



The Crackerbarrel

VOLUME 50 NUMBER 1
JANUARY 2013



President's Report



President George Rowe

What a great time to sit back and relax, and take a minute for a briefing on all the activity at 360 Park.

On Veterans Day, I attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the addition to the Veterans Memorial, just north of the library on the river. Mayor Kaptain spoke and Dr. David Sam, ECC president, gave the keynote speech. Thanks to Jerry Turnquist for chairing the committee of veterans.

Also on Veterans Day, Jeff Meek, a 1968 graduate of Larkin High School, spoke at Gail Borden Library on his book, *They Answered The Call*. Jeff was a teacher who became interested in World War II knowing his father had served, yet his father never talked about the war, and died before Jeff became interested. When Jeff retired he began writing down the stories of other World War II vets, and now writes a monthly newspaper column on World War II for the Hot Springs Village Voice in Hot Springs Village, Ar. Jeff's book has the stories of veterans from every branch of the service, and a few signed copies are for sale in the Museum Store.

The Police Cart is now on display at the Elgin police station. Previously, Elizabeth Marston and I worked with the CPAAA (Citizens Police Academy Alumni Assn.) to create some historical displays for their lobby. When that project was finished, Detective Brian Lawrence asked if EAHS could create a horse-drawn police cart similar to some 1890 pictures at the Museum. We found an old cart and modified it to look like the original in the photos, recreating a bit of Elgin history for visitors to the police station to enjoy.

Dave Kloke was an excavator until the recession hit. With no work, he began pursuing his dream of building a steam locomotive. His first engine, The Leviathon, is completed, and is a replica of the engine that pulled Lincoln's funeral train from Washington DC to Springfield in 1865. You may have seen it on display at the Gail Borden Library in April. Dave's group would like to replicate that trip in 2015, and he only needs to finish the replica funeral car. The car carried Lincoln's casket and also that of his son, who had died a few years earlier, back to Illinois. The original funeral car fell into disrepair and burned in a freight yard in Minnesota in the early 1900's. Here is a link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jf6FNnQxmc>

Art Deco in Elgin will be the topic of the March 17 exhibit opening. This is a program that was developed for the Chicago Art Deco Society in October of 2012. Jackie Vossler of EAHS learned that the Chicago Art Deco Society (CADS) was looking for Elgin items, and teamed up Keith Bringe of CADS with collector Jeff White of EAHS. Many Art Deco designs came from the Elgin National Watch Co. and the Illinois Watch Case Co. Jackie sensed an opportunity, and the project began to grow. Bill Briska agreed to speak on watches and watch design. Jennifer Fritz volunteered to do a segment on Art Deco buildings in Elgin. Rich Renner crafted a segment on the Illinois Watch Case Co. and Art Deco design. Phil Broxham of Grindstone Productions created a video presentation for the Society. The amazing art deco video is available from the Society's website or the City of Elgin's website.

On November 15, the Simpson mural was unveiled at Judson University. Professor Joe Cory from the Judson University art department led the effort to clean, frame and hang the mural in the Harm Weber building at Judson. Bill Conn, CEO of Simpson Electric, spoke on the importance of this company in Elgin, and reminded us that the mural is the last piece left. I hope you will take the time to stop in and see this wonderful piece of history.

Can't wait till next year!

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The Crackerbarrel welcomes reader contributions.
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 Visit our website www.elginhistory.org

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Program Schedule for 2013

David Nelson, Program Chair

Check the website for the latest details.
<http://www.elginhistory.org/events.html>

January 27, 2-5 P.M.: Antique Appraisals with Mark Moran at Gail Borden Public Library
(Event rescheduled from Jan. 6)

January 24, 7 P.M.: Roxworthy Restored Bungalows

March 17, 1-4 P.M.: General Meeting, Watch Exhibit Grand Reopening, Elgin National Watch Company
Program: Art Deco in Elgin

