

Compiled by Helen Stampfly
Transcribed by Ardis Sibley
June 10, 1961

Dewitt Grange No. 459 Patrons of Husbandry was organized in Bates Hall, June 11, 1874, and July 21 a charter was applied for which was granted and dated September 7, 1874. The 52 charter members paid membership fees of \$3.00 for men and \$.50 for women. Thereafter the initiation fees were \$5.00 for men and \$2.00 for women. The charter members were: David Scott, Theodore Schoewe, Rebecca Schoewe, George Scott, Jennie Scott, Newton McLouth, Mrs. Newton McLouth, Charles Moon, Mary Moon, Cyrus Parr, Newton Webb, Edward Webb, Byron S. Webb, Nellie Scott, J. E. Fletcher, Mrs. J. E. Fletcher, Carrie Fletcher, Louise Fletcher, Alexander Mason, Sarah Alexander, Gottlieb Guisenheifer, Bishop Downer, Dora Downer, Thomas J. Clements, Sylvia Clements, Arthur Clements, D. G. Church, Nellie Church, Albert Harlow, Catherine Harlow, Minnie Harlow, Edith Harlow, O. G. Pennell, Mrs. O. G. Pennell, Sylvester Scott, Mary Scott, D. W. Brinkerhoff, Mrs. D. W. Brinkerhoff, Lydia Brinkerhoff, George Ward, Alice Ward, Charles Bauerley, John Stierley, George Cook, Adelaide Cook, Alvira West, Andrew West, Mark Scott, Emma Scott, Galusha Pennell, Mrs. Mary Scott and Lizzie Webb.

Ethel Bauerley Klaver is the only direct descendant of a charter member now belonging to our Grange. She is the granddaughter of Charles Bauerley.

In the first record book under date of June 27, 1874 are names of delegates to convention, committees on regalia, finance and executive. The first real minutes were dated July 11, 1874, and Alvira West was initiated in all four degrees at that time. It was voted to meet twice a month on Saturday nights at eight o'clock in summer and seven o'clock in winter. Galusha Pennell was the first master and B. E. Downer the first secretary. Furniture costing \$20.70 was purchased that summer and meetings were held in both the Aaron Norris and Addison Woodruff halls.

As the Grange here was organized primarily to do away with the middleman, much direct buying and selling was done.

In October, 1875, an organ was purchased, and in 1877 there were large attendances of from 45 to 53 members. Some meetings were held in Clinton hall (the hotel) and later moved to Bates hall where \$30 per year rent was paid.

In March, 1879, Lecturer's hour was first observed and at the second meeting thereafter

it was voted that no brother should speak for more than fifteen minutes on any question. Whether the sisters were seen but not heard in those days, or whether the Grangers realized how vile it would be to set a time limit for them, I am unable to say. In January, 1880, it was voted to hold every alternate meeting from October to May in the afternoon.

February 14, 1880, the Grange voted to buy five shares in the Grange store at Lansing. In August, 1880, a committee was appointed to select a site for a Grange hall and in December, 1880, the present hall, then the store building of Addison Woodruff, was purchased and stock sold at \$5.00 a share. In June, 1881, it was voted to incorporate the Grange, which was done July 2, 1881, said incorporation being for 30 years, or until 1911.

December 3, 1881, the Executive Committee was instructed to get the deed made out legal and signed over to the Grange. The first taxes on the hall, amounting to \$4.35, were paid in January, 1882.

The hall was rented to the Odd Fellows for \$25.00 a year.

During the 80's it was customary to donate use of the lower hall for donation parties for both the Baptist and Methodist ministers. It was also rented once for a funeral.

In March, 1883, after initiation at nearly every meeting, it was voted to have degree work at only the first two meetings of each quarter, with a feast after the second meeting, and the Executive Committee was to hire the dishes washed after the feasts.

April 4, 1884, it was voted to insure the hall for \$300.

In May, 1885, Grangers were discussing "Causes of the present depression and hard times, and what are the preventions."

The Good Templars paid \$15 a year for use of the hall.

In March, 1886, "Ten Nights in a Bar-room" was given at the Clinton House, Albert Rense, proprietor, getting 1/3 of the profits. It was voted that proceeds of the play be used to buy mirror, washbasin, towels, comb and drinking mug.

In September, 1887, another organ was purchased and in June, 1888, \$67.73 was spent for carpets, curtains etc.

Weekly meetings were held from July, 1888, to May, 1889, and again during the winters of 1890 and '91.

The first Woman's Work Committee was appointed March 22, 1890. It is now known as the Home Economics Committee.

The hall was freshly papered, painted and re-curtained in October, 1893 and window blinds were purchased in June, 1895.

