



# HISTORICO

*Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter*

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VOLUME 59 NO. 9

NOVEMBER 2023

Your Invitation to the Society's Annual



## Holiday Party

**Wednesday, December 13**  
*at Historic Edwards Place*

Join fellow Society members and their guests for our annual holiday gathering to be held this year at historic Edwards Place, 700 North Fourth Street in Springfield. Tickets are \$35 per person for members, \$40 for non-members (registration form on page 7 or on-line at [sancohis.org](http://sancohis.org)). Payment must be received by Tuesday, December 5.

Party-goers will dine on an array of savory hors d'oeuvres including grilled shrimp on skewers, chicken satay, stuffed mushrooms, teriyaki cocktail meatballs, caprese skewers, buffalo chicken celery boats and more along with an array of delicious desserts in the Edwards Place Gallery. Cash bar,

(Party goers should use the *center door* to the complex that goes directly into the Gal-



lery nestled between the restored Edwards Place historic home front door and the offices of the Springfield Art Association. On site and on-street parking is available.

### November 14: Day and Dana

## Society Program to Explore Bonds That Brought Two Women Fame

The intertwined relationship of two Springfield women who each became national figures in their own right—poet, artist and photographer Leigh Gross Day and her equally famous life-long friend, Susan Lawrence Dana—will be the focus of the Society's Tuesday, November 14 program jointly sponsored with the Springfield Art Association and the Dana Thomas House Foundation.

The free program will be held in the gallery of the Springfield Art Association, 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield facility, starting at 5:30 p.m. On site

and on-street parking is available. Sharing and discussing the two historically prominent figures will be Society and current Dana Thomas House Foundation president Cinda Klickna, former Foundation board member and current Dana Thomas House Foundation Education Committee member Allicent Smith and Betsy Dollar, executive director of the Springfield Art Association.

Reproductions of Day's works will be on display, the result of a \$1,000 SCHS Special Projects

*Continued on Page XX*

## Dana Thomas House Restoration Update On Tap For January 16 SCHS Meeting

And just when you thought you knew everything about the Dana Thomas House.

Think again... and circle Tuesday, January 16, the first Society meeting in 2024!

That's when you won't want to miss hearing what Springfield-based architect and historic preservation expert Mike Jackson has to say about its restoration.

Jackson knows.

A Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Jackson served

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# From the President's Desk



CINDA KLICKNA

## Holiday Season About Here With Lots to Do!

The holidays are upon us, and so we hope you will join in on the festivities at our Holiday party, Wednesday, December 13 at Edwards Place, connected to the Springfield Art Association.

The historic site is a perfect venue. Not only will it be decorated for the season, but it is also where the "courting couch," used by Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln, now stands.

The Sangamon County Historical Society awarded a grant to the Springfield Art Association to help restore the couch.

\* \* \*

Interesting calls come into the Society.

A lady from Minnesota whose family was originally from Springfield, called about books and pictures she has from the Vachel Lindsay family. These are now part of the Sangamon Valley Collection at Lincoln Library.

Many people call asking for help with genealogy; it is interesting to hear their stories and we direct them to the Sangamon Valley Collection where they can acquire photos and information. Some people want us to take items off their hands – a large, framed portrait, a school bell are two examples – we do not take items, but try to help direct people to possible

sites that might be interested.

History is all around us – the Society continues to look for new and interesting information. So, join us on Tuesday, November 14 for history about an amazing artist, Leigh Gross Day, and on Wednesday, December 13 for the holiday party. And mark your calendars for another historic program on Tuesday, January 16 (See page 1 for details)

\* \* \*

It's my continuing pleasure to return to a tradition of the president welcoming new and returning members and their families to the Sangamon County Historical Society in this column.

We look forward to their participation and enjoyment as they learn or continue to learn more about Sangamon County history: John Owen, Brenda Larison, Richard Zepp, Janet Zepp Susan Smarjesse, Suellen Funk, Sandra Bauer, David Vandervoort, Willa Barger, and Pat Foster.

*Cinda*



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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 [historicoedi-](mailto:historicoedi-)

MEMBER S ONLY SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY

# Give A Gift of New Membership

Looking for a holiday gift that will bring joy and much more throughout the year and beyond? We can make the process easy for you! Let us take care of acknowledging your gift of a new membership in the Sangamon County Historical Society.

Just fill out the form below, send us a check and we will acknowledge your wonderful gift to the recipient by mail. This offer is good through January 15, 2024.

