

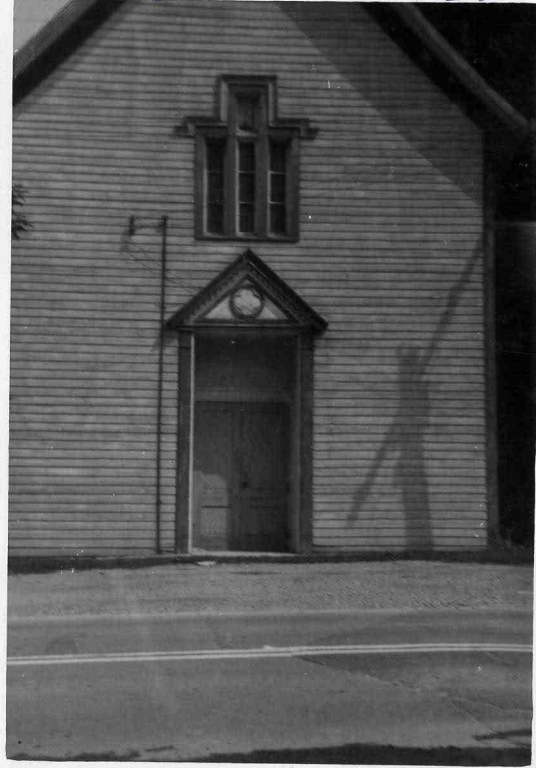
# LODGE :

I.O.O.F HALL



AUG . 60

MASONIC HALL



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# HISTORIES:



I.O.O.F. WALK



## THE BELMONT MASONIC LODGE

The Belmont Masonic Lodge, A.F. and A.M., 190 is older than the Dominion of Canada, having been founded in April 1867. Many early pioneers attracted to the Belmont area were Masons. Soon a gathering was held to discuss the forming of a Masonic Lodge in Belmont. On April 17 the brethren met upstairs over George Watcher's General Store (corner of Copeland and Main Streets) under dispensation from Grand Lodge. Emmanuel MacKay a former native of Fingal was the First Worshipful Master. Dues were 25¢ per month to be paid monthly. Regular meetings were to be held every Friday on or before Full Moon - a practice carried on until 1959. 17 candidates were initiated the first year.

Meetings continued at Watcher's Store but in January 1872 plans were made for a new Lodge building. A site was purchased from Mr. Watcher for \$50. Briefly, meetings were held over Billy Soole's store (south of Barker's Drug Store). The new Masonic Temple was dedicated January 2, 1874. A fire swept the area in 1891 but the Masonic Hall was saved. Finally a new site was purchased and the Temple was moved across the street to its present location July 7, 1899. With the Lodge rooms upstairs, the lower hall has seen varied community gatherings. Belmont Lodge has had three Brethren who have achieved Grand Lodge honours as District Deputy Grand Masters. (D.D.G.M.)-John Boyd 1888-89, William C. Moore 1921-22, and Donald A. Ferguson 1939-40.

On May 8, 1967 the Belmont Lodge observed its 100th Anniversary with a banquet and program and as special guest Most Worshipful the Grand Master James N. Allan, paying his fraternal visit. Presiding was the Lodge's Worshipful Master, Russel Farquhar.

In 1971 there is a large active membership and the Worshipful Master is Thomas Frankland.

## REBEKAH LODGES

The I.O.O.F. Victory Lodge was instituted March 16, 1920 with 14 Charter members and William Hughes as first Noble Grand.

Monta Rebekah Lodge, Belmont was instituted the afternoon of May 29, 1922. Degrees were conferred on the candidates that evening. Wives of the officers of the I.O.O.F. Lodge were installed as officers of the new lodge. There were 15 Charter members. Mrs. James Jenkins was first Noble Grand.

From 1922-1931 meetings of these two lodges were held upstairs in the W. A. Barons Flour and Feed Store (on the site of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Meikle's house, west side of Main Street south). This building was sold to Alfred Weldhen and moved down between the C.P.R. Station and Borden's. The lodges moved across to the W.A. Baron's house and after meeting upstairs for a time, purchased this historic South End Mansion in 1931. The lower floor was converted to apartments and the upper to Lodge Rooms. Here the two lodges continue to meet.

This house was built by Adam Allison, who was agent for the Credit Valley Railroad (1883). He built and owned the Mill, was a grain broker and ran a bank in a small building attached to the south west corner of the house. Later the properties were sold to John McNicholl who in 1909 sold to W. A. Barons. The building to-day is known locally as the "Oddfellows" Hall.

Lodge honours have come to members. In the Grand Lodge of Ontario I.O.O.F., Neil McMillan was Grand Musician 1968-69 and Ed Coventry was Grand Conductor 1956-57. In 1969-70 Catharine McMillan was Color Bearer of the Rebekah Assembly of Ontario and Ruth McKeen, former member, served as Inside Guardian. In 1971-72 Hiram Jenken is the D.D.G.M. of Erie District 16, I.O.O.F.

