

Mary's Velvet Rose December 2021

ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS



ALP Conference 2022 - April 21-24

<http://www.lincolnpresenters.com/2022-conference/>

From Murray Cox – host of the 2022 conference in Leavenworth, Kansas. “With one minor exception (that being of a speaker from the Kansas State Historical Society who cannot attend as originally planned), everything remains as was planned for this past April. We'll see what April brings, but everyone seems anxious to get back to the old normal and are looking forward to our visit, with Abe's and Mary's in their finery.”



ALP is looking for Hosts and Hostesses!

So many of us have happy, enjoyable memories of ALP Conferences - learning new things about the Lincoln Family and the world they inhabited; meeting new folks with common interests; catching up with old friends from across the country. The ALP is looking for future hosts and hostesses of these annual conferences, and I'd like to encourage you to consider that role. As a member of the Conference Committee and the Hostess of the 2018 ALP Conference in Freeport, I would be happy to chat with any of you regarding the ins and outs of hosting an ALP Conference. In order for us to continue to attend informative and exciting conferences, we need our members to step up and organize them. Please contact me at LFKeyes@gmail.com

From Laura Keyes



Christmas Presents for the Lincolns

This article was on the Lincoln National Historic Site Facebook page.

We're sure the Lincoln boys were anxiously awaiting Santa's arrival by this time. But what was Santa going to bring the family?



For Mr. Lincoln--perhaps a book or a nice comb with which it tame his "wild Republican hair" (his words, not ours!). Mrs. Lincoln may have gotten fabric for a new dress or perhaps one of the linen handkerchiefs Mr. Lincoln purchased on December 24, 1860. For Robert, a new hat or fashionable walking stick to take back to school might have been on his list. For Willie and Tad, perhaps wooden hoops to race down the street, checkers, toy soldiers, and everyone's favorite--firecrackers!!--which yes, looked more like small sticks of dynamite!

Springfield stores also advertised books, pen knives, and dominoes available at "Kris Kringle's Headquarters" to help Santa fill his bag of goodies. Traditionally, the Lincoln boys wouldn't hang up their stockings (probably borrowed from Mary Lincoln since hers were the longest and had the most room to fill) until Christmas Eve.

In 1860, a holiday visitor commented on how mature Robert Lincoln was in helping his little brothers hang their stockings but being very careful not to ruin the magic of who filled those stockings.

[from Ruth Painter Randall's "Lincoln's Sons," pg. 83-84]
Good times were had by all!



Thanksgiving's Timeline

The New York Times,
November 25, 2021,
By David Leonhardt



The first appearance of the word “thanksgiving” in The Times digital archives — which go back to 1851 — did not refer to the holiday. It instead was a reference on Oct. 4, 1851, to “an appropriate prayer and thanksgiving” from a reverend at the opening of the Queens County’s annual agricultural exhibition. “Thursday was quite a jubilee in the pleasant village of Jamaica, Long Island,” an unnamed reporter for The New York Daily Times wrote. “The ruddy, manly appearance of the farmers, and the freshness, delicacy, and real natural loveliness of their wives and daughters, (for which the county is justly renowned,) were sights to cheer and amaze the citizen, and many were there to witness and enjoy them.”

The first mention of the holiday occurred less than a week later, in a brief news item reporting that the governor of Massachusetts had declared Thursday, Nov. 27, 1851, as “a day of public thanksgiving and praise.” There was no national Thanksgiving holiday at the time.

The origin story of Thanksgiving that’s often told in school — of a friendly meal between pilgrims and Native Americans — is inaccurate. As far back as 1974, The Times ran an article describing the holiday as a “national day of mourning” for many Native people.

The real origin of the national holiday dates to Abraham Lincoln. On Oct. 3, 1863, he called for the country, “in the midst of a civil war of unequaled magnitude and severity,” to set aside the last Thursday in November as “a day of Thanksgiving.” The Times published his Thanksgiving proclamation on the front page, and several times subsequently.

While reciting the country’s many blessings — a productive economy, bountiful harvests and a growing economy — Lincoln also recommended that Americans give thanks “with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience.” Lincoln’s proclamation was in part a response to Sarah Josepha Hale, the editor of Godey’s Lad’s Book who had spent decades campaigning for a national day of gratitude.

A pandemic, overlooked

Like this year’s version, Thanksgiving in 1918 occurred in the midst of a global pandemic. But the atmosphere was surprisingly joyous. World War I had ended on Nov. 11, and the country was celebrating, despite a horrific number of influenza deaths in October. During the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, the Times articles contained relatively few mentions of the so-called Spanish flu. “Thanksgiving Day this year will evoke a gratitude deeper, a spirit of reverence more devout, than America has felt for many years,” a Times editorial on Nov. 19

said. One factor may have been that the pandemic briefly receded that November, before surging again at the end of the year. As has happened over the past two years, a virus ebbed and flowed in mysterious ways.

Depression and recovery

By 1930, the country's mood was much darker. A front-page headline on Thanksgiving Day that year reported: "450 Tons of Food Given to Needy, But Supply Fails." The police turned away elderly men and women to reserve the food for families with young children.

The Times also reported that the Thanksgiving tradition of ragamuffins — in which children would dress up and go door to door asking for coins or treats — seemed to be fading in Manhattan. "Things ain't the way they used to be," a police officer said.

