



LINCARNATIONS

“Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all”

ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN PRESENTERS



Taking Care of Business

Dues for 2006 are, well, due! And Larry Elliott, ALP treasurer, asks that they be paid no later than April 7 (Convention 2006). Those who have not paid their dues by that date will have their names placed on the inactive list.

As a reminder, the following fees are in effect: New member, \$25; Single member, annual, \$10; an Abraham and Mary couple, annual, \$15; Patrons (single), annual, \$20; Lifetime member, \$100 (one time only).

Dues may be sent to: Larry Elliott, 9300 Wimbley Court, Louisville, Ky. 40241. Questions? Phone (502) 394-0694 or e-mail him at ldelliott@fedins.com.

Anyone interested in hosting the ALP's annual convention in April 2008 should contact Vern Risty, chair, Future Conventions Committee, at (847) 577-0304; vristy@hotmail.com. The membership will vote for the 2008 location at the 2006 Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Risty reported that community representatives from Ft. Wayne, Ind.; Gettysburg, Pa.; and Alton, Ill., have requested to be considered as convention sites. However, none of the three had a sponsoring ALP member at the time of his report.

Those with auction items for the 2006 Conference are asked to send them to Lenny Kleiner, 4142 Cooperfield Lane, Cincinnati, Ohio 45238. Those attending the conference may bring the items when they come. If each attendee brings an item, we will have quite an interesting array of materials.

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Stanley A. Wernz
266 Compton Ridge Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215

February 8, 2006

Dear Colleagues,

We are fortunate to have many members representing 38 different states. With this geographical diversity, coupled with willingness to travel, our ALP members provide programs that reach people in almost every state. From our programs, and use of the Web site, the ALP continues to grow, for which we are grateful.

However, with growth comes a challenge to provide needed information about our operational procedures. Those who are not "charter members" of ALP aren't privy to the early discussions and rationale for decisions. We have never had a manual to read which outlines how the organization functions and meets objectives.

Members have asked from time to time for advice about award procedures, conference site selection procedures and guidelines for conferences. Additionally, some members have commented about ethics and the need for professional development. Others have inquired about membership procedures and membership status, i.e., AL, MTL, other presenters and patrons.

In order to better serve you, we are preparing an ALP Policy Manual. We will print some copies, but will send the information by e-mail whenever possible. For this effort to be most effective, you will need to keep the material and refer to it as necessary. As you receive these items, please review them and provide feedback to any ALP board member. We want to serve you effectively.

I look forward to seeing you in Cincinnati. Your conference committee has been working to present an educational, entertaining and rewarding program. The business meeting agenda contains important items, including a vote on revised by-laws and the election of the ALP board and officers. Your voice is important.

Travel safely!

Your humble servant,

Stan Wernz

A new set of By-Laws will be presented at the spring convention. To obtain an advance copy in .pdf format by e-mail for review, please e-mail your request to: abe@honest-abe.com. — Dean Dorrell, Committee Chair

What's Happening...

When **Kevin Wood** moved to *Spain* in 2003, he brought along his Abe Lincoln things "just in case." Now, he says, "I'm glad I did!"

Last February, Wood gave a presentation at an English-speaking school near Madrid. He later participated in a Thanksgiving celebration -- his first time to speak publicly in Spanish. Now he's getting ready to participate in a nearby town's "Cultural Week" at the end of March. Wood will represent the U.S.A. by reading the Gettysburg Address in both English and Spanish, and making a few appropriate remarks on the subject of immigration.

Chet Damron of Berrien Springs, Mich., reports that for 15 months in 2004 and 2005, "this traveling Abe" had the privilege of journeying back to Penang, Malaysia, located in Southeast Asia. "I was invited back to serve as a volunteer hospital chaplain at the Penang Adventist Hospital," he said. "This 80-year-old hospital has served a population of more than one million residents on this small island that measures about 12 miles long and 8 miles wide. Of course, there are other hospitals to help lift the load."

Damron wrote that Penang Adventist Hospital is a very modern, 250-bed institution offering the latest in modern medicine with a well-trained medical staff. There is also a College of Nursing, with more than 200 students. His job "was to recruit, train and nurture VOLUNTEER chaplains to give needed assistance to the one lady chaplain who was trying to meet the spiritual needs of 250 patients and their families." At the end of the 15 months, "God blessed the hospital with 58 volunteer chaplains who continue to give 24/7 spiritual care to patients and their families. We were also able to recruit a new director of spiritual care who has a Ph.D. in counseling.

"But I had a wonderful 'side blessing...'"

