



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744, Phone: 217-525-1961,
 e-mail: schsoffice@gmail.com web: www.sangamonhistory.org, SangamonLink.org

VOLUME 52 NO. 10

OCTOBER 2016



Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk October 9

ENTRYWAY: Those planning to go on the Oak Ridge Cemetery Tour should use the Monument Avenue or Walnut Avenue entrances where signs will direct them to the parking area.

Don Your Walking Shoes For a Step Back In Time

Get out your walking shoes and hope for some nice fall weekend weather!

The popular Sangamon County Historical Society *"Echoes of Yesteryear: A Walk through Oak Ridge Cemetery"* is set for Sunday, October 9 at historic Oak Ridge Cemetery.

The free event will run from Noon to 4 p.m. with the last tour starting at 3:15 p.m. Rain date is Sunday, October 16.

Tour takers will be transported by bus to the first grave site, then walk to the other gravesites before boarding the bus to return them down the hill.

At each site, actors and actresses in period costumes will tell the stories of eight individuals who were instrumental in the development of our community and who have been buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery. These authentic stories, which have been thoroughly re-

(Continued on page 4)

INSIDE

- From the President's Desk.....2
- Headstone for Revell.....5
- Speakers Set for Lecture Series.....5
- Calendar.....7

HARVESTING HISTORY



Page 6

IN MEMORIAM

**DONNA
CATLIN**
1944-2016



Page 3



Change In the Weather, Change for the Society, Too

Hello Friends,

Autumn is upon us bringing cooler, crisp temperatures, colorful falling leaves and shorter days. Our thoughts are turning to warmer clothes, curling up by the fireplace with a good book, and enjoying delicious treats made of our fall favorites such as apples and pumpkin.

Since our last newsletter, we received sad news about the passing of a beloved board member, Donna Catlin, who died in late August. For a number of years she served as a dedicated board member of the SCHS and took most of the photographs seen in *Historico*. She also photographed many other historical events in our community. Some of her award-winning photographs were published in *The State Journal-Register* and *Illinois Times*. She will be missed very much. We thank the Catlin family for listing our Society as a recipient for memorials to Donna.

Moving on to happier news, we are proud to welcome some new board members who were elected in August. They are Terri Cameron, Elaine Hoff and Mary Schaefer (three-year terms); Carol Phillips (two-year term); and Cathy Mosley and Eugene Walker (one-year terms). We are looking forward to working with them to bring you interesting programs and events in the coming year.

Many of you may utilize the Sangamon Valley Collection for historical and genealogical research, so please keep in mind that the SVC will be closed for renovation through most of November 2016. If you need assistance, contact manager Curtis Mann, who is willing to help answer your questions.

We want to thank several donors who have recently made contributions of historical books and artifacts to the Society. These donations are now housed at the Sangamon Valley Collection or have been passed along to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

A special "thank you" to Mayors Mary Malcahy of Buffalo and Sam Rogers of Illiopolis for their assistance in preparations for the Sangamon Ordinance Plant presentation held at the Tri-City Library in Buffalo in September. Vicky and Roger Whitaker created and delivered a very informative multi-media presentation which was very well attended and generated a number of questions and comments from the audience.

A few of the Society's members attended a recent meeting of the Illinois Bicentennial Coordinating Committee of Springfield. A number of interesting and informative programs are being planned as part of the state's 2018 Bicentennial celebration. We will keep you informed about these events as they are finalized and the time gets closer.

As we move into October programming, we hope many of you will attend this year's Cemetery Walk at Oak Ridge Cemetery which will be held Sunday, October 9. Eight great actors and actresses dressed in period costume will portray some of Springfield's famous historical individuals. Thank you to Chairman Mary Alice Davis and her committee for all the planning and organizing that has been done for this great event. Also, we send a big thank you to Mike Lelys, manager of Oak Ridge Cemetery and his staff for their help.

This year's walk is sure to be very enjoyable and informative. Please see the article on page __ for complete details. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Mary Alice or Jennifer Battles and let them know you would like to volunteer.

I look forward to seeing you at there!

Sincerely,



Historico, published 10 times a year (except July/August 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, www.sangamohistory.org or sancohis.org. Send event announcements to historicoeditor@gmail.com.
Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor

Society Mourns Passing of Long-Time Board Member Donna Catlin

Like her many friends, neighbors and family, the Sangamon County Historical Society was both shocked and saddened to learn of the death of one of its most ardent and hard working members, Donna Catlin, who died in her sleep on August 27 while on a family vacation in Utah.

