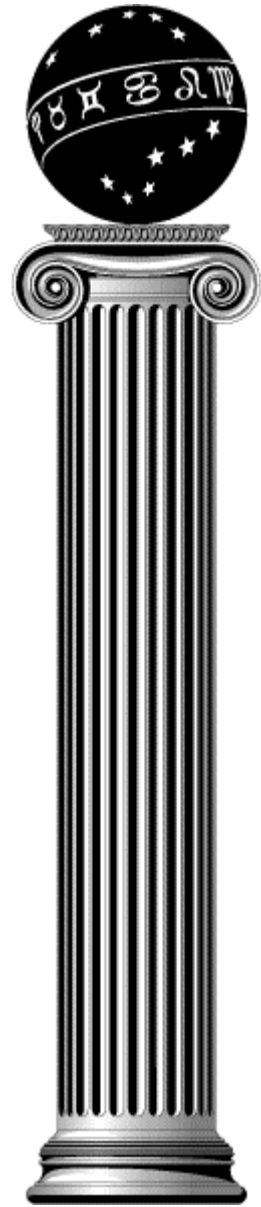


**The Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia**

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



**“Friend to Friend”**

**in**

**Nova Scotia**

**Approved by BOGP June 23, 2007**

(Masonic Education Committee)

# "Friend to Friend" in Nova Scotia

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## PREFACE

The "Friend to Friend Program" is an opportunity for individual Lodges to open their doors to the public to tell them what it is we do and to inform possible candidates for Freemasonry. In its current state the script may be appropriate for Lodge Open Houses, Family and Friends' Nights and even for presentation at Ladies' Nights.

**It is *strongly* suggested that revisions be made to "personalize" the presentation and reflect a Lodge's own history and traditions. This document is purely a guide and Lodges are free to change and adapt this script to meet their needs. Some paragraphs may not apply to your Lodge and can therefore be omitted. If the Masons expounding this program can do it without reference to the printed text, so much the better. If not, the presentation can be read by different members of the Lodge.**

Be cautious of the overall program length and what you choose to include. For example, the description of the officers may be limited to the three principal officers if time dictates.

This document is an adaptation of the "Friend to Friend" program devised by the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario, and "Ascending the Winding Stair", a presentation written by RWBro Rod B. Poech, Grand Lodge of Alberta.

It is intended that the program be presented at an open House in which case the Lodge would not be opened. If, however, it is presented on a Lodge night, the Lodge should be "At Ease" when the visitors are brought into the Lodge and visitors escorted from the Lodge before the work is resumed.

Only the S of F is to be used when guests are present in the Lodge room.

## INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

(Ladies,) gentlemen, guests of ..... Lodge, my brethren. Good Evening.

My name is ..... and I am the Worshipful Master of this Lodge.

It is normal for people to distrust those things which they do not understand but we are not a secret organization.

By definition, a secret organization is one which hides itself from the public and whose members keep their membership hidden from others. Masonry does not do these things.

Masonic buildings are prominently identified in their communities. Our hall is open to the public for wedding receptions, as well as social and community functions.

Throughout the world, Masonic buildings are clearly identified. They are easy to locate. In Nova Scotia Masonic Halls may easily be found in Halifax, Bedford, Dartmouth, Yarmouth, Sydney, Antigonish, Freeport, Kentville, Springhill, Parrsboro; you name it and we are there - we exist and we are proud of it.

Members of our fraternity wear the familiar symbols of Freemasonry - the Square and Compasses - on their ring fingers and on lapel pins and we proudly display them.

We have nothing to hide and perhaps the fault has been ours for not shouting out our good works from the roof tops. We are not a secret organization.

The general public and indeed the members of our audience here today, may have no idea of the extent of the work we do in our communities.

In North America alone, the Masonic family contributes well in excess of 750 million dollars per year, (yes, over two million dollars a day), to charity.

The Freemasons in the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia have invested nearly a million dollars in the youth of our Province over the past thirteen years through the Scholarship Program, assisting students in their studies at Atlantic Universities and Community Colleges.

