



# HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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VOLUME 52 NO. 5

MARCH 2016

## Get Ready to Play!

# History Trivia Night March 19

Tickets and tables are going fast for the Fourth Annual History Trivia Night, a sell-out ever year that it's been held.

"This year may well be no different," says Society president Mary Alice Davis, even in moving the popular event to a new larger site, Christ the King Parish Hall at 1930 Barberrry Drive in Springfield. Doors open at 6 p.m., with play beginning at 7 p.m.

"In past years, the Old State Capitol played host to the fundraiser, but it became apparent last year that History Trivia

Night had outgrown the building. "We had to turn away tables because we had maxed out on the number of tables we could fit into Foundation Hall. With the move, we have doubled the potential amount of players."

This year the Society is partnering with the Pleasant Plains Historical Society which owns and operates the Clayville historic site.

"Clayville has always been an active partner in our trivia night, providing supplies and players, so it is with special delight to know that this year, they will also directly benefit from its success," she added.

There's still time for you to put a team of 10 together and

challenge your friends at this fun-filled evening. You can reserve a table of 10 for \$100 or purchase individual tickets at \$10, on-line through the Society's website at sangamonhistory.org. You can also purchase a table or individual tickets by mailing a check to the Society at Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62792-9744. Checks must be received no later than March 15. **All tickets and table reservations must be purchased in advance. No tickets will be sold at the door.**

*(Continued on page 6)*



## Brewing History On Tap, Museum Tour, Too

SCHS members will have a lot to do and see this coming April and May. Two terrific programs are planned, one a traditional program meeting, the other a members-only tour.

You'll be learning about each in greater detail in the April issue of *Historico* as well as more about our annual June Dinner and a huge garage sale in the spring for benefit of the Society, but here's a quick look at what's immediately ahead:

**Tuesday, April 19: *The Brewing***

*History of Central Illinois.* Beer historian Roy Mayfield takes center stage in this fascinating powerpoint look at Central Illinois's rich tradition of beer and brewing history.

Mayfield is founding president of the Reisch Brew Crew, a group of more than 55 men and women hobbyists from across Central Illinois who collect *breweriana* including items from once thriving area breweries, now long gone, including the Reisch Brewing Company, Springfield Brewing

Company, and Dick's Brewing Company. Mayfield is currently vice-president of the Reisch Brew Crew, an affiliate of three nationwide Breweriana clubs and a Life Member of the Sangamon County Historical Society.

**Tuesday, May 10:** Members-only 6 p.m. guided tour of the *Chiara Center, St. Francis of Assisi Church* and *Franciscan Heritage Museum* near Riverton. This will be a week earlier than our regular third Tuesday of the month program which it will replace.

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## Don't Miss Trivia Night. It's Lots of Fun!

You may have passed it off in the past, but I really want to urge you to join fellow Society members on Saturday, March 19 to play trivia.

It's not only for a good cause. It's lots of fun, too. You don't have to be a walking encyclopedia of history or sports or music or geography to play. There will be nine others at your table in what is really a team sport that requires just a paper and pencil! And it's social too. Lots of laughs, groans (at the answer that got away) and table to table camaraderie when you and the folks sitting around you publicly celebrate getting the right answer!

The best part of the evening is that your participation will help two very worthwhile efforts. One is the Society's special project fund that provides financial underpinnings to a broad variety of meaningful historic efforts, from repairs to the bell tower at Oak Ridge cemetery, to a radio program that captivantly provides the colorful history of Sangamon County to a broad audience. The other beneficiary is Clayville, the massive and wonderful restoration project that the Pleasant Plains Historical Society has undertaken, bringing back to life a part of Sangamon history that would otherwise have entirely disappeared. Those who continue to maintain and expand the Clayville Historic Site know how difficult it is both physically and financially to maintain the facility. We have always appreciated the fact that when we held our first three History Trivia Nights, the folks from the Pleasant Plains Historical Society stood by us shoulder to shoulder, providing tables and chairs, labor to set up and take down, and on top of that, nearly five dozen players as well as a round sponsor. That's why we are especially delighted to partner with them and know that in appreciation of those efforts, the event will provide them with much needed additional funds to help them meet their goals.

