

# The Wide Awake Bulletin



## The Lincoln Group of New York

FALL 2005

DEDICATED TO THE STUDY OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

### President's Letter



Joseph E. Garrera

### Dear Members & Friends,

I am pleased to report that these are exciting times to be involved in Lincoln studies. In Springfield Illinois, the new presidential museum and library is attracting enormous numbers of visitors. In Virginia, a new Lincoln society was formed this past May with more than two hundred people turning out for their inaugural program. The Lincoln Forum has already sold-out their annual symposium that will convene in November. Across America Lincoln organizations are reaching out and responding to an elevated interest in Abraham Lincoln.

In New York we are striving to be a member friendly organization, and this excellent publication is a prime example of our commitment. After more than twenty-five years of meetings at the historic Seventh Regiment Armory, we have selected a new meeting site in Manhattan that I believe, based on its close proximity to Penn Station, and the Lincoln Tunnel, will be more convenient for most members.

Continued on page 6

### In This Issue



• 1 • *President's Letter*



• 1 • *Springfield Diary - "Here We Have Visited"*



• 2 • *Harold Holzer  
Lincoln at Cooper Union*



• 2 • *Dr. Ronald C. White  
Lincoln Through His Words*



• 2 • *Chief Justice  
Frank J. Williams  
Crime & Punishment*



• 3 • *Garrera & Ballone  
Presidential Inaugural Parade*



• 4 • *Dr. Hans Trefousse  
New Lincoln Book*



• 5 • *Harold Holzer wins  
2004 Award of Achievement*

**Editor: Steven R. Koppelman**  
**Photographer & Artist:**  
**Henry F. Ballone**

### Springfield Diary - "Here We Have Visited"

By Steven R. Koppelman

Every summer for the past few years, my son Scott and I have taken a "father-son" trip to various Civil War battlefield sites. In 2003 we visited Antietam, Harper's Ferry, and Gettysburg. In 2004 it was Virginia as we toured Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, The Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and also stopped at Front Royal and Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley.

This summer however, we decided to make a deviation from Civil War battlefields and instead travel to perhaps the most important Abraham Lincoln related location there is—Springfield, Illinois.

Continued on page 6



Scott Koppelman (left) & Steve Koppelman (right) with the Lincoln family

*Father & Son annual Civil War battlefield trip leads to perhaps the most important Abraham Lincoln related location there is - Springfield, Illinois.*

## 2004-2005 Meetings Review

### November 4, 2004 • Harold Holzer Opens the Lecture Season

Prolific writer and lecturer Harold Holzer addressed The Lincoln Group of New York with his presentation on his new book, *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President* (2004).

Just as the crowd that came out to see Abraham Lincoln on February 27, 1860 at Cooper Union, the large crowd that came out to hear Mr. Holzer was not disappointed. In his usual charming and personable way, Mr. Holzer expressed how The Cooper Union Address was such a pivotal moment in the life of Abraham Lincoln.



Perhaps once best known for the line "Let us have faith that right makes might..." Mr. Holzer detailed all of the important aspects and profound arguments in the speech, emphasizing the thorough research performed by Mr. Lincoln prior to giving it.

Mr. Holzer has authored, co-authored, and edited 23 books and is the co-chairman of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. He has received numerous honors and awards within the field of Lincoln and Civil War studies.

### The Lincoln Group of New York

#### President

Joseph E. Garrera

#### Vice President

Hans L. Trefousse

#### Secretary

Fran Berman

#### Treasurer

Diana L. Garrera

#### Executive Committee

Henry F. Ballone  
Paul Ellis-Graham  
Hal Gross  
Harold Holzer  
Steven R. Koppelman  
John K. Lattimer  
Milton Seltzer  
Richard E. Sloan  
Larry West

### February 8, 2005 • Dr. Ronald C. White

Paints a Portrait of Lincoln  
Through His Words.



Dr. Ronald C. White, Jr., a faculty member at the San Francisco Theological Seminary in California, gave an outstanding presentation at the February meeting of The Lincoln Group of New York, on his latest book, *The Eloquent President: A Portrait of Lincoln Through His Words* (2005).

