

# History Happenings

## *In Preparation of #9's 150th Anniversary*

June 2025 - Issue 35

*Charter Received December 8, 1878*



It's Summer Fun Time at #9, so take a dive into this edition of History Happenings:



- *learn more about Elks State Associations*
- *meet David R. Francis, a facinating St. Louisan AND #9 member*
- *Lodge #263's REST in the 'Jewel of Jamestown'*

As early as the 1890's, the topic of State Associations was debated by members of the Grand Lodge. Although not yet recognized by the BPOE Constitution, the Ohio Elks Association was formed in 1898 and followed four years later by the creation of the Georgia Elks Association.



By 1914, there were twenty-three State Associations in existence, including the Missouri Elks Association, all without the blessing of the BPOE Constitution. At the 1915 Grand Lodge Session in Los Angeles, a recommendation was made and approved to recognize State Associations and to make necessary BPOE Constitution changes. A Grand Lodge Committee of State Associations Conference was held in St Louis on January 15, 1917, and at that conference, a uniform constitution and by-laws was drafted and a Ritual for the installation of officers of State Associations was authored. Those opposed to the State Associations feared that local lodges would surrender their own voice at the Grand Lodge. To satisfy this fear, State Associations were prohibited from becoming a legislative body and would exist only to carry out Elk projects and to take care of their own business.

Today, State Associations are recognized as a valued structure that permits BPOE members who are not members of the Grand Lodge to participate in bigger Elk endeavors than their single lodge can provide. Not surprisingly, State Associations began to develop state major projects (as in the Missouri dental program). The State Associations help to do what individual lodges could not do on their own. They became functional organizations that ran a business of helping others.....always looking for the unmet needs of others.



*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 June:*

*I was president of the Fair's Board of Commissioners, as well as a former Governor of Missouri. The oldest modern Olympic stadium, still in use regularly for official sporting events, is named after me.*

*The answer can be found in this newsletter!*

## *Elks REST Elsewhere*

In 2017, the Elk Statue was removed from its base in Lake View Cemetery, Jamestown, New York and shipped to Penn Yan Foundry for a complete rebuild. Originally purchased by a Louis Heinemann, a generous Jamestown Lodge #263 Elk Member, now buried at the Lake View Elks REST, the statue had visible signs of wear and damage after nearing 100 years of serving as “the spreading antlers of protection.” The original casting of The Elk was created in memory of The Honorable Jerome Fisher who had died four years earlier. Jerome had served as the 22nd Grand Exalted Ruler of the B.P.O.E., the only Jamestown Lodge member to be elevated to that position.



*Elks REST, Lake View Cemetery  
Jamestown, New York*

The decision to repair the Lake View Elks REST statue was long overdue and became a joint decision made by the lodge and the cemetery. “It was becoming a danger to visitors..... could be knocked over easily..... antlers were replaced as many had broken off.... and the legs were reinforced with rods..... should be good for another century.”



*Lucille Ball's grave marker, Lake View Cemetery  
Image: RoadsideAmerica.com*

Lake View Cemetery, “The Jewel of Jamestown,” was founded in 1859 as the towns 3rd cemetery. Originally sitting on 37.5 acres, it has since been expanded to 65 acres. No fewer than 5 U.S. Congressmen are buried at Lake View, but the marque grave sight, no disrespect to the Elks REST, is the final resting place for Lucille Ball of “I Love Lucy” fame.

# Eternally an Elk

## *The #9 Notables at Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum*

*Many prominent St. Louisans interred at Bellefontaine were also Lodge #9 members.  
Thanks to Sandy Schneider, Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum volunteer researcher,  
we are delighted to introduce the first 'BCA #9 Notable'.*

### **David Rowland Francis**

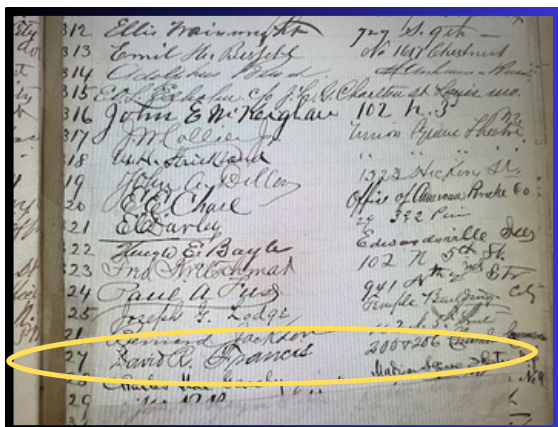
October 1, 1850—January 15, 1927

So, what makes a member “notable?” Certainly not his bankroll or name. While it is fun to see the names of famous people in the membership rolls, we know it takes dedicated members of all means to make Lodge #9 successful for almost 150 years. These next bios will tell of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Some of their names and contributions may have been lost in time. We hope to honor them for their dedication to Lodge #9’s mission of benevolence through Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity.

