



Historico

The newsletter of the Sangamon County Historical Society
 308 E. Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701
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June, 2006

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June 20, Tuesday, 6:00 PM

Annual Meeting, Banquet and program

Sangamo Club
 227 East Adams

The Great American Foot Race of 1928

Speaker: Janice A. Petterchak, President SCHS 1995-1996

An incredible marathon in 1928 from Los Angeles to New York—described as the "longest, toughest and zaniest foot race in history"—will be brought back to life by author Janice A. Petterchak in the featured program segment of the Annual Banquet and Meeting of the Sangamon County Historical Society on Tuesday, June 20, at the Sangamo Club. The event begins with a reception at 6 p.m. and continues with the banquet at 7 p.m., followed by a brief business meeting and the program.

Known as the "Bunion Derby," the 3,422-mile race attracted some 200 contestants competing for the top prize of \$25,000. Organized by C. C. (Cash and Carry) Pyle, a flamboyant and controversial sports promoter, the grueling race attracted national media coverage. From California to Illinois, the runners mainly followed the then new Route 66. Coming through Sangamon County, they were cheered by hundreds of onlookers. The runners spent a night at Springfield's downtown Elks Club before heading on to Lincoln.

Mrs. Petterchak, a former director of the Illinois State Historical Library, is a researcher and writer whose books primarily include biographies and business histories. Her most recent work is *Historic Illinois: An Illustrated History*. She was president of the Sangamon County Historical Society in 1995-1996 and currently serves on its Board of Directors.

The traditional drawings for Door Prizes will be held, and tickets may be purchased at the Annual Dinner. If you wish to contribute to the raffle, please contact Curtis Mann 753-4900, Ext. 234 or cmann67@hotmail.com.

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Bus Trip to Funk's Grove & Prairie Home

The Funk's Grove bus trip turned out to be full of wonderful surprises! The 1864 family chapel is charming and so beautifully maintained that it is a popular wedding locale, with up to four weddings being held there a week-end; brides choosing between the historic chapel and the rustic 'chapel in the woods' a few yards away. The cemetery has an unusual number of interesting tombstones and a group memorial to about 50 Irish laborers who died while constructing the nearby railroad and were permitted burial there.

The newest addition to the Funk Grove attractions is the Sugar Grove Nature Center. Though in its developmental stage, it has a full schedule of imaginative programs, already filled into fall. Staffed by an energetic and vivacious director, the center is eager to host parties and nature adventures. Worth checking out for families!

Our next stop was the Lafayette Funk a few miles away. The home, built in 1863, was occupied by members of the Funk family until 1971 and then restored to its late 19th century appearance. While it features an elaborately decorated parlor with Chickering piano, Italian marble fireplace, and gold valance boards above windows, the most fascinating aspect of its history is that of being electrified by generator in 1910 by Lafayette Funk's son, an electrical engineer. Even the grass tennis court was lighted!

Next door to the home is an incredible gem and mineral museum, said to be the largest, collection in the world amassed by one person. Minerals from all over the world are displayed

A final stop was made for maple sirup (note Funk spelling) pur-

chases, and that turned into a tour and explanation of the sirup distilling facilities, now spotlessly in storage awaiting next year's sap harvest.

May Program

Tom Schwartz, State Historian and Interim Director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, presented an interesting talk on the significance of Matthew Marsh's 1836 map of the area that was then Sangamon County, though it encompassed the territory of three counties. He pointed out some of the peculiarities of the map: it has no roads drawn on it, though every waterway is included; towns known to be just 'paper' towns that were perhaps surveyed but not developed are shown; mill sites and groves such as Clarys, Sugar and Elkhart; and then the single labeling of Peter Cartwright's cabin. Schwartz stated that when such a map is discovered, the question has to be 'why' it was created.

The map appears to emphasize the transportation available by waterway and numerous villages that formed a developing commercial network of activity. The designation of the Cartwright cabin appears to be a marker for the hopeful development of a road from Beardstown to a proposed Beardstown/Sangamon canal connecting the Sangamon and Illinois rivers at Huron (which was surveyed and laid out by Abraham Lincoln).

This meshes with the exploration that Bob Mazrim has done in the area at both New Salem, where foundation remnants were found on land that Lincoln was deeded, and at Papsville where artifacts have been uncovered. A thriving market economy seems to have been hoped for and developing throughout the area, and the Marsh map is one more proof of it.

