



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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VOLUME 51 NO. 7

APRIL 2015

Members-Only Tour of Edwards Place Set for April 7

There's still time to register on-line for a free, *SCHS members-only* preview tour of the newly restored Edwards Place historic home on Tuesday, April 7 starting at 5:30 p.m.

The historic home, owned and operated by the Springfield Art Association, has been closed for first-floor renovations for nearly a year. It reopens to the general public on April 11.

Built in 1833 and restored to reflect the time immediately following an 1857 remodeling, Edwards Place was the home of attorney Benjamin Edwards, youngest son of Governor Ninian Edwards and brother-in-law of Mary Lincoln's sister Elizabeth. It is the oldest house in Springfield still on its original foundation.

In the years before the Civil War prominent citizens such as Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas were entertained there at lavish dinner parties and receptions.

The 4,500 square foot mansion, at 700 North 4th Street in Springfield, features nine rooms restored to their mid-19th century appearance, complete with original and local furnishings. Included in its collection of historic treasures are a rare piano



EVERYTHING BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL: Edwards Place curator Erika Holst amid looks over one of the many rooms in the historic home brought back to life through a renovation project. SCHS members will see for themselves on April 7.

Donna Catlin photo

which belonged to a colorful early Congressman, important portraits of 19th century Springfield residents, and artifacts from Abraham Lincoln's in-laws, includ-

ing the "courting couch" on which Lincoln and Mary Todd sat during the early days of their romance.

The special SCHS tour will be led by curator Erika Holst who has overseen the \$490,000 restoration project that began last May.

Included were structural repairs to the plaster, updating the electrical system, refinishing the walnut trim, faux walnut

SCHS MEMBERS-ONLY TOUR

WHERE: Edwards Place, 700 North 4th Street, Springfield.

WHEN: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 7

RESERVATIONS: On line at sangamonhistory.org

graining on the pine trim, refinishing chandeliers, reupholstering furniture, and installing period-appropriate wallpaper, carpeting, and window treatments. In two instances, wallpaper patterns were reproduced from original 1850s fragments found during the restoration process.

Most of the work was underwritten through private donations, matched by a \$150,000 challenge grant from the Jeffris Family Foundation of Wisconsin. A second-floor restoration is planned.

May Meeting to Eye History of Lanphier High School, North-End

Ken Mitchell, businessman, author, and raconteur who grew up Springfield's North-End and later turned his experiences into a series of books about the people and places that shaped his life there, returns to the Sangamon County Historical Society

on Tuesday, May 19 to share the details of his latest book, *North End Pride, The History of Lanphier High School*.

His presentation will begin at 5:30 p.m. in Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library. The

program is free and open to the public.

Mitchell last spoke to the Society in 2010, focusing on the colorful north side neighborhood in and around Reservoir Street from Ninthth to 15th Streets in which his father grew up. It was

whimsically dubbed "Rabbit Row" acknowledging the large families who lived there.

In one of his earlier books, *"Growing Up In Rabbit Row,"* Mitchell describes the neighborhood in which his father spent

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Recreating History

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A Busy Time for the Society? You Can Count on It

Time is whizzing by as the Society enters the final quarter of its fiscal year. It's hard to believe there are just three more programs, some exclusively for members, before we wrap up our meeting season.

That's not to say we're not looking ahead. In fact, we're programmed through the fall. You'll be hearing more about the details on these events as the season progresses, but needless to say, we're sure you'll want to get in on the two big summer events already on the schedule.

Those of you lucky enough to be part of the after hours tour of the State Supreme Court Building in 2013 may want to see what it looks like now, after a more than a year of being closed for renovations and the cleaning of the dozens of works of art that decorate nearly every wall.

We thank John Lupton, acting executive director of the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission, for keeping his promise to let us take another look once the work was done.

The SCHS tour, which will be open only to members, and at that, the first 50 who sign up, is scheduled for Tuesday, July 21. The June issue of *Historico* will let you know the deadline for and how to register. There can be no walk-ins. We will need to submit the names of those planning to tour the facility in early July.

Also ahead, this time in late August, will be a backstage tour and presentation on the history of the Muni, followed by—for those of you who would like to see it—that evening's performance. You'll be hearing more about this in coming weeks.

Our fall meeting opener in September will focus on the history of communications in Sangamon County, from telegraphs to commercial and amateur radio operations that helped our communities connect with the wider world.

October, of course, will bring the much anticipated return of the annual Oak Ridge Cemetery walk that was put on hiatus a few years ago, but will be coming back, bigger and better we think.

