



# HISTORICO

*Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter*

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## Sangamon County DAR Chapters to Share History That Reaches Back to D.C. Inaugural Celebration

Representatives of the three area Daughters of the American Revolution chapters in Sangamon County will explore their organization's past, present and future in a Sangamon County Historical Society Powerpoint and panel discussion on Thursday, October 20. Two of the three chapters are based in Springfield, the third in Chatham.

The meeting will be held in the Carnegie Room at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 South Seventh Street starting at 5:30 p.m.

The program will open with a Powerpoint overview of the DAR created by Mike Kienzler, editor of *sangamonlink.org*--the Society's on-line encyclopedia of Sangamon County history--based on a booklet com-

plied by DAR members Lynda Kerstein and Mary Barringer in 2020 to mark the Springfield Chapter's 125th anniversary.



Chartered in 1895, it is among 13 of the earliest DAR chapters in Illinois, formed just five years after the national organization was founded. The second Springfield DAR group, the Sergeant Caleb Hopkins chapter, was chartered in 1946. The Chatham-based Captain William Penny chapter was organized in 1966. The DAR has 103 chapters in Illinois, 3,000 world-wide.

(Continued on page 6)

### INSIDE LOOK:



**LOOK SEE:** Society members and guests flowed into the new Route 66 Monarch Flyway butterfly gardens following an SCHS presentation on the new permanent Illinois State Fair complex on September 20. For more on the project and the tie between Route 66 and Monarch Flyway History, see pages 4 and 5.

*From the President's Desk*.....2  
*On Line Program Guide*.....7

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

**IN MEMORIAM:** G. Cullom Davis, SCHS president 1991-1992 who in 2018 was honored with its first Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his efforts in promoting oral history as a fundamental part of historical research....., PAGE 3



**GOOD WEATHER** was forecast for the Society's annual Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk on October 2, [too late for *Historico's* deadline but check out next month's photo spread]. TV viewers and media fans got preview in September at an on-site press conference (above, with chair Mary Alice Davis) covered by local radio and television stations and in print with a feature in the *Illinois Times*.





# *From the President's Desk*



Susan  
Helm

## Teamwork, Support, Partnerships Map Our Future

As I settle in to my role as President of the Society, I must admit I am impressed by some key board members like Vicky Whitaker writing and editing *Historico* and Mary Alice Davis directing our well known Cemetery Walk for the eighth time and, of course, Ruth Slottag, using her professional life skills to do an amazing job promoting all of our events. We are lucky to have all three women taking such active roles in our organization.

To some of our members who have been with us for many years, I thank you for supporting us and ask that you reach out to me at any time to offer suggestions for programs including field trips or newsletter articles. It's fun to be out in the community and also view incoming emails showing what people are interested in. I would say genealogy has become a new passion for many so I'm thinking about having a program on this subject and how it is being done in modern times.

The Society helped establish the Sangamon Valley Collection in Lincoln Library and started its own website highlighting a wide variety of historical subjects pertaining to Sangamon County. We plan to feature the masterminds behind these unique offerings – Curtis Mann, Stephanie Martin and Mike Kienzler – at our November program. A special thanks to Summer Griffith, the new director of the library, for meeting with me and brainstorming about future programs including this one.

I'm very interested in partnerships with like-minded organizations like Lincoln Library. A special thanks to Lashonda Fitch, director of Oak Ridge Cemetery, for partnering with us once again on the ever popular Cemetery Walk. Newer board member Sarah Adams, Curator of Collections and Interpretation, Edwards Place, has agreed to be our new social media chair, board secretary and has already offered some great program ideas involving the Springfield Art Association.

Finally, it's exciting to have our local DAR chapters be featured in our October program. Our own Mike Kienzler recently put together a presentation on the founders and presented it at a belated 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. We're expanding that presentation for the October 20 program at the Lincoln Library, 5:30 pm, to include the two women who put that history together and representatives from other local chapters in Sangamon County to include a panel discussion. We are hoping many members of our local DAR chapters as well as our own members will consider joining us.

Again, it's all about partnering with like-minded organizations.



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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](http://www.sangamohistory.org) or [sancohis.org](http://sancohis.org). Catch us on **Facebook** and **Twitter**. Send event announcements to [historicoeditor@gmail.com](mailto:historicoeditor@gmail.com).

Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor.

Cinda Klickna, Mike Kienzler, contributors

## G. Cullom Davis, SCHS President 1991-1992

Historian and educator G. Cullom Davis, who served as president of the Sangamon County Historical Society from 1991 to 1992, died September 9 at age 87.

