

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS



Taking Care of Business

See inside for a letter from our president, Stan Wernz, and a full report from the recent ALP Convention in Lexington, Kentucky by Susan Miller.

Laura Keyes will be hosting our next conference, April 19-22, 2018 at Freeport, Illinois. Some further information is available on the website (<http://www.lincoln-presnters.org>), and details will be available in December.

Our Webmaster, Dean Dorrell, again requests that you check your information on the website.

Remember that your description is limited to 100 words, so please submit an edited version if it is longer than that. Submit additions or changes to abe@honest-abe.com.

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ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS

266 Compton Ridge Drive
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June 2017

Greetings, ALP Members!

In April, the membership assembled in Lexington, Kentucky, to study, learn, renew old friendships and make some new ones. Susan Miller with her very capable team (Joan Howard, Larry Elliott and Jim Sayre) did an admirable job hosting the 2017 conference in the city where our first conference was held. Thank you for providing us this wonderful experience.

I am again honored that you permit me to serve another year as president of the Association of Lincoln Presenters. From a few visionary members, this organization has grown and now has more than 100 Lincolns and more than 35 Marys. Our number also includes some other presenters, whom we are happy to welcome to our activities.

However, as was noted at the conclusion of our 2017 business meeting, the toll of time has been claiming members. The average age of our people is rising. We need to find people who will join with us and dedicate themselves to furthering our mission. Have you considered mentoring a person who has shown a spark of enthusiasm at one of your presentations? Why not give it a whirl?

Several years ago at a re-enactment, we decided to have three Lincolns: an Indiana Lincoln, a New Salem Lincoln, and a President Lincoln. All Lincolns reviewed information to allow them each to present at their assignment. The Indiana Lincoln became a student of Lincoln, and did presentations at his school later that year and the next. Unfortunately, he had other talents and the Rebels recruited him as a drummer for their unit two years later. I have hopes he will be drawn to resume his Lincoln scholarship. This is but one example of an attempt to develop someone to journey the path with us.

At Lexington, several times discussions developed over how we can get more members to attend conferences. I considered a questionnaire, but thought you may prefer to provide feedback in "your own words." Therefore, I propose a question for you: What are the deterrents to attending our conferences? Too far? Too costly? Too long? Not educational enough? Calendar conflicts? In our discussions we recognized that illness has kept several members away, and others just couldn't make it (you are in our prayers). However, for many, we want to encourage you to join us! To reply use: 266 Compton Ridge Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45215 or email Lincolnwernzs@peoplepc.com.

In that regard, Laura Keyes is well on her way with conference plans in Freeport, Ill., April 19-22. From her report, the time will be well spent as we are treated to another great conference. I hope to see you there!

Your humble servant,

Stan

ALP Conference 2017

In Review

Submitted by Susan Miller, Kentucky

Excitement came to the Bluegrass April 20-23, 2017. The Association of Lincoln Presenters held its annual conference in Lexington. The group visited various places in Frankfort and Lexington where Mary and Abraham Lincoln walked.

Keynote speaker Warren Greer discussed the Lincoln Trail in Kentucky and the Lincoln Heritage Alliance. Roger Billings, a Northern Kentucky University professor, presented "The Law Practice of America's Greatest President." Mrs. Lincolns heard Terry Pyles discussed the "Victorian Wardrobe from the Inside Out." Chocolate covered strawberries and peach tea were enjoyed, as well as making hat pins and hair doilies.

On Friday, April 21, we traveled to Frankfort and spent time at the Kentucky State Capitol. Secretary of State Allison Lundergran Grimes welcomed the ALP in the Capitol Rotunda beside the large statue of Abraham Lincoln. Mary Lincolns enjoyed the collection of First Lady inaugural ball gown dolls. Lunch was served in the Old Governor's Mansion.

