



History of
Phoenix Lodge #123
F&AM
1844 ~ 2009

Updated 11-12-09

A History Of Phoenix Lodge 123 F. & A.M.

About twenty-eight years after the founding of the Village of Perrysburg, Ohio, a group of interested persons gathered together pursuant to a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio and organized a Lodge of Free Masons. This meeting took place on March 7, 1844. A Special meeting was called on March 11, 1844, for the purpose of reading and adopting the "By-laws" of the lodge. Those present at this memorable meeting included:

John Hollister - Worshipful Master,	D. Wilkinson – Treasurer,
Josiah Miller - Senior Warden,	J. Curtis - Senior Deacon protem,
Daniel Wheeler - Junior Warden,	H.L. Homer - Junior Deacon,
J.M. Hall – Secretary.	

L. Bates was also in attendance as a visitor that meeting.

The Grand Master of Masons in Ohio, Most Worshipful Brother W.B. Thrall, did, on May 25, 1844, grant a dispensation to these brethren officially designating the budding lodge as "PHOENIX LODGE of PERRYSBURG, OHIO." The original fees were established at five dollars for each of the degrees in blue lodge. The Grand Lodge Communication held in Columbus, Ohio, on October 23, 1844 approved the by-laws and work of Phoenix Lodge and issued them charter number 123. The charter of Phoenix Lodge was signed by:

John Hollister ~ W.M.	David Wilkinson – Treasurer
Josiah Miller ~ S.W.	H. M. Hosmer
Daniel Wheeler ~ J.W.	Thomas Leaming
J.M. Hall ~ Secretary	Richard Shaw

Phoenix was even then an active lodge. The first petitioner was John Bates. His petition was read and accepted on March 11, 1844, the same date as the adoption of the by-laws. Brother John Bates' Masonic history is as follows:

Entered Apprentice, March 25, 1844,

Fellowcraft, April 8, 1844

Master Mason, April 22, 1844.

As is usual with most ventures, many problems arose during the first struggles of a growing Phoenix Lodge. One of the first was the resignation of the first Worshipful Master brought about by his moving from the State. Brother Andrew Young, an initiate of Phoenix Lodge, was elected to fill the vacancy, and at the following regular meeting was installed as Worshipful Master. It is very hard for us, living in the affluent times that we do, to understand the value of a dollar in the early life of the Lodge. The annual dues were one-and-one-half dollars and there was considerable trouble in collecting that. However, the Lodge was able to weather the financial troubles it encountered and continued to grow. During the first twelve years of the Lodge, the rooms of Brother J.M. Hall were rented as a Temple for an annual fee of forty dollars, which included a suitable stove, to be furnished by the landlord. Then in June of 1855 the Lodge purchased the home of Mrs. Peter Laney, the widow of the late Brother Peter Laney, and it was stipulated in the transaction that Mrs. Laney was to have a life lease on the property. Early in 1856 a committee was appointed, consisting of Brother A. Bloomfield, Brother L. Hunt and Brother E. Graham to negotiate for the rental of rooms, which were proposed to be built over the Bank. Direct reference to the outcome of this committee is unavailable but it is recorded that in December the same year a new Masonic carpet was purchased for the new Lodge rooms and it supposed that the Lodge moved into its new quarters. Then in February of 1857 reference is made to a Masonic Festival held by Phoenix Lodge to help defray expenses connected with the new meeting rooms, and the success of this venture was sufficient to warrant continuing the Festival on an annual basis for several years. The economic condition of the area was improving and early in 1857 it was voted to increase the fees for the degrees to twenty dollars and to be divided as follows: ten dollars for the Entered Apprentice degree, five dollars for

the Fellowcraft degree, and five dollars for the Master Mason degree. These fees remained in effect until the middle of the following year when they were raised to the sum of ten dollars for each of the degrees.

Things were really moving in this community just after the Civil War. Many of the young men of the community had been out in the world and were ready to accept the responsibility of being Masons. The Lodge prospered, and at the time of their report to Grand Lodge in October of 1866 they counted eighty-nine members. During this time and the immediate years following, it was considered proper to use either persons from the local organization or to import persons from another part of the country to address different organizations, and Masonry was not excluded. Our own Brother Asher Cook was often used for this purpose, and our history records that he was an able speaker. One of the very great events of this nature was on February 6, 1878, when a Past Grand Master from the Grand Jurisdiction of Kentucky was commissioned to make an address before Phoenix Lodge. This man, later known as the father of the Order of Eastern Star, Most Worshipful Brother Robert Morris did come to Perrysburg and addressed the members and visitors of Phoenix Lodge. It is recorded that his speech was very inspiring, and it is known that Brother Morris was a very learned man in the field of Freemasonry. For those who have been initiated into the Order of Eastern Star, the ritual that he wrote and the lessons that he inculcated in that ritual are truly inspiring, and to attest to the perfection with which he worked, that ritual is practically unchanged even unto this day. The occasion of his visit was truly outstanding in the history of Phoenix Lodge. On the 21st of June, 1869, plans were submitted to the Lodge for the building of a room on the walls of a building owned by Brother Asher Cook located on lot number 385 in the village of Perrysburg. Brother Cook had previously made a very interesting proposition to the Lodge in which he offered to allow the Lodge to construct this room on the walls of a building he proposed to build on the lot mentioned. Said walls were to be of brick placed upon a foundation of stone and to be sixty-six feet long and twenty-five feet wide and twelve feet high. Said walls were to contain iron columns and to be covered by suitable joists for the mentioned construction. The plans were adopted with minor changes and the construction was offered out to bid. One contractor, Alex Voss, was commissioned to construct the new rooms, and in order that the interests of the Lodge be carefully considered, the Worshipful Master, Brother William Crook, appointed Brothers A. Roach, Henry Thornton and Asher Cook as a committee to work with the contractor and to see that the room was constructed and finished as the specifications required.