A lot of planning is already underway for this event that in the past brought thousands of visitors to Oak Ridge. The Society is in the process of developing plans and building committees for this event. If you would like to be part of that effort, please drop me a note c/o the Society at Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744 or contact me by e-mail at schsoffice@gmail.com.

We're still working on the November program, but one thing is certain, you can count on December to bring you our annual Holiday Party!

Mary Alice



Historico, published 10 times a year, is the official monthly bulletin for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society. *Winner, 2013 Certificate of Excellence, Illinois State Historical Society.*

You can download back issues of *Historico* in PDF format by going to our website, sangamon-history.org or sancohis.org. Send event announcements to historicoeditor@gmail.com.

Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor, Donna Catlin, *Photographer*

Society Grant Application Deadline Closing In

The clock is ticking on funding from the Sangamon County Historical Society for that special project you're thinking about pursuing to preserve and promote interest in Sangamon County history.

The deadline for filing applications for the Society's annual Special Projects grant program is April 20.

Over the past two years, the Society has given Special Projects grants to a variety of projects such as the Clayville Historic Site for permanent flora and fauna markers for its new nature trail; the Village of Williamsville to help underwrite public signage that links the community to the historic Interurban railroad; the Springfield Boys & Girls Club to participate in activi-

ties marking the 150th Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation; and for a National Public Radio series on WUIS-FM on Sangamon history.

Individuals and groups can apply grants of up to \$1,000 each.

An application form and related material can be found on-line at www.sangamonhistory.org, the Society's website.

Completed forms can be submitted online or mailed to the Sangamon County Historical Society, Special Projects Committee, P.O. Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744.

Award winners will be announced at the Society's annual dinner in June.



OFFICERS

President.....Mary Alice Davis
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 Secretary.....Sue Massie
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Term Ending 2015

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 Mike Kienzler, **SangamonLink.org Editor**

Please make note of our official mailing address:
SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744

SangamonLink.org Gets Two Partners: Now You Can Check Our Site Out on Face Book and Twitter!

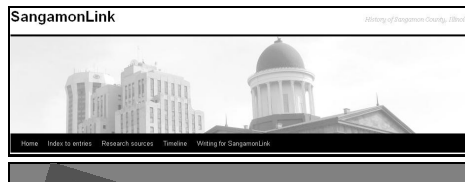
Social media savvy history buffs now have two more ways to learn about the Society's on-line and searchable encyclopedia of county history, *SangamonLink.org*.

Editor Mike Kienzler has teamed up with board member Cathy Mosley who oversees our regular Facebook site, to link two new sites, one on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SangamonLink), the other on Twitter ([twitter.com SangamonLink.org](http://twitter.com/SangamonLink.org)) with teasers on the material they will find on the regular *SangamonLink.org* page. Kienzler is also posting some articles to You Tube.

The on-line encyclopedia was launched last June and continues to expand under the direction of Kienzler, a retired editor at the *State Journal Register* and long-time SCHS member. Kienzler also prepares a segment of the site that is run by the *SJ-R* twice a month, below the Society's familiar green and white logo.

If you haven't checked out the *SangamonLink.org* lately, you may have missed read some of the newest entries, one on the 1933 state championship loss by Springfield High School that includes a link to a You Tube video about the game. Also new to the site is an article on the Victory Loan Flying Circus, a barnstorming group of World War I pilots using WWI combat aircraft, who put on a show for thousands of onlookers in front of the State Fairgrounds Grandstand in 1919.

(Continued on page 6)



NEW SITES: SangamonLink.org, is now promoted on Facebook and Twitter, too.

APRIL 2015 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Society welcomes new members:

Dennis Bomke, John Lucchesi, and Don Gray

Lanphier High School, North-End Close-Up on May 19

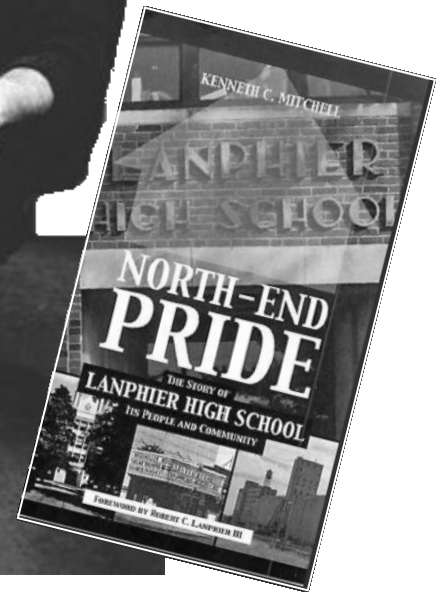
(Continued from page 1)

