



LINCARNATIONS

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

Association of Lincoln Presenters



Dan Bassuk,
ALP Founder

Larry Givens

In March 2021, Stephen Wood, an ALP member from New Hampshire, was contacted by Sheila Arnold, a fellow storyteller from Virginia whom he met when she was the featured teller at a New Hampshire festival in 2018. Sheila has been hosting “Sacred Storytelling,” a monthly online program presented by Artists Standing Strong Together (ASST, pronounced “assist”). Each month, the Sunday afternoon program presents a variety of storytellers sharing stories that follow the theme of sacred stories, as well as honoring three storytellers who have passed away.

One of those being remembered on March 28 was someone who had portrayed Abraham Lincoln. Sheila had never met him. Knowing Wood portrayed Lincoln, she thought it would be fitting for him to participate in the online memorial. The following is Wood’s reaction:

“Imagine my surprise when she revealed that the storyteller being honored was Larry Givens! Sheila was equally surprised to learn that I knew Larry.

“My wife Sharon helped me work on collecting photos and writing a short tribute to Larry. She contacted ALP President Stan Wernz and asked him to send a request for memories from ALP members who would have known Larry, who passed away in 2005. We incorporated the recollections we received into my tribute.”

Wood met Larry Givens through the ALP. “My wife and I joined the ALP in the year 2000 and we attended our first conference the following year in Beckley, West Virginia,” Wood said. “Although we didn’t know each other well at that time, Larry and I were part of the Abe experience at that conference, and shared a dark and damp tour of a former coal mine.

“Abraham Lincoln was not the only historical character that Larry Givens portrayed. He created presentations in the personas of several Biblical

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ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS

266 Compton Ridge Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215-4120

January 2022

Dear Members,

The last year has, in several respects, curtailed our mission, as each of us has dealt with the pandemic and various restrictions placed upon us. Efforts to maintain programs were thwarted. During this period, several members adjusted by using virtual programming. Some members have passed to their eternal reward – victims of what Lincoln called in his Lyceum speech “the silent artillery of time.” These ALP leaders were pillars in promulgating the Lincoln legacy in their geographic area. And, as Lincoln further states in that speech, it is up to us to “supply their places with other pillars.”

As many presentations have been cancelled or postponed, programs that have been given many times may have become “rusty”; information and recall may have slowed; the very familiar and often quoted passages may not be on the “tip of your tongue.” Regaining these skills and the fluency will be challenging. I urge you to think on these things, and resolve to bring all your skills back to that former luster. Strange as it may seem, one way is to practice presentations in front of a mirror. Folks will notice!

Another way to assist your redevelopment is by rubbing elbows with colleagues of like mind. A grand opportunity to do that will be available to us at Leavenworth, Kan., on April 21-24, 2022. Murray Cox has reached out to contacts in Leavenworth, and is assured they understand our delay in coming. They remain eager to see us and to enhance our understanding about those crucial times in Lincoln’s life. Events during the last two years have impressed us with the need for broad understanding of these times, as well as knowing particulars.

As is usual at our conferences, there will be a business meeting. There will be reports from our committees, including our Future Conference Committee. Our 2023 Conference is scheduled for Springfield, Ill. Randy (and Joy) Duncan will be our host (and hostess); during our business meeting, they will provide us with a capsulized version of the program that is planned.

Elections of three board members (three-year terms) and of ALP officers (one-year terms) are also on the agenda. Terms expire for Robert Broski, John Cooper (first vice president) and Homer Sewell. All three have agreed to seek re-election. The officers of ALP are elected by you from those seated on the board. Current board members whose terms do not expire include: Murray Cox (treasurer), John King, Stan Wernz (president), Susan Miller, Kevin Wood, and Sue Wright (secretary). The second vice president position is currently vacant.

Seeing you in Leavenworth will be great; catching up on your progress from the last two years will be “icing on the cake!” Safe Travels!

Stan

2022 Convention Leavenworth, Kansas

Come to Kansas in April, and be prepared to learn not only of Abraham Lincoln's 1859 visit there, but also events leading up to that visit, and the U.S. Civil War.

We will be staying at the Leavenworth Home2Suites, 250 Delaware, in Leavenworth. **Our Room rate is \$119** (plus tax). It offers a free breakfast, free Wi-Fi, free parking, a nice fitness center and a pool. Each room contains a King or two Queen beds, as well as a queen-size sofa-bed and work table, a refrigerator/freezer, microwave, dishwasher, cookware, coffeemaker and toaster. See the last page of this notice for contact information. The rate is good from April 21 until the 24th.

