



Alexandria Times

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Marking Time

An Elk Presides over Prince Street

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Image: The majestic elk watches from above. Photo, Office of Historic Alexandria.

For 97 years, a life-size bronze elk has stood watch over the 300 block of Prince Street. The mascot of Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks remains in the second-story alcove of the former lodge, though the Elks themselves moved out in the early 1980s.

Alexandria's Elks Club, known as Lodge #758, was founded in 1902 and the organization purchased property on Prince Street the same year. By 1909, the Elks authorized plans for a new lodge to be built at 318 Prince and when it opened the following year, it featured an auditorium, stage, library, locker room, ladies' parlor, rathskeller, and modern amenities like toilets, showers and steam heating. The rathskeller, or downstairs bar room, was finished in weathered oak with mission style furniture and had billiard, pool and card tables.

The red brick building featured limestone trimmings, including a tablet engraved "BPOE" just above the central archway. Inside the arch, directly above the entrance, is the bronze elk. Reportedly made in Salem, Ohio, and weighing about 1,000 pounds, the elk was set into place two months before the formal opening of the clubhouse in 1910.

When the Elks announced plans in 1983 to sell the building and move to a suburban site with more parking, they hoped to take the elk with them. Mayor Charles E. Beatley, Jr., argued the elk was part of the "architectural fabric of the city" and should stay put. The building was sold to a condo developer, the elk conveyed and today the bronze beast remains at the old lodge.



"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.