April 13: Church/Synagogue Walk

April 14, 1-3 P.M.: General Meeting, Illinois Miners' Revolt with Rosemary Fuerer

April 28, 12-4 P.M.: Youth History Fair

May 15, 12 Noon: Brown Bag Lunch, International Museum Day. Native American Art—Carl Flaks

June 8: Day Trip, Holocaust Museum, Skokie

June 20, 12 Noon: Brown Bag Lunch
Elgin Mental Health Center—Bill Briska

July 14, 10:30-3 P.M.: Thunderbird Car Show at the Museum

July 18, 12 Noon: Brown Bag Lunch
Jerry Turnquist discusses Elgin Churches

August 15, 12 Noon: Brown Bag Lunch
American Flyer Model Railroads—Carl Flaks

August 25: Illinois Gateway to the American West with Rick Pickren

September 22, 11-3:30 P.M.: Cemetery Walk
Bluff City Cemetery

October 13, 1-3 P.M.: General Meeting
Program on Thanksgiving with Penelope Bingham

**November 2, 6-10 P.M.: Annual Benefit/
Silent Auction/General Meeting.**
Program: Civil War: Steamboatin'—Brian Ellis

December 7, 1-3 P.M.: Holiday Tea
Old-Fashioned Christmas with Rochelle Pennington

Girl Scout Centennial Exhibit
September 5, 2012 - April 20, 2013

Share your memories of Girl Scouting in Elgin at the Museum. This temporary exhibit features Elgin memories of scouting, including Camp Hawthorne, the Mariner's troop, earning badges, selling cookies, camping, and a sampling of vintage uniforms.

Welcome New Members

- Jennifer Bero
- Susan Blakely
- Paul Brandes
- Kimberly McKinney
- Glenda Sayre
- Beatrice Wilson

Donor Thanks

- Sara Ellen Anderson
- Carl and Mary Ellen Flaks donated \$1,000 to the Education Fund
- Terry Gabel, Sue Brigham and Mrs. Langland
- Rick and Kathleen Grimm
- Wayne Heinmiller: matching grant with SBC
- George and Marge Rowe
- Alan Walters: matching grant with Benjamin Moore

Thank You Volunteers

By Laura Stroud

Thank you to all who decorated the Museum for the holidays and those who helped put together the Museum benefit on Nov. 3, 2012. All enjoyed the silent auction and the musical presentation on 19th century popular songwriter Stephen Foster, performed by Chris Vallillo. Mr. Vallillo, from Macomb, IL, has a degree in anthropology from Beloit College in Wisconsin. He worked as an anthropologist for three years, but his love of music won out and he became a folk-singer and songwriter.



Rear: Laura Stroud, Ricky Harris, Carl Flaks, Mira Wojciechowska, Dolores and David Nelson. Front: Elizabeth Marston, Marge Rowe, Jerri Barnhart. Performer Chris Vallillo (dark hair) is in the center.



Marge Rowe's nephews also helped. Daniel Handrock (left) and Joseph Walden



Volunteers who decorated the Museum for the holidays. Standing, L to R: Linda Rock, Carole Handrock, Marge Rowe, Mira Wojciechowska, Beth Walden. Kneeling, L. to R., kneeling: Carol Huntoon and Laura Stroud. Carole Handrock and Beth Walden are Marge Rowe's family members.

Elgin Odd Fellows

Jim Turner

For a couple of years now, I have been a volunteer at the Elgin History Museum. Museum Director Elizabeth Marston told me about a couple of cartons of Odd Fellow items in a storage area at the Museum. As a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, discovering a window to the organization's past certainly piqued my curiosity.

