



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. 7

APRIL 2014

Seating Limited

Register On-Line For April 15 Presidential Library Tour

On-line registration is continuing for the Society's Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library guided after-hours tour on Tuesday, April 15.

The **members only** event is limited to first 50 who sign up. Registration opened last month. The program will begin at 5:30 p.m., led by Lincoln Curator James Cornelius, and Kathryn Harris, Director of Library Services.

The Library is located at 112 North Sixth Street, directly across from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

Participants can park on the street or in a lot off Seventh Street, just behind the

library. You can be buzzed in through the back door or come in through the Sixth Street at Jefferson entrance.

The 98,000 square foot Library, which opened in 2004, serves as home to the Illinois State Historical Library and its famed Henry Horner Lincoln Collection. It has more than 12 million books, documents and artifacts, 52,000 of which are from the Lincoln Collection, the world's largest.

The collection includes an original copy of the Emancipation Proclamation, the 13th Amendment outlawing slavery, the Gettysburg Address, and Lincoln's presidential briefcase that are on rotating display at the museum.

play at the museum.

The library also includes a 33,000 square foot state-of-the-art storage facility, approximately six miles of shelves, reading rooms, archival facilities, microfilm and manuscript collections. It also has classrooms, a multi-purpose conference space, offices, interactive displays, exhibits, and meeting and special event areas.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's huge Illinois history collection includes items from the 1700s to the 1900s including original copies of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the earliest newspaper published in Illinois.

Fair Fare for May; Annual Dinner in June at Sangamo Club

The Illinois State Fair may not start until this August, but for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society, it will be around the corner. That's because our Tuesday, May 20 general meeting will focus on the history of this Springfield landmark in a session packed with information and photos of its rich history.

Representatives of the Illinois State Fair Museum Foundation, which operates a small museum on the site during the 11 day exposition, will provide a historical texture to an annual event that draws several hundred thousand visitors to



IN THE OFFING: Fair Facts, Sangamo Celebration

this area every year. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. in Carnegie Room North at the City of Springfield's Lincoln Public Library. The program will be open to the public. More details will appear in next month's *Historico*.

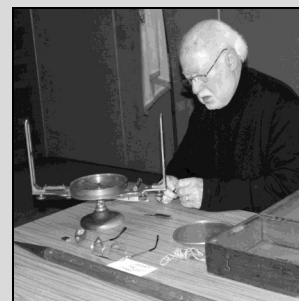
On Tuesday, June 17, the Society will hold its annual meeting and elections, dinner and live and silent auction at the Sangamo Club in Springfield. Tickets will be \$30 per person with a choice of menu. Program details, election information and a ticket ordering form will be in the May issue and on-line.

INSIDE

Making a Difference.....	2
Nominations Deadline.....	3
Lincoln Monument Event Set.....	3
Calendar.....	7

HISTORIAN Robert Church assembles equipment used by early surveyors here to plot areas west of the original colonies. Church spoke to the Society last month. See photos

Page 6





You Can Make A Difference and Help Us Grow

By the time you read this, Mother Nature should have put aside all that cold, nasty weather that plagued us this past winter. It's a time for rejuvenation, both personally and as an organization.

Right now, the Society is taking a close look at its membership and beyond, reaching out to fill seats on our board and prepare a slate of officers. I've had a wonderful two years serving as president but am committed to a path for our organization that builds and encourages a continuous stream of fresh leadership. That's why we limit terms on our board and encourage our members to step up and serve.

This year is no different. This month, our nominating committee will be putting together a slate of directors and officers that will be presented in May and voted upon at our June annual meeting. We expect to see among them, new faces, new energy and new ideas, a system that has invigorated our organization and made it into one of the largest and most active county historical societies in the state. If you want to play a role in the future of the Society, now is your chance to step forward.

