



# HISTORICO

January 2025

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Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter  
P.O. Box 9744 Springfield, IL 62791-9744 | 217-525-1961 | schoffice@gmail.com  
www.sangamonhistory.org | www.sangamonlink.org

## January Program at Lincoln Library Sangamon County Poor Farm

**Tuesday, January 21**  
**5:30 pm at Lincoln Library -**  
**Carnegie Room**

The Sangamon County Poor Farm operated near Buffalo from 1870 to 1944. For those 70-plus years, the farm was, literally, the home of last resort for Sangamon County's unluckiest residents – anyone who was too old, poor or feeble to take care of themselves and had no friends or relatives willing to take them in.

Mike Kienzler, the editor of SangamonLink.org, the historical society's online encyclopedia, will discuss the poor farm's history, its residents and its management. Those attending this presentation also will see long-lost portraits of eight residents of the farm, portraits that were drawn in 1912 or 1913 and then disappeared for more than a century, until Kienzler discovered them when researching something else.

Mike Kienzler, a Springfield native, spent not quite 40 years as an



editor and reporter with The State Journal-Register. After retiring in 2013, he became SangamonLink's founding editor. SangamonLink now boasts more than 1,500 entries (and counting) on all aspects of Sangamon County history.

### Highlights

**January Program**  
January 21 at  
Lincoln Library

**February Program**  
February 18 at  
Lincoln Library

**March Program**  
March 21 at First  
Presbyterian Church  
in partnership with  
Springfield Choral  
Society

**NOTE: This is on a  
Friday, not our usual  
program date**



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Mark your calendar for the  
January Program! We're back  
at Lincoln Library!



# From the President's Desk



CINDA KLICKNA

Wishing you a Happy New Year! Much is planned for 2025 with the Sangamon County Historical Society.

Programs are set through May, the annual cemetery walk is already scheduled for October 5, and we are continuing the work to update the website and make it more user friendly.

What a wonderful surprise to receive a call from Roy Mayfield from Reisch Charities sharing that the Society is the recipient of a \$1,000 donation to be used for our annual cemetery walk. Mr. Mayfield will be joining us at the January meeting to present the check. The group will also be donating to Edwards Place and Sucker State Preservation Foundation that cleans and maintains veteran headstones.

Thanks to Marion Leach who provides treats to program attendees. It is hard to resist her little sandwiches, various small cakes, brownies, etc. Several varieties of pies (coconut cream, pumpkin etc.) were enjoyed by those who came to the November meeting. As always, we welcome your ideas, feedback, and participation at our programs.

We are seeking volunteers and new Board members so please consider how you can help by offering your expertise in many areas – finance, membership, programs, grant review, cemetery walk, etc. Please contact me at [schsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:schsoffice@gmail.com)

*Cinda*



## SCHS Board of Directors

### 2024-2025 Officers

President - Cinda Klickna

Vice President - Linda Schneider

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*Term ending 2025*

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*Term ending 2026*

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*Term ending 2027*

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Winner, Certificate of Excellence, Illinois State Historical Society

You can download back issues of Historico in PDF format by going to our website: [www.sangamonhistory.org](http://www.sangamonhistory.org) or [www.sangcohis.org](http://www.sangcohis.org).

Send event announcements to: [schshistorico@gmail.com](mailto:schshistorico@gmail.com)



# Thank You



Thank you to Jerry Smith who has served as Treasurer of the Sangamon County Historical Society since 2015. He has resigned from the Board of Directors and will be missed. Jerry also served on the Finance Committee, Cemetery Walk Committee and Trivia Night committee.

***Thank you Jerry!!!***

Jerry Smith, a Springfield native, has served several terms as treasurer. He earned an Associates degree from Springfield College, later pursuing studies in business administration at SIU. As a veteran hotel executive, he traveled almost 35 years around the US opening and managing various hotels in the South and Midwest. He returned home in 2006 and managed the conversion of the Springfield Renaissance Hotel to the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel for three years.



Larry Stone has also resigned from the Board of Directors. Larry joined the board in 2016 and served on the Finance Committee and Cemetery Walk committee. He also served as the Society's photographer.