A Gatekeeper's emblem for \$3, also an agate and gavel were purchased in February, 1895, and the next year an outdoor lamp was purchased for \$3.10. Later in 1896 the hall was painted white with green blinds.

In December, 1896, it was voted to build a barn, the timbers of which were donated by Brother and Sister W. D. Molt. Dances, teas and socials helped toward the barn fund and in October, 1897, a bee was held at which the men painted the barn and graded the yard while the women cleaned the hall and prepared dinner.

For several years it was the custom to invite members of the G. A. R. and W. R. O. to the last meeting in May to participate in a Memorial program.

In 1899 a new stand for lady officers and four small stands were purchased.

The Merritt property north of the hall was purchased in May, 1899. Disposal of tools, the foundry and renting of the house west of it was left to the Executive Committee. They rented the house to E. P. Chadwick, and January 27, 1916, the entire lot was sold to Carl and Maude VanFleet.

A young people's club was organized in 1902 and gave \$25 toward repairing the hall.

National Grange was held in Lansing in November, 1902, and members of this Grange conferred the second degree there.

February 13, 1904, the Grange paid Jerome Dills \$71.42, the amount necessary to free the Grange from debt. Brother George Scott, a charter member, was present on that occasion.

During the summer of 1905 cement walks were laid in front of Grange property at a cost of \$40.50.

One hundred twenty-four members were enrolled in 1904 and we entertained Pomona Grange at a cost of \$14.53, which of course included hay for the horses.

In February, 1905, the Grange Dramatic Club gave gasoline lights to the Grange which were used until installation of electric lights in 1914.

The lower hall was rented to the American Yeomen for their meetings at 50¢ a night.

In March, 1906, a previous by-law to confer degrees only four times a year was repealed and we have since initiated whenever convenient.

An interurban car was chartered in September, 1906, to take our members to a Grange picnic at Pine Lake -- now Lake Lansing.

DeWitt Grange exhibited several times at the Clinton County Fair, receiving \$6.90 in premiums in 1906 and \$50.00 in 1922.

The Grange presented the M. E. Church with a \$3.50 Bible in November, 1906, in appreciation for the use of the church for our Pomona meeting.

The piano that was in the lower hall until last year was purchased in March, 1907, for \$86.75 and the old organ.

Newton L. Webb, a charter member of DeWitt Grange, passed away March 30, 1907, and the Grange funeral ceremony was given at the grave. I have witnessed this ceremony only twice, the other time being for Worthy Master William Milwanger in 1946. Older members tell me it was also given at the burial of Jessie Vail.

In July, 1906, it was voted to remodel the Grange hall by raising it, building on twenty feet, partitioning twelve feet off on the front both upstairs and down for reception hall, ante rooms and stairway, partitioning twelve feet off the back of lower hall for kitchen, raising windows on sides and removing rise on the floor. It was also voted to move the hall back and build the addition on the front, remove the old cornice so the windows could be raised and place a small window at each end of the building for ventilation. The estimated cost was \$592, but the actual cost was \$961.48, and \$700 was borrowed from Varney Pearce, Sr. Seven meetings were held in the Modern Woodman hall and the first meeting in the remodeled hall was October 11, 1906. The hall had been papered upstairs and down, and the entire expense had been donated as well as many of the kitchen furnishings. A kitchen range was purchased of Mrs. Henry Goodrich for \$25 in April, 1909. The barn was also raised, new doors put on and painted. Grange membership was then 107.

February 6, 1909, the Grangers voted to rent the upper hall to the Lady Macabees for \$15 per year.

Jerome Dills in a talk September 4, 1909, stated that improvements of the past ten years were electric care, telephone, rural free mail delivery, sidewalks, automobiles, elevators and twenty-five new houses in DeWitt village.

Two traveling libraries were secured from the state library in 1910 for cost of freight which was \$1.25 per set.

In 1911 we began entertaining Pomona in April instead of November.

The Grange hall was painted in 1922 and a Juvenile Grange was also organized that year.

Members of the Grange put on a play, "Mrs. Briggs of the Poultry Yard," at thirteen different places in Clinton and Ingham counties in 1922 which netted about \$200. They purchased a piano for the upper hall with part of the proceeds.

The largest membership was in 1922 when 246 were on the roll, but that had dropped to 126 by the close of 1923 and in 1925 only 23 were enrolled. Frequently a quorum was not present and in April, 1929, and again in September, 1930, considerable thought was given to selling the Grange property and dividing the proceeds, but there were enough loyal Grangers to defeat the proposition and now I am happy to state that we have 96 members.

The Grange barn was sold to V. D. Pearce in April, 1928 for \$50.

Fifty dollars was realized from an advertizing stage curtain in 1924 and \$21 from one in 1933.

The Grange hall was damaged by fire in March, 1928, when the Methodist Church burned and \$386.45 was spent in repairs, all of which was covered by insurance.