The Lodge held its first annual meeting in the new Temple on Monday evening, December 6, 1869. The date of January 17, 1870, was chosen as the proper time to have the dedication of the new facility and it was also the date set for the installation of the new corps of officers of Phoenix Lodge. The dedication was held, presided over by Most Worshipful Brother Alex H. Newcomb, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio, who then proceeded to conduct a public installation of the Officers of Phoenix Lodge. A banquet and a ball followed the installation. It is noted that the net receipts of the evening amounted to \$150.86. On March 3, 1873, the committee in charge of the construction of the rooms and the temporal affairs of the Temple reported that a perpetual lease had been entered into and it is thought that the text of that lease might be of interest to the reader. It is as follows: Know all men by these presents, that in consideration of goodwill and the conditions herein after stated, I, Asher Cook, of Perrysburg, Ohio, do give, bargain, and convey unto the Trustees of Phoenix Lodge No. 123, Free and Accepted Masons, and their successors in perpetual succession, the right to have and maintain a Lodge room 66 feet long and 25 feet wide on the second story of the building erected by me on the south 25 feet of the north 48 feet of In-lot number 385 in Perrysburg, Wood County, Ohio; and I hereby bind myself and my heirs and assigns to keep the lower story of said building and forever maintain the same of the present height and condition. It is further agreed that I am to have the use of the stairway in common with said Lodge, each to be at one-half of the expense of keeping the same in good repair. The Trustees of said Lodge bind themselves and their successors forever hereafter to keep and maintain said Lodge room and the roof thereof in good repair and to pay the taxes on said Lodge room. "In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seal this 19th day of February, A.D. 1873. " Signed in the presence of:

James O. Troup,
Valentine Schwind,

Asher Cook (seal),
William Crook (seal)
F.R. Miller (seal)
John Thornton (seal)

State of Ohio
Wood County

Be it remembered that on the 19th day of February, A.D. 1873, before me the subscriber, a Notary Public, within and foresaid county, personally came Asher Cook, William Crook, F. R. Miller and John Thornton, Trustees of the within named Lodge, parties to the within named contract of conveyance and acknowledged the signing and sealing thereof to be of their voluntary act and deed for the purpose therein mentioned, in testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and official seal this 19th day of February, A.D. 1873.

(Notary seal)

James O. Troup,
Notary Public
Wood County, Ohio

Numerous changes were made in the furnishings and equipment of the Lodge during the time between 1873 and 1919. The young men were returning from France at this time and the economy was on the prosperous side. The fees had been raised to \$45.00 and the Lodge was in safe financial condition. At this time the south 26 feet of the north 74 feet of In-lot number 385, adjacent to the rooms occupied by the Lodge were offered for sale and the Lodge proceeded to purchase them. A permanent building committee was named consisting of Brothers J.F. Brandhuber, Chairman, P. Wetzel, E.L. Clay, L.A. Waffle and Frank Fox. In order to simplify the legal aspects of this and the following transactions, this committee organized into a Corporation under the laws of the State of Ohio and was known as the Phoenix Masonic Building Company. This building company then proceeded to construct the building that today (1969) houses the business offices of Garn Realty Co. and the dining rooms and attached rooms of Phoenix Lodge.

Dedication ceremonies for the new building were set for December 5, 1927, at which time the representatives of the Grand Lodge convened in Perrysburg and proceeded to dedicate the new rooms for the use of Masonry in this community. Changes were later wrought in the furniture and furnishings of the Temple and the adjacent rooms by the installation of theater type seats, new carpet, painting of the walls and ceiling, new tile floor in the dining room, completely remodeling of the kitchen facilities, etc. On May 2, 1921 permission was granted for the Temple room to be use by the Order of the Eastern Star and Perrysburg Chapter No. 446 O. E. S. was thereby established. During the time of its existence, the Order of the Eastern Star has been of inestimable assistance to the Lodge in the purchase of needed equipment and the making of needed repairs. We owe a great amount of thanks to this organization and we extend our congratulations on its continued growth, and hope that that growth will continue through the years.

The foregoing is, admittedly, severely condensed. Not one of the trials or triumphs of Phoenix Lodge is of such inconsequential importance as to be worthy of being deleted or magnified. It has been the desire of your historian to touch upon some of the highlights, after going over the records of the Lodge. From the modest beginning in 1844, the Lodge has grown to a membership of 344 and at the time of this writing is again feeling the pangs of crowded conditions. What will become of this is the concern of succeeding historians, but you can be assured that what is done will be done with the best interests of Phoenix Lodge in mind.

Respectfully,
Ralph M. Perry P.M.
Historian (I969)

Phoenix Lodge History 1969-1987

Phoenix Lodge celebrated its 125th anniversary in 1969. The lodge, under the leadership of Herbert Samson, Worshipful Master, celebrated the occasion with a big banquet at the Great Hall of the newly constructed Toledo Masonic Complex. The featured speaker of the evening was the nationally known overseas foreign correspondent, Irving R. Levine. Over 500 brethren and ladies attended the anniversary banquet and listened to this famous speaker.