All our memberships are family, so one payment covers adults and children 16 and over living at the same address. There's a special rate for college and university students too. And don't forget a neighbor or friend! Mail the form with your check to SCHS, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744 by January 15. Duplicate the form below for multiple gifts.



**2024 SCHS NEW MEMBER GIFT:**

Full Name of Gift Recipient(s): (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Gift Recipient's Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City, State , Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Membership: Regular: \$30 Pioneer: \$100 Settler: \$250 Trailblazer: \$500 Lifetime (\$700 one-time fee) College/University Student (individual) (\$20).

Please advise the recipient that this is a gift from \_\_\_\_\_.

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



**2023-2024 OFFICERS**

President.....Cinda Klickna  
Past President....Susan Helm  
Vice-Presidents.....Mary Alice Davis, Stephanie Martin, Ruth Slottag, Vicky Whitaker  
Treasurer.....Jerry Smith  
Secretary.....Sarah Adams

**DIRECTORS**

*Term Ending June 2024*  
Mary Alice Davis  
Kathy Hoffmann  
Kathy Dehen

**DIRECTORS**

*Term Ending June 2025*  
Lee-Ann Burgener  
Elaine Hoff  
Larry Stone  
Vicky Whitaker

**DIRECTORS**

*Term Ending June 2026*  
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Scott Pillsbury  
Linda Schneider  
Ruth Slottag

Please make note of our official mailing address:

**SCHS**  
**Box 9744**  
**Springfield, Illinois,**  
**62791-9744**

# Panel to Look at Two Friends Who Left Their Mark in History

(Continued from page 1)

grant awarded to the Dana Thomas Foundation and the Springfield Art Association to help underwrite reproduction of some of her photographs, some of which were shot at the Dana Thomas House.

Klickna and Smith had an opportunity to meet two of Day's granddaughters, Kitsie Demby and Barbara Sutton, who shared stories of their family and Susan Lawrence Dana, and allowed photographs of Day's scrapbooks and art portfolios to be reproduced. These will be shown during the presentation. The artwork by Susan Lawrence Dana, called *Effect in Blue* will also be shared.

Day, daughter of Judge Eugene Gross and his wife, Susan Zimmerman Gross, grew up in the same Aristocracy Hill neighborhood as Susan Lawrence Dana. Eugene Gross was a close friend of Susan Dana's father, Rheuna Lawrence Dana.

The two young girls stayed friends into adulthood, with Day, by then a professional photographer, often using Susan's yard as backdrop for her work.

Day's stories, poems, and sketches appeared in several leading publications of the period, including *The Ladies' Home Journal* and *Woman's Home Companion*. She was on the staff of the *Burr-McIntosh Monthly*, published from 1903-1910.

Her written work included *In Shadow Town* published in 1907 and *Borderland and the Blue Beyond* in 1908. Married in 1886 to George Edward Day, a Springfield businessman, she died in 1910 at age 48 and was buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery.

Day's life-long friend, Susan Lawrence, grew up in an Italianate home built by her father, a former mayor of Springfield and president of the State National Bank.

In 1883, she married Edwin Dana.

When both her father and her husband died within a six month period in 1900-01, Susan and her mother, Mary Agnes Lawrence, (who died in 1905) were the primary heirs of the estate. In 1902 they hired Frank Lloyd Wright to remodel and expand their home.

Completed in 1904, the 12,600 square foot Wright-designed home on Fourth Street, became not only a venue for lavish entertaining, but also a community center for education and the arts and a platform for the women's rights movement.

Dana's bold design sensibilities, paired with a staid commitment to advancing social justice for women and within the African American community through political involvement, marked her as a unique and progressive patron of architecture at the turn of the century.

The project grew and became a

blonde Roman brick mansion with 35 rooms on 16 different levels. An anomaly in Springfield, the Dana Thomas House is a masterpiece that still stands today as one of Wright's finest Prairie designs.

Dana paid \$45,000 for the construction and an additional \$15,000 for the Wright-designed furnishings. She lived in the home from 1904 until about 1928, when, suffering from increasing financial constraints, she closed the main house and moved to a small cottage on the grounds.

Struggling with age-related dementia, in 1944 she sold the home to Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Thomas for their publishing firm.

The State of Illinois purchased the house in 1981 and maintains it as a historic site through the Historic Preservation division of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.



