



# HISTORICO

*Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter*

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VOLUME 47, NO. 11

APRIL 2011

## Mann's Hunt On eBay Nets Rare Photo of Springfield's North End

When it comes to finding old photos and documents about Springfield, eBay, the online auction and shopping website, is a regular stop for Curtis Mann, manager of the Sangamon Valley Collection at Springfield's Lincoln Library.

"I'm pretty methodical about it," he says, setting time aside each week to search for items tagged "Springfield, Illinois" or its many abbreviations--even misspellings--in search of that rare treasure.

In March, he hit pay dirt!

Mann found two photographs of Springfield taken in the 1870s. The seller identified one of the photos as "a field near Springfield." The other was of Oak Ridge Cemetery. Both were stereoscopic images taken by Scibird and Cressey, a Bloomington, Illinois firm whose photographer, says Mann, apparently travelled to Springfield

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## Faragher Reception Part of Society's 50th Year Celebration

The Sangamon County Historical Society will kick off its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration on Tuesday, April 26, with a reception honoring noted historian Dr. John Mack Faragher.

The event, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Public Affairs Center restaurant at the University of Illinois in Springfield, precedes Dr. Faragher's free public lecture at 7 p.m. in the Brookens Library Auditorium at UIS, just down the hall from the reception area.

A hearty hors d'oeuvres buffet will be served and a cash bar will be available.

Tickets purchased by April 18 are \$18 per person for Society members and their guests. Tickets purchased after that date are \$23 per person. A reservation form is on page 7. Mail it with

your check made payable to SCHS to the Society office at 123 South Seventh Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701.

Dr. Faragher, author of nu-

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merous historical works including *Sugar Creek, Life on the Illinois Prairie*, is the Arthur Unobeskey Professor of American History at Yale University. *Sugar Creek* traces settlers in this section of rural Illinois four to five decades before the beginning of the

*(Continued on page 8)*

### From the President's Desk

## Faragher's Sugar Creek Work Stands Test of Time

As you have read in *Historico*, the author of a notable book on the Sugar Creek community in frontier Sangamon County is coming to Springfield in late April.

A highlight of the visit of John Mack Faragher is the reception for him sponsored by the Sangamon County Historical Society, starting at 5:30 p.m. on April 26 at the University of Illinois at Springfield. To secure a place at the reception, return the form on page 7. The reception will be followed by Faragher's lecture in Brookens Auditorium at 7 p.m., entitled "*Small*

*Places, Wider Worlds: Sugar Creek and Settler Colonialism.*"

### Sugar Creek and Our Society

Sugar Creek has interesting links to the history of our Society, celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. In the earliest years of the Society, historic preservation was a strong emphasis, as reflected in the Society's first logo featuring the Old State Capitol.

In 1963, the Society received as a donation, a

*(Continued on page 4)*



DAVID SCOTT

## You Won't Want to Miss This Special Program

What does a Yale history professor have in common with the members of the Sangamon County Historical Society? Quite a bit. Both have deep and abiding interests in the history of Sangamon County's earliest settlements.

John Mack Faragher, the Yale professor, has a particular love for the area along the southern part of Sugar Creek. In addition to his time spent in libraries and court houses researching that area, Faragher has spent considerable time talking to many of the descendants of the early settlers along that Creek. He shares his findings of that time and place and those people in a classic account of early Sangamon County life entitled *Sugar Creek, Life on the Illinois Prairie*.

But Faragher's account is not your grandfather's version of a "classic history of early Sangamon

sites and places described in Faragher's book without knowing that it was here that Sangamon County was born and spent the early years of its developing life.

The significance of Faragher's work was brought home to me several years back while my son was attending Northwestern University. He called me one day to ask if I had ever heard of John Mack Faragher and his book *Sugar Creek*. The book was assigned reading in one of his history courses.

Thankfully, I had read the book and had met Faragher several times on his visits to Sangamon County. I testified to my son that the book was a well written account of an area of Sangamon County that was home to his early settler ancestors.

My son's call revealed to me that *Sugar Creek* had become not only a Sangamon County classic, but it had come to be rightfully acknowledged as an American classic--a description of the common life experiences of the early settlers of the Midwest and beyond.

