



Historico

The newsletter of the Sangamon County Historical Society
 308 E. Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701
 www.sancohis.org 217.522.2500

February, 2006

February 8, Wednesday, 5:00 pm

Board Meeting

Lincoln Library, Carnegie Room South

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Booksales
 Sue Wall
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February 21, Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Program

Lincoln Library, Carnegie Room North



What's New in the Neighborhood?

A Lincoln Home National Historic Site Update

Tim Townsend

Latest developments at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield—along with projects planned for the future—will be outlined by Tim Townsend, the historian at the site.

Townsend's presentation will come at an exciting time in the historic relationship between Springfield and President Abraham Lincoln. The opening of the Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum has generated renewed interest throughout the country in the sixteenth President and his ties to Springfield. The flow of visitors to the various Lincoln sites in the city and surrounding area has increased greatly. Improvements are under way or scheduled at a number of the sites, including the Lincoln Home—a major attraction—and Union Station, which is expected to be a visitors' center for the library and museum as well as for some other local historical sites.

Townsend, a frequent speaker on the Lincoln residence and neighboring structures, holds a bachelor of arts degree in history from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, and a master of arts degree in history from the University of Illinois at Springfield. He has worked on the curatorial staff at the Rock Island Arsenal Museum and has served as an interpreter at President Grant's home at Galena and the Vachel Lindsay house and Lincoln-Herndon law office, both in Springfield. In addition, he assisted with field archeology and research for the Springfield archeological firm of Fever River Research. He began his career with the National Park Service as a Lincoln Home park ranger in 1991.

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Around Town in February

February 11

2:30 PM Vachel Lindsay Home
Poet in the Parlor
Marcellus Leonard

February 12

9:00 AM Lincoln Home Visitors Ctr
George Painter Lecture Series

Dr. Richard West Sellars,
NPS Historian and author
Dr. Robert Bray, R. Forrest
Colwell Professor of American
Literature at Illinois Wesleyan
University and author

1:00 PM Music of the Lincoln Era
Thomas J. Trimborn,
*'Lincoln and the Music of the
Civil War'*
and the "New Century Ensemble"
featuring Bill Furry

1:00 PM Old State Capitol
Hall of Representatives
Catherine Clinton
*'Wife v Widow: Clashing Perspectives
on Mary Lincoln's Legacy'*
David Mark Epstein
'The Road to Washington, 1847'
Joshua Wolf Shenk
'Lincoln's Emotional Life'

Annual Abraham Lincoln Banquet
7:00 (Reservation required)
Doris Kearns Goodwin
Sponsored by:
Abraham Lincoln Association
ALPLM
IHPA

February 13

10:00 AM Groundbreaking,
Home for the Friendless memorial,
Oak Ridge Cemetery

February 18

1:00 PM 5th Annual Poetry Read-
ing, Museum of Funeral Customs

Report History for the Holidays

Over 60 Society members filled the candle-lit Iles House accented with hand made holiday decorations and enjoyed the Barringer antique furniture collection at the highly successful *History for the Holidays* on December 13th. Our thanks go to Dick Hart, Tom Bundy, Dave Barringer, Lisa Sabo and the Ricketts of the Iles House Foundation for all of their hard work in preparing the house so beautifully!

Curtis Mann explained various aspects of the benefits gained from having the 1876 Springfield map in a restored and digitalized condition. The details of building shapes and locations so enabled are quite amazing.

Carolyn Moore then presented a charming framed print of the bridge over Fayette at the edge of Washington Park that painter, Bob Larsen, generously donated as a prize for the member who was responsible for the most new and renewed members this year. Dan Buck was the hands down winner, and we congratulate him for being responsible for the membership of about 29 people!



The evening ended with the revelation of President Gil Pilapil's '*December Surprise*' in the form of a delightful interlude of sleight of hand tricks by John Brownbeck of Chatham.

Our thanks to Chairman Mary Jo Potter and her committee for a wonderful evening!



*Home for the Friendless
Memorial Renovation Project*

Enclosed with this issue is a brochure requesting help with the project to more appropriately memorialize those individuals from the *Home for the Friendless* who are buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery. The Oak Ridge Cemetery Board of Trustees have incorporated this effort into their 150th anniversary of the cemetery observance.

To commemorate the State Legislature's passing of a special Act that established the home on February

12, 1963, ground will be broken for the memorial on Monday, February 13 at 10:00 AM. You are invited to attend the ground breaking.

