



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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February 15 On-Line Presentation

Black Female Educators and School That Made a Difference

The Sangamon County Historical Society will mark Black History Month on Tuesday, February 15 with an on-line presentation focused on education.

The program will look at the experiences of two Black female educators—one in the 1870s, the other in the 1950s, who overcame prejudice in their careers.

The third segment will look at the history and fate of the Ambidexter Industrial and Normal Institute for Black students established in 1857 in Springfield and almost erased from the history books when the building in which it was housed was twice threatened by razing, once in 2013 and again in 2018.

As with the January 2022 program,

the presentation will be entirely on-line in view of the continuing concern over the threat of spreading Covid at large gatherings.

The Society hopes to return to on-site meetings at the City of Springfield Lincoln Library in coming months.

Three panelists will share the February presentation: Journalist and Society board member Cinda Klickna will look at the life of Gertrude Wright, who in 1877, was the first Black person to graduate Springfield High School and went on to become a national leader in the early women's suffrage and civil rights movements with her husband, Clement Morgan, a prominent Massachusetts attorney and first Black graduate of Harvard and Harvard Law School.

SCHS board vice-president Susan Helm will survey the challenges and indignities faced by late Mae Ryan Hammons who in 1955 became the first Black person hired to teach in Springfield's School District 186.

Gina Lathan, currently working on the restoration of Taylor House, the former home of Springfield's Ambidexter Industrial and Normal Institute housed at 902 South Twelfth Street, will discuss the history of the school and efforts now and in the past to restore the site.

There are several options to view the program: Watch it on-line starting on February 15 on the Society's website, sangamonhistory.org, or on You Tube, or on the Society's Facebook page.

Archeologist to Share Fabric Clues From 1908 Race Riot Research



What can you learn from a piece of scorched fabric?

Quite a bit, if you're an archaeologist like Cheslea Coates (*left*) who has spent months sorting and inventorying textiles recovered from one of the houses burned in Springfield's 1908 Race Riot.

Coates, a staffer with the Springfield-

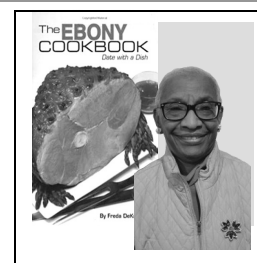
based archaeology research firm, Fever River Research, will talk about her work and findings at the Society's Tuesday, March 15 meeting, which may be presented as an on-line program unless there is a change in Covid guidelines limiting large gatherings, an issue the Society is addressing on a month-by-month basis. The format will be announced in the March issue of *Historico*.

(Continued on page 6)

INSIDE:

<i>From the President's Desk</i>	2
History Changer to Get a Marker.....	3
On Line Program Guide.....	7

**IN THE KITCHEN
WITH KATHRYN
And Her Special
Cookbook Collection
Pages 4-5**





Stephanie Martin

On the Watch List: Movies, Buildings and Grant Deadline

I hope everyone has had a chance to view our January program “Springfield’s Movie House History” on YouTube.

I learned so much! Thank you to Vicky Whitaker for all of her efforts in researching, writing, and assembling the program. Also thanks go to the program contributors and editors, Mike Kienzler, Curtis Mann, and Cinda Klickna. Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTAV7maS-sE>.

* * *

A few local historic buildings have been in the news recently, (from left) the Leland Farm House and Save the Leland Farm Summer Kitchen effort, Tony and Ann Libri purchasing property on the former campus of Benedictine University with the intention of building renovation, and the Conn’s Hospitality Group purchasing the Vinegar Hill Mall, the Baur’s Building, and the DeWitt Smith Mansion.



These are definitely stories to keep an eye on in 2022. If you see any additional preservation efforts in the news across Sangamon County, please let me know.

* * *

The Society will announce the opening of the 2022 Special Projects Grants application period this month.

Since 2013, the Society has provided funds to museums, cemeteries, history organizations, and other groups for projects that have produced markers and signs, exhibits, and programs. The deadline for applications is April 30, 2022. Grantees will be announced in June. I think this initiative is a great fulfillment of our mission. For more information: https://www.sancohis.org/schs_grant_program.htm



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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

Plaque to Mark Oak Ridge Gravesite

Springfielder Who Helped Sangamon Become County Seat to be Honored

Plans are in the works for a ceremony at Oak Ridge Cemetery this spring that will pay homage to an often overlooked historic figure said to have been instrumental in getting Springfield designated as the county seat.