The medical director found out that Damron performed as "The Abe Lincoln Impressionist." "So I took my costume with me on one of my trips... and portrayed our beloved 'Patron Saint!' I was invited to make six appearances, which included two at the hospital so all the employees had an opportunity to attend. Also, I was asked to present in churches and civic organizations.

"I was amazed at how much these people know about our 16th president! I was told that in studying western history, students learn (about the) many wonderful characteristics (of) Abraham Lincoln, especially his honesty and integrity and his rise from poverty with little formal education. Malaysian students, like most students in the Orient, treasure education and make the most of their educational opportunities."

Donna McCreary from Charlestown, Ind., was recently awarded membership to the Society of Midland Authors, a literary society based in Chicago. The SMA is the oldest literary organization serving the 12 states of the Midwest, McCreary wrote.

To be granted membership, an author must have published works of merit, be nominated by a member of the organization and then granted membership by a vote of the board of directors. Other Lincoln authors who have held membership in this organization include Carl Sandburg and James McPearson.

McCreary's next book, a study of Mary Lincoln's fashions, should be ready for publication this spring.

Gene Griessman of Atlanta, Ga., announces that he recently released "Lincoln on Communication" in DVD format. It has been purchased in VHS by "literally thousands of companies, schools and universities."

He further writes, "It's a bit pricey, but if any members of the association order it directly

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from me, I will give them a 50 percent discount. (If they use my shopping cart, I will include a check for \$60 with the order, plus some bonus items. If they order it though Amazon, I won't be able to give the discount.)”

For a description, please go to <http://www.achievementdigest.com/lincoln%20on%20communication.html>.

Robert and Janet Taylor of Tulsa, Okla., have announced their retirement. Jim and Mary Sayre received the following, which they shared with *Lincarnations*: “We are both well and staying busy, but have retired from active participation as Abe and Mary. Janet said after 25 years, she was going to hang up her hoop. It has been rewarding and fun, (and we have enjoyed) meeting such wonderful people as you two. We will cherish your friendship as we remember our Lincoln days.”

Jim Sayre, chair of the ALP's Membership Committee, also recognized some of the newer members of the organization: **Mike Cox of Mooresville, Tenn.; Mike O'Hare of Dyer, Ind.; Glenn and Eva Pettus of Pocahontas, Ariz.; Robert Quinn of Danvers, Ill.; Bruce Spears of Norfolk, Va.; John Walther of Bloomington, Ill.; Wayne Watson of Carrollton, Ga.; Earl Webb of Harrisburg, Ill.; Kevin Weinert of Oakley, Calif.; and Howard Wright of Canton, Conn.**

Welcome to you all!

Stan Wernz of Cincinnati, Ohio, was filmed for a DVD documentary – “Lincoln and Lee at Antietam: The Cost of Freedom” – in May 2005. He reports that it was released at the end of January 2006 and can be purchased in some bookstores. (Borders in Cincinnati has it, at a cost of just under \$25.) Historian James McPherson has extensive parts, as does Dennis Frye of the Harpers Ferry Battlefield.

“While some can easily say I am biased, I am impressed with the final product,” Wernz wrote.



ALP member Ken Jones of Dyersburg, Tenn., recently joined Ken Teutsch as Mark Twain in a Springfield, Ill., performance at the Old State Capitol. Mark Twain and Abraham Lincoln were contemporaries; in reality, the two never met.



Mary's Velvet Rose

A Book Review

"Four Marys and a Jessie" Described as "Wonderful Tribute" to Lincoln Family

"An Evening with Peggy Beckwith" was the headline of a small article in a local weekly paper. The Manchester (Vermont) Historical Society was sponsoring a first-person historical presentation by local author C. J. King the next evening. I immediately decided that Steve and I would be in the audience. Without knowing anything about King's book, I was intrigued by the prospect of listening to someone speak in the persona of Abraham and Mary's great-granddaughter. We had that evening free (a rarity!), and Manchester is just a 90-minute drive from our New Hampshire home.

Born Mary Lincoln Beckwith in 1898, Peggy was the last female descendent of Abraham Lincoln to live at Hildene, Robert Todd Lincoln's home in Manchester, Vt. Author C. J. King traces her family back to Mary Harlan Lincoln, Robert's wife, and her book "Four Marys and a Jessie: The Story of the Lincoln Women" is a wonderful tribute to her family heritage.

King's presentation as Peggy, though only her second performance, was well done and intriguing. Even though I went desiring to hear about Abraham, Mary and Robert, I left appreciating that the program was about Peggy, a woman who deserves recognition in her own right.

