

# history theatre

*Experience the Unforgettable*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **The Andrews Sisters back and better than ever! *Christmas of Swing***

SAINT PAUL, MN – The Andrews Sisters' holiday USO show is back by popular demand with a bigger band, two fresh new faces, a new set by Michael Hoover, and the same amazing trio of ladies to bring Patty, Maxene, and LaVerne to life on stage. ***Christmas of Swing*** is a joyful reimagining of a Christmas Eve USO show for soldiers recovering in a V.A. hospital stateside. The show features 36 of The Andrews Sisters' signature song and dance numbers including "Let It Snow," "Hey Santa," "Mele Kalikimaka" and many more along with swing versions of traditional Christmas tunes. There will be also special guest appearances by Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Abbott & Costello, and Santa. The show also touches on the realities of a hard-fought war on foreign soil by including excerpts from real letters written by World War II soldiers.

During the run of ***Christmas of Swing*** all World War II veterans are invited to attend for FREE. There will also be a Military Family Day on Sunday, December 1 where all veterans and military personnel will be invited to attend for free and tickets will be just \$10 for family of active duty personnel and veterans.

History Theatre will also host a **Boogie Woogie Swing Dance Party** on Saturday, December 7 from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. which will include swing dancing (lessons provided), live music, refreshments, and casual fun between performances of ***Christmas of Swing***. (40s attire admired, not required!)

### **Christmas of Swing**

OPENS: Saturday, November 23, 2013  
CLOSES: Sunday, December 22, 2013  
PLAYING: Thurs, Fri, Sat. @ 8 p.m. | Sat, Sun. @ 2 p.m. | Thurs. (excluding 11/28) @ 10 a.m.  
Complete performance schedule is included on page 6  
TICKETS: Tier 1 **\$40**; Tier 2 **\$36**; Tier 3 **\$32**  
Seniors (60+ years old) get \$2 off | Students (5 to 18 years old): **\$15**  
Discount rates are available for groups of 12 or more.

Audio Described and ASL interpreted performance on 12/8/12 at 2:00 p.m.

Performing at History Theatre, 30 East Tenth Street | St. Paul, MN 55101

History Theatre Box Office at 651.292.4323 or [www.historytheatre.com/tickets/](http://www.historytheatre.com/tickets/)

**Photos are available at [www.historytheatre.com/about/press](http://www.historytheatre.com/about/press)**

More photos will be posted on 11/22/13

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## About the Show

***Christmas of Swing*** was originally commissioned by History Theatre and premiered in 2004 and was such a hit that it was brought back again in 2005. Last season, ***Christmas of Swing*** once again played to packed houses and delighted audiences, so it was an easy choice to bring the Andrews Sisters back again this season. The 2013 production is getting a huge face lift in the form of Michael Hoover's sparkling new scenic design. Plus, the band has a few additional instruments, and we've added a couple fresh-faced young men (Bryan Porter and Eric Heimsoth) to play the WWII soldier boys.

Another new feature in the 2013 production will be an opportunity for patrons to share remembrances of the WWII heroes to whom they are personally connected. The names of those who served our country during World War II can be submitted to the box office before the show and will be read and acknowledged from the stage by Ruthie Baker after intermission. There will be a Wall of Heroes display in the lobby which will consist of letters, photos, and memorabilia from WWII service men and women, brought in by History Theatre patrons. The lobby will also include a display with information about letter writing – how it was done and how important it was for the war effort both at home and on the battlefields – during World War II.

The 2013 production will once again feature Ruthie Baker playing Patty for the eighth time, Stacey Lindell playing Maxene for the third time, and Jen Burleigh-Bentz playing LaVerne for the second time. They are joined by Raymond Berg as Vic the music director, Mark Rosenwinkel and Bill Scharpen making special appearances as Bing Crosby, Lou Levy, Abbott & Costello, and two new ensemble members Bryan Porter and Eric Heimsoth playing young World War II G.I.s. The show is once again directed by Ron Peluso with choreography by Jan Puffer. There is a new set design by Michael Hoover (*Baby Case*). The creative team is rounded out with returning artists Kelsey Glasener (costume design), Pamela Kildahl (lighting design), C. Andrew Mayer (video and sound design), and Kirby Moore (properties design).

More information about The Andrews Sisters, USO Tours, and letters sent home from American soldiers is available in the Play Guide which can be downloaded at:

[www.HistoryTheatre.com/2013-2014/christmas-of-swing-2013](http://www.HistoryTheatre.com/2013-2014/christmas-of-swing-2013).

