



Lincoln Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2015

Published by the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission

Bringing visitors to Beardstown

New brochure unveiled

There is no doubt – the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum is Cass County's precious jewel.

It was here that Abraham Lincoln practiced law. It was here that he defended William Duff Armstrong in what was destined to become his most famous case, surpassing even his brilliant defense of the Rock Island Railroad in the 1857 *Effie Afton* case (*Hurd vs. Rock Island Bridge Co.*).

On the second floor is the courtroom in which Lincoln appeared – the only such courtroom still regularly used for court sessions.

Our building encompasses Lincoln, but there is so much more.

Consider that the building was erected to be the Cass County Courthouse. When voters returned the county seat to Virginia, the building was donated to Beardstown to house the City Hall.

Our museum is the home of a priceless collection of American Indian arrowheads and other artifacts. There also is the world class collection of 19th century firearms.

Beardstown is a river town and our museum tells the story of life on the Illinois River. It tells about the commercial fishermen as well as the sportsmen. It brings back to life the era of the steamboat. And visitors learn about the floods that threatened the community's very existence and those who survived nature's fury.

And there is so much more.

Yes, we have a great museum. However, we need to get the word out if we expect people to make their way to our door.

Thus, the commissioners decided a new brochure was needed – one that would attract attention and entice people to visit.

The new brochure (*right*) is now available and is being distributed at locations across Central Illinois.

Do you have a location or know of a location where our new brochure may be displayed?

If so, drop us an email at pmw41@casscomm.com or contact any member of the commission (*commissioners names and contact information may be found elsewhere in this issue*).

Oh yes, and be sure to make time this summer to visit the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum and our Gift Shop. Bring your friends and family.

You'll enjoy your time with us.

Visit the Home of Lincoln's Almanac's Trial



And Discover So Much More



From the First People, To Life on the River

Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum
Third & State Streets
Downtown Beardstown, Illinois

Young visitors share impressions of OLCM

May is a particularly enjoyable time for the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum.

Commissioner Connie Foley explained the month brings young visitors to explore every corner of the building.

This year, more than 140 4th grade students from Gard School toured the OLCM on May 15 as part of their tour of sites around the city square. The visit marked the completion of their Beardstown history study.

On May 19, students from Trinity Lutheran School in Arenzville visited as did 5th and 6th graders from VIT Grade School in Schuyler County.

OLCM volunteers who participated in this activity included Commissioners Chris Massie, Paula Woods and Foley. Other volunteers were Corky Kinstle, Lisa Evenson and Dale Robertson.

The following is a sample of the “thank you” notes as written by Gard School 4th graders. Their teachers are Katie Hobbrock, Angie Brown and Whitney Davis.

I would like to thank you for the tour last week. I especially liked the Courtroom. I felt so special because I know very few people get to see where the Almanac Trial was held, and where Abraham Lincoln was during the trial.

I also liked the jail cell. I couldn't believe that Duff Armstrong was in the same cell we looked at. It was cool how we got to be in the cell too!

I hope to visit the Old Lincoln Courtroom and museum again.

~Adeleid

I wanted to thank you for the tour last week. It was neat to see the jail cell where Duff Armstrong was held. It was cool to go into the jail cell with Duff in it.

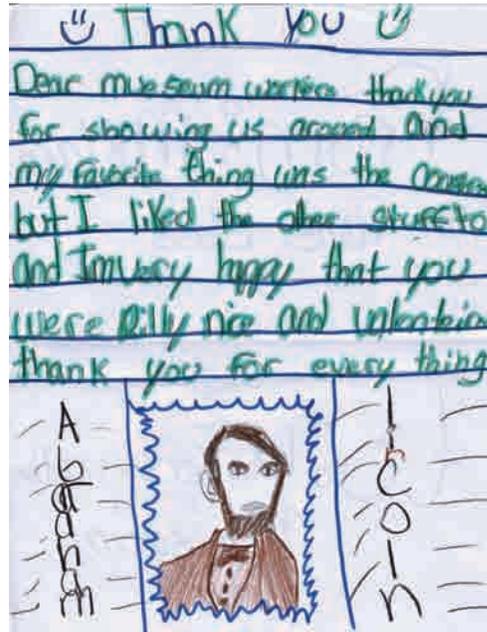
~Gabe

I loved the museum! Everything was great! I don't know what to pick as my favorite. The museum looked clean and great, and it's awesome that you have Beardstown history, Lincoln history, antiques and artifacts, and the real furniture in the rooms you can't go in (since its real). I would love to go there again! It is cool to think that in the old courtroom, Lincoln stood there! I hope you keep the museum, all the rooms and the stuff, the giftshop, the whole place! Save the museum! History rocks! Keep all the facts!