his childhood and teen years as “a kid’s dreamland.” Built in the late 1800s, Reservoir Park--once one of the city’s most popular family recreation areas--was the social center of Rabbit Row. Its four-million gallon reservoir served as an emergency water source for Springfield, its lake and lagoons provided boating in summer and skating in winter, had an ornate fountain that was lighted at night, croquet fields, tennis courts, horse shoe pits, a pavilion, flower-filled gardens and walkways, picnic grounds, and a baseball stadium that opened in 1925.

The Springfield Park District sold the site to the Springfield School District in the late 1920s to make way for construction of Lanphier High School. The reservoir was plowed under in the early 30s, following completion of the new reservoir, Lake Springfield, created by building Spaulding Dam across Sugar Creek. It is in his new book that Mitchell picks up the story of Reservoir Park and its demise and goes on to define the North-End community, one with its own industries, character and spirit and the impact and construction of Lanphier High School--which opened in 1937--had shaping it.



ADEPT AT providing a slice of life look at Springfield’s North-End and its people, author Kenneth C. Mitchell (left) has produced another in a series of books about the area, the latest on the history of Lanphier High School



Keeping Eye on Weather Throughout Seasons

Spring is here and summer? It’s around the corner.

With a full schedule of programs planned right into next fall, the Society will continue to keep an eye on the weather.

Tornado alerts, heavy rains that cause flooding, even a severe heat wave could affect program scheduling. If weather conditions call for it, the Society meeting could cancel a meeting. And if that happens, an announcement to that effect will be posted by **3 p.m.** of the day of the meeting/event several different ways. Notices initially will be posted on our main website, sangamonhistory.org and on our phone, **217-525-1961** by 3 p.m. on the day of the meeting. This should give you ample time to change plans.

Where possible, we will also post any cancellation notices on media websites and request that they be broadcast through local radio and television outlets.



Nominations, Renewal Notices, Committee Sign-Up Op Ahead This Month and Next

Nominations are now being sought for positions on the Sangamon County Historical Society Board. Five directors are being sought for three year terms ending in 2018. In addition, there are three one-year terms ending in 2016. Elections will take place at the annual dinner meeting on Tuesday, June 23 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Springfield.

With some exceptions, Board members can serve just one three year term (unless they have filled a partial term). Former board members can seek an additional term after a year off the board. Board members are required to attend all monthly board meetings and be active on committees and special events throughout their term. The Society will also elect a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer at the annual meeting.

Society members who are interested in seeking office or a seat on the board must send a resume to the Nominating Commit-

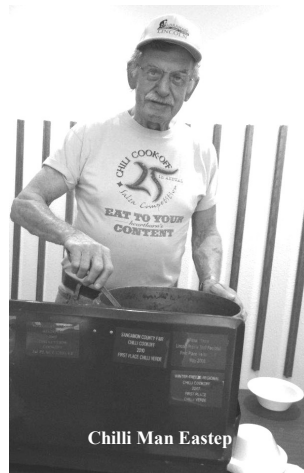
tee no later than April 18. Resumes should be sent to the Society at Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744, attention Brenda Holmes, Nominating chair. The proposed slate will be published in the May edition of *Historico*.

Society members will also be receiving an annual renewal notice/yearly review (or in the case of Life Members, a review) in coming weeks. In addition to dues (which must be paid by June 30), this year, all Society members will be asked to think in terms of future endowments and annual gifts to help support the Society’s ongoing programs such as its Special Projects Grants and other efforts to preserve and protect our local historical heritage.

In addition, if you are interesting in working on the Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk this October, now is the time to let President Mary Alice Davis know. Drop her a line by snail mail or e-mail schsoffice@gmail.com.

