

# Not in our Neighborhood!

## ANTI-LYNCHING BILL PASSED.

The Anti-Lynching Bill was passed by both houses of the State Legislature. Mrs. Nellie Francis is responsible for its introduction. She was given a public testimonial and presented with a loving cup at a meeting last Sunday in St. Paul.

This broad, united stand of the suffrage body for the principles of a democracy which must include black women as well as white will win for the cause of suffrage many pathizers who

by Tom Fabel and Eric Wood

October 14–24, 2021

**h**istory theatre



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# *Making* — a — *Scene*



**CHRISTMAS OF SWING**

*The Andrew's Sisters  
USO Show*

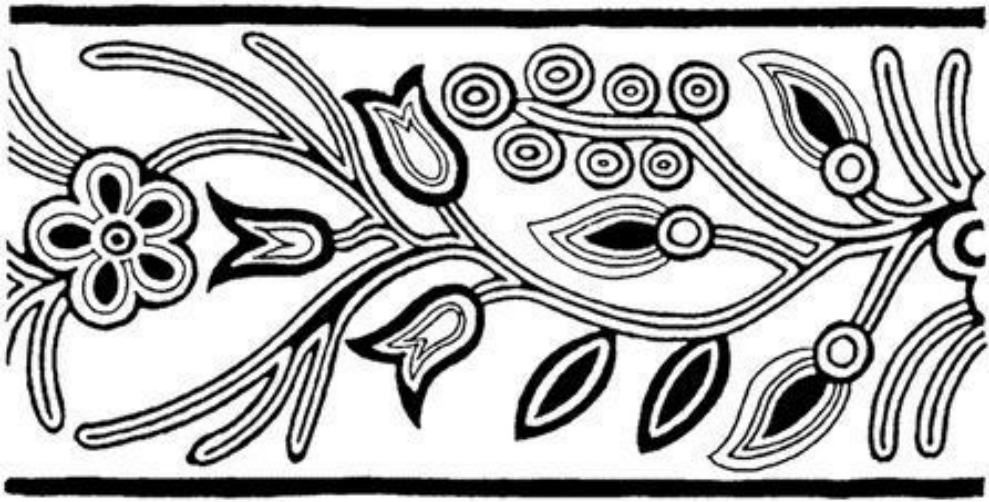
**Nov 20-Dec 19**

by **Bob Beverage** in collaboration with  
Ron Peluso, Jan Puffer and David Lohman

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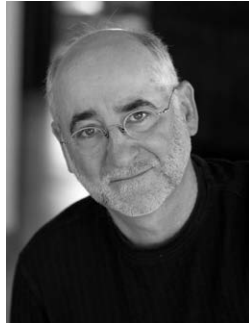
Learn more  
about Christmas  
of Swing

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## Land Acknowledgment

History Theatre sits on the ancestral, traditional and contemporary land of the Dakota people, for whom the land holds historical, spiritual, and political significance. We recognize and honor the Dakota people, ancestors, and descendants, as well as the land itself, and all the sovereign Native nations in Minnesota and beyond. We recognize that this acknowledgement itself is not enough, and only serves as a first step towards decolonization.



FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**I**t's been quite a journey to get here, but on behalf of the entire staff, board and all the artists at History Theatre, a heartfelt welcome back & THANK YOU for joining us tonight and for sticking with us on zoom and beyond during the madness of the last 18 months.

Much has changed since we last gathered. The murder of George Floyd has forced the country to take a second look at the American experience and how we teach and understand our complicated history.

Tonight's play looks at the courage it takes to live a "full life" in a world stained by racism. Nellie and William Francis had the will and backbone to stand up for what is right. Their fight to live in a

### **VIEWER DISCRETION IS ADVISED:**

Given the historical period of this play, there may be language and/or images that some may find disturbing or offensive.

neighborhood of their choice is STILL A FIGHT for many Americans.

Thank you, Eric and Tom, for tackling this important Minnesota story. Sadly, this story has played out a million times over the years and across this country.