The group walked to the Kentucky History Center. There, the special collections director brought out Todd artifacts that are not on display. We enjoyed the permanent exhibit of 225 years-plus of Kentucky history. Stuart Sanders of the Kentucky Historical Society gave a presentation about Emilie Todd Helm and Gen. Ben Hardin Helm in the Old State Capitol. We know that Lincoln spent time in Frankfort because it was the home of Mary's step-mother, Elizabeth Humphries. Later that evening, Kent Masterson Brown spoke and showed his video "The Lincolns in Kentucky." At the ALP's annual business meeting, Tom and Sue Wright were presented the Excellence Award for Distinguished Service for 2016.

Heavy rain did not deter our activities on Saturday morning. The Lincolns paid a visit to Camp Nelson in Jessamine County. Camp Nelson was a Civil War supply depot from 1863-1866. It was also the third largest training camp for African-American soldiers. A special Lincoln Memorial Service was held, with a 21-cannon salute taking place at 10 a.m. Lunch and speakers were located in the reproduction of a barracks. Steve McBride spoke to the Lincolns about Camp Nelson and what role it played in the Civil War. Mrs. Lincolns enjoyed a presentation about Victorian Mourning Customs by Cathy Taylor.

At 1 p.m., the group attended a moving memorial service honoring former ALP presenters who have passed away. The memorial was held in the beautiful Lexington Cemetery at the gravesite of Cliff Howard, a charter member of the organization. He also portrayed President Jefferson Davis and offered a "balance" in recognizing two Kentuckians' contribution to American history during a time when America was torn asunder.

Madeline Howard rang a bell as each name was read and Alex Howard placed a wreath at their grandfather's grave. Jack Pattie, federal bugler, played taps. "Gen. Lee" offered the benediction.

Ron Bryant was a tour guide for the Lexington Cemetery and talked about the Todd plot located across from Henry Clay's massive monument.

Another highlight of the day was a visit to the Mary Todd Lincoln House. Guides at the house

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talked about Mary's step-sisters and -brothers.

Saturday evening the association enjoyed a Kentucky Fair buffet dinner. Don and Sylvia Coffey entertained with period music using the bass, hammered dulcimer, banjo and guitar. Joan Howard led an enjoyable Civil War song sing-along. We sang and learned a little history about the period songs. We also learned about the Punch and Judy puppet show and that Abraham and Mary Lincoln enjoyed going to the puppet show. At our puppet show, we saw that Punch actually helped the president write some of the Gettysburg Address. The annual silent auction with many Lincoln books and memorabilia items brought in \$1,200.

On Sunday, the association held a worship service in a wedding tent that had been set up for a wedding on Saturday. Larry Elliott led the worship service and Stan Wernz directed the choir. The group enjoyed lunch at the Keepers House at Ashland and toured the home of Henry Clay.

The 2017 Conference Committee thanks everyone who attended the Lexington/Frankfort Kentucky Conference. We look forward to traveling to Freeport, Ill., for the 2018 conference and then to Atlanta in 2019. See you there!

A Book Review

Lincoln's White House

By James B. Conroy

"Lincoln's White House" is another well written and informative book by James Conroy, whose prior work, "Our One Common Country," dealt with the Hampton Roads Peace Conference.

Unlike many books on Abraham Lincoln that reiterate what one has likely already read (albeit from a different perspective), this book has something new for many of us. It has information that will help to address questions that are sometimes posed to us by audience members, especially young ones, regarding life in the White House (e.g., water, sanitation issues, etc.).

For me, it also puts a timeline to certain events that other books only allude to. For example, I knew that William Stoddard was added as a secretary, but I was under the impression that this only occurred later in Lincoln's first term. This book puts his hiring very early in Lincoln's first term, and identifies him as someone who not only campaigned for Lincoln in Illinois, but was also recruited by Lincoln to come to Washington to work for him.