I spent a few hours going through the boxes and discovered a few books of particular interest. One is titled *Directory of Subordinate Lodges, I.O.O.F. 1913*. I was stunned to learn from this book that there were over 17,500 Odd Fellow Lodges in North America, with the vast majority in the USA. Illinois alone had over 970 active Odd Fellow lodges. Elgin had two lodges, Kane #47 and Althea #619, until 1940 when they merged into one lodge called Elgin #12. I also learned of a third lodge, Paul #691. Upon further digging I discovered a "minutes book" from Paul lodge written in German, dated somewhere around the turn of the century. The only thing that I could read was Paul #691, Elgin IL and the date. This lodge disappeared at the beginning of World War I. The third book of interest was a compilation of a monthly newspaper that the Althea lodge of Elgin published for its members. This book contained lodge news collected from July 1925 through June 1927. A brief perusal of its contents indicated that Elgin had over 1,500 I.O.O.F. members. Based on Elgin's population at that time (somewhere around 30,000), and factoring in women and children, nearly one out of every 15 adult males belonged to this benevolent organization.

Althea Lodge held weekly meetings in the Odd Fellow Hall located at the southeast corner of Highland Avenue and Spring Street. With local businesses at street level, the lodge conducted its affairs on the top two floors. The lodge newsletters were filled with advertising, which more than paid for publication costs, and only members could advertise. Advertisers were comprised of dozens of local businesses, including JCPenney, Beck's Office Equipment, Dennison's Motor Company (Bunge's), Bloemke Leather Goods, and even a local bank. Membership was comprised of city councilmen, the mayor of South Elgin, several police and firemen, farmers, doctors, dentists, lawyers, business owners and of course watchmakers from the Elgin National Watch Company. Even Franklin D. Roosevelt, along with several historical figures were Odd Fellows.

Since the late 1930s, interest in belonging to benevolent organizations such as the Odd Fellows became less appealing as government programs like unemployment became available. The Odd Fellows pro-

vided several benefits including unemployment, sick and death benefits to name a few. Although this organization still exists today, its membership is a fraction of what it was a century ago. There is still an Odd Fellow Lodge in Elgin today. Elgin Odd Fellows presently participate in a variety of charitable functions throughout the year, including scholarships, house painting projects, donating to youth athletics, and food pantry donations.

The Moseleys of Elgin — Part 3

David Siegenthaler

In October 1882 in Limona, Florida, Julia Moseley became pregnant with her second child, Hallock (“Hal”). It was a difficult pregnancy and Julia was bedridden, full of pain and extremely tired for months at a time. Charles built a 12x14-foot room for her about 20 yards from the home where she could rest in peace and quiet. Hal, born in July 1883, grew up and joined the Navy. After several years of active sea duty he became an engineer with a large ship-building firm in Tampa. During World War I he served in the Merchant Marine and later as an engineer on freighters in the Caribbean and Atlantic oceans. Hal married Ruby Winifred Davis in 1917, and in 1919 became the only Moseley child to leave Charles and Julia a grandchild. Julia Winifred Moseley, daughter of Hal and Ruby, would become the person responsible for preserving the Moseley homestead, *The Nest* and its collections, which, since 1985, has been on the National Register of Historic Places.

In August 1883 Charles returned north, this time to the Hampden Watch Company in Springfield, Massachusetts. Here he resumed his watchmaking career after a layoff of 21 months, during which time he regained his health and established his homestead in Limona. The Limona Park Association’s promotional brochure emphasized Limona’s curative powers by printing testimonials from formerly ill residents. Among them was Charles, who declared “immediate and permanent relief” from his asthma.

Now 55 years old, Charles focused his skills on performing consulting work for various smaller watch factories and machine tool firms in the Northeast and Midwest. These jobs took him away from Limona for extended periods of time and he often took his younger sons with him. He and Julia wrote letters to each other almost every day when they were apart. Julia’s other principal correspondent was Eliza Slade of Elgin. Five years older than Julia, Eliza never married and was an invalid from girlhood—bedridden and pain-wracked most of her life. However, she had an excellent mind, was widely-read and much admired for enduring her suffering with patience and cheerfulness.

