

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

The Lincoln Library of Essential Information has the following on the Knights:

"A Social Brotherhood founded at Washington, D.C., February 19, 1864, by Justus Henry Rathbone and four others, to promote the principles of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence. The fundamental tenets of the Order are 'toleration in religion, obedience to law, and loyalty to government'. Accepted candidates are advanced through the three ranks or degrees of Page, Esquire and Knight. Local bodies are known as Lodges; the governing body is the Supreme Lodge".

Gutteridge's History of Maynard informs us that the local Progressive Lodge of the Knights of Pythias was instituted July 25, 1898. Not having access to newspapers of that year we will have to omit mention of the founding officers. However on January 24, 1902 we learn that the following are officers for the coming year: B.O. Philbrick, William Grannigan, John Wollerschied, Freeman Robbins, George Bradley, Arthur Coughlin, Herbert Moore, George Grannigan, Neil Jacobsen, A.C. Fairbanks and Harry Parmenter.

Meetings and entertainments must have been held in Masonic Hall on Main Street for we come across this fact all through the life of the organization. The Lodge many times had out-of-town Lodges as visitors. On October 28, 1910, for example, a supper and entertainment was held at Masonic Lodge and lodges from Worcester, Ayer, Ayer Junction and Hudson disembarked from the electric cars at the car barn on the corner of Great Road and Main Street and with the Maynard Brass Band leading, marched to Masonic Hall. Edward Cheney was the Toastmaster for the occasion. March 17, 1911 news reports that new headquarters have been engaged at Music Hall, but that was short-lived as Music Hall burned down in 1912.

February 20, 1914 a Golden Anniversary literary and musical program celebrating the beginning of the National Order was held at Cooperative Hall. The committee on arrangements was composed of A.C. Fairbanks, George Bradley, Tom French, Charles Shearer, E.G. Cheney and W.V. Cameron.

At a July 15, 1921 meeting a Temple of Pythian Sisters was instituted. The officers were: Mrs. Jessie Bell, Theresa Fox, Gertrude Tucker, Isabelle Kennedy, Bertha Mason, Grace Spencer, Laura Fletcher, Mary Martin, Ellen Shearer, Marion Butterworth, Olive Richardson and Elizabeth Jamieson.

February 20, 1931 we take note of a Military Whist being held at Masonic Hall.

February 3, 1939 officers were installed as follows: Thomas Fox, Harry Bumpus, John Mitzcavitch, Charles Shearer, Walter Croft, Ernest Larson and Ben Gruber.

April 5, 1940 a Regional or State Convention was held in Masonic Hall with the attendance running into the hundreds.

The organization petered out during the 1940's due possibly to the war.

All dates are from the Maynard News of those dates indicated.

Read at the March, 1966 meeting of
The Maynard Historical Society

BIRGER R. KOSKI