Ron Peluso

*Your comments, questions, and feedback are always welcome!*





## FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

**W**elcome back! It's been a long 18 months since we shut our doors just as *Not in our Neighborhood!* was about to open. It's with great appreciation for all of your support since that time that we eagerly return with this important story. Many thanks to History Theatre staff and artists who have been busy preparing for our safety and healthy return to live performances.

Our world is different in many ways, and so is History Theatre's focus. Our board and staff have convened regularly to look at all areas of our organization through the lens of racial equity, diversity and inclusiveness. We are nearing completion of a comprehensive plan which reinforces our values. Some of the actions we are currently taking include: developing familiar and untold stories that reflect the true

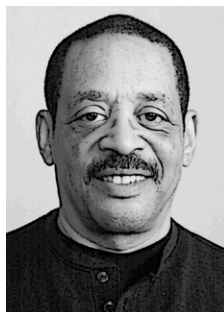
diversity of our region; creating better working conditions and opportunities for artists, designers and playwrights; diversifying staff and board membership; and gathering greater input around and transparency throughout our operations. All these initiatives are to ensure accountability, deepen community engagement and relevance and prioritize this work in all aspects of our organization.

As we all take time to be together again in the theatre, witnessing pieces of history unfold and inform the current issues of today, let's also take a moment to thank the front line workers who have risked so much during the pandemic so that we can return with caution to the theatre. So glad to be with you all once again!

Karen Mueller



Tom Fabel



Eric Wood

## FROM THE PLAYWRIGHTS

**T**he extraordinary story of William and Nellie Francis came to our attention through local historian Paul Nelson in his article “William T. Francis, At Home And Abroad”, in the Winter, 2017 edition of *Ramsey County History*. The word “extraordinary” clearly applies to their lives as state and national leaders in early chapters of the Civil Rights movement, to Nellie’s successful battle to include African American women in the suffrage amendment, and to William’s appointment as just the second African American to the diplomatic post of ambassador to a foreign country.

However, equally extraordinary to us was the fact that these heroic figures and the shameful discrimination they encountered in 1924 had been lost in the narrative of local history. One of us, raised in the Macalester Groveland neighborhood, was stunned to learn that these hidden events occurred so close in time and proximity to his own upbringing. The other of us was appalled to learn that memories of William and Nellie were

not well preserved in his St. Paul church, Pilgrim Baptist, which was at the center of their worshipping and social lives in the African American community.

The absence of William and Nellie from the historical narrative provided for many generations of Minnesotans in the past hundred years is telling, and must be humbling for us all. What did we hear about noble contributions of Minnesotans to the struggles of Blacks to be free? Perhaps the valiant efforts of Minnesota troops in the Civil War, then the contributions of Hubert Humphrey to the Civil Rights laws of the 1960s, and perhaps an acknowledgement of the national leadership role played by Roy Wilkins, the longtime head of the NAACP, but not much more. And what did we learn about the history of vicious racism in our state. Maybe the 1919 lynchings of three Black circus workers in Duluth, if even that. In other words, our historical narrative clearly is much in need of cleansing and expansion.

Being slapped across the face by Paul Nelson’s article is what caused us to take pen in hand for the creation of this play. We received immediate encouragement from the Landmark Center, which agreed to produce our original work in February, 2019. Large crowds and extensive publicity surrounding that production was followed by another article in *Ramsey County History* in Summer, 2020, “Nellie Griswold Francis, The Women Of

**STORY, PG 10**

**TO VIEW INTERVIEW  
WITH THE PLAYWRIGHTS,  
[CLICK HERE](#)**

# Not in our Neighborhood!

by Tom Fabel and Eric Wood

Directed by Richard D. Thompson

There will be no intermission.

## TIME / PLACE

St. Paul, Minnesota, 1924, 1927 & 1929

Monrovia, Liberia, 1929.

