



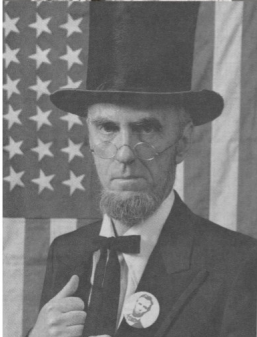
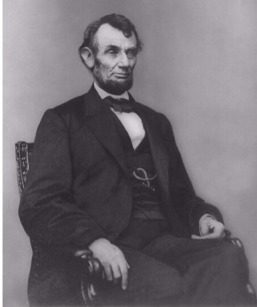
LINCARNATIONS

Volume 26 No. 1

January 2019

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

Association of Lincoln Presenters



Dan Bassuk,
ALP Founder

Taking Care of Business

ALP Excellence Awards

There is still time to nominate your fellow ALP member! If there is an ALP member in your life whom you would like to nominate, please fill out the form located on the new ALP web-site: <http://www.lincolnpresenters.com/awards/>. There are a variety of categories, and all nominations will be reviewed by previous winners. This is an opportunity to share with the entire association the outstanding work that a fellow ALP member has done in the areas of: Performance, Writing, Film or Video, Scholarship, or Distinguished Service. Please take the time today to consider how your fellow ALP members have contributed to this association and Lincoln family history in general. If there are any questions, please contact Award Committee Chairperson Laura Keyes at LFKeyes@gmail.com.

Future Conference Site Proposals

Anyone interested in hosting the ALP's annual conference in April 2021 should contact Joe Woodard (vwoodard@ciu.edu; 217-932-5378) or Laura Keyes (LFKeyes@gmail.com; 815-494-4313). The membership will vote for the 2021 site at this year's conference in Georgia. The 2020 conference is scheduled to take place in Springfield, Illinois.

Inside this issue:

Letter from Stan Wernz	2
Meet Your Fellow Lincoln	3
A Patriotic Speech in Lincoln's Own Words	4
Lincoln's Lost Speech	6

ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS

266 Compton Ridge Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215-4120

January 2019

Greetings, ALP Members!

Your ALP Board has been very busy since our conference last April in Freeport, Ill. The most significant accomplishment is found when you go to <http://www.lincolnpresenters.com/>. If you haven't seen it, you may want to have a look. All editions (in my possession) of *Lincarnations* and *Mary's Velvet Rose* are there, plus reports and photo galleries of many past conferences, pages for presenters and their bios (please check your entries for corrections), and separate pages that provide the latest information on future conferences.

Our next conference, the 25th annual conference, will be in Amicalola Falls, Georgia. Homer Sewell and Joan Britton have worked diligently to assure an educational and enjoyable experience for all attendees. For details, capitalize on the website information. You will find the latest tentative agenda and registration form.

The annual conference is also the time for our annual meeting and elections. This year, terms (three-year) expire for board members John King and Murray Cox. A Nominating Committee will present a slate; nominations will also be accepted from the floor. We will also select the 2021 conference site.

In other business, your Board has developed and will recommend you pass an "Internet Policy," "Website Guidelines" and "In Memoriam Guidelines." These documents have been prepared to provide consistency in administering our business as those in leadership positions change. We believe the result will mean fewer issues and better satisfied membership.

Your ALP Board also proposes amending By-law 16 by addition. As we become increasingly involved in digital communications, and use various avenues of social media, it seemed appropriate to establish a standard for our use of these popular venues. To that end, the Board proposes the membership adopt the amendment. Copies of all proposals will be available at the conference.

See you in Amicalola Falls!

Stan

Meet Your Fellow Lincoln

John Voehl

Submitted by John Cooper, Baltimore, Ohio

Meet John Voehl from Littleton, Colo. (near Denver), who has performed as Abraham Lincoln since 1996. John has also been married to Pamela for 46 years (his high school sweetheart from Santa Barbara, Calif.). Pamela performs as Mary along with John and as a solo act. John and Pamela have developed as many as 50 different programs to present. They have four adult children and seven grandchildren. Besides his passion for his family and Lincoln, John is also passionate about his Christian faith.