In addition, there are a number of affiliated or sometimes called Concordant Bodies with Charitable programs. It should be understood, members of these bodies are Lodge Members first, and all must maintain their membership in the Lodge, and support their Charities. They, then, because of fellowship or educational reasons join the Concordant or affiliated bodies, and support among other things their Charitable Programs.

The York Rite - and its several bodies have various charities

- 1) The Grand Chapter of Nova Scotia, Royal Arch Masons – Glaucoma Fund (administered by the QEII Foundation).
- 2) The Knights Templar Charitable Foundation (supporting student-clergy, widows and orphans, Canadian Cancer and Diabetes, etc.)
- 3) The York Rite Sovereign College Charitable Foundation of Canada (supports registered Masonic Charities)
- 4) Knights, York Cross of Honour, Medical Research Foundation
- 5) Grand Imperial Conclave of Canada Charitable Foundation (object – Arthritis)

Another branch of Freemasonry, the Scottish Rite, through its charitable arm, the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada, provides approximately \$500,000 a year to fund research into the causes of mental impairment, with emphasis on Alzheimer's. More recently it has established Learning Centres, to provide specialized tutoring to children afflicted with dyslexia. The third Canadian Learning Centre was opened in Halifax-Dartmouth in September 2006.

Through the Masonic Foundation of Nova Scotia, matching funds of three to one are contributed to individual lodges who provide funds for charities or needy people within their communities.

How many people even realize that the members of the Ancient and Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine are Masons? They are all first members of a Masonic Lodge and as Masons, and only then, may they join the Shrine Organization. The Shriners have their parades with marching bands, clowns,

minibikes and bagpipes but they also have many Shrine functions which are devoted to charitable fund-raising for the support of the Shrine Hospitals for crippled children with hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

In Canada, the Shriners' Hospital in Montreal is the primary location for medical care for our nation's most severely injured and disabled young people. Millions of dollars are allocated there each year by Masons and no fee has ever been charged to the families of these unfortunate children.

The Order of Eastern Star has many different fund raisers to support their charities of choice. The membership of this concordant body of Freemasonry includes any of the female relatives of Masons. This is a great opportunity for family involvement with participation in so many new activities and friendships.

The Shriners equivalent of this is the Daughters of the Nile.

The younger children of Mason's may elect to become involved in our associated youth groups of Rainbow Girls for girls and the Order of DeMolay for boys.

The so-called secrets of Freemasonry are available to anyone with access to the Internet but for us it is a matter of integrity and honour. Each Mason made a promise not to reveal our modes of recognition and parts of our Ritual and our word is a highly regarded matter of honour and integrity.

I hope that this evening will give you a glimpse of the work and working of Freemasonry. Welcome to our Lodge.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF MASONRY

Worshipful Master, ladies, gentlemen, guests of ..... Lodge, my brethren. Good Evening. My name is.....

This evening I will provide a brief history of Masonry.

While we relate many of our rituals and symbolism to the building of King Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem 3000 years ago, the specific origins of our order are lost in the sands of time.

There is no doubt that the operative stone masons who built the great stone Cathedrals in Europe over the past 1000 years formed themselves into what they described as Lodges. These organizations of working stone cutters had the dual purposes of training and certifying the skills of men working with stone as well as being an early form of benevolent societies. The stone masons of the middle ages worked hundreds of feet in the air on wooden scaffolding and with tools which were crude by our standards. The work was difficult and dangerous, and resulted in numerous serious injuries and often in death. These early Masonic Lodges, if I may refer to them as such, were committed to the care and keeping of injured brother workers or their widows and orphans.

The original concepts of education and benevolence have been maintained by present day Lodges. Both the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia and each individual Lodge in the Jurisdiction maintain segregated 'benevolent funds' for the relief of distressed members and their widows and orphans.

Written documentation of the existence of Masonic Lodges exists for the past 500 years. Historical records may be found in England and Scotland which clearly indicate operative masons accepting as members, what they described as speculative Masons, who while not workers in stone were deemed worthy of membership as a result of their high moral standards and their demonstrated commitment to the practice of benevolence and charity.