## CAST

Nellie Griswold Francis .....	Erin Nicole Farsté
William T. Francis.....	Darius Dotch*
Sheriff Wagner, Wallace Greer .....	Bruce Abas
Commissioner Clancy, Quincy Haas .....	Brandon Holscher
Pastor Harris, Dr. Valdo Turner .....	Kevin Brown, Jr.*
Mrs. Haas, Mayor's Secretary .....	Melinda Kordich
Judge John W. Willis, George Olson .....	Carl Schoenborn*
Mayor Arthur E. Nelson .....	Edwin Strout
Oscar Arneson, Secretary Kellogg .....	Fred Wagner*
Understudy-Nellie .....	Jamila Joiner
Understudy-William, Valdo, Pastor .....	Kevin Brown Jr.*
Understudy-Arneson, Mayor, Sheriff .....	Jon Hegge*

## ARTISTIC TEAM

Scenic Designer.....	Rick Polenek
Lighting Designer .....	Wu Chen Khoo
Costume Designer .....	Anna Hill
Sound Designer.....	C Andrew Mayer
Video Designer .....	Kathy Maxwell
Properties Designer .....	Kirby Moore
Stage Manager .....	Lisa M. Smith*
Assistant Stage Manager .....	Joelle Coutu
Artistic Associate .....	Laurie Flanigan Hegge*
Costume Manager.....	Becca Michelle
Technical Director .....	Gunther Gullickson
Scenic Change Artist.....	Dee Skogen
Master Carpenter .....	Zachary Morgan
Master Electrician .....	Nick Walberg
Assistant Master Electrician .....	Nick Fetting
Stage Electricians .... Paola Fisher, Garret Cameron, Mark Kieffer, Matt Porath, Richard Graham	
Videographer .....	Gary Bingner/Hold Tight Video
Carpenters .....	James Duncan, Brian Hesser, Deirdre McQuillin
COVID Safety Manager.....	Peter Simmons



National  
New Play  
Network



The Director is a member of the  
STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS  
SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

\*denotes a Member of Actors' Equity Association

\*denotes a Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Inc.

\*denotes a Member of American Federation of Musicians Local #3073

# The Cast



## BRUCE ABAS

*Sheriff Wagner, Wallace Greer*

Bruce has performed onstage in the Twin Cities for over 35 years. Happy to be back at History Theatre after appearing in *All the Way* and *The Great Society*.

By day he co-owns and operates one of Minneapolis' most successful dance venues with his wife, Rebecca, Four Seasons Dance.



## KEVIN BROWN, JR.

*Pastor Harris, Dr. Valdo Turner*

Kevin is hype to be making his History Theatre debut! Recent credits: *In the Heights* in Miami. He is new to the Twin Cities acting scene, but you may have

seen him in *Smokey Joe's Cafe* (The Ordway).

Upcoming productions: *Christmas of Swing* (History Theatre) and *Into the Woods* (Artistry Theater). Kevin thanks his mom and dad for thier limitless love and support.



## DARIUS DOTCH\*

*William T. Francis*

Ivey Award-winning actor/hip-hop artist Darius is thrilled to return to History Theatre! Other History Theatre productions include *A Civil*

*War Christmas* and *Lombardi*. Recent credits: *Skeleton Crew* at Yellow Tree Theater; *Pipeline* and *Detroit 67* at Penumbra; *A Raisin in the Sun* and *The Color Purple* at Park Square Theatre; *Intimate Apparel* at Ten Thousand Things; *Bars and Measures* at Jungle Theatre; *Akeelah and the Bee* at Children's Theatre Company; *Colossal* at Mixed Blood Theatre; and *Marcus or the Secret of Sweet* (Ivey Award, Best Ensemble), *The Road Weeps the Well Runs Dry* and *Broke-ology* at Pillsbury House Theatre.



## ERIN NICOLE FARSTÉ

*Nellie Griswold Francis*

Erin is elated to be returning to History Theatre! Originally hailing from Kansas City, MO, Erin is happy to now call the Twin Cities home. Her previous credits: Guthrie

Theatre (*Dining With The Ancestors*), Artistry Theatre (*Footloose*), History Theatre (*Teen*

*Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*), Old Log Theatre (*Beehive*). Thank you for continuing to support the arts through this tough year and joining us for our beautiful story. Enjoy the show!