There has been an old story passed down through the generations accusing the Brethren of Phoenix Lodge of stealing the Northern Light Lodge Officer's Jewels after that lodge went dark in 1827. The following is a quote from a research project conducted by Ken R. Dickson, Past Master of Harbor Light Lodge #746.

Early Masonry in Northwestern Ohio By R. E. Richards 1870 AD

“There were reasons, (so I am informed) besides those set forth in the petition of Bro. Young, why the members of Northern Light desired to re-build the old temple instead of laying the foundation for an entirely new one. When the lodge broke up in 1827, the Officers' Jewels were deposited with a brother who resided across the river in Perrysburg, and when Phoenix Lodge was organized in 1844, said brother became a charter member of the new Lodge, and the jewels were by him, passed over to Phoenix Lodge. No new Lodge at Maumee or elsewhere had any legal right to them. They were the property of Grand Lodge. Therefore, in order to become repossessed of the lost jewels, they must have a re-issue of the Charter under the old number. By decision of the Grand Lodge in their favor, as above stated, the old organization (Northern Light #40) was recognized and the Lodge re-instated in its rights. The Jewels, however did not come into their possession again until January 22, 1850, and then only after lengthy discussions pro and con by committees from both Lodges.”

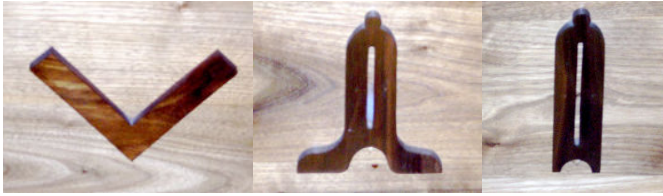
Research submitted by: Ken R. Dickson, PM, PM of Harbor Light #746

Right Worshipful Brother James Olmstead, while serving as Secretary of Phoenix Lodge, discovered some old records and various items stored high up in a seldom-used storage cabinet. Among the sacks and sacks of old bills and letters of correspondence he found four very old officers' jewels minus the neck cords. They consisted of the Tyler's Sword, the Treasurer's Crossed Keys, a Steward's Cornucopia, and the Master's Square. The following question must be asked; is it possible that Northern Light Lodge didn't get all their jewels returned in 1850? There is no way to authenticate these jewels as part of the original inventory from our neighboring lodge but we can't help but wonder.



As time marches on so do the activities and growth of Phoenix Lodge #123. The following is an update of these events, which are now added to the lodge history.

Brothers James Olmstead and Steve Swartz presented, to the Lodge, a solid walnut altar and kneeling bench, which they hand crafted themselves. The large walnut altar had four Tuscan columns, one at each corner extending from the base to the underside of the top.



Each side of the altar had a hand carved emblem prominently affixed in the center of each side panel; the hand carved Square, Plumb & Level were each placed on one of the sides and the familiar Square and Compasses within a circle of darker walnut was placed on the fourth side.



They presented the new altar to the Lodge during a stated meeting and said they built it for the Lodge as a token of their pride to be a Mason in Phoenix Lodge #123. The altar's appraised value in 1970 was \$5,000.

The minutes of 1969-70 once again show that discussions were long and controversial on the topic of purchasing land and planning for a new temple. Brother Norm Schneider offered to sell approximately seven acres along South Boundary to Phoenix Lodge for a building site. The price of \$50,000 was, to many brethren, an astronomical sum of money but the vote was overwhelmingly positive and the sale was finalized. Only a few short years were actually needed to fully pay off the debt and plans were started for a new temple.

As each new Worshipful Master served Phoenix Lodge, he enthusiastically planned his term and led the lodge through the activities and events normally scheduled during a year. However, they never lost sight of the goal to eventually build a new temple.

The members raised the money to build a new facility but were concerned about how maintain it. They decided that even though they had enough money build the temple they realized that they needed to continue fund raising efforts until they could establish an endowment fund that would cover the annual maintenance expenses.

The Grand Lodge Communication, held in Columbus in 1976, held a surprise for Phoenix Lodge. Worshipful Brother James Olmstead (1975-76) was appointed District Education Officer of the Eleventh Masonic District. Two years later at the 1978 Grand Lodge Communication he was appointed District Deputy Grand Master of the Eleventh Masonic District. He served in this new capacity for three years.

Unfortunately, in May of 1980, "Unmasonic Conduct" charges were brought against one of our brothers, which resulted in a Masonic Trial being held in the lodge on June 16, 1980. The acting Worshipful Master appointed a Trial Commission to take testimony. Worshipful Brother William Jones, Past Master, was appointed the Chairman of the Trial Commission. After listening to lengthy testimony, the brother was found guilty of "Unmasonic Conduct" and was sentenced to "indefinite suspension". This action was

not a pleasant experience however the fraternity must police its own members to ensure that the reputation of the order is not sullied.

The early 1980s were active years with respect to the new temple. The property purchased from Brother Schneider a decade earlier was sold to Marathon Oil Company with certain conditions, which assisted the lodge in completing their long-term goal of erecting a new temple. 1985 was the year of the new temple. The endowment fund raising efforts over the years had finally reached it's goal.

