

Hostick Scholarship recipient announced

The 2022 recipient of the King V. Hostick Scholarship is Joshua David Fulton of Berwyn.

Fulton is an Associate Professor of History at Moraine Valley Community College, and a Ph.D. candidate in history at Northern Illinois University. He earned a BA in history from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and an MA in History from Eastern Illinois University. His dissertation project under the direction of Dr. Rosemary Feurer, "Performance Patriotism: the State Council of Defense, the Illinois Women's Committee, and the Role of the State in World War I Illinois," looks at the state and how Illinoisans experienced the war between 1917-1918. Josh grew up in Brookfield, Illinois, and he currently lives in Berwyn with his wife and three daughters.



The King V. Hostick Research Scholarship is awarded annually by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and the Illinois State Historical Society to graduate students who are finishing their dissertations. The award, up to \$5,000, helps scholars travel and complete Illinois history research projects at libraries, archives, and historical societies projects in the state. The Scholarship is named for King V. Hostick, a Lincoln collector from Decatur who endowed the award after his death in 1993.

Our online store is now open

The Illinois State Historical Society has worked hard to open an online store which features literature and hard-goods which are related to Illinois. These are often hard to find or limited run items.

If you have a history buff in your family that is hard to buy for this is your place to shop! While anyone can purchase items, we offer additional discounts to ISHS members. Visit our store to browse the current inventory of items, item availability and inventory will change often. <https://www.historyillinois.org/Store.aspx>

New Lenox couple funds new ISHS history teacher initiative

Darrell and Suzanne Holmquist of New Lenox have long been advocates and promoters of Illinois history. Darrell, a retired social studies and history teacher at Joliet High School, created a high school curriculum for his students that focused on teaching state and national history with a local focus. Both graduates of MacMurray College in Jacksonville, the couple also decided to sponsor a student-teaching award at Mac before that 147-year-old institution closed its doors in 2020.

To keep their award alive and give it new legs, the Holmquists approached the Illinois State Historical Society, initially to sponsor another student teacher award. But after consulting with ISHS executive director William Furry, they chose to sponsor a membership initiative for college students studying history at Illinois colleges and universities.

This year the Holmquists sponsored 16 new student memberships in the ISHS, and their generosity inspired others to donate to the cause. Society board members and history professors around the state nominated students for membership. The result is that the Society now has 18 new members destined to teach, work, or do research in Illinois history. What a wonderful gift to the students and the Society!

Our new ISHS student members are:

Leia Hasting, WIU, *Macomb*
 Katy Cody, Greenville University, *Greenville*
 McKenna Kay Servis, Illinois College, *Jacksonville*
 Halle Elizabeth Maul, Illinois College, *Jacksonville*
 Carla Townsend, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Ryan J. Schlindwein, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Emily Jane Pursley, Illinois College, *Jacksonville*
 Lisa Hill, Millikin University, *Decatur*
 Lily Georgiou, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Nathan Coope, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Mason Seggebruch, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Justin Smock, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Shelby Jones, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Kaitlyn Morrison, Bradley University, *Peoria*
 Dave James, University of Illinois, *Springfield*
 Audrey Hopper, Eastern Illinois University, *Charleston*
 Tanner Skym, Eastern Illinois University, *Charleston*
 Kimberly McWherter, Eastern Illinois University, *Charleston*

Welcome to the Illinois State Historical Society, and thank you, Darrell and Suzanne!

End of an era

Railsplitter gift shop closes at Lincoln's New Salem

After three decades of operating its souvenir and bookshop and the Museum Store at New Salem State Historic Site, the New Salem Lincoln League has ended its contractual relationship with the State of Illinois. While the League will continue to support the historic site, it will no longer be operating stores. And there also will be no food service at the site. To date, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), which oversees the park, has been unable to find another vendor to operate the stores and food service.

It is unfortunate that the League will no longer provide these services to visitors, but the decision was made after the State initiated a new bidding process that would have increased the League's costs. Earlier this year the IDNR released a call for bids to operate the food concession and the gift shops for a 5-year period beginning May 1, 2022. In its request for proposals, the State increased rental fees and added new burdens for the selected vendor.

After a thorough review of those bid requirements, the League reluctantly concluded that it would not be fiscally wise to submit a bid. There were no bidders in response to the IDNR request for proposals. In April, the State made a second attempt to recruit a vendor but again no vendors submitted bids. As a result, for the first time in memory – at least 65 years, there will be no gift shop, bookstore or food service at New Salem.

In the 1990s, the State of Illinois approved a contract to allow the League to begin operating the gift shops, bookstore and snack bar at Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site. This allowed the not-for-profit League to fill a two-fold need:



The simple sign “Closed, please call again,” but the New Salem gift shop, which operated for 30 years with volunteer help from the New Salem Lincoln League, is closed for the entire season due to an impasse with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources over the vendor bidding process. Visitors are always welcome to bring their picnic baskets.

offer food and souvenirs for visitors and raise funds that could enhance the experience of site visitors. Prior to the State awarding the contract to the League, the stores had been run by a for-profit business that invested very little money in New Salem. The League reinvested 100 percent of its profits into supporting site improvements and programs at New Salem.

