

The Worshipful Society of Free Masons
Rough Masons, Wallers, Slaters, Paviers, Plaisterers and Bricklayers
The Operatives
United States of America Region



D.G.M.M. & S.P.M
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To All Those Qualified and Interested:

This letter is distributed on behalf of the United States of America (USAM) Region of the Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Wallers, Slaters, Paviers, Plaisterers and Bricklayers, known colloquially as *The Operatives*.

The Society exists to perpetuate or preserve a memorial of the practices of operative Free Masons existing prior to, or continuing independently of, modern Speculative Freemasonry and consists of seven grades commemorating a lifetime, or “*forty years*”, of operative craft rituals:

- I° Indentured Apprentice
- II° Fellow of the Craft
- III° Fitter and Marker
- IV° Setter Erector
- V° Intendent, Overseer, Super Intendent and Warden
- VI° Passed Master (Note: Not “*Past* Master”)
- VII° Master Mason, or Grand Master Mason *Honoris Causa*,
of whom three are the Grand Master Masons

While the names of *The Operatives*’ degrees may seem similar to those of the Speculative Craft, *The Operatives* do not purport to confer the first three degrees of Speculative Freemasonry, nor alternatives to these. The requirements for membership presume that all candidates for Indenture have already received the first three Speculative Craft degrees. To be considered for membership in *The Operatives*, one must be a member of a Craft Lodge in a Jurisdiction recognized by the United Grand Lodge of England, a Mark Master Mason, and a Royal Arch Mason.

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The Society has about 2,500 members scattered throughout the world in England & Wales, Australia, New Zealand, India, Spain, France, Canada, Belgium, South America, and the United States. Should you desire, much information can be obtained through the Society website (<http://www.operatives.org.uk>). After you are on the web site, click on "The Society" on the top bar, then "brochure".

Although one can apply directly to join *The Operatives* in the UK, in the USAM Region *The Operatives* can be thought of as a "semi-invitational" body of Freemasonry with some Assemblages being more open and some being more strictly invitational. In all cases, candidates must be proposed by two members of the Society, supported by an additional five members of the Assemblage to which they have been invited to apply, and approved by the membership according to the established procedures. The Indenture Fee required of all candidates in the USAM Region is \$500. Annual Dues vary by Assemblage and range from \$50 to \$150.

All of the Assemblages in the USAM Region retain allegiance to Grand Assemblage in London and adopt an "English" practice of Freemasonry within *The Operatives*. Dress is dark suit or "stroller" - not tuxedo. The badge of membership in *The Operatives* is one's jewel of rank and the distinctive tie of the Society. Although each of the degrees I° - IV° have a distinctive apron for the degree, aprons are not worn in our meetings.

Within the USAM Region, membership in *The Operatives* is considered most suitable for Masons experienced in the Speculative Craft who seek a deeper experience of its operative origins. Commitment to attendance and participation are reasonable expectations of membership and are required for advancement. The founding members of *Bryn Athyn Quarry Assemblage*, the first Assemblage of *The Operatives* constituted in the United States, spent more than six years traveling to Canada and the UK in order to achieve sufficient advancement to qualify as founders. As with our Operative predecessors, travel to the work is considered an opportunity and not a hardship.

Advancement within The Operatives is slow by American usage. It may take two years or more to reach the IV°, which is the "full membership" degree of the Society. Advancement beyond the I° and II° is dependent upon participation and attendance.

Advancement to the V° is by recommendation of the Assemblage's Deputy Master Mason and the invitation of the Region's Deputy Master Mason V°; the minimum qualifications being consistent attendance and activity in regular Assemblage meetings. Further advancement to the VI° is also by recommendation of the Assemblage's Deputy Master Mason and the invitation of the Region's Deputy Grand Master Mason. The minimum qualifications for recommendation to the VI° are that one be an Installed (or, Past) Master in a Craft Lodge and an Installed Master in a Mark Lodge, in addition to additional recommendation and participation. Within the USAM Region, the requirement of being an Installed Master of a Mark Lodge translates to being a Past High Priest of a Royal Arch Chapter. Exaltation to the VII° is strictly by invitation of the three Grand Master Masons and is their sole prerogative.

