



# Lincoln Newsletter

Second Quarter 2013

*A publication of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission  
Beardstown, Illinois*



## An OLCM dream becomes a reality

What began as a dream more than a year ago is now a reality, thanks to the support of the greater Beardstown community.

Yes, the Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum Commission is delighted to announce that the Audio/Visual Project is complete and in service.

Five computer monitors have been installed in various locations in the museum and are available for viewing with narration in either Spanish or English.

Nathan Carls, local businessman and actor, serves as the English narrator. Maricella Chavez, employed by Grand Avenue School, serves as the Spanish narrator. Local attorney Milt McClure narrates the Almanac Trial video.

The videos were photographed, edited and produced by Paul LaMantia of Springfield. Bob Osborne, local computer

expert, prepared and installed the different videos on each monitor. Kathy Haut, museum volunteer, transcribed 28 pages of script from English into Spanish. The scripts were written by the museum's active and retired commissioners. Some script information, especially about the river and the American Indian artifacts, was provided by Harold Tyson, Hap Swan and Herschel Logsdon.

In addition, Circuit Court Judge Bobby Hardwick and attorney McClure took time from their schedules to make the courtroom appear on screen as it is used for actual court sessions. This courtroom is the only one in the country where Lincoln practiced that is still in regular use for court.

A project of this magnitude cannot become a reality without money, and the people of the community certainly supported this project. A goal was set and reached thanks to the generosity of many. The names of contributors to the project are listed as a screen saver on each of the five computer screens.

A very special thank you is extended to all the donors and to the students of the Beardstown schools who alone collected \$813.50. One of the rewards for the "Pennies for Lincoln" campaign was a private tour of the museum and a viewing of the monitors. On four different days the students of the winning classrooms received and enjoyed their tours.

The winning classrooms were Tammy Ruthardt's 5th grade from Gard School; Krystal Christofanelli's 1st grade from Brick School; Sue German's 3rd Grade from Beardstown Christian Academy; and the students at the Beardstown Charter School.

Rob Hymes' Beardstown Middle School history class and Aaron Elmore's Beardstown High School history class were unable to tour due to the final exam schedule.

Money was also collected from Grand Avenue Pre-School students.

A special celebration is being planned by the OLCM commissioners to highlight the new additions to the museum. A date will be announced in the new future.

We invite you to tour of the museum either with a guide or by using the monitors for a self-guided tour.

Beardstown is very fortunate to have such an outstanding museum, and it is a wonderful place to learn about Beardstown's history, river life, famous citizens, and of course, the famous Almanac Trial.

*~Connie Foley*



Tammy Ruthardt's Gard School 5th grade class poses for the camera following their museum tour. More photos on the next page.

Krystal Christofanelli's 1st grade students from Brick School spend some time in jail during their tour of the OLCM. Because of their exceptionally good behavior, the class soon was on its way to see the rest of the museum.



Who said pennies are worthless? Not the 3rd graders in Sue German's class from the Beardstown Christian Academy. During their recent tour, they got an up close look at the monitors and video productions they helped purchase through the pennies they and students from other schools collected.



Beardstown Charter School students were among the young people who received VIP tours of the OLCM. These special tours were given in appreciation for their efforts in collecting a total of \$813.50 for the Audio/Visual Project.

## ***An ounce of prevention, or better safe than sorry***

There are dozens of clichés we could use to explain moving materials from the first floor of the museum to the second when Beardstown was threatened by a flood.

On April 22 in response to concerns, valiant volunteers tackled the task of moving materials just in case there was flooding in Beardstown. The Essay Contest awards and reception had to be rescheduled as well.

Artifacts, some very small, were bundled up by volunteers who answered the call for help. The courtroom was repository for most of the materials. All of the benches were loaded and tables and chairs piled high. Next, materials, mostly records from the office and gift shop, went into the Transportation Room and the Military Room. The last item to be moved was the computer, which went into the Vintage Clothing Room.

