



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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VOLUME 57 NO. 11

OCTOBER 2021

Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk Ready to Go!



MEET THE PRESS: Local radio, television, and print reporters turned out for an on-site press briefing at the Monument Avenue entrance to Oak Ridge Cemetery on September 7 that detailed the October 3 event. Reenactor Linda Schneider, at the microphone in period dress, joined event chair Mary Alice Davis in providing details of the walk.

Circle Sunday, October 3 on your calendar, electronic or otherwise! weather, it would be cancelled."

You won't want to miss participating in the return of the Sangamon County Historical Society's free annual Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk that's back on track after a year's break because of Covid.

It's all outdoors, a tour that provides a glimpse of the history and heritage of Springfield and Sangamon County.

Some walking is involved, but the distance is somewhat shorter than in past years, about half a mile, notes Cemetery Walk chair Mary Alice Davis.

"We always suggest wearing comfortable clothing and shoes, and with the help of Mother Nature, hope to have nice weather for the event as we have in past years." The only caveat, she noted, is if it rains. "We do not have an alternate date. In the event of rainy

If the weather looks iffy, you can check the Society's website, sangamonhistory.org, its Facebook page, or call 217-525-1961 and hear a recorded message if there is a cancellation.

All participants *must* park in a designated area west of the Oak Ridge Cemetery Bell Tower (*See map, page 5*).

You can use either entrance to Oak Ridge--Monument Avenue on the south or J. David Jones Parkway on the west, but in either case, signs posted along the way will direct you to the designated parking area for the Walk.

The parking area is located adjacent to the bus pickup and return area and also to an area where you can purchase snacks and drinks manned by the Springfield and Central Illinois African American

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HISTORICAL COINCIDENCE: The Society's 2021 Meeting Season Opener at Clayville on September 14 was also the site of its first public meeting 60 years ago. For the story and photos of this year's event, see PAGE 6.

Stephanie J. Martin



A Welcome Welcome Back!

Hello! Fall is my favorite season. I'm excited that we can bring back a fall favorite Echoes of Yesteryear Oak Ridge tour after a year away. Fall in the cemetery is crisp and colorful!

* * *

In my roles as the SCHS president and librarian at the Sangamon Valley Collection, I was asked to serve on the Sangamon County Bicentennial Committee.

The committee also includes business and community leaders, politicians, high school students and three past Sangamon County Historical Society presidents.

One result is a digital time capsule of interviews with the committee members, county board members, and residents about their experience in Sangamon County.

Not to be a spoiler for my video but, I've lived here for seven years and have learned so much about this county through my job at the library and being a member of the Sangamon County Historical Society. To view the videos or learn more about submitting your own, check out the county's website: <https://co.sangamon.il.us/i-want-to/learn/sangamon-stories>

Thank you to everyone who attended the gathering September 14. It was nice to talk with members and grant recipients. I was impressed by the projects. I look forward to seeing them come to fruition. Thank you to the Clayville Historic Site for hosting us. Thank you to Mary Alice Davis and Vicky Whitaker for coordinating the event.

* * *

My predecessor, former president Vicky Whitaker, has gone through 60 years of the *Historico* and compiled descriptions of programs, tours, and trips for each year. It was inspiring to read through! This Society has hosted many experts on an impressive variety of local topics. I look forward to revisiting some of these topics and exploring new ones.

The next project is to index the *Historico*! The project will index programs, people, and the Society's actions, such as bylaw and policy changes. The index will be useful for the board and an important resource of the Society's history and county history.

I look forward to another year of engaging programming.



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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. Catch us on Facebook and Twitter. Send event announcements to historicoeditor@gmail.com.

Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor.

Cinda Klickna, Mike Kienzler, contributors

AAHM Hits A Home Run With Black Baseball Exhibit

Representatives from the Sangamon County Historical Society were on hand for the September 2 opening reception at the Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum for a new exhibit on Negro Leagues Baseball. The exhibit will run through October 30.

In 2019, the Society awarded the Museum \$1,000 through its Special Project Grants program to help bring the traveling exhibit to Springfield in May, 2020, but the effort was temporarily derailed by the Covid pandemic that forced museums around the country to curtail operations. The AAHM located at 1440 Monument Avenue in Springfield was no exception in trying to bring the traveling exhibit put together by the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum of Kansas City, Missouri, to Springfield. It had to be put on hold until now.

"We were delighted to be able to view the wonderful exhibit and to have the Sangamon County Historical Society be part of individuals and groups from across the area that helped bring it to Springfield," said SCHS president Stephanie Martin. At the reception, Museum officials publicly acknowledged the support it received from the Society.