John is six years retired from a 32-year career as an aerospace engineer, having worked for Martin-Marietta (now Lockheed Martin) at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, then transferring to the Denver area to work on launch vehicle facilities and hardware. John received a double major in business-economics and mathematics from UC Santa Barbara in 1975.



He enjoys a lot of other activities besides being Lincoln. He was a long distance runner (completed a couple marathons) and a long distance bicyclist, including 440- and 550-mile events through the Rocky Mountains, summiting above 12,000 feet several times. He also ran races dressed as Lincoln and enjoyed cheers for Lincoln all along the routes. John and Pamela also have ridden coast to coast on their Goldwing motorcycle. They have custom license plates for the bike and trailer that read "ABEMRY" and "LINCLNS."

John's Lincoln journey began in 1996 with a skit for a Cub Scout camp. Since then, he has performed an estimated 1,320 living history programs in 45 states (with the hope of someday reaching all 50 states). Since retiring, he is traveling the country and performing 100 or more times each year, with a high of 127 programs in one year. He performs a program every year in Lubbock, Texas, with Frederick Douglass (portrayed by Michael Crutcher of Kentucky). He became an ALP member in 1997 after meeting William Peck (of California) at Ford's Theater, when a group of Lincolns visited the theater after the Gettysburg conference. (John was in civilian clothes and just happened to be visiting Ford's that day.) His first conference was Beckley, W. Va., in 2001, and he remembers being in awe of meeting with 50 other Lincolns. He has attended three addition-

(Continued on page 8)

A Patriotic Speech in Lincoln's Own Words (Mostly)

Submitted by Joe Woodard, Hazel Dell, Ill.

I have received public inquiries concerning "Abraham Lincoln" speaking at Independence Day observances and similar events. I compiled the following speech from Lincoln's own speeches and letters intended for public exposure. I offer it to any one of us to use. Being quotations of Lincoln (or close paraphrases of his words), it would be public domain. I would also be interested in reactions from any of our members and suggestions for improvement. – Joe (Contact Info: vwoodard@eiu.edu; 602 N. Pine St., Hazel Dell, Ill. 62428; 217-932-5378.

When I was growing up in southern Indiana, there was a preacher who came through our neck of the woods every so often who was famous for preaching very long sermons. Once, when asked why his sermons were so long, he said that it was because he was too lazy to prepare a short sermon. Ladies and gentlemen, I promise you I will not resemble that Hoosier preacher this evening. I have prepared a speech of about a quarter-hour. My topic is the excellence of America's political institutions and the threat to their perpetuation.

Sometime about the fourth of July every year, we hold meetings to celebrate our country and the anniversary of its birth. We cast our minds back through history some 80 years and we remember men living in that day who were our fathers and grandfathers. Among those men was an earlier Abraham Lincoln, for whom I was named -- my grandfather who served in the Revolution. I expect that I am not unusual in having kin who fought in the Revolution. I expect there are several men and women here today whose grandfathers served in the Revolution. They were iron men and they fought for country and principle, and we understand that by what they then did has followed what we now enjoy -- a degree of freedom and prosperity such as few nations have ever enjoyed. If we leave more attached to country and principle, then we are better men for these gatherings.

But there are other men at these gatherings who are not descendants of those Americans of '76 -- men who have come from Europe or whose parents came here long after '76. But when they look through that old Declaration of Independence, they find that those old men say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal" and then they feel that that moral sentiment taught in that day evidences their relation to those men and that they have a right to claim it as though they were blood of the blood and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote that Declaration, and so they have. That is the electric cord in that Declaration that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together. All honor to Thomas Jefferson -- to the man who in the pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people had the coolness and the capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth applicable to all men at all times, and to put it there so that then, and today and all coming days, it might be a rebuke to re-appearing tyranny.