Best of all, Faragher not only writes well, but he speaks well. Hearing him speak on the 50th anniversary of the Sangamon County Historical Society at the UIS campus located on the boundaries of Sugar Creek (now Lake Springfield), is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Put it on your bucket list and be there!

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County." Faragher's groundbreaking and realistic account unveils the often mundane but essential routine of early prairie life, including that of the early female settlers and the events arising out of a community of kinship and friends. Each day, many of us pass the

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*Raised in Springfield, Richard Hart has been a practicing attorney here for the last 40 years. He is a partner in the firm of Hart, Southworth & Witsman. Hart is a past president of the Sangamon County Historical Society, Springfield Preservation, Ltd., the Elijah Iles House Foundation, and the Abraham Lincoln Association. He has also authored "Springfield's African Americans as a Part of the Lincoln Community" published in the Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association, "Lincoln's Springfield, The Public Square (1823-1865)", "Springfield, Illinois' Nineteenth Century Photographers (1845-1900)", "The Underground Railroad in Lincoln's Springfield," and was editor of "Early Sangamon County Antiques: The Barringer Exhibit."*



**Historico**, published 10 times a year, is the monthly bulletin for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society. Back issues are available on-line in PDF format at our website, [www.sancohis.org](http://www.sancohis.org). Updates, late-breaking news, features, and more are regularly posted on our website.

Event updates also can be found on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)). Log in and search for *Sangamon County Historical Society*.

**Annual Membership dues, (effective June 1, 2011) are:**

Household: \$25, Sustaining: Household \$100.

Household Life Membership, one-time payment of \$700.

Not-for-Profit Organization, \$20 Corporate, starting at \$250.

**For a membership form and/or additional information, contact the Society at 525-1961 or write to us at P.O. Box 1834, Springfield, IL 62705 or [schsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:schsoffice@gmail.com).**

# Nominating Committee Seeking Candidates To Fill Seats on Society's Board of Directors

Want to serve on the board of the Sangamon County Historical Society? Know of someone who would make an excellent board member?

Here's your chance to step forward or put someone's name in motion!

The Society's five member Nominating Committee, headed by Don Springer, is beginning its search to find new directors to succeed those whose terms are expiring this year or who have left the board for other reasons. Candidates need to be a current paid member and have an interest in the advancement of our Society.

"This is a great opportunity to participate in the programs as well as provide input that we need and welcome," notes Springer. "You will be closely involved and have a say in all of the activities of the Society."

The Board, he adds, meets for an hour, eight to nine times a year, on the second Wednesday of each month except for July and August. Board members also serve on committees of their choice. Directors serve three year terms.

If you or someone you know is interested in being on the board, or if you have questions, contact any member of the Nominating Committee: Connie Bussard, Claire Eberle, Rick Carlson, or Taylor Pensoneau or e-mail chairman Springer at [donspringers@comcast.net](mailto:donspringers@comcast.net)



## EXECUTIVE BOARD

**President**.....David W. Scott  
**Vice-President**.....Vicki Megginson  
**Secretary**.....Pam VanAlstine  
**Treasurer**.....Paul R. Mueller  
**Past President**.....Nancy Chapin

## DIRECTORS

### Term Ending June 2011

Jack Alexander  
 Connie Locher Bussard  
 John Huther  
 Don Springer  
 Jane Vetter

### Term Ending 2012

Carolyn Moore  
 Donna Catlin  
 Roger Whitaker  
 James H. Beaumont

### Term Ending 2013

Linda Bee  
 Bruce Beeman  
 Claire Eberle  
 Carolyn Oxtoby

## Presidential Appointees to the Board

Richard Carlson  
 Constitutional Committee chair  
 Vicky Whitaker  
 Publicity chair, *Historico* Editor

### Honorary Director

William Hughes Diller Jr.

