



LINCARNATIONS

Volume 24 No. 1

August 2016

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS



Taking Care of Business

Note from Murray Cox, ALP Treasurer: Those of you who attended our conference in Vandalia in 2015 recall that after Colleen Vincent (*California*) took a fall, a free will offering was taken up and sent to her and her husband, Roger, to help with related expenses. At our annual business meeting this year, I failed to mention that a nice note was received from the Vincents, thanking us for our thoughtfulness. I belatedly mention this now to those of you who donated to this cause, so you will know that your efforts were acknowledged and appreciated by the Vincents.

As always, we urge all of you who have email access to make sure the organization has your correct address. Please send ANY updated contact information to:

John Cooper, Membership Chair, fourscore7yearsago@yahoo.com; 11781 Julie Dr., Baltimore, Ohio 43105, and to ALP President Stan Wernz, Lincolnwernzs@peoplepc.com; 266 Compton Ridge Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio 45215.

We continue to invite you to share your ALP communication ideas with the Lincarnations team: Vicki Woodard, (vwoodard@eiu.edu, 217-932-5378); Dean Dorrell (abe@honest-abe.com, 812-254-7315); and Gerald Payn (gmpayn@sssnet.com, 330-345-5547).

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Association of Lincoln Presenters
266 Compton Ridge Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215

Greetings, ALP Members!

May 9, 2016

The 22nd annual conference of the Association of Lincoln Presenters was held in Santa Claus, Ind. (Spencer County). Our host, Dean Dorrell, along with his committee, had done extensive planning. This planning provided us with a jam-packed conference, with opportunity to address students, share experiences with one another, and visit places young Abe frequented during his teen years. Thanks, Dean, for a wonderful conference.

I take this opportunity to thank long term ALP Board Member Joe Woodard (*Illinois*) for his years of dedicated service to the ALP. Joe advised me in advance of the conference that he wanted to provide others the opportunity to serve on the board, and chose to not run for re-election. Joe, you have given much of yourself to our efforts. When testy issues were under discussion, we could count on you for reasoned points of view clearly expressed. Many thanks, Joe, for your thoughtful service to the ALP.

At the annual business meeting, the ALP Excellence Award was presented to Vern Risty (*Illinois*). Vern is a charter member of ALP, and has attended all conferences but one. He continues to support our mission and our organization, serving on special committees when asked.

In other business: A) Murray Cox (*Indiana*) and John King (*Ohio*) were elected to three-year terms on the board. Board officers are: Stan Wernz, president; John Cooper (*Ohio*), first vice president; Larry Elliott (*Kentucky*), second vice president; Sue Wright (*Tennessee*), secretary; and Murray Cox, treasurer. B) Members are requested to submit articles of interest for publication in Lincarnations. Send your material to Vicki Woodard (vwoodard@eiu.edu). C) Susan Miller (*Kentucky*) reported on the 2017 conference, to be held in Lexington, Ky. Watch for further details. D) The membership selected Freeport, Ill., as the 2018 conference site. Our hostess will be Laura Keyes. E) Robert and Dianne Broski (*California*) have donated funds to ALP to help members incurring financial stress attend conferences. The following committee will establish procedures to administer the funds: Robert Broski, Murray Cox, Mark Rehagen (*Missouri*), Homer Sewell (*Georgia*) and Joe Woodard. Anyone can make tax deductible donations to the fund.

The worship service on Sunday morning wrapped the conference. The pastor's sermon synthesized, then elaborated, on three points that can be gleaned from Lincoln's life: A) Always choose right over wrong. We are given minds; with scripture as a basis, we will know right from wrong; choose the right, regardless of the cost to self. B) Always do your best. It is a terrible and avoidable indictment for someone to be able to say you could have done better. If you always do your best, you will avoid that charge. C) Don't be afraid to let others know you care. When you demonstrate that you care, you will provide others with assurance of their personal worth. You won't always know what you mean to another person, but they will be lifted by knowing you care.

Other conference items will be reported elsewhere in this publication.

Best wishes for a rewarding summer with good health and safe travels!

See you in Lexington!