A plaque will be placed at the grave of Andrew Elliott (1792-1864) by the Veterans Memorial Foundation and the Oak Ridge Cemetery Foundation detailing what early area historian John Carroll Power (1819-1894) described as Elliott's successful effort in 1821 to have Springfield named the county seat in 1825, a move that propelled the city's growth and

eventual selection as the state capital. At the time, Springfield's rival was Sangamo Town, a small commercial community founded by Moses Broadwell eight miles to the northeast in what today is part of the Clayville Historic Site just west of Pleasant Plains.

"This is a long over-due recognition of a historical figure in our county's history," noted Foundation member Mike Lelys. "We are looking forward to the return of good weather so that we can set a date for the official installation of a plaque at his Oak Ridge Cemetery gravesite."

Elliot, a local businessman and early Springfield settler, was asked to serve as the guide to a team of inspectors charged with recommending the location for the county seat. According to Power, he took them from Springfield, on a route through "all the sloughs he

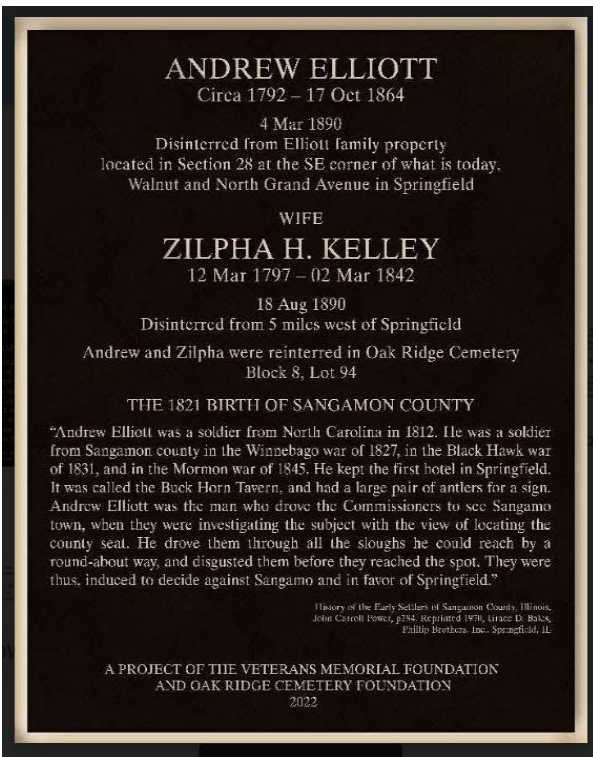
could reach by a round-about way," one that disgusted them before they reached Sangamo Town. As a result, Power said, Springfield won the designation.

Originally from North Carolina, Elliott was a veteran of the War of 1812, moving to Sangamon County in 1819 and serving in the local militia

in the Winnebago War of 1827, the Black Hawk War of 1831 and the Mormon War of 1845. Elliott operated the Buck Horn Tavern near Second and Jefferson Streets and was married to Zilpha Kelley, a niece of John Kelley who built the first cabin in Springfield in 1819. She died in 1842, her husband in 1864.

Elliott and his wife were originally buried in a family plot on the southeast corner of what today is Walnut and North Grand Avenue. They were reinterred in Oak Ridge Cemetery in 1890.

(Continued on page 6)



