



# LINCARNATIONS

Volume 15 No. 1

February 2007

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS



## Taking Care of Business

### Convention Tidbits...

As veterans of past conventions well know, schools in host cities often invite their guests into the classrooms on Friday mornings. Our host, **Lee Williams**, reports that the children of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, are no different. If you are planning to attend this year's convention and are willing to volunteer, let Lee know. He can be contacted at 712-774-5781; 712-249-7855 (cell); or [lee@abelincoln.org](mailto:lee@abelincoln.org).

Also, **Murray Cox, Indiana**, reports that at the close of the convention on Sunday, he will host a brief visit to Arsenal Island, located at Rock Island, Ill. “Rock Island appears to be approximately 75 minutes northeast of our convention site,” he said. “If you are traveling in that direction, it could easily be a stop on your way home. I hope you'll be able to join us.”

He adds that there, “at the site of the Rock Island Bridge, ‘Abraham Lincoln’ will review the background of the construction of the bridge, the collision of the Effie Afton with the bridge, and the resulting trial in which (Lincoln) defended the builders of the bridge against suit brought by the boat's owner.”

According to Cox, the site is a federal facility. Thus, he has been advised that drivers will need to have a valid I.D., and all other occupants of the vehicle will need to have a photo I.D.

*(Editor's Note: Partial entry from "Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia": The Rock Island Arsenal, located on Arsenal Island in the Mississippi River, on Rock Island, Ill., is the largest government-owned weapons manufacturing arsenal in the United States. (It) has been an active manufacturer of military equipment and ordnance since the 1880s...*

*"The Rock Island Arsenal Museum was established on July 4, 1905. It is the second oldest U.S. Army Museum in the United States after the West Point Museum... Other historical sites in the area include the Confederate Cemetery, the Rock Island National Cemetery, 19<sup>th</sup>- century stone workshops, officer's quarters along the river, Col. Davenport's House and the site of the first bridge built across the Mississippi.*

*"During the Civil War, Arsenal Island was home to a Confederate prison camp, the Rock Island Prison Barracks and the cemetery where a total of 1,964 Confederate prisoners and 125 Union guards are buried. The camp was operational from December 1863 to July 1865."*

*For the full description, please see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock\\_Island\\_Arsenal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_Island_Arsenal).)*

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An Open Letter to the ALP Membership

**From Stan Wernz, President**

266 Compton Ridge Drive

Cincinnati, Ohio 45215-4120

January 2007

Dear Members,

Welcome to our newest members! We wish you many rewarding days as members of the Association of Lincoln Presenters. (Check below for names.)

A few moments ago, I received a phone call from Lee Williams, our conference host in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. What a delightful call! Following our conversation, I am even more excited about the conference this year. (See pages 5 and 6 for details). Plan now to join your colleagues for this opportunity for fellowship and education.

I receive numerous mailings as your president. A recent one which caught my eye told of "Our American Cousin," a new opera which presents the story of Lincoln's final evening at Ford Theatre. The concert version of this opera is set to debut on March 31, 2007, at Amherst College in Amherst, Mass.

In several states throughout the nation, preparations are underway to celebrate the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth; however, in other states (Ohio, being one), the planning is reportedly off "at a crawl." A fitting tribute to Mr. Lincoln would be for all 50 states, in addition to our nation's capitol, to pay tribute through planned activities throughout the year 2009. Please check with your state leaders to determine what planning is underway, and offer your assistance as you are able. Why not all members in a state coordinate inquiries for greater impact?

Finally, there has been limited response to my request for information about your activities. (See insert in Sept. 2006 issue of *Lincarnations*.) I really need to know who is actively portraying Lincoln, Mary, Robert and others. I also need to know how far each of you is willing to travel. From time to time, I receive inquiries about someone to make an appearance, but time doesn't permit my taking a survey. Plus, I always prefer suggesting several of our members. Your assistance is requested. (Editor's Note: If you are unable to find your copy of this application form, please contact Dean Dorrell, 801 E. Walnut St., Washington, Ind. 47501; 812-254-7315; [abc@honest-abc.com](mailto:abc@honest-abc.com). Or look on the Association of Lincoln Presenters' Web site – <http://www.lincolnpresenters.org>.: Click on the "Membership" link)

I hope to see you in Mount Pleasant!