The new exhibit, which opened to the public on September 4, includes player profiles and timelines, and baseball memorabilia including players and events from Springfield and Central Illinois. It explores the connections of African American base-

ball history to Hispanic cultures, communities and countries.



VIEWERS: Society secretary Elaine Hoff (left) and president Stephanie Martin (right) were among several SCHS members present at a September 2 reception marking the opening of a new exhibit on the history of Black Baseball at the African American History Museum in Springfield. The Society provided a grant to the Museum to help bring the traveling exhibition to the area.



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Emmy Winning Springfield Native's Documentary on Black Baseball in Post-Robinson Era Included in the Exhibit

Besides providing some of the underwriting, the Sangamon County Historical Society has a second connection to the AAHM's new Negro League baseball exhibit and you can see it for yourself!

The television documentary, "*After Jackie: Black Baseball in the 1950s*" that's part of the display, is the work of Emmy Award-winning television producer and writer Alison Davis, a Society member and Springfield native.

The one-hour documentary, made for Illinois Public Media's WILL-TV, looks at the life of black baseball players who barn-

stormed America in the 1950s as members of the Negro Baseball League.

Davis, the daughter of Society past-president Mary Alice Davis, wrote and produced documentaries for 27 years at WILL-TV including "*Prairie Fire*" series [clips of which were incorporated into the Society's Powerpoint on the history of the Sangamon Ordnance Plant in Illiopolis]. Another video, "*Lincoln: Prelude to the Presidency*" made for the Big Ten Network, was shown as part of the Society's Sangamon County History through the Arts event in 2012.

Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744

October Cemetery Walk Is Set to Go

(Continued from page 1)

History Museum. Although there is no charge for the Walk, the Society welcomes donation to help offset its cost. The Society will have a table in the same area should you wish to make a contribution.

The tour, "Echoes of Yesteryear: A Walk Through Oak Ridge Cemetery" will run from Noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, October 3. The last tour begins at 3:15 p.m.

At the seven sites selected for this year's walk, you'll find actors dressed in period costumes who will portray eight individuals who made significant contributions to our community. The personal stories of each historic figure will be interpreted at his or her respective gravesite in the cemetery.

"Their authentic stories have been compiled by a team of Society members, all of them skilled history researchers headed by Mike Kienzler who developed scripts for each of the talented reenactors to perform as they take tour goers back to an earlier time and provide insight into their lives," Davis said. "The individual performances reflect several months of work and rehearsal plus thought into costumes appropriate to each historical figure."

This year's tour will focus on the gravesites of:

Harriett Knudson (1883-1969), the driving force behind the creation of Lincoln Memorial Gardens, the Springfield Civic Garden Club and the Springfield PTA Council.

Harriet Palmer Crabbe (1857-1948). The presentation would not be complete without the portrayal of **Gertrude Wright Morgan** (1861-1931), her life-long closest friend. Palmer Crabbe was the daughter of the 15th Illinois Governor.

Wright Morgan was the first African-American student to attend a white school in Springfield. The

two walked together to school and remained friends throughout their lives. Wright Morgan fulfilled her dream of becoming a teacher in St. Louis and then Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts, playing vital roles in Black and cultural life in all



WALK PLANNER: Society member Mary Alice Davis has chaired the Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk for the past several years. She is a past-president of the Society and current member of the board. The Walk began as an casual tour for members in 1967 led by the late Dr. Floyd Barringer, another past-president, based on a book he had written with Richard Kahne, *A Walking Tour of Oak Ridge*. In that first trek, the authors suggested the participants wear "sensible dress and shoes," advice that holds up 55 years later! The walk was held on and off until 1996 when it became an annual event but halted in 2008 before being returned in 2015 at the urging of Davis during her presidency.

three areas. She was involved in the creation of the Niagara Movement,

the NAACP of which she was a founder, and women's suffrage. Wright Morgan also died in 1931 and is buried in Mount Auburn, Massachusetts.

Richard Dodds (1851-1921), was the owner and operator of a Springfield landmark drug store on the corner of Fifth and Monroe streets known as Dodds' Corner, which became a *de facto* city meeting place near street car routes.

Thomas Rees (1850 -1933) was the long-time publisher of the *Illinois State Register* and Illinois State Senator. Upon his death, he left funds to build the carillon in Washington Park that bears his name.

Salome Paddock Enos (1791-1877) was the wife of Pascal Enos who opened the first land office in the Springfield District. He died at a young age, leaving her to manage his sizable land holdings. In 1837 she donated \$3 million worth of property for a new State Capitol.