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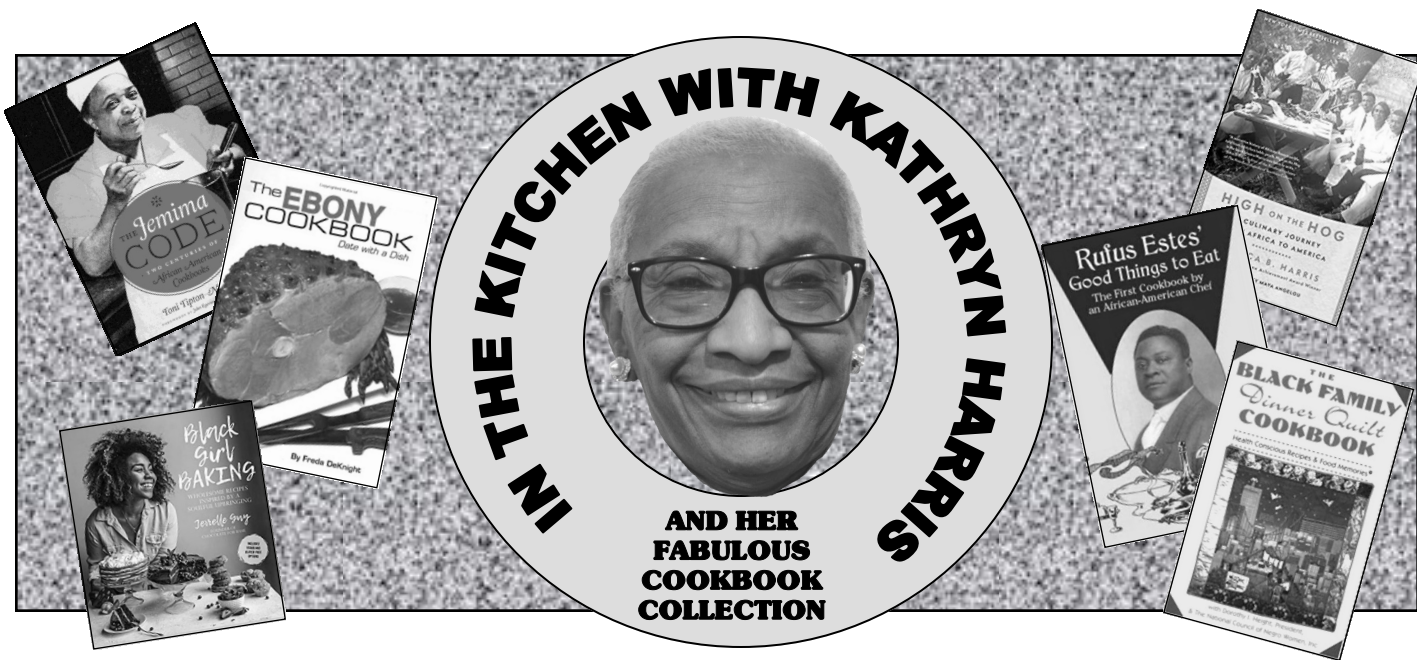
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Culinary Whiz and Past SCHS President Shares Her Decades of Cookbook Collecting With Display at Springfield's African-American History Museum

For past Sangamon County Historical Society president Kathryn Harris, cookbook collecting represents a lifetime of food for thought, one that she's sharing in a new "Follow the Recipe" exhibit of some of her favorite tomes at the Springfield and Central Illinois African-American History Museum that reflect Black culture and history.

Some 50 books are in the display that offers a look at the recipes, experiences and authors who represent the heritage, culture and historic impact African-American chefs and cooks have had on American cuisine.

The display represents just a fraction of the "couple of hundred" cookbooks Harris has collected over the years, stashed on shelves in her kitchen and elsewhere in her home. An admitted "foodie," Harris is hooked on television shows like "Chopped," on the Food Network, the "Great British Bake Off," the *New York Times* Food Section and just about any recipe that catches her eye.

"I started collecting recipes from *Ebony Magazine* when I was young," says Harris, her favorite how-to's now embraced in its own volume, *The Ebony Cookbook: Date With A Dish* that's part of the exhibit.

Here's a look at some of the other

Harris cookbooks that will be on display over the next few months and for which she has provided a timeline for viewers at the Museum at 1440 Monument Avenue which is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from Noon to 4 p.m.:

Good Things To Eat

The oldest is a reprint of Rufus Estes' *Good Things To Eat*, the first cookbook by an African-American chef, first published in 1911. Born into slavery in 1857 in Murray County, Tennessee, as a young man, Estes (the slaveholder's last name assigned to the family), moved to Nashville, working in a restaurant for several years before heading to Chicago to work for Pullman as a Private Car attendant. His skills propelled him into planning and overseeing the company's Private Car dining operations that drew celebrated political and entertainment figures such as U.S. Presidents Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison, and a parade of internationally famed artists and European royalty traveling by rail to events such as the Chicago World's Fair.

