



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

308 East Adams Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701 217-522-2500 www.sancohis.org

NOVEMBER 2009

Don't Miss Out On December 8 Party!

The clock is ticking, but it's not too late to sign up for the Society's annual "History for the Holidays" Party to be held Tuesday, December 8 at Stonegate, the historic Barker family homestead off Chatham Road, Springfield. The party will run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Reservations are \$12.50 per person but you must be a member to attend. Individual members who'd like to bring a spouse or other family member can easily upgrade their membership for a small fee, using the form on page 7. And if you'd like to invite someone as your guest, why not give them an early holiday "gift of membership" for which the form is also on page 7. Deadline for reservations is December 1.

Mann to Share Research on November 17

Once Prominent Springfield Family Now Just A Historical Footnote? Historian To Tell Why

Remember the James A. Baret family of Springfield? No?

You're not alone.

Historian Curtis Mann will trace the rise and fall of this once socially prominent Springfield family who wound up being just a footnote in history when he addresses the Tuesday, November 17 meeting of the Society.

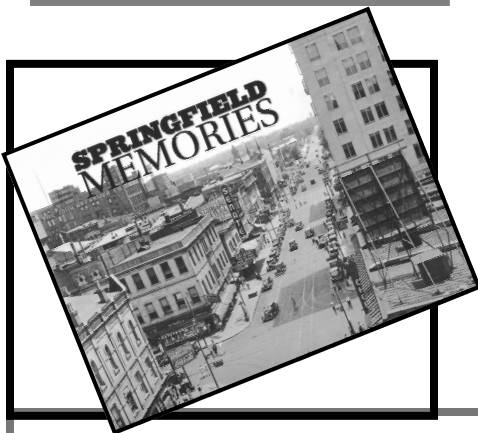
The program will be held at the Elijah Iles House, 628 South 7th Street in Springfield starting at 7 p.m. The free presentation is open to the public. Refreshments will follow.

Mann came across the Baretts while researching information on distilleries in Springfield. Baret's father, James W. Ba-

ret moved here from Greene County, Kentucky, at the behest of his brother Richard and became a wealthy farmer and land speculator. His children, including James A. Barret, married well, Mann says, and were part of Springfield's high society in the mid 1800s.. His father and brother also dabbled in politics.

James A. Baret's fortunes floundered after he borrowed money to repair a distillery here, using his land as equity. He was sued by both the lumberyard from which he purchased nearly \$3,000 in building materials and by a business partner from whom he borrowed \$10,000. Abraham Lincoln was the attorney for both plaintiffs.

(continued on page 3)



New SJ-R Book Now Available to Society Members

If you haven't pre-ordered a copy of the **State Journal Register's** new book, *Springfield Memories*, you'll be able to pick up a one at the November 17 program meeting at Iles House or at our headquarters at Robinson's, 308 East Adams Street, Springfield.

The Society worked closely with the newspaper in sorting through the vast number of photos submitted for inclu-

sion in the book and in return, will benefit from proceeds of the books it received.

"These will make wonderful holiday presents and we are very grateful to the generosity of Pediment Publishing Company and the State Journal-Register," said President Nancy Chapin in making the announcement. The books are priced at \$30.

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Ahead in 2010:

TOPIC: "Illinois Springs: A Historic Perspective"

SPEAKER: Philip C. Reed

TIME: 7 p.m.

LOCATION: Chatham Public Library

(Details on Reed's program will appear in the combined December-January Historico published in December.)





Website Viewing Stats Startling, More Upgrades Ahead

We have been working on the website in hopes of making it more attractive, informative and viable.

Roger Whitaker, our webmaster, shocked us when he told us that according to the 'count', we have been getting about 600 individual 'hits' a month with another 200 or so return 'hits'.

(For the uninitiated, 'hits' are visits to our web address from people and return hits are returns by some of those same individuals.) Some of these 'hits' result in questions about local history or people thought to have lived here.

Such was the case this past month when a question came in concerning a photographer thought to have come here in the mid-19th century.

promptly replied with date and location details, etc. With the help of generous people, it is a wonderful service we are able to provide!

As part of our 'check out our website' campaign we have been posting pictures from negatives Sangamon Valley Collection obtained from the Mercury Studio and asking for identifications.

In addition to the photos the website will soon have other changes and improvements, so keep your eye on it!

