



A History Museum

523 S. Webster St.
Naperville, Illinois 60540-6517
P: 630.420.6010
F: 630.305.5255
W: napersettlement.museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS:

Donna DeFalco, 630.305.5250, Defalcod@naperville.il.us
Jody E. Ellyne, 630.420.6017, Ellynej@naperville.il.us

May 11, 2009

Page 1 of 2

Civil War Days features over 300 reenactors

Famous figures include Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass and Civil War generals

Naperville, Ill. — The saying, “You can never know where you’re going until you know where you’ve been,” is never truer than during Civil War Days to be held May 16-17 at Naper Settlement in downtown Naperville. The historic museum village comes to life with the talents of more than 300 reenactors, who bring the turbulent time period of the 1860s to life. The Civil War divided the nation, with brother fighting against brother in a bloody conflict that claimed more than 600,000 lives.

During this year’s reenactment, Naper Settlement welcomes award-winning actor Kevin McIlvaine, who will portray abolitionist Frederick Douglass. The artist-in-residence at the National Park Service’s Frederick Douglass Historic Site in Washington, D.C., McIlvaine is a Chicago native and a graduate of Harlan High School. A singer, historian, model, director and ordained minister, McIlvaine has appeared in television, film and on the stage. His portrayal of Douglass is based on extensive historical research.

“I love to bring history to life,” McIlvaine said. “Frederick Douglass is so inspiring because of where he came from. He was born a slave and taught himself how to read and write. He also was one of the first men to fight for women’s rights.”

McIlvaine said that Douglass also was instrumental in organizing the first black regiment, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, immortalized in the film, “Glory.”

“The story of this man is remarkable,” McIlvaine said. “I think it’s important for our young people and for all American to realize there were heroes.”

For Larry Werline, who portrays General Ulysses S. Grant, authenticity in dress and historical accuracy are of utmost importance as a reenactor. He has read more than 30 books about Grant and has been giving presentations since 1997 as the Civil War general, who became the nation’s 18th president.

- MORE -

Naper Settlement Civil War Days 2009 Press Release Page 2

“I am Grant's exact height and his weight as president and I have come to admire the man as well,” Werline said.

A battle between the Blue and the Gray takes place each day at 2:30 p.m. Learn more about famous figures of the era including President Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd Lincoln, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Wirz, who was the commandant of Andersonville Prison, Louisa May Alcott, Stephen A. Douglas, Civil War spy Major Pauline Cushman and many more. A variety of presentations and living history demonstrations are held throughout the two-day event.

Civil War Days will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 16-17 at Naper Settlement, 523 S. Webster St., Naperville. Tickets are \$9 adults, \$8 seniors and \$6.50 youth 4-17. One dollar off advance tickets are available at Naper Settlement and these Naperville retailers: Anderson's Bookshop, Canterbury Shoppe, Oswald's Pharmacy and Just Ducky. For more information, call Naper Settlement at (630) 420-6010, the Event Hotline at (630) 305-5555 or visit www.napersettlement.museum.

###