The terminology of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons takes its meaning from being Ancient - as the oldest fraternal organization in the world, Free as admitting craftsmen of their own free will, and Accepted - as welcoming(or accepting) men of high moral standards into their fold.

We repeatedly emphasize to our newer members that we are not operative, but rather Free and Accepted or Speculative Masons. On June 24, 1717, four London Lodges met together and formed a Grand Lodge. This was the originator of the present United Grand Lodge of England. In 1725 a Grand Lodge was formed in Ireland and in 1736 a Grand Lodge was formed in Scotland.

The first recorded Mason in the New World was John Skene. In 1670 he is listed as a Merchant and a Mason, on the membership roll of the Lodge at Aberdeen, Scotland. John Skene came to North America in 1682 and settled in what is now Burlington, New Jersey. He served as Deputy Governor of East Jersey from 1685-1690.

By 1730 there were various groups of men meeting as Masons. The influx of British troops into the New World also saw the arrival of Masonry. The soldiers brought with them Traveling Warrants; these Warrants allowed those soldiers who were also Masons to meet and assemble in Lodges.

In this year the Grand Master in England appointed Daniel Coxe as Provincial Grand Master of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, for a two year term. Several local groups were given Warrants and by the year 1736 Masonry was well established in the Colonies.

A Provincial Grand Master was appointed in Massachusetts in 1733; this Provincial Grand Lodge, operating from Boston, warranted several Lodges, which are now situated in Canada. These Lodges were situated in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia - 1738, St. John's, Newfoundland - 1738, and Halifax, Nova Scotia - 1750. The Province of Nova Scotia is the home of Freemasonry in Canada, having had the first warranted Lodge, in Annapolis Royal. Within this Jurisdiction there are 95 Lodges, with a membership of approximately five thousand men.

This, then, is "A Brief Introduction to the History of Masonry". Thank you for your kind attention.



## AN EXPLANATION OF THE LODGE ROOM

Worshipful Master, ladies, gentlemen, my brethren. Good Evening. My name is .....

This evening I will explain the Lodge Room, its contents, the manner in which things were used by Operative Masons and also the way in which they are adopted by us to symbolize lessons in morality.

To begin, the form of a Lodge is a solid bounded by three pairs of parallel sides in the shape of a brick. The Lodge is symbolically, not geographically, situated East and West. (The three pillars, which are situated by the Altar, are replicas of the three different types of columns used by the ancient Greek architects. They symbolically support the ceiling of the Lodge. The Ionic pillar stands in the East and represents Wisdom, the Doric pillar stands in the West and represents Strength and the Corinthian pillar, which stands in the South, represents Beauty.) Above the seat of the Worshipful Master is suspended the letter "G", which represents God or Geometry, the basis of our Craft.

This is the Tracing Board, which, with the Rough and Perfect Ashlar are known as the Moveable Jewels. It was used by the Master Mason to draw a guideline for the workers to follow when erecting a building. To Masons, it represents the foundation of our lives and a plan to follow in order to become a better man and Mason.

This is the Rough Ashlar, which was used by the Operative Apprentice Mason, to practice on and to try and perfect his skill. To us it represents the new Mason and serves as an example for him to improve as a man and a Mason.

The Perfect Ashlar was used by the Operative Mason to perfect the finishing skills of their Craft. To us the Perfect Ashlar represents Moral Perfection.

This case contains the Working Tools of a Mason. Three of the Working tools; the the Square, the Level and the Plumb are also referred to as the immoveable jewels. They are so termed because they are appropriated to particular parts of the Lodge, where alone they should be found: the Square to the East, the Level to the West, and the Plumb to the South.

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 Principals of Morality and Virtue.

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 Plumb was used to enable the wall 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.

The other Tools consist of the Twenty-Four Inch Gauge; from it we learn to compute the time and labour that will be required for the completion of our work. The Common Gavel serves to remind us that all rough spots are to be made smooth and that hard work and determination will stand as a memorial to a life well spent.

The Trowel is the tool of a Mason which encourages us to spread friendship and brotherly love which is the principal tenet of the fraternity.

