/SRRResearch

@ScottishRiteRS

The Plumblime is published quarterly by the Scottish Rite Research Society (SRRS), from the offices of:

The Supreme Council, 33°
1733 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009-3103

The opinions expressed in *The Plumblime* do not necessarily reflect those of the SRRS, the Supreme Council, 33°, or their respective officers.

Articles, news items, and letters regarding *The Plumblime* should be sent to AKendall@ScottishRite.org. All submissions become the property of the SRRS.

Editor of *The Plumblime*:

Adam Kendall, 32°, KCCH

Scottish Rite Research Society Managing Board:

President

James Graham, 33°, SGIG in Arkansas

Vice-President

Martin P. Starr, 33°

Secretary

Robert Wolfarth, 33°

Membership information:

SCOTTISH RITE RESEARCH SOCIETY
1733 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009-3103
Tel: 202-232-3579
E-mail: SRRS@scottishrite.org

©2018-19 Scottish Rite Research Society. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any format without the written permission of the SRRS.

The Plumblime is designed by Kia Boone in the office of the *Scottish Rite Journal*.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The current role of Freemasonry in men's lives remains an ongoing debate. While some prefer the traditional models, there is no real consensus on what that entails. However, I will wager that respect, or even reverence, for the Masonic experience is essential. By this approach, the brethren are encouraged to experience Freemasonry as an expression of a long and rewarding journey. It is taking a communal role in a series of experiences that are, at times, inexpressible. Freemasonry has a long and storied history that continues to intrigue and beckon with its promise of mystery and retreat from the workaday world. As a result, increased awareness of Masonic traditions and history has led to an interest in the Craft's history, and how it relates to the civil society from both a global and local view. But how does the Masonic journey affect a man outside of lodge? How can the fraternity play a part?

Mark C. Carnes's 1989 monograph, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, sought to provide an insight into the reasons for the late 19th and early 20th-century fraternal craze.¹ The study investigates how ritual-based fraternal organizations provided members with unique expressions of gender roles. In their rituals, they often favored modern interpretations of legendary and mythological archetypes, often as a bulwark against changing social structures. Any student of history will recognize that those perspectives may not necessarily be accurate. Still, for better or for worse, they were collective responses to a new world of machines, of cities and nation-states. Fraternal orders provided a bridge from what some considered a simpler world, to one of increased complexity. They allowed participants to preserve the noble and poetic qualities of gendered identities in a changing world, even if some of them rejected and fought these changes outright. Much of what is experienced in, or believed about, contemporary Freemasonry originated during this era, and we owe it to ourselves to understand their nuances of belief and culture so that we might gain some insight into our own present.

Irrespective of how much history can be analyzed, we still may not achieve a perfect consensus as to how Freemasonry should evolve to meet the needs of the current era. However, we can seriously consider projects that derive their inspiration from the Masonic traditions of education and the cultivation of social graces. In this issue's article, Bro. Angel Millar discusses the common challenges facing modern men. He then examines how the creative, yet practical, applications of Freemasonry's lessons have inspired new generations to create rewarding social, spiritual, and intellectual experiences. Lastly, he explores how fresh approaches to Masonic culture and education, such as MasonicCons, films, and other programs, originate from a grassroots momentum. Their can-do attitude is representative of Freemasonry's goal: encouraging authenticity, creativity, and the acquisition of knowledge and experience. It inspires driven and confident men to combine their talents and resources to spread the cement of brotherly love, and to unite the building into one common mass.

1. Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

LETTERS & SUBMISSIONS

If you would like us to consider an original, unpublished, scholarly article of 3,500-4,000 words for publication in *The Plumblime*, please send us a query via email to AKendall@ScottishRite.org including the following information: name, address, Masonic affiliation (if any), contact information (telephone and email). Please also include a short summary—one paragraph or less—of your article including the title, subject, and the theme of the piece. We will respond to queries promptly, and authors of articles we are interested in will be asked to forward their entire manuscript to us electronically. * Please direct all letters to the editor, comments or concerns to AKendall@ScottishRite.org *

THE FUTURE OF FREEMASONRY: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER

(Continued from pg. 1)

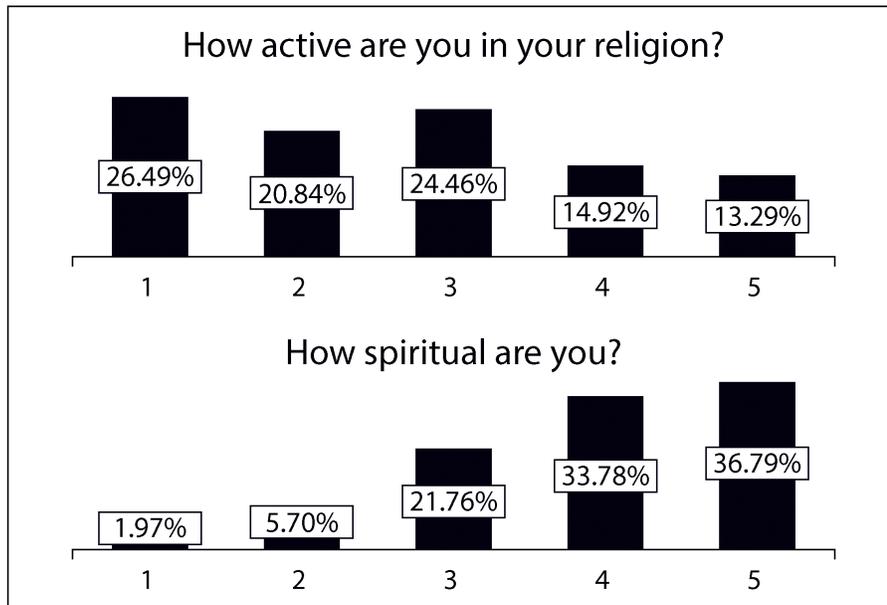


Photo credit: Based upon data collected by the Masonic Service Association and a report by John Ruark

frequently worked late, was emotionally disengaged from his son(s). Some had fathers who were emotionally or physically abusive (or both). Alcohol, gambling, infidelity may also have been involved. They could not impart knowledge, wisdom, or a sense of dignity that young men need.

With such a poor start in life, many young men will turn to drugs or alcohol, join gangs, or wind up in prison. Still more risk susceptibility to religious or political fanaticism or will simply live a life that seems to be bereft of meaning, and without living up to their fullest potential.⁶ Many of our Masonic brothers grew up with a father who, rather than imparting life lessons, damaged them emotionally. The same may be the case for those future petitioners to our lodges. However, men intrinsically recognize that they need positive male role models and the bonds of authentic male friendships. Indeed, there is a growing men's self-development movement, typified by the website, "The Art of Manliness," and the YouTube channel, "Knowledge For Men."

The reality of modern society is that despite social media or identity politics, people feel more isolated and lonelier than

ever before. Dubbing it a "loneliness epidemic," *Psychology Today* noted in 2018 that "rates of loneliness" have doubled over the last fifty years, and report that 20% of Americans say that they "rarely or never" feel close to other people.⁷ As author and journalist Johann Hari stated, "people's sense that they live in a community, or even have friends they can count on, has been plummeting."⁸

Yet, with 93% of our fraternity saying they appreciate the camaraderie of the lodge, this is also part of the solution. The fraternity has something to offer that most people desperately need and naturally want, but cannot find elsewhere. Indeed, the lodge offers more than camaraderie. It is where we experience the bond of brotherhood that is stronger than most friendships. And it is there that we find positive examples of manhood and how to behave as a man. At times, friendships can seem shallow, or out of simple convenience. Many men wonder how trustworthy their friends are, or whether they are dependable in a crisis. In most cases, they won't be. *Brothers are different.* Brothers live by a code. And, deep down, most men want to live by a code.