King's book is a delightful combination of familiar historical research and obscure family stories. As I began to read, I was prompted to run to my computer to buy copies of "Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters" by Turner & Turner and Neely & McMurtry's "Insanity File," because of the many footnotes referencing them. The early chapters on Mary Todd Lincoln (King's Mary #1) were well-researched, and I enjoyed reading her account of the Mary I'm most familiar with.

Marys #2, 3 and 4 are Robert's wife, Mary Harlan Lincoln; their oldest child, Mamie; and Peggy, daughter of Robert and Mary's second daughter, Jessie. Several chapters are devoted to the life of each "Lincoln woman." King's writing style made for fascinating reading, and I was enthralled by the many personal anecdotes that brought these women to life.

One of the family stories that King used in her presentation tells of Hildene's head gardener complaining to Robert Lincoln that his granddaughter, Peggy, had picked some of the prize roses in his formal garden. Robert's reply was, "Well, I don't know who has a better right."

Another feature of the book that I especially enjoy are the many family photos, including one of an elderly Robert holding his newborn granddaughter, Peggy; young Peggy and her cousin, Linc Isham, sailing toy boats in a reflecting pool at Hildene; and family portraits of Peggy; her brother, Bud; and their mother, Jessie. As I write this review, I have not yet finished reading the book, but am truly savoring each new chapter. It's a pleasure to meet the Lincoln descendents for the first time.

"Four Marys and a Jessie" was published by The Friends of Hildene and is available in paperback at Hildene's online gift shop for \$19.99. If you'd like a copy, go to <http://www.hildene.org/> and click on Museum Shop. You can either buy online or download a mail order form. Anyone planning to attend the ALP conference in Cincinnati and who doesn't mind waiting until then to get a copy can let me know (sharon_wood@pobox.com). I'll pick up a copy for you and save you the cost of postage.

--Submitted by Sharon Wood, New Hampshire

MTL Survey

Sheri Manthei, MTL Chair, invites all women (and any interested men!) of the ALP to participate in this survey. She would like to hear your thoughts and wishes to aid in future programming choices.

In regards to Strawberry Socials at conventions: (Check all that apply.)

- Would you like the "Abes" to be present?
- Would you like to have "guest" (non-ALP members) speakers?
- If so, would you be willing to pay a higher registration fee to help compensate these speakers?

Topics I would like to learn more about:

- The Lincoln Family (i.e., the Lincoln boys)
- Fashions of the time period
- Etiquette of the time period
- Makeup of the time period
- Mourning habits and rituals of the time period
- Jewelry of the time period
- History of the area where convention is located
- Hairstyles of the time period
- Hats, bonnets and accessories of the time period
- Dances, balls and the music of the time period
- Fireside past-times of the time period
- Children's amusements of the time period
- Open forum where the ladies could discuss anything they wanted

Any Comments or Concerns:

Please fill out and return to:

Sheri Manthei
 MLT Chairperson
 4013 Hyde Road
 Clarklake, Mich. 49234

Or e-mail your responses to marytoddlincoln@yahoo.com.

"I will tally the answers and report them as "New Business" during the business meeting at this year's convention. Thank you!!!" *Sheri*

Advice to the Novice: The "Old Pros" Speak Out

Recently a newer member of the organization asked "Lincarnations" to run some advice for the novice presenter. Several of our "old pros" rose to the occasion, submitting advice suitable for both the Abrahams and Marys among us. (With the exception, maybe, of "mole" adhesion. We'll leave that to the Abes!) Perhaps even those who have been presenting for a time can still learn from the advice presented below:

"My advice to anyone who aspires to the 'high calling' of Lincoln presentations must first know that looking like Lincoln is not enough.

"First, read, read, read. If you do not saturate yourself with Lincoln, you could become an embarrassment to Lincoln, to the ALP, to your audience and to yourself. Read primary sources. By that I mean Lincoln's speeches, letters and proclamations. Read the best Lincoln biographers. After much reading you will begin to feel inadequate. At that time you are ready to begin inventing your presentation.

"I discourage following the lead of any current Lincoln presenter. You do not want to be a copy of the copy. You must select and interpret your materials. You should be able to adapt to a wide range of ages and audiences.

"No matter how much you know, during open forums someone will ask a question that you cannot answer. Be prepared to say, 'I don't know, but I will try to find the answer for you.'

"Now go forth and strike a good lick for Lincoln."

--B. F. McClerren, Charleston, Ill.

