

HISTORY OF BEAVER LODGE #27

Beaver Lodge #27 was instituted on February 27, 1907 after 6 members with live withdrawal cards petitioned the Grand Lodge of Alberta for a charter. Those six were: Alonzo Rodgers, Tom Franks, J.D. Park, James Lyall, A.D. Kellog and Gabe Severson, Stavely's mayor at the time. They also submitted a list of 16 applicants. The letter was dated February 15th so Grand Lodge must have moved quickly. The Masonic Lodge was forming at the same time. They received their dispensation on June 21st, had their first meeting July 9th but didn't receive their charter until May 30, 1908. It must have been a bustling place to have two prominent organizations forming at the same time. Both organizations used what was called 'Brand Brothers' Hall' for their meetings. On May 4, 1909 this hall burned to the ground and the records and books of both Lodges were destroyed. Beaver Lodge #27 then held their meetings in the upper room of the Stavely School House. In October of 1909 they received dispensation to hold meetings in the new Masonic Hall on Railroad Street.

We have all the minute books dating back to the first meeting following the fire and what I have done is take snippets out of these books to give you a flavor of what transpired through the years of Odd Fellowship in Stavely.

History sheets

You know, starting from the wheel chair they bought back in 1957, the Lodge spent increasingly more time and effort in the community. The minutes went from being two to three pages long to five and six pages long simply because they were doing so much more; Art Scott Auction concessions, donating to the hospitals, minor sports, 4H beef and horse clubs, selling raffle tickets for the Grand Lodge, Grey cup tickets for Lethbridge No. 2, assisting victims of house fires, we participated in the Figure Skating Clubs Skate-a-thon for its 4 year life, the list goes on and on. The returns from the casinos has steadily risen and our last casino netted us in excess of \$31,450. This money has been returned to the community in many different ways and it is so gratifying as an organization to be able to help so many. In the past the Lodge saw it's way to give \$10 annually to the Woods Christian Home, \$10 annually to the Bursary Fund, \$10 annually to the Library Board. Now we are able to give \$500 or \$1000 away at a time to the community things which are so important to all of us.



**SEVERAL OF THE BROTHERS FROM BEAVER NO. 27
AND VISITING BROTHERS**

As the second second-largest lodge in Alberta (tied with Cayley #103) we take pride in what we can accomplish. But we cannot forget the previous members who set the stage for us. Some of those members should be acknowledged tonight. We have one member, Bro. Ed Nelson, who has 73 years service, two members, Fred Hall and Roy Nelson, who have in excess of 60 years of membership in our lodge. We also have five members in excess of 50 years: Alan Alsgard, Laverne Eskeland, Art Scott, Kendall Allonby, and Les Kiely. Our 40+ year members include: Brian Nelson, Gentry Hall, Morley Heidmiller, Bernie Johnson, Barry Johnson, Larry Nelson, and Terry Olsen. Another fact that should be brought before you is that we have a 4th generation member in our lodge. Carl Nelson joined us in March of 1944, his son Ed joined in June of 1944, his son Brian joined in 1972, and his son Curtis joined in 2003. We believe this demonstrates how strong these people believe in what we do.

You will notice that the tables have been set with the theme of white, blue and red. These are the colors of the three links of Odd Fellowship. The first link is Friendship symbolized by the white. The second link is Love, portrayed by the blue and the third link is Truth exemplified by the red. These three principals, Friendship, Love and Truth are what we strive for and these principals have endured in Stavely for the past 110 years.

During our closing ceremony at every meeting we recite a valediction which reminds each time we recite it of what we believe in, who we are, and why we are here. I don't know if, since it is part of our ritual, if it is to be shared with the general public but in my opinion I think it should be on display for all to see. It goes:

I AM AN ODD FELLOW. I believe in the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man; I believe in Friendship, Love and Truth as basic guides to the ultimate destiny of all mankind; I believe my home, my church or temple, my lodge and my community deserve my best work, my modest pride, my earnest faith, and my deepest loyalty, as I perform my duty "to visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan" and, as I work with others to build a better world, because in spirit and in truth, I am and must always be, grateful to my Creator, faithful to my Country and fraternal to my fellow man.

I AM AN ODD FELLOW!

Thank you.