Ironically, his nearly 600-recipe guide to early 20th century cooking was written during an oppressive and violent period for his African Ameri-

can peers, but charted innovative ways to cook and enjoy life, observed food writer and journalist Kayla Stewart in Mark Bittman's popular on-line food and cooking site, *Heated*.

"Estes' book invites us to imagine a world in which Black people could enjoy the pleasures of food and service. A world in which, against the backdrop of nationwide ingrained racism, a Black person still managed to revel in the possibility of the fullness of life, the delight and joy of eating, and the pride serving good things to eat."

His cookbook provides simple instructions for preparing such standard fare as fried chicken, beef roast, and glazed carrots. But the heart of the book lies in mouth-watering recipes for dishes rarely found in contemporary cookbooks — among them Creole-style chicken gumbo, chestnut stuffing with truffles, cherry dumplings, and southern-style waffles— from haute cuisine to family-style meals.

Butler's Guide

Also on display is Harris's copy of Robert Roberts' *An African American Butler's Guide*, which, though not a cookbook, provides a historical look at work, home life, and race relations in early America, based on Roberts' personal and professional experiences.

Charleston, South Carolina native Roberts' book was one of the first written by an African-American and published by a commercial press. His manual for butlers and waiters offered insight into the social milieu, hierarchy, and maintenance of the antebellum manor. It remains a critical primary source in sociology and African-American history.

The Black Family Dinner Quilt Cookbook

Drawing a parallel between quilts that are passed from generation to generation and the recipes that preserved the culture of a people and their social, historic and artistic connections to their past and future, the volume was edited by the late civil rights and women's rights activist Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women which published the book in 1993, it offers recipes based on both traditional and contemporary African-American cuisine with recipes full of down-home flavor.

Slave in the Box

Author Maurice M. Manring addresses the vexing question of why the troubling figure of Aunt Jemima has endured in American culture. Manring traces the evolution of the mammy from her roots in the Old South slave reality and mythology, through reinterpretations during Reconstruction and in minstrel shows and turn-of-the-century advertisements, to Aunt Jemima's symbolic role in the Civil Rights movement and final incarnation as a "working grandmother."

In 1889, the Aunt Jemima name and character was appropriated from a Missouri vaudeville house minstrel show poster by *St. Joseph Gazette* editor Chris R. Rutt and his partner, Charles G. Underwood to brand a ready-made pancake flour mix produced by their new St. Joseph business, Pearl Milling Company. When the two partners ran out of money a year later, they sold the business and formula for Aunt Jemima flour mix to Davis Milling Company which was renamed Aunt Jemima Mills in 1914. Acquired by Quaker Oats Company in 1926, Quaker formally registered the Aunt Jemima trademark and logo in 1937. Quaker Oats was acquired by

PepsiCo, Inc. in 2001, modernizing the logo in recent years by removing the "mammy" kerchief from the character to blunt growing criticism that the brand perpetuated a racist stereotype. In 2021, Quaker removed the image and name altogether as part of an effort to make progress toward racial equality. It gave the brand a not so new "new" name: Pearl Milling Company.

Aunt Jemima's ready-mixed products "offered middle-class housewives the next best thing to a black servant: a slave in a box that conjured up romantic images of not only the food but also the social hierarchy of the plantation South," says Manring. Her continued appeal in the late twentieth century is a more complex and disturbing phenomenon, he says, in an effort to learn important lessons about our collective cultural identity.

High on the Hog

Jessica B. Harris has spent much of her life researching the food and foodways of the African Diaspora. *High on the Hog* is the culmination of years of her work, taking the reader on a har-

rowing journey from Africa across the Atlantic to America, tracking the trials that the people and the food have undergone along the way. From chitlins and ham hocks to fried chicken and vegan soul, Harris celebrates the delicious and restorative foods of the African American experience and details how each came to form such an important part of African American culture, history, and identity.

Jubilee

Award-winning food journalist Toni Tipton-Martin provides techniques, ingredients, and dishes that show the roots of African American cooking in a 100 recipe collection that ranges from

classics to lesser-known but even more decadent dishes like Bourbon & Apple Hot Toddies, Spoon Bread, and Baked Ham Glazed with Champagne. In the process, she introduces readers to black cooks, some long forgotten, who established much of what's considered to be our national cuisine.

