

Elkhart Historical Society

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For immediate release

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The year's final Dinner Lecture presentation from the Elkhart Historical Society promises to be unique as it will give new insights concerning the creation of some of the most beautiful stone buildings in the Springfield area. "The Culver Chronicles: The Story of Col. Culver and Culver Chronicles", will be presented by Lee Ann Burgener, on Friday October 18, 2024, at Horsefeathers' Wild Hare Café in Elkhart Illinois. The doors open at 5 p.m. and dinner will be served beginning at 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$45 per person, and reservations are required and can be made by calling 217-947-2238, where you may be prompted to leave your name, phone number and the number of people in your party, which will hold your place in line for seats. You will get a return call confirming your reservation and to answer any questions you may have. The deadline for reservations is October 9, 2024. The entrees are Beef Bourguignon or Coq au Vin, for full menu information please go the web site [www.elkharthistoricalsociety.org](http://www.elkharthistoricalsociety.org)

Our presenter Lee Ann Burgener developed a fascination for investigation while doing an assignment for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, on her family's genealogy. This fact-finding beginning grew into research on buildings, their history, which in turn expanded into the builder, and his genealogy.. Her subject tonight explores the life journey of Col James Culver and his monument company which began in 1871, as The Culver Marble and Granite Works. His brother soon joined him, sharing the workload which allowed him to expand into the construction of buildings, which merged his skill in stonework with the expertise of well-known architects. He became a general contractor in 1887 when he built the Second Methodist Church at 5<sup>th</sup> and Carpenter. Some of his works include Carnegie Library, Franklin Life Building, Governor Tanner's Monument, Governor Yates' home, Illinois State Military Museum, YMCA, and numerous banks and churches. He also worked on the Old State Capitol and the Governor's Mansion. Culver Construction became a part of American History when they were selected to do the first reconstruction of Abraham Lincoln's Tomb. The rest, as they say, is history. Col. Culver worked on or created over 3000 buildings in Springfield alone, and many more throughout the country, which include, the Illinois Monument at Vicksburg National Military Park, and the St. John the Baptist Chapel ca., 1892 (the Gillett Chapel) in Elkhart Illinois.