



LINCARNATIONS

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

Association of Lincoln Presenters



Dan Bassuk,
ALP Founder



Stan Wernz,
President
Emeritus

TRIVIALITIES

“An actor is going about over the country impersonating Abraham Lincoln. But it isn’t exactly what you would call a new act. A number of statesmen have been doing it for years.”

From *The Kansas Weekly Capital*, March 3, 1910, p. 4. Retrieved from *Newspapers.com*

The actor who likely inspired this quip was:

Elmer Ellsworth Grandin

Benjamin Chapin

Samuel Dade Drane

Logan Paul

Herbert Bela Chesley

(Answer in next *Lincarnations*)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mark your calendars for our 2024 Conference in Dayton, Ohio, hosted by Teena Baldrige. Note that the dates will be a little later than normal, April 25-28, 2024. Teena has several tours of sites in Dayton as well as some outstanding lecturers lined up. Abraham Lincoln spoke in Dayton in September 1859, while campaigning for the Republican gubernatorial candidate, William Dennison, who would win the race and later become Lincoln's second postmaster general.

We continue the need to recruit new members. We urge all current members to be on the lookout for potential members who portray Abraham or Mary Lincoln or any other historic characters. If you encounter such people, please tell them about ALP and get their contact information. That information should be furnished to Larry Elliott, our marketing manager and to me as President. We have also established a social media team during our Springfield conference. Members are Kevin Wood, Bob Brugler, Ann Bruehler and Pat Gifford, assisted by Larry Elliott. They are exploring social media tools that can help to publicize ALP as well as developing flyers and cards to hand out to prospective members. These handouts will be made available to all our members.

At our conference, the ALP Achievement Award was presented to life member Lenny Kleiner. Lenny has been recognized for his performances for 23 years. He participates regularly at Hodgenville Lincoln Days, representing ALP and himself. He portrays a humble Lincoln, which is also his own persona. He is always kind and patient with adults and children while answering questions and posing for photos.

Finally, we want to thank Randy Duncan and Laura Keyes for hosting our conference in Springfield. Around 50 guests enjoyed the historic sites related to the Lincolns, as well as several interesting lectures. A survey was sent to attendees and 25 of you responded, which is an excellent response rate. Their most favorite activity seemed to be the Lincoln Museum, especially the "Ghost in the Library" behind the scenes tour. Every lecture and tour rated at 7 (of 8) or higher, so we can consider them successes. Finally, 80% of respondents said they plan to attend in 2024 and the other 20% stated they might attend. That sounds like a good base for Teena and Dayton to build upon. The survey results and comments have been forwarded to Teena and Kevin Wood, our next two conference hosts.

Thanks.

John Cooper, 740-862-6373, 5-17-23

UPDATE ON THE 2024 DAYTON CONFERENCE

By Teena Baldrige

The Courtyard by Marriott
University of Dayton, 2006 Edwin C.
Moses Blvd.
Dayton, Ohio

Thursday – April 25

Board Meeting – 3 pm the room will be available after for the silent auction items
Dinner on your own. Reservations can be made at the Carillon which is close by but not walking distance for 5 pm. 7:30 - Ice Breaker at the Hotel

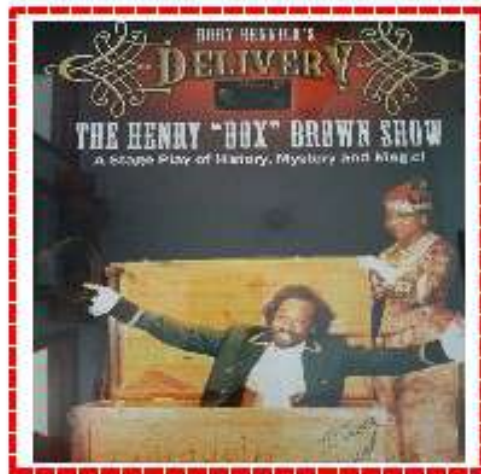


Friday – April 26

Continental breakfast at the hotel
Visit to the VA Medical Center, Tour by Margaret Kruckemeyer, Dayton Woman's Club, President
Lunch at the Old Courthouse where Lincoln spoke on September 17, 1859. Group Photographs
Dinner - TBA

Saturday – April 27

Continental breakfast at the hotel
Speakers at the hotel in the morning
Membership Meeting – 3 pm
Dinner - 5 pm
6 pm - Entertainment Henry "Box" Brown