In 2018, Davis was awarded the Society's first Lifetime Achievement Award at a dinner in his honor that drew a cross-section of the history community.

Dr. Davis created the oral history program at Sangamon State University that has given researchers and others a chance to first-hand the recollections of people who served or participated in activities, events, or decisions that helped shape Sangamon County.

The recorded interviews made by the students he trained and the accompanying transcripts are available on-line through the Brookens Library at the University of Illinois-Springfield.

Among the speakers reflecting on his achievements at the 2018 ceremony were Illinois State Historical Society executive director William Furry, Mark DePue, then Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Director of Oral History (now retired) and Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission executive director John Lupton.

"In addition to making the technique fundamental in history education and preservation, his actions had direct consequences for the many history organizations of which he was part, the Society among them," noted SCHS president Susan Helm. "We are proud that Dr. Davis was part of the original Sangamon County Historical Society committee that helped plan our on-line and searchable encyclopedia of Sangamon County, *SangamonLink.org*. In addition, as president of this organization, Dr. Davis initiated the Special Projects grant program to fund small but significant local historic projects, an effort that continues to this day."

Born in Aurora, Dr. Davis was raised in Peoria before being sent to a private secondary boy's school in New Jersey during his teens, in preparation for--and down the road from--his father's and his uncle's alma mater, Princeton University

where he honed his interest in history. Not that history was ever far from his family tree, Dr. Davis was a descendant of Governor and U.S. Senator Shelby Cullom.

After graduation from Princeton and a brief stint in the advertising department at Caterpillar in Peoria, Dr. Davis pursued a teaching career, first at a private school in Hawaii before returning to take a graduate assistantship at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. His post-graduate job hunt ended in the early 1960s at a history conference where an article he wrote on the Federal Trade Commission, published by a leading history journal, caught the eye of recruiters from Indiana University, which hired him in 1964.

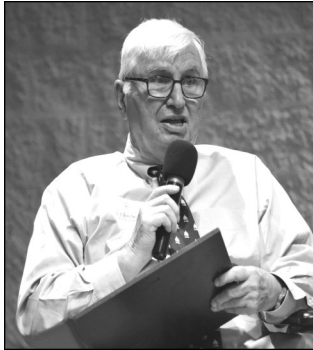
In January 1970, at age 34, Dr. Davis gave up his history teaching post at Indiana University, where he had been an assistant professor, to serve on a blue-ribbon team being assembled to create a new state university for Central Illinois in Springfield.

Dr. Davis was invited to join the Sangamon State University planning team by Dr. Robert C. Spencer, a nationally prominent political scientist and graduate dean of Rhode Island University who was recruited by Illinois to organize and open the new university within a year.

Dr. Davis served as his assistant and as associate professor of history, earning a full professorship in 1974. It was during this period that he created and directed the new university's Oral History Office and helped design its Master's program in public history. He quickly developed a national reputation in the oral history community, serving as president of the Oral History Association from 1983 to 1984.

Over the next 30 years Dr. Davis held successive faculty appointments and a variety of administrative positions. He retired in 1995 as emeritus professor of history, just before Sangamon State University was merged into the Illinois State University system.

A past president of the Abraham Lincoln Association (1995-1996), from 1988 to 2000, Dr. Davis was Director and Senior Editor of the Lincoln Legal Papers that later became the *Papers of Abraham Lincoln*.



**HONORED: Dr. G. Cullom Davis responding to colleagues and friends at a 2018 ceremony where he was presented with the Society's first Lifetime Achievement Award.**



### 2022-2023 OFFICERS

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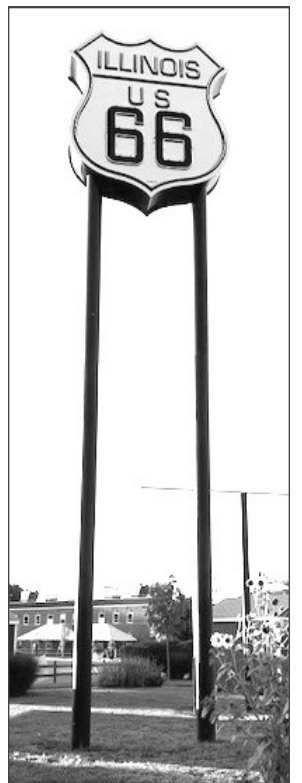
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# ON THE WINGS



