

Lincoln Newsletter

Fall 2016

Published by the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum Commission

DID YOU KNOW?

Lincoln is known for his famous speeches, especially the Farewell Speech, delivered as he left Springfield, the Gettysburg address, and the Second Inaugural Address, all justly famous for their rhetorical effectiveness. He made some attempts at scholarly lecturing, most notably “Discoveries and Inventions.”

But Lincoln the mystery writer??

“Remarkable Case of Arrest for Murder” was published in the April 15, 1846, issue of the *Quincy Whig*, almost the same time as Edgar Allan Poe’s “Murders in the Rue Morgue,” generally considered to be the first true mystery/detective story.

An account of the arrest of the brothers Trailor, William and Archibald, “Remarkable Case” recounts the events surrounding the murder in 1841 of a Mr. Fisher and the trial of the brothers, accused by a third brother, Henry, of the murder and disposal of the body.

Lincoln was the Trailor brothers’ defense attorney, for which services, incidentally, he was never paid. At the trial he introduced a Dr. Gilmore, who stated that Fisher was alive, although in “feeble health” and suffering from “temporary derangement of mind.”

Gilmore’s testimony had about it “so much of the air and manner of truth that his statement prevailed in the minds of the audience and of the court,” and the Trailors were acquitted. A few days later, Fisher, “in full life and proper person,” as Lincoln states it, arrived in Springfield.

“Remarkable Case” falls into the mystery sub-genre of “true crime.” Lincoln’s tale was not uncommon in the mid-19th Century. Otto Penzler, editor of *The Best American Mystery Stories of the 19th Century*, explains that “In the mid-1800s it was a common practice for lawyers to use their own cases as the basis for lurid ‘true crime’ fiction, embellishing where needed to bring excitement to a case and, not coincidentally, enhance the perception of them as brilliant lawyers and clever detectives.”

Lincoln’s writing about a defense clever in producing in Dr. Gilmore, a witness whose credentials and demeanor convinced the jury that the defendants

were not guilty, was an exercise in self-promotion as much as recounting a tale that was worthy of telling. What could he have done with his defense of Duff Armstrong in the Almanac Trial?

[Paula Woods]

Coming Events

Open House

August 27, 2016 – 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum introduces two new acquisitions, an appointment document, signed by Abraham Lincoln, dated 1863, and donated to the museum by Philip Frowery.

The second document is a deed, signed by Thomas and Nancy Beard, dated 1845, which was donated by George Bell.

These documents are an important addition to the Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum’s collection. More details about the documents and their donors will be included in a future Newsletter.

Trivia Night

Tuesday, September 13, 7:00 PM

The Old Lincoln Courtroom Museum will hold its annual Trivia Night at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, September 13, 2016, at Reichert’s Barn, Bluff Springs, IL. Proceeds of the event will be used to help fund the period restoration of the Foyer for the Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum.

The Courtroom Commissioners are looking for teams to participate in the Trivia Night event. Teams may consist of up to ten members, and the fee per person is \$10.00. All groups are encouraged to form their own teams and compete for honors at this event.

Fun for all as well as an opportunity to help improve one of Beardstown’s drawing cards is available with a phone call to (217) 323-4514 or (217) 248-6053 to register your team. You can also register by e-mail: pm41@casscomm.com.

[Randy Reichert]

Mt. Pulaski Courthouse Patience & Perseverance



Standing proudly in the town square since 1844 atop the highest piece of land in the area, the Mt. Pulaski Courthouse has refused to give way to those who might consider it out-of-date and useless.

Originally built as the courthouse for the area, it lost its legal role when neighboring Lincoln became a larger city and the functions of the courthouse were moved to Lincoln. However, that was not before Abraham Lincoln and Judge Davis practiced in this very building.

After it lost its role as a courthouse, it functioned as a school, a post office, and a variety of other uses before it was sold to the State of Illinois for \$1.00 and restoration to its original condition began. That restoration is still in process, and it takes an immense amount of time, research, and patience.

On August 2, Commissioners Chris Massie and Randy Reichert, accompanied by Sue Reichert, Greta Hardwick, and former Commissioner Connie Foley and volunteer Ross Foley visited the Courthouse to see the period restoration and discuss their methods with Barbara Stroud-Borth, Site Manager, a woman of unique dedication and endless knowledge of details regarding the Courthouse and its history

Each room is identified by its original purpose, and each room is furnished with original period-appropriate furniture, including wood boxes and cast iron wood stoves for heat. Chandeliers utilize candles for lighting and minimal recessed electric lights do not destroy the feeling of the less effective chandeliers.

