



# The Crackerbarrel

VOLUME 50 NUMBER 6  
NOVEMBER 2013



## President's Report



President George Rowe

The windmill raising on Sept. 7 was quite a success.

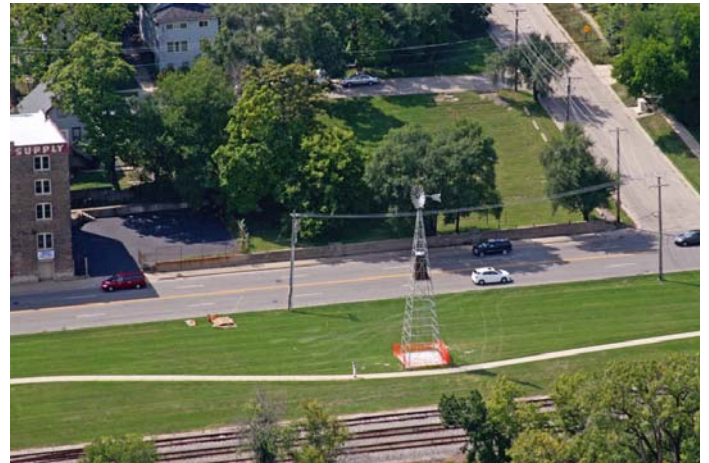
I arrived at Foundry Park at a quarter to seven on that Saturday morning. Maury Dyer was already there pitching a tent. Frank Engel showed up a few minutes later along with three trailers, two trucks, and a couple of grandkids. Frank's welder started by grinding the fresh paint off the corner plates that had been bolted onto the foundation. Frank and

his crew then began to assemble the bottom section of the tower, which had been disassembled when the windmill was taken down in 2004. I remember Frank Engel handing me a cutting torch when we took down the windmill and asking me if I knew how to use it.

Now, in 2013, the bottom section of the mill was going back together for the first time since 2004. It did not take Frank long to reassemble this section and soon the crane, supplied by Brian Kinser of Kinser Crane, was lifting the first section into place on the concrete foundation. Frank was able to put it back together like he had taken it apart yesterday.

George, the welder, was soon welding this bottom section of the tower to the steel plates that had been attached to the foundation. The cypress cistern went on top of the bottom section and the middle section followed. Next came the final section with the vanes already attached. By 11:00 A.M. the windmill was up and running, Frank and his crew were heading back to Hampshire, and Pat Crawford was up above in his chopper taking some beautiful aerial pictures. Pat is the owner of Medi-vac ambulance service. Pat also had an ambulance on site that day—just in case I had

a stroke when I finally saw the windmill up and running. Pat is representative of the type of volunteer effort we were able to put together to make this windmill project a success.



*The Completed Windmill in Foundry Park, at Long Last.*

So there it is, now standing on the exact site where it was built! Travelers on Route 31 who see the beautiful windmill will know that the Elgin Area Historical Society has expanded beyond the walls of Old Main.

Many thanks to everyone who helped: Frank Engel, Brian Kinser, City of Elgin staff, and of course, the many dedicated Museum volunteers.

A dedication was held in Foundry Park on Oct. 20, and almost all of the volunteers turned out. Probably 70-80 people attended. Mayor Kaptain and Senator Noland were there, as were City Council members Rauschenberger, Dunne, and Gavin. I gave a short speech on the provenance of the windmill; and Maury Dyer talked about the importance of the windmill in its era and the important improvements made at the Elgin Windmill Company.

One lady in attendance, from Portland, OR had grown up in the house on Larkin Ave. where our windmill used to stand. Her grandmother had owned the house and she was there almost every day of her early life.

## The Crackerbarrel

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The Crackerbarrel welcomes reader contributions.  
**Next deadline December 20, 2013**

 **Visit our website [www.elginhistory.org](http://www.elginhistory.org)**

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After a couple of short speeches, we had Mayor Kap-  
tain, Senator Noland, and Frank Engel do the "ribbon  
cutting." When the ribbon was cut, we released the  
governor on the windmill, and it began workin' the  
wind! What a beautiful sight!