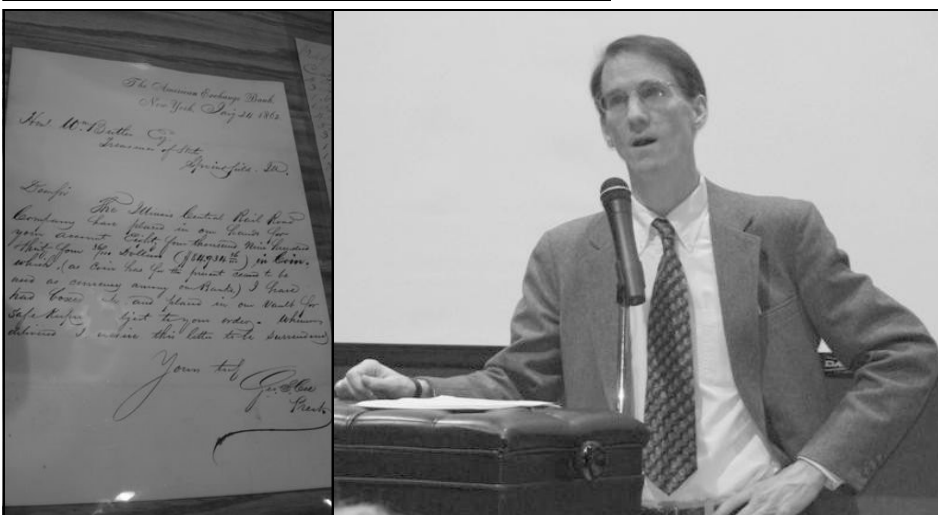
## BOARD MEETINGS

2nd Wednesday, Lincoln Library, 5 p.m.

**April 13, May 11, June 8**



**CHECKING IN:** Mary Loken, (right) who with fellow Society member Elaine Birtch, chaired this year's school awards program, shows Jefferson Middle School principal Sena Nelson (left) the check her school received to purchase materials to improve reading skills while discovering history. Christine Dunn, who wrote the grant, looks on. Jefferson was one of four area middle schools to share more than \$1,000 from the Society to expand and improve teaching history. *Donna Catlin photo*



**MAN OF LETTERS AND MORE:** James M. Cornelius, curator of the Lincoln Collection at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, shares both history and documents on Lincoln friend and political supporter William Butler with Society members at its March 15 meeting at Springfield's Lincoln Library. Cornelius brought samples of a large cache of documents (like the one at left), many of them sales receipts, that are now being evaluated. *Donna Catlin photos.*

# *Sugar Creek: a Cutting Edge Work*

*(Continued from page 1)*

as a donation a seven-acre tract of land along Sugar Creek. The area was named Pioneer Park and includes a covered bridge over the creek and the site of the cabin of the county's first settler, Robert Pulliam—a featured character in Faragher's book. Much later the logo was changed to feature the bridge. The Society maintains this logo to the present day although it has deeded the historic property to the village of Chatham.

Whatever interests a Society member might have about life on the Illinois frontier, John Mack Faragher's 1986 *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (Yale University Press, New Haven) is almost sure to cover it and his lecture will surely touch on some of them. The local interest, of course, is that the book examines the development of a community centered in and around what is now Ball Township. The book focuses on the settlement period beginning in 1817 and extending into the 1850s. It also describes the pre-1817 social, economic and geographic background leading up to settlement as well as development up to the Civil War period and the formation of the Old Settlers Society in 1859.

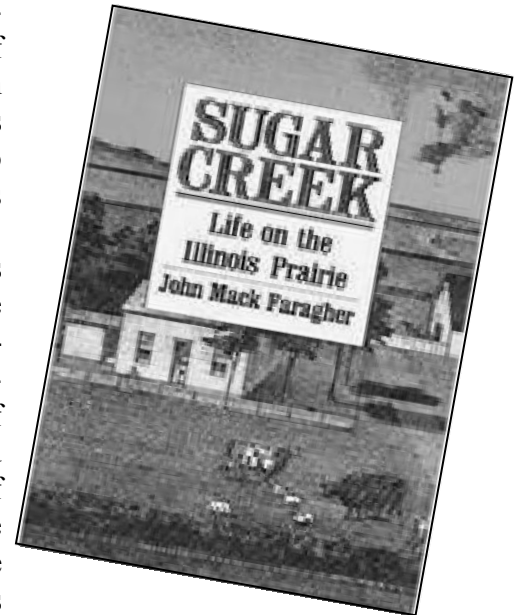
## **Book Address a Variety of Topics**

The book jacket invites the prospective reader to become acquainted with some of Sugar Creek's inhabitants: "There is Robert Pulliam, a peg-legged pioneer who came to make maple sugar and stayed to build the first cabin; Sarah Hubbard, mother of twelve, who bartered homemade bread for game with retreating Kickapoo Indians; Jacob Rauch, German indentured servant, who became a prosperous miller; Jane Fletcher, who ran her farm alone for a quarter-century; Gilbert Dobb, lay preacher, who led a congregation of revivalist Presbyterians and organized the local anti-slavery society."

