



Historico

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

OCTOBER, 2008

Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk October 5



Perry Hall welcomes a visitor to the Cemetery Walk at Oak Ridge Cemetery.

The Sangamon County Historical Society will hold its 12th annual "Echoes of Yesteryear" cemetery walk at Oak Ridge Cemetery on Sunday, October 5, beginning at noon. The last tour of the day starts at 3:15 pm. A trolley will be available at the parking area to take visitors to the start of the walk and back again. Traditionally, the largest crowds arrive at 12:00. Later arrivals may avoid a long wait for the trolley. Weather permitting, visitors arriving after 2:30 will be parked in a new area to make their return to their cars easier.

The "Historama" area will again feature exhibits by historical associations. Society books will be available for purchase, and the Springfield International Folk Dancers will perform. The popular Prairieland Dulcimers will provide music, and popcorn, cookies, and cider will be for sale. (*Continued on page 3*)

INSIDE

Note From Nancy-----	2
September Meeting-----	2
Trail of Death-----	3
SCHS Treasure-----	4
Sherman News-----	4
Gifts and Memberships-----	4
African-American Farmers-----	5
Old Settlers Day-----	5
New Springfield Book-----	5
Calendar-----	6

Statehouse Grounds Statuary October 21, 5:30 pm Statehouse Visitors' Center Roberta and Carl Volkmann Limited to 30 by reservation only: 522-2500

The Volkmann's new book, *Springfield's Sculptures, Monuments, and Plaques*, has raised our awareness of many assets we have overlooked for years, among them some of the statuary on the Statehouse grounds. October 21 will be a special opportunity to view the various statuary and plaques while receiving background information from the experts!

The Volkmanns have lived in Springfield since 1960, teaching and absorbing the local history. Roberta taught music and teacher training courses locally before serving as an fine arts consultant for the State Board of Education, and Carl taught history at Tri-City High School before becoming a librarian and eventually Director of Lincoln Library. The book was their opportunity to combine their interests.



Carl is also a past President of the Sangamon County Historical Society.

The walk will begin at the *White-tailed Deer* statue at the capitol complex visitors' center at 5:30 PM and conclude with refreshments at the Pasfield House. In case of rain the group will meet at the Lincoln Library Carnegie Room North to receive the same information without actually looking at the statues.

Note from Nancy

A few years ago then Director Dave Brady suggested to the Board that it would be nice to publish a county history for the county's bi-centennial in 2021. That date being some 16 years in the future, the Board readily agreed. Since then Curtis Mann, Dave, and John Huther have done a little preliminary work from time to time, but no real plan has ever been made to achieve publication by 2021! Recently several of us met to ascertain whether or not we really were going to proceed with the project, and if so, what format would it take, how were we going to proceed, and how were we going to pay for what most certainly would be an expensive endeavor!

Since the project completion is still some thirteen years in the future, it was pretty easy to conclude that we DID want to do it. However, concepts of what 'it' was were all over the map, from a pictorial, cocktail table book to a detailed, research tome. The verdict on format is still out (along with a lot of other things like procedure and cost), though the process of thinking through what we want to do was productive and fairly conclusive: we want to end up with something with the validity of the research tome and the appeal of the picture book! Seems logical enough!

More was achieved at the meeting than first meets the eye: a commitment of time, effort and determination was made; the scope of the project, not to be taken lightly, became apparent to all; and some of the pitfalls and benefits of various approaches were realized. We will keep you informed.

Curtis Mann Speaks at September Society Meeting

The September meeting of the Society convened in the Farrell and Ann Gay Museum of Springfield History at the Iles House where "Springfield as Urban Frontier 1818-1836" was exhibited through September. Speaking on the topic "At Early Candlelight," Sangamon Valley Collection Manager Curtis Mann presented evidence that early Springfield citizens did not fit the stereotype of rough frontier men and women. Rather, they actively organized into groups for a number of purposes. Curtis uncovered evidence that early Springfield citizens were extremely busy writing constitutions, developing by-laws, and meeting "at early candlelight."

Curtis described an early Masonic lodge, Bible societies, a temperance society aimed at youth, The Sangamon County Colonization Society, and educational groups which promoted improved schooling and a subscription library. He also discovered in his research organizations designed to provide diversions and recreation including military groups, a thespian corps, and a chess club.

