

THE TRADITIONAL ARTISANS OF FRANCE

THE COMPANIONS OF DUTY 

LES COMPAGNONS DU DEVOIR 

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Welcome to our presentation about THE COMPANIONS OF DUTY.

[INTRODUCE YOURSELVES - WHERE YOU ORIGINALLY MET EACH OTHER, YOUR TRADES,
WHERE YOU WORK AND LIVE NOW]

We have an interactive poll question for you on the right of your screen:
Have you heard of the Compagnons before? Some people may know similar organisations
in different European countries where they are called "Journeymen".

TOPICS

History of Compagnonnage

Study

Trades

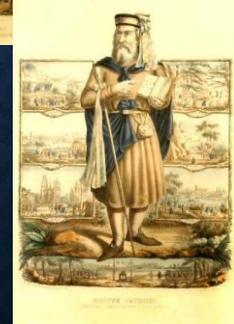
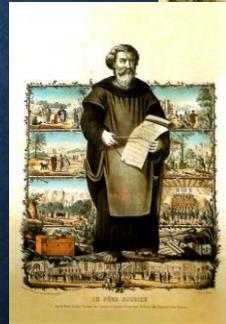
How to identify Compagnons

Our Masterpieces

This afternoon we are going to talk to you about the origins of The Companions of Duty and how it has transformed into a world-class education facility for manual trades across France and beyond.

HISTORY

- Origins have been dated back to Solomon's Temple(c. 900 BC)
- King Solomon of Jerusalem along with his stone mason called Master Jacques and an architect named Father Soubise are now key founding figures of Compagnon traditions (right)
- In the Middle Ages (c.1200) ornate cathedrals were being constructed
- Groups of tradesmen were travelling and working together around France
- They started forming alliances for mutual aid which then started the Compagnons as we know them today.



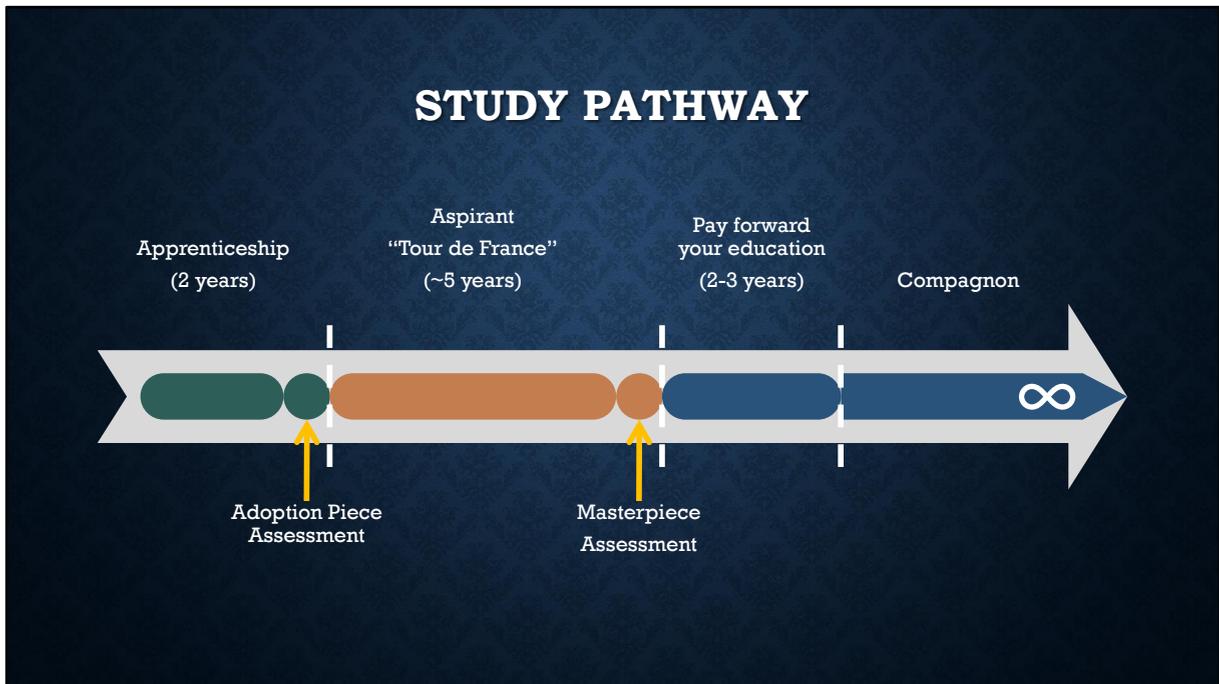
The origins of Compagnonnage are dated back to the reign of King Solomon of Jerusalem and his famous temple, around 900 BC. This is the same time when pharaohs still ruled Egypt. Solomon is a direct descendent to them.