Faragher chose the Sangamon County area for a case study on the basis of an informed hunch that good records in libraries and archives were likely to be found here because of the interest in Abraham

Lincoln, according to Collum Davis. Davis, Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Illinois, Springfield, has used *Sugar Creek* in his classes.

Faragher draws on federal land surveys; court, marriage, church and voting records; cemetery inventories, genealogical reports, census data, diaries, letters, newspaper articles, and many other sources of information. Records are good enough to determine that the average number of children born to women in the early period was 8.2 and declined to 5.9 for the next generation of women. Much attention is given to women's roles on the frontier. Related topics are home manufacturing, the pervasiveness of marriage and the rarity of divorce, the distinct culture and activities of males, and wedding traditions



Other topics are patterns of migration into Sugar Creek, the dispossession of Indians, the work of surveyors, frontier religion and the temperance movement, the nature of schooling and local government. The county allowed considerable control to localities in regard to roads, schools, welfare, justice, law enforcement, and voting. Those interested in political history will find an extended analysis of shifting patterns of support for Democrats and Whigs/Republicans—another example of the rich sources of data available in Sangamon County and the author's careful use of them.

*(Continued on page 5)*

# That Draws Praise From Historians

(Continued from page 4)

The focus of the book is not on the influence of the frontier in creating American individualism, but rather on community and associations. In the early days, neighboring was pervasive as reflected in borrowing among families, helping in times of hardship, sharing common grazing lands, working on common projects, intermarrying and the creating of kinship groups, and

historian as indicated by his being recruited by Yale University and heading up its Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders. He was teaching at Mount Holyoke College when he was performing the research for *Sugar Creek*.

In substantial agreement as to the high quality of research and the high regard in which the book is held is James Davis, author of *Frontier Illinois*, (1998), an overview in contrast to the micro-study of a small area



**Rauch, German indentured servant, who became a prosperous miller; Jane Fletcher, who ran her farm alone for a quarter-century; Gilbert Dobb, lay preacher, who led a congregation of revivalist Presbyterians and organized the local anti-slavery society."**

**The book jacket invites the prospective reader to become acquainted with some of Sugar Creek's inhabitants: "There is Robert Pulliam, a peg-legged pioneer who came to make maple sugar and stayed to build the first cabin; Sarah Hubbard, mother of twelve, who bartered homemade bread for game with retreating Kickapoo Indians; Jacob**

joining and supporting churches.

However, as time went on, changes occur. Those without a claim to land in the early period were squatters; in the later period, farm hands and tenant farmers. Some farms grew in size and more clear class distinctions appeared. Agriculture became more commercial and its techniques more productive. The villages of Auburn and Chatham developed along with the arrival of the railroad. And behavior became more civilized.

## **Academic Standing of *Sugar Creek***

Professor Collum Davis gives it high praise, stating that it has stood the test of time. According to Davis, the book added to Faragher's reputation as a western

that characterizes *Sugar Creek*. Retired Professor of History at Illinois College in Jacksonville, Davis sees Faragher not only in *Sugar Creek* but in earlier works as one of the new social historians whose work started in the 1960s, and that is reflected in his special research emphasis on women.

## **Mark April 26 on Your Calendar**

Society members should not miss the lecture and the reception prior to it. *Sugar Creek* will be on sale at UIS at this time. And, according to James Davis, Faragher is a very good speaker with a great command of the language. Do mark your calendar for April 26 and remember to make your reservation for the reception.



# On-Line Search Brings Sangamon Valley Collection Rare Photo

(Continued from page 1)

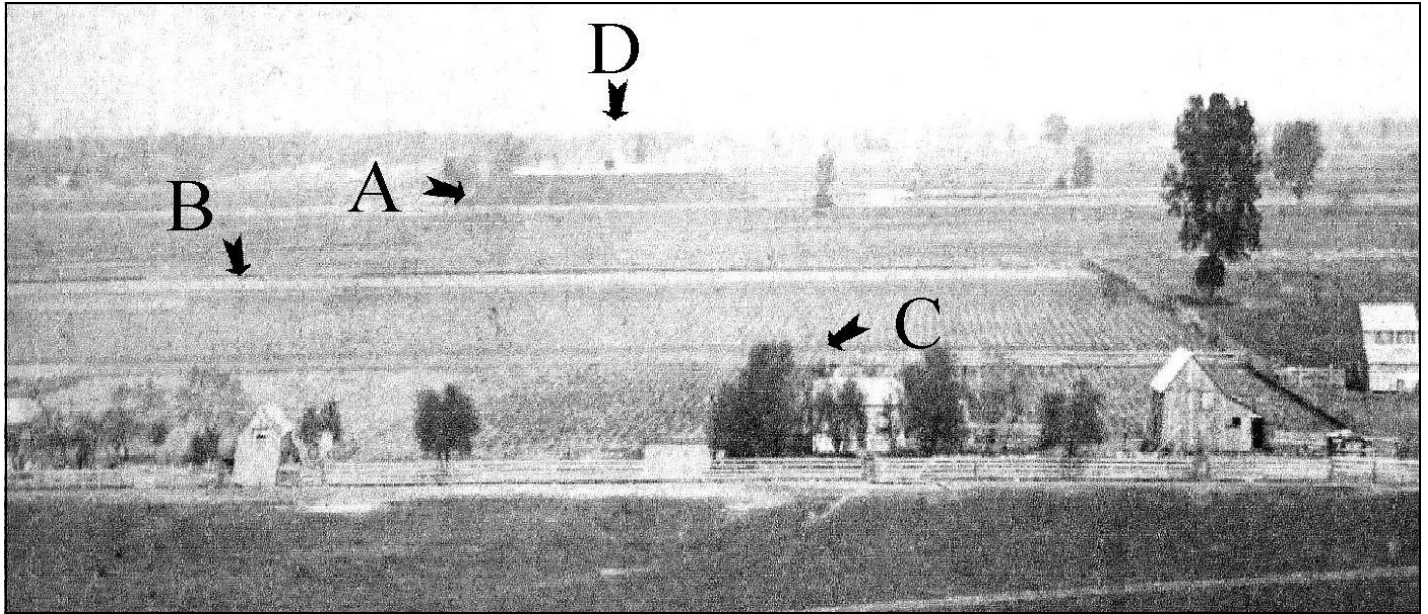
to take photographs of different subject matter.

“Photographs of Springfield taken before the 1890s are rare, so I generally purchase them no matter what the subject material might be,” says Mann, noting that “at first glance, an early 1870s stereoscopic image of

Springfield in 1849. In 1856, one of these immigrants, a grocer named Manuel Alfonso purchased 22 acres of land located north of the Illinois State University and east of the Great Western Railroad running along Tenth Street. Alfonso sold off small tracts of one-and two-acre plots to fellow Portuguese residents who built the first of

River north of the city. The reservoir was square with rounded corners and could hold 4,000,000 gallons of water.

A standpipe (D) was located in the middle of the reservoir and stood 70 feet high. “Water pumped from the river was directed through this pipe to come in the form of a spray. In the photo, the standpipe



Springfield's northeast side by the Sangamon Valley Collection does not stir much excitement. The photograph was taken from the main building of the old Illinois State University campus located between Matheny and Moffat and 12th and 15th streets”.

Nicknamed "The Coffee Mill" because of its resemblance to a coffee bean grinder, the three-story structure provided a perfect vantage point to take the photo, says Mann. “The image reveals an expanse of land, followed by a number of houses and outbuildings, then another stretch of open land and finally in the background a mound of earth, not the most visually interesting item I have ever bought.”

But that was before he took a closer look.

## Neighborhood Found

“A little research and the ability to scan and enlarge the image has revealed some interesting facts represented in this photo. For instance, the houses in the photograph (C) are part of a neighborhood of Portuguese immigrants who arrived in

a row of houses that would eventually dominate the north side of Phillips Street between 12th and 15th streets.”

By 1860 at least a half dozen Portuguese residents were noted to be living in this area which would have then been on the north boundary of Springfield, says Mann. “This photograph represents one of the few images connected with the Portuguese history of the city.”

## Reservoir Revealed

The thin line that appears just before the mound of earth is the railroad bed of the Great Western Railroad (B) as it curved from the Tenth Street line to turn east toward Decatur. The mound in the background (A) is actually the reservoir of the Springfield Water Works that once stood where Lanphier High School is today. “This image is probably the earliest known photograph of the reservoir. The reservoir was built in the late 1860s and provided storage for the city of Springfield's water supply which was pumped from a station located on the Sangamon

is barely visible in the middle of the reservoir. The lagoons that were created from the removal of earth to build the reservoir are visible to the right of it.”

The three-foot-wide ornamental iron standpipe was embedded in a five foot high eight-sided concrete pedestal that featured alternating seahorse and dolphin ramparts, above which was a 15 foot vase and above that four life-size swans attached to the ramparts. The crest was a combination of highly ornamental iron-work extending outward on all sides.

## More Questions

The newly acquired images do pose some yet unanswered questions for Mann. “The frustrating part of this little known series is that none of the images are identified. Each stereoview is hand numbered and could be one of a kind for all I know. I have searched with much frustration for a list of the published images. A potential gold mine of images could exist somewhere because some of the images owned by the SVC have numbers above one hundred.”

# You're Invited To Our 50th Anniversary Kick Off!



**HONOREE**  
*Dr. John Mack  
Faragher*

Please join us on **Tuesday, April 26** from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for the kick-off of the Society's 50th Anniversary celebration! At the event—in the Public Affairs Center restaurant on the University of Illinois at Springfield campus—you'll get an opportunity to meet our honoree, famed Yale University professor **Dr. John Mack Faragher** who will be giving a free public lecture at 7 p.m. in the nearby Brookens Library auditorium, a short walk down the hall from the reception site. Dr. Faragher's topic will be *"Small Places, Wider Worlds: Sugar Creek and Settler Colonialism in North America,"* A hearty hors d'oeuvres buffet will be served and a cash bar will be available. **Reservations are a must by April 18 to get the \$18 per person rate available to SCHS members and their guests.** Reservations received *after April 18* will be \$23 per person. Fill out the form below and mail with your check payable to SCHS to the Society at **123 South Seventh Street, Springfield, Illinois, 62701.**

*Count me in for the 50th Anniversary kickoff on Tuesday, April 26, honoring Dr. John Mack Faragher. Enclosed is my check for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations at \$18 per person. (Reservations received after April 18 will be \$23 per person).*

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Phone

***Sangamon County Historical Society***  
P.O. Box 1834,  
Springfield, IL 62705  
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## **Society to Kick Off 50th Anniversary**

*(Continued from page 1)* and R. Lamar Center for the American Civil War. The winner of numerous honors and awards for his work, he also serves on a wide range of history-related organizations. He currently is director of the Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontier and Borders at Yale and is on the executive board of the Society of American Historians and the editorial board of the Pacific Historical Review.

### **End Notes**

#### **Welcome Mat Still Out for Office Volunteers**

If you'd like to help out, or just man the Society's new office at 123 S. 7<sup>th</sup> Street any Monday, Wednesday, or Friday morning from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the Society would like to hear from you. !! Contact us at 525-1961 or schsoffice@gmail.com.

#### **Forwarding Your Mail? Please Let Us Know!**

If you are going on a trip and having your mail forwarded to you, please call the Society's office at 525-1961. Mailed issues of *Historico* cannot be forwarded and are returned to the office with a full postage charge.



**2011 Calendar**

### **PROGRAM MEETINGS**

***Tuesday, April 26***

*SCHS 50th Anniversary Reception, 5:30 p.m.*

*John Mack Faragher lecture, 7 p.m., UIS*

***Tuesday, May 17***

*History and Tour, Lincoln Memorial Garden*

*Jim Matheis, Executive Director*

***Tuesday, June 21***

*Annual Meeting*

***All program meetings are held at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Public Library, 326 S. Seventh Street, Springfield unless otherwise noted.***