## BRANDON HOLSCHER

*Commissioner Clancy, Quincy Haas*

This is Brandon's debut at History Theatre. He has been fortunate to work at many Twin Cities theatres including

Lyric Arts, Lakeshore Players, and the Phoenix Theatre. He lives in Champlin with his wife.



## MELINDA KORDICH

*Mrs. Haas, Mayor's Secretary*

Melinda was last seen at History Theatre in *Sisters of Peace*. She has worked in the Twin Cities for the past 20 years after an eight year stint in NY. She has been seen at The Old Log, Park Square, 5 Point Theatre, Actors Theatre of Minnesota and Yellow Tree among others. She is also very active in commercial, voice and print work.



## CARL SCHOENBORN\*

*Judge John W. Willis, George Olson*

Carl is happy to be back at History Theatre, especially to be part of such an important story. Carl works on and offstage throughout the Twin

Cities. He's is a founding member and resident Technical Director/Designer for Gremlin Theatre in Saint Paul. As an actor, he's been in productions at The Ordway, Children's Theatre Company, Park Square Theatre, Frank Theatre, Artistry and many more. Previously at History Theatre he has appeared in *Christmas Schooner*, *Working Boys Band* and *Orphan Train*.



## EDWIN STROUT

*Mayor Arthur E. Nelson*

Edwin is delighted to be making his debut at History Theatre. In the 30 years that Edwin has been performing in the Twin Cities theater community, he has worked

with over 46 different theater companies in over 100 roles. Most recently, he has



performed as Don Pedro in *Much Ado About Nothing* at Zephyr Theater; Scheffler in *The Ugly One*, and Armin in *Equivocation* for Walking Shadow Theatre; MacDuff in *Macbeth*, Ghost/Gravedigger in *Hamlet*, and Finbar in *The Weir* for Wayward Theatre Company; Bob in *Caught* for Full Circle Theater; and Robert Hooke in *Isaac's Eye* for Theatre Pro Rata.



### **FRED WAGNER\***

*Oscar Arneson*

*Secretary Kellogg*

Fred has been doing theater in the Twin Cities area since 1978. He has worked at theater venues that no longer exist, that's how long —  
Jungle Theatre (Lake Street),

Old Log (Don Stoltz era), Dudley Riggs (it's a brewpub now). He has performed with all of the venerable companies - Latté Da, Torch Theater, TRP, Chanhassen Dinner Theater, ARTisphere Theater, Illusion Theatre, Park Square, Frank Theater, History Theatre, The Ordway, Troupe America, Pillsbury House, Jon Hassler Theater, Paul Bunyan Playhouse, The Guthrie, and Ten Thousand Things.

## **The Creative Team**

### **TOM FABEL**

*Playwright*

Tom is a retired attorney whose career included public positions as Deputy Attorney General, Deputy Mayor for the City of St. Paul, assistant Hennepin County attorney, and appellate judge for two Minnesota Native American communities and Partner at Lindquist & Vennum law firm for 20 years. He has appeared in community theater productions presented by the Landmark Center, Lakeshore Players, LexHam Theater, and the Eagan Theater Company. *Not in our Neighborhood!* is his first venture at playwriting. Tom apologizes for any similarity between the script and a legal brief!

### **ERIC WOOD**

*Playwright*

Eric has spent much of the last three decades involved in theater. He is pleased to have co-authored this play with good friend Tom and is grateful for History Theatre having graciously included it as one of its productions. He wishes enlightenment for all who see *Not in our Neighborhood!*

### **RICHARD D. THOMPSON**

*Director*

Richard began performing at age 10. Since that time he has worked as an actor, dancer/choreographer, arts administrator, arts educator, and stage director. His credits include founder of the African dance troupe Uchawi Dancers and Musicians, and associate producer for Penumbra Theatre Company. As a stage director, TREEMONISHA, national tour with the Paragon Ragtime Orchestra, INTO THE WOODS, JR and SUNDIATA: THE LION KING for the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