"Lincoln's White House" occasionally gives an unflattering, although honest, look at President Lincoln during his term. It offers new information that I feel will help bring a presentation to life, helping people to understand the man and the times a little better. While we have all heard and read of the patient, kindly Lincoln, there are some instances cited on how he let his impatience and frustration show itself to some who pushed him a bit too far. The author also notes that John Nicolay was the clerk to the Illinois secretary of state, and when Lincoln was nominated for the presidency, Lincoln paid him \$75 a month. He was essentially Lincoln's one-man campaign staff in addition to his Illinois state position, and no one seemed to be bothered by this, not even Lincoln.

As far as life in the White House, what words of wisdom did outgoing President Buchanan

give Lincoln as he moved to the White House? Buchanan told him, "I think you will find the water in the right-hand well of the White House better than that at the left." The book tells of hot and cold running water in the Executive Mansion, a couple of flush toilets, a coal furnace, servants quarters and a cooking fire in the basement that had not gone out since John Adams' servants lit it in 1840. It was an otherwise dirty and dilapidated house.

For some odd reason, I found the following very amusing as my imagination envisioned it. The author tells of a State Dinner when, after the dinner, the women retired to the Porter's Lodge, where there was a flush toilet, while the men stayed in the dining room and "the servants brought in cigars, screens and chamber pots."

The book mentions the various secretaries who served Lincoln, which I hope could serve to dispute the oft-mentioned comparison between Presidents Kennedy and Lincoln, which has claimed that Lincoln had a secretary named Kennedy. (More on this topic can be found in another article in this issue of *Lincarnations*.) Insight is given into the personalities and responsibilities of Lincoln's various secretaries, although Nicolay was officially the only secretary to him. In addition to Nicolay, Hay and Stoddard, who were with Lincoln from the outset, mention is made of Gustave Matile and Nathaniel S. Howe who were brought in during the summer of 1863, and Edward Neill, who soon joined them. Finally, in the summer of 1864, Charles Philbrick joined them, while Stoddard left to be U.S. marshal in Arkansas.

In regards to the secretaries mentioned, it should be noted that the budget only allowed Lincoln one secretary, and that was John Nicolay. Lincoln was going to pay John Hay from his own funds to serve as an additional secretary, but Nicolay found a way to hire him as a clerk of the Interior Department, with him then assigned to the White House.

Stoddard was employed as a land patent secretary under precedent of Andrew Jackson. Stoddard worked in the Interior Department first, but later worked out of the White House.

Edward Neill was another clerk for the Interior Department. He had been an author, school administrator and former university chancellor, as well as a minister.

Nathaniel Howe was another clerk of the Interior Department who worked in the White House.

No mention was made of Gustave Matile's actual departmental assignment.

Charles Philbrick took Stoddard's title as a land patent secretary. Philbrick was also from Illinois and also knew Hay and Nicolay, so Lincoln had four from Springfield helping him, as well as a Swiss immigrant (Matile), someone from Massachusetts and someone from Minnesota.

Friends of Mary Lincoln may be dismayed to find one chapter devoted to her, which is not entirely complimentary, and there are several financial scandals and other controversies involving her that are mentioned at various places in the book.

If I have a fault with the book, it is the same one I had with Mr. Conroy's prior work, and that is that when two or three persons are mentioned, it is sometimes difficult to be sure exactly which of those involved the author refers to. For a lawyer, I find this a bit surprising, although it does not detract from the information provided. If you are yearning for information on what life was like in the Executive Mansion during Lincoln's presidency, this can be an interesting and exciting find for you.

Submitted by Murray Cox, Indiana

“Our Members Take the Floor...”

While much has been researched and written about Abraham and Mary Lincoln, there continue to be questions that either remain unanswered or can only be answered via the “best guess” method. If you had the opportunity to put an end to all speculation and were able to definitely and factually answer any question about the Lincolns; their family, friends or enemies; or the Civil War, what would that question be and why.

