

DC is not my favorite city, but circumstances being what they are I'm here for the long haul. One of the few things good about DC is every so often you get invited to something really special and that's what happened last week.

An old Air Force friend who runs a Civil War society donated exact replica flags for the President's box for the newly renovated Ford's Theatre. As a result he invited me to the National Park Service dedication of Ford's Theatre and the Lincoln museum. I always say it's the best little museum in Washington and now it's gotten even better.

What a dedication! They had this impressive re-enactor portraying the Chief of Metropolitan Police A.C. Richards who was in the theatre during the assassination and recounted the events of that night. Interestingly, he stated he didn't believe the accounts that Booth broke his leg when he jumped on the stage (notice the height from the box to the stage- a good 10'). He said Booth wasn't limping as he ran across the stage. His account is backed up by Booth who later told others and entered in his diary that his horse fell on him during his escape ride.



Then they had a woman who sang "Hail to Our Soldiers."- especially written by the band leader William Withers for the President that night. It was a song Lincoln never got to hear.



Throughout the ceremony a Civil War era band The Federal City Band played period songs with Civil War instruments that included Lincoln's favorites- The Soldiers' Chorus and yes, Dixie.



But most strange and eerie was when “Hail to the Chief” was played. You could not take your eyes off the President's box. I thought it was just me. It was the last song Lincoln ever heard. Played when he arrived at the theatre, he was shot 30 minutes later.



If you're ever in downtown DC, go to Ford's Theatre. It's an incredible experience.

Vinney