Giving USA recently reported that in 2018 almost $428 billion of wealth changed hands from philanthropically-minded individuals to charitable institutions. This had an extraordinary impact on charitable institutions, including libraries and museums like the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM). Approximately $40 billion of these contributions were received from bequests via wills.

*Forbes* reported that approximately half of all Americans 55 and older do not have a will. Let’s face it, most people aren’t giddy over the prospect of having to think about a will let alone drafting one. It’s not at the top of most to-do lists and if it is, it’s usually the last item tackled. No one wants to think of their mortality. Yet, it is inevitable and requires as much attention and foresight as planning to buy a home, going to college, getting married or having a baby.

What happens when a person dies without a will? Abraham Lincoln, the consummate lawyer, could school us on the answer to this question. And yet, he died without a will. Let that sink in for a minute. For all his brilliance and understanding of the law, when it came to preparing for his own death—something he felt and at times believed was imminent—he failed. Abraham Lincoln, the lawyer’s lawyer, did not have a will.

Lincoln was always concerned about his legacy, his place in history. Even as a young boy, scribbling in his homemade cypher book, a page from which is part of our incredible collection we are working to preserve, Abraham thought about his immortality and legacy, writing:

> Abraham Lincoln is my nam[e]
> And with my pen I wrote the same
> I wrote in both hast[e] and speed
> And left it here for fools to read.
How many “fools” have read those words in the some-196 years since he wrote them? His legacy is incomparable. And yet, for someone so focused on leaving one, he missed out on one of the easiest and most important ways to ensure it: Having a will. Through his will, he could have not only taken care of loved ones, but also, institutions he admired, such as the soldier’s home he viewed out of the window of The Cottage—his 19th century Camp David—or Gallaudet University, the nation’s first school for the deaf which he chartered in 1864. Make no mistake, Lincoln’s legacy is sealed in the annals of history. He didn’t need to leave a bequest to ensure it. And yet, I imagine had he the gift of time, he would have wanted to remember and help in perpetuity institutions like these which held a place in his heart.

This may be the first and only time I say something like this, but here goes, “Don’t be like Abraham Lincoln.” Ok, let me clarify that, “Don’t be like Lincoln and die without a will.” Why? Because in the midst of the unthinkable—dealing with your passing and being without you—your loved ones are suddenly thrust into a financial nightmare. What are your financial assets? Who gets what? Who will take care of the minors? What happens to the dog? Is there someone special—not an apparent heir—you would want to remember through a bequest provision? Is there a charity that you supported in your lifetime that you want to provide for? These are just some reasons to have a will in place. A will speaks for you after you have left this earth and are hopefully sipping a latte with Abraham Lincoln in that great coffeehouse in the sky.

This past year, our Foundation established the Better Angels Alliance to further engage friends like you and others in preserving his legacy here at the ALPLM through a planned gift, be it a bequest, charitable remainder trust, insurance policy, annuity etc. We are so grateful to many of you who have informed us of your intentions and to those who gave generously through their estate plans so that Lincoln’s legacy is preserved at the ALPLM.

What is the moral of this story? Don’t, at least in this case, be like Abraham Lincoln: Have a will. Do it for your loved ones. Do it for yourself. And, if in the process you wish to join in partnership with us as we preserve and advance Mr. Lincoln’s profound legacy, become an “Angel” by remembering the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation in your estate plans for the benefit of his Library and Museum. The time is now and our gratitude is endless.

BETTER ANGELS ALLIANCE

For more information about the Better Angels Alliance, please contact Kate Sullivan at ksullivan@alplm.org or (217) 557-6251.
Nearly fifteen years ago, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum opened its doors to the world, offering incredible insights into the life and times of our nation’s greatest president. Like many young institutions, the ALPLM has faced challenges in finding the best pathways to present the story of Lincoln, his era and how it all relates to mankind today. Regardless, the ALPLM and our foundation have achieved far more successes than setbacks.

