

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Newsletter
November 2006

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RECENT NEWS

Mackevich Takes Helm at ALBC

Four hours after accepting her appointment as executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission on Sept. 20, Eileen R. Mackevich sat down in the ALBC offices jumped right into a dialogue with staff about the Bicentennial’s future. It was merely a brief glimpse into what was to follow.

Since her full-time arrival on Oct. 10, Mackevich has set a dizzying pace. She has met and talked with all of the Commissioners as well as with many existing – and possibly future – partners. She’s initiated conversations with the Poetry Foundation, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), and the National Orchestra League, for example, in an effort to beef up the role of music, theater, poetry, photography and film in the Bicentennial celebrations. She’s had lunch with theologian Michael Novak, and dinner with Dr. Robert Remini, historian of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The woman with the round James Joyce spectacles seems to have a boundless supply of energy – and ideas.

Eileen Mackevich comes to the ALBC after 16 years as the co-founder and president of the Chicago Humanities Festival. Recognized by the *Chicago Sun-Times* in 2004 as one of the 100 most powerful women in Chicago, Mackevich built the Chicago Humanities Festival from a one-day event involving four Chicago cultural institutions into a three-week, internationally recognized series of events that drew more than 50,000 people of all ages and marshaled the resources of more than 40 Chicago institutions.

Prior to her tenure with the Chicago Humanities Festival, Mackevich was a broadcast journalist and talk show host for 18 years at WBEZ, the Chicago affiliate of National Public Radio, and was deputy director of the Illinois Humanities Council. She has been awarded honorary doctorates by Dominican University and Lincoln College and is invested as a Member of the British Empire. In 2005, Mackevich was honored by the N’DIGO Foundation, a Chicago-based educational charity.

“I am enormously honored to have been selected by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to serve as its executive director,” Mackevich said. “The Bicentennial of the birth of our greatest president gives us an unprecedented opportunity to come together as a people in the exploration of Lincoln's life and values. We are challenged today to take up the 'unfinished work' of his presidency. It is our hope that the Bicentennial moves us toward that goal.”

After living in Chicago for more than 30 years, Mackevich has relocated to Washington, where she and her dog, Charlie, have found a new home on Capitol Hill.

Gettysburg Address Translations on the Web

Seven score and three years ago, President Lincoln predicted that the world would “little note nor long remember” a two-minute speech he made at a Pennsylvania battlefield dedicating a national cemetery there.

Lincoln could not have been more wrong!

In the words of renowned historian James McPherson, the Gettysburg Address has become “the world’s foremost statement of freedom and democracy and the sacrifices required to achieve and defend them.” It has been cited by world leaders and memorized and recited by generations of school children around the globe.

To mark its anniversary, the ALBC has posted 29 translations of the Gettysburg Address on its Web site. The translations, compiled by Roy Basler and published by the Library of Congress in 1972, are the beginning of a project the ALBC hopes to make a cornerstone of the international celebration of the Bicentennial.

U.S. Mint to Issue Lincoln Commemorative Coin

A \$1 commemorative coin “emblematic of the life and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln” will be issued in 2009, the Bicentennial year, by the U.S. Mint.

President Bush signed the Abraham Lincoln Commemorative Coin Act on Sept. 27. The measure, which was sponsored in Congress by ALBC Co-Chairs Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Ray LaHood (R-IL), directs the Secretary of the Treasury to mint 500,000 one-dollar coins, which will be 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson will select the coin’s design in consultation with the ALBC.

The Commission’s third co-chair, Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer, expressed his gratitude to Durbin and LaHood and the other congressional members of the Commission for their work in shepherding the bill through Congress.

“The Lincoln commemorative coin championed by the Bicentennial Commission will not only serve as a handsome keepsake of 2009's milestone anniversary, but help support the educational and commemorative activities we plan for Lincoln's 200th,” Holzer said. “All of us on the

Commission – and Lincoln enthusiasts across the country – owe a debt of gratitude to all of our congressional commissioners for sponsoring this unanimously-passed legislation, particularly of course my estimable co-chairmen, Dick Durbin and Ray La Hood. Lincoln himself, a self-made man who knew the value of a dollar, would surely be pleased by the result of their work to make this dollar coin a reality."