William A. Northcott (1854 - 1917) served as Illinois Lieutenant Governor and U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Illinois. He later became Head Consul of Modern Woodmen of America, a fraternal life insurance company that erected his monument.

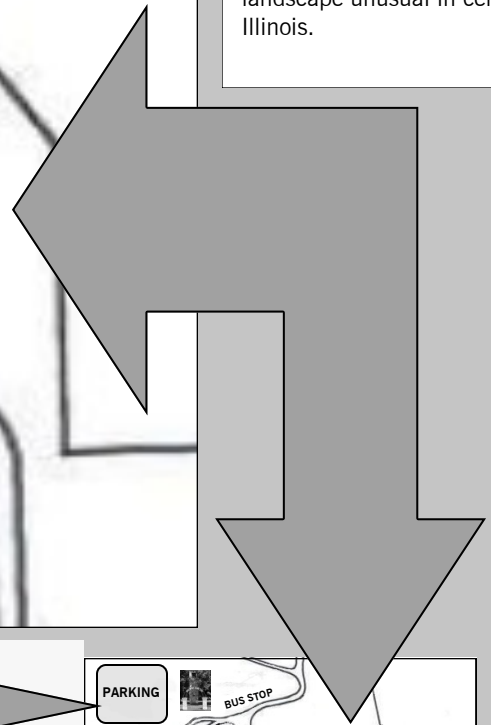
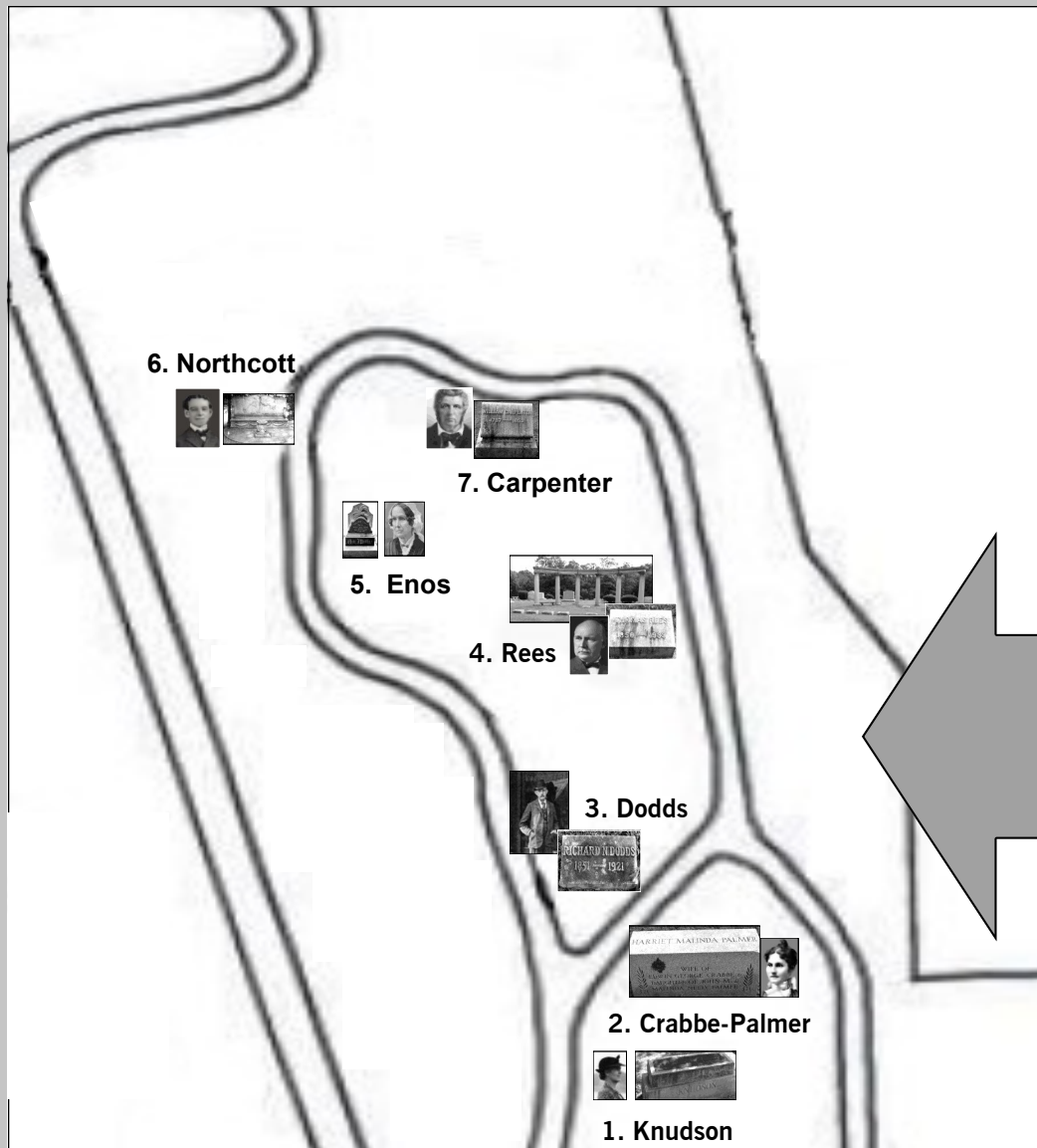
William Carpenter (1787 - 1859) was an early settler who owned a ferry operation along a stagecoach line. The settlement was known as "six-mile house." He later served as Springfield postmaster and had extensive real estate holdings. Carpenter Street and Carpenter Park are named after him.

