DESTINATION LODI

HARRISVILLE GRANGE #2543

GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Seven men founded the Harrisville Grande in 1867; they were Oliver Hudson Kelly, William Saunders, Francis M. McDowell, John Trimble, Aaron B. Grosh, John R. Thompson and William M. Ireland. It had a secret ritual like the Masons, but based on agricultural symbols. The organization was unusual as it allowed women and teens as equal members. On February 3, 1932, the meeting called to order had forty-three applications for Charter members of the Harrisville Grange. The three officers elected were Master Claude Rickel: Lecturer Juliette Towslee: and Secretary Nora Rickel.

Meetings of the Harrisville Grande were held the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Community Hall, which was shared with the Ladies Aid Society. The front portion of what was at one time called the Crawford Corner Community Hall was a schoolhouse original to the location located on State Route south of Congress Road. Around 1910 the school building that was located on Repp Road was then moved across the fields by the use of a winch and teams of horses. It was then that the two buildings became one. It was still used as a school building with eight grades in it. Around 1913, the children were taken to other schools in the surrounding areas’. As years passed by, the Aid Society thought the use of the hall by the Grange members was a bit improper, since dancing and card playing took place in the hall. A contact was drawn up concerning the use of the hall, Grange members could not agree and was told to find another place. In June of 1938, the members of the Grange moved their meeting place to the Lodi High School auditorium. At this time, the rent was one dollar, unless they were going to be entertainment for which an admission was going to be charges, then five dollars was paid to the school board.

In September of 1946, the members bought the Crawford Community Hall. They raffled off a pig donated by Alvah and Marcene Brown. Claude Rickel was appointed to take care of electric and gas. All Grangers tuned out to clean and fix up their new home. On October 1, 1946 at 8 pm, the meeting began in the new hall.

Who remembers the Swiss steak dinners? The members hosted dinners, dances and other family orientated functions for years. The Grange would display items made by members at the fair.

From World War II through the late 1970’s the Grange held square dances every other Saturday with music being provided by different area orchestras. The last music was provided by Sherry Brown Kauffman and Carl Stewart with Duwayne Kauffman call the dances.

In the 1950s and 1960s Archer and Freda Dague hosted dances for the teens, (record hops) serving light refreshments.

The property that the Grange stood on was never deeded to the Grange organization and in 2000; the building was auctioned then demolished by the current property owner.

This information was compiled by Margo (Suzie Dague) Stafford who was a member of the Harrisville Grange Hall from 1974-1984 when she and he husband moved to Pennsylvania.

Thank you Margo! I had to edit some information (sorry) but the article will be placed on file at the Lodi Harrisville Historical Museum for future research needs.