



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 53 NO. 1

NOVEMBER 2016

Famed WWII Vet, Author to Speak on 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 SCHS program 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.

Reservation Deadline December 3

Annual SCHS Holiday Party Set for December 13 at Historic Pasfield House

With Thanksgiving around the corner, can Christmas be far behind?

For Sangamon County Historical Society members, the answer to that question translates into helping kick-off the holiday season by attending the organization's annual holiday party, a strictly social event in a magnificent historic setting: the Pasfield House mansion in Springfield.

Substantial and delicious hors d'ouvres and desserts will be on the menu for the gathering on Tuesday, December 13, where you'll be able to mix and mingle and tour the former home of one of Springfield's early community leaders while enjoying its beautiful holiday decor.

The annual party will run from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30 per person, \$35 for guests, with reservations/payment due by December 3. You can purchase tickets by filling out the form on

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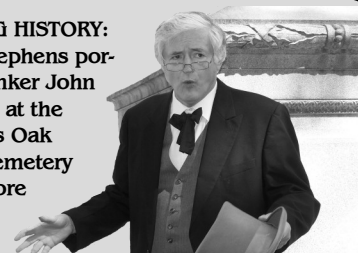
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP ROSTER



Starts Page 5

SHARING HISTORY:

Donn Stephens portrays banker John Williams at the Society's Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk. More photos, Page 4





November is a Time to Give Thanks in Many Ways

The calendar is quickly taking us into November, the month of Thanksgiving – a time to give thanks for our many blessings. We should remember to thank our fellow historians who worked hard to establish the Sangamon County Historical Society in 1961 as well as those who have since carried the torch – keeping up the mission of preserving and promoting our county’s rich history.

We are proud to have shared some of that rich history a few weeks ago at the “*Echoes of Yesteryear: A Walk Through Oak Ridge Cemetery*” on October 9. This event beautifully portrayed the rich history of several historical individuals buried there. Mary Alice Davis, chairman of the Cemetery Walk Committee did a wonderful job leading the effort again this year. The committee began planning and organizing in late May and worked tirelessly through the summer to bring this great historical event to the community. It was a pleasure working with such a great committee which also consisted of Jennie Battles, Susan Helm, Mike Lelys, Curtis Mann, Mike Kienzler, Linda Schneider, Ernie Slottag, Jerry Smith and Larry Stone.

I especially want to thank the actors and actresses: Mary Disseler as Clara Irwin, Connie McGee as Leanna Donnegan Knox, Donn Stephens as John Williams, William Furry as Rev. Francis Springer, Tracy Petro as Rosa Kun Keydell, Deborah Brothers as Mattie Lightfoot, and Keith Wilson as Henry Owsley. They all did a tremendous job in portraying their historical individual and keeping our community’s history alive.

We send a very special thank you to our sponsors: Butler Funeral Homes, Staab Funeral Home, Oak Ridge Cemetery Board of Managers and Foundation who helped make it possible. Thanks also is sent to the African American History Museum and Lincoln Monument Association for providing refreshments.

Also, we are extremely grateful for the two dozen other volunteers, Mike Lelys and the Oak Ridge Cemetery staff, Mayor Langfelder, and the City of Springfield staff who helped with promoting the event. A portion of the program was videotaped by the City videographer who plans to produce a half-hour program to be played on the City’s Municipal cable-TV channel 18 in the not-too-distant future.

* * *

November is also a time to commemorate Veteran’s Day by honoring the many veterans who have served our country. The Society’s November program will feature a very special veteran, Vince Speranza, who served in World War II during the Battle of the Bulge. This 101st Airborne Division Machine Gunner is the author of a book, “NUTS!” He will share memories of his experiences in this world-famous battle. (See article on page 1.) This is one that you won’t want to miss.

* * *

It’s not too early to think about Holiday shopping and SCHS has a wonderful selection of history books. You will find numerous topics about various aspects of local history, from pictorial coffee table books to booklets about Oak Ridge Cemetery, even the History of Chilli. You can find a complete list of SCHS books at www.sangamonhistory.org/publications.

Please take a few minutes to browse the list and make your favorite history lover happy this holiday season.

Sincerely,



Historico, published 10 times a year (except July/August), 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

SJ-R Photo Editor Rich Saal to Cast Photog's Eye on History January 17

Award-winning *State Journal Register* photo editor Rich Saal will kick off the Society's 2017 offerings in January with a program on Tuesday, January 17 focusing on preserving history through photography.

