

Connecticut Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Meeting
November 12, 2008

Meeting held at the Connecticut Historical Society in the Research Library at 9:00AM

Commission Members in Attendance:

Martha Brackeen-Harris, Renbrook School
Michael Burlingame, Connecticut College
Lisa Curran, Lincoln Financial Foundation
Irving Moy, 14th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry
Blair Pavlik, CT Civil War Roundtable
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, UConn
Howard Wright, Renbrook School
Walter Woodward, State Historian

Commission Members Absent:

Walton Brown-Foster, CCSU
Katherine Kane, Stowe Center
Olivia White, Amistad Center for Art and Culture

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 AM by Commission co-chair Howard Wright

1. Approval of 10/22/08 minutes

There was a motion to approve the minutes from the 10/22 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2. Welcome to Wendy Allen

Wendy Allen, whose artwork is featured in the CALBC logo, was unable to attend the meeting. Post meeting note: She has been extended an invitation to attend our 01/21/09 meeting to discuss her National Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, "Happy Birthday, President Lincoln" project and Connecticut's possible participation through our state commission.

3. CALBC website and banner update

The website has been redone with the new logo and colors. The information was updated with new information from Mitchell College added. Dana Schaffer requested that all events submitted for posting on the website follow the format that's currently being used on the site. The first event will be The Jan Cohn Lecture: "Becoming Lincoln: The Conservative as Radical", on November 12, 2008 at 4:15 pm in the McCook Auditorium at Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

4. CALBC Logo

Howard thanked all involved for the work done on the logo.

5. Budget & resources for funds

Lisa Curran reported that she had a conversation with Bruce Fraser of the Connecticut Humanities Council. CHC has a new review process and right now their priority is funding programs that drive traffic to historic sites - the signs to publicize events would fit into that, but the essay contest prizes would not. Bruce Fraser has a discretionary fund with a \$2500 limit that does not require CHC committee review. Bruce asked for institutional approval before using the discretionary fund. Lisa checked with Katherine Kane who is a Commission member and CHC board member and she was fine with it. Irving mentioned that the encampments would fit into CHC's funding priorities, because they draw visitors to historic sites.

The commission plans to request CHC discretionary funds for the essay contest and History Day prizes and the commission may apply for a CHC grant for the events, using the Connecticut Historical Society as the fiscal agent. The grant would be submitted on either 12/1/08 or 1/2/09 depending on schedule and time to prepare a competitive proposal. Irving asked about funds for stationery and Lisa reported it will be included in the request for discretionary funds. It was decided that the letterhead would be sent electronically to be used until stationery can be provided.

Award levels for the essay contest – for both categories 1st place would receive \$100 and a book prize, 2nd place \$75 and a book prize, and 3rd place \$50 and a book prize.

Award levels for History Day contest – for both categories (senior and junior) the best project related to Abraham Lincoln would receive a \$100 award.

6. 11/17/08 press conference with the Governor

Scheduled for 11/17/08 at 1:30PM in room 310 at the Capitol. All commission members will have nametags so they are not anonymous to the press.

Schedule of press conference:

INTRODUCTION OF THE GOVERNOR: Walter Woodward (State Historian and Commission member)

WELCOMING REMARKS: Governor Rell

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: Lincoln biographer Michael Burlingame (5-10 min)

CALBC MEMBER: Dana Schaffer (Gilder Lehrman Center) will provide overview, events, web site, etc. (5-10 min)

1863 THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION READING: Howard Wright

CLOSING: Governor Rell

The Governor's Press office sent a press release. Twenty press packets will be made comprised of:

- Website address and copy of the events from the site
- 2-3 sentence summary of the first proclamation
- Bios of Howard Wright and Michael Burlingame
- Cover sheet on official letterhead

- Copy of the press release form the event
- Copy of the press release that announced the creation of the commission

7. Update: Essay contest

Lisa Curran confirmed that she planned to include a request for funding the essay contest in the CHC proposal. Lisa Curran has run an essay contest before and volunteered to be the point person on the Commission. For strategies to get the word out, Howard spoke to Tom Murphy from the State Department of Education and will put him in contact with Lisa. Ron Spencer suggested that a letter from the DOE should be sent to schools statewide. Howard confirmed that Tom Murphy is the person to send such a letter. Walt Woodward mentioned to not forget the independent schools because they tend to participate more in contests like this. Readers would be needed for the contest and Bruce Stave, Walt Woodward, Dana Schaffer, Michael Burlingame and Ron Spencer all volunteered. It was mentioned that CHC's logo will need to be put on all related materials if they fund the essay contest. Lisa will email the essay contest rules. Post-Meeting Note: Lisa Curran has been approached by the Connecticut PTA about partnering on the essay contest.

Other Business

Bicentennial stamp

Irving Moy reported on and handed out materials related to the U.S. Post Office's program of creating postal marks to commemorate events. The mark needs to be 2" x 4" and a template with the logo needs to be created. The line "Connecticut Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission" would be removed from the logo. There was debate whether or not the bust of Lincoln would reproduce well and the decision was to use what we have. Dana Schaffer will create a stamp template for members to use and add their own event information. Irving Moy requests that any event coordinator who makes this opportunity available at their event to let him know so he can send the information for inclusion on our website.

Lisa Curran reported that Mike McGarry has reconstituted the Wide Awakes – an 1860s group from Hartford that supported Lincoln. An Irish group called the Boys from Wexford will recreate the Wide Awakes' marches and sing songs that Lincoln like. They are available for events and presentations. Lisa will provide more information when it becomes available.

It was asked if it would be possible for commission members to get discounted tickets to the play *A Civil War Christmas* at Long Wharf Theater on 12/14/08. Dana said that she would look in to it.

1860 Lincoln Tour update

The Hartford venue has been scheduled at the University of Hartford on 9/17/09 - Constitution Day.

The Meriden venue is tentatively scheduled for 4/19/09

Walt recommended contacting Paul Giguere of CTN so these programs get on their schedule of events for recording.

Next meeting will be on 1/21/09 at 10:00 AM at the Connecticut Historical Society.

The meeting was adjourned by Howard Wright at 10:03AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Rapacz
Connecticut Historical Society