One of our past board members, Pam Van Alstine, has been a driving force behind the creation of the Lincoln Monument Association and its efforts to draw attention to the needs of this important historical site. So it was with some pleasure that her efforts and those of its members (including some who also belong to the Society) are behind a program that provides visitors with another way to tour the grounds: a Tree Tour it will launch on May 24.

The debut will include an ice cream social, a throwback to the days when visiting Oak Ridge Cemetery to drive around and picnic was a popular weekend activity, so much so that by 1879, its board of managers closed one of its gates, required tickets to enter the grounds and published a rule book for plot owners and visitors alike. Banned was smoking on the grounds, driving any faster than walking, or leaving your horses unsecured!

The site has a rich history, forever intertwined with our community, county, state, and nation. Our hats are off to people like Pam and the others who are intent on preserving this important historic site.

The Society was pleased to be part and parcel of planning and seeing the success of the 2nd annual History Trivia Night last month at the Old State Capitol.

We were duly impressed by the wonderful young singers who made up the Lincoln Troubadours, the troupe of area high school and college students who perform Civil War music a cappella at historic sites across the area each summer. We were happy to raise funds to support their efforts.

And what a great group of kids! They pitched in to help where they could and also entertained everyone with their melodic tones throughout the evening. At the end, they formed a line to personally thank each and everyone for coming to the event. That's impressive.

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 or sancohis.org. Send event announcements to historicoeditor@gmail.com.

Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor, Donna Catlin, Photographer

Board Nominations Deadline April 9

The Society's Nomination committee has begun compiling a list of possible candidates for the board of directors and officers for 2014-2015.

Any member interested in serving on the board should submit a resume and a cover letter to Nominating Committee chair Brenda Holmes by April 9, either by

mail at SCHS, Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744 or (*preferred*) by e-mail at nominations@sancohis.org.

Board members serve three year terms unless they are filling a vacancy and are required to attend monthly board meetings and participate in Society committees and events.

Edwards Place Closing for Renovations May 1

Edwards Place, the historic antebellum mansion tied into the social and cultural life of Abraham Lincoln's Springfield, will close on May 1 so that restoration work can begin on the first floor.

The project is the latest phase of a \$1 million program to restore the entire 700 North Fourth Street structure to its mid 19th century appearance.

The building is owned and operated by the Springfield Art Association.

Working from an interior

finishes and furnishing plan produced by Sullivan Preservation, Edwards Place will receive historically-appropriate carpeting, wallpaper, treatment of woodwork, window treatments, and updated lighting.

In addition, its small dining room will become the Archaeology Room, where archaeological artifacts excavated on site will be displayed and the physical history of the house will be explored.

The oldest house in Springfield on its original

foundation, the 1833 structure has undergone several additions and renovations in response to changes in fashion, occupancy, and use.

In the mid 1850s, it was purchased by attorney Benjamin S. Edwards, son of Governor Ninian Edwards. Benjamin Edwards' brother, Ninian Wist Edwards, was married to Elizabeth Todd, sister of Mary Todd Lincoln.

The Benjamin Edwards and the Lincolns moved in the same professional and social circles.

"Spirited Stroll into the Past" on May 24

An afternoon ice cream social and newly inaugurated Tree Tours at the Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site/Oak Ridge Cemetery, will be held on Saturday, May 24 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.



The event, "A Spirited Stroll into the Past," is sponsored by the Lincoln Monument Association in conjunction with the Oak Ridge Cemetery Association. In addition to the ice cream social and tree tour, it will include a performance by the Springfield Municipal Band and the presentation of information about the new, "original" First Street entrance to the cemetery.

The event is free but there will be a nominal fee for the ice cream and cake.

The Tree Tour, developed with the help of Starhill Forest Arboretum, includes 12 trees identified with markers that describe the tree, its GPS coordinates, and a QR

code that gives the tree's identity, additional information and photo. At the event, each tree will have an interpreter to provide historic and horticultural facts about the tree. Eventually 250 trees will be identified on future tours.

The ice cream social is in keeping with the historic nature of the site. In the 19th century, Oak Ridge Cemetery was a favorite destination for drives or Sunday picnics.

