



# HISTORICO

*Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter*

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744, Phone: 217-525-1961,  
e-mail: schsoffice@gmail.com web: www.sangamonhistory.org

VOLUME 50 NO. 1

SEPTEMBER 2013

*Up, Up, and Away!*

## Season Opener Will Put Eye on the Sky With Special Air Combat Museum Tour

The Sangamon County Historical Society kicks off its 2013-2014 meeting season on Tuesday, September 17 with a *members-only* tour of the spectacular Air Combat Museum in Springfield led by its founder and Museum president Mike George.

The program, part of the Society's on-going look at "jewel box" specialty museums in Sangamon County, will provide a look at historic aircraft—each a flying piece of history—and aviation artifacts including flight jackets and equipment used by pilots from Sangamon County. George will provide insight on the collection and the preservation of aviation history.

The meeting is free

but reservations are a must and can be made online at [www.sangamonhistory.org](http://www.sangamonhistory.org) or by calling the Society at 525-1961. Reservations

must be made no later than Wednesday, September 11.

"We're delighted Mike is opening the museum to our members as our season opener," noted SCHS president Roger Whitaker. "The museum has a magnificent collection of aircraft, many found in private collections and unable to be viewed up-close by the public." George and his staff will be rolling some of the craft out to an area outside the huge hangar adjacent to Springfield's Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport. The Museum is located at 835 South Airport Road. The program will begin at 5:30 p.m.



**PLANE FACTS:** Mike George, whose passion for the preservation of aviation history led to his creation of the Air Combat Museum in Springfield, will display and discuss his collection on September 17.

*Donna Catlin photo*

*(Continued on page 6)*

### INSIDE

Off to a Flying Start.....	2
Anti-Vandalism Bill Signed into Law.....	3
Society Elects Officers, Board .....	4
New Journalism Prize to Honor Pokorski's Memory...4	
History Happenings.....	7

**DIGGING IN:** Society membersgoers sample the fare at the annual dinner. More photos and story on pages 4 & 5.





## We're Off to a Flying Start! Really!

With summer mostly behind us, we welcome September and the start of our new meeting season.

And what a season it will be.

This month, we're delighted to continue our series of members-only visits to the area's "jewel box" museums with a tour of Mike George's Air Combat collection of planes and artifacts that are helping preserve this area's aviation history.

Next month, we'll be headed to Edwards Place where you'll get a chance to see some of the changes that have been made to this historic home and then settle in for an evening of seasonal "Spooky Sangamon" tales spun by expert story tellers Garrett Moffet, Cathy Mosley, and Tara McCllelan McAndrew.

Next month, you'll be getting details about our November program, focusing on how Sangamon County residents dealt with World War II and the Korean War and of course, in December, it's time for our annual Holiday Party.

Speaking of the season, work is already underway on our entry for the Festival of Trees. This year's Festival theme is "Rejoice," at to that end, our ornaments will focus on the historic houses of worship across the County. Drop me a line if you'd like to help in the ornament-making process or decorating the tree during "set-up" weekend at the Orr Building. Last year more than 30,000 visitors saw our tree.

As you will read on page 3, Governor Quinn signed into law the anti-vandalism bill your Society sought and successfully saw passed by the State Legislature this past spring. It was a learning process for us and an educational process for our legislators who cut across party lines to support a measure that will not just help individuals and or-

ganizations with historic properties, but all victims of vandalism. The final version of the bill upgraded an existing statute that requires those who commit vandalism to make complete restitution and face a fine, even substantial jail time if damage is excessive. That's a plus for everyone who has ever been victimized by wanton vandalism, only to see the perpetrators walk away with little penalty.

In coming weeks, we will be again reaching out to our state counterparts to inform them of the change in the law so that they can share the information with history organizations and others in their area. We also plan to publicly thank those who made the effort to see this key piece of legislation become part of the state's legal code.

Thanks are due, too, to the record number of members who made donations to the Society in addition to their dues and to everyone who responded to the membership questionnaire we sent out in May. Your answers have been tremendously helpful and will continue to be so as we map our programs and special events over the coming months and also develop committees.

We're also pleased that former board members Bruce Beeman and Claire Eberle have agreed to continue on the board as Presidential appointees. Beeman will head the Legal Committee, Eberle, the Membership Committee. They join Marion Leach, who has served on the board as a Presidential Appointee responsible for Membership Relations.

We have several new board members joining our seasoned veterans this year too, a great team to work with!

*Roger*



*Historico*, published 10 times a year, is the official monthly bulletin for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society. *Winner, 2013 Certificate of Excellence, Illinois State Historical Society.*

You can download back issues of *Historico* in PDF format by going to our website, [sangamon-history.org](http://sangamon-history.org) or [sancohis.org](http://sancohis.org).

