

🌀 Encounters with Lincoln's World 🌀

Simultaneous performances will be held inside the McLean County Museum of History, Ensenberger Condominiums lobby and Heritage Plaza in Downtown Bloomington on Friday, July 20, from 5 to 8 p.m.

In celebration of our state's Bicentennial, *Encounters with Lincoln's World* will present dramatized stories of ordinary people who became real "Hometown Heroes" by adapting to extraordinary times – in the aftermath of the Civil War (1865 – 1869). This historical journey with members of the Historic Acting Troupe spans the generations and the miles, highlighting sights, sounds and ideas that echoed throughout the state and the nation.

"Bullets or Ballots?"

Emily Stewart -- **Kathe Conley**

Hattie Dunn -- **Diane Boeck**

Bloomington, late June 1865: Emily Stewart of Randolph recalls a memorable Christmas spent with her husband, a Union surgeon, at a military hospital in Alabama during the war. A letter from her husband, recently published in the *Pantagraph*, boldly declares that southern blacks will need "bullets or ballots" after the war. A young public school teacher, Hattie Dunn, listens intently. As an early Illinois State Normal University graduate, she embraces the principles of her abolitionist father, a well-known local physician concerned with the rights of black citizens in both the north and the south.

"Beyond the Battle of the Crater"

William McCoslin -- **Charles Andrews**

J. N. Ward -- **Bruce Boeck**

Bloomington, after the Civil War: William McCoslin is a black barber from Bloomington who enlisted in the Union army in late 1863. He rose to become a sergeant major in his all-black unit and participated in the ill-fated Battle of the Crater in Petersburg, Virginia. Back home after the war, he is part of the reception when orator Frederick Douglass visits Bloomington—as President Johnson is vetoing legislation that would secure the rights of black men. J. N. Ward, a prosperous furniture maker and dealer, has long been an abolitionist. He remembers his neighbors' negative views of Congregationalists in the 1840s, and that members of the Abolitionist political party were deemed fanatical. He listens to McCoslin's stories and weighs in on Johnson's actions.

"A Great American Adventure"

Emma Dean Powell -- **Susan Palmer**

John Wesley "Wes" Powell -- **Wes Melton**

The Home of John Wesley Powell, Town of Normal, December 1867 - February 1868:

John Wesley "Wes" Powell and his wife Emma discuss their recent eleven-person expedition to Colorado and their plans for another more ambitious trip the very next summer. How can he raise enough funds for this great adventure? Long before he becomes nationally famous, Powell is planning his early explorations right here in the Town of Normal.

"Votes for Women!"

Nellie Powell Thompson -- **Kathy Clesson**

Sarah Raymond -- **Elsie Cadieux**

Bloomington, March 1868: The burning issue of the day is: Should women be allowed to vote? Schoolteacher Sarah Raymond, and Nellie Thompson, the wife of Bloomington's school superintendent, discuss this controversial topic after Illinois State Normal University Professor Edwin Hewett gave a lecture opposing women's suffrage.

"Healing and Remembrance"

Hannah Orme Newell -- **Ann White**

Frances Hill -- **Lorie Highfill**

Bloomington, May 1869: Hannah Newell is working with the committee to place floral wreaths on soldiers' graves for what will become the first "Decoration Day" in Bloomington. Hannah tells Frances Hill about the difficult days she spent at a military camp, nursing her soldier husband back to health. Frances, in turn, reveals the negative reception her physician husband received upon moving to Bloomington after the war, in spite of his faithful service in the Union Army. Their conversation offers them a moment for healing and remembering.