King Solomon needed the assistance of a skilled stonemason by the name of Master Jacques, and an architect named Father Soubise, to travel to Jerusalem to construct this glorious masterpiece.

Master Jacques and Father Soubise returned to France once the construction was complete with teams of loyal workers keen to continue learning and growing their skills.

Flash forward to the Middle Ages in France, when there was a significant number of Cathedrals under construction with many skilled tradesmen travelling the country to work on them.

These tradesmen needed mutual aid on their journeys and guilds started forming to support them with: travel and accommodation. Funding pools were formed for workers needed financial assistance when injured or ill. These are the origins of what we now know as Trade Unions and Pension Funds.



Compagnonnage has unique and strict education system.

To start the journey to become a Compagnon, the first step is to complete a two-year apprenticeship.

To then start your "Tour de France", with the approval of Compagnon Elders, each student is then required to make an Adoption Piece for assessment. If passed, students may start their Tour and will then become known as an "Aspirant".

It takes up to five years to complete the Aspirant level to gain enough experience. The assessment to formally graduate as a Compagnon is a process in itself. Each Aspirant must again ask the Elders if they are technically and spiritually ready to start the process of making a "Masterpiece" for final assessment.

There is no monetary exchange for tuition as Compagnons are not-for-profit association. When Compagnons complete their Masterpieces they are required to pay their skills forward to the next generation of Aspirants by serving in a management or teaching role for 2-3 years within the association.

We'll share more information on Masterpieces towards the end of our presentation.

AUSTRALIA QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK (AQF)

AQF Level	TAFE or equivalent	Higher Education	Compagnons
10		Doctoral Degree	
9		Masters Degree	Compagnons  ← Compagnons
8	Graduate Dip.	Graduate Dip.	Aspirants
7	Graduate Cert.	Graduate Cert.	
6	Advanced Dip.	Bachelor Degree	
5	Diploma	Associate Degree	
4	Cert. IV 	Diploma	Apprenticeship  ← Aust. Builders Licence ← Aust. Trades
3	Cert. III 		
2	Cert. II		
1	Cert. I		

This type of study is not available in Australia in the trades sector. Australian tradies achieve a Certificate 3 to obtain their qualifications.

The level of training and intellect Compagnons achieve is equivalent to a Masters Degree.

Some Australians seeking further education can apply for grants like the Churchill Fellowship program, to learn these skills in Europe. If they are studying in France, there is a good chance their teachers are also Compagnons.

STUDY

- Aspirants immerse themselves in travel and study at the same time on their “Tour de France”
- Now required to travel one year overseas for study