~Amelia

I would like to thank you for the tour last week. I especially liked the courtroom. It was awesome how the arrowheads were in different shapes. It was neat to see the Lincoln room.

~ Garrett



Some students display considerable creativity with their “thank you” notes to the OLCM volunteers. This letter was written by Marian, who is a student in Whitney Davis' class at Gard School.

My favorite part was the dresses. I thought it was really cool what they look like. I thought they were pretty and very fancy. I liked the pink dress and I liked the jail cells. I thought they were cool and the old rooms and there was a stroller in one room. I thought that was cool!

~Lyndsey

I loved everything the Best of all the jail sell the man inside made it more like a jail. The guns they had back then were very weird the way I see them on video games are very different in real life. Also, I think it would be painful to ride on the tricycle and the skates too. The chairs were very very very comfy.

~Lyric

I would like to thank you for the tour last week. I especially liked the Courtroom. It was awesome how Lincoln was on the Almanac trial. It was neat to see Lincoln in a white suit and pants for the first time. I would like to come again.

~Jewel

I would like to thank you for the tour last week. I especially liked the Jail Cell. It was awesome how we got to set in the jail cell. It was neat to see where Duff Armstrong was Held.

~Jaelyn

Thank you for letting us go to the Lincoln museum. My favorite part was the real courtroom! The jail was awesome. I was so amazed. I'm a huge fan of Abraham Lincoln! Now I'm a bigger fan!

~Emma

Editor's note: Space does not allow us to share all of the student notes. However, we will post them throughout the OLCM.

OLCM: Looking for some new Friends

So, let's make the most of this beautiful day.

Since we're together we might as well say:

Would you be mine?

Could you be mine?

Won't you be my neighbor?

Won't you please,

Won't you please?

Please won't you be my neighbor?

Surely you remember these lines from *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*. Fred Rogers was really talking about friends and the special bond that exists between friends.

We rejoice in our Friends, and deeply regret the loss of a number of wonderful and faithful Friends who "now belong to the ages." Our work, however, continues.

We preserve items from Beardstown's history as seen in our very diverse displays featuring:

- Abraham Lincoln Room
- Vintage Clothing Room
- Military Room
- Beardstown Room
- River Room
- River Gallery (local artists)
- Bill Barnhart Wayside Exhibit Drawings
- Transportation Room
- Rudie Black Firearms and American Indian relics displays
- Founders' (Thomas Beard) Room
- Reading Room with original documented print sources
- Heritage Room
- Furniture and other memorabilia from churches, lodges, former businesses, former residents
- Courtroom and Judges' Chambers
- Beardstown Ladies' Room
- Jail

• We host tours of "Your Museum" for hundreds of school children annually.

• We maintain a gift shop for our visitors who remark on its variety and who purchase items to remind them of their visit to Beardstown.

• One of our current projects is to renovate the entry hall to make it more Lincoln period appropriate.

We need new Friends – Friends like our current ones – loyal, committed to the work and contribution of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum. We need Friends who want to belong and who believe the work the museum does is truly worthwhile. We won't be calling you asking you to come to meetings or apply pressure to volunteer. This is a chance for you to belong to an organization that will make you feel good and proud to do your part.

Just complete and mail the form on this page. Help us continue to improve "your museum."