Dr. White put his own eloquence on full display as he delighted his audience with his own words as well as Lincoln's. His prior award-winning book, *Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural* (2003), in conjunction with this, his latest work, puts him in the forefront in the study of Lincoln's "way with words."

### April 7, 2005 Chief Justice Frank J. Williams

Lectures on the Crime and Punishment of the  
Lincoln Assassination Conspirators.

The close of the 2004-2005 lecture season for The Lincoln Group of New York was a most memorable experience as Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, and noted Lincoln scholar, Frank J. Williams honored us with a presentation.



His talk on "Crime and Punishment, Murder and Myth: The Lincoln Assassination Trial in Law and Lore" truly raised the level of discussion on this topic to new heights. No one is better able to address this subject than the man who recently was sworn into service, commissioned for a two-year term as a Major General in the United States Army to serve as a member of the "Military Commission Review Panel," which will be deciding the disposition of the enemy combatants held by the United States at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Justice Williams is founding chairman of The Lincoln Forum, a major collector of Lincolniana, as well as an author and scholar. His most recent book is *Judging Lincoln* (2002).



Members fortunate enough to attend the April meeting were also absolutely enthralled by the performance of some surprise visitors...the Eugene T. Maleska School choir, under the direction

Continued on page 5

**Member News and Notes by Steve Koppelman**

**Washington DC - Garrera & Ballone Ride In Presidential Inaugural Parade**

Through an invitation extended by the National Lincoln Highway Museum & Archives of Galion, Ohio Lincoln Group of New York President Joseph E. Garrera and Executive Committee Member Henry F. Ballone



Craig Harmon & Joseph E. Garrera

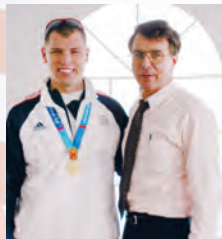


Henry F. Ballone & Chris Rooney

rode as guests in the presidential inaugural parade aboard "The Spirit of the Lincoln Way", a vintage fire truck that travels the country promoting Abraham Lincoln. Ballone and Garrera escorted legendary Hollywood entertainer Mickey Rooney and his wife Jan. Mr. Rooney respects all Presidents and has not missed an inaugural since FDR's. In referring to Lincoln Rooney stated, "He's like one of our Founding Fathers, and a great President too."



Jan & Mickey Rooney & Joseph E. Garrera



Jason Reed & Joseph E. Garrera

Also on board were Olympic Gold Medallist Jason Reed and Wally Earhart, cousin of famed aviator Amelia Earhart. Earhart was dressed as Abraham Lincoln.



Wally Earhart & Joseph E. Garrera



**Holzer Presents at White House Wins Lincoln Prize**

The East Room of the White House was the venue on Friday, February 11, 2005 as Harold Holzer and celebrated actor Sam Waterston performed "Lincoln Seen and Heard" before an invitation only audience of Lincoln scholars from throughout the country (included were Joseph E. Garrera and Richard Sloan from the Lincoln Group of New York), and of course, the President and First Lady.



Pres. Bush & Joseph E. Garrera

The President addressed the audience and commented that

"Abraham Lincoln was a master of the English language, but his true mother tongue was liberty." The President went on to say, "The Civil War was decided on the battlefield; the larger fight for America's soul was waged with Lincoln's words."

And it was these words of Lincoln, wonderfully recreated by Mr. Waterston, with poignant accompanying visuals and commentary by Mr. Holzer that proved President Bush's point. The president used his own words to announce that Harold Holzer was a winner of the 2005 Lincoln Prize, the most generous and prestigious award in the field of American History.

Mr. Holzer's book, "Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President," was selected by the Lincoln Prize jury which commented: "This account of Lincoln's address at Cooper Union in early 1860 will change the way historians and general readers alike view the Illinois politician's ascent to the presidency."

Allen C. Guelzo, who became the first two-time winner of the Lincoln Prize, won the 2005 prize for his highly acclaimed book, "Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America." Co-Founders of the Lincoln Prize, Richard Gilder and Lewis Lehrman, the principals of the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History in New York commented that Dr. Guelzo's books is "The first study of this important subject in forty-years, a masterpiece of compelling scholarship and elegant prose."

