



# Historico

The newsletter of the Sangamon County Historical Society  
 308 E. Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701  
 www.sancohis.org 217.522.2500

**March, 2006**

**March 8 Wednesday, 5:00 pm**

**Board Meeting**

Lincoln Library, Carnegie Room South

- Officers**  
**President**  
 Dr. Virgilio R. Pilapil  
**Vice President**  
 Taylor Pensoneau  
**Past President**  
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 Mary Jo Potter  
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 David Brady  
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 Robert Davis  
 Carolyn Oxtoby  
**Committee Chairmen**  
**Membership**  
 Carolyn Moore  
**Program**  
 Taylor Pensoneau  
**Publications**  
 Curtis Mann  
**Finance**  
 John Huther  
**Project Awards**  
 Gary Vitale  
**Nominating**  
 R-Lou Barker  
**Constitution & By-laws**  
 Curtis Mann  
**Publicity**  
 Janice Petterchak  
**Special Functions**  
 Elena Pilapil  
**Tours**  
 Kim Efird  
**Webmaster**  
 Karen Everingham  
**Booksales**  
 Sue Wall  
**Historico Editor**  
 Nancy Chapin

*March 21, Tuesday, 7:00 PM*

*Program*

*Lincoln Library Carnegie Room North*

*The LPGA in Springfield—A Success Story*

Carol Lohman and Sandra Dehner-Wheeler

Memorable moments in the history of the highly successful run by the LPGA State Farm Classic will be recounted by Carol Lohman, who helped bring the annual tournament to the Springfield area, and Sandra Dehner-Wheeler, who retired last year as executive director of the tourney.

Mrs. Lohman was among those involved in early efforts by many individuals—including her late husband, Walter (Bud) Lohman, a former president of the First National Bank—to attract an LPGA tournament to this area. She has vivid memories of her husband working with Leonard Sapp and his partner Jacob Bunn in the mid 1970s to persuade the LPGA to stage an event at the duo's new development, the Rail Golf Course at Sherman. Mrs. Lohman, an avid golfer herself, was a former women's champion in the sport at Illini Country Club.

Mrs. Dehner-Wheeler was hired twenty-seven years ago as executive director of the Rail Charity Golf Classic, a nonprofit corporation producing the State Farm Classic. Sandra, whose name has become synonymous with the event held each Labor Day weekend, is a longtime Springfield resident who was born and raised in Lincoln. A singer and entertainer earlier in her life, she put her promotional skills to work in every facet of the Classic, including the negotiating of sponsor contracts and the lining up of top players. When Sandra came on board, recalled one individual in the tourney's early history, "we were struggling." But, this person added, "She could go out and knock on doors and sell the tournament."

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*Around Town*

March 3  
11:00 AM Old Capitol State  
Historical Marker Awareness Week  
Rededication of Old Capitol  
Marker

March 11  
2:30 PM Vachel Lindsay Home  
Poets in the Parlor  
Charles Chapin & Rob Cross

March 18  
1:00 PM Museum of Funeral Customs  
5<sup>th</sup> Annual Poetry Reading

April 8  
11:30-2:30 PM Old State Capitol

included the Lincoln house, but wars and depressions interfered with the intent of those sometimes grandiose goals.

His slide program showed many photos of Springfield and the Lincoln family, beginning even before he became president. These included photos of the throngs who encircled the Home at the time of his funeral, as well as the tracks that brought the streetcars past it on a daily basis.

Homes that have been, or will be restored include the Lyon, Shutt, Cook, Henson Robinson, Dean, Arnold, Sprigg, Conneau, DuBois, Morris, Miller, Birch, Carrigan, Struve, and their relationship to the Lincoln Family and Home was noted.

Then and Now overlays or 'footprints' were used to show the changes from the 19th to the 21st century. Pointing out the changes in the 8th Street neighborhood helped demonstrate the past and future plans of the National Park Service with regard to the Lincoln Home. Several of the homes have been moved, sometimes several times, before going back to their original address.

*Report on February Program*

Sangamon County Historical Society members enjoyed an excellent program at its February program meeting, presented by Tim Townsend, Lincoln Home Site Historian. He discussed the various projects in the Lincoln Home neighborhood, with their projected target dates for completion. Included is the Great Western Depot, where in February 1861, Lincoln left for Washington D.C., and where the train bearing his body returned him to his hometown in May of 1865.

The last part of the presentation was a beautiful movie encompassing much of the ambience of the Lincoln era. A new film is now in the works and will be ready by the sesquicentennial of Lincoln's birth in 2009.