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\* \* \*

Sometimes there are never enough thank-yous to go around, but fortunately we have a pile of them that we'd like to spread around, not the least of which is to Marion Leach, our Hospitality Chair who each month bakes those delicious cookies, cakes, and breads we so casually devour during and at the end of our program meetings. She also sets up the refreshment tables and hovers reassuringly nearby throughout the evening to make sure everyone who wants that taste of home baked goodies gets the opportunity to do so! We're lucky to have such a hard-working and talented committee chair!

Thank-yous are also in order to Genevieve Kaplan and Heather Wickens for putting together our February meeting, a fast-spinning look at history culled from some of our members' personal collections and recollections.

And a thank-you to Ruth Slottag for stepping in to produce last month's *Historico* while our editor, Vicky Whitaker, was on the mend. Good work!

Mary Alice



*Historico*, published 10 times a year (except July and December), is the official bulletin for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society. Winner, 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](http://sangamon-history.org) or [sancohis.org](http://sancohis.org). Send event announcements to [historicoeditor@gmail.com](mailto:historicoeditor@gmail.com).

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

## New Play About Lincoln's Wedding Set for March 11, 12 at Edwards Place

"Love is Eternal," an original play based on the Lincoln's wedding, will be staged Friday, March 11 and Saturday, March 12 at the Springfield Art Association's Edwards Place Historic Home, Springfield.

The original play, written and directed by Rose Harmon, starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets, at \$25 can be purchased on line at [www.edwardsplace.org](http://www.edwardsplace.org) or by calling 217-523-2631 to order tickets.

The play is set on November 4, 1842, and a small group of Springfield's elite have gathered in the home of Ninian and Elizabeth Edwards to watch Elizabeth's sister Mary give her hand in marriage to a young lawyer named Abraham Lincoln. Each guest at

the wedding provides his or her own analysis of Abraham and Mary's relationship, but the true nature of the famous couple's feelings for each other and reasons for marrying is left to the audience's interpretation.

At the conclusion of the play, a wedding song will be played on the very same piano that actually played the music at the Lincolns' wedding.

After the play, there will be a panel discussion featuring the play's director, writer, costumer, and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Lincoln Curator James Cornelius. Wine and cake reception to follow the show. The Edwards Place Historic Home is located at 700 North Fourth Street.



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 Mike Kienzler, [SangamonLink.org](http://SangamonLink.org) Editor

## Linking to the Link

### YWCA, Rodeos, Prohibition and an Early Celebrity Now on Website

The back story on Springfield's former YWCA building--now on the verge of demolition--is a click away on [SangamonLink.org](http://SangamonLink.org), the Society's free searchable on-line encyclopedia of Sangamon County history.

It's one of several recent additions to the site, notes editor Mike Kienzler. You can also read about the Stapleton Rodeo in New Berlin, Prohibition referendums in Sangamon County between 1908 and 1917, and publicist, author and celebrity Nellie Revell.

Here's a quick sampling. You'll have to go to the website to read more about these newly added sections:

The YWCA was "built in the after-

glow of evangelist Billy Sunday's six week long local revival in 1909" writes Kienzler. "In his colorful way, Sunday had called out Springfield on its lack of attention to women's organizations."

The response was immediate, the newly organized Young Women's Christian Association quickly attracting some 1,300 women who joined for \$1 each. Another 21 women signed up for life memberships.

*(Continued on page 6)*



### MARCH 2016 DONOR REPORT

*The Society extends its thanks and appreciation to the following donors:*

Richard and Pat Herndon in honor of Doug and Rosalie Polite  
 Richard McLane

Please make note of our official mailing address:

**SCHS**  
**Box 9744**  
**Springfield, Illinois,**  
**62791-9744**



# THE HISTORY COLLECTORS

Society members and guests got a whirlwind taste of local history February 16 in a "speed-dating" style, five-minute-a-piece presentation by nine collectors of everything from dishes to family documents. It was different. It was fun. But most of all, it offered a broad view of personal history seldom seen in museums.

