

## PRESENTATION TOPICS

**Guy Sternberg:**

**The Lincoln Vault Oak** (The biology and history of the last documented living participant in the funeral of Abraham Lincoln, including historic images, the methods and results of dissection of its stump, and wood samples showing evidence of events that took place at the site. Originally presented as part of the Lincoln Funeral Coalition Sesquicentennial Reenactment program series at the Illinois State Museum, the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and for the National Garden Clubs Association Midwest Conference.)

**Pathfinder: the Last Sentinel** (The story of what probably was the last known Indian Trail Oak in Illinois, as an example of trail marker trees once found throughout much of North America. This heavily illustrated presentation will feature a photographic record of the tree along with the steps needed to determine the likelihood that a bent tree is of aboriginal anthropogenic origin. Originally researched and prepared for the 2015 Triennial Conference of the International Oak Society and the journal of the Illinois State Historical Society.)

**A Virtual World Tour of the Oak Genus** (The oak genus *Quercus* is not only the US National Tree – it is the predominant tree group in the Northern Hemisphere, with ~500 species, both evergreen and deciduous and ranging from giant trees to trailing shrubs, occupying habitats from deserts to swamps and mountains to coastal plains. Join the founding president of the International Oak Society for an illustrated intercontinental armchair adventure in quest of oaks.)

**The 20-1/2 Oaks of Illinois** (An illustrated introduction from the founding president of the International Oak Society to every native oak species found in Illinois – other states or countries upon request.)

**The Diversity and Majesty of Bur Oak** (Our ubiquitous denizen of the Midwest savanna is one of the most widespread and variable of all North American trees. See some majestic examples of this great tree and review the differences displayed by specimens grown from throughout its native range.)

**Nightmares on Oak Street** (A comprehensive illustrated overview of current and upcoming oak pests and problems in North America. We will focus upon the Midwest with occasional diversions into other regions.)

**Managing Oak Wilt** (An Illinois case study showing step-by-step procedures for preventing, identifying, and controlling this critical fungus disease of our ubiquitous oak trees.)

**Pruning Oaks: Training the Young to Achieve Grandeur** (Most trees need a little help to be the best that they can be. Oaks have special characteristics that, if addressed at a young age, can be molded into the venerable form and stature that we all think about when the word “oak” is mentioned. Learn the right, and wrong, ways to approach oak pruning during the early years of tree growth. Originally presented in France for the 2012 Triennial Conference of the International Oak Society.)

**Understanding Oak Hybridization** (The hundreds of species of oaks divide along several lines into interfertile breeding groups, further complicated by anemophilous pollination and protandry. We will explain the mechanisms, potentials, and limitations of oak hybridization in understandable terms, and present some promising hybrid oak cultivars.)

**The Artistic Morphology of Trees** (Find the inspiration of seeing trees with a broad new perspective. Topics include the subtleties of seasons, lighting, tree features at eye level and ground level, fragrance, wildlife interactions, how to experience the full measure of trees, and view-shed management as related to tree placement. Learn how to use the artistic features of your existing trees more effectively in the landscape and how to plan for new trees.)

**The Imaging of Trees** (Tree photography can be an important part of your outdoor recreation experience as well as your business, whether you have a \$20,000 DSLR camera or a smart phone. Guy Sternberg has published tree images in many magazines, journals, and books, and has studied and worked with some of the great outdoor photographers of our time. He offers tips and demonstrates techniques for composition, lighting, lens sizes, focus, resolution, wind, seasons, aspect ratio, parallax, editing, digital compression, filing, special effects, and other things that can help make your tree, and your camera, the best that they can be.)

**Managing Ancient and Historic Trees** (Engage your imagination and talk about giant, ancient, and unique trees. We will examine what makes monumental and historic trees more than the "renewable resources" of forestry parlance, with some dramatic case studies showing how they should and should not be managed. Learn what you can do in your own neighborhood to help preserve a gift that is irreplaceable on a human time scale – our venerable heritage trees.)

**Ash: The Morning After** (Now that EAB has arrived, what should you think about besides making baseball bats from your former community forest? Save worthy ash trees first, and then restore the newly opened landscape with a mix of trees that offer diversity, site suitability, and adaptability to our changing climate. Procedures for evaluation, treatment, and replacement will be shown.)

**Think Like a Tree** (Using image files from an extensive collection, this light-hearted program gives some "advice from a tree" information and hopefully a strong take-home message. Suitable for luncheons or other venues where a general, less technical program is needed. Two versions are available, adaptable for mature or younger audiences.)

**Nature's Art** (An automated 40-minute slide show of captioned outdoor photography suitable for background projection during conference dinners and casual gatherings.)

**The Dark Side of Dendrology** (Many people have discovered that old cemeteries are fascinating places to study trees and artistic monument iconography. This presentation will feature a heavily illustrated review of the botanical and other symbolism in Victorian cemeteries and will show some of the grand and historic trees and other plants, both native and nonnative, that can make cemetery botany such a rewarding experience. Focusing upon North America, examples also will be included from around the world.)

**The Historic Cemeteries of Menard County, Illinois** (In the land where Lincoln rose to greatness, his presence has enhanced the preservation of much of the pioneer history of the Midwest. There is no better place to touch such history, with a liberal bonus of botany, art, sculpture, scenery, and legend, than in the historic cemeteries of his home region. Take an armchair tour of 24 of the most interesting and historic cemeteries in this special county.)