The name, "DeWitt Grange No. 459," was painted on the hall in 1934.

Fifty feet was sold off the back of the lot in July, 1932, to Maude VanFleet for \$50.

A perusal of the old record books of the Grange has not been without its humorous side, such as reading a bill of the 60's for 7 lamp chimneys and 4 spittoons and a message a former secretary left on a record book, "Remember me when this you see, and take a little catnip tea."

We entertained Pomona in May, 1935, with the help of South Riley grange. Expenses were \$10.55, including 41 pounds of beef at 17¢ a pound.

January 4, 1936, a degree team from Charlotte Grange came and initiated a class of 17 candidates in the combined four degrees. It was an impressive ceremony that had been written by Bernice Curtis of Charlotte, State Grange Chaplain. That fall a team from Student Grange, M. S. C., also initiated candidates for us using the combined degrees. Through the efforts of Agnes Steinhardt we organized a similar team in January, 1937. The members of

the team were: Master, Paul Lerg; Overseer, Francis Sibley; Steward, Lavern Lerg; Lecturer, Maxine Locher; Chaplain, Esther Lerg; Gatekeeper, Russell Sibley; Assistant Steward, Carl Steinhardt; Secretary, Max Locher; Treasurer, Glen Locher; Ceres, Esther Bauerle; Pomona, Fayollyn Cutler; Flora, Donna Daggett; Lady Assistant Steward, Lorna Belle Andrews; Pianist, Olga Loesch; Ladies of the Court - Mina Newman, Bess Parkhouse, Mina Locher, Elaine Hardtke, Florence Seyfried, Doris Seyfried; Harvest Marchers - Ernest Stampfly, Henrietta Hanney, Allen Stampfly, Helen Stampfly, John Lerg, Dora Lerg, Lewis Daggett, Zelma Daggett, Lavern Kowalk, Laura Loesch, Glenn Locher, Edna Andrews.

Following the death of Paul Lerg in World War II, Ardis Stampfly became degree team master and still is. The personnel of the team has changed many times, but some of the original members are still in it. It cost \$23 to outfit the team with implements and gowns. Agnes Steinhardt donated the officers' regalia. Vornals for the degree team were purchased in September, 1955, with money the team had received for out-of-county presentations.

A four-burner oil stove was purchased from Celia Lorenz in 1936 for \$10.00.

That same year a play, "Going Modern," was given three nights and netted \$40.35.

A banquet for the Plymouth Congregational Church Club of Lansing brought in \$16.00.

At the October 10, 1936, meeting it was voted to resume paying the secretary 25¢ per meeting as had been customary before the Grange got so small.

As the DeWitt school house burned November 30, 1936, it was voted at the next meeting to allow the Board of Education use of the lower hall for school, they to furnish their own wood, lights and janitor.

As long as Agnes Steinhardt's health permitted, she always hosted a surprise supper in September in honor of her son, husband, mother and father's birthdays that all occurred that month.

South Riley grange was remodeling their hall in 1937 so we allowed them the use of our hall to put on a play without charge, they to do the janitor work.

A sidewalk and curb was put in front of the Grange hall in 1937 at a cost of \$25.00

In November, 1937 the sisters cleared \$22.85 at their performance of a "Kitchen Cabinet Orchestra."

A Grange orchestra was organized and played at several meetings. It consisted of Piano - Olga Roberts, Violins - Francis Sibley and Maxine Locher, Trumpet - Ardis Stampfly, Cornet - Allen Stampfly.

The rubber mat in front of the Overseer's station was given us by the State Grange for increasing our membership by 10 in 1937 and in 1938 we received a Bible for increasing our membership by 13.

A baseball team was organized in 1938 with Russell Sibley and Glenn Locher in charge. A box social helped finance the team by \$11.25.

New green valour stage curtains were secured in 1938 with advertising on wall at the rear of the hall.

In March, 1939, a kitchen range was purchased of Alfrieda Seeger for \$5 and the old stove sold to the Royal Neighbors for \$2.

Tickets were sold on a rug donated by Pearl Bath and proceeds used to buy wall paper. Numerous baked goods sales and a warm sugar social besides donations from the members raised the \$68.50 paid to Robert Sedt for painting the exterior of the hall. Expenses were more than the \$50 he had offered to do it for.

Pomona was entertained in May, 1939, at a cost of \$21.45. Mighty pounds of beef was consumed. The entertaining Grange furnished the entire meal at that time. As sugar, coffee, kerosene, etc., were rationed during the war, Pomona dinners were changed and the host grange furnished only potatoes and a meat dish, the rest being pot-luck. In 1944 we began entertaining Pomona in March instead of May.

