

**OHA AT 150****Thanksgiving**

The Onondaga Historical Association is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Here's what was going on in 1863:

President Abraham Lincoln declared that a national day of Thanksgiving be observed on the last Thursday in November 1863.

Before 1863, the day on which Thanksgiving was to be celebrated was determined by the governors of the individual states, with some states electing not to celebrate the holiday at all. From 1863 until 1939 every president followed Lincoln's precedent, annually declaring the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

FDR broke this tradition in 1939 (a year November had five Thursdays) by declaring Thanksgiving be celebrated on the second to last Thursday in November, possibly because it would extend the Christmas shopping season and help boost the economy.

Congress passed a resolution in 1942 fixing the holiday as the fourth Thursday in November, making the date of Thanksgiving a federal law for the first time.

— *Daniel Connors of the OHA*