The Lodge appointed a building committee to meet, discuss and oversee the process of designing and building the new facility. The committee consisted of;

Herbert H. Samson, KYCH ~ Chairman
James E. Olmstead, PDDGM ~ Secretary
Robert Brossia ~ Lodge Project Overseer
Marv Adams, PM
Thomas Bettinger
Warren Bock
Gary Bowers
Melvin Camp, PM
Allen H. Christen, PM
Paul Colvin
James A. Foote, PM
John F. Gurtzweiler
Ron Hall
Calvin Henry
Wayne Hockstetter, PM
William Jones, KYCH
Dale Kohl, PM
Lester Lusher
Robert May, PM
Edward Meinders, PM

Robert A. Brossia ~ Vice-Chairman
Donald R. Jameson ~ Treasurer
Gilbert Pacheco, PM
Paul Sargent
Ron Schaller, PM
Dean Scott, PM
Harry Seminew, PM
Michael Seminew
Ronald Sheldrick
Glenn Smith, PM
John F. Smith, PM
Marvin Snyder, PM
Wilber Stanford
Joseph Tymiak, PM
John Welch
Robert C. Welch, PM
Hubert G. Wideman, KYCH
Earl Witzler

Early in that year the architectural firm of Bauer, Stark and Lashbrook was retained to design the new temple at a projected cost of \$510,000 (actual cost was \$559,000). The construction firm of Rudolph/Libbe was retained to build the facility. September 16, 1985 the Lodge voted to accept the \$65,000 offer for the sale of the Louisiana property and to plan ground breaking ceremony for May 4, 1985 at the site on South Boundary. Community and area political leaders joined with Masonic leaders for this event.

Frequent meetings were held to work out all the details, which resulted in the raising of a new home for Masonry in Perrysburg. In spite of all the minor problems associated with constructing a new building the project was close enough to completion that Phoenix Lodge and Perrysburg Order of Eastern Star were able to move in during October of 1986. Final completion is expected during the spring of 1987.



Our Sisters and Brothers of the Order of the Eastern Star were very supportive of the building project. The entire kitchen was designed with input from the of the Order of the Eastern Stars. They also donated the money for all the kitchen equipment, the silverware, and the dishes.

Brother Bob Shank of Witzler Shank Funeral Homes donated the engraved black granite sign to prominently mark the entrance to our new building.



The Building Committee had several discussions regarding what to call the new facility. There were some critics of freemasonry who charged that we were a religion rather than a fraternity. The word "Temple" merely added confusion to this concept. The Committee also realized that there was a good possibility that other Masonic bodies may become tenants in the new facility. Therefore rather than call the facility Phoenix Masonic Temple, it would be more prudent to call it "Perrysburg Masonic Building" which is the home of Phoenix Lodge #123 and all other bodies which may reside within.

Most Worshipful Brother Robert See, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio, confirmed the date of April 26, 1987, for the official dedication and cornerstone laying ceremonies. Right Worshipful Brother George O. Braatz, Deputy Grand Master, was the coordinator between Phoenix and the Grand Lodge officers. At the time of this symbolic cornerstone laying ceremony the Masons of Ohio numbered over 200,000. This is down from the over 250,000 Masons fifteen years earlier. There has been a sincere effort by Grand Lodge to slow and eventually reverse this trend. The brethren of 1987 hope that future generations can attest to the success of that effort.

A special evening for the Annual Awards Night ceremonies was held on February 2, 1987. Right Worshipful Brother James E. Olmstead presented a special plaque to the lodge in honor of Worshipful Brother Herbert Samson. It was called the "HERBERT SAMSON AWARD" for "Exceptional Work in the Quarries of Masonry." It was only fitting that the first recipient of the award be Worshipful Brother Herb Samson himself since his unceasing efforts as chairman of the building committee for eighteen-years finally resulted in fruition of the hopes of Phoenix Lodge, a new temple.

Respectfully submitted:
James E. Olmstead, PDDGM, & Secretary 1987

Phoenix Lodge History 1987- 2005



The Lodge moved into the new building in October 1986 and Perrysburg Chapter #446 OES was the first body to hold a meeting in the new quarters.

Grand Master Robert See and the Grand Lodge Officer's conducted the cornerstone ceremony and dedication of the new building April 26, 1987. A solid copper time capsule was deposited behind the corner stone in the hallway. The copper capsule was signed by all the Phoenix officers and the Grand Lodge Officers using a diamond stylus to engrave their signatures on the outside of the time capsule casket which contained the following;



- Copy of the “option to Purchase” the site
- Toledo’s 150th Birthday Celebration “Blade” insert
- Various pictures of the old temple, new building, and members
- Dedication napkin
- Printer’s “Cut” used for the napkins
- A copy of the “Perrysburg Messenger Journal” 4-22-87
- Masonic “Tidings” April 1987
- Grand Lodge Bulletin, March 1987
- History of Phoenix Lodge #123 F&AM
- Various news clippings
- Fellowcraft Jewel from Sanford Collins #396
- Installation Program from Ft. Industry Lodge
- Installation Program from Phoenix Lodge
- Valley of Toledo, AASR Reunion Program book
- Valley of Toledo, Maundy Program book

- Perrysburg #446, OES Program Booklets 1986-87
- Perrysburg #446, OES membership list for 1987
- Perrysburg #446, OES 50th Anniversary Program
- Perrysburg #446, OES Pin and Ring
- Masonic History of Northwest Ohio 1813-1984
- Barton Smith 75th Anniversary Program
- Sylvania Lodge stone plaque
- Phoenix Lodge Past Master's apron
- "Freemasonry; A Way of Life" booklet
- Pyramid #701 money clip
- Toledo Commandery #7 Belt buckle
- Coins from: Barton Smith #613, Robinson Locke #659, Grand Lodge of Ohio, Valley of Toledo AASR (two)
- Lapel pins from: Triad #708, Harbor Light #746, Phoenix #123
- Golf Ball from Ft. Industry
- Information sheet from the Order of the Eastern Star
- Toledo Masonic Bulletin May 1987

During the Grand Lodge session in October 1987, Grand Master, MWB George O. Braatz appointed RWB James E. Olmstead, Past Master of Phoenix in 1976, to serve as the Junior Grand Deacon of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. RWB Olmstead progressed through the Grand Lodge Officer's line to become the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Ohio in October 1994

The Officers of Phoenix Lodge initiated a program "Breakfast with Santa" in 1988. This event was opened to the entire community. The Perrysburg Police department partnered with the Lodge to provide a "Child Identification Program" (CHIP), which fingerprinted children and recorded their personal information to assist authorities in case a child were ever abducted or missing. This successful program has continued through the years to the time of this writing (2005).