As we enter our fifteenth year, the ALPLM is excited to have a new Board of Trustees, chaired by former Illinois congressman and U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. Secretary LaHood and the members of this newly minted governing board share a passion for Lincoln and history. Illinois Governor JB Pritzker’s thoughtful selections for the eleven-member board will provide the ALPLM with strong guidance and, undoubtedly, a positive influence toward our mission.

The ALPL Foundation, supported by thousands of generous donors, is a critical partner in our work. Often, the importance of the Foundation’s support is easy to see. New exhibits and special events are possible only because of donor support. However, what isn’t always noticed is the critical support required for managing and preserving the fascinating history this institution is trusted with. Without donor support, our world-class team of museum, library and historical experts would be unable to protect and restore the irreplaceable collections we house.

Simply put, without the generosity, support and leadership of countless individuals, the ALPLM would be unable to celebrate our 15 years with the confidence in the momentum we have.

We’re entering a new chapter in our history. At the Museum, we’ll be sharing a new exhibit in partnership with the International Spy Museum. In addition to unique artifacts featuring espionage, terrorism and threats within our nation’s borders, the ALPLM will reveal our own exclusive artifacts and fascinating spy stories from the Civil War. At the Library, we are updating some of our facilities to improve our education services and better preserve our collections. And, of course, our research historians continue to be engaged in uncovering the past and connecting these lessons to today.

On behalf of our dedicated team of professionals at the ALPLM, I hope you’ll agree that the ALPLM’s “crystal” anniversary is as much yours as it is ours.
As we approach the fifteenth anniversary of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, it is easy to reflect on the most memorable exhibits and programs and even recall some of the inevitable missteps that come with launching a world-class museum and research archive. However, when looking back over the past decade-and-a-half, I am struck by how consistent at least one thing has remained.

Beginning in 1948 and continuing every few years thereafter, historians have been asked to rank American presidents in order of “greatness.” Over the past 70 years, Abraham Lincoln has never fallen lower than number three and is usually ranked first.

That is remarkably consistent, especially considering who joins him on the list, like Woodrow Wilson, who in 1948 was considered a top-five president, but today has fallen to eleventh. Similarly, Andrew Jackson once ranked sixth, but today has fallen to eighteenth. Still other presidents have experienced a resurgence in recent years. For example, Ulysses S. Grant once ranked in the bottom five, but his presidency has been reevaluated and now finishes in the top half. Similarly, Dwight Eisenhower ranked just twenty-first in 1962, but today he comes in fifth, behind Lincoln, George Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Theodore Roosevelt.

In this most recent poll, 91 historians, political scientists, and authors were asked to evaluate every president on ten qualities of leadership, including Public Persuasion, Crisis Leadership, Economic Management, Moral Authority, International Relations, Administrative Skills, Relations with Congress, Vision/Setting an Agenda, Pursued Equal Justice for All, and Performance Within Context of Times. Lincoln ranked first in four categories and no lower than fourth in any category. Interestingly, while Lincoln ranked first in terms of overall greatness, his successor, Andrew Johnson, ranked second-to-last and his predecessor, James Buchanan, ranked dead last.

We were thrilled when C-SPAN reached out to us earlier this year and asked us to partner with them in publicizing the most recent presidential rankings. Their temporary exhibit, American Presidents: Life Portraits, resided here over the summer, devoting a panel to each president, summarized their term in office, and revealed where they ranked in order of greatness. The exhibit elicited the sorts of conversations in our library that are good for the health of our democracy. The partnership culminated with a book signing on July 25 and a public program, in which I had the honor of sharing the stage with C-SPAN CEO Rob Kennedy to discuss the presidential rankings, how historical interpretations change over time, and the enduring nature of the Lincoln legacy.
New Foundation Board Members

Kevin Conlon is a founder and president of Conlon & Dunn Public Strategies. He has more than 30 years of experience in law, government, venture capital, and non-profit organizations. Prior to the formation of the firm, Conlon practiced labor and employment law for 15 years and served in federal, state, and local government including the Cook County Zoning Board of Appeals, a court-appointed arbitrator for the Circuit Court of Cook County, and a Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of Illinois. Active in the community, he is past president of the Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago, a member of the advisory committee for the Illinois Connection/University of Illinois Alumni Association, as well as the Economic Club of Chicago. He has taught classes at the University of Chicago’s Harris School of Public Policy Studies, Chicago-Kent School of Law at the Illinois Institute of Technology and DePaul University. Kevin holds a bachelor’s degree from Illinois State University, a master’s degree from the University of Illinois, and a juris doctorate from the Loyola University of Chicago School of Law.

