

# Cameron Lodge Established at Wallacetown 100 Years Ago

On Friday, October 23rd, the centennial of Cameron Lodge, No. 232, A.F. A. M., will be observed at a banquet to be held in the Public School Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. Wives of Masons will serve the dinner and the program following will not only be in observance of the local lodge's 100th anniversary, but will also be a reception to the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario, Bruce B. Foster of Ridgetown. Donald W. Foster, D.D.G.M. of St. Thomas District will preside.

In connection with the centennial the following history of Cameron Lodge has been prepared:

Cameron Lodge, No. 232, A.F. & A.M., came into being in 1870 as a result of the efforts of a dozen members of the Craft residing in Wallacetown. Being members of the adjoining lodge, Prince of Wales, No. 171, now located at Iona Station, they petitioned the then grand master of Canada in the Province of Ontario, Alexander B. Stevenson of Montreal and Thomas B. Harris, grand secretary, who granted a dispensation to the following brethren: John Edgecombe, Dr. G. W. Ling, D. G. McKellar, W. H. Loud, J. H. Stewart, Dr. D. G. Ruthven, C. L. Humphries, Joseph Scott, John H. Cameron, T. Cusack, W. Simpkins and several others.

The lodge was constituted a lodge of Free and Accepted Masons and was named after one of

the founders, John H. Cameron.

Meetings were held on the Wednesday on or before full moon and the first principal officers were John Edgecombe, W.M.; Dr. G. W. Ling, S.W. and D. G. McKellar, J.W.

### First Meeting Place

The brethren rented a hall from J. Scott at Wallacetown, the lower part being occupied by J. P. McKellar's general store. This building was afterwards sold to Peter McCallum, who moved it to Dutton and placed it about where Dutton Bakery recently was situated. This necessitated a search for another hall at Wallacetown.

Alex. Urquhart was building a store at the time—about 1879—and the Masons arranged to fix up the upper storey for a lodge room at a rental of \$15 per year. They were in it only a short time, however, when C. G. Henry's hotel, which was located next door, caught fire and destroyed both buildings along with the Masonic records and lodge furnishings.

When the Foresters erected a brick block now occupied by Robt. Giles' general store at Wallacetown, the upper storey was fitted up for a Masonic lodge room and meetings were held there until 1889. At that time, there were more members in Dutton than in Wallacetown and it was decided to move the lodge here.

### Moved to Dutton

The first meeting place in Dutton is believed to have been over Hockin & Pool's grocery store. A

lease still among the lodge records shows that William H. Nelson, jeweller; John C. Price and Joseph T. Sifton, merchants, acting on behalf of Cameron Lodge, agreed to rent from Hockin & Pool the quarters for the sum of \$12 quarterly.

Ten years later, in 1899, the lodge moved again, this time to rooms over Drake & McPherson's store on the west side of Main St. Rental for two small and one large rooms—\$36 yearly.

The lodge apparently met in the latter place for only a short time.

October 14th, 1970

## Cameron Lodge

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because it was operating above J. H. Price's store in 1903 when that place was burned and again the lodge records were lost.

After operating in different quarters in the next few years, Cameron Lodge moved to the Hodder block in 1914 and for 43 years that was the meeting place. The late A. E. Roberts conducted the dedication of that hall in May, 1914.

Starting with a membership of 12 in 1870, Cameron Lodge had 49 on the roll in 1880, 34 in 1890, 32 in 1900, 62 in 1910, 103 in 1919 and at present there are 130 enrolled.

### Observe 50th Anniversary

At a gala night in the Sons of Scotland Hall on September 16th, 1920, Cameron Lodge celebrated its 50th anniversary. Some 300 Masons and their ladies from Cameron and neighboring lodges attended. A. E. Roberts presided and an account of the gathering states that until the midnight hour there was a "feast of soul and flow of wit." Robert Jordan, the oldest living member at that time, presented a brief history of Cameron Lodge.

Dr. Webster, West Lorne; Peter Stalker and Rev. J. Pollock were among the speakers and the musical numbers were provided by W. Spencer, humorist, of Toronto; W. Hollingshead, Misses E. Hollingshead and K. Reekie.