**PHOTO PARADISE:** Society volunteer photogs Ernie Slottag, Ronni Betts and Roger Whitaker had lots to choose from as they recorded the organization's first meeting of the season focusing on the new permanent Route 66 Monarch Butterfly Flyway complex at the State Fair Grounds in Springfield that salutes both the Mother Road and Mother Nature. Above (and below), attendees get a background on the project from Casey Claypool, Route 66 Scenic Byway exec director as the next two speakers, Ace Sign execs Scott Bringuet and Kelcie Salvo, await their turn to detail their company's contribution to the effort that will make the site a year-round history, tourism...and Monarch butterfly attraction. (Photos by Roger Whitaker). Below, top left, new Mother Road-related billboards installed at the site (Roni Betts photo). Betts also snapped the site's towering Route 66 sign (right) and caught eight year old Grayson Brinquet on page 5 the moment he looked up to trace the path of a Monarch released during a tour following the presentation. Slottag's breathtaking closeup of Brinquet's twin brother Frankie with a Monarch resting in his palm would be the envy of any nature photographer. We liked it so much, we silhouetted it on the front page, placing it against the new Monarch Flyway Route 66 road sign (taken by Betts) installed at the site.



# OF HISTORY

It was Mother Road meets Mother Nature at the Illinois State Fairgrounds on September 20, site of the Sangamon County Historical Society's season opener. The outdoor event provided an update on an exhibit in the making combining two icons – Route 66 in Illinois and the Monarch butterfly.

"This exhibit is all about partnerships – the Illinois Department of Agriculture, the Illinois State Fair, the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, the City of Springfield, Route 66 Scenic Byway, Ace Sign Company, and the Illinois Department of Transportation and that's only the beginning," noted SCHS president Susan Helm in previewing what some 50 members and guests would learn, "All of these efforts you're about to hear about are focused on being completed by the Centennial of Route 66 which is 2026."

Helm detailed her involvement in the project that dates back to the spring of 2021 when she got a call "from a very excited Scott Dahl, Director of the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, wanting me to meet him and some others at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. He had seen me working downtown, installing and maintaining native plants in bump outs and planters."

Partnerships were already forming between the Illinois Department of Agriculture and Director Jerry Costello and the city to create a permanent exhibit, honoring cities and memories along Route 66 in Illinois and the state insect – the Monarch butterfly." Helm joined the Illinois Monarch Project and the Route 66 Monarch Flyway project and is currently on its steering committee.

Three speakers filled out the presentation, starting with Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway exec director Casey Claypool who also sits on the Mother Road Festival Board and owns a business in Girard, Illinois, *Doc's Just Off 66*. Claypool detailed all aspects of the project including its origin, funding, and how a combination of cooperative efforts by government agencies, business and community groups is making it a reality.

Ace Sign Company Chief Experience Officer Scott Bringuet and the firm's lead graphic designer Kelcie Salvo followed, discussing their roles in the exhibit and what makes Ace Sign Company such a special and appropriate partner to do this.

In introducing the duo, Helm noted that some of those at the meeting may remember an SCHS field trip to the Ace Sign Company Museum in Springfield where many of the area's most significant historic signs have been restored and put on display.

"They are true historians and preservationists and we are proud and fortunate to have them located in Springfield" said Helm. "In business since 1940, they are very familiar with the neon signs that are currently being fabricated for this site along with other signage because they actually created one of them back in 1956."

The site eventually will include an outdoor theatre with family seating created to look like antique automobiles. The complex will be open to the public year-round.

The exhibit area had previously been the State Fair's Ag Land, its raised garden beds holding corn and soybeans. "Fast forward to today and this has all been converted to a pollinator habitat with special emphasis on supporting Monarchs," noted Helm.

There are over 50 species of native plants in the garden with four types of milkweed, all here supporting pollinators and, in particular, the Monarch butterfly.

After the presentation, attendees were able to tour the new garden and watch a release of Monarch butterflies.



# Panel to Share DAR History, Overview

(Continued from page 1)

Kerstein and Barringer will be on the panel along Springfield Chapter Regent Susan Meister; Carolyn Berning from Sergeant Caleb Hopkins chapter; and Diana Weyhenmeyer from the Captain William Penny chapter. SCHS board member Kathy Hoffmann will serve as moderator.



## Inaugural Celebration Spawns the DAR

The national organization was founded in 1890 just after the 1889 centennial of President George Washington's inauguration, a celebration that spawned the creation of numerous patriotic and preservation societies as Americans looked for additional ways to recognize the Nation's past.