Sunday – April 28

Continental Breakfast
Church Service at the Presbyterian Church


Speakers at the conference:
Mike Major, Sculptor, "Creating Lincoln"
Kim Villalva, author, *Lincoln, the Servant Leader*
Christopher Burns, *Lincoln and Grant, The Alliance that won the Civil War*
Margaret Kruckemeyer, President of the Dayton Woman's Club
Alex Villalva, *The Tomb of the Unknown Civil War Soldiers*
Rory Rennick, Magician, Storyteller, Teaching Artist
Holly Ray, Ladies feather fans
Teena Baldrige, Host of the 2024 ALP Conference in Dayton, Ohio
937-748-4077, email: teenabaldrige@yahoo.com

ONLINE RESOURCES OF LINCOLN'S WRITINGS

Digital sources of Lincoln's writings have expanded, providing opportunities to read them without the trip to a library or bookstore, or paying an online subscription or enrollment at an institution of higher learning. While Archives.org does have several published works available, and subscription is free, they are not arranged as a single collection, requiring multiple searches. The following websites allow free access and contain many writings, from correspondence to published speeches. Please advise me if you know of online resources relating to Mary, Robert, and other Lincoln relatives. If you can recommend additional sites, or share experiences with any of them, please contact John McKee for inclusion in the next edition of *Lincarnations*.

<i>Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln</i>	https://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/
<i>Selected Writings of Abraham Lincoln</i>	https://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/writings.htm
<i>Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress</i>	https://www.loc.gov/collections/abraham-lincoln-papers/about-this-collection/
<i>Abraham Lincoln Books</i>	https://www.classicly.com/abraham-lincoln
<i>The Papers and Writings of Abraham Lincoln, Complete by Abraham Lincoln</i>	https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3253
<i>Papers of Abraham Lincoln Digital Library</i>	https://papersofabrahamlincoln.org/

LINCOLN DAYS AT HODGENVILLE, KY

October 7-8, 2023

While not an ALP event, Lincoln Presenters do have a history of attending this event.



For more than 50 years, Lincoln Days Celebration has offered unique experiences for young and old alike! No other place in the world can claim to be the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln and LaRue County embraces that distinction with a weekend festival that brings in crowds from around the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

This year on Saturday, October 7, the stage is set for the Abraham and Mary Look Alike Contests. Contestants give a 3-minute presentation on the stage to the crowds in the square. Mary Lincoln participants may describe their costume and/or deliver a portrayal of some event in Mary’s life. Participants will be judged on both authenticity of costume and presentation.

Abraham Lincoln Look-Alike contestants will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes to portray/relate a “Lincoln story or speech”. In addition to the short oratory, Abrahams will also be judged on costume, physical traits, and presentation.

First place contestants receive \$100. And there are second and third place prizes. After the contest the Ladies Club of Hodgenville provides the contestants with a free, delicious lunch. All costumed interpreters are invited. After the luncheon we participate in the parade that winds through Hodgenville to cheering crowds.

Everywhere people want to greet the Lincolns, take pictures, or shake a hand. We are truly celebrities at this event.

[Information is available online from https://www.facebook.com/LincolnDaysCelebration](https://www.facebook.com/LincolnDaysCelebration), and lincolndays.org.

Lodging: As no hotels are in Hodgenville but is available at Elizabethtown (10 miles northwest of there), with several hotels off I-65. The following hotels have agreed to offer a discounted rate for people attending the festival. Let the hotel know you are attending Lincoln Days when you make your reservation.

Days Inn 2010 North Mulberry Elizabethtown, KY 42701 270-769-5522	Quality Inn 2009 N. Mulberry Street Elizabethtown, KY 42701 270-765-4166
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Sites: In addition to the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Park south of Hodgenville, one can also find to the northeast of town the Knob Creek boyhood home of little Abe from ages 3 to 7 before moving off to Indiana. The Hardin County Museum is in downtown Elizabethtown, while Bardstown (20 miles northeast of Hodgenville) has the Civil War Museum, the Talbott Inn, and My Old Kentucky Home State Park.

MEET YOUR FELLOW LINCOLN

RON CARLEY



Ron Carley, of Westland, Michigan, has been performing as Abraham Lincoln since 2012, when he appeared as Lincoln at a Halloween party. He performs 10-12 times each year at sporting events, parades, car shows, and veterans' events. At another Halloween party, a man asked him how long he had been doing Lincoln. He looked at his watch and said about an hour, lol.

