



Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter
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www.sancohis.org | www.sangamonlink.org

November Program at Lincoln Library Sangamon County Poor Farm

Tuesday, November 18
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

Holiday Party
Dec. 11
at Pasfield House

Cemetery Walk
Pictures

November Program
November 18
at
Lincoln Library
Carnegie Room

September Program
Recap



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Please make sure we have your email address so you can stay up to date! Winter cancellations are possible - make sure you don't miss any notices!

From the President's Desk



LINDA SCHNEIDER

On Sunday, October 5th, we held our annual Oak Ridge Cemetery Walk - Echoes of Yesteryear, the Sangamon County Historical Society's annual gift to our community. Around 500 participants joined us on that beautiful Sunday afternoon. This year, we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of this run of the cemetery walk, brought back under the leadership of planning committee co-chair, Mary Alice Davis.

The original run of the cemetery walk ran from 1996-2008, and it was Mary Alice's vision that brought the cemetery walk back in 2015.

Planning for the walk starts during the wrap-up of the previous year's walk. A possible theme is discussed and then our researcher and script writer, Mike Kienzler, presents a slate of possible gravesites to visit. Things to take into account are the proximity of the gravesites from one another, the length of the actual walk, and the difficulty of the terrain. The planning committee usually starts planning in earnest mid-spring - scripts are written, actors are recruited, publicity and marketing begin, and a myriad of other details are worked out.

Many on the planning committee have worked together for the past 10 years. Thanks to Susan Helm for stepping up to assist Mary Alice as co-chair and serving as the volunteer coordinator, Mike Kienzler for research and script writing, and Ruth and Ernie Slottag for publicity and marketing tasks, in addition to logistics on the day of the walk. Our thanks to the Oak Ridge Cemetery staff - this walk could not happen without their assistance in the set up and logistics of the day, and our thanks to our dedicated parking crew. Also, our thanks to the many actors over the years that have brought the interesting stories to life. Several others have served on the planning committee over the past 10 years and their service is much appreciated.

A big thank you to all the volunteers that make this event happen seamlessly each year. This is a project that definitely "takes a village." As we breathe a sigh of relief for the completion of another successful walk, rumor has it that Mike is already planning which gravesites to visit and stories to tell next year. See you there!

Linda



2025-2026 Officers

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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 or www.sangcohis.org.

Send event announcements to: schshistorico@gmail.com

September Program



Paul Golladay of Sucker State Preservation Foundation shared the work of the group in restoring military gravestones. Did you know that Illinois was known as the Sucker State beginning in the 1820s? Abraham Lincoln in 1858 said, "Just think of such a sucker as me as President."

The work of the Foundation volunteers is sanctioned by the U.S. Veterans Affairs and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Golladay showed before and after pictures of gravestones and told the stories of several Civil War soldiers who are buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery. Silas Sappington, a corporal in the 55th Massachusetts colored regiment during the Civil War, came to Springfield and died here in 1922. Noah E. Mendell was a captain in the first Illinois 7th Infantry and was killed in 1862.

Golladay explained the cleaning process and warned against anyone using "anything found under a kitchen sink." D/2 Biological Solution is the appropriate chemical to use.

Golladay serves in the Illinois Army National Guard as a Sergeant First Class and course manager, instructor, and platoon trainer at the Officer Candidate School. He served as assistant curator at the Illinois State Military



Museum, where he later supported recovery efforts at the Louisiana National Guard Museum in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Sucker State Preservation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) which is funded through donations.



All photographs by Ernie Slottag

Echos of Yesteryear Cemetery Walk

2025



All Cemetery Walk photos by Ernie Slottag



*Even a parrot
attended the
Cemetery Walk!*



Echos of Yesteryear Cemetery Walk

2025

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Calendar

A Heads Up Guide to Area History Events

Send announcements, information, photos and illustrations to schshistorico@gmail.com.

Nov. 29 & 30: Annual Small Business Saturday Boutique Drive

Support over 20 local small businesses and enter your punch card for a chance to win!



Dana-Thomas House Foundation

Tour the Dana-Thomas House and see the beautiful Christmas decorations. Enjoy appetizers and entertainment. Cash bar available.

Register at www.dana-thomas.org

Dec. 3: Illinois Statehood Day.

9:30 am to 4:00 pm. The Illinois State Historical Society is hosting Illinois Statehood Day celebration with a special luncheon honoring Illinois businesses and other organizations who have achieved continuous operation for 100 years or more. For more information or to register, call 217-525-2781 or go online to www.historyillinois.org



www.facebook.com/events/2239728799831580

Dec. 4: 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Holiday Party at the Dana-Thomas House.

Tour the Dana-Thomas House and see the beautiful Christmas decorations. Enjoy appetizers and entertainment. Cash bar available.

Register at www.dana-thomas.org

Save the date!



Dec. 5: Bourbon Tasting at Edwards Place.

7pm. Taste bourbon samples and learn the history of bourbon.



Register at www.edwardsplace.org



Dec. 6: Holiday Open House at Edwards Place.

1-4pm. Tour Edwards Place, enjoy refreshments, Christmas carols

around the piano and meet a Civil War era Santa Claus. FREE and open to the public



Dec. 13: Wreaths Across America at Camp Butler National Cemetery.

11:00 am. Wreaths will be placed after a short ceremony.

Can't attend but want to contribute? Wreaths are \$17 each.



Reminder: The Historico is NOT published in December. Have a Merry Christmas and enjoy time with your loved ones!



Sangamon County Historical Society
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PROGRAMS

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
5:30 PM AT LINCOLN LIBRARY

November 18
Sangamon County Poor Farm
January 20
TBD

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



HOLIDAY RECEPTION

Thursday, December 11
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm
Pasfield House
525 S. Pasfield St.
Springfield, IL 62704

Members free
Guests \$25

*Join
THE
Conversation*

Want to get involved?

Consider joining a committee.
It's a great way to give back
while preserving and promoting
Sangamon County history.

Committees:

Events
Membership
Grants
Cemetery Walk
Finance