



# HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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## April 19: Tapping Into Beer Brewing History

Beer historian Roy Mayfield takes center stage in a powerpoint-enhanced eye on Central Illinois's rich tradition of beer and brewing history when the Society holds its monthly program meeting on Tuesday, April 19.

The free program will start at 5:30 p.m. in Carnegie Field North at Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 S. Seventh Street.

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 Reisch Brewing, Springfield Brewing, and Dick's Brewing.

Mayfield is currently president of the Reisch Brew Crew,

an affiliate of three nationwide *breweriana* clubs, and a Life Member of the Society.

Born and raised in Springfield, he started collecting *breweriana* in the mid 70's during the beer can craze. It eventually led him to focus on Central Illinois breweries, historical research and preservation.

"A 1969, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* did a story about man who collected beer cans as a hobby. It turned out he wasn't alone. The first club of beer can collectors, the Beer Can Collectors of America, started in St. Louis. It's now called the Brewery Collectibles Club of America,"

explains Mayfield.

And it's not unusual for people who collect *breweriana* to specialize in a geographical area or a specific company, he adds. "Most people collect something related to their region since it's probably most abundant in the area it came from." The bottles and cans

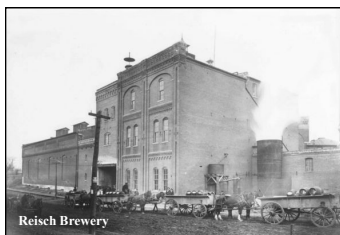
they collect are usually empty, he says. Although it can be pasteurized, beer can go bad. As a result, "most collectors prefer empty bottles and cans. Full cans tend to rust through eventually and cause mess."

Mayfield will be showing program attendees some of his

favorite Reisch products, but it's the old labels that draw his special affection.

"I love some of the old labels. The characters and the artwork that went into them compared to today's labels are stunning," he says.

Professionally, Mayfield is senior supervisor of the Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network, and a graduate of St. John's School of Emergency Medicine. He has worked with emergency medical service and fire department agencies for more than 20 years here and in Saudi Arabia where he was a paramedic and part of the medical entourage of King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. His broad interests include local history, quad copter operations, photography and gardening.



Reisch Brewery

## Registration Starts for Members-Only Tour of Historic Church, Museum

On-line registration is now underway for a Tuesday, May 10 members-only guided tour of the historic *Chiara Center*, *St. Francis of Assisi Church* and *Franciscan Heritage Museum* near Riverton.

The tour will be in place of the Society's regular Tuesday monthly program meeting but will also be a week earlier than the norm schedule.

The Center, a conference and meditation complex, sits on part of a 300-acre campus established here by the Hospital

Sisters of St. Francis who have the sick in Central Illinois since 1875.

In addition to the Chiara Center, the site now houses a convent and Motherhouse of the American Province of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis; the administrative centers of both the province and the Hospital Sisters Health System; Crucifixion Hill Cemetery; and the Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach.

The religious centerpiece of the center's expansive facilities is St. Francis of Assisi

Church, designed by the Springfield architectural firm of Helmle & Helmle and built by local contractor Frank Fitzsimmons from 1920 to 1924. The church was dedicated on April 29, 1924.

The church was described in 2008 by Paul Helmle, professor emeritus of architecture at California State Polytechnic University, and a relative of Springfield's architectural Helmle:

*Although the architects built almost 400*  
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## History Trivia Night A Hit in Its New Location

There's always concern when you move a popular event to a new, bigger venue. Will "the regulars" show up? Will we fill the house? The answer, in our case, was a big "yes" last month when our annual History Trivia Night set new attendance records in a new location. As much as we loved the historical setting of the Old State Capitol for our previous three Trivia Nights, last year we had to turn players away for lack of space. That's painful when you are trying to raise money for a good cause.

That wasn't the case this year and judging from the feedback, our new site was a success both in comfort and income. We're delighted that proceeds from the event will not only benefit the Society's Special Projects Fund, but also our partner in this year's Trivia Night, the Clayville Historic Site owned and operated by the Pleasant Plains Historical Society.