The other man laughed, too. Then the man booked him for a grand opening at his Lincoln Motor dealership. He rented a not-to-period tux. At the dealership the people went crazy, and one lady asked him why he was at the party as Lincoln? He replied, "Do you know what is the name of the dealership? It's Hines Park Lincoln". She finally looked embarrassed and walked away. He joined ALP at our Santa Claus, IN conference in 2016 as a lifetime member. He has also appeared at Lincoln Days in Hodgenville, KY, where he won the Lincoln contest one year. Ron was born in South Bend, IN, but moved as a child to the Detroit, MI area where he has lived his entire adult life. Ron graduated in 1971 from Thurston High School in Redford, MI, a suburb of Detroit. He attended Schoolcraft Community College for 2 years. He was working full-time at Murray's Auto Parts which took precedence and ended his academic career. The only athletics were backyard games of baseball and hockey with friends and some golf and bowling. His primary job began at a store called Murray Auto Parts in the Detroit area back in 1972, when the company opened its first store. He started at the bottom doing stock activities. Never filled out an application. Pay was at the minimum, \$1.00 per hour. He helped to set up the first 3 stores. It grew from there to 120 stores in Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois. O'Reilly Auto purchased the chain in 2009. Ron reached his highest rank as District Manager with 11 stores under his wing in 1990 until his retirement in 2016, after nearly 45 years with the two companies. Ron is currently married to wife, Tina, who does occasionally portray Mary Lincoln and accompanies him. He has a 26-year-old son, Cameron, from his first marriage.

His musical talents are limited to singing in the shower, where he says you'll have to take his word for it that he is pretty good. But he has some skills in woodworking and photography.

Ron's favorite story while performing as Lincoln occurred when he asked a young man if he knew Lincoln's middle name. The young man answered after some thought "It is 'Ham'. his first name is 'Abra,' his middle name is 'Ham' and his last name is 'Lincoln.'" Ron often works that into other presentations.

Ron loves being Lincoln and wishes he could just dress as Lincoln all the time ("Why not?"). He states, "I feel it is the most worthwhile thing I have done in my life. I love putting smiles on the faces of other people." He enjoys the conferences, especially socializing with other members. He suggests that at a future conference, we have a member show and tell, where members can tell how they became Abraham or Mary Lincoln. He would like to know other tips like subjects that others cover in their presentations, how they determine their fees, and how to get period clothing. Lastly, his favorite book is likely whichever one he is currently reading. Right now, that is *Lincoln on the Verge: 13 Days to Washington*.

Respectfully submitted by John Cooper

EARLY LINCOLN PORTRAYERS

Elmer Ellsworth Grandin

The Spring 1993 *Lincarnations* issue shared a trivia question on the first Lincoln Presenter, Abraham's cousin Dennis Hanks, who wore a stovepipe hat and relied on a family resemblance soon after the assassination, while sharing stories of the late President's early life. He was a key player in purchasing and displaying to the public a cabin Lincoln lived in briefly in Decatur, IL. According to Beasley's *McKee Rankin and the Heyday of the American Theater*, no plays were ever produced featuring the character of Abraham Lincoln between 1865 and 1891, though Southern playwrights depicted him harshly during the war (John Hill Howell's play is one example).



Arthur McKee Rankin (no known relation), a native of Canada, and Archibald Douglas Gordon, born in Ceylon to English and Scottish parents, would collaborate to produce the first play about the sixteenth president. Rankin was a leading stage actor and director, while Gordon was a leading journalist and author based in the U.S. Their collaboration had Rankin evolving the design while Gordon wrote the dialogue. The play consisted of seven acts set between 1863 and 1865 and was not restricted to depicting cabinet members and other political or military characters, but also Mary Lincoln (played by Ellenore Carroll), Robert (Bingley Fales), and "Tad" (Walter Flynn) as well as members of the notorious Booth ring. Myron Leffingwell portrayed Booth, and Elmer Ellsworth Grandin (1861-1933) portrayed Lincoln.



Grandin's portrayal was lauded for his performance and resemblance to the leading character. One critic did note that the historical Lincoln spoke with a "shrill voice" while the actor spoke in deep tones. The first performance was held at the Grand Opera House in Indianapolis on September 8, 1891, followed by appearances at Chicago's Grand Opera House on September 13, and Philadelphia's Chestnut Street Theater on October 12. The play was cancelled after eight weeks on the road, never reaching New York. Its structure seemed more like a string of five tableaux than as a coherent story. Throughout its Chicago production, the play underwent various changes until the last performance seemed worse than the first. Controversy over the subject matter might have also influenced the play's restructuring. The play depicted the Booth ring from its earlier attempts through the assassination, ending with Booth's death at the tobacco barn. Actors' associations stated that the play would cause Edwin Booth unneeded distress, and stated they will not attend any performance. Grandin noted that Robert Todd Lincoln discouraged dramatizations of his father.



Rankin would continue acting on stage and is known to have appeared in three films between 1919 and 1929, with the title role in *Daniel Boone* in 1923. No mention has been found of any other portrayals of Lincoln until his death, but he retains the distinction as being the first actor to present Lincoln on stage. This venture did not prevent another playwright from including Lincoln as a character in another play, one that proved to be very successful and to be discussed in the next newsletter.

John M. McKee

THE LINCOLN QUESTION and ANSWERS

"Abraham and Mary Lincoln shared some values. What values do you think they shared and how did these affect Abraham's political path. (in one or two paragraphs)."