### **LISA M. SMITH\***

*Stage Manager*

Credits include: History Theatre: *Dirty Business*, *Sweet Land* (tour), *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*; Ordway Center for the Arts: *Annie*, *In The Heights*, *West Side Story*, *Pirates of Penzance*; The Guthrie Theater: *Choir Boy*. Theater Latte Da: *C*, *Into the Woods*, *NEXT*, *All is Calm*, *Our Town*, *Company*, *Spring Awakening*, *Passages*, *Old Wicked Songs*; Theater Mu: *A Little Night Music*, *Kung Fu Zombies vs Cannibals*, *Yellow Fever*, *Into the Woods*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Yellowface*, *Flower Drum Song*; Frank Theatre: *Things of Dry Hours*; MN Orchestra: *Hansel and Gretel*, *Bernstein: Mass*; Producing House: *Cowards Women*. Dance/Taiko: *Collide Theatrical*, *TU Dance*, *Shelter Dance*, *Taiko Arts Midwest*, *Mu Daiko*. Festivals/Events: *Flint Hills Children's Festival*, *Spotlight Awards*, *MN Fringe Festival*.

### **JOELLE COUTU**

*Assistant Stage Manager*

Joelle has worked in the Twin Cities theater scene for the past 20 years as an assistant stage manager, stage manager, and general technician. She has worked for The Guthrie, Triple Espresso, Park Square Theater, and Theatre in the Round. Joelle is very excited to be a part of her first History Theatre production.

### **ANNA HILL**

*Costume Designer*

Anna is currently the resident costume designer and costume shop director for Concordia University in St. Paul where she completed a self-designed Theater Design major in 2012. She received her MFA in Costume Design from Illinois State University in 2017. Her previous design work: *neighbors*, *Coco's Diary* (History Theatre), *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Twelfth Night*, *Spring Into Dance* (Concordia University), *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Far Away* (Wayward Theater Co.).

## RICK POLENEK

### Scenic Designer

Rick returns to History Theatre having previously designed *Glensheen*, *The Great Society*, *Dance 'Til You Drop*, *All the Way*, *Teen Idol*, *The Incredible Season of Ronnie Rabinovitz*, *God Girl*, *This Side of Paradise* and *Coco's Diary*. Rick has been active in the Twin Cities' theatre and design communities for over 45 years as a scenic and props designer, exhibition designer, commercial art director and college instructor. Upcoming projects: *The King of the Kosher Grocers* (Stage North), *Chanukah in the Dark* (Six Points Theater) and *Holmes and Watson* (Park Square Theatre).

## KATHY MAXWELL

### Video Designer

Kathy has designed video and lights for several Twin Cities' arts organizations including Penumbra Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Open Eye Figure Theatre, Children's Theatre Company, History Theatre, the Ordway and the Guthrie Theatre. Recent design credits: *This Bitter Earth*, *Benevolence*, *Mamma Mia* and *Ride the Cyclone*. She received her M.F.A in theatrical design from The University of Minnesota and her B.A. in theatre and dance from the University of Texas.

## C ANDREW MAYER

### Sound Designer

C Andrew has designed sound and/or projections for over 75 shows at History Theatre. Previously he designed *Gloria: A Life*, *Dirty Business*, *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*, *All the Way*, *Watermelon Hill*, *Glensheen*, *Hiding in the Open*, *Tyrone and Ralph*, *A Piece of the Rope*, and *Hmong! The CIA's Secret Army* among others. He has worked with many fine theatres in the Twin Cities including the Minnesota Opera, the Guthrie, the Jungle, Pillsbury House, Park Square, Mixed Blood, and elsewhere, including Opera Philadelphia,

## SPECIAL THANKS

Ashley Clark-Jackson  
Hamline University Theatre  
Concordia University Theatre  
Augsburg University

Arkansas Rep, Everyman Theatre in Baltimore and ACT in San Francisco. He won an Audelco Award for his design for *Pure Confidence* at 59E59 in NYC, and was a McKnight Theatre Artist Fellow (2008-09). In the summer he serves as Producing Director of the Acadia Repertory Theatre on Mount Desert Island, Maine.