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## About the Artists

### **Ruthie Baker\***

PATTY ANDREWS

Ruthie is tickled pink to be playing Patty for the 8th time! She recently played Doralee Rhodes in *9 to 5 the Musical* (Tent Theatre) and did a reading of *Luck! The Musical* (JCC Manhattan). Ruthie is a proud member of the Jen Waldman Studio (NYC) and AEA. Favorite roles (other than Patty) include Eva Peron in *Evita*, Winnifred in *Once Upon a Mattress* and *The Waitress in Working*. Ruthie loves her Tall English Husband, their two Puggles (Crumpet and Doughnut) and her amazing family! Let's get Christmassy! [RuthieBaker.com](http://RuthieBaker.com)

### **Jen Burleigh-Bentz\***

LAVERNE ANDREWS

Jen couldn't be happier to be back at History Theatre playing LaVerne! History Theatre-goers will also remember Jen from *Hornel Girls* and *Beyond the Rainbow*. Broadway credits include *Tanya*, *Mamma Mia*, and national tours of *Buddy - The Buddy Holly Story* and *Miracle on 34th Street*. Favorite roles include Baker's Wife (*Into the Woods*), Annie Oakley (*Annie Get Your Gun*), Snow White (*Disenchanted*), Violet Newstead (*9 to 5*), and Velma (*Chicago*). In addition to owning Brickhouse Music with her talented husband, Tommy Bentz, ([brickhousemusic.com](http://brickhousemusic.com)) Jen tours with *Yesterday Once More - A Musical Tribute to the Songs Made Popular by the Carpenters*. Catch Jen on Dec. 23rd at the Pantages in John Trones' *Christmas in the City*. Love to M&D, BW90s and always, always, TBB.

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## **Stacey Lindell**

MAXENE ANDREWS

Stacey is so happy to be reunited with her “sisters” this holiday season! Local credits include *Christmas of Swing*, *Sisters of Swing*, *Hormel Girls* (History Theatre); *Evita*, *The Full Monty*, *King of Hearts* (Theater Latte Da); *9 to 5 the Musical*, *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Minnetonka Theatre); *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *A Class Act*, *Jane Eyre the Musical*, *The Secret Garden* (Minneapolis Musical Theater); *Tintypes* (Actors Theater of MN); *Legendary Ladies* (Buffalo Gal Productions). National Tours: *Broadway’s Legendary Ladies* (Buffalo Gal/Allied Concert Services), *A Christmas Carol* (Troupe America, Inc.). Special thanks to my family for their constant love and support. Merry Christmas!

## **Bill Scharpen\***

HANK, BUD ABBOTT, BING CROSBY

Bill is very happy to be spending the holidays again at History Theatre with this talented and fun cast. Recently he appeared as Signor Naccarelli in Theater Latte Da’s production of *Light in the Piazza* at the Ordway. Locally he has also performed with Minnesota Opera, Nautilus Music Theater and Jon Hassler Theater. While living in Chicago Bill appeared at Candlelight Dinner Playhouse, Illinois Theatre Center, Drury Lane Theatre and Theatre at the Center. Shows include *Crazy for You* (Bela Zangler), *Blood Brothers* (Narrator), *Baby* (Alan), *Funny Girl* (Nick), and *Annie* (FDR). He spent three weeks this past summer as a participant in the 2013 Wesley Balk Opera Music-Theater Institute.

## **Mark Rosenwinkel\***

LOU LEVY, LOU COSTELLO

Mark’s professional acting career spans nearly three decades, and includes work with most of the major theatres in the Twin Cities area. Among them are Guthrie Theater, Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, and Park Square. He has been in History Theatre’s productions of *Hormel Girls*, *Sisters of Swing*, and *Hiding in the Open*. In addition, he has appeared at the Illinois and Idaho Shakespeare Festivals, as well as the Off Broadway production of *Pure Confidence*. A long-time member of the Playwrights’ Center, he has received numerous awards for playwriting, and holds an MFA in theatre from the Asolo/FSU Conservatory for Actor Training in Sarasota, Florida. He currently serves as Chair of the Dept. of Theatre and Dance at Concordia University in St. Paul.

## **Eric Heimsoth**

DANNY KAYE, SOLDIERS

Eric is very excited to be doing his first production with History Theatre. Since graduating from St. Olaf College, he has had the privilege of working with several theatres in the Twin Cities area including: Children’s Theatre Company (500 Hats...), The Jungle Theater (*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*), Theatre Latte Da (*NEXT: New Musicals in the Making*), Stages Theatre Company (*Seussical*, *Aladdin Jr.*), Bloomington Civic Theatre (*Into the Woods*, *You’re A Good Man Charlie Brown*, *My Fair Lady*), and most recently with the Open Window Theatre in their remounted original, *Mercy Unrelenting*. He thanks his family and Katie for their seemingly boundless support and love.

