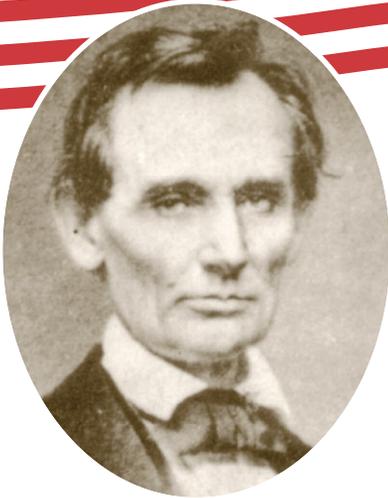


# The Wide Awake

## Bulletin



**The Lincoln Group of New York** FEBRUARY 2008  
DEDICATED TO THE STUDY OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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### President's Letter



Joseph Garrera

**D**ear Friends & Members,

Every student of Lincoln history will undergo a memorable experience in the next two years.

The Lincoln Bicentennial activities are kicking off February 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>. This is the phase of the Bicentennial, which takes the Lincoln story to the world.

Last year, our "Award of Achievement" committee reviewed 25 books, a number nearly triple what it was five years ago. The years 2008 and 2009 will yield a bumper crop of Lincoln books and a seminal era in Lincoln studies.

The primary beneficiary to this renaissance in Lincoln scholarship is the American public. As much as we thought we knew about the 16<sup>th</sup> President, there is much more to learn. One excellent example of this resurgence is Harold