Robert J. “Bob” Graves is a partner with Jones Day, a more than 125-year old global law firm for which he represents lenders and borrowers in a wide variety of commercial financial transactions. Graves served as co-chair of Jones Day’s global Banking & Finance Practice for 12 years. He is currently an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois College of Law. Graves is a member of the American Bar Association’s Business Law Section, The Chicago Bar Association, where he has served as chair of the Commercial Finance Committee; and the Economic Club of Chicago. He holds a bachelor’s degree and graduated cum laude from Illinois Wesleyan University. He is a Fulbright Scholar, having studied at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg in Germany and a graduate, magna cum laude from the University of Illinois College of Law. Graves is active in community and charitable affairs.

Richard A. Morin is secretary to the board of directors of Cognex Corporation in Natick, MA. Previously he served as Cognex’s executive vice president and chief financial officer for 18 years until his retirement. In this role, he managed worldwide banking relationships, financial and tax reporting, operating and cash budget, acquisitions, and cash working capital management for the consolidated organization. Morin was responsible for financial reporting, internal and external, budgeting, taxes, legal, investor relations, human resources, corporate communications, IT, treasury, and risk management. Morin’s non-profit board experience includes Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, United Way of Central Massachusetts and United Way of Westborough, Saint Vincent Hospital and The Bridge. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and Accounting from College of the Holy Cross and is a CPA.
Marion G. “Bubba” Nelson is a real estate developer and manager whose career spans 45 years. Projects he has spearheaded include The Gables shopping center, Park Towers, Koke Mill—a 250-acre development and multiple office buildings all in Springfield and its environs. He is a trustee of the MG Nelson Family Foundation and the Marion G. and Barbara W Nelson Private Foundation both with a charitable focus to help children in all stages of their lives. Nelson has served on boards of directors of the Memorial Health Systems, Memorial Health Systems Foundation Board in Springfield, the Mental Health Centers of Illinois and the Commercial Bank in Panama City, FL, as well as the advisory board of Marine Bank of Springfield. He also has served as trustee of Springfield’s The First United Methodist Church and president of the Illini Country Club. Nelson holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Banking and Finance from the University of Florida.

Laura Ortega is the executive director of the International Business Council at the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. In this role, she increases global trading opportunities for Illinois bringing needed Investments and jobs to the Land of Lincoln. Previously, Ortega was with the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation at the Legal Office for Consular Affairs in Madrid where she conducted legal matters relative to international judicial cooperation, treaty implementation, and the protection of Spanish citizens abroad. She is the founder and president of Lexpana Consulting Group an international consulting firm. Laura holds a Bachelor’s of Law degree from the Universidad de Cordoba, Spain and a Master’s of Law from Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia (UNED), Madrid. She also holds a Master of Arts in Diplomacy and International Relations from the Diplomatic School of Spain with concentration on International Commerce and is a graduate of a joint program on Energy from Georgetown University and Universidad Rey Juan Carlos.

More Speech: A Conversation about the First Amendment

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) kicked off the month of October as one of a handful of sites streaming the program, “More Speech: A Conversation about the First Amendment” throughout the state of Illinois. The event was a partnership of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, American Library Association, and Illinois Library Association. These organizations coordinated with the ALPLM to bring the program to central Illinois. The program examined how the First Amendment impacts art and civic life, freedom of speech, and expression. It explored the role of art and design in shaping First Amendment freedoms. The keynote was given by David Hiller, president and CEO of the The Robert R. McCormick Foundation. The McCormick Foundation is a founding donor of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.
Four Score and Seven

THERE’S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE at the Lincoln Museum Store

The Museum Store is open 9 – 5 daily.