Away back in my childhood in Indiana, I got hold of a small book, which I expect few here today have read or seen but which was popular in its day -- Weems' *Life of Washington*. I remember the accounts given there of the battlefields and the struggles for the liberties of the country and the great hardships of that time. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for, something even more than national independence -- something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world. It was a hope that in due time that the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men and that all should get an equal chance. That is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

When the authors of the Declaration of Independence wrote that "all men are created equal," I think they intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in size, intellect, color, moral development or social capacity. They defined, with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal -- equal in "certain inalienable rights," among these "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This, they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were actually enjoying that equality, nor yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right so that enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit. They meant to set up a maxim for a free society which should be familiar to all and revered by all constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and, though never attained, approximated, and thereby spreading and deepening its influence.

The United States of America was conceived in the Articles of Association in 1774. It was born in the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was matured and the faith of all then 13 states was pledged that its federal union be perpetual by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing our Constitution was to form a more perfect Union.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

With the adoption of the Constitution of 1787 the process was completed of transforming 13 separate colonies under a king's government into one federal union under a people's government. I say a people's government because it was one not only in the sense that the people were governed, but in the sense that it was a government chosen by the people -- the laws made by representatives of the people -- and a government dedicated to the good of the great mass of the people, as contrasted to one to be run for the good of one monarch, or of a few aristocrats.

Our grandparents made a republic to take direction from the majority while protecting the rights of the minority. A republic which was to attend to the legitimate object of government, "to do for the people what needs to be done, but which they cannot, by individual effort, do at all, or do so well for themselves."

Until 1787, it was an open, an un-answered, question whether a nation so conceived and so dedicated could be made. Through its first few decades, it was seen by all as an undecided experiment; now it is understood to be a successful one. But a related question is still unanswered: How long can a nation so conceived and so dedicated endure?

At the beginning of my speech I said I would talk about danger to our political institutions. It may be asked -- Why suppose any danger to our political institutions? Have we not preserved them for more than 70 years? May we not preserve them for 70 times as long? We hope there is no sufficient reason, but to think that no danger can arise is both foolish and dangerous. But where shall we expect the approach of danger? Shall we expect some trans-Atlantic military giant to step over the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! I say that all the armies of Europe combined, with all the treasure of the earth (ours alone excepted) in their military chest and a Bonaparte for a commander, could not, by force, drink from the Ohio or even make a track upon the Blue Ridge in a trial of a hundred years. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men we must live for all time or die by suicide.

Rivalry and struggle and suspicion between states -- large states against small states -- and between regions -- east against west and north against south -- and between factions -- has been and continues to be a danger. Compromise has so far resolved or allayed these struggles, but if a party should ever arise that scorns all compromise, and that must have its way, laws and elections, notwithstanding, and will rule or ruin at all events, then I fear for our country.

Also, consider the danger posed by personal ambition. Many good and great men may ever be found whose ambition would extend to nothing more than a seat in Congress, or a gubernatorial or presidential chair; but such belong not to the family of the lion or the tribe of the eagle. What? Think you that such places would satisfy an Alexander, a Caesar, or a Napoleon? Towering genius disdains a beaten path, it thirsts and burns for distinction, and if possible it will have it, whether by emancipating slaves or enslaving free men. Is it unreasonable to expect that some man possessed of the loftiest genius coupled with ambition to push it to the utmost stretch will at some time spring up among us? When such a one appears it will require the people to be united with each other, attached to the government and laws and generally intelligent to frustrate his designs.

By the frame of government under which we live, the people have given their public servants comparatively little power for mischief and the people have provided for elections at regular intervals so that the people can use their power to turn out of office those who engage in mischief. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no chief executive can seriously injure the government in the short space of four years. But should the people cease their watchfulness and cease to care about what kind of men make and administer their laws, then their freedom might not long endure thereafter.