In 1939 \$32.59 was cleared from a banquet put on for teachers from Pottengill Junior High School in Lansing.

The Ladies Union of the DeWitt Community Church rented the hall for \$2 for their fair in December 1939.

In May, 1940, it was voted to have a penny march at each meeting with proceeds to go to Committee on Charity for the flower fund. This procedure is still followed.

An outside stairway was constructed on the west side of the hall to comply with fire safety requirements in 1941 at a cost of \$26.17. Public euchre parties were held every two weeks on Wednesday evenings. Several radio programs were also given over WKAR radio

station. During this year mystery boxes were raffled off, a bingo party was held and overdeer garment hangers were sold to replenish the treasury.

Paul Lerg was the first Granger to be called into service in World War II and the only one to make the supreme sacrifice.

August 8, 1942, Agnes Steinhardt presented the Grange with a 3 by 5 ft. American flag, also a service flag with four stars for our members already in service, namely Lieutenants Paul Lerg and Francis Sibley, Corporal Russell Sibley and Private Charles Woods. Later stars were added for Carl Steinhardt, Howard Sibley and Richard Wood. Paul Lerg's star was replaced with a gold star following his death May 21, 1943.

Our quota of kerosene in 1943 was 16 gallons for 12 months.

January 1, 1945, State Grange dues were raised from \$.175 to \$.25 per quarter.

In May, 1945, it was decided to rent the lower hall to Grange members for \$3.00, provided they do not use it for profit making purposes, and with the stipulation that only the lower hall is to be rented.

Both fire and wind insurance on the hall was increased in 1945 to \$2,700 - \$200 on the contents and \$2,500 on the hall.

In 1946 the meter box was moved to the outside of the hall and an outlet put in large enough for an electric stove. Folding legs were also put on the dining tables instead of using saw horses. New curtains were purchased for the lodge room at a cost of \$15.45 and for the lower hall for \$8.00.

A set of by-laws for DeWitt Grange was drawn up and adopted March 30, 1946, and a copy is in the record book of 1945 to 1947.

Grangers operated a refreshment stand at the carnival held June 15, 1946, to raise funds to build the Veterans' Memorial Building. The proceeds were \$80.00.

Members wearing mourning arm bands attended the funeral of Worthy Master William Ellwanger in a body and formed a guard of honor at both the funeral home and cemetery. The Grange funeral ceremony was given at the grave. They also served lunch at Sister Ellwanger's auction sale November 2, 1946, and cleared \$116.53.

In February, 1947, Golden Song books were purchased for \$6.80.

"Maytime Varieties" was presented in 1947 by the youth of the Grange and netted \$43.00. They purchased a record player for \$40.00. An ice cream social netted \$71.30 and Christmas and all-occasion cards were also sold.

An electric stove was purchased of Harry Moon for \$60.00 in May, 1947.

In January, 1948, ten card tables were purchased for \$18.44. A grange picnic was held at Round Lake in August. Some penny bingo parties were held after grange meetings with proceeds going to the flower fund.

A 50-cup coffee maker was purchased in March, 1949, for \$25.12 and a book, "The Grange - Friend of the Farmer," for \$3.50.

A Cradle Roll was also started in 1949 with Edna Andrews in charge. She donated the cradle.

The 75th anniversary of our grange was observed June 18, 1949, with a good program at which time fifty-year member Augusta Lankton was presented with her Golden Sheaf pin.

A dinner was served the Royal Neighbors convention which netted \$102.30.

A steel beam was put in the ceiling of the lower hall and the dining room painted and papered. Gusta Lankton donated plastic drapes for upstairs windows and Allen Stampfly donated a coat rack.

Inasmuch as State dues had been raised, it was voted to raise our dues from \$1.20 to \$1.60 per year.

In October, 1950, a ham supper and Fall Festival was held and \$106.32 realized.

November 18, 1950, Ernest Stampfly was presented with his Golden Sheaf certificate and button.

February 10, 1951, the Sisters served dinner to the Brothers who buzzed and corded wood donated by Ernest Stampfly, while others painted. The painting was finished at another bee in March.

An ice cream social in August, 1951, netted \$59.00 and a Harvest Festival and pancake supper in October netted \$66.05.

In June, 1952, a ham supper was put on for Rosevale Co. at the Memorial Building and netted the Grange \$162.89.

Harry Moon painted the exterior of the hall for \$50 and also put in cement steps. The paint cost us \$85.00. Three years later different cement steps with a railing were put in some of the Brothers.

A mystery ride in July, 1952, covering 28 miles ended at Wilsey Community hall where supper was enjoyed and the name of Grange Cinderella was drawn.

The Grange took out Blue Cross group insurance in 1952 also Liability Insurance.