In December 1885, during a heavy frost, *The Nest* burned to the ground. No one was hurt but all of Charles’ and Julia’s work went up in flames. All that was left was the small retreat that Charles had built for Julia’s difficult pregnancy. Rebuilding began immediately and eventually *The Nest* became bigger and more beautiful than before.

In 1890 the Tampa Journal published a very complimentary story about the Elgin colony at Limona Park, which was reprinted in an Elgin newspaper. It named many Elginites who owned orange groves in the area. Special mention was made of a visit to Julia Moseley’s home, which read in part: “We found this lady a brilliant conversationalist and her home gave evidence of her culture and refinement. The house itself is remarkable for its simplicity and it is a unique and beautiful home. The walls are hung with the raw fiber of palmetto, the rich neutral tint forming an exquisite background for pictures and bric-a-brac, which, though plentiful, bespeak the discrimination of the true artist’s eye.” The Moseley homestead, also called *The Nest*, has been preserved by an organization called Timberly Trust, Inc., and looks much the same today. “The Land of Timberly” was coined by Julia to describe the abundant trees on their property, particularly the longleaf pines.

Charles continued his consulting work until the age of 85 in 1913, when he announced to family friends in Elgin that he was retiring to his Limona home. Julia passed away on her 68th birthday in 1917, followed 15 months later by Charles, who was 90 years old.

Horace N. Moseley, a younger brother of Charles, was a machinist in Boston who later became superintendent of a paper mill in Delaware. During the Civil War he served as a lieutenant in a Delaware infantry regiment. He married Elizabeth Morrison and their son William was born about 1864. In 1867 Horace moved to Elgin, where he established himself as a manufacturer of light hardware. It is not known if he and Elizabeth divorced or if she died, but in April 1869 he married Emily Gragg Brimblecom, a divorced Massachusetts woman who had a seven-year-old son, Wendell, by her first husband, William Brimblecom. Emily was an older sister of Mary Josephine Gragg, Charles’ first wife.

After the marriage, Horace returned to Delaware but came back to Elgin in 1873 to form a partnership with his brother Charles called Moseley Brothers, which manufactured watchmakers’ lathes and tools. Charles was also still employed by the Elgin National Watch Company through 1876. In 1878, when Charles moved back East, Horace acquired his interest in the firm and renamed it Moseley and Company.

In the mid-1890s the name changed to the Moseley Lathe Company. Horace remained involved in the firm until a couple of years prior to his death in 1920 at

age 87. His son William worked for the firm from the mid-1880s until his suicide from illuminating gas in 1925. William, who never married, also worked at the watch factory in 1896-97 and again from 1916 until his death. The Moseley Lathe Company remained in business until about 1940.

Wendell Brimblecom, who took the name Moseley after his mother married Horace in 1869, was born March 18, 1862 in Waltham, Massachusetts. By 1880 at age 18, he was working in the Elgin watch factory, where he became a designer and engraver. Wendell worked at the Elgin National Watch Company until about 1892, by which time he had established himself as a successful commercial artist, designer and engraver. In February 1894 he married Laura Pinkney in Beloit, Wisconsin. Laura, a former Elgin watch factory employee, was born in South Elgin in 1865.



Wendell and Laura Moseley

In addition to being a talented commercial artist—producing business cards, advertising copy and other promotional items for firms around the country—Wendell was also a respected landscape painter, exhibiting his water colors at the Art Institute of Chicago and other cities around the country. Wendell passed away on October 1, 1923, and Laura on October 20, 1954.

Wendell and Laura had two children: Roland, born 1895, and Lauris, born 1901. Roland married Florence in 1920 and they were divorced in 1948, a year before Roland died. They had no children. Florence Moseley, who worked at the watch factory for 46 years, died in 1981.