Your humble servant,

Stan

### Welcome!

We'd like to officially welcome those of you who have joined our organization in the past year – **Susan Aloisio, Bradenton, Fla.; Glenn Bruan, Forest Park, Ill.; Michael Crutcher, Nicholasville, Ky.; Jane DeBeaumont, Victorville, Calif; Joyce Higgins, Cincinnati, Ohio; Glenna Holloway, Lexington, Ky.; Ralph Lincoln, Berlin, Pa.; Gerald Pitts, Greenwood, S.C.; Steven McKendrick, Fayetteville, Pa.; Loren Small, Spring Hill, Tenn.; and Christopher Ulinski, Victorville, Calif.**

## Our Members Share...

*Members of the Association of Lincoln Presenters were recently asked via e-mail to share some of the “funnier/more unusual/most difficult questions” that they’ve been asked over the years. Several responded, with some asking for help in answering some of the trickier queries put before them. Perhaps you, our readers, can help them out!*

From **Bill Ames, Michigan:**

“The most-asked ‘question’ I get by far is a statement -- ‘I thought you were dead!!!!’

“I answer, ‘People can do terrible things to your body, including killing you, but they can never take away what you are, and that is your spirit which lives on. Hopefully, you can see that spirit of Lincoln through me.’”

From **George Cheevers, Massachusetts:**

“A couple of years ago, a youngster asked me, ‘What was Abraham Lincoln’s favorite color?’ The question presupposes Abraham Lincoln had a favorite color. I don’t know whether he did or not. I’d like to definitively know -- and I’d like a source. Thanks.”

From **Chet Damron, Michigan:**

“A few years ago, I was presenting my ‘impression’ of our friend, Abe, in a Christian elementary/middle school. I had the usual run of typical questions. Suddenly, a boy who looked like he would fit into the seventh or eighth grade, sitting in the back row of the room, raised his hand. I recognized him with, ‘And what is your question, young man?’

“Mr. Lincoln, did you put on clean underwear this morning?”

“Subtle laughter went throughout the student body as his teacher, seated next to my young inquirer, just slid down in her chair as she attempted to get beneath her chair with embarrassment.

“I thought upon this important question for a moment and then, with a very straight face, answered, ‘Yes, sir, my young friend, we have a rule in our home -- clean underwear *every* morning!’ The student body applauded wildly.

“Shortly thereafter we concluded the questions, as time had caught us. The students returned to their classrooms, but my new friend’s teacher raced to meet me at the podium. With the students gone, I roared in laughter (just like ole’ Abe would have done, I think!). She apologized profusely, and I said, ‘Honey, you know, I think that is just about the most unique and insightful question I have ever had asked of me. Please, don’t feel bad. He will likely be our president in a few years!’ Yep, Art was right -- ‘Kids (still) ask the darndest things!’”

From **Randy Duncan, Illinois:**

“I have been asked so many questions like, ‘How does it feel to be shot?’ or questions the teacher told (students) to make up as assignments so they weren’t really interested in the answers. The best question I have gotten reflected a truly inquisitive young mind. An about-nine-year-old girl asked me very seriously, ‘Do you use soap or shampoo on your beard?’”

From **Jim Hitchcock, New York:**

“Quite a few years ago, I was presenting to a fifth-grade class in Florida. During the beginning, I explained that Abe’s sister had died in childbirth. About 20 minutes later, during the question-and-answer period, one little girl raised her hand and asked, ‘What happened to the baby?’ ‘What baby?’ was my reply, and then it finally sunk in. To tell the truth, I did not have the foggiest idea. I told the class that the baby died in infancy, thinking that if I was wrong, I would call the teacher and tell her the next day. As luck would have it, I was right.”

*(Continued on page 4)*

From **Donna McCreary, Indiana:**

Q: “Mrs. Lincoln, I’ve read that you beat your husband with a broom.”

A: “Sir, I assure you that if I ever took a broom to my husband, he had just returned from riding the circuit and needed a good dusting off before entering our clean home.”

From **Joe Woodard, Illinois:**

Q: “How did you play when you were small?”

A: This question came from a second- or third-grade schoolchild. I believe it was a genuine request for information. I was at a loss for answers that day. I subsequently read “Lincoln’s Youth,” and I know a little more, but I am still not familiar with many of the games and sports which the book lists. (“Prisoner’s Base,” for instance.)

*(Editor’s Note: Does anyone else see the potential for a convention workshop here!?)*

Q: “Why did you let your sons run wild?”

A: This question was posed by someone who obviously had a good background of Lincoln knowledge and probably wanted to embarrass the presenter (me). I have a theory about the matter which I can give third-person, but no first-person answer(s).

Q: “Are you ‘gay?’”

A: I have never had this question posed to me when I had to answer about Lincoln in first-person. I have a ready answer, however – “Sometimes I am jolly and jovial, and at other times I am downright glum.” The beauty of this answer is that that usage of the word “gay” in a sexual sense has gone in and out of currency several times in the past few centuries. If the questioner persisted and re-phrased, I would just answer, “No.”

**The contributor of this entry asked not to be named**, but did write that “it is a very difficult question with an answer that worked to defuse a rather tense situation. I wouldn’t want to embarrass the school where all but a few of the students were very well-behaved.

