



HISTORICO

Sangamon County Historical Society Newsletter

123 South Seventh Street, Suite 402, Springfield, Illinois. 217-525-1961,
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VOLUME 47, NO. 8

JANUARY 2011

New Year Meeting Opener January 18

19th Century American Music Expert To Share Insight on Role Music Played in Civil War Era

Music historian R. Todd Cranson will kick off the Society's 2011 winter-spring program offerings when he discusses "Civil War Music" on Tuesday, January 18.

Cranson's talk, which starts at 7 p.m., will be held in Carnegie Room North at Springfield's Lincoln Library, 326 S. Seventh Street. The session is free and open to the public.

Cranson, director of the University of Illinois, Springfield, Band and Chamber Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Vintage Brass Band of Springfield, is an expert on 19th Century American band and dance orchestra music. The Band produced its first CD last spring, featuring the music of The Humbolt Brass Band. The Humbolt, Kansas Civil War era band was formed by Union Army

musician Richard R. Redfield in 1866.

The band's hand-written part books (music for each instrument) survive to this day, originally collected and preserved by the late Carl



R. Todd Cranson

Busch, conductor of the Kansas City Symphony and later acquired by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Sousa Archives and

Center for American Music, where they are housed today.

A tubist who has studied with some of the world's leading tuba players, Cranson holds music and music education degrees from Louisiana State University and a master of music degree in instrumental conducting from the University of Arkansas.

Before receiving a Post Graduate Diploma with distinction in performance from the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, England, He also was the subject of an Emmy-award-winning documentary on the Hot Springs Music Festival, *The Sound of Dreams*, shown on Public Broadcasting Stations around the country. He is married to fellow tuba player Rose Schweikhart.

INSIDE:

From the President's Podium.....	2
Help Set a World Record.....	3
Elkhart Event Set.....	3
Statehouse Art Ahead.....	4
Tree at Exec Mansion.....	6
Party Amid History.....	7
New Run for Play.....	8

HAPPY NEW YEAR

After 49 Years at Robinson's

Society Moves Operations to New Springfield Headquarters

A 49-year relationship between the Sangamon County Historical Society and Robinson's Advertising Service officially ended December 31 when the firm at 308 East Adams Street, Springfield, ceased operations. The company had been handling membership and record keeping details since 1961 when then Sangamon County Historical Society president — the late John Chapin — turned those operations over to Robinson's

(Continued on page 4)

From the President's Podium

New Developments Prompt a Timely Update



DAVID W. SCOTT

The Annual Meeting of the Sangamon County Historical that is held in June is the time for the President to report to the members "on the activities of the Society" (By-Laws, Article III, Section 1). However, a semi-annual report is in order now as there have been a number of developments since June 2010 and more are being considered for the coming months.

New Ways of Communicating

Since June two new means of communicating with members have been put in place to supplement the two existing means – the long established monthly newsletter (*Historico*) and the recently developed web site (www.sancohis.org). Of course, the web is available to anyone with access to the internet.

This past summer the Society contracted with Patron Mail, an e-mail service that enables us to send notices of upcoming event to members, but has also been used to generate renewals and to ask for volunteers for several activities. The second is a move into social media. We are on Facebook which opens up a channel of communication with younger people.

Our Own Office

December 1 was the first day SCHS officially has its own office, a 250 square foot room at Seventh and Adams above the Sachi flower shop. At its October meeting, based on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Board authorized renting this space through the end of 2011. It also authorized spending up to \$1,500 for office equipment and materials and hiring a person on a contractual basis to perform mainly clerical work for up to \$1,000 extending to May 31, 2011. However, no money needs to be spent yet on personnel as we have for a while at least the able volunteer services of Marion Leach.

With Robinson's Advertising Service closing down operations, the Society decided to handle on its own the essential support services Robinson had been providing for many years: helping prepare the *Historico* for mailing, providing storage, maintaining a phone service, distributing mail, handling payments for membership and special events and keeping a list of members and non-renewals.

