



ILLINOIS LABOR HISTORY SOCIETY

# REPORTER

Summer 2015

## A Day of True International Solidarity

May Day is called International Labor Day—and it truly lived up to its name this year at Haymarket Square in Chicago. Union members, peace activists, immigrant rights activists, low wage labor organizers, and community members gathered together at the site of the Haymarket tragedy to sing, remember the past, and commit to fight together for a better future.

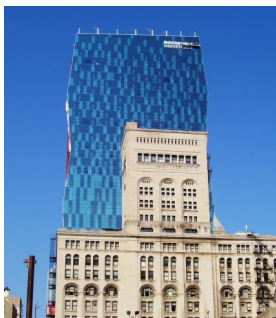
We unveiled two new plaques for the monument, one from the German labor movement, and one from the Swedish labor movement. We also had a large delegation from Japan return to Chicago to share this special day. It was a fitting year to honor our brothers and sisters from Sweden, as this year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the martyrdom of Swedish-American labor activist Joe Hill. Six guests from Sweden spent two days with the Illinois Labor History Society, touring labor history sites, talking with Chicago unionists, and building solidarity. Tobias Baudin, the Vice President of Sweden's main labor federation, LO, addressed the both the crowd at the monument and later our membership meeting. His inspiring speech to the ILHS membership is included in this newsletter—and it is well worth the read if you did not have the chance to join us at the meeting.

May Day gatherings continued into the night. Chicago's music venue, The Hideout was packed to overflowing for the kick-off of the Joe Hill Road Show. The ILHS's own Bucky Halker was joined on stage by Alexis Buss, Paul Durica, Anne Feeny, Jan Hammarlund, and JP Wright.

The ILHS would like to acknowledge the Chicago Federation of Labor, Chicago Federation of Musicians, Chicago Jobs With Justice, United Electrical, and the Radio and Machine Workers of America, who all helped make the May Day events and visit with our Swedish guests possible.



*A rose placed on the Haymarket Monument as the crowd gathers - photo courtesy of Mike Matejka,*



## ILHS Offices Have Moved

(Yes again!) We are still located in the Auditorium Building of Roosevelt University. But now we are on the **18th** floor. Stop by our new office and visit our book store, and enjoy our amazing view of Lake Michigan.

**ILHS, 430 S. Michigan Ave., Room AUD1851, Chicago, IL 60605**

## Dear ILHS Members,

As I look back over the ILHS calendar over the past few months I am struck by the truly international story of the labor movement. On May Day we hosted a delegation of labor leaders from Sweden. The ILHS unveiled two new plaques from Sweden and Germany at the Haymarket Monument. We also shared the day with a large group of labor and peace activists from Japan. In July, ILHS was honored to support a visit from Reyna Tejada, a labor activist in the garment industry of Honduras, as part of the Midwest School for Women Workers. In the past few weeks, visitors from Canada and India have stopped by the ILHS offices to learn more about Chicago labor history. Through these visits and conversations it is clear that the spirit of International Labor Day that we honor at Haymarket lives on.

The histories we protect and share in Illinois have resonance throughout the world. It would not be possible for ILHS to share these stories without the loyal support of our members. Thank you for helping us continue to ensure that the voice of the people is heard!

In the next few months we will have two more occasions to gather together, first at Labor Day in Pullman and then at our annual Union Hall of Honor in Chicago. I look forward to seeing many of you at these two events.

Until then, in Solidarity,



ILHS President

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[Illinoislaborhistory.org](http://Illinoislaborhistory.org)

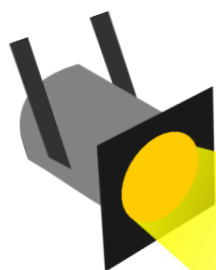
## Labor History Education

Spring and Early Summer were a busy season for Illinois labor history education. One highlight was a visit to the Haymarket Monument by 140 junior high students, parents and teachers on a field trip to Chicago from Ann Arbor, Michigan. We also held an all-day labor history workshop and tour of Chicago for twenty-five K-12 grade teachers. This program was a partnership between ILHS, the Chicago Metro History Education Center, and the Teaching with Primary Sources Program at DePaul University.



Photos: (clockwise) Three teachers examine labor history photos from the Library of Congress Archives; ILHS Board Member Alma Washington reenacts speeches by Lucy Parsons to a group of junior high students at Haymarket; Dr. Jeff Helgeson talks to a group of teachers about the Packinghouse Workers Mural.

