



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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Annual SCHS Dinner Will Serve Up Fun, Food, Elections...

When members of the Sangamon County Historical Society gather on Tuesday, June 21 at the Clayville Historic Site for the organization's annual dinner meeting, they'll be doing more than socializing, munching on sandwiches and devouring delicious desserts.

They'll be asked to affirm by vote a new slate of four officers and six directors whose terms will range from one to three years.

President Stephanie Martin, whose two-year term ends with the annual event, will continue to serve on the board as past-president, a non-elective position.

Here's the Nominating Committee's proposed slate of officers for 2022-2023: **Susan Helm, president; Cinda Klickna, vice-president; Sarah Adams, secretary,** and **Jerry Smith, treasurer.**

The board is also composed of 15 directors, with groups of five elected each year to three year terms.

Nominated for *Director* positions are: **Scott Pillsbury, Kathy Dehen, Elaine Hoff, Larry Stone, Angela Weiss and Vicky Whitaker.**

When vacancies arise, candidates are sought to fill the remainder of the terms, as in the case of Scott Pillsbury who will fill the final year of a three-year directorship that ends in June, 2023. Likewise, Kathy Dehen has been nominated to fill the remainder of a two-year term ending in 2024.

Elaine Hoff, Larry Stone, Angela Weiss and Vicky Whitaker have been nominated to fill full three-year terms ending in 2025.

Depending on the qualifications of a potential candidate and the point in time of the Society's operational year in which they are identified, a fifth nominee for the three year post will either be appointed by a vote of the full board or will be left vacant until next the next annual meeting in June 2023.

For more on the candidates, see pages 4 and 5.

...And Winners of the Society's 2022 Special Project Grant Awards!

It may not be the Academy Awards, the Tonys or, for that matter, the Pulitzer Prize, but it might as well be for winners of the Sangamon County Historical Society's annual Special Projects Grant program that this year will be announced at its June 21 annual dinner.

Prize winners have been invited to attend the event but are bound to keep the good news under wraps until then. That's when, in addition to receiving a check and warm applause, they'll get an opportunity to share details of their projects with members of the Society and their guests.

"It's always exciting for the winners and nice for our members to see the depth and variety of the history projects that we can help bring to fruition," notes SCHS president Stephanie Martin.

The grant program, geared toward small but significant projects that might be overlooked by major funding agencies because of their limited size and scope, was started a decade ago and since then has annually financed dozens of local history projects, among them a feature-length film, permanent signage detailing the history of local communities, interpretive cemetery and community markers, history exhibits, projects for children and more.



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CAPTURING COVID HISTORY: WTAX radio reporter Kiye Kimball interviews SCHS president Stephanie Martin before the start of the Society's May 17 meeting on documenting Covid History. At far right, UIS Sangamon Experience director Anne Moseley talks about its Covid-19 Project to preserve student, faculty and staff experiences during the pandemic. Other presenters were Amanda Riggenbach from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and Amanda Bryden from the Illinois State Museum sharing their COVID documentation efforts. The meeting was held at Springfield's Lincoln Library.





Stephanie Martin

Some Parting Words, Thanks, and Great Memories

This is my final “From the President’s Desk.”

First I want to take this opportunity to say that I’m grateful that I was able to work with past president Dick Hart. He was a force in the Sangamon County history world. His collections, research, and the memory of his passion will continue to further the study of Sangamon County history.

It has been an honor to serve as the president of the Sangamon County Historical Society. I like to think of the role as being an ambassador for Sangamon County history.

*I want to thank the board and members for their support over my two years as president. I also want to thank the in-person and video program presenters. We made some adjustments due to the pandemic such as producing video programs and holding board meetings via Zoom while still publishing **Historico**, giving grants, and maintaining SangamonLink.*

Shout out to Mike Kienzler for all of the amazing work he does with *SangamonLink*, our online encyclopedia of Sangamon County history. It gets so much reach and engagement! I enjoy telling people about it and using it often.

*Thank you to Vicky Whitaker for her dedication to editing **Historico** and creating the Springfield entertainment program.*

Thanks to Roger Whitaker for keeping our websites going.

Of course my gratitude goes to Jerry Smith, our treasurer for keeping track of our finances.

Mary Alice Davis deserves a shout out for chairing the Oak Ridge Walk (it will happen in 2022!), nominating, and Annual Meeting committees.

A big thanks to Mary Schaefer our social media chair and Jennie Battles on our fundraising and Oak Ridge Walk committees who will be leaving the board in June.

Have you seen our programs in the news? That is thanks to our public relations chair Ruth Slottag!

Thank you to Pete Harbison for becoming the new special projects grant chair.

Thank you to Elaine Hoff for keeping minutes as our secretary.