Stan

22nd Annual Conference Report

Santa Claus, Indiana

Submitted by Joseph Woodard, Illinois

Registration for the 2016 conference of the Association of Lincoln Presenters began at 3 p.m. Thursday, April 14, in the lobby of Santa's Lodge in Santa Claus, Ind. This was the second occasion of the ALP's annual meeting taking place in Santa Claus. (*The ninth annual conference was headquartered there in 2003.*) The Board of Directors met from approximately 3:30 to 5:30 that afternoon in the lodge's conference room.

At 7 p.m., local artist Jerry Baum shared some reminiscences of his long career in art with an audience of ALP members and local residents. At the end of his talk, a member of the audience chosen by lot received one of Baum's original drawings - - one that was used as the cover art on the book given to each person going on the Saturday bus tour. Homer Sewell (*Georgia*) was the lucky recipient.

On Friday morning, association members dressed in costume met outside the Lincoln Theatre of the Lincoln Boyhood State Park and greeted audience members as they arrived for a program of nine short (nine-minute) presentations from 10 ALP members. Most of the audience were fourth- and fifth-grade schoolchildren from local schools. Jim Crabtree (*Ohio*) and Teena Baldrige (*Ohio*) appeared jointly, while Whit McMahon (*Tennessee*), Stan Wernz (*Ohio*), John Walther (*Illinois*), Fred Priebe (*Michigan*), Roger Vincent (*California*), Laura Keyes (*Illinois*), Homer Sewell and Mary Ann Mathews (*Indiana*) appeared singly.

After the program, at around 11:30 a.m., ALP members met at the Bicentennial Plaza of the state park to pose for group photographs.

Those who had so arranged met at noon in the Nancy Hanks Room of the Visitor Center of the Lincoln Boyhood National Monument for lunch and a presentation. Later that afternoon, plenary sessions took place in the Lincoln Chapel of the monument's visitor center. Attendees heard about "Lincoln's Neighbors" from local historian Michael Crews, and then about two re-enactments of Lincoln's flatboat trip from Spencer County, Ind., to New Orleans from Duane Walters, who had participated in both trips.

That evening, a barbecue-style supper was served at Santa's Lodge. Shortly thereafter, the annual business meeting of the Association of Lincoln Presenters convened in the conference room. (*See letter from ALP President Stan Wernz for highlights.*)

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From 9 a.m. to about 4:30 p.m. Saturday, most attendees and several interested others went on a guided bus tour of parts of southern Indiana and some adjacent parts of Kentucky with connections to Abraham Lincoln. There were two buses and a separate guide for each bus. Jim Herron, compiler of the tour guidebook, led one group while the other group was led by William Bartelt, author of "There I Grew Up." The longest stop on the tour was at the Rockport Pioneer Village and Museum, where the group enjoyed a box lunch while visiting the site.

Activities at the Gala that evening, in addition to a buffet-style meal, included music provided by the acoustic duo Wild Mountain Thyme, a silent auction and, for an adventuresome few, dancing directed by Joan Howard (*Kentucky*).

A Sunday morning worship service was held at the Lincoln Chapel of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial Visitor Center. The sermon was delivered by Joe Kamman, a local Methodist clergyman, and there was congregational singing and special music by our own Singing Lincolns.

A few members stayed for the final scheduled event – a photo opportunity surrounding a tree planting on the grounds of the National Memorial at 11 a.m.

Going Out of Business Sale

Former ALP member Kevin Koester writes that he's hanging up his stove pipe hat. "I have only done a handful of appearances in the past handful of years. For that reason, I am offering up for sale my Lincoln costume," he writes. "All items are in good condition. With this outfit, I placed second at Hodgenville, Ky., (in the) 2006 Lincoln Days Look-alike Contest."

Being offered are:

Stove pipe hat -- felt, size 7¼

Frock coat – custom-made, 100 percent wool (Koester wears a size 42L suit coat.)

Pants – custom-made, 100 percent wool, includes suspenders, 40-44 inseam

Vest – black, cotton, adjustable

Shirts (2) – custom-made, cotton, pleated front, sleeve length 35, includes cuff links

Boots – riding, size 12, height 15"

Bowtie – pre-tied

Pocket watch w/chain (battery-operated)

Wire-rimmed glasses (slight magnification)

Total cost -- \$200, plus shipping

Koester says he will transmit electronic photos to interested parties. Please contact him at IamAbrahamLincoln@yahoo.com; 608-723-9205.

