



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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VOLUME 51 NO. 8

MAY 2015

Capturing Colorful Memories

May Meeting: History of Lanphier High School, North-End

What was it like growing up on Springfield's North-End? And what did Lanphier High School mean to the North-End community wrapped around it?

You'll get the answers to those questions...and quite a bit more on Tuesday, May 19, when Ken Mitchell, businessman, author, and raconteur shares his North-End experiences with the Society at its monthly program meeting.

Mitchell's presentation, in which he will share the details of his latest book, *North End Pride, The History of Lanphier High School*, 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.

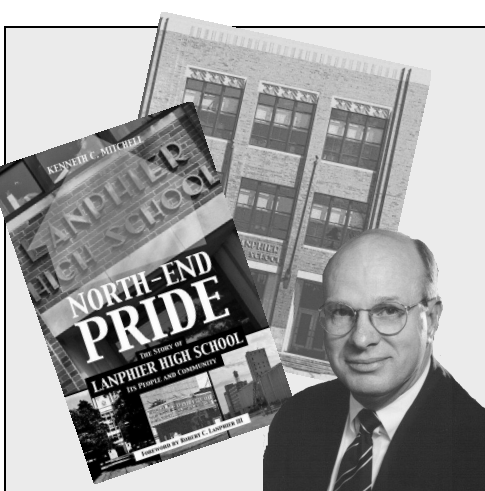
For Mitchell, this will be a second appearance before the Society. In 2010, he provided Society shared stories from an earlier book, *Growing Up on*

Rabbit Row that focused on the colorful north side neighborhood in and around Reservoir Street from Ninth to 15th Streets in which his father grew up.

Mitchell described the neighborhood in which his father spent his childhood and teen years as "a kid's dreamland." It

was whimsically dubbed "Rabbit Row," a nod to the large families who lived there.

Springfield's North-End was once a recreational destination for families from across the city, thanks to Reservoir Park, one of the city's most popular parks. Built in the late 1800s, Reservoir Park also was the



courts, horse shoe pits, a pavilion, flower-filled gardens and treed 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.

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.

The park had an ornate fountain that was lighted at night, croquet fields, tennis

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—particularly the impact of Lanphier High School that was built on the site in 1937.

SCHS Nominating Committee Rolls Out 2015-2016 Slate

Members of the Sangamon County Historical Society will be voting on officers and directors next month at the organization's annual dinner on Tuesday, June 23.

The board last month accepted the proposed slate from the Nominating Committee.

Additional nominations can be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

The Society is governed by a four-member executive board consisting of the president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer who are elected annually, and a

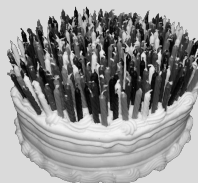
15 member board of directors, each of who are limited to a three year term. Former board members who have completed a three year term must wait a year before seeking a board seat anew or filling a va-

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Marks Its
175th



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Lots to Do and More to Come This Summer, Fall

For most organizations, things usually wind down as the end of their fiscal year approaches, in our case, June 30.

But not us.

This has been a busy 11 months, rich with programs and events and plans for even more ahead. I thought this would be a good opportunity to let you know what's in the works and update you on some of the larger projects on our plate. It also offers me a chance to remind you of the important role you play as a member of the Society in supporting our initiatives and goals.

I'm pleased to say our plans to resume the popular Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk are moving right along, thanks to an enthusiastic committee drawn from both our membership and beyond who are working diligently to bring this event back to Springfield. Over the years, the Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk drew over 70,000 people to this important historic site before being abruptly cancelled by a cemetery administrator who is no longer associated with Oak Ridge. We're delighted with the support and enthusiasm Mike Lelys, the cemetery's executive director, has for this Society project. Keep your eyes open for signs announcing the October event. They'll be posted at Oak Ridge in coming weeks.

Plans for the Society's annual dinner are also well underway and we're pleased we were able to go back to historic Westminster Presbyterian Church for the event. Its large and attrac-

tive Fellowship Hall proved an ideal location two years ago and we were happy it was available for us this year. With over 600 members and most program meetings drawing large audiences, it is getting more and more difficult for us to find a space to accommodate a dinner for an organization of our size. The annual meeting is a constitutional requirement, since it includes the election of officers and directors, and obligates the Society to hold it at a location that can accommodate *all* members who wish to attend.