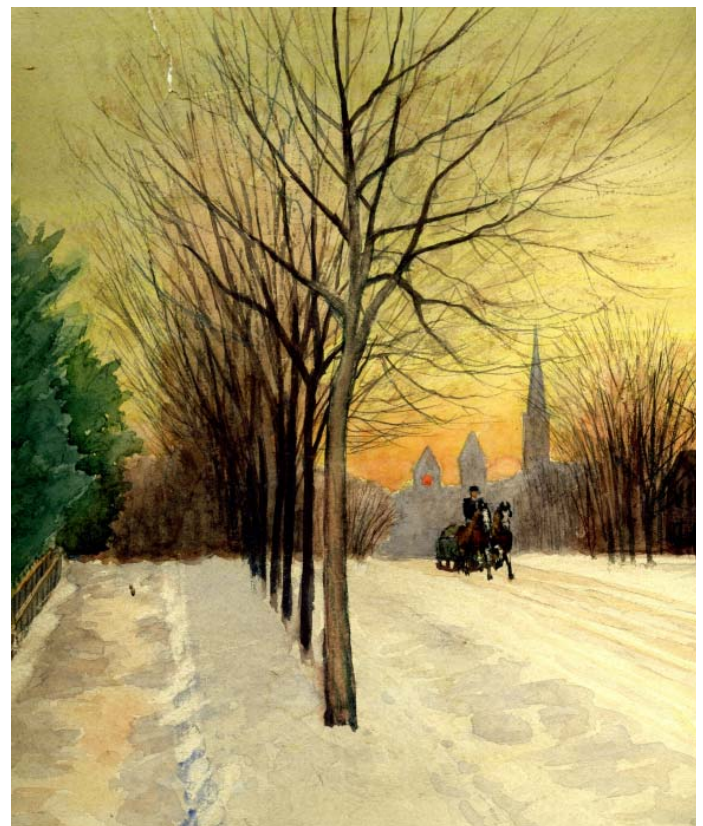
Lauris Moseley was a public school music teacher for 25 years and taught piano and organ for more than 50 years. In 1948 she married Harvey Young, whose first wife had died in 1941. Donovan A. Young, who owned an Elgin real estate and insurance business for 30 years, was her stepson. Lauris died in 1995.

Several months ago, the Elgin Area Historical Society received a gift of many Wendell Moseley paintings, engravings and sketchbooks, including excellent examples of his commercial art as well as his landscapes. This collection, generously donated by Tina and Darren Young, was passed down to Darren through his father Paul, grandfather Donovan and step-great-grandmother Lauris Moseley.



1893 World's Fair Scene

Acknowledgements: *Come to My Sunland; Letters of Julia Daniels Moseley from the Florida Frontier, 1882-1886*, edited by Julia Winifred Moseley and Betty Powers Crislip (1998); and various city directory, newspaper and Internet sources.



Wendell Moseley Landscape

2012 Annual Report

Significant Accomplishments

- Art Deco Seminar for the Chicago Art Deco Society and 30-minute video on Art Deco in Elgin now on local cable access television.
- Simpson 1940s mural cleaned, framed and on exhibit at Judson University.
- 25th Annual Cemetery Walk brought in over 600 visitors to Bluff City Cemetery.
- The Timeline Exhibits on the Museum's first floor were completed from the 1830s to the 1970s.
- 2013 Elgin Memories calendar was completed, focusing on Moorhouse Photo Collection.
- *Silent City: A History of Elgin's City Cemeteries* was published.

Membership

Jerri Barnhart, Membership Chair

Membership in 2012 was 268 households, approximately 825 members, bringing in \$13,635.

9,786 hours were logged by 86 volunteers in 2012.

Programs and Events

David Nelson, Program Chair

1,913 people attended the Society's 20 programs presented in 2012. There were many highlights including

- Collingbourne Mills Virginia Snow kit quilts
- Francis Willard talking about temperance, performed by Leslie Goddard
- Two Illinois Humanities Council sponsored speakers on traveling salesmen and small town Illinois
- Thunderbird Car Show in the Museum's parking lot organized by Dennis Roxworthy
- The songs of Stephen Foster by Chris Vallillo
- The Legend of St. Nicholas performed by Terry Lynch
- Over 600 people attended the 25th Anniversary Cemetery Walk
- A daily radio segment, *Elgin 100 Years Ago*, which requires 12 months of research and programming to complete. Thanks to WRMN, Jerry Turnquist, Rich Renner, Larry Drafall, and David Siegenthaler for their diligent work in producing this radio spot. Check out the Society's website to hear recordings of the show.