# Large Turn-Out of Masons Expected Here on Friday

Masons from a wide area are expected here Friday evening for the centennial observance of Cameron Lodge, No. 232, and the reception to Bruce B. Foster, Ridgetown, Grand Master. It will take the form of a banquet in Dunwich-Dutton Public School with wives of Masons serving a roast beef dinner at 6:30 p.m. followed by a program at which the Grand Master will be the main speaker. Presiding will be W. Donald Foster, R.R. 4, Iona Station, Ontario, D.D.G.M. of St. Thomas District. Among those expected for what promises to be one of the most important events in Cameron's century of operation are representatives of D. C. Cregier Lodge, Chicago, which is also celebrating its centennial this year. Two weeks ago four local Masons—Stuart McWilliam, Duncan K. McKillop, Harold Smith and Donald Lackey—accompanied by their wives, drove to Chicago to attend Cregier lodge's celebration. They were guests at a dinner dance and were royally entertained by the Chicago Masons. An invitation was extended to members of Cregier to, in turn, attend the celebration here on October 23rd.

## Remainder of History

Following is the second part of the history of Cameron Lodge prepared for the centennial:

## Decision To Build

In 1955, the members of Cameron Lodge, being aware of the need for larger and improved quarters, decided to erect their own building. Arrangements were made to lease the lower floor to the Post Office which had been looking for larger accommodation for some time.

In early August, 1956, work was begun on the 33 x 65 foot building on the east side of Main Street.

The lot was donated and other liberal donations of time and money were made. Several members and relatives of former members made generous contributions in the way of furnishings to the new rooms. Financing of the building was done by debentures sold only to members of the Craft.

## Officials

The first board of trustees consisted of Lloyd Corby, president; John McNeil, treasurer; Frost Hockin, secretary; Alistair Littlejohn, director.

Building committee members were Lloyd Corby, J. U. Brown, Dr. J. A. Hafele, Peter Love and George Ford.

Those charged with raising the funds were Frost Hockin, John McNeil, Herb Campbell, A. E. Roberts and James Bennett.

The first meeting in the new temple was on May 1st, 1957, with the Worshipful Master, Larry Smith, presiding and a large number of local Masons as well as visitors present.

## 1957 Officers

Officials of the lodge in 1957 were: I.P.M., George Ford, W.M., Larry Smith; S.W., Ralph Wilson, J.W., Alistair Littlejohn; chaplain, George Cornell; secretary, Frost Hockin; treasurer, Dr. J. A. Hafele; D. of C., J. U. Brown, S.D., Morley Page; J.D., Stuart McWilliam; I.G., Willard Watts; S.S., Gordon Gow; J.S., Len. Doolittle; tyler, Donald Forsyth.

## Dedication of New Building

At one of the largest gatherings of Masons ever gathered here, dedication of the new temple took place on June 7th, 1957.

Bruce B. Foster of Ridgetown, represented Grand Lodge and presided for the ceremony. The honor of cutting the ribbon symboliz-

## Large Turn-Out

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ing the opening of the temple, went to J. U. Brown, chairman of the building committee, who also received the keys to the temple from the Grand Secretary, E. G. Dixon. Some 200 attended the ceremony in the lodge room.

Preceding the dedication, a banquet was held in the public school with more than 300 attending. Thomas Pullen, D.D.G.M., St. Thomas District, presided and B. B. Foster gave the main address. Herb Campbell, chairman of the committee on arrangements for the banquet proposed the toast to Grand Lodge, while the worshipful master, Larry Smith, sponsored the toast to the visitors.

Entertainment included vocal numbers by the Page Quartet—Morley, Don, Jack and Bill—and a solo by Bill Page.