County History Progress

The long discussed county history project is finally taking form under the Society's County History Committee led by Nancy Chapin and Dick Hart. The impetus for considering such

a project was to recognize the 200th anniversary in 2021 of the founding of Sangamon County. An early major decision of the Committee was to forgo using the traditional narrative format of a book with chapters telling the history of the county in chronological order. It was thought that there would be little general appeal in such an approach, but more interest if people have immediate access to specific topics of interest. Given this expectation and the general trend away from books and to the internet, the committee decided to use the encyclopedia format by putting online short essays on a great number of topics. Although the committee is recruiting volunteer writers and a cadre of volunteer reviewers/editors, the Board has authorized the committee to spend up to \$3,000 for professional writers.

Strategic Plan

Progress is being made in carrying out a Strategic Plan I submitted to the Board of Directors in September. The Plan identified two priorities:

1) Increase marketing activities to expand and diversify membership and to increase income. The Membership Committee has the main responsibility to present recommendations to the Board, including new membership categories; corporate sponsorships; joint memberships with other related groups; the use of social media; and increased visibility in the media and with non-history groups.

2) Build on the strengths of existing program and activities to serve a wider variety of interests. The Program Committee and others are generating ideas, including finding ways to have a significant involvement with schools; developing some focus on genealogy; providing assistance to other county groups and activities; supporting programs appealing to younger families; and have noon-time programs downtown.

Significant cost could be associated with carrying out these kinds of activities, so I have obtained the approval of the Board to form a fund-raising planning committee. A fund-raising campaign is particularly appropriate now as part of the recognition of the Society's 50th anniversary this year and to support an even stronger Society for the next 50 years.

David



Historico, published 10 times a year, is the monthly bulletin for members of the Sangamon County Historical Society. Back issues are available on-line in PDF format at our website, www.sancohis.org. Updates, late-breaking news, features, and more are regularly posted on our website.

Event updates also can be found on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com). Log in and search for *Sangamon County Historical Society*.

Annual Membership dues are:

Individuals: \$17.50, Family: \$25, Sustaining: \$50
Individual Life Membership, one-time payment of \$250
Family Life Member, one-time payment of \$400.

For a membership form and/or additional information, contact the Society at 525-1961 or write to us at P.O. Box 1834, Springfield, IL 62705 or schs@um.att.net.

Want to Help Set A World Record? Here's Your Chance!

Members of the **Sangamon County Historical Society** can help attempt to set a world record **February 11** by participating in a simultaneous reading of Lincoln's farewell address. The re-enacted speech will be broadcast at **11 a.m.** from the **Great Western Depot** at 930 Monroe Street, Springfield. There will also be simultaneous readings taking place here at the **Lincoln Home National Historic Site** and the **Old State Capitol** as well sites world-wide.

The event's sponsors—the **Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**, **GateHouse Media**, the **National Park Service**, the **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum**, the **Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area**, and the **Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition**, hope to beat the **Guinness World Record** for the most people reading aloud from the same document. The event will also help kick off the nation's **Civil War Sesquicentennial Observance**,

The Great Western Depot, the site of the original Farewell Speech as well as the February 11, 2011 re-enactment, is owned and operated by The State Journal-Register, the GateHouse Media newspaper for Springfield, Illinois. The record for the most people reading aloud from the same document simultaneously is 223,363 participants at 909 venues across the United States for an event organized by Walden Media on December 13, 2006. Organizers of the February 11 event are confident they can break the existing world record while officially opening the nation's Civil War Sesquicentennial observance. A similar world record attempt by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum to simultaneously read the **Gettysburg Address** on **Lincoln's 200th birthday**, February 12, 2009, garnered 180,000 documented participants. Although short of the world record, the lessons learned from that attempt have been put to use in planning the February 11, 2011 reading. Since Guinness World Records™ requires the record-breaking reading to last at least five minutes, participants will read the Farewell Address several times until the five-minute threshold is met. To register, contact edie.weaver@sj-r.com or call the SJ-R at 788-1356.

IN THE NEWS:The **Elkhart Historical Society** will hold the first in its 2011 Dinner/Lecture Series on Friday, January 28, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at The Wild Hare Café in Elkhart, Illinois. Author **Bill Donath** will speak on "Logan County During the Civil War." The String Band will entertain with Civil War era music during dinner. Tickets are \$24 per person. For reservations, go to www.elkharthistoricalsociety.org or call 947-2046....Congrats to **Justin Blandford** and wife **Holly** on the December 28 birth of a baby girl, **Greta Rae**. Blandford, site manager for the **Old State Capitol**, the **Vachel Lindsay Home** and the **Lincoln-Herdon Law Office**, spoke to the Society about the latter at its November meeting.