So many people assisted in making the event a success that it would fill this page and more, so let me just say thanks to all of you who helped. We could not have done this without you.

\* \* \*

Looking ahead, we will be changing both officers and filling board seats in June, based on the recommendations of the Society's nominating committee. If you are interested in becoming more active in the administration of our organization, please see the article on page 7 in this issue and send in your resume. And even if you're not ready for a board seat or have limited

time, don't hesitate to volunteer for any one of the half-dozen standing committees and event committees that operate through the year. It's a great way to learn more about the Society and develop a path to serving on our board.

\* \* \*

Our May program, a tour of the historic Chiara Center including its museum, will wrap up the Society's meeting season. Please note that it will be held on a Tuesday evening a week earlier than usual. You'll be hearing more about and will be able to sign up for our annual dinner next month. Details will be in the May issue of *Historico*. Plans are already underway for some summer events and our kick-off meeting in the fall!

\* \* \*

Last, but not least, we want to extend our congratulations to fellow SCHS member James Cornelius, Lincoln Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, on his election as president of the Elijah Iles House Foundation.

As a county-wide historical society, our nearly 600 members reflect affiliations with numerous local historical organizations, museums, and historic preservation efforts. As we have in the past and will continue in the future, we support all their efforts to expand, improve, and raise awareness of the unique historical heritage we share as residents of Sangamon County and the state of Illinois!

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*

## April 22 Deadline Fast Approaching for Society's Special Project Grants

The clock is ticking for organizations and individuals who want the Sangamon County Historical Society to help underwrite projects that will expand the historic knowledge of people, events, places and activities in the county.

The filing deadline to apply for up to a \$1,000 grant is Friday, April 22.

Applications for the Special Projects grant can be downloaded from the Society's website, [sangamonhistory.org](http://sangamonhistory.org). The completed applications must be post-marked by the deadline date and mailed to the SCHS Special Projects Committee, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744 or submitted electronically to

[grants@sancohis.org](mailto:grants@sancohis.org).

Projects must begin after July 1, 2016 and be completed by June 30, 2017 to be eligible.

SCHS Special Project grants in the past have helped underwrite such projects as historic signage in Williamsville and Clayville, development of a public radio series about Sangamon history; archeological research, and a variety of other significant historic projects across the county.

Up to three awards are presented each year, the winners announced at the Society's annual dinner in June.



### OFFICERS

**President**.....Mary Alice Davis  
**Vice-President**.....Ruth Slottag  
**Secretary**.....Sue Massie  
**Treasurer**.....Jerry Smith

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#### Term Ending 2018

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 Roger Whitaker  
 Heather Wickens

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Troy Gilmore  
 Amy Henrikson  
 Genevieve Kaplan  
 Doug Polite  
 Sara Watson

#### Term Ending 2016

Pamm Collebrusco  
 Kathy Dehen  
 Elaine Hoff  
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**Special Projects:** Elaine Hoff  
**Finance:** Patricia Davis, Doug Polite,  
**Nominating:** Donna Catlin  
**Membership:** Claire Eberle  
**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**

### Linking to the Link

## Chatham Building With An Extraordinary Life Story Gets a Closer On-Line Look

What's so special about 113 W. Mulberry Street in Chatham?

Quite a bit, finds [SangamonLink.org](http://SangamonLink.org) editor Mike Kienzler whose latest update to the Society's prize-winning on-line and searchable encyclopedia of Sangamon County history focuses on a one-story structure on the northwest edge of Chatham's village square that helped shape the community.

"Buildings customarily gain historic reputations from their age or because of their connections to a prominent person or event," notes Kienzler. "We also like them decorated in an architectural style on a site where we can be sure that such-and-so was a steppingstone to a better future."

Buildings of a generic type, on the other hand, seldom receive the attention they deserve for enabling society to

exist and grow, he says. "Most such buildings, in fact, don't last as long as the simple one-story structure on the northwest edge of the Chatham village square."