When Bad Weather Strikes

Throughout the year, if bad weather prompts a meeting or event cancellation, an announcement to that effect will be posted by 3 p.m. of the day of the meeting/event several different ways. We will post announcements on our primary website, www.sangamonhistory.org as well as on our supplementary site, www.sancohis.org. We'll also have an announcement on our phone, 217-525-1961.

Where possible, we will also post any cancellation notices on media websites and through local media outlets.



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

Please make note of our official mailing address:

SCHS
Box 9744
Springfield, Illinois,
62791-9744



Troubadours Benefit **Trivia Night A Hit, Society Members Play Key Roles**

With Sangamon County Historical Society members playing major roles, the 2nd annual History Trivia Night on March 22 was a sell-out, drawing some 130 players to the Old State Capitol for an evening of fun, food, and festivities.

Proceeds from the event are going to the Lincoln Troubadours, a group of vocally talented high school and college students from Sangamon County who each summer perform Civil War era music a cappella at historic sites across Central Illinois. The teens receive a small stipend from the state for their efforts, the trivia night funding helping underwrite their expenses and savings for college.

The Society had three “official” tables for individual players and two more sponsored by board members in the mix of the 13 tables of 10 filled by members and friends of history organizations across the county including the Old State Capitol Foundation, the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum, the Illinois State Historical Society, the National Park Service, Clayville/Pleasant Plains Historical Society, and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

In addition, Society members led by Mary Alice Davis and Vicky Whitaker, helped spearhead the event’s organization, providing printed materials, on-line reservation services, game production assistance and supplementary services.

(Continued on page 6)

NATIONAL CHILLI CHAMP Les Eastep, (top) an SCHS board member, provided the food and service at History Trivia Night, March 22, at the Old State Capitol. Getting a taste of his famous blend was fellow board member Patricia Davis. Dave Blanchette, Governor Quinn’s Springfield press spokesman (center left) handled the emcee’s job. Members of the Troubadours (center right) in full costume, entertained at intermissions and before the game began. Judges (below, from left), Heather Wickens, Kathy Rem, and Pam Brown go over the round answer sheets later recorded by Karen Gietl (right) who posted them on a screen so tables could see their progress. The Illinois State Historical Society table won first place, Old State Capitol Foundation and National Park Services tables coming in second and third, respectively.

Donna Catlin photos



Trivia Night Sells Out, Raises Funds

(Continued from page 4)

Committee member Les Eastep, an SCHS board member and a national chilli champ, prepared the evening's meal, two types of chilli that proved popular with the trivia players. SCHS Life Member Tony Leone, proprietor of historic Pasfield House, gave Eastep use of his commercial kitchen and licensing for the food's preparation. SCHS treasurer Richard Herndon served as the financial liaison before and during the evening, handling income and expenditures.

Several other members of the organizing committee, who included Dan Usherwood (president of the Pleasant Plains Historical Society that operates Clayville); Barbara Dickerman (on the board of the Springfield African-American History Museum); Elizabeth Simpson (president of the Old State Capitol Foundation); Bill Furry (executive director of the Illinois State Historical Society); Carol Strick (Rochester Historical Preservation Society); Sue Massie (president of the Iles House Foundation); Stewart Reeve (director of the Illinois State Military Museum); Erika Holst, curator of Edwards Place/Springfield Art Association; Justin Blandford, IHPA area site director; and trivia master Al Gietl and his wife Karen, who assisted the evening's judges, are also members of the Sangamon County Historical Society.

The planning committee also included Ann Rowley of the Rochester Historical Preservation Society; Lisa Higgs of the Vachel Lindsay Association; Sarah Watson of the Looking for Lincoln Historic Commission; Sable Williamson and Lynn Williamson, both from Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum; Sue Hamilton, director of the Lincoln Troubadours; and Troy Gillmore, Old State Capitol site director.