An agreement was reached with the Methodist Church that we pay \$25.00 for privilege of using their well, and \$5.00 per year for the water. Grange brothers laid pipe in August, 1953, and the pump, tile and pipes cost \$37.58.

In 1954, \$95.69 was paid for new flooring for the lodge room. This was laid and finished by Brothers and some Sisters. The old carpet was sold for 50¢.

Robert and Edna Newman donated a kitchen range to the Grange in 1954.

An oil heating stove was purchased for the lodge room in November, 1955, for \$144.60 and the old stove sold for \$1.00.

December, 1955, it was voted to increase annual dues from \$1.60 to \$2.50.

An oil heater for the dining room was purchased in March, 1956, for \$66.95.

Grange ladies received \$11.00 for touring Hager-Fox kitchens in April, 1956.

It was voted in April, 1956, to pay the Grange secretary \$25.00 per year.

In June, 1956 we bought 70 chairs from the Modern Woodmen at \$.25 each and they gave us their tables. The extra tables and benches are stored in Earl Klaver's barn. It was understood that Brothers and Sisters wishing to borrow tables and benches were welcome to use those that are being stored.

The Harvest Marchers from the degree team marched in the Centennial parade at St. Johns in 1956.

At Booster night October 27, 1956, the 89th birthday of G. F. Ottmar, a visitor from South Elley Grange, was noted. He made a few remarks and said the Grange was responsible for bringing about the use of secret ballots at elections.

December 29, 1956, the meeting night of Grange was changed from Saturday to Friday nights, and in September, 1957, it was voted to hold them the second and fourth Friday nights of each month.

A fuel oil tank was purchased in January, 1957, for \$20.

The following month men of the Grange built a shelf in the kitchen with lumber donated by John Lerg.

Linoleum and trim was put on the dining and kitchen tables in April, 1957, at a cost of \$52.99, greatly improving their looks and ease of upkeep.

Our Grange had charge of the eat booth at the OxRoast parade in 1957 and we received \$5 prize for the float we entered. Other prizes won for parade entries were \$15 first prize in 1952, \$10 second prize in 1956, \$20 first prize in 1958, \$20 first prize in 1959 and \$10 second prize in 1960. There is no record of other years. We have had charge of some booth at every OxRoast.

We sponsored a Red Cross First Aid class in 1957 and a Bloodmobile in April, 1958. We also donated food, clothing and bedding to a family that had burned out.

Use of the lower hall was donated to Vacation Bible School in 1957 and 1958 and in 1959 to a Sunday School class from the Methodist Church during their building program.

Through the efforts of Robert and Edna Newman a Juvenile Grange was organized by Ila Balog, State Grange secretary, April 10, 1959, with 16 charter members, Ruth Baby, Matron, and Edna Newman Assistant Matron. The charter members of DeWitt Juvenile Grange No. 305 were as follows: Larry Brya, Norma Brya, Georgia Muhn, Douglas Klaver (a great grandson of Charles Bauerley, Charter Member of DeWitt Grange), Nancy Ann Locher, Martha Jean Locher, Betty Jo Moots, Jim Moots, Carol Sibley, Allen Sibley, Susan Sibley, Gary Steinhardt, Shirley Steinhardt, Robert Newman, Lenore Wood, Colleen Wood.

In October, 1959, a piano was purchased for the Juvenile Grange for \$20.00 and the old piano was given to a Lansing piano shop in March, 1961.

In February, 1960, members of defunct South Riley grange voted that they would like to consolidate with DeWitt Grange with the stipulation that any money received from sale of their property be earmarked for maintenance and repairs of DeWitt Grange hall, so they would feel they were owners also. We voted to so accept them and on March 10, 1961, we welcomed fourteen of them members of our Grange, three members having previously joined with us.

In May, 1960, the Methodist Church addition having been completed, water connections were again made with the church at a cost of \$41.01. We were glad to not have to bring water to each meeting any more.

As we were paying more into the State Grange than our local dues brought in, it was voted in April, 1960, to raise our annual dues to \$3.00 effective January 1, 1961.

Proceeds of a dinner for the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce February 22, 1961 were \$70.59.

New window shades for the hall were purchased in March, 1961, at a cost of \$20.16. In April, 1961, it was voted to have but one meeting per month in June, July and August of 1961 and 1962, as has been the custom in recent years, said meetings to be held the second Friday of the month.

In the 1880's Sister Estella Mills composed a Grange installation ode which she gave at State Grange and used as long as health permitted in our Grange, 1937 being the last year she installed our officers. Others around the state had learned her ode, one being J. M. Bedall of Portland Grange, a former member of DeWitt Grange. In 1942 Henrietta Banney memorized it and with few exceptions has since installed our officers.