Three years ago, the League stopped running the food service at New Salem when the State gave the food service contract to a for-profit vendor. Unfortunately, the vendor provided sporadic service and then failed to return in either 2020 or 2021. While disappointed that it will not be running the stores or food service at New Salem, the League Board is grateful for the staff and volunteers who have run the shops for more than thirty years. Over the years, dozens of volunteers have supplemented store staff to make the shops a success and raise money to support New Salem. League President Edie Sternberg said, “We wish to thank all of the volunteers and staff who have been so dedicated to serving New Salem’s visitors.”

Whether visitors traveled a few miles or 2000 miles to visit New Salem, the League strove to greet them with a smile and provide valuable services for them. It is regrettable that the stores will not be operating but President Sternberg reiterated that the League will continue to provide financial support for programs and other needs at New Salem. The Board’s goal for 2022 is to develop new strategies and a different business model for supporting New Salem. Sternberg also noted that the League has already committed \$24,000 for New Salem in 2022 and will continue to support activities that enhance visitors’ experiences.



Submit your local history event

Do you have an exciting local history news story or an event that you would like to share? Go to <https://www.historyillinois.org/Calendar.aspx> to submit it and after a quick review it will be added to our news roll or events calendar. The goal is to add news and events from all over the state to celebrate Illinois’ rich history. Get involved and get the word out about news and events in your area.

During the past 41 years, the New Salem Lincoln League has contributed in excess of a million dollars in support of New Salem's activities. The League supports the feeding and care of the horses at New Salem and recently purchased a horse trailer for the site staff's use in maintaining animal care. For decades, the League has paid for the cultural and education activities at New Salem. These special events include the popular Traditional Music Festival and Candlelight Tour. The League has also supported Theatre in the Park and sponsored site programs and lectures.

Besides funding educational and cultural programs, the League has paid for materials to repair roofs, steps and porches for buildings in the village. When the statues at New Salem were showing damage and threat from verdigris corrosion, the League paid \$32,000 to clean and seal the statues. The League paid thousands of dollars to replace the audio/visual system in the Visitors Center Auditorium and also bought a new sound board for the Kelso Hollow Outdoor Theatre. And for many years, the League has partnered with Illinois College to fund six summer interns to work at New Salem.

Although the League will not be running the shops at New Salem, it will continue funding programs and needs at the Park. Past League President Al Grosboll said "The New



Mary Sue Schusky of Collinsville stands beside an ISHS Illinois bicentennial Johnny Appleseed Tree, one of 170 trees grown from scion wood taken from a tree known to have been planted by Jonathan Chapman in the early 19th century. How is your county's bicentennial tree doing? Send us a photo!

Salem Lincoln League was formed forty-one years ago to help New Salem and that mission has not changed. We will continue to raise money to support the village and fund efforts to keep alive the memory of Abraham Lincoln's six years living in New Salem."

The League wishes to express thanks to its many friends for their past support and patronage. If you are interested in joining in this tradition, please contact the League at PO Box 272, Petersburg, IL 62675 or email us at prairiepic@hotmail.com.

[Editor's note: The New Salem Lincoln League reports that negotiations with IDNR are ongoing and that the volunteer organization is hopeful the gift shop will reopen in 2023. Meanwhile, visitors are encouraged to bring their own picnic lunches, water, and snacks and take advantage of the many picnic tables located around the visitors center.]

Prudence Crandall historical marker dedication in Troy Grove

By Charles Stanley

A courageous woman who fought racial bigotry in New England and then moved for refuge to La Salle County was remembered with the dedication of a state historical marker in Troy Grove

Prudence Crandall (1803-1890) was a white teacher who in the 1830s conducted an advanced academy for black women in Canterbury, Conn.

Original an academy for white females, after the first black female was admitted, racial bigotry resulted in the academy becoming exclusively for black females. But white racial discrimination and repeat violence forced the school to close.

In Connecticut, Crandall's school still stands as a museum and in 1995 the Connecticut General Assembly named her the Official Heroine of Connecticut.

In 1842 Crandall moved to Troy Grove and lived in Illinois for 35 years, primarily in La Salle County. She taught school and was an advocate for women's rights and the abolitionist movement to end slavery.

The marker will be located near the Wild Bill Hickok Memorial in a small park that mark's where the famous figure of the American West was born. The location is appropriate because the Hickoks also were abolitionists and their home recorded as a station on the Underground Railroad helping freedom seekers escape from slavery.

The dedication included a talk by Dr. Jennifer Rycenga of California, an authority on Crandall's life.

Sponsors for the marker are the La Salle County Historical Society, the Mendota Museum and Historical Society, the Village of Troy Grove, the William G. Pomeroy Foundation and the Illinois State Historical Society.