Over the years since its construction in 1919, the building had many uses, from a auto garage and dealership to a school for the disabled to a children's daycare center. Sitting on the site of a former blacksmith shop, 113 West Mulberry Street charts Chatham's history from the time of horse drawn transportation, he points out.

For a detailed look at its multi-faceted history, check out the website at [SangamonLink.org](http://SangamonLink.org).



### APRIL 2016 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

*The Society welcomes the following new member to its ranks:*  
**Paul Sangster**

Please make note of our official mailing address:

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



# Game Time





THERE WAS NOTHING TRIVIAL about our 4th annual SCHS Trivia Night on Saturday, March 19. The Parish Hall at Christ the King Church, a new location for the event, was filled with players vying for top honors and cash prizes (some of it donated back to the Society and our partner, the Clayville Historic Site). Trivia guru Al Gielt (above left) created the questions, with judges Tony Leone, Kathy Rem, and Kathleen Hergett aided by Karen Gietl, checking the scores while television personality Mark McDonald served as emcee, (bottom, left). SCHS volunteer Roni Betts, (bottom right) practically sold out balloons for the Balloon-Round Game and “Mulligans” purchased by individual tables. Players dined on chilli prepared by nationally-prominent chilli maker and past SCHS board member Les Estep, hot dogs and popcorn, soda, water, and wine served by board member Doug Polite and president Mary Alice Davis (below, center). Board secretary Sue Massie coordinated making and selling the cookies for dessert. Below, right, past president Roger Whitaker sells a food ticket to *SanamonLink.org* editor Mike Kienzler as McDonald checks out the crowd.



# Historic Commission, Bureau Hunt for Early Farm Houses

Owners or others familiar with farmhouses in Sangamon County built before the Civil War can still get in on a search spearheaded by the Sangamon County Historic Preservation Agency and the Sangamon County Farm Bureau.

A late March soft deadline won't hold you back from participating in the project, Chuck Pell, Commission Chair, told *Historico*. The search includes farmhouses built before 1860 and on currently operative farms.

To participate, you'll need to submit evidence of pre-1860 construction. Verification by the Commission of the submitted evidence will lead to the presentation of certificates to the owners and to a plaque for the owner of the oldest farmhouse in

the search. The oldest farmhouse found in each township also will be cited.

"These historic farmhouses represent generations of hard work and dedication to the land and the community," said Sangamon County Farm Bureau President Larry Beaty. "It is important to recognize our local farms that have survived and continue to operate into a new millennium."

Forms for submitting evidence of pre-1860 construction are available from the Sangamon County Farm Bureau, 2631 Beechler Court, Springfield 62703, or [farmbureau@sangamonfb.org](mailto:farmbureau@sangamonfb.org) and must be submitted to either the Farm Bureau, or the Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission (c/o Springfield & Sangamon

County Planning Commission, Room 212, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield 62701-1629 or [SteveK@co.sangamon.il.us](mailto:SteveK@co.sangamon.il.us). Further information is available at 836-1551 or [jake@springnet1.com](mailto:jake@springnet1.com).

The search has a number of purposes, says Pell. Primarily it is to expand an inventory of the county's historic resources and in general to help instill a sense of pride in the county's agricultural history, and make county residents more sensitive to the county's historic legacy.

"It also can serve to inform the public that the county, through its Historic Preservation Commission and the Farm Bureau," says Pell, "has a team involved and active in identifying, recognizing, and protecting its historic treasures."

## Book, CD Party, Insider Tour Set for April at Edwards Place

A book and CD party and a behind-the-scenes tour are on tap at Edwards Place in Springfield this month.

The historic home, at 700 North Street, owned and operated by the Springfield Art Association, will be hosting a free "Book and CD Release Party" on Wednesday, April 13 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., a double-feature on its own.

It will include a one-day only revival of its popular "*Shifting Sands: Springfield's Architectural Legacy*" exhibit and the debut of a CD, "*As Lincoln Heard It*," a recording of the music Abraham Lincoln loved, played on the piano he knew well.