DeWitt Grangers are charitable, contributing to Red Cross, March of Dimes, Polio, Cancer, Heart, and Crippled Children's funds. They have also helped 4-H Club, International Farm Youth Exchange, local summer recreation and Grange Youth Leadership programs.

When a brother member has been ill or disabled, a bee has been held to plant or harvest his crops, with Grange sisters preparing dinner. Sick members are remembered with fruit, flowers or cards. Newly-weds have been given gifts as have several silver and golden anniversary couples.

I have endeavored to give you some of the interesting data in the history of DeWitt Grange. The fact that this farm organization has survived for eighty-seven years and now has ninety-six members leads us to hope that it may function for many more years and continue to be a vital force in the fraternal life of this community.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Stampfly

MASTERS OF THE WITT ORANGE

1874	Calusha Pennell	1906	James Ranney	1938	William Loesch
1875	Sylvester Scott	1907	Thomas Stampfly	1939	Paul Lerg
1876	" "	1908	" "	1940	" "
1877	" "	1909	Harry Moon	1941	Carl Steinhardt
1878	Newton L. Webb	1910	Ernest Stampfly	1942	" "
1879	William Collins	1911	Frank Huffman	1943	Arthur Magsig
1880	R. G. Mason	1912	William Ellwanger	1944	" "
1881	Thomas J. Clements	1913	James Ranney	1945	Elmer Wood
1882	DeWitt Brinkerhoff	1914	Daniel Ellwanger	1946	William Ellwanger (deceased 6-8-1966)
1883	George W. Scott	1915	" "	1946	Frank Huffman
1884	Jerome Dills	1916	Helen Dills	1947	Russell Sibley
1885	Henry N. Webb	1917	" "	1948	Frank Huffman
1886	Newton L. Webb	1918	Ernest Stampfly	1949	Harry Green
1887	J. T. Norris	1919	" "	1950	" "
1888	Jerome Dills	1920	William Ellwanger	1951	Carl Steinhardt
1889	" "	1921	" "	1952	" "
1890	Elmer Lankton	1922	" "	1953	Harry Green
1891	Jerome Dills	1923	" "	1954	" "
1892	" "	1924	Ernest Stampfly	1955	" "
1893	Charity L. Pearce	1925	Henry N. Webb	1956	" "
1894	" "	1926	" "	1957	" "
1895	Estella Dills	1927	Ernest Stampfly	1958	Charles Ferguson
1896	Henry N. Webb	1928	" "	1959	Harry Green
1897	Estella Dills	1929	" "	1960	" "
1898	Luther Sibley	1930	" "	1961	Chester Baby
1899	Newton L. Webb	1931	May Moses		
1900	" "	1932	Arthur Magsig		
1901	Harry Moon	1933	" "		
1902	Elmer Lankton	1934	" "		
1903	" "	1935	" "		
1904	Clayton Woodruff	1936	William Loesch		
1905	Mark Norris	1937	" "		

GOLDEN SHEAF MEMBERS - 50 YEARS

Jerome Dills
D. Scott Pike

Estella Dills
Ernest Stampfly

Elmer Lankton
Augusta Lankton

SILVER STAR MEMBERS - 25 YEARS

Wm. V. Case
Abbie Dills
Agnes Steinhardt
Henry Bauerle
Henrietta Cushman
Alger Sibley

Allen Stampfly
Carl Steinhardt
Robert Newman
Mary Case
Ellen Stampfly
Mary Havens

Hertha Bauerle
Arthur Magsig, Sr.
Lilah Sibley
Helen Stampfly
Russell Sibley
Edna Newman

100-Year-Old Hall Offered for Sale

By FAYE HANSON
State Journal Special Writer

DEWITT — One of DeWitt's oldest building, the Grange Hall, is for sale.

Over 100 years old, the frame building has been the home of DeWitt Grange 459 since 1875, one year after the local chapter of the organization was formed. Prior to that it was Woodruff's carpenter shop.

The building has been put on the market because Grange

membership has dwindled from a high of 246 members in 1922 to only a handful today.

To continue using the building the Grange would have to have a new well and hook into the city sewer system, and members feel their organization is no longer large enough to warrant the expense. Oscar Johnson is grange master and meetings are held in the Memorial Building.