In his presentation, at 5:30 p.m. in Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, Saal is expected to discuss not only the photographer's eye in capturing history, but also changes in the methods used in today's photographs and those in the future that could impact on how such photos will be collected and preserved for future generations.

The program is free and open to the public.

Saal is no stranger to the topic. His eye for people and places combined with a vision of history through photography has resulted in assembling and publishing a collection of glass plate images of Springfield from the late 1920s through the mid 30s, *Springfield Photographs: Images from the Illinois State Journal Glass Plates 1929-1935*.

A more recent collection of his own work focusing on mom-and-pop stores in Illinois and Missouri over a 35 year period was recently featured along with a personal narrative in the *State Journal Register*. The photos were part of a documentary photography project he started in the early 1980s in which he tried to record the dozens of mom-and-

pop grocery markets that could still be found in southern and central Illinois as well as part of Missouri and Kentucky.

Saal resumed the project this past summer, "curious about what had happened to these wonderful places," he said, in the commentary that accompanied the published photos. "I didn't assume anything. I knew most of them-- and the people too, -- would be gone. The idea was to create a visual timeline with two points 35 years apart."

(Continued on page 10)

Society Readies Entry For 2016 Festival

Members and the general public will be able to see the Society's entry in Memorial's annual Festival of Trees starting November 19 at the Orr Building on the Illinois State Fair Grounds.

With the 2016 event's overall theme, *Remember When*, the Society tree theme this year is the Roaring 20s, replete with silver, gold, and black ornaments, reproductions of holiday magazine covers and and trim that reflect the Art Deco period.

In previous years, Society trees have featured ornaments of schools, historic homes and buildings, barns, and prominent figures from the past.

The Festival runs from Saturday, November 19 through Sunday, November 27. For more information, go to www.memorialmedical.com/memorial-medical-center-foundation/events/festival-of-trees.



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Mike Kienzler, *SangamonLink.org* Editor

NOVEMBER 2016 MEMBERSHIP/DONOR REPORT

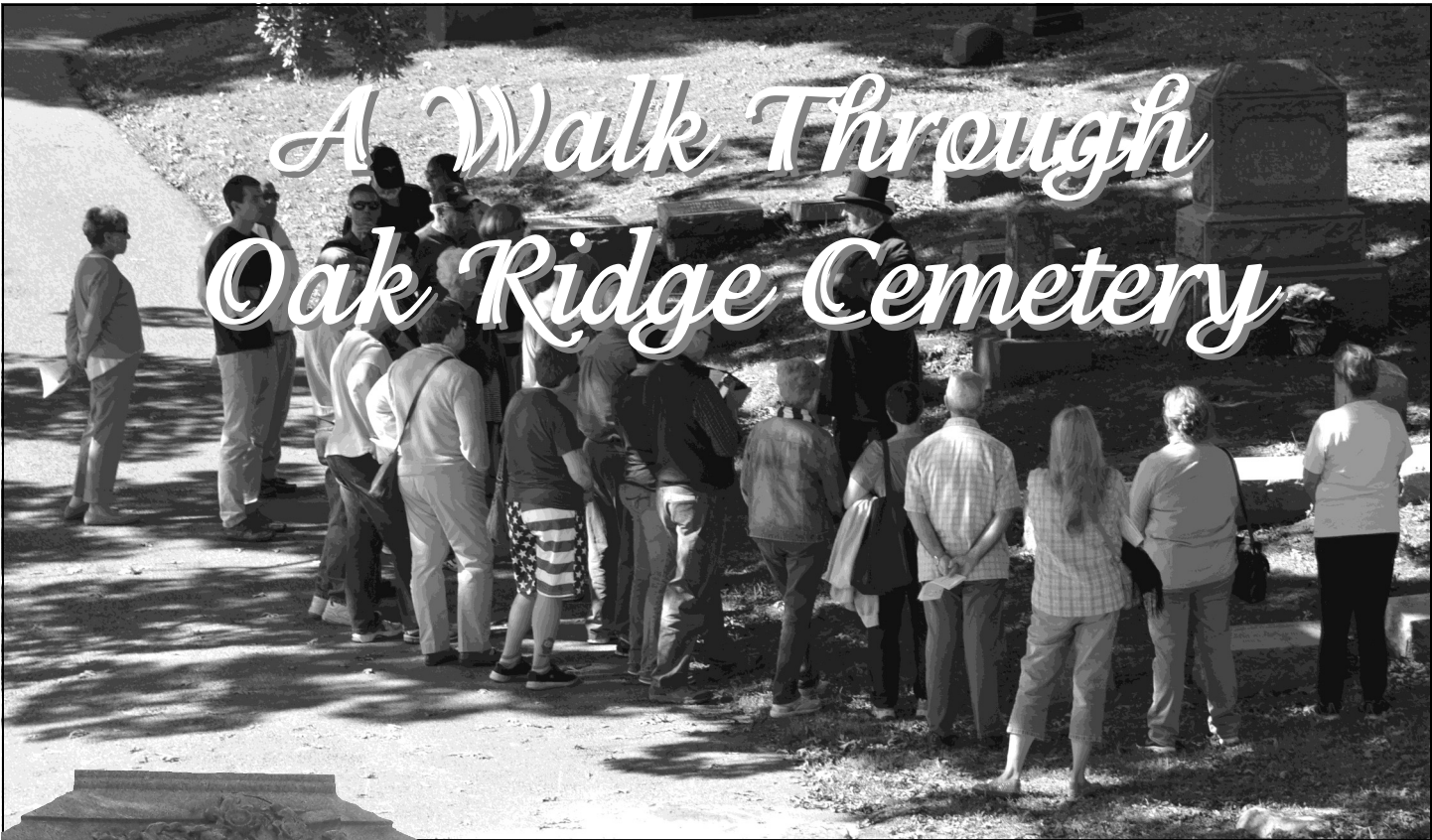
The Society welcomes the following new members:

Lynda Kerstein, Mark D. Roehrs, Elizabeth Roehrs, Laurie Hughes Roehrs
 Terry Castleman.

...And extends thanks to the following donors: Nancy Clark, Catherine Caughlin, Diane Arnold (all in memory of Donna Catlin) and Michael and Kathryn Egan.

Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744



WITH MOTHER NATURE providing perfect weather, several hundred history buffs turned out for the Sangamon County Historical Society's annual "Echoes of Yesterday: A Walk Through Oak Ridge Cemetery" October 9. With stops at seven grave sites, tour goers listened to costumed actors and actresses tell the stories of prominent individuals buried at Oak Ridge. At left, Mary Dissler portrays Clara Irwin, wife of businessman Robert Irwin, who owned the home now known as Elijah Iles House. Cemetery walkers were whisked to the start of the tour by bus, and at the end of the tour could browse through displays, look at a replica of the Lincoln funeral hearse from P.J. Staab, or listen to the music of the Prairie Aires, a dulcimer music group. The event, chaired by Mary Alice Davis, was co-sponsored by Oak Ridge Cemetery.

Photos by Kathy Dehen and Larry Stone.



SANGAMON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Membership Roster 2016-2017



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Frances Armstrong
R-Lou Barker
Daniel Monroe Barringer
Tadd Baumann
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Holly Rae Blandford
Justin A. Blandford
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Madelyn Bogue
Edward Brooks
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Daniel Buck
Robert H. Bunn
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Terri Cameron
Ann Carlson
Richard Carlson
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Nancy Chapin
Bradley S. Churchill
Job C. Conger IV
Mary Alice Davis
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Bette Franke
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Paula S. Myers
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Joe Nicoud Jr.
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Stan Papp
Thomas D. Patton
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Virgilio R. Pilapil
Theresa M. Power
Priscilla Reyhan
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Paul Schanbacher
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Andy Van Meter
Margaret Van Meter
Roger Whitaker
Vicky Whitaker
Harold Wright
Jacqueline Wright
Mary Jane Wright
Elvin Zook
Sharon Zook

SANGAMON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Membership Roster, 2016-2017

<u>SETTLER</u> J. Patrick Joyce Janice M. Joyce	<u>TRAILBLAZER</u> David Farrell Laurie Farrell
--	--

<u>PIONEER</u>		
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Patricia Boyce	Elaine Corum	Eric Fair	Thomas Green
Dave Brady	Cathy Cragoe	Dennis Faulk	Rick Grimes
Chet Brandt	Sandy Crome	Janet Faulk	

(Continued on page 7)

SANGAMON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Membership Roster, 2016-2017

(Continued from page 6)