The rule was that if it might be damaged by water or humidity and it wasn't nailed down or too big or heavy to move, it went upstairs. The nailed-down rule was broken when Ross Foley and Randy Reichert removed the life-size painting of Lincoln and the "yardstick" beside it from the wall of the hallway. After their struggles and because of the size and weight of the picture, Randy called the city to help carry it up the stairs.

Connie Foley took photographs of the displays before they were dismantled so we would know the placement of the artifacts when we restored the exhibits. It was ironic that items in the River Museum were removed, things such as duck decoys and flood pictures.

Gift shop manager Lisa Evenson and her husband, Rev. Douglas Evenson, packed up gift shop items just days after Lisa had put the shop together following the remodeling of the gift shop/office area. On May 13 and 14, the exhibits were restored as the river began to recede ever so slowly. We are gradually getting the office and greeting area back to "normal."

The intrepid band of volunteers included Ann Chelette, Connie Foley, Ross Foley, Dottie Gholson, Mary Gist, Kathy Haut, Suzie McClure, Peggy Meyer, Leigh Morris, Norma Morris, Randy Reichert and Paula Woods.

As Leigh Morris had predicted, there was no flood in Beardstown. On April 23 he wrote in an email: "I boldly predict – no flooding in downtown Beardstown!" Nevertheless, it is gratifying that volunteers responded so efficiently. And to learn just how much can be accomplished in a short time.

*~Paula Woods*

*Make your next visit  
a visit to the OLCM*

## **Remodeling project reveals gift shop room's history**

In March, the Gift Shop and office area was treated to a well deserved makeover.

After furniture was moved to the back office and the Lincoln Room, much information about the history of the room was revealed.

Last fall "bubbles" appeared on the northeast wall, caused by moisture seeping through the brick outer wall. After evaluation by the Department Public Works, the City Council agreed there was no hope of simply repairing the wall. Instead, a complete remodel of the room was in order.

Contractor Joe Herter removed the faux wainscoting and the wall covering, revealing the history of the walls.

The wall covering was not dry wall as we know it, but a paper thin sheeting of some sort, complete with several coats of paint. Under this in places were slats randomly placed, probably, Herter believed, used to attach the tin that at one time covered most of the courthouse interior walls. Beneath that was plaster and the brick exterior wall. Scraps of wall-paper remained on some of the room's interior walls.

One place on the exterior wall revealed a piece of charred and half-burned wood, perhaps the result of a fire of in an overheated stove similar to the one in the courtroom.

With the walls down to bricks, it could be seen what was above the dropped ceiling. The tin ceiling remains. Unfortunately, the dropped ceiling was kept because wiring runs between the tin and the dropped ceiling. The necessary extensive rewiring wasn't in the budget.

Removing the wall covering revealed a closed off door into the hall, across from the Lincoln Room door.

*Continued on next page*



Contractor Joe Herter works his magic during the Gift Shop remodeling project.

## **A Friend passes**

The OLCM lost a devoted Friend of the Courtroom with the March 24, 2013 death of Willard J. Korsmeyer of Beardstown.

Willard and his wife, Carnell, attended all Friends receptions and most events sponsored by the OLCM Commission. Their enthusiasm and support were greatly appreciated and enjoyed.

Their son, the late Stanley Korsmeyer, is featured in the "Local Residents of Note" display on the second floor of the museum.

Stan was a 1968 graduate of Beardstown High School and among the world's elite biomedical investigators prior to his death in 2008. Stan's genetic study and insights revolutionized our understanding of human cancer and normal animal development. A scholarship has been established by his many colleagues, friends and family to assist Beardstown High School graduates seeking degrees in science.

Memorials for Willard Korsmeyer were suggested for the scholarship fund. Also, donations may be sent to the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum.

Carnell continues to attend functions, often with Willard's sister Dorothy Lamb who, with her sister Irene Lamkin, are also Friends of the Courtroom.

Our condolences are shared with the Korsmeyer family.