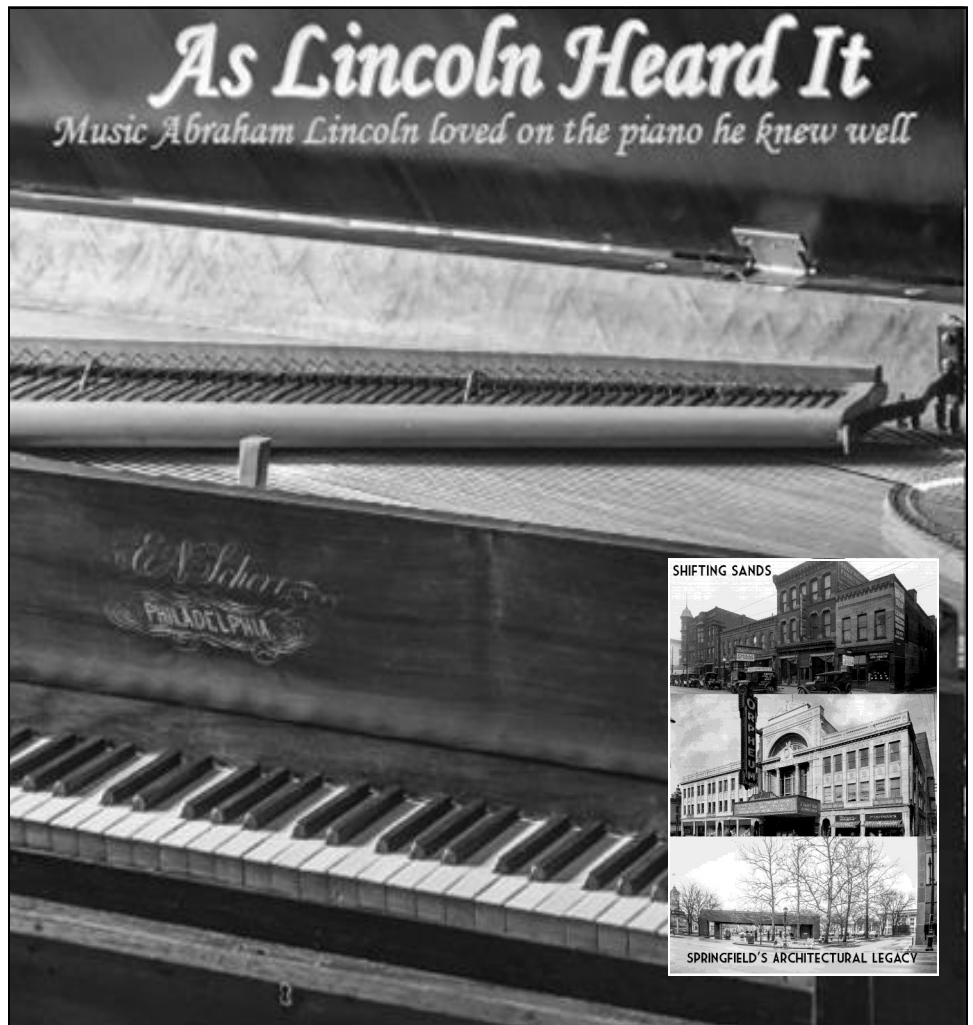
Pianist Jane Hartman Irwin will be on hand to perform selections of music from the CD. Event goers will be able to purchase the CD at a special introductory price of \$15 and a printed catalog of the photo exhibit for \$10.

On Saturday, April 16, Erika Holst, the Curator of Collections at Edwards Place, will open its doors and drawers to the public, guiding visitors on a rarely seen tour of the attic and cellars, as well as the historic site's collections and storage areas.

As a special bonus, highlights from the Art Association's historic costume collection will be on display in the bedrooms. The tours will be held at

Noon and 2 p.m., with a \$15 per person admission fee. For more informa-

tion, call 523-2631 or go to [springfieldart.org](http://springfieldart.org).



