

## PRESS RELEASE

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The Elgin Museum and Historical Society of Elgin, Oregon has just been awarded a \$4,910 grant to digitize its collection of the Summerville Annotator, the Elgin Recorder, and the Union County Review, covering local news from 1889 through 1981.

The generous grant was awarded through Oregon Heritage's 2025 Oregon Museum Grant Program. Oregon Heritage is the State Historic Preservation Office and part of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in Salem, Oregon.

"The museum is thrilled to move their fragile newspaper collection into a digital format that will have search capabilities and be available free to the public, researchers and genealogists through an online database that will be accessible from the Museum's website," Debbie Leslie, Elgin Museum and Historical Society President said.

The process of digitizing the papers will take about 6 months, but the museum is expecting that the digitized newspapers will be accessible to the public by the end of December 2025.

"The honor of receiving this grant reaffirms the commitment the museum has to advance its historic preservation of the local history through digitization of their collection," Leslie said.

One Union County history researcher, Dave Yerges of Summerville, said he is extremely happy that these historic newspapers will finally be digitized and accessible to the public.

"In an April 19, 1962 issue of the Elgin Recorder, there are more than 40 brief articles about local people and happenings along with many additional names of residents," Yerges said. "Articles like these will be of great use to researchers of the local area in the future."

The Museum's mission for the future also includes designing new interactive exhibits, developing special exhibits for children to learn history through hands on exploration and creating a museum where the public can enjoy regular events and workshops.

To accomplish these goals, however, the museum realized it requires greater space than it currently has, so it looked for property and learned about the availability of the historic US Bank building at 800 Alder Street in Elgin. It became available for sale in March 2025, and the museum started the process to purchase it.

The museum is currently running a capital campaign fundraiser for \$200K, and it is in need of community donations. To become a donor, please visit [www.elginmuseum.org](http://www.elginmuseum.org). If there is any organization that would like to hear a presentation about the Elgin Museum and what it is trying to accomplish, please contact Debbie Leslie at 541-605-8059.



Museum board members, Betty Knapp (left) and Phyllis Bechtel, are holding two examples of the Elgin Recorder. Standing behind them are board members: Suzanne Goodall, Risa Hallgarth, Dave Yerges, Debbie Leslie, volunteer Mary Townsend and board member Sue Horn.