Come July, Society members will have a chance to see what's been done to the Illinois State Supreme Court Building that was closed for nearly a year for refurbishing and repairs. Those of us who toured the site in 2014 took note of the amazing amount of art and the architectural details that had been dulled by time, dirt, and dust. The rehabbing included restoration of these works that should be a treat to see. You absolutely must sign up in advance for this limited-number, members-only tour. The June issue of *Historico* will provide the details.

In June, you'll learn more about a special tour and talk on the history of the Muni planned for August that will also offer you an option to stay for supper and get seats for a ticketed performance of *West Side Story*. More about that in the June *Historico* too. Our fall line-up is set as well but we'll tell you more as our new operating year begins.

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*



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Happy 175th Birthday Springfield! For Details See *SangamonLink.org*

The city of Springfield turned 175 years old last month.

Most people might not have known that, but now they do, thanks to Society Life Member and Iles House historian Linda Garvert, who brought that fact to the attention of Mike Kienzler, editor of the Society's on-line and searchable encyclopedia of Sangamon County history, *SangamonLink.org*.

The details of that event are among the newest additions to the almost year-old website that continues to grow. Like Garvert, you too can contribute tips, queries, even full articles to Kienzler for the site. Each month, *Historico* picks out one or two to feature to whet your appetite for more!

And for the record, Springfield officially became a city on April 6, 1840. Notes Kienzler, "Springfield already had been incorporated as a town in 1832. As the community grew, however, city officials – including Abraham Lincoln, who became a town board member in 1839 — asked the legislature to authorize Springfield to become a city instead. Among other changes, institution of city government would allow the community to be divided for election purposes into wards, rather than having a town president and four board members elected at large."

Many of the powers outlined in the proposed city charter were remarkably similar to those employed today by city government, Kienzler points out. The new city council was authorized to build and repair streets, provide water to residents, extinguish fires, regulate merchants, protect public health and "tax, restrain, prohibit and suppress tipling houses, dram shops, gaming houses, bawdy and other disorderly houses," among other responsibilities. In those days, the city also operated schools and established hospitals.



The legislature approved a city charter for Springfield on February 3, 1840, but only under condition that voters endorse the change.

Want the tally and to find out who was in charge back then? You'll have to go to *SangamonLink.org* to read the details!

Segments of SangamonLink.org are also published twice a month in the State Journal Register. And be sure to check out the Society's two social media sites maintained for SCHS by board member Cathy Mosley on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SangamonLink) and Twitter (twitter.com/SangamonLink.org). Both offer teasers on the material that can be found on the regular *SangamonLink.org* page.

OFFICERS

President.....Mary Alice Davis
Vice-President.....Ruth Slottag
Secretary.....Sue Massie
Treasurer.....Richard Herndon
Past President.....Roger Whitaker

DIRECTORS

Term Ending 2015

Donna Catlin
 Les Eastep
 David Grimm
 Francie Staggs
 Vicky Whitaker

Term Ending 2016

Kathy Dehen
 Cathy Mosley

Term Ending 2017

Troy Gilmore
 Amy Henrikson
 Genevieve Kaplan
 Jerry Smith
 Sara Watson

Committee Chairs

Legal: Bruce Beeman
Special Projects: Elaine Hoff
Finance: Patricia Davis, Doug Polite,
Nominating: Brenda Holmes
Membership: Claire Eberle
Membership Relations/Hospitality: Marion Leach
Publicity and Marketing: Ruth Slottag
Publications: Roger Whitaker
Programs & Special Events: Mary Alice Davis, Vicky Whitaker

Staff

Dr. Samuel Wheeler, **Executive Coordinator**
 Mike Kienzler, **SangamonLink.org Editor**

