

## How much time will my partner be expected to dedicate to Freemasonry?

In Australia and New Zealand lodge meetings are usually held monthly. Members are encouraged to attend regularly.

However, if your partner decides to take a more active role within his lodge or within the Masonic community, the amount of time he will dedicate to Freemasonry will increase. There are a lot of Masonic activities throughout the year, like quarterly communications, celebratory dinners and fundraising events, which your partner might choose to take part in also.



## What costs are involved in joining Freemasonry?

As with all organisations, annual membership fees are expected of members but are reasonably priced. Fees may vary from Lodge to Lodge depending on the style of the Lodge. For example, a Lodge that values fine wine and cuisine would have larger catering costs. When first becoming a Freemason, your partner will pay a one off joining fee and also purchase Masonic attire.

## Can I be involved in Masonic activities?

Family and family values are an important part of a Freemason's life and families are frequently invited to take part in Masonic activity and the day-to-day workings of the Lodge. Freemasonry can provide men and their families with a fun and active social life with like-minded people from all walks of life.

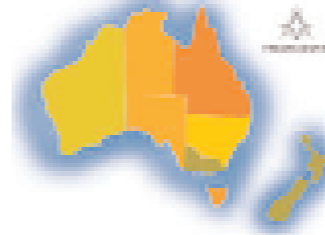
Your support of your partner in his Masonic activities is vital for his development as a Freemason.

## Who should I contact for further information?

You are most welcome to contact your local Grand Lodge for further information about the organisation. You are free to visit the Grand Lodge and discuss membership with our friendly staff. Please call at any time if you wish to discuss membership or obtain further information.



**For further information please contact:**



### NEW SOUTH WALES & ACT

Grand Secretary - United Grand Lodge of NSW & ACT  
Sydney Masonic Centre, 279 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
PO Box A259, Sydney South 1235  
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### VICTORIA

Grand Secretary - United Grand Lodge of Victoria  
Masonic Centre, 300 Albert Street  
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### QUEENSLAND

Grand Secretary - United Grand Lodge of Queensland  
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### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Grand Secretary - Grand Lodge of South Australia  
Freemasons' Hall, 254 North Terrace  
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### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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### TASMANIA

Grand Secretary - Grand Lodge of Tasmania  
Masonic Centre, 3 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart TAS 7000  
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### NEW ZEALAND

Grand Secretary - Grand Lodge of New Zealand  
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Ph: 0011 64 4 385 6622 Fax: 0015 64 4 385 2420  
Email: [secretary@freemasons.co.nz](mailto:secretary@freemasons.co.nz)

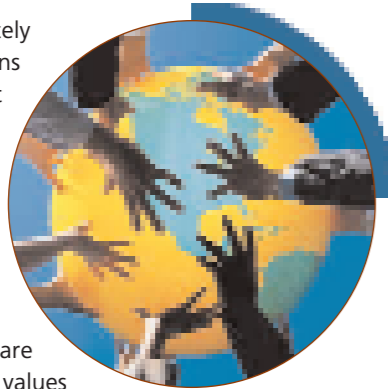
# A PARTNER'S GUIDE to understanding FREEMASONRY



## What is Freemasonry?

Freemasonry is an organisation of men who strive to live by the fundamental principles of integrity, goodwill and charity. It is a non-profit organisation that is heavily involved in supporting charity and community service. It is a society that unifies men of high ideals regardless of colour, creed or worldly status.

There are approximately five million Freemasons worldwide and about 75,000 in Australia and New Zealand. Freemasons are ordinary men in the community, 18 years and over, of all religions and backgrounds, who share a concern for human values and moral standards, respect for the laws of society and the rights of individuals.



## Why would my partner want to be a Freemason?

There are many reasons why a man will choose to be a Freemason. It is an organisation that promotes self-development, family and community values. It provides

members with an opportunity for public service and hands-on involvement in charitable and community issues, as well as a chance for them to socialise



with men from all walks of life without religious, political or social barriers.

## What is the history of Freemasonry?

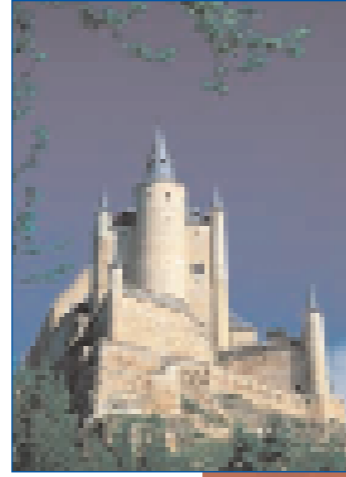
The precise origins of Freemasonry have been lost in time, however, its traditions date back to the Middle Ages and to the stonemasons who built the castles and cathedrals of Europe. These highly skilled masons formed themselves into 'lodges' to protect the skills and secrets of their trade and to pass on their knowledge to worthy apprentices.

By the 17th Century, when the building of castles and cathedrals subsided, Freemasonry began to lose its 'operative' aspects and worthy men were also accepted into its membership. It was from this time that Masons were known as 'free and accepted' Masons, as they continue to be known to this day.

## Are there any secrets that my partner must keep from me?

The so-called 'secrets' of modern Freemasonry are used solely as a ceremonial means of demonstrating that one is a Freemason when in Lodge meetings. The point of a Freemason promising not to reveal them – even to you – is basically a dramatic way of testing the good character of those who join.

If you were to read your partner's notice papers or ritual books, you might discover that there are initials



and spaces used to discreetly classify some significant words and signs. A Freemason will not reveal this information to you, but if you were really curious, further study of Freemasonry at your local library might be of assistance.

## What do Masonic Symbols mean?

The most widely recognised symbol of Freemasonry is the Square and Compasses. Members wear the symbol to remind themselves of their obligation to the lessons learned in their lodges and to identify their membership to other Freemasons and all people. Masonic symbols have wide meanings – some directly relate to the tools used by operative Masons and some represent the need for order and direction in life.



## Why can't women become Freemasons?

Freemasonry is a fraternal organisation with practises deeply entrenched in tradition and history. The Book of Constitutions, compiled by Anderson and published

in 1723 unites Freemasons all over the world. All the regular Grand Lodges adhere to the principles therein. To change these constitutions to allow women to become members would require Lodges throughout the world to agree to the change.

As cultures are so diverse and vary so dramatically in terms of social structure and gender relations, making this fundamental change to the Constitution would be extremely difficult.

## Are there similar organisations for women?

Yes, there are. There are orders with Masonic characteristics, such as The Order of the Eastern Star and The Order of the Amaranth that are for women.

Members of The Order of the Eastern Star are dedicated to working together for the good and benefit of mankind. The moral and social purpose of this Order is to elevate character, promote friendship and practice charity. For further information, please contact your local Grand Lodge.

The Order of the Amaranth is a fraternal institution inspired by the Gala Annual Amaranth Ball held in Sweden during the reign of Queen Christina. Its objectives are to unite Freemasons, their wives and female relatives so that

all may enjoy sincere affection and mutual confidence, and have the opportunity to work for the common good of the community. For further information, contact your local Grand Lodge.

