



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

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MARCH 2022



March 15 Meeting: "Lost Fashion"

Archaeologist to Detail What's Been Gleaned From 1908 Race Riot Home Excavation Site

Archaeology is more than digging up the past. For Chelsea Coates, it also includes piecing together what's found.

Coates, part of the Springfield-based archaeology research firm Fever River Research's team, will detail her work and findings at the Society's Tuesday, March 15 meeting.

The meeting will be held in the Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 South Seventh Street, starting at 5:30 p.m. The Society's January and February meetings were presented online, reflecting Covid guidelines limiting large

gatherings, an issue the Society has been addressing month-by-month.

As it has for other historical sites across the region, Fever River was tapped to do an archeological survey before construction could begin on the Carpenter Street underpass rail project, one that involved doing a partial excavation of five houses destroyed during the riot, all of them constructed in the 1840s and early 1850s.

Archaeological testing began in late 2014 and in 2018 resulted in a decision to shift the railroad right of way to the east to preserve in place those houses. Archeological site work was completed in 2020. Since then, Fever River has been processing

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ARCHEOLOGIST Chelsea Coates at work, inventorying clothing and other artifacts uncovered in one of five homes destroyed by fire by a white mob during the Springfield Race Riot in August 1908. The archaeological investigation has provided details about those forced to flee their homes.

Fever River Research photo

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For more than a decade, the Society's Special Project Grants have helped underwrite small but significant history projects that might not have been doable without local financial support. As the 2022 Special Projects Grant deadline approaches, we take a look at what the program has accomplished.

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Stephanie Martin

It's Time to Celebrate Women's History Month. Here's How!

It's women's history month!

Here are some resources to learn more about Sangamon County women's history.

I'll start with *Unsung Heroines: A Salute to Springfield Women* by Melinda Kwedar, a book the Society published in 1977.



From women's organizations to firsts for women, *SangamonLink.org*, our online encyclopedia of Sangamon County history, has multiple articles on local women's history.

In the right side column, under "Categories" click on "Women." *The Pictorial Souvenir Central Illinois 1912* includes three black woman Springfield business owners, Mary Francis Penn Clark, Mrs. M.A. Tucker, and Miss P.E. Florville.

It's available on the Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/details/pictorialsouvenir1912>.

I hope you enjoy exploring these resources!

* * *

Know kids who are interested in history? Check out these local summer camps!



The Springfield Art Association is hosting a five day *History Detectives* camp for Sixth grade through high school students June 13-17. They will take field trips

around town and explore what it's like being a historian.

In July, the Illinois State Museum is hosting *Time Travelers* camp for 8-11 year olds where they will explore fashion, music, technology, and culture through



art and science activities from the 1890s to the 1990s and the *Guardians of the Museum* camp for



11-14 year olds will explore what it's like working at a museum. Learn more on their Facebook page.

The Springfield and Central Illinois African

American History Museum is bringing back their History Camp. Dates and more details will be announced soon.



These are wonderful opportunities for young people.



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You can download back issues of *Historico* in PDF format by going to our website, www.sangamohistory.org or sancohis.org. Catch us on Facebook and Twitter. Send event announcements to historicoeditor@gmail.com.

Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor.

Cinda Klickna, Mike Kienzler, contributors

April 30 Deadline Set To Seek Special Project Grant Funding

Have an idea for a history project that can make a difference? The Sangamon County Historical Society wants to hear from you, provided you apply for one of its annual Special Project Grants whose winners will be announced in June. The deadline for entering a proposal is April 30.

For more than a decade, the Society's Special Project Grants program has provided the underpinnings for dozens of small but significant historical preservation projects with a powerful impact.

They've ranged from something as simple as a grave marker in a historical Rochester cemetery to furnishing period school equipment for a replica of 1800s one-room school house at the Clayville Historic Site in Pleasant Plains.

The grant program has provided funds to assist the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum with several projects including bringing to Sangamon County a national traveling exhibit tracing the history and impact of the Negro Baseball League, and the Illinois State His-

torical Society to produce "*The Mysterious Bard of Sangamon*," a film on poet John Hancock.

Grants have also been used to digitize and thus preserve the architectural plans of historic Sacred Heart Chapel (1895) and the Ursula Hall Music Conservatory (1895) on the grounds of the former Ursuline Academy on North Fifth Street, a Catholic college preparatory high school that operated from 1857 to 2007 and was affiliated with Springfield College in Illinois.

The campus including the two landmark buildings, became a branch of Benedictine University which closed the Springfield operation in 2018.