Guidance is also something that sets brotherhood apart from friendship. In lodge, new members will be mentored so that they can learn the ritual questions and answers after each of the three Craft degrees. In some jurisdictions, perhaps there is a little more mentoring. However, it can be taken to the next level, providing practical benefits to members of our fraternity. Currently, in New York City, there is an initiative called "Brothers for Brothers." The program will, according to its founder, Brother Teodorescu, "offer an internal platform for Masons to foster, develop and enhance the qualities of well-rounded upright men through mentorship and knowledge sharing." Presentations on practical life skills will be given for members of the Masonic fraternity free of charge. There will also be an opportunity for Brothers to speak with the presenter on a one-to-one basis to discuss the issue on a more personal level. Additional subjects will include developing communication skills, personal and professional development, developing confidence and self-esteem, health and nutrition, and developing appropriate sartorial and grooming skills.

As the name "Brothers for Brothers" suggests, each presentation is given by a brother who has an expertise, or has earned a university degree, in his subject. The point of Brother Teodorescu's initiative is to provide brethren, free of charge, with the life skills they need and desire, but have had little exposure or encouragement. Although these are skills that would take a considerable amount of time or money to acquire, Bro. Teodorescu remarked that "the response and reception of the program, and its long-term potential to develop Master Masons within our ranks, has been exceptional." It will provide a tangible benefit to members of the fraternity. It also promises to provide a benefit to the fraternity itself. As Bro. Teodorescu stated, our members are "ambassadors" for the fraternity. It is essential that our brothers exude confidence, act

as role models for one another, as well as presenting our fraternity at its best. To wit, the initiative sends the signal that the fraternity provides multifaceted support to its membership.

MASONIC EDUCATION

According to Ruark's survey, nearly 90% of members believe Masonic education is either important or very important. However, 65% of members say that their Lodge provides Masonic education between *sometimes* and *never*. Additionally, he discovered that the nearly one-in-four members who weren't satisfied, or who were perhaps dissatisfied, with their Masonic experience were in those Lodges. As Ruark stated, those brothers are not finding in lodges any inclination toward spirituality, philosophy, education, research, or history. He lamented, "And we're letting them walk out the door."

We will look at spirituality later. Here, however, the question of what defines Masonic education should be addressed. Is it academic, or a university of sorts? The answer, I believe, is when giving a talk on the history of Freemasonry, the sources should be credible, and we should have an understanding of our subject and an understanding of how to research and evaluate our findings. Fantasy, wild speculation, and unfounded claims should have no place in Masonic education. However, Freemasonry is not a university, and the aim of Masonic education should *not* be to compete with academia. It should, I suggest, be to help us understand the mysteries of Freemasonry, and to help us to understand and to improve ourselves.

Over the last year, Jungian psychotherapist Jordan Peterson has gone from obscure YouTuber to a best-selling author (with his book *12 Rules For Life*), lecturing across the globe, appearing on television in several countries, and with a huge and dedicated fan base. To be clear, I am *not* endorsing Peterson, but it must be asked how a man could command such enthusiasm when his primary concerns are Jungian psychology and interpreting largely Biblical mythology. (And let's

remind ourselves that at the heart of the Craft Masonic Ritual is the Biblical story of the building of Solomon's temple. And psychology and mythology are subjects that interest many Freemasons.)

Despite what might be claimed, Peterson's continuing success derives ultimately from his ability to explain myth in a way that relates to the lives of his audience and their individual struggles (with choices between right and wrong, courage and fear, blaming others versus taking self-responsibility, etc.).⁹ He not only shows that we all face such struggles but that our lives are, in a sense, archetypal, mythic, or heroic. Peterson encourages his audiences to take responsibility for their

wisdom, and I would encourage every brother to share it in the form of a presentation in lodge. Not every brother will be interested in the esoteric. Perhaps he is a veteran. I am certain that our members would be inspired by a sincere talk about a wartime experience that illustrates the Masonic values of brotherhood, of facing danger, mortality, and what illustrates our potential and capacity to endure or to overcome.