“A few years ago, I was invited to do Lincoln at a nearby high school south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Speaking before an entire auditorium of 14- to 18-year-olds, I was repeatedly interrupted by a few rowdy, male, African-American students. I asked if they had a question, and one of the young lads did finally make a query, but it was unintelligible. I asked him to repeat it, but I still couldn’t decipher what he was trying to say. Again he repeated himself, and again, I couldn’t understand him. We both were getting embarrassed. Finally, one of his associates translated for him, asking wasn’t it true that Lincoln was really a racist? That he thought blacks were inferior to whites? The room was getting more tense by the moment, enough so, that some of the football coaches moved forward to advertise their presence.

“After a quick reflection, I replied, ‘Yes, young man, that’s one of the few things I am prepared to acknowledge I was dead wrong about. I did not think that recently freed slaves could compete on an equitable basis with their former white masters, and was even pondering giving them passage to another land where they could better rebuild their livelihoods. But with your presence here today, young man, you have proven me oh so wrong. Any other questions?’ After a brief moment of silence (perhaps tinged with irony), the rest of the presentation went uninterrupted and was well-received by all -- even the rowdy ones!”

*Please remember: Lincarnations is YOUR publication. Is there an issue or question you’d like examined in a future issue? Let us know. We’d love to hear from you.*

*Send ideas to Vicki Woodard, 602 N. Pine St., Hazel Dell, Illinois 62428, 217-932-5378, ([vwoodard@eiu.edu](mailto:vwoodard@eiu.edu))  
or Dean Dorrell, 801 E. Walnut St., Washington, Ind. 47501,*

*812-254-7315 ([abe@honest-abe.com](mailto:abe@honest-abe.com)), co-editors.*

## ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS

## 2007 CONFERENCE

"Where Lincoln's Grandchildren Played"

Mt. Pleasant, Iowa

April 13-15, 2007

Host: Lee Williams (712) 774-5781 Cell: (712) 249-7855

**Headquarters:** Brazelton Hotel, 1200 E. Baker, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa 52641

Phone: (319) 385-8803

**Book hotel rooms on your own:**

Lincoln Presenters (ALP) Room Rates: \$60 + 12 % tax; Suites: \$65 + 12 % tax

**Reservation deadline: March 15, 2007****NOTE: Room rates guaranteed for reservations made before March 15, 2007.**

After March 15, ALP negotiated rates may not be available.

**Check-In Time:** 3 p.m. **Check-Out Time:** Noon**Hotel Parking:** Plenty of free parking in hotel lot and adjacent lot.Included with room rental is a **Complimentary Breakfast Buffet** in Foyer:

6 to 10 a.m. Monday through Sunday

**Transportation:****Des Moines Int'l Airport (DSM)** -- 136 miles to Mt. Pleasant

Rental Cars: Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz and National

**SE Iowa Regional, Burlington (BRL)** -- 30 miles to Mt. Pleasant

Rental Cars: Avis, Budget, and National

Also, **AMTRAK** does stop in Mt. Pleasant.

If you arrive via AMTRAK, let us know and we will arrange transportation to the hotel.

**Friday, April 13**

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. -- School presentations

2 to 5 p.m. -- Registration;

Brazelton Hotel (Foyer area)

6 p.m. Dinner at hotel

*(Includes welcome, dinner,  
introduction of new members  
and "The Lincoln  
Grandchildren" presentation)*3:30 -- Group Photos (*Harlan-Lincoln**House/Iowa Wesleyan Campus*)

4 p.m. -- Tour of Harlan-Lincoln House

5:30 p.m. -- Dinner (Campus)

7 p.m. -- Presentations at the campus

*(Public is invited.)**Various Lincolns (four- to five-  
minute presentations)**"Frederick Douglas" by**Michael Crutcher Sr.***Saturday, April 14**

7 to 8:30 a.m. -- Breakfast

9 to 9:30 a.m. -- "Lincoln and Iowa,"

by Lee Williams

9:30 to 11 a.m. -- Business Meeting

Lunch on your own. *(Several choices  
within walking distance.)*

1:30 to 3:30 p.m. -- Museum Tour

2 to 3 p.m. -- Strawberry Social

**Sunday, April 15**

7:30 to 9 a.m. -- Breakfast

9 a.m. -- Church Service

10:30 to Noon -- Round Table

Discussion

Lunch on your own

1:30 p.m. -- Tour of Arsenal Island,

Rock Island, Ill. (Murray Cox)

2007 ALP Annual Conference Registration  
Brazelton Hotel  
Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Others in your party for whom you wish to register:

Activities:	Y/N	Number	Cost	Total
Friday Banquet	_____	_____	\$12.00	\$ _____
Theatre Museum*	_____	_____	\$ 3.00	\$ _____
Saturday Banquet	_____	_____	\$16.00\$	\$ _____
Strawberry Social	_____	_____	\$ 5.00	\$ _____
Registration: \$15.00/person; \$25.00/couple				\$ _____
Grand Total (Write check for this amount)				\$ _____

**Make checks payable to: Larry Elliott, Treasurer, ALP**

Mail completed check and registration to: **Lee Williams**  
62495 690<sup>th</sup> St.  
Wiota, Iowa 50274

\*Theatre Museum of Repertoire Americana – A unique collection of memorabilia from the days of early American popular entertainment; stage drops, playbills, costumes and scenery of touring companies from the 1850s to the 1950s.



