



Bicentennial Speaker Series: The culture and heritage of Illinoisans

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SPRINGFIELD – A special Illinois Bicentennial series of programs – “The Culture and Heritage of Illinoisans” – will begin on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 18 and continue on the third Sunday of every month through October 2018 at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield. The series is presented by the Academy of Lifelong Learning at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield in collaboration with the Illinois State Museum, and it will feature several Road Scholar Speakers offered by Illinois Humanities.

The first program in the series is a presentation by Illinois State Historian Dr. Samuel Wheeler to be held at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 18 in the Thorne Deuel Auditorium at the Illinois State Museum, 502 S. Spring St. in downtown Springfield. The program is free and open to the public. Reservations are not required.

Dr. Wheeler’s topic – “Two Centuries to Celebrate: Illinois at the Bicentennial” – will focus on the ways our state has celebrated milestone anniversaries from statehood in 1818 through the centennial in 1918, as well as the sesquicentennial in 1968. Dr. Wheeler will discuss the ongoing bicentennial celebration plans and will help us remember what makes our state unique, which events are truly worthy of celebration, and the many Illinoisans who are worthy of admiration.

Dr. Samuel Wheeler is the 10th State Historian in Illinois history. He specializes in the history of the Prairie State, the Civil War Era, and the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln. He has devoted much of his professional career to the field of Public History, assisting museums, historic sites, historical societies, documentary editing projects, libraries, and archives, helping them execute their missions effectively and efficiently. As the Illinois State Historian, Dr. Wheeler serves as the Director of Research, Collections, and Library Services at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, is the historian of record for the state's 56 historic sites, and is a member of the state's Bicentennial Commission.

Other programs in the special Illinois Bicentennial Series will examine Native American settlements, the establishment of early government, the role of transportation in binding the state together, the anti-slavery movement, the roles of entrepreneurs and employees, the prairie and agricultural growth, and art and literature. The lecture series will conclude with a special musical presentation of the music that has been part of our history during 200 years of statehood.

For more information, please call the Illinois State Museum at (217) 782-0979, or the Academy of Lifelong Learning at Lincoln Land Community College at (217) 786-2477.

Biography of Dr. Wheeler and a series list are below.

Biography:

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The Culture and Heritage of Illinoisans Bicentennial Series:

Feb. 18	“Two Centuries to Celebrate: Illinois at the Bicentennial”	Dr. Samuel Wheeler, Springfield
March 18	“This Land Was Your Land: Native Americans, Globalization and Treaties”	Dr. Michael Wiant, Petersburg
April 15	“Becoming A State: The Illinois Way”	Tara McClellan McAndrew, Springfield
May 20	“Binding Our State Together: Canals, Railroads, Postal Services and Roads”	Dr. Norman Moline, Rock Island
June 17	“Illinois Antislavery and the Struggle For Freedom”	Jeanne Schulz Angel, Chicago
July 15	“Building Illinois: Entrepreneurialism Flourishes, Workers Rise”	Mike Matejka, Bloomington
Aug.	“Farming in the Great Corn Belt: 200 Years of	

19	Challenges, Choices & Changes"	Don Meyer, Lexington
Sept. 16	"Illinois in Art & Literature, 1818 to 2017"	Laura Mueller, Burbank
Oct. 21	"From Prairie to Farm to City: Music to Commemorate Illinois' Bicentennial"	Phil Passen, Chicago