Why do lodges with ten or twenty active members find it so difficult to put on Masonic education? Simply, public speaking is America's number one fear.¹⁰ I have spoken in many lodges around the USA and at MasonicCons and conferences, and I still get nervous before

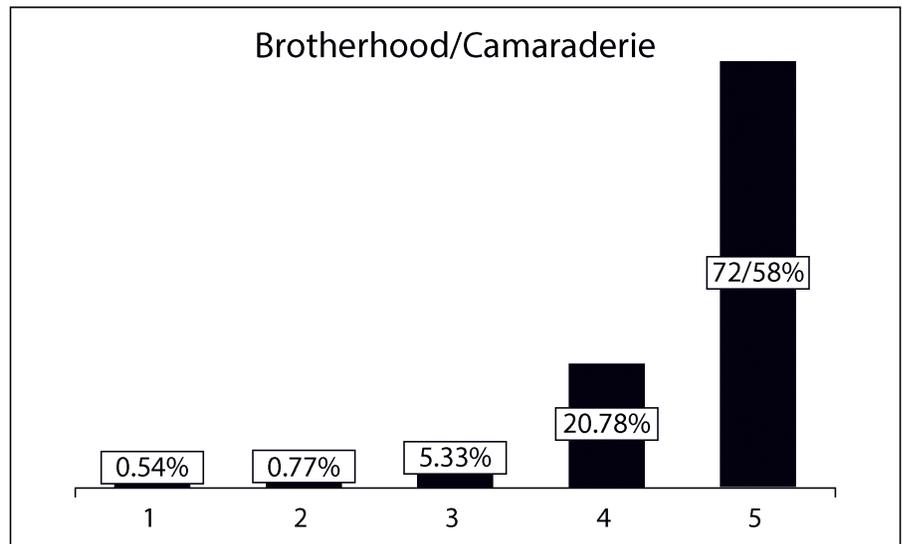


Photo credit: Based upon data collected by the Masonic Service Association and a report by John Ruark

actions and act with courage. This is what he does right. Even if the subject is mythology, symbolism, or esotericism, a talk should be relevant to those listening, should provide new insights into our internal struggles and lives, and should inspire and empower the listener. We often feel very little in our day-to-day lives. But a talk should make listeners feel a little more alive – as if they are saying “yes!” inside.

Part of what is lacking in the world today is guidance and wisdom. Probably every Freemason possesses some

a presentation. This is normal. My advice to a brother who feels too nervous to give a talk is to watch some videos or read a book on public speaking. These will provide practical advice and confidence to succeed.

However, lodges also need to address the fear of public speaking. As has recently become the practice across the country, in Compact Lodge in New York City, newly initiated, passed, and raised brothers are asked to give a short presentation. After the Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft degrees, the talks are

just a few minutes long, and are generally a personal reflection of the experience.¹¹ After the Master Mason degree, the talk is roughly 15 minutes, focusing on some area of interest. The point is to get brothers comfortable with speaking in lodge and to be able and willing to contribute to the lodge and to its Masonic education later on.

A SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT

When asked about how active they were in their religion, only slightly over 13% of members considered themselves very active. However, nearly 37% of Masons consider themselves very spiritual. In fact, according to Ruark's data, over 90% of the fraternity considers itself somewhere between moderately and very spiritual. The fraternity would seem to be loosely comprised of those who regard themselves as both religious and spiritual, and those who regard themselves as spiritual but not religious. In America, these two groups constitute 75% of the population, though the former group appears to be in decline while the latter group is currently growing.

According to the Pew Research Center, between 2012 and 2017 the percentage of Americans who described themselves as "spiritual but not religious" rose from 19% to 27% of the population (an eight percent rise). During the same period, however, those describing themselves as "religious and spiritual" declined 11% from 59% to 48%.¹² Part of this decline might be due to reports of religious extremism and violence across the globe over the last couple of decades. However, younger people are more likely to describe themselves as "spiritual but not religious," with only 17% of those over 65 years of age describing themselves as such.

Chuck Dunning, author of *Contemplative Masonry*, said during our conversation that those identifying as spiritual but not religious "tend to see the development of personal wellness as a significant element of spirituality."¹³ They also "often regard mainstream religious institutions as being more divisive of humanity than encouraging of tol-

erance, inclusiveness, mutual respect, and equality. Ironically, their avoidance of involvement in traditional religious communities means they can lack in the benefits of belonging, mutual support, and social networking that such communities provide."