*Edwards Place volunteers needed*The Art Association is recruiting volunteers for interpretive tours of Edwards Place. For information please contact Janeen Burkholder, Volunteer Coordinator at 523-2631, ext. 207 or volunteer@springfieldart.org

We Welcome New Member

Aislin Nickey

Report on January Program

On Tuesday, January 17th the Carnegie Room was filled with a large group to learn about the Ursuline Sisters' history. Sister Rosemary Meiman, from St. Louis, archivist of the Ursuline Central Province, began by explaining that the community originated in Brescia, Italy in 1535. St. Angela Merici brought together young, educated women to educate girls for whom there were very few opportunities to gain an education. While at first the women lived in their own homes, as time went on they formed a community. From those first efforts the communities expanded into France, Germany and across Europe. Today, Ursuline communities can be found around the world. Their name honors the British saint of learning, St. Ursula.

Wherever the sisters went, they established boarding schools for girls, as that was the traditional form of European education. In 1900 the Roman Union of Ursuline sisters was established and most Ursuline communities joined that union which effectively internationalized the Order.

In 1857 Mother Mary Joseph Woulfe arrived in Springfield with sisters to found Ursuline Academy. Soon after establishing the Academy, they established a free day school, the first 'parish' school for girls in Springfield. In 1865 they purchased 6.5 acres on North 5th Street and moved the Academy there; the Chapel was built in 1895, with all the intricate wood carv-

ing done by the sisters themselves; the Nuns' house, adjacent to the Academy, in 1901; and St. Ursula Hall in 1909. By 1927 they were educating 2,000 children and adults in the Academy and parish schools across the community; and by 1957 3,000 children and adults were being educated with the addition of Springfield Junior College in 1927.

In 1969 there were 72 members of the Ursuline community in Springfield, but times were changing and the number of sisters began declining. Ursuline Academy became co-ed in 1981; in 1987 a non-Ursuline principal was named for the Academy and a non-Ursuline president for the College; by 1997 the Academy and the convent became separate corporations; in 2003 Springfield College entered a partnership with Benedictine University; and in 2005 the college took over administration of the Academy.

In June, 2005 the remaining 13 sisters moved from the convent at 1400 N. 5th street and found a welcome with the Franciscan sisters, completing the circle began when the Ursuline sisters shared their housing and English language when the German Franciscans first arrived in 1871 to establish a hospital. Eight of the sisters are still actively working in the community.

While the number of sisters is declining in North America and Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Asia are experiencing a growth in membership, allowing the work of the sisterhood to continue in a changing world.

10th Annual Walk Through Oak Ridge Cemetery

Mary Jo Potter has been appointed Chairman of this year's Cemetery Walk and Elaine Birtch will be Portrayal Chairman. As this year's walk will coincide with the end of the year long observance of the 150th anniversary of Oak Ridge Ceme-

tery, six portrayals have been chosen to reflect various aspects of Oak Ridge's development.

Please note on your calendars now the date of this year's Cemetery Walk: October 9, 2006.

We are grateful for donations -

Tony Leone

In memory of James Coble

Kathryn Harris

Anonymous

Board bequest decision

In response to requests, the Board voted to place memorials to Barbara Mason in the Publication Fund in recognition of her long time service as the Society's 'bookseller extraordinaire'.

Grateful to those lawmakers!

"There are three specific public health provisions in the original municipal code [1840]: The first, an ordinance prohibiting leaving manure in the streets for more than three days; the second, prohibiting the throwing of filth, meat or slops any place in the city, or permitting dead animals to remain in the streets or on private premises, and a third regulating the sanitary condition of slaughter houses."

(Report on the history of the Health Department by George T. Palmer)

Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Sangamon County, Munsell Publishing Company, Chicago, 1912. p. 836.

Sure glad to know that the dead animals will keep getting removed from the streets!!

The President's Corner

I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and my wish to all for a happy 2006. Since the last *Historico*, interesting happenings have taken place. Our December "History for the Holidays" event went very well. It was enjoyable, educational and with plenty of catered food and Board-member-donated wines for everyone. Curtis Mann's presentation on the Society-funded restoration of Springfield's 1876 map was informative and inspiring to do more of the kind. Elijah Iles, our "December Surprise," came around a second time in the person of John Brownback from Chatham to entertain us with his jaw-popping magic, spiced with his belly-shaking humorous one-liner. We introduced our new Board secretary, Sally A. Cadagin, and awarded Dan Buck with the prized painting of Bob Larsen of the Illinois State Museum for soliciting the most number of members for the Society. Our thanks to event chair, Mary Jo Potter, with help by Carolyn Moore, Nancy Chapin, R-Lou Barker, Sally Cadagin and Susan Smarjesse for working hard to make the occasion as successful as it has been, and to Iles House' Director Dick Hart, together with the Iles House Foundation members David Barringer, Tom Bundy, Elizabeth Ricketts and Lisa Sabo for their help at the event and support for the use of the facility.