Shop online 24/7 at shop.alplm.org

MEMBERS RECEIVE A 10% DISCOUNT!

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Abraham Lincoln
Presidential Library Foundation

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2012

Lech Wałęsa receives the fifth Lincoln Leadership Prize

Caterpillar Foundation donates $1 million to the ALPLF

First annual Spooktacular

“Under His Hat: Discovering Lincoln’s Story From Primary Sources” website launched, which includes 3d images of artifacts

“To Kill and to Heal: Weapons and Medicine of the Civil War” and the first of four “Boys in Blue” exhibits presented
From Behind the Curtain with

Phil Funkenbusch

Director, Shows Division,
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

We had such a big, busy summer I thought featuring photos by Chris Wills would be a fitting recap.

June brought a special performance by Chris Vallillo—“Oh, Freedom! Songs of the Civil Rights Movement”—to the Union Theatre stage, featuring the choir from Springfield’s Pleasant Grove Baptist Church. We welcomed back songwriter Barry Cloyd, who performed “Illinois—The Land Between the Rivers” in July, and each Saturday morning we hosted music by Civil War bands, Springfield Municipal Band and local musicians.

Visitors were enthused by their conversations with new Living History characters: Mary Elizabeth Bowser (portrayed by Patricia James-Davis), Kate Warne (portrayed by Sheryl Hinman) and Elizabeth Keckley (portrayed by Kathryn Harris). Bowser was a freed slave who became a spy for the Union Army; Warne was one of the first female detectives when she went to work for Alan Pinkerton (we have a children’s book about her in the Museum Store); and Keckley was a dressmaker hired by Mary Lincoln.

We gave our 250th performance of the play “One Destiny” on July 23rd. Ed MacMurdo and Zaxxson Nation performed several times this summer to capacity crowds in the play by Richard Hellesen. The ALPLM and Ford’s Theatre are the only places in the U.S. to see the play about the aftermath of the Lincoln assassination.

All of these performances were made possible by the Illinois Arts Council, Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Susan Cook House Educational Trust, Dr. Scholls Foundation and the ALPL Foundation.
You Learn Something New Everyday

Reflecting on ALPLM’s upcoming 15th anniversary, there are plenty of things to highlight, but chief among them is its incredible, ever-growing collection. It would take more than a lifetime to explore every corner of the library and each week I learn something new about Abraham Lincoln, Illinois, or the ALPLM itself.

Take, for instance, recent work that went into curating an exhibit on *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*—currently in the waiting area for Ghosts of the Library. I knew we had amazing material related to the book, but I was nevertheless shocked to discover just how amazing it is. Among the items we put on display are a first edition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, one of the original serialized chapters, a beautiful contemporary collection of character illustrations, and abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison’s personal copy of the anti-Uncle Tom novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin, As It Is* (19th-century opposition research!).

What’s more, I uncovered details about the novel and its context that I didn’t know before. The most interesting discovery involved Lincoln himself. After the publication of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe defended herself from pro-slavery critics by writing *A Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which showed the research behind the novel’s characters. According to the Library of Congress’s borrower records, Lincoln checked out the book on June 16, 1862. This is a fascinating detail for several reasons, not least because it shows Lincoln engaging in one of his greatest unheralded skills: research. June 16 was a little under a month before he proposed the Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet. It makes sense Lincoln would have been studying the South and its “peculiar institution” as he considered how to reshape the Union war effort to more effectively attack the Confederacy. How fascinating that Stowe’s work was part of that process?

