

On May 10, 1911, a dispensation was granted by Harold Banner, Worthy Grand Patron, for a chapter to be constituted in Chugwater, Wyoming. On that date, eight members of Oak Leaf Chapter No. 6 and four members of Wheatland Chapter No. 11 met with fifteen petitioners and Laurel Leaf Chapter No. 25 was constituted by Sister Inez M. Robinson, special deputy of the Worthy Grand Patron.

The first Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron elected and installed to serve Laurel Leaf were Sister Fanny D. Foss and Brother E.B. Welty.

Initially, the chapter met on the first and second Saturdays of each month. However, in 1912, it met only four times and only three times in 1913. On March 14, 1914, the meeting date was changed to the Saturday night on or before the full moon in order to allow members light to travel home. In later years, the meeting date was changed to the first and third Tuesday nights of each month. Dues were initially set at \$1.50 and the initiation fee at \$3.00.

Due to Chugwater's relatively small population and resident membership being ranchers who traveled several miles to attend the meetings, it was only logical that the chapter had to depend on pro-terns.

As the February 10, 1912, minutes quite obviously point out: "Sister Marion B. Johnson was in her regular station as Associate Conductress and she also pro-temmed as Adah and Electa. Brother Frank M. Johnston pro-temmed Ruth; Brother A.R. Bastian as Esther and Brother Robert M. Grant as Martha. Brothers Johnston and Bastian also filled their regular offices as Warder and Sentinel. In the margin of the April 27, 1912, minutes appears a notation about their immediate Past Matron, "Mrs. Fannie M. Foss died April 7, 1912. She was riding with her husband on a railroad hand car between Chugwater and the Foss ranch home at Diamond, some twelve miles south, when the ends of the long scarf she was wearing caught in the wheel mechanism and she was thrown from the hand car to the ground and killed instantly". At that time, she was holding the office of Martha. The first Worthy Grand Matron to visit Laurel Leaf was Sister Ruth Taylor of Sheridan on March 14, 1914.

The minutes of 1915 first mention that all important word "refreshments", a problem that plagues many chapters from time to time, i.e., many Masonic Halls were small, had no kitchen facilities and no serving aids so the Sisters called upon to serve had to bring absolutely every article from home to serve and then pack it all up and carry it home.

In 1917 Brother Foss again served as Worthy Patron. He came by train from his ranch in Diamond, arriving in Chugwater on the northbound passenger train, and saw to it that the meetings were concluded in time to catch the southbound 9:00 train back to Diamond.

On February 3, 1917, Brother Casper B. Bare was initiated into the Order and at the next meeting, on March 10th, pro-temmed as Associate Conductress.

During the early 1920's, the minutes show the attendance at chapter meetings averaged between ten and fifteen. Often, all of the offices could not be filled, even with pro-terns. However, when Worthy Grand Matron Anna P. Davis made her official visit on March 26, 1925, there were twenty-seven members and six visitors present.

On June 2, 1925, the chapter voted to replace their obstinate phonograph with a piano and the minutes of October 6 first mentioned the filled office of Organist by Sister Eva Bastian. For the next 36 years only four sisters served in that office.

In 1927 refreshments again came to the fore when it was moved and seconded that 150 tin cups and 100 tin spoons be purchased.

In 1930 the chapter presented the first Life Membership to Brother Foss with all the privileges of the Order. The last annual Foss picnic was held during the summer of 1933. "Brother Foss was becoming quite infirm."

On October 15, 1935, dues were reduced from \$10.00 to \$5.00.

In 1939 Sister and Brother Templin presented the chapter with new emblems and Sister and Brother Milstead gave the pedestals for the emblems.

In 1940 the chapter voted to give Life Membership to charter members.

Laurel Leaf's Sister Lillian Templin was installed as Worthy Grand Matron in 1940.

During the war years, the chapter contributed liberally to various causes— to an ambulance fund; the Red Cross; and many food and clothing drives.

In 1946 the chapter initiated a Benevolent Fund and each member was "taxed" \$.50 per year.

On February 25, 1947, the Masonic Hall and chapter room were completely gutted by fire. The fire destroyed the chapter's original charter and a duplicate was issued under the date of March 4, 1947.

By November 1947, the hall had been completely restored and much of the needed paraphernalia had been donated by other chapters, organizations and special friends.

During that year the dues were raised to \$3.00 and the initiation fee to \$10.00

In 1951 new Eastern Star furniture was purchased, a far cry from the first little kindergarten chairs which were later replaced by uncomfortable wooden folding chairs which were in use for so many years.

In 1960, from a chapter membership of fifteen, Laurel Leaf Chapter had grown to a paid membership of 120 and a resident membership of approximately seventy. Although the chapter was one of the smallest in the state, it was always considered one of the most active.

On May 10, 1961, Laurel Leaf observed its 50th Anniversary. An open meeting was held in celebration with approximately 200 people in attendance.

Unfortunately, as our small towns grew smaller and membership and attendance waned our small chapters became quite vulnerable.

Laurel Leaf surrendered their charter on December 31, 1989.