The story is told that toward the end of the Constitutional Convention as the great Benjamin Franklin was leaving the hall where the Convention met, he was asked what kind of a government have you made for us? And that Franklin replied, "A Republic, if you can keep it!"

The task of keeping our republic and its political institutions is one that gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, and duty to our posterity all require us to perform. The surest safeguards of our national union and our political institutions are to be found among the virtues of our people. Let the materials of general education, sound morality, and a reverence for the constitution and laws be molded and formed into the foundation of our freedom, and then as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Lincoln's "Lost Speech": His Greatest Speech Ever?

By Kevin Wood, Oak Park, Ill.

[The following article is adapted from a post on my "*Loath to Close . . . Still!*" blog published on July 28, 2018, and available at <http://www.mrlincoln.com/blog/?p=579>.]

As Abraham Lincoln portrayers and/or aficionados, we're all familiar with his most famous speeches: the Gettysburg Address, of course, and probably also the "House Divided" speech, the Cooper Union speech, the two inaugural addresses, and perhaps a few others. Yet some claim that Lincoln's greatest speech wasn't any of these, but rather one we've never read nor recited for the simple reason that it was lost to history.

It is known simply as the "Lost Speech," and it was delivered at Bloomington, Ill., on May 29, 1856, at an exceedingly tense and tumultuous time. Two years previous, the great slavery debate had exploded in greater furor than ever before due to Sen. Stephen Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Act. Up to that point, slavery had been contained in just one part of the country with the hope, and the expectation, that one day the nation might be rid of it entirely; now slavery would be allowed to spread into the west and even into the north, and we might never be rid of it.

This prompted an entire re-ordering of the political landscape, as well as Lincoln's re-entry into politics. Prior differences between Democrats and Whigs over other issues moved to the background as the defining issue now became whether one was for or against Douglas's bill. The Whig Party soon collapsed under the weight of the situation, and there emerged a movement to gather all the "anti-Nebraska" forces – i.e., all those who were opposed to the extension of slavery – into one political force, if not one entirely new political party.

By early 1856, a presidential election year, this movement was coalescing under the name "Republican." The new party would hold its first-ever national convention in the middle of June in Philadelphia to nominate candidates and adopt a platform. State conventions were likewise called in many of the northern states; in Illinois, it was decided to hold the convention in Bloomington on May 29.

During the week leading up to the Bloomington convention, the tensions suddenly escalated significantly. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was brutally beaten on the Senate floor by South Carolina Congressman Preston Brooks in retaliation for Sumner's speech denouncing the Kansas-Nebraska Act, in which he also mocked Brooks' cousin, Senator Andrew Butler; the outrage in the North was loud and strong, while in the South, Brooks was praised. Meanwhile, out in Kansas, the anti-slavery stronghold of Lawrence was ransacked by pro-slavery ruffians, and three days later a group of men led by John Brown retaliated by killing five pro-slavery settlers north of Pottawatomie Creek; "Bleeding Kansas" was well underway. And right here in Illinois, an anti-slavery editor named Paul Selby, who would have been one of the leaders of the Bloomington convention, was viciously attacked by pro-slavery sympathizers and now lay at home recovering from his injuries.

Amid all this tension, the Bloomington convention did its work, hearing speeches, nominating candidates, and adopting resolutions. Lincoln chaired the nominating committee for state offices and was named a delegate to the upcoming national convention – an honor he would have to decline because he had neither the time nor the money to attend – as well as a statewide elector-at-

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

large for the Presidential election. But he was passed over for what he would have most desired: an opportunity to address the crowd.

As the convention drew to a close around 5:30 p.m., however, many of the delegates and visitors were in no mood to leave, and a crowd of more than a thousand men was still gathered in and around the hall. It was then that some of them started calling out for Lincoln. They may have only wanted some of his funny stories, but what he gave them instead was a rousing, hour-and-a-half-long speech.