Chicken dinner fund-raisers were started during the 1970's as a way to develop a Building Fund. These events were a source of good old fashion fellowship among the brethren as well as a good public awareness opportunity in the community showcasing Masonry in Perrysburg. This annual event was expanded during the 1990's to include an art contest for the Perrysburg High School art students. Several competition categories were established with savings bonds, and gift certificates being awarded to the winners in each category.

MWB H. Ray Evans honored Phoenix Lodge once again by appointing Worshipful Brother Robert Sickelbaugh as District Education Officer for the 11th Masonic District. Worshipful Brother Sickelbaugh served for three years from 1992 ~ 1995.

Grand Master James E. Olmstead made an official visitation to Phoenix Lodge in November of 1994 accompanied by the other Grand Lodge Officers to perform the Reconsecration Ceremony in the afternoon celebrating 150 years of Masonry in Perrysburg. This was Worshipful Master Michael Olmstead's last official act as Master because the installation of the new officers was only a few hours away.

That evening, following a banquet meal, the Grand Lodge Officers assumed their respective stations and proceeded to install the 1995 Phoenix Lodge Officers. The Grand Lodge Officer who held that same station in the Grand Lodge installed each corresponding Phoenix officer.

During the 1990's, Several Masonic Temples in the Toledo Metropolitan area were facing financial challenges, which prompted some of them to merge with other Masonic Lodges in other facilities. Calumet temple on Broadway & South sold their building and the fraternal groups meeting there relocated into other facilities throughout the area.

St. Omer Commandery #59, Knights Templar moved from the Calumet Temple to the Perrysburg Masonic Building and held their first meeting in their new location December 22, 1994.

Calumet Council #133, Royal & Select Masons also moved from Calumet Temple to the Perrysburg Masonic Building in 1994.

October 1995 Grand Lodge held its annual communication at the Toledo Masonic Complex in Toledo. Traditionally the officers of the Grand Master's lodge are asked to officially open the Grand Lodge session using the full form opening. The Phoenix Lodge officers allowed the immediate Past Master, Michael Olmstead the oldest son of the Grand Master to assume the Master's station and perform that duty. David L. Olmstead the youngest son escorted his father to the altar and introduced him as the Grand Master of Masons in Ohio.

It was a historic session as the Masonic delegates voted overwhelmingly to extend the hand of fraternal friendship by granting recognition to all the symbolic lodges under the jurisdiction of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio. Our Afro-American brethren are now recognized and visitation between the two Grand Lodges is encouraged. This historic action was the result of extensive meeting with both Grand Lodge Officer's lines to compare the rituals and confirm the origin of each. It was confirmed that both the rituals came from the same source, the Grand Lodge of England. The Grand Lodge of England voted in 1994 to recognize the Prince Hall Grand Lodge as legitimate and entitled to the rights and privileges of fraternal recognition. The Grand Lodge of Ohio joined with 26 other Grand Lodges in the United States who also extended recognition to the Prince Hall Grand Lodges in their respective states.

Portage Lodge #351 in Elmore, OH was having difficulty getting brethren to accept officer's stations. They followed the procedures outlined in the Masonic Code concerning merging with another Lodge. Their membership voted to merge with Phoenix Lodge #123 which was consummated on 6/21/96.

MWB Douglas O. Brenneman honored Phoenix Lodge in 1998 by appointing Worshipful Brother Michael J. Olmstead as District Education Officer for the 11th Masonic District. Worshipful Brother Olmstead served for three years from 1998 ~ 2001.

Once again Phoenix Lodge was honored when MWB Thomas E. Reynolds appointed Worshipful Brother Michael J. Olmstead as District Deputy Grand Master for the 11th Masonic District. Worshipful Brother Olmstead served in this capacity from 2001~ 2003.

Perrysburg Chapter, Order of Eastern Star made a donation, in 2001, to cover the purchase and installation of a flag pole to be placed next to the black granite sign along East South Boundary. It was donated in honor of Gertrude Murray, a long time, loyal member of the Eastern Star.

The family of Masonic organizations in Perrysburg continues to expand. Elmore Chapter #154 Order of the Eastern Star merged with Perrysburg Chapter 3-3-94 followed by Tontogany Chapter on 2-2-93 and Maumee Chapter #197 on 3-2-2000.

Lotus Chapter #477, Order of the Eastern Star moved into the Perrysburg Masonic Building after the Eastside Masonic Temple was sold in December 2002. They held their first meeting in their new home in September 2003. The three Blue Lodges on the East side, Port Lawrence, Lotus, and Yondota, merged

under the name of Paragon Lodge #788 and are meeting in temporary quarters in Oregon, OH. *(They have since bought a building along Rt 51 north of Genoa and have remodeled it for their new home)*

Freemasonry in the early days utilized the mouth to ear technique to coach the candidates and wall charts to illustrate the lessons contained in the lectures of the degrees. Then technology moved the lodges into a new era with the "Magic Lantern" which used glass slides to project the illustrations on a wall or screen while the lectures were presented. Progress continued by utilizing the 35mm projector and the Kodak transparencies, which were smaller and more realistic in content.