*Doug Tomsha, George Rowe and Bill Briska put up the signage for the windmill.*

## Welcome New Members!

- **Laura Anderson Family**
- **Mike Bailey Family**
- **Stephen Blackwell Family**
- **Mike Delehoy Family**
- **Joseph Miechle**
- **Beth Nawara Family**
- **Barry Roberts**
- **Sara Russell**

## Program Schedule for 2013

*David Nelson, Program Chair*

Check the website for the latest details.

<http://www.elginhistory.org/events.html>

**November 9, 6-10 P.M.: Annual Benefit/  
Silent Auction/General Meeting.**

**Elgin History Museum, 360 Park St., Elgin, IL**

**Program: Captain Henry Detweiller on The Role of  
Steamboatin' in the Union Victory! with Brian Ellis**

\$35 Members/\$45 Non-Members, advance tickets  
required. Based on the pilot's logs of Captain Detwei-  
ller, Brian "Fox" Ellis immerses the audience in the  
vital, though unsung, role of steamboats in the siege of  
Vicksburg, the capture of Natchez, and the horrors of  
Shiloh. Captain Henry Detweiller delivered troops  
and supplies during the Civil War, was a friend of Lin-  
coln and rival of Mark Twain. Fox brings these stories  
to life in a first person monologue that shares this  
important chapter of river history.

**November 13, 2013, 7 P.M.**

**Preserving Elgin Bungalows**

**Elgin History Museum**

Historian Steve Stroud and architect Eric Pepa will  
discuss bungalow styles and provide examples of the  
more than 2,000 bungalows built between 1910 and  
1946 in Elgin. We are working with Neighborhood  
Housing Services and Landmarks Illinois and the City  
of Elgin to create awareness of Elgin's architecture  
with a focus on bungalows. There is also interest in  
establishing a Bungalow Historic District, where bun-  
galow owners can opt-in to the historic district and  
qualify for city preservation grants.

**December 7, 1-3 P.M.: Annual Holiday Tea**

**A Christmas Musical** with Rise Jones, Soprano; Betty  
Volkening, Violinist; and David J. Nelson, Pianist. At  
1:30 p.m. Rochelle Pennington presents "An Old Fash-  
ioned Christmas." Refreshments provided!

**January 20, 2014, 7 P.M.**

**Gail Borden Public Library**

**Preserving Elgin Bungalows**

The Preserving Elgin's Bungalows program (see Nov.  
13 event description above) will be presented again at  
Gail Borden Library on Jan. 20.

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## Thank You Donors!

Many thanks to all of the people interested in preserving Elgin history. The Society is involved in a few ongoing projects including the Elgin Windmill Project, the Elgin African American History Project, the Courier News Project, and the Annual Board Fundraiser.

### African-American History Project

- Danny's Pizza
- Ann Kohl
- Barry Danielson
- Wesley Foell
- Nancy Johnston
- Rise Jones
- Carl and Chris Missele
- Fred Steffen

### Windmill

- Brian Anderson
- James and Sara Ellen Anderson
- Chuck Bell

### Board Fundraiser

- Brian Anderson
- Joseph and Lois Bendick
- Terry Gabel and Sue Brigham
- Janet and Gordon Burkart
- Martin and Mary Gregory
- Aubrey and Rachel Neville
- Mary Robert
- Steve and Laura Stroud

### Courier News Project

- David Siegenthaler
- Elgin Genealogical Society for a Bowser Grant
- Jerri and Ken Barnhart
- James and Sara Ellen Anderson

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## General William Lynch, Civil War Hero Part 2

*David Siegenthaler*

After Colonel William Lynch's release from the Confederate prison in October 1862, he received an order to recruit and reorganize his regiment. From January to June 1863 he was in command of Camp Butler, near Springfield, which held Confederate prisoners. Then his regiment was sent to Cairo, Illinois, and its companies were scattered for duty in various places for the remainder of the year.

In early 1864 William and his regiment were sent to Mississippi to help General Sherman with his raid on Meridian. On March 5, 1864, at Canton, Mississippi, while returning from the Meridian raid, Colonel William Lynch was put in command of the First Brigade. He was thus an acting Brigadier General a week before his 25th birthday.