On July 13, 1890, after reading about a Sons of the American Revolution meeting, published in *The Washington Post*, journalist Mary Smith Lockwood wrote an editorial page reply detailing the role of patriot Hannah White Arnett and raised the question of "Where will the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution place Hannah Arnett?"

A week later *The Washington Post* published a response to Lockwood's question from William O. McDowell--Arnett's great-grandson--in which he offered to help form a society to be known as the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The first meeting of the society was held August 9, 1890, with the first chapter formally organized on October 11, 1890 at a meeting at Lockwood's home.



**WALWORTH**

One of the DAR's four co-founders, Lockwood was joined by Eugenia Washington, a great-grand niece of George Washington; Jacksonville, Illinois-born Ellen Hardin Walworth, a lawyer, author and historic preservation activist; and educator, women's rights activist and civil servant Mary Desha who became the first DAR vice-president and designed the DAR seal.

Eighteen women attended, as well as four of six Sons of the American Revolution who would serve as the advisory board to the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution in its first few years of existence. First Lady Caroline

Lavina Scott Harrison, wife of President Benjamin Harrison, lent her prestige its founding, serving as its first President General.



## Springfield Chapter Organized in 1893

The first Springfield, Illinois DAR chapter was organized five years later, on February 11, 1895 and officially chartered on



**HICKOX**

November 5, 1895, reflecting the efforts of Kate J. Chatterton Hickox, its first regent, whose parents, George and Sarah Chatterton moved to in Springfield in 1834. (Her father, a jeweler, underwrote construction of the historic Chatterton's, a major entertainment center that rose on the site of the former Rudolph's Opera House that burned to the ground in 1876).

Also among the 24 original members of the Springfield chapter were Savillah Hinrichsen and Elizabeth Brown Ide.

Hinrichsen, sister of Secretary of State William Hinrichsen, was the top-ranking



**IDE**

employee of the State Library from 1894 to 1898. Born in 1854 in Alexander, Illinois, she was a member of a large and prominent Morgan County family. Hinrichsen, educated at Springfield's Bettie Stuart Institute, became an outspoken supporter of universal suffrage, unafraid to voice her political views in an era when women were often discouraged from political participation.

Ide, daughter of prominent community activists Springfield attorney Christopher and Caroline Owsley Brown, was the wife of Francis P. Idea, son of Albert Ide, inventor of the Ideal electric generation steam engine that brought him international fame and fortune.

A Sunday School teacher at the Home for the Friendless, [today known as the Family Service League], she later became secretary of its board of lady managers.

One of only two woman members on the 1914 Springfield Survey organizing committee--a massive and never replicated, examination of economic and social conditions in the city-- she recruited 100 volunteers, also mostly women, in gathering data for the survey that led to the creation of baby wellness stations where mothers could see doctors and get nutrition help for their children.



## Second Springfield Chapter in 1946

The Springfield-based Sergeant Caleb Hopkins Chapter, chartered in 1946, was named for the Revolutionary War soldier to honor Luta Hopkins Abels, a descendant of Caleb Hopkins. Abels was Regent of the Springfield DAR Chapter from 1943-1945 and served as sponsor and advisor when the second Springfield chapter was formed.



**ABLES**

Caleb Hopkins served in 1776 in Truro, Massachusetts and again in 1778 at Winter Hill where American soldiers pitched tents during their siege of Boston. He died in 1836 at age 93. Sergeant Hopkins was a descendant of Stephen Hopkins, a passenger on the *Mayflower* in 1620 and assistant to the governor of the Plymouth Colony through 1636.



## Chatham Chapter Founded in 1966

The Chatham-based Captain William Penny DAR Chapter was organized September 5, 1996, and granted a charter on October 12, 1996.

The Chapter was named for William Penny, a Revolutionary War soldier born in 1751 in North Carolina but with later ties to Illinois. In the Revolutionary War, Penny served as Captain of a North Carolina Cavalry Company attached to the army of General Horatio Gates.

Under the command of General Griffith Rutherford, Penny also served as a spy against the Tories. After the war, Penny and his wife and family moved first to Pope County, Illinois and in 1818 to Richland Creek, north of Pleasant Plains, now Cartwright township.

Penny resided there until the time of his death on March 15, 1821. Captain Penny is buried in the Richland Baptist Church Cemetery, site of the chapter's annual memorial service.

# 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](http://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](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.

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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. *PLEASE PRINT.*

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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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