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Short Papers Competition 2007

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Paper 71/2007

Title **What Can I Do for Freemasonry?**

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Perhaps none of us knows the real origins of Freemasonry as it is practised today.

What we do know is that it has existed for several hunded years based on the simple precepts of Brotherly love, Relief and Truth. Over that period it has given fulfillment to millions of men and they in turn have applied its lessons in the relief of those in society less fortunate than ourselves.

The most important thing therefore that each of us can do is to help it to survive for hundreds of years to come practicing those tenets which we hold so dear.

It's an obvious statement that every freemason from the Grand Master to the newest entered apprentice has been initiated into Freemasonry and, one way or another, every one of us must leave it. So it's a simple challenge then really. If Freemasonry is to survive we must, each and everyone of us, engineer our own replacement.

Ask yourself "How many men have **I** proposed into Freemasonry?" If the answer to that question is less than one then your own replacement hasn't yet been achieved.

Freemasonry is a living organisation and like all living things it changes; it evolves. The days have gone when prospective candidates queued outside the door of the Masonic hall, anxious and prepared to wait several years between acceptance and initiation. We live in a different world from our fathers and we must take the initiative to seek out those men whom we believe would make excellent Masons and who in turn would add something to Freemasonry. We must also be careful that we do not, in our desire for new members, accept those who do not live up to the high standards that Freemasonry expects and deserves.

And those good men ARE there, but in today's society there are many calls on their time. Despite the ostensible progress that society has made in recent years, many work longer hours than hitherto. Many men involve themselves much more with their families than was pehaps once the case and that is undoubtedly a good thing.

We have to ensure that Freemasonry is attractive and flexible enough to them to warrant a proportion of their available leisure time. Open lodges later and work efficiently. Dine efficiently too. Equally we must ensure that their families also think that it's worth the time, cost and effort.

And **it is** worth that time effort and cost. You know it and I know it. All you have to do now is throw off your doubts. Ignore those who throw their hands in the air and accept defeat as inevitable. Your replacement into our wonderful brotherhood **IS** out there, just waiting for your approach. These days he won't ask you, don't wait for him to do so. Talk to him, ASK him.

Once you have your new initiate you have only just begun. You must mentor him carefully and dilligently, but that, as they say, is another story.

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