When Curtis completed his prepared remarks, he highlighted features of the exhibit which presented through photographs, documents, and artifacts evidence of the urban life style that the early Springfield citizens enjoyed. "Springfield as Urban Frontier" was a unique collaborative effort. Curtis and Linda Garvert researched the information and Corrine Frisch and Edward Russo of Sangamon Researchers designed the exhibit. The team drew on resources from the Sangamon Valley Collection, the Illinois State Museum, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, the Illinois Regional Archive Depository, and Floyd Mansberger of Fever River Research.

The evening ended with members and guests browsing through the exhibits while enjoying refreshments provided by R-Lou Barker and Jane Vetter.



Board Meeting

**October 8, 2008, 5 PM
Lincoln Library Carnegie
Room South**

OFFICERS

President

Nancy L. Chapin

Vice President

David Scott

Past President

Carolyn Moore

Secretary

Curtis Mann

Treasurer

John Huther

Directors to 2009

R-Lou Barker

Dan Buck

Susan Hammond

Tim Krell

Sarah H. Thomas

Directors to 2010

Elaine Birtch

Kim Efirid

Carol Schwend Smith

Sue Wall

Martha Wolters

Directors to 2011

Jack Alexander

Connie Locher Bussard

Sally Cadagin

Jack Navins

Jane Vetter

Honorary Director

William Hughes

Diller, Jr.

HISTORICO CONTRIBUTORS

Donna Catlin

Nancy Chapin

Dick Hart

Curtis Mann

Sue Massie

Carl Volkmann

Roberta Volkmann

WEBMASTER

Terry Cameron

Nominating Committee

Request:

If you have recommendations for Director or Committee members for the future, please call the office, 522-2500, or email chairperson, Carolyn Moore (carmor1@comcast.net).

Trail of Death Remembered in Sangamon County



On September 24 SCHS Board President Nancy Chapin presented a certificate commending the efforts of the Potawatomi Trail of Death Association to George Godfrey of Athens and Shirley Willard, officers of the organization. Every five years a caravan sponsored by the Association retraces the forced march of the Potawatomi Indians from northern Indiana to central Kansas. This year's caravan toured the Old State Capitol and viewed the marker that commemorates the march through Sangamon County on September 28 and 29, 1838. One of over 70 along the trail, the Springfield marker is on the east wall of the kiosk on the Old Capitol Plaza .

Cemetery Walk (continued from page 1)

This year the walk is commemorating the 100th anniversaries of both the Abraham Lincoln Association (originally named the Lincoln Centennial Commission) and the 1908 race riots in Springfield with four individuals representing each. They are:

Melinda Bunn: Mrs. Bunn will tell of her life with her husband Gib (George W. Bunn, Jr.), a banker, who served as the second president of the Abraham Lincoln Association and was instrumental in the publication of the collected works of Lincoln. Mrs. Bunn will be portrayed by Leona Edwards.

Benjamin F. Caldwell: A farmer, land dealer, banker, and builder of the Caldwell Mansion was a founder of the Lincoln Centennial Commission. Mr. Caldwell will be portrayed by Bruce Davidson.

Mary Douglass Hay Funk: The daughter of Logan and Lucy Hay will tell about her family and her father, especially his role in the Abraham Lincoln Association. Mrs. Funk will be portrayed by Linda Schneider.

Dr. William Jayne: Dr. Jayne was the son of Springfield's first physician, four-time mayor, and friend of Abraham Lincoln who was the only founding member of the Lincoln Centennial Association to attend Lincoln's first inauguration. Dr. Jayne will be portrayed by Don Schneider.

William Donegan: Mr. Donegan came to Springfield in about 1845 and worked as a cobbler. Over the years he accumulated property and arranged for many African American citizens to find work in the community. His was the final and most outrageous death caused by the rioting. Homer Hubbard will portray Mr. Donegan.

Reverend Lyman Hubbard: Rev. Hubbard was the grandson of Bluford Chandler, the man who remained on his porch with a gun at the ready to protect his property during the riot. Chandler owned a farm south of town where many people in the community fled for safety. Rev. Hubbard's son, Tom, will portray him.

Charles C. Lee: The Republican captain for the African American community, Lee had a saloon, hotel, poolroom, restaurant and theatre in one large building on the Levee's East Washington Street before the race riot.

