

HISTORIC RUDY'S HALL CELEBRATES ITS QUASQUICENTENNIAL

125 YEARS

When they purchased 27-31 East Main Street, in 2002, the new owners, Jayfore Family Partnership/Weston & Lisa Terry, were presented with a gift, from the archives of Lititz Historian Cory Van Brookhoven, the original Mortgage document between Miles H. Rudy and Lititz National Bank. At their time of purchase, the building was fondly referred to as the Spacht Building or Lititz Office Products, the prominent businesses that conducted businesses there during the prior 75 years.

The stately brick building needed extensive updating. As they reviewed this original mortgage loan document, and uncovered intriguing building details, during planning and construction, the Terry's felt it was historically important to once again refer to the building by its original given name, Rudy's Hall, named after the young philanthropic town butcher, who chose to build a Town Hall for the community's enjoyment, directly across the street from his residence.

The handwritten 1900 bank document, combined with notes of past Lititz Historical Foundation curator, Hiram Eberly's, ***Main Street Lititz**, Section III, The John Henry Rauch House*, indicates the ownership history of the original lots that the 125 year old Rudy's Hall was built on. The site was an original stone home, erected at 27 East Main Street, approximately 1775 by John Henry Rauch. "He was an expert mechanic and was the inventor of the starter point for auger bits. Before this when a man attempted to bore a hole his bit would jump all over the place. By adding the small threaded tip to a bit it was possible to bore accurately. This was a boon to carpenters the world over and is used to this day, but all that Rauch got out of it was the bit he made before they came into general use." At 25 East Main Street sat a large home built in "1796 with 15 pane windows, the home later was owned by Dr. Levi Hull" Eberly, ***Main Street Lititz**, Section IV, The Dr. Levi Hull House*, This ownership is where the Miles Rudy mortgage deed documentation originated. Following continued family ownership of Hull's heirs, the home ownership was recorded in Lancaster County deeds, March of 1893 to John H. Stauffer and his wife Jane. Miles Rudy mortgage deed was granted and indentured in the Lancaster County property records on the 1st day of April 1898, when Rudy was only 29 years old. Although the complete details are uncertain, the deed and historical documentation indicate that Rudy's Hall was built between April, 1898 and September of 1900, on lots where those original homes stood, and were most likely torn down for Rudy's vision of the Town Hall. The Lititz National Bank documentation indicates that Miles Rudy paid \$5,000 toward the mortgage most likely for the completed building on October 6, 1900, with the Indenture stating "to have and to hold the said usage and lot of ground known as Rudy's Hall. An additional sum of \$5,000 lawful money, as aforesaid, together with interest at a rate of four and one half per cent per annum, payable on the first day of April A.D. One Thousand nine hundred and one, 1901. The Mortgage document is notarized and states the Mortgage was paid principal and interest in full, as indicated by the Lititz National Bank. It has been recorded that Rudy's Hall cost Miles Rudy \$20,000 in its entirety to build in 1900.

"Rudy's Hall soon became a bustling meeting area for community organizations. One of the first recorded events was "T. S. Arthur's Masterpiece, entitled Ten Nights in a Barroom. The play opened on Monday, December 17, 1900 after the Franco American Scenic Company entered into contract with Mr. Rudy in November of 1900 to paint a complete set of scenery for the stage that was located on the second floor."

"The third floor was reserved for Lodge meetings. Some of those that met were, Knights and Ladies of the Golden Eagle, Knights of the Pythias, Independent Order of Odd Fellow, Foresters of America,

Ancient Order of Knights of the Mystic Chair, Daughters of Naomi of the Mystic Chair. All meetings were secret, and evidence of the secrecy was preserved in an existing door having a small hole with a swinging cover that had to be lifted, through which a password had to be whispered for admission.”

“The second floor was used for entertainment: For the admission of five cents, townsfolk could attend silent movies accompanied by a pianist. Vaudeville Acts or a Glass Blower might also be included. The biggest event was the Poultry Show. On the first floor was a Farmer’s Market. Often on a Saturday night, an organization would hold a festival, serving food while listening to bands and dancing to music.”

“In March, 1910 Franklin Emig became the manager of the very first moving picture show in Rudy’s Hall. After Emig’s death,... the showing of moving picture shows continued by J.F. Stoner until about 1914 when Hiram Holtzhouse bought out Stoner. Oftentimes, the front wall of the building was used as a screen, and the crowds grew to such large proportions that it stopped traffic on Main Street.”

Sadly, Miles Rudy only lived 4 years after he completed this grand building for the community’s enjoyment. He died of the flu in his 36th year, leaving his widow Lillie Bear Rudy and seven children. “ I had the privilege on several occasions to meet personally with one of Miles Rudy’s granddaughters, the late great, and at the time one of Lititz oldest natives, Anna Yerger, (1915-2022).” “One day after our interior construction was completed, we were able to get Anna from her home at Moravian Manor, to the building for a complete tour of the renovations.” “Anna had an extraordinary memory and she provided me with many facts and stories she vividly remembered about her Grandmother Lillie Rudy and spending time in her home directly across the street (at the current site of Zest) from Rudy’s Hall.”