First ALBC Staffer Set to Retire

Jackie Williams, who opened the ALBC's doors in 2001 and served as the initial acting executive director, will retire from the federal workforce on January 1. Her last day in the ALBC office was November 17, due to accumulated leave.

After former president Bill Clinton signed into law the act establishing the ALBC, Co-chair Dick Durbin, the senior senator from Illinois, detailed Williams from his staff to the set up the ALBC's operations. She served as acting executive director until 2002, when she became the Commission's development officer. She has been director of development since 2005.

Williams will return to her native Decatur, Ill.

Genevieve Courbois, who has served as program associate since 2005, will take on many of Williams' responsibilities.

CALENDAR

September 29 – February 19, 2007

The Lincoln Family Album

An exhibition of snapshots of life among the Lincolns.

The Lincoln Museum

Ft. Wayne, IN

November 3 – December 22

Forever Free: Abraham Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation

<http://www.ala.org/ala/ppo/currentprograms/foreverfree/foreverfreeabraham.htm>

Park City Library

Park City, UT

November 9 – December 21

Forever Free: Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation

<http://www.ala.org/ala/ppo/currentprograms/foreverfree/foreverfreeabraham.htm>

Brigham City Library, Brigham City, UT

and

Multnomah County Library, Portland, OR

November 16-18

Lincoln Forum Symposium <http://www.thelincolnforum.org/symposiumSchedule06.html>

"The Genius of Abraham Lincoln"

Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, PA

November 18, 1:00 p.m.

Remembrance Day Parade and Ceremonies

Annual parade of Civil War living history and reenactment groups through Gettysburg with ceremonies to follow at the G.A.R. Memorial and the High Water Mark Monument. Sponsored by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Gettysburg, PA

November 18

4th Annual Luminaria

Luminary candles will be placed on each Civil War grave as a testament to the sacrifices made there in 1863. Sponsored by the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg. For more information, contact Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, 717-334-0772.

Soldiers National Cemetery

Gettysburg, PA

November 19, 1:00 p.m.

143rd Anniversary of the Gettysburg Address

An annual observance with brief memorial services. Sponsored by the Lincoln Fellowship of Pennsylvania and held in conjunction with the Lincoln Forum Symposium (see above).

Soldiers' National Cemetery

Gettysburg, PA

November 20, 11:00 a.m.

Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows

ALBC Commissioner Gabor Boritt, and author of the *Gettysburg Gospel*, will give a lecture on his recent book.

Heritage Foundation www.heritage.org/Press/Events/ev112006a.cfm

Washington, DC

February 2-3, 2007

Lincoln and the Rule of Law

Presentations by Frank J. Williams, William Miller, and Ralph Gary.

Hildene, VT

February 12, 2007

Abraham Lincoln Association Symposium

<http://abrahamlincolnassociation.org/symposium.htm>

“Lincoln and the Politics of the 1850s”

Springfield, IL

February 12, 2007

Wreath Laying At the Lincoln Memorial

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States

Washington, DC

March 24, 2007

Abraham Lincoln Institute Symposium

Archives II

College Park, MD

April 2007

'Our American Cousin' Opera Premier

Culmination of a week-long festival honoring the civil rights movement and Lincoln's impact on American democracy.

Academy of Music Theatre

www.academyofmusictheatre.com/

Northampton, MA

June 14-15, 2007

Fourth Annual Lincoln Institute for Teachers

<http://www.usi.edu/hsi/events/workshops.asp>

"The Elusive Lincoln: Teaching and Learning About Lincoln Through Images and Documents"

Call 800-489-4474 or email hsi@usi.edu

Historic Southern Indiana

University of Southern Indiana

Evansville, IN

July 15 – August 2, 2007

Presidential Academy for American History and Civics Education

<http://www.presidentialacademy.org/>

Secondary school teachers will study three pivotal points in American history – the Revolution, the Civil War, and the civil rights movement – at sites in Philadelphia, Gettysburg, and Washington.