Friends of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum

Yes, I wish to become a Friend as follows:

- Mr. Lincoln's Friend: Annual Gift \$25 - \$49
- Mr. Lincoln's Bar: Annual Gift \$50 - \$99
- Mr. Lincoln's Barristers: Annual Gift \$100 - \$249
- Mr. Lincoln's Bailiff: Annual Gift \$250 - \$499
- Mr. Lincoln's Judges Chambers: Annual Gift \$500β

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 _____

Commissioners

Paula Woods, Chair - 217-323-4514 - pmw41@casscomm.com
Connie Foley, Secretary - 217-370-1205 - rcfoley@casscomm.com

Ann Chelette, Treasurer - 217-853-5882 - annchelette@gmail.com

Ron Culves - 217-323-5077 - rculves@aol.com

Chris Massie - 217-997-5971 - ifp@casscomm.com

Leigh Morris - 217-371-0481 - studebaker055@yahoo.com

Randy Reichert - 217-323-4597 - suereichert@casscomm.com

The Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission
PO Box 381

Beardstown IL 62618

Email: pmw41@casscomm.com

Web: LincolnInBeardstown.org

In the past lane

OLCM's Trivia Nite

Last year's OLCM Trivia Nite venue was so popular, we've decided to do it again.

Yes, the Trivia Nite – set for Tuesday, Sept. 15 – will be held at Reichert's Barn on South Bluff Springs Road, thanks to the generosity of Randy and Sue Reichert.

Those of you who joined us last year will agree, the barn is the star of the show.

The rules for participation are simple:

- A team may have up to 10 players. However, you do not need to have 10. Often, teams have fewer than 10.
- The cost to play is \$10 per person. Proceeds will benefit the OLCM.
- Each team may purchase 10 mulligans for \$10. A mulligan is used when a team does not know an answer and prefers not to guess.
- A total of 10 rounds will be played. Each round will have 10 questions. In addition, each round will have one bonus question.

Those of you who have attended past Trivia Nite events will recall that Kevin Massie, president of Illinois Forest Products, has repeatedly requested that we include some questions about trees. OK, Kevin. You win. This year's Trivia Nite will include a few questions about trees. Who knows, we may even toss in a shrub just for fun. Monty Python will be pleased.

See you on Sept. 15th.

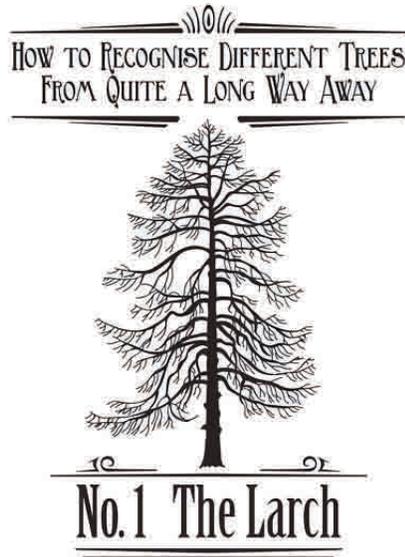
Volunteer opportunities

Our museum depends on the involvement of volunteers and, to be frank, we never have enough.

The OLCM is looking for people who would be willing to conduct tours and handle Gift Shop sales. We need folks who can volunteer once a month as well as those who can volunteer more frequently.

Volunteering at the OLCM is extremely rewarding and we will provide all the necessary training.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer – or just want more information about volunteering – please contact OLCMC Chair Paula Woods (323-4514 or by email at pmw41@casscomm.com).



Recognizing our Friends

Below is a listing of those who have made 2015 contributions to the Friends of the Courtroom.

We invite you to join this distinguished list.

Mr. Lincoln's Friend: Annual Gift \$25

Anthony J. Bigger
Frances Hegener
Earl & Doris McKenzie
Mrs. Ellie Meyer
Charles & Judy Taylor
David & Ila Watson

Mr. Lincoln's Bar: Annual Gift \$50

Dr. R. Thomas Loyd

Mr. Lincoln's Barristers: Annual Gift \$100 - \$249

George Bell
Arline Bley
Brent Bordenkircher, Edward Jones Investments
Mr. & Mrs. H. O. Brownback
Bob & Carol Burget
Ross & Connie Foley
Mr. & Mrs. Roy French
Dottie Gholson
Melody Foley Glidden
Joan Korsmeyer
Carnel Korsmeyer
Norman & Betty Korsmeyer
Mrs. Irene Lamkin
Judge Richard & Rachel Mills
Leigh & Norma Morris
Randy & Sue Reichert

Other gift categories are Mr. Lincoln's Bailiff (annual gift of \$250 to \$499) and Mr. Lincoln's Judges Chambers (annual gift of \$500 or more).