In March 1864 William's brigade became part of the disastrous Red River Campaign, meant to re-establish federal authority in Texas. As they made their way up the Red River in Louisiana, they were involved in continual conflicts. The Union forces eventually had to retreat and the final battle of this campaign took place at Yellow Bayou, Louisiana. Here, on May 18, 1864, William was leading a charge of his men against the enemy when his leg was shattered by a musket-ball, which struck him just below the knee. He was lifted off his horse and carried back to the boats. William later would say, "I had seen so many legs amputated without sufficient cause that I was determined not to lose mine. When they put me on the table, I gave my revolver to my orderly and told him to shoot the surgeon if he tried to take off the leg." William was sent home to Elgin, and was not able to leave his house for months. Though credited with participating in two later battles, he would never take the field again, performing mostly recruiting duty until the close of the war.

William was sorry afterward he had not permitted the amputation. Though he had been wounded six times before, the bullet received at Yellow Bayou was the only one from which he could not recover. It ended his war service, was a constant source of pain and would eventually cause his death a dozen years later.

In 1865, following the war, William joined the Fenians (Irish Republican Brotherhood) in a futile plan to invade Canada. In 1867 he was commissioned Captain in the Regular Army and received the rank of Brevet Colonel for his "gallant and meritorious services" at Yellow Bayou. By 1869 his wound was impairing his health so much that medical authorities advised him to resign his commission and move to a better climate. At this point his constitution was so fragile that an amputation was out of the question. In December 1870 William was retired from active service with the rank of Brigadier General. A law of Congress soon after reduced him and others to the rank of Colonel, but in a personal interview with President Grant, his former commander, his rank of Brigadier General was restored.

Although William did not graduate at Notre Dame, he received the honorary degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1865. He was admitted to the bar in 1871 and practiced law with his brother-in-law, Eugene Clifford. In 1872 he was elected to the Elgin City Council and served two terms. In 1873-74 he was a member of the school

board, serving one year as president. He became an officer of the Elgin Mining Company, in which he lost a substantial amount of money. In September 1876 he went to Kansas for his health, intending to buy land. By December his health was declining and his wife Julia went to Kansas to be with him. William passed away in Fort Larned, Kansas, on December 29, 1876, at age 37. His body was returned to Elgin and buried in Channing Street Cemetery. His remains were re-interred at Bluff City Cemetery in 1914.

In January 1863 William married Julia Clifford and they had six children: Clifford (1863-91); William (1865-1942); Eugene (1867-88); Mary (1870-1948); Katie (1872-88); and Margaret (1874-94). Julia died in May 1879 at age 39, leaving their six young children, ages four to fifteen, as orphans.

In the summer of 1863 William and Julia moved into a 2-story brick home at 35 Leonard Street. This home is still standing and is the subject of some interesting but unverified stories. One is that it was presented to William by the citizens of Elgin upon his return from the Civil War in appreciation of his heroic service. In July 1863 the property was sold by Charles Stevens to William for \$2,000. It may be that William could not pay the entire amount at the time and received a loan from W.C. Kimball. About three months later Kimball deeded the property to William for \$400, presumably the amount of the loan. In October 1862 William had returned to Elgin, a celebrated war hero just released from a Confederate prison. Three months later he married Julia and was ready to start a family. Perhaps there was a fundraising effort to help establish the couple in a home of their own.



*The Lynch Home, 35 Leonard Street*

In the spring of 1865 W.C. Kimball and his family, according to information provided by his family in the 1870s, moved into the Lynch home and remained there two years. This would have coincided with the end of the war, when William returned home a disabled man who faced an uncertain future and whose wife was carrying their second child. Perhaps Kimball, who had built and lived in the Waverly House hotel prior to that, had moved in with the Lynches as a courtesy. In August 1865 in Galena, General Ulysses S. Grant was presented with a home. When he became president, this fact became widely known and part of the lore of the returning Civil War hero. Perhaps, over time, the story was mistakenly applied to Elgin's Civil War hero, too.