These Tools remind us that the Supreme Being has revealed his divine will to man and that we are to bear his laws in mind and act in accordance with them.

On the floor of the Lodge, in front of the Altar, is the Mosaic Pavement. The dictionary defines "mosaic" as a collection of small pieces of material assembled together to form a picture or design. To us the Mosaic Pavement represents, symbolically, humanity as the pieces of material assembled and fitted together to form the grand design of life. It reminds us that we are all small pieces of life and, as such, should endeavour to fit together in order to complete the design that the Supreme Being created for us.

This evening, I have attempted to give a general description of the Lodge Room, and its furnishings and to explain that, when a Speculative Mason enters the Lodge Room, everything in it has a symbolic meaning and reminds him of the manner in which he should conduct his life.

This then is an explanation of the Lodge. Thank you for your kind attention.

## EXPLANATION OF THE TERM “VOLUME OF SACRED LAW”

Worshipful Master, ladies, gentlemen, my brethren. Good Evening, my name is .....

I will explain the Masonic term the “Volume of Sacred Law”. Here on this Altar is a King James Version of the Holy Bible. It is a Holy Book. It is also an example of a “Volume of Sacred Law”. As you are well aware, there are numerous faiths in the world and each has religious or sacred writings or Holy Scriptures which are considered sacred by that faith group and most commonly placed together in a book form; that is a Holy Book or a Sacred Volume. Masonry refers to each one of these as a Volume of Sacred Law.

Freemasonry is not a religious order. In fact discussion of religion or religious matters within a Lodge is strictly forbidden. But at the same time Freemasonry encourages every man to be steadfast in the faith of his acceptance.

In Freemasonry, the first prerequisite of a Mason is a belief in God. However, whatever his particular opinions may be concerning God, they are of no immediate concern to our institution. Freemasonry likewise insists that every Mason should never mention the name of God except in that reverential manner which is due from a creature to his Creator, that he should implore God’s aid in all commendable and honourable undertakings, and to esteem God as the chief good of “all that is”.

Many Lodges will have more than one Holy Book or VoSL on the Altar if there is a member of a different faith in attendance, particularly when there are obligations to be taken as in the case of new members joining. In that instance the new member kneels, places his hands on his particular VoSL and promises before God to conduct himself with the best moral and ethical behaviour with which he is capable so that it may bring honour to God, to his family, to his neighbour and to himself.

The letter “G” ( *indicate the “G” in the East* ) represents the Great Architect or Grand Geometrician of the Universe; symbolic of each man’s belief in a higher being. Masons in Nova Scotia and around the world come from all faiths and include Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, Sikhs, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, and many others. Any religious restrictions to membership in our Order are imposed by those religions, not by Freemasonry.

The attitude of dictating what one is to believe about God leads to intolerance and bigotry which history shows has caused immeasurable strife and man's inhumanity to man since organized religion began and continues world wide today. Among other tenets, Masonry stands for toleration and freedom of religion. Anti-Masonic sentiment from a few faith groups has been generated because of distorted and incorrect information and the fact we are so tolerant, rather than any intolerance on our part.

The VoSL is part of the furniture of every Lodge and must be present in the Lodge when the Craft is at work. It is opened when the Lodge opens and closed when the Lodge closes. No Lodge can transact its business, much less initiate candidates, unless the VoSL is open upon the Altar. It is against our Constitution.

Here in the centre of the Lodge upon the Altar rests the VoSL supporting the Square and Compasses. The VoSL speaks to us of our duty to God; the Square reminds us to square or perfect our lives and actions and the Compasses remind us to limit ourselves within those actions which are acceptable to our Creator. Around these three duties we build our lives and our work.

Every Mason is admonished to read and study his VoSL. The reason given being that the most about God and God's will is revealed through it than by any other means.

This, then, is an explanation of the term "Volume of Sacred Law".

Thank you for your kind attention.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE TITLES, JEWELS, BADGES AND DUTIES  
OF THE LODGE OFFICERS.

Worshipful Master, ladies, gentlemen, my brethren. Good Evening. My name is .....