## Present Officers

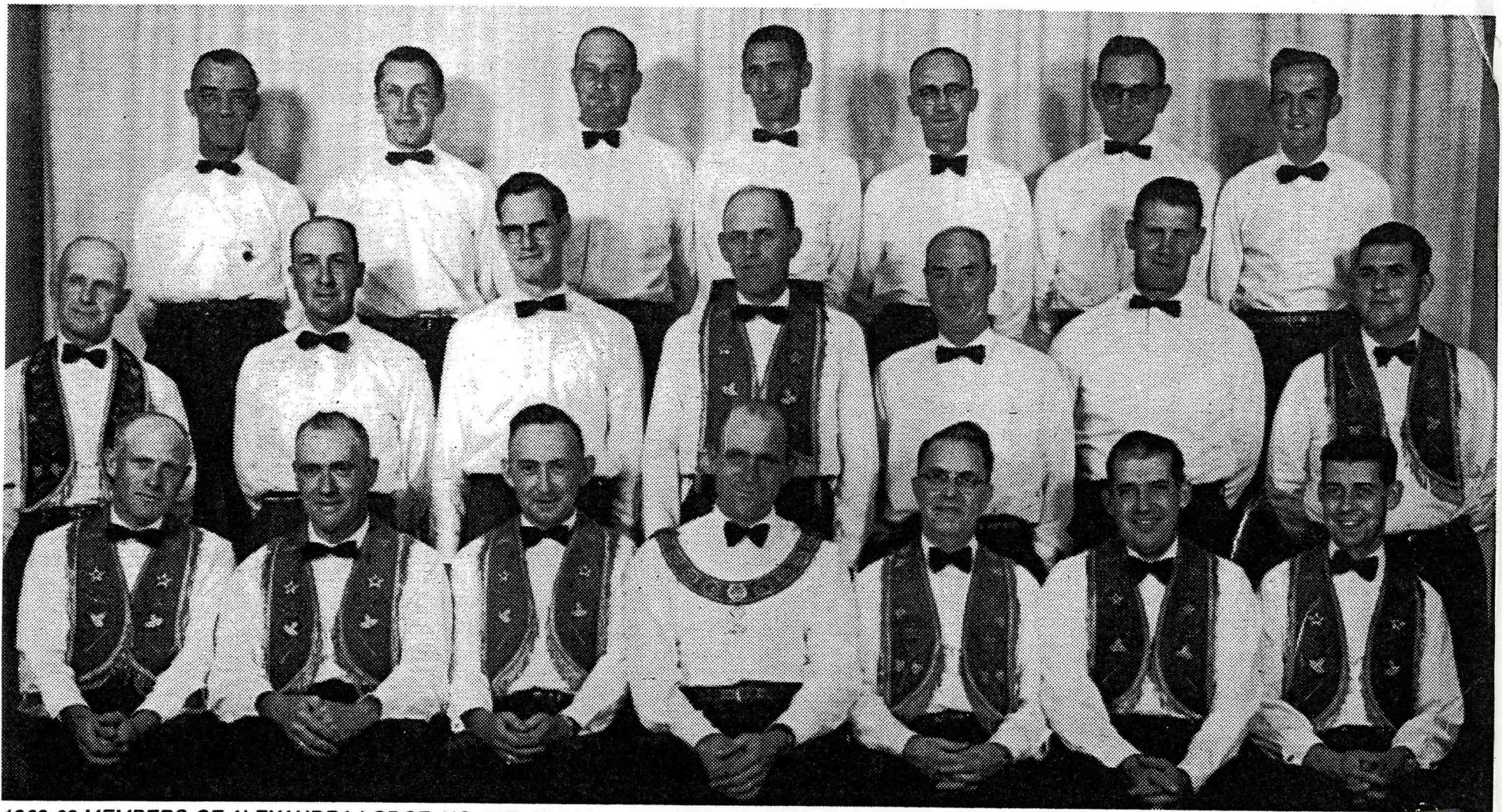
The 1970 officers of Cameron Lodge are as follows: Stuart Graham, I.P.M.; Duncan K. McKillop, W.M.; Donald Lackey, S.W.; Harold Smith, J.W.; Lloyd Corby, treasurer; J. U. Brown, D. of C.; Morley Page, chaplain; Cyril J. Beill, secretary; Gordon D. Gow, assistant secretary; Stuart Stacey, S.D.; Gordon Welch, J.D.; Arch. MacFarlane, I.G.; Dennis Siddall, S.S.; David Noiles, J.S. and John Crowe, tyler.