~Ann Chelette

## **A popular Gift Shop item**

A popular item in the Gift Shop of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum is the pack of knowledge cards, "What Do You Know About Abraham Lincoln?" by Jack Van Zandt.

One such card asks this question:

"Lincoln's skills as a trial lawyer were legendary long before he became a national political figure. In the 1857 civil trial Fleming v. Rogers & Crothers, Lincoln used chicken bones in his summation for the jury to illustrate a point in defense of his two clients, the defendants. What was the profession of his clients, what type of now-common action was the suit, and what was the jury's decision?"

The answer on the reverse side of the card:

"Doctors - medical malpractice suit - hung jury. The plaintiff in the case, a carpenter named Samuel Fleming, sued doctors Thomas Rogers and Eli Crothers, claiming that they incorrectly set and later reset his broken leg, leaving him lame for life. He hired six lawyers and sued for \$10,000. Lincoln faced an uphill battle, as the public overwhelmingly favored Fleming. There was no legislation then in Illinois (or anywhere else) specifically aimed at medical malpractice, so Lincoln played for time with continuances and then relied on his considerable courtroom skills and power of persuasion. Producing a chicken's leg and thigh bones from a recent meal and using them to explain the workings of human anatomy evidently worked well enough to sway some of the jurors. The case was later settled out of court without retrial."

The Gift Shop is up and running in a newly refurbished room of the museum.

Along with our newly redecorated space, we have some new items for sale. You'll find old fashioned games from the Civil War era and signed copies of Harold Tyson's new book about the history of Beardstown. Please stop in and visit us.

The Gift Shop hours are the same as the museum – Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Abraham Lincoln grows a beard ~ 1860.

### **Remodel from previous page**

Herter not only hung dry wall, he replaced the baseboard. In addition, he framed the windows with wood to match the baseboard that he finished himself. The window framing was inspired by framing found in the old jury room, the least changed part of the courthouse. Herter said, "I'm going to do as much as I can with the money I have." He did much more than repair the walls.

The walls have been painted a dark gold, and it was decided not to rehang the curtains so that the framing of the windows could be better displayed.

The OLCM owes Herter a debt of gratitude for making the gift shop and office area an inviting place for visitors and volunteers alike.

### **Commissioners**

Paula Woods, Chair – 217-323-4514  
Dale Robertson, Vice Chair – 217-323-3344  
Connie Foley, Secretary – 217-323-5205  
Ann Chelette, Treasurer – 217-323-2559  
Chris Massie – 217-997-5971  
Leigh Morris – 217-323-2668  
Randy Reichert - 217-323-4597

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PO Box 381  
Beardstown IL 62618  
E-mail: [lincolncourtroom@hotmail.com](mailto:lincolncourtroom@hotmail.com)  
Web: [LincolnInBeardstown.org](http://LincolnInBeardstown.org)

# Won't you be our friend?

A year ago, Suzie McClure wrote a message. It was so good, we are repeating it:

"In January of 2006, a letter went out announcing a brand new campaign called Friends of the Courtroom. In the ensuing years, our Wall of Honor listing those who faithfully contribute to the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum each year has grown steadily.

"Like with all things, there are those who send their contributions like clockwork on a certain date each year, others who need a reminder and still others who have evidentially lost our address.

"Each name that graces that wall is an active and vital part of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum. Yes, we need volunteers.

"Yes, we need workers on work days. Yes, we need displays revitalized and rotated. And yes, we have people who loyally come to the museum and work without any thought of pay or reimbursement. And yes, we can always use more hands on deck.

"However, the \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 and larger donations of money mailed each year also make the donor a volunteer and a contributor. And for that, we are grateful! Thank you!"

It was and still is a great message. Below is a listing of those who sent in their gifts for 2012.