The Jemima Code: Two Centuries of African American Cookbooks

To discover the true role of black women in the creation of American, and especially southern, cuisine, Toni Tipton-Martin spent years amassing one of the world's largest private collections of cookbooks published by African American authors, looking for evidence of their impact on American food, families, and communities and for ways that knowledge can be used to inspire community wellness of every kind. *The Jemima Code* presents more than 150 black cookbooks that range from a rare 1827 house servant's manual to modern classics, arranged chronologically and illustrated with photos of their covers and selected interior pages, including recipes.

With such a vast collection of cookbooks at her fingertips, where does Harris begin?

An appetizer? Vegetable? Main course? Dessert, of course!

"I like to bake pie. Any kind of pie," she says, her favorite a "Color of Stone" fruit cobbler based on a recipe from a colleague who gave it to her when she served as division manager for library services at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, from which she retired in 2015. "It's made up of fruits with pits, the pits removed, of course, including plums, apricots, sweet cherries and peaches."

Harris is fearless when it comes to trying new recipes, like Zuppa Toscana, the popular creamy Italian soup served at Olive Garden or a chicken noodle soup made with the bone broth from roasted chicken from Sam's Club. "I like to try new recipes and if I don't like it, I won't make it again."

With a lot to share, through her largess, she hopes the new display she provided may encourage others to try their hand at mixing ingredients with culture and history.-V.W.



Scorched Race Riot Fragments Fodder for Archeologist's Research

(Continued from page 1)

If the Society returns to its normal schedule, the meeting would be held in Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 South Seventh Street, starting at 5:30 p.m.

Programs are free and open to the public.

Established in 1984, Fever River Research specializes in cultural resource management projects associated with historic properties that date to the recent past including historical archaeology, architectural studies, National Register of Historic Places nominations and tra-

ditional history including several in Sangamon County.

Coates joined Fever River in August, 2019 after earning a bachelor's degree in anthropology in 2011 and a Masters in historical archeology in 2014 from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and a Masters degree in Cultural Resource Management from Adams State University, Colorado, in 2021.

This past October, Coates, along with Fever River Research Historian, Archaeologist and Architectural Historian Christopher Stratton and Fever River Director Floyd

Mansberger, detailed for a Conference on Illinois History, their findings in a partial excavation of five houses destroyed during the 1908 Race Riot in an archeological survey mandated before construction could begin on the Carpenter Street underpass rail project.

Archaeological testing of the area began in late 2014 and in 2018 resulted in a decision to shift the railroad right of way to the east to preserve in place those houses.

Work began in 2019 and was completed in 2020, so that Fever River could focus

on processing and inventorying the artifacts from the houses.

The finds in a charred and burned trunk and dresser from one of the houses has provided Coates and colleagues with a treasure chest of fragments and buttons from clothing-related items such as corsets and shoes. In addition, there were over 1,200 fabric fragments that have been sorted into individual garments, household linen and other personal accessories including such common personal items as a handkerchief and an umbrella.

Plaque to Honor Man Who Helped Make Springfield the County Seat

(Continued from page 3)

Sangamo Town, a settlement on the Sangamon River, thrived for a time and at its zenith was home to perhaps 250 people. It included a gristmill, a wool carding mill (powered by oxen on a tread-wheel), a general store, a blacksmith shop, a tavern, and a ferry across the river.

It also served as a shipping port. Commodities such as pork, hemp, lard, and flour were loaded aboard flatboats and keelboats there for markets in St. Louis and New Orleans

Founded by Revolutionary War veteran Moses Broadwell who came to Sangamon County from New Jersey in 1819, the community rose on a 320-acre site that Broadwell platted and sold lots.

A number of mishaps dimmed Broadwell's dreams for the place. Lumber bought for a planned bridge was rotten, the bustling village of New Salem took away trade, his partners in a milling company reneged on a pledge to buy half the platted land, and the outlying lots were never paid for. The fatal blow was losing the

county seat to Springfield in 1825.

Patrick Allan Pospisek reported the consequences in an examination of the two villages' rivalry written in 2010 for *Historical Geography*.