David Grimm	Ronald R. Knox	Tom McSwiggin	Richard Sabo
Jan Grimm	Jack Kreil	Karen Mitchell	Dana Saal
Nancy Hahn	Penny Wollan Kriel	Kenneth Mitchell	Rich Saal
Ralph Hahn	Tim E. Krell	Zemfrida Mitchell	Paul Sangster
Rick Ham	Gloria C. Lamb	Cathy Mosley	Christi Sarff
Rita Ham	Brenda Larison	David Mourey	Don Schaefer
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Mark Hansen	Gary Lazar	Mary Mucciante	Don Schneider
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Amy Ihnen	Alice E. Martin	Janice Petterchak	Deb Stahl
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Richard Kerhlikar	Patrick McDaniel	Neil Riley	George Tinkham
Carol Kerins	Randall McDaniel	Peggy Riley	Mary L. Townsend
Tom Kerins	Mark McDonald	Marlene Rinehart	(Continued on page 8)
Lynda Kerstein	Pam McDonald	Michael Robinson	
Jean Kienzler	Teri McDonough	Rhonda Robinson	
Max Kienzler	Tim McDonough	John R. Rodenburg	
Mike Kienzler	Bill McGee	Linda Rodenburg	
Ben Kiningham III	Connie McGee	Elizabeth Roehrs	
Beth Kinningham	Stephen McKenrick	Mark Roehrs	
Elizabeth N. Kloppenburg	Joseph E. McMenamin	Laurie Hughes Roehrs	
Alvera Knox	Lynn C. McMenamin	James K. Russell	
	Sharon McSwiggin	LuAnn Russell	
		Patricia Sabo	



SANGAMON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Membership Roster, 2016-2017

(Continued from page 7)

Ann Tucker
Ron Tucker
Judith Ullrich
Terry Ullrich
Dan Usherwood
Deborah Usherwood
Larry Van Alstine
Pam VanAlstine
Kim Villanueva
Gary Vitale

Roberta E. Volkmann
Cathy Vollmer
Charlene M. Vollmer
John Vollmer
Jolene Vollmer
Anita Walbaum
Robert C. Walbaum
Eugene Walker
Richard E. Walton
Patricia MacDonald Warren
Robert Warren

Larry Werline
Rita Werline
Keith Wilson
Karen Witter
Randall Witter
Alison Davis Wood
Robert Wood
Linda Yokley
Thomas Yokley



INSTITUTIONAL /NON-PROFIT

City of Springfield Lincoln Library/Sangamon Valley Collection
Cass County Historical Society
Rochester Historical Preservation Society
Tri City Public Library

Illioopolis-Niantic Public Library
Chatham Area Public Library District
Sherman Public Library District
Williamsville Public Library and Museum

Thank-you for your support. Your membership dollars make it possible for the Sangamon County Historical Society to continue its mission to support and preserve local history.

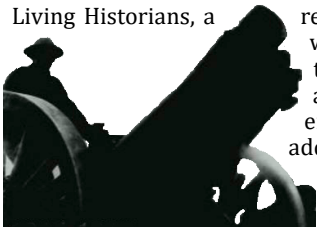


Just fill out the form on the back of your *Historico* and check off the Gift of Membership. We'll take it from there!

Calendar of History Events

Wednesday, November 9: *Civil War: A Day in the Life.* 2 p.m. Civil War reenactor and enthusiast Duane Carrell tells what life was like for civilians and soldiers during the Civil War in this special presentation in conjunction with the Williamsville Public Library and Museum's current exhibit, *Williamsville Civil War Veteran Jacob Yocom, 130th Illinois Infantry.* Free. For information, call 566-3520. The Library is located at 217 North Elm Street, Williamsville.

Saturday, November 12: *Great War Encampment World War I,* 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Illinois State Military Museum hosts this special Veterans Day event where you'll get 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 and battle reenactments. In addition, there will be talks on how Illinois units trained and fought and the consequences of the war. Uniformed re-enactors will demonstrate WWI combat techniques through mock battles at the museum at 1301 North MacArthur Boulevard, two blocks north of the intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and North Grand Avenue, Springfield.

Saturday, November 12: *A Literary Evening.* 7 p.m. With featured readers Audrey Brinkmeyer, David Farrell, Erkia Holst, Betty Carlson Kay, Mark McDonald, Adam Schnell, and Pam Van Alstine, ticket holders to this

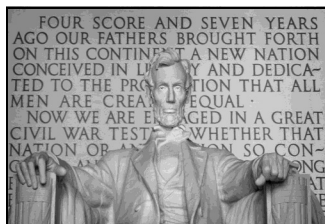
Edwards Place Historical Home event will be able to step into the past with the Edwards family for a chance to experience the 19th century Victorian pastime of reading. Guests will hear live readings of 19th century literature and prose by costumed interpreters and will have the chance to participate in the readings themselves. A wine and cheese dessert reception will follow. Tickets are \$20 per person. Edwards Place, 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield. For information, call 523-2631 or see www.edwardsplace.org/upcoming-events.