The traditional story is that the speech was ‘lost’ because the newspapermen and others were so enthralled that they stopped taking notes. William Herndon, Lincoln’s friend and law partner, claimed that he *“attempted for about fifteen minutes ... to take notes, but at the end of that time I threw pen and paper away and lived only in the inspiration of the hour. If Mr. Lincoln was six feet, four inches high usually, at Bloomington that day he was seven feet, and inspired at that.”*

It is just as likely, however, that Lincoln and other party leaders deliberately suppressed its publication, given that he directed his words to a highly partisan crowd. In an election year, it wasn’t the kind of message that would have been politically expedient to share with a broader audience.

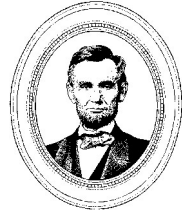
But this doesn’t mean that the newspapers, as well as individuals, didn’t report on Lincoln’s speech. Herndon called it *“full of fire and energy and force: it was logic; it was pathos; it was enthusiasm; it was justice, equity, truth, and right set ablaze by the divine fires of a soul maddened by the wrong; it was hard, heavy, knotty, gnarly, backed with wrath.”* Editor ‘Long John’ Wentworth of the *Chicago Democrat* reported that *“Abraham Lincoln for an hour and a half held the assemblage spellbound by the power of his argument, the intense irony of his invective, the brilliancy of his eloquence. I shall not mar any of its fine proportions by attempting even a synopsis of it.”*

The only paper that did attempt a synopsis appears to be the *Alton Weekly Courier*, which reported: *“Abraham Lincoln, of Sangamon, came upon the platform amid deafening applause. He enumerated the pressing reasons of the present movement. He was here ready to fuse with anyone who would unite with him to oppose slave power; spoke of the bugbear disunion which was so vaguely threatened. It was to be remembered that the Union must be preserved in the purity of its principles as well as in the integrity of its territorial parts. It must be ‘Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.’ The sentiment in favor of white slavery now prevailed in all the slave state papers, except those of Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri and Maryland. Such was the progress of the National Democracy. Douglas once claimed against him that Democracy favored more than his principles, the individual rights of man. Was it not strange that he must stand there now to defend those rights against their former eulogist? The Black Democracy were endeavoring to cite Henry Clay to reconcile old Whigs to their doctrine, and repaid them with the very cheap compliment of National Whigs.”*

Lincoln’s primary objective seems to have been to unite all the disparate elements then coalescing into the new Republican Party, inspiring them to put aside their differences and commit wholeheartedly to the movement to fight against the extension of slavery. The increasingly violent slave power must be resisted, Kansas must be free, republican principles must be preserved, and the Union must be maintained.

c/o Dean Dorrell
5 1/2 Daviess Dr.
Washington, IN 47501

Phone: 812-617-1806
E-mail: abe@honest-abe.com



(Continued from page 3)

al conferences, most recently, Lexington, Ky., in 2017.

John's favorite story is that of Grace Bedell and Lincoln's beard, but he had a rocky beginning with the story. In his very first school presentation in 1997 for second graders, he told the story. Afterwards a little girl asked if Lincoln ever met Grace Bedell. Being a newbie to Lincoln, he was unaware of the Westfield, NY, meeting in 1861 and instead made up an answer, stating he had not met Grace Bedell. After class, the sweet little second-grader brought her children's Lincoln book up to him, showing him the story of Lincoln and Grace meeting in her hometown. Since then, he has been careful to not assume answers, but responds that "Abraham Lincoln would like to answer that question, but he is limited by what this fellow John has learned, and he doesn't know the answer."

John enjoys performing as Lincoln and sharing the righteous virtues in his exemplary life. He has read hundreds of books and has found no dark side to Lincoln or anything in his life that he is not willing to honestly share in the context of his life. One of his favorite books is *Lincoln* by the Kuhnhardts. His proudest moments are, after a presentation, when someone compliments him by saying they felt like they were with the real Abraham Lincoln, not a presenter.