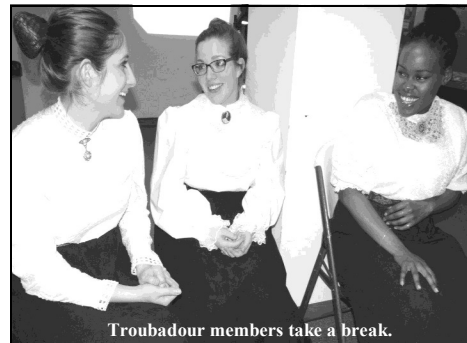


The Art of the Game: History Trivia



Some 150 players filled the Old State Capitol's Foundation Hall, Saturday, March 21 for the Third Annual History Trivia Night. And what a night it was! A mix of merriment and frustration flowed through the room as teams of players tried to guess the right answers to 10 questions in each of 10 rounds in a bid to get the highest table scores of the evening. The event, co-sponsored by the Sangamon County Historical Society and the Old State Capitol Foundation, benefitted the Lincoln Troubadours, an acapella chorus under the direction of Lincoln Land Community College choral director Sue Hamilton. Each summer, the group—composed of area high school and college students—don period costumes and perform Civil War music at area historic sites, underwritten in part by a small state stipend. History Trivia Night proceeds help fill the expenses gap. This year, as in last, players dined on chilli prepared by national chilli champ (and SCHS board member) Les Eastep. The night included the raffle two historic works, one a photo taken of Abraham Lincoln at the Old State Capitol following his nomination for President, donated by the Illinois State Historical Society. The other, donated by Pasfield House innkeeper and SCHS Life Member Tony Leone, was a commemorative reprint illustrating the second inaugural of Lincoln on March 4, 1865.

Chilli Man Eastep



Ticket sellers Claire Eberle and Roni Betts.

Troubadour members take a break.

Donna Catlin photos

New Entries to View Too!

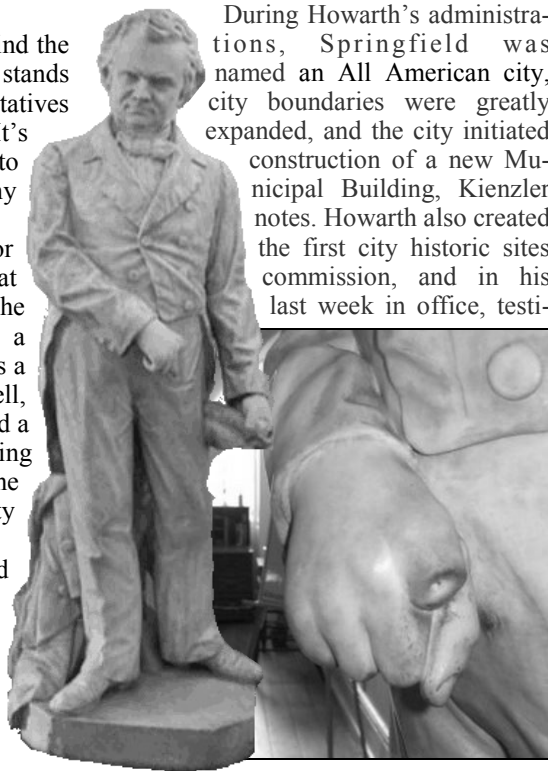
Sangamon.Link.org Adds New Social Media Options

(Continued from page 3)

Kienzler also recounts the story behind the statue of Stephen A. Douglas that stands just outside the House of Representatives chamber at the Old State Capitol. It's missing a finger, but you'll have to read the entry itself to find out why and how it came to be that way.

Also new to the site is a timeline for Springfield's public high schools that also points to North-End Pride: The History of Lanphier High School, a new book by Kenneth C. Mitchell, as a source for more information. Mitchell, raised in Springfield's North-End and a graduate of Lanphier, will be talking about his book when he speaks to the Sangamon County Historical Society in May.

A profile on former Springfield Mayor, the late Nelson Howarth, is another new addition to *SangamonLink.org*. Howarth, who served three terms between 1955 and 1971, had a reputation for being colorful and combative.



During Howarth's administrations, Springfield was named an All American city, city boundaries were greatly expanded, and the city initiated construction of a new Municipal Building, Kienzler notes. Howarth also created the first city historic sites commission, and in his last week in office, testi-

fied before Congress as part of the ultimately successful effort to create the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, he says.

"Howarth, however, is probably best remembered for his civil rights efforts – as mayor, he integrated the Municipal Band and desegregated Oak Ridge Cemetery, expanded the number of African-Americans on the Springfield Police Department, ordered taverns and restaurants to admit blacks and established a city human rights commission," Kienzler writes.

There's more, much more about Howarth on the site including some of his colorful memories of Springfield on his first night back from World War II.

SangamonLink.org is an ongoing project of the Society, the on-line encyclopedia of Sangamon County history eventually containing thousands of entries. Individuals and organizations can contribute information and articles to the site. For information, go to *SangamonLink.org*.