"Grants have ranged from a few hundred dollars to over \$1,000 that because of their size and scope are often overlooked by federal, state, and large private funding organizations that underwrite major, often six-figure projects and have a long application process that often employs professional grant preparers," explains Peter Harbison, chair of the Society's Special Project Grants Committee.

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Historic Neighborhood to Get A Close Look When Experts Share Their Findings, April 19

Just who were Susan Lawrence Dana's neighbors along Fourth Street's 800 Block that stretched to the Governor's Mansion in the late 1800s and into the early 1900s?

You'll find out on Tuesday, April 19, when the Society and the Dana Thomas House Foundation provide a joint and up-close look at this stellar historic neighborhood and the people who lived there. Providing the details will be Allcent Smith, a former Foundation board member and Cinda Klickna, a member of the Society's board and secretary of the Foundation.

Their presentation will draw upon a walking tour brochure published by the Foundation with funds from a Sangamon County Historical Society Grant. The program will be held in the Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 South Seventh Street, starting at 5:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744

Society's Special Project Grants Have Long-Lasting Impact

(Continued from page 3)

"Our process is much simpler. Just look at the rules, answer the questions, and submit the application by the deadline date." Information and an application is available on the Society's website, sangamonhistory.org.

Harbison's committee, made up of board volunteers who review and discuss the applications and recommend the recipients and proposed funding to the Society's board, which makes the final decisions. Winners will be invited to attend the Society's annual dinner in June and provide a brief description of their project.

"There are some qualifiers in terms of funding," Harbison noted, rules that come from years of experience that even pre-date the formalized Special Projects Grant process that was established in 2013 to deal with funding requests. Prior to that, individuals and groups that requested project funding were addressed by the board across the calendar year and included everything from an Eagle Scout's desire for financial support to upgrade a historic gravesite off Chatham Road in Leland Grove to a request for funds for major overhaul to the sound system at the Old State Capitol.

Here's a look at the projects the Society has funded since 2013 when the formal grant process was instituted:

2013

Recipient: *Abraham Lincoln Association*



Project Description: Help purchase tee shirts and caps for youths participating in a reenactment of the life of Civil War soldiers marking 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Recipient: *Springfield Art Association*

Project Description: Printing and promotional costs in conjunction with four other Springfield historic groups that jointly presented "*The Fiery Trial: Civil War Stories by Candlelight*" marking the 150th Emancipation Proclamation anniversary.

Recipient: *Village of Williamsville*

Project Description: Underwrite graphic design fees for a historic site marker detailing Williamsville's early transportation system including the Interurban rail that provided a direct link to Springfield and points east and west from the late 1800s through the mid 1900s.

2014

Recipient: *Pleasant Plains Historical Society*

Project Description: Permanent signage for a new three-quarter mile loop nature trail at its Clayville Historic Site.

Recipient: *Tara McClellan McAndrew*

Project Description: Produce a series of short stories about the history of Sangamon County on *WUIS-FM*.

Recipient: *Village of Williamsville*

Project Description: Phase two of a signage program that detailed Williamsville's involvement in the Interurban, an early mass transportation system.

2015

Recipient: *Tara McClellan McAndrew*

Project Description: Write and produce stories about Springfield and Sangamon County history on Springfield's National Public Radio station, *WUIS-FM*.

Recipient: *Oak Ridge Cemetery Foundation*

Project Description: Replace the broken automatic controller in the bell tower at Oak Ridge Cemetery to resume tolling on the hour and half hour as well as for special events.

Recipient: *Illinois State Museum Society*

Project Description: Help establish a tree ring analysis laboratory at the Museum's Research and Collection Center to accurately determine the areas date, chronology and settlement patterns.

2016

Recipient: *Oak Ridge Cemetery Foundation*

Project Description: Restoration of a weathered tablet behind which Abraham Lincoln's remains were placed in the receiving tomb of the cemetery.

Recipient: *Williamsville Public Library and Museum*

Project Description: Historical marker for the Price-Prather House, built in 1868 by cattle breeder James Price and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recipient: *Eight Area History organizations*

Project Description: The Abraham Lincoln Historic Site, Edwards Place, the Old State Capitol, Elijah Iles House, the Dana-Thomas House, the Vachel Lindsay Home, the Executive Mansion and SCHS shared the award that covered fees for musicians, singers and performers for a community-wide program at various historic sites to show how Christmas was celebrated here in the 1800s.

2017

Recipient: *Pleasant Plains Historical Society*

Project Description: Funds went to outfitting a newly built replica of a log cabin school at the Clayville Historic site to provide insight into what the interior of the school looked like in the early 1800s when Illinois was a young state.