Tuesday, November 15, *Sangamon County Historical Society Program Meeting* 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 both experiences with members and guests of the Sangamon County Historical Society in this post-Veterans Day Salute. Spranza, an Auburn resident, turned his memoirs into a widely read 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 1)

Saturday, November 19: *Gettysburg Day at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum,* 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Help mark the 153rd anniversary of the Gettysburg Address with a look at original, in

Lincoln's own handwriting (on display from November 18-21), and hear the Address delivered by



Fritz Klein, nationally known Lincoln interpreter. From Noon to 2 p.m., Dr. James Cornelius and Dr. Carla Knorowski will be signing the *Gettysburg Replies* and the new *Under Lincoln's Hat* books while Michael Burlingame and Robert Shaw will be signing their Gettysburg coffee table book. At 1 p.m., the First Illinois Regimental Cavalry Band will perform in the museum plaza.

Saturday, December 3: *Ticket Reservation Deadline* for the Sangamon County Historical Society Annual Holiday Party. Purchase tickets on-line or use the mail-in form on page 11. (See story, page 1).

Saturday, December 3: *Decorate Iles House for Christmas,* Noon to 4 p.m. Iles House returns to its best winter tradition when it asks volunteers to help decorate the historic house for the holidays. Iles House is located at 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield. Complimentary hot chocolate and cookies will be served. Free and open to the public. Parking is available at the Iles House Parking Lot on the southeast corner of Seventh and Cook.

Thursday, December 7: *Holiday Walk, Dana Thomas House,* 8 p.m. The Frank Llyod Wright historic site is located at 301 East Lawrence Avenue, Springfield. For information, call 782-6776.

Saturday, December 9, *Iles House Candlelight Tour,* 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Be sure to bring your camera to capture Christmas at the Iles House when it candle lights up for an 1840s look back at holiday season. Iles House is located at 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield. Complimentary hot chocolate and cookies will be served. Free and open to the public. Parking is available at the Iles House Parking Lot on the southeast corner of Seventh and Cook.

Tuesday, December 13: *Sangamon County Historical Society Annual Holiday Party,* 5:30 p.m. Members of the Society will be gathering for this annual

social event that this year will be held at historic Pasfield House in Springfield. Tickets are \$30 per person (\$35 for non-members). Tickets can be purchased on line at sangamonhistory.org or ordered by mail by filling out and mailing the form on page 11. Ticket deadline is Saturday, December 3.



Friday, December 16, *Iles House Candlelight Tour,* 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Be sure to bring your camera to capture Christmas at the Iles House when it candle lights up for an 1840s look back at holiday season. Iles House is located at 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield. Complimentary hot chocolate and cookies will be served. Free and open to the public. Parking is available at the Iles House Parking Lot on the southeast corner of Seventh and Cook.

Saturday, December 17, *Iles House Candlelight Tour,* 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Be sure to bring your camera to capture Christmas at the Iles House when it candle lights up for an 1840s look back at holiday season. Iles House is located at 628 South Seventh Street, Springfield. Complimentary hot chocolate and cookies will be served. Free and open to the public. Parking is available at the Iles House Parking Lot on the southeast corner of Seventh and Cook.

Tuesday, January 17, *Preserving History Through the Photographer's Lens,* 5:30 p.m. *State Journal-Register* photo editor Rich Saal talks about his efforts in preserving history in this 2017 SCHS program season kick-off. Free and open to the public. Carnegie Room North, City of Springfield Library, 326 South Seventh Street, Springfield. (See story, page 3).

Photographer With an Eye on History to Speak in January

(Continued from page 3)

In 2012, Saal, with underwriting provided by Patrick Coburn, former publisher of the *SJ-R*, the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation of Chicago, the Illinois Press Association, and the Sangamon County Historical Society, reproduced photos originally taken on glass plates by the *Illinois State Journal's* first photographers, Earnest Pearson and Raymond Hodde.

The glass plates were donated to the Sangamon Valley Collection by the *S-JR* in 1989. Saal learned of the plates at the Library in 2010 when he was doing research for his master's degree in history from the University of Illinois.

Saal's research and accompanying narrative, along with an exhibit at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library and an associated website,

provided a broader view into Springfield's 20th century history and people. You can view them on line at visuals.sj-r.com/the-glass-plate-collection-1/.



