



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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

MARCH 2010

History in the Making, March 16:

Scholar to Tell Story Behind How Illinois Became a State



Dr. David Scott

It was just 200 years ago that Illinois became a state.

Getting there wasn't easy, as scholar David Scott will show on Tuesday, March 16, when he speaks to the Society on "How Illinois Became A State."

The presentation, part of a series of free monthly program meetings that are open to the public, will begin at 7 p.m. at the Lincoln Public Library, 326 S. Seventh Street, Springfield.

Dr. Scott, a past president of the Illinois State Historical Society, vice-

president of the Sangamon County Historical Society and chair of its Long Range Planning Committee, will look at the key players in the drive toward statehood as well as their motives, and how their efforts shaped the way Illinois would be governed in the future.

He intends to illustrate his talk with maps that will be distributed to audience members "to indicate when the current boundaries of Illinois were put in place."

A retired university professor and educational policy consultant, Dr. Scott

has had a long running interest in the structure of government, underscored during the six years he spent as a full-time faculty member at Northern Illinois University, where he taught courses in state and local government.

A more broadly focused article he authored on "Illinois: From Territory to State," appeared in the November-December 2009 issue of *Illinois Heritage*, a magazine published six times a year by the Illinois State Historical Society.

In a profile last year in

Historico, Dr. Scott pointed out that his teaching experience at Northern Illinois University had allowed him to become "very familiar with the development, structure and functions of state and county governments."

The great-grandson of the president of Ohio State University, Dr. Scott has had a life-long interest in history and historic preservation. He is a former president of the Historic Preservation Association of Springfield and served on the Mayor's Historic Sites Commission.

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NEXT MONTH

Topic: Springfield's Donner Family: Trials of the Pioneer Trail, 1846

Speaker: Don Springer

Date: April 20 **Time:** 7 p.m.

Location: Brookens Library

University of Illinois, Springfield



Springer



Society Website Adds Immediacy; Mini Festival on June 15

I don't know if you have noticed, but the Society has a wonderful new resource!

Within hours of the funeral train marker's dedication at the Amtrak station, pictures and a report were up on our website! And again, immediately after the popular Interurban program was completed in the Carnegie Room of the library, a picture of the crowd and a synopsis of Dale Jenkins' fascinating talk was posted!

The report began with Dale's story of his sitting on the tracks as a small boy in order to stop the train and went right through his love of trains to the demise of the Interurban system in 1981. It was a wonderful program, and if you missed it, you can still savor many of the details online!

Vicky Whitaker also brought printouts of some of the Mercury Studio photos for which we are seeking identifications to the meeting, which proved helpful as new identifications were made. The pictures will be much more valuable as time goes on if we know

if we know who and what they represent.

Do check the sancohis.org site weekly as new pictures are put up regularly.

We are putting together a mini-festival in Williamsville around the annual meeting on June 15. Plans are still being developed, but activities will probably start about 5 p.m. with tours of the Box Car Museum, the Train Depot library, etc. before the regular dinner and program meeting at 6:30 p.m.

If you would like to have a limo or bus made available for the trip up and back, please call Theresa, 522-2500, and let her know.

You will not be making a commitment; just letting us know whether or not the service is worth pursuing. Obviously there will need to be a charge for the service.

Nancy

MARCH REPORT

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

New Family Members

Michael & Jennifer Logan
Judith A. Schmidt Family
Bert Morton & Lee Korty

Brad and Carolyn Swanson

New Individual Members

John E. Roberts
Ilene Casebeer

Donations

Richard McLane

The Society thanks you for your generosity in providing additional support for our programs!

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. For Individual Life Membership, there is a one-time payment of \$250 and for Family Life Member, a one-time payment of \$400. For a membership form and/or additional information, contact the Society at 522-2500 or write to us at 308 East Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701.



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 ♦ Don Springer ♦ Jane Vetter

Directors to 2012

Tim Krell ♦ Vicki Megginson
Donna Catlin ♦ Roger Whitaker ♦ James H. Beaumont

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.



ALL EYES ARE TRAINED on railroad historian Dale Jenkins as he addresses the Society's February 16 program meeting. The session, focusing on the now defunct Illinois Traction System, a 550 mile interurban rail line that served commuters here from 1895 through the mid 1950s, drew more than 100 attendees. Jenkins is president of the Illinois Traction Society. For more on the meeting, check the SCHS website, www.sancohis.org.

Salute to Barringers Set

“Soiree” Marking Iles’ 214th Birthday In March 27 Iles House “Fun Raiser”

Melinda Iles would have loved it!