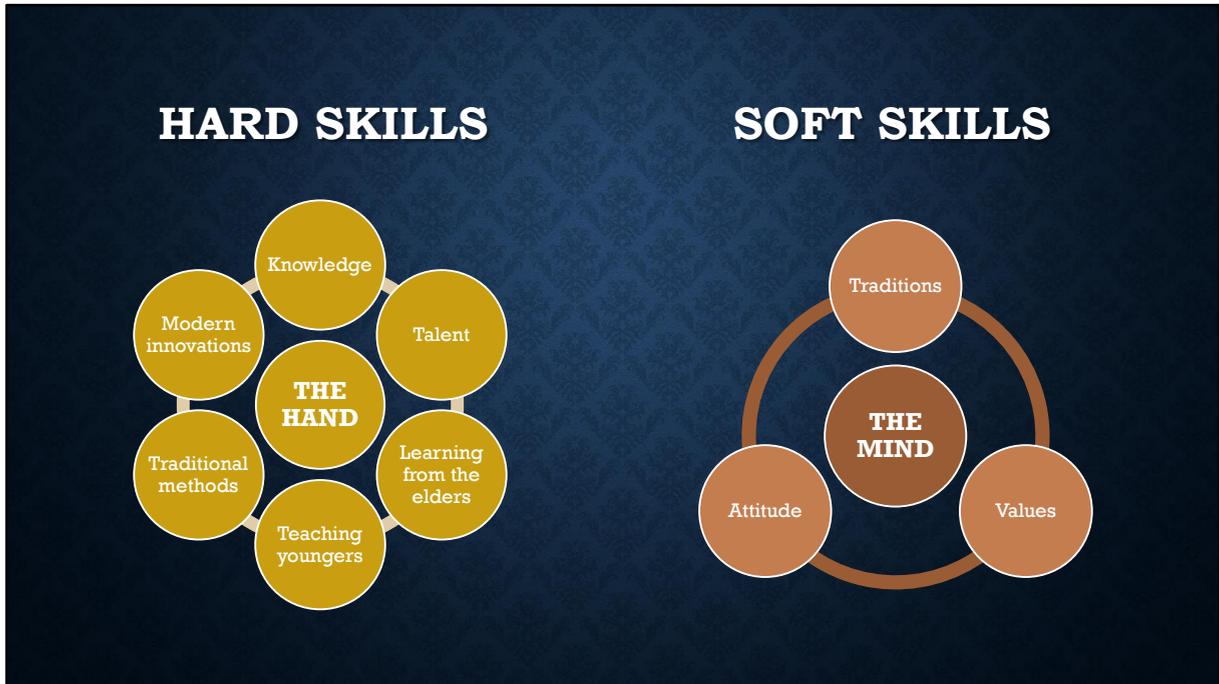


Aspirants travel at the same time as learning which emulates similar experiences to their forefathers.

They mostly stay in dedicated Compagnon Houses across France in campus style living, just like this one on the right.

In recent years travelling overseas for one year is now part of the curriculum - which may required them to learn a second language to French, which is what the curriculum is delivered in. Family members and partners are not allowed to accompany Aspirants. This can make the balance between work and personal life difficult. This immersive experience, some may compare to a form of military camp lifestyle.

These factors and their demanding schedules can make graduation rates as low as 3%!



One aspect within the unique philosophies of Compagnons is focussing studies on balancing the hard and soft skills. It has been a fundamental process they have used for centuries.

The first years of study are completed manually – only hand tools – to ensure they have the right mindset to manoeuvre their hands precisely and safely during manual labour.

In current times it is not commercially viable for Compagnons to do all their work by hand and often use power tools.

L' Association Ouvriere des Compagnons du Devoir et du Tour de France (AOCDTF)

The Workers Association of the Companions of Duty and of the Tour of France

Building

Metallurgy and Industry

Layout and Finish

Taste

Living

Soft Materials



There are three separate Journeyman guilds within France. Our guild's full name is "L' Association Ouvriere des Compagnons du Devoir et du Tour de France (AOCDTF)".

Our association offers over 30 trades which is the largest variety in Europe. These trades are categorised under six sections as seen on the screen.

BUILDING

- Locksmith/metal fabricator
- Carpenter
- Plumber
- Roofer
- Brick mason
- Stone mason



The Building category could be summarised as the earlier stages of construction.

Thomas' trade is a Locksmith but he isn't the type of tradie to call when you lock your keys in the car. Instead, he can craft the actual lock and keys to match.

Since the Industrial Revolution locks are machined, so Locksmithing has evolved into to a trade that creates access, protection and safety by making metal gates, doors, windows, stairs, handrails and balustrading... and installing locks into these pieces where required.

This picture is Aspirant Stonemasons carving scroll work for a grand column.

LAYOUT AND FINISH

- Joiner
- Cabinet Maker “Ébéniste”
- Flooring
- Painter
- Plasterer
- Tiler



The Layout and Finish category is the secondary stages of construction.

Anthony's trade is Joiner and makes a range of architectural fixtures, much like Thomas but in wood: doors, windows, stairs, handrails and balustrading.

Laurent is a Cabinet Maker. In Australia, it is more akin to what we would know as a furniture maker, although he makes kitchen cabinets at work too.

