



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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VOLUME 59 NO. 2

FEBRUARY

Organist, A History Sleuth, Tracking Carnegie's Church Gifts



Illinois Benefitted From Industrialist's Largess

As you may already know, the Carnegie library movement established through the philanthropy of industrialist Andrew Carnegie at the beginning of the 20th century, had a profound effect on public education in Illinois.

More than 100 libraries were funded by Carnegie in Illinois including the forerunner to the city's present library in Springfield (profiled in recent *Historicos* and which unlike the others, does not bear his name) and nearly 1,800 others throughout the United States.

What you may be surprised to learn is that Carnegie loved music as well as literature, and that in addition to libraries, he awarded matching grants for churches and community groups to build pipe organs in more than 8,000 communities around the world, including 207 in Illinois.

You'll hear more about his legacy on Tuesday, February 21 at the city of Springfield's Lincoln Library when professional organist and Carnegie organ history sleuth Paula Pugh Romanaux,

TALENTED HISTORY-SEEKER Paula Pugh Romanaux at the console of the G. Donald Harrison-Skinner pipe organ in Annie Merner Chapel on the former campus of MacMurray College.

William Furry

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From the President's Desk



Susan Helm

Heading Into Another Great Year for the Historical Society!

I have learned so much from so many of you as we move into the last half of my Presidential year. I appreciate how forthcoming you have been via texts, emails and phone calls, sharing ideas, proposing programs, expressing concerns and just general institutional knowledge.

I love the fact that our organization supports all like-minded ones by promoting their events and even fundraisers through our newsletter and on our website.

Recently I was struggling to get a program put together and got some big time help from several of you but finally went with a suggestion from Vicky Whitaker that led me to Bill Furry's wife, Paula. So in 2023, we had a January program on the arts and history and the February program will be on music and history.

More information about this February program is laid out here but I have to think we always seem to have loyal patrons willing to help us out and step up, even somewhat last minute.

Thank you again for those who were able to support our grant fund appeal and provide

some dedicated funds to the annual spring grants.

With the stock market so uncertain, it's nice that many of you were able to ensure we've had funds to make this important part of who we are a reality.

In April we will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of *SangamonLink*, our on-line encyclopedia of Sangamon history, led by very capable researcher and writer Mike Kienzler.

SangamonLink

History of Sangamon County, Illinois



SangamonLink editor Mike Kienzler

The attention we get worldwide from this site is mind boggling.

Society Vice President and regular contributing writer to the *Illinois Times* Cinda Klickna has pitched the idea of an anniversary story to Editor Fletcher "Bud" Farrar and he has accepted so we all look forward to that.



Historico, published 9 times a year (except July, August & 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.

Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor.

Cinda Klickna, Mike Kienzler, contributors

Special Projects Grants

Committee Reviewing Guidelines For 2023 SCHS Funding Proposals With An Eye To Community Needs

With a little tweaking, members of the Sangamon County Historical Society's Special Project Grants Committee will be ready to post rules for the competitive funding program this month.

Sensitive To Needs

"As usual, the committee reviews the requirements and where necessary, suggests changes and brings its recommendations to the board for discussion and approval before posting the application on line at the Society's website, *sangamonhistory.org*, explained SCHS president Susan Helm. "It keeps us sensitive to the needs of the community in terms of funding small but significant history projects."

Powerful Impact

For more than a decade, the Society's Special Project Grants program has provided the financial underpinnings for dozens of small but significant local historical preservation projects with a powerful impact.

They've ranged from something as simple as a grave marker in a historical Rochester cemetery to furnishing period school equipment for a replica of 1800s one-room school house at the Clayville Historic Site in Pleasant Plains.

Exhibits And More

The grant program has also provided funds to assist the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum with several projects including bringing to Sangamon County a national traveling exhibit tracing the history and impact of the Negro Baseball League, and the Illinois State Historical Society to produce "*The Mysterious Bard of Sangamon*," a film on poet John

Hancock.

In 2022, the Society gave Friends of the Original Leland Farm House Inc. \$1,000 to restore the Leland Farm House Summer Kitchen which had been moved from its original site to Washington Park. The funds were used to reinstall the windows, a door and staircase as well as mason work for the foundation and a brick walkway outside the historic 1860s building.

The building will be used to display information about the Leland family and original farmhouse.

Repainting And More

The Illinois State Museum Society was also a grant recipient, given \$900 to restore Vachel Lindsay's Lincoln Top Hat at the Illinois State Museum.