One of the Commissioners' main purposes in visiting was to see the plank floors which are a modern synthetic material but look remarkably like the original floors which are in the courtroom itself. The first level floors had all been removed when the building functioned as a post office, so new floors were required during the restoration. Maintaining the period look was important, and these floors certainly accomplish that purpose.



One of the restoration projects just completed involved replacing two major trusses in the ceiling of the upstairs courthouse. All furnishings had to be removed and holes cut in the plaster ceiling. The ceiling was jacked up to allow for removal of the bad beams and reinstallation of the new beams. Finally, the cutouts in the ceiling were plastered over and painted.

One of the next major projects involves painting the walls. The problem is that the last paint that was applied is peeling badly. Preliminary tests show that the lime in the plaster has been affected by water leeching through the brick walls causing the paint to peel, especially since the red coating that had been applied over the exterior brick to prevent water from seeping in has cracked and is leaking, now holding the moisture inside and not letting it dry quickly.

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An exterior wall has been chosen for further testing, paint samples have been analyzed, and once approval has been received, paint will be chosen and applied and they will wait for the results. Barbara expects the process to take at least another year before they know if their solution will work.



Another unique restoration involves the windowsills and doors. Windowsills that have rotted have been replaced, both the portions that are unseen as well as the parts of the sill that are seen. Since not all windows are the same size, each has to be measured and made to fit. The same is true of the doors.

Since the original doors were made of African mahogany instead of more inexpensive native pine or oak, replacements are expensive. The Courthouse Foundation has raised the money to purchase African mahogany, and a local carpenter has made it his task to replace the windowsills and make the doors all in the original style so the restoration carries the original period ambiance and the result is an extremely uniform and pleasing outcome.

Like Beardstown's courtroom, Mt. Pulaski's is also on the second floor of the building. In many respects it is similar to Beardstown's but with a much

taller bar that separates the operations section from the audience. Twelve chairs are provided in the jury area, but usually only six were used in a trial. Visitors or those awaiting trial sit on old church pews. Some locals believe the pews were originally in the courthouse, then removed to a newly built church when the courthouse ceased to be used as such. When the church was closed, the restoration of the courthouse had begun, and the pews returned to the restored courthouse.

Overall the trip was extremely interesting and helpful. While our respective missions differ somewhat, we share many of the same goals, and the Mt. Pulaski restoration project is well-funded and presents a period-appropriate view of what a courthouse looked like in Lincoln's day. Mt. Pulaski has a museum in another building on the square, separate from the courthouse, while Beardstown's museum and courthouse share the same building. Mt. Pulaski's museum was closed the day we visited because two volunteers are needed, one to work the courthouse and the other to work the museum. Beardstown's single volunteer can take care of both at the same time since they are in the same building.

A trip to the Mt. Pulaski Courthouse is well worth your time, especially if you want to feel you are in the same era and rooms where Lincoln walked and practiced law.



Judge's Bench, Mt. Pulaski, IL, Courthouse with 30 star American flag. [Randy Reichert]

Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the Revolution, never to violate in the least particular, the laws of the country; and never to tolerate their violation by others. -- Abraham Lincoln, January 27, 1838, from his *Lyceum Address*

Friends' Donations January 2016 to Date

One of Beardstown's crown jewels is the Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum. The Museum is able to operate through the services of volunteers and its support group, **Friends of the Old Lincoln Courtroom & Museum**, and any fund-raisers sponsored by this group.

In addition to the Old Lincoln Courtroom, displays include: **The Lincoln Room, Founders Room, River Museum, Transportation Room, Vintage Clothing Room, Military Room, Judges' Chambers, Beardstown Room, River Art Gallery, Jail, Heritage Room, Beardstown Ladies' Room.**

The adage, "Everyone Needs a Friend" could not be more true. **Will you be our friend?** Will you help us maintain the history of Beardstown and the integrity of the Museum & Courtroom collection? We acknowledge each contribution with a tax-deductible receipt, and you will also receive our quarterly newsletter to keep you updated.

**Mr. Lincoln's Friend:
Annual Gift \$25.00 - \$49.00**

1. Ann Brewer
2. Doris McKenzie
3. Warren Musch
4. Jo Deen Roley
5. Tom Stipanowich
6. Loren & Hilma Stove
7. Charles & Judy Taylor

**Mr. Lincoln's Bar:
Annual Gift \$50.00 - \$99.00**

1. Frances Hegener
2. Dale & Wylla Lovekamp
3. Dr. R. Thomas Loyd
4. The Sazarac

**Mr. Lincoln's Barristers:
Annual Gift \$100.00 - \$249**

1. Brent Bordenkircher
Edward Jones Investments
2. Ron Culves
3. Michael & Charlotte Farrell
4. Ross & Connie Foley
5. Melody-Glidden Foley
6. Dottie Gholson
7. Carole Hegener Kinzer
8. Judge Carson & Carole Klitz
9. Mrs. Carnell Korsmeyer

