



# 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

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SEPTEMBER 2014

## Members-Only Season Opener

# All Aboard! Talk, Museum Tour to Eye Impact of Rail on Sangamon's History

Time to say goodbye to those lazy, hazy days of summer?

You bet!

The Sangamon County Historical Society gets back on track this month, opening its 2014-2015 meeting season on Tuesday, September 16 with a *members-only* talk on the history of rail in Sangamon County topped with a tour of the Chatham Railroad Museum. The program is free, but *reservations must be made by Friday, September 12* either on-line at the Society's website, [www.sangmonhistory.org](http://www.sangmonhistory.org) or by calling the Society at 217-525-1961.

Bill Shannon, president of the Chicago & Illinois Midland Chapter of the National Railway History Association, will preface the tour with a look at the area's early railways that linked and nurtured the growth of communities along its spine. His talk will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Chatham Community Building, 109 West Mulberry Street on the north side of the village square (enter through the east door). Afterwards, program goers can walk a short

block or drive over to the Chatham Railroad Museum at 100 North State Street.

There is plenty of parking at both locations and if you prefer, instead of parking on the square, you can park at the station before the meeting and then walk back.

Retired from the Illinois Department of Transportation, Shannon has been involved with the museum since its inception in the late 1990s when the Village of Chatham purchased the site and area

residents began its restoration.

Built in 1902 by the Chicago & Alton Railroad to replace one that was destroyed by fire, the station was in daily use by both passengers and for



**DOWN BY THE STATION:** Bill Shannon, head of the National Railway History Association's Chatham Chapter, which restored the Chatham Railroad Station and turned it into a museum. He will kick off the Society's meeting season that includes a tour of the station.

freight shipments until its closing 70 years later, in 1972. By then, after several mergers, the building was owned  
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**NEW BOARD MEMBERS** (from left) Genevieve Kaplan, Troy Gilmore and Amy Henrikson were among those at the Society's annual dinner. A complete list of the 2014-15 board is on page 3.



## We're Off to a Great Start, More to Come!

Transitioning is never easy, whether you're moving into a new position, new home, or to a new state. But when you have lots of help, momentum that continues to grow, and exciting times ahead like we do at the Sangamon County Historical Society, it's a joy.

I'm delighted to become president of this great organization as we leap into the future. We're extremely fortunate to have had a great number of dedicated people working well together that have brought us to this point and will continue to do so in the future.

Before I go any further, I want to thank Roger Whitaker, our immediate past president, and my fellow board members for all the hard work they have put into building our organization and reputation for getting things done.

I'm pleased that every board member and officer from the past year who has completed their official position indicated they wanted to stay on, working on committees, chairs or special projects.

If some of the names on the Directory of Officers, Board Members, and Committee Chairs on the next page look familiar, it's because they are.

We are not losing our experienced board... many will head committees as we expand and broaden our activities.

We urge you to step up too, join a committee and help us move into the future.

And speaking of that future, I'm happy to let you know that in the fall of 2015, October 11 to be exact, we will be bringing back the Society's popular "Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk" that before being discontinued about a decade ago, drew some 75,000 participants.

This single event has garnered so much interest and enthusiasm for its return that it could not be ignored.

We will be taking the lead in putting this together and in fact, work is already underway, but we expect to embrace many history groups and individuals in the process as we should be as a county historical Society.

Next month, we will be going into greater depth about our coming programs and events, but you may want to circle Saturday, March 21 on your calendar now.

We'll be back with our annual History Trivia Night on that date at the Old State Capitol for benefit of the Lincoln Troubadours. This past year (right) was a great success and the teens, who perform throughout the summer for free



at area historic sites, were greatly appreciative of the financial underpinnings the event made possible.

Mary Alice



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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). Send event announcements to [historicoeditor@gmail.com](mailto:historicoeditor@gmail.com).  
Vicky Whitaker, *Historico* Editor, Donna Catlin, *Photographer*

## ***“Booking the Iles House” Offers Chance to Meet Local Authors, Stack Up on Their Works***

If there’s nothing like a good book, how does eight of them sound?

