

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

OF THE

MASONIC RESTORATION FOUNDATION

Since 2001, the Masonic Restoration Foundation (MRF) has been examining the issues facing North American Masonry, identifying successful practices and offering realistic solutions aimed at improving the experience of Masonic labor. We have tried to understand modern perceptions of Masonry, and identify what newer Masons seek in the lodge experience. We are aware that many men who are joining the fraternity today have generally already done a lot of reading and web surfing and have formulated an opinion about the fraternity.

Many of these men come into Masonry knowing more than those who have been members for some time. Young men tend to perceive Freemasonry as a venue for truth seeking, a vehicle for self-improvement and philosophical development; a place for the discovery of one's inner potential. Our new brothers know what they want from the fraternity and have high expectations that their lodge will meet their needs as men.

As North American Freemasonry faces some of the most important challenges in its history, the MRF stands to ensure a sense of purpose and identity for the Craft.

ORGANIZATION, MISSION AND GOALS

The Masonic Restoration Foundation is an educational organization that provides news, research, and analysis relating to the rich heritage in Freemasonry and current trends in the North American Masonic experience.

The MRF was organized to identify and distribute, through its research, the time-tested cultural and fraternal Masonic practices that have proven successful in the historical repertoire of Masonic experience. The focus of the MRF is to promote the characteristics which form the best lodge meetings, fraternal and social practices across the Masonic landscape, while preserving Freemasonry's landmarks and upholding its identity as a transformative art.

The MRF is a group of regular Freemasons who promote those traditions in Freemasonry which are centered on the shared dialogue of men embracing the nature of God, self improvement, and civic duty. We believe Masonry creates solemn places and social environs that foster harmonious, transforming, and fulfilling experiences for members of the Masonic fraternity.

Involvement in the MRF is restricted to Master Masons in good standing in a lodge chartered by a Grand Lodge that is a member of the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America.

The mission of the MRF is to assist and support—through education, communication, example, and coordination of efforts among lodges, Grand Lodges, individuals and groups of Masons belonging to regularly and duly constituted lodges—the overall improvement and happiness of the individual Mason and his fraternal relationships.

The goal of the foundation is to restore Freemasonry to the historical and philosophical intent of its organizational founders. We believe that in so doing, Masons will return to the development of a fraternal culture of learning and intellectual growth, which will not only benefit the individual Mason, but society as a whole.

The MRF is not a Masonic Lodge, order, conclave, encampment, or rite; nor will it ever attempt to charter, create, or establish lodges. In Masonry, only a Grand Lodge can charter a Lodge. The MRF does not and will not claim Masonic authority over any Masonic Body. It has no ritual, but upholds the highest ritual standards in presentation as legally prescribed by the adopted practices of regular Grand Lodges.

MRF activities may only happen with the permission of a Grand Lodge.

Lodges that support the MRF operate solely under the Grand Lodge in whose jurisdiction they are chartered and, as such, have an independent existence from the MRF. Lodges that support the mission, purposes, and goals of the MRF have a responsibility to creatively and faithfully excel in the rules and regulations of their respective Grand Lodges.

The MRF serves as a clearinghouse of best practices in Freemasonry. Its supporters share ideas and information, discuss Masonic topics, and conduct local, regional and national Masonic education conferences upon request of members or lodges, and with permission of the Grand Lodge in which its events are held.

THE INTENT OF OUR MASONIC FOUNDERS

The MRF endorses the following tenets as being the verifiable historical intentions of the founders of speculative Masonry, as established from the time of the Premier Grand Lodge. They are essential to the character of the Masonic institution, and widely accepted as representing the best practices in Masonic Lodges across the world:

