

Grande Loge Provinciale de Alpes-Méditerranée

R.:L.: Abbey n°33

Consacrée le 21/03/1931 à l'orient de Nice



Rite : Emulation

Date de tenue : 4ème vendredi du mois

Adresse du Temple : ZA Argile, 06370 Mouans Sartoux

VÉNÉRABLE MAÎTRE : T.V.F. Monternier Jean

~~27/04/2018 19:00 Tenue régulière~~

~~25/05/2018 19:00 Tenue régulière~~

~~22/06/2018 19:00 Tenue régulière~~

Freemasons built on tradition at Abbey Lodge

Riviera Reporter



The changes brought about by the progressive construction of a railway network across Europe in the 19th century have been the subject of many books, and at least one recent television programme. In 1864, four years after Nice became part of France after the Second World War of Italian Independence, the first railway was completed along the coast of the French Riviera making Nice, Menton and Monaco accessible to visitors from all over Europe. Some 100,000 visitors arrived in 1865 and, by 1874, residents from abroad living in Nice numbered 25,000 of whom the majority were British. Famous names amongst them included Queen Victoria who, along with eminent members of high society and the nobility, was anxious to escape the winters of Northern Europe.

Expatriates across the world bring language, traditions, ways of life, and customs with them, and perhaps we should not be surprised that this included Freemasonry. Abbey Lodge No 33 based

in the Alpes-Méditerranée, which met in Cannes, was consecrated in 1931. Founding members were principally English freemasons, and from the outset the Lodge adopted Emulation Ritual and conducted its meetings entirely in English.

The Lodge established a proud reputation and over time it was a significant contributor to the Provincial College of Officers as well as Officers in the Grande Loge Nationale Française (GLNF). Two Provincial Grand Masters were members of Abbey Lodge and throughout its long history the Lodge enjoyed international support. Lodge papers record that in 1939 brethren from three ships of the US Navy regularly attended meetings before the German occupation destroyed any hope that Masonic meetings could continue. The Lodge was in darkness between 1940 and 1948.

As the Lodge gradually recovered in the early post-war years, numbers increased and by 1973 it was ready to welcome members of The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, who attended the Lodge's Installation Meeting. More recently in 2011, 29 Freemasons from Norway were present demonstrating the reality of universal Freemasonry.

English working, combined with a warm and friendly atmosphere, prompted many Freemasons from the English Constitution to become members of the Lodge during this period, and they in turn encouraged visitors whose attendance contributed so much to the life of the Lodge.

Difficulties, which culminated in the United Grand Lodge of England withdrawing recognition from GLNF, sadly affected the Lodge dramatically as English Freemasons had to withdraw.

These problems fortunately have now been overcome, and Abbey Lodge is once again trying to re-establish its broad appeal across the nations in the hope that previous links can return. Its members are looking forward to returning Abbey Lodge to its former strength, and would welcome visiting brethren from recognised Lodges who may be in the South of France or others who live in the region.

They will find much that is familiar as Abbey Lodge continues to carry out ritual in English. Learning ritual, in what for many members of the Lodge is a second language, is proud testimony to the commitment of non-English speaking members of the Lodge to their Freemasonry. An interesting observation by the current Master of why he took up this challenge was that "the meaning, poetry, and rhythm underlying so much of Emulation Working is difficult to translate from English into French".

"We would, of course, welcome Brethren, particularly those who would like to become full members to help us revitalise Abbey Lodge and strengthen its membership," commented Richard Dawe, PM of the Lodge, "so that once again it can become a major influence in the Province. Our aim is to promote fellowship and brotherhood."

For more information, email Richard Dawe at Richard.Dawe@wanadoo.fr or John Knight at john.fockbury@orange.fr. Alternatively, for those in the UK, please contact john_pagella@hotmail.com

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