

Immediate Release

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**Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum  
A Conversation Between a Civil War Soldier and General Grant**

Springfield, Illinois, June 27, 2018 - The Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum is honored to host A Conversation between Civil War Soldier Sgt. Andrew Lewis and General Ulysses A. Grant on Saturday July 14, 2018 at 5:30 at 1440 Monument Ave. The use of Colored troops in the American Civil War was doubtful at first. But their eventual involvement became a personal fight for the “unalienable rights” expressed in the Declaration of Independence; and for the “full rights of citizenship” subsequently added to the U.S. Constitution as the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments. This program is told from the first-person perspective. General Grant is portrayed by Larry Werline. And Sgt. Henry Perkins of the 29th Inf. USCT from Illinois is portrayed by Robert J. Davis.

“We’re very excited that Larry Werline and Robert J. Davis are telling the story of the Civil War and the dynamic perspective of African American Soldiers,” said Nell Clay, Board President. “African American Soldiers changed the tide of the war, and for those reasons their determination and bravery to fight for a country that denied them liberty must be examined and discussed.”

**Featured Guest:**

**Larry Werline:** Larry Werline has been portraying General Grant for more than 20 years. He also does a first-person impression of President Grant. Larry had been a Civil War reenactor as Captain of a large Midwest Artillery Battery when he got the call to do an impression of General Grant for a convention. He grew a beard, and the rest is history, so to speak.

Larry performs approximately sixty appearances a year at reenactments, museums, schools and historical venues. His favorite is the Old State Capitol in Springfield where General Grant got his start as a soldier in the American Civil War.

Larry is retired from Oracle Corp. and lives in Chatham, IL with his wife, Rita Werline.

**Robert J. Davis:** Robert Davis is a historic interpreter and re-enactor who spends much of his time involved with Civil War projects. He is the author of and performs a one-man presentation, “A Soldier’s Story: The Ghost of Andrew Lewis,” which traces the life of a Union soldier from slavery through the war years to freedom. Mr. Davis has researched, written, produced and directed several Civil War era programs including: (1) The Abolitionist Church & Abraham Lincoln’s Friend, Jamison Jenkins; (2) Lincoln, Colored Warriors and the Spirit of Freedom; and

(3) From Emancipation to the 13th Amendment: Steps on the Road to Freedom. In his reenactments, he delivers several of Frederick Douglass' speeches covering The Emancipation Proclamation, The Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, and Reconstruction. He currently has an exhibit at the Springfield and Central Illinois African American Museum, which is a chronology from slavery to the three U.S. Reconstruction Amendments (13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>) in the United States.

Mr. Davis serves on the Board of Directors of the Abraham Lincoln Association and the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition. He and his wife Patricia live in Springfield, IL.

**For more information visit our website at [www.spiaahm.org](http://www.spiaahm.org) or call the museum at 217/391-6323.**

**About AAHM:** The Springfield & Central Illinois African American History Museum exhibits, identifies, collects, catalogs, restores, houses and maintains documents and artifacts relating to and chronicling the history and legacy of African Americans in Central Illinois. The Museum provides research opportunities, educational programming and interpretive services to historians, educators, students and others interested in the lives and legacies of African Americans in Central Illinois while enhancing their overall knowledge about African American people.