Do plan to go to the Festival of Trees sometime between November 21 and 29. Our tree will be spectacular!!! - thanks to the creativity of Vicky Whitaker and the help of a few volunteers!

Nancy

NOVEMBER REPORT

New Members

The Sangamon County Historical Society is pleased to add the following people to its membership ranks this month:

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Ken and Sue Massie

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Dorothy Ford
Tara McClellan McAndrew
David Ramsey
Larry Von Behren

Membership in the Sangamon County Historical Society is open to both individuals and families. Dues are \$17.50 per year for individuals, \$25 for a family, \$50 for a sustaining member.



2009-2010 Officers Sangamon County Historical Society

President.....Nancy L. Chapin
Vice-President.....David Scott
Secretary.....Curtis Mann
Treasurer.....Paul R. Mueller

Directors to 2010

R-Lou Barker ♦ Elaine Birtch
Kim Efird ♦ Sue Wall ♦ Martha Wolters

Directors to 2011

Jack Alexander ♦ Connie Locher Bussard
John Huther ♦ Jack Navins ♦ Jane Vetter

Directors to 2012

Tim Krell ♦ Vicki Megginson
Bill Minder ♦ Sarah Thomas ♦ Roger Whitaker

Honorary Director

William Hughes Diller Jr.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS: Finance: Tim Krell; Hospitality: Jane Vetter; Long Range Planning: David Scott; Membership: Connie Bussard; Nominating: Phyllis Eubanks; Program: Jack Alexander; Tours: Susan Hammond; Project Awards: Elaine Birtch; Publications: John Huther, Historico editor: Vicky Whitaker.



MONEY MAN: Dave Brady discusses the state's fiscal crisis, circa 1820s, in a Society presentation October 20 on "Fraud on the Frontier." About 60 people attended the session at Iles House. Full text of his remarks can be viewed at www.sanchois.org. Attendees got a special treat when member Farrell Gay displayed part of his Springfield Watch Collection (right) housed in the meeting room but usually unavailable after normal hours.



SOCIETY TOUR CHAIR SEEKS FAVORITE DESTINATIONS

Have a little wanderlust? Susan Hammond, the Society's Tours chair, would love to hear from you!

"I'm looking for suggestions for tours the Society can set up for both within and beyond Sangamon County," says Hammond, who welcomes input from all members who have been on tours themselves or heard about great sites to visit from friends, family, or co-workers.

"It's a perfect opportunity for you to share some of your experiences in visiting historical sites that are nearby as well as out of the area and to suggest other places you've heard about from others or that you'd love the opportunity to visit.

You can reach Hammond at 546-1990 or drop her an e-mail at hammsusan@yahoo.com.

TRIM -A- TREE NOVEMBER 7

Society members who'd like to help trim the Society's tree on "set-up weekend" for the Festival of Trees are welcome to come down to the Orr Building on Saturday, November 7 at 9 a.m. The tree, with a theme of "Reflections of the Past" will feature specially created ornaments, each a miniature reproduction of snapshots from Springfield's past, mainly culled from the Mercury collection at the Lincoln Library's Sangamon Valley Collection. The Festival will open to the public on Saturday, November 21, for a nine-day run.

Heartland Series to Wrap Up November 18 at UIS

A three session series examining creative expression in the Illinois heartland wraps up November 18 at the University of Illinois. The free series, which began in September, is co-sponsored by the University's SAGE Alumni Society and the Illinois State Historical Society.

The final session, from Noon to 1:30 p.m. will focus on "Creative Images: Canvas and Glass. Architect and stained glass restoration expert Ralls Melotte will talk about the history and evolution of stained glass here and Robert Sill, Curator and Assistant Director of Art for the Illinois State Museum, Springfield, will discuss "Painters from the Heart of Lincolnland." For information call 206-7395 or alumni@uis.edu.

Historian to Detail Famed Springfield Family's Fade Into History

(Continued from page 1)

Baret earlier faced-off against Lincoln in a lawsuit brought by the Alton and Sangamon Railroad after Baret tried to get out of paying for 30 shares of stock he purchased when the railroad changed plans to build a route that would have bordered some of the 4,215 acres he owned here. Lincoln won the high profile case and Baret lost some of his acreage. Baret eventually returned to Kentucky.