Recipient: *Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum*

Project Description: Research and develop data, pictures and information pertaining to early African American pioneers who settled in Sangamon County and surrounding Central Illinois areas. The information was used to create new exhibits, permanent displays and related programs.

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Recipient: *Springfield Art Association/Historic Edwards Place*
Project Description: Install an exhibit of archeological artifacts dating to circa 1835 -1850 to provide a glimpse into an early 19th century kitchen.

Recipient: *Oak Ridge Cemetery Foundation*

Project Description: Create a donor plaque to display the names and donors contributing to the restoration of Oak Ridge Cemetery's handwritten interment Books 1 and 2.

2018

Recipient: *Sarah Jones*

Project Description: Digitize and thus preserve blueprints of the Sacred Heart Chapel (1895) and the Ursula Hall Music Conservatory (1895) designed by William Conway, Springfield's first architect.



Recipient: *Rochester Historic Preservation Society*

Project Description: Signage at Rochester Historic Park.

Recipient: *Oak Hill Cemetery, Clear Lake*

Project Description: Creation of a Donner Party memorial plaque and landscaping.

Recipient: *Rochester Sesquicentennial Committee*

Project Description: Plaque marking the grave of Rochester's first settler, James McCoy who is buried in the 1800s pioneer section of the Rochester Township Cemetery.

2019

Recipient: *Central 3 Community First Project Inc.*

Project Description: Signage for first Black firehouse in Springfield describing its history and role in the 1908 race riot.

Recipient: *Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum*

Project Description: Help underwrite the cost of bringing to the museum a major national traveling exhibit on the historic Negro League.

Recipient: *Pleasant Plains Historical Society*

Project Description: Rebuild wheel chair ramps to three historic buildings at its Clayville Historic Site,

Recipient: *Oak Ridge National Cemetery*

Project Description: Create an interpretive marker with historical information about the former third street entrance sign (circa 1900), now restored.

Recipient: *Springfield Art Association/Historic Edwards Place*

Project Description: Help underwrite the cost of bringing a traveling history-in-a-trunk program to area classrooms.

2020

Recipient: *Pleasant Plains Historical Society*

Project Description: Digitize slides, photos, and newspaper articles for displays at its Clayville Historic Site and off-site.

Recipient: *Dana Thomas House Foundation*

Project Description: Develop a presentation of information about Susan Dana's neighbors and neighborhood during the

years she lived in the Frank Lloyd Wright House via webinar, printed brochures and walking tours.

Recipient: *The Veterans Memorial Foundation*

Project Description: Erect an interpretive plaque for the Grand Army of the Republic Mound at Oak Ridge Cemetery that includes information on the 98 veterans buried there.

Recipient: *Kathryn Harris*

Project Description: Erect an interpretive marker at the "Colored Section" of Oak Ridge Cemetery.

Recipient: *The Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum*

Project Description: Provide board members and volunteers with training in the techniques involved in recording oral history and purchase audiovisual equipment to enhance AAMH exhibits so that information can be provided in an alternate format.

Recipient: *The Abraham Lincoln Association*

Project Description: Erect an interpretive sign identifying the site for the proposed Lincoln's Springfield Cottage Project near the Lincoln Home to show how the Lincolns lived before the expansion to the two-story house there today.

2021

Recipient: *Documentary-maker Mary Frances, for a Grave-stone for Olive Price at Oak Ridge Cemetery*

Project Description: Provide a grave stone for Olive Price, sister of Eva Carroll Monroe who founded the Lincoln Colored Home in Springfield for black orphans and widows in 1898 and operated it for 35 years. Price helped her sister raise initial money for the home at 427 South Twelfth Street. The building, the first Black orphanage in Illinois, is on the National Register of Historic Places. Springfield anthropologist and college professor Mary Frances recently produced a documentary about Monroe's efforts.

Recipient: *Illinois State Historical Society*

Project Description: Funds helped defray production costs in



making *The Mysterious Bard of Sangamo*, a professionally-acted film based on the life of talented poet John Hancock, a well-traveled, well-educated English-man who made his home in Springfield in the

1830s and 1840s, and identified authorship of his work when it was published in the frontier newspaper, *Sangamo Journal* only with the letter "H."