Elks Lodge #9 has produced many fine civic leaders, but few have surpassed David R. Francis for his service to our city, our state, and our country. Born in Kentucky, he began his education there. Since his uncle, David Pitt Rowland, lived in St. Louis, Francis saw that as an opportunity to attend Washington University. He became active in the community right away. He was a member of the Young Men’s Union Club, and at his graduation he gave an oration entitled “The Statesman.” However, the expense of pursuing a law degree proved to be too much for him, so his uncle offered him a job at his grain commission house instead.



David Rowland Francis  
Image: missouriencyclopedia.org



David R. Francis, member #327,  
St Louis Lodge #9, November 8, 1882.  
Image: #9 Archives & Membership Registry

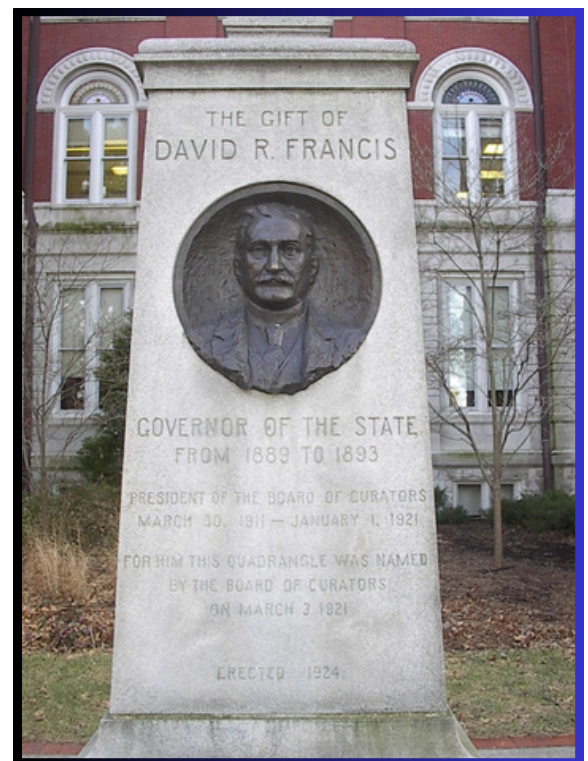
Francis applied all his skills and became so successful that he managed to pay off his college debts and even save to go into business for himself in 1877. He went on to reorganize and operate as David R. Francis and Brother Company, all in just thirteen years. Being a grain dealer earned him wealth and recognition. He was named as an officer for Missouri Valley Trust Company, Terminal Railway Association, Union Electric, and three street railways.



As he was beginning his rise in his professional life, Francis also made commitments in his personal life. In 1876, he married Jane Perry, daughter of a wealthy businessman. In 1880, the Francis family, now with two sons, moved to 16 Vandeventer Place. Soon Francis brought his 22-year-old brother Sidney to live with them, and about a year later also invited his 27-year-old brother Thomas to live there as well. David also moved his parents from Kentucky to a farm that he had purchased for them in what is now the north county suburb of Pine Lawn. The area was considered rural then, and miles from the smoke and industry of St. Louis. Francis not only wished to improve his life, but that of his family for the sacrifices they had made for him.

By 1885, Francis was president of the Merchants Exchange, and the following year he was elected as mayor of St. Louis. During his term in office, he cut city expenses, and vetoed anything that he felt had even the hint of corruption.

Francis was nominated for governor in 1888, and by winning became the only St. Louis mayor to become governor. Although not familiar with state politics, he had a plan for what he was sure that Missouri needed. As always, he drew on his keen business sense to firm up railroad regulations, institute a grain inspector, and to staunchly resist moving the University of Missouri from Columbia to Sedalia after Academy Hall burned in 1892. Rather than move the campus from its central location in the state, he sought \$250,000, about \$8.8 million in buying power today, from the legislature to replace the building. The citizens of Sedalia were not pleased but embraced the idea of being named the site of the Missouri State Fair as appeasement. Also during Francis' term as governor, Barnes Medical College was established, the Missouri State Federation of Labor, and the Board of Mediation and Arbitration were formed.



*Monument on the campus of University of Missouri Columbia, northeast of the entrance to Jesse Hall, facing the Francis Quadrangle.  
Image: [muarchives.missouri.edu](http://muarchives.missouri.edu)*

As his term as governor was ending, Francis was approached to run for the U. S. Senate. He asked Jane for her opinion. She reminded him that he had several sons (they would have six sons) who would need their father's guidance. Jane had no intention of continuing to shoulder the bulk of parenthood, especially if they had to move to Washington, D.C. Francis turned down the suggestion to run.