This evening I am going to explain the Lodge officers' titles, the jewels and badges of their office and their duties.

First you will already have noticed that the Worshipful Master, WBro ..... has addressed you from the East. There are at a minimum three Chairs in the East, from your right to left: the Immediate Past Master, WBro.....; the Worshipful Master, WBro .....; and a chair reserved for the Grand Master, or his representative, usually the District Deputy Grand Master.

I will start with the office of Worshipful Master representing King Solomon – the wisest of men. Worshipful Master is a mediaeval term. The title indicates courtesy and respect. The office of Worshipful Master is the highest honour the Lodge can bestow on any of its members. He is responsible for the well being of the Lodge and its members. It is his duty to conduct the business of the Lodge, initiate new members and perform various rituals and the work of the Degrees. (There are three Degrees that are explained later.) The jewel of his office is the Square, which teaches us to regulate our conduct by the principles of Morality and Virtue and is suspended from his collar.

The Senior Warden is the officer next in line to the Worshipful Master. In the absence of the Worshipful Master, he may open and close the Lodge and preside over the Lodge for all Lodge property. He is also co-Chairman of the business meetings of the Lodge. It is important that he work with the Worshipful Master in all aspects of Lodge business and Ritual, as he normally succeeds the Worshipful Master. The jewel of his office is the Level which teaches equality in that no man is better than another in the eyes of God.

The Junior Warden is responsible for the Lodge while at refreshment hour. He directs the Stewards. He is usually the Chairman of the Social and Entertainment Committee. As he is one of the three principal officers of the Lodge, he is required to work in close proximity with the Worshipful Master and Senior

Warden. He follows the Senior Warden in officer progression. His jewel of office is the Plumb which teaches us to maintain uprightness of conduct.

Next is the office of Immediate Past Master. He holds this position in the Lodge by right of ancient custom; he is not elected or appointed. It is his duty to assist the Worshipful Master during each meeting of the Lodge. Each Worshipful Master ought to use the knowledge of the Immediate Past Master, as he has just vacated the Chair of Worshipful Master and possesses a reservoir of current information that the Worshipful Master can make use of for the betterment of the Lodge. His jewel of office is the Square from which the 47th Problem of Euclid is suspended.

The duty of the Director of Ceremonies is to ensure that he provides appropriate and correct instruction for all of the ceremonial work that is to be carried out in the Lodge at various times. His badge is the Crossed batons.

The Chaplain is an Office that requires little comment, as his duties are apparent to all. He occupies an honorable place in the Lodge. His badge is an All-Seeing Eye on a Triangle.

The office of Secretary is a most important one. It is his duty to record the minutes of every meeting; collect dues and transfer them to the Treasurer; issue all summonses for the assembly of the brethren; maintain records of membership; record the fees payable to the Grand Lodge; prepare all returns required by the Grand Lodge; present a yearly statement of membership to the Lodge and countersign all orders of the Worshipful Master. All communications pass through the hands of the Secretary. The Secretary should be a brother who commands the respect of the brethren and who is impartial in all dealings. His badge of office is the Crossed Pens.

The Treasurer is responsible to keep a record of all receipts and expenditures; submit the books and records annually to the members of the Lodge; pay all accounts signed by the Worshipful Master and the Secretary; prepare statements of receipts, expenditures, assets and liabilities for the auditors of the Lodge; and invest the surplus of funds, if any, in vehicles for the best advantage of the Lodge. His badge of office is the Crossed Keys.

The Deacons are messengers; the Senior Deacon of the Worshipful Master and the Junior Deacon of the Senior Warden. It is also their duty to attend the Worshipful Master and to assist the Wardens in the reception of candidates and during the ceremony of the Degrees. They are to assist the Senior Warden in the preparation of the Lodge Room. They are also responsible for the collection of the ballots for new applicants and affiliates to Masonry. The Worshipful Master can direct them to serve on the several committees of the Lodge. Their badge of office is the Dove bearing an olive branch in the beak. As the Dove bearing the olive branch brought information to Noah on the Ark, so the Deacons carry messages around the Lodge room.