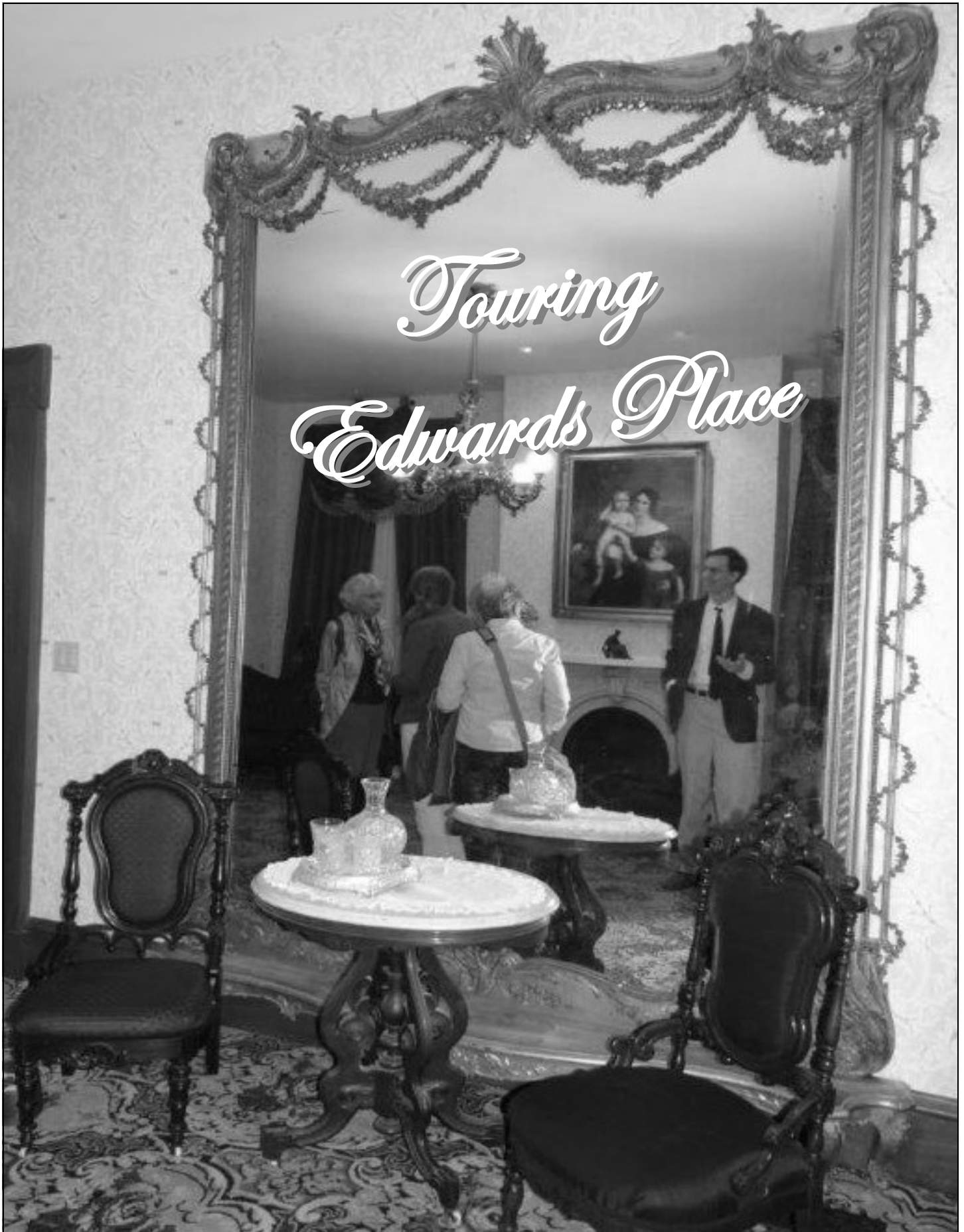
Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744

MAY 2015 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Society welcomes new members:

Eugene Walker, Jane Running, Larry Stone, Pamm Collebrusco, Ken Mitchell, Karen Kelly Mitchell, Zemfira Mitchell, Chuck Hartke, Joe Armstrong



*Touring
Edwards Place*



IN A PRE-TOUR presentation, Edwards Place curator Erika Holst told Society members about the initial renovations to the historic home and plans to revive the second floor. Proceeds from a new book, *Edwards Place, A Springfield Treasure*, will help raise funds for Phase 2.