Our board will meet at 2:00 PM Thursday in the hotel's meeting room. At any time before and after that meeting you may leave your silent auction items in the same room.

You can check in at the hotel starting Wednesday, if you like. Thursday supper will be on your own, and at 7:00 we will meet at the Riverfront Community Center, a beautiful former train depot, for a social gathering, to be welcomed by the town of Leavenworth, and to hear a presentation from John Brown.

Friday morning, at 8:30, we will board a bus that will take us to the University of St. Mary to view their Lincoln collection, including an original signed 13th Amendment. We then move on to Fort Leavenworth, where we will hear from speakers at the Fort, and enjoy a full buffet for lunch. The buffet has a large selection of salads, entrees and desserts of all types allowing for vegetarian and gluten free options. We then split into two groups: One that will go to the Frontier Army Museum, which houses a replica Gatling Gun, a carriage Lincoln rode on during his trip in Kansas, as well as various forms of transportation during that era. The other group will get a tour of the grounds. Fort Leavenworth is a 107 acre facility that is the second oldest active United States Army post west of Washington, D.C, and the oldest permanent settlement in Kansas.

(Please note that the trip to the Fort has been arranged by the Public Affairs Office, using the Fort's buses, which will simplify admission to the base).

This is a "package deal," so there is no easy way to split out a part of this package into pieces. However, if you wished only to see the artifacts at St. Mary you could meet us there, then depart from our group when we board our transportation to go to the Fort Leavenworth. Likewise, if you did not want to take part in the viewing of items at St. Mary, you could meet us there, and then ride with us to the Fort. (However, you would then need to find a way to get back to your vehicle after the

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bus drops us off at the hotel in the afternoon.)

Cost of the St. Mary and Fort, including lunch, will be \$25, \$5 of which is our contribution toward security at St. Mary for them to display the 13th amendment, and \$20 for the meal and presentations at the Fort.

After leaving the Fort we take the short trip back to the hotel. The Ladies will there have their Tea, hearing from a local speaker on Women's Suffrage. The men will gather to hear a recreation of Lincoln's "Lost Speech".

It is then time for rest and relaxation.

At 6:30 we meet at the Riverfront Community Center for supper of Stuffed Chicken Breast, with a vegetarian/gluten-free option, and to hear from Carol Ayres, author of "Lincoln in Kansas", who will tell the story of Lincoln's trip. We will also hear from our pre-presidential Lincoln, who will present a portion of a speech he gave in Kansas. Carol Ayres will also have copies of her book offered for sale. **Cost for this evening will be \$30.**

Saturday morning, at 8:30, we will board a bus or buses to go to Lecompton, Kansas. **This again is a "package deal,"** to see and hear a play by the Lecompton Reenactors, telling of the turmoil in the Kansas Territory leading up to the adoption of the Free-State Constitution. The Territorial Capital Museum, where we will enjoy this presentation, was intended to be the Kansas State Capital building under the Lecompton Constitution. The site is quite proud of the fact that President Eisenhower's parents were married in that building, when it served as Lane University, and some of their displays deal with the Eisenhower family.

We will then proceed to a local church for a nice fried chicken and mashed potatoes lunch, followed by a presentation of a local Lincoln presenter. (I will make sure to provide for those that have dietary restrictions). Next we go to Constitution Hall, where the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution was drafted. We will also hear about the problems in the Kansas Territory of the Bogus Legislature. On the way back Kevin Wood will narrate as we take a brief trip through Historic Lawrence. **Costs of all of this is \$40.**

It is then back to the hotel for some R & R, and a chance to stroll the area, weather permitting. Don't forget to make your final bids on the silent auction items. Items will be picked up and paid for after our Business Meeting.

At 6:30 we will again meet at the Riverfront Center for supper and our annual business

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meeting. There will be a buffet with a carved beef and roast turkey, with a vegetarian/gluten-free option. **Cost will be \$25.**

Sunday Morning we will head to a nearby church for services, then depart until we next meet.

TRANSPORTATION

If you will be flying, Mid-Continent International Airport in Kansas City, on the Missouri side of the river, is relatively close.

Amtrak has a depot in Kansas City, again on the Missouri side of the river.

If you are driving, there are several historical venues you may find worthy of your visit on your way to Leavenworth, or as you return home.

For those coming from the west, there is the Eisenhower Center in Abilene, Kansas, just off of I-70, which contains the boyhood home, Presidential Library and Museum, and burial site of our 34th President.