**The Iconography of Victorian Cemeteries** (The study of the meanings of symbols, in this case on historic cemetery monuments, is called iconography. Join us for a look at the circumstances that produced some of the most expressive and emotional stone carving in North America, and learn what some of it can tell you. Presenter Guy Sternberg, a member of the Lincoln Monument Association and Charter Board Member of the Oak Ridge Cemetery Foundation, has been studying historic cemeteries for decades and has presented programs about cemeteries and their trees and symbols for the US National Park Service, the Illinois State Museum, and many interest groups.)

**Trees in a Changing Climate** (Virtually all scientists agree that our climate is becoming increasingly unstable, even if a few still doubt the extent of the role our own species is playing in the process. How will this affect our most treasured and permanent landscape plants – our trees? Why should we be concerned, and what should we do? Learn about things such as observed versus proxy data; clonal variation; Milankovich and ENSO climate cycling; climate change; the importance of species, provenance, and diversity. Consider some expected trends for our landscapes of the coming century, and come away better prepared for the uncertain future of your environment.)

**Our Evolving Climate** (An abbreviated version of the above three-hour class, limited to an overview of climate change: what we know, how we know it, why it's happening, and what it means for the future of our trees and gardens.)

**Tough Trees for our Evolving Climate** (Also extracted from the original class, skipping most of the climate science and focusing only upon some of the trees that may be successful in the future climate of the Midwest, or other regions as requested. Explore a selection of adaptable landscape trees and see some memorable examples of how adaptable they can be to urban conditions, poor drainage, soil problems, and that gorilla-in-the-closet concern for the future: climate destabilization. We will emphasize your region's native species, but also touch upon some others to consider, or to avoid.)

**Trees and Gardens of Northern Thailand** (For those with a wanderlust but inability to travel, this program will present some amazing botanical and horticultural diversity ranging from Chiang Mai north into the notorious Golden Triangle region adjacent to Myanmar and Laos.)

**Exploring the Woody Plants of Samoa** (The mountainous islands of Upolu and Savaii in the tropical archipelago of Independent (Western) Samoa comprise a paradise for trees as well as for people. See some of the fascinating plants and beautiful scenery found in this South Pacific horticultural wonderland where you never need a jacket.)

**Death by a Thousand Cuts** (Thousand cankers disease of black walnut is becoming one of the most critical and urgent threats to forestry and forest ecology ever to strike our country. Learn about this severe new problem, see what our government agencies are, and are not, doing about it, and leave with the inspiration and knowledge to make a difference.)

**Forest Ecology for Naturalists** (Learn the basics of forest ecology and the options available to us for managing forests for natural values. We will review forest types and habitats, components of the forest, factors influencing forest composition, natural succession and cycles, goals of management, threats to forest ecosystems, and the nature and value of urban and community forests. Originally developed as a class for the Illinois Master Naturalist program and applicable to Illinois and other Midwest states.)

**Believe in Miracles: *Maclura pomifera*** (The story of Osage-orange, from the Pleistocene to the future. Learn about the nearest thing we have to a miracle tree, with attributes that offer something for everyone. We will begin with its fossil history and continue through post-ice-age re-colonization, adaptation to anthropogenic vectoring, unique chemical and structural properties, genetic diversity, human history, cultivar selections, and its bright future in a world threatened by global climate destabilization. If your smart phone had only one tree-app, this species should be the one.)

**Starhill Forest: The Making of an Arboretum** (See how the most comprehensive oak reference collection in North America began, along with the history of this arboretum's growth and development. Beginning from scratch with no endowment, it was built through personal effort, eventually becoming the official arboretum of the oldest college in Illinois with more than 2500 accessioned woody plants.)

**The Tree Cultivars of Starhill Forest** (While developing this Illinois arboretum during the decades since the early 1960s, many very special trees have been found in our propagation beds or during collecting trips worldwide. Some of them were just too unique or interesting not to introduce into general cultivation, so . . . here we go! See the trees and learn their fascinating stories.)

**Guided Tours of Starhill Forest Arboretum** (This scenic arboretum in central Illinois includes the most comprehensive living collection for *Quercus* in North America. Contact us via our web site for more information: [www.StarhillForest.com](http://www.StarhillForest.com) .)

**Alana McKean:**

**Pruning Trees and Shrubs** (Pick up the basics of the art and science of pruning. Done properly, pruning can increase plant vigor, encourage growth, and lengthen the lifespan of our woody landscape plants. We will cover what and how to prune, when to do it, choosing the right tools, and of course, what NOT to do. Presentation can accompany an onsite demonstration if plants are available!)

**Collections Management for Small Gardens** (Learn from 40 years of experience in DIY botanical collections management-- without the state of the art specialized software and a full-time plant recorder! We will share the who, what, when, where, why, and how we collect data about the plants we grow at Starhill Forest Arboretum, including labeling in the field, managing the data, mapping, and more. Those interested in documenting their own collections can learn from our successes and hopefully avoid the inevitable mistakes!)

**Forest Management for Naturalists** (Learn some of the basics of forest management with an emphasis on preserving biodiversity and eradicating invasive species. The talk is best paired with a walk in the woods to see some management strategy—good or bad—first hand!)

**All About the Arboretum** (Children's Program. What is an arboretum? Why do we grow so many trees? How are we different from a park? Learn all about what we do at Starhill Forest Arboretum!)

**Native Plant Gardening** (More and more gardeners are catching on to the trend of using native plants in the home landscape. Both beautiful and ecologically functional, learn about some of the latest trends in environmentally-conscious gardening: why and how to use native plants, some resources, a few species suggestions, and some invasive species to avoid!)