**PHOTOGENIC:** Photographer Leigh Gross Day occasionally used the yard of Susan Lawrence Dana's Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home as a photo backdrop. The two Springfield women, who carved distinctive national paths, grew up in the same "Aristocracy Hill" neighborhood and remained close much of their lives.

# GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

FANCY POINT, the huge (and eventually demolished) 19th century 16-room mansion designed by internationally known Springfield architect E.E. Myers and built by Ernest Gehlmann for New Berlin farmer Wellington B. Huffaker is long gone except in family renderings and antiques, but its roots live on in memories shared by Huffaker's great great granddaughter, Allison Huffaker Smith (right) who provided a historical Powerpoint perspective in October on her family's and the area's history for Society members and guests. Its design won Myers a prize in the 1865 Paris Exposition.

Ernie Slottag photo



## Society to Get Insider's View of the Dana-Thomas Restoration Story

*(Continued from page 1)*

as project manager for the restoration of the Dana-Thomas State Historic Site from 1989 to 1990, returning the house to its 1910 splendor

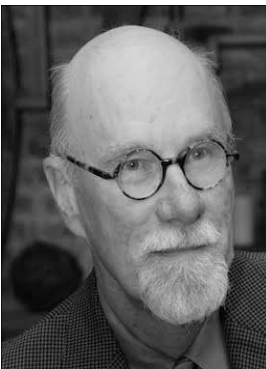
"Jackson's first-hand experience provides a most interesting story," notes SCHS president Cinda Klickna who also serves as president of the Dana Thomas House Foundation.

"Jackson will explain why 1910 was chosen, the issues the team faced, the many details that had to be coordinated as the House became a showplace once again."

The restoration project was enthusiastically supported by then Governor Jim Thompson, Klickna adds. Thompson "had a special interest in Illinois history and helped get the State to purchase the Dana-Thomas House as well as helped raise money for acquisitions of items that had been sold at the six-day auction of Susan

Lawrence Dana's things in 1943.

The 1989 project catapulted interest in the Dana-Thomas House, making it one of the finest Wright houses in America and the most intact of all of Wright's designs."



**EXPERTISE:** Architect and historic restoration expert Mike Jackson will discuss the revival of Dana Thomas House when he speaks to the Society in January.

Jackson's architectural accomplishments include serving as a visiting professor of architecture at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, leading the architectural division of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency for more than 30 years and championing the

development of the Association for Preservation Technology's Building Technology Heritage Library, an online archive of pre-1964 AEC documents.

His on-line posts on *Architect*, the Journal of the American Institute of Architects, reflect world-wide and historical architectural research on a wide range of architectural subjects. Among his works are articles about architectural ornamentation, the art and economy of architectural terra cotta, the enduring charm of log cabins, Frank Lloyd Wright designs, Australia's architectural history, even street lighting in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He currently serves as president of the National Building Arts Center in St. Louis.

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

The free program and is open to the public.

# Calendar

## A Heads Up Guide to Area History Events

Send announcements, information, photos and illustrations to [historicoeditor@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://sangamonhistory.org).

**Tuesday, November 14: Leigh Gross Day and Susan Lawrence Dana: Bonded by Photos, Art, and Friendship**, 5:30 p.m. The Sangamon County Historical Society joins with the Springfield Art Association and the Dana Thomas House Foundation for a program that explores the friendship and work of nationally-known Springfield poet, artist and photographer Leigh Gross Day and her equally famous lifelong friend, Susan Lawrence Dana. The panel discussion will be held at the Springfield Art Association's Edward Place Historic Home complex at 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield. See story, page 1.

**Friday, November 17: History Happy Hour: Rye**, 7 p.m. The Springfield Art Association's Edward's Place Historic Site takes a look at the long history rye whiskey has in our country (our founding father, George Washington, even distilled it at Mount Vernon) in this fundraiser rye-tasting event. The selection offered at this tasting is designed to tickle the palate: the \$40 per person ticket includes the tasting, snacks and desserts, and an informative and fun program. Kentucky native/bourbon connoisseur Dr. Nathan Steele, will serve as tasting guide to offer context and guidance Edwards Place Historic Home complex at 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield. For information, call 1-217-523-2631.