Freemasonry, with its emphasis on camaraderie can be a part of an individual's "personal wellness" (health and mental wellbeing, etc.) both through Brothers For Brothers-type programs and through the lodge experience itself with lodge talks on self-development, in addition to more spiritual subjects (e.g., myth, Masonic ritual, and symbolism). Moreover, our rituals are themselves of a spiritual, philosophical, and self-developmental nature. "Our rituals," noted Brother Dunning, "literally encourage members to carefully examine themselves and the world, to take personal responsibility for their own development as moral and spiritual beings, and to employ our virtues and extend our good will with all people... we can also provide those members with the benefits of a mutually supportive and spiritually oriented community."

Regarding the rejection of religious intolerance and divisiveness, this is something that Freemasonry has been noted for. In 2009, bestselling author Dan Brown told The Associated Press, "I have enormous respect for the Masons. In the most fundamental terms, with different cultures killing each other over whose version of God is correct, here is a worldwide organization that essentially says, 'We don't care what you call God, or what you think about God, only that you believe in a god and let's all stand together as brothers and look in the same direction.'"¹⁴

No less important than its religious tolerance, is the fraternity's centuries-long history. While there are countless religiously unaffiliated spiritual and esoteric groups in the USA today, none have a history, lineage, or tradition comparable to that of the Masonic fraternity (indeed, many of them have been influenced by Freemasonry). In an age when

more people consider themselves "spiritual but not religious" and are seeking life's profound truths, we need to embrace the mysteries of Freemasonry and not, as has been the case over the last few decades, present our fraternity as having "no secrets" or as being merely a charitable club. It is a society with symbols, mysteries, profound depth, and a history and a lineage evocative of medieval craftsmen's guilds.

MASONIC=CONS AND A "CAN-DO" CULTURE

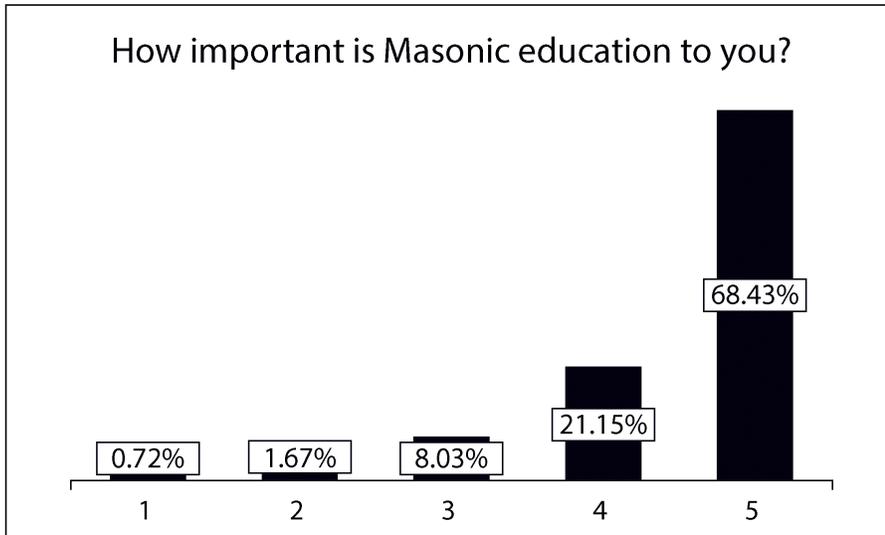
In 2016, Ezekiel Bates Lodge launched the first ever MasonicCon event, featuring various speakers and hosting numerous vendors of Masonic merchandise. Held in the Ezekiel Bates lodge building in Attleboro, Massachusetts, the event draws hundreds of visitors (mostly Masons) each year, despite not being in a major city (Providence, RI, the closest city, is 13 miles away).