The "My Home, My History" meeting concept, put together by SCHS board members Genevieve Kaplan and Heather Wickens, drew a mix of topics and show-and-tell, from a broad range of presenters, all of them Society members.

The evening included a brief history of SCHS president Mary Alice Davis's collection of the Jewel Tea Company's premium, Autumn Leaf china, a popular collectible in the mid-west prior to World War II through the late 70s; telegraph keys that make up part of board member Roger Whitaker's personal collection of telegraphy artifacts; and Mike Kienzler's story

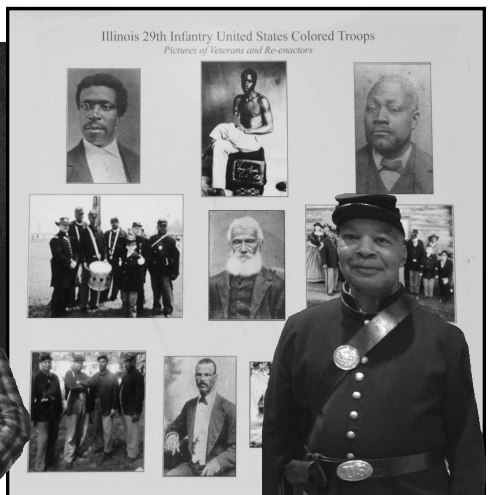
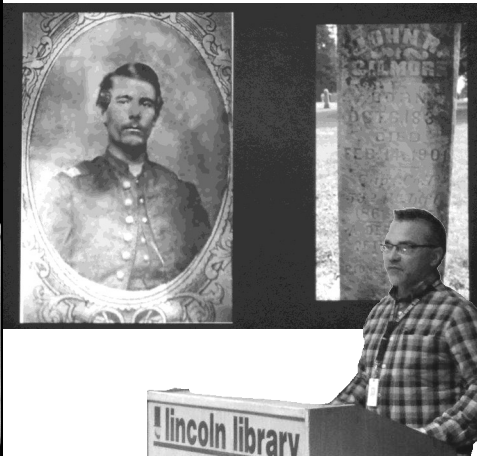
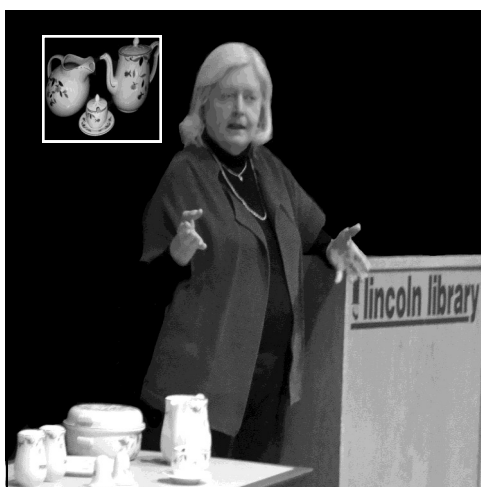
behind reporter Nellie Browne Duff's 1,200 page Honor Book of Sangamon County published in 1920 that recognized the County's World War I 4,000 military veterans and home-front supporters.

Robert Davis, donned the uniform he wears as a Civil War re-enactor to share his personal collection of photos of the African-American Civil War veterans who served in the Illinois 29th Infantry, United States Colored Troops, buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery, including some photos from the 2013 ceremony placing a historical marker and gravestone on the previous unmarked grave of Private Lewis Martin of Springfield. Board member Troy Gilmore, assistant Supervisor of the State's historical sites in Springfield and a Civil War re-enactor with the 114th Infantry, shared a family photo of his great-great grandfather, John R. Gilmore, a captain in the Civil war who served with the 53rd Volunteer Infantry out of Ottawa, Illinois and an early Nebraska pioneer whose

