

History Happenings

In Preparation of #9's 150th Anniversary

May 2025 - Issue 34

Charter Received December 8, 1878



On July 2, 1962, representatives from Clayton Lodge #1881 met with a similar contingent from Kirkwood-Des Peres Lodge #2058 for the purpose of investigating the possibility and advisability of consolidation of Clayton and Kirkwood-Des Peres Lodges. The representatives of Clayton Lodge #1881 voted unanimously to recommend to their Lodge Floor not to proceed with consolidation for the following reasons:

- “Consolidation would be of no real benefit to our lodge unless it were necessary for approval of the Grand Lodge to locate the consolidated lodge within the city limits of Kirkwood or Des Peres.
- Before the meeting with the Kirkwood-Des Peres group we had been informed that they had between 50 and 60 paid-up members and liquid assets of approximately \$25,000. Their own figures of 30 members and liquid assets of \$12,000 could prove of little value to our lodge, in our opinion.
- The opinion seemed to be prevalent at the meeting that Clayton Lodge was in financial trouble and needed Kirkwood-Des Peres to “bail us out” of trouble.
- To sum up, Kirkwood-Des Peres Lodge, in our opinion, can contribute little in funds, manpower or experience to us. We were disappointed in the apparent lack of decision and leadership evidenced at the meeting, which was attended by two Past Exalted Rulers and the present Exalted Ruler of Kirkwood-Des Peres Lodge. The Clayton Lodge Floor accepted the committee’s recommendation.”

A year later, the topic of consolidation resurfaced as Clayton’s Board of Trustees wished to petition the Grand Lodge to arrange and permit consolidation with Kirkwood-Des Peres. This time, the effort was opposed by Lodge #2058 (once again sensing Clayton Lodge #1881 desperation).



In preparation for the 1904 Worlds Fair themed History Committee Trivia Night, bits of trivia will be included in upcoming History Happenings Newsletters. The trivia question for May:

Missouri farmer C H Sumner displayed his nut butter at the 1904 World Fair. Based upon its popularity, Beech Nut launched the first nationwide brand of this product, now known as?

The answer can be found in this newsletter!

Eternally an Elk

The Men at ELKS REST Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum

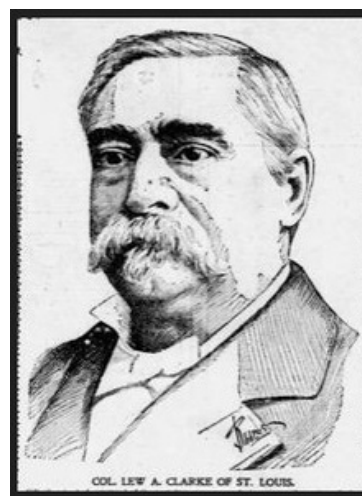
Tenth in the series remembering thirty-three members interred from 1883-1989.

Article provided by Sandy Schneider, Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum volunteer researcher.

Lew Clarke 1824-1901

Reporter, racetrack official, secretary of Lodge #9, and “survivor” of the Walker Nicaragua Expedition of 1855

Do you recall the Walker Nicaragua Expedition of 1855 from your history classes? If not, you are in good company! This month’s bio shows how deeply divided mid-19th century St. Louis, and the nation were over issues that are still hotly debated today—immigration, civil/equal rights, and states’ rights.



Flag of the post-1855 'American Party', colloquially referred to as the 'Know Nothing Party'.

Inage: Wikipedia

Lew A. Clarke was born in Philadelphia in 1824. By 1850, he was a reporter for the Pittsburgh Post. He was influenced by the Know-Nothings, a secret society of ‘nativists’ who believed immigration in the 1840s was a ploy to dilute the ‘native-born American’ way of life. The party expanded in the 1850s to become anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, and anti-Jewish, and insisted that immigrants should not be allowed to vote or hold office.

Clarke was also influenced by William Walker who was a reporter at about the same time Clarke was in Philadelphia, and then later in New Orleans. Walker was educated both nationally and abroad as a doctor and a lawyer but chose to be a newspaper reporter. He appealed to the nativists believing in “manifest destiny,” that Americans were destined to spread our culture and way of life, including slavery, to other countries. Keep in mind, this is more than a decade before the Civil War.

Slavery was banned in Mexico and Central America, but Walker wanted to reinstate it. When Mexico refused to grant Walker a colony to settle, he organized about forty-eight American men into his own militia to enter Sonora and take it by force. That violated the Neutrality Act, so Walker certainly wasn’t representing our government. His men were quickly turned back to California, but surprisingly he was acquitted in a court martial. Still admired by many and known as “the grey-eyed man of distinction,” Walker next sought to infiltrate Nicaragua.