## Register On-Line

# Tour of Historic Church, Museum Set for May

(Continued from page 1)

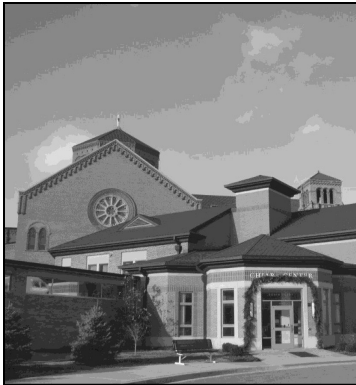
buildings and were a major player in the 20th century physical image of Springfield, this church is certainly one of their finest works. Its exterior brings to mind images of German Romanesque architecture of the 12th century, with its eastern towers sitting confidently against the immense nave recalling medieval monasteries. Inside the terra cotta-clad nave there is harmony between the architectural elements. The astonishing scarlet dome hovering over the baldachino with columns of richly patterned marble and the elaborate golden tabernacle recreate a past world of overwhelming splendor.

The church is traditionally cross-shaped, 133 feet long and 115 wide, rising 84 feet to the top of the dome. Its focus is the ornate sanctuary, designed in Belgium and surmounted by a bronze- and gold-covered canopy.

Also among the church's many notable features is a reputed fragment of the True Cross, once owned by Pope Pius IX

(1846-78), which has been displayed in the church since 1945. A small, but sophisticated museum at the Franciscan Life

Center that will be part of the tour, outlines the history of the Franciscan order and its role in Central Illinois.

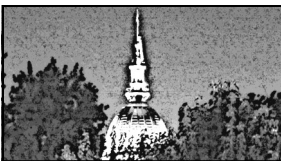


Chiara Center photos by Donna Catlin



## April 20 Deadline for Board Seats

Members of the Sangamon County Historical Society who would like to be considered for a seat on the board of directors should send a resume to the Nominating Committee no later than April 20, President Mary Alice Davis announced. Resumes can be sent to [schspress@gmail.com](mailto:schspress@gmail.com). Candidates must be available for interviews and if elected at the annual dinner in June, must be able to attend all board meetings and take an active role in the organization.



# Calendar of Historical Events

**FRIDAY, APRIL 1: CELEBRATORY PREVIEW BEFORE ELIJAH ILES HOUSE OPENS TO THE PUBLIC.** 6 p.m. See the newly redone "A Time to Remember Exhibit of Illinois Watches and Sangamo Electric Clocks" on the Iles House Lower Level. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Tickets, \$10. Make reservations at 492-5929.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2: ILES HOUSE SEASON OPENER: A TIME TO REMEMBER.** Noon. Be on hand for the ribbon cutting marking the Grand Opening of "A Time to Remember" and the re-opening of Iles House for the season. Farrell Gay has completely redone the Museum of Springfield history on the lower level of Iles House and added new additions to his world class collection of Illinois Watches and Sangamo Electric Clocks. Iles House, at 628 S. 7th Street, Springfield, will be open Wednesdays and Saturdays from Noon to 4 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13: BOOK & CD PARTY.** 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Edwards Place, 700 North Street Springfield. Debut of "As Lincoln Heard It" CD and one-day only display of "Shifting Sands: Springfield's Architectural Legacy." Free. See story, page 6.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 16: EDWARDS PLACE ATTIC, CELLAR, & HISTORIC COLLECTION STORAGE AREA TOUR.** Noon and 2 p.m. Tour of

Attic and Cellars of Edwards Place plus the historic site's collection and storage area. Noon and 2 p.m. \$15 admission fee. For information call 523-2631 or go to [springfieldart.org](http://springfieldart.org).

**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. Free and open to the public, Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 South Seventh Street.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 22: DEADLINE FOR SCHS SPECIAL PROJECTS GRANTS.** See page 3 for details.

**TUESDAY, MAY 10: CHIARA CENTER, ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH AND FRANCISCAN HERITAGE MUSEUM TOUR.** 6 p.m. 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. On-line registration will be required at [sangamonhistory.org](http://sangamonhistory.org).

***Sangamon County Historical Society***  
P.O. Box 9744,  
Springfield, IL 62791-9744  
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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.



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