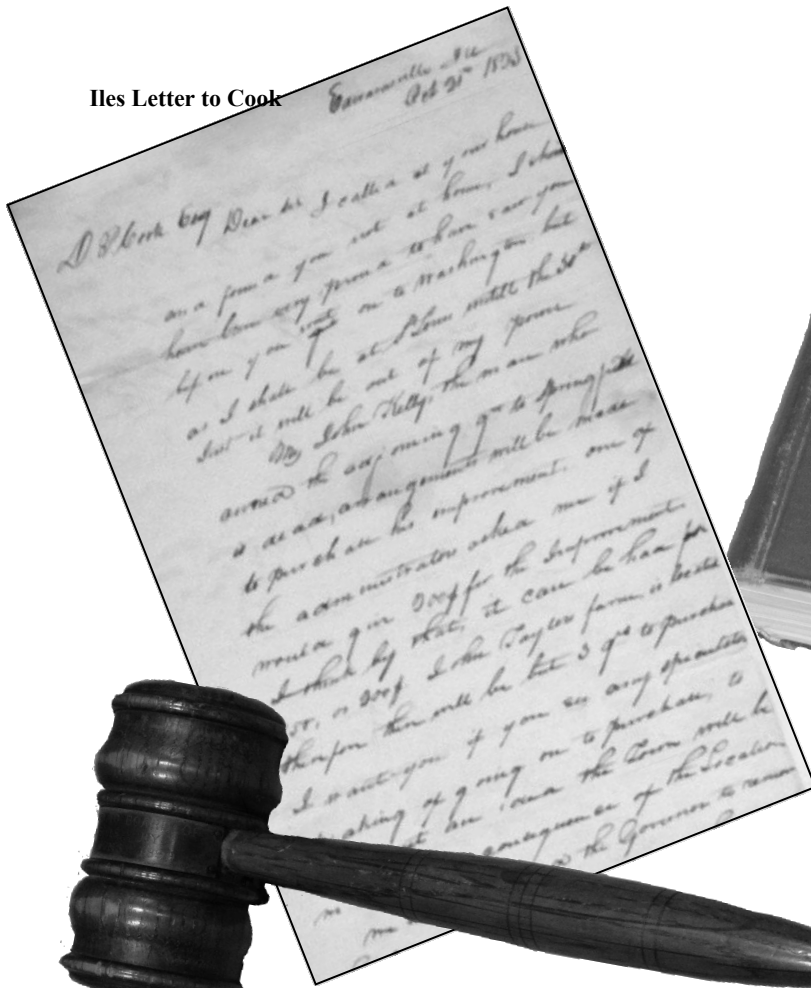
tombstone he discovered in Omaha, Nebraska.

Curtis Mann, head of the Sangamon Valley Room at the City's Lincoln Library, shared a favorite letter written by Elijah Iles to Congressman Daniel Pope Cook that smacks of backroom dealing in assembling land that would become Springfield. Family history had its turn with Larry Stone who reflected on the careers of his great-grandfather, Judge Lawrence E. Stone, who was a Sangamon County Circuit Court Judge from 1932 to 1945 and his grandfather, Springfield attorney Lawrence E. Stone.

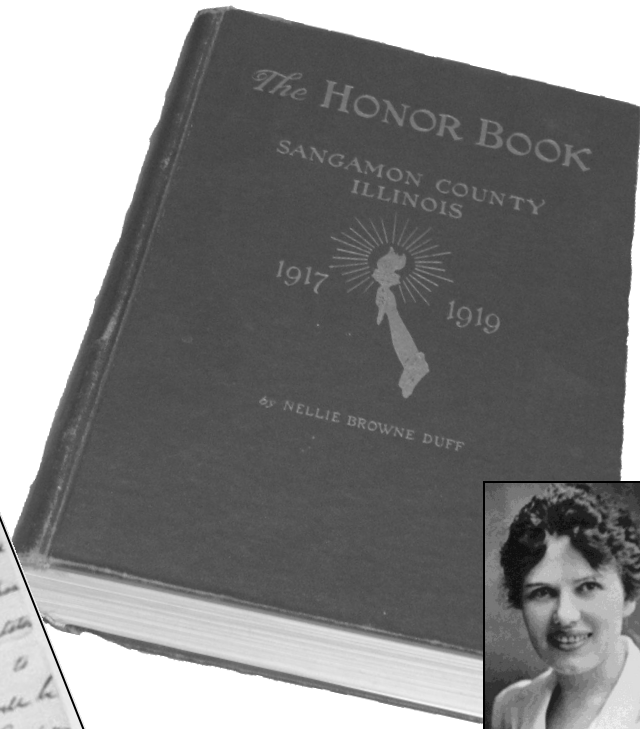
Co-program planners Kaplan and Wickens also had their five-minute turns, Wickens, project manager for Looking for Lincoln, talking about a new Looking for Lincoln book series, and Kaplan briefly detailing her grandfather Robert Weed's career as a Secret Service Agent.