Well, the technology revolution has once again impacted freemasonry as well as Phoenix Lodge. The Grand Lodge of Ohio produced a DVD (Digital Video Disc) containing all three of the lectures of the degrees. This DVD was first used as part of the 2002 Grand Master's One-day Class in ten locations around the state of Ohio. This first time ever Grand Master's One-day Class brought in approximately 7800 new Master Masons in April of 2002 under the authority of Grand Master Thomas Reynolds, an honorary member of Phoenix Lodge. The newly produced DVD was placed into a laptop computer and projected on a large screen so brethren and candidates could watch while the lectures were presented orally by a brother. Phoenix Lodge purchased the necessary equipment and DVD's in 2004 and now uses this new technology for instructing the candidates about the lessons of the degrees.

Phoenix Lodge began to struggle in 2002 through 2003. Job transfers and other resignations resulted in many officer stations remaining unfilled. Then in 2003-4, several Past Masters assumed the stations of Worshipful Master, Senior & Junior Wardens. The plan was to spend the first year in restructuring the format of the meetings to make them more interesting. The first meeting of each month was the normal business meeting and an education presentation from the Lodge Education Officer. The second meeting of each month was designated as "Family Night" with a dinner at 6 PM. This was followed by a special program for the families, including community awards presentation, introductions of special guests from the community, or musical programs performed by young people from the Perrysburg Public Schools.

This new approach began to draw better attendance to the meetings. Donations from the Phoenix Lodge Charitable Fund were usually presented during this second stated meeting. Some of these donations were to the Perrysburg Fire Department, the Perrysburg Police Department, Perrysburg Youth Soccer programs, the Way Library, and the 32° Masonic Learning Center for Children who suffer from the learning disability "Dyslexia". This ability to extend the hand of fraternal charity was made possible through a bequest from the Victor and Olethia Peterson estate in the mid 1990's

The effort during the 2004-5 year concentrated on membership development as well as continuing the "Family Night" format.

Phoenix Lodge initiated a small pilot program, utilizing the "selective invitation" concept as opposed to the old paradigm of "2B1ask1." During the first seven months, this concept has yielded over 30 new members. This success should convince masons that it would be wise to abandon the "2B1ask1" paradigm and get comfortable with "selective invitation" as our recruitment model. Most Masons firmly believe that a personal invitation to become a Mason will be more successful than the old 2B1Ask1 approach. There are potential candidates out there that will enjoy the Masonic experience if personally invited to become a freemason.

It is this writer's hope that the next updating of Phoenix Lodge's history will include confirmation of growth within the fraternity in general and Phoenix Lodge in particular.

As this writer completes the updating of the Lodge history, once again the Grand Master honors Phoenix Lodge. Most Worshipful Brother James M. Williamson appointed Robert G. Sickelbaugh District Deputy Grand Master for the Eleventh Masonic District for 2005-6.



Phoenix Lodge has sponsored Fallen Timbers Chapter Order of DeMolay for a number of years. Theodore B. Korn (a member of Phoenix Lodge) was appointed Governor of the First District in 2005. He was also appointed an Active member of the International Supreme Council Order of DeMolay in 2005.

Upon reaching the proper age, a number of young DeMolay's petitioned for the Masonic degrees in Phoenix Lodge. These included Mike Olmstead, Paul Dobson, Dan Mills, and David Olmstead. Paul Dobson and Mike Olmstead eventually went on to serve as Worshipful Master of Phoenix Lodge. RWB Michael Olmstead served as the Dad Advisor for Fallen Timbers in 1990-93 and again in 1999-2010.

Fallen Timbers has been recognized several times for their growing membership. They have been active in the State level programs and activities.

The "Guild of the Leather Apron" award is designed to give singular recognition to a chapter advisor who in the past has made an outstanding contribution to the growth and success of a chapter. The advisor is one who should exemplify the ideas and precepts of the Order of DeMolay in his daily life as well as his work with the young men of DeMolay. This is at the discretion of the Executive Officer only and only one may be awarded a year in a jurisdiction. At the Annual DeMolay Conclave in 2009, Dad Michael Olmstead was honored with the "Guild of the Leather Apron Award" as the outstanding Dad Advisor in Ohio.

As an interesting side note, Paul Dobson became active in the Bowling Green area and was elected County Prosecutor for Wood County. Michael Olmstead became active in the Perrysburg area and was elected to serve on the Perrysburg City Council.

Several members of the chapter have been honored with the "Grand Master's Excellence in Youth Award" during annual Grand Master's Receptions in the eleventh Masonic District. This confirms the claim that DeMolay helps young men develop their potential skills and personalities as well as instilling the importance of serving others.

Phoenix Lodge continues to demonstrate that it is a premier lodge in the Eleventh Masonic District.

God Bless us all and God Bless the Masonic Fraternity.

Respectfully submitted:
James E. Olmstead, Past Grand Master

Phoenix Lodge History 2006 - 2009

The Perrysburg Masonic Building was twenty-three years old in 2009 and some capital improvements were needed to bring the building up to its more useful condition. The original dining room tables were damaged from heavy use and needed to be replaced. As result of a short-term fundraiser, all eighteen tables were replaced with new white lightweight folding tables.