Visit Iles House in Springfield on Saturday, October 4 and you’ll not only be able to choose from among a group of new works for children and adults, but also get a chance to meet the authors, all local, and have them sign their works. Book purchases will help support a variety of projects, and for a small fee, you can munch on lunch while one of the authors discusses his work.

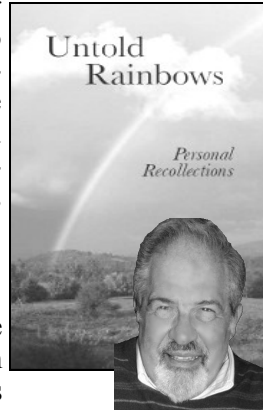
It’s all part of *“Booking The Iles House,”* a morning-through mid-afternoon event at the historic site at 628 South Seventh Street. Children’s books will be the focus of the morning’s activities, with adult oriented books featured in the afternoon. The program runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Admission is free, but the luncheon, which includes a presentation by Sangamon County Historical Society member Gary Vitale about his book, *Untold Rainbows*, is \$10.

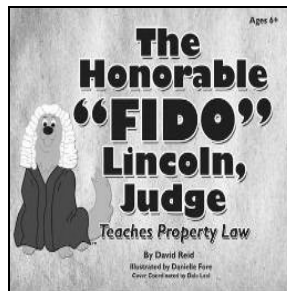
Prior to his retirement, Vitale taught Shakespeare, speech, drama, film, and the humanities at Benedictine University, Springfield. Through

the years, he has published a variety of written works, from a book of annotated Civil War era letters, to magazine articles, a college textbook, and even church anthem lyrics. He is a former SCHS director.

From 10 a.m. until Noon, the focus will be on children’s books including *The Honorable FIDO Lincoln, Judge*



**Gary Vitale**



*Teaches Property Law*, by Springfield attorney David R. Reid that’s suitable for children six and up. Part of the proceeds from Reid’s

book will go to support restoration at Edwards Place.

*(Continued on page 6)*



### **OFFICERS**

**President**.....Mary Alice Davis  
**Vice-President**.....Ruth Slottag  
**Secretary**.....Sue Massie  
**Treasurer**.....Richard Herndon  
**Past President**.....Roger Whitaker

### **DIRECTORS**

#### **Term Ending 2015**

Donna Catlin  
 Les Eastep  
 David Grimm  
 Francie Staggs  
 Vicky Whitaker

#### **Term Ending 2016**

Kathy Dehen  
 Cathy Mosley  
 David Scott

#### **Term Ending 2017**

Troy Gilmore  
 Amy Henrikson  
 Genevieve Kaplan  
 Jerry Smith  
 Sara Watson

### **Committee Chairs**

**Legal:** Bruce Beeman  
**Special Projects:** Elaine Hoff  
**Finance:** Patricia Davis, Doug Polite,  
**Nominating:** Brenda Holmes  
**Membership Relations/Hospitality:** Marion Leach  
**Publicity and Marketing:** Ruth Slottag  
**Publications:** Roger Whitaker  
**Programs & Special Events:** Mary Alice Davis, Vicky Whitaker

### **Staff**

Dr. Samuel Wheeler, **Executive Coordinator**  
 Mike Kienzler, **sangamonlink.org Editor**

## **SEPTEMBER 2014 MEMBERSHIP & DONATIONS REPORT**

*The Society welcomes the following new members:*

**Sandra Bellatti, Ray & Pam Bruzan, Norm Clausen, Lee Espenschild, Thomas A. Fitch, Suellen Funk, Kathryn Gairani, Bernard T. Gaulet Sr., Troy, Michelle & Massie Gilmore, Pam & John Gray, Rita Ham, Amy, Tom & Alex Henrikson, Sarah Iaiennaro, Kim Villanueva, Dennis & Kristin Jorgensen, Genevieve M. Kaplan, Gary & Evelyn Lazar, Linda McCaffrey, Thomas & Sharon McSwiggin, Nelvin & Ida Sloman, Shirley & Pam Springer, Sara & Chuck Watson.**