***Thank you Larry!!!***

Born in Springfield, Larry Stone graduated from St. Louis University in 1973 with a degree in finance, management and accounting. He attended graduate school at St. Louis University and University of Illinois studying finance and accounting. He was an Internal Auditor for 36 years most recently as Chief Auditor with State Retirement Systems for nearly 10 years and Information Systems Audit Manager at Central Management Services. Stone served as an Adjunct Professor in Accounting at the University of Illinois, Springfield and Millikin University for 16 years. Stone is a member of the Springfield Bicycle Club and a volunteer at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

**Thank  
YOU!**

Sam Sgro will be the new  
Treasurer for the SCHS.  
**Welcome Sam!!**

# Upcoming Programs

## 2025 Programs are back at Lincoln Library

5:30 pm

### Carnegie Room

**February 18** – History of the Army National Guard at Camp Lincoln and the Illinois State Military Museum by Colonel Paul Fanning.



**April 15** – The Marbold House- History, Restoration and New Life. Once part of Sangamon County, the area near Greenview, Illinois, was where John Marbold settled and built his mansion. Acquired by the Marbold Association in 2011, the group has transformed a rat and termite-infested, deteriorating building into the splendor it once had.



**March 21** – Instead of our typical third-Tuesday program, the Sangamon County Historical Society is partnering with the Springfield Choral Society for a special program: Songs for the Unsung: Music and Stories of Women on Friday, March 21. Small ensembles of the Choral Society will join with actors from the Sangamon County Historical Society, interweaving life-narratives of significant Springfield women with thematically-related works by female composers. The program will be held at First Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m. Cost \$15 online or at the door. Tickets are already available at [www.springfieldchoralsociety.org](http://www.springfieldchoralsociety.org).



**May 20** – The Society will focus on our third program on the Underground Railroad.





# Conklings Come to Life

Attendees gathered at the Art Association for the November program on the Conkling family and were taken back to the 1860's. Many came away realizing much has changed since that time, but much is still the same – parents worrying about their child at college and urging good conduct, a college student forging a new life and asking for more money, as well as the many current issues affecting people's lives whether that was 1860 or 2025.



*Allicent Smith*

Allicent Smith led the presentation about the Conkling family. Allicent accessed letters written by James Conkling, his wife, Mercie, and Clinton, their son, who was studying at Yale, during the time Lincoln was elected president and the Civil War erupted. Tom Ryder (James), Linda Schneider (Mercie), and Josh Ryder (Clinton), in period costume read excerpts from letters between the couple and their son. As the Conklings were friends of Abraham Lincoln, Clinton took photos of Lincoln with him to college and in his letters asks his parents to send more as schoolmates

wanted pictures of Lincoln. James often writes that he is sending money but expects Clinton to keep track of costs 'per the enclosed form'; Mercie reminds her son to "keep your Christian faith" and to "attend to your studies"; Clinton asks his mother to tell the young ladies that "I haven't forgotten them" and asks his father for money for a "worn coat."



Through the letters and Allicent's narrative, information about the times becomes illuminated: the reactions to the Civil War, losses of sons from Springfield families, the antagonism between the Democrats and Republicans in town, the Springfield women preparing bandages for soldiers, the creation of Camp Butler, deaths from typhoid, etc.

*Right:  
Tom  
Ryder,  
Josh  
Ryder  
and Linda  
Schneider*



*All photos  
by Ernie  
Slottag*

# Website Updates

The new website for the Sangamon County Historical Society is coming along and will be launched soon!!



Our new software program, Growth Zone, integrates with the website and will allow online event registration and payment, online membership renewals, news, resources and much more!

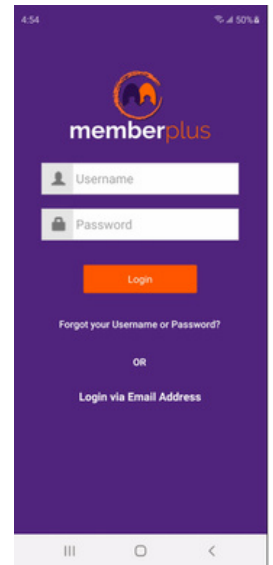
Members can log in to the Member Portal and update contact information, register for events, pay invoices, etc.

There is also a member app that can be downloaded to your cell phone. Search for Member Plus in the app store. You will be able to view the calendar of events and programs, view and pay invoices, view and

register for events, read blog posts, and more. You can set it to receive push notifications so you will always know when new information is added.

Please note: In order to log in to the Member Portal, you will need to use the email address we have on file. If we do not have your email address, please send it to us at [schsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:schsoffice@gmail.com).