**Discovery Channel's "The Greatest American"**

The Discovery Channel aired a month-long series of programs this past June whereby the American public ultimately selected the person who "most influenced the way we think, work and live."

The series began with a Discovery Channel list of the top 100 Americans as previously nominated by its viewers. This list was then reduced, week by week, based on live voting via the internet as well as text messaging and toll-free phone numbers first the top 25, and then further to the final five. The finalists were Benjamin Franklin, Martin Luther King, Jr., Abraham Lincoln, Ronald Reagan, and George Washington.

With a week to go in the voting, advocate groups for each of the final five candidates appeared on an episode of the series entitled, "The Great Debate." The Abraham Lincoln contingent was headed up by Harold Holzer and Joseph E. Garrera. Holzer made a very strong case on Lincoln's behalf.

During the grand finale episode, which aired live on Sunday June 26th, the final five were narrowed down to the top two as Franklin, Washington, and King were eliminated, respectively. Finally, despite a cogent argument by Doris Kearns Goodwin, Ronald Reagan was selected, albeit by the narrowest of margins, as the "Greatest American" by the voters. According to Discovery Channel, over three million votes were cast during the campaign.

In addition to Mr. Holzer and Mr. Garrera, during "The Great Debate" episode and the "Grand Finale" episode, many Lincoln Group of New York members attended and were seen and heard making the case for Lincoln. This group included: the Chandler family, Diana Garrera, Dr. Michael P. Gray, Steven R. Koppelman, Prof. Mark Washburne, Prof. Heidi Weber and many others.

## Member News and Notes continued

### Dr. Trefousse's New Book on Lincoln's Reputation

Vice-President of the Lincoln Group of New York, Dr. Hans L. Trefousse has written "First Among Equals: Abraham Lincoln's Reputation During His Administration," Fordham University Press, 2005. In this latest work, Trefousse argues that Lincoln was very much appreciated and respected in his day, not just strictly after his assassination.



Pulitzer Prize winning author James M. McPherson said the following: "A much-needed corrective of the traditional story of a contrast between Lincoln's unpopularity while president and his elevation to heroic stature after the assassination. Trefousse shows that much contemporary criticism of Lincoln was driven by partisan motives and pro-Southern sympathies, while the mass of the Northern people appreciated Lincoln's superior qualities and leadership from the beginning."

This book is another important work in the distinguished career of Dr. Trefousse whose biography of Andrew Johnson stands as the definitive assessment of his life. His work, "*The Radical Republicans: Lincoln's Vanguard for Racial Justice*" (1969) is considered to be a classic work on the subject.

### Hal & Ida Gross Donate Lincoln Collection to Queens College

A special presidential reception room at the Queens College Library was filled to capacity on September 22, 2005 for the official dedication of the Hal & Ida Gross Lincoln and 19th Century American History Collection. Consisting of more than 600 volumes, many scarce and outdated editions, the collection represents a major addition to the nearly one million books already housed at Queens College. Professor Rolf Swenson told the standing-room-only audience that "74% of the books represent titles that have never been in the library at Queens College. And Queens College is very grateful for such a generous and academically important gift." After more than thirty years as a collector, Hal Gross can now enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that his hard work will assist in educating a new generation of Americans about the importance of Abraham Lincoln.



### Sloan Presents at Clinton MD. Surratt Society Annual Conference

Founding member and former president of the Lincoln Group of New York, Richard Sloan, was invited to speak at the Surratt Society's annual conference this past April. The theme of the conference was "Crime of the Century: Aftermath," and Mr. Sloan's presentation was titled, "You Are There: Abraham Lincoln's New York City Funeral."



### Seltzer Gives Slide-Talk in Wantagh, New York

Executive Committee member Milton Seltzer, who serves as the historian for the Wantagh Preservation Society, presented a slide-talk at the Wantagh Library, commemorating the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's famous Cooper Union speech. Attendees were enlightened as to how Lincoln won the hearts and minds of sophisticated New Yorkers on his way to the 1860 Republican presidential nomination.



