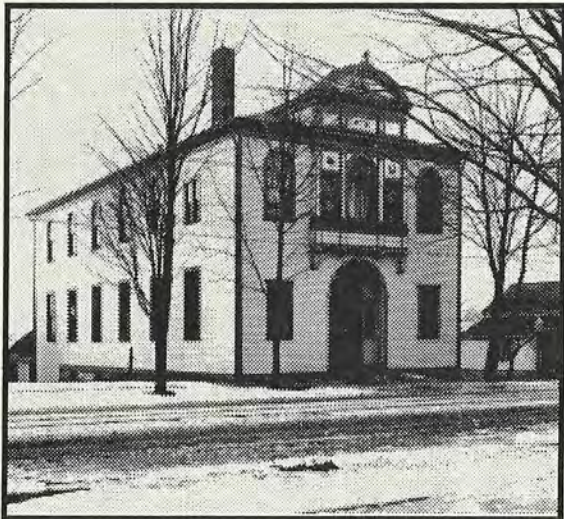


History Highlights of the **WEBSTER GRANGE** and Building

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1899 - 1999

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Webster Grange Hall
1899

Origin of the Grange

The order of the Patrons of Husbandry originated in the mind of O.H. Kelley, a man of New England birth who moved to Minnesota in his early manhood and became a farmer. In 1864, Mr. Kelley became an employee of the Dept. of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. While traveling in the south as part of his job, the thought of a secret society of agriculturalists, for the protection and advancement of their interests, first occurred to Mr. Kelley.

On December 4, 1867, Mr. Kelley and six other men met and constituted themselves the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry with appointed officers. The first Charter to be issued to a Subordinate Grange was at Fredonia, New York on April 16, 1868. The first meeting of National Grange, as a delegate body, was held at Georgetown, D.C. on January 8, 1873. Six founders of the Order and seventeen delegates (4 women) were present. Nearly 30,000 Charters were issued prior to 1900.

In 1880, a small group of farmers and their wives held a meeting which resulted in a decision to form a Grange in Webster, NY. On May 6, 1880, County Grange Deputy, L.A. Palmer of Honeoye Falls met with them in the basement of the Webster Baptist Church and organized Webster Grange #436.

Webster Grange Hall Highlights

- ★ To start the Building Fund, a resolution was presented and adopted to transfer \$250.00 from their treasury.
- ★ Bonds of \$10.00 were issued bearing a 4% interest, due in 10 years. These bonds were sold to their current membership of 232 people.
- ★ In 1899, members dues were raised from \$1.20 to \$2.00 per year.
- ★ The Architect's fee was \$35.00.
- ★ A decision was made to erect a building not only for their meetings but also for public gatherings.
- ★ April 29, 1899, George Sage received the contract to build the new hall.

- ★ The lot was purchased for \$450.00.
- ★ Upon completion of the Grange Hall, Mr. Sage was paid \$3,808.00.
- ★ The foundation used 217 perch stones at 40 cents per stone totaling \$87.00. It took 11 days and cost \$22.87 for labor.
- ★ They used 77 bushels of lime at a total cost of \$19.25.
- ★ Many Webster Grangers donated their time in helping in any way they could.
- ★ On May 6, 1899, the cornerstone, donated by Thomas Wright, was laid and a ceremony was conducted by Elliott Norris, then the Master of New York State. Various articles, artifacts, wine and other gifts were placed in the stone.
- ★ On December 28, 1899, the Webster Grange was dedicated by Mr. Norris.
- ★ Dimensions of the new building were 36' by 80' consisting of a lodge room on the second floor, dining room and kitchen on the main floor and a basement.
- ★ On January 6, 1900, the first meeting was held in the new hall with a membership of 322.



Lodge Room

- ★ At the end of seven years, all bonds were paid. Several State Officers were present for the burning of the bonds.
- ★ Minstrel shows became popular at the Grange Hall.