Documents show that Lew Clarke made trips to Nicaragua starting in 1851. In the press, those believing in Walker's mission called his recruits "colonists." Those opposed called them "filibusters," meaning "freebooters," or those trying to gain wealth for themselves or for a cause. On entry documents Clarke and the other volunteers were listed as a "miner," and again as a "gold digger." Clarke said he was along as a reporter but was pressed into fighting. He bore a scar upon his cheek from a sword. He kept a journal to write a book afterward, but it was stolen before he left Nicaragua.

Walker was considered the leader of Nicaragua for about a year but was defeated and executed on the beach in 1857. Public opinion of Walker began to shift, and he was then called "the grey-eyed man of extinction."

Some of Walker's men managed to escape Nicaragua while others were given passage to leave the country. Clarke said that for more than a year fever and illness plagued him and delayed his trip home. Records indicate that as late as 1865 Clarke was entering Cuba from Nicaragua.

After returning to the U.S., Col. Clarke as he was called spent some time in Louisville as a racetrack official. When he moved to St. Louis the 1870 City Directory listed him as a printer. In 1881 he worked for Ecker, Watts, and Company as a bookmaker (betting on horseracing). He helped establish the Cote Brilliant Racetrack, was secretary of the St. Louis Jockey Club, and long-time secretary of Lodge #9, located then at 211 North Seventh Street. He attended national Elk gatherings as well.

While no book resulted, Clark did give a lengthy interview to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on September 24, 1899, less than two years before his death. He continued to speak highly of Walker and the fighters he gathered for his unsuccessful missions. Clarke remained single, and in his later years he lived with a niece, Mrs. Margaret Stevenson of 3858 Olive, to whom he left all his possessions. He died of complications following a surgery and chronic nephritis on September 9, 1901, at Rebekah Hospital at age seventy-seven. Clarke was the tenth Elk to be buried at Elks Rest in Bellefontaine Cemetery.

Resources found for the writing of this article will be listed and given to the Lodge #9 Archives.

TRIBUTE/MEMORIAL FORECOURT UPDATE:

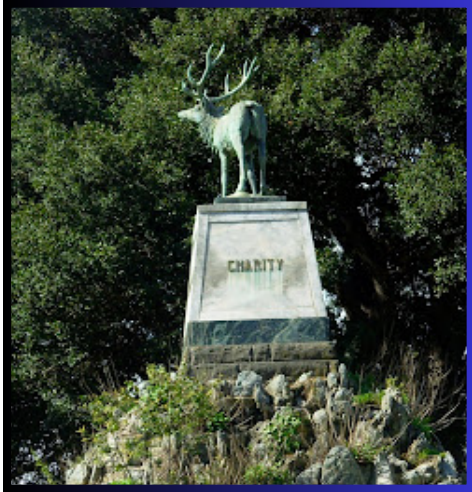
Progress is taking place on the relocation of the Tribute/Memorial Brick Forecourt. Ground is broken for moving the original installation with room for new brick orders to be added. The original location was going to be in the way of construction efforts, so it has been filled with sod. The excavated area will be a set depth before laying the sublevels of paving base and pads. This will make the new location less susceptible to heaving from the frost cycles. The installation project is expected to be completed Summer 2025.

See page 6 of this issue for brick order form.



Elks REST Elsewhere

On March 16, 1896, The Oakland Lodge #171 Elks REST was dedicated. Preliminary ceremonies were held at the Oakland Lodge before the large number of attendees marched to one of the highest points of Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, California.



Baptized in the rain of the day, the large bronze elk modeled after "Father Elk," an actual elk housed at The Golden Gate Park, eventually would bask in the sun by the end of the day. Per the San Francisco Call; "When the speaker was referring to solemn topics there seemed to be inevitably a cloud overhead. But when they launched forth on the beauties of love and protection, the sun peeped out through from the dark layers of nimbus and seemed very appropriate."

Delegates attended from California Lodges such as Tacoma, San Francisco, Olympia, San Diego, Sacramento and Stockton as well as out of state lodges such as Cincinnati, Minneapolis, New York City, Fair Haven (Washington), Hartford and St Louis #9. Five Past Grand Exalted Rulers were present.

Brother Thomas J. Clunie of Sacramento Lodge #328 delivered the oration in which he noted; "Our ceremonies and our principals have a common origin with those of other kindred societies. We have the same grand natural truths with them, the same splendid rituals. It is entirely natural that this should be so because we have sipped words of wisdom from the same well, and we regard history, with its magnificent examples, it's glorious illustrations, as a common property of all."