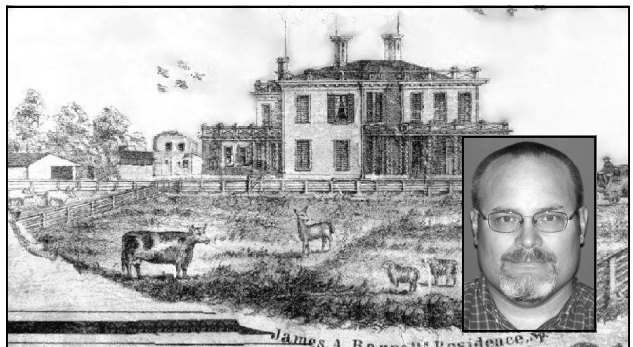
By the 1870s, the Barret name had faded from public memory.

Mann will also discuss some difficulties associated tracking historical information, especially family genealogy. The Baretts are a case in point, he says, since public and private records spell the name two

different ways, Baret and Barrett. Mann will be showing an old illustration of Baret's estate that incorrectly spells his name.

Mann, a former Society president and its current secretary and official historian, is a librarian and manager of the Sangamon Valley Collection at Lincoln Library in Springfield. He also serves as City Historian.

Originally from southern Illinois, he studied history at several Illinois universities and received his master's degree in Library Science from the University of Illinois. Mann also serves as an officer the



CURTIS MANN and the illustration of the Baret home inscribed with the incorrect spelling of the family name.

Elijah Iles House Foundation and is president of the Illinois Foundation for Frontier Studies.

For David Scott, a Lifetime Linked to History

Like his father before him, David Scott is his family's historian and archivist, a role that seems fitting for the retired educator whose first foray into genealogy whetted his appetite.

"My early interest in history stems from, as much as any factor, learning about Scott family history when I provided some clerical help for my father's family history work while I was in junior high school," recalls Dr. Scott, a retired educator who serves as vice-president of the Sangamon County Historical Society.

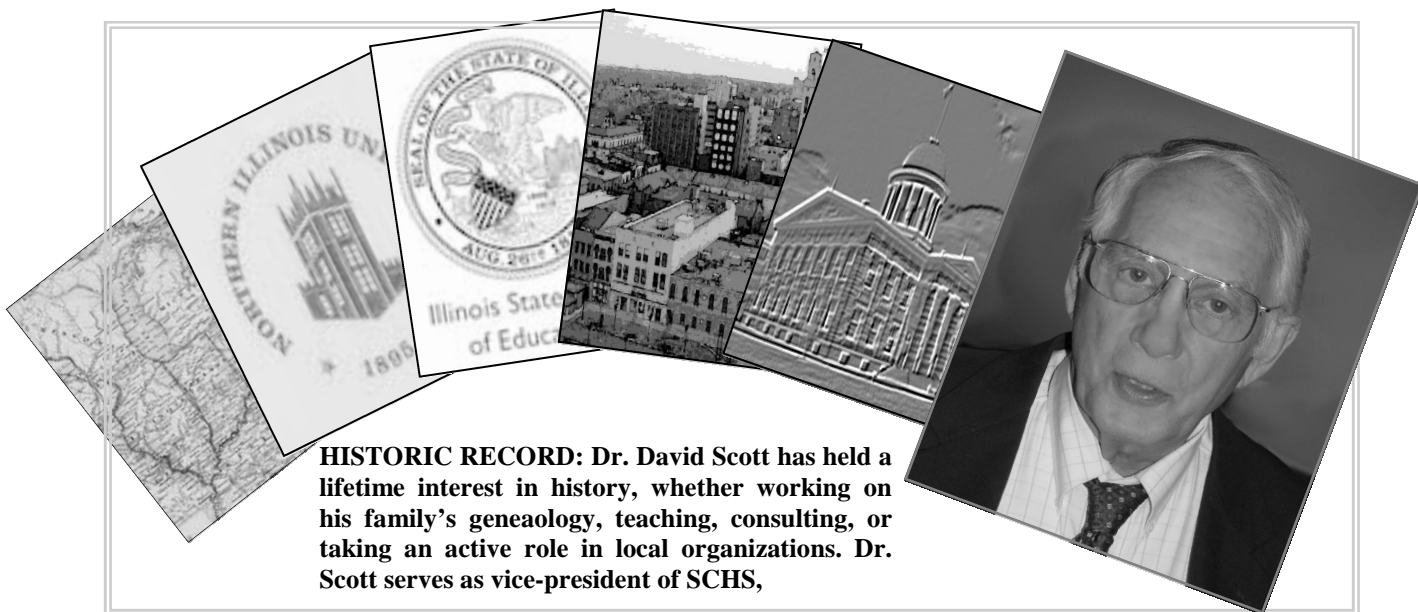
Still, the Evanston, Illinois native found himself torn between pursuing a degree in history or one in political science, a field that also drew his interest. Dr. Scott chose history, doing his undergraduate work at Denison University in Grandfield, Ohio, from which he graduated with honors. Even in college, for Dr. Scott, history was a lot more personal than what he read in textbooks or heard in a class lecture.