CAPTURING HISTORY: Richard Saal saved vintage glass plate photos from oblivion, serving as editor of a tome on work by early *Illinois State Journal* photographers.

Looking for that First Snowflake? SCHS is Prepared

Late October and early November may have had its share of summer-like days, but there's no escaping that winter is almost upon us.

Even with winter not officially beginning until December 21, there's always a possibility that by the time this copy of *Historico* is in your hands, the first snowflake of the season may have fallen in Sangamon County!

What does it mean to SCHS members?

A heavy evening snowfall or icy roads deemed too hazardous to drive could mean a program or tour may be postponed or cancelled. Here's how you can find out before heading out the door:

If road conditions or hazardous weather prompts a general meeting or event cancellation, an announcement to that effect will be posted by 3 p.m. of the day of the meeting/event several different ways.

Notices initially will be posted on our website, www.sangamonhistory.org and on our phone, 217-525-1961 by 3 p.m. on the day of the meeting. This should give you ample time to change plans.

Where possible, we will also post any cancellation notices on media websites and request that they be broadcast through local radio and television outlets. Hopefully, Mother Nature will hold off and you'll be able to attend!



Society's Annual Holiday Party to be in a Historic Setting

(Continued from page 1)

on this page (See below) and mailing it with your check by the reservation deadline or purchasing tickets on-line at the Society's website, sangamonhistory.org. Please take note that all levels of our membership include spouses, significant others, and family members 16 and over living at the same address. The guest ticket price applies only for non-SCHS members

Pasfield House, at 525 South Pasfield Street-- just west of the State Capitol Complex-- is one of Springfield's most distinctive, privately owned historic structures. Once part of a 40 acre estate that three generations of George Pasfield had resided on since the early 1840's, the Georgian-Revival mansion was built in 1896 by banker George Pasfield Jr., the grandson of one of Springfield's wealthiest families. Restored and owned by SCHS Life Member Tony Leone, it is an architectural treasure both inside and out. The City of Springfield has designated the Pasfield House as a City Landmark as well as the area surrounding the former residence, as the Pasfield House Historic Area.

The first floor includes such architectural details as Roman capitals upon fluted columns, paneled wainscoting and

a grand staircase. The Library/Bar and the Capitol View Reception Room are adjacent to a picturesque lobby with stately crown molding similar to the style found at the State Capitol. The grand lobby is flanked with identical fireplaces of picturesque architectural design and which mirror each other.

Much of the artwork, by well-known local artists, depicts legislative and State Capitol scenes. Other repeating architectural details include carvings of reed bands wrapped with x-crosses, the Greek or Roman symbol for unity, often used in Civil War times. In fact, the Pasfield House boasts columns depicting all three classic Greek Styles: Doric, Ionic and Corinthian.

The home is appointed with many classical American pieces of furniture from the Baker's Charleston Historical Society Collection. Green marble top tables abound. George Pasfield's home office interior furnishings are replica Stickney furniture original pieces that complement the quarter sawn oak bookcases and fireplace stained in period décor. Leathered-upholstered wing back leather chairs and tufted sofas are of classic Chippendale style. The mission-style furnishings complement reproductions of Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana-Thomas House decorative accent pieces.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY MAIL-IN RESRVATION /PAYMENT FORM



Please use this form only if you wish to attend the Tuesday, December 13 Annual Sangamon County Historical Society Members Only Holiday Party but do not wish to register and pay on-line via our website, sangamonhistory.com.

Tickets are \$30 per person. All SCHS membership levels include family members 16 and older living at the same address. If you wish to bring a non-member with you, their ticket price is \$35.

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ reservations.

Names of Attendees (Please print): _____

Your name: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail _____



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Sangamon County Historical Society MEMBERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL Form

Mail this form with your check to the Sangamon County Historical Society, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744. You may also join or renew on line by going to sangamonhistory.org. Our membership year runs from June 1 to May 31. All memberships cover adults and children 16 and over living in the same household. Be sure to include their names.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ E-mail: _____



Status

New Member

Renewal

GIFT of Membership from:

Phone _____

Membership Levels

- Regular Membership - \$25
- Not-For-Profit Membership - \$20
- Student Membership - \$10 (Must show proof of status).
- Pioneer Level Membership - \$100
- Settlers Level Membership - \$250
- Trailblazer Level Membership - \$500
- Lifetime Membership - \$700

ALL MEMBERSHIPS COVER ADULTS AND CHILDREN 16 AND OVER LIVING IN THE SAME HOUSEHOLD. PLEASE INCLUDE THEIR NAMES: _____