

Connecticut Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Meeting
March 18, 2009

Meeting held at the Connecticut Historical Society in the Research Center at 10AM.

Commission Members in Attendance:

Lisa Curran
Katherine Kane, Stowe Center
Irving Moy, 14th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry
Mary Lou Pavlik, CT Civil War Roundtable
Andrea Rapacz, Connecticut Historical Society
Dana Schaffer, Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition
Ron Spencer, Trinity College
Bruce Stave, University of Connecticut
Olivia White, Amistad Center for Art and Culture
Howard Wright, Renbrook School

Commission Members Absent:

Martha Brackeen-Harris, Renbrook School
Walton Brown-Foster, CCSU
Michael Burlingame, Connecticut College
Blair Pavlik, CT Civil War Roundtable
Walter Woodward, State Historian

The meeting was called to order at 10:04AM by Commission co-chair Howard Wright.

1. Approval of 1/21/09 Minutes

There was a motion to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2009 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2. Feb. 12 at the Amistad Center, and Wendy Allen's appearance on March 28, 29

Olivia White reported that the exhibition *Lincoln: Man, Myth and Memory* opened at the Wadsworth Atheneum with the Lincolnmania celebration. Governor M. Jodi Rell was in attendance for the ceremony and the official cake cutting. Co-chair Howard Wright who portrays Lincoln was on hand all day to speak with and have pictures taken with visitors and offer tours, including a tour with a letter from Lincoln to Horace Greeley. In the evening there was a lecture by John Stauffer that was sponsored in conjunction with the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center and foundations. Members of the audience purchased all of the books and stayed long after the lecture to speak to Stauffer. The exhibition *Lincoln: Man, Myth and Memory* is being extended to July 5, 2009 and open during the Amistad Center's Juneteenth Celebration.

On March 28 & 29, 2009, artist Wendy Allen will present her One Brush Stroke and Happy Birthday card projects at the Wadsworth Atheneum. [projects are described in the 1/21/09 minutes] Funding was provided by United Technologies Corporation. The Atheneum is open free to the public the last Saturday of the month from 10AM-1PM, children are allowed in for free and parents with kids will be allowed in to this program for free, so there are many opportunities for visitors to attend the program. Commission member Irving Moy and his wife have agreed to volunteer at the event.

3. Feb 12. at UConn

Bruce Stave reported that the Conference on Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address was attended by 60-70 people at the Alumni House. It was sponsored by the University of Connecticut Humanities Institute. Poet Nicole Miller began the program with a compelling reading of the Second Inaugural. Presentations featured Professors Harry Stout of Yale and John Stauffer of Harvard along with a panel of four UConn faculty members. Discussion centered on the religious

base of the Second Inaugural Address. The audience raised many probing and insightful questions.

Andrea Rapacz reported that on 2/12/09 the exhibition *Remembering Lincoln, Considering Soldiers, Then and Now* opened at the Connecticut Historical Society. This exhibition was a collaboration with Amistad Center's exhibition *Lincoln: Man, Myth and Memory* and both exhibitions were curated by Dr. Frank Mitchell. On February 17, 2009, CHS hosted a program by Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Kristen Hass of the University of Michigan that focused on memorials and memory that started after the

4. Budget & resources for funds; Essay Contest Update

Lisa Curran reported that the essay contest was behind schedule. It was discovered that Lisa had emailed a draft of the contest rules to the commission members and was waiting for comments, but the draft was only received by one member of the commission. As a result there will be a change in the contest dates. The essays must be postmarked by Tuesday, December 1, 2009 and the winners will be notified by Monday, January 25, 2010. Submissions will be sent to Andrea Rapacz at the Connecticut Historical Society.

The maximum length of the essay will be 750 words for the middle school students and 1250 for the high school students.

On the evening of Thursday, February 11, 2010, there will be an essay contest reception for the six student contest winners and their families, and for the two History Day Lincoln project winners (and their families). Members of the CALBC will attend the event, as this will be the concluding activity of the CALBC's efforts. Pending approval, the Connecticut Historical Society will be the venue for this event.

6. Encampment Update

Mary Lou reported that all three encampments are in place. The planning for the Torrington encampment is 90% done. Torrington Savings Bank has donated money for port-o-lets and shuttle buses and a grant application was submitted to the Connecticut Humanities Council. Plans for a train from Waterbury to Torrington are still being worked out.

7. Updates from the Stowe Center and CHS

Katherine Kane also commented on the success of the John Stauffer lecture and the co-sponsorship between the Stowe Center and the Amistad Center. She also reported on the Salons at Stowe – "Stowe Lobbying Lincoln" on March 5, 2009 with Trinity Professor Eugene Leach and Political Analyst Duby McDowell.

On June 13, 2009 the Stowe Center will be hosting a Community Open House in honor of Stowe's Birthday. That is also the same day as the Juneteenth Celebration at the Amistad Center. Olivia White and Katherine Kane discussed the possibility of collaboration.

Andrea Rapacz reported on CHS activities earlier in the meeting.

5. March 23rd Lecture by Michael Burlingame at Trinity College

Ron Spencer reported that all commission members have been invited to the pre-lecture dinner. If you have not responded, please do so.

8. 1860 Lincoln Lecture Tour Update

Co-chair Howard Wright reported on the presentations in Bridgeport on March 8 at 2:00PM at the Klein Memorial Auditorium and in Norwich on March 9 at the Slater Museum. The remaining presentations are:

Meriden: April 19 @ 1:00PM at Hubbard State Park

New Haven: TBD; coordination will be with the Gilder Lehrman Center

Hartford: Sept. 17 @ 7:00 PM in the Wilde Hall of the University of Hartford

9. Other

Bruce Stave reported on a committee that was assembled to discuss plans for the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the start of the Civil War. The group was assembled by Prof. Matt Warshauer of Central Connecticut State University. The commemoration will kick off with a two-day conference at CCSU. Karyl Evans was contacted about producing a documentary and the publication of a book is being discussed with the Wesleyan University Press.

Lisa Curran reported that there are many DVD-sets produced by Lincoln Financial and the History Channel in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the start of the company in storage and asked if we wanted to consider handing them out as prizes, or if there are other things we can do with them. In addition to one on Abraham Lincoln the other DVDs focus on the history of the Dow Jones and two episodes of Modern Marvels, one on money machines and the other on the stock exchange. Lisa Curran will determine how many are left in storage and they will be given to winners of the essay contest and the History Day Lincoln-related project winners.

10. Decide whether to have another meeting date of the CALBC

It was decided that a meeting would be called by the co-chairs only if necessary. The tentative date for this meeting is May 13, 2009 at 10AM at the Connecticut Historical Society.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10AM by co-chair Howard Wright

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Rapacz
Connecticut Historical Society