The Masonic Building Board approved a log term fundraiser to address the major capitol improvement projects. All the fluorescence lighting was replaced with energy efficient electronic ballasts and tubes. The savings on energy cost is projected to pay for the project in five years.

Frequent roof leaks prompted the Board to approve replacing the portion of the roof over the dining room with a seamless rubber roof. This has solved the leaks in that area. The next phase of the capitol improvements project is to replace the HVAC. The Brethren of Phoenix Lodge always answer the call for assistance when maintenance and repairs need to be addressed.

After 33 years, Most Worshipful Brother James Olmstead, retired as a public school educator with Toledo Public Schools. Twelve of those years he was an Industrial Arts instructor specializing in woodworking and construction. He was elected to the position of “Active” in the Supreme Council of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in 1995. His love for woodworking led him to design and build his own office desk for use during his tenure as “Active.” Upon his retirement to become an “Active Emeritus”, he donated his office desk to Phoenix Lodge for use as the Secretary’s desk. The appraised value of the desk in 1995 was \$5000.



The Lodge had for many years used an assortment of unmatched working tools in the degrees. Most Worshipful Brother Olmstead designed and made a complete matched set of the working tools out of solid walnut. These tools were actually functioning tools made completely out of wood. He constructed an oak display case with blue velvet lining to store and also display the working tools at the appropriate time in the various degrees.



He also donated the ancient sailing ship and display shelf mounted to the right of the Anteroom doors as you leave the lodge room.



He also made a display board for the Tyler's sword, which is mounted, to the left of the entrance door to the lodge room. He donated the antique sword hanging on this board.



Those Called to Fraternal Service

The Order of the Eastern Star and Phoenix Lodge have been honored by having some of their members elected to serve as Grand Officers in their respective organizations.



Most Worshipful James E. Olmstead
served as
Grand Master of the
Grand Lodge of Ohio
1994-95.



Richard Oldham
served the
Grand Chapter of Ohio
Order of the Eastern Star
as
Worthy Grand Patron in 1984



Marilyn Bennett
served the
Grand Chapter of Ohio
Order of the Eastern Star
as
Worthy Grand Matron in 1992



Ray Hendricks
served the
Grand Chapter of Ohio
Order of the Eastern Star
as
Worthy Grand Patron in 1994

Respectfully submitted:
James E. Olmstead, Past Grand Master

Past Masters of Phoenix Lodge #123 F&AM 1844 ~ 2005

Dispensation May 25, 1844 ~ Chartered October 25, 1844

1844 ~ John Hollister	1 ~ W.E. Escott	58 ~ Ernest (Mike) Craven
45 ~ Andrew Young	2 ~ E.A. Underhill	59 ~ Harold Fox
46 ~ D.H. Wheeler	3 ~ A.R. Williams	1960 ~ Lawrence Atherton
47 ~ H.L. Hosmer	4 ~ Jno. Thornton	61 ~ Marvin Bortz
48 ~ D.H. Wheeler	5 ~ W.E. Escott	62 ~ D. Wade Loomis
49 ~ Jarius Curtis	6 ~ Chas. H. Van Norman	63 ~ Joseph P. Tymiak
1850 ~ Jarius Curtis	7 ~ J.F. Brandhuber	64 ~ Clarence D. Herman
51 ~ L.O. Simmons	8 ~ J.F. Brandhuber	65 ~ Dale X. Penny
52 ~ Jarius Curtis	9 ~ Phillip Wetzel	66 ~ Hugar B. Ross
53 ~ James Murray	1910 ~ Phillip Wetzel	67 ~ Marvin Snyder
54 ~ Andrew Bloomfield	11 ~ George A. Powers	68 ~ John F. Smith
55 ~ James Murray	12 ~ George A. Powers	69 ~ Herbert H. Samson
56 ~ James Murray	13 ~ A.R. Williams	1970 ~ Wayne Hockstetter
57 ~ James Norton	14 ~ Paul M. Schibrowski	71 ~ Dale H. Kohl
58 ~ James Norton	15 ~ Paul M. Schibrowski	72 ~ William E. Jones
59 ~ James Norton	16 ~ R.P. Barton	73 ~ Melvin A. Camp
1860 ~ Asher Cook	17 ~ R.P. Barton	74 ~ Ronald B. Schaller
61 ~ Jessie Norton	18 ~ Phillip Wetzel	75 ~ Robert E. May Sr.
62 ~ Andrew Bloomfield	19 ~ Harry Turner	76 ~ James E. Olmstead
63 ~ Wm. F. Pomeroy	1920 ~ Harry Turner	77 ~ Glenn Smith
64 ~ Wm. F. Pomeroy	21 ~ D. Whitehead	78 ~ Harry Seminew
65 ~ Wm. F. Pomeroy	22 ~ M.P. Gorton	79 ~ Edward B. Minders
66 ~ William Crook	23 ~ H.C. Webb	1980 ~ Ted Dooley ++
67 ~ William Crook	24 ~ E.L. Clay	81 ~ James A. Foote
68 ~ William Crook	25 ~ Floyd Thornton	82 ~ Allen H. Christen
69 ~ William Crook	26 ~ Harold Denger	83 ~ Gilbert Pacheco ++
1870 ~ William Crook	27 ~ Hubbel Fuller	84 ~ Dean W. Scott
71 ~ William Crook	28 ~ A.L. Cocanour	85 ~ Robert C. Welch
72 ~ William Crook	29 ~ L.E. Sweet	86 ~ Marvin L. Adams
73 ~ William Crook	1930 ~ C.R. Hartshorn	87 ~ John J. Gardner
74 ~ William Crook	31 ~ Jno. W. Lyons	88 ~ John B. Welch
75 ~ William Crook	32 ~ C.C. Lydorf	89 ~ Daniel E. Sprinski
76 ~ A.M. Russell	33 ~ H.E. Roether	1990 ~ Joseph W. Brainard
77 ~ William Crook	34 ~ Carl Grimes	91 ~ Robert G. Sichelbaugh
78 ~ William Crook	35 ~ Leon LaFarree	92 ~ Larry W. Turner
79 ~ Perry Thomas	36 ~ K.L. Pratt	93 ~ James N. Dollar
1880 ~ Perry Thomas	37 ~ Ralph M. Benard	94 ~ Michael J. Olmstead
81 ~ Asher Cook	38 ~ Arthur C. Lippert	95 ~ John C. Barker
82 ~ Asher Cook	39 ~ J.D. Van Brimmer	96 ~ Tod W. Burhans
83 ~ Asher Cook	1940 ~ F.R. McLaughlin	97 ~ Paul A. Dobson
84 ~ A.M. Trowbridge	41 ~ C.T. Falls	98 ~ John M. Tansey
85 ~ A.M. Trowbridge	42 ~ Ellery Lusher	99 ~ Douglas W. King
86 ~ Asher Cook	43 ~ V.C. Wagoner	2000 ~ Michael J. Spisak
87 ~ Jno. H. Thornton	44 ~ Robert D. Beck	01 ~ Robert D. TerDoest
88 ~ Jno. H. Thornton	45 ~ Lloyd L. Smith	02 ~ Mathew J. Morris
89 ~ E.L. Kingsbury	46 ~ A.H. Merrill Jr.	03 ~ Mathew J. Morris
1890 ~ E.L. Kingsbury	47 ~ Ralph Ford	04 ~ Michael J. Olmstead
91 ~ E.L. Blue	48 ~ Jack C. Lever	5 ~ John M. Worcester
92 ~ E.L. Blue	49 ~ Thomas LaFarree	6 ~ Jimmie L. Walsh
93 ~ Jno. H. Thornton	1950 ~ A. Joshua Lehman	7 ~ John M. Worcester
94 ~ Jno. H. Thornton	51 ~ Leonard Preston	8 ~ James R. Miller
95 ~ Jno. H. Thornton	52 ~ N. Joseph Lehman	9 ~ Jeffrey W. Hamons
96 ~ C.C. Hum	53 ~ Hubert G. Wideman	10 ~ James M. Anderson
97 ~ Jno. H. Thornton	54 ~ Ralph M. Perry	
98 ~ A.C. Fuller	55 ~ Jack C. Anning	
99 ~ A.C. Fuller	56 ~ Harry C. Bottorff	
1900 ~ D.K. Hollenbeck	57 ~ Donald Toland	