-photos courtesy of Lisa Oppenheim and Stephanie Seawell



## Volunteer Spotlight - Chaelecia Cooper

Chaelecia is working on her Master's Degree at Northeastern Illinois University and is a proud member of AFSCME 1989. Over the spring she gave her time as intern for ILHS working on a project researching Lucy Parsons and compiling materials for students to use in the classroom. The project is planned to be done by the end of this year. Chaelecia stated: "I am excited to be here at Illinois Labor History Society interning for spring 2015. I am working towards earning my Masters in Inner City Studies at Northeastern Illinois University and having an awesome time. I am fortunate to be close to many projects related to Lucy Parsons, whom I am researching. Lucy was a powerfully profound speaker and writer for the Labor Movement in Chicago. Lucy's writings and speeches were examples of her resilience. There was a need for her message; it was filled with her burning passion for social justice and equality for all people. Lucy kept pushing the limits for this knowledge to be heard. Her contributions during the 19th century were phenomenal, but her story's exposure today lacks the notoriety she deserves."

Want to volunteer for ILHS? Email [ilhs@prodigy.net](mailto:ilhs@prodigy.net) and find out how you can help keep history alive!



# Speech by LO First Vice-President Tobias Baudin at the Illinois Labor History Society, Chicago, May 1, 2015

Brothers and sisters. Union friends.

First of all, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to address your meeting. I would also like to bring you a greeting of solidarity from the Swedish Trade Union Confederation.

Sometimes, when I attend meetings like this, talking with union friends in other countries, there is one thing which strikes me especially. When we tell each other about the situations in our home countries, we often describe the same things. Whether we come from Sweden or the US, from the UK or Greece, from Brazil or Japan, we have a similar story to tell. It is a story of decreasing security for workers, increasing unemployment and growing social divides.

A story about how governments are competing with each other to reduce taxes, cut back social welfare and weaken workers' rights. Here in the US, you are currently in the middle of the struggle against the Fast Track Legislation and the Right to Work laws. In Sweden we have to defend victories we thought we had won long ago, such as the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike. And all over Europe labor unions are fighting mass unemployment, social injustices and neoliberal austerity.

Of course there are still differences between the situations in our countries, but we have especially two things in common. The growth of an economy of global speculation with immense power for capital investors. And a political wave of right wing neoliberalism.

This fight is not all new, and neither is our enemy. There were people that fought this fight before us, and we can learn a lot from them. Today, we remember the martyrs of Haymarket. We also remember my fellow countryman, and your union organizer, Joe Hill. Since then the world has changed. But we know, as they knew, that there is one thing that will never change:

If we want justice, if we want to stand up for our rights, if we want to change things-We have to organize. We have to use our common force and strengthen our solidarity. Oppressors have always seen free labor unions as a threat. Of course they have. They know that free labor unions may threaten their power. They know that our aim is to improve conditions for the everyday workers. And they know that we will succeed!

The basis of a labor union is solidarity. We promise each other that we will never work on less favorable terms or less pay than what we have agreed on. That we will refuse to be played against each other.



Because we know: Together we are stronger. Together we can make demands, Together we can make them listen. It is easy to feel powerless when faced with the world of today. The global power of capital. All the injustices. All the obstacles to equality. What do we have to put up against all this global power, one may ask? My answer is simple. We have our solidarity. We have more than 200 million organized union members all over the world. We have the power of the union.

So, sisters and brothers. We know what we have to do. We must organize. We must be as effective as possible in our union work. We must recruit new members, and retain the ones we have. And in that union struggle everyone must be included. The labor union solidarity knows no boundaries or borders. And no one shall be excluded on the basis of gender, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Because if we allow a single one of us to be excluded, we betray our union vow.

So, dear friends, let us look back over our shoulder at our history. At our achievements and our disappointments. At our victories and our defeats. Let us learn from history without losing ourselves in it. Together we have travelled a long road of workers solidarity and trade unionism. A journey that has brought us from Haymarket in 1886 to this meeting here today. Yes, we have had our setbacks. We have had our defeats. But we have grown along the way.

Through history the power of the unions  
- to fight for justice, to fight for jobs, to bargain for a fair share of the wealth workers create  
- has been demonstrated all over the world.

