

Newsletter
of the
Illinois
State
Archives
&
The Illinois
State Historical
Records
Advisory Board

Jesse White
Secretary of State
&
State Archivist

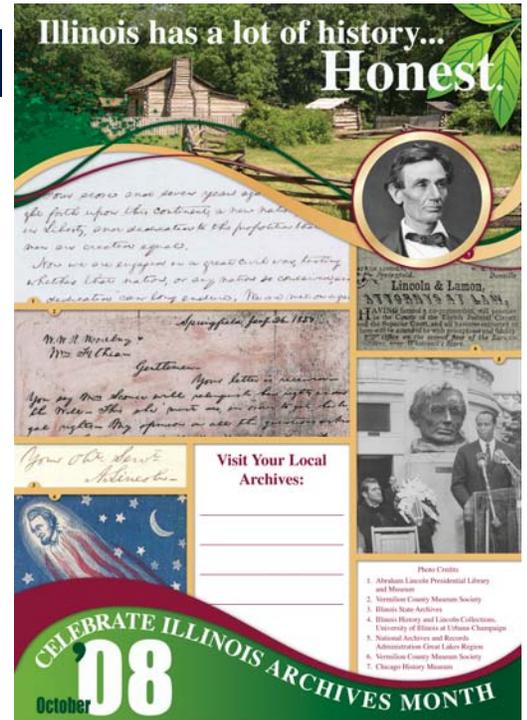
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October is Illinois Archives Month

Archives Month is a national celebration in October to promote the rich documentary heritage found in archival and historical institutions. It's a time to increase public awareness of archival materials, to focus on materials in archival repositories that have broad appeal, and to strengthen ties with regular archives users while introducing new and potential users to the treasures that abound in these repositories.

During Illinois Archives Month, a state-sponsored arm of the national celebration, archives, libraries, museums and historical societies will sponsor special events or exhibits that highlight their collections, programs and services. An Events Calendar for the month is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com (click Departments, Illinois State Archives, Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board).

"Archival institutions in Illinois abound with valuable information and resources for genealogy and historical research," said Secretary of State Jesse White. "Supporting and celebrating these institutions will ensure that they continue to play a role in the preservation of the state's history for years to come."



The Illinois Archives Month poster this year was funded by a federal SNAP grant and commemorates the February 2009 bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The poster is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com or by calling 217-782-2226.

Secretary White appoints new ISAAB/ISHRAB members

Secretary of State Jesse White recently appointed two new board members to the Illinois State Archives Advisory Board/Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board. For the 2008-2011 term, Morag Walsh of the Chicago Public Library and Lisa Oppenheim of the Chicago Metro History Education Center will replace Greta Bever and Martin Tuohy, respectively. Christopher Prom of the University of Illinois and Linda Evans of the Chicago History Museum also were reappointed to serve the 2008-2011 term.

The ISAAB advises the State Archives on general operations. The ISHRAB is the state-level arm of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, a statutory body affiliated with the National Archives and Records Administration. The ISHRAB reviews grant proposals submitted by Illinois institutions to the NHPRC.

The State Archives Advisory Board serves concurrently as the State Historical Records Advisory Board.

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DATES & REMINDERS

Illinois State Genealogical Society

40th Anniversary Conference
"40 Years of Discovery—Portals to the Future"
October 18, Elgin
www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ilsgs

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

2008 Conference on Illinois History
October 30-31, Springfield
www.illinoishistory.gov/conference.htm
donna.lawrence@illinois.gov
217-785-7933

Midwest Archives Conference

2008 Fall Symposium
Digital Preservation
November 7-8, Lawrence, KS
www.midwestarchives.org/2008Fall/index.asp

Illinois State Historical Society

29th Annual Illinois History Symposium
"Abraham Lincoln in Ante-Bellum Illinois: 1830-1861"
March 26-28, Illinois College, Jacksonville
www.historyillinois.org
217-525-2781

National Genealogical Society

Conference in the States 2009
"The Building of a Nation:
From Roanoke to the West"
May 13-16, Raleigh, NC
www.ngsgenealogy.org/Conferences/2009/index.htm

Downstate Local Records Commission Meeting

1st Tuesday of the month, 10 a.m.
(unless otherwise noted)
Margaret Cross Norton Building, Springfield
www.cyberdriveillinois.com

Cook County Local Records Commission Meeting

2nd Tuesday of the month, 11 a.m.
Video Conference Room, 9th floor
Thompson Center, Chicago
or
Capital City Center, Springfield
130 W. Mason St.
www.cyberdriveillinois.com

State Records Commission Meeting

3rd Wednesday of the month, 9:30 a.m.
Margaret Cross Norton Building, Springfield
www.cyberdriveillinois.com

Volkel elected to National Genealogy Hall of Fame



Former Illinois State Archives employee Lowell M. Volkel has been elected posthumously to the National Genealogy Hall of Fame. Volkel was founder and first president of the Illinois State Genealogical Society in 1968.

Volkel became an archivist at the State Archives in 1970 and headed the Reference Unit from 1974 until his death in 1992. He compiled, edited and indexed more than three-dozen volumes of historical sources. He also taught genealogy classes and was a frequent genealogy speaker.

The National Genealogy Hall of Fame elects one person to the Hall of Fame annually. A nominee must have been actively engaged in genealogy in the United States for at least 10 years, been deceased for at least five years at the time of nomination, and have made contributions to the field of genealogy judged to be of lasting significance in ways that were unique, pioneering or exemplary.