Nominees for Officers and Directors

The Board has approved the following slate of Officers and Directors to be presented at the Annual Meeting

Officers:

- President – Taylor Pensoneau
- Vice-president – Carolyn Moore
- Treasurer – Nancy Chapin
- Secretary – Sally Cadagin

Directors to 2009:

- Jack Billington
- Dan Buck
- Al Eck, Jr.
- Susan Hammond
- Steve Leonard

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

The Board has approved the following addition to the Constitution, to be voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Article V Officers and Board of Directors

Section 3. The Nominating Committee may present to the Board of Directors the name(s) of nominee(s) for the title of Honorary Director, a member (s) in good standing who has provided long and valued service to the Society. Upon approval by the directors, the name(s) shall be added to the Nominating Committee's slate for election by the membership at the Annual Meeting. An Honorary Director shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. This shall be a lifetime appointment.

*Gift in Memory of
John Chapin*

Michael and Jean Kienzler

2006 ANNUAL MEETING

*Annual Meeting, Banquet and Program June 20th
6:00 PM Cash bar with dinner at 7:00 PM*

**Sangamo Club
227 East Adams**

Reservation deadline, **June 16th** (\$5.00 surcharge on all reservations made after June 16th)

Name(s) _____

Menu choice: Marinated and Grilled chicken breast or Vegetarian Pasta Primavera

Number of Reservations: Member _____ Non Member _____ Telephone _____

Note: Non-member spouses/friends of members to pay non-member cost

The cost is **\$25.00** per member; **\$28.00** per non-member

Make your check payable to: The Sangamon County Historical Society

308 East Adams Street
Springfield, IL 62701

You may write **one** check **and include your SCHS dues for 2006-2007.**

To join or renew your membership, simply fill out the form below and mail it along with your membership (If you want to give a gift membership, fill in name, address and telephone number of new member(s); designate (X) in 'Gift" box; sign your name as Donor; and don't forget to include that total on your check. A letter announcing the gift will be sent to the recipient including the donor's name.

Individual -	\$17.50	Individual life -	\$250.00*
Family -	\$25.00	Family life -	\$400.00*
Sustaining -	\$50.00		*One time payment

Name _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____ Gift membership donor _____

If you would like to volunteer for Society activities, please indicate your interest: _____

Would you be willing to provide refreshments for one of the monthly programs? _____

If you would be willing to serve on a committee, please indicate your interest: _____

Total enclosed for membership _____

No. of Dinner reservations _____

Total enclosed for Annual Meeting _____

*Funk's Grove and Prairie Home
trip on May 13*



June, 2006

Thanks to Dan Buck and Thelma Peabody for these pictures.

The President's Corner

Not long ago, I started this column and now I am writing my last one. I hope it helped keep you informed of Society activities and enjoyed the events that took place. Please continue to support our Society and invite others to join and share our interest in Sangamon County history.

At our May Board meeting: we decided to permit electing a non-voting lifetime *Honorary Director* for reasons of long and valued service to the Society to be approved at our Annual Meeting; changed our website host from *Springnet1* to *Network Solutions* for less cost and more capabilities; renewed the position of Society Historian with the manager of the Sangamon Valley Collection selected to take the post which was previously occupied by Dr. Floyd S. Barringer (1915-1993), our first and only historian, who was never replaced after his death; and heard the Publications Committee's outline of the proposed book on Sangamon County history to come out by the County's bicentennial in 2021.

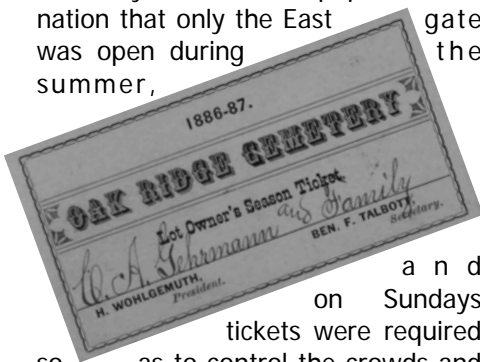
The tour of LaFayette Funk's 1865 *Prairie Home* in Shirley, Illinois, its adjoining *LaFayette Funk Gem and Mineral Museum*, the contents of which were collected by LaFayette's grandson, LaFayette II, and *Funk's Grove* was most interesting. The *Paul A. Funk Heritage Trust*, created to maintain the facilities as a public service, made the site tours free. Board member Phyllis Brissenden and members Susie and Charlie Hammond did a great job arranging the tour. State historian Thomas F. Schwartz' presentation on "*Mathew S. Marsh's 1836 Map of Sangamon County*" was excellent and his comments on the new findings relating to President Lincoln's work while in New Salem is revealing of the president's business acumen.

Please come to our Annual Meeting June 20 at the Sangamo Club. Our best wishes to the coming new slate of officers and Board members and my sincere thanks to our present ones for their excellent support, cooperation and hard work that made it an enjoyable year for everybody. Lastly, our sympathy and condolence to a long time past Board member, Melinda L. Garvert, on the loss of her father, Dr. Leo John Garvert, 91, who passed away April 27.

VRP.

