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KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

The Fraternal Order of Knights of Pythias was an international fraternity, founded in Washington, DC, February 19, 1864, by Justus H. Rathbone, and was the first to be chartered by an act of Congress. Bellefonte's Lodge appeared September 27th, 1869. Chancellor R. H. Graham, from Philadelphia, was on-hand to institute the Lodge. The Lodge room was on the third floor of a then new building, owned by Jerry Butts, on Allegheny Street. By August of 1872, they had "leased and fitted up in splendid style Meek's Hall," over the Watchman office.

UNION VETERAN LEGION

Bellefonte, Encampment No. 59 was organized April 16th, 1890 mainly through the efforts of G. B. Brandon. The application for a charter was signed by 16 veterans and there were 35 charter members.

There meeting room was in the Harris block.

Membership requirements according the National Roster of the Union Veteran Legion of the USA, page 4, 1898:

"Officers, soldiers, sailors and marines of the Union Army, Navy and Marine Corps, during the War of the Rebellion who volunteered prior to July 1, 1863, for a term of three years, and were honorably discharged for any cause after a service of at least two continuous years or were at any time discharged by reason of wounds received in the line of duty. Also, those who volunteered for a term of two years prior to July 22, 1861 and served their full term of enlistment, unless discharged for wounds received in the line of duty; but no drafted person, nor substitute, nor any one who has at any time borne arms against the United States is eligible"

Thanks to: George Kane, of Chicopee, MA @ gkane1@prodigy.net

IMPROVED ORDER OF RED MEN

The Order of Red Men traces its origin to certain secret Patriotic Societies founded before the American Revolution. They were established to promote Liberty and to defy the tyranny of the English Crown. Among the early groups were: The Sons of Liberty, Sons of Tamina and the Red Men.

A local group of Red Men is called a Tribe, and its Lodge is called a Wigwam.

The Red Men degrees are called Adoption, Hunter, Warrior, and Chief.

The Degrees utilize such emblems as the bow and arrow, tomahawk, war club, wampum belt, peace pipe, and skeleton.

The IORM's stated goal is: "to perpetuate the beautiful legends and traditions of a vanishing race and to keep alive its customs, ceremonies and philosophies."

The Bellefonte camp of Red Men was formally organized on Monday

evening, August 18, 1902. Charles R. Willets and H. Burket, of Harrisburg, installed the officers of Nehasane camp, No. 71, Improved Order of Red Men of Bellefonte.

The camp owed its existence to Bellefonte police officer Harry Miller, whose efforts in organizing it were so successful that sixty-four good names were secured as signers to the application for the charter.

The original officers installed were as follows: Prophet, Harry T. Miller; sachem, Jacob S. Knisely; senior sagamore, Wm. Beezer; junior sagamore, J. W. Rightnour; chief of records, Harry Walkey; assistant chief of records, Chas. Hazel; keeper of wampum, Wm. Rider; guards, Frank Sausserman and Seneca Walker; trustees, Bruce Garman, of Bellefonte; Charles Reese, of Snow Shoe, Isaac Shawver, of Centre Hall.

They met Friday evenings at 8 o'clock in the Eagle building.

WASHINGTON TEMPERANCE SOCIETY

"Dec. 11th (1841), the Washington Temperance Society of Bellefonte was organized. This was followed by organizations at Milesburg, etc. This Washingtonian movement was started by missionaries, as they were called, from Lewistown. It spread all through Centre County, and did much good. Among other features introduced was the establishment of a coffee and reading room at Bellefonte by McConnell & Keene.

James H. Rankin was president of the Washington Society of Spring and Bellefonte; George Welch, secretary. At a meeting on Christmas night songs were sung by John Montgomery, Wesley Lambert, and W. H. Butler, and addresses delivered by Hon. John Blanchard, Joseph T. Hall, Frederick Smith, Col. James Burnside, and committees appointed to organize societies at Boalsburg and Jacksonville."

(History of Centre and Clinton Counties, page 85, John B Linn)

KNIGHTS OF THE MACCABEES

The Knights of the Maccabees were a fraternal and benevolent "legal reserve society." Families of deceased members received benefits in the form of legal-reserve insurance. All white persons of sound health and good character, from birth to 70 years of age, were eligible for membership. Their name comes from the Biblical Maccabees. Before 1914, it was known as the Knights of the Maccabees. Subsequent to 1914, it has been simply been called "The Maccabees". Originally it operated on an assessment basis; whenever a member died, each living member was assessed 10 cents to go into a pot to provide the widow \$1000. After reorganization, it became much more sophisticated, collecting monthly assessments based on payouts. By the 1890s it provided not only death benefits but also sick benefits of \$4 to \$10/week; total and permanent disability benefits of \$50, \$200, or \$300 annually (depending on the size of your assessment); \$175-\$2000 for loss of hands, eyes, feet, etc.; funeral benefits, and so on. "Coal miners" - "aeronauts" and other dangerous professions excluded. Manufacturers, sellers, and drinkers of alcohol also excluded. The *Maccabees* were one of the more successful of fraternal benefit societies which sprung up after the Civil War. Many insurance companies were not interested in sales to ordinary people and there was little in the way of "safety nets". Groups like the Maccabees, Foresters, Woodmen, and so on provided a safety net along with pleasant social meetings and other gatherings.

The Bellefonte Tent was instituted in the Eagle's hall, on Wednesday, September 12, 1906, with a charter list of nearly one hundred members. The Tent was instituted and the officers installed by deputy grand commander H.

W. Phillips, of Pittsburg.

The following were the officers elected at that first meeting, for their first year:

Past commander, Geo. T. Bush; commander, Hardman P. Harris; lieutenant commander, Fred Rees; physician, Dr. Melvin J. Locke; record keeper, S. H. Robb; chaplain, John C. Rumberger; sergeant, James Noonan; master of arms, Samuel Miller; 1st master of guard, Frank Holderman ; 2nd master of guard, Harry Rearick; sentinel, Chas. Rapp; picket, Frank Woomer; trustee 3 years, A. C. Heverly; trustee 2 years, Harry Gehret; trustee 1 year, R. R. Oesterreich.

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