# Mary's Velvet Rose

## Convention Announcements From Your MTL Committee Chair:

**Sheri Manthei, Michigan**

As you can see from the agenda for Convention 2007 (found elsewhere in this issue of *Lincarnations*), this year's Strawberry Tea is set to take place at 2 p.m. Saturday, April 14, at the host hotel. I am anticipating the event to last approximately one hour, and am currently working with the locals in making arrangements. **(Please note:** *While men and women both are invited to attend the tea, only our lady members will be allowed to vote on business matters.*)

If there are any "Marys" who plan on attending and would like to present, please let me know ASAP. Due to other activities on the agenda, any presentation would have to be no longer than a half-hour in length.

Other activities are to include a short business meeting, at which time ladies will elect a new MTL chairperson for the 2007-2008 year. My goal is to have the names of all nominees on a paper ballot, to be prepared prior to the convention. Anyone wishing to nominate an individual to serve as MTL Committee chair (including themselves!) should let me know by March 31. I may be reached at 517-529-9989 or [mrsmarytoddlincoln@yahoo.com](mailto:mrsmarytoddlincoln@yahoo.com).

There is a chance that, due to personal matters, I will be unable to attend this year's convention. If that be the case, fellow ALP board member Vicki Woodard will preside at the business meeting. In any case, I wish you all well and have an enjoyable convention!

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## Anniversary Commemoration

Members of the ALP (men and women!) are invited to attend the July 16 and 17 observance activities commemorating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mary Todd Lincoln's death. While arrangements are still being finalized for this Springfield, Ill., event, organizers promise a wreath-laying ceremony, followed by the regular flag-lowering ceremony, on Tuesday, July 17, at the Lincoln Tomb. A special program about the events and details of Mary's death and funeral will be held that same evening at the nearby Museum of Funeral Customs.

**Donna Daniels (Illinois)** will present her one-woman show on the morning of July 16 (the actual anniversary of Mary's death) at the Lincoln Home, while **Donna McCreary (Indiana)** plans to present a program (subject to be announced) the following day.

Those interested in attending are, of course, welcome to stay anywhere they choose. However, special discounts are available at the River Bank Lodge in nearby Petersburg. These accommodations have their own unique history as the building once served as the local bank. If you wish, you can even obtain a room in the old vault!

Anyone interested in attending any of these events should contact Donna McCreary at 812-256-2370 or [mtlincoln@hotmail.com](mailto:mtlincoln@hotmail.com) for information.

**Association of Lincoln Presenters**

c/o Dean Dorrell  
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Washington, IN 47501

Phone: 812-254-7315  
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E-mail: [abe@honest-abe.com](mailto:abe@honest-abe.com)



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### **Lincoln Amphitheatre Update**

For those of you interested in the status of the musical "Young Abe Lincoln" and the Lincoln Amphitheatre at Lincoln Boyhood State Park in Indiana, there is some encouraging news. The preliminary budget for the state of Indiana for the next two years includes nearly \$2 million to repair and upgrade the amphitheatre and prepare to re-open it in the summer of 2009 as part of Indiana's Bicentennial Celebration. The University of Southern Indiana, which produced the show for many years, will likely no longer be involved. There will be a full-time year-round managing director and marketing director hired to run the day-to-day operations. There will most likely be a non-profit board to oversee the operation.

The current plan is to open in 2009 with an all-new show. One proposed show focuses less on Lincoln's boyhood itself, and more on how his childhood in Indiana affected his presidency. Another is a more straightforward exploration of his childhood, told in a somewhat less glamorized and more historically accurate manner than "Young Abe Lincoln." It is possible that eventually these two shows might be shown on alternating evenings, or even perhaps in alternating years. The past practice of pairing a Lincoln play with a Broadway musical on alternating nights is no longer being considered.

The long-term plan is to invest more money now, and to appeal to and market to a broader audience in a much larger geographic area, with the hope that larger audiences will help the amphitheatre sustain itself, thus requiring less support from the state in the future.

There is a long way to go, and one can never predict what the Indiana Legislature will do, but we seem to have strong support, especially since this would be the cornerstone of Indiana's celebration of the Lincoln Bicentennial. We should know for sure some time in April.