Donna Catlin photos



Close to 80 Society members flocked to Edwards Place on April 7 for an exclusive preview of recently completed renovations to the historic home prior to its re-opening to the public later in the month. Built in 1833 and restored to reflect the time immediately following an 1857 remodeling, the 4,500 square foot mansion at 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield, was home to attorney Benjamin Edwards, youngest son of Governor Ninian Edwards and brother-in-law of Mary Lincoln's sister, Elizabeth. In the years before the Civil War, prominent citizens such as Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, were entertained at lavish dinner parties and legislative receptions. The mansion, now owned by the Springfield Art Association, closed last year for nearly \$500,000 in renovations to the first floor. Additional work is planned.



New Faces Amid Proposed Slate for 2015-2016

from page 1)
a vacancy.

The proposed slate includes three of the four current officers who will be seeking second terms: president Mary Alice Davis, vice-president Ruth Slottag, and secretary Sue Massie. Seeking office for the first time will be treasurer candidate Jerry Smith who will step down from his position as a director (through 2017) to seek the post. He would succeed Richard Herndon who is not seeking re-election.

Proposed as directors for three year terms ending in 2018 are Valerie Patterson, Jane Running, Larry Stone, Roger Whitaker, and Heather Wickens

Nominated for a two-year term ending in 2017 for the seat being vacated by Smith is Doug Polite. If elected, he will join Troy Gilmore, Amy Henrikson, Genevieve Kaplan, and Sara Watson.

Nominated for one-year terms to fill existing vacancies through 2016 are Pamm Collebrusco, Elaine Hoff, and Vicky Whitaker. If elected, they would join current directors Kathy Dehen and Cathy Mosley.

Nominees Patterson, Stone, Wickens, Running, and Collebrusco would be filling board seats for the first time.

Patterson is a Williamsville Village Board trustee and a member of the Williamsville Public Library and Museum



Patterson

Collection Committee among other community activities. She holds Masters degrees in Communications and Arts and has a professional background in sales and marketing.

Stone, a resident of Sherman, has a life-long back-

ground in finance and accounting including serving for 36 years as an Internal Auditor and then Chief Auditor for the State Retirement System and Information Systems Audit Manager for Central Management Services.



Stone

Collebrusco, who holds masters degrees in English and Library and Information Science, is a public services librarian at Benedictine University at Springfield's Becker Library. She is on the editorial board for *Collebrusco Quiddity International Literary Journal* and Twelve Winters Press.

Running, now retired, spend most of her working career as a



reference librarian for the Illinois State Library. She holds an undergraduate degree in English Literature and General History from Washington University, St. Louis, and a Masters in Library Science from Emory University, Atlanta. She is a Docent at First Presbyterian Church where she is working on the church history. She is also vice-regent of the Springfield Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Wickham, Program Manager for the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition and the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, holds a Masters Degree from the University of Illinois in History.



Running

Wickham, Program Manager for the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition and the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, holds a Masters Degree from the University of Illinois in History.



Wickham

She previously worked for the National Park Service and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

Detailed biographies and photos of the entire proposed slate will appear in the June edition of *Historico*.

The annual dinner will be held in the Fellowship Hall of Westminster Presbyterian Church starting at 5:30 p.m. and catered by Carol Fraase.

The Society's annual Silent and Live auction will also be held. If you'd like to donate items for the auction, drop a note to schsoffice@gmail.com.

Tickets, at \$30 per person, will go on sale May 1 on-line (at sangamonhistory.org) and by mail (See order form, page 7). Please include the full name of any guests.

Mail reservations accompanied by your check, must be received by Monday, June 15.



ANNUAL DINNER SITE: The Sangamon County Historical Society will hold its annual dinner on Tuesday, June 23, at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Springfield. In addition to elections, the Society will announce recipients of its Special Projects Grant program. A Silent and Live Auction will also be part of the event. Starting May 1, you can make reservations on line at the Society's website, sangamonhistory.org or use the ticket order form on the bottom of page 7 to guarantee a seat. All reservations/payment must be received by Monday, June 15.

Roger Whitaker photo



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.

Friday, May 1: Prairie Humanities Lecture Series, "The Lincoln Train is Coming," 2 p.m., Atrium, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 524 E. Lawrence Avenue, Springfield. Retired professor Dr. Wayne Weslowski, director of the Benedictine University Lincoln Train Project in the 1990s, discusses his historical research and construction of a 1/12 scale model of the Lincoln Funeral Train now permanently housed at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Free.