A Book Review

“Lincoln's Battle with God: A President's Struggle with Faith and What It Meant for America” (Stephen Mansfield, 2012)

Submitted by Murray Cox (*Indiana*)

I was honored to have been given a book by my office staff for Christmas 2015 titled “Lincoln’s Battle with God” (Stephen Mansfield, Thomas Nelson, 2012). Anyone who has studied Abraham Lincoln knows there was a time in his life that he seemed to struggle with various religious principles, so I was interested in the book and got into it right away. Initially, I found some of Mansfield’s comments interesting. He claims, for example, that early 19th-century religious leaders were concerned about America’s spiritual decline. Reference is made of several Revolutionary War heroes that attacked or criticized Christianity, and that after all of this, revival occurred. Some of these claims differ from the impression we receive from some religious leaders and what politicians tell us today. I also felt there was a fair representation of the pros and cons of camp meetings that followed. But then I began running into several claims made without attribution, which ran through much of the book, and numerous errors. This caused me to wonder about most things the author stated.

I first would like to say that I admit to being heavily influenced by the work of Louis A. Warren (“Lincoln’s Youth in Indiana”) and a complementary book by William Bartelt -- “There I Grew Up.” Those authors have Thomas Lincoln portrayed by his Indiana neighbors as a kind and decent man, while “Lincoln’s Battle with God” states Abraham was miserable in his father’s house. That may or may not be true, but no source is cited. It did not take the author long to raise more questions in my mind about his statements concerning Lincoln and religion (such as a disdain for his father and his father’s religion). There is also that statement that Thomas wouldn’t hesitate to sacrifice his son. Again, all of these with no source cited.

Then there are quotes (the author) uses that Mansfield attributes to Don Fehrenbacher’s “Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln.” However, when quotes are referenced in that source, one finds that on five occasions the quote is graded as D, which is considered by the editors as of more than average doubtful authenticity. Yet, they are used.

I also question the factual information presented (e.g., that John Hay was a childhood friend and that Isaac Singer invented the sewing machine).

In the introduction, Mansfield refers to Lincoln’s flatboat trip with Allen Gentry as taking place in 1828, a fact with which Warren and Bartelt agree. But later Mansfield refers to two flatboat trips Lincoln made in 1830, and refers to this as the first time Lincoln had been to New Orleans. Mansfield also refers to the flatboat as having a size of 16 by 4 feet. Then there is the statement that the winter of the deep snow occurred no sooner than they had arrived in Illinois.

Perhaps I am too critical of a book that was not intended to be a historical document but, rather, an inspiration to those of faith. I don’t disagree with the overall premise of the book or its conclusion. But I certainly have issues with the supposed facts presented to reach this conclusion.



Mary's Velvet Rose

Have you read the following?

"Mary Lincoln: Southern Girl, Northern Woman"
by Stacy Pratt McDermott, 2015

The story of Mary Lincoln's life represents the complex and dramatic events of the mid-19th century in the United States. Mary Lincoln was a woman ahead of her time. She was educated and ambitious. Her life epitomizes the divisions between North and South. As the daughter of a southern, slave-holding family, Mary Lincoln had close ties to people on both sides of the war. Her life shows how the North and South were interconnected, even as the country was torn apart by sectional strife.

In this concise narrative, Stacy Pratt McDermott presents an even-handed account of Mary Lincoln. Her work is supported by primary documents and the resources are readily available at the following website: <http://routledge-textbooks.com/author/historicalamericans-9781138786813/>. There are links to the resources, including images, video, Web links and documents.

The book is divided into five chapters depicting five stages of her life -- Mary Ann Todd, Mary Todd to Mary Lincoln, Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, Mrs. President Lincoln, and The Widow Lincoln.

In the introduction to the book, McDermott states something profound that we haven't paid a lot of attention to recently. **Mary never called herself Mary Todd Lincoln.** Until her sister was born, she was Mary Anne Todd; after that, she went by Mary Todd. When she arrived in Springfield, she was Miss Todd, Mary Todd or Molly. After she married Abraham Lincoln, she was Mary Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln or Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. She took the Lincoln name and was Mary Lincoln until she died. It is historically inaccurate to call her Mary Todd Lincoln.