*And thanks the following for their donations:*

**Frances Armstrong, Bruce & Joan Beeman, Donna & Carl Catlin, Job C. Conger IV, Denis Conlon, David & Laurie Farrell, Nadine Ferguson, Kimble Funk, Perry & Marilyn Hall, Susan Hammond, Dr. Mark & Jackie Hansen, Richard E. & Ann Hart, Chuck Hartke, Fred & Kathy Hoffmann, Brenda Holmes, David Joens & Monda Martin, Patrick & Janice Joyce, Richard McLane, Logan McMinn, Joe Nicoud Jr., John & Ida Noll, Margaret Oswald, Robert & Valerie Patterson, Dr. Virgilio & Elena Pilapil, Sarah Robinson, William & Patrick Rudolph, James K. & LuAnn Russell, Richard & Dana Saal, Jean Richards & Bob Sablonty, Paul Schanbacher, David & Virginia Scott, Ron & Ann Tucker, Dr. Elvin & Sharon Zook.**

Please make note of our official mailing address:

**SCHS**  
**Box 9744**  
**Springfield, Illinois,**  
**62791-9744**



# Summer



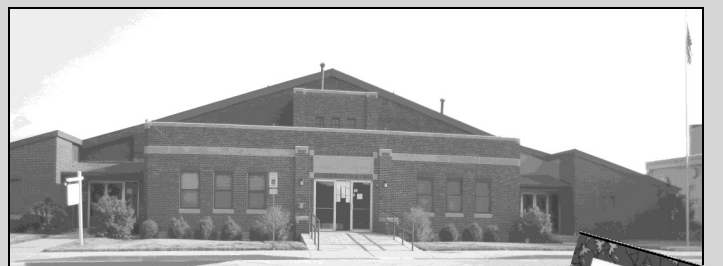
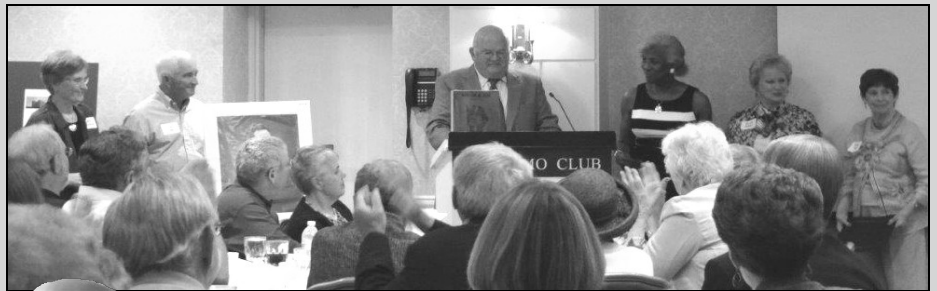
**MAKING NEWS:** The momentum of previous months continued with a press conference on June 17 to debut the Society's new on-line county history encyclopedia, SangamonLink.org edited by Mike Kienzler (at left), a long-time Society member and retired night city editor of the State Journal-Register. Print and electronic media turned out in force at the Old State Capitol for a demonstration of the new on-line resource that will eventually contain thousands of entries about every facet of Sangamon history. Society executive coordinator (below) was also on-camera to provide details. Members of the Society attending the annual dinner later that evening also saw the site in operation for the first time. Segments of entries are also appearing in the SUNDAY A.M. Section of the SJ-R twice a month, with the Society's logo prominently displayed. Over the coming months, Kienzler and other Society members will be reaching out to community groups and individuals encouraging them to share their histories and photos on the site.



**SangamonLink**
*History of Sangamon County, Illinois*

# Scrapbook

**FILLED** to capacity, the Society's annual dinner provided an opportunity to mix and mingle, bid on auction items, salute the efforts of officers and board members and those who have contributed to the Society over the years. Held at the Sangamo Club on June 17, the event included the election of new officers and directors and a live and silent auction.



**GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS:** With the weeks slipping by, newly elected Society president Mary Alice Davis (standing, left) gets some computer pointers from immediate past president Roger Whitaker as the transition is made from one Society administration to the other. Davis gathered the board for an informal meeting in late August where board members and committee chairs received their annual handbook. August also meant firming up the fall program line-up including the September 16 meeting which will start at the Chatham Community Center (above) followed by a tour of the nearby Chatham Railroad Museum. The Society also published a revised and redesigned edition of Les Eastep's popular *Springfield, Illinois: A Chili History*.





# Members-Only Opener September 16 in Chatham

(Continued from page 1)

by Illinois Central Gulf, reflecting a merger between Gulf Mobile & Ohio and the Illinois Central Railroad. It is one of the very few remaining small town stations still standing where it was built. The adjacent tracks are in daily use by Union Pacific freight as well as Amtrak.

Shannon, president of the local NRHS chapter since 1995, grew up in Athens, Illinois and lived in Springfield until 2002 when he moved to Chatham.

A member of the Sangamon County Historical Society for several years, he is active with the Chatham Area Chamber of Commerce and in addition to his interest in railroading, enjoys taking his antique and classic cars to area car shows and cruise-ins.

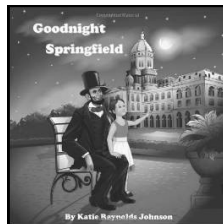


**ARTIFACTS FROM ANOTHER ERA:** The Chatham Railroad Museum which is filled with mementos of bygone railroad days, will be open to SCHS members after the program.

## Meet the Author to Get a New Twist at Iles House Next Month

(Continued from page 3)

*Goodnight Springfield*, by Springfield native Katie Reynolds Johnson, shares her special affinity for her hometown and its hero, Abraham Lincoln, in this book that designed to delight children of all ages.



*My African Home*, written by Allison Gnuse, a Springfield pre-k teacher, draws on her experience in Kenya as volunteer teacher in a missionary program that aids needy and orphaned children and women.



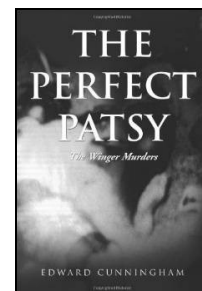
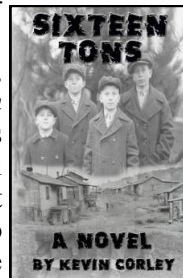
Her book, designed for young readers, introduces children to both Kenya's inner city and rural bush. Part of the proceeds

will go to the Nasha Ministries International, an arm of the New Mission Systems International that underwrites the

missionary program.

At 1 p.m. the authors of books written for an adult readership will present background on their work. They include:

■ Kevin Corley, whose novel, *Sixteen Tons*, while written as fiction, is based on oral histories of a great many of those who lived and worked the mines of Sangamon County at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

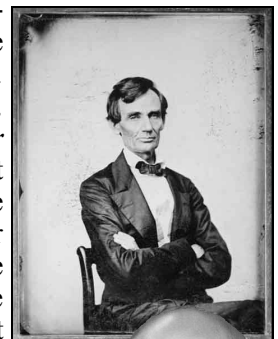


■ Ed Cunningham, author of *The Perfect Patsy*, a report on the 1995 Winger murders. A trial lawyer, Cunningham spent 10 years collecting records on the case and interviewing witnesses. Two murders

occurred. First ruled justifiable homicide, the case was later reopened, ending in a murder charge.

■ Richard Hart, who has written two books about individuals who figured in Abraham Lincoln's life while in Springfield.

*Preston Butler, Photographer* looks into just who was the photographer engaged to take an image of the future president that was to become the signature portrait of President Lincoln.



Hart's other book, *Jameson Jenkins and James Blanks - African American neighbors of Abraham Lincoln*, describes people whose lives and professions were intertwined with Mr. Lincoln's life in the community.

Hart, an attorney, is a Life Member of the Sangamon County Historical Society and a past president.

# UIS Lecture in Anticipation of Lincoln Funeral Re-enactment

Historians whose research has focused on President Abraham Lincoln's death and funeral, will speak at the University of Illinois, Springfield's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Lincoln Legacy Lecture, Thursday, October 16.