"When I was in college, my father gave me some notes, letters and articles written by my great-grandfather about his attendance as a child at subscription schools in the

University where he became associated with the community politics program and wrote his dissertation on the governance and politics of education. From 1968 to 1973, he became a full-time faculty member at Northern Illinois University, where he taught courses in state and local government. "As a result, I became very familiar with the development, structure and functions of state and county governments," valuable expertise that he has put to use throughout his career and beyond.

In 1974 Dr. Scott moved to Springfield to join the staff of the then newly-formed Illinois State Board of Education. As a senior professional, he mainly concentrated his efforts in its Department of Planning and Research but also spent some time with the ISBE's Department of Finance. "Much of my work involved policy research, and management consulting," he explains.

He retired in 1999 but even well before that, Dr. Scott became embedded in history-related activities. "In the mid-1980s, I became an active member of the Historic Preser-



HISTORIC RECORD: Dr. David Scott has held a lifetime interest in history, whether working on his family's genealogy, teaching, consulting, or taking an active role in local organizations. Dr. Scott serves as vice-president of SCHS,

1840s. In later life, he became president of Ohio State University. I used these primary sources along with some county histories and other secondary sources to prepare a paper on early Ohio education for a course on the Old Northwest," he recalls.

Dr. Scott went on to graduate school at the University of Wisconsin, with an eye toward getting a doctorate and teaching history at the college level. But after earning a master's degree, he opted instead for a stint in the Army and after that, three years as a college administrator. But the pursuit of a Ph.D. never lost its appeal and by the late 1960s, he found himself back in graduate school, this time at Northwestern

University where he became associated with the community politics program and wrote his dissertation on the governance and politics of education. This group was concerned with the preservation not only of architecturally distinguished and historically significant structures, but with all structures in Springfield still standing that go back to the time Lincoln lived in Springfield." At about the same time, he joined the Sangamon County Historical Society.

His visibility in the community and his eventual election as president of the Historic Preservation Association of Springfield led to his appointment to the Mayor's Historic Sites Commission.

(Continued on page 6)



CENTENNIAL AWARD WINNERS: Illinois State Historical Association president Mark Sorensen (left in both photos) presents Centennial Awards to (left) Archie Lawrence, president of the Springfield branch of the NAACP on behalf of the national organization which was founded in Springfield; and to (right) David Franke of Paris Cleaners, a family-owned business he runs with his brother Shep (right), now marking its 100th year. Their mother Betty looks on.

Photo by

Paris Cleaners, NAACP Earn State Historical Society Centennial Honors

Paris Cleaners Inc. was among 23 Illinois businesses honored by the Illinois State Historical Society last month for reaching or exceeding 100 years of continuous operation.

In addition, Springfield representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) accepted a special centennial award on behalf of the national organization that was formed here 100 years ago, partly in response to the 1908 Springfield race riot. It was one of three non-profits so honored, the other two based in Chicago.

Descendants of Paris Cleaners founder Frank Franke were on hand to receive the award as was Archie Lawrence, president of the Springfield chapter of the NAACP. The presentation ceremony was held at a private reception at the Illinois Executive Mansion on October 3.

Since 1984, the Centennial Awards Program has honored more than 1,200 companies around the state, from multinational corporations to mom-and-pop hardware stores. Award recipients receive a plaque inscribed with the names of the standing Illinois governor and president of the Society, use of the Society's Centennial Awards logo on their business letterhead, a year's membership in the Society, and statewide recognition.