Sworn in last June for a term on the Society's board of directors, it was not unfamiliar territory for Donna, who



over the years served in several different posts—directorships included—from heading the Society's nominating committee to drumming up support and helping decide what groups might benefit from our Special Projects grants. But she was most easily recognizable by the camera she always had in hand, snapping away at meetings, not only for the Society, but for the dozens of history groups whose activities she documented for now and future generations.

Donna's roots were deep in the

community...a running joke among board members that she was related to everyone in the county...something that always drew a hearty laugh from her too. But in many respects it was true.

Donna's family ties were wide and deep and her memory for what was then, made her the ideal candidate for the post she loved: official historian for the Village of Sherman.

A week or so before she left for Utah, Donna was a passenger in a research road trip to Illiopolis, going down back roads from Sherman, east to the site of the former Sangamon Ordnance Plant.

Along the way she identified almost every farm and field, stopped to take pictures, and provided a running narrative about the people who once lived there—and yes, many of them Donna's relatives.

She was the official photographer for *Historico*, turning in for any single event hundreds of beautiful shots to choose from, made even more remarkable by the fact that Donna was blind in one eye, the result of a childhood accident.

Her passing is a great loss, not only to those of us who knew her and worked with her, but also to the larger community who have lost an irreplaceable source of information and perspective on Sangamon County's rich history.



OFFICERS

President.....Ruth Slottag
Vice-President.....Vicky Whitaker
Secretary.....Kathy Dehen
Treasurer.....Jerry Smith
Past-President.....Mary Alice Davis

DIRECTORS

Term Ending 2019

Jennie Battles
 Terri Cameron
 Mary Schaefer
 Elaine Hoff

Term Ending 2018

Larry Stone
 Roger Whitaker
 Sue Massie
 Carol Phillips

Term Ending 2017

Troy Gilmore
 Doug Polite
 Sue Helm
 Eugene Walker
 Cathy Mosley

Committee Chairs

Legal: Bruce Beeman
Finance: Doug Polite, Larry Stone
Nominating: Donna Catlin
Hospitality: Marion Leach
Publicity and Marketing: Ruth Slottag, Susan Helm
Publications: Roger Whitaker
Programs & Special Events: Mary Alice Davis, Vicky Whitaker
Social Media Chair: Cathy Mosley
Special Projects: Elaine Hoff

Staff

Mike Kienzler, *SangamonLink.org* Editor

OCTOBER 2016 MEMBERSHIP/DONOR REPORT

The Society welcomes new members: Michelle Shaefer-Bertolino, and Louise Henderson.

...And extends its thanks to the following donors:

Diane Arnold, John Baker, Terry and Elaine Banderas, Sarah Ann Benner, Phyllis Brisenden, Barbara and Paul Carter, Lan Cassel, Sheridan Christensen, Pamm and Mark Collebrusco, Herman Cooper, Kevin and Linda Cox, Thomas and Susan Foran, Janet Hickey, Brenda Holmes, Jo Ann Holton, Kenneth and Judith Lazar, Jeanne Livesay, Marilyn and Tipton H. McCawley Jr., Jerry and Dawn Oltmanns, Janet Plohr, Rosalie and Doug Polite, Ruth and Ernie Slottag, Francie Staggs, Ted and Charlotte Walschleger, James O. Williamson, John Yokley, and Thomas Yokley (*all in memory of Donna Catlin*).

Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744

Lots to See, Hear at October 9 Cemetery Walk

(Continued from page 1)

searched, will take the audience back to an earlier time and provide insight into their lives and times.

The walk is approximately 1.75 miles and takes about two hours to complete.

In addition to the walk, you'll be able to purchase books published by the Society as well as drinks and snacks from the Lincoln Monument Association and the African American History Museum. The Prairie Aires, an all-woman Dulcimer group, will perform throughout the afternoon. Butler Funeral Home is helping underwrite bus transportation.

The reproduction of the 1865 Lincoln Funeral Hearse created by P.J. Staab for the Lincoln Funeral Reenactment in 2015 will also be on display.

The popular cemetery walk, which is sponsored by the Sangamon County Historical Society and co-sponsored by Oak Ridge Cemetery, was held annually for twelve years beginning in 1996 and ending in 2008. It was brought back by popular demand last year.

"The walk will provide visitors with a glimpse into the history and heritage of Springfield," said Mary Alice Davis, chair of the Sangamon County Historical Society Cemetery Walk Committee.

Actors and actresses in period costumes will tell the stories of eight individuals who were instrumental in the development of our community and who have been buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery.

During the 2016 walk, you'll stop at the gravesite and listen to:

- **Clara Irwin** (1815-1911), wife of businessman Robert Irwin who owned

ville and Williams Boulevard in Springfield, portrayed by **Donn Stephens**.