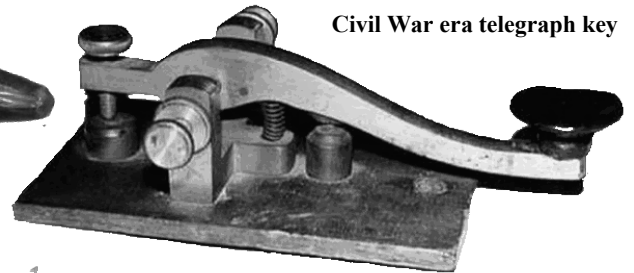
Hes Letter to Cook



Judge Stone's gavel



Nellie Browne Duff



Civil War era telegraph key

**QUICK STUDY:** February meeting co-planners Heather Wickens (left) and Genevieve Kaplan (right) put a new spin on history with a program meeting that included nine speakers, displays and a warning bell that went off at five minutes that ended each presentation. Most speakers held to the rule. The spin was enough to whet the appetite of attendees who afterward flocked to the displays and peppered the speakers with questions.

*Donna Catlin photos*





Christ the King Parish Hall

# Trivia Night on March 19 at a New Site

*(Continued from page 1)*

Society members who purchase individual tickets will be assigned to SCHS tables where possible.

A limited number of the 10 Round sponsorships at \$100 per round are available but are also going quickly. In addition to acknowledgement in the program, the

Round sponsors are recognized at the start of one of the 10 rounds with a corporate logo or business card.

The three top teams will earn cash prizes of \$200 (first place), \$100 (second place) and \$50 (third place). In the event of a tie, a tie-breaker round or rounds will determine the winner.

As in past years, players cannot bring

food or snacks into the building. Food and drinks will be available for purchase including chili prepared by renowned chili chef Les Estep. Cookies, beer, wine, soda, and bottled water can also be purchased.

Trivia master Al Gietl is again designing this year's game that will draw broadly on a range of topics, some general, some with historical ties.

# SangamonLink.org Website Adds More to Area's History Dialogue

*(Continued from page 3)*



The cornerstone for Springfield's YWCA Building was laid in 1912.

at \$100. By 1912, the fledgling organization saw the cornerstone for its new building at Fifth and Jackson, the structure designed by local architect George Helmle opening a year later.

"The entire cost – \$24,000 for the lot, \$76,000 for construction and \$8,000 for furnishings – had already been pledged, allowing the YWCA to move in with no debt." For much more on its history, check the website

Fame is fleeting, especially for the likes of Nellie Revell who grew up in Riverton and Springfield whose nationwide celebrity has long faded from most memories. Kienzler brings it back to life in this section on a woman who in the 1890s defied the expectations of her era, becoming a pioneering newspaper reporter for some of country's leading newspapers, and later a top

theatrical publicist, author, radio broadcaster, even vaudeville performer. Revell died in 1958 and is buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery but on SangamonLink.org, you can learn



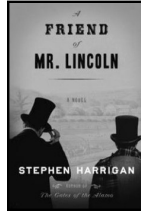
Nellie Revell

more about some of the world's best known performers and others who came to her door.