In 1925, Ralph M. Spacht purchased Rudy’s Hall at public auction to be used for his business vision of a combined Furniture Store and Funeral Parlor. An excerpt from an advertisement brochure fondly gifted to the Terrys, plus many cherished photographs, during this era, from the late great William “ Bill” Spacht (1927-2022), boasted “A NEW FURNITURE PALACE, Out of the High City Rent Districts.” It stated Spacht’s Furniture was one of the largest Furniture and Rug Stores in Lancaster County, and was open every night. Ralph Spacht “remodeled, enlarged and beautified the original Rudy’s Hall structure so that it was more than ever the outstanding and most attractive temple dedicated to a trade in Lititz.” In addition to the Furniture displays, the third floor was reserved for Funerals, consisting of a chapel, coffin display room, and apartment accommodations for out of town funeral guest attendees, as well as an apartment dwelling for the Spacht family. In 1957, Ralph’s son, R. William “Bill” Spacht, joined his father’s business and was instrumental in establishing the Spacht funeral home business at 127 South Broad Street, in addition to maintaining the furniture business at 27 E. Main Street.

William E. Bell, Sr. purchased the Spacht building in April, 1981. The new business residing in the building became the Lititz Book Store, and then was expanded into Lititz Office Products under the ownership of William Bell, Jr. after his father’s death in 1995. Bill Bell, Jr. made the decision to change the location of his business to the Flyaway Business Park, for more accessibility for his customers and deliveries in 2001.

Over the past 23 years and the Terry ownership, the building has been transformed into a multiuse building with all modern compliances for Class A office space and fit out for a full service restaurant space, including large full service kitchens on both the 1st and 2nd floors. To celebrate the building’s Quaquicentennial, the owners will be bringing back some of the events that originated on the 2nd floor in 1900. During the month of November, wake up Wednesday evening’s and join your friends and neighbors in the newly enhanced Event Space,

THE MAIN EVENT, on the 2nd floor of Historic Rudy's Hall for "Dancing Through the Eras." The 2nd floor is ADA compliant and can be reached from the Main Street entrance up the front staircase or from the rear parking lot, off of North Lane, through the back entrance and up the elevator, or rear staircase. For information regarding our future events rudysshall.com Tickets can be purchased directly on line or at the door until sold out. A portion of your donation or ticket purchase will benefit Lititz non-profits.

**Comprised from the buildings historic writings of Lisa Terry. Special thanks for the Notes of Facts, and Articles that were provided by the kind contributions of the late Ronald Reedy, Anna Yerger, and Bill Spacht. As well as by Lititz historian Cory Van Brookhoven, and notes from Cheryl Bell, and a compilation of The Lititz Record Express, printings of "Out of the Past" articles.*

"DANCING THROUGH THE ERAS"

Wednesday Evenings in November

- **Wednesday, November 5, THE MOONLIGHTERS** swing through the Big Band era with music of the popular local Moonlighters Band, from 7:00-9:00 pm. You can't help but love the sounds of this popular local band with its big band sounds. Presale tickets or tickets at the door are by donation of Pay What you Will.
- **Wednesday, November 12, THE FABULOUS GREASEBAND**, dust off your poodle skirts and croon to the sounds of Sinatra, and the Beatles, and other classics so you can hop and bop to the sounds of the 50's -80's, This night will feature the Fabulous Greaseband, the original icon from the Jersey Shore. The first 100 tickets can be purchased in advance on our website for \$20.00 plus fees, the remaining tickets may be purchased on our website for \$25.00 plus fees, or at the door until sold out. The Fabulous Greaseband will perform from 7:00-10:00 pm.
- **Wednesday, November 19, THE KERI EDWARDS BAND**, this local all female band, rocks us through the 80's through the present era dancing to soft rock, pop, and some country. Keri Edwards on vocal and guitar, Heather Lee on bass guitar and small but mighty Deb Olsen on drums! They will play from 7:00-10:00 pm. Presale tickets or tickets at the door are by donation of Pay What you Will.
- **Wednesday November 26, JAKE'S ROCKIN COUNTRY BAND**, take a break from Thanksgiving dinner prep, gather your out of town guests or reunite with your hometown friends, and put on your boots and hats for a boot stomin' night with this notable Country Line Dancing Band complete with a line caller from 7:00-10:00 pm. Again the first 100 tickets will be offered for \$20.00 plus fees by clicking on the event portion of rudysshall.com The remaining tickets will be sold for \$25.00 plus fees.

POP UP MAIN STREET MARKET

Wednesday Dec. 10 & Friday Dec. 12 in December

- In December, we will open our 5,000 square feet of newly enhanced event space for the first of a series of pop up winter indoor market opportunities for makers to sell their goods and handcrafted gifts at our indoor “Main Street Market,” during the busy shopping season. The market hours will be open on Wednesday, December 10, and Friday, December 12th from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. Food, Artist, and Maker Vendors welcome. Set up is available on Tuesday, December 9. For further information and registration see Vendor application.

NEW YEAR’S EVE GALA

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

- Check out future information for Ringing in the New Year, and our final Celebration of Rudy’s Hall Quasquicentennial on December 31, featuring the popular dance band “Big Boys Brass Band.”