Midwest State Micrographics Conference

The Illinois State Archives hosted the 21st Annual Midwest States Micrographics Conference on September 16-18. The conference targets and brings together those seeking information on the current state of micrographics operations and electronic records imaging.

Sixty-four attendees from 15 states took part in discussions and presentations concerning the continued relevance of microfilm in today's world of information management and preservation. Guest speakers gave presentations on digital imaging of paper and microfilm, microfilming ergonomics, paper conservation/preservation and MayDay activities. A representative from each state presented an update on their state's micrographic activities.

The late Jim Wassell (see below), past administrator of the State Archives' Micrographics Services Division, started the Midwest States Micrographics Conference in 1986. He initiated the gathering with representatives from three states — Illinois, Missouri and Wisconsin.

Wassell leaves legacy of photographic work

Former Illinois State Archives employee James L. Wassell of Springfield passed away on May 29 at age 94. He joined the Archives' Micrographics Division in 1978 and retired as division administrator in 1995.

Wassell's photographic career advanced from a lecturer on Ansco color film processing to director of marketing for Bell & Howell Professional Products, general manager of Hollywood Film Co. and vice president of Kalvar. He wrote and lectured nationally on photographic subjects and was a Fellow of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers. He won an Oscar technical award in 1963 and received a Special Award from the Association for Information and Image Management.

Wassell founded the Midwest States Micrographics Conference in 1986. He was instrumental in the preservation of microfilm and his article on Redox control won Writer of the Year award from *A/IM* magazine in 1990. Prior to his death, an extensive, cataloged collection of his early photographic work was accepted into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

Archives selected one of “Best Websites for Genealogy”

In its September 2008 issue, *Family Tree Magazine* named the Illinois State Archives’ online databases Web page as one of its “101 Best Websites for Genealogy.”

The Archives’ databases first went online in February 1996. Frequently used index databases for State Archives records include the Public Domain Land Tract Sales Database, various databases on Illinois veterans, the Illinois Statewide Death Index (1916-1950) and the Illinois Statewide Marriage Index (1763-1900). Indexes for selected local governmental records maintained by the IRAD system also are available. All Archives databases may be accessed at www.cyberdriveillinois.com (click Departments, Illinois State Archives, Databases).

Cook County vital records online

The Cook County Clerk’s Bureau of Vital Records now provides online copies of non-certified versions of Cook County vital records for the purpose of genealogical research. Available records include birth records 75 years and older, marriage licenses 50 years and older, and death records 20 years and older.

Records found on this site are for Chicago and Cook County dating back to 1872. The Chicago Fire of Oct. 8, 1871, destroyed all Cook County vital records prior to that date. More than 6 million of the 8 million genealogy records are already searchable and more are being added. The database at www.cookcountygenealogy.com is free to search, but payment is required to download copies of the records. The Illinois State Archives assisted Cook County in getting the records online.

2008-09 IRAD Interns



IRAD Interns are, front row, left to right: Maureen Mohan, Matthew Cox, Chad Burroughs, Lindsay Barber, Michael-Ann Johnson, Rochelle Joseph, Matthew Etzel, Jeff Wade and Joanne Cartalino. Back row, left to right: Megan Ditzler, Ion Nimerencu, Ryan D’Arcy, Adam Carey, Paul Skonberg, Tyler King, Roberto Rincon, John Duerk and Eric Willey (hidden).

Eighteen graduate students have been selected to serve as interns at one of the state’s seven Illinois Regional Archives Depositories (IRAD) for the 2008-09 academic year. The depositories, located at universities throughout the state, preserve official records of local governmental agencies that have permanent legal, administrative, historical or other research values.

IRAD internships introduce graduate students to the functions of an archives institution and allow them to develop basic archival and research skills. Duties include arranging and processing records, preparing descriptive inventories, and handling reference on county, township and municipal records. As part of their internship, students attended a two-

day training session in Springfield funded by a State and National Archival Partnership (SNAP) Grant. Interns and their majors are:

Eastern Illinois University

Chad Burroughs, Historical Administration
Ryan D’Arcy, History

Illinois State University

Lindsay Barber, Politics & Government
Matthew Cox, Historical Archeology

Northeastern Illinois University

Joanne Cartalino, Communications
Ion Nimerencu, Political Science
Roberto Rincon, Political Science
Jeffrey Wade, History

Northern Illinois University

John Duerk, Political Science
Tyler King, History

Southern Illinois University

Megan Ditzler, Political Science
Michael-Ann Johnson, History
Maureen Mohan, Political Science
Paul Skonberg, Political Science

University of Illinois at Springfield

Matthew Etzel, History
Rochelle Joseph, Political Studies

Western Illinois University

Adam Carey, History
Eric Willey, History

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2007-2010

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2008-2011

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Thomas F. Schwartz, State Historian
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**State Archives receives
SNAP Grant**

The National Historical Publications and
Records Commission recently awarded a
\$19,580 State and National Archival
Partnership grant to the Illinois State Archives.
The Archives sought the grant on behalf of the
State Historical Records Advisory Board to
support board operations, programs and activi-
ties.

For the period of July 2008 through December
2009, the grant will support a variety of activi-
ties, including sponsorship of two IRAD intern
training sessions and production of Illinois
Archives Month posters for 2008 and 2009.
The grant also will help facilitate working
relationships between ISHRAB, other state
historical records advisory boards and the
Council of State Archivists.