MISSING FINGER: The Stephen A. Douglas statue at the Old State Capitol with its missing digit.

Last Segment of Civil War Series Set for April 9 at Union Theater

The last installment of a 13-week Sesquicentennial series at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum marking the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, will be held Thursday, April 9 at 6:30 p.m. Doors will open at 6 p.m.

Dr. Mark DePue, an oral historian with the Presidential Library, will lead a discussion on the "Pursuit to Appomattox." Guest speakers will be Mark Flowtow, an independent researcher who has written a series of poems about the Civil War, and Christian McWhirter, assistant editor of the *Papers of Abraham Lincoln* at the Presidential Library.

The program is free and will be held in the Union Theater, but reservations are required either through the ALPM website, www.presidentlincoln.illinois.gov or by calling 558-8934.

On April 2, 1865, Robert E. Lee's decimated army withdrew from the besieged cities of Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia, and headed west hoping to link up with Joe Johnson's Confederate army in the Carolinas. But a dogged pursuit by Union forces led to what had previously been unthinkable: the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on April 9, 1865 at the village of Appomattox Court House. It signaled the end of the Southern States attempt to create a separate nation. The surrender documents were signed in the parlor of a house owned by Wilmer McLean. The village is now a National Historic Park.

Old State Capitol to Host Presentations On Appomattox, Lincoln Hearse Repro

The Old State Capitol will host two free special programs this month in Representative Hall, tied to Lincoln and the Civil War.

The first, on Wednesday, April 8, at 5:30 p.m. is entitled, appropriately, "On the Eve of Appomattox." Two well-known Civil War reenactors, Larry Werline and Paul Wood, portraying U.S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, respectively, will talk about the events leading up to the Appomattox Campaign, including their opinions of the campaign itself.

Following a short

intermission, the iconic generals will discuss the surrender meeting that took place on April 9, 1865, and postwar matters.

On April 15 at 6 p.m., the program will focus on "The Recreation of the Lincoln Funeral Hearse" by Paul (P)J Staab II, co-owner and president of Stabb Funeral Home in Springfield.

Staab is recreating the ornate, plumed hearse—the original of which burned in 1887—for the historical recreation of the Lincoln funeral set for the first weekend in May.

The original Lincoln hearse was built in 1857 in Philadelphia for a St. Louis company and was used in the funerals



of several well-known Missouri figures. The mayor of the city of St. Louis offered to Springfield for the Lincoln funeral.

To reserve a seat for the April 15 program, call 546-0166. Refreshments will be provided.



Calendar of Historical Events

With the clock ticking down the days to the 2015 Lincoln Funeral Re-Enactment on May 3, local history groups and other organizations are offering numerous Lincoln-related programs, theatrical productions and public presentations. We've incorporated some of them into our monthly calendar. For the full schedule, go to lincolnfuneralcoalition.org.

Wednesday, April 1: Lincoln's Vault Oak, Noon, Illinois State Museum Research and Collections Center. Arborist Guy Sternberg, Director, Starhill Forrest Arboretum, takes a close look at the last documented living participant in the President's Springfield funeral, a tree known as the Lincoln Vault Oak that shaded the funeral choir. He will share the history and biology of this white oak tree, using historic records, images, and actual wood specimens analyzed to yield information about the events that took place. Free. The Center is located at 1011 East Ash Street, Springfield.

Thursday, April 2: Evening With the Creators Series, Bob Rogers, 6:30 p.m., Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. The second in a series of lectures from the creators of the Museum. Rogers, founder and chief creative officer of BRC Imagination Arts, spent six years creating Museum's exhibits. Tickets :\$12.50 per person.

Tuesday, April 7: SCHS Members Only Pre-Public Private Tour of Edwards Place renovations, 5:30 p.m. Free but pre-registration required. (See story, page 1).

Friday, April 10–Sunday April 12: "Our American Cousin," 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday. Directed by Pam Brown in conjunction with the Springfield Theatre Center, the play is forever connected to President Lincoln who was watching it at Ford's Theatre when he was assassinated. Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 S. 6th Street, Springfield. Tickets \$18, adults, \$16, seniors and children under 12.

Saturday, April 11: Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (1861-1865) Annual Death Day Open House, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., DUVCW Museum, 503 South Walnut Street, Springfield. Free.

