

Journey to Toulouse

By Grand Master Julie Scott

On August 12, 2009 Rosicrucians around the world celebrated the 100th anniversary of H. Spencer Lewis's initiation into the Rosicrucian tradition. All Rosicrucian members were invited to take some time on that day to acknowledge and thank H. Spencer Lewis for his enormous contributions to humanity and to participate in a special meditation leading us into AMORC's next phase of service to humanity. Members participated in this meditation in their home sanctums, in affiliated bodies, and in the Grand Temple at Rosicrucian Park.

In Toulouse, France, on August 12, all of the Grand Masters came together for a special commemoration led by the Emperor. Participating with us were members of the English Grand Lodge for the Americas, the Portuguese Grand Lodge, and the French Grand Lodge.

That morning the Directors of the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC visited the chateau where H. Spencer Lewis was initiated into the Rosicrucian tradition. Before we visited this tiny village, just outside of Toulouse, the Emperor stated that we would go to the chateau but there was no guarantee that we could enter. The owner of the estate during H. Spencer Lewis's time, Raynaud E. Bellcastle-Ligne, the Emperor of the Rosicrucians of Languedoc, and his family did not return to the chateau following the First World War, so it was abandoned and then later sold. The current owners rent the chateau to others, who understandably want their privacy. We fully respected this, however when we arrived, the renter invited us to come inside, on this very special occasion, and we were allowed to visit as we wished.

What an experience! Since there are sixteen Supreme Grand Lodge Board officers, we entered in two groups. Like H. Spencer Lewis we ascended the staircase. He had written that his initiator, Emperor Bellcastle-Ligne, seemed to appear out of nowhere, and indeed, at the top of the steps, there was a door that could barely be discerned from the surrounding wall. It led to a corridor behind. (For a complete description of H. Spencer Lewis's initiatic journey, please see the "A Pilgrim's Journey to the East." Also available is Frater Paul DuPont's fascinating description of his visit to this chateau in the 1980s.)

Then we entered the first chamber that was used for his initiation. Today it has been remodeled and looks nothing like it did in the past, however one can still imagine H. Spencer Lewis passing through this chamber during the first step of his initiation. Then we entered the second chamber, and finally the third.

Just beyond this was the small room where H. Spencer Lewis said he lay down to rest and fell asleep, experiencing on the mystical plane the final ceremony that was to come, with his spiritual mentor presiding. This was the same being that had appeared to H. Spencer

Lewis during his initial mystical experience in New York, when he had first been instructed to seek out the Rosicrucians in France. During the ceremony that followed, the Grand Master of France presided, with other Rosicrucians in attendance. They gave H. Spencer Lewis the charter to establish the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC in America, which he accepted and beautifully manifested.

It was such a privilege to be allowed to enter the place where all this took place. My heart overflowed with deep gratitude, reverence, and awe.

Following this moving experience, we journeyed back to Toulouse. There I met the group from the English Grand Lodge and we participated in the mystical experiment for August 12, adding our energy to the visualization for the future of AMORC.

Next we all walked to the Hotel d'Assezat for the commemoration led by the Imperator. This beautiful building, constructed in 1555, has been the meeting place of the mystical *Academy of the Jeux Floraux* since 1894.

We approached the Hotel d'Assezat in silence. Upon the door hangs a large doorknocker in the shape of a horse (cheval). Chevalier in French means "knight". For centuries in Toulouse, this type of doorknocker was placed on the doors of buildings where mystics met in secret. We knocked on the door and entered. To the sound of chanting and in semi-darkness, we stepped inside the building. The Imperator stood before us. There he presided at a deeply inspiring tribute to H. Spencer Lewis. At the end, with lit candles in our hands, we departed the building, forever carrying in our hearts the inspiration of H. Spencer Lewis and his initiation in Toulouse.

So Mote It Be!