



Parkman Historical Society Presents: History of the Western Phoenix Masons Charter #42

Guest Speaker - Dale Komandt

Our guest speaker, Dale Komandt, presented the history of the Western Phoenix Masonic Lodge - Charter #42 and its importance to our community. Parkman has one of the oldest in Ohio and the first in Geauga County, and it's tied to the oldest, largest and most widely known fraternal organization in the world — the Freemasonry.

The #42 Charter was granted to the Parkman members in 1818. Members would meet on Thursdays eve following the full moon as there were no street lights to travel by.

In 1866, the third floor of the Blackmann and Jones Building was erected for the Lodge meetings. It cost \$1300 to build. Before, the lodge had met wherever they could find a place big enough to conduct business in. They had the dedication on June 24, 1887 been here ever since. This is considered the very first “Condo” agreement in the country, as a shared responsibility of building ownership.



In 1897, H.F. Burgess gave the Western Phoenix Lodge a Tyler Sword, which signified guarding the lodge.

Not only has the building withstood many years of history, it also survived the fire of 1899. “That fire destroyed the business block. This was the only building left. It had \$93.25 of damage. Most of the records before 1886 were lost to time and fire; however the present lodge hosts the historical records from 1877 to present.

In 1903, the lodge’s mortgage was paid. What makes Parkman’s lodge unique is it is the second smallest lodge in the state, yet its roots trace back to 1817. That’s when a dispensation was given to some gentlemen here for the Western Phoenix Lodge,” and in 1818, they got the charter.

People familiar with Freemasonry might also know women were and still are not allowed into masonic lodge meetings, unless there is an open meeting, however, the women created their own, essentially counterpart group in 1912, called the Eastern Stars, which also met in the same room as the masons.



Parkman’s Western Phoenix Masonic Lodge - Charter #42 continues to be an active organization involved with volunteering in many of our community activities and fundraisers. The #42 Charter has a long history of always make our community better.

Thank you to Dale Komandt and the members of Parkman’s Western Phoenix Masonic Lodge - Charter #42 for this presentation and their continued involvement within our community.