



# HISTORICO

## Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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### A Special Message: Keeping You, But Not History, at a Distance

Until the crisis is passed and we can resume a normal meeting schedule, the Society will continue to post video programs online and feature them in *Historico*. *Historico* is also posted online at sangamonhistory.org if you wish to view it digitally.

### Curtis Mann Presents on the Early Years of Sangamon County

Curtis Mann, the manager of the Sangamon Valley Collection at Lincoln Library, was the presenter for the Society's January program. Mann prepared a recorded program called "In the Beginning: A Look at Sangamon County 200 Years Ago." Mann first discussed the area that was widely known as the Sangamo Country.

This area was primary based along the Sangamon River from as far east as Macon County and as far west as the Illinois River. Robert Pulliam is recognized as being the first settler in Sangamon County. He and a small group of people brought a herd of cattle into the area now known as Ball Township in the fall of 1817. They built a cabin near Sugar Creek and remained through the spring of 1818.

Other settlers soon arrived and a year later over 300 people were squatting on government land. Reports from visitors like Elisha and published accounts helped to encourage more settlers to come. The cessation of land by the Kickapoo Nation in 1819 was another factor in the settlement of the area.

Sangamon County was created on January 30, 1821. The new county was originally much larger than it is today. It once covered all or parts of 12 counties. Mann noted that most of the original settlers were from the upland south states. He then noted the locations of various settlements which were often centered on creeks and groves of timber. All of the land in Sangamon County in 1821 was owned by the federal government. Teams of



surveyors were hired by the government to lay the land out in townships and sections so the land could eventually be sold to individuals.

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Two exciting anniversaries will make 2021 a big year for the Society. First, we have the bicentennial of the creation of Sangamon County. We started our bicentennial programming with an informative program from Curtis Mann on the Sangamon County of 200 years ago. As the year goes on, we will be working with the Sangamon Experience, who is planning monthly programs and digital exhibits. They are building a digital project to highlight four items that tell a story from each town in Sangamon County. We will also highlight what other organizations are doing to

celebrate the bicentennial. Second, the Society itself is celebrating 60 great years in 2021. This June, we will have programming and *Historico* articles relating to our past.

I am very proud to be the president of the Society for such a momentous year, and look forward to the programming we will present for these two great milestones.

*Stephanie J Martin*

### Follow the Society on Twitter

The Society is now active on Twitter! Follow us @sangamonhistory and @sangamonlink to keep up with our events, local history news, and SangamonLink posts.



### Early Years of Sangamon County

#### Continued from page 1

The commission form of government was first used in Sangamon County. Three commissioners and the sheriff were elected. The commissioners, Rivers Cormack, William Drennan and Zachariah Peter, were then responsible for appointing other county officials like the treasurer, justices of the peace, constables and road supervisors. Another duty of the commissioners was to locate a site for a temporary courthouse. A spot in the field of John Kelly was selected, which was today located near the north-west corner of Second and Jefferson streets.

A man named Elijah Iles made a decision to move to Sangamon County. He located the future spot of the courthouse and arranged for a storehouse to be built nearby. Iles plan was to operate a store until the time came for land sales to begin. He would go on to become one of the founders of the city. Mann concluded his program by suggesting three books for people interested in reading further about the early history of the area. *The History of the Early Settlers of Sangamon County* by John C. Power, *Sugar Creek* by John Faragher and *The Sangamo Frontier* by Robert Mazrim. View the video presentation on YouTube.



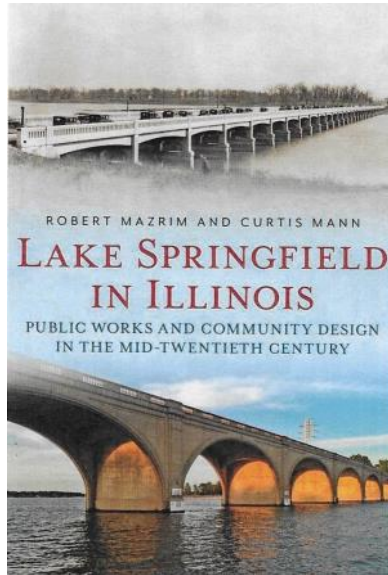
1821 Sangamon County



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Stephanie Martin, *Historico* Editor

## New Book on Lake Springfield

A new book, *Lake Springfield in Illinois: Public Works and Community Design in Mid-Twentieth Century America* will be released by Arcadia Publishing in February. The Society will interview authors Curtis Mann and Robert Mazrim for our March 16th program video. Mann is Springfield's city historian and the manager of the Sangamon Valley Collection at Lincoln Library, the Public Library of Springfield. Mazrim is an archaeologist at the Illinois State Archaeological Survey. The book will be available through the publisher and Amazon.com, other sellers will be named soon.



### OFFICERS

President.....Stephanie Martin  
 Vice-President.....Susan Helm  
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## SCHS Member Named First Citizen

The Society would like to congratulate Kathryn Harris on being named the SJ-R 2020 First Citizen. She served as the SCHS president 2004-2005. She has portrayed Phoebe Florville, Rebecca Wood, and Jane Pellum at the Oak Ridge Cemetery Walks. Her contribution to the history community and promotion of local and national history in Springfield is unmatched.



Harris as Rebecca Wood

### *Thank you...*

The Society would like to thank Margaret Izzo, who made a donation in honor of her father David Scott.

## One Day in Sangamon County Photo Challenge

Sangamon Valley Collection (SVC) at Lincoln Library encourages the community to celebrate Sangamon County Bicentennial Day on January 30, 2021 by participating in the One Day in Sangamon County photo collection challenge. This 24-hour challenge asks the community to help document "a day in the life" by

taking photos of buildings, landscapes, streetscapes, or anything that captures the day. Submit digital images to the SVC through the Community Collection Portal: <https://www.lincolnlibrary.info/learn/sangamon-valley-collection/portal>.

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*(Please Print)*

**SELECT THE MEMBERSHIP LEVEL**

- Regular Membership - \$30     Pioneer - \$100     Settler - \$250     Trailblazer - \$500  
 Lifetime Membership - \$700 (*one time fee*)     College/University Student (individual) - \$20.

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*This is a GIFT for: (Name of Recipient, Mailing Address (Street, City, State, Zip))* \_\_\_\_\_

*I am adding a donation of \$* \_\_\_\_\_.

Mail this form with your check to the Sangamon County Historical Society, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744