**Friday, December 1: Springfield Urban League 97th Anniversary Dinner**. 5:30 p.m. Acclaimed *Black Panther*: *Wakanda Forever* writer and director Ron



Kyle Coogler will be the keynoter when the Springfield Urban League gathers to celebrate its 97th year with a social hour starting at 5:30 p.m. at the at the Crown Plaza., 1000 Dirksen Parkway followed

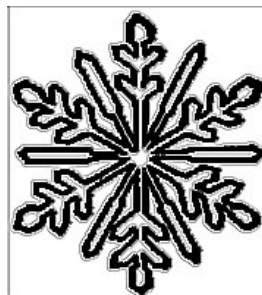
by dinner and a program at 6:30 p.m., entertainment and a post dinner reception. Upon release, Coogler's film grossed \$1.3 billion worldwide and broke numerous box office records, becoming the highest-grossing film directed by an African-American director,

the ninth-highest-grossing film of all time and the second-highest-grossing film of 2022. He also co-wrote and directed its 2022 sequel. Tickets are \$75 per person, \$800 for a table. For ticket information, call 217-789-0830, extension 1100. Ticket sales end November 24.

**Saturday, December 2, Holiday Embroidery Historical Craft Workshop**, Historic Edwards Place, 9 a.m.-Noon. Participants will create small embroidered objects appropriate for the winter holidays and gift-giving. Fee is \$25 for Springfield Art Association members, \$35 for non-members. Edwards Place Historic Home complex at 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield. For information, call 1-217-523-2631.

**Friday, December 8: Dana-Thomas House Holiday Reception**, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$50 for members, \$60 for guests. 301 E. Lawrence Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. Reservations deadline December 1. For information call 1-217-782-6776.

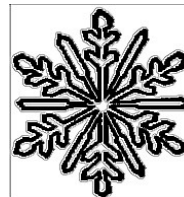
**Saturday, December 9: Holiday "Mark Twain" Tea**, 1 p.m. Historic Edwards Place is the setting for this event where you can learn about popular tea customs while participating in a special program focused on holiday themes. for the event is \$40 and includes tea, tea foods, gifts, and original programming. Edwards Place Historic Home complex at 700 North Fourth Street, Springfield. For information, call 1-217-523-2631.



**Wednesday, December 13: Sangamon County Historical Society Annual Holiday Party**. 5:30 p.m., Edwards Place, 700 North Fourth Street. See page 1 for details.

For reservations, follow the instructions on page 7. Reservations and payment must be received by Tuesday, December 5. For reservation information, see information on page 7.

# 2023 Holiday Party Reservation Form



Party-goers will dine on an array of savory hors d'oeuvres including grilled shrimp on skewers, chicken satay, stuffed mushrooms, teriyaki cocktail meatballs, caprese skewers, buffalo chicken celery boats and more along with an array of delicious desserts on Wednesday, December 13 in the Springfield Art Association Edwards Place Gallery. Cash bar.

**Tickets: Members: \$35, Guests \$40.**

You can order tickets by mail using the form at the bottom of this page or order and pay for tickets on-line.

In either case, reservations and payment must be received by **Tuesday, December 5.**

**No Walk-ins or payments at the door.**

### ON-LINE PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

To pay on line go to the Society's website at [sancohis.org](http://sancohis.org) and follow the **holiday party registration instructions**. Please note that our on-line payment system provider does not permit you to list the names of other than yourself if you are purchasing more than one ticket. If you are purchasing multiple tickets on line, once your transaction is completed, **please e-mail the full names of your guests to [party@sancohis.org](mailto:party@sancohis.org).** Upon notification from our payment system that your transaction has been approved, we will add them to the paid list and provide them with a name tag when they arrive.



## HOLIDAY PARTY MAIL-IN REGISTRATION



Just fill out the form below and mail it with your check to  
**SCHS, P.O. Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744**

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_tickets for the Society's annual holiday party for:

- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  Member  Non-Member Guest
- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  Member  Non-Member Guest
- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  Member  Non-Member Guest
- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  Member  Non-Member Guest
- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  Member  Non-Member Guest
- Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  Member  Non-Member Guest

***Sangamon County Historical Society***  
P.O. Box 9744,  
Springfield, IL 62791-9744  
*Return Service Requested*

Non-profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 777  
Springfield, Illinois

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**Sangamon County Historical Society 2023-2024 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 living at the same address. Be sure to list their full 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:
<i>Choose Your Level of Membership.</i> — 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 \$ _____

NOVEMBER 2023	NOVEMBER 2023	NOVEMBER 2023	NOVEMBER 2023
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