"The original idea," Bryan Simmons related, "was the result of multiple factions [in the lodge] wanting something." There were Shriners who wanted "to demonstrate the value of being a Shriner." The lodge's esoteric study group, *Lyman Scientiae*, wanted educational talks on the esoteric, while another group regularly set out to visit lodges they had never visited before. These "brothers wanted an event that brought everyone to our lodge for fraternal fellowship. Slowly, all these elements formed the first Masonic Con in 2016... [This] was the first attempt to make Freemasonry what Ezekiel Bates Lodge wanted it to be."

The event's influence has been far reaching far beyond the borders of Massachusetts, attracting others who wish to provide a similar experience for their local brethren. In the last year alone, MasonicCons have been held in New Mexico, Texas, and California. There has also been an EsotericCon, which was an esoteric conference organized by Masons, for Masons."

"I think the fact that we're not sponsored by any governing body," said Bro. Simmons, "gives Brothers an opportunity to

Photo credit: Based upon data collected by the Masonic Service Association and a report by John Ruark



see how easy it would be for their lodge to host one.” There is plenty of work involved in setting up a MasonicCon, of course, but members are able to do it for themselves and to create the Masonic experience they want. Although the Ezekiel Bates Masonic-Con is “supported” by grand bodies, there is no obvious grand lodge presence at the event. Everything is on the level. And the focus is Masonic education, socializing, visiting vendors, and having a good time.

The Ezekiel Bates MasonicCon has grown from approximately 300 attendees in 2016 to 400 in 2018. Simmons estimated that approximately 15% of Masons came from out of state in 2016, while that had grown to approximately 40% in 2018. This translates to 255 locals and 45 from out of state that attended in 2016. For 2018, 240 locals and 160 from out of state attended in 2018. While this is only an estimate, it suggests that local membership has remained more or less the same and that the increase has come from those who have been prepared to travel, often across country, to be at the event. However, since Ezekiel Bates’s MasonicCon has been held on the same day as other various state-wide Masonic events over the last couple of years, this has reduced the number of local brothers who could attend. With the increase of brothers attending from out of state, MasonicCon has become “a Masonic networking hub for like-minded Masons to meet and build friendships that

blossom into joint projects like MasonicCons, podcasts, and even potentially a new lodge,” said Simmons. “It empowers our membership to know that nothing is impossible. If we can host an event with 400 people, what else can we do?” Masons taking initiative will need to play a significant role in perpetuating the fraternity, and getting lodges to a point where they are, once again, growing. As the MasonicCon phenomenon proved, whether it is creating an annual or one-off event or shaping the culture of the lodge, it is the brethren themselves who must take action.

Brother Dago Rodriguez was one of the main organizers of the 2019 South Pasadena MasonicCon, hosted by South Pasadena Lodge near Los Angeles. He told me that the event received a “fantastic” response from attendees. While the Ezekiel Bates MasonicCon has been free (with a \$5 charge per attendee last year), the recent South Pasadena MasonicCon cost \$125 for general admission and \$165 for an executive pass. Both passes covered the whole event, which ran from Friday evening through Sunday morning, but the executive pass included a special merchandise. Despite what some would consider a high price of admission, over 150 people attended, with the majority being Freemasons. This event offered not only value for money, but also a unique and valuable experience. Like other MasonicCons,

it made brothers feel inspired and uplifted, excited to be part of a memorable educational experience, and, thus, proud to be a member of the fraternity.

Said Rodriguez, “we had three days of speakers, panels, screenings, vendors, and a huge pop culture festive board.” The event provided an intense educational weekend, not only on the history and mysteries of Freemasonry, but showing, too, how Freemasonry had a notable positive influence over the centuries in art as well as in the community. The event emphasized that “Masons have to think outside of the box and be creative in ways to display Masonic education and influence.” He advised lodges to “know your target audience, make it accessible to all,” and create a positive, “memorable experience” for those who attend.

