

Stettler Grain Elevator Museum Society

(Formerly Stettler P&H Elevator Preservation Society)



To all of our many volunteers, donors, and supporters who have played a big part in the success of the Stettler Grain Elevator Project over the past 20 years, we thank you and apologize for not being in touch with you through our newsletters or on-site activities. Our first 16 years saw very positive progress in restoring and preserving Stettler's last standing elevator, a testament to our past. Take pride in your accomplishments. We thank you!

The Past

However, for the past 3-4 years, this project has been sidetracked. In 2022, the Society's board saw a significant change in Board members. The following is a short recap of what happened since then.

- Priorities changed from Preservation of the complex to finishing the new Coffee and Washroom building. Most of the newly elected Board members were also newcomers to the Elevator Project.
- Despite the Mission Statement calling for "restoration and preservation of the Elevator buildings and equipment," there has been virtually no progress on this project.
- At a Board meeting, a motion was passed to not spend any money on the old buildings. Subsequently, a Board member stated that the old buildings should "be let go as only the new [Coffee and Washroom] building was important."
- The Coffee and Washroom building had been under construction and was 80% completed and paid for before this board took over.

- This new board removed many files from the “Legal Office of the Society”, the original yellow office of the Elevator, including bank records, minute books, financial records, and many other business files. It was requested many times to have these returned, and access to the office was granted, but this has not happened.
- In June 2024, a public meeting was called, and approximately 80 people from the community attended. The purpose of the meeting was to assess community sentiment to determine if the Elevator Project should continue. The consensus was positive, but several issues surfaced, resulting in the formation of a non-partisan committee to explore ways to resolve these issues and get the project back on track. The committee was unsuccessful in having its recommendations adopted. This included the use of a donated computer and the purchase of software to make minutes, membership, and financial records easier. These were to be kept in the Elevator office. This has not occurred, nor have these been returned.
- Because records had not been kept and made available, an accounting firm was hired to do a 2-year financial review (at a cost of \$3700). Their report was not made available at the 2025 AGM 2 days later. Two Board members took on the role of signing all cheques, resulting in some unjustifiable major expenses. Requests to access financial reports from Board meetings have been refused.
- In October 2025, 4 volunteers (aged 65-84!) took it upon themselves to paint and install some of the materials that have been on hand for years to side the Feed Shed. Other materials for numerous small jobs are on hand and awaiting installation.

The Present

At the April, 2025 Annual General Meeting, a new Board of Directors was elected. We had hopes that the Elevator Project could get back on track and resolve the issues raised in 2024. Outstanding issues include:

- The return of all records, the computer, and software to the office. This was promised to occur after the last AGM.
- The current Board has jurisdiction over the bank accounts. When they took over, there was a GIC with \$27,000 from a Casino that was strictly designated for work on the original buildings. There was also a GIC for \$57,000 that had been donated by individuals and intended for specific areas of development of the Elevator Project. Both GIC's have matured, and amounts should increase due to accumulated interest. Information on the integrity and location of these funds is not being disclosed.
- In an attempt to start on the badly needed roof repairs, our contractor took steps to purchase materials and contract special equipment. His invoice was submitted to the Board in November and to date, there has been no response.

- Since April, the Board has not accepted the duty of paying utility bills. Neither did they accept responsibility to pay the Summer Student. Government reimbursement is pending. Donors and volunteers have been paying the bills with their own funds.
- Since April, Board members have not helped or worked on the Elevator project. When asked, the President stated that the board was operating on a “Governance” model and not an operational or volunteer model. It is our opinion that this small project needs very little Governance as was the case for many of the early years.
- All of the utilities for the Coffee and Washroom Building are being supplied by the Elevator Complex currently. Originally, the plan for this building was to provide public washrooms, a coffee area, and a kitchenette for small community functions.
- At present, the Preservation Society holds Casino funds and Individual’s donations. Since these funds were accepted with definite conditions, they must be turned over so that the funds can be used as per the requirements and in respect of the donor's intentions.

The Future

Way back in 2005, a small group of people came together to save the P&H Elevator Complex from demolition. This project slowly took shape, and with over 50,000 logged volunteer hours, many dedicated donations, and much community support, resulted in what stands today as a testament to their interest and intent. We MUST continue to respect the great community outpouring.

As of December 2025, a new Society has been formed under the name **Stettler Grain Elevator Museum Society**. The Society was formed by individuals who are dedicated to the original mission statements and who wish to see the project continue as it did in the early years. From this date, the Elevator Project will be administered by this new society, and it will be instrumental in the advancement of the project as originally conceived.

The Elevator Project can continue without a society and does not require being governed by a society. However, a registered society allows a non-profit project to access grants, casino fundraising, and have charitable status for issuing tax receipts for donations.

We want to apprise everyone that all donated items are being cared for and will be accepted and cared for in the future. We appreciate the confidence placed in us to be responsible for all these items, as they form a valuable part of our Agricultural Heritage.

Plans for the future include:

- Completing projects for which we have had materials on hand for many years.
- Return to the tradition of having community functions such as the Pancake Breakfast, Fall Supper, New Year's celebration, and many others.

- Utilizing the Coffee and Washroom building for project activities (Educational!), and making the public aware that it is available for community activities such as Anniversaries, Birthdays, Coffee parties, meetings, local clubs (e.g., 4H), and other gatherings.
- Raising funds for urgently needed repairs and maintenance issues.
- Continue to have the Elevator Project open to the public for tours and activities.
- Rebuild the community's faith and trust in the value and continued best interest of the **Stettler Grain Elevator Museum Society**.

We Need Your Volunteerism and Support!

Ownership Issue (for your information)

The P&H Elevator complex and improvements were purchased by Stan Eichhorn in 2004 when demolition was scheduled. The ownership still remains with him. The land is owned by Alberta Prairie Railway, and the project has a long-term lease with them. Stan has often stated that he has never benefited monetarily or otherwise and that this will be true until the ownership is eventually transferred. Although having been accused of improprieties in the past, there is no evidence of such, nor has any proof of such ever been brought forward. When it is felt that an individual or non-profit group can be trusted to follow the original mission statement and comply with the intent of restoring and preserving the Elevator for future generations, the ownership will change.