A second unverified story regarding this home is that General Grant, William's former commander, visited him here—or that “Grant slept here,” as recent real estate ads claim. It is certainly plausible. Grant lived in Galena prior to being elected President in 1868 and he would have taken the train through Elgin en route to and from Galena. The Lynch home was only a short distance from the west side passenger depot on South Crystal Street. Many years later a neighbor, who would have been a young girl at the time, claimed to have remembered the visit. Though Grant visited Elgin while he was President in 1870, the only sitting President to ever visit Elgin, he was here only to tour the watch factory and did not go to the west side of town. Grant also twice stopped briefly at Elgin's west side depot after his presidency, but William had passed away by then.

Another unverified claim is that this is the oldest existing home in Elgin. This is also certainly possible. It was built about 1840 or soon thereafter. The original land owner was W.C. Kimball, who owned much real estate on Elgin's west side, including a stone quarry along Highland Avenue. One theory is that his stone quarry was just south of Highland between Jackson and Lynch streets, where there seems to be evidence of mining. Kimball may have hired stonemason Charles Stevens to work the quarry. Stevens may have built the brick home on the top of the hill immediately west of the quarry in the early 1840s. In 1846 Kimball sold the property to Stevens for \$300. A sketchy 1846 map of Elgin, perhaps the earliest city map, depicts several structures and the only one still standing is this home. The Elgin Township Assessor's database gives the year built as 1840. Though the Assessor's “year built” date is often just an estimate, there doesn't appear to be any other home in Elgin with such an early date. The home originally faced Lynch Street (named for William some time prior to 1875) and is located on the summit of one of the highest hills in Elgin. The accompanying photo of the home was taken looking south from Highland Avenue in the summer of 1877, only months after William died.

*Acknowledgements: Mike Alft's newspaper columns; "Notre Dame Scholastic," Nov. 18, 1899; Ken Gough's "Elgin Area Civil War Soldiers" database and newspaper references; Steve Stroud's deed research; various other sources, including censuses, newspaper articles and the Internet.*

## Parlasca's Inspiration: Francis M. Cayou and the 1913 "Hiawatha"

*Richard Renner, Board Member*

Carl Parlasca always insisted that his inspiration for Elgin's Hiawatha pageant had been Hiawatha performances under Francis Cayou in Chicago. The 100th anniversary of Cayou's Hiawatha is an opportunity to recall the events that set an Elgin accountant on the road to becoming "Injun Par."

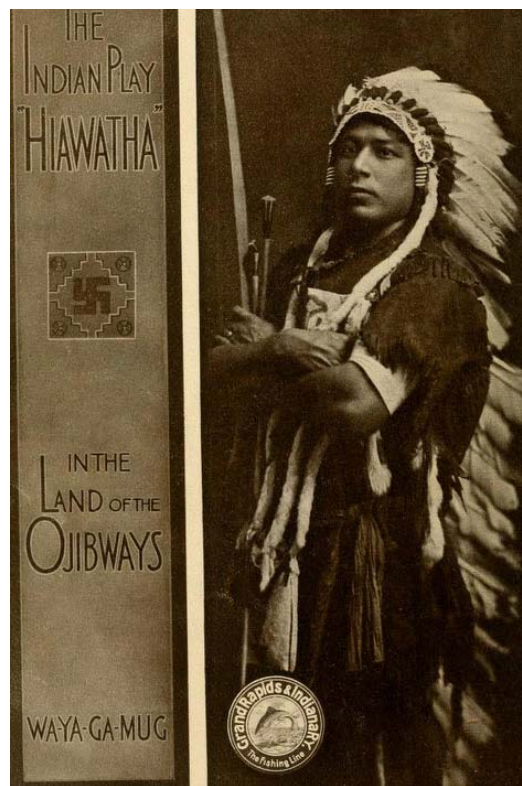
Carl Parlasca had been born in Elgin in 1882, the son of German immigrants. His brothers had been satisfied with conventional business careers, but by 1913 Par likely was sensing that there might be something more fulfilling than his life as an accountant at the Borden Condensed Milk plant. He had been enchanted by Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows when they had come to Elgin with over 100 Sioux, many of whom roamed downtown streets and shops in full regalia. But Par's true spark came from a show advertised in the Elgin Daily News of November 26, 1913: **HIAWATHA** Played by Ojibway Indians, The Land Show, At the Coliseum, Chicago."