## WU CHEN KHOO

### Lighting Designer

Wu Chen is a lighting designer, labour organizer, stagehand, and production manager based in the Twin Cities. Selected History Theatre designs include *The Highwaymen*, *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*, *The Things They Carried* and *Lonely Soldiers*. His designs have been seen at Stages Theater, Children's Theater Company, Penumbra Theater, Mixed Blood Theater and the Guthrie Theater among others. He co-founded the community outreach and education program Technical Tools of the Trade along with Laura Wilhelm. He shares his life with his partner Kristin and children Teng Jin and Yi Lian.

## KIRBY MOORE

### Properties Designer

His work spans 35 years of stage, film and commercial work. Former design work at History Theatre includes, *The Christmas of Swing*, *Buddy Holly Story*, *Coco's Diary*, *Courting Harry*. Other theatres: The Cricket, Park Square, Flying Foot Forum, Minnesota Jewish Theatre. This year, he received Kennedy Center's College Theatre Award for scenic design and technical direction for "My Soul and other broken things."

## STORY, PG 6

Rondo And Their Suffrage Crusade" by Leeta M. Douglas. And now our campaign to advance the Francis story has made it to the esteemed stage of the History Theatre, for which we are very grateful.

Optimism for the defeat of racism and the ultimate victory of racial harmony is in very short supply these days. But the best and the brightest of humanity, like William and Nellie Francis, beckon us ever onward toward those goals.

**TURN OFF  
smartphones, pagers &  
digital noisemakers. No  
cameras or recording  
devices are permitted in  
the theatre. Thank you!**



William T. Francis, about 1900.  
Courtesy: Minnesota Historical Society



Nellie Francis in 1912 when she was active in the women's suffrage movement locally and nationally.

## William T. Francis, at Home and Abroad

**Paul D. Nelson**

*Ramsey County History, Winter 2017*

**T**ragic is an overused word, but it applies to the life of St. Paul lawyer William T. Francis.

He was born with talent, ambition, a mother's love, and not much else. Ability and ambition drove him to an improbable position, U.S. Minister to Liberia, just at a moment when Liberia became important. Here's the tragedy: Achieving the diplomatic post he pursued for so long cost him his life.

William Trevane Francis was born in Indianapolis on April 26, 1869, to Hattie and James Francis. When he came to St. Paul, probably 1887, his father was gone. What became of James Francis, and why his wife and son came to St. Paul, are unknown. If Billy Francis finished high school, which is uncertain, he did so in Indianapolis.

St. Paul in the 1880s was just beginning its boom as a railroad town. In ten years, 1880 to 1890, its population grew from 41,000 to 133,000. Its ethnic base was Yankee, then German, then Irish, and the boom brought

thousands of Scandinavians. Billy Francis's ethnic community, African Americans, comprised a village within the city, by 1890 about 1,500 mostly laboring people.

Francis got his first job as a messenger for the Northern Pacific railroad. He moved up to office boy, then stenographer in the legal department. This was a very good job at the time for a black man in Minnesota, and there he stayed throughout the 1890s.

Meanwhile, Francis matched his business success with social success. The life of polite St. Paul African American society in that era was chronicled obsessively by the *Appeal* weekly newspaper. Francis makes his first appearance there in April of 1887, at a birthday party. In October he sang at a young people's party in a quartet called the Little Four. Over the next few years, Billy Francis acted in a comedy, sang in an Irish trio and a Mozart quartet, played a nobleman disguised as a peddler in the Gypsies' Festival, starred as Knight Francis William in a play called "The Magic Mirror," and danced the schottische at a Christmas event (and there were more). He was slim and handsome; he sang, danced, went to church, and had a good job: a golden young man. [READ MORE](#)



# Finding Nellie Francis?

*Rachel A. Neiwert, Ph.D.*  
Associate Professor of History  
Sr. Mon Riley Endowed Chair in the Humanities  
St. Catherine University