Sunday, April 12: Prairie Humanities Lecture/Discussion Series: Lincoln and His Todd Relatives, 2 p.m. Historian and writer Erika Holst shares previously little examined information about the Todd sisters who came from Kentucky to Springfield, one by one, to find a husband on the growing frontier of Illinois, and their relatives. Free. Cathedral of St. Paul (Episcopal), 815 South Second Street, Springfield.

Wednesday, April 15: Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (1861-1865) Annual Death Day Open House, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., DUVCW Museum, 503 South Walnut Street, Springfield, Free.

Wednesday, April 15: Honoring Lincoln Symposium on "Life and Death–Health Care for the President's Family," 1 p.m. The three part program includes presentations by Dr. Wayne C. Temple, Deputy Director, Illinois State Archives, on *Lincoln's Physicians*, historian and author Jason Emerson, on *Seasons of Sadness: The Final Days of Lincoln's Wife and Sons*; and Dr. Lonnie Laughlin, director of Palliative Care, HSHS Medical Group, *Caring for Patients Near the End of Life: Then and Now*. Free. Dove Auditorium, Prairie Heart Institute, 619 Mason Street, Springfield.

Wednesday, April 15: Honoring Lincoln Symposium on "Massive Grief-The Nation and the Family," 6 p.m., Presentations on *Mourning and Physical Presence from Lincoln's Era to Modern Times* by Dr. Christine Todd, professor and chair of Medical Humanities, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine; historian and author Jason Emerson on *The Effect of Lincoln's Death on Mary Robert and Tad*; and Dr. Susan Matt, professor and chair of history, Weber State University, Utah, *Death and Grief in the Age of Abraham Lincoln*, SIU School of Medicine South Auditorium, 801 N. Rutledge Street, Springfield. Free.

Friday April 17–Sunday, April 19: "Our American Cousin," 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday. Directed by Pam Brown in conjunction with the Springfield Theatre Center, the play is forever connected to President Lincoln who was watching it at Ford's Theatre when he was assassinated. Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 S. 6th Street, Springfield. Tickets \$18, adults, \$16, seniors and children under 12.

Saturday, April 18: Lincoln's Vault Oak, 2 p.m. Lincoln Home National Historic Site. Arborist Guy Sternberg, Director, Starhill Forrest Arboretum, takes a close look at the last documented living participant in the President's Springfield funeral, a tree known as the Lincoln Vault Oak that shaded the funeral choir. He will share the history and biology of this white oak tree, using historic records, images, and actual wood specimens analyzed to yield information about the events that took place. Free. Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 426 South 7th Streetm Springfield.

Saturday, April 25: "Death of a President: How Blacks Mourned Lincoln's Assassination." 2 p.m. The Springfield and Central Illinois African-American History Museum embraces a reader's theater format to present individual reactions of African-Americans, both local and national, based on research by the AAHM. Springfield Art Association, 700 North 4th Street, Springfield,. Free

Thursday, April 30: Symposium: Mourning Father Abraham: Lincoln's Assassination and the Public's Response, 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6 p.m.) Free. Speakers will include Dr. Michael Burlingame, Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies, UIS; Dr. Martha Hodes, Professor of History, New York University; and Dr. Louis Masur, Distinguished Professor of American Studies and History, Rutgers University. Brookens Auditorium, University of Illinois at Springfield. A reception and book signing will follow. For more information, go to <http://cspl.uis.edu> or call 206-7094.

Tuesday, June 23: SCHS Annual Dinner, Election of Officers and silent auction, 5:30 p.m. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 533 South Walnut Street, Springfield. icket information and program details will appear in the May edition of *Historico*.

Sunday, October 11: Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk sponsored by the Sangamon County Historical Society and back by popular demand! Plans are now underway that will return this major community event that annually drew thousands of participants before being put on hiatus a few years ago. Watch for details.

Sangamon County Historical Society
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Sangamon County Historical Society MEMBERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL Form

Mail this form with your check to the Sangamon County Historical Society, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744. You may also join or renew on line by going to sangamonhistory.org. Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30.



Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ E-mail: _____

Status

New Member

Renewal

Gift of Membership from:

Phone _____

Membership Levels

- 01 - Regular Membership - \$25
- 02 - Not-For-Profit Membership - \$20 (Must show proof of status).
- 03 - Student Membership - \$10. (Must show proof of status).
- 04 - Educator, \$15. (Must show proof of status).
- 05 - Pioneer Level Membership - \$100.
- 06 - Settlers Level Membership - \$250.
- 07 - Trailblazer Level Membership - \$500.
- 08 - Lifetime Membership - \$700