Education and Outreach

Lucy Elliott, Museum Educator

Education programs brought in 1,468 people in 51 programs, an increase of 37% over 2011.

Recent personal contributions dedicated to the Education Fund demonstrate support for the role the Museum can play in heightening community pride for all families, particularly at-risk students and second language speakers new to the area. Scouts, parochial schools, and senior centers have traditionally been educational groups eager to use the Museum as a resource. Other unique users included ECC History Classes, Rolls Royce Car Club, and bus tours.

Other new audiences are being served by the Museum. They include Boys and Girls Club, Rakow Library programs, Elgin Academy video and writing classes, Elgin Downtown and Cemetery Programs tailored for high school, and Elgin Public Museum partner programs. Speakers Bureau volunteers went out into the Elgin community and gave six programs on a variety of topics.

The Elgin Youth History Fair was held in April of 2012 at Old Main for the first time. All involved agreed that moving *time of year* and *location* were good logistical decisions and are eager to hold the event in 2013, its ninth year. Over 400 grade school students and 70+ high school students participated in this active event that showcases Elgin's heritage.

In 2012, a number of community projects were initiated and or supported by the Society and Museum.

The canvas mural from Simpson Electric, removed in 2010 by EAHS, was delivered to Judson University for cleaning and framing by art students. The mural was unveiled on November 15 and hangs in the Harm Weber Building on campus.

The Museum hosted a community-wide Preservation Meeting that included many organizations and interested individuals. They shared historical preservation updates and information on projects of historical/cultural significance.

The Elgin Police and Fire Barn Museums are receiving ongoing support for their missions. The Fire Barn was included in the BikeCHAIN Map of Elgin's historical core, and EAHS completed a replica of an Elgin police cart for display in the Elgin Police Station lobby area.

The Observatory/Planetarium is a unique, historically significant resource that receives Museum support for programming. Museum volunteers also helped refinish woodwork under the 1910 observatory dome.

In September, the Museum participated in the Elgin International Fest celebrating the many cultures that have made Elgin their home. Several months of planning culminated in an event that included a community tent where the Museum's Immigrant Exhibit

Panels were displayed, and an educational tent offering hands-on activities showcasing the cultures of 22 different countries. Plans are in place for 2013.

The Society and Museum participates in the Downtown Farmers Market, the Mayor's Awards, the Heritage Commission Plaque Program, and other community activities. Board members, staff, and volunteers are consistently engaged in the community, promoting the importance of preservation and Elgin's rich heritage. The Society promotes sustainability and giving meaning to "a sense of place."

Collections and Exhibits

Elizabeth Marston, Museum Director

The Collections Committee accepted hundreds of items relating to Elgin history from 64 donors to the Museum in 2012. Several large collections came in including,

- **Fox River Country Day School archives, which closed in 2011.**
- **Moorhouse photography collection of negatives, prints, and slides.**
- **Brendan Morse collection of Elgin memorabilia.**
- **Keeney's Sporting Goods items.**
- **Sterling silver Elgin watch box for the 50 millionth Elgin watch from Terry Gabel and many other individual donations of items relating to the Elgin watch factory materials.**
- **Westphal Hiawatha Collection including items from Don and Janice Westphal.**
- **George L. Hughes Elgin watch from 1883.**
- **Courier-News items from the Lange Family.**

The 20th century exhibit, *Elgin 1910-1970* in the timeline series was finished, completing the new chronological interpretive plan on the first floor of the Museum. The Illinois Public Museum grant helped to pay for this newest permanent exhibit. Temporary exhibits included *Girl Scouting in Elgin*, which opened in September 2012 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouts.