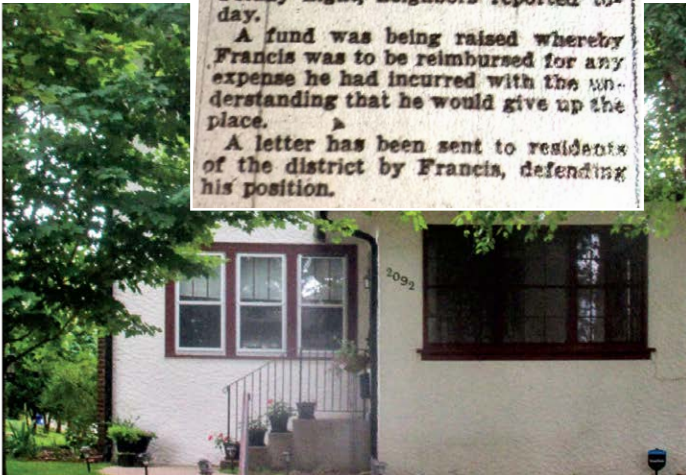
Over the last two years, I have been working in physical and digital archives to learn more about the stories of housing inequality and racism in Ramsey County as part of St. Kate’s research collaboration with the [Mapping Prejudice Project](#), called “[Welcoming the Dear Neighbor?](#)” One of the stories that stands out to me is the story of Nellie Francis for two reasons. First, her story is about the neighborhood where I work. According to the map app on my phone, her house on Sargent Ave is a mere eight minute walk from my office at St. Kate’s. That means the cross burnings, harassment, violence, and racism that form the contours of the story aren’t just stories of other places; they are the stories of this place. Second, at St.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HER SUFFRAGE WORK, CHECK OUT THE RECENT DOCUMENTARY, CITIZEN**

Kate’s, our vision is “to educate women to lead and influence.” Nellie Francis was someone engaged in both leading and influencing her community from a very young age. Her efforts to bridge the white and African American women’s suffrage organizations offer a powerful model of how differences can be bridged and compromises might be forged.

The most striking feature of the newspaper stories describing the events on Sargent Ave starting in the fall of 1924 is the relative absence of Nellie Francis. The very first article that my students found came from the November 15, 1924 issue of the St. Paul Dispatch. The article reported that “W. T. Francis...moved in...” Though short, William Francis is mentioned five times.

[READ MORE](#)



(left, now demolished) Residence of Nellie and Billy Francis, 606 St. Anthony Avenue, in St. Paul’s Rondo neighborhood, where the Everywoman Suffrage Club was founded. (right) Crosses were burned on the lawn when they moved in 1924 to 2092 Sargent Avenue, in the nearby Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. (above) St. Paul Dispatch Nov. 15, 1924 article reported W. T. Francis moved in; no mention of Nellie Francis.



# Rondo Neighborhood

St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood ran roughly between University Avenue to the north, Selby Avenue to the south, Rice Street to the east, and Lexington Avenue to the west. African American churches, businesses, and schools set down roots there in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, creating a strong community. Construction of Interstate-94 (I-94) between 1956 and 1968 cut the neighborhood in half and fractured its identity as a cultural center.

From the beginning, Rondo was a haven for people of color and immigrants. Its namesake, Joseph Rondeau, moved there in the late 1850s from a site close to Fort Snelling, where he had faced discrimination due to his wife's mixed white and indigenous heritage. French Canadian immigrants followed Rondeau to the area in the late nineteenth century; later, German, Russian, Irish, and



View of Rondo Avenue from the Josiah B. Cheney residence (604 Rondo Avenue), ca. 1900.

Jewish families found homes there.

Beginning in the 1910s and 1920s, Rondo experienced a social and cultural boom. Music and theater flourished. African American newspapers such as the Appeal, the Northwestern Bulletin, and the St. Paul Recorder represented Rondo's interests and needs. [READ MORE](#)

## Pilgrim Baptist Church

Pilgrim Baptist Church, 743 Central Avenue in St. Paul, was started in 1863 by Rev. Robert T. Hickman and his prayer group, who called themselves "Pilgrims." Its current building at 743 Central Ave. dates from 1928 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The church not only is a place of worship it also played a role in establishing institutions important to Frogtowners, including the St. Paul chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or NAACP

(1916), the local Urban League chapter (1923), and the Hallie Q. Brown Center in 1929. The Sterling Club, a social club, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters also met at the church.