Expelled - ++



Knights of the York Cross of Honor (KYCH)

- Ralph M. Benard ~ 1967
- John F. Smith ~ 1974
- Hubert G. Wideman ~ 1976
- D. Wade Loomis ~ 1976
- William E. Jones ~ 1983
- Herbert H. Samson ~ 1983
- Jimmie L. Walsh ~ 1994
- John M. Worcester ~ 1995
- Robert C. Welch ~ 1996
- John B. Welch ~ 2000
- Robert D. TerDoest ~ 2002
- Michael J. Spisak ~ 2006



Honorary Members of Supreme Council, 33° (Sovereign Grand Inspectors General)

- James E. Olmstead, 33° ~ 1988
- John M. Worcester, Jr., 33° ~ 1996
- Theodore B. Korn, 33° ~ 1997
- Michael J. Olmstead, 33° ~ 2000
- James A. Foote, 33° ~ 2003
- Douglas W. King, 33° ~ 2006
- David L. Olmstead, 33° ~ 2006



Order of the Purple Cross

- James E. Olmstead ~ 2004
- John M. Worcester ~ 2007

Active Member of Supreme Council, 33°

- James E. Olmstead, 33° ~ 1995 ~ 2006
- Deputy for Ohio 1996 ~ 2005
- Active Emeritus 2006 ~ Present



- Theodore B. Korn ~ District Governor
- James E. Olmstead ~ Honorary member of ISC 2003-Present

Masonic Trivia

Past Grand Masters From The 11th Masonic District

Alexander H. Newton ~ 1869-70-71
Toledo Lodge #144

Reuben C. Lemmon ~ 1878-79-80
Toledo Lodge #144

Leander Burdick ~ 1888-89
Rubicon Lodge #237

Barton Smith ~ 1896-97
Sanford L. Collins #396

Clifford G. Ballou ~ 1904-05
Wakeman #522

Thomas B. Guitteau ~ 1911-12
Toledo Lodge #144

Otto H. Holy ~ 1928-29
Rubicon Lodge #237

James W. Morgan ~ 1929-30
Rubicon Lodge #237

John I. Guss ~ 1953-54
Lotus Lodge #624

Charles H. Strayer ~ 1960-61
Sanford L. Collins #396

Donald E. Kretzinger 1967-68
Sylvania Lodge #287

Robert D. Sager ~ 1974-75
Barton Smith Lodge #613

George O. Braatz ~ 1987-88
Grand Rapids Lodge #289

James E. Olmstead ~ 1994-95
Phoenix Lodge #123

Thomas E. Reynolds ~ 2001-02
North Baltimore Lodge #561

Charles R. Murphy ~ 2008-09
Genoa Lodge #433