Our lives today are far busier than those of generations past, and there is no sign that things will slow down for future generations. A brother who finds that he genuinely cannot attend lodge every month, perhaps because he is working late, may well make a point of attending an annual event that offers him camaraderie, education, excitement, as well as a sense of identity, belonging, and personal tradition. For this reason alone, such events may well help to keep Masons in the fraternity, as well as to attract new members. Echoing Rodriguez’s advice, creating an uplifting and memorable experience is relevant to the lodge as well.

STAIRS, NOT CHAIRS

Visit any Masonic museum and you will see plenty of handmade Masonic items from the 18th and 19th century: aprons, floor cloths, carved walking canes, hand-inlaid Masonic furniture, and other treasures. If there are any objects from the mid-20th century, they will almost certainly be mass-produced items. This reflects a change in attitude of the fraternity. Vibrant and exciting, Freemasons contributed their time and love and made the fraternity what they wanted it to be, fashioning a fraternity and a culture that still inspires us. Re-

grettably, society experienced a boom in automated and passive activities such as instant meals or television; members expected things to be done for them. But as a result, those brothers were left with little to remember. No Masonic art, little or no Masonic education, and only the best-selling Masonic books of the century written by non-Masons. Nevertheless, we should not criticize. The lodges suited the times and served a function, especially in bringing men together after their return from war. But that century is over. There are new challenges, new Brothers, new needs to be satisfied, and a new attitude.

Today, Freemasonry is changing from the bottom up. Once again, brothers are taking the initiative, contributing to the fraternity and leaving a legacy for brothers who come after us. For the first time in many decades, or more, we see the emergence of Masonic artists, filmmakers, and a growing number of Masonic authors and lecturers. We see taking the initiative and launching MasonicCons and other symposia to great success, as well as other creative initiatives. And all of this is happening both in the major cities and in smaller towns.

Brother Johnny Arias of Los Angeles has a great saying that should be remembered: “focus on the stairs, not the chairs.” People today are busy, and time is precious. And the lodge has to be a place of experience more meaningful than that of the humdrum of everyday life, not a part of it. If lodges provide that kind of value, members will remain and give back to lodge culture by taking the chairs or taking on other tasks. Fortuitously, we know who we are and what we want. As noted, according to Ruark’s survey results, nearly 90% of brothers consider Masonic education to be either important or very important. Over 90% of consider themselves between moderately or very spiritual. And over 90% appreciate the camaraderie of the lodge.

From that survey, it is clear that we need to focus on three areas: One, understanding the mysteries, symbolism, and history of Freemasonry, and understanding ourselves. Two, fostering a non-sectarian and non-dogmatic spiritual environment, where good men of all faiths and of different spiritual be-

liefs, convictions, and backgrounds are welcomed and can participate in and discuss the mysteries of Freemasonry. And, three: fostering camaraderie and the strong bonds of brotherhood. The essence of the Craft must once again become the focus. To that end, each Mason can contribute his skills and talents, and can be an active part of the legacy that we leave for our descendants.

BIO

Angel Millar is the author of several books on Freemasonry, including the highly praised Crescent and The Compass. He is a well-known lecturer on Freemasonry and related subjects and has spoken at Masonic Cons and other Masonic events, as well as to lodges around the USA. His forthcoming book, The Three Stages of Initiatic Spirituality: Craftsman, Warrior, Magician, will be released by Inner Traditions Publishing in February 2020.

ENDNOTES

1. Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 60. Johann Hari, *Lost Connections: Uncovering The Real Causes of Depression -- And The Unexpected Solutions* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018), 72-90.
2. The tercentenary celebration was held at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Alexandria, Virginia. The 2018 Attleboro Masonic Con was organized by Ezekiel Bates Lodge in Attleboro, MA.
3. Amy Gallo, October 29, “The Value of Keeping the Right Customers,” *Harvard Business Review*, accessed December 3, 2019, <https://hbr.org/2014/10/the-value-of-keeping-the-right-customers>.
4. Ibid.
5. Timothy Grall, “Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2013,” *Current Population Reports*, accessed December 3, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/P60-255.pdf>.
6. In the USA, nearly 93% of prison in-

mates are men. “Inmate Gender,” Federal Bureau of Prisons, accessed December 3, 2019, https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_gender.jsp.