"Start with your audience. Getting audience attention is the absolute initial requirement. Just because we appear in costume doesn't guarantee it. What you do to get that attention depends on the major goal you have in mind.

"Example #1 -- If I am Lincoln to a class of fifth graders, I begin by saying, "I need your help in answering two very difficult questions: In what month of the year do we celebrate the Fourth of July? and, Why do we celebrate the Fourth of July? I have this beginning (the Declaration of Independence) because my session ends with the Gettysburg Address and my major goal is to have them see that 'Four score and seven' refers back to the document which says, 'All men are created equal...'. I'm sure ALPers know where we go from there.

"Example #2 -- With an adult audience which I plan to treat as though they are guests in the White House and my ultimate goal is to try to convey the pressure-packed and difficult environment within which Lincoln worked, I may begin with words attributed to him: 'I am happy to see all of you. I suppose you are happy to see me. But looking about this room at you, I am sure that I get the better of the bargain.'

"As for costume, clothes don't make the man. A.L. was 6 feet, 4 inches tall. Dan Bassuk, may he rest in peace, wouldn't have come up to Lincoln's armpits. But when he appeared and spoke, you knew who he was.

"One final word of caution. About 15 years ago, I ordered a stovepipe hat from a Pennsylvania firm recommended to me by an ALPer. Even though in the order I indicated head or hat size, what I received turned out to be a one-size-fits-all job that was not worth the cost. Buyer beware, and buyer use care."

--David Tavel, Estes Park, Colo.

"(Regarding) some of the best advice that I received when I had the same question back before the founding of (the) ALP:

"There was an article about Max and Donna Daniels in a magazine. (As I) was starting out as a presenter at the time, I contacted Max for advice. Max said that I could take any part of Lincoln's life or anything to do with him. His final advice was 'Who is around to tell you that you are doing it wrong?' That may be the best advice that I ever received."

--Jim Hitchcock, Stamford, N.Y.

"1) While in costume (and always, if possible), practice the traits Mr. Lincoln was known for -- honesty, humbleness, consideration, respect, commitment, etc!!!!!! Never, ever say or do anything to put Mr. Lincoln down. If something comes up, he was a human being and certainly was entitled to have human weaknesses (melancholy, for one). Do your best to support Mrs. Lincoln, also, pointing out all of the difficult circumstances in her life.

"2) Gear your presentation to the audience. With younger children, I normally go with questions for me to answer (pre-planned with their teacher, if possible). With large groups of adults, I have a prepared topic (pre-determined from among several choices), and allow time for a few questions afterwards. Middle school/high school can be tough! Expect some presentations to go better than others. It depends a lot on the teacher. I much prefer speaking with classes rather than larger assemblies of students. It helps me get greater interaction with the kids and, hopefully, they

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Association of Lincoln Presenters

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will feel more free to ask questions, etc.

"3) Folks enjoy 'Jack, the Doll.' (Thanks, Fred!) I also split a number of 'rails' (about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 10 inches) to have folks (depending on circumstances) build a 'rail fence' for me. (I would like more ideas about 'hands-on' activities that kids can do!)

"4) I do use notes, especially if I am delivering any of Mr. Lincoln's speeches. I, personally, am not able to rote memorize. Mr. Lincoln wrote his speeches out and more or less read them, so I think that it is okay for us to do same (which might save some a lot of concern regarding public speaking).

"5) READ, READ, READ, READ!!!!!! (Thanks, Ralph!) You can never know too much!!!! Be as accurate as possible with any information you present. It is so helpful to visit Lincoln sites (and Civil War sites). ALP conferences are a great help, also!

"6) I have my 'speeches' split up into different chapters of Mr. Lincoln's life. Also, have (material ready on) topics such as 'Lincoln and Slavery,' 'Lincoln and Religion,' 'Lincoln on Leadership,' 'Lincoln at Gettysburg,' etc.

"7) I think it is important that a presenter be relaxed and enjoy him/herself while speaking. The audience picks up on that right away and appreciates it. Include some humor (as Mr. Lincoln normally did.)"

--Gerald Payn, Wooster, Ohio

"Here is something that all you Lincolns could use if you like. I know how difficult it is to keep those pesky fake moles on. I have tried most (methods) and found what works for me is a large drop of eyelash glue or surgical glue (which, I think, are one in the same) with skin-colored makeup covering the white glue. The glue takes a while to dry, so I put it on first and by the time I am dressed, I can put on the color. In special cases, I have had the mole stay on for two days!"

--Don Ancell, Oxnard, Calif.