On a chat, Board member John Huther and I took pleasure at our modern capability to communicate by email as it facilitates the conduction of Society business without holding a Board meeting. That's how we voted on our new secretary and approved the request to include a brochure in one of the forthcoming issues of *Historico* to help raise funds for a memorial at Oak Ridge Cemetery for the 643 children buried there who were cared for and died at Springfield's *Home for the Friendless* (1863-1928). Board member Wm. Hughes Diller, Jr. recalls that when he "attended Stuart School in 1922-23, the Home of the Friendless was still operating across the street from the school."

Our January program, "The Ursuline Sisters in Springfield," and this month's "What's New in the Neighborhood? A Lincoln Home National Historic Site Update," will continue to teach us about our local history and I am happy at our members' continued interest to come to these programs.

Our condolence to past Board member Dorthy Ross on the loss of her mother who passed away November 18. It also saddens us to hear of the death from medical complications of our long-time past Board member, Barbara Mason, December 24. Barbara, curator at SIU's Pearson Museum, had been a dedicated and hard working Board member and the Society's "bookseller *extraordinaire*" for many years. We will miss her as she joins the ranks of those who have gone ahead to that other world. Peace be to them. – VRP.

FUNERAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S SON

From *The National Intelligencer*, 1862



In respect of the funeral ceremonies at the President's mansion yesterday, business was suspended in all the government departments.

During the morning hours many visitors availed themselves of the opportunity to take a last view of the features of the interesting boy whose death had stricken so many hearts. In the East room the large magnificent mirrors were festooned with mourning drapery. The body of the deceased remained in the "Green Parlor" adjoining.

The coffin which enclosed the remains was metallic, and finished in imitation of rosewood. On a plain square silver plate was inscribed "WILLIAM WAL-LACE LINCOLN, born December 21, 1850, died February 20, 1862."

As the large concourse of spectators gazed on the lad, lovely in death, many tears fell on the coffin.

By the hour of two o'clock the East room was filled, with the reverend clergy, the mourners, members of the Cabinet, Foreign Ministers, Senators, and members of the House of Representatives, the Mayor, and citizens in general.

Rev. P. D. Gurley, D.D., of the Presby-

terian Church, rose and commenced the services by reading appropriate passages of the Holy Scripture. This he followed with an appropriate and impressive address, in which he made special reference to the loved one whose departure had saddened so many hearts. The reverend speaker skillfully extended his remarks so as to afford consolation to the heart of every sorrowing parent present. When he concluded, the throne of Divine grace was addressed by the Rev. John C. Smith, D.D.

The coffin was removed to the hearse. Six pallbearers followed, viz: Messrs. Asbury, Pope, Watts, Gurley, Denham and Kerr, and Sabbath school

Willy Lincoln's funeral cont.

scholars in the same class with the deceased youth. Then Rev. Drs. Gurvey and Smith, President Lincoln, accompanied by his son, Robert, and private Secretary Nicolay, the Illinois delegation, Vice President Hamlin, Heads of Departments, Major General McClellan, Foreign Ministers, members of Congress and citizens generally.

The solemn procession then moved

onward to the beautiful "Oak Hill Cemetery" on the picturesque heights of Georgetown. On arrival there, the length of the cortege rendered it necessary to extend the route to High Street, thence around the reservoir to the cemetery.

All having alighted another procession was formed, and proceeded to the Cemetery Chapel, where the solemn

burial service was repeated by Dr. Gurvey; after which the coffin was deposited in a receptacle prepared for it, and susceptible of a ready removal to Illinois.

From Dorthy Ross

Report from Jim Patton on a mission to save Southern flags

On the morning of Dec. 3, Mark Whitlock, Paul Golladay and I departed in a box van loaded with \$15,000 worth of donated cleanup supplies headed for the Louisiana National Guard Military Museum at Jackson Barracks (in the lower 9th ward) to try to save what was left of the LNG flag collection. We were asked to go because of our efforts restoring 450 flags from the Centennial Building in Springfield to the Illinois National Guard Flag Building at Camp Lincoln. The LNGMM director is a friend of Mark's and knew of our work here. Figuring we were the "flag experts" we were asked to come down there.

Upon arriving at N.O., we went to the airport area and rented a sedan so we could get back and forth from our hotel to Jackson Barracks. (We couldn't park the van in the hotel parking.) When we exited the van at the airport, all we could smell was garbage and death. I thought to myself, "Can I stand 18 days of this?" Upon arriving at Jackson Barracks, there was no abnormal smell, thank goodness. There we met Stan Amerski, the curator, who has been trying to clean up the mess of 18 feet of water covering everything. The weather was chilly and he was working in a t-shirt. We asked him why he didn't have a jacket on and he said he didn't have one. His house in Slidell had been inundated with 2 feet of water and he had lost nearly everything. Mark gave him his own fleece jacket.