George Richardson: The accusation that Richardson had attempted rape of a white woman was the trigger for the race riot in August of 1908.

Richardson's family had lived in the community for generations, and he held a respectable job and owned property. Mr. Richardson will be portrayed by Billy Washington.

As the result of the 1830 Indian Removal Act, on September 4, 1838, over 800 Potawatomi Indians were forcibly removed from their homes. The Indians arrived in Osawatomie, Kansas, on November 4, 1838. Because over 40 people died on the 660 mile trip, it has been named the Trail of Death.

The Sangamon County stop is described by Jesse C. Douglas in the *Journal of an Emigrating Party of Potawatomi Indians, 1838* as follows:

"Friday 28th Sept. 18 mi. Crossed Sangamon River. Polke promised Indians tobacco after going thru Springfield tomorrow if they present a good appearance. Chief I-o-weh in charge of clean up. Forage is plentiful. 2 children died during the night.

Saturday 29th Sept. 17 mi., McCoy's Mills. Indians dressed up to pass thru Springfield, Ill. Camped at stream with little water."

For more information, see: www.springfieldsculptures.net/Potawatomi.html



DONATIONS

Gary & Jean Vitale



MEMBERSHIPS

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP:

Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Church

NEW MEMBERS:

Melissa Ellen Campbell
William and Violette Campbell
Larry A. Stevens
Pam and Larry VanAlstine

SAVE THE DATES!

November 18

John Paul, owner emeritus of Prairie Archives, will present "Old Man on Old Books" at the Society's monthly meeting at 7 pm in the Carnegie Room North at Lincoln Library.

December 16

The Society will have its annual Christmas party at a time and place to be announced.

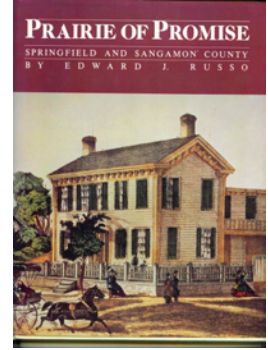


Sherman

In the mid 1800s most of the 80 acre parcel of land that is now Sherman was owned by four entrepreneurs who were instrumental in the development of the Chicago and Alton Railroad: Cornelius Flagg, Virgil Hickox, Joseph Ledlie, and David Sherman. Locals then called the area "Grasshopper," but that name was deemed inappropriate when a post office was about to be established in the community. Each of the four community leaders put his name in a hat, and David S. Sherman's name was drawn. As a result, the village of Sherman, Illinois, was recorded at the Sangamon County Court House on November 8, 1858.

Sherman residents, past and present, commemorated this occasion with a sesquicentennial celebration September 19, 20 and 21, 2008. The event kicked off with a reunion of residents at a "Block Party" in historic Sherman. The festivities included a parade with Dorothy Ori Johnson, the oldest living native of Sherman, as Grand Marshal. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Mines and Minerals presented a display which included an old mining car and featured former Sherman companies Wenneborg Coal Co. and Peabody Mine. Celebrants were treated to tours of the homestead of Cornelius Flagg built in 1871. Listed in the National Register of Historic Homes, the Italianate farm house is now a bed and breakfast. Wood carvers, soap makers, Calvary re-enactors, and period costumed volunteers all contributed to the spirit of the celebration.

Found Treasure Benefits Society



Dusty basements and hidden nooks sometimes reveal wonderful things! Robinson's Advertising has long been the backbone of the Society by maintaining all its membership rolls, printing/ mailing all the Historicos, and performing a myriad of other Society needs. Along the way, their office has become the repository of various "extras." For example, a few years ago a sizable cache of out-of-print Society publications was discovered hidden away there. Those books were quickly sold for the benefit of the Society.

A couple of weeks ago Theresa Powers, Robinson office manager, was on a cleaning binge and found about 12 copies of *Prairie of Promise*, published in 1983 and signed by the authors Ed Russo and Karen Graff. The initial thought was that this was a nice find, but a discussion with Sangamon Valley Collection Manager Curtis Mann and then a check online raised the bar! It was an incredible find!! A used unsigned copy of the book was being sold online for \$100. Our stash of brand new signed books is available for \$60.00 per copy to members and \$75.00 per copy to non-members.

We can't wait to find out what Theresa finds on her next rampage!