Ashland University

Ashland, OH

September 22-25, 2007

Emancipation Proclamation Display

Original document on display.

William J. Clinton Presidential Library

www.clintonfoundation.org/cpc-index.htm

Little Rock, AR

"Lincolniana," a quarterly digest of events in the Lincoln world, appears elsewhere on the ALBC Web site at www.lincolnbicentennial.gov/about/lincolniana.php. Compiled by Commissioner Frank J. Williams, Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, "Lincolniana" appears in the *Lincoln Herald*, a quarterly publication of The Abraham Lincoln Museum at Lincoln

Memorial University, Harrogate, TN. It is published on the ALBC Web site with their permission.

BOOK CORNER

A flurry of five new Lincoln books hit stores this month, including *The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows* (Simon & Schuster) just in time to mark the 143rd anniversary of the famous speech that has been called “the world’s foremost statement of freedom and democracy and the sacrifices required to achieve and defend them.”

The core of *The Gettysburg Gospel*, by ALBC Commissioner Gabor Boritt, is an analysis of the speech and contemporary reaction to it. It explores the political and social and military environment in which it was written and delivered. *Publishers Weekly* calls it an “elegant account that will delight readers.”

Other Lincoln works being published this month include:

Abraham Lincoln Portrayed in the Collections of the Indiana Historical Society, co-edited by ALBC Co-Chair Harold Holzer, Emily Castle, and Barbara Quigley. (Indiana Historical Society Press)

Lincoln’s Sword: The Presidency and the Power of Words, by ALBC Advisory Committee member Douglas L. Wilson. (Alfred A. Knopf)

The Sangamo Frontier: History and Archaeology in the Shadow of Abraham Lincoln, by Robert Mazrim. (University of Chicago Press)

Lincoln and Chief Justice Taney: Slavery, Secession, and the President’s War Powers, by James F. Simon. (Simon & Schuster)

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

ALBC Speakers’ Bureau

Need a speaker for an event scheduled on Valentine’s Day? Check out the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission’s Speakers’ Bureau online where you will find someone who can expertly speak about Lincoln’s controversial courtship of Mary Todd and the romance of their 23-year marriage.

Planning a leadership retreat for youth? Need someone for a Black History Month event? Looking for something a little different for your bar association meeting? The Speakers’ Bureau may have just what you need.

Pulitzer Prize and Lincoln Prize winners, renowned historians, and leading academics are among the 40 Abraham Lincoln experts currently listed in the growing Speakers’ Bureau, now available on the ALBC Web site (www.lincoln200.gov).

The Speakers Bureau is a project of the ALBC and is intended as a resource for corporations, universities and schools, community groups, and other organizations that may want to incorporate the Lincoln story into their events.

Among the experts who have agreed to be listed in the Bureau, Doris Kearns Goodwin has most recently won acclaim for her best-selling book *Team of Rivals*, for which she won the prestigious 2006 Lincoln Prize. (She won a Pulitzer Prize in 1995.) Other Lincoln Prize winners include Allen Guelzo (2000 and 2005), Harold Holzer (2005), Richard Carwardine (2004), and Lincoln Prize finalists Michael Vorenberg (2002) and John F. Marszalek (1993).

Coming soon, the online Speakers' Bureau will include podcasts of speakers' talks.

All of the experts listed have written and spoken extensively about Abraham Lincoln. The list of topics on which they are available is wide and varied, ranging from Lincoln family relationships, Lincoln's religious philosophy, his legal career, his leadership, the assassination, and numerous other subjects. Among the programs listed by the speakers on which they are available to speak and write include:

- The Lincoln Marriage
- Lincoln and the Formation of the Republican Party
- The Great Communicator: Lincoln and the Press
- Lincoln, God, and the Civil War
- Lincoln the Great Emancipator
- Lincoln and Civil Liberties
- Lincoln's Constitutional Issues
- The Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment
- The Civil War and American Freedom
- Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President
- The Image of the Great Emancipator
- Lincoln as Trial Lawyer

The ALBC offers the Speakers' Bureau as a service to the public. All arrangements and negotiations related to their services should be conducted directly with the speakers.