### More Member News

Out of state member **Dr. Barry Schwartz** of The University of Georgia was a featured lecturer at the National Endowment for The Humanities summer program at Boston University, he continues to work on his next book dealing with Abraham Lincoln and national collective memory. Out of state member **Dr. Edward Steers'** award winning book "Blood On The Moon: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln" has nearly sold out of its' sixth hard cover edition, the book has been re-released in paperback. **Larry Appel** of New York City is teaching a class on Abraham Lincoln at Mary Mount College. Larry was surprised to learn that 79 people requested to take his class that could only accommodate 45 students. Out of state member **Sara Gabbard**, Vice President of the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana and Editor of "Lincoln Lore" was recently honored by having "Lincoln Lore" recognized as one of the top fifty magazines in America. Under the direction of Sara Gabbard "Lincoln Lore" has become one of the most respected Lincoln journals in the country. If you are not a subscriber visit The Lincoln Museum online at: [TheLincolnMuseum.org](http://TheLincolnMuseum.org). **Dr. Michael Gray** of East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania is experiencing good sales of his book "The Business Of Captivity: Elmira And Its Civil War Prison." This book is must reading for anyone who thinks only Southern prisons were harsh and unfit during the war.

**Harold Holzer Wins 2004 Award of Achievement by Steve Koppelman**

**In a unanimous decision, the 2004**

Award Committee of The Lincoln Group of New York, consisting of Richard E. Sloan (Chair), Prof. James R. Rawlins, and Prof. Mark Washburne, selected *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President*, by Harold Holzer, as the 2004 recipient of the Award of Achievement.

The award, which is given annually to the individual or organization that has done the most to encourage the study and appreciation of Abraham Lincoln, was presented on November 4, 2004 at the Seventh Regiment Armory in New York City.

In conferring this award to Mr. Holzer, the committee noted that this work was a seminal achievement in scholarship which filled a void in the study of the life of Abraham Lincoln.



Joseph E. Garrera, Harold Holzer and Paul Ellis-Graham

Mr. Holzer is the first ever three-time recipient of the Award of Achievement having previously won it in 1988 for his numerous writings on Lincoln — 1) “The Gettysburg Address” in *American History Illustrated*; 2) “A Few Appropriate Remarks” in *Cobblestone*, 3) “The Lincoln Image” in the book entitled “The Historian’s Lincoln” and in 1993 for “The Lincoln-Douglas Debates: The First Complete, Unexpurgated Text;” “Washington & Lincoln Portrayed: National Icons in Popular Prints,” and “Dear Mr. Lincoln: Letters to the President.”

• • •

Continued from page 2



of Music Instructor Felicia Yarber the choir, delighted the audience with their musical talents. The intermediate school students from the Bronx, New York were all smiles as they performed amongst other songs, their truly unique rendition of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.”

It was a privilege for The Lincoln Group of New York to give something back to the community by providing dinner for this fine group of youngsters who can look forward to a bright future.

One final note on the evening. . .unfortunately it was our **last meeting at the historic Seventh Regiment Armory**, home for so many years to the Lincoln Group of New York, as it has closed its doors to this type of activity. We will certainly miss the ambience of the impressive building but look forward to a new venue as we move forward.

• • •

**In Memoriam: Dorothy Goepfert  
Dr. Daniel E Bassuk**

The Lincoln Group of New York was saddened to receive the news that long-time member, **Dorothy Goepfert**, passed away after a brief illness on October 20, 2004. Dorothy is remembered as a warm and cheerful lady. Her presence is certainly missed by all who knew her.

We are further saddened by the news of the death of long time member **Dr. Daniel Bassuk** of Wallingford, PA., who died this past May. Dr. Bassuk made history in 1990 when he formed the Association of Lincoln Presenters, a national organization that has grown to 274 members that are dedicated to portraying Abraham & Mary Todd Lincoln across America.

To his credit, Dr. Bassuk leaves a rich legacy that includes an important manuscript that will be published as a book titled, “*President of Black and White Americans: Ten Blacks Tell of Encountering Lincoln.*” Dr. Bassuk was a true credit to our organization; he rarely missed a meeting, and was an inspiration to all who crossed his path.

