



Internet Lodge 9659
United Grand Lodge of England
Province of East Lancashire
<http://internet.lodge.org.uk>

Short Papers Competition 2007

*The opinions reflected by the author are not necessarily those of Internet Lodge,
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Paper 29/2007

Title **Music in Masonry - Today**
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When our forefathers built this splendid Masonic building they included an organ which has been used for almost every ceremony in Craft and other side orders of Masonry.

As we have no one to play tonight, this is an opportunity to think about Masonic music.

Why have music? Since the earliest days our ceremonies have been dignified by music from some notable musicians such as Mozart, Haydn, Sibelius, and Elgar. But the great composers are not our concern today; why do we have music? Why have church services, civic ceremonies and state funerals used organ music?

Because, I submit, music adds to the atmosphere. You all know that an Initiation without music is far less inspiring for the candidate; a Provincial occasion is far more majestic with fine fanfares and inspiring organ music.

But let us not dwell on our great Provincial meetings when we usually have the resources in terms of the instrument and the musician, let us think of our ordinary domestic Lodges. I am sure you would agree music does add to our ceremonies, yet what do we find today.

Most Lodges sing an opening and closing ode and little else. Some have music books dating from 50+ years ago, where there is something to sing for every perambulation. But even if this is available, often it is no longer enthusiastically embraced by those present. So if we are lucky enough to have someone to play, and if a full musical service is available, don't you think we should try to use it? We have no choirmaster, but it would make a much more impressive ceremony if you would pick up the book and give it a go.

Now about organists. We cannot hope that every Lodge in the Province will have an experienced organist to play. But let us encourage anyone who can play a keyboard or piano to help out. There is an interesting "reluctant organist guide" which comes in two forms. The basic introduction shows any person with a glimmering of keyboard skills how to enhance our ceremonies, and another which provides guidance to someone who can play a bit, to help them get the best out of the various organs we have in our Lodge rooms. (Incidentally this also debates the merits of CD ROMs and MP3 downloads).

Finally. It is actually easier to play a conventional pipe organ than the little electronic home organs that sometime find their way into our Temples. The second paper explains how to avoid a rumba or tango as the DC announces that the WM's Procession is about to enter.

All this information is available on an Internet site provided by Internet Lodge No:9659, and I have a couple of print-outs with me for those who would like to see this after we close the Lodge, and I have some slips with the URL for those who would like to look on line. Sing, brethren! - sing the merits of music!

*Short papers are intended to be read aloud in lodge meetings as a form of Masonic Education.
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