Present Noble Grand of Victory Lodge is Elmer Barons and of Monta Rebekah Lodge Mrs. Stuart Bartlett.



## VICTORY LODGE I.O.O.F.

### MONTA REBEKAH LODGE

Victory Lodge I.O.O.F. was instituted March 16, 1920 and Monta Rebekah Lodge was instituted May 29, 1922. These lodges met for nine years on the second floor of a feed warehouse.

In 1931, Victory Lodge purchased the present property, remodelled it for lodge rooms on the second floor and apartments on the first floor. On March 16, 1945, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Victory Lodge, the mortgage was burned and both lodges are still functioning very successfully.

The Lodge was instituted on March 16th, 1920 by the Grand master, the Late G. M. Hermiston of Toronto, assisted by past Grand Master S. C. Parkes acting as Grand Secretary. Mr. Parkes is still living at 32 Summerhill Avenue, Toronto. He is the oldest Past Grand Master of Ontario living having celebrated his 90th birthday and their 60th wedding anniversary last November. He is also over 65 years as a member of the I.O.O.F.

There were 14 charter members and 5 still are living and members of the lodge. W. A. Hughes; J. C. Jenkins; W. C. Barons; E. A. Coventry; E. J. Garton; B. Hawley; H. Legg, and C. Farquhar.

The first meeting place was in the building now owned by the Elgin-Middlesex Farmers opposite the CPR station. It was situated at the time of the lodge meetings where J. D. Meikle's house is. The building being sold, the lodge were forced to move across the road to the late W. A. Baron's large house after meeting in the upstairs for a few months, the Lodge purchased the property and remodeled it for suitable accommodations to hold their meetings in the upper rooms and made apartments in the lower part. This was done in 1932. The lodge has had one grand lodge officer.

#### Eight Charter Members Still Active

Monta Rebekah Lodge, Belmont, was instituted May 29, 1922, by the late Mrs. Carrie Watson, of St. Thomas, who was then president of the Rebekah Assembly of Ontario and the late Mrs. Effie Claydon, also of St. Thomas, who was district deputy president of East St. Thomas district at the time.

The institution took place in the afternoon and the Rebekah degree was conferred on a class of candidates in the evening. Women were installed in offices corresponding to those held by their husbands in the I.O.O.F. Victory Lodge.

From 1922 to 1931, meetings were held in a room above a flour and feed store. However, in 1931, the building was sold and the present lodge rooms were purchased from the late W. A. Barons. The upper floor was converted into lodge rooms and the ground floor to two apartments.

During forty-two years of existence, Monta Lodge has had seven district deputy presidents: Mrs. W. C. Barons, Mrs. John Ferguson, the lates Mrs. W. H. Legg, Mrs. Willson Black, Mrs. W. D. Farquhar, Mrs. Norman Taylor and Mrs. Charles Farquhar.

There were 15 charter members at Monta Lodge in 1922. Eight are still in the active membership: Mrs. J. C. Jenkins, Mrs. Fred R. Taylor, Mrs. E. A. Coventry, Mrs. Roy C. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Barons, Mrs. Charles Mannell transferred to Otterville and Mrs. William Black of London, Ontario

Present officers are noble grand Mrs. Harold Jenkins, vice-grand, Mrs. Earl Grawburg; recording secretary, Mrs. Neil McMillan; financial secretary, Mrs. Lorne Taylor and treasurer, Mrs. Norman Taylor. 1963



1970 Victory Lodge No. 465 of Belmont Ontario celebrated their 50th Anniversary on Tuesday Eve April 21st when over 80 members were in attendance. The Lodge was instituted on March 16th 1920 with 14 Charter Members of whom 4 are still in membership; W. A. Hughes the first N. G. and a 63 year member; W. C. Barons, E. A. Coventry and Thos. Jenkins all over 50 years. Bros. E. M. Barons and Norman Taylor were presented with 50 year jewels by P. G. M. C. A. Hutchison and B. E. Dundas. 25 year jewels were also presented to Bros. Wesley Phillips, Henry Legg and Charles Farquhar by D. D. G. M. Bro. Murray Rourke of Elgin Dist. No. 16. Bro. Charles Mannell of Tecumseh Lodge, Otterville was present. Bro. Mannell lived in Belmont at the time of the institution of the Lodge being a member of Fergus Lodge at the time, however he took a very active part also in the Lodge but did not transfer as he expected to be moved at any time.

After the meeting the Lunch Committee served a delicious lunch of Fish burgers, Coke and Ice Cream. The Lodge have had 9 District Deputies and One Grand Lodge Officer.

Thirty-seven Candidates were initiated on the night of Institution by Samaritan Lodge of Ingersol. The late Bro. G. M. Herminston was Grand Master and late Past Grand Master S. C. Parkes was acting Grand Secretary.