The Stewards duties are to prepare the candidates for the various Degrees, prepare the Lodge Room for various Degrees and assist the Junior Warden at refreshment hour. They are to ensure that the brethren and visitors are made comfortable. They may be requested, by the Worshipful Master, to serve on the various Lodge committees. The badge of their office is the Cornucopia or Horn of Plenty.

The Organist - it is his duty to attend all Lodge Meetings and take such part in the ceremonies as the Worshipful Master may direct. His badge of office is the Lyre.

The Historian - his duty is to record and maintain an ongoing history of the events in the Lodge so that the future members of the Lodge may know and appreciate the past. His badge of office is the Lamp.

The Marshal – it is his duty to arrange all the processions of the Lodge and preserve order and decorum. His badge of office is the Crossed Batons.

The Inner Guard is to admit all Masons into Lodge, and to make sure candidates for various Degrees are properly prepared. He is to obey the commands of the Junior Warden and to give direction to the Tyler. His badge of office is the Crossed Rods.

The Tyler is situated outside the Lodge Room. It is his duty to ensure that none but Masons enter. It is also his duty to see that candidates are properly prepared. He also sees that all members and visitors have signed the Attendance Register. He is to assist the Deacons in the preparation of the Lodge Room and to assist the Junior Warden when necessary. His badge of office is the Sword.

The Past Masters - although there is no office specific to their rank, they are highly esteemed by the Worshipful Master and members of the Lodge. They are encouraged to assist the Worshipful Master and serve on the various Committees of the Lodge. They take an active part in the conferring of the various Degrees, and provide a wealth of knowledge and experience, invaluable to the Worshipful Master. They are easily identifiable for they wear a Past Master's jewel in their breast pocket.

That then is an explanation of the "Titles, Jewels, Badges and Duties of the Lodge Officers".

Thank you for your kind attention.



APRONS OF MASONRY: THEIR LESSONS AND SYMBOLIC  
IMPORTANCE TO MASONS

Worshipful Master, ladies, gentlemen, my brethren. Good Evening. My name is .....

This evening I will explain the various Aprons of Masonry, their lessons and symbolic importance to Masons. The Freemason's Apron is a curtailed survival of the apron worn by operative masons, to protect their clothing from the abrasive surface of building materials, particularly stone.

After receiving knowledge and instruction in the symbolic form, the new brother is at last given a tangible symbol of Masonry to wear as his own and eventually to carry away in the form of an Apron.

At any rate, inasmuch as stone workers are as old as civilization itself, the humble apron of operative masons can claim a greater antiquity than the heraldic symbols of riches and power, such as the Golden Fleece and Roman Eagle. The Mason's apron is worn only in the context of Love and Harmony. Private piques and quarrels have no place within the tyled recesses of the Lodge. As a symbol, it admonishes us to protect our spiritual persons from sin or the stain of vice. To the newly admitted brother it serves as a constant reminder, not only that he now owes certain duties to his brethren, but also that they have now accepted him as a Brother Mason. *(Have an apron to be shown.)* The white lambskin apron of the Entered Apprentice is completely undecorated and serves him as a reminder of blameless purity, which should be his constant aim. In shape it is a perfect square, an emblem of Morality, which represents the "Good Man", "Four Square", fashioned without reproach.

*(Have an example to be shown.)* The apron of the Master Mason is more ornate. It is bordered by a ribbon of sky blue, in five separate segments; three on the apron and two on the flap. The color blue reminds us of the heavens, which declare the Glory of God and shows His handiwork. The triangular flap, with its border, reminds us of the Mason's Square, that other emblem of Morality. The belt, in addition to holding the apron in place, signifies the cable tow which was used to bind you closer to the fraternity than any man-made binding could. The two ribbons which carry the solid or chain drops symbolize the two great pillars which were found before the porch of King Solomon's Temple. The seven tassels refer to the seven steps and the seven liberal arts and sciences along with

the five orders of architecture as well as the five senses of man. The three rosettes or their alternates symbolize, in turn, the great Lights and the three indispensable officers required to open a Lodge. From this you can see that the apron has a story to tell if we have eyes to see and the knowledge to understand that the embellishments of the apron are not just ornamentations. *(Have an example to be shown or a brother wearing one is asked to stand.)* A Lodge, which has attained its one hundredth year of continuous service, is entitled to have gold trim added, as a special marking.