**ATTENTION MEMBERS:  
YOUR GENEROUS HELP  
IS REQUESTED...**

As you're certainly aware, one of our most popular Lincoln Group of New York meeting events is the book raffle. What you might not know is that our members donate all of the books. That's where your help is needed. To keep this raffle going with high quality Lincoln publications, we respectfully request that if you have any books that you can spare for the raffle, simply bring them to the meeting and see one of our Executive Committee members to ensure that they're included in that night's raffle. **Thank you, in advance, for anything you can contribute.**

**President's Letter, continued**



Many individuals in our organization are working diligently to elevate the professionalism of the LGNY. For example, this newsletter would not be possible

without the leadership of executive committee member Steven R. Koppelman. Steve has enabled us to produce one of the most respected publications in the Lincoln historical community, and I along with our entire organization remain indebted to him. Henry F. Ballone, the official photographer of the Lincoln Group of New York, handles the layout and graphics, as well as the publication.

A few weeks ago I was proud to be invited to speak at a special ceremony at Queens College in New York when Hal Gross of our



Hal Gross and his Lincoln collection

executive committee donated his highly valued Lincoln collection to the college. Harold Holzer was the keynote speaker

and was introduced by the president of the college who was grateful that his college was receiving such an important gift.

As the Lincoln Group of New York president I am honored to be approaching my eighth year in office. If I have learned anything in all these years, it's how important the members are. Without your support we would have nothing, with your support anything is possible. Always remember, it's your enthusiasm and interest, that keeps our organization moving forward. JEG . . .



Harold Holzer

**Springfield Diary - "Here We Have Visited" continued**



**Day One, Saturday**  
July 2<sup>nd</sup>

Mostly a travel day, the goal was to make as much of our 4-day extended 4th of July weekend as possible. With that in mind, we decided to fly into St. Louis which is only a 90 minute drive from Springfield as opposed to Chicago which is three hours away. Upon landing in St. Louis and renting a car, instead of driving straight through to Springfield, we made one small detour and stopped in Alton, Illinois, only 30 minutes from the St. Louis airport.

Here, we not only viewed the site of the seventh and final debate between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas but also the Elijah Lovejoy Monument and the ruins of a former confederate prison.

Standing in "Lincoln Douglas Square" overlooking the Mississippi River, viewing the full size bronze replicas of the "combatants," which depict the passion of Douglas and the pensiveness of Lincoln, one can't help but feel the aura of the history that took place in this spot.

The Lovejoy Monument, erected to memorialize the slain abolitionist newspaper editor, reminded us of a time when a quaint American town such as this, could erupt in mob violence over the most passionate issue of the day—the abolition of

slavery. Lovejoy, a leading abolitionist, was set upon by a pro-slavery mob and shot to death, while his printing press was destroyed and thrown into the Mississippi River.

Finally, Alton displayed some of its Civil War related history as we viewed the ruins of the Alton Prison, which opened in 1833 as the first Illinois State Penitentiary and was closed in 1860. Shortly thereafter, as the Civil War began, the need arose for a military prison in the area, so it was re-opened. Ultimately, almost 12,000 Confederate prisoners would spend time here.

As we drove out of Alton, heading to Springfield, a sense of anticipation began to overtake us as we got closer and closer to "The Land of Lincoln."

**Day Two Sunday**  
July 3<sup>rd</sup>



With a long, full day planned (and thankfully, a gorgeous sunny day as well), Scott and I agreed that the day simply had to begin by visiting the Lincoln Home National Historic Site at 8th & Jackson Streets.

We arrived at the Visitor Center as soon as it opened and received our tickets for that morning's first guided tour of the home. We had some time prior to the tour and spent it walking around Lincoln's neighborhood, and getting our first view of the actual home Lincoln lived in for close to 25 years, and the only home he ever owned. This was the site I most wanted to see, and it did not disappoint--though smaller than I had pictured it (even though I knew it would be). To stand in front of this house was quite a moving experience. Picturing the Lincoln's here taking part in their every day activities, allowed one to put the "icon" that Lincoln is into more "human" terms.