Those coming from the east may like to stop in nearby Independence, Missouri, again, just off of I-70, at the Truman Presidential Library and home.

If you will travel along I-40, as you work your way up to Leavenworth, you may like to stop at Ft. Scott, in southeastern Kansas. It is a restored fort established in the early 1800's to try to keep peace between the native inhabitants and white settlers.

In Kansas City, Missouri, there is the Arabia Museum, which has a fascinating display of items that were on the steamship Arabia, which sunk in the Missouri River in 1856. Across the street from the Arabia is a WWI museum.

However you choose to travel I hope to see you there.

To Register for our conference:

Fill out the form on the next page and mail along with payment to the address on the form, or

Go to <https://forms.gle/X9i4o7YLDv9hxctH7>

Any time you have questions, you may inquire with Murray Cox at indianalincaln@hotmail.com, his home at 260-563-7126 (voice only), or, the week of the conference, at his cell, 260-571-2870, voice or text.



Lincoln Presenters– Hotel Reservations

April 21 – 24, 2022

To make your reservation online, please search for
Home2 Suites by Hilton, Leavenworth KS or
<https://home2suites3.hilton.com/en/hotels/kansas>

Enter check in and check out dates

Check the box “Special Rates” and enter Group Code LP2

Select your room type

Click “Quick Book” to complete your reservation

To reserve your room, please call Hilton’s toll-free Reservation

Number (844) 587-9779 to receive the group discount

Please mention the booking code LP2

Please reserve prior to the cutoff date of March 30.

Thank you.

Home2 Suites by Hilton

250 Delaware Street

Leavenworth, KS 66048

Association of Lincoln Presenters Conference			
Name(s) _____		_____	
_____		_____	
Email _____		Phone # _____	
Address _____		_____	
	Number attending	Cost	Total
Registration Fee-Member & Partner		\$40	
Registration Fee-Children with adult		\$0	
NON-MEMBERS			
Add if attending one day's events		\$15	
Add if attending both day's events		\$25	
<i>If Joining the ALP, this amount will be credited to first year's dues</i>			
THURSDAY			
Evening social and presentation by Kerry Altenbernd as John Brown		included	
FRIDAY			
Artifacts at St. Mary		\$5	
Fort Leavenworth-lunch, presentations and tour		\$20	
<i>Buffet Lunch will have Vegetarian & Gluten Free choices</i>			
Mary's Tea and men's gathering			
Ladies, woman suffrage		\$0	
Men, Kevin Wood, The Lost Speech		\$0	
Dinner & Keynote speaker Carol Ayres, Joe Woodard		\$30	
SATURDAY			
Trip to Lecompton		\$40	
Number of vegetarian requested	_____		
Number of Gluten Free requested	_____		
Quick tour of Lawrence			
Evening meal and Business Meeting		\$25	
Number of vegetarian requested	_____		
Number of Gluten Free requested	_____		
SUNDAY			
Staying for church (Yes/No)			
Total			\$ _____
IF PAYING BY CHECK			
MAKE CHECK OUT TO:		ALP	
MAIL TO:		3979 S BAILEY ROAD	
		WABASH, IN 46992	

Meet Your Fellow Lincoln

Skip Critell

Submitted by John Cooper, Ohio

Skip Critell, a life member of the ALP since 2006, hails from Boise, Idaho. Aside from presenting Lincoln, he is now retired, having spent 21 years in automotive parts, nine years in a furniture store, and, finally, 12 years as owner of a healthcare business. Skip is married to Brenda (for 18 years), who supports his Lincoln performances, but has not become a "Mary." Skip has six children, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

His Lincoln career dates back to the last century, having begun in 1999. Skip normally makes about 50 presentations a year, mostly in Idaho, but occasionally in the neighboring states of Oregon, Washington, and Utah. His furthest trip was to Texas in 2014 for a Juneteenth presentation. He even did a presentation on a cruise ship off the west coast for a special group with which he was travelling. In 2009, Skip made 129 appearances, including 35 in February alone. He enjoys being Lincoln because it is a chance to share history and make people feel good about our past. From this, they may learn to make a better tomorrow.



His favorite story is about Grace Bedell and her letter urging Lincoln to grow whiskers. He is also intrigued by Grace's church experience when she was eight years old. She heard a sermon which emphasized that God will "lift you up when you fall." She tested that out by stepping from a second-story window, falling and breaking both her legs. She would recover to write her famous letter at age 11. Skip loves to take questions, especially from schoolchildren. Once a fourth-grader asked what kind of underwear Lincoln wore. Skip replied that it is kind of like a "onesie" that a baby wears, only without the feet. His favorite book about Lincoln is *Young Abe Lincoln: His Teenage Years* by Fred Conway.