For Paris Cleaners, the award is particularly sweet. The company was founded by Frank Franke after his son, Carl D. Franke Sr., failed his final exam in tailoring school and asked his father to send him to dry cleaning school in Denver. Dry cleaning was a nascent industry at that time in America, but the senior Franke quickly realized the commercial opportunity presented by the sale of pre-made suits: they would have to be cleaned. And so the joint venture of Paris City Dry Cleaning Company was established in Springfield in 1909.

Named for the European city where the cleaning process was invented, Paris City Dry Cleaning Company was originally located at 313 East Monroe in downtown Springfield. Within five years the company expanded and opened a new branch cleaning service on the city's north side and by 1925 had opened a cleaning facility at Ash and Yale Boulevard that took up an entire city block.

Over the course of the next 100 years, the name changed to Paris Cleaners Inc., but the integrity of Springfield's oldest dry cleaners has remained consistent.

Today the company is owned and operated by fourth-generation descendents C. David Franke III and his brother Shep.

State Historical Society Publishes "Lincoln In Sculpture" Book Written by Carl Volkman

In commemoration of the Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration, the Illinois State Historical Society has published *Lincoln in Sculpture*, a collection of historical essays about Lincoln statuary in Illinois.

The 56-page book was written by Sangamon County Historical Society member and former president Carl Volkman, former director of the Lincoln Library in Springfield who with his wife

Roberta, co-authored *Springfield's Sculptures, Monuments, and Plaques* (2008 Arcadia). Roberta Volkman served as editor of **Historico** last year.

Lincoln in Sculpture features more than 40 essays about the most significant Lincoln sculpture in Illinois, as well as busts, replicas, and humorous statuary. Each article and sculpture mentioned includes a photo as well as the GPS co-

ordinates where individual Lincoln statuary can be found.

Featured sculptors include: Lorado Taft, Augustus St. Gaudens, Avarad Fairbanks, John McClarey, Lily Tolpo, Giovanni Bucci, and many others.

The book is available from SCHS at program meetings or at 308 E. Adams Street, Springfield.

For Historian, Looking Back Part of Looking Forward

(Continued from page 4)

“Although often generating controversy, the work of these two groups in the 1990s helped create a more supportive attitude toward preservation in the city. At least I would like to think so.”

He has also played a leadership role in the Illinois State Historical Society, serving from 2003 to 2005 as its president. Dr. Scott’s connection to the organization dates back to 1987 when he presented a paper on the education provision of the Northwest Ordinance at the Society’s annual symposium.

“Later I became a regular attendee. In the late 1990s, I got involved with the management of the Society; first being appointed to the board, then the Executive Committee, then the Vice-Presidency before becoming President.” He continues to serve on Society committees and occasionally prepares a paper for its Symposium or one of its publications.

Dr. Scott took a more active role in the Sangamon County Historical Society in early 2008, becoming a board member, then a few months later vice-president, filling in for president Nancy Chapin on several occasions. But the job has taken on a new dimension in past months, at Dr. Scott’s suggestion.

In many organizations, he says, the vice-president is also responsible for developing an overview of the organization, something that had not been required under the SCHS by-laws. “I suggested to Nancy Chapin that a long-range or strategic planning committee was needed. She authorized the committee’s formation and appointed me the chairman.”

The Committee, he says, has met twice. “We have gathered information about what some other Central Illinois county historical societies are doing, with the idea of seeing if there are functions that our group could feasibly assume that we are not doing now or if we could enhance existing functions.” Dr. Scott believes the Society has done well in carrying out its major current activities, from monthly meetings to

publishing books and a newsletter. “Based on the limited information I have from other counties, we are stronger in these areas than most.” He expects that the report of the Long Range Planning Committee will help set the agenda for any board discussion about changes in current activities.

While history continues to dominate Dr. Scott’s time, retirement has led to other activities as well, he says, including pursuing long-standing interests in golf and bridge. “My grandfather and older brother got me started in golf when I was about 10. I took up bridge as part of getting ready for college social life.” He also quit jogging and took up racquet ball, which, he says, “is a much more satisfactory form of exercise for me.” Retirement has also given him more time to travel, first in North America, since 2005 to Europe, and most recently to Russia.