## Mr. Lincoln's Friend Annual Gift \$25.00

Ann Brewer  
Brent Bordenkircher, Edward Jones  
Investments  
Cass County Abstract Company  
John, Alecia, & Paul Crowe  
Patricia Day  
Mike & Phyllis Dour/Millard Florist  
Doris Edwards  
Donna P. Finney  
Sue Ralston Fletcher  
Frances Hegener  
June Houston  
Earl & Doris McKenzie  
Steve & Cathy Megginson  
Mr. & Mrs. O'Neil Meyer  
Warren R. Musch  
Joyce L. Potts  
Caroline A. Ryan  
Charles & Judy Taylor  
Virginia Thompson  
Virginia N. Turner  
L. K. Vredenburg Lumber Company  
Walker Nursing Home  
John & Julia Weldin

## Mr. Lincoln's Bar Annual Gift \$50.00

Roy L. French  
Greg & Kelly Gilmore  
Glenn & Patricia Hankins  
Carl J. & Anna Marie Hood  
Joan Korsmeyer  
Bill & Dot Leistriz  
Kevin & Chris Massie/IFP  
Dale Robertson  
Was Tyson's Drive-In Restaurant

## Mr. Lincoln's Barristers Annual Gift \$100.00

Arline Bley  
Honorable Thomas & Cynthia Brannan  
Mr. & Mrs. H.O. Brownback III  
Bob & Carol Burget  
David & Althea Carls  
Jess & Ann Chelette  
Delphos Herald, Inc, /Murray Cohen, President  
Jane Fearneyhough  
First National Bank of Arenzville  
Mr. & Mrs. Ross Foley

### Friends of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum

Yes, I wish to become a Friend as follows:

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Lincoln's Friend:          | Annual Gift \$25.00  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Lincoln's Bar:             | Annual Gift \$50.00  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Lincoln's Barristers:      | Annual Gift \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Lincoln's Judges Chambers: | Annual Gift \$500.00 |

I prefer to become a lifetime member of Mr. Lincoln's Supreme Court.  
My pledge is in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Method of Contribution

- My Annual Gift is enclosed: Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 I'd like to make my annual gift in two equal installments.  
[Mr. Lincoln's Barristers; Mr. Lincoln's Judges Chambers;  
Mr. Lincoln's Supreme Court only]

Installments will be due March 1 and September 1

- I'd like to make my annual gift in four equal quarterly installments.  
[Mr. Lincoln's Supreme Court only]  
Installments will be due March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward your payment (payable to **Friends of the Courtroom**) to:

Friends of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum  
PO Box 381  
Beardstown IL 62618

Check here if this is a renewal of your membership \_\_\_\_\_

Honorable Bobby G. & Greta L. Hardwick  
Mary Ann Hardwick  
Ron & Faye Hoenes  
Carol Hegener Kinzer  
Kiwanis Club of Beardstown  
Carson & Carol Klitz  
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Korsmeyer  
Mr. & Mrs. Willard J. Korsmeyer  
Dorothy Lamb  
Irene E. Lamkin  
Fairy Launer  
Lloyd M. McClure IV  
Mr. & Mrs. L. Milton McClure  
Milton McClure  
Judge Richard and Rachel Mills  
Leigh & Norma Morris  
Marty & Megan Turner  
Paula Woods

**Mr. Lincoln's Judges Chambers:  
Annual Gift \$500.00**

Wal-Mart  
Mr. & Mrs. Murray Cohen  
Delphos Herald, Inc./Murray Cohen  
Ethel & Nathan Cohen Foundation, Jennifer Shneiderman,  
President  
Richard Dick

Below is a listing of those who sent in their gifts for 2013.

