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KENDALL MASONIC LODGE 1871-1996

This past weekend Social Lodge No. 713 of Free and Accepted Masons celebrated its 125th anniversary with a banquet at the Evergreen Restaurant in Hamlin. Since 1871 Social Lodge has been an integral part of the lives of many people in Kendall.

The Lodge was instituted on January 28, 1871 and the first meeting was held on February 2, 1871. The charter members consisted of 38 members of Murray Lodge No. 380 F & AM of Holley who transferred their membership to Kendall. William S. Jewett was made the first Master of the Lodge.

The first meeting place was a one-story cobblestone building, now popularly known as the "Stone Jug", located on the east side of Main Street in Kendall.

This building was reputed to be the only Masonic Lodge building where meetings were held on the ground floor. The present quarters of Social Lodge are also located in a single story structure, and this precedent has since been copied by other lodges in the state who have found ground floor meeting places more convenient for their members. This stone building was deeded to the trustees of Social Lodge on December 14, 1874, by the Sons of Temperance Lodge, and meetings were held in this building until 1904. The cost of this building does not appear in the records, but a mortgage of an unspecified amount was held by Mr. Marvin Harris.

In 1874, the lodge became landlords for the first time, renting their lodge rooms to Kendall Lodge No. 538, I.O. of Good Templars for \$10.00 per quarter. This rental proved to be too steep for the Good Templars, and after one year a new rental fee was negotiated between the two Board of Trustees reducing the quarterly rental to \$5.00. This may appear a very small amount in today's economy, but in 1875 it was a considerable sum. It was this same year that a motion was adopted by the lodge to place a lock on the door of the building.

Tax figures, for example, on the property owned by Social Lodge for the year 1878 shows a school tax bill of 19 cents and county and town taxes of \$2.78. In 1904, the lodge contracted with Cole and Putnam for the

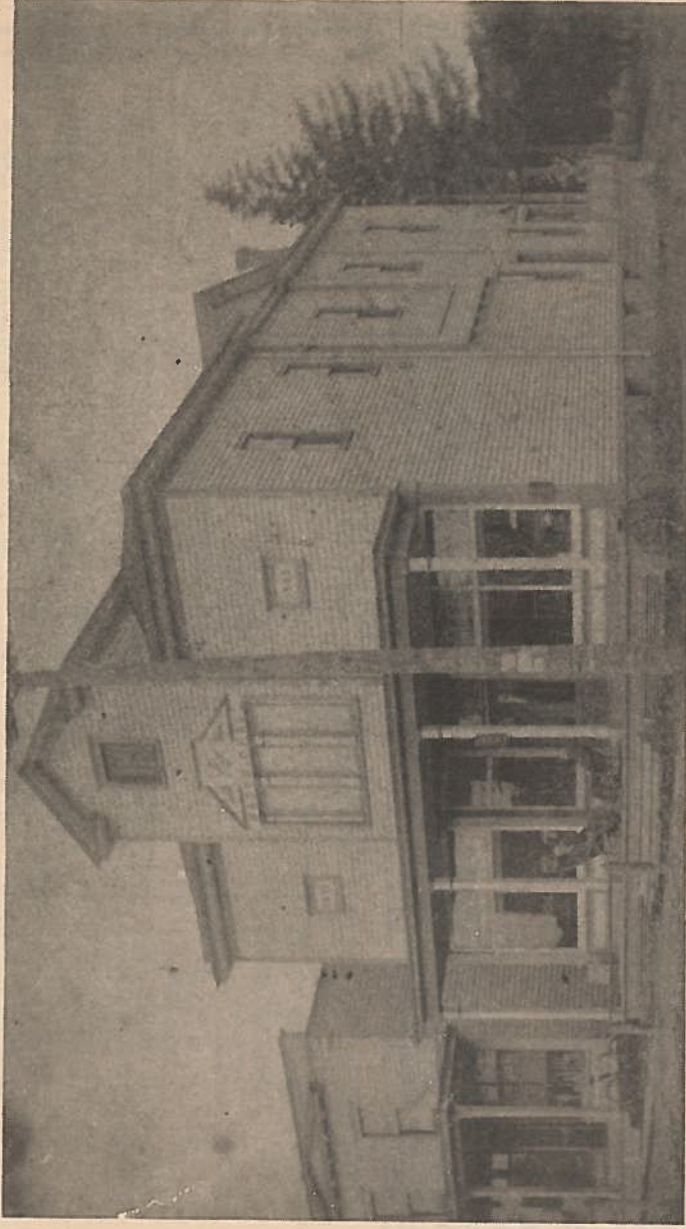
construction of a new Masonic building on the southwest corner of Kendall's Main Street. The new building consisted of a two-story structure with lodge room and ante rooms on the second floor, and a banquet hall and small workshop and store rented to Mrs. Stevens on the first floor. Our photo here, shows the Masonic Hall and Stevens Furniture and Undertaking business on the ground floor around 1910.

Lighting for the building was furnished by carbide lamps with the gas-making apparatus in the basement of the building. Orleans chapter #318 O.E.S. was chartered in 1904, and the lodge rented the lodge rooms and banquet hall to them at a rental of \$50.00 a year.

Transportation in this era was still primarily by horse and buggy. Many brothers from the Morton area attended meetings by riding the train the two miles to Kendall and many times returned home after a late meeting on foot.

Brotherhood was a way of life for early Masons. If a brother was ill, the lodge responded with assistance with farm chores, planting, harvesting, etc.

Masonry was growing rapidly at the turn of the century, and Social Lodge was sharing in this growth as well. The late William V. Newcomb served as Master in 1911-1912 and raised twenty-four new members in Social Lodge. However, during the depression years, the membership in the lodge decreased from a high point of 144 in 1920 to just



about 100 members. Many brothers could no longer continue to pay lodge dues; few prospective candidates could afford the luxury of joining the fraternity.

On April 16, 1914 a disastrous fire broke out in Kendall beginning in the ICOF building and quickly spreading to Sord's store and then to the Masonic building shown here.

The Masons were able however, to save all of their lodge records and furnishings. The spirits of the members were not dampened by this loss and they proceeded to rebuild at once. N. L. Cole received the contract to build a new building on the old foundation at a cost of \$3,750.00. Later revisions in the plans increased this cost to \$4,500.00. Work

began almost immediately. Meetings of the lodge were again held in the old stone building, owned by the I.O.G.T.

In the 1920's the lodge began the practice of serving a goose supper on the occasion of the official visit of the District Deputy Grand Master. In later years this was reorganized as a money making community event with the first annual goose dinner being served on Dec. 5, 1959. Dinners are now sold by advance reservation limited to 1,000.

On Dec. 18, 1958 a fire destroyed the old Masonic building which had been erected in 1914. The members were determined, however, and lost little time in making plans for the rebuilding of a Masonic temple in

Kendall. One member, Bro. Jack Turner, very generously donated land on the east side of the Kendall Road just north of route 18, for the present one-story structure. The first meeting was held in the partially completed building in March 1958. The cornerstone was laid on July 12, 1958, in a public ceremony preceded by a Masonic procession through the streets of Kendall.

In 1993 the lodge consolidated with Murray Lodge No. 380 of Holley thus re-uniting the two with no change of name or number for Kendall Social Lodge. No one knows why the name Social was chosen but it is aptly appropriate for the socialability that it has undertaken for the last 125 years.