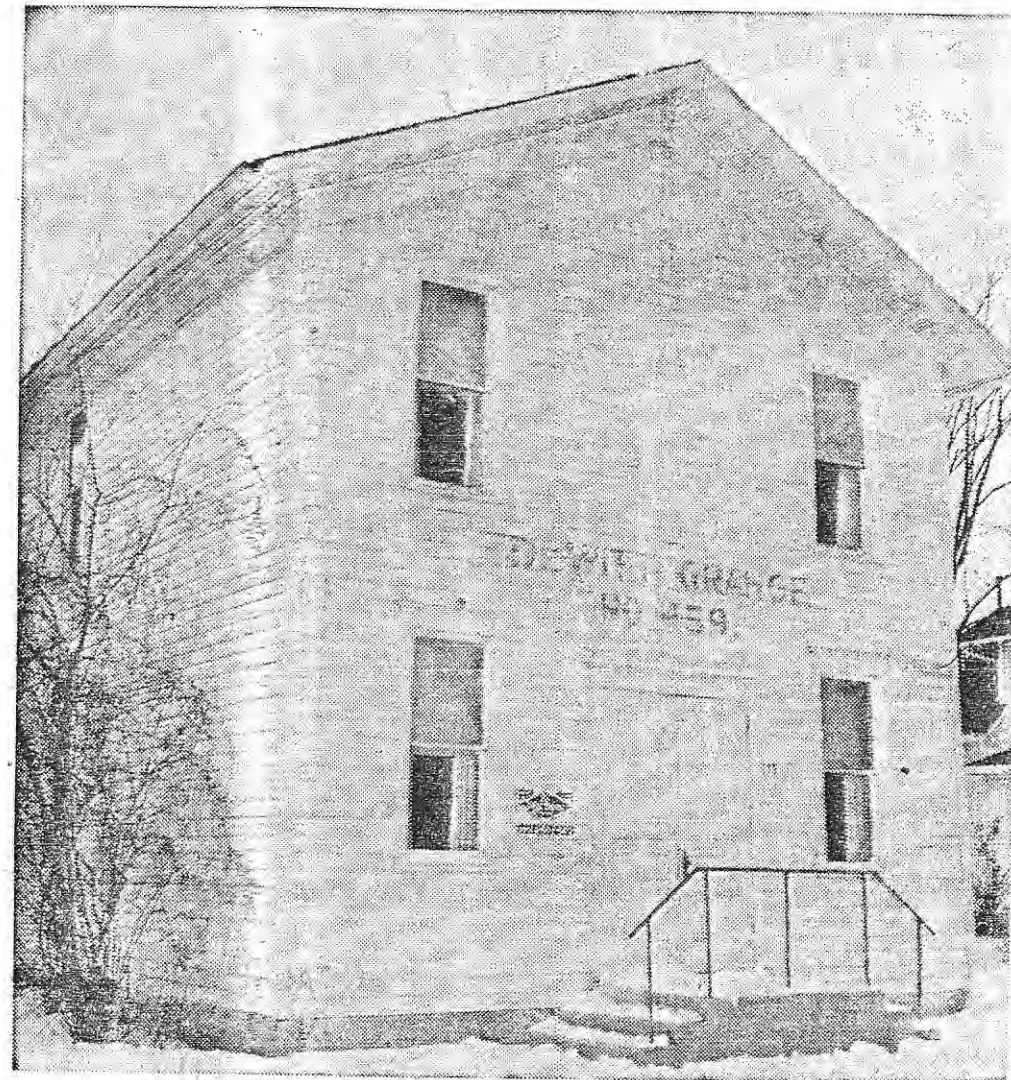
At one time there was a stable at the rear of the hall to house the horses of members on meeting nights and those of townspeople who used the building for various functions.

Gasoline lights were installed in 1905 and electricity was installed in 1914.

Through the years the Grange Hall has been a center of community activity and figured in the history of DeWitt. It was damaged in 1928 when fire destroyed the adjacent Methodist Church, and in 1936 when the DeWitt Public School burned the lower floor of the Grange Hall was rented for classrooms until the new school was built.

The hall has been rented by various groups. The Lady Macabees used it at the turn of the century, and it has been the scene of wedding receptions, was loaned to churches for vacation Bible school, was used for card parties, and at least one funeral was held there.

The future fate of the hall is not known.



DeWitt's Grange Hall, one of community's oldest buildings, is up for sale.

LOCAL HISTORY
COLLECTION
BOX FILE

Welcome Address Nov. 4th 1903

We welcome Pomona with a hearty good cheer;
As we have at this season for many a year;
We're welcomed you all from far and from near;
Our best thoughts to air and to interchange
And I know of no better place than in the Grange
On topics that are numerous and various.
Also those of a dubious nature and precarious.
We find in our little book called the ritual
The lessons taught are so grand and beautiful
If we would but heed its teachings and admonitions
We would advance along the line of prohibition
By avoiding intemperance in eating, drinking, language,
Also work and recreation,
And whatever we'd do would do it so well
That "Angels would hasten the story to tell."
Honesty is inculcated education nurtured, it seeks
the highest standard in morality
Temperance is supported, brotherly love cultivated
another essential is charity.

Woman is also admitted as man's equal
Thus making our order one that is truly social
For "God said it is not good for man to be alone."
Both are required to make a happy home,
And here in our "Grange home" I am proud to say
We can preside with the same grace and dignity
as they.