## **Bryan Porter**

STAGE MANAGER, SOLDIERS

This is Bryan’s first production at History Theatre. Over the past couple of years he has been in productions at Park Square Theatre (*Sherlock Holmes*), Flying Foot Forum (*Alice in Wonderland*), Penumbra Theatre (*Technically Love*), Walking Shadow (*Gross Indecency*), Bloomington Civic Theatre (*Cabaret*), and Alan Berks and Co (*Six Characters in Search of an Author*). His Film/TV credits include *Dear White People* and *The Sandbox*. And up next he will be appearing in *Gershwin Songbook Series* (Ordway), *Diary of Anne Frank* (Park Square), and *The Three Musketeers* (Walking Shadow/Guthrie).

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## **Special Offers & Events**

### **Family Four-Pack**

Saturday, November 30 at 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.

Celebrate all you have to be thankful for with four tickets to a performance of *Christmas of Swing*.

\$120 Tier 1 | \$100 Tier 2.

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### **Military Family Day**

Sunday, December 1 at 2:00 p.m.

History Theatre honors the men and women who proudly serve in our armed forces, past and present, by inviting them and their family members to enjoy an afternoon of holiday cheer.

*Military personnel and veterans FREE | family members of active duty personnel and veterans \$10.*

### **Park, Pub, Play Four-Pack**

Thursday, Dec. 5 at 6:00 p.m.

One package price includes validated parking at Embassy Suites, a 25% discount on dinner at **Cork's Pub**, shuttle service from Cork's to History Theatre and back again, four Tier 2 tickets to the 8 p.m. performance of **Christmas of Swing**, and four drink vouchers at History Theatre's concessions.

*\$180 for 4 people (\$45 for each additional person)*

### **Boogie Woogie Swing Dance Party**

Saturday, Dec. 7 from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Patty Andrews (Ruthie Baker) will host a Boogie Woogie Swing Dance Party between the matinee and evening performances of **Christmas of Swing!** There will be live music, swing dance lessons, refreshments, in History Theatre's lobby. (1940s attire is admired, not required!).

*\$15 per person*

### **Afterthoughts**

Sundays at 4:15 p.m.

Patrons are invited to stay for a lively post-show discussion following every Sunday matinee featuring special guests including World War II veterans and historians, community advocates, and artists.

*FREE to ticketed patrons*

**Complete performance schedule is included on page 5**

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## **About History Theatre**

For 35 years, the History Theatre Experience has created:

- Inspiration. The History Theater Experience brings real stories about real people to the stage in an immediate experience that touches our lives.
- 111 world premiere performances, more than any other theater in the Twin Cities. The History Theatre is one of the country's most impressive new play development homes – bringing to full production new work by Jeffrey Hatcher, Melanie Marnich, Craig Wright, Kim Hines, Dorie Baizley, John Olive, Kira Obolensky, and more.
- Brave, entertaining explorations of all the histories that make up our diverse community. From *Farm Boys* to *Snapshots: Life in the City*, from the celebratory *Wellstone!* to the dark, complex *Piece of the Rope* about Minnesota's first public execution, HT has moved Minnesotans to rediscover, relive, and respect every piece of their history. More than 200,000 students have connected with history through performances at HT.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

History Theatre is equipped with an FM hearing enhancement system. We offer ASL interpreted and Audio Described performances. We have complimentary wheelchairs for those patrons who need extra assistance into the building. The handicap-accessible entrance is on Cedar St. Just inside the entrance is an elevator that will take patrons to the theatre level. Patrons are asked to indicate any special needs that when ordering tickets.

**History Theatre**  
**Christmas of Swing**  
 At the HISTORY THEATRE  
 Performance Schedule, 2013

Thursday, November 21	<i>Preview</i>	8:00 p.m.
Friday, November 22	<i>Preview</i>	8:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 23	<i>Opening</i>	2:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 24	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m. 4:15 p.m.
Tuesday, November 26		10:00 a.m.
Thursday, November 28	<i>Thanksgiving</i>	<i>(building closed)</i>
Friday, November 29		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 30	<i>Family Four-Pack</i> <i>Family Four-Pack</i>	2:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 1	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m. 4:15 p.m.
Thursday, December 5	<i>Park, Pub, Play Four-Pack</i>	10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Friday, December 6		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 7	<i>Boogie Woogie Swing Dance Party</i>	2:00 p.m. 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 8	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m. ASL/AD 4:15 p.m.
Thursday, December 12		10:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.
Friday, December 13		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 14		2:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 15	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m. 4:15 p.m.
Thursday, December 19		10:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.
Friday, December 20		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 21		2:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 22	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m. 4:15 p.m.

*AD/ASL = Audio Description & American Sign Language interpreted performance*