The tour began promptly, and took us through each of the rooms in the house, with many original and period pieces throughout; it was quite an experience to literally walk the floors that Lincoln walked, and to run our hands along the same hand-rail leading upstairs that Lincoln had used.

## Springfield Diary - "Here We Have Visited" continued



The information provided during the tour itself however, was lacking. Scott and I were disappointed that only some very general facts were provided by the park ranger conducting the tour. Scott, who has been a member of The Lincoln Group of New York since joining as an eight-year old in 1999, felt that he could have done a better job—I would agree.

Upon leaving the home, we walked just a few blocks to the Great Western Railroad station (known as the Lincoln Depot), site of Lincoln's famous Farewell Address given when he left Springfield to start his inaugural journey to Washington DC on February 11, 1861. Standing here, and reading the address, I couldn't help but picture the final scene of "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" where Raymond Massey, as Lincoln, steams off toward his unknown future appointment with history.

From here we walked over to the old town square, site of the Old State Capitol building and Lincoln's law office. First we toured the law office and saw where Lincoln worked on a daily basis (when he wasn't traveling the circuit), where his children played and bothered his partners (at least Herndon), and where his skills both as a lawyer and politician were certainly honed. It was easy to imagine the hustle and activity that must have taken place within those walls.



The tour of the Old State Capitol, which is a beautiful Greek Revival building, provided the highlights of seeing where Lincoln gave his famous "House Divided" speech—Representatives Hall (also where he laid in state before his burial in Oak Ridge Cemetery), and the room he received well-wishers and office seekers in as a Presidential candidate and then

President-Elect—the Governor's reception room.

Now it was time to get in the car and make the short drive to Oak Ridge Cemetery for our opportunity to get as close to Lincoln as is humanly possible. The cemetery itself certainly is a beautiful place, if such a word can be used to describe such a place. Certainly one can understand why Mary Todd Lincoln was so insistent on the burial being here as opposed to a downtown location.

As you enter the cemetery grounds, it's an extremely short drive until you come upon a wide open expanse of grass at the head of which lies the 117 foot granite tomb containing not only Abraham Lincoln but Mary, and three of their four sons—Eddie, Willie, and Tad (Robert is buried in Arlington National Cemetery).



Upon entering the tomb, small bronze statues and excerpts from some Lincoln speeches are displayed along the walls of circular hallway which leads to the red marble marker which stands above the area where Lincoln's coffin lies. His body actually rests below the floor in a steel and concrete-reinforced vault. The emotional impact of being in this place can not be adequately described. I found myself though, thanking Lincoln for all he had done so that we today can enjoy all the freedoms that we do.

Now that we had seen, in essence, the end of the Lincoln story, we felt it was time to see what amounts to the beginning (almost anyway)—the town of New Salem. Here, Lincoln first emerged at age 23, as a "public man."

New Salem was a short drive, about 20 miles, from Springfield. It surprised us as we didn't think it would be all that worthwhile a place to visit, being a "reconstructed" town—we were wrong. Though all

buildings are reconstructed except for one—the Onstot Cooper Shop—they are furnished with period antiques, some of which belonged to some of the town's original inhabitants. All buildings are laid out as they were at the time based on original surveys that remain in existence today.

It was a wonderful woodsy place to walk through and you really did get a sense of what life was like in this pioneer village. As an interesting aside, we were told by some of the people who volunteer their time interpreting life in New Salem, that Liam Neeson (who will be playing Lincoln in Steven Spielberg's film project based on Doris Kearns Goodwin's upcoming Lincoln book), had just been visiting the town a week or two earlier, researching his role.

Aside from the buildings that encompassed the town, including the Lincoln-Berry Store, we saw the site, as best can be determined, of the famous wrestling match between Lincoln and Jack Armstrong. As we looked around, I couldn't help but wonder if Lincoln really did find love here with Ann Rutledge.


Before heading back to Springfield at the close of a long but fulfilling day, we made the short 2-mile drive to nearby Petersburg, to visit the gravesite of Ann Rutledge—if only she could have given us the answer.