10. Mrs. Dorothy Lamb
11. Mrs. Irene Lamkin
12. Mr. & Mrs. L. Milton McClure
13. Judge Richard & Rachel Mills
14. Joyce L. Potts
15. Randy & Sue Reichert
16. Dale R. Robertson
17. Walker Nursing Home

**Mr. Lincoln's Bailiff:
Annual Gift \$250.00 - \$499.00**

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

Memorials

1. Herschel Logsdon by Jess and Ann Chelette



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-\$399**
- Mr. L's Judges' Chambers Annual Gift \$500/+**

My pledge is in the amount of \$ _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

This is a _____ new membership.

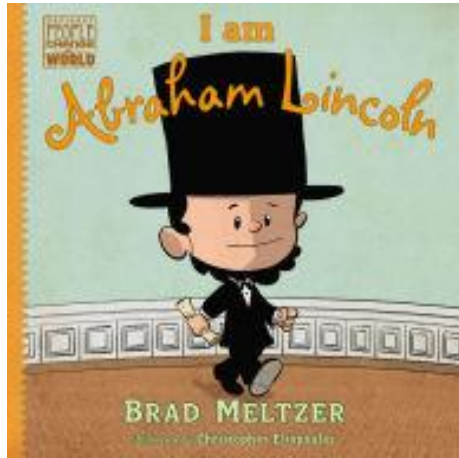
This is a _____ renewal membership.

Please forward your payment (payable to **Friends of the Museum/Courtroom**) along with this information form to:

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

I would like to receive my newsletter in the form of
_____ a paper copy
_____ an e-mail copy

From the Gift Shop



I Am Abraham Lincoln
By Brad Meltzer

Well known best-seller adult mystery and biography author, Brad Meltzer, has created a picture book biography for young elementary students K – 2nd grade. The inspiring message of the book is “We Can All Be Heroes.” The storyline is a great life lesson for kids, using Abe Lincoln as the hero role model. Abe always spoke up about fairness and honesty, and the book encourages youth to emulate those characteristics in their own lives.

The book is well illustrated by Christopher Eliopoulos who creates cartoon-like pictures kids quickly enjoy as well as the fact that the book reads like a comic book for children.

Another theme of the book, “Ordinary People Change the World” is not always easy to accomplish. Doing the right thing can be difficult, but somebody has to and it has to start somewhere. Abe readily challenges his readers: “I will never stop fighting for what’s right. And I hope you’ll remember that when you speak your mind—and speak for others—there’s no more powerful way to be heard.”

Celebrating Lincoln at the State Fair

Again this year the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition sponsored the heritage activity center at the Illinois State Fair. Held on the corner by the Illinois Building right behind the statue of Lincoln at the main gate to the fair, the center is the place to go for insight into the life of 19th Century Illinois.

Visitors enjoyed a Civil War “encampment,” crafting demonstrations, dramatic and musical performances, period games for children, and of course, Abe Lincoln himself, who broke “protocol,” riding around the fairgrounds in a golf cart.

Of special interest was a group of Boys’ Club members clad in Civil War uniforms, who demonstrated marching activities of the kind in which soldiers would have participated. They educated visiting children about how to march and led them around the grounds.
[Paula Woods]

Ornaments by David Badger



Brick School ornaments drawn by David Badger. These attractive ornaments can be used on a Christmas tree or year-round. The drawing is covered by glass in a lead frame with decorative bow and hangar.



Beardstown High School ornaments drawn by David Badger

Our Featured Exhibit: Roy Patterson and the Beardstown Fire Department

What boy doesn't like a fire truck? Clearly the Fire Department at Beardstown attracted the attention of young Roy S. Patterson who, on February 27, 1927, at the age of 16 joined the department as a volunteer fireman and retired 43 years later, November 1, 1969, as its longest tenured fire chief [28 years].



Roy Patterson, age 16, far right

Roy became a regular fireman when Fred I. Cline was mayor, and he continued to serve under other mayors including George Ring, Glenn Tillitt, John Glenn, and N. B. Murray. Roy listed outstanding events during his years of service as follows:

- First pumper secured by the Department in December 1939
- Second pumper secured April 16, 1947
- Cline fire on January 28, 1945
- Woolworth fire January 19, 1950
- Denton fire February 29, 1952

The Denton fire cost Beardstown \$500 for services of another fire department, and Chief Patterson recognized the need for and originated and developed the plan for the Illinois Valley Fire Fighters Association. He was elected its first president and the Association now is composed of representatives from

the departments of 20 towns in this area pledged to mutual aid in the event of emergency.