Dining Room and Kitchen

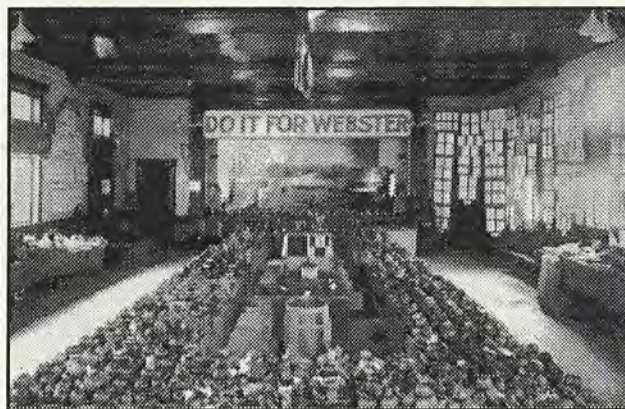
- ★ On non-meeting nights, the building was rented out to various organizations for \$2.25 per night.
- ★ In March 1902, railings were installed in the stairway for safety reasons.
- ★ In the 1907 records, Village Taxes were \$6.00, School Taxes were \$12.19.
- ★ The concrete sidewalks in front were installed in Sept. 1907 at a cost of \$53.25.
- ★ In the era of 1909, fire escapes were installed.
- ★ October 1910, the kitchen and dining room were moved to the basement and the main hall was used as an auditorium.



Stage Show in the Auditorium

- ★ In December 1910, electric replaced the gas lights that were being used. The complete price including lamps, shades and fixtures was \$430.39. Also the Village water line was installed at a cost of \$16.39.
- ★ The May 1911 bill from Sodus Gas and Electric was \$3.30.
- ★ It was in September 1911, Grange members were asked to help level and seed the newly acquired lot in the rear of the building. They had many volunteers who came with their teams of horses and completed the job.
- ★ In March 1916, the Bell Telephone Co. installed a phone in the Grange Hall. Service charge was \$24.00 per year plus toll charges.
- ★ On the 23rd of August 1921, a lease was signed for the use of the main floor auditorium to show movies on Saturday nights and one other night per week. The rent was \$8.00 per night and \$2.50 if they had a matinee on the same day. This lasted until March 1931.
- ★ Dances were held on Saturday nights from 1936 until March 18, 1939.
- ★ The new Juvenile room and two dressing rooms for the stage were dedicated on May 6, 1939. In April 1940, the Grange Hall was rented once again for the use of movies on each successive Wednesday night.
- ★ In the Fall of 1943, the Drill Team gave the Grange new ovens and utensils for the kitchen. The installation services of the ovens was donated by F. Prinzing.
- ★ At the December 15, 1951 meeting, it was approved to raise the rent for the use of the hall, dining room and kitchen to \$20.00. If the main room was also used, the rent was \$35.00.
- ★ In June 1952, the Church of the Good Shepherd started holding services in the Grange Hall.
- ★ A new roof was installed in December 1952 at a cost of \$728.00.
- ★ At the April 16, 1955 Grange meeting, it was announced that the Town of Webster was interested in purchasing the Grange Hall. It was voted down.

- ★ In June 1960, it was necessary to paint the outside of the Grange Hall at a cost of \$1,000.00 for two coats of paint. Each member was asked to contribute \$1.50 to defray the cost.
- ★ Xerox rented the Grange Hall from March 1963 through February 1967. The rent was initially \$213.00 per month and subsequently raised to \$238.00 per month in March 1965.
- ★ Webster Grange Garden Club, organized in 1965, purchased a new water heater and coffee maker for the kitchen in January 1967.
- ★ At the October 18, 1969 meeting, it was decided to hold the meetings in the Junior room to keep their costs down.
- ★ In March 1971, the Grange Hall was rented each weekend for a Flea Market for \$75.00.



Fall Festival

- ★ On March 23, 1974, the Grange accepted an offer from the Rochester Chapter of SPEBSQSA to purchase the Grange Hall for \$45,000. In addition, the Webster Grange members had use of the Junior room and kitchen facilities free of charge for 20 years, renewable on a year to year basis.
- ★ The September 5, 1974 Grange meeting was the first in the Hall under new ownership. The Webster Grange is currently still using the facilities for their meetings.
- ★ **The Webster Grange welcomes anyone that may have an interest in joining their organization.**