- **Reverend Francis Springer** (1810-1892), founder of the first Lutheran worship services in Springfield, who was instrumental in establishing the Home for the Friendless in Springfield, portrayed by **William Furry**.

- **Rosa Kun Keydell** (1827-1911), wife of Andrew Kun, who operated Kun Brewery beginning in 1856. After his death Rosa married Robert Rudolph, then Moritz Keydell, both of whom continued operating the brewery, portrayed by **Tracy Petro**.

- **Mattie Lightfoot** (1857-1920) At seven years old she and three siblings along with a boatload of other civil war orphans were transported from Arkansas to Springfield, portrayed by **Deborah Brothers**.

- **Henry Owsley** (1755-1811), a Revolutionary War veteran who owned a large plantation in Kentucky, portrayed by **Keith Wilson**.

- **Moses Broadwell** (1764-1827), a Revolutionary War veteran who settled in Sangamon County near Pleasant Plains in 1820. He and his son John built Broadwell Inn, portrayed by **Jerry Smith**, a direct descendant of Broadwell.



BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE: A re-enactor at last year's Cemetery Walk gets into character as gets ready to meet tour goers .

the home now known as the Elijah Iles House, portrayed by **Mary Disseler**.

- **Leanna Donnegan Knox** (1797-1876), a free woman of color whose son William Donnegan was murdered during the 1908 Race Riots, portrayed by **Connie McGee**, a direct descendant of Knox.

- **John Williams** (1808-1880), a founder of the First National Bank of Springfield and namesake of Williams-

Auburn Vet's Memoirs Bring World-Wide Fame

Battle of the Bulge Survivor Vince Speranza Speaks November 15



Internationally celebrated author Vince Speranza, the Battle of the Bulge

101st Airborne Division Machine Gunner immortalized for his actions in Belgium during World War II, will share his experiences with members and guests of the Sangamon County Historical Society in a post-Veterans Day salute on Tuesday, November 15.

The general meeting, free and open to the public, begins at 5:30 p.m. in Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library.

Speranza grew up on Staten Island, part of a large and colorful Italian family. Following basic training, he became a paratrooper. The then 19-year-old private joined the 101st Airborne Division just prior to the Battle of the Bulge, where his unit became famous for its defense of Bastogne. During the siege, Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe responded to the German offer to have the Americans surrender with one word: "Nuts," the title of Speranza's book that propelled the Auburn resident into the international spotlight.

Nellie Revell to Get Oak Ridge Headstone

Nellie Revell, the famed 19th century publicist, author, and celebrity raised in Riverton and Springfield, who was buried in an unmarked grave in the family plot at Oak Ridge Cemetery, will finally get a headstone on October 5.

Revell's rise to fame was detailed by editor Mike Keinzler in a February 2 entry for SangamonLink.org, the Society's on line and searchable history of Sangamon County.

As noted in the on-line entry, Revell's relatives were in the process of making arrangements to have the headstone placed on her grave. Many of them are expected to come from across the country to attend the brief 10 a.m. ceremony, noted Colorado-based Barbara Humphrey in a recent e-mail invitation to Keinzler. Humphrey, a great-niece of Revell, has written an unpublished biography of her great aunt's life.

Revell, who was born in 1873 and died in 1958, was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton H. MacAleney. She was married three times: to circus advance man Charles Smith, Chicago businessman Joe Revell and press agent Arthur Kellar, but "Revell" stuck as her last name, Keinzler noted in his entry.

As a newspaperwoman, Revell always called herself "a police reporter," but also said she had covered some of the signal events around the turn of the century: the funeral of Queen Victoria,

(Continued on page 7)

October 20 Free Lectures

UIS Lincoln Legacy Series Offering Look At America's Struggle For Equality

"Lincoln and Reconstruction: America's Struggle for Equality" will be the focus of two free lectures October 20, both part of the University of Illinois at Springfield's 14th Annual Lincoln Legacy Lectures. The presentations will run from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in Brookens Auditorium and

of many books on Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War, including *Fateful Lightning: A New History of the Civil War and Reconstruction* Dr. Simpson specializes in the Civil War and Reconstruction period. His books include *The Reconstruction Presidents* (University Press of Kansas, 2009).

The lecture series is sponsored by the UIS Center for State Policy and Leadership, in cooperation with the Chancellor Naomi Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies, and co-sponsored this year by the Abraham Lincoln Association, Illinois State Historical Society, Illinois State Library, the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition, and the Springfield Branch of the NAACP.



Guelzo Simpson Burlingame

are open to the public.