DECEMBER 2010 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Sangamon County Historical Society is pleased to add the following members:

LIFE MEMBERS

Theresa Power, Mary Marada

INDIVIDUAL

Candy Knox
Ruth McCarty
Mikle Sieve
Chuck Williams
Joyce Bell
Chris Bulter

Joyce Campbell
Margaret Cullen
Robert Hill
Michele Hughes
Gregory Laun
Steve Leonard

Cathy Mosley
Helen Poe
Doris Prather
Sherman Public Library
Bill Springer

FAMILY

Dennis Camp & Barbara Milman, James M.Cornelius Family, Hal & Mary Perkins, Don & Linda Schneider



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President.....David W. Scott
Vice-President.....Vicki Megginson
Secretary.....Pam VanAlstine
Treasurer.....Paul R. Mueller
Past President.....Nancy Chapin

DIRECTORS

Term Ending June 2011

Jack Alexander,
Connie Locher Bussard,
John Huther
Don Springer
Jane Vetter

Term Ending 2012

Tim Krell
Carolyn Moore
Donna Catlin
Roger Whitaker
James H. Beaumont

Term Ending 2013

Linda Bee
Bruce Beeman
Claire Eberle
Carolyn Oxtoby
Jane Treadwell

Presidential Appointees to the Board

Richard Carlson
Constitutional Committee chair
Vicky Whitaker
Publicity chair, *Historico* Editor

Honorary Director

William Hughes Diller Jr.

BOARD MEETINGS

2nd Wednesday, Lincoln Library, 5 p.m.

January 12, February 9, March 9,
April 13, May 11, June 8

Robinson's Closes Shop, Society Moves to New Offices

(Continued from page 1)

just as the fledgling historical organization was getting started.

Aware of the plans of owner Mary Marada and her sister, Theresa Power who has worked there since 1973, and respecting their wish that decision not be made public until all customers could be notified, the Society has been quietly planning for the transition since late summer, seeking out new office space, furnishings, equipment and staff to handle its needs now and in the future.

Elevator Service

The new office, at 123 South Seventh Street, is across from the Abraham Lincoln Hotel and the Prairie Capital Convention Center Parking garage. Housed on the fourth floor of an office building above Sachi's Flower and Gift Shop, the office (Suite 402) is accessible by elevator from its Seventh Street entrance.

The office is being staffed Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. by volunteer Marion Leach. The Society's new phone number is 217-525-1961. Messages left when the office is not staffed will be answered promptly. The Society's new mailing address is Box 1834, Springfield, IL, 62705. The new office e-mail address is schs@um.att.net

Marada, who completed purchase of the firm in 1958 from its founder, William Brown Robinson, remembers the first time Chapin approached her "with an envelope which contained all the information to set up a business—envelopes, letterheads, membership cards, program brochure listing date, time, location of monthly meetings. Mr. Chapin informed me that I knew my business and he entrusted the envelope and its contents to me. We began in earnest to get the process rolling and the Sangamon County Historical Society was born. The Society consisted of nine people at that time."

Chapin's relationship with Robin-

"It was always Robinsons Advertising until several years ago when I was bold enough to put the apostrophe in."

Mary Marada

son's went back to childhood, when as an eighth grader at the Lawrence School, he launched "The Depression Tonic" to compete with a classmate

who had also started a newspaper. Signing up 100 neighborhood subscribers at 10 cents per month and listing himself as editor-in-chief, publisher, and delivery boy, he struck a deal with Mr. Robinson to run off 100 mimeographed copies for what he thought would be \$9 a month, giving him a \$1 profit.

Chapin's Lifelong Thanks

"What Mr. Robinson meant was \$9 a week," recalled Chapin in an interview with Cullom Davis for a 1998 oral history. "When Mr. Robinson found out about the misunderstanding, he volunteered to go ahead and do it anyway. In exchange for that all the rest of my professional life, I sent Robinson's Advertising Service, all the business I could, including the Sangamon County Historical Society."

Robinson, a Greenville, Illinois native who founded the business in 1912 as Practical Advertising, three years later changed its name to Robinsons Advertising Service and used the slogan "Since 1915," Marada recalled. He did not like apostrophes as it was always Robinsons Advertising until several years ago when I was bold enough to put the apostrophe in."