Board members Cinda Klickna and Susan Helm presented programs.

Thank you to the other board members who served on committees.

During my time as president we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the county. The Society presented a video program on the early years of the county. I also enjoyed being part of the county government’s efforts for the bicentennial including their “Sangamon Stories” digital time capsule: <https://co.sangamon.il.us/i-want-to/learn/sangamon-stories> .

* * *

At the Annual Meeting, the Society will vote on the 2022-2023 board and hear from the 2022 grant recipients. I look forward to seeing members at the Annual Meeting at Clayville on June 21.



Historico, published 10 times a year (except July & December), is the official bulletin for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society. Springfield, Illinois.

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.

In Memoriam: Richard Hart -1942-2022

SCHS President, 1973-1974

Attorney Richard "Dick" Hart, who served as president of the Sangamon County Historical Society from 1973-1974, died May 16 at age 79.



For several years, Hart, an early devotee of local history and historic preservation, served as chair of the Society's Publications Committee, overseeing the compilation, editing and production of many of the Society's early booklets, some of which he researched and wrote.

A Springfield native, Hart was a graduate of Springfield High School and the University of Illinois, from which he received a law degree. He practiced law for 40 years in Springfield and founded the law firm of Hart, Southworth & Witsman.

Hart's true passion, however, was Springfield and its connection to Abraham Lincoln. Hart loved Lincoln and admired the man so much that he devoted much of his spare time to further preserving Lincoln's legacy.

He served on the board and as president of the Abraham Lincoln Association for many years. He wrote books — many, many books — about Lincoln and the people and influences around him.

Some of Hart's extensive research, collections, and historic photos were donated to the Sangamon Valley Collection at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library.

As a leader in Springfield's historic preservation movement, numerous historic buildings stand

today because of Hart. He revitalized a strip of dilapidated Lincoln-era homes just west of downtown he named German Settlers Row; led efforts to save the Elijah Iles house, Springfield's oldest standing home which is now a museum; and spearheaded the restoration of the Strawbridge-Shepherd House, now on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places.

In later years, although much of his attention focused on Iles House, Hart continued to support the Society and its activities, including organizing and guiding two almost back-to-back summer bus tours of Sugar Creek for which, in addition to serving as guide, delighted tour takers by providing a limited edition souvenir pamphlet he produced about the area that he distributed those on board.

He most recently assisted the Society in its research for its January 18, 2022 program on the history of the area's movie theater industry, a Powerpoint presentation that briefly touched on the area's earliest theatrical history, the latter based on some of the material in a book he compiled in 2017 for the Abraham Lincoln Association, *Entertainment in Lincoln's Springfield* and offered to do a program for the Society about his book later in 2022 on one of his trips back to his hometown, having recently relocated to Bonita Springs, Florida.

In November 2021, Hart, was named winner the *State Journal Register's* First Citizen Award, one of many honors he received over the years in recognition of his efforts to preserve local history.



2021-2022 OFFICERS

President.....Stephanie Martin
 Vice-President.....Susan Helm
 Secretary.....Elaine Hoff
 Treasurer.....Jerry Smith
 Past-President....Vicky Whitaker

DIRECTORS

Term Ending June 2022

Jennie Battles
 Kathy Dehen
 Mary Schaefer
 Larry Stone
 Angela Weiss

DIRECTORS

Term Ending June 2023

Sarah Adams
 Vincent Chappelle
 Peter Harbison
 Mary Mucciante
 Ruth Slottag

DIRECTORS

Term Ending June 2024

Mary Alice Davis
 Kathy Hoffmann
 Cinda Klickna

Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744



OFFICER CANDIDATES

Susan Helm, president

Susan Helm, the current vice-president, has been an active volunteer in Springfield for the last 35 plus years.

Her unpaid career included serving on several boards including the Junior League of Springfield (President and Editor, *Honest to Goodness*), Lincoln Memorial Garden, Springfield Parks Foundation, Festival of Trees, Denim & Diamonds (Chair/Marketing Chair), Old Capitol Art Fair, Dana Thomas House Foundation, Springfield Road Runners Club, and FRIENDS of Memorial.

She is a University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteer and spends a lot of her free time in the summer promoting pollinator gardens through the Springfield Park District and downtown Springfield. She served as Director of Marketing for the Department of Surgery, SIU School of Medicine for 22 years prior to her retirement.

Cinda Klickna, vice-president

A current member of the SCHS board, vice-presidential candidate Cinda Ackerman Klickna has a bachelor of arts in English Education from the University of Illinois, Urbana, and a master's in Literature from the University of Illinois, Springfield.

Klickna taught English in the Springfield School district for many years and held several positions with the Illinois Education Association and the National Education Association. She retired in 2017 after serving six years as President of the Illinois Education Association.