The image on the bottom is a replica of a Louis XIV (14th) style office cabinet, this was made by another Compagnon furniture maker.

METALLURGY AND INDUSTRY

- Blacksmith
- Bodybuilder (coach maker)
- Boilermaker
- Electrician
- Foundry / Caster
- Machinist
- Mechanic



With steam power being invented 300 years ago, and the Industrial Revolution following 50 years later, Metallurgy and Industry is the fastest evolving category. It has seen the emergence of trades to support popular inventions such as electricity and vehicles.

This image shows students working on an aero-dynamic Peugeot concept scooter

TASTE

- Baker
- Butcher
- Cheesemaker
- Cooper (barrel maker)
- Pastry chef
- Winemaker



We hope you've eaten your lunch as this will make you hungry!

French cuisine and wines are world-renowned and some Compagnons work in Michelin-star restaurants as chefs and sommeliers.

Bertrand's brings Savoir Faire to Australia with his pastry cheffing skills.

There have been many Compagnon winemakers traversing in Australia's wine growing regions. Winemaking is one of the new trades offered at the Compagnons.

SOFT MATERIALS

- Leatherworker
- Saddle-upholsterer
- Shoemaker
- Upholsterer



Fabrics and leathercrafts form this category and they collaborate harmoniously with many other trades.

Many Compagnons work in technical roles with some of the world's leading interior or fashion houses, like Dior and Chanel.

LIVING

- Farrier blacksmith
- Landscape gardener



Living is a niche category dedicated to flora and fauna.

LOST TRADES

- Rope Makers
- Weavers
- Milliners
- Dyers
- Tailors
- Leather Tanners
- Wheel Wrights



Evolution in trends and technologies have seen some courses discontinued. It has also brought about opportunities to replace them with new trades.

For example, wheelwrights have been around for over 3000 years making timber wheels for carts. As motor vehicles became popularised, this one trade has been replaced with multiple trades in the automotive industry.

GLOBAL RECOGNITION



- In 2010, Les Compagnons du Devoir were recognised by UNESCO under their “Intangible Cultural Heritage” safe-guarding program for their “network for the transmission of knowledge and identities by the profession”.
- Les Compagnon du Devoir is one of two education facilities in the world to achieve this.
- Unfortunately **no** aspects of Australian culture have been recognised and safeguarded under this program yet.

HOW TO IDENTIFY COMPAGNONS



We are humble people. We have been taught that the quality of our work speaks for itself and that should always go first.

Being a Compagnon doesn't give you exclusive rights to work in the world's most illustrious jobs, however managers will be confident that we are competent in carrying out technical tasks.

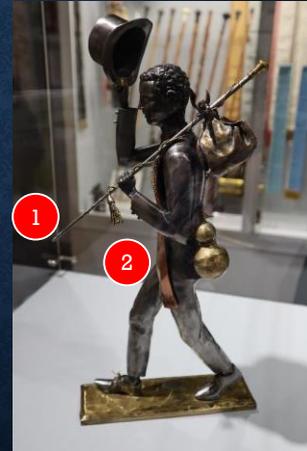
In France, it is common knowledge within trades to not write Compagnon qualifications on your resume or tell someone in a professional environment you are a Compagnon.

Again, the quality of your work does the talking.

OTHER IDENTITY CLUES

At official ceremonies and features in their work

1. a walking staff made from bulrush cane
2. a velvet sash with gold embroidery
3. the square and compass



Sometimes you can identify Compagnons at official ceremonies and occasionally in their works by three traditional symbols:

- A staff made from bulrush cane. This is given to new Aspirants to aid them on their “Tour de France”. Another staff is given at the graduation ceremony.
- A velvet sash with gold embroidery. This is given to Aspirants during their adoption ceremony and further embellishments are added as they progress on their Tour. There is a unique “colour” to identify each trade.
- The square and compass hand tools. They are traditionally used for measurement and geometry to ensure a Compagnon’s work is always true.

The images are of a metal statue of a travelling Compagnon; and the left image is an inlay of the Square and Compass which features on the head of a staff. The lettering on this inlay is unique to each trade.