Another discovery popped up on my radar about a month ago that was equally intriguing (and, in one sense, a little frustrating). I was researching Elmer Ellsworth—the first Union officer killed in the Civil War. He was shot by a secessionist after taking down a Confederate flag in Alexandria, Virginia. His death resonated deeply with the northern public and among the Lincolns, who had known Ellsworth from some time he’d spent in Springfield. I knew all this before starting my research and had even helped curate a case in the *Treasures Gallery* on Ellsworth, but then I ran into an article that said part the flag from Alexandria now resides here at ALPLM. This was news to me, and I set about trying to locate it in our artifact database. Curiously, it didn’t show up and I began to think maybe the article was wrong. Then my colleague Ian Hunt had the insight to look in our manuscripts collection. Sure enough, we located an 1878 letter from Ellsworth’s comrade, Francis E. Brownell, describing the incident and forwarding along a stitched-on piece of the flag. I’d heard the Ellsworth story for years, and now here I was standing in front of a piece of the very flag he died trying to take down.

Moments of discovery and awe like these are what museums and research libraries are all about. It’s a real privilege to be able to work with things like this every day.
A Long and Winding Road
The Papers of Abraham Lincoln: Past, Present, and Future

For nearly two decades, the Papers of Abraham Lincoln (PAL) has been an integral part of the Illinois State Historical Library and its successor, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (ALPL). PAL has come a long way from its origins as the progeny of the Lincoln Legal Papers, growing, evolving, and developing into what we hope will be the definitive and paramount collection of Lincolniana. Here are some milestones in the project’s long road to 2019:

2000: The Lincoln Legal Papers, established by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) in 1985, completes the search for Lincoln legal documents


2000: Trustees of the IHPA approve the expansion and transformation of the Lincoln Legal Papers into the Papers of Abraham Lincoln

2004: Staff of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln launch a worldwide search for non-legal Lincoln documents. Teams of researchers begin visiting private and public repositories around the U.S. searching for, identifying, and scanning Lincoln documents

2005: The Papers of Abraham Lincoln obtains the PubMan content management system for document tracking and collection management

2006: The project expands the search to collections in the Library of Congress and the National Archives

2007: The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) awards the project a grant of $200,000 for FY 2008-10

2008: The Papers of Abraham Lincoln receives a five-year grant of $1.7 million from the Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund

2008: The University of Virginia Press publishes The Papers of Abraham Lincoln: Legal Documents and Cases, a four-volume selective edition


2010: The NEH awards the project $250,000 for FY 2011-13

2013: The NEH awards the project $300,000 for FY 2014-16

2015: The NEH awards the project $400,000 for FY 2016-19

From the Desk of Daniel E. Worthington
Director of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln

The Little Rock Nine receive the eighth Lincoln Leadership Prize
April 15th—150th anniversary of Lincoln’s assassination
May 1-3—Abraham Lincoln funeral reenactment
10th Anniversary of the Library and Museum’s opening
2015: The Papers of Abraham Lincoln enters into a partnership with Iron Mountain to store our master TIFF files in perpetuity as part of its philanthropic commitment to the project.

2016: Project staff move the TIFF files to Iron Mountain.

2017: PAL becomes a department in the Research Division of the ALPL.

2018: The project launches the Papers of Abraham Lincoln Digital Library, a beta version of its first digital publication.

The past nineteen and a half years have had their share of ups and downs, periods of euphoria, success, and stability along with times of upheaval, uncertainty, and instability. But the project has withstood the tests of time, tribulation, and transition, and emerged committed as always to its mission: to locate, digitize, and publish online all documents written by, written to, or signed by Abraham Lincoln, universally acclaimed as America’s greatest president.

The Papers of Abraham Lincoln have flourished due in part to the largesse of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation (ALPLF). PAL has long enjoyed the endorsement and assistance of the ALPLF, and we are grateful to the ALPLF Board of Directors and members for their support. I offer special thanks to the ALPLF staff for managing our finances, submitting our grant applications, administering our grants, fund-raising to match federal grant dollars, and for guiding a novice director through the mysteries of Grants.gov.

In past issues of *Four Score and Seven*, I recounted the work of PAL from January 2017 to May 2019. PAL continues to advance on a number of fronts; as a perennial supporter of the project, allow me to give you an update on its progress.