(Continued on page 5)

Iles House on February 15

Statehouse Art, Lost and Found, to be Focus of Society's Next Meeting

Mark Sorensen, president of the Illinois State Historical Society and a former Illinois State Archives assistant director, will share his knowledge about Statehouse art when he speaks to the Society next month at its February 15 program meeting.

The 7 p.m. meeting will be held at the Iles House. Seating is limited.

Sorensen will give an illustrated presentation about the how the current State Capitol was built and decorated in 1877 and what paintings and statuary have been added, lost and currently rediscovered and restored. The State House is both a functioning office building and in some respects a museum.

During his 27 years of working in Spring-

field, Sorensen witnessed and researched the many changes that continually took place inside the Capitol and on its grounds, including the "indoor rainstorm" that hit the building this past July.

In addition to his position with the State Historical Society, he is the Official Macon County Historian.

A former member of the Decatur Historic Architectural Sites Commission, he now serves on the Board of the Governor Richard Oglesby Mansion.



Sorensen



LIFE MEMBERSHIPS were presented by Society president David Scott to Theresa Power (left) and her sister, Mary Marada (right) who oversaw the day-to-day business operations of the Society for 49 years at Robinson's Advertising in Springfield. Marada, who owned the company since 1958, closed its operations on December 31 to retire. *(Virginia Scott photo)*

Fond Memories of a Stellar Relationship with Historical Society's Leaders

(Continued from page 4)

The growing company, which started in office space above the Wyle and Bryant Drug Store at Sixth and Capitol, moved several times before settling into the space it has now vacated after some 40 years.

When Robinson first approached Marada in 1954 to buy the company, it was primarily a direct mail business that also did some advertising in local newspapers for its former clients.

Direct Mail Grows

"Slowly, we gave up advertising in the papers, developing the graphotype and addressograph for mailing lists (one customer alone had 20,000 names on their mailing list). We had to emboss each plate and addressed

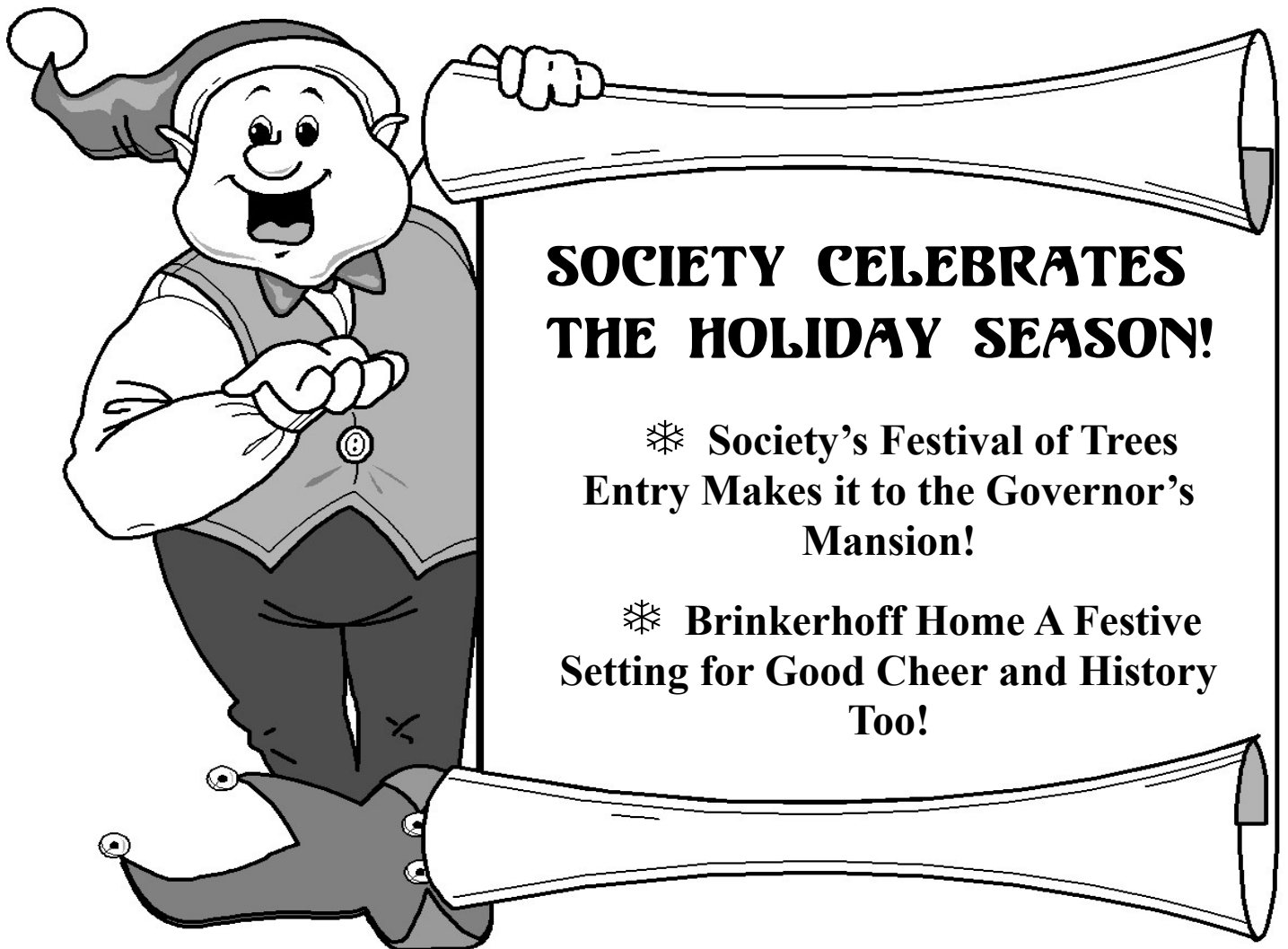
them twice with the address and then on the reverse, the dealer's return address. Then it was on to the post office which required that we bundle, tie with string and mail. We also did mimeographing printing, multigraphing and general typing for our clients. We had numerous civic clubs for whom we printed and mailed newsletters." When her youngest sister, Theresa, joined Marada, she "soon picked up the knack of recording memberships, mailings, etc."