*Chicago Tribune Advertisement for "Hiawatha"*

The Land Show was an annual event created by the Chicago Tribune to promote agricultural interests and settlement of open lands in North America. It ran for nearly three weeks at Chicago's Coliseum on South Wabash, the McCormick Place of its day. Offering promotional exhibits from American states and Canadian provinces, the show featured as its primary entertainment an interpretation of Longfellow's epic "performed by the lineal descendants of the real Hiawatha and the real Minnehaha immortalized by Longfellow."

It is ironic that Par so strongly associated Francis Cayou with Hiawatha. Although the Tribune promised that the "staging and production of the drama are under the direction of Francis M. Cayou," he likely had little to do with creating the show. Indeed in 1913 his entire adult life had been a rejection of the traditional Indian elements so attractive to Par. The show itself had its roots in the work of a Canadian Pacific railroad promoter L. O. Armstrong. Armstrong had interested a band of Ojibway from Garden River Ontario in Longfellow's poem and prepared a dramatic version which they presented to Longfellow's descendants in 1900. Armstrong published "'Hiawatha' or Nanabozo, An Ojibway Indian Play" in 1901 and took his "Hiawatha" on the road to Boston, New York, and elsewhere. In the summers groups of Garden River Ojibway moved to "Wa-ya-ga-mug" (Round Lake) near Petoskey, Michigan where they staged a popular outdoor version of the play that charmed the area's many vacationers.



*1912 railroad promotion for the Wa-ya-ga-mug "Hiawatha" in Michigan*

The Tribune assured its readers that the Land Show's version offered "the Original Company of Ojibways and Iroquois from Wa-ya-ga-mug." They performed in woodland scenes on a 150 foot stage—"the largest stage in Chicago"—in "full tribal costumes of costly ermine, furs, and beaded buckskin." Francis Cayou's rich baritone provided the Longfellow narrative.

When Francis Mitchell Cayou got involved with “Hiawatha” he was a 35-year-old member of the Omaha tribe who had spent nearly 20 years in the public limelight away from his Nebraska roots. As a teenager he attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania. Carlisle had been founded to remove young Indians from their reservations and traditional ways and promote their assimilation into modern America. Its founder had said he wanted to “kill the Indian and save the man.” Carlisle graduates were intended to be educated, articulate, sober, and the very antithesis of Buffalo Bill’s “show Indians” with their war whoops and headdresses.

Cayou embraced Carlisle’s mission. A popular singer and star halfback on the school’s renowned football squad, he often spoke for the team at events accompanying its games against top universities across the country. After a particularly epic performance against Yale in 1896, the 18-year-old told his audience that the reservation system was degrading Indians and that their “only hope is to live among the whites, be educated and adopt their ways.”

Cayou lived his message. After Carlisle he attended the University of Illinois, starring on its track and football teams before entering a successful career coaching at Wabash College and Washington University. His life inspired a Broadway play and even his romances received headline attention. In 1913 he had just left Washington University and was starting a sales position with the Spaulding sporting goods firm. He was one of the few Indians in Chicago, indeed one of the few Americans anywhere, to have successfully mastered the growing media and celebrity-driven entertainment culture of the new century, and he was the perfect choice to manage the Land Show’s drama and help its performers navigate the big city.



Francis Cayou, circa 1904

Touting the authenticity of the Land Show’s “Hiawatha,” The Tribune claimed that “no band of white actors, however famous, however talented, could possibly interpret this story as it is interpreted by these primitive people...” Par, of course, found something in those “primitive people” that inspired him to take up that challenge, but it would be nearly fifteen years before he mounted his own version. Meanwhile, the lives of Cayou and Parlasca crossed again ten years later in an event Par always credited as having introduced him to genuine Indian dancing.