The three-foot tall fiberglass version of Lincoln's stove pipe hat was painted by artist Felicia Olin in 2009 as part of the City of Springfield's "*Hats Off to Lincoln*" project that celebrated the 200th Anniversary of Lincoln's birth.

Being displayed outside the museum for a number of years, the hat suffered weather damage and needed repainting.

Oak Ridge Cemetery received \$1,000 for a brochure and map which identifies and celebrates distinguished individuals of color buried at the cemetery. The new booklet assists descendants, historians and other interested parties in locating burial markers of African Americans interred at the cemetery.

Preservation Inc. received \$1,000 for supplies and labor to dry wall the damaged ceiling and walls in practice rooms around the stage of the 1908 music conservatory on the former Ursuline Academy campus in Springfield.



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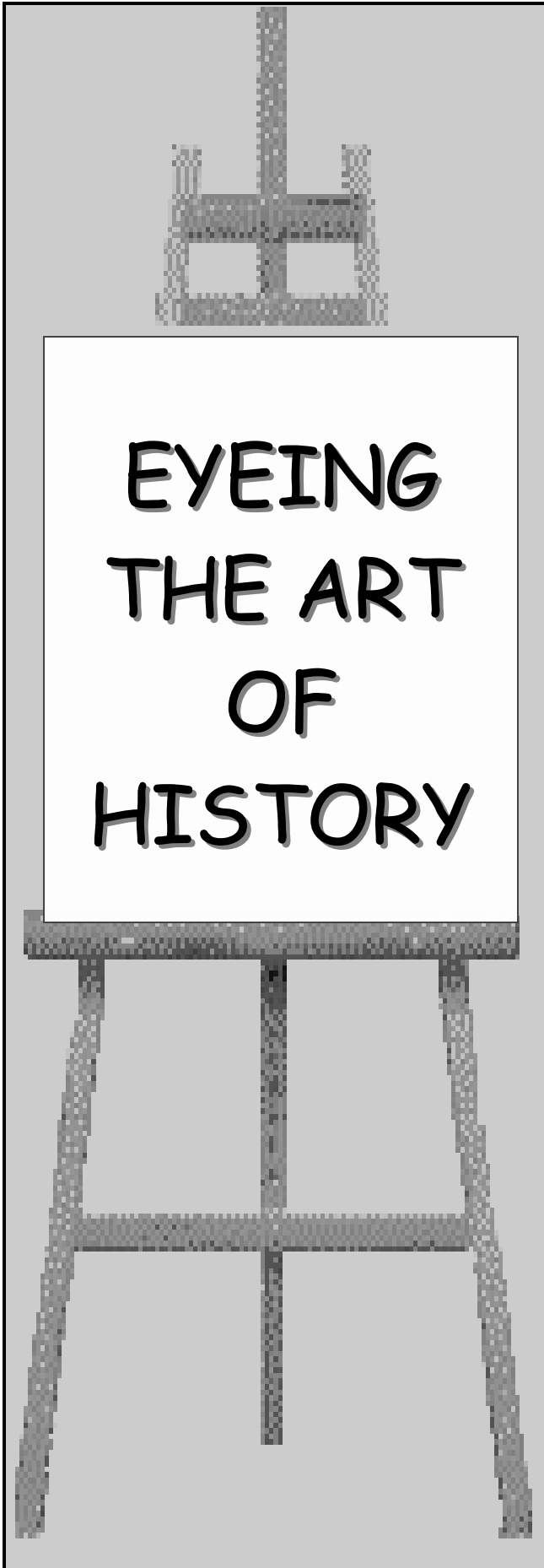
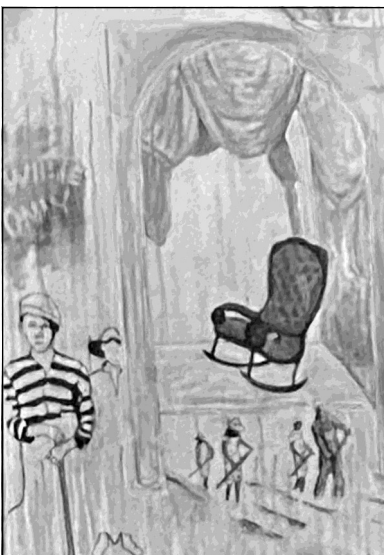
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Please make note of our official mailing address:

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FILM MAKER Josh Hester, principal and executive producer of The Story Teller Studios (above) tells meeting goers about the challenges his crew faced in filming the work of artists from across Illinois involved in a University of Illinois project, "Making Our History," a year-long visual residency program that produced mixed-medium works (like those below, left and right) centered on Abraham Lincoln's Legacy.