## Anti-Vandalism Bill Advanced by SCHS Signed into Law By Governor Quinn

A bill to provide stronger penalties against and restitution from those who would damage or destroy privately owned and operated historic properties became effective August 16 when Governor Patrick Quinn signed it into law. The bill, Public Act 098-0466, is an upgrade of an existing anti-vandalism bill and extends to schools and houses of worship as well.

“While the bill we proposed and campaigned for specifically dealt with historic sites, noted SCHS, it was broadened to include the wider community, noted president Roger Whitaker, “and while specific mention of historic sites was dropped in the final language in order to conform to existing statutes, the end result is the same. For the first time, non-public organizations and individuals who own or operate historic sites will have recourse through the courts to see that those who vandalize such sites will be appropriately punished and ordered to make restitution.” State and federal sites are already covered by law.

The Society proposed the legislation last spring after a series of incidents in which vandals caused thousands of dollars worth of damage to privately operated historic properties in Sangamon County. The bill, introduced by Representative David Harris (R-Mt. Prospect) and co-sponsored by fellow House members John Cabello (R-Loves Park), Michael Zleski (D-Riverside), Dennis Reboletti (R-Addison), Lawrence Walsh Jr. (D-Joliet), Sue Scherer (D-Decatur), Dwight Kay (R-Edwardsville), Jil Tracy (R-Quincy), Greg Harris (D-Chicago), John Cavaletto (R-Salem), Mike Fortner (R-West Chicago), Rich Brauer (R-Springfield) and C.D.

Davidsmeyer (R-Jacksonville), won unanimous approval from both the House and Senate where it was co-sponsored by Senator Andy Manar (D-Staunton) Pamela Althoff (R-McHenry), William Sam McCann (R-Jacksonville) and Kirk Dillard (R-Westmont)

In its efforts to see the legislation passed, the Sangamon County Historical Society reached out to its county counterparts around the state, drawing a significant number of letters of support and action by the other organizations, some of whom buttonholed their representatives to support the bill.

Sangamon Society president Whitaker testified on behalf of the legislation at both the Senate and House Judiciary Committees, joined by Dan Usherwood, president of the Pleasant Plains Historical Society (which owns and operates the Clayville Historic site that has experienced vandalism in the past), Pasfield House owner Tony Leone, whose site was damaged last fall by vandals, and Pat McDaniel, executive director of the Macon County History Museum and Prairie Village in Decatur.

“We have stayed in contact with our county counterparts throughout the past several months, even creating a website where we can exchange information. Now that the bill has become law, we will be reaching out once more to alert them to the change in the law so that they will be able to notify local historical organizations and historic sites in their county of the new provision. We are currently conducting a survey of such sites in Sangamon County so that we can do the same here, Whitaker said.



### OFFICERS

**President**.....Roger Whitaker  
**Vice-President**.....Ruth Slottag  
**Secretary**.....Elaine Hoff  
**Treasurer**.....Richard Herndon

### DIRECTORS

#### Term Ending 2014

Patricia Davis  
 Kathy Hoffmann  
 Brenda Holmes  
 Doug Polite  
 Vicky Whitaker

#### Term Ending 2015

Donna Catlin  
 Les Eastep  
 David Grimm  
 Mary Alice Davis  
 Francie Staggs

#### Term Ending 2016

Rebecca Cisco  
 Kathy Dehen  
 Sue Massie  
 Cathy Mosley  
 David Scott

#### Presidential Appointees To Board

Marion Leach,  
*Membership Relations Chair*  
 Bruce Beeman  
*Legal Chair*  
 Claire Eberle  
*Membership Chair*

#### SCHS Executive Coordinator

Dr. Samuel Wheeler

### SEPTEMBER DONOR REPORT

*The Society gives special thanks to the following donors:*

**R-Lou Barker, Byron A. Bartlett, Bruce & Joan Beeman, Sherri Boner, Chris & Val Butler, Donna & Carl Catlin, Job C. Conger IV, Denis Conlon, Barbara Dickerman, Nadine Ferguson, Jackie & Mark Hansen (*in memory of Floyd Barringer*), Richard E. Hart, Ken & Judith Lazar, Kent & Sue Massie, Frank & Ruthann Mazrin, Richard McLane, Vicki & Norm Megginson, John & Pinky Noll, Steven & Paula Peddicord, Dana & Richard Saal, and Dr. Elvin & Mrs. Zook.**

Please make note of our new mailing address:

SCHS  
 Box 9744  
 Springfield, Illinois,  
 62791-9744

## **Elections, Tribute and A Future Award, Fundraising Fun**



The Sangamon County Historical Society wrapped up one of its most successful seasons in its 53-year history on June 25 with an annual dinner, elections, a silent and live auction and a special tribute to the late Doug Pokorski, a veteran reporter for the *State Journal-Register*, who led the Society from 2002-2003.