*(Have an example to be shown or a brother wearing one is asked to stand. )* I now direct your attention to the Royal Blue Apron worn by several Members of the Lodge. These brethren have rendered substantial service to the Craft and have been officers of our Grand Lodge.

There are several other aprons that are distinctive. This one that I hold denotes the regalia of a District Deputy Grand Master. *(Have him stand if present.)* Several of the brethren of the Lodge wear this distinctive Regalia. They were elected by their peers in this District to serve as the Grand Master's Representative for one year. They are brethren who are highly respected in their Lodges and indeed their Districts for their knowledge and experience in Masonry.

This then is an explanation of the "Aprons of Masonry" and their importance to us as Masons.

Thank you for your kind attention.

## SUMMATION

Worshipful Master, ladies, gentlemen, my brethren. Good Evening, my name is.....

Permit me to give you a brief summation of the symbolism of Freemasonry, in the three Degrees. Freemasonry is more than an outward symbol and ceremony, narration and fellowship. It has a tradition, which is mystical and personal, nevertheless, real and vital for the full understanding of the spirit of Masonry. That inner spirit of Masonry is nothing less than a consciousness of the presence of God, in the heart, soul and mind of the individual.

The First Degree, which is comparable in symbolism to birth, the beginning of life, requires a trust in God and the thought uppermost in our minds in this Degree is the strength and power of the Great Architect of The Universe, the Creator and Supporter of a wonderful cosmos.

The Second Degree is the Degree of life, knowledge and mental development. God's all Seeing Eye observes us, and it is He who is invoked to shed the rays of Heaven, to enlighten us in the paths of virtue and knowledge.

The Third Degree points to the inevitability of death, at the end of our earthly pilgrimage - but it does not stop there. Rather the emphasis is upon the attainment of the quest: "That in our perishable frames resides a vital and immortal principle, which inspires a Holy confidence, that the Lord of Life will enable us to lift our eyes to that bright morning star, whose rising brings peace and salvation."

Freemasonry is not a religion or an alternative. It is a philosophy of life built on a system of moral living, expressing a belief in a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.

Gentlemen and guests, this is but a brief discourse on the lessons we endeavour to impress on the new candidates, who knock on our doors by their own choice, for enlightenment and knowledge.

One last area we should explain is how the family of Freemasonry is organized and how individuals become involved. We have a wonderful method of screening members. Quite simply, we never ask anyone to join.

It is against our principles to conduct membership drives or solicit new members. Rather, it is our practice to live our own lives in such a manner that others would wish to be like us. We make no secret of our Masonic affiliation, and if others inquire about our membership, we are more than willing to extend the hand of brotherhood to any who inquire, but they, (not us) must be the first to ask.

Once a man has become a Mason, a whole new world of opportunities opens up to him and to his family.

The opportunities are endless and the personal rewards limitless.

Ladies and gentlemen, our brief time with you has come to an end, and we have only been able to give you a very brief summary of some of the aspects of Freemasonry. On behalf of the officers and members of ..... Lodge and over four thousand Masons in the Province of Nova Scotia, I would like to thank you for your attendance and apparent interest. I trust that you have enjoyed our presentation but more importantly, that you have learned something of Freemasonry and its fraternal and benevolent practices.

..... Lodge is only one of the ..... Masonic Lodges in ..... County and there are ninety five Lodges in Nova Scotia, each very similar to ours yet individual in its character and membership.

I remind you that if our order interests you further, the key phrase is "to be one - ask one". Masons are not difficult to find - they are upright citizens in your communities, men who quietly lead by example but whom you can always depend on to be there when the need arises.

We trust that after your visit today you have a better understanding of Freemasonry and what Masons are all about. Our hope is that the next time you encounter derogatory remarks about our order, you will recall this time you spent with us and know what the truth really is.

Thank you for your kind attention. Are there any questions?

(Masonic Education Committee)