# Calendar of Historical Events

**THURSDAY, MARCH 3: Steve Harrigan: A Friend of Mr. Lincoln.** Author Stephen Harrigan will sign copies of his book at 6 p.m. and then at 6:30 p.m. discuss his new novel, *A Friend of Mr. Lincoln*, when he appears at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum Union Theater, 212 North Sixth Street, Springfield. In his tome, Harrigan paints a vivid portrait of Lincoln and his circle in the Black Hawk War, in Springfield, and on the circuit in the 1830s-1850. Applauded by *The Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*, the author's newest and sixth book furthers the acclaim that began with *The Gates of the Alamo: A Novel*, published in 2000. The event is free but you can reserve a seat by going to [www.presidentlincoln.illinois.gov](http://www.presidentlincoln.illinois.gov).



**SATURDAY, MARCH 19: Fourth Annual History Trivia Night** sponsored by the Sangamon County Historical Society and the Pleasant Plains Historical Society, 6 p.m. (Play begins at 7 p.m.). (See story page 1, map page 6). Tickets are \$10 per person, \$100 for a table of ten and must be purchased in advance. No ticket sales at door. Food and drink will be available. Christ the King Church Parish Hall, 1930 Barberry Drive, Springfield. To reserve a seat or table, go to [www.sangamonhistory.org](http://www.sangamonhistory.org) or mail a check to SCHS at Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744. All payments must be received by March 15.



**THURSDAY, MARCH 10: Eddy Lincoln's Birthday.** The anniversary of the birthday of Eddy Lincoln, the second born but least known Lincoln child, will be celebrated at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, 212 North Sixth Street, Springfield, in this special Family Day event geared to children. Running from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., participants will play 19th century games, do a craft, and learn a little more about Eddy. The event is free but regular Museum admission required.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19: Bonnets, Beaus, and Bustles Civil War Fashion Show and Dinner,** 6 p.m. The Illinois State Historical Society is sponsoring this event to be held at Edwards Place Historic Home on the grounds of the Springfield Art Association, 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield. Tickets are \$40 per person for ISHS members, \$50 per person for non--members. To make a reservation, call 217-525-2781 or 217-523-2631 or go to [www.historyillinois.org](http://www.historyillinois.org).

**FRIDAY, MARCH 11 AND SATURDAY, MARCH 12, "Love is Eternal."** Edwards Place Historic Home serves as both the stage and backdrop for s performance of "Love Is Eternal," an original play by Rose Harmon based on the Lincolns' Wedding., staged at. Directed by Harmon, the play goes back to November 4, 1842, where a small group of Springfield's elite have gathered in the home of Ninian and Elizabeth Edwards to watch Elizabeth's sister Mary give her hand in marriage to a young lawyer named Abraham Lincoln. Each guest at the wedding provides his or her own analysis of Abraham and Mary's relationship, but the true nature of the famous couple's feelings for each other and reasons for marrying is left to the audience's interpretation. At the conclusion of the play, a wedding song will be played on the very same piano that actually played the music at the Lincolns' wedding. A panel discussion featuring the play's director, writer, costumer, and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Lincoln Curator James Cornelius will follow after which there will be a wine and cake reception. Tickets are \$25 per person. To reserve a seat go to [www.edwardsplace.org](http://www.edwardsplace.org) or call 217-525-2631. The historic home is located on the grounds of the Springfield Art Association, 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield.



**TUESDAY, APRIL 19: The Brewing History of Central Illinois,** 5:30 p.m. Speaking to members and guests of the Sangamon County Historical Society, beer historian Roy Mayfield will be detailing the history of Central Illinois's once thriving beer and brewing industry, one that today attracts a growing number collectors of *breweriana*. The presentation will include a powerpoint show that captures the size and scope of a brewing business that in an earlier century helped put Springfield and Central Illinois on the map. The session, free and open to the public, will be held in Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 South Seventh Street.



**TUESDAY, MAY 10: Chiara Center, St. Francis Of Assisi Church and Franciscan Heritage Museum Tour.** Sangamon County Historical Society members will get an exclusive guided tour of the church and museum of this historic 300 acre retreat at 4875 LaVerna Road near Riverton operated by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, 6 p.m. On-line registration will be required.



**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](http://sangamonhistory.org). Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30.



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**Status**

New Member

Renewal

Gift of Membership from:

\_\_\_\_\_

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**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