Thank you for your patience as we have worked on the new website.



## From the Illinois State Historical Society

Time to think about traveling through history again!

The Illinois State Historical Society and the Illinois State Museum Society are collaborating again for an immersive historical experience in Illinois heritage. We will have specifics in place and a brochure for registration in early January for an overnight trip on March 19 -20, 2025.

Highlights: Stories of the “Radium Girls” in Ottawa, Native Americans at Starved Rock, the new National Public Housing Museum in Chicago, and a motor coach tour of the Bronzeville community, including the statue honoring Ida B. Wells created by sculptor Richard Hunt.

Check your calendars now and watch for details after January 5, 2025!



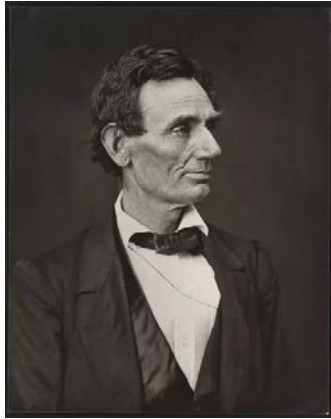
# Calendar

A Heads Up Guide to Area History Events

Save the Date!



Send announcements, information, photos and illustrations to [schshistorico@gmail.com](mailto:schshistorico@gmail.com).



**January 16, 6:30 pm to 8pm and Every Third Thursday, 6:30 pm to 8pm through May 15 at Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation Mr. Lincoln's Hometown CWRT**

The roundtable offers presentations about the historical figures and events of the Civil War era.



**February 1, 10:00 am to 11:00 am at Chatham Area Public Library**  
**Local History: The Bunns and the Peases**

Bob Bunn will share the fascinating history of two

iconic heritage brands now united under one roof in Springfield. Chocolatier Ashley Miller will delight attendees with samples of her exquisite, handcrafted chocolates.



The Abraham Lincoln Association  
Established 1908

**February 15, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Abraham Lincoln Hotel.**

Celebrate the 216th birthday of President Lincoln at the Annual Benjamin P. Thomas Symposium. Speakers include Tim Good, Edward Robert McClelland, Jonathan White, William J. Griffing and Kate Masure. Book signing at 3:00 pm. Annual Banquet at 6:00 pm with keynote speaker Michael Burlingame. Symposium attendance is free; lunch reservation required. Register at [www.abrahamlincolnassociation.org](http://www.abrahamlincolnassociation.org)



Ongoing  
**"Something So Horrible, The**

**Springfield Race Riot of 1908" at Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum.**

The exhibit clarifies what happened and why, and seeks understanding of how 1908 speaks to today.



**April 11, Dana Thomas House Foundation Dinner and Program with storyteller Timothy Trotten - The Perilous and Amazing Journey of Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in Japan.**

More details coming soon.

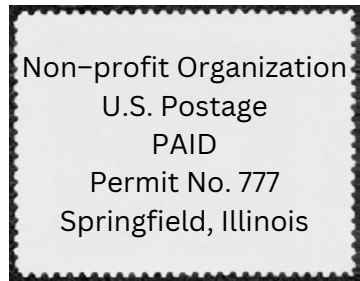


**April 25 to April 27; Friday & Saturday at 7:30 pm and Sunday at 4:00 pm: Mr. Lincoln at The Hoogland Center for the Arts.** The one-person play features both the folksy wisdom of Lincoln's biography and the transcendent grandeur of his nation-healing words as president, healing that was cut short by an assassin's bullet.

Sangamon County Historical Society

P.O. Box 9744,  
Springfield, IL 62791-9744

Return Service Requested



**Sangamon County Historical Society 2024-2025 MEMBERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL Form**

**Mail this form with your check to the Sangamon County Historical Society, P.O. Box 9744, Springfield, IL 62791-9744. Our membership year runs from June 1 to May 31. All memberships cover adults and children 16 and over living at the same address. Be sure to list their full names. Please Print.**

Your Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Significant Other First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's maiden name where applicable \_\_\_\_\_

Your e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Your address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Choose Your Level of Membership:  Regular (\$30)  Pioneer (\$100)  Settler (\$250)

Trailblazer (\$500)  Lifetime (\$700 one-time fee)  College/University Student (individual) (\$20)

This is a GIFT (Name of recipient, mailing and e-mail address):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I am adding a donation to the Society in addition to my membership in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_