Oak Ridge Cemetery 150th Anniversary Celebration

Oak Ridge Cemetery is celebrating its 150th Anniversary this year, and a picnic is planned for July 16th as the principal observance. In the 19th century the lovely, park-like cemetery was a very popular place for families to go for picnics on a sunny, summer Sunday afternoon. The cemetery was such a popular destination that only the East gate was open during the summer,



and on Sundays tickets were required so as to control the crowds and ensure that only 'proper persons' could gain entrance. Lot owners were issued season passes. "Visitors, and other persons than lot owners, may

obtain Tickets of admission, on application at the office of the Mayor, or the City Clerk, or to any member of the Board of Managers. For the accommodation of strangers, Tickets will at all times be found at the principal Hotels of the city, where they will be furnished to all proper persons, upon application therefore," stated the booklet published by the Board of Managers in 1879.

This year's celebration will honor that past with a special, community wide picnic. Box lunches will be available, or families are welcome to bring their own. There will be contests, musicians, stone rubbings and other special events.

It is hoped that families will use the event as a time to pass on their own history to the younger generation in attendance.

Save the date, July 16, and watch for more information as it unfolds!

Appeal to Members

Do you enjoy interesting history programs, or traveling to a local historic spot, or do you take pride in local history? If you can answer yes to any part of this question, or if you have friends or neighbors who would share these interests, then you need to renew your membership or encourage others to take advantage of membership in the SCHS. This organization has a vital part in helping to promote the preservation of Sangamon County history and would like for you to be a part of it. We are just concluding a very good year and look forward to a new period beginning in the Fall of 2006.

Carolyn Moore,
Membership Chairman



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Summer attractions at the
Vachel Lindsay Home*

Poets in the Parlor

June 10 2:30 pm—Corrine Frisch

July 15 2:30 pm TBA

August 12 2:30 pm - Vachel Lindsay
Repertory Group

Saturday Mornings at 603

June 17 10:00 am Dan Guillory -

"Carl Sandburg and his relationship
with the Chicago School of writers".

June 24 10:00 am 4th annual walk

**HOSPITAL SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
CELEBRATE 130TH ANNIVERSARY**

Many know St. John's Hospital in Springfield, Illinois as the oldest hospital in Sangamon County. A recent invitation from the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis to celebrate their 130th Anniversary tells us a lot about their history and that of St. John's Hospital and is the source of this report.

The Hospital Sisters came from Germany and arrived in Springfield, Illinois on November 11, 1875. There were twenty who came and they soon were at work to take care of patients in their homes and later in the Sister's residence that eventually became known as St. John's Hospital.

The Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis is an international organization of Franciscan Sisters that was founded in Germany in 1844. They have five provinces: Germany, Poland, USA, Japan and

the Region of India. The American province, which was founded in 1875 and is based in Springfield, Illinois, provides its healthcare ministry through the Hospital Sisters Health System that owns and runs eight hospitals in Illinois, which includes St. John's Hospital, and five others in Wisconsin. The American Province also provides missionary work to Haiti and Tanzania.

Three interesting historical tidbits connect the Hospital Sisters to President Abraham Lincoln. The first is that three of the Sisters, Sisters Francis, Bonosa Kloenne and Aldonza Eltrich, had cared for Mrs. Mary Todd Lincoln, even as they did their nursing duties at St. John's Hospital and throughout the city at that time. Mrs. Lincoln was residing then at the home of her sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Edwards, where she died on July 16, 1882. The second connection relates to St. John's Breadline. The Breadline started when the Hospital Sisters started serving meals to the poor and needy at the kitchen door of St. John's Hospital. In time, as the need increased, the service was continued at an old building facility near the hospital and this later became a program of the Springfield Catholic Charities since 1933. The building was eventually razed and the Breadline is now at its present location at 430 North Fifth Street, but its former site became the site of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. The third connection relates to the continued support of the Hospital Sisters for the Lincoln cause. On July 15, 2006, the Hospital Sisters will be commemorating the care they had given to Mary Todd Lincoln as they celebrate their 130th Anniversary and give gifts and donations to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation to support the programs of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM).

Those interested in attending the celebration to be held at the ABLPLM on 212 North Sixth Street from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on July 15 are directed to call 217-558-8877 for more information or to make a reservation with a donation. –
By Virgilio R. Pilapil, M.D.

Special thanks

As we come to the end of another year for the Historical Society, we want to thank not only Dr. Pilapil for his leadership, but those people who really keep the organization running smoothly, such as Janice Petterchak, who handles all of our publicity and press releases; Karen Everingham, who efficiently maintains our website, and posts the Historico each month; Sue Wall,

who has been our tireless bookseller; Theresa Power and Mary Marata at Robinsons, who have kept the society running smoothly almost from its beginnings; and Curtis Mann, our new, official historian, though he has been acting in that capacity for many years.

Without the continued support of these people, we would not be able to accomplish nearly as much!