Stacy Pratt McDermott is the assistant director and associate editor of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Papers of Abraham Lincoln. She addressed the 17th Lincoln Symposium of the Abraham Lincoln Institute at Ford's Theater this past year. In her address, she discusses 10 misconceptions of Mary Lincoln.

Please enjoy McDermott's address at Ford's Theater:

<http://www.c-span.org/video/?406672-105/discussion-life-legacy-mary-lincoln>

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"Lincoln's Final Hours: Conspiracy, Terror, and the Assassination of America's Greatest President"

By Kathryn Canavan, 2015, University of Kentucky Press

In November 2015, a couple of ALP members had the opportunity to enjoy a presentation by the author of "Lincoln's Final Hours" at the Kentucky History Center. Canavan held the audience spellbound as she told the tale of John Wilkes Booth and the behind-the-scenes conspiracy to assassinate the president. Here is a description of the book from the Amazon Book website:

In "Lincoln's Final Hours," author Kathryn Canavan takes a magnifying glass to the last moments of the president's life and to the impact his assassination had on a country still reeling from a bloody civil war. With vivid, thoroughly researched prose and a reporter's eye for detail, this fast-paced account not only furnishes a glimpse into John Wilkes Booth's personal and political motivations but also illuminates the stories of ordinary people whose lives were changed forever by the assassination.

While countless works on the Lincoln assassination exist, "Lincoln's Final Hours" moves beyond the well-known traditional accounts, offering readers a front-row seat to the drama and horror of Lincoln's death by putting them in the shoes of the audience in Ford's Theatre that dreadful evening. Through her careful narration of the twists of fate that placed the president in harm's way, of the plotting conversations Booth had with his accomplices, and of the immediate aftermath of the assassination, Canavan illustrates how the experiences of a single night changed the course of history.

"Four Marys and a Jessie: The Story of the Lincoln Women"

By C.J. King , 2005

This is an excellent book about the Lincoln women -- Mary Lincoln (the president's wife), Mary Harlan Lincoln (Robert Todd Lincoln's wife), Mary "Mamie" Lincoln Isham (Robert's daughter), Jessie Lincoln Beckwith (Robert's second daughter and Peggy's mother), and Mary "Peggy" Lincoln Beckwith (President Lincoln's great-granddaughter). The book relates the four generations of women and how they dealt with the Lincoln legacy.

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In Memoriam:

James A. Getty, 83, of Gettysburg, Pa., died Sept. 26, 2015, in Gettysburg. For the past four decades, Jim's full-time vocation was the study and portrayal of Abraham Lincoln. Over the years, he touched countless thousands of lives with his vast knowledge of all-things Lincoln. A full obituary can be found at:

http://www.gettysburgtimes.com/obituaries/article_ae6f150f-cce8-5a63-9396-df7489aa10be.html

Jimmie Ray Rubin, 84, of Prosperity, W.V., passed away Tuesday, April 19, 2016. In his retirement, beginning in 1995, Jim enjoyed presenting the 16th president for more than 15 years. He and his wife, Edna, were very active in ALP activities and, until illness prevented them from doing so, both regularly attended the annual conferences, as well as other related events. A full obituary can be found at: <http://blueridgebeckley.tributes.com/dignitymemorial/obituary/Jimmie-Rubin-103497524>

William T. Peck, 86, of California, passed away peacefully at 12:45 a.m. Nov. 3, 2015. He was a passionate historian and educator who touched thousands with his charisma and knowledge. We are extremely grateful to have had him as a President Lincoln presenter for more than 20 years.

If you hear of an ALP member's passing, please notify Stan Wernz, 266 Compton Ridge Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45215; [513-761-6120](tel:513-761-6120); Lincolnwernzs@peoplepc.com. This information will be shared with the membership and allow the Memorial Book to be updated.

Mark Your Calendars:

Lincoln Days Celebration, Hodgenville, Ky. – Oct. 1 and 2, 2016

2017 ALP Conference, Lexington, Ky. (Susan Miller – host) – April 20-13, 2017

2018 ALP Conference, Freeport, Ill. (Laura Keyes – host) – April 19-22, 2018