

The Prestonian Lecture:

*Foundations: new light on the formation and early years
of the Grand Lodge of England*

The lecture explores the evolution of Freemasonry, queries long-standing myths, and explains the step change that occurred with the creation of the first Grand Lodge of England in 1717.

Ric Berman outlines the connections between Freemasonry and the British establishment in the eighteenth century, and how and why its leaders positioned Grand Lodge as a bastion of support for the government. He also touches on how Freemasonry was used to advance Britain's diplomatic objectives and for espionage.

The Lecture marks the 300th anniversary of the formation of the first Grand Lodge and sets a context for 2017's celebration.

The Prestonian Lecturer is appointed by the United Grand Lodge of England. Ric Berman, is the author of *Foundations of Modern Freemasonry* now in its second edition; *Schism*, which examines the conflict between the Moderns and the Antients; *Loyalists & Malcontents*, a history of colonial Freemasonry in the American Deep South; and *Espionage, Diplomacy & the Lodge*. He is currently working on a history of early freemasonry in North Carolina

Dr Berman has been a freemason for forty years and holds London and Provincial Grand Rank. He is a PM of the Marquis of Dalhousie Lodge, No. 1159 (EC); Treasurer of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076 (EC), England's premier research lodge; and a PM of the Temple of Athene Lodge, No. 9541 (EC), the research lodge of the Province of Middlesex.

*The book of the talk is available at
[amazon.com/author/ric.berman](https://www.amazon.com/author/ric.berman)*