Klickna served as a trustee of the Illinois Teachers' Retirement System from 2003-2019. She is a freelance writer and serves on several boards: Illinois Educators' Credit Union, Illinois State Museum Society Board, Dana Thomas House Foundation Board, Illinois State Historical Society, and United Way Education Vision Council.

Sarah Adams, Secretary

Sarah Adams, an SCHS director who is seeking the position secretary, is the Curator of Collections and Interpretation at the Springfield Art Association.

She holds a bachelor of arts in Religious Studies from Western Illinois University and an masters in arts in Museum Studies from the University of Kansas.

Adams has worked in the museum field since 2012 with a focus on history and anthropology collections. Her research interests include 19th century history, religious culture, and culinary history, examining how our everyday habits influence and are influenced by the society in which we live.

As a museum professional, she uses artifacts to help investigate those habits so we can make a bridge to our past by forging tangible connections to it.

Jerry Smith, Treasurer

Current treasurer, Jerry Smith has served the Society in that position since 2014. A Springfield native, Smith earned an associates degree from Springfield College in Illinois after graduation from Springfield High School, later pursuing studies in business administration at Southern Illinois University.

Smith's first paid employment was as a houseman, helping to open the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge South-East in 1966 and for almost 35 years traveled the United States opening and managing various hotels in across the country before returning to Springfield in 2006 to retire but not before managing the conversion of the Springfield Renaissance Hotel to the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel for three years.

Since that time he has been a volunteer at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum & Library, Westminster Presbyterian Church and the Pleasant Plains Historical Society, Clayville, where he served as vice president.

BOARD CANDIDATES

Scott Pillsbury

Raised in Petersburg, Illinois with his five siblings, his mother was a PORTA Elementary School Teacher, his father was a founder of Lincoln Land Community College and a Cemetery Board member. Both served on the Edgar Lee Masters Museum Board.

Pillsbury has always enjoyed learning the history of his ancestors as well as the history of Central Illinois. He has three adult children and two granddaughters. A pharmaceutical sales representative for most of his professional career, he currently works for the Green Family Auto Dealerships.

Pillsbury served on the board of the Sangamon County Chapter, American Diabetes Association as well as on the board of the State of Illinois American Diabetes Association. He has volunteered as a Little League baseball coach, Cub Scout leader, a Southeast High School Spartan Club Parent-Teacher Organization member and President of the Sports Booster Club at SSSH.

Kathy Dehen

A Springfield native, after graduating from Springfield High School and Springfield Junior College, Kathy Dehen completed her undergraduate education at the University of Illinois and has a masters in arts from Sangamon State plus 60 hours. She taught elementary school for 20 years and then worked at Sangamon State University/University of Illinois for 16 years, first in the Payroll Office and then in charge of Student Employment.

Dehen has been active in the community as a volunteer for 30 years. She is a founding member of the Good as Gold event committee, a collaboration of the UIS Volunteer and Civic Engagement Center, the Junior League of Springfield, and the United Way of Central Illinois to honor volunteers. She is immediate past-president Academy of the Life Long Learning at Lincoln Land Community College and served as vice-chair of the Sangamon Auditorium Advisory Board. She is a member of the Springfield Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the General Society of Mayflower Descendants as well as the Springfield Ceramics and Crafts Club. She has traveled extensively.

Elaine Hoff

Born, raised and receiving her education in Michigan, Elaine Hoff taught special education in Michigan and northern Illinois before moving to Springfield in 1967. For most of her professional life she worked in the field of disability rights, most recently as a Policy Advisor for the Illinois Attorney General, retiring in 2003.

Hoff has been affiliated with a number of disability rights and community organizations, founding a local group addressing needs of "kids at risk" and an organization that advocated gifted children programs. She supports efforts to preserve and promote the rich history of Sangamon County. First elected to the board for a three-year term in 2011, she gave up her seat in 2013 to run for board secretary. For several years starting in 2014, she chaired the Society's Special Project Grants Committee.

Larry Stone

Born in Springfield, Larry Stone graduated from St. Louis University in 1973 with a degree in finance, management and accounting. He attended graduate School at St. Louis University and University of Illinois studying finance and accounting. He was an Internal Auditor for 36 years most recently as Chief Auditor with State Retirement Systems for nearly 10 years and Infor-

mation Systems Audit Manager at Central Management Services. Stone served as an Adjunct Professor in Accounting at the University of Illinois, Springfield and Millikin University for 16 years. Stone is a member of the Springfield Bicycle Club and a volunteer at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. He has served as co-chairman of the Society's Finance Committee for the past two years.

Angela Weiss

Born in Du Quoin, Illinois and raised in Du Quoin and Winchester, Illinois, Angela Weiss has been a fan of history since childhood, favoring reading historical books and novels even as a pre-teen.