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The Assemblages comprising the USAM Region, in order of seniority, are:

BAQ	<i>Bryn Athyn Quarry Assemblage</i> Wy.Bro. Alan R. Beidel, V ^o , Clerk	Allentown, PA bryn.athyn.quarry.clerk@gmail.com	29-Nov-2008
SWQ	<i>Solar White Quarry Assemblage</i> W.Bro. George Katchue, VI ^o , Clerk	Monroe, NC swq.clerk@gmail.com	15-Feb-2010
TSC	<i>Texas State Capitol Assemblage</i> Rt.W.Bro. Jackie W. Matthews, VII ^o , Clerk	San Antonio, TX jackie@mattlockdrilling.com	16-Feb-2010
TCH	<i>Trinity Church Assemblage</i> W.Bro. Donald J. Berry, VI ^o , Clerk	New York, NY djberry58@att.net	17-Feb-2010
BRQ	<i>Bull Run Quarry Assemblage</i> Wy.Bro. Peter S. Jensen, V ^o , Clerk	Winchester, VA pjensen@h157.com	12-Feb-2012
SJM	<i>San Jacinto Monument Assemblage</i> Rt.W.Bro. Jackie W. Matthews, VII ^o , Clerk	Dallas, TX jackie@mattlockdrilling.com	21-Aug-2015
SGW	<i>Samuel G. Wilkeson Quarry Assemblage</i> Bro. Reed B. Fanning, IV ^o , Clerk	Salt Lake City, UT reed.the.mason@gmail.com	22-Aug-2015
ACM	<i>Ashcom Quarry Assemblage</i> Bro. Alvin E. Just, IV ^o , Clerk	Everett, PA ajust1725@aol.com	24-Aug-2015
WMT	<i>Washington Monument Assemblage</i> W.Bro. Robert G. Officer, VI ^o , Regional Clerk	"Peripatetic" USAM.Region.Clerk@gmail.com	25-Aug-2015

With the constitution of an additional four Assemblages in the United States of America Region in August of 2015, the Region has reached a level of maturity such that an active Assemblage should be within reasonable distance of all those interested in membership. Therefore, ***we will no longer be accepting applications to be Indentured at the annual Regional meeting*** held during Masonic Week in February in the greater Washington, DC area.

The Washington Monument Assemblage was formed to serve a special purpose within the USAM Region and does not take applications for membership in the usual manner. If a group of qualified Freemasons in a particular area is interested in forming a new Assemblage, the Washington Monument Assemblage may provide a pathway for membership and advancement necessary to petition for Constitution. We will be happy to discuss this opportunity with you should you so desire.

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Should you wish to pursue membership in the Operatives and join an Assemblage located near you, please inquire with the Regional Clerk:

W.Bro. Robert G. Officer, VI^o, Regional Clerk
USAM.Region.Clerk@gmail.com

The information that we require may be sent via e-mail and must include the following:

- Full name (full first name, full middle name, surname)
- Date of Birth
- Home mailing address
- E-mail address
- Phone number(s); mobile and home (if applicable), please
- Craft Lodge and Jurisdiction; please indicate if you are a Past Master
- Royal Arch Chapter and Jurisdiction; please indicate if you are a Past High Priest

Please indicate which Assemblage you would prefer to be Indentured into from the list of existing Assemblages in the USAM Region. **That Assemblage will need to approve your application.** Acceptance of your application is not automatic and should not be assumed without prior contact and notice of approval. As stated earlier, *The Operatives* may be considered as a “semi-invitational” Masonic organization; knowing that, there should be no offense taken if your application is not accepted or acted upon immediately. Each Assemblage is expected to inquire into your character and Masonic standing and to get to know you to its satisfaction before acting on your application. Also, please realize that the Assemblages perform degree work on a rotating cycle and that it may be up to two years until the next Indenturing (I^o) opportunity.

Should you be interested in forming an Assemblage of *The Operatives* in your Craft Jurisdiction, we would be happy to talk with you about this undertaking. Please inquire about Assemblage formation through the Regional Clerk as noted above and include the same information about yourself and others interested in joining you in this rewarding endeavour.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely and Fraternally,



George R. Haynes VII^o
Deputy Grand Master Mason
USAM Region