**Mr. Lincoln's Friend  
Annual Gift \$25.00**

John, Alecia, & Paul Crowe  
Mike & Phyllis Dour/Millard Florist  
Glenn & Patricia Hankins  
Earl & Doris McKenzie  
Mike & Cristy Nordsiek  
Charles & Judy Taylor  
Mrs. Virginia Thompson

**Mr. Lincoln's Bar  
Annual Gift \$50.00**

Joan Korsmeyer  
William J & Dorothy G. Leistriz  
Dale Lee Robertson

**Mr. Lincoln's Barristers  
Annual Gift \$100.00**

J. Steven Beckett  
Arline Bley  
Jess & Ann Chelette  
The Delphos Herald, Inc – Murray Cohen, Pres.  
Mr. & Mrs. Ross Foley  
Carol Hegener Kinzer  
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Korsmeyer  
Mr. & Mrs. Willard Korsmeyer

Mrs. Dorothy Lamb  
Irene Lamkin  
Fairy E. Launer  
Leigh & Norma Morris  
Randal & Sue Reichert  
Robert W. Sudbrink in memory of  
Milton McClure  
Paula Woods

**Mr. Lincoln's Judges Chambers:  
Annual Gift \$500.00**

Pastor Douglas & Lisa Evenson

Did you find your name on the 2012 list? Is it on the 2013 list?

If you have yet to make your contribution for this not so new year, please take a moment to send your gift to use. You can use the handy form on this page.

What if your name is not on 2012 or 2013?

If this is the case, the time has come to consider becoming of Friend of the Courtroom. Your gift will make a very real difference.

## ***Lincoln Essay Contest***

For evidence of Abraham Lincoln's ongoing influence one need look no further than to the young people of Beardstown.

On May 24, the OLCM Commission honored six young people as the winners of the commission's annual essay contest. This year's theme was "How has Abraham Lincoln inspired you?"

The ceremony, which was chaired by commissioner treasurer Ann Chelette, was held in the famous second floor courtroom of the OLCM building. Chelette read the six winning essays, presenting each student with an award. A reception followed the presentations.

Taking first place honors in the Middle School Category was Henessey Martinez, 12, a student at Beardstown Middle School. She is the daughter of Oscar Martinez and Marieel Facio.

In the High School Category, the first place winner was Jordan Welker, 18, Beardstown High School She is the daughter of Roger and Marian Welker.

The other winners in the Middle School Category were: second place went to McKenzie Perry, 13, the daughter of Linnie and Danielle Perry, and third place to Karina Trujillo, 13, the daughter of Rafael Trujillo and Loraine Brasel. Both attend Beardstown Middle School.

In the High School Category, the other winners were: second place to Jill Harris, 18, daughter of John and Cindy Harris, and third place to Brenda Hernandez, 18, daughter of Librado and Margarita Hernandez. Both attend Beardstown High School.

Due to space limitations, we are publishing the two first place essays. All six essays are posted on the OLCM's website: [www.LincolnInBeardstown.org](http://www.LincolnInBeardstown.org).

## First Place – High School Category

By Jordan Welker

Abraham Lincoln has inspired me in many ways. He was known as “Honest Abe” because he was always truthful. He has inspired me to be honest at all times. He has also shown me that just because it’s hard, that doesn't mean it’s impossible. He was a simple man and he became the president of the United States. Abraham Lincoln has inspired me to be honest, to never give up, to work hard, and to follow my dreams because they can be accomplished.

Being honest all the time can be a very hard thing to do. Maybe you don't want to hurt someone's feelings, so you lie. Maybe you don't want to get in trouble, so you lie. It always seems easier to lie, but being honest is the best choice to make. It may hurt someone, and you may get in trouble when you tell the truth, but it saves all the trouble in the future of trying to remember which lie fits where in the huge web of lies. Honesty is the best policy, especially in today's society - although you won't always get the truth. Abraham Lincoln has also inspired me by never giving up, even when something seems impossible. In his pursuit to become a senator and president, Abraham Lincoln never gave up, even when it seemed all odds were against him. He showed that hard work pays off and helps you reach what you thought was once impossible. He showed me that if I follow my dreams, I can do anything, no matter where I come from. Lincoln was just a simple man and he became the president of the United States. I know that if I follow my dreams, work hard, and always be honest and never give up, I will make it to my goals.