John Cooper of Ohio writes, “I’ve been trying to research an issue for a couple months and can’t find the details. I even asked the Lincoln conference group after we had a session with a lawyer on Lincoln law cases, and no one (including the expert speaker) had the answer, so here it is:

“In March, 1849 (at the end of his term in Congress), Lincoln appeared for his only time to present a case to the U.S. Supreme Court. The case involved a Statute of Limitations law from the state of Illinois. The case appears to date back to 1837, but finally reached the Supreme Court in 1849. I have found a reference that indicates the Court ruled against Lincoln’s side of the issue. However, the questions I need answered are, ‘Which side of the case did Lincoln argue?’ and ‘What is the text of his argument?’ Thanks.”

Also, Cooper would like to know if Lincoln would have initiated action to get suffrage (the vote) for women in the latter part of his second term (once he resolved suffrage for black men).” Early in his political career, during his first term in the Illinois House of Representatives (in 1834-5), Lincoln wrote a paper in which he suggested that “perhaps some women should have right to vote, particularly those who owned property.” But there doesn’t appear to be any references to women’s suffrage in his later speeches and writings.

Joe Woodard of Illinois simply wishes he could know the true answer to this question: “What understanding did Lincoln have with Ann Rutledge?”

Murray Cox of Indiana writes, “I have found absolutely nothing in any of the books I have available to me that would give the slightest idea that Lincoln ever had a secretary by the name of Kennedy.

***Theodore Kennedy: April 30, 1862 -- A footnote to a message Lincoln sent to General Wadsworth regards a Theodore Kennedy, who had asked Lincoln for useful work. Collected Works, Vol. XI (second supplement) P. 50

***William K. Kennedy: May 30, 1862 -- A footnote to a message to Sec. Stanton of that date regards an appointment of William K. Kennedy of Louisiana, Mo., as assistant quartermaster with rank of captain. Collected Works, Vol. V, P. 253

***Dr. Hugh Kennedy: Nov. 21, 1862 -- Dr. Kennedy was a pharmacist and one-time editor, and later, a one-term mayor of New Orleans (in 1864). He took a message from Lincoln to Governor Shepley of Louisiana regarding the makeup of candidates for Congress from Louisiana. Collected Works, Vol. V, Pp. 504-505

***John P. Kennedy: This refers to a letter from John Kennedy to Lincoln concerning George C. Neilson, but the supposed document dated April 2, 1863, has not been found. Collected Works, Appendix II, Vol. 8, P. 513

***Mrs. Kennedy: January 1864 -- Lincoln writes a note to Stanton to hear Mrs. Kennedy and see if he can find a place for her son. No other identity provided. Collected Works, Vol. VII, P. 101

***John P. Kennedy (second reference): March 4, 1864 -- The footnote refers to a letter from John P. Kennedy that was sent to Lincoln regarding a copy of the Bancroft version of the Gettysburg Address that would not do for the Baltimore Sanitary Fair. Collected Works VII, P. 22, footnote 33

***Chief Kennedy: April 14, 1865 -- This refers to Chief Kennedy of the New York police. “The Day Lincoln Was Shot,” Jim Bishop, P. 255

***Interior or Agriculture clerk Kennedy -- While I cannot recall the book, sometime in the last year I recall reading a comment that a clerk by the name of Kennedy had taken a document to the Executive Mansion to Lincoln.

Donating to Your Local Historical Society and/or Small Museums

*Submitted by Laura Keyes (Illinois)
(As presented at ALP Conference, April 2017)*

I would like to talk to you about small museums and local historical societies. I'm not talking about large facilities, such as the Kentucky State Historical Society that ALP members visited while we were in Lexington; I'm talking about the small societies. These places usually only have one or two buildings, often open just a few hours spaced over three or four days each week. These little places are preserving Lincoln family history. They really are.

While it's true that some great museums hold significant objects, letters and stories that are connected with the Lincoln family, there are just as many items in private hands or small collections. For example, there is a photograph housed in the Stephenson County Historical Society that is only the second known photograph of Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln. What's more, there is no known duplicate of this original ambrotype. This is the definition of a rare Lincoln artifact, and this small historical society is eking out an existence on a small budget.