The Illinois State Historical Society table won first place in the Trivia Night competition, followed by the Old State Capitol Foundation table and the National Park Service table. Dave Blanchette, the Governor's Springfield press secretary, served as emcee for the evening. Doing the judging were retired **State Journal Register** editorial staffer Kathy Rem; Pam Brown, a well-known Mary Todd Lincoln re-enactor; and Heather Wickens, project manager, Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition.



SURVEYING was the name of the game for Society members attending last month's general meeting March 18 when surveying historian Robert Church detailed the role Thomas Jefferson...and Abraham Lincoln played in shaping Illinois. Jefferson created the Public Land Survey System, the first mathematically designed method to survey public lands west of the original 13 states. Lincoln learned surveying in the early 1830s, mapping out part of Sangamon County, as illustrated by Church (above), in a drawing marking completion of land in Petersburg in 1837. Church brought and explained some of the surveying instruments used in Lincoln's time (left). Jefferson's role as a surveyor, Church showed, is depicted in this statue at the University of Virginia. Jefferson, at 74, surveyed the site. The meeting was held at Springfield's Lincoln Library.

Donna Catlin photos

CALENDAR

Wednesday, April 9: Deadline for submitting nominations for seats on the Sangamon County Historical Society board. Resumes and a cover letter can be mailed to the Society at Box 9744, Springfield, 62791-9744 or e-mailed to nominations@sancohis.org.

Wednesday, April 9: SCHS Board Meeting, 5 p.m., Carnegie Room South, City of Springfield Lincoln Library.

Tuesday, April 15: Members Only Tour of the Lincoln Presidential Library, 5:30 p.m. Free, but on-line reservations



(limited to the first 50) required. (See story, page 1).

Wednesday, May 14: SCHS Board Meeting, 5 p.m., Carnegie Room South, City of Springfield Lincoln Library.

Tuesday, May 20: The State Fair: A Historical Perspective, 5:30 p.m. Carnegie Room North, City of Springfield Lincoln Library. Free and open to the public.

Saturday, May 24: "Spirited Stroll to the Past," Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social Inaugurating Tree Tour at Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site/Oakridge Cemetery, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free. Nominal fee for food.

Tuesday, June 17: Sangamon County Historical Society Annual Dinner, 5 p.m., Sangamo Club, Springfield. Tickets \$30 per person.

sangamon county historical society friends and sponsors

Jack Rooney
President
jack@cap-strategies.com

2413 Heather Mill Court
Springfield, Illinois 62704
TEL 217/652-1645 FAX 217/546-5952
www.cap-strategies.com



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

Flagg Farmstead Bed and Breakfast

500 Old Tipton School Road
Sherman, IL, 62684

Toll Free: 888-611-3524
Local: 217-816-8569

dougpolite@yahoo.com
www.flaggfarmsteadbandb.com



@tripadvisor: ☆☆☆☆☆

Rosalie and Doug Polite, Owners



PASFIELD HOUSE INN

"HOSPITALITY IN A GRANDEUR WAY"

TONY LEONE
PROPRIETOR

525-535 S. PASFIELD STREET
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704
217-525-3663

If you are a volunteer or staff member at a local tourist site, consider these LLCC offerings to kickoff the tourist season!



**For information, call
786.2432. To register,
call 786-2292.**

LOOKING FOR LINCOLN (AND MORE) TERRITORY • Thurs., 5/1/14

With May comes an increase in visitors at all local sites, whether a museum, historic site, zoo or garden/nature center. Share energy and stories in an inspiring start to summer tourism, with words of inspiration, entertainment and refreshments.

THE RIGHT BEGINNING • Fri.-Sat., 5/2/14-5/3/14

Introducing the necessary concepts of guest services, connect the visitor experience to a site/resource and bring home to a guide or docent what visitors actually take back to their own home.

MINING FOR THE MESSAGE • Thurs., 5/15/14 and 5/22/14

If you are an interpreter or want to be, learn tools that help you compose successful scripts with the right details to deliver key messages.

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. Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30



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