The church's brick building is designed in a simple Romanesque style. Note the main three-door entry and take a moment to look at the detailed windows. Many windows depict symbols of the church and people and moments important in church history.



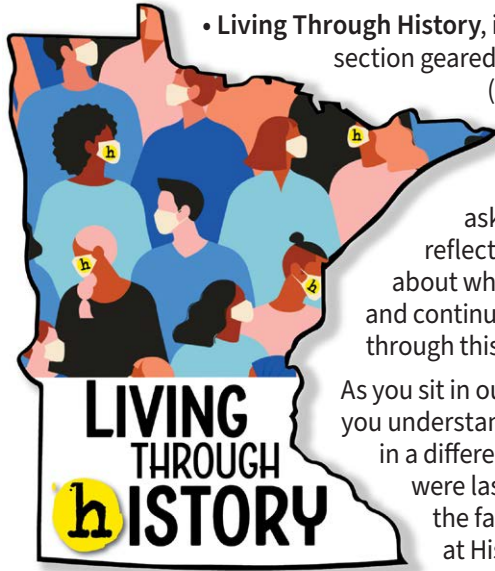
Congregation in front of Pilgrim Baptist Church on opening day (Dec. 16, 1927), 732 West Central Ave, St. Paul.



## FROM THE EDUCATION MANAGER

**H**ello friends. How are you? It's a real joy to have you back, and we wanted to let you know what the Education Department has been up to. Miraculously, most of our programs continued through the first year plus during the pandemic.

- **Seats to Stage** kept going with the intrepid students of Avalon;
- **Cabaret for Seniors** class had great success at Lyngblomsten and Episcopal Homes; also
- Episcopal Homes had a class called **The View Through My Window** about the early days of the pandemic and how the seniors there made it through;
- **Vail Place and Minnesota Independence Community and College** continued in virtual space and Zoom boxes; and finally, we started a new class called;



- **Living Through History**, including a section geared toward BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color) learners, that asked people to reflect on and write about what it has been and continues to be like living through this current moment.

As you sit in our theater again, you understand that we are all in a different place than we were last year. Even in the face of that change, at History Theatre we will keep fast to at least this one thing:

We will keep on inviting people to tell their stories, inviting people to listen to the stories others have to tell.

*Paul de Cordova*  
[pdecordova@historytheatre.com](mailto:pdecordova@historytheatre.com)



Welcome back! Thank you for joining us for our first on-stage performance in over 18 months.

**Engage students in magic of live theatre!**



**Text "STUDENT" to 52182 to donate**

**Help bring a student to a History Theatre performance**



# WELCOMING THE DEAR NEIGHBOR?



Virtual Exhibition



Alice Wykes



Mikayla Kobus



Emma Stefanovich



Dee Tazopurua



Bethany Wether



Alice Wykes

For more information about this project, visit [www.stkate.edu/wtdn](http://www.stkate.edu/wtdn)



ST. CATHERINE  
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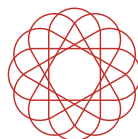
LEARN ABOUT THE PROJECT:  
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# history theatre

## Thank you Corporate, Foundation, and Government Funders



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## Thank you Individual Donors

Gifts as of July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021

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The Estate of William Randall Beard  
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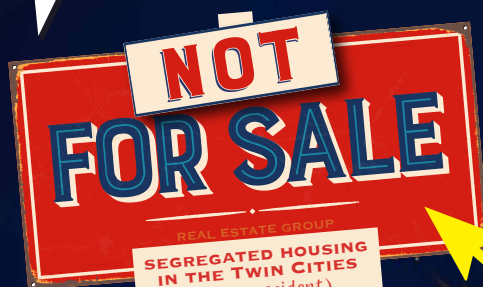
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