In the February 2019 issue, I related that in October and December 2018, PAL submitted grant applications to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and the NEH, respectively, for funds totaling $613,500. I am pleased to report that in June 2019 the NHPRC awarded the project a one-year grant of $87,125—the first time in project history that it has received the entire amount requested from the NHPRC. In August, the NEH awarded PAL a three-year grant of $350,000—$150,000 in direct funds, and $200,000 in matching federal funds. With the required project match of $200,000, the total of this grant could reach $550,000 for FY 2020-22. In the competition for NEH funding, PAL was one of four documentary editing projects to receive a grant in a program where the average success rate is 20 percent. The project will use these funds to pay existing staff, update and upgrade the Papers of Abraham Lincoln Digital Library, and hire two new assistant editors.

In the May issue, I described our work on documents in the Congressional Digital Edition, covering the period of Lincoln’s life from the end of his last term in the Illinois House of Representatives (March 1841) to the completion of Lincoln’s time in the U.S. House of Representatives (March 1849). I am delighted to announce that in August we published and posted 250 of these documents to the Papers of Abraham Lincoln Digital Library. The website now has 5,482 documents, in addition to associated biographies of 2,167 persons, 159 organizations, 33 events, and 336 places. We will add documents weekly until all 3,836 documents in the Congressional Digital Edition and Archive are published and posted. The scheduled completion date for this segment is August 3, 2020. After that, we will turn to the pivotal period from the end of Lincoln’s term in the U.S. House to his election as president (November 1860). Lincoln’s Peoria speech, House-Divide speech, and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates are among those documents that grace what we call the Campaign Digital Edition.

If you have not had an opportunity to peruse The Papers of Abraham Lincoln Digital Library, please give it a look. We are proud of what we have accomplished, and we are extremely grateful to the ALPLF for its role in bringing this milestone in the project’s history to fruition. Everyone associated with PAL values the support the ALPLF has shown the project in the past, and we hope our cordial and close collaboration continues for many years to come.
any of us have stand-out field trip memories from our childhoods. In part, our memories may be traced to the change in routine and exploring a new place with school friends. But the memories are even more enduring when the experience sparked our curiosity, making us want to learn more.

Field trips to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum are designed to spark that curiosity and an enduring love of history and Lincoln. The trip encourages imaginative time travel as students follow Lincoln’s life starting in his childhood cabin. As they follow his steps through formative experiences, the journey is accompanied by mood-altering music and sounds, lighting meant to startle or soothe, smells that evoke feelings, and objects they can touch. They see young Abraham working as a store clerk, courting Mary Todd, and relaxing with the paper as his boys play catch with ink in his law office. Students are confronted with the scene of a family being ripped apart and sold into slavery. They see Abraham and Mary grieve for their lost children and Lincoln facing vicious criticism from all sides while grappling with the burden of hundreds of thousands of people’s lives being sacrificed to advance freedom and democracy. They watch him write the Emancipation Proclamation and visit the theater on that fateful night.

Visiting students often have a chance to talk with historic interpreters about what they are seeing throughout this Civil War journey, thanks to the Dr. Scholl Foundation. School groups encounter powerful figures that left a mark on history like Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Abraham and Mary Lincoln as well as unknown soldiers and slaves with important perspectives to share. This past year, they spoke to an interpreter who portrayed Mary Louise Bowser, a freed slave who became a spy for the Union Army during the Civil War and another who portrayed America’s first female detective, Kate Warne. She played a vital role in uncovering an early plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. Kate Warne and her fellow Pinkerton detectives disguised the president-elect and smuggled him into Washington DC. Students may not have learned about these unique stories and perspectives in their textbooks, and they are always so excited to ask their own questions and connect with fascinating people of the past.