Abraham Lincoln has been a huge inspiration in my life, and I'm sure, in the lives around me. He inspired me to go for my dreams and goals no matter what. I can achieve my goals as long as I never give up and work hard, just like he did. Abraham Lincoln is a true inspiration to me.

## First Place – Middle School Category

By Henessey Martinez

Abraham Lincoln is a huge inspiration in everybody's lives, including mine. He inspired me to do the best that I could, as did he. When I do something, I give it my 100 percent effort, and that's because of him. He stood up to many things and accomplished a lot during his presidency. Not many people be-

lieved in him, and I can relate to that. Just like him, not many people believe in me, either. In the end, he proved all those people wrong, and I do the same.

Every day I face constant challenges. Abraham Lincoln probably did the same, except his challenges were probably bigger than mine. He was a very successful president, and that's why he's a huge inspiration to me. Lincoln also didn't let negative problems get in his way of trying to be a good leader. I respect all the little things he did to try to help this nation become better. He pushed America further, and it helped a lot. I think he's a good leader to look up to in a time of need. His presidency was during a rough time in American history, yet he was still successful.

Lincoln was a great leader and he was a big part of why America is where it's at today. I think current presidents also look up to Abraham Lincoln. He could be a great role model to them, and do what he would do. Personally, Abraham didn't support slavery. He also didn't think government had the right to take slaves away from the people. But he is a huge reason slavery ended. That's very important to me, and I am thankful for him. Because, if Abraham Lincoln didn't help stop slavery, the United States probably wouldn't be like it is today. These are many reasons why Abraham Lincoln is a huge inspiration to me.



Winners of the Annual Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission Essay Contest (from left): Henessey Martinez, 12, first place Middle School Category; Jordan Welker, 18, first place High School Category; McKenzie Perry, 13, second place Middle School; Brenda Hernandez, 18, third place High School; Karina Trujillo, 13, third place Middle School. Jill Harris, 18, the second place High School winner was unable to attend.

# ***Bridging the Illinois***

Beardstown's first toll bridge was constructed in 1888, stretching from the foot of State Street to Schuyler County.

In 1898, the Beardstown Bridge Company was organized to build a more substantial steel bridge. Known as the Wagon Bridge, the span was erected at a cost of \$26,911.60. The city of Beardstown assumed ownership and the cost of the bridge. A toll was charged to use the span.

The Wagon Bridge sat low to the water – its wooden deck on the same level as Main Street. A swing span would open to allow the passage of boats, but it became a target for numerous vessels. The most serious incident took place on April 30, 1944, when a Navy LST slammed into the swing span, causing \$70,000 in damage. The LST pushed the span off of its stone masonry pivot, broke steel girders and damaged gears. The federal government provided a new span. A ferry was called into service to handle highway traffic during the months the bridge was closed.

Perhaps the most spectacular incident occurred on May 8, 1950. It began when the towboat *Baton Rouge* hit the swing span and damaged the gears. That afternoon, a steel barge was torn from its moorings at the Logsdon Sand and Gravel Company. A fierce gale blew the barge upstream, where it struck the Wagon Bridge. When a tug was unable to pull the barge away, a Central Illinois Public Service line crew under the supervision of Bill Ortgessen ran a steel cable from a

truck-mounted winch to the barge. Two CIPS workers, Joe Roley and Rex McFadden, got on the barge. While a crowd cheered, the CIPS men pulled the barge back to the seawall.

As if all this was not enough, a wooden-hulled Logsdon barge added insult to injury when it was torn from its mooring later that same afternoon and pushed into the bridge by the powerful gale. The wooden barge was no match for the bridge. It soon broke apart and sank.

The Wagon Bridge continued in service until Sept. 13, 1955, when the new free bridge was officially opened. Russell Shouse of Beardstown was the last toll collector, receiving \$43.25 on that final day.

*~Leigh Morris*



Beardstown Wagon Bridge, Beardstown, Ill.

Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission

Leigh Morris, Editor

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