The summer is ended, the harvest is past—
And our W. L. has prepared for your minds a feast.
So I will not detain you any longer
But give the time to those more capable and stronger.
But again I say in behalf of Four Fifty Nine
We are glad to welcome Pomona every time
Thank You

Estella

BOX LIFE
COLLECTION
LOCAL HISTORY

Worthy Master, Brothers and Sisters,

In behalf of "Clinton Co. Pomona Grange" I would say:

We know we are welcome with Hickory today
For have we not thrice heard them say
By the hearty hand clasp and cordial word of greeting
That "Pomona" was always welcome with her May meeting.

Story

I will read to you a little ditty
Tis not very sound neither is it witty
The topic is nothing new or strange
Just a few words about our "County Grange."
We meet for pleasure with work bent on
From all the corners of "Old Clinton"
And clasp the hand of those who would be strange
Were it not for meeting in "Pomona Grange."

I wish that all the Patrons I can see
Would come and take the Fifth Degree
Another link higher that binds in a happy band
To educate the farmers of this broad land.
"This world is too dark, this life is too short"
To not be in "Pomona Court".

Our officers are good and true, we selected them with care
Our Master and Overseer as you can see are quite a handsome pair
Our Worthy Lecturer Sister Charity when she rises to her feet
To announce the program we know it is complete
The Steward that's found within our rank
Has an honest face for is he not always Frank.
Our Ass't. Steward we think him quite a "feller"
He can drive the goat clear round the room when ass'd by
Sister Chilly.

Our Worthy Chaplain of Bath Sister Dryer,
Asks blessings on our "Grange" of the Master Higher.
Then there's our Worthy Secretary Sister Dills,
Keeps the records and writes receipts to pay off bills.
While our Worthy Treasurer Bro. Jones of Bengal
Says "Here's your cash just hear the Silver jingle.
I hope that from the fold none will stray or roam
For our gate is guarded with strength and nerver you all
know Jerome.

We have Godesess Three I wish each would take her place
Thereby filling the position with dignity and grace.
For do they not preside over cerals, fruits and flowers
All necessaries in these beautiful homes of ours.
And now as we seperate and mingle with the world again
Let us remember the precept of our order, be honest be just
with our fellow men
And in eating, drinking and language, intemperance avoid
Thus keeping ourselves unspotted by deeds that are noble and good.

Read at Grange by Estella Dills

(The first virtue is to restrain the tounge
He approaches nearest the Gods who knows how to keep silent;
even though he be in the right.)

May 20 '85 ?

DeWitt Grange played vital role

Historic DeWitt

By Kenneth Coin

For farmers, the month of May has always been a busy time. Years ago, many DeWitt area farmers took a relaxing break from their duties to attend the May meeting at the grange hall on N. Bridge St. This May meeting was historically one of importance to the DeWitt Grange for it was then that it annually played host to Pomona, the County Grange.

Pomona was founded in 1879 as a county-wide association of granges. Its purpose was to oversee and coordinate the business and activities of the separate granges of the county.

The Grange as a whole played a vital role in the economic, social and political history of Clinton County for nearly 100 years.

The following poem was written at the turn of the century by a local resident, Estella (Cook) Dills and was read by her as a welcoming address to Pomona in DeWitt.

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"This world is too dark, this life is too short,"

To not be in Pomona Court.

Our officers are good and true,

We selected them with care.

Our Master and Overseer, as you can see, are quite a handsome pair.

Our Worthy Lecturer, Sister Charity (Pearce) when she rises to her feet,

To announce the program, we know it is complete.

The Steward that's found within our rank,

Has an honest face, for is he not always Frank?

Our Asst. Steward we think him quite a "feller,"

He can drive the goat clear round the rooin when ass'd. by Sister Chilly.

Our Worthy Chaplain of Bath, Sister Dryer (Frances?),

Asks blessings on our Grange of the Master Higher.

Then there's our Worthy Secretary, Sister Dills (Abbie),

Keeps the records and writes receipts to pay off bills.

While our Worthy Treasurer, Bro. Jones (Charles) of Bengal,

Says, "Here's your cash, just hear the silver jingle."

I hope that from the fold none will stray or roam,

For our gate is guarded with strength and nerve, you all know Jerome (Dills).

We have Goddesses Three, I wish each would take her place,

Thereby filling the positions with dignity and grace.

For do they not preside over cereals, fruits and flowers?

All necessities in these beautiful homes of ours.

And now as we separate and mingle with the world again,

Let us remember the precept of our order; be honest, be just with our fellow men.

And in eating, drinking and language, intemperance avoid,

Thus, keeping ourselves unspotted by deeds that are noble and good.