These fire grenades were tossed into a kitchen stove fire where they would break and the contents would extinguish the flames.

In 1959 Patterson pushed for better rural fire protection. This action resulted in the Rural Fire Association and the purchase of a new \$12,000 rural fire truck in 1967.

Ironically Roy's first ambition was to be a doctor, but he was unable to pursue that career because of the cost of a college education. He then wanted to become a locomotive engineer or a fireman. Having settled on fireman, he often said he devoted his time to that career out of interest to the welfare of the general public.



Fire Truck Light

He and his wife, the former Edna Best, lived on the second floor of the fire station. Although the location was extremely convenient for Roy, it was not always the most comfortable. In an interview with Virgil Reither shortly after retiring, Roy explained, "We used to have a lot of night fires, mostly roof fires, and we still have a great many alarms, although they are from

different causes. Our [three] kids slept right through the clamor of fire bells and sirens, even when the truck roared out of the engine house under their bedrooms.”



Fire Chief's Brass Bullhorn and large fire hose nozzle

(source an *Illinoian-Star* article written by Virgil Reither)

[Randy Reichert]

From Our Visitors' Log

This summer has seen a number of interesting visitors who have come from at least fifteen states and one foreign country. Several have been on the river sailing the Loop, a waterway circuit of the eastern U.S.

Others have had connections to Lincoln and to Beardstown. The grandfather of a man from Minnesota was manager of the glove factory in the '40s, and his father stayed in Beardstown to finish his senior year at BHS. He even found his uncle's picture in the photograph of the BHS 1946 baseball team in the Beardstown Room.

The great, great, great grandfather of a visitor from Jacksonville was in the Lincoln's militia unit in the Black Hawk War.

Becky Ireland of Montrose, IA, is the great, great, great granddaughter of Benjamin Franklin Stephenson, the doctor who testified for the prosecution in the Almanac Trial.

Visitors have learned about the OLCM through websites of the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition

and by the LfL brochures, by seeing the signs, especially the one on U.S 67 in Schuyler County on the bridge approach, and recommendations from previous visitors.

Most often heard remarks are “there's a lot here,” and “it's a lot bigger than it looks from the outside.”

One of the most interesting was Paul Adlaf from Park Ridge, IL, where he is the chair of their historic museum. He was interested in both the courtroom building and the opera house. He remarked that these venues are an asset to the community.

[Paula Woods]

Butterfly Garden



The Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum is sponsoring a butterfly garden featuring perennial native plants in the octagonal raised flower bed across 3rd St. from the museum. The second level of the bed has been planted with milkweed and purple coneflowers to attract butterflies, especially the endangered Monarch butterfly. Currently the top level is planted with purple grass and the bottom level with sweet potato vines and other colorful annuals that match the planter boxes in the downtown area. These plantings are courtesy of Katie Vitale of Main Street.

In the future more butterfly attracting plants and some flowers that are especially attractive to birds will be added to the milkweed and cone flowers.

When you visit the plants, please come across the street to the museum and see a piece of the old tree that the planter box replaced.

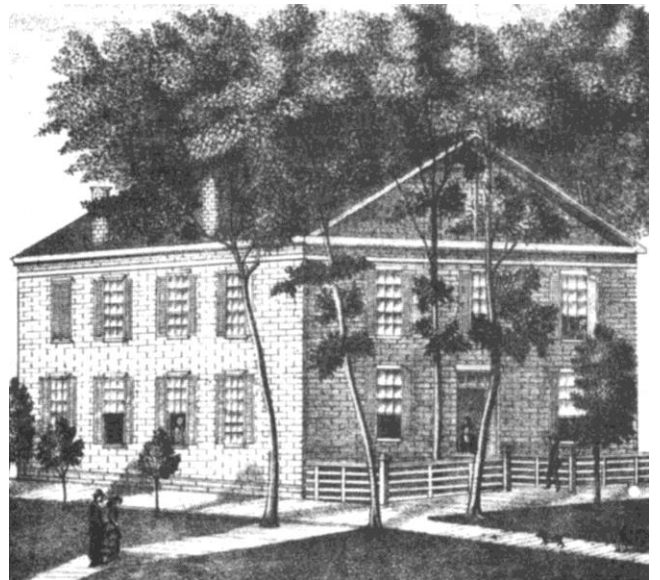
[Paula Woods]

Old Lincoln Courtroom
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Email: pmw41@casscomm.com
Web: LincolnInBeardstown.org**



Open House

Saturday, August 27, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

We will be open during Art in the Park and Taste of Beardstown for visitors to see our new Lincoln document and the new Thomas and Nancy Beard deed. These are important acquisitions of which we are very proud. Please plan to stop by to see them.