The Oakland Lodge REST is 3/4-ths of an acre large. It was donated by Frank Ench, a prominent Elk and successful mining executive. Ench died suddenly, a short while after donating "the place where Elks sleep in peace." His wish was to be cremated. His urn sits beneath the Elk Rest Monument.

The Oakland Elks REST monument base is made out of serpentinite, a local rock which is unfriendly to plants. The steps at the foot of the Elks REST are unique to other Elks RESTs across the country.





*The Miller Crypt, one of three pyramid crypts at Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland CA. OCG Miller, a founder of the Pacific Lighting Corporation, built the crypt for his first wife, Einnim Havemeyer Tucker, who passed away March 28, 1896.
Image - Mountain View Cemetery.*

Founded in 1863, the 223 aced Mountain View Cemetery quickly became known as "Oakland's Beautiful Monument Cemetery," of which its Elks Rest Monument is revered as iconic. Mountain View is the home of three pyramid mausoleums, the most of any single cemetery in the United States. It is the final resting place for many local notables, perhaps none as famous as "Chocolate King" Domingo Ghirardelli.

The Oakland Elks Lodge #171 was chartered in 1890 and later merged with Alameda Elks Lodge #1015. Ironically, the merged entity took and maintains the higher # identity of 1015 (common practice is for merged lodges to assume the lower number identity).

Once an Elk. Eternally an Elk

Although a strong departure from the usual "always an Elk" phrase, the reason behind this intensity will become clear soon enough. Scattered across the United States in peaceful corners of the landscape are sacred plots of ground - some small and simple, others quite grandiose - wherein rest the remains of Departed Brothers, still side-by-side in fraternal unity though their final summons to the Celestial Lodge came as far back as a century ago. Some of these Lodge-owned cemetery plots, called ELKS RESTS, have outlived the Lodges which established them, while others have even been forgotten by their Lodges, passing almost invisibly through the years in peaceful repose while a lonely sentinel elk statue presides over its silent Lodge amid the changing seasons.

While we can't fully understand all the social factors which might have induced an Elk in 1905 to want to be buried in an Elks Rest as opposed to some more traditional family plot, we must accept it as irrefutable proof of a strong commitment to the Order, certainly on the part of the deceased Elk, but also by the Lodge which consecrated the site in the first place.

Elks Rest sections are a unique aspect of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks and the history of fraternal organizations in the United States. If you ever are in an appropriate locality and feel fraternally inspired, you may want to search out one of the indicated cemeteries and discover the ageless power of true Fraternity by visiting "our Absent Brothers" in the Elks Rest section.

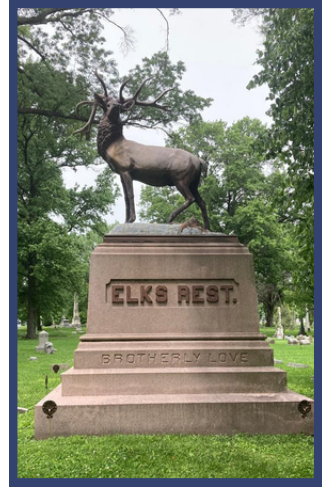


From: Elks History Project, <https://www.elks.org/history/cemetery.cfm>

"Restoring the St. Louis ELKS REST" Brick Campaign

The ELKS REST at Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum is the final resting place for 33 of our brethren. Since the 1890's, the Elks Rest monument has watched over this sacred spot. Now, worn and weathered by time and the elements, it seems appropriate to restore the Elks' Rest to its original stately appearance.

By replacing the damaged Elk, improving the individual markers, and tending to the landscaping, we can move forward with certainty that we are doing all we can to honor our fellow Elks.



To achieve that goal, the History Committee has launched a fundraising campaign. All bricks sold will be laid at the base of the Elk guarding the entrance of Lodge #9. Bricks are 4" x 8" and are available two colors Nutmeg (\$125) or premium option Regimental Red (\$150).

Each brick will be engraved with the name(s) or phrase(s) of your choice; 3 lines of text, 20 characters per line.*

For questions, please contact Beth Schnettler - beth12523@gmail.com.

To place an order, complete this form and send with payment to Elks Lodge #9, 12481 Ladue Road, Creve Coeur, MO 63141, attention Beth Schnettler.

Make checks payable to "Elks Lodge #9" with the note "Elks Rest Brick Campaign" on the memo line. Payment can also be made through the Club Room Bar register.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Line 1: _____

Line 2: _____

Line 3: _____

**The History committee reserves the right to assess all orders to ensure all words and phrases used are appropriate for placement on the Lodge grounds.*