## Grand Lodge Officers

The following Cameron Lodge members have held Grand Lodge offices: A. E. Roberts, D.D.G.M. (1913); M. S. Claus, D.D.G.M. (1931); J. U. Brown, D.D.G.M. (1945) and member Board of General Purposes (1969-70); Herb C. Campbell, D.D.G.M. (1955); Stuart McWilliam, D.D.G.M. (1967); H. B. Hockin, G.S. (1932); J. G. McKellar, G.S. (1946); Peter Love, G.S. (1956); George Ford, G.S. (1968).

## Centennial Committee

Stuart McWilliam heads the committee in charge of arrangements for Cameron Lodge's centennial observance. Others on the committee are J. U. Brown, Herb Campbell, Peter Love, George Ford, Duncan K. McKillop, Cyril J. Beill, Frost Hockin, Lloyd Corby, Alistair Littlejohn, Stuart Graham, Harold Smith, Morley Page, Donald Lackey, Howard Loveland and Harold Lyons.



1962-63 MEMBERS OF ALEXANDRA LODGE, NO. 337—Front row, left to right: Norman McWilliam, Stan Duncanson, James Ian McCallum, Don McWilliam, Jack Knight, George Corneil and John McNeil. Middle row: John Bobier, Murray Jacques, Don Galbraith, Donald Leitch, Fraser Sinclair, Gord Paton and Alastair Hales. Back row: Archie Malcolm, Jack Lindenschmit, Tom Page, Al Kahnt, Alf Campbell, Art Schultz and Jack Affleck.

## Alexandra Lodge 100th

### Items of Interest

October 1915 gas installed by Alex Law at a cost of \$15.80. Gas bills - November (1916) 60¢, March (1917) \$2.20. Hydro installed in Spring of 1918 at a cost of \$93.62 for lights and fixtures. Janitor's salary \$20.00 per year in 1927, and was raised to \$25.00 in 1929. The contract stipulated stove and pipes were to be kept in shape and rooms kept in clean condition.

Stair carpets were cleaned and mended for \$1.00. In 1927 front of building painted at a cost of \$25.00; 1928 taxes on building \$80.00. In 1929 a pool table was purchased for \$50.00 and is still in use. An Odd Fellows District picnic was held in Pinafore Park, St. Thomas, in 1931. A new front was put on the lower portion of the building then occupied by R.E. Fraser's Egg Grading Station at a cost of \$265.00 in 1934. This portion of the building was later occupied by Jackson Variety and is now occupied by the Seniors Centre and the Daffodil Society.

In 1938 a hardwood floor was installed in the Lodge rooms to replace the carpet at a cost of \$300.00 for #1 birch. That same year

the rooms were papered - labour \$19.00, paper \$26.68. Water was installed in the Lodge room and the building below in 1948, as well as the office of the late Dr. Carman McKishnie which adjoined the building. Improvements have been continued throughout the years.

### Blood Clinic

The first Blood Donor Clinic held in Dutton was sponsored by Alexandra Lodge and held in the Lodge Hall in March 1943. In the Spring of 1950 the Lodge co-sponsored and took part in a Minstrel Show with the Kinsmen Club. Local ball teams, Wallace town Fair Queen contestants, students visiting the United Nation Headquarters in New York, and local charities have been assisted by the Lodge with donations and equipment throughout the years. A supply of crutches and canes are available to anyone needing same at no cost by contacting any Lodge member.

### Support Charities

Alexandra Lodge supports many local charities such as Cancer Society, Daffodil Society, West Elgin Skating Club, West Elgin Community Health Centre, and

this winter donated \$1,000.00 to the new Dutton Medical Centre.

In 1976 the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Heart Equipment Fund was established in Districts 15, 16, 17 and 18 to supply equipment to hospitals

which were not funded by government funds. Over \$115,000.00 to date has been raised and distributed to the various hospitals throughout the area. Alexandra Lodge has supported this fund with many donations throughout the years.