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

Where to Park, What You'll See and Hear

About Oak Ridge

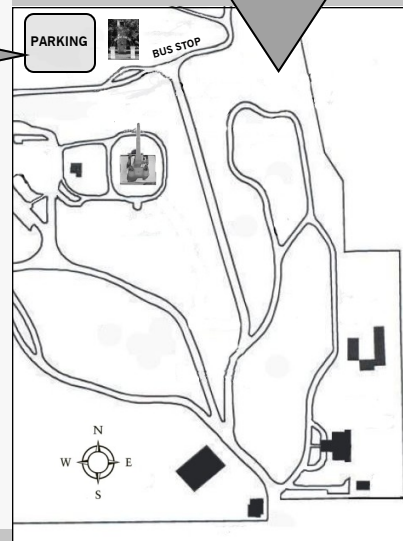
Oak Ridge Cemetery is the second-most visited cemetery in the United States, after Arlington National Cemetery. Opened in 1860, the cemetery was designed by William Saunders in the Rural Cemetery Landscape Lawn style. The location was chosen for its topography, including rolling hills, key to this style. The many eponymous oak trees cover a ridge bordering low-lying Spring Creek, a landscape unusual in central Illinois.



WHERE TO PARK

You can enter Oak Ridge Cemetery from the south via Monument Avenue or from the west via J. David Jones Parkway. Signs will be posted along each route directing you to the special Cemetery Walk Parking Area just west of the Bell Tower. *Buses will take you to and from that point to this year's tour site.*

Please park only in the designated lot.



SCHS Season Opener Had a Historic Counterpart

It wasn't by design but in retrospect, it seemed appropriate that the Society's return to in-person meetings on September 14 was held at the Clayville Historic Site in Pleasant Plains.

A recent compilation of the Society's 60 year-history found the geographical connection: after a series of organizational and board meetings when the Society was formed on June 12, 1961, its very first public meeting was held at Clayville on October 1, 1961!

This year's event included a box dinner and the in-

roduction of winners of the Society's 2021 Special Project Grants...and of course, face-to-face socializing albeit masked except when dinner goes partook of an array of sandwiches, salad, fruit and dessert from Nelson's Catering.

As a popular spot for events and receptions, the Pleasant Plains Historical Society representatives who operate the site were well-versed on the restrictions Covid has placed on large gatherings, setting up seating and dining that gave the more than 50 SCHS members and guests plenty of elbow room.



FROM FOOD TO FINANCES, Society members and guests had a lot to talk about at the Society's season opener. President Stephanie Martin (top right) emceed the gathering that included brief presentations from Special Project Award winners, a treasurer's report and the introduction of officers and long-time members.

Miss A Past Society Program? It's Right at Your Fingertips!

Yep. Fall is here. And so are we, back with live events for the rest of 2021 and into 2022 unless the Corona Virus has a say.

That wasn't the case through much of last year and early 2021 when our monthly program meetings went on-line.

If you missed any of these really terrific presentations we've offered over the past several months — or just want to see and hear them again — you can, simply by sitting down in front of your computer and tuning in.

Here's how to access each from your computer arm chair:

1. Go to the Society's website. sangamonhistory.org.
2. At the top of the page, go to the menu and tap **BOOKS & VIDEOS**
3. On the **BOOKS & VIDEO** page, you will find links--by month and year: November 2020, January 2021, February 2021, March 2021, April 2021, and May 2021.
4. Hit the iconic "Skip the Ad" button [that's part of the You Tube experience unless you like commercials.]
5. Enjoy!