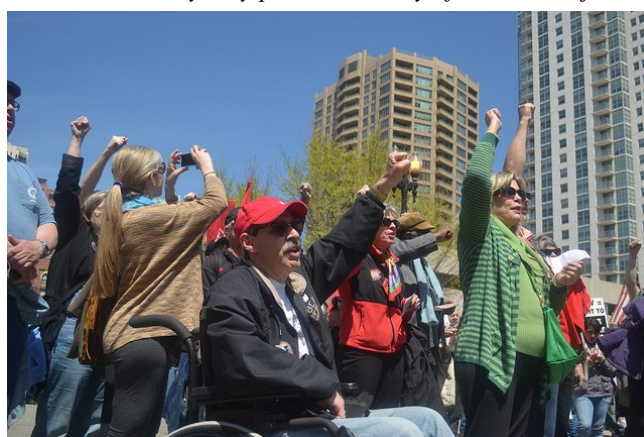
Our long journey is far from over. Justice and freedom have not yet been won for all. In today's world more and more people realise that their jobs, their homes and the value of their pension funds have been stripped away by the greed and incompetence in the financial sector. The global financial crisis has demonstrated once and for all that neoliberal policies don't work. They don't work for the economy, they don't work for the workers and they don't work for the environment. They have even rushed us down a path of environmental catastrophe, with climate change threatening the livelihoods of hundreds of millions.

So, our job is not done. There must be an end to unrestrained financial markets, an end to the greed, an end to social injustice. So, to get the job done we must be even better at organising workers nationally and globally. We can do that. And we will. Because the words that Joe Hill sang in one of his most famous songs is still true today, just as it will always be true. There is a power in the union!

Dear friends, we are that power!

Thank you.

*May Day photos courtesy of Mike Matejka*



# Celebrate LABOR DAY

**Pullman State Historic Site - North Factory**  
11057 S. Cottage Grove Ave.

**Monday, September 7**

12:30 pm Tour of Historic Pullman

1:30 pm Music and Program

**Free Admission**

Food ♦ Music ♦ History ♦ Family Fun

## Have You Purchased your ILHS Commemorative T-Shirt?

In order to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of labor activist and song writer Joe Hill, the Illinois Labor History Society has commissioned a limited edition t-shirt. The t-shirt was designed by Chicago Teachers Union member and artist Jesus Sanchez.

**Place your order online at [illinoislaborhistory.org](http://illinoislaborhistory.org)**  
(look for the tab titled Joe Hill T-Shirt)

You can also pay for your order with a check sent to:

Illinois Labor History Society, 430 S. Michigan Ave,  
Room AUD1851, Chicago, IL 60605

Colors: Red or Gray

Available Sizes: small - XXXL

Cost: \$15 per shirt (If you would like you can make an additional donation. All extra donations will go toward the Illinois Labor History Society Guthrie Fund, a dedicated fund to pay for labor music programs, workshops and performances).



Learn more at  
[illinoislaborhistory.org](http://illinoislaborhistory.org)



# Illinois Labor History Society

## Membership Form

Renew your membership in the Illinois Labor History Society. Membership dues are \$30 per year for individuals and \$200 for unions (\$100 for those with less than 200 members). To join as an individual or to affiliate your local union, complete this form and send it with a check to our office, or renew online at [www.illinoislaborhistory.org](http://www.illinoislaborhistory.org).

For the first time, **you can also become a recurring member.** **To become a recurring member you MUST sign and return this form.** Once you become a recurring member, we will automatically renew your membership each year. by charging the credit card provided. This means we will not have to ask you to update your membership.

To support ILHS, I want to:

\_\_\_\_\_ Become a member (\$30 annually)

\_\_\_\_\_ Affiliate my union (\$200 annually, or \$100 for locals under 200 members)

\_\_\_\_\_ Become a recurring member. (\$30, billed annually. Cancel any time )

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Union Local \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Payment (please check one):

- Check is enclosed
- Credit Card (we will call you for credit card information)

Yes! I want to become a recurring member of ILHS

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me with more information about

- Scheduling a Labor History program for my union/organization
- Scheduling a Labor History Tour
- Volunteering with ILHS

**Return this Form To:**

**430 South Michigan Ave. Room AUD 1851, Chicago, IL 60605**



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**430 South Michigan Ave.**  
**Room AUD 1851**  
**Chicago, IL 60605**

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# *You are Invited*

## *34th Annual Union Hall of Honor Awards Dinner* *The Illinois Labor Movement from Farm to Table*

Honoring Elizabeth Maloney, Ruben Ramirez, Sr., Olgha Sandman

*Friday, October 23, 2015, 5 – 8 pm*

Operating Engineers Local 399 Hall, 2260 South Grove, Chicago

Visit [www.illinoislaborhistory.org](http://www.illinoislaborhistory.org) for pricing and ticket details  
and look for your invitation in the mail soon