Dorothy Ross

*Donation to Publication Fund  
in Memory of Barbara Mason*

Dr. & Mrs. Virgilio R. Pilapil  
Charles and Nancy Chapin  
A friend

*We Welcome New Members*

Life Member  
Robert H. Bunn

Individual and Family members  
Barbara Weitekamp Diller  
William Furry  
Rosemary King  
David & Cathy Kolaz  
Amanda Kozar  
Genevieve Pittman  
Allen E. Smith  
Carol Schwend Smith

Robert Lincoln inherited the Lincoln home and rented it out for several years, before ceding it to the State of Illinois in 1887; in the interim the large double parlor had even been used as a commercial museum. The young Lincoln stipulated in his gift to the State, that it could not charge for admission to view the home, and that is still true today.

Over the years there have been several governmental "Plans" that

*Book Review*

April 6, 5:30 P.M.  
LaSorella Restaurant  
3325 Robbins Road

*"Early Settlers in Rochester, IL"*

By Sally Schaefer  
Dinner & review \$15.00 for members (\$18.00 for non-members)  
To reserve your place, mail check to:  
SCHS, 308 E. Adams ('01)

*Media Cabinet*

The Sangamon Valley Collection has received and put to use the media cabinet purchased with proceeds from the Carroll Hall Fund.

## The President's Corner

The last two Board meetings were the shortest ever, taking half the time, while still managing to handle items that came up before it. The Board approved to use money from the SCHS Carroll Hall fund for a second media file cabinet for the Sangamon Valley Collection (SVC) to store negatives of the Mercury Studio collection purchased from the estate of James Woodruff, and directed memorial money coming to the SCHS in memory of Barbara Mason to go to the Publication fund to reflect Barbara's longtime role as the Society's "bookseller *extraordinaire*." It also approved co-sponsorship of the Iles' House plan for a program there this Spring to commemorate the 160th anniversary of the Donner Party's departure from Springfield, with Board-members Dave Brady and Jennie Battles happily volunteering to take charge of the "finger foods" and coffee. On February 6, the 1876 map of Springfield was officially unveiled at SVC by its director, Curtis Mann, and Tony Leone, who helped raise the fund for its restoration. Mayor Tim Davlin and Lincoln Library director Nancy Huntley were on hand for the unveiling along with several members of the Society. Exactly a week later, a groundbreaking ceremony was held at Oak Ridge Cemetery for the *Home for the Friendless* memorial.

Noted in passing, was the Salisbury Christian Church in Pleasant Plains, one block north of IL-97 (organized September 30, 1875), which celebrated its 130th Anniversary with services last November. The church, about 10 miles west of Springfield, began in 1873 in what was known as Pelham Hall. It was organized two years later by John Lemmon as the Salisbury Christian Church. Lemmon, who was born in Sangamon County, served in Company D of the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry and fought in the Battle of Big Black River Bridge at Vicksburg during the Civil War where he lost his right leg and left index finger. He studied for the ministry after the war and became the church's first minister.

Our congratulations to Board members John Huther, for writing the booklet, "*Lincoln Memorial Garden: A Living Memorial to Abraham Lincoln*," and Janice Petterchak, for her book, "*Historic Illinois*," cited elsewhere in this issue of *Historico*. These works reflect highly on the caliber of our Board members that we could all emulate. We look forward to seeing more accomplishments like these that might inspire our membership to become county historians.

## County Historical Society Organizes

Judge Benjamin S. DeBoice was named temporary chairman Tuesday of the Sangamon County Historical Society at a meeting in the Circuit Court Room at the courthouse at which its organization was discussed.

**DE BOICE** was named chairman by Frank Sullivan, chairman of the Springfield Historical Monuments Commission, who acted as chairman of the meeting.

The commission sponsored the move to organize a historical society.

A nominating committee also was appointed by Sullivan to name candidates to offices. DeBoice will act as chairman and other committee members are Robert Stephens, Edward Pree, Charles Trimble, Herbert Georg, Mrs. Mary Virginia Woodward, Dr. Emmett Pearson, Mrs. Ernest East, John Chapin, Herbert Croft, Carroll Hall and Mrs. Mary F. Minniear.

An organization meeting of the society will be called at a date to be announced by DeBoice.

**DR. GLENN H. SEYMOUR**, president of the Illinois State Historical Society, and head of the social science department of Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, discussed Stephen Douglas, his early political career in the Springfield area and the events which took place in the Courthouse, once the state capitol.

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WOMAN for light housework and companion to elderly lady; stay; refs. Box L-339 Jour.-Reg.

FIVE room house for sale or rent. Inquire 216 Cherry.

