



Teacher Background Information

Sheldon Peck is a famous early American artist who lived in Lombard, then called Babcock's Grove, from 1837 to 1868. Sheldon Peck painted ordinary people's portraits year around in the days before cameras were invented. Peck's paintings hang in art museums and recently a double portrait sold for \$820,000. There are exhibit copies of Sheldon Peck portraits at his pioneer home, now a Lombard local landmark.

Sheldon married his wife, Harriet, at their Vermont birthplace. Later they moved to Jordan, New York and left there to come to Chicago, a town of 5000 people. When banks failed, they left Chicago for Babcock's Grove. Sheldon Peck and his family built their house (now the oldest house in Lombard), raised merino sheep and farmed land at Grace & St. Charles Rd. U. S. President Tyler signed their land deed.

Sheldon and Harriet had 10 living children (two babies died) who lived in this house. Harriet also became known as a cheese maker and helper of the sick. Sheldon was a deacon in an early church and started the first school in his house and paid the teacher's salary. In 1849, he sold a corner of his land to build the first railroad through town. Sheldon Peck Homestead is at 355 E. Parkside Street.

Peck helped people travel to freedom using a secret escape route called the Underground Railroad (URR). Before the Civil War, Illinois was a Free State prohibiting slavery. Many escaping slaves went through Illinois to find freedom. They traveled the long journey north going from one "station", such as the Peck House, to another - usually at night. URR was a secret group of people who helped move slaves from one station to another trusted station, so most stories about using "quilts as markers" are not accurate. Where did escaped slaves hide at the Peck Homestead? LHS research found a family journal that said they hid in a barn that no longer exists. It was also stated, in the family diary, that slaves stayed in the house, but it didn't state exactly where. Thus, the Peck Homestead is one of many Underground Railroad stations.

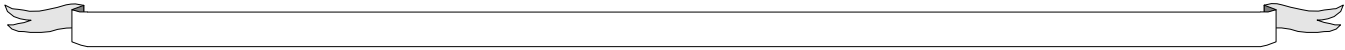
For more information on school program and contest:

Contact LHS Museum Director, Jeanne S. Angel, or LHS Peck Homestead Chair Patricia Poskocil at 630-629-1885, or write to Lombard Historical Society, 23 West Maple Street, Lombard. For information about the contest, you can also contact Brigitte O'Brien, Contest Chair at 630-627-2892 or email to obrienb@villageoflombard.org.

Class tours, pioneer programs or history events for a school group can be arranged by contacting Lombard Historical Museum (telephone 630-629-1885). Museum staff and volunteers can come to schools to speak to teachers for staff events, or to talk to students in single or multi-classrooms on local history topics, provide educational pioneer demonstrations, show exhibit materials, and share ideas about local history.

Sheldon Peck Homestead Tours are free to the public on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday afternoon, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 355 Parkside (near Grace St. and St. Charles Road). Group visits (6 or more) or special pioneer programs can be arranged at different times by appointment. Telephone is 630-629-1885.

Sheldon Peck Homestead visits are optional and not required to enter local history Letter Writing project. For more details on local history current events, go to the LHS web site: www.lombardhistory.org.





Additional Teacher Information

Illinois State Goals and Standards Met:

English Language Arts

State Goal 3B: Compose well-organized, coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.

State Goal 3A: Use correct grammar, spelling punctuation, capitalization and structure.

State Goal 3C: Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.

State Goal 5A: Locate, organize, and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems and communicate ideas.

State Goal 5C: Apply acquired information, concepts, and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats.

Social Science

State Goal 16B: Understand the development of significant political events

State Goal 18B: Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.

History Project Letter Deadline:

The history project begins on Feb. 1, 2010 and ends Thursday, February 28, 2010. All letter entries must be received by the Lombard Historical Society office, 23 W. Maple Street, Lombard, either by mail or hand delivered no later than 4 p.m. on Feb. 28, 2010. Teachers may choose to send a package of multiple letters. Please have the students attach each personal entry form to their letter.

Guidelines for Judging – 100 point total:

25 points

A - Letter shows student writer's ability to create a hand written, interesting letter that Lincoln could read and Peck could have written in 1848. Letter must be original, handwritten and created by the student. (Note: there were no typed letters written in 1848.)

25 points

B - Letter uses various details about Sheldon Peck's life: his life as an artist, the abolitionist movement, the Underground Railroad, his family and/or as a community leader.

25 points

C - Letter shows student's ability to research, find and use accurate 1848 Illinois historical information about Lincoln, Peck, Babcock's Grove and Illinois history, in a personal way.

25 points

D - Letter has correct spelling, accurate word use, and is handwritten, in a readable, letter format. Letters should be 250 to 400 words on 1 or 2 pages (8 ½" x 11" paper).