The Lincoln funeral-themed presentation is in anticipation of the re-enactment and commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lincoln's funeral next May in Springfield.

Open to the public, reservations are not required for the free program that will run from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in Brookens Auditorium.

Those who arrive early will have an opportunity for seating in the auditorium; overflow seating will be in Public Affairs

Center room C/D. A live webcast can be viewed at [www.uis.edu/technology/uislive.html](http://www.uis.edu/technology/uislive.html).

Panelists for this year's event will be:

■ **James L. Swanson**, senior legal scholar at The Heritage Foundation, on "*I Give You My Sprig of Lilac: The Death and Funeral of Abraham Lincoln*." Swanson is the author of *Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer* and its sequel, *Bloody Crimes: The Funeral for Abraham Lincoln and the Chase for Jefferson Davis*.

■ **Dr. Richard Wightman Fox**, University of Southern California history professor, "*What We've Forgotten about Lincoln's Funeral and What We've Never Known*." Dr. Fox is the author of the forth-

coming book, *Lincoln's Body: A Cultural History*.

■ **Dr. Michael Burlingame**, who holds the Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies at UIS, will offer opening remarks, "*Why Lincoln was Murdered*," and serve as moderator. Dr. Burlingame is the author of the two-volume biography, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life*.

The authors' books will be available for purchase and signing at the reception following the lectures.

The event is sponsored by the UIS Center for State Policy and Leadership, in cooperation with the Lynn Chair in Lincoln Studies. For more information, call Barbara Ferrara at UIS, (217) 206-7094.



**IT'S OFFICIAL:** Society Life Member Tony Leone (left) is all smiles following a ceremony August 23 unveiling the official 2014 City of Springfield Christmas ornament by Mayor Michael Houston (right). The ornament, the first to be in color, features Leone's historic Pasfield House built in 1896 by Dr. George Pasfield as a wedding present for his son. The house, now a bed and breakfast, is on the site of a once 40 acre estate that housed three generations of George Pasfields, each leaders in the community. Proceeds from the ornament sale will benefit St. Joseph's Home. Joining in for the festivities were special guests Sally Faith, Mayor of historic St. Charles, Missouri and its Civil War Santa, Jim Phillips whose costume reflects the Santa depicted by cartoonist Thomas Nast.

## New AmazonSmile.com Program Bringing SCHS Benefits

If you're an on-line Amazon shopper, you can now help support the Sangamon County Historical Society's programs and projects at no cost to you simply by signing up for AmazonSmile.com.

Amazon is now donating 0.5 percent of its free AmazonSmile members purchases to eligible organizations of their choice. Donating to the Society is one of the options.

You can manage your purchases and other account information on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile using a single account. You can use your existing Amazon.com ac-

count on AmazonSmile if you have one, or create a new account if you don't at Smile.Amazon.com.

If you shop on AmazonSmile.com using an internet browser on your desktop or laptop computer, your mobile phone, or your tablet (including any Kindle Fire device), then your AmazonSmile purchases will be eligible for donations.

Purchases made using an Amazon Shopping App are not currently eligible for donations nor are purchases made from any Kindle E-reader device through the Kindle Store.

### CALENDAR

**Wednesday, September 10:** SCHS Board Meeting, 5 p.m., City of Springfield Lincoln Library.

**Tuesday, September 16:** Rail History Talk and Museum Tour, Chatham. Members Only. 5:30 p.m. (See Story, page 1) **Saturday, October 4:** "Booking at Iles House,"

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (See story, page 3).

**Wednesday, October 8:** SCHS Board Meeting, 5 p.m., City of Springfield Lincoln Library.

**Thursday, October 16:** 12th Annual Lincoln Legacy Lecture, 7 p.m. Free. University of Illinois, Springfield, Brookens Auditorium

(See story, this page).

**Tuesday, October 21:** SCHS Program Meeting: *Now You See It, Now You Don't: Sangamon's Disappearing Landscape*; William Furry, speaker, 5:30 p.m., Carnegie Room North, City of Springfield Library. Free and open to the public.

**Sangamon County Historical Society**  
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**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). 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