Both women, Sangamon County natives, have fond memories of their years interacting with Society members. "We had many distinguished and prominent members in the Society. The presidents, since the Society's inception, have been "top notch," and each one brought their own special tal-

ents and interests to the Society," Marada says.

Recognized for Efforts

The future is still a toss-up, they say. "I plan to sleep a lot, which I already do," chuckles Marada, "and Theresa's on to new and different interests." They may miss the Society's day-to-day interaction, but that won't keep them from its membership, thanks to a recent vote of the Society's Board of Directors. Both were voted Life Memberships in the organization and were presented with certificates to that effect by President David Scott in December. They were also provided with a small gift, a token of appreciation from the Society in recognition of their efforts for nearly 50 years.



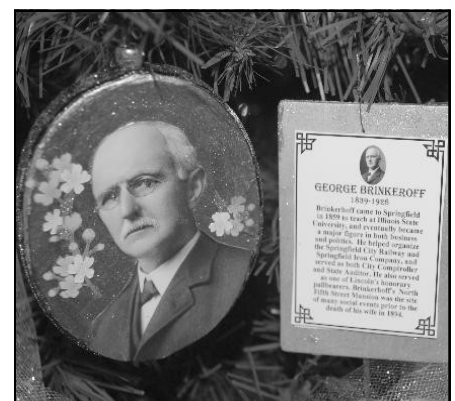
The Society's 2010 entry for the annual Memorial Medical Center Foundation's Festival of Trees in November wound up making some history of its own this year. It was among a handful of Christmas trees put on exhibit at the Governor's Mansion in December after the nine-day Festival ended on November 28.

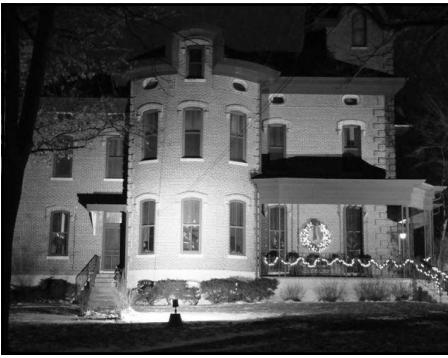
The Festival, a display of several hundred Christmas trees decorated by community organizations, draws more than 40,000 visitors to the Orr Building on the State Fair Grounds in Springfield every November, the largest family-oriented event of its type in Central Illinois. This was the second year the Society decorated a tree, in both years with a history theme.