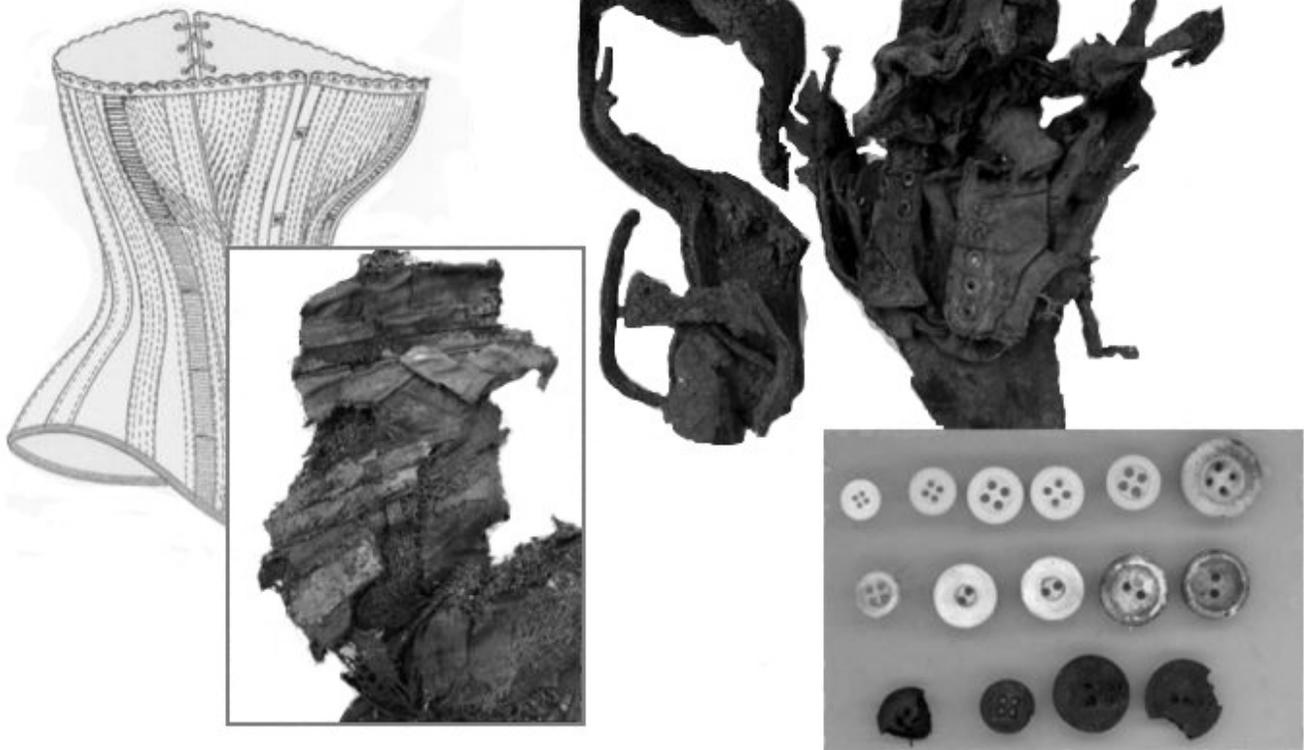
Recipient: *Springfield and Central Illinois African-American History Museum*

Project Description: Provided funding toward creation of a permanent guide to the "Colored Section" at historic Oak Ridge Cemetery including an interactive map with information about persons buried there.

Recipient: *Oak Ridge Cemetery Foundation Tree Committee*

Project Description: The grant provided the committee with funds to identify and place permanent markers for select trees that have historic significance.

LOST AND FOUND



PIECES OF HISTORY: A wide variety of clothing fragments and buttons were found in a trunk in one of the Fever River Research-excavated home sites. Clothing-related items included a corset of the period (illustrated) whose fragments are above at left and shoes (upper right). Coates has pieced together a wide range of clothing and machine and hand-made household fabrics and formal wear that might have been in the wardrobe of a younger middle class Black woman.

Fever River Research Photo

Archeologist Finds Clues to Those Displaced by Springfield's 1908 Race Riot

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and inventorying the artifacts from the houses.

Last October, Coates and her colleagues -- archaeologist and architectural historian Christopher Stratton and Fever River director Floyd Mansberger -- detailed some of their findings for teachers and historians in a three-part presentation at the annual Conference on Illinois History held in Springfield. The presentation was entitled *"Why Bother with the Archeology of Burned Houses from 1908: The Significance of*

the Archeology of Mob Violence on Jim Crow Era Black Households in the Post-George Floyd Era."

Coates is expected to review and update her portion of the original presentation for the Society's March meeting.

The finds in a charred and burned trunk and dresser from one of the houses has provided Coates and her colleagues with a treasure chest of fragments and buttons from clothing-related items such as corsets and shoes. In addition, there were over 1,200 fabric fragments that have been sorted into individual garments, household

linen and other personal accessories including such common personal items as a handkerchief and an umbrella.