The first speaker, Allen C. Guelzo, Henry R. Luce Professor of the Civil War Era at Gettysburg College, will discuss "Reconstruction as a Bourgeois Revolution." He will be followed by Brooks Simpson, Foundation Professor of History at Arizona State University, whose topic will be "Abraham Lincoln and Reconstruction: Did Booth's Bullet Change History?"

Dr. Michael Burlingame, Chancellor Naomi Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies at UIS, will offer opening remarks on "Lincoln's Changing Thoughts on Reconstruction," and serve as moderator during the question and answer period with the audience.

Dr. Guelzo is the prize-winning author

University co-sponsors include the Brookens Library John Holtz Memorial Lecture, the Colleges of Education and Human Services, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Public Affairs and Administration, the Engaged Citizenship Speaker Series, Gobberdiel Endowment, NPR Illinois, and the UIS Office of Advancement.

Doors to Brookens Auditorium will open at 6 p.m. Seating is first come, first seated. Overflow seating will be provided in the UIS Public Affairs Center conference rooms. A book signing and informal reception will follow the lectures. A live webcast can be viewed at www.uis.edu/technology/uislive.html. For more information, contact Dr. Barbara Ferrara, bferr1@uis.edu, 217-206-7094, or go.uis.edu/LincolnLegacyLecture.

SIZE OF SITE:
20,000 acres
31.25 square miles

8 miles north to south
4 miles east to west

Enough Room For:

- 54.6 Illinois State Fairgrounds
- 8.7 Abraham Lincoln Capital Airports
- 28.6 New Salem State Parks

Larry Stone photos

TELLING THE STORY: Board member Roger Whitaker served as narrator for a multi-media powerpoint presentation September 20 on the history of the World War II Sangamon Ordnance Plant in Illiopolis, a program that kicked off the Society's fall-winter meeting season. Held at Buffalo's new Tri City Library, the powerpoint, researched and created by SCHS vice-president Vicky Whitaker, drew nearly 100 SCHS members and guests and was followed by a lively question and answer session. The Illiopolis-Public Library will host a repeat of the program on Thursday, October 20 at 6 p.m. To reserve a seat, call the Library at 217-486-5561.

Larry Stone photos

Own A Piece of Political Memorabilia? They Want to See It!

Still have that old Adlai Stevenson Silver Shoe pin with the hole in the sole?

Or the *I Like Ike* Button?

How about those political bumper stickers or the boater you donned at one of the national conventions?

Someone wants to not only see them, but also to scan or photograph them as well, not to mention listen to the stories that went with the memorabilia before they hand them back to you!

On Saturday, October 22, University of Illinois History Department

students from Devin Hunter's undergraduate Public History class and Ken Owen's graduate History and Digital Media class will do just that, documenting for posterity the way that people in Central Illinois have participated in elections. The "History Harvest" — part of a nationwide

project — will take place at the Old State Capitol from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Under the direction of Dr. Hunter and Dr. Owen, the students will take high-resolution photographs of each object, or alternatively high-resolutions scans of documents. Participants will then have an opportunity to tell the student 'harvesters' the stories behind the objects. After the

harvest is concluded students will work on creating an online, free-to-access archive that presents and preserves materials brought in on the day.

You can bring and share any and all political memorabilia from the past: letters, photographs, diaries, buttons, bumper

stickers, along with their stories. These will be photographed or scanned for inclusion in a free web-based archive that will chronicle the ways in which residents of central Illinois have experienced the democratic process.

The goal of the History Harvest is to democratize and widen our understanding of the electoral process. Though elections are celebrated as giving voice to the people, all too often our historical understanding of elections is dominated by campaign managers and

political elites.

By collecting information on the historical memories of the local electorate, History Harvest will provide a unique insight into how ordinary citizens in central Illinois have participated in and remembered the democratic process.



Headstone Ceremony Set for Grave of Celebrated Publicist

(Continued from page 5)

the coronation of Czar Nicholas II, the Haymarket Riot and the Iroquois Theater fire in Chicago, and the celebrated murder trial of Harry K. Thaw.

According to Humphrey, Revell quit a Chicago newspaper in 1906 to become press agent for a vaudeville show there. She eventually became the first in motion pictures as a publicist. At the height of her

career, however, she suffered a spinal injury that would leave her hospitalized for four years.

Hundreds of celebrities lined up to visit Revell while she was confined to a hospital bed including George M. Cohan, Harry Houdini, Jack Dempsey, Lillian Russell, Babe Ruth, Eubie Blake and Eddie Cantor. Will Rogers performed rope tricks in her hospital room. Once out of the hospital, Co-

han, Cantor, Cobb and a spectrum of other theatrical friends threw a Friars Club benefit for her at the Hotel Astor in New York. (Revell was named an honorary Friar, making her the club's first woman member).

