

because of conflicts with a Scout pilgrimage, open house at the Dana-Thomas House and several other events on the same day - but the weather, the food, the entertainment - and even the hike in the woods - made it a gala afternoon for those who were there.

### IT'S A BOY!

Congratulations and best wishes to Rose and George Painter, whose son was born on April 4th! Jeffrey Matthew Painter also was welcomed by his sister, Amanda, and by the entire Sangamon County Historical Society, which greets him as its newest honorary member.

### BOARD MEETING REPORT

The SCHS officers and directors met at Lincoln Library at 4:30 P.M., on Tuesday, April 17, with 21 members present. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted, as was the treasurer's report. The total assets in all accounts as of April 17 are \$21,491.00. Vickie Biddle and Kim Nicol presented their request for SCHS financial support for a proposed exhibit of photographs made by Judge Benjamin DeBoice in the late 1940's. Slides of some of the photographs were shown. Although the project seems well-planned, financial support was not granted because of limited interest. Committee reports were made. The Pioneer Park committee had completed plans for the April 29 picnic, including entertainment. (See Potluck Picnic report.) Plans for the Spring Tour have been completed (see Spring Tour schedule.) The May program will be given by Bob Larson, and details of the Annual Meeting were announced. The next Board meeting will be held at the Library at 4:30 P.M. on Thursday, May 24th. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 P.M.

### NEW SUPERINTENDENT AT LHNHS

The new Superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site is Norman Hellmers, an 18-year veteran of the National Park Service. He succeeds Gentry Davis, who recently became the Superintendent of National Capital Parks-East, headquartered in Washington, D.C. Mr. Hellmers, a New Orleans native, is a graduate of Concordia College in River Forest, Illinois, and has done post-graduate work at the University of Iowa. He has served in several National Park Service positions in Pennsylvania, Virginia and Minnesota, and most recently as Supt. of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Indiana. Mr. Hellmers and his wife, Patricia, have a son and daughter who are students at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. Mr. Hellmers' plans include further restoration of the Lincoln neighborhood so that more of it can be opened to the public, now that the Lincoln Home restoration has been completed.

### LINCOLN THE SOLDIER

At a meeting of the New Salem Lincoln League at Petersburg in February, Judge Richard Mills spoke on the career of Abraham Lincoln as a soldier - a relatively short but interesting time in the life of our 16th president. Judge Mills serves as a Brigadier General in the Illinois Militia. At your editor's request he kindly has shared with us his paper on this phase of Lincoln's life. It will appear in two parts, in the May and June HISTORICOS.

### LINCOLN THE SOLDIER

In January of last year, I had the singular experience of spending 8 days at sea

on the nuclear aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson as a guest of the Navy. What a thrill it was for this land-locked soldier to participate in a carrier qualification cruise in the Pacific about 100 miles off the Coast of Mexico. A floating city with a compliment of 6000 officers and crew, where 1222 landings and takeoffs occurred, both day and night. The last night at sea--as we were churning toward the Golden Gate Bridge--I spent with the Captain on his bridge. This was his last cruise, his final command, his last night on the quarterdeck, for he was shortly to retire after a distinguished Naval career--from Annapolis to Commanding Officer of the then largest naval vessel flying the stars and stripes. His relationship with his officers, as I observed it over those 8 days, reminded me of what General of the Armies "Black Jack" Pershing once said:

In a social order in which one person is officially subordinate to another, the superior, if he is a gentleman, never thinks of it, and the subordinate, if he is a gentleman, never forgets it.

On that last evening at sea, I presented the Captain of the VINSON with a bust of Illinois' greatest son, Abraham Lincoln. It seemed most appropriate for me to do this since my court is located in the Capital City of Springfield, in the shadow of both Mr. Lincoln's home and his final resting place, and since the VINSON's sister ship--the USS Abraham Lincoln--was then being completed and to be commissioned at Norfolk Navy Yard in Virginia last November 11th, Veterans Day--as indeed she was. When she officially joined the U.S. fleet, "THE ABE" replaced the VINSON as largest Nimitz class ship under the American flag.

How poignant that our greatest flag ship should memorialize the huge stature of our most beloved president and recognize his leadership qualities as our commander-in-chief during the most desperate and devastating years of our Union's civil conflict. When and where did those great qualities manifest themselves? At what moment and in what context did such traits surface?

I suggest they were first revealed in the spring and summer of 1832, when a new period in the life of Lincoln began. It was then that he obtained his first public recognition, and entered upon the course of life which was to lead him to a position of prominence and great leadership. In March of that year--at age 23--he was an unemployed store clerk, Mr. Offutt's business having gone to pieces. But he took his first political step by announcing for the state legislature. In the handbill of his first political campaign platform, Lincoln said this: "I have no other (ambition) so great as that of being truly esteemed by my fellow men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem."

But before much campaigning could be done, news came that Black Hawk and his braves were on the warpath, pillaging, killing settlers and spreading terror along the Rock River. Although numerous regular army troops were in the area, the general alarm was such that Governor John Reynolds thought reinforcements were necessary and called for volunteers from the Illinois Militia--by law being "all free male white inhabitants" between 18 and 45.

The Governor himself was astonished at the speed and patriotism with which the call was answered. Among those who enlisted at the first tap of the drum was Abraham Lincoln, and equally to his surprise and delight he was elected captain of his company. The volunteer organizations of those days were conducted on purely democratic principles. The company assembled on the green, an election was suggested, and three-fourths of the men walked over to where Lincoln was standing; most of the small