Which is why it seems appropriate that on behalf of the Elijah Iles Foundation, she's the one issuing the invitation to a 214th birthday “soiree” in honor of her husband, an event that's bound to be full of fun, great food, entertainment and more, promises an energetic chair Bette Franke, who with former Foundation president Dick Hart, is handling all the details.

Expect lots of surprises, says Franke, who is keeping the wraps on what's in store for guests who will be paying \$100 per person to attend the March 27 event at Iles House.

“Since it's March, there will be lots of daffodils [the traditional March flower] in the decorations, and there will be live music by the River Ramblers Prairie Grass from Pawnee, but that's all I can tell you!” she says. “But everyone can expect to have a great time!”

One of the highlights of the event will be a Silent Auction, but
(Continued on page 6)



SALUTE SET: The Barringer family will be honored March 27 as part of the 214th birthday festivities for Elijah Iles.

Call Today!

Archives Visit March 31, Tour Limited to First 15

If you act quickly, you can take a walk back in time by signing up for a Society-sponsored tour of the State Archives.

The Wednesday, March 31 tour is limited to the first 15 people who phone in a reservation. Dave Joens, Illinois State Archives Director, will lead the tour that begins at 1:30 p.m. with stops at the reference room, conservation lab, the Director's Office and some of the stacks.

Along the way, Joens will talk about the Archives and its various functions. The tour should run about an hour or less, depending on how many questions are fielded by the group.

Call Theresa at 522-2500 to reserve a spot and let her know if you would be interested in eating lunch as a group beforehand. Unless other arrangements are made, the group will meet in the lobby of the Norton Building (enter on north side). Parking is on Edwards Street or in the visitor's lot. Special arrangements can be made for drop off in the parking lot if necessary.



Norton Building

Taste of History Leads to a Life-Long Passion

You never know where history will strike.

For Society board member Sue Wall it came in the form of a Girl Scout troop project.

"I never had been interested in the subject until my daughters became Girl Scouts," she admits. "When their troop decided to pursue a merit badge that involved learning about the community, I volunteered to help, taking on the task of researching Springfield history."

The rest, literally, *is* history.

Wall has been a member of the Society for several years, after turning that first taste of local history into a volunteer job at the Lincoln Library's Sangamon Valley Room. "I've donated four to five hours a week there for at least 20 years," she says. "In fact, that's where I learned about the Sangamon County Historical Society."

Wall, who has served several terms on the board, has enjoyed participating in a variety of Society activities, from the Cemetery Walk — her personal favorite — to excursions and monthly program meetings. She also loves selling Society publications. "You get a chance to talk to people when you do that," she says.

Born in Springfield, Wall is a graduate of Sacred Heart Academy and Springfield Junior College (now Benedictine). After college, she took lab training at St. Francis Hospital in Peoria and worked as a Medical Technologist, running the lab at McFarland Mental Health Center for 21 years before retiring in 2001.

Widowed in 1973, her two grown daughters now live in St. Louis. She also has a 15-year-old grandson, a fact that has sharpened her interest in the need for making students more aware of local history. "We should remember our roots and pass the knowledge on to the younger generation."

When Wall isn't involved in Society activities, you can find her sketching, doing needlework, or some other craft. "I love crafting," she says, and her skill along those lines hasn't gone unnoticed.

Wall has taught drawing and painting as well as other crafts to members of the Springfield Ceramics and Crafts Club, a by-invitation membership organization of over 250 local crafters and artists.



"We should remember our roots and pass the knowledge on to the younger generation."

-SUE WALL

She has also served on the SCCC's board of directors and was Crafts Chair for two years, a key position in its operations.

"I've enjoyed my association with the Sangamon County Historical Association and the interesting people I have gotten to know," says Wall, "plus the fact that I've learned a lot more about my home town!"