Because these trips are invaluable and not all schools can afford to come, we are grateful to philanthropic organizations like the Winnick Family Foundation which ensure that children from schools with fewer resources can gain inspiration from Lincoln’s story.
Teachers who brought their classes through the Winnick Field Trip Initiative commented:

“I was very impressed by the conversations and discussions we had afterward about their experiences and feelings. We had great discussions about the presentation of Lincoln’s pre-presidential years and “Lincoln’s Eyes.” The entire experience reinforced what they had learned in the classroom about the social impact of political events and how political positions are affected by ideologies and viewpoints over time.”—Teacher, Our Lady of Tepeyac Elementary

“Thank you for awarding this grant to our school district. We sincerely appreciate the funds, without which we would have been unable to give our students this experience. Our students had a magnificent time in Springfield.”—Teacher, Galatia Elementary School

Life-changing educational experiences at our museum are by no means reserved for students. An extraordinary week-long teaching seminar took place this past June in partnership with The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History with support from an anonymous donor. Thirty-four K-12 teachers from across the country participated in “Lincoln Speaks: Words That Transformed a Nation” led by Michael Burlingame, the Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies, at University of Illinois at Springfield, with Master Teacher Josh Bill at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Throughout the week, the teachers spent their mornings in lectures with Dr. Burlingame before going on field trips to Lincoln sites such as the New Salem State Historic Site, the Old State Capitol, and Lincoln’s Tomb. The combination of lecture and field trips paired with special behind-the-scenes interactions with museum staff, interpreters, and guest lecturers provided the teachers with an intimate, “only in Springfield” learning opportunity at no cost to them.

Teachers expressed their gratitude in seminar surveys:

“I am so grateful for the time and care shown by Josh Bill and the Abraham Lincoln Library staff. Learning from Dr. Burlingame was an amazing experience. Unlimited access to the Abraham Lincoln Museum, the tours, the local food restaurants - all well planned to give us a clear understanding of Lincoln as a young man, husband, father, neighbor, politician, and President. Thank you!”

“Dr. Burlingame was phenomenal with his in-depth knowledge on Lincoln as a human, president, and writer. I especially enjoyed his humor when trying to explain intricate information on Lincoln.”

“This seminar felt like we experienced Lincoln’s life, rather than just studying him.”

“It was truly a once in a lifetime experience to step into the spaces that Lincoln had walked.”
Upcoming Events

For more details, updates, and full events list, visit www.PresidentLincoln.Illinois.gov.

Exhibits

Open Now
All Aboard!

Working in partnership with the Springfield Railroad Society, Inc., a working model railroad brings to life the construction of the rail line and the significance of connecting the United States via rail.

Union Station
Open Now-January 12, 2020
In This Great Struggle: The Greatest Generation Remembers World War II

There were no bystanders during World War II—the American people were “all in.” This exhibit lets those who experienced the war tell their amazing stories through oral history, artifacts, and original poster art.

Illinois Gallery, Museum
*This exhibit made possible by generous support from AT&T.

Now-September 2020
“Return Visit” Sculpture

President Lincoln and an unnamed “modern man” together make up the sculpture “Return Visit,” which imagines Lincoln returning and talking about his famous Gettysburg Address. The bronze sculpture by Seward Johnson stands 31 feet tall and weighs 37,200 pounds. 

In front of the Museum

Lectures and Book Signings

November 14, 2019, January 9, 2020, and March 12, 2020
Illinois History Forum

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

November 14: The Anti-Slavery Movement in Illinois
Moderator: Independent Historian and Executive Director of the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association Jeanne Schultz Angel
Suggested Reading: Eric Foner, Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad
January 9: Looking for Lincoln
Join Sarah Watson, the executive director of the “Looking for Lincoln” project, as she takes you on a journey of the 43-county Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area.

March 12: The Life of Albert Cashier
Join “Team Cashier,” a dedicated group of history buffs, in discovering the life story of Albert Cashier. Born as Jennie Hodges, Cashier took on the identity of a man before enlisting and serving in the Union Army during the civil war.

Union Station
Open Now-January 12, 2020
In This Great Struggle: The Greatest Generation Remembers World War II

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

December 12: The Anti-Slavery Movement

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

December 12: Dr. Christian McWhirter – Civil War Battles

February 13: Love and Romance – Join ALPLM manuscripts curator Christopher Schnell to explore and discuss changing attitudes about love, romance, dating, and relationships using textual material from the 19th and 20th centuries. View rare items from library collections such as saucy poetry and love letters from the 1850s, diary entries of lonely Civil War-era singles, machine-made Victorian Valentine’s Day cards, and vinegar Valentine’s from the roaring ’20s.