Chicago Tribune Advertisement for “Hiawatha”

The occasion was the 1923 celebration of American Indian Day, the fourth Friday in September set aside by the Illinois legislature in 1919. By then Par had extricated himself from accounting and was the Executive of Elgin’s Boy Scouts. Finding Indians “the symbol of the free, full, fine life in the out-of-doors” he already had his Scouts building tepees and performing the “Battle of Wounded Knee” at their summer camp at Idlewild along the Fox River. But it was only in September at the Deer Grove Forest Preserve near Palatine that Par encountered a real Indian doing the real dancing he wanted to emulate. Par had taken two truckloads of Elgin Scouts to the last day of the three-day event to help manage traffic and join the thousands of others enjoying authentic Indian dancing and tribal pageantry. Here Par met Edward Little Chief, a grandson of Sitting Bull and experienced Indian dancer who would serve as Par’s instructor and mentor until his death in 1928. The Palatine pow-wow was conducted under the auspices of the Chicago Historical Society’s Indian Fellowship League. The League’s president was Francis Cayou.



*Francis Cayou c. 1919*

Finally, Par was not the only young white man from Illinois to find inspiration in the Grand River Ojibways' version of "Hiawatha." The Hemingways of Oak Park annually summered at Petoskey, Michigan, and their son Ernest and his sisters always looked forward to the Hiawatha performances. Ernest Hemingway used Garden River Indians in his earliest fiction. One biographer believes his Petoskey experiences encouraged Hemingway to see the Indian

as "a man of the outdoors, absolved from the pieties and frustrating inhibitions of the white man" and a convenient medium for Hemingway's own rebellion against his family and its Oak Park values.

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## 26th Annual Cemetery Walk Recap

*Laura & Steve Stroud*

This year's cemetery walk was a huge success in so many ways. The weather cooperated and gave us a beautiful sunny fall day. We had close to 600 visitors again this year. (And we didn't run out of booklets!) We brought in \$7,159.44 and after expenses netted \$5,241.91. We heard many favorable comments from our guests.



*Treasurer Bill Briska as Louis Blum*

Our actors shared stories of the lives of several Elginites. August Conte portrayed Edward Szula, Linda Rock portrayed Mary E. Stewart, Traci Ellis portrayed Polly Rutland, Rick Ellis portrayed Levi Tenant, Bill Briska portrayed Louis Blum and Bonnie Conte portrayed Annie Tallent. We also had three vignettes: Dr. Benjamin Browne portrayed by Jim

Anderson and Andrew Ross, story of the common grave area given by Sara Ellen Anderson and Emma Marston, and George M. Peck portrayed by George Rowe.

Their stories ranged from a professional parachute jumper to two people born into slavery, a proprietor of an Elgin institution—Blum's Ice Cream parlor, the first women to enter the Black Hills in the Dakota Territory, a beautiful redhead who was the daughter of Phineas Smith of the dairy industry, and Dr. Benjamin Browne, founder of Judson College.



*Traci Ellis as Polly Rutland*

We also had students volunteer from Mr. Devine's history class at Elgin High School. They greeted visitors, shadowed some of the guides, and two students even helped out at the gravesites of Annie Tallent and George M. Peck.

We thank everyone who worked and supported the cemetery walk. A special thank you to Anne LoCascio for her work on the flyers, posters and booklets.

We appreciate the support from all of the sponsors and contributors who faithfully donate every year.

If you missed the walk, a DVD produced by John Fleener of Elgin Academy is available for sale in the Museum store. Pick one up and enjoy an hour of "living history." You will not be disappointed.



## Holiday Shopping Starts Now

Besides the Museum Store, the 2014 Elgin Memories calendars are available at State Street Market on Rt. 31. Around Thanksgiving they will be sold at Ace Hardware Stores on Spring St. and Lillian St. and at the Soulful Sparrow on Douglas Ave. in downtown Elgin. \$12.00 each, make great holiday gifts so buy soon!

And, we are pleased to offer a new item for the 2013 holiday season: these nice beer glasses silk-screened with our logo and the logo of the old Elgin Eagle Brewing Co. These will most likely be a popular item so order yours soon! For sale in the Museum Store—\$7.50 per glass, \$27.00 for a set of 4, or \$36.00 for a set of 6. The glasses will also be available through [www.elginhistory.org](http://www.elginhistory.org).



ELGIN AREA  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Elgin Memories - 2014 Calendar**