Friday, May 1: Lincoln Through the Arts, 7 p.m., Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 South Sixth Street, Springfield, 7 p.m. In paintings, music, videos, and poetry, contemporary artists and poets interpret and respond to the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln. Benedictine University and **Quiddity** present performances by national award-winning poets and artists including Toi Derricotte and Jamaal May, celebrating the essence of Abraham Lincoln. The multimedia arts event will also be accompanied by visual arts and music inspired by the quiddity of Lincoln as president, statesman, and poet. Tickets \$15. Call the Hoogland box office at 523-2787.

Friday, May 1 through Sunday, May 3: Civil War Encampments, Dawn to dusk. The public can visit any of several sites in the Springfield area hosting Civil War encampments. The Springfield campus of Benedictine University Civil War Encampment will feature band concerts on the lawn, in the amphitheater, and in the Sacred Heart Chapel, as well as a Civil War artifact museum in the historic Brinkerhoff Home, 1500 N. Fifth Street. Infantry, artillery, and mixed military and civilian campus recreating life in the 1860s can be seen at Lincoln Park, 1601 North Fifth Street. The 10th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry (Reactivated) Headquarters encampment will be on the south lawn of the Springfield Art Association, Edwards Place, 700 North Fourth Street. Free.

Saturday, May 2: Historic Home Tour, 1 p.m. to 5 pm. The Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association hosts this self-guided tour of a half-dozen mid to late 1800s homes in the neighborhood, Tickets are \$10 available on the day of the tour at the Springfield Art Association, 700 North Fourth Street. For information, e-mail president@epnia.com.

Sunday, May 3: "Lincoln's Legacy and Civil Rights," 9:15 a.m.

The Cathedral of St. Paul (Episcopal) hosts a free panel discussing how, under Lincoln's presidency, laws changed and doors opened for equality regardless of race. Speakers will be Dr. Matthew Holden, Jr., Wepner Distinguished Professor, Political Science, University of Illinois, Springfield; James A. Lewis, U.S. Attorney; and Springfield attorney Richard Hart. At the Church, 815 South Second.

Saturday, May 23: A Spirited Stroll Into the Past, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Oak Ridge Cemetery. Recapturing a historic tradition, The Lincoln Monument Association and the Oak Ridge Cemetery Association offers an afternoon of sweet treats, a historic tree tour, period crafts demonstrations and family-oriented children's activities on the cemetery grounds, 1441 Monument Avenue, Springfield. For information, go to www.oakridgecemetery.org or call 789-2340.

Tuesday, June 23: SCHS Annual Dinner, 5:30 p.m. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 533 South Walnut Street, Springfield. Annual election and silent auction. Tickets \$30. Order on-line at sangamonhistory.org or use the form below. Reservation deadline is Monday, June 15.

Tuesday, July 22: Members Only Tour, State Supreme Court Building, 5:30 p.m. Advance reservations required by July 8. Details in June **Historico**.

Thursday, August 15: History of the Muni Tour and Talk, 6 p.m., followed by an 8 p.m. performance of "West Side Story" (optional). Watch for details and reservation information in the June **Historico**.

Tuesday, September 15: Sangamon County's Broadcasting History: From Telegraph to Television and Everything in Between, 5:30 p.m. The Sangamon Valley Radio Club joins with SCHS in presenting this special overview of broadcasting history, with broadcasting historian Joe Armstrong. Carnegie Room North, City of Springfield's Lincoln Library.

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 Annual Dinner Reservation Form

Please reserve ___ seats at \$30 per person for the annual dinner, 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, June 23 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Springfield. Enclosed is my check for \$_____.

Your Name: _____

Name of Guest(s): _____

Phone Number _____ e-mail: _____

Send this form and your check by to SCHS at Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744. Save time and a stamp by making your reservation on-line at sangamonhistory.org. All reservations/payment must be received by Monday, June 15.

Sangamon County Historical Society
P.O. Box 9744,
Springfield, IL 62791-9744
Return Service Requested

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 777
Springfield, Illinois

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