

The Essence of Freemasonry

In Craft Masonry we learn that we should endeavour to “please each other and to unite in the grand design of being happy and communicating happiness.” We also learn that Freemasonry is a system of morality, founded on a belief in God and promoting Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. The Royal Arch continues and develops this theme and enables us to reach a deeper and more rewarding understanding of all that has gone before.

The Masonic story cannot end with the Third Degree. Make up your mind to enjoy your Royal Arch Masonry as you do your Craft Masonry and you will come to understand why the Royal Arch is considered, The Essence of Freemasonry.

Which Chapter and how to Join?

There are twenty nine Chapters in Suffolk, each one conjoined with a Lodge. Some brethren like to join a Chapter where they are well known whilst others prefer to join at a different centre altogether. Whichever you choose, you will make new friends as usually more than one Lodge supports each Chapter.

Your friend here is the Provincial Year Book. Each Chapter lists its officers and gives contact details for the Scribe E. who is the Chapter equivalent of a craft secretary. He will be delighted to receive your call. Alternatively, you are welcome to contact the Provincial Grand Scribe E., whose details are also shown in the Year Book. He will be happy to discuss anything to do with the Order. Royal Arch details are found on the pages following the Craft details.

You will find the companions to be a very friendly and welcoming group of people.

PRODUCED BY THE ROYAL ARCH PROVINCE OF SUFFOLK



**PROVINCIAL GRAND CHAPTER
OF ROYAL ARCH MASONS
OF SUFFOLK**

The next regular step for the Master Mason

Royal Arch Masonry

After the Third Degree

Having been Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, you are now eligible to be Exalted to the Supreme Degree of the Holy Royal Arch, often known as Chapter. A Royal Arch Chapter is a Masonic body attached to, but organised separately from, a Craft Lodge.

The Supreme Degree of the Holy Royal Arch is correctly described as both the foundation and the keystone of the whole Masonic structure.

In Craft Masonry, a brother acknowledges a belief in The Supreme Being, yet this relationship is never explored. In the Royal Arch, the mason continues and completes his education and knowledge of Craft Masonry and is invited to consider his relationship and dependence on God.

It is, therefore, justly claimed to be the climax of Pure and Ancient Freemasonry, and no brother can consider his Masonic knowledge complete until he has joined this Supreme Order.



A Royal Arch Chapter

Chapters usually hold three meetings each year known as Convocations. The joining and annual fees are considerably less than those of a Lodge. Due to its close affinity with the Craft, the Royal Arch does not hold its own Charity Festivals and therefore restricts its charitable giving to Alms Collections.

A Chapter is similar to a Lodge in that there is a progression of officers towards the position of the Three Principals who govern the Chapter. A Past Master of a Lodge normally holds the office of a Principal.

There should be no pressure for a member to progress through these offices unless he wishes it. Most new companions are happy to attend, learn more about freemasonry and cultivate new friendships until after they have passed the Master's Chair but some are keen to take part in the ceremonies sooner, and enjoy doing so. It is up to you. Being a member is the important thing.

Structure and Administration

The Supreme Degree of the Holy Royal Arch is the only order officially recognised by Grand Lodge. This should in no way put you off from joining one of the other wonderful orders of freemasonry, but if you only join one - it should be this one.

Supreme Grand Chapter administers the Royal Arch, and its principal officials are always the same as those of the United Grand Lodge of England. Within Suffolk, we are led by a Grand Superintendent, a Deputy Grand Superintendent and a Second and Third Provincial Grand Principal. Their details can be found in the Provincial Year Book. Each year we have an Annual Convocation, much as the Craft has its Provincial Grand Lodge.

Between a third and a half of craft masons tend to join Chapter, normally the keener members. They are easy to spot in the Lodge, as companions proudly wear their Royal Arch Jewels. White for a companion, red for a principal or past principal and tri-coloured for a Provincial Grand Officer.