

# 1,500<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

The Phoenix Lodge No.43 celebrated its 1,500<sup>th</sup> meeting in April. Fittingly this was the passing to the Fellow Craft Degree of the Vicar of St Peters, Anglican Parish of Akaroa/Banks Peninsula. Fittingly, as it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vicar of the Church, Rev William H Cooper, who in 1876 formed the predecessor to the current Lodge, became its first Master, and who facilitated the construction of the rooms the Lodge uses today.

In true Phoenix tradition, the 1,500<sup>th</sup> meeting followed the rule of Fun, Fellowship and Freemasonry. Grand Lodge was received and an ANZAC tribute given. As always, music was a highlight of the ceremony and after the passing, and a brief history presentation, all retired to a relaxed refectory sprinkled with formality included the cutting of a celebratory Cake. Some got home rather late!

Freemasonry in Akaroa started much earlier when Captain L'Anglois gathered other whalers then (1837) around Banks Peninsula to a meeting on his vessel *Cachalot* at anchor in Port Levy. L'Anglois purchased land in Akaroa and on his return to France proceeded to organise for a colony to be formed. He returned with the colonists as Captain of the *Compte d'Paris* arriving back in Akaroa 1840.

Again, in 1842 he called a meeting on his ship and the following year, when the French Corvette, *Le Rhin* arrived in Akaroa (1843), a Lodge was formed under the Grand Orient of France. It is reported that in that same year a lodge room was built "by one of the immigrants named Etevenaux". A full list of the members of that first lodge, *Loge Francaise Primitive Antipodenne No. 86*, is displayed in the rooms, at 160 Rue Jolie.



Figure 2. Phoenix

The 1876 Lodge closed in April 1881, but in November that same year was resurrected as Phoenix Lodge No.1959 E.C. taking over the rooms so recently completed. Although added to and modified over the years, the core structure of that 1876 construction remains largely unaltered. In the refectory, added in 1906 and extended in 1963, one can enjoy the warmth from the fire place added in that 1906 modification. The lean-to that forms the current entry hall is part of the 1963 modification while the kitchen area has undergone many modifications, the latest being in 2005.



Figure 3. Lodge Rooms at 160 Rue Jolie, Akaroa. 1876 hall to the left and 1963 extension to the right.

The rooms came through the earthquakes almost unscathed. They continue to be improved with modernisation of services including heating, rewiring, insulation and roof maintenance. In the Lodge Room, attention has been paid to preserving many original aspects and furnishings. Phoenix, as the name might imply, uses the past as a launching pad to the future and will continue to modernise while preserving its history and foundation.



Figure 4. Much of the furniture is original.



Figure 1. Bro Rev Michael Baker watches as W Bro Graeme Curry (DC) and W Bro Tony Templeton (Master) cut the cake.