May 2021: A Pictorial History of the Construction of the Vachel Lindsay Bridge. Kansas City-based Lance Warren, Research Librarian/Archivist with Burns McDonnell, provides a pictorial and in-depth look at this iconic Springfield landmark and the story and people be-

hind its creation and Lake Springfield.

April 2021: Virginia Eifert: Springfield Native, Prolific Naturalist. Learn about the life and legacy of Virginia Eifert from researcher John Hallwas and the Illinois State Museum's Tracy Pierceall. Eifert, a naturalist, author, and artist, worked at the Museum where she created, wrote and edited its *The Living Museum* magazine and publications on Illinois flora and fauna, rivers, people, and history. In 2019, Hallwas, who specializes in "forgotten voices from Illinois history," provided the cover story on Eifert for *Illinois History Magazine*, whose archives are housed at the Western Illinois University Library.

March 2021: Lake Springfield In Illinois: Public Works and Community Design in the Mid-Twentieth Century. The perfect primer for the Society's May meeting, historians Curtis Mann and Robert Mazrim provide details from their new book and the story-behind-the story that motivated them to take a closer look at a public project that helped shape Springfield's future.

February 2021: Shine A Light Project: Historic Preservation and Interpretation on Springfield's East Side. Preservationists Sue Massie and Kathryn Harris take a look at efforts to preserve the John Taylor House, the Lincoln Colored Home and Fire House No. 5 and how each site contributed to the lives of African-Americans here.

January 2021: In The Beginning: A Look at Sangamon County 200 Years Ago. Using maps, illustrations and a knowledgeable voice-over, Curtis Mann, head of the City of Springfield Lincoln Library's Sangamon Valley Collection, provides an illustrated look at both the people and geography that played into the development of Springfield.

November 2020: "I Think That We Will Soon Be In Springfield": An Illinois Civil War Soldier's Quotations About Sangamon County from their Personal Letters. Author Mark Flotow brings the Civil War to its grass roots, in a program that illustrates the letters home by including audio readings of some of these moving stories provided by Sangamon County Historical Society members

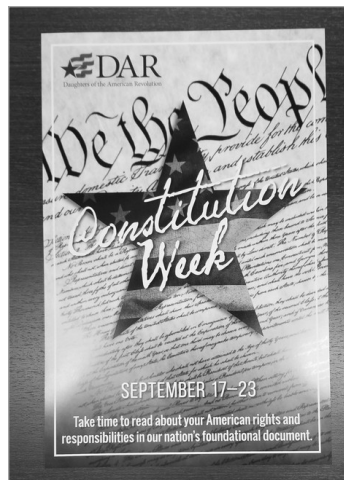
DAR Chapters Here Team Ring In National U.S. Constitution Week

That ringing in your Freedom - The Sound of the Constitution in 1955, ears you heard last month Patriotism." at 3 p.m. wasn't imaginary.

The three chapters of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution on September 17 to celebrate U.S. Constitution Week. It was the end result of the efforts of three Springfield area chapters of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution on September 17 to celebrate U.S. Constitution Week. This year is the 66th

The Springfield Chapter, Sergeant Caleb Hopkins Chapter and Captain William Penny Chapter joined other chapters nationwide in the *Bells Across America* event that encouraged community churches to participate in the national DAR event by ringing "The Bells of

when the Daughters petitioned the signing of the Constitution and the 230th anniversary of the ratification of the first ten amendments known as the Bill of Rights. Its goals are threefold: to encourage the study of historical events that led to the framing of the Constitution in September 1787; to inform people that the resolution, Constitution is the basis which of America's great heritage and the foundation of our way of life; and to emphasize U.S. citizens' responsibility to protect, defend and preserve the Constitution.



The NSDAR started the tradition of celebrating 2, 1956.

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Sangamon County Historical Society 2021-2022 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 at living at the same address. Be sure to list their names.

Your Full Name _____ Spouse/Significant Other First Name _____

Spouse's maiden name where applicable _____ Your e-mail _____

Your address _____ City, State , Zip _____ Phone _____

Full Names of other family members included in your membership:

Choose Your Level of Membership: Regular (\$30) Pioneer (\$100) Settler (\$250) Trailblazer (\$300)
 Lifetime (\$700 one-time fee) College/University Student (individual) (\$20)

This is a GIFT (Name of recipient, mailing and e-mail address):

I am adding a donation to the Society in addition to my membership in the amount of \$ _____

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