

# Mary's Velvet Rose ~ May 2025

## ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS



### 2025 Conference

The 29th annual conference of the Association of Lincoln Presenters was held April 24–27, 2025, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. This event brought together historians, reenactors, and enthusiasts dedicated to preserving and promoting the legacy of Abraham and Mary Lincoln.



Kalamazoo holds a unique place in Lincoln history as the only city in Michigan where Abraham Lincoln delivered a public speech. In August 1856, he addressed a Republican rally in Bronson Park. This ALP conference honored that legacy. The ladies are standing in front of the recent Lincoln statue installed in Bronson Park in August 2023, spearheaded by the Kalamazoo Lincoln Institute (KLI).

Thursday night the group participated in “Trivia with the Lincolns” and heard an excellent presentation – “Lincoln’s Winning Smile” by Cameron Brown, president of Kalamazoo Lincoln Institute.

On Friday morning there was a lecture “Lincoln and Native Americans.” The group journeyed to Schoolcraft, Michigan to the Dr. Nathan Thomas home that is now a historical house museum and Underground Railroad Museum.

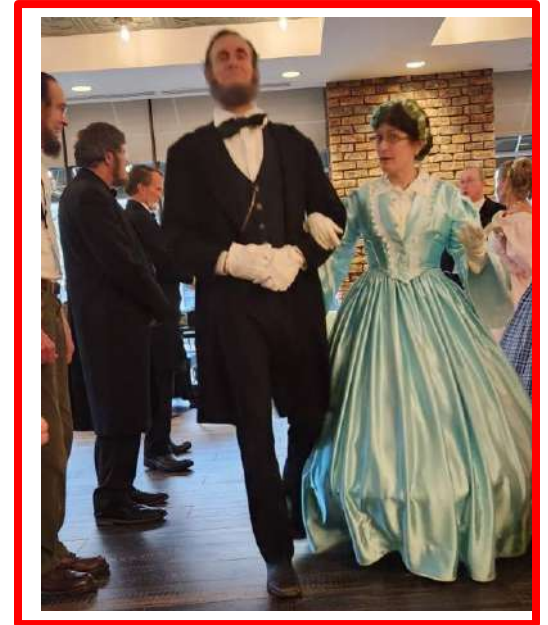


Friday afternoon the conference participants toured the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and there was another lecture “Who had Tea with Lincoln; Why Did Lincoln Come to Kalamazoo?” A discussion with ALP members about the finer points of reenacting the Lincolns followed afterwards.

A quick change back at the hotel and a buffet dinner was served, and after that a Civil War Ball. Joanne Wood looks lovely in mint green and Kevin looks like he’s having a great time!

Saturday morning there were four lectures at the lovely building owned by the Ladies Library Association. “The Role of Jackson, Michigan in the Founding of the Republican Party”, “Texting Lincoln: A Semi-true Tale of an Illinois Prairie”, “Lawyer’s Return to Kalamazoo”, “Kalamazoo Ladies Soldiers Aid Society and their Sanitary Fair” and “Kalamazoo County and the Civil War”

Lunch was at the Nonprofit Advocacy Coalition just down the road from the Ladies Library Association building. Many ALP members walked down the street on a pretty spring day. It’s a great sight to see so many costumed interpreters.



The annual Mary Lincoln Luncheon featured Laura Keyes and her portrayal of Mary Harlan Lincoln.

Laura F. Keyes, as we know, is a seasoned historical interpreter and librarian from Illinois. She brought to life the nuanced character of Mary Harlan Lincoln—the daughter-in-law of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln—through her compelling first-person portrayal. Her performance, titled *Mary Harlan Lincoln: Mourning First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln*, delves into the complex relationship between the two Mary Lincolns.

Set shortly after Mary Todd Lincoln's death in 1882, the narrative follows Mary Harlan Lincoln as she sifts through one of her late mother-in-law's storage trunks. The emotionally charged act served as a catalyst for reflections on their shared past, highlighting the tensions and bonds that defined their relationship. Through this portrayal, Keyes gave a glimpse into the personal dynamics of the Lincoln family, moving beyond the public personas to reveal the intimate struggles and connections within.

Later that afternoon at the Annual Business meeting, Larry and Mary Elliott were presented the ALP Excellence Award. The Elliotts have been active in the ALP for over installation of a two decades. They were instrumental in planning and hosting three conferences and have done much to promote the mission of the Association.



Buffalo New York was chosen as the site of the 2027 Conference to be hosted by ALP member Glenn Murray.

Saturday evening Madelyn Porter portrayed Sojourner Truth at a theater presentation titled “Saturday Night (A)live – History Brought to Life.” Fourteen Mary and Abraham Lincolns, a General Grant and Jefferson Davis also participated in the production of “The Chronological Lincoln.”