Behind The Headlines

Lincoln Funeral Train: Facts and Perhaps Some Fiction

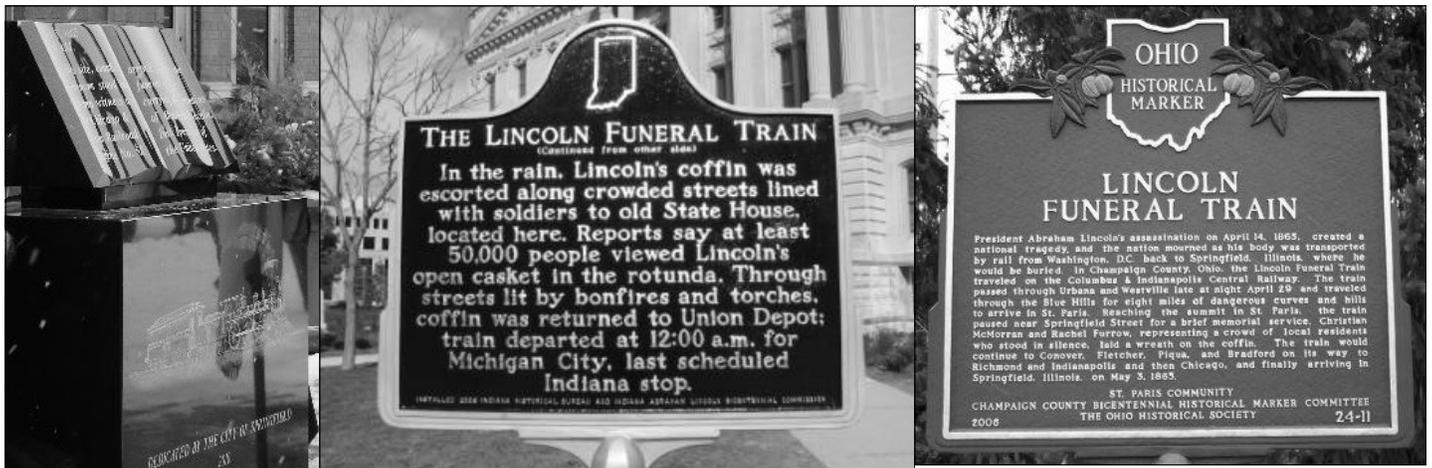
As anyone who has done historical research knows, there's plenty of fiction parked alongside all those facts, especially when it comes to high profile figures and events.

And plenty of scholarly dispute, too.

Take the Lincoln Funeral Train, which has gotten its share of publicity here and elsewhere in recent weeks, with the installation of a five-foot high granite memorial at the Amtrak Station in Springfield. It was one of the few spots along the 1,654 mile long route that lacked a historical reminder of the journey from Washington D.C. to what would be Lincoln's final resting place here.

Freedom, Mr. Lincoln and Friends, Mr. Lincoln and the Founders, and Mr. Lincoln and New York.

The Lincoln Institute supports research and disseminates information on Lincoln. It is also involved in the presentation of the Lincoln and Soldiers project Lincoln Prize that recognizes the best printed and electronic work on the Civil War era; the Hay-Nicolay Prize (awarded annually by the Abraham Lincoln Association and the Abraham Lincoln Institute for the best doctoral dissertation on President Lincoln and his Administration); research at Knox College on the works and correspondence of Lincoln; and two other major literary awards



LATE BLOOMERS: Springfield may have been the latest municipality to play Lincoln Funeral Train catch-up, but not the only one. Indianapolis put up its plaque (center) last March, and Paris, Ohio, in 2006, among others, research shows.

Springfield may have waited nearly 150 years to install the marker, but it wasn't the only municipality along the historic route of the funeral train that waited until the 21st Century to catch up. Among the others? Calumet City, Illinois, that installed a marker in May, 2009, Indianapolis in March 2009, and Paris, Ohio, in 2006.

The history of the Lincoln Funeral Train's journey has its share of unresolved questions, including the name of the engineer that brought the train into the station in Springfield, to the engine's number, and the size of the crowds along the train's route. *Historico* got caught up in the latter dispute last month, when it used information on the public turnout posted on a website, *Abraham Lincoln's Classroom* (abrahamlincolnsclassroom.org), an arm of the Lincoln Institute, one of six inter-related-organizations funded by the Lehrman Institute. The others are *Mr. Lincoln's White House*, *Mr. Lincoln and*

dealing with American history.

The *Abraham Lincoln's Classroom* website notes that "The Lincoln Funeral Train embarked on a trip that took 1,700 miles and involved an estimated 30 million mourners." That's a pretty impressive figure, considering the population of the United States in 1860 was 31,443,000 and in 1870, 39,818,000, observed a keen-eyed *Historico* reader, James Cornelius, curator of the Lincoln Collection at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield.

"For 1865, let us call it 35 million. If someone assumed that 30 million of those 35 million people at the time were "mourning" Lincoln's death, they are likely wrong. It was perhaps roughly 20 million or 15 million to be safe," he says.

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Iles Event Will Pay Tribute to Barringer Family

(continued from page 3)

it won't be your typical fare. Bidders will get a chance to take home elegant antiques, furniture, paintings, jewelry, crystal and more, all contributed by Foundation members and supporters. "We're calling it a 'fun raiser,'" she explains. Proceeds from the Auction and the event will help maintain and restore what is Springfield's oldest house.