Library, Free; no reservations required.

Social

Friday, November 29, 2019
Fun Frosty Friday
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Jumpstart your holiday season at the 5th Annual Fun Frosty Friday! This FREE family event features fun for the entire family and includes trains, face painting, balloon art and our signature LIFE-SIZED CANDY LAND ADVENTURE! What would a holiday event be without a photo opportunity with Santa and a real-life Ice Princess?! Free.

Library, Free.

Monday, January 20, 2020
Tribute to Martin Luther King
10:00 a.m. - Noon

We’ll honor King’s legacy with two dramatic performances of his famous “I Have A Dream” speech by noted local actor Reggie Guyton. Special musical performances and historical reenactors depicting important African-American figures in U.S. history will also be featured throughout the day. We also honor King’s birthday each year by hosting Community Day: Not-for-profit groups that serve the public can visit the Museum free of charge if they register in advance.

Plaza, Museum. Free.

Wednesday, February 12, 2020
Lincoln’s Birthday Celebration
10:00 a.m. - Noon

History will come to life with visits from President and Mrs. Lincoln, musical performances throughout the day, and arts and crafts activities for kids and grandkids. The winners of a statewide art contest will also be announced, with the winning entries from Illinois school children going on display in the Museum.

Plaza, Museum. Free.

Community

Monday, November 11, 2019
Veterans Day

Free admission for veterans.

Education

February 4, February 6, and February 26, 2020
Educational Events in the Library

5:30 p.m.

February 4: How to Use the Library – Join us for an informative session about the Library, including the types of resources available and what to expect during a research visit. Receive instruction on finding and requesting Library materials to view in our Reading Room.

February 6: Lincoln’s Assassination and its Consequences – Prominent abolitionist Frederick Douglass (historical reenactor Bob Davis) will give a series of speeches in Illinois in the aftermath of President Lincoln’s assassination that asks timely questions about the direction the Nation will take into the Reconstruction Period.

February 26: Path to Freedom: How the Abolitionist Movement Helped Establish the Underground Railroad – As part of our celebration of Black History Month, Owen Mueller from the Galesburg Colony Underground Railroad Freedom Station at Knox College will share his knowledge of how the abolitionist movement helped the Underground Railroad in becoming the first socially integrated movement in American history.

Library, Multi-Purpose Room.


2019

George W. Bush receives the twelfth Lincoln Leadership Prize

C-SPAN exhibit “American Presidents: Life Portraits” presented

“In This Great Struggle: The Greatest Generation Remembers World War II” exhibit presented
Friday, December 3, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

An Evening with Medal of Honor Recipient
Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum cordially invite you to an evening with sole surviving Battle of Iwo Jima, Medal of Honor Recipient Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams, in conversation with Dr. Mark DePue. Fundraising proceeds from this event support the campaign to secure a “permanent home” for the Lincolniana collection.

$1,000 - BENEFACTOR: (Tickets are tax-deductible as allowed by law)
- Dinner & Cocktails with Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams: 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Sangamo Club
- Reception: 6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m., Museum Plaza
- Presentation (PREMIER seating included): 7:15 p.m. - 8 p.m., Museum Union Theater
- Photo with Medal of Honor Recipient Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams: 8:00-8:30 p.m., WWII Exhibit

$200 - SUPPORTER: (Tickets are tax-deductible as allowed by law)
- Reception: 6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m., Museum Plaza
- Presentation (RESERVED Seating included): 7:15 p.m. - 8 p.m., Museum Union Theater

$50 - GENERAL ADMIT
- Presentation (General Seating included): 7:15 p.m. - 8 p.m., Museum Union Theater

Event Sponsors include: UPS Foundation, Julie and William Cellini, Ray and Judy McCaskey, and Mary and Paul Yovovich.

For more information please call 217-557-6251 or email ksullivan@alplm.org.