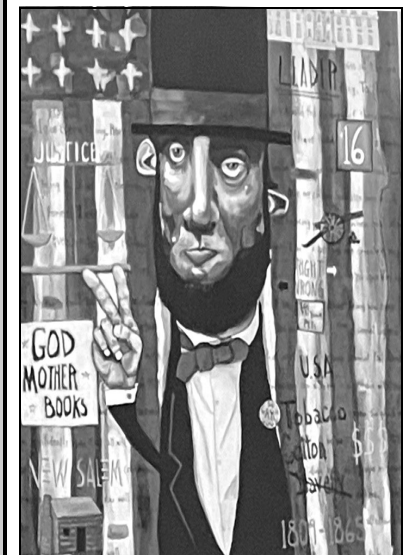


EYEING THE ART OF HISTORY



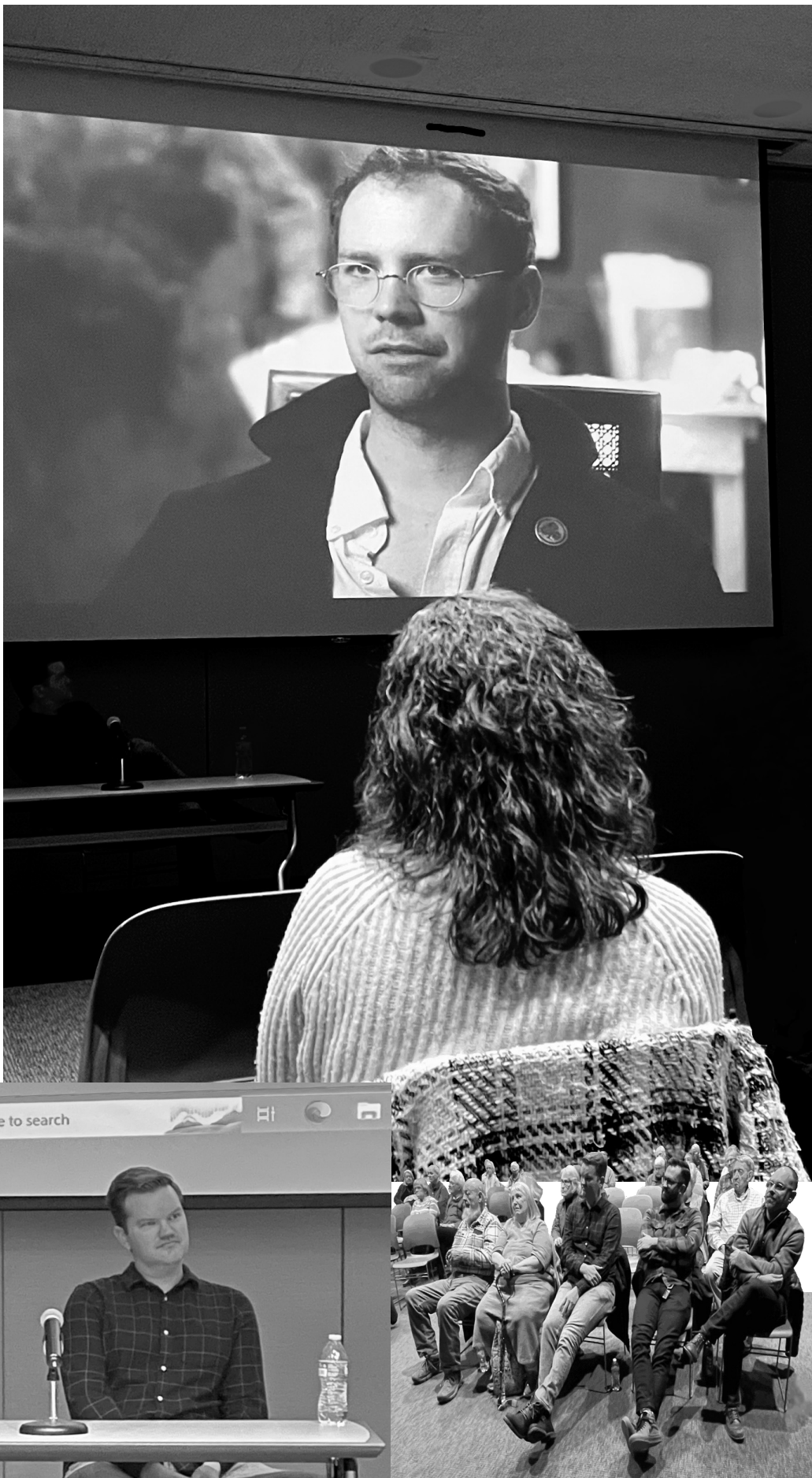
UNIVERSITY AT ILLINOIS-SPRINGFIELD History Department Wepner Distinguished Professor of Lincoln Studies, Dr. Graham Peck (above) shares his experiences as co-director of the videoed year-long collaborative virtual residency project that drew on the talents of a cross-section of artists, documentary makers and scholars. The effort underscored a new approach to looking at and interpreting history.