The evening will also provide an opportunity for the Foundation to honor the late Floyd S. Barringer and his family, who have donated much of the period furnishings

that are in the house. Dr. Barringer, a Springfield neurosurgeon with a life-long love of history, was instrumental in the restoration and preservation of Iles House and other historic buildings here. He was the author of numerous books about local history and played key roles in several history organizations including the Sangamon

County Historical Society of which he served as president from 1963 to 1964.

"Floyd and Winifred Barringer were the sparks that have fired the dreams

collection of early Sangamon County furnishings, the Lincoln Law office, the Old State Capitol, the Freeman Hughes House, their Spring Creek farmhouse," Hart points out.

"Floyd also left an unmatched legacy of written materials on local history--*Historic*

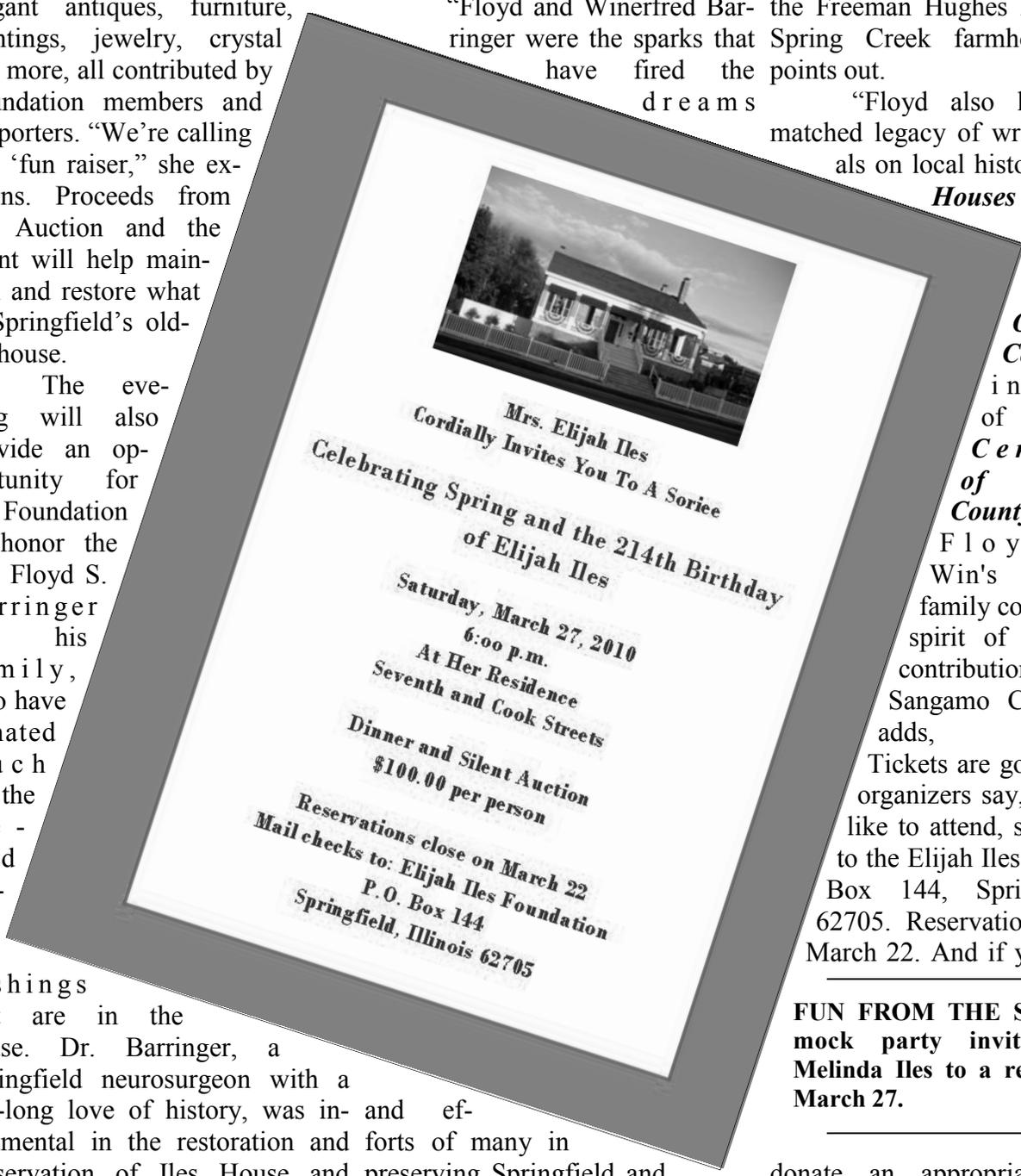
Houses of Springfield, A Walk Through Oak Ridge Cemetery, an inventory of all of the Cemeteries of Sangamon County. Today,