The best building for us to work in had been used by the JB volunteers for the rebuilding and restoration of antique aircraft. We, with the assistance of 6 West Virginia National Guard troops started to clear the building by pulling out a Cobra helicopter, a large radial piston engine, a helicopter engine and various parts. Also inside were shop tools, drill press, lathe and work tables which had to be scrapped. The building had inside it a wooden building which housed an office, kitchen and bathroom. This inner building was torn out.

Next came the power washing of the building interior. The building was insulated. Realizing that the insulation which had gotten wet still contained moisture and mold, we removed that also. We power washed the interior and started setting up the donated tables and conservation equipment.

Once we were somewhat organized for emergency conservation work on the flags, we went to the museum storage area, donned our Tyvec suits, galoshes, rubber gloves and respirators and began to remove soggy, tissue paper covered flags. These were dipped in a Lysol bath, gently blotted with a sponge to remove the acid free tissue paper, dipped in a Lemon Lysol bath and then clear water. They were hung on a plastic covered clothes line to dry. Those flags that were too brittle or shredded were laid out on unbleached muslin on plastic screening to dry. After the flags were completely dry, the larger ones were placed between two sheets of Tyvec, rolled on 3 inch PVC pipe, labeled, documented and placed in Sono tubes for temporary storage. The smaller flags were either left on shelves covered with Ethafoam or enveloped in unbleached muslin between two sheets of Gatorboard, which is like acid free, plastic corrugated board.

In all, we saved over 150 flags, guidons and textile trophies of war.

Some of our hotel staff had lost their homes, so the hotel management said they may stay in the hotel until they can get housing. At the hotel, we met a group from Calvary Chapel in Los Angeles who are working for a group called Safe



Sangamon County Historical Society
308 E. Adams Street
Springfield, IL 62701



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Spring Calendar

- February 21: *What's New in the Neighborhood? A Lincoln Home National Historic Site Update*, Tim Townsend
March 21: *The LPGA in Springfield: A Success Story*, Carol Lohman and Sandra Dehner-Wheeler
April 18: *The Rebirth of Downtown Springfield*, Carolyn Oxtoby and Victoria Clemons
May 16: *Matthew S. Marsh's 1836 Map of Sangamon County*, Thomas F. Schwartz

Harbors. They were serving food to the staff and workers in the hotel staff dining area. They found out about Stan Amerski and his loss, so they each chipped in some money and bought him a new refrigerator, which was delivered to his house. Mark's church group in Springfield sent down a sectional sofa, dining table and chairs, occasional tables, a headboard and dresser for Stan's daughter, a futon for his son and new bunk beds for the two younger boys. Christian acts such as these certainly can bring a tear to your eye.

We were working under rather Spartan conditions. Our water was supplied by a military tank truck, our electricity by the donated generators and heavy equipment (bobcats, sky crane, end loader/backhoe) from the military. The port-a-potty contract ran out three days before we left, so we had to drive ¼ mile to use the MP's johns.

On our way to work we saw the barge which had floated through the break in the levee, coming to rest on a school bus and a house. We drove down there and got a few pictures of that destruction. Those barges are really big! We figured the only way they can get it out of there is with a cutting torch.

Every day we were at work by 8:00 a.m. and usually stayed until 4:30 p.m., one evening until 7.

All was not work. We did take one afternoon off to ride the steamboat "Natchez" on an excursion down the river past Jackson Barracks, the Domino sugar plant and the Mobil refinery and back. On board, the Margueritas and warm sunshine made the trip very relaxing. We dined at a number of great restaurants in the French Quarter and found ourselves most satisfied with the service and food at the Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. which was only a block from the hotel. We were in our own rooms, in bed by 7 or 7:30 most evenings, except for Saturday night when we went to Bourbon St. to see the sights. We did go to the D-Day Museum and were treated to a complimentary tour by the curator. We also visited St. Louis Cemetery No. 1, where the famous "voodoo queen" Marie Laveau is entombed.

We turned in the car at the airport and the next morning departed for home, arriving on the 20th.

I am glad I had a chance to participate in the saving of the flags from such a catastrophic disaster as Hurricane Katrina. It is a once in a lifetime chance to work on a project of this magnitude.

We will be returning to Jackson Barracks for the first week in February. This time we will probably concentrate on the weapons collection.