Not that Dr. Scott was unaccustomed

to traveling. “Going to the Chicago area from Springfield for family matters and activities, for job-related work, to visit friends, and to attend plays, Cubs games, and other events has added up to some 300 round trips for us along I-55 since 1974!” he says. His wife, Virginia, whom he married in 1964, was a textbook editor in Chicago and executive director of an advocacy coalition, the Illinois Environmental Council, in Springfield. The Scotts have two married daughters: Margaret Izzo, who lives in Mt. Lebanon, PA, and Elizabeth Budinger, who lives in nearby Sherman. Each family has two children.

And as might be expected, David Scott continues to explore his family’s heritage, most recently in eastern Ohio, visiting libraries and old cemeteries in Coshocton County to learn the story of 19th century ancestors who lived there for several generations.



SETTLING IN: Participants in a Civil War encampment make themselves at home on the grounds of the Elijah Iles House for the Iles House Foundation’s annual Old Settlers Day celebration, October 24. The event also included Civil War era music, tours, and children’s activities.

Dick Hart photo

Correction

An article in last month’s **Historico** misidentified the purchaser of Dana Thomas House after Barker, Goldman, and Lubin purchased the Susan Dana Lawence estate in the early 1940s.. The house was sold not to Lincoln historian Benjamin Thomas, but to Thomas Publishing (no relation).

History for the Holidays” Holiday Party Reservation Form

Enclosed is my check for the Society’s annual Holiday Party. *You must be a member of the Society to attend.* Reservations are \$12.50 per person. If you hold an Individual Membership and wish to bring a family member, you just need to enclose an additional \$7.50 to bring you to the Family Membership level. (If you wish to bring a guest, they will have to become a member of the Society. A Gift of Membership form is below). For a list of membership categories, see page 2.



Member Name/Names: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

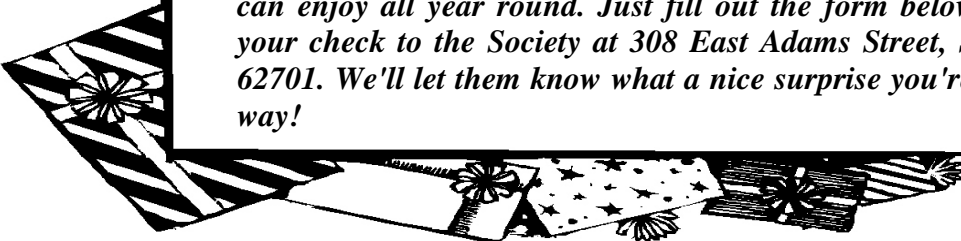
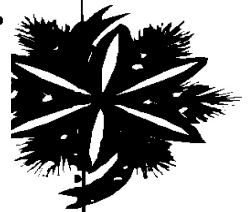
Amount Enclosed: _____

Please check here if this includes an upgrade to Family Membership.

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS DECEMBER 1

This may be the perfect time to give a gift of membership in the Sangamon County Historical Society.

Know someone who loves history as much as you? If you'd like them to be able to attend the annual members-only "History for the Holidays" party in December, why not give them an early gift, one they can enjoy all year round. Just fill out the form below, send it with your check to the Society at 308 East Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701. We'll let them know what a nice surprise you're sending their way!



Name _____

(First)

(Middle)

Last

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(s) _____ E-Mail _____

Donor's Name: _____ Membership Level: _____

Sangamon County Historical Society
308 East Adams Street
Springfield, Illinois 62701

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More About the Mercury Studio Collection...and our weekly contest!

Do Those Faces Look Familiar? You Could Win A Prize!

Help the Society identify photos from the Mercury Studio Collection now housed in the Sangamon Valley Collection at the Lincoln Public Library...and you could win a prize!.

The Mercury Studio collection consists of thousands of photograph negatives taken for the years 1946 to the 1990s. The majority of the images were taken during the 1960s and 1970s. The collection was first started by Walter Bubnis and eventually was purchased by James Woodruff. The Sangamon Valley Collection acquired this collection after Woodruff's death in 2004. The collection consists of a variety of images including street scenes, businesses, weddings, conventions, portraits and social events.

Every week we post a photo like the one shown here. If you know who's in the photo or what it's about, send your information to research@sancohis.org. In May we will hold a drawing of all those who have contributed information for a grand prize! Check the website archives for photos you may have missed!



2009-2010 Board Meetings

November 18 ,
January 13, February 10, March 10,
April 14, May 12

2010 Monthly Programs

(Third Tuesday)
November 17, January 19,
February 6, March 16, April 20,
May 18

Annual Meeting

June 17

