

## History of Temperance Lodge 1963 Installation of Officers

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Source: Mr. and Mrs. Collins F. Kindred collection

History of Lodge - given by Brother Alfred Renfro, at open installation of officers for 1963 - Saturday, January 12, 1963

Our town was founded by Humphrey Smith in 1822 and was originally called Smith's Mill, later changed to Smithville. He had two sons, Hiram and Calvin, who were members of a Masonic Lodge at Ridgely in 1848. Both of them were members of the Christian Church and in 1926, Hiram at the age of 96, made affidavit of title on the land where the Christian Church of Smithville now stands.

Temperance Lodge #438 was 90 years old last October, according to our charter, but masonry in Smithville goes back before the Civil War. According to research carried out many years ago by F.K. Justus, the first Lodge in Smithville met before the Civil War in a two-story log house located on East Main Street, where Bill Long's house now stands. The Smithville Public School met on the first floor and the Masonic Lodge met on the second floor. When the Civil War came along, the Lodge was closed and its records were lost.

In 1871, a new two-story building was erected on the corner of Bridge & Main Sts., the building being the one where the Western Auto Store occupies today. On February 22, 1872, the District Deputy Grand Master, Elias Parrott, opened Temperance Lodge at 6 P.M. for our first communication and appointed the first officers. Many present were members at Acacia Lodge at Gosneyville (now called Paradise) and of Zerubbabel Lodge south of Ridgely. Some of the members transferred membership to this lodge.

Our Grand Lodge charter was granted October 17, 1872, with meetings held on the first & third Saturdays, later on the first & third Tuesdays, and on March 18, 1905, changed to the first & third Wednesdays, the present meeting nights. Our present hall has been occupied since 1905 and was dedicated on January 20, 1905 when a Grand Lodge meeting was held here for that occasion.

Many people wonder at the name of Temperance Lodge and why the name was chosen. There may have been thoughts on the matter regarding opposition to the drinking of liquor at the time of considering a name for the Lodge, but masons have a broader understanding of the term, Temperance. Temperance is the first of the four cardinal virtues which are taught, instilled, and practiced in Freemasonry - Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. Teachings concerning Temperance are especially emphasized in the First Degree initiation and we as Masons are taught not to give way to unrestrained passions not to indulge in any habits to excess. The term, intemperance, is usually associated in the minds of most people in the use of liquor to excess and is both condemned and abhorred because of its effect upon the human body and by the excessive use of alcohol, the destruction of human personality and the dignity of an individual.

But the term of Temperance is not to be confined merely to the abstinence from the use of alcohol, for in Masonic teaching and application every man is left to his own taste which he should keep within due limits, being bound by the Masonic vow to exercise moderation in ALL action and in ALL habits to guard against giving way to dissipation and excess in any and all behavior.

Our oldest living member is Elmer Iden who has been a member of this lodge for 54 years - since 1909. Others who have been long time members of Temperance Lodge are:

C.C. Kindred 49 years  
Leon Morton 46 years  
E.R. Stroeter 43 years  
S.A. McComas 42 years

Though he is not originally a member of this lodge, Brother James T. Duncan was presented with his 50 year pin last year by this lodge.