Coates joined Fever River Research in August, 2019 after earning a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in anthropology in 2011 and a Masters degree in historical archeology in 2014, both from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Coates also earned a Masters degree in Cultural Resource Management from Colorado-based Adams State University in 2021 and is a Field Archaeologist at the University of South Carolina.

SCHS ON-LINE PROGRAM GUIDE

When the Corona virus prevented the Society from having face-to-face meetings back in early 2020 and through most of 2021, we did the next best thing: videoed our programs and put them on-line.

The February 2022 meeting continued that tradition and is available on You Tube. We will continue to make our in-person vs. on-line meeting decisions on a month-to-month basis. If you want to play catch-up on the months we've been unable to gather as a group or could not make a meeting, check out the list below, bring them up on your computer or connect your computer's video output to your television set and watch on a big screen.

HERE'S THE BASIC HOW-TO:

1. Go to the Society's website. sangamonhistory.org.
2. At the top of the page, go to the menu and tap **BOOKS & VIDEOS**
3. On the **BOOKS & VIDEO** page, you will find links--by month and year.
4. If you're watching it on You Tube Hit the iconic "Skip the Ad" button [that's part of the You Tube experience unless you like commercials.]
5. Enjoy!

February, 15 2022: *Black Experiences in Education.* The Sangamon County Historical Society marked Black History Month on Tuesday, February 15 with an on-line presentation focused on education that looked at the experiences of two Black female educators—one in the 1870s, the other in the 1950s, who overcame prejudice in their careers and at the history and fate of the Ambidexter Industrial and Normal Institute for Black students established in 1857 in Springfield and almost erased from the history books when the building in which it was housed was twice threatened by razing, once in 2013 and again in 2018. Catch the full presentation on You Tube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0G96IRHE9k>.

January, 2022: *History of Springfield's Movie Theater Industry.* It's a Powerpoint available both as a downloadable PDF and on You Tube and just like the silent movies it includes, there is no sound, but if your computer has an extra drive, you might want to add a little background music, you might want to pop in "*The Very Best of Ragtime.*" To download it, go to https://sancohis.org/PDFs/THEATER_PDF.pdf or watch it on You Tube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTAV7maS-sE>.

November, 2021: *The Mysterious Bard of Sangamon*

mon," can be found on Vimeo (a video sharing website), at <https://vimeo.com/626671152/daae07f0cc?m0>

May 2021: *A Pictorial History of the Construction of the Vachel Lindsay Bridge.* Kansas City-based Lance Warren, Research Librarian/Archivist with Burns McDonnell, provides a pictorial and in-depth look at this iconic Springfield landmark and the story and people behind its creation and Lake Springfield.

April 2021: *Virginia Eifert: Springfield Native, Prolific Naturalist.* Learn about the life and legacy of Virginia Eifert from researcher John Hallwas and the Illinois State Museum's Tracy Pierceall. Eifert, a naturalist, author, and artist, worked at the Museum where she created, wrote and edited its *The Living Museum* magazine and publications on Illinois flora and fauna, rivers, people, and history. In 2019, Hallwas, who specializes in "forgotten voices from Illinois history," provided the cover story on Eifert for *Illinois History Magazine*, whose archives are housed at the Western Illinois University Library.

March 2021: *Lake Springfield In Illinois: Public Works and Community Design in the Mid-Twentieth Century.* The perfect primer for the Society's May meeting, historians Curtis Mann and Robert Mazrim provide details from their new book and the story-behind-the story that motivated them to take a closer look at a public project that helped shape Springfield's future.

February 2021: *Shine A Light Project: Historic Preservation and Interpretation on Springfield's East Side.* Preservationists Sue Massie and Kathryn Harris take a look at efforts to preserve the John Taylor House, the Lincoln Colored Home and Fire House No. 5 and how each site contributed to the lives of African-Americans here.

January 2021: *In The Beginning: A Look at Sangamon County 200 Years Ago.* Using maps, illustrations and a knowledgeable voice-over, Curtis Mann, head of the City of Springfield Lincoln Library's Sangamon Valley Collection, provides an illustrated look at both the people and geography that played into the development of Springfield.

November 2020: *"I Think That We Will Soon Be In Springfield": An Illinois Civil War Soldier's Quotations About Sangamon County from their Personal Letters.* Author Mark Flotow brings the Civil War to its grass roots, in a program that illustrates the letters home by including audio readings of some of these moving stories provided by Sangamon County Historical Society members

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Sangamon County Historical Society 2021-2022 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 at living at the same address. Be sure to list their names.

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:

Choose Your Level of Membership: Regular (\$30) Pioneer (\$100) Settler (\$250) Trailblazer (\$500)
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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 \$ _____

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