It is the intent of Freemasonry that the fraternity is, above all else, an initiatic order whose main purpose is to teach good men to subdue their passions, become masters over themselves, and grow in life to be better men.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that only those who are duly and truly prepared are eligible to be admitted as members. In keeping with the Masonic statement “to make good men better,” a man should only be initiated into a lodge if he is already good and capable of being made better. Determining the qualifications of men in seeking admission is an essential aspect of upholding the integrity of our ancient institution.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that its ceremonies should be conducted with the utmost reverence and solemnity. Masonic ritual ceremonies should always be performed in a solemn and dignified manner. All efforts pertaining to the presentation of the degrees of Craft Freemasonry should be focused on the candidate, providing each with the most profound and transformative initiatic experience possible.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that every Mason should be desirous to learn and apt to teach. Sufficient time between degrees should be given to each candidate so as to enhance his self-transformation through personal intellectual study, reflection and contemplation. It is incumbent on every lodge to be aware of the progressive nature of its teaching curriculum, and to provide its candidates with a ritual coach and the mentorship of well-informed brethren.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that each candidate should demonstrate his proficiency in learning at each individual stage or degree before he can be advanced to the next stage. Traditionally, Masonic learning includes a demonstration of the candidate's understanding of the journey from darkness to light, ignorance to knowledge; and his insight into the uses and applications of Masonic symbols, allegories and myths introduced by the ritual ceremonies. Every newly raised Master Mason should feel that he has grown by his Masonic experience.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that members of Masonic Lodges should be actively engaged in Freemasonry. Historically, attendance at Masonic meetings and functions was mandatory, with fines paid for absences not excused by the lodge. Active participation in the business and purposes of Masonry by a large majority of those who belong is essential to the growth and vitality of a lodge, and in carrying out its role in improving society.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that Masons come together to seek fellowship and fraternity in a common pursuit of virtue and moral improvement. This has historically best been accomplished in small and intimate gatherings of fraternal association. Lodges should be large enough to be efficient, but small enough for all the brethren of the lodge to closely know each other. Fraternal ties must always be stronger than social ties. Masonic relationships are expected to be forged between members in the same way a brother grows close to a sibling.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that, through the exercise of genuine brotherly love, men become better enabled to regard humankind as one family. Charity, being the chief of all social virtues, encumbers Masons to aid, support and protect each other, relieve the distress and misfortune of family members, and consciously contribute to the betterment of society at large.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that Lodges should make regular time for feasting, communal dining, and embracing the social enjoyment of their members. Holding a formal dining event after meetings has long been a traditional element of Masonic evenings. Table Lodges and Feasts of St. John offer opportunities to observe this important Masonic tradition with the larger Masonic community. The fellowship of men is best embraced in the convivial environs of sociability.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that its formal and tyled assemblies should be dedicated to the attainment of a deeper knowledge and understanding of Freemasonry by all members. To this end, the presentation of lectures, poetry, music; discussions of the arts, philosophy, and history; and the interpretation of symbols, allegories and myths of Masonic ritual all play an important role in furthering the aims and growth of a Masonic lodge and its members. Each tyled meeting should be devoted, at least in part, to the realization of this profound purpose.

It is the intent of Freemasonry that only the ablest among us should serve in an office of Masonry. Serving in a Masonic office is a privilege and not a right. Officers of Masonic lodges should be elected and appointed based solely on their merit. Officers who are invited to progress in the offices of Masonry should be able to demonstrate their qualifications to lead and execute the duties of their office.

Above all, the most important intention of a Freemason is self-improvement. The improvement of the individual is the most fundamental aspect of improving society.

THE MASONIC RESTORATION FOUNDATION'S HOPE FOR NORTH AMERICAN FREEMASONRY

The many Lodges, Grand Lodges, and individual Masons who support the work of the MRF believe that when lodges practice Masonry as a transformative art, they become a part of the true heritage of Freemasonry that has been established over hundreds of years and has been energized through hundreds of rituals, which have been repeated thousands of times. Such places have spectacular reserves of energy, all focused on a single, foundational hope—the improvement in the individual man and Mason.

We believe the focus on a quality fraternal, educational and social experience for each individual Mason determines the uniqueness and effectiveness of the lodge. And its potential power rests in this—such a place does not exist anywhere else in the world.

To assist in creating such a culture, and to experience it in lodge after lodge, within Grand Jurisdiction after Grand Jurisdiction, is the mission of the Masonic Restoration Foundation.

We invite you to join us in the restoration of Freemasonry to the historical intentions of its institutional founders.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the MRF please contact us directly so we can continue the discussion.



www.masonicrestorationfoundation.org