

**Connecticut Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Meeting
September 19, 2008**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting held at the State Capitol, Room 401 at 9:00 a.m.

Commission Members in Attendance:

Martha Brackeen-Harris, Renbrook School

Walton Brown-Foster, CCSU

Michael Burlingame, Connecticut College

Lisa Curran, Lincoln Financial Foundation

Mary Lou Pavlik

Andrea Rapacz, Connecticut Historical Society

Dana Schaffer, Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition

Ron Spencer, Trinity College

Bruce Stave, UConn

Olivia White, Amistad Center for Art and Culture

Walter Woodward, State Historian

Howard Wright, Renbrook School

From the State in Attendance:

Donna Tommelleo, Communications Aide

Commission Members Absent:

Katherine Kane, Stowe Center

Irving Moy, 14th Connecticut

Blair Pavlik

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commission co-chair Howard Wright.

1. Welcome

2. How to get students involved

On July 10, 2008, Bruce Stave, Ronald Spencer and Walton Brown-Foster met with Michael Meotti, Commissioner of Higher Education. At their request, Meotti wrote all college and university presidents in the state to encourage that their institutions sponsor one or more public events on Lincoln. In response to the letters, Stave received information about events and plans at Trinity College, UConn, Fairfield University, CCSU, and Housatonic Community College.

Events at other schools:

Trinity College - 11/12/08 – James Oakes, author of a recent book on Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, is giving the Jan Cohn Memorial Lecture, 11/20/08 – Public Discussion of Lincoln and the Politics of Slavery and Race, 2/5/09 Public Discussion of Lincoln’s Rhetoric and

Political Thought, 2/12/09 – Public Discussion – Remembering Lincoln, 3/23- Michael Burlingame will be giving the Wassong Memorial Lecture.

UConn – 2/12/09: Conference on Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address; Evening concert in Jorgensen Auditorium in honor of Lincoln & Darwin, who were born on the same day.

Fairfield University – 2/9 Open Visions Forum, Lincoln biographer Harold Holtzer

CCSU – Prof. Matt Warshauer will be emphasizing Civil War Lincoln in his courses next year

Housatonic Community College – nothing scheduled, but will get back with events

Connecticut College – no plans at the moment, but will be doing something

It was announced that all papers relating to the Commission should be saved and will be preserved in the State Archive.

Tom Murphy who, on behalf of Commissioner of Education Mark McQuillan, sent out letter to town managers and 1st selectmen throughout the state, will not be at the meeting today.

The Amistad Center will be reaching out to elementary schools, there is also a natural collaboration with Capitol Prep and Manchester High School’s civics classes. Renbrook School students may also be involved.

Essay contest – would have needed funding to make it larger scale. It was reported the Ancient Burying Ground received money from Bank of America and that CHC offers small scale grants (less than \$5,000) that are turned around in a month.

History Day – This year’s theme is *The Individual in History*- Dana Schaffer is the coordinator of the New Haven district for History Day and will speak to Ben Gammell (state History Day Coordinator at CHS) about a prize about Lincoln or a way to promote the bicentennial

Donna Tommelleo joined the meeting and said that she was there and to report on what the Governor’s office can do to help get the word out. They can distribute press releases – ideally would like at least 10 days lead time to review and distribute. We should give a timeline of releases so they can be coordinated with other state activities.

3. Coordination between institutions

Amistad Center for Art and Culture

2/12/09 – all day opening of the exhibition titled *Lincoln: Man, Myth & Memory*

Sent a formal invitation to the Governor to attend, but Gov. Rell’s office cannot confirm until a couple of weeks before. Collaboration with CHS - cross-promotion and events still to be determined.

Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition

Panel on Lincoln & Memory scheduled for Fall 2009

12/14/08 - Sunday Symposium at Long Wharf Theater - David Blight and Paula Vogel speaking (David Blight is on the National ALBC)

2/20/09 – David Blight’s one man play on Frederick Douglass in Washington, DC

Co-sponsoring conference at Howard University with the National Lincoln Commission on Emancipation Day

Connecticut Historical Society

February – exhibition with Amistad Center – program still TBD

4/13/09 – Susan Schoelwer on her research to authenticate the Lincoln Assassination Flag

Fall 2009 – small scale exhibition on Lincoln highlighting Lincoln-related objects from CHS's collection

4. Encampments

Headed up by Mary Lou and Blair Pavlik and Irving Moy

3 sites for Living History and demonstrations

5/30/09 – Torrington Historical Society

7/18/09 – Fort Trumbull State Park

10/3/09 – Connecticut Historical Society

All will show aspects of Connecticut life during the Civil War

Variety of living history presenters – Lincoln, Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Buckingham and his wife, Mark Twain, Col. William Webb of the 29th Connecticut

8 authors will be signing books

Roseland College, Woodstock, CT, may be hosting their own encampment, the date to be coordinated with the commission.

5. Howard and Michael are in the early stages of developing a symposium paired with Lincoln's speaking blending scholarly discussion with living history.

6. Walt is the host of the list-serv H-Connecticut (<http://www.h-net.org/~ctlist/>) that can be used to promote events

Dana posted a call for events back in June, will post another to make sure all events are coordinated.

Gilder Lehrman will host a CALBC website on their site so all can link to it. Events are to be submitted to Dana to list on the CALBC website and to be forwarded to the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism. Launching of the site was held up pending the selection of a logo for the project.

Information can be sent before the website is up – send date, time, location, description and speakers

It was suggested that Michael Meotti send a second letter after the site is up.

Donna felt that the launch of the website would be a newsworthy item.

Lisa Curran has worked with a designer at Lincoln Financial about a logo - Wendy Allen, a Connecticut artist whose work interprets Lincoln. Lisa will go back to Wendy to ask if we

can use the logo and if it can be reconfigured to be more readable or take up less space when it is shrunk down. Potentially thank her by allowing another show of her work at the LOB.

Logo will be nailed down within the next week. Lisa and Dana to choose the logo and then move forward with the site.

Recap of meeting with Karen Senich on September 10, 2008 with Howard, Lisa, Michael and Andrea

Lisa Curran to develop a budget of what's needed for printing and prizes for school programs.

What the CALBC would like help with and needs funds for:

- Print and Radio ads and brochures
- PR support
- Video and news releases
- Donna will ask about funds from Governor – if there are any sources

Press release and press conference:

Possibly a Q&A with press at a press conference. Governor will be involved pending her schedule. Walt suggested a Thanksgiving proclamation with Lincoln. Lincoln first proclaimed a national Thanksgiving in 1863. (*since the meeting the Governor has expressed interest in this idea)

Lisa and Dana will draft the press release.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Next meeting: October 22, 2008 at 9:00am

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Rapacz
Connecticut Historical Society