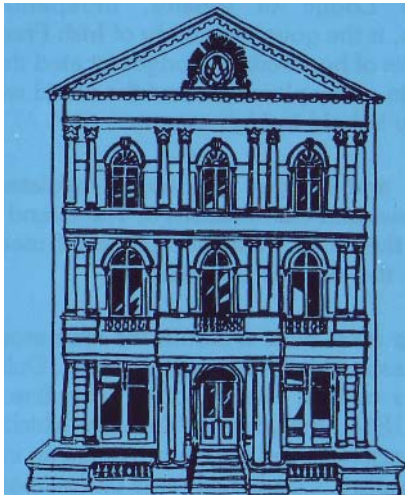
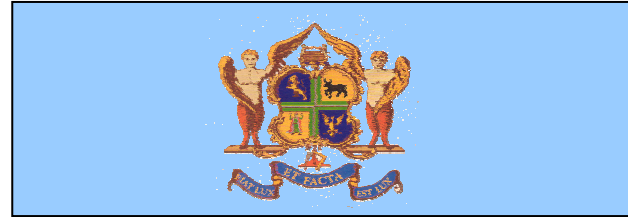


FREEMASONRY IN IRELAND



**FREEMASONS' HALL,
17 MOLESWORTH STREET,
DUBLIN 2.**

(0)1 676 1337 . (0)1 679 5465



Freemasonry is one of the world's oldest fraternal societies and has flourished in Ireland for more than 300 years, bringing together men of goodwill and integrity, tolerant of the beliefs of others, charitable in disposition and striving #o achieve high moral standards in every aspect of their daily lives.

The Grand Lodge of Ireland, independent and autonomous, is the governing body of Irish Freemasonry which consists of hundreds of Lodges located throughout Ireland and in many places around the world where Irish Freemasonry is held in high esteem.

Freemasons and Lodges are strictly regulated by the published Laws and Constitutions of The Grand Lodge of Ireland and the times, dates and places of meetings are published in the Annual Calendar.

Most Lodges meet once a month for nine months each year. Freemasons' Hall, Molesworth Street, Dublin, is the headquarters of Irish Freemasonry. This fine building, erected in 1865, includes a Museum which displays documents, artefacts and regalia providing an insight into Irish Freemasonry. Conducted tours of Freemasons' Hall and Museum are given each year during the summer months, when the Hall is open to the public.

MEMBERSHIP

It is an essential requirement that Freemasons must profess a belief in God, regardless of how they worship or address Him. Membership is open to men of good character and repute, irrespective of race, colour or religion.

Brethren are required to observe certain confidences which might easily be referred to as "secrets", but these are entirely of a ceremonial nature.

Freemasons are expected to be law-abiding citizens - any member convicted of a criminal offence being liable to suspension or expulsion from the Order. Freemasons come from all walks of life and from all social and financial backgrounds. All members in a Lodge are regarded as equal and will receive a warm welcome in any Irish Lodge or any Lodge overseas operating under a Grand Lodge recognised

RELIGION

Freemasonry is neither a religion nor a religious organisation. Members are expected to support their own faith whatever it may be. No religious discussion is permitted at any meetings.

POLITICS

Nor is political discussion permitted at any meeting. Freemasonry is non-political. Many organisations exist which claim to be "Masonic", but because they are either political or, sectarian, the Grand Lodge of Ireland does not recognise them and will not permit any contact with them.

CHARITIES

Irish Freemasonry is a caring organisation which, for two hundred years, has been concerned with the welfare of young and old.



Late 19th century stained window depicting the allegorical figure of Charity. Stairwell, Freemasons' Hall.

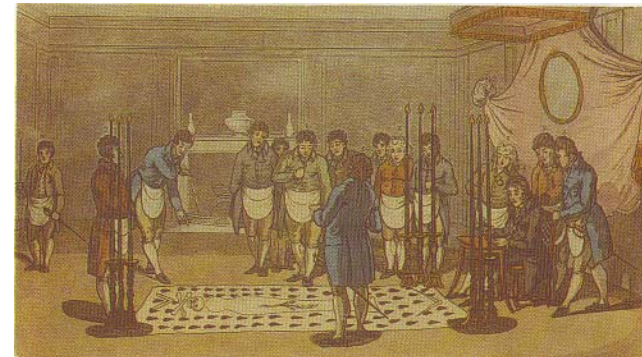
Freemasonry is not a Provident Society, therefore membership does not confer or guarantee financial benefits. However, in accordance with basic principles of charity, all funds available are disbursed where need is greatest. These funds derive from members' voluntary contributions, fundraising activities and income from monies accumulated and invested in past years which are prudently managed.

Where funds permit and circumstances merit, our Charities help meet the cost of providing education for sons and daughters of members who may be deceased, incapacitated or unemployed. About 600 young people receive support in this way each year.

Members' widows in financial difficulties may receive annuities to augment their income. Over 2,000 widows are supported in this manner. Sheltered accommodation for the elderly is provided at several locations around Ireland.

Our most recent project raised a substantial capital sum to found The Freemasons of Ireland Medical Research Fund from which the income has initially been used to finance two different Research Projects at Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast, and St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin, into causes of Arthritis.

In addition to the main charitable activities mentioned above, many Lodges operate their own Charity Funds locally.



Print of an early 19th century cartoon showing 'A meeting of Freemasons'

This leaflet is intended to provide some concise information on Freemasonry in Ireland; more detailed information is given in other leaflets readily available on request.