A graduate of Winchester High School, she attended Lindenwood University in Missouri and later Lincoln Land Community College, from which she earned an associates degree,

Her love of history took a more interesting turn, she says, when her husband became involved in the national Surveyors Historical Society, a decision that has taken them across the United States for studies of various surveys and surveyors in different parts of the U.S. and in different eras. Elected to the board in 2019, Weiss served on several Society committees. She is also a member of the Menard County Historical Society, served an interpreter at the Old State Capitol, and on the Old State Capitol Foundation board.

Vicky Whitaker

A New York City native, prior to retirement in 1999 when she moved to Springfield, Whitaker headed State University of New York at Stony Brook News Service for 14 years. Previously, she was a reporter and editor for a business daily and managing editor of a prize-winning newspaper chain.

Whitaker served 10 years on the national board of the Society of Professional Journalists and is still active in SPJ, serving on committees and as a judge for its national contests. A past president of the Press Club of Long Island that in 2016 inducted her into its Journalism Hall of Fame. A past vice-president of the Deadline Club in New York City, Whitaker has written for the State Journal-Register, Copley News Service and Creators Syndicate. A past president of the Society, she has edited *Historico* for nearly 14 years. Whitaker co-chaired Memorial's Festival of Trees entertainment committee for 15 years, was a past vice-chair of the Springfield Area Arts Council, and past chair of the Sangamon Auditorium Advisory Board. A licensed amateur radio operator, she is public information coordinator for the Illinois Section, ARRL, the national association for amateur radio. She holds a bachelors degree in journalism from Hofstra College.



BOARD candidates, from top left: Pillsbury, Dehan, Hoff and Stone. Weiss, left, and Whitaker, right.

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 and the start of 2022, we did the next best thing: videoed our programs and put them on-line. We returned to a live format with the March meeting, but you can still catch those earlier on-line meetings. Just follow the instructions below:

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 YouTube Hit the iconic "Skip the Ad" button [that's part of the YouTube experience unless you like commercials.]
5. Enjoy!

February, 15 2022: *Black Experiences in Education.* The Sangamon County Historical Society marked Black History Month on Tuesday, February 15 with an on-line presentation focused on education that looked at the experiences of two Black female educators—one in the 1870s, the other in the 1950s, who overcame prejudice in their careers and 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. Catch the full presentation on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0G96IRHE9k>.

January, 2022: *History of Springfield's Movie Theater Industry.* It's a Powerpoint available both as a downloadable PDF and on YouTube 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 a 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 YouTube 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



SCHS JUNE 21, 2022 ANNUAL DINNER RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a seat, mail the form below with your check for \$22 per person to SCHS, Box 9744 Springfield, Illinois, 62791-9744. If you prefer, you can register, make your meal selections and pay on line by following the link on our website, sangamonhistory.org.

ALL MAIL AND ON-LINE RESERVATIONS AND PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY MONDAY, JUNE 10.

Box Supper Choices:

A Smoked Turkey Breast *Smoked turkey breast topped with Swiss cheese, leaf lettuce, & sliced tomato on Wheat Berry Bread*

B The Club *Smoked turkey breast, honey ham, bacon, cheddar cheese, leaf lettuce, & sliced tomato on buttery croissant*

C. Chicken Caesar Wrap *Nelson's grilled chicken breast, thinly sliced and topped with parmesan cheese, romaine lettuce, sliced tomatoes, Caesar dressing.*

A Vegetarian Box Supper is also available.

Each dinner will be served in an attractive container with condiments, cutlery and napkin. Dinner includes dessert and complimentary ice tea and water.

A cash bar will be in operation throughout the evening.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEMBER NAME</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>PHONE _____</p> <p>E-MAIL ADDRESS _____</p> <p><u>DINNER CHOICE:</u> A B C OR VEGETARIAN</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>YOUR GUEST'S FULL NAME</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>PHONE _____</p> <p>E-MAIL ADDRESS _____</p> <p><u>DINNER CHOICE:</u> A B C OR VEGETARIAN</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEMBER NAME</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>PHONE _____</p> <p>E-MAIL ADDRESS _____</p> <p><u>DINNER CHOICE:</u> A B C OR VEGETARIAN</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>YOUR GUEST'S FULL NAME</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>PHONE _____</p> <p>E-MAIL ADDRESS _____</p> <p><u>DINNER CHOICE:</u> A B C OR VEGETARIAN</p>

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Sangamon County Historical Society 2022-2023 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 _____

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 (\$500)
 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 \$ _____

JUNE 2022 JUNE 2022 JUNE 2022 JUNE 2022 JUNE 2022 JUNE 2022