THE SQUARE AND COMPASS

Compagnons

Compagnons have been established in France since 13th century

Compagnon guilds practice mastering the hand and the mind with professional products and services

Not necessarily relate to masonry trades

Freemasons

Freemasons established in England during the 17th century & later extended into other parts of the world

Freemasonry is a symbolic and intellectual group



- It is important to note that the square and compass has also been identified as a symbol for the Freemason movement, which is an entirely separate group.
- Compagnons have been established in France since 13th century, whereas Freemasons were established in England during the 17th century and later extended into other parts of Europe and the world.
- Compagnon guilds practice in professional products and services, which don't necessarily relate to masonry trades.
- This image is a headstone inside the former roof of Notre Dame de Paris marking the architect and carpenter who worked on the world-famous cathedral. A version of the Carpenters' Square and Compass is inscribed at the bottom.
- Laurent took this photo many years ago when working on a project for the cathedral. It is likely this artefact has since been destroyed in last year's fire.

MASTERPIECES

To graduate from Aspirant to Compagnon individuals must design and fabricate a “Masterpiece” from their respective trade.

COMPAGNONNAGE MUSEUM, TOURS



This is made of pure sugar and food dye!

A row of carpentry maquettes of cathedral roofs



In the city of Tours, western France, there is a museum dedicated to preserving the historical significance of Compagnonnage.

Most of the artefacts in the museum are Masterpieces or exceptional pieces of work Aspirants made for a hobby. They take thousands of hours to complete. Some are replicas of traditional antiquities, others are modern concepts which push the limits of imagination and physics.

It is likely they have been entrusted to the museum because the vast amount of man hours involved makes them priceless.

OUR MASTERPIECES

There is a significant amount of artefacts already in the museum with some Masterpieces being over 100 years old!

Our Masterpieces are not considered appropriate to be in the museum. Bertrand's Masterpiece work was eaten. For the rest of us, the Elders decided our Masterpieces would serve better as practical and working pieces within Compagnon houses across France.

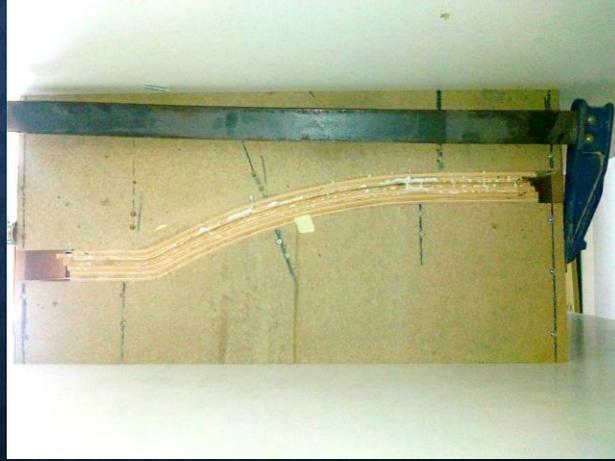
We are now going to talk you through what we made...

LAURENT



[LLP to talk about his masterpiece]

LAMINATING AND PRESSING



[LLP to talk about his masterpiece]

PRESSING JIGS



[LLP to talk about his masterpiece]

FAULT LINE DESIGN



[LLP to talk about his masterpiece]

RECEPTION COUNTER BEFORE ASSEMBLY



[LLP to talk about his masterpiece]

THOMAS



Before



[TDT to talk about his masterpiece]

Thomas' Masterpiece which is installed at the Compagnons' quarters in Reims.

THOMAS



After



[TDT to talk about his masterpiece]

Thomas' Masterpiece which is installed at the Compagnons' quarters in Reims.

BERTRAND



[BR to talk about his masterpiece]

BERTRAND



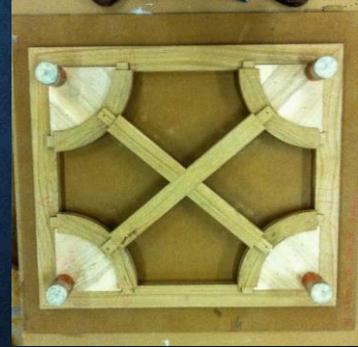
[BR to talk about his masterpiece]

ANTHONY



[AC to talk about his masterpiece]

ANTHONY



[AC to talk about his masterpiece]

QUESTIONS?

Thank for your tuning in. That's the end of our presentation.

Does anyone have any questions???

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