The Speakers' Bureau can be found on the ALBC Web site under "Planning the Bicentennial," at <http://www.lincolnbicentennial.gov/planning/speakers/>.

'LIVE THE LEGACY'

In his eloquently simple and timelessly powerful remarks at the dedication of the Gettysburg battlefield cemetery, President Lincoln admonished his countrymen that "it is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."

This week, as we pause to remember the sacrifices of the thousands of young men who died and were wounded at Gettysburg, as well as the 143rd anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address on November 19, it is timely to consider how the nation has progressed on that "unfinished work."

Commissioners are interested in hearing your views:

- What IS the nation's "unfinished work?"
- How is it different today than when President Lincoln mentioned it 143 years ago?
- What progress has been made toward completing the nation's "unfinished work?"

Please join the dialogue. Send us your thoughts on these questions at alincbicomm@loc.gov and check back regularly to see what others are saying.

LINCOLN IN THE NEWS

New Director Named for Springfield Museum

Renowned history museum veteran Rick Beard, former director of several major history museums and head of a nationwide Civil War Sesquicentennial observance effort, will assume his new duties this month as director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) in Springfield, Ill.

Beard served as executive director of the Atlanta Historical Society from 1992 to 2002, and oversaw the opening of the Atlanta History Museum. From 2002 to 2004, he was CEO of the New York Historical Society. He has over 30 years of professional experience, including tenures at the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery and with the Museum of the City of New York.

He is also president of Civil War 150: The Sesquicentennial Initiative, a nationwide effort to mark the 150th anniversary of the Civil War from 2011 — 2015. He will retain this position while heading the ALPLM.

Beard replaces Richard Norton Smith, who served as the Library and Museum's founding executive director from October 2003 to March 2006 and who coordinated the October 2004 Library and April 2005 Museum openings. State Historian Tom Schwartz has been serving as Interim Executive Director since Smith departed.

Beard will be an active member of the Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, which was formed this year to plan the state's observance of Lincoln's 200th birthday, with the Library and Museum as the centerpiece.

Lincoln 'Blog' Launched

Brian Dirck, an associate professor of history at Anderson University in Indiana, this summer launched a Web log – or “blog” – specifically on the topic of Abraham Lincoln.

In almost daily entries, Dirck muses on a variety of Lincoln topics, including recent books about the president and his family or the Civil War, upcoming museum exhibits, and Lincoln references in the daily news, including the recent “fun little story [Newark Star-Ledger, Nov. 7] about Johnston and Murphy, a shoemaking company that has made shoes for every American president since Millard Fillmore, including Lincoln. Abe was a size 14, by the way.”

The blog can be found at: <http://alincolnblog.blogspot.com/>

New Poll Finds Growing Support for Penny

While debate over the future of the penny has been heating up with new legislation aimed at eliminating the coin, data shows increasing support for keeping the one-cent coin in circulation. According to a survey released in August by Coinstar, Inc., 79 percent of Americans favor keeping the penny, up from 66 percent just a year ago.

"When people become educated about the issues around the penny, such as new solutions to lower production costs and rounding at the cash register, they appear to be more inclined to keep the penny as evidenced by the 13 point increase over last year," said Alex Camara, senior vice president and general manager of Coinstar's worldwide coin business.

Penny support now extends beyond romantic notions about penny candy and penny loafers.

Thirty-one percent support keeping the penny if alloys are changed to reduce rising production costs and 48 percent say leave the penny as is (79 percent support). Only 15 percent favor discontinuing use of the Lincoln cent.

Almost two-thirds of Americans (63 percent) still feel the penny should be retained as an important symbol of American culture, history and the economy.

While support for the penny is stronger, there also is more evidence that its value as daily tender is fading. Sixty-nine percent of people will pick up pennies off the ground compared to 79 percent just a year ago.

U.S. Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-AZ) introduced legislation in July to modernize the nation's legal tender, including the elimination of the penny. Kolbe, who is retiring from Congress at the end of the year, has five cosponsors for his bill. Without further congressional action this year, the measure will die and have to be re-introduced when the new Congress convenes next year.