The African-American Farmers of Chinkapin Hill, Sangamon County, Illinois - Part II

By Curtis Mann

(Editor's note: This is the second of a two part series. Part I was published in the September issue of Historico.)

The Chinkapin settlement proved to be the largest group of African-American farmers in Sangamon County in 1850. Twelve African-American families were listed as farmers in the census. Another group of three farm families lived on land owned by Nancy Collier.

Robert Hill purchased more farm land in the settlement until he had about 142 acres, making him the largest landholder in the group. Dinah Posey sold her land in 1852. This land later became part of Hill's holdings. Posey moved to Springfield and lived in a house on West Washington Street. Richard Fry experienced some financial setbacks and lost his land in the 1850s but apparently was able to gain some of it back.

In 1858 Robert Hill, accompanied by his wife and niece, left Sangamon County to visit the country of Liberia, located on the west coast of Africa. This country was founded in 1821 through the efforts of the American Colonization Society which settled freed slaves from the United States there. The Hills were impressed with Liberia and decided to live there. They returned to Springfield in May, 1859, to settle their affairs in Sangamon County. *The Illinois Daily Journal* printed a lengthy article with information provided by Hill regarding his situation in Liberia. The Hills had planned to return to Liberia in the fall of 1859, but unfortunately Robert caught typhoid fever and died while still visiting in Springfield.

During the 1860s the Fry families gradually got smaller as children became adults, married and moved away from the farm. None of Henry's children apparently chose farming as an occupation, preferring to move to Springfield and other places. One of Richard's sons, Thomas, is known to have worked with his father until 1860 when he left to farm in Minnesota for two years. Thomas returned to farm in Sangamon County. Richard remained a farmer until his death in 1866. Thomas quit farming in 1867 and moved to Springfield where he found employment with the Leland Hotel which was a large employer of African-American men at that time. Henry Fry eventually moved to Springfield where he died in 1875. One of Henry's sons, William, became an engineer and miller.

The Chinkapin settlement of African-American farmers faded into history with the death of Richard Fry and the removal of Henry Fry to Springfield. The African-American farmers of Sangamon County are a poorly understood segment of this county's history, and further research is needed to learn more about them.



**Have you renewed
your
membership?**

Springfield Aviation History Book Released



Springfield Aviation by Job Conger, former Board member of the Society, has been released by Arcadia Publishing Company as part of its "Images of Aviation" series.

Other Springfield books published by Arcadia are *Springfield's Sculptures, Monuments, and Plaques* (see page 1) and *Springfield, A Reflection in Photography* by Edward Russo, Curtis Mann, and Melinda Garvert. All Arcadia publications are available in local book stores and online.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 19, 1 until 4 pm for the second annual **Old Settlers Day** revival. Come enjoy the ambiance of the 1840s with period music, crafts, and food at the historic **Strawbridge-Shepherd House** located on Shepherd Road between UIS and LLCC. Admission is free.



Old Settlers Day, 2007

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



Non-profit Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit No. 777
 Springfield, Illinois

www.sancohis.org



OCTOBER

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

5	"Echoes of Yesteryear," SCHS 12th annual Cemetery Walk (see page 1)	12 to 4 pm Oak Ridge Cemetery
8	SCHS Board meeting	5 pm Lincoln Library Carnegie Room
14	NAACP commemoration of 1908 Race Riots	TBD Old State Capitol
15	Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series - "Lincoln & Presidential Campaign Politics" featuring historians Jennifer Weber and Silvana Siddali	7 pm UIS Brookens Auditorium; 206-6576
19	Second annual Old Settlers Day revival (see page 5)	1 to 4 pm Strawbridge-Shepherd House
21	Second of <i>Central Illinois: Patchwork of People</i> Lunch and Learn series: "How They Organized Their Communities" (see September <i>Historico</i>)	11:30 am to 1:30 pm UIS Public Affairs Center Rooms C/D; 206-7395
	SCHS monthly program: "Statehouse Statuary;" (see page 1)	5:30 pm Capitol Complex Visitors' Center; reservations 522-2500
23	Historian Roberta Senechal de la Rouche lecture on her book <i>In Lincoln's Shadow</i> , the only book-length study of the 1908 Springfield race riot	7:30 pm lobby of UIS's Public Affairs Center
30 & 31	IHPA 10th annual Conference on Illinois History	8am to 5 pm daily Prairie Capital Convention Center and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum; 785-7933