Ruth Slottag photos



SANGAMON COUNTY Historical Society members and guests got a first-hand look at a unique project on January 17, an innovative way to look at and interpret history. Dr. Graham Peck, the University of Illinois at Springfield Distinguished Professor of Lincoln Studies who co-directed the project, showed segments of *Making Our History, Artists Render Lincoln's Legacies* (like that at right) that documented the collaborative art and history project in which artists were asked to produce a work that represents the many facets of Lincoln. Springfield-based The Story Teller Studio filmed the artists as they worked and talked about the meaning of their effort. The paintings, sculptures, prints, photography, virtual reality, conceptual and video art will be in the UIS permanent collection. Below, STS Producers Chris Costello (left) and Kevin Christensen (right), detail the challenges and experiences in producing the video that documents the work.

(Photos by Ruth Slottag)



Musician On a Mission: Carnegie's Organ Legacy

(Continued from Page 1)

with the aid of a Powerpoint and microphone, takes a look at Carnegie's pipe organ legacy in Central Illinois and beyond. The free program starts at 5:30 p.m. appropriately in the Library's Carnegie Room.

Dr. Romanau, who holds both Ph.D., and DMA (Doctor of Musical Arts) degrees, has been researching Carnegie-sponsored pipe organs in Illinois since moving back to the Prairie State in 2017, but her history with these special Carnegie benefactions goes back to her childhood when she learned to play organ repertoire on a Carnegie organ in Virginia, Illinois.

Since that initial experience, Dr. Romanau has studied and performed on pipe organs throughout Europe, earning her reputation as a master interpreter of 20th century French pipe organ music as well as a performer of Baroque masterworks by Bach, Buxtehude, Handel, Scarlatti, and others.

Dr. Romanau, who earned Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Music degrees in music and organ performance at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, was professor of music and organ at Kalamazoo College for 25 years.

She has more than 50 years experience as an organist and choral conductor, and was selected to be a music ambassador to the Balkans in the 1990s, traveling, lecturing and playing pipe organs in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and other republics.

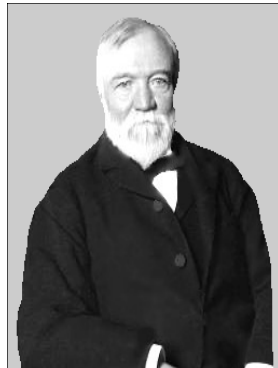
Dr. Romanau has served as organist for dozens of churches including St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia (George Washington's church), St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and Bon Air Baptist in Richmond, Virginia, and most recently at First Presbyterian Church in Springfield from 2018 to 2022.

While living in Petersburg she has discovered and played Carnegie pipe organs in Winchester, Petersburg,

Havana, Roodhouse, Girard, White Hall, Divernon, and several other Central Illinois communities, and it is her goal to catalog and record these instruments before they are lost.

Philanthropy Spawnd By A Love of Music

The back story that shaped industrialist Andrew Carnegie's decision to fund church organs is as complex as the man himself, detailed in his own autobiography published in early 1920 just a few months after his death in August 1919 at age 83.



Andrew Carnegie

In it, Carnegie says his father shaped his love of music, the "sweet sounds in the unsurpassed minstrelsy of my native land as sung by my father. There was scarcely an old Scottish song with which I was not made familiar, both words and tune. Folk-songs are the best possible foundation for sure progress to the heights of Beethoven and Wagner...I probably inherited his love of music and of song, though not given his voice."

