

MORE ABOUT *HELLO THE HOUSE*

Hello the House is a play written by Don Carlton and based on the life and death of Rev. Thomas Johnson. In the year 1830, Johnson and his wife Sarah came to what today is known as the Shawnee Indian Mission of Fairway, Kansas – a state historical site and namesake for an entire community. Shawnee Mission was conceived by Johnson who became the first director of the mission. Years later, the Kaw Mission was conceived by Johnson's brother, William. When the Kaw Indians signed their second peace treaty in 1846 and were moved to a reservation located at what was then the Council Grove crossing on the Santa Fe Trail, William decided to build the Kaw Mission to educate young Kanza Indian boys to be farmers and Christians with the intention of helping the boys assimilate with Euro-Americans soon to settle in what is now the State of Kansas.

A certain degree of mystery surrounds what we know of Thomas Johnson today due to the fact that most of his papers were lost in a house fire after he died a sudden death near the end of the Civil War. The play takes place on one very bitter winter night in early January 1865 in what were to become Johnson's last hours - the night of Johnson's still unsolved murder. Through the years there has been much speculation and controversy about who murdered Johnson and why.

The cast of *Hello the House* consists of three SIM volunteers, Bob Allen (The Reverend Thomas Johnson), Petra Allen (Mrs. Sarah Johnson), and Don Carlton (Mysterious Visitor). The Allens are actual husband and wife who live today in Leawood, Kansas, where they are known as experienced and accomplished actors. Together they have worked in numerous local stage theater productions, heading up the artistic direction of the Leawood Stage Company. Petra serves on the Friends of the Shawnee Indian Mission Board of Directors. Don Carlton, currently the vice-president of the Friends of the Shawnee Indian Mission and representative to the Foundation Board, is a curious part time actor/playwright who has found the persona of Thomas Johnson and the texture of his times a fascination for the past four years. Carlton inks the comic strip *Doonesbury*.