The 2025 ALP Conference in Kalamazoo successfully combined historical scholarship with community involvement, honoring Lincoln's enduring legacy. As the ALP continues its mission, future conferences will build upon this foundation, fostering education and appreciation for one of America's most iconic figures. We give many thanks to Kevin Wood for hosting the 2025 Conference.

**All photos were taken from Tom George Davison’s Facebook page. Check his website [davisonimaged.com](http://davisonimaged.com) for images that can be purchased.**

## **April 9-12, 2026**

The 2026 Association of Lincoln Presenters conference will be held in Bardstown, Kentucky. Larry and Mary Elliott will be the hosts.

The Fairfield Hotel by Marriott will be the conference’s home base. It has a lovely breakfast area and a good size conference room for a dinner and silent auction. It has a lovely pool and a great exercise room.



Plans are underway for a great conference. Thursday evening there will be a meet and greet the community at the Lincoln National Bank. Friday the group will be bused to “Museum Row” home of four museums in Bardstown and include The Civil War Museum in the Western Theater, The Museum of Women in the Civil War, The General Hal Moore Military Museum, and The Old Bardstown Colonial Village. Conference attendees will visit My Old Kentucky Home – a State Historic Site for a tour.



The Mary Lincoln Luncheon and the lunch for the Abraham Lincolns will be at the Talbott Restaurant and Inn. [Home - Talbott Tavern Restaurant & Inn](#)

The Old Talbott was built in 1779 and has been called the oldest western stagecoach stop in America. It was a haven of hospitality to those sturdy pioneers and early settlers of Kentucky. The Old Tavern has welcomed a long procession of statesmen, soldiers, adventurers, artists, and rulers, including a four year old Abraham Lincoln.

After lunch we will travel to the Oscar Getz Bourbon History Museum. This will be a very enlightening tour of the museum and lecture by the curator about the importance of Lincoln's whiskey tax that supported the Union Army and the fight to save the union.

A little free time will be enjoyed back at the hotel that afternoon to get ready for a banquet later in the evening at My Old Kentucky Home. Larry will be asking ALP members to perform short presentations after the banquet.

Saturday the group will travel to Hodgenville and visit to the Lincoln Birthplace, Lincoln Museum, and Knob Creek Home. Iris Larue, longtime director of the Lincoln Museum will present "Ladies in Lincoln's Life." Afterwards the group will travel to the Kentucky Railway Museum and enjoy lunch aboard the historic train taking them back to Bardstown.

The Annual Business Meeting, dinner and Silent Auction will be back at the hotel on Saturday evening.

## Mary Lincoln Virtual Book Club

No matter where we are in our path to researching Mary Lincoln, there is always so much more to learn about her life, family, and times. At each conference I attend, I'm always happy learn more – mostly from my fellow Mary Lincoln presenters.

I am proposing that we, the ladies of the ALP, form a Virtual Book Club to learn more about Mary Lincoln's life and times. This Book Club would meet quarterly via Zoom, and we would collectively read books that will improve our understanding of the Lincoln Family, and ultimately, our programs.

If you are interested in joining such a group, please contact me at [LFKeyes@gmail.com](mailto:LFKeyes@gmail.com) before 15 June with your name, email address, and any comments on what time of day or day of the week might be best for you to meet virtually. Keep in mind that the ALP membership is nationwide, and therefore we must choose a time that is convenient to all.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. Happy Reading!

Laura Keyes  
[LFKeyes@gmail.com](mailto:LFKeyes@gmail.com)



## Zoom Lectures and ALP Social Time

Laura Keys has planned several zoom presentations for the members of ALP. It is at 6:30 Central Time with a social ½ hour and then a lecture at 7 pm. The subjects, dates, and times subject to change. Contact Laura at [LFKeyes@gmail.com](mailto:LFKeyes@gmail.com) for more information and to obtain registration link.

### 1 June

“Cooper Union and Phillips Exeter Academy: Essential Stops on Lincoln's Journey to the Presidency” Jack Herney, Instructor of History at Phillips Exeter Academy for 40 years, Chair of the History Department and Dean of Faculty

### 17 August

The Lincoln Miracle: Inside the Republican Convention That Changed History

Author Ed Achor. This book won the Harold Holzer Lincoln Forum Book Prize for the best book about Abraham Lincoln published in 2023.

### 12 October

Lincoln/Net, a digital project of Northern Illinois University, Drew E. VandeCreek, Director of Digital Initiatives of the University Libraries

### 7 December

Robert Todd Lincoln's Hildene, Stephanie Moffett-Hynds, Programming Director and Gary Parzych, Exhibits Manager