This year's tree featured 49 three-dimensional ornaments (*like those at right*) hand made by Vicky Whitaker, depicting 19th century Sangamon County buildings and community leaders. They were accompanied by an equal number of ornaments providing a nutshell explanation of the historic figure or site. The tree was trimmed in red, white, and blue sparkling tulle.

As Festival sponsors, Whitaker and her husband Roger—both Society board members—purchased the tree during a “Sponsor Auction” held at a gala held prior to the Festival opening to the public. To the delight of innkeeper and Society Life Member Tony Leone, they donated it to historic Pasfield House for its holiday display.

But on the day it was to be delivered to Pasfield House, Leone received a call from the Governor's Mansion asking Pasfield House to be represented in a show of Christmas trees from historic sites around the state. Leone temporarily “re-gifted” the tree for the display. Placed in a prominent spot in the main exhibition area, it was one of a few trees highlighted on a WSEC-TV *Illinois Stories* program about the exhibit that aired in December. In advance of the Inaugural, the tree was returned to Pasfield House last week and will be on display there next Christmas.





DECORATED for the season, the historic Brinkerhoff Home provided an elegant backdrop to the Society's annual party. At right, Bill Vetter shares stories about the house and the Brinkerhoffs who made it their home. Vetter's wife, Jane, is a past president of the Brinkerhoff Home Foundation.

Donna Catlin photos



Over 90 people turned out for the Society's annual members-only Holiday Party December 14 at the historic Brinkerhoff Home on the Benedictine University campus in Springfield. Attendees dined on an eye-catching and delicious assortment of substantial hors d'oeuvres and desserts prepared by Carol Jean Frasse (*below, center*), and sipped wines donated by past and present board members (and thanks to Tim Krell, from Brad Atwell of "It's All About Wine" in Springfield). Board member Don Springer (*below right*) volunteered for the evening's bartender duties. The mansion was decorated for the season with holiday greenery, holiday lights and more. The event also offered Society members a chance to learn more about the history of the mansion from Bill Vetter, whose wife, Jane, a member of the Society Board, chaired the holiday party. Jane (*with her husband Bill, below left*) is a past president of the Foundation that has worked so hard to restore this key part of Springfield history. Bill Vetter, who also worked on its transformation, went room to room, sharing the history of each with those enjoying the evening's fare.



Sangamon County Historical Society
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“One Destiny” Headed for Repeat at Presidential Museum; More Shows Set

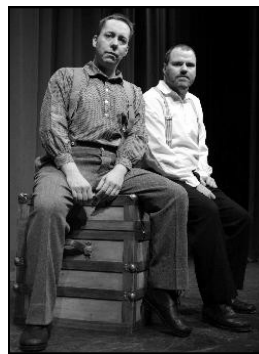
History buffs can look forward to repeat performances of “One Destiny,” a play by Richard Halleen that was presented in December at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. Producer Phil Funkenbush plans additional performances in February, although the dates were not available as *Historico* went to press.

In the 35-minute one-act play, comedic actor Harry Hawk and co-owner of Ford’s Theatre Harry Ford grapple with whether they could have changed the course of history. Could John Wilkes Booth have been stopped?

Theatergoers get an opportunity to revisit April 14, 1865, and the events surrounding the tragic assassination of Abraham Lincoln through the eyes of the men who were there when history happened.

The play was commissioned for Ford’s Theatre and is currently

WHAT IF?
That’s the question central to a play that will be produced in February at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum,



being produced here. For February scheduling and ticket information, call 785-6085.

In March, the Museum will stage the play “Flight” by Charlayne Woodard. Set on a Georgia Plantation in 1858, it is written for family audiences and will be staged March 17 through 19 and March 24 through 27 at 7:30 p.m. A matinee may be added.



2011 Calendar

PROGRAM MEETINGS

Tuesday, January 18

“Civil War Music,” R. Todd Cranson

Tuesday, February 15

“Statehouse Art: Lost and Found

Mark Sorensen, Iles House

Tuesday, March 15

program to be announced

Tuesday, April 26

SCHS 50th Anniversary Reception, 5:30 p.m.

John Mack Faragher, speaker, 7 p.m., UIS

Tuesday, May 17

History and Tour, Lincoln Memorial Garden

Jim Mathais, Executive Director

Tuesday, June 21

Annual Meeting