Mary and Abraham Lincoln both valued education, whether formal or informal. They were great readers, and we know Lincoln learned primarily from reading. This allowed Lincoln to have a breadth of knowledge possibly not easy to obtain in traditional schooling. They valued their family and doted on their sons. They believed in actively and persistently working to obtain the goals they desired, which served Lincoln well in the White House.

MaryAnne Mathews



Unquestionably it was their devotion to each other and their commitment to their vows, Abraham had inscribed in his wedding ring Love is Eternal. Yes, they had their quarrels and verbal arguments, and Mary was indeed quite difficult to live with (and so was he) but I never read anything that was said about a breakup and certainly never any talk of a divorce. Their commitment to each other was sound. If a second value could be mentioned, it would be their devotion to their children.

Honestly Speaking

Larry "Larry-like Lincoln" Elliott



She saw greatness in him early on and he found a girl who liked Shakespeare and poetry. In *Did Lincoln Own Slaves*, Prokopowicz's index entries for Mary are mostly negative. His ambition was equal to hers, unlike the opinion of John Todd Stuart who claimed that she supplied his "will and ambition".

Richard Miller

BOOK DISCUSSION

QUESTION ON OWNING SLAVESI have been reading *Did Lincoln Own Slaves* by Gerald Prokopowicz. If you are an Aber, you will find this book to be a huge benefit, which will refresh your memory on several topics and prepare you to answer questions that may be asked. However, that comment is not the purpose of this writing.

In the section of the book specifically dealing with that question posed in the title, there is mention on page 160 of the effort of Lincoln and Herndon to raise funds to free a young free black fellow from Springfield who had been illegally imprisoned in New Orleans. That reminded me of some information provided to me on this issue several years ago. That information referenced a book titled *Lincoln's Family: The True Story*, by Troy Cowan. That book mentions this incident, with the author concluding that Lincoln did indeed own a slave, citing the circumstance mentioned. In my opinion, as Lincoln might say, the author has his facts right, but reached the wrong conclusion.

In the brief mention of this incident in Mr. Prokopowicz's book, he cites as reference *Herndon's Lincoln*, pages 232-233, which provides more details about this incident. Each book provides some details that the other doesn't, but the basic facts remain the same, that Lincoln and Herndon raised funds to free the young man so that he could return to freedom and Illinois.

The Prokopowicz book also cites a different incident in which Lincoln is said to have offered to pay for a slave to solve a dispute between a Union Camp commander in Kentucky, and the slave's owner, an acquaintance of Lincoln, who was a Judge in Kentucky. (This can be found in *The Collected Works*, Vol 5, page 512). In brief, a Colonel Utley of the Twenty-Second Wisconsin Volunteers was asked to return to George Robertson, a Kentucky judge, a young lad Judge Robertson said he owned, that had been discovered in Colonel Utley's camp at Nicholasville, Kentucky. Colonel Utley refused to allow Judge Robertson into the camp to take possession of the boy and refused to lead him out of the camp. He left the decision to leave or stay to the boy, but the boy stayed, as he did not want to return to his owner. Judge Robertson took legal action against Colonel Utley. Colonel Utley's men refused admission to the camp to those who would arrest him. Colonel Utley wrote Lincoln, saying he had been accused of "man stealing". Lincoln, who personally knew Judge Robertson, tried to resolve the situation, and get Colonel Utley out of the legal mess he was in. Lincoln offered to pay Judge Robertson up to \$500 to free the boy. Judge Robertson, in a later letter to Lincoln, said that it was a civil case, and he was suing the Colonel for \$1,000 for the cost of his lost slave.

Lincoln's offer does not constitute ownership, as Lincoln was willing to pay to free the boy.

(This issue was not resolved until after the war. Judge Robertson continued to pursue his claim against Utley after the war and was awarded a settlement in a U.S. Circuit court in Wisconsin of \$908.60 plus \$26.40 in costs. In 1873 congress approved the U.S. Treasury to pay Judge Robertson the amount that had been assessed to Colonel Utley. There is much detail in Vol. 5, pages 512-514 on this story).

As Mr. Prokopowicz mentions, some folks just cannot be convinced that Lincoln never owned a slave. However, if you run into someone that uses either of these instances to support their argument, you can be prepared to provide the details, although neither of these incidents gives evidence of actual ownership, but rather supports the view of Lincoln trying to right a wrong.

Murray Cox

Association of Lincoln Presenters

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ITEMS FOR PURCHASE



We still have more Association of Lincoln Presenters patches. They are \$4 each. The patches look very smart on ball caps, jackets, and shirts. Please include an extra dollar for postage. Make the check out to ALP.

Susan Miller

108 Hidden Meadow Lane
Nicholasville, KY 40356