We are living history presenters and we bring the Lincoln family's story to life. However, these small museums and local historical societies are often tasked with preserving the little things in history, those stories and objects that might otherwise have been lost. We do the same thing, by sharing the personal stories and anecdotes of the Lincoln family, rather than having our audiences read about them in books.

If you can afford a donation of just \$25 a year to four different places, *please do it*. Make it part of your new routine. For the cost of a few dinners out with your special someone, please consider sending the money to a worthy cause. If you are not able to add this to your personal budget, consider partnering with your local historical society and offering your services as a living history presenter to them gratis. Not just discounted. Show how much you care about them by giving of your time. You might even consider making it part of your standard presentation or lecture to encourage your audience to *visit* and *support* their local historical society.

Annual support, or membership, is not just important, it is vital to these small museums and historical societies. Some societies rely on donations to make up 75 percent of their annual budget, which is a huge percentage. If these small museums, historic sites and historical societies don't have individual support from folks like us, *they won't last*.

State and federal funding, for every part of the nation, is quickly drying up. So many of these small museums and historical societies are on a shoestring budget. If they have one year of very few monetary donations, they might limp along. If the next year the roof caves in and the basement floods, that could cause them to shut their doors permanently. And all that history, all those nearly-forgotten stories and memories, really will be forgotten. *Forever*. These items might be stuffed into an attic or boxed up and placed in a basement of the last remaining society member. And never looked at again.

We are dedicated to preserving the Lincoln family's memory through living history, but when the day comes when we are not able to portray the Lincoln family members anymore, people will only have museums left. And we should do our best to make sure these small museums and historical societies remain, and not perish from the earth.

(See list, page 8)

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List for ALP Members
Compiled by Laura F. Keyes, MLS

(By no means is this list complete. There is no order to this list.)

The Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection at Allen County Public Library

Books, photographs, documents and other resources related to Abraham Lincoln and his times.

<http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/LincolnCollection/Collection.htm>

Stephenson County Historical Society

Their mission is to preserve and promote local and regional history, with an emphasis on Lincoln's visits to Freeport, Ill.

<http://www.stephcohs.org>

Exeter (NH) Historical Society

Their mission is to preserve Exeter's history and educate students, the community and visitors of all ages through programming and outreach. This organization has hired ALP members in the past, and preserves the Lincoln family's connection with Exeter, NH.

<https://www.exeterhistory.org>

Batavia Depot Museum

This museum has hired ALP members in the past, and is the only location for nearly all items connected with Mary Lincoln's stay in Batavia in 1875.

<http://www.bataviahistoricalsociety.org>

The Harlan-Lincoln House

This was the summer home of Senator James Harlan, friend and adviser to President Lincoln. This house saw two generations of Lincolns, as Robert and Mary Harlan Lincoln brought their children to live here most summers.

<https://www.iw.edu/harlan-lincoln-house-history/>

Lincoln-Douglas Society

Dedicated to preserving the heritage of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858 and the ideal of civilized public political discourse.

<https://www.facebook.com/Lincoln-Douglas-Society-268416083190169/>

Lincoln-Tallman House

When Abraham Lincoln stayed at the Lincoln-Tallman House in 1859, it wove Rock County, Wis., into the history of one of America's greatest presidents.

<http://www.rchs.us/sites/lincoln-tallman-house/>

Lincoln's Cottage

It is the only place the public can experience the history of Abraham Lincoln's public and private life where he lived and worked for more than a quarter of his presidency.

<http://www.lincolncottage.org/>

Lincoln Heritage Museum

Part of Lincoln College in Lincoln, Ill., the museum exhibits a rare and valuable collection of artifacts that tell the story of the life and times of the Lincoln family.

<https://museum.lincolncollege.edu/>