Bette Franke found this little newspaper article and sent it to John Chapin as he's the only one still living of the original group.

We're coming up on our 45<sup>th</sup> reunion!

### *Outstanding Master's Thesis Award*

UIS honored Patrick Pospisek, for his 'outstanding Master's thesis' on *Inspired Self-Interest: Motivating Factors in the Relocation of the Illinois Seat of Government, 1836-1845*. The thesis explored some of the factors involved in moving the capital from Vandalia to Springfield. Patrick concluded that the politicians and Springfield citizens who endeavored to have the move become reality were working out of an inspired self-interest.

Congratulations Patrick!

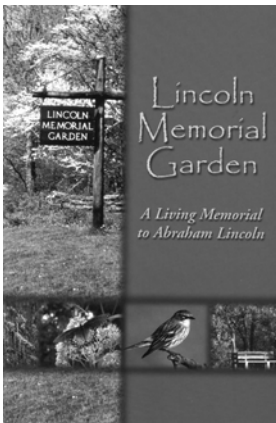
## Members' Publications



The Illinois Historical Society commissioned Janice Petterchak, current Board member and Past President, to write a coffee-table history of Illinois several years ago, and it has now been published. The book contains the stories of hundreds of prominent Illinoisans, and the drama of events such as the Chicago fire; the Cherry Mine Disaster; the Mormon 'war's, etc. The book includes more than 100 photographs, lithographs, and paintings chronicling the state's history from prehistoric times to present day, and features Robert Thom's handsome painting, "Joliet and Marquette, August 1673" , on the cover.

Congratulations, Janice, for a great job!

*Historic Illinois: An Illustrated History* will be available to SCHS members at the member's discounted price of \$30.00 through the month of March. Send check to SCHS, 308 E. Adams ('01) to reserve your copy. After that time the book will be selling for \$49.95 (plus \$4 shipping and handling) and will be available at ISHS (217-525-2781) or Prairie Archives.



Lincoln Memorial Garden & Nature Center has published a new booklet highlighting the garden's history and its natural features. Board member, John Huther, wrote the text, and Helen Adorjan, Judith Everson, Susan Hammond Katie Huther and Jim Matheis assisted. Others contributed pictures and designs. It is a history of the Garden plus 77 photos reflecting some of the Jens Jensen design and scenery and activities in the Garden today.

52 pages in color for \$4.95 available at the Garden now and hopefully at Lincoln sites soon.

### *Donner Party anniversary*

On April 16, 1846 the Donner Party left Springfield on their trip to Oregon and California. Like many thousands before them, the Donners had every reason to look forward to their journey when they started out, but they became trapped in the Sierra Nevada mountains during the winter of 1846-47. Nearly half of the party died. The experience has become legendary as the most spectacular episode in the record of Western migration.

The Iles House will host a reception recognizing the trip's origins here in Springfield on April 17th. SCHS will be providing refreshments. Please hold the date. Details to follow in the April *Historico*.



### *Home for the Friendless Memorial Groundbreaking at Oak Ridge*

On February 13 the ground was broken for the memorial wall to commemorate the orphans buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery.

## *Lincoln's Land in Oak Ridge Cemetery*

By Gary C. Vitale

It seems appropriate, in the year that Oak Ridge Cemetery celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to recount the story of how some land, which later became a part of the Cemetery, should have been owned by Abraham Lincoln.

Although the Lincoln Tomb certainly means Lincoln "owns" a part of Oak Ridge today, he could have legally owned another five acres of it while he was still very much alive and practicing law in Springfield, but for the death of another lawyer, his early political enemy, General James Adams.

Like Lincoln, James Adams, who came to Springfield in 1821, was a veteran of the Black Hawk War, although it is unclear how he attained the rank of general. Perhaps it was during the Winnebago War, or even the War of 1812, in both of which he also claimed to have served.

When he got to Springfield from New York, he said he was a lawyer and began practicing law. In 1836, he even bought a lot in Huron, the small town Lincoln had surveyed and that some Springfieldians hoped would flourish next to the ill-fated canal that was to have been dug from the Sangamon River to the Illinois. Through the years, James Adams became a respected citizen of Springfield, a friend of Archer Herndon and Stephen Logan. But he was a Loco-foco, a Democrat, and Lincoln was a Whig. Lincoln always referred to him as "General Adams," perhaps with just a touch of sarcasm.

