



A Spirited Holiday Past

Saturday, December 5, 2020

10 am - 4 pm

As seen in *Early American Life* magazine, 15 St. Louis historic houses, museums and privately-owned homes will join together to present a splendid multi-site tour on Saturday, December 5th from 10 am to 4 pm. For this one-day event, each venue will be decorated in a festive flair and may offer costumed skits, music, other seasonal activities and refreshments. Choose a themed tour or customize your own. Visit the Historic Saint Louis website www.historicsaintlouis.org to discover your newest, spirited holiday tradition. *Fees vary by location.*

HOLIDAY EVENTS

BY LAURA AMICK



In a parlor skit at Historic Sappington House, part of the Historic St. Louis program "A Spirited Holiday Past," Lydia Kirktion portrays 12-year-old Lucinda Sappington, the first child to be born in the 1808 house. Lucinda's cousin Tyrre Sappington, played by Nathan Mayfield, joins her in making decorations for the coming Christmas celebration.

MISSOURI

Every year, on the first Saturday in December, Historic St. Louis hosts a grand tour of its twenty-five member historic sites, museums, and houses. On December 5 each offers holiday decorations, programs, and activities that inspire visitors to discover their heritage.

Historic Sappington House, built in 1808, is decorated with simple evergreen boughs to reflect a time before Christmas trees became a tradition. The site, believed to be the oldest brick home in St. Louis County, offers a whimsical yet historical skit, with interpreters in period dress portraying the Sappington cousins celebrating the joys of the season. Visitors can join in the Regency-era dancing.

The Federal-style Field House

Museum, a middle-class rental row house built in 1845, re-creates the experience of an unhurried lifestyle through Christmas décor blending traditional German feather trees with modern embellishments and the museum's toy collection.

Visitors can enjoy gallery exhibitions, tour the house, and sample holiday treats as they learn about the national impact of Field family members—attorney Roswell Field, who represented Dred Scott and the enslaved African American fought for his freedom prior to the Civil War, and the attorney's son Eugene Field, a popular humorist and newspaperman known as the "Poet of Childhood."

At Christmastime, the Chatillon-DeMenil Mansion is splendidly decorated for a *Joyeux Noël* to reflect both

French Creole and American Victorian holiday traditions. Henri Charliron, a guide on the Oregon Trail, built his farmhouse in 1848. Eight years later he sold it to pharmacist Nicholas N. DeMenil, who expanded the home into a Greek revival mansion.

Historic Hawken House focuses on the year 1863 as owner Christopher Hawken converses with General Ulysses S. Grant in the formal parlor. The two men share whiskey and cigars as they discuss the Civil War, Grant's recent victories, general sentiment in the area about the war, and issues related to Hawken's farm.

Mary Ann Hawken greets visitors in the family parlor and tells them about members of the Hawken family, including Jacob and Samuel, who developed a long-range rifle for General



Find the yesteryear connections during a house-to-house regional tour of 15 sites. You can trace the degrees of separation between Daniel Boone and Edward Bates, Pierre Laclede and Dred Scott, Samuel Hawken and Ulysses S. Grant, and Thomas Hart Benton and seven St. Louis historic sites. As visitors listen to interpreters and costumed characters, they will pick up pieces of the puzzle that is the history of St. Louis through the Story Connections Across Time themed tour. Figure out the Sappington connections to Daniel Boone's Home, Hawken House and U.S. Grant National Historic Site.

Advent calendars and greeting cards will be on sale as souvenirs at Sappington House's Loft Gift Shop.