Skip has attended about seven ALP conferences, but none since 2014. Being further away than many of our members, it is costly (\$1,000 and up) to attend a conference. However, he has enjoyed every one he has attended and enjoys the experience of meeting with other Lincolns. He also enjoys the visits to historic sites planned into the conference schedules.

Skip's outside hobbies include woodworking and building period items and RV travelling. He has worked with youth through the AWANA program, and was a youth soccer coach for his own children and other children in the fourth and fifth grades. Although he has no interest in professional sports, he has served as an umpire for both little league baseball and adult softball.

Skip has also been heavily engaged with the Idaho Civil War Volunteers since 2001, and presently serves as their commander. This group performs at many venues, and once performed at a four-day event that included more than 5,000 visitors. He enjoys firing many Civil War-era weapons, including a Napoleon cannon, battery gun, swivel gun, and various muskets and pistols. He enjoys these opportunities to share history and make it come alive through events such as these.

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figures, including the Apostle Peter, and other historical figures, like Johnny Appleseed. Through his storytelling, Larry was able to make his audience feel they were actually spending time with the person he was portraying.”

Wernz, of Ohio, shared some of his memories of Larry that included a presentation Larry gave during the conference in 2002. Stan recalled: "Larry hosted the ALP Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana. That was my first conference and my introduction to Larry. Part of the conference program was Larry doing a monologue titled 'I am Peter.' My, was he impressive. You lived with him Peter's life from fisherman to Peter's part in the Passion History, and following the Resurrection. The audience was silent, totally engaged in his story.”

Wood said Larry was an engaging storyteller and he enjoyed talking with the folks who came out to see the Lincolns at the conferences each year.”Of course, Abraham Lincoln himself was known to be a storyteller. He enjoyed being in crowds and would often announce: That reminds me of a story!”

(NOTE: At this point in the March tribute, Wood put on his stovepipe hat and told the story “Footprints on the Ceiling.”)

Another place that some Lincoln presenters get together each year is in Hodgenville, Ky., for its annual Lincoln Days in October. In addition to a parade, the Lincolns who are able to attend participate in a Lincoln look-alike contest.

Jim Sayre, a Lincoln presenter from Kentucky, recalled: “I remember Larry very well. He came to Hodgenville every year for the contest. He and I were the same age. Good friend. I miss him at the Hodgenville contest.”

Yes, Larry and his sense of humor are missed by those who knew him. Jim Rubin, a Lincoln presenter from West Virginia who has also passed on, described Larry as a kind and gentle man, with a quick wit, who liked to tell corny jokes, and that he would be welcomed in Heaven for his sense of humor.

At the Fort Wayne Conference, several Lincoln presenters volunteered to be filmed for an episode of Comedy Central on the Late Show with Jon Stewart. Not all ALP members were eager to be part of that project, being wary of what they would be asked to say or do.

Rick Miller, Lincoln presenter from Pennsylvania, who was among the volunteers, recalled, “Larry was the 'star' of the Comedy Central piece by Ed Helms on the disease ‘Lincolntism.’ Larry's good nature was evident in his willingness to be the butt of many jokes.”

There again, Larry shared a personality trait that Abraham Lincoln was known for -- poking fun at his own appearance. Lincoln realized the audience's reaction when he walked onstage, and would tell a joke on himself to get everyone laughing so he could then move on to talk about the more important business at hand.

(NOTE: Wood then told one of Lincoln's “Ugly Man” stories at this point in the tribute.)

It was only after Larry passed away that Wood learned more about his private life. The son of a United Methodist minister who grew up in Northern Indiana, he was an elementary school teacher and insurance salesman, before retiring to do what he really loved -- telling stories.

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Association of Lincoln Presenters

c/o Dean Dorrell
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E-mail: abe@honest-abe.com



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“It has been my honor to introduce you to Larry Givens. Let us all keep his memory alive by continuing to tell his story.”

Steve Wood, Claremont, NH

Photos

#1 Larry (standing, third from right) with fellow Lincolns at the Beckley, West Virginia coal mine, 2001

#2. Larry (third from left) and some of our fellow Lincolns talking with visitors at Lincoln's Boyhood Home National Historic Site in Indiana in 2003