In 1837 General Adams was running for probate judge of Sangamon County, an office that had recently become an elective one. Dr. Anson Henry, a friend of Lincoln's, was the Whig candidate. Into the Stuart and Lincoln law office came a widow, Mary Anderson, and her son, Richard. She claimed that General Adams had cheated her and her son out of 10 acres of land that belonged to her dead husband, Joseph. Joseph Anderson had hired the General to recover a debt from a man named Joseph Miller. The General had successfully won the suit for Anderson, and for his pay, Adams said, Joseph Anderson had given him 10 acres of land. The Widow Anderson said the General was lying, and she asked Abraham Lincoln to help her. If he was successful, she promised him half the 10 acres.

Lincoln set out to prove the General a cheat. He examined the original agreement between Adams and Joseph Anderson and noted that, though the paper seemed old enough, the ink looked fresh, especially when compared to the random ink marks on the back of the paper. And the agreement seemed to be written in the General's hand. Joseph Anderson had signed with an "X."

Lincoln wrote about his findings in a handbill that was printed in the *Sangamo Journal*, the Whig newspaper in which he often had articles published. General Adams answered in the Democrat newspaper, *Illinois Republican*, accusing Lincoln of manufacturing the dispute to help his friend Henry get elected. In another article, Adams

accused Lincoln's law partner, Stephen Logan, of forgery, prompting Logan to sue for libel. And then the *Sangamo Journal* discovered that when James Adams had first come to Springfield, it was apparently to escape an 1818 indictment in New York— for forgery.

The mudslinging continued. Affidavits were printed from Stephen Logan, Archer Herndon, and Elijah Iles, among others, supporting Lincoln, even though the long friendships the General had with the Logans and Herndons were ruined because of them. Affidavits attesting to the General's reputation also appeared in print. Lincoln ridiculed one of them as probably coming from "some black or mulatto boy from the Kitchen." In the end, General James Adams was elected probate judge of Sangamon County, and Lincoln, it is believed, had learned a lesson about dirty politics.

But the Widow Anderson's suit dragged on. It was transferred to Rushville in Schuyler County. In 1840, Adams was baptized a Mormon. He ran for office in Hancock County, and even went into the steamboat business with Joseph Smith, the Prophet. The Widow Anderson's suit was sent back to Sangamon County. Then, on July 11, 1843, Adams became a polygamist. One month to the day later, he died, though the official cause of death was not polygamy, but cholera. The Widow Anderson's suit was abated, "defendant having died." The widow's mite was lost; Lincoln never received his five acres pay.

It would be ironic if those five



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*Spring Calendar*

March 21:	<i>The LPGA in Springfield: A Success Story,</i>	Carol Lohman and Sandra Dehner-Wheeler
April 18:	<i>The Rebirth of Downtown Springfield,</i>	Carolyn Oxtoby and Victoria Clemons
May 13	Tour of 'Prairie Home' and Funk's Grove	
May 16:	<i>Matthew S. Marsh's 1836 Map of Sangamon County,</i>	Thomas F. Schwartz
June 20	Annual Meeting, Sangamo Club	Janice Petterchak

acres were the land on which the Lincoln Tomb now sits. But, not so. With the help of Curtis Mann in the Sangamon Valley Collection, old record books were opened to discover that the full 10 acres of land southwest of the west half of the northeast corner of Section 21 was sold by the General's son, Lucian, to Thomas Lewis, and then the land became part of Oak Ridge Cemetery. Just where? The narrow western edge of the rectangular tract borders Walnut Street Road in the southwestern part of the Cemetery. Its length extends straight east, making 10 full acres. As nearly as can be determined, it contains or is close to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The General must be smiling.

*Spring tour planned*



Mark the date – May 13<sup>th</sup> - for a tour of 'Prairie Home' near Shirley, Illinois, built in 1865 by Marquis de Lafayette Funk. The home, built largely with lumber and timber felled in Funk's Grove, housed two generations of Funks before being preserved in 1971 to provide a glimpse of life in the 1860s and beyond to future generations. Adjacent to the home is a gem and mineral museum showcasing the collection of Lafayette II, grandson of the home's builder. The property is maintained by the Funk Heritage Trust, and there will be guided tours of the home and museum. A box lunch will be served on the porch of 'Prairie Home'

The first stop of the tour will be at Funk's grove to see the 1864 chapel and unique cemetery. There will also be a tour of the nature center at Funk's Grove.

The tour will leave Springfield at 9:00 and return at 5:00 PM. The cost will be \$35.00 for members and \$40.00 for non-members. A sign up sheet will be provided in the April Historico, but space is limited and if you want to ensure your seat, send your check now to 308 E. Adams ('01) with your luncheon choice ( 1)Ham on Whole Wheat, 2)Chicken Salad on Croissant, and 3)Veggie in a Pita Pocket), and **please include your phone number!**