



PA HISTORIC DRAMAS presents...

The Visit

ABSTRACT

Imagine if you will...a Sunday afternoon picnic. A trip to visit your grandparents; and, maybe your great grandparents. The autumn sun warms you as your carriage passes through the iron gate to a serene setting of Victorian Architecture. Your father ties the family horse to a post, then helps your mother from the carriage. Turning, she takes the picnic basket from you. Your brothers jump. You step down. The blanket is spread. The family kneels for a short blessing. Sandwiches are passed around. The chatter is lively and fun.

Then, the camera lifts over the top of your picnic, revealing the headstones of your ancestors. The family's all here. No one feels eerie. No one is afraid. There's a reverence in the air. And, a closeness to those n'er forgotten begins to evolve. If the spirits of the departed are near, they love that their children have taken time from the world of anguish to find peace in this visit, which seems oddly natural.

Today, we rarely visit cemeteries. They're thought of, and even commercialized as spooky. Yet, everyone has someone whom they miss; someone who died either suddenly or over a long illness. That closeness need not be a hidden feeling. Psychologists will tell us it's good for our souls to experience unfinished feelings. By showing a family of the 19th century traveling in a horse-drawn carriage to a cemetery – in this case, The Harrisburg Cemetery – we provide a window to the past for students to see that death, though sad or even morbid, need not wither away. People did visit fairly frequently, and, as this short film will depict, families made it an event right there, close to the graves of their loved ones.

Pennsylvania Historic Dramas (PHD), a non-profit since the year 2000, portrays subjects and events of Pennsylvania history. From stories of Milton Hershey to our state's significance across the Underground Railroad, we seek to educate as we entertain. School districts across the Commonwealth don't have time to cover our forgotten history. Either through stage plays or motion pictures, PHD takes the words of history and delivers visual drama that will not be forgotten. We provide a much needed and appreciated supplement to public education. PHD has the resources to make this film. We've worked with actors, authentic period costumers, camera crews, and even horses and mules. In previous projects, we told stories of historic events or people who effected our culture.

Clearly, this film is a departure. Yet, the storyline touches all of our present lives, and who better to tell the story of yesteryear than a company that knows how to tell history. Students will sit up and wonder about this subject; why families actually visited cemeteries. At first, it might seem peculiar, but when the dialogue sounds like conversations of today – even with humor – their wonder will grow greater. And that is a gift to the classroom.

The Plan

I would like to propose to the (Papenfus) Administration an exciting short promotional film for Harrisburg's rich cultural "heritage" identity.

A short film that focuses on the heritage of Harrisburg - not with a shopping list of restaurants on 2nd St. - but a historic statement within the serene surrounding comfort of the Harrisburg Cemetery with 19th century period costumes, a horse and carriage, and re-enactors from The Pennsylvania Past Players. An additional treat would be modern dialogue over the serene footage to depict the past. I feel even in this economically challenging time, a piece of history will do more to lift our pride - especially with a new administration. In addition, Allison Hill could use positive public relations, which it would get in a very stylish way.

The team:

Brian Kreider, Creative Director

After graduating from Temple University's Film Curricula, Brian worked for BBC Scotland in Glasgow in the drama department, as an associate producer and studio floor manager. His stage writing and producing credits include the original *Blue Eyed Six*, *The Prince of Cornwall* and *Milton Hershey*, *The Play*. After 12 years working in Atlanta as a writer-producer for TNT and CNN, Brian was appointed by the Ridge Administration as State Film Commissioner for Pennsylvania. Since leaving state government, he produced *Tour, Roar Explore...and More*, a tourism video for Centre County and *Envision Lancaster County*, an anti-sprawl video for Lancaster County Planning; and more recently, a documentary called, *What Would Mister Hershey Say: Voices of His Legacy* - all partnering with central PA's leading documentary group, Smokey Roberts Film & Video.

Bruce W. Kreider, Producer

A Liberal Arts graduate of Penn State University, Bruce studied Theater Arts. As co-founder of Kreider Bros. Productions, he co-wrote *The Blue Eyed Six*, *The Prince of Cornwall*, and *Milton Hershey*, *The Play*. As Chairman of the Board for non-profit PA Historic Dramas, he served as Executive Producer for the documentary film, *The Blue Eyed Six* and developed productive working relationships in the region, which helped secure historic locations throughout eastern Pennsylvania. Locally, Bruce produced prior productions *Driving Miss Daisy*, starring the late Leonard Washington in August of 1997 at the Gretna Playhouse, and in 1998, he directed the late circuit judge, G. Thomas Gates in the one-man show, *Clarence Darrow for the Defense*, performed at Lebanon Valley College.

Mark Myers, Editor

Mark has more than 20 years of experience in broadcasting, including the production of 30-second spots, documentary and corporate communications projects. With degrees both in Business Management and Communications, Mark has the knowledge and ability not only to nurture and guide the creative process, but to do so with the proper financial controls and an ability to meet deadlines. His past clients have included Lancaster General Hospital, Moravian Manner, and LutherCare in the medical arena. He was also producer, and editor of the Central Pennsylvania's Workforce Investment Board's half hour special promoting careers in healthcare. Mark's specialty includes interviewing and setting at ease, non-professional talent. He is also our Guru for anything I.T.

Joe Trojczak, Composer, Musical Director

Joe is owner of Progressive Sound Studios in Hershey and has composed many original works including jingles for various Fortune 100 clients from New York to Baltimore. His studio in the woods is a secret "Camp David" for creative artists and voice-over talent and has attracted interviews by local and state politicians. Progressive Sound Studios is also configured for custom sound effects, video production and video post-production.

The audience:

Education groups seem foremost in attracting positive attention to the cemetery, both college and secondary. Historical societies, planning groups, artisans, and the public, especially if marketing includes good press.

Other uses:

The scope of this project is a ten-minute promotional film. It can be leveraged to seek greater funding from other sources, that can be approached to rejuvenate the Allison Hill neighborhood.

Budget estimate:

<u>Preproduction</u>	\$5000
Meetings with city, historical groups and cemetery officials to gather significant facts for inclusion. Script writing for narrative. Three approval stages prior to commitment for narration recording.	
<u>Production</u>	\$7500
Three days of principal cinematography Interviews & B-roll (beauty shots)	
<u>Post-Production</u>	\$6500
Studio rental Recording of narrator 3-4 days of edit Re-edit revisions (2 days) Audio sweetening/mix/layback	
Final delivery of ten-minute Master DVD	\$19,000

Personal Note:

On one of my trips to Sundance Film Festival when I was the Pennsylvania film commissioner, I attended a short lecture by founder, Robert Redford. Clearly and emphatically, Redford made the point that documentary filmmakers need to borrow some street sense from those who make feature films. In short, create some drama with the documentary and audiences will respond. Today, documentaries are ten times more popular than they were ten years ago. The mystique of the Harrisburg Cemetery is the drama that will attract educators who know they have to entertain as they educate. The public will follow. The exposure will open the wallets of city and county residents who want to see neighborhoods be more comfortable. This short film will create discussion, tours, and business.

- Brian W. Kreider
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