Stop by the Gift Shop

If you haven't yet visited the Gift Shop this year, you are in for a pleasant surprise.

Our selection of items has been significantly expanded. You will want to check out our new book titles that appeal to readers both young and old.

The Gift Shop has games, music, toys, t-shirts, coffee cups, art and so much more.

And we are always happy to hear your suggestions for new items.

The next time you are in town, stop by and check it out.

Beardstown Ladies Room: Under construction

The Beardstown Ladies Investment Club graciously told the Museum Display Committee they would share their room with memorabilia from other civic organizations.

As a result, the photographs of these outstanding women have been rearranged, reframed and placed on one wall, along with a multitude of awards.

Another wall highlights the many newspaper articles that told of their numerous accomplishments, travels and book signings.

Opposite the photo wall is a treasure from the former Masonic Temple building located on Sixth and State streets. This desk was left behind when the Masons moved to their present location and Mayor Steve Patterson asked if the museum would like to have it.

Paul Blakeman restored it for the museum, adding legs since it would have been a safety issue if mounted on the wall. Above the desk are photos of the four Masonic Temple locations in Beardstown. Masonic Lodge Secretary Larry Gabbert was instrumental in providing us with the pictures. Milt McClure provided much information.

On the north wall is a photograph of the 1892 Beardstown Republican Glee Club, complete with the names of the members. On this same wall are the names of the charter members of the Beardstown Junior Chamber of Commerce and an award to Bobbye Spears from the Boy Scouts of America.

The Display Committee would like to have information about your civic organization in the form of a certificate that tells the date the organization was established and/or photographs. These certificates and photographs will be framed and placed on the walls so museum visitors see what an active, community-minded town we are!

~Connie Foley



Anala Massie and OLCMC Chair Paula Woods take a break from planting flowers in our new planters.

Thanks for the flowers, Chris

Last summer, Commissioner Chris Massie had two new flower boxes made for the front entrance of the Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum.

These were needed to replace the aging planters that were disintegrating before our eyes.

Next, she filled the planters with annuals and ornamental grass.

On May 16 of this year, Massie, assisted by her granddaughter, Anala Massie, with kibitzing by OLCMC Chair Paula Woods, planted these boxes with colorful flowers to accompany the fountain grass.

Beardstown Main Street plants a number of boxes around the square each summer. However, our planters vary considerably from the standard and stand out among all the other boxes.

Thanks to you, Chris!

Four area students were recipients of the 2015 Abraham Lincoln Essay Awards presented by the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission on May 8. This year's theme: "One hundred fifty years ago this week, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. In your opinion, what was the greatest tragedy of his death?" Beardstown Academy students Karly Marie Wessel and Rebekah tied for first. A-C Middle School students Payton Marr took second and Tyler Ethan Parker won third. Commissioner Ann Chellette chaired the event. Pictured (from left) are Wessel, Chellette, Smith, Marr and Parker.

Remembering when...

From the late 1870s to early 1950s, railroading was the dominate force in Beardstown and in the lives of her residents.

This early 20th century photo was taken from the Schultz, Baujan & Company mill complex, showing the area to the south.

Behind the tall smokestack one can make out a portion of the massive nearly round Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad roundhouse. Sadly, this limestone edifice was later demolished. Only the smaller brick roundhouse survives.

While engine repair and maintenance was carried out in the roundhouses, both freight and passenger car repair and construction took place in other buildings. And the yards always seemed choked with freight cars.

Beardstown had a second railroad, the Baltimore & Ohio, which ran southeast to Springfield and on down to Flora and Shawneetown.



Though the B&O did not have shops, it provided both passenger and freight service.

Today, the B&O is a fading memory. What was the CB&Q is now part of the BNSF Railway, maintaining a railroad tradition dating back 145 years.

Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission
Leigh Morris, Editor
PO Box 381
Beardstown IL 62618