Floyd and Win's wonderful family continues their spirit of service and contribution to the Old Sangamo Country," he adds,

Tickets are going fast, the organizers say, so if you'd like to attend, send a check to the Elijah Iles Foundation, Box 144, Springfield, IL 62705. Reservations close on March 22. And if you'd like to

FUN FROM THE START: The mock party invitation from Melinda Iles to a real soiree on March 27.

donate an appropriate Auction item, bring it to Paris Cleaners, 1013 East Ash, from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays. They'll store it till the auction and you'll get a receipt for the donation.



Sangamon County
Historical Society

ID Photo Contest



Sleuth of the
Month:

Dick Levi



HEY, THAT'S ME! Dick Levi, now president of Levi, Ray & Shoup, Springfield, recognized himself in this November, 1964 photo taken outside the McDonald's on MacArthur Boulevard, Springfield. The shot is part of the Mercury Studios Collection at the Lincoln Library's Sangamon Valley Collection. Levi becomes the latest semi-finalist in an ongoing photo ID contest sponsored by the Society to help identify the people and events in the 500 photos now being digitized. Levi is second from the right. While he couldn't recall the names of the fellows to his left or right and the young man on the far left, the others are, from left, Howard Pence, Sam Pulliam, Gary Osing, and Ron Bormida. A prize drawing will be held in May for those who have submitted full or partial photos IDs since the contest began. For this month's photo, see page 8 or check out www.sancohis.org.

Lincoln Funeral Train: Facts and Perhaps Some Fiction

(Continued from page 5)

Cornelius points out that Lincoln received 2,210,000 votes in 1864. "Multiply by five for their families and MAYBE double that for sympathetic anti-Lincolnists," he says, and you may get a better view of the numbers of mourners. In addition, "there were hundreds, maybe thousands of arrests in April, 1865 of people celebrating his death."

The bottom line, Cornelius says, is that there were eight million who saw the funeral or the train itself, "possibly 10 million."

The 30 million was included in story about the Springfield monument unveiling that was posted on the Society website (www.sancohis.org) immediately after the ceremony and has been changed on both the site and the PDF of the February *Historico*. The change was too late to catch in mailed editions of the newsletter.

It would be simple if the controversy over the funeral train stopped there, but it doesn't. Scholars are still arguing over some other details.

Cornelius points to *The Lincoln Funeral Train* in which author Scott Trostel in his 2002 book, writes that the engineer from Chicago to Springfield was *James Colting*.

"Rumors of a second engine being added at Joliet are plausible, with its engineer named J. Jackman, but that part cannot be substantiated even in newspapers. Colting drove engine No. 58 of the Chicago and Alton Railroad."

In 1917, the Illinois State Historical Society *Journal* published an article by J.W. Becker, editor of the *Jerseyville Republican*, Jerseyville, Illinois, who interviewed William S. Porter, a special brakeman assigned to the Lincoln Funeral train. Porter's recollections are also cited on the *Abraham*

Lincoln's Classroom website.

In it, Porter contends that there were two locomotives selected for the final run of the funeral train for the 184 mile trip from Chicago to Springfield, No. 40, a "pilot" train driven by *Henry Russell*, and the other, No. 57 with an engineer named *James Cotton* at the controls who brought the train into the Springfield station.

Pilot trains were used along the entire route of the Lincoln funeral train, running a few minutes ahead of the main section for security and to assist the main locomotives on steep inclines. Both wood burning steam locomotives, Porter said, were decorated with similar crepe, bunting, a portrait of Lincoln and a wreath of flowers. When the "pilot" train arrived at the outskirts of Springfield, it waited for and was coupled with the main section before entering the city, he told Becker.

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Can You ID This Month's Mystery Photo?



YOU MIGHT BE IN THIS photo, or perhaps know someone who is. It's another in the Society's series of Photo ID contest shots to help the Sangamon Valley Collection at the Lincoln Library identify Mercury Studio photos they're now digitizing. If you can name one or more of those in the photo, send the info along to research@sancohis.org. Your name will be entered in a prize drawing scheduled for May. For more photos, go to www.sancohis.org.

2010 Meeting Calendar

Monthly Programs

(Third Tuesday)

April 20

*Springfield's Donner Family:
Trials of the Pioneer Trail, 1846*

Speaker: Don Springer

May 18

Governors and Gangsters

Speaker: Taylor Pensoneau

June 15

Annual Meeting

2010 Board Meetings

March 10

April 14

May 12