In 1903, by then one of the wealthiest men in America, Carnegie was approached to help fund construction of a new church building for a small congregation in Allegheny, Pennsylvania favored by his father. He declined to contribute to "a project for so few," instead providing the church with a new organ.

"Applications from other churches soon began to pour in," Carnegie recalled, "from the grand Catholic Cathedral of Pittsburgh down to the small church in the country village, and I was kept busy. Every church seemed to need a better organ than it had."

To control the deluge, Carnegie created

an Organ Department in his philanthropic foundation, creating "a rigid system of giving" that mandated applicants fill out a questionnaire before the request would be addressed. "The department is now perfectly systematized and works admirably because we graduate the gift according to the size of the church," he noted.

Still, donating church organs did ruffle some feathers, Carnegie recalled, particularly among some churchgoers in the Scottish Highlands of his youth, where, he said, he was castigated for "demoralizing Christian worship by giving organs to churches. The very strict Presbyterians there still denounce as wicked an attempt "to worship God with a kist fu' o' whistles," instead of using the human God-given voice. After that I decided that I should require a partner in my sin, and therefore asked each congregation to pay one half of the desired new organ."

Even with that, said Carnegie, "the Organ Department still operates and continues to do a thriving business, the demand for improved organs still being great. Besides, many new churches are required for increasing populations and for these, organs are essential."

In requiring the congregation to pay half the cost of better instruments, he added "there is assurance of needed and reasonable expenditure. Believing from my own experience that it is salutary for the congregation to hear sacred music at intervals in the service and then slowly to disperse to the strains of the reverence-compelling organ after such sermons as often show us little of a Heavenly Father, I feel the money spent for organs is well spent. So we continue the Organ Department."

Calendar on 7:

A Heads Up Guide to Area History Events



Send announcements, information, photos and illustrations to historicoeditor@gmail.com. You can still see a list and links to all the Zoom programs the Society offered during the Pandemic on-site meeting shut-down, by going to the SCHS website, sangamonhistory.org.

Park rangers from National Park Service sites across the country are in Springfield this month to take part in public lectures and panels, perform music, and present programs as Lincoln Home National Historic Site commemorates Black History Month. The visiting rangers are presenting free public programs on topics connected to Black history and their home units on weekends throughout February. Since *Historico* is distributed about a week before our mid-month meetings, some of the earlier events will have past, but there are still some excellent presentations to catch!



Friday, February 17, 7 p.m.: New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park Ranger Jade Perdue, who performs with the Arrowhead Jazz Band in New Orleans, gives a free evening performance in downtown Springfield at the Pharmacy Gallery and Art Space, 623 E.



Adams Street. The Arrowhead Jazz Band connects talented NPS rangers with jazz musicians to interpret the history of this art form as they perform a range of traditional New Orleans Jazz and selections from the Great American Songbook. At the Pharmacy, Perdue will perform with members of the University of Illinois at Springfield Jazz community, including Dr. Brian Stark, Director of the UIS Jazz Ensemble) on saxophone. If you can't catch the Friday night performance, it will be repeated at the Lincoln Home Visitors Center the next evening. See next listing.

Saturday, February 18, 7 p.m.: Visiting New Orleans Jazz National Park Ranger Jade Perdue repeats her performance of traditional New Orleans Jazz and selections from the Great American Songbook from the Arrowhead Jazz Band, this time at an hour and a half evening performance at the Lincoln Home Visitors Center, 426 S. 7th Street, Springfield. Free.

Friday, February 24, 7 p.m.: Visiting National Park Rangers Luecreasea Horne from the Nicodemus National Historic Site in Kansas, Rich Condon from the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park in South Carolina and Jorge Hernandez from Zion National Park, Utah, will present a free panel discussion at the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum, 1440 Monument Avenue, Springfield, moderated by Dr. Brian Mitchell, Director of Research and Interpretation at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Saturday, February 25, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.: Visiting National Park Rangers Horne Condon and Jorge Hernandez



dez head to the Lincoln Home Visitors Center for two free programs on topics connected to Black history at the Lincoln Home Visitors Center, at 426 S. 7th Street, Springfield. this time including a premiere of Hernandez's documentary film on the 29th Illinois United States Colored Troops and their service in the Rio Grande Valley following the Civil War.

Sangamon County Historical Society
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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 _____

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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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