In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to spark the economy by moving Thanksgiving one week earlier, to create a longer Christmas shopping season. Critics mocked the policy as "Franksgiving," and it failed. Roosevelt announced in 1941 that he was abandoning the experiment for the next year. Roosevelt ultimately settled on the fourth Thursday of the month — a middle ground that made sure the holiday would not occur later than Nov. 28 and that Christmas shopping could always begin in November.

November 22, 1963

Thanksgiving in 1963 came only six days after the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and most public celebrations were canceled. The Macy's parade was an exception, The Times reported, because the organizers felt its cancellation would be "a disappointment to millions of children."

The Kennedys gathered at the family compound in Hyannis Port, Mass., but they skipped their usual game of touch football. "Like millions of other Americans, they will give the day over to the children and mourn together their loss," The Times wrote.

The isolation of 2020

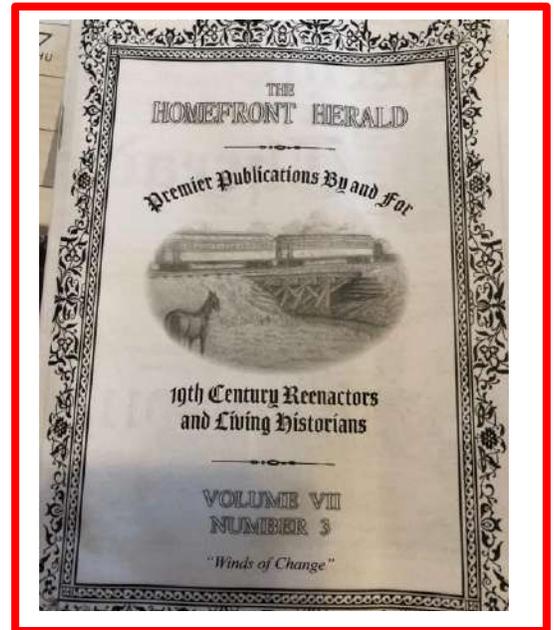
The Covid-19 pandemic arguably caused a bigger break in Thanksgiving traditions than anything that came before. Since Lincoln's proclamation, even during war, depression and tragedy, most Americans still found ways to gather with family and friends for a holiday meal. But the threat from a pandemic — better understood in 2020 than it had been in 1918 — caused many people to stay home last year.



The Homefront Herald

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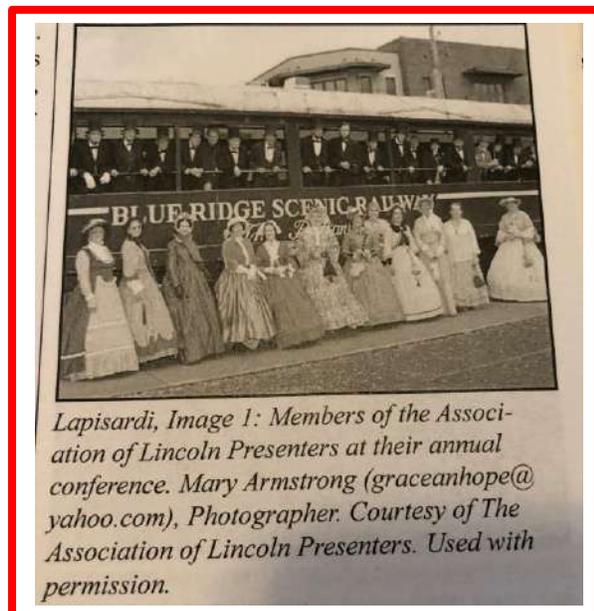


The latest edition of the Homefront Herald has an article titled “ Developing First-person Portrayals: An Introductory Guide” and in it is a shout out to the Association of Lincoln Presenters.

I never cease to be astonished at the Association of Lincoln Presenters' sense of camaraderie and mutual support among members. There seems to be relatively little sense of rivalry, but rather a shared sense of purpose and a willingness to (quite literally) make room for all the Lincolns at the table. *See Lapisardi, Image 1.*

Here is recognition of ALP's mission.

First person presentations of a well-known couple as the Lincolns is daunting and requires a great deal of skill and research to portray it accurately. This is the what our conferences provide for all.



Lapisardi, Image 1: Members of the Association of Lincoln Presenters at their annual conference. Mary Armstrong (graceanhope@yahoo.com), Photographer. Courtesy of The Association of Lincoln Presenters. Used with permission.

Further Reading:

“Solving a Lincoln Literary Mystery: ‘Little Eddie’”

Samuel P. Wheeler

https://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jala/2629860.0033.205/--solving-a-lincoln-literary-mystery-little-eddie?rgn=main;view=fulltext&fbclid=IwAR2yIWg73D_gDlpAkxfk9IPsXe1Rv6qxPnfFMLNdxcW0zvmBple_SRiEUy

Mary Lincoln’s letter to her mother-in-law

On December 19, 1867, the widowed Mary Todd Lincoln sent a letter to her mother-in-law, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln.

https://lincolncollection.tumblr.com/post/135191690884/mary-todd-lincolns-letter-to-her-mother-in-law?fbclid=IwAR2Nfyc_12v2e8zAs9yNG3wPnlqC3RmFLcYNvr-I7r