Publications

Silent City: A History of Elgin's City Cemeteries was printed and ready for distribution in September. 500 copies of the 2013 Elgin Memories Calendar: Ferris Moorhouse Photography were printed in August. The Museum Store sold approximately \$5,775 in books and DVDs, and \$6,787 in merchandise and calendars.

Crackerbarrel and Websites

6 issues were published in 2012. Digital color copies of the newsletter are emailed to about 192 members. The Museum's Facebook Fan Site currently has 500 friends.

Financial

Bill Briska, Treasurer

The Society and Museum finished 2012 debt-free, adequately insured, and with an adequate emergency reserve fund. In 2012, EAHS continued the positive momentum of the last decade by slowly and steadily expanding services and programs. A major expense in 2012 was the continuing revamping of the first floor exhibits. In addition, the Society produced new publications and a television show pertaining to local history.

Operating income in 2012 (i.e., income not destined for the endowment fund) was about \$130,000. Expenditures were about \$142,000. The apparent deficit is because the Museum is awaiting final reimbursement from a grant for exhibit reconstruction. That amount will make up the \$12,000 difference and a bit more.

Donations to the endowment fund grew by \$4,561 in 2012. The fund is primarily composed of bequests and memorial gifts. Combined with investment growth, the endowment fund now stands at \$330,000. The principal of the endowment fund is not used for operating cost, only the income; thus creating a lasting legacy from these precious gifts.

The Society's business model, which has been successful during the last decade and especially during the Great Recession, has been to develop several diverse sources of revenue. These include dues, donations and admission fees, of course. They also include sponsorship opportunities for events and TV productions, store sales, research and photo reproduction fees, grants for specific projects and donations of in-kind services. A major, non-monetary, part of the Society's success is the large number of volunteer hours donated to the Museum's operations. The combined efforts of volunteer help is equal to that of about 6 full time employees. The Society's actual payroll remains at an equivalent of 1.2 full time staff.

Income Summary

- **10% Membership Dues**
- **17% Cash Donations**
- **38% Grants**
- **35% Earned income (sales, admissions, fees for services, sponsorships, etc.)**

Expense Summary

- **24% Exhibit Construction**
- **26% Programs, insurance, supplies, equipment, printing, postage, etc.**
- **45% Salaries, taxes and contracted services**



The Lost Have Been Found

Steve Stroud, Board Member

Several years ago, I began to research Elgin's cemeteries. At the time, I was told that the original sexton's books had been lost. Only death records were available at the library or at the Bluff City Cemetery. I was able to get permission to examine the set of death record books at the Cemetery office: six volumes of about 500 pages each. I created an indexed database for burials and removals at Channing Cemetery and it will soon be accessible on the Elgin History Museum's website on the Research Page. While doing this research, I found that there were many remains that were unaccounted for and might possibly have been left behind when the cemetery closed. The list of burials accounts for about 3,500 people, but the list of removals only amounts to slightly more than 1,000.

In November, Cemetery Superintendent Rick Ellis told me that something strange had taken place at the cemetery: A worker named Mark had found a plastic bag leaning against a tree near a garbage container. He was about to place it in the garbage container, but because of the weight of the package, he looked inside. He found two very old books—the lost sexton's records! Mike Alft had researched material in these

books many years ago and he has confirmed that these are the books he remembers. In *Silent City* I remarked that these books had been lost. Is it possible that someone read the book and decided to return them? Why were they taken and by whom is a mystery. Why they returned is also a mystery. Why they were placed in a plastic bag and left unprotected also presents more questions. Although these questions may never be answered, the books are now available for research. If the person responsible for the removal of these books from the cemetery reads this, the Society thanks you for their return.

These books contain information on the ownership of lots and their cost, a list of burials up to 1875, and plat maps of individual gravesites.

All those who were moved from Channing to Bluff City Cemetery are stamped with the phrase "Moved to the new cemetery."