The creation of a new journalism prize for the coverage of Illinois history was announced at the dinner and will be awarded at next year's event.

To be known as the Pokorski Award, guidelines for the honor will be developed by a blue-ribbon committee of nationally prominent journalists and historians and will be promoted nationwide, SCHS president Roger Whitaker told the gathering. The award was approved by the Society's board at its last meeting.

Pokorski won a number of awards for his education coverage, including a first-place national award from the Education Writers Association for a five-part series on school finance credited with helping spur passage of a temporary tax increase for education.

But it was for reporting on Abraham Lincoln and other historical topics that Pokorski came to be recognized well beyond Central Illinois. His thorough and zealous historical reporting not only made him popular with readers here, but it also made him a nationally recognized historian.

Traditionally, the Society invites the president of the organization from decade earlier to give the keynote address. That honor would have gone to Pokorski, who died from a heart attack in April, 2003, at age 53, two months short of the end of his presiden-

tial term.

At this year's dinner, Society leaders, a fellow journalist and a close family friend reminisced about the popular president, sharing often touching stories and impressions of Pokorski with the sell-out dinner crowd.

The presentation was coordinated by Kathryn Harris, director of Library Services for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, who succeeded Pokorski as president of the Society. Harris will be next year's keynote.

Other presenters were SCHS past president Richard Hart; SCHS member Mike Kienzler, retired *State Journal-Register* night metro editor; SCHS past president Dr. Virgilio Pilapil; City of Springfield historian and SCHS past president Curtis Mann, head of the Sangamon Valley Collection at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library; and Jane Ford, a close Pokorski family friend.

The annual dinner was held at historic Westminster Presbyterian Church in Springfield. The evening also included the Society's annual election and its traditional auction, this time both silent and live. The auctions raised over \$1,400.

Nominating Committee chair Brenda Holmes presided over the elections that included the re-election of Whitaker as president and Richard Herndon as treasurer. Also elected to the Society's executive board were Ruth Slottag as vice-president and Elaine Hoff, secretary.

Elected to the board seats were Rebecca Cisco, Cathy S. Mosley, Kathy Dehen, Sue Massie, David Scott, and Mary Alice Davis.



**WORDS OF WELCOME:** Society president Roger Whitaker welcomes attendees at the Society's annual dinner held at the historic Westminster Presbyterian Church in Springfield on June 25 that drew over 130 participants. The evening included a Power Point show highlighting the year's events, the annual election, silent and live auctions that raised over \$1,400 and a special tribute to the late Doug Pokorski, who died in office a decade ago and would have traditionally been the keynote speaker. A moving tribute to Pokorski, a prize-winning *State Journal Register* journalist, was given by his associates in a program put together by Kathryn Harris, (from top, left) director of Library Services for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, who succeeded Pokorski as president. Harris will also be next year's keynote. Other presenters were SCHS past president Richard Hart, Mike Kienzler, retired *State Journal-Register* night metro editor, SCHS past president Dr. Virgilio Pilapil, past president City of Springfield historian and past president Curtis Mann, head of the Sangamon Valley Collection at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Library, and Jane Ford, a close Pokorski family friend.

*Donna Catlin photos.*



**HANDS UP:** Bidding at the live-auction included waving a numbered “hand” to outbid the competition for items such as weekend get-aways, historic publications, vintage dolls, and signed, first edition books. More than 40 items were on the block for the Silent Auction. All were sold.



**SPORTS FAN and SCHS Life Member Janine Toman** is all smiles as she holds her live auction prize, a well-preserved copy of a Chicago Tribune sports section from 1969.



**GOOD FIXIN’S AND FUN:** Dinner attendees dined on a delicious buffet prepared by Carol Jean Fraase. The after-dinner fun included the live auction. Here, SCHS auction committee member Roni Betts provides Katie Spindell with a close look at one of the live auction items, preserved original front pages from late 1800s *Harper’s Weekly* featuring cartoons by Thomas Nast.