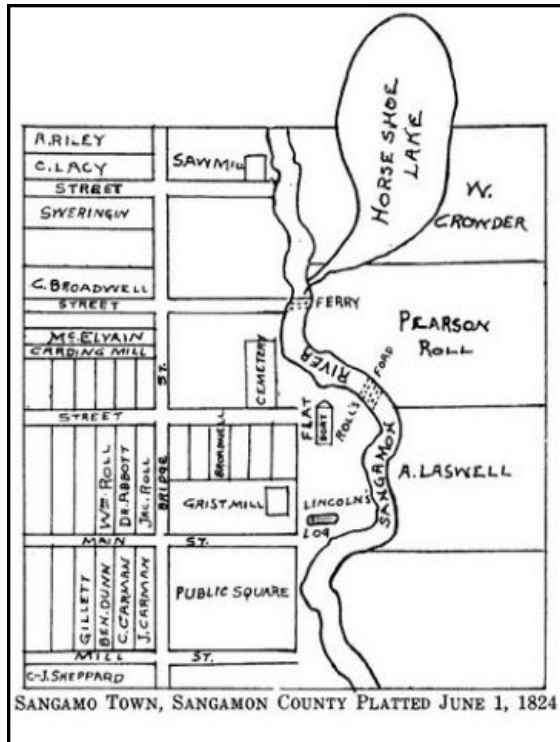
"Moses Broadwell's original plan for Sangamo had called for a diversified number of industries and a school should the town fail to become the county seat. (But) following the establishment of the permanent county seat in Springfield, not even a grammar school appears to have opened in Sangamo Town.

... While a handful of stores, a tavern and a blacksmith operated in Sangamo, few appear to have been entirely satisfied with their prospects."

Moses Broadwell died in 1827, and the unsold lots ended up in the hands of his son, Charles, who went bankrupt and left Sangamon County. By 1833, most of Sangamo Town had been abandoned.

For the next 10 years, the former village became strictly a milling center, the only residents being a few mill hands.

The last of the mills probably closed in the early 1850s, and the town site reverted to farm fields and pasture.



ALL BUT FORGOTTEN: Moses Broadwell's Sangamo Town was seen as a rival to Springfield in the hunt for a County Seat, but the round-about route Andrew Elliott's took to bring the decision-makers there is said to have sealed its fate. It was abandoned by 1833.

SCHS ON-LINE PROGRAM GUIDE

When the Corona virus prevented the Society from having face-to-face meetings back in early 2020 and through most of 2021, we did the next best thing: videoed our programs and put them on-line.

Although this past November meeting was a return to our normal on-site program at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, with the sudden surge of Omicron—the highly contagious Covid variant—we thought that in January, it would be in the best interest of our members and guests to once again go on-line rather than have an in-person gathering. The February meeting continues that tradition and will be available on line as a downloadable PDF after the on-line presentation.

We will continue to make our in-person vs. on-line meeting decisions on a month-to-month basis. The Society, did not hold its traditional holiday gathering in December which is usually offered in place of a program meeting.

You can watch our January 18 program on the history of the area's movie industry right on your computer. The same holds true for our November 2021 presentation, the public premiere of the film, "*The Mysterious Bard of Sangamon.*"

If you want to play catch-up on the months we've been unable to gather as a group or could not make a meeting, check out the list below, bring them up on your computer or connect your computer's video output to your television set and watch on a big screen.

January, 2022: *History of Springfield's Movie Theater Industry.* It's a Powerpoint available both as a downloadable PDF and on You Tube and just like the silent movies it includes, there is no sound, but if your computer has an extra drive, you might want to add



little background music, you might want to pop in "*The Very*

Best of Ragtime." To download it, go to https://sancohis.org/PDFs/THEATER_PDF.pdf or watch it on You Tube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTAV7maS-sE>.

November, 2021: *The Mysterious Bard of Sangamon,* can be found on Vimeo (a video sharing website), at <https://vimeo.com/626671152/daae07f0cc?m0>

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 behind 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

HERE'S THE BASIC HOW-TO:

- 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.**
- 4. If you're watching it on You Tube** Hit the iconic "Skip the Ad" button [that's part of the You Tube experience unless you like commercials.]

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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. 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 _____

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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 (\$500)
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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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