*June 1902 dedication at the Eugene Field House. Francis (center) with Samuel Clemens, better known as 'Mark Twain'.  
Image: Eugene Field House Magazine, 2012*

After his term as governor, Francis remained active in Democratic politics. This certainly was noticed by then President Grover Cleveland, who appointed Francis as his Secretary of the Interior in 1896. During Francis' tenure, Cleveland set aside twenty-one million acres as forest reserves.

Still upset that Chicago had been awarded the 1893 Columbian Exposition instead of St. Louis, Francis rallied to get approval of St. Louis as the site of the 1904 World's Fair. Not surprisingly, Francis was named the president of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Committee. No one promoted St. Louis or the Exposition more than Francis. He traveled to promote the Fair in Europe and in Russia and published in 1903 "A Tour of Europe in Nineteen Days." How was that even possible?

But Francis was just getting started. Perhaps cashing in some of his political clout, Francis questioned why Chicago would be awarded the 1904 Summer Olympics. Two international events held so close together in time but in two different cities would not be practical. The decision was reconsidered, and St. Louis was awarded the Summer Olympics. When Francis presided over the opening held at Washington University, he was the first American to do so who was neither the president nor vice-president.

Francis was not ready to take his foot off the gas. On the contrary, as president of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Association in 1905, he set off for Europe and Asia to personally thank their leaders for participating in our World's Fair. After his return to St. Louis, he was deeply involved in family, in business, in local politics, and always in keeping his options open.

His next big entrance to the world stage was his appointment by President Woodrow Wilson as U. S. ambassador to Russia in 1916. Francis was accompanied by Philip Jordan, his long-time personal valet/servant. Jordan was perhaps the only Black American to witness the Bolshevik revolution.



*April 30, 1903, Dedication Day for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Former President Grover Cleveland, President Theodore Roosevelt and David R. Francis, president of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, at the entrance of Francis's residence.  
Image: StL Library Digital Collection*



*Philip Jordan, 1868–1941, African-American valet, chauffeur and major domo of sorts to U.S. Ambassador David R. Francis. Sharing the back seat with Ambassador Francis is counsellor J. Butler Wright.  
Image: simanaitissays.com*

Francis even escaped an assassination attempt. Harper Barnes wrote “Standing on a Volcano” as not only an account of those tumultuous years, 1916-1918, but also Francis’ rise to that position.

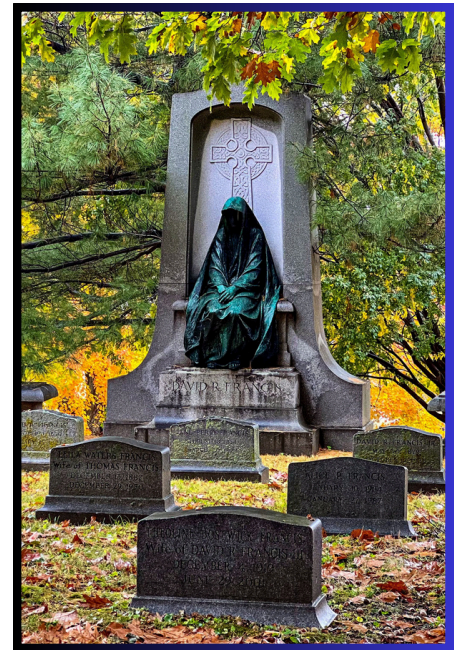
When Francis returned from Russia, his health was in decline. Someone had asked him if he should have taken on such a challenging assignment since Francis was over 65 years old. He very eloquently replied that if his government “in its wisdom” thought that he was qualified to take on a task, he would be a poor citizen if he declined.

Jane Perry Francis died in 1924, after nearly fifty years of marriage. Francis commissioned George Julian Zolnay (sculptor of the *University City Lions Gate*, and several Confederate monuments across the country) to sculpt a bronze perpetual mourner statue for her grave.

David Rowland Francis died after years of illness in 1927. As were his wishes, his funeral left the family mansion on Maryland Avenue, and he was buried at Bellefontaine Cemetery in his family lot.

Honoring his years of service to the city, state, and country, many sites have been named in honor of David R. Francis:

- Washington University Francis Field, site of the 1904 Summer Olympics
- David R. Francis Quadrangle University of Missouri in Columbia. *It is customary to rub the nose of the bust for good luck before taking a test.*
- SS David R. Francis, Liberty Ship built in 1943 and scrapped in 1960
- Francis Park, 60 acres donated to the city by Francis in 1916.
- Statue of Francis by Harry Weber was added to the park in 2018.



*Jane Perry Francis Grave  
Bellefontaine Cemetery*



# "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.*