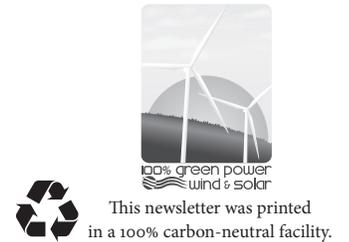
7. Shainna Ali Ph.D., LMHC, “What You Need to Know About the Loneliness Epidemic,” *Psychology Today*, accessed December 3, 2019, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/modern-mentality/201807/what-you-need-know-about-the-loneliness-epidemic>.
8. Johann Hari, 79.
9. Jordan Peterson, *12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos* (Toronto, Canada: Random House Canada, 2018). Peterson has attracted the attention and drawn some praise from thinkers as diverse as traditional feminist Camille Paglia, spiritual author and teacher Ken Wilber, and Bishop Barron. .
10. Christopher Ingraham, “America’s top fears: Public speaking, heights and bugs,” *Washington Post*, accessed December 3, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/10/30/clowns-are-twice-as-scary-to-democrats-as-they-are-to-republicans/>.
11. I am a member of this lodge and report from first-hand experience.
12. Pew Research Center, Michael Lipkin and Claire Gecewicz, “More Americans now say they’re spiritual but not religious,” Pew Research Center, accessed December 3, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/06/more-americans-now-say-theyre-spiritual-but-not-religious/> . .
13. Chuck Dunning, *Contemplative Masonry: Basic Applications of Mindfulness, Meditation, and Imagery for the Craft* (Plano, TX: Stone Guild Publishing, 2016). .
14. “Freemasons await Dan Brown’s ‘Lost Symbol,’” *Today/Associated Press*, accessed December 3, 2019, <https://www.today.com/popculture/freemasons-await-dan-brown-s-lost-symbol-wbna32863148>.
15. Mid-Atlantic Esotericon 2019, accessed December 4, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/events/manasseh-lodge-no-182/mid-atlantic-esotericon-2019/2273294866237569/>.

SCOTTISH RITE RESEARCH SOCIETY
1733 SIXTEENTH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20009

NONPROFIT ORG
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 DULLES, VA
 PERMIT #3



Indocti discant, ament meminisse periti.
“Let the unlearned learn, let the experts love to remember.”



MASONIC EVENTS CALENDAR

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	FOR MORE INFORMATION
New Jersey Winter Education Seminar	January 25, 2020	Burlington, NJ	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2020-winter-masonic-education-seminar-tickets-72417381337
Masonic Week 2020	February 6-9, 2020	Crystal City, VA	http://www.amdusa.org/MasonicWeek/
Esoteric Music Symposium at Nazareth College	February 22-23, 2020	Rochester, NY	https://www2.naz.edu/dept/music/esoteric-music-symposium
Southeastern Masonic Education Symposium	March 7, 2020	Tampa, FL	hillsborough25.ticketleap.com
Massachusetts Masonic Con 2020	April 17-19, 2020	Attleboro, MA	eb1870.org
UCLA 9th Annual International Conference on Freemasonry	April 18, 2020	Los Angeles, CA	https://www.freemason.org/events/uclaConference.htm
Virginia 2020 Mid-Atlantic Esotericon	June 13, 2020	Manassas, VA	https://www.facebook.com/maesotericon
International Conference of St. Albans Lodges	October 2-4, 2020	Long Island, NY	nassaumasons@gmail.com
The Scottish Rite Mysteries: An Esoteric Journey	September 12, 2020	Sacramento, CA	MBALBIANI@SACRAMENTOSCOTTISHRITE.ORG
Quatuor Coronati Conference	September 18-20, 2020	Boston, MA	https://www.quatuorcoronati.com/2020-conference-book/conference-program/
Chicago Masonic Con	September 18-20, 2020	Chicago, IL	https://masonicconchicago.com

If your jurisdiction is sponsoring a Masonic event of national or international importance, please submit the information listed above to AKendall@ScottishRite.org for review and possible publication.