## Day Three Monday

July 4<sup>th</sup>

On this holiday when we celebrate the birth of our nation, now 229 years old, we had reached the day where we would visit the brand new, 3-month old, Abraham Lincoln Museum.

To label this museum "state-of-the-art" is quite simply, an understatement. Upon entering the enormous main rotunda of the museum, you see a recreation of The White House directly in front of you, and in front of this you see the Lincoln family there to greet you (see accompanying photo). As your eyes move left, you see a recreation of the Log Cabin that Lincoln grew up in—the dichotomy of the two is striking. One enters the log cabin and essentially passes through the various stages of Lincoln's life, all depicted with "life-like" Lincoln figures,

 ultimately ending with The White House, and Ford's Theatre recreations. You pass through the times of Lincoln's life and see him through all of its various stages.

There has been much debate as to the so-called "Disney" approach used in this part of the Museum in terms of "life-like" reproductions of Lincoln and others, used throughout these exhibits. Quite frankly, I thought I would not like the approach used and would come down on the negative side. But I saw how it brought people more in to the Lincoln story, how it made it easier to depict important events, and I must say, I felt that it was very well done and did not detract in any way.

That said, I would have preferred this large exhibit area to be smaller with less emphasis on it, and more emphasis instead being put on the exhibit areas where true Lincoln artifacts were displayed, for this was truly the fascinating part of the museum for me (though for the average visitor, that may not be the case). Seeing documents written in Lincoln's own hand, some of his actual possessions, etc. was surely a treat—more would have been better.

The temporary exhibit, BLOOD ON THE MOON, was a major highlight of the visit as a significant number of assassination related artifacts have been brought together here in one place. Some of the more moving items, to me, included the carriage in which Abraham and Mary Lincoln rode to Ford's Theatre in, the actual bed that Lincoln died in, and many pieces of furniture from the funeral train that brought Lincoln's body back to Springfield for burial.

Other exhibits in the Museum that were well worth taking the time to see included the multi-media "Ghosts of the Library" and "Lincoln's Eyes." The former is a hologram show covering the joy of history and discovery that awaits a researcher, while the latter uses many special effects to allow the audience to see events as Lincoln saw them.

The museum was a truly wondrous adventure into the world of Abraham Lincoln, presented in an exceptionally modern way, yet of course focused on the past. The visit to the museum was the "highlight" of the trip, according to Scott. And, by the way, the gift shop was outstanding too!

Since this day was July 4th, we spent the evening on the grounds of the present day State Capitol building (significantly larger than the Old State Capitol building), where we witnessed a fine fireworks display in the skies over "Lincoln's Springfield."

## Day Four Tuesday

July 5<sup>th</sup>

Mostly a travel day, this time back home, we left Springfield, not knowing when, or whether ever, we may return. We stopped in downtown St. Louis on the way back to airport to visit the famous Gateway Arch and the National Westward Expansion Museum which is located at the base of the Arch.

We were able to ride via tram to the top of the Arch where we had a spectacular view of the Mississippi River with St. Louis to the west, and Illinois, the Land of Lincoln where we had just come from, to the east. As I looked back towards the direction of Springfield, my thoughts were of everything we had seen and experienced during the past few days and their significance, and I felt how very lucky we were to have had the opportunity.

...

*We left Springfield, not knowing when, or whether ever, we may return.*

**Award Committee:** *A special thanks to our dedicated members that serve on the award committee.*

2004

Richard Sloan, Chair  
Professor James Rawlins  
Professor Mark Washburne

2005

Richard Sloan, Chair  
Professor Heidi Weber  
Educator Paul Ellis-Graham

**THE WIDE AWAKE** is a publication of The Lincoln Group of New York. We welcome your feedback, letters and comments, as well as news of your Lincoln related activities. Please direct your correspondence to:  
Steven R. Koppelman, Editor • The Wide Awake • 5 Leigh Court • Randolph, NJ 07869

Lincoln & Civil War event photos & albums can be viewed at: <http://homepage.mac.com/civilwarnut>

Note: Member ideas and opinions are very important. Anyone wishing to speak with Lincoln Group of New York president Joseph E. Garrera is encouraged to do so by calling (973) 383-9304 evenings between 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. E.S.T.