Revell moved to an apartment near Times Square and continued to write books, a syndicated newspaper column and silent-movie treatments. In the 1930s, she started yet an-

other new career, this one in radio. Her 15-minute daily interview program, "Neighbor Nell," ran on NBC for the next 17 years. Cataracts finally forced Revell to retire in 1950. A broken hip returned her to a hospital bed in the summer of 1958, where she died on Aug. 12.

For the full story of Revell's life, check out *SangamonLink.org*.

Calendar of Historical Events

Sunday, October 9: Sangamon County Historical Society Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk, Noon- 4 p.m., Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield. Enter through Monument Avenue or Walnut Street main entrance and follow signs to event parking area. Free. See page 1 for details.

Wednesday, October 12: Fireside Chats at Iles House, 5:30 p.m. Mark McDonald, well-known to viewers of **WSEC-TV** and affiliated Public Television stations in Central Illinois kicks off the fall series. McDonald will be "Telling Illinois Stories" to attendees, upstairs at Iles House, 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield.

Friday, October 14: Wright Concepts Tour, 1:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. Frank Lloyd Wright fans will love a new specialty tour offered for a limited time at the Dana-Thomas House State Historic Site. The "Wright Concepts" tour features longtime Dana-Thomas Home docent Larry Betz, explaining Wright's principles of architectural design and taking visitors through the unique home. Built between 1902 and 1904, it is perhaps the best-preserved of Wright's "Prairie Style" homes, with more than 400 pieces of

specially made art glass and original furnishings. Fee: \$20. Dana-Thomas House, 301 East Lawrence Avenue, Springfield.

Saturday, October 15: Made for Music Concert, 7 p.m. Frank Lloyd Wright's acoustically attuned architecture at the Dana Thomas House in Springfield promises to open your ears to a landscape of sounds you didn't know existed. Guests should enter the garden gate facing Lawrence. Dana -Thomas House,

Wednesday, October 17: Fireside Chats at Iles House, 5:30 p.m. Linda Garvert, recently retired from the Sangamon Valley Collection at Lincoln Library, will provide a journey through the history of Springfield including the people, places and events that created the city, upstairs at Iles House, 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield.

Thursday, October 20: The Sangamon Ordnance Plant: It's Impact and Legacy. 6 p.m. The Illiopolis Public Library hosts a second showing of the SCHS multi-media presentation that was presented at the Ti City Library in Buffalo. On September 20. If you missed it, here's your chance to see

it. Seating is limited and reservations are a must. To reserve a seat, call the Library at 217-486-5561. The Library is located at 6th and Mary Street, Illiopolis.

Thursday, October 20: America's Struggle for Equality, 7 p.m. The University of Illinois at Springfield brings two speakers to Brookens Auditorium to discuss elements of "Lincoln and Reconstruction," part of its ongoing annual Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series. Free. For details, see story, page 5.

Saturday, October 22: "History Harvest" 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Old State Capitol, Springfield. The public can bring and share political memorabilia that will be photographed or scanned for inclusion in a web-based archive chronicling the ways in which residents of central Illinois have experienced the democratic process. See story, page 6.

Wednesday, October 26: Fireside Chats at Iles House, 5:30 p.m.. Archaeologist Floyd Mansberger, explains how he has been "Digging Up 9th and 10th Streets" in pursuit of 1908 Race Riot artifacts, early Springfield immigrants, and other surprises. Mansberger

will provide slides of some of the views and relics he has unearthed over the last two years. Iles House, 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield.

Saturday, November 12: Great War Encampment World War I, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Illinois State Military Museum provides a close-up view of life in the trenches of Europe during World War I. See how Illinois National Guard troops lived and fought "Over There." The event features uniformed Living Historians, a recreated trench with WWI military equipment. The Museum is located at 1301 North MacArthur Boulevard.

Tuesday, November 15, Remembering the Battle of the Bulge. 5:30 p.m. Internationally celebrated author Vince Speranza, the Battle of the Bulge 101st Airborne Division Machine Gunner immortalized for his actions in Belgium during World War II, shares his experiences with members and guests of the Sangamon County Historical Society. Speranza turned his memoirs into a book, "Nuts," that ushered in a new career as a lecturer and first-hand military historian. Free and open to the public. Carnegie Room, City of Springfield Library. See story, page 5.

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 June 1 to May 31. All memberships cover adults and children 16 and over living in the same household. Please include their names.

Name(s) _____

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