*Donna Catlin photos*



## Members Only Air Museum Tour To Kick Off Fall Meeting Season

(Continued from page 1)

George, president of Springfield-headquartered George Alarm, became fascinated with flight at an early age, progressing to obtaining many of the airplanes head read about and saw at air shows. His collection represents a life-long commitment to aviation history and includes Fleet Model 9, one of only two remaining of this type of aircraft left in the world; the 1942 Ryan PT-22 Recruit, the first mono-plane used by the U.S. Army Air Corps for pilot training and manufactured by the same company who built Charles Lindbergh's "The Spirit of St. Louis"; and the Galeb Seagull, the first jet airplane designed and built in Yugoslavia to enter production in the 1960s. The museum's aircraft is a movie star. If you saw the movie Iron Eagle III with Lou Gossett, you saw this airplane!

In addition to the presentation and the large collection of planes, you'll get a chance to see vintage memorabilia, models and more housed in display cases. Two armored vehicles, a 1943 MC Half-track and a 1958 Alvis Saladin, are also part of the Museum's collection.

### DIRECTIONS TO THE MUSEUM



**Address:** 835 South Airport Road, Springfield.

The Museum is located a short distance from the main entrance to Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport off J. David Jones Parkway (IL 29).

When you turn into the main airport entrance, make the first left (onto South Airport Drive) and proceed to the Museum/hangar which will be on your right.

The building is well marked. Parking is plentiful.

## HISTORY HAPPENINGS AROUND SANGAMON COUNTY

### Hidden History Show & Series Now at SAA's Edwards Place

With its Edwards Place headquarters as the springboard, the Springfield Art Association has opened a new exhibit and is launching a lecture series this month that tells the story of Springfield during the years before the Civil War as seen through the lens of one of the few houses that survived to tell about it.

**"Hidden in Plain Sight: The Material Life of Early Springfield,"** displays small but significant collection of artifacts surviving from those early days, including paintings, decorative arts and archaeological artifacts that are time travelers from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The exhibition, which runs until October 5, features highlights from the SAA's collection of pre-1860 objects. A four-part lecture series in conjunction with the exhibit begins Thursday, September 5 and continues on successive Thursdays, at 7 p.m.

Archeologist Robert Mazrim will kick off the lecture series with a discussion on **"The Archaeology of Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Illinois."** He will be followed on Septem-

ber 12 by Erica Holst, curator of Edwards Place, who will talk about **"Antebellum Springfield Art."**

**"Buy Local or by River: Furnishing Springfield and the Midwest,"** will be the topic September 19 when Andrew Richmond of Garth's Auction speaks. The series ends September 16 with **"The Built Environment of Early Springfield,"** with Christopher Schnell of Saint Louis University as the speaker.

### Fireside Chats at Iles To Focus on Black Hawk

Iles House kicks off its fall Fireside Chats series with a look at **"The American Indian in the Old Northwest."**

The three-part series, free, runs on Wednesdays September 4, 11 & 18 at 7 p.m. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 492-5929. Iles House is located at 628 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Springfield.

Dale Phillips, military historian and Superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic site, launches the series with a presentation entitled **"Final Decision for the Old Northwest, September-October 1813."** He will trace the confederation efforts of the tribes, battles ending

their dreams and the War of 1812.

On September 11, the Black Hawk War and its Aftermath will be the focus of Dr. Michael Wiant, archaeologist and Director of the Dixon Mounds State Archeological site. Continuing the saga as tribes resettle near Peoria, Dr. Wiant will focus on the action taken by Chief Black Hawk and the ensuing Black Hawk War.

The series will conclude on September 18 when re-enactor Fritz Klein, as President Lincoln, explains the desperate Indian circumstances during his presidency, his intense feelings, and national policy initiated to improve conditions.

### Clayville Fall Fest Coming Up September 21 & 22

The Pleasant Plains Historical Society holds its annual **Clayville Fall Festival** on Saturday, September 21 (9 a.m.-6 p.m.) and Sunday, September 22 (10 a.m.-4 pm.) at the restored historic site it operates off Route 125 east of Pleasant Plains.

Watch artisans and craftsmen at work, tour Broadwell Tavern and Batterton Cabins, hear music and see military reenactments. For more details, go to [www.clayville.org](http://www.clayville.org)

## Two-Day IHPA Conference on Illinois History to be Held in Springfield September 26 & 27

Members of the Sangamon County Historical Society are invited to sign-up for a Conference on Illinois History that will be held in Springfield on Thursday, September 26 and Friday, September 27 at the Prairie Capitol Convention Center and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the conference, sponsored by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

The event will include a two-part workshop on the National Register of Historic Places. The workshop will focus on the origins of the program, what it means to be registered, examples of National Register properties in Illinois, and the requirements are in order to become registered as well as the application process itself and the best practices for writing a nomination form.

The conference includes 23 sessions on topics such as politics, Abraham Lincoln, Latino history, and the Civil War, seven workshops, and two roundtable discussions.

Veteran journalist and author Robert Hartley will be luncheon featured speaker on Thursday, his talk focusing on "How a Rifle Shot Changed the Illinois Election Outcome." Harley has written several books about significant Illinois political figures including Paul Powell, Charles Percy, and Paul Simon. His recent work, *Battleground 1948: Truman, Stevenson, Douglas, and the Most Surprising Election in Illinois History*, examines the pivotal role Illinois played in the 1948 elections of Adlai Stevenson II as governor, Paul Douglas as senator, and Harry Truman as president of the United States.

Suzanne Cooper Guasco, the Robert Haywood Morrison Associate Professor and Chair of History at Queens University at Charlotte, North Carolina will be the guest speaker on Thursday night at a banquet to be held at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. Her book *Edward Coles and the Rise of Antislavery Politics in Nineteenth-Century America* examines the important role that Edward Coles—Illinois' second governor (1822–26)—played in shaping the national debate against slavery.

Mark Pohlad, associate professor of Art History and associate dean of Liberal Studies at DePaul University, will discuss the Windy City's Lincoln connections using historic and modern-day images "Abraham Lincoln: Chicagoan?" when he addresses those attending the event's Friday luncheon.

Pohlad teaches courses in American and Modern European art, the history of photography, and Chicago topics. He frequently speaks on his research interests—photohistory, Abraham Lincoln, Chicago artists, and the relationship between art and history.

Fees for the event range from \$90 for both days to \$50 per day. Luncheons and banquet fees are separate. For registration information and the event program, go to [www.illinoishistory.gov/conference.htm](http://www.illinoishistory.gov/conference.htm) or call 558-9014.

### 2013 SANGAMON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING SCHEDULE

**Wednesday, September 11:** Registration deadline for September 17 Members Only General Meeting, Air Combat Museum, Springfield. Call 525-1961 or sign-up at [sangamonhistory.org](http://sangamonhistory.org).

**Saturday, September 14, 6 p.m.** Board Dinner meeting.

**Tuesday, September 17: 5:30 p.m.** General Meeting (Members only), Air Combat Museum (See details, page 1).

**Wednesday, October 9, 5 p.m.** board meeting, Carnegie Room South, City of Springfield Library.

**Tuesday, October 22,** general meeting, "Spooky Sangamon County," Edwards Place

**Wednesday, December 11:** SCHS board meeting, Carnegie Room South. City of Springfield Library.

## sangamon county historical society friends and sponsors

TONY LEONE  
Owner/Innkeeper  
ajleonejr@aol.com  
217-725-3663 cell



**PASFIELD HOUSE INN**  
Hospitality in a Grandeur Way  
[pasfieldhouse.com](http://pasfieldhouse.com)

217-525-3663 Inn  
Pasfield House Inn  
525 S Pasfield St  
Springfield, Illinois 62704



**Our names are Jilly and Fergus  
And We Love History**

### SIGN UP SOON - 217.786.2292!



**Information:**  
217.786.2432 or  
[www.llcc.edu/commed](http://www.llcc.edu/commed)

#### WRITING LABELS FOR EXHIBITS/DISPLAYS

Renowned museum director John Cotton Dana observed almost a century ago that "objects are silent" and require interpretation if all they have to communicate is to be revealed. The first opportunity for interpretation is often the labels we place in our exhibits. Bring an artifact with you and gain hands-on experience in writing labels for your audiences.

**Instructor:** E. Claire Jerry **Curator:** Paul Findley Archive  
**Date:** Thurs., 9/26/13 **Time:** 6:30-9 p.m. **Location:** Menard Hall, room 1178  
**Fee:** \$29 **Course Code:** CEW 112-52C

***Sangamon County Historical Society***  
P.O. Box 9744,  
Springfield, IL 62791-9744  
*Return Service Requested*

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

**Sangamon County Historical Society MEMBERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL Form**

Mail this form with your check to the Sangamon County Historical Society, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744. You may also join or renew on line by going to [sangamonhistory.org](http://sangamonhistory.org).



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Status**

\_\_\_ New Member

\_\_\_ Renewal

\_\_\_ Gift of Membership from:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Levels**

- 01 - Regular Membership - \$25
- 02 - Not-For-Profit Membership - \$20 (Must show proof of status).
- 03 - Student Membership - \$10. (Must show proof of status).
- 04 - Educator, \$15. (Must show proof of status).
- 05 - Pioneer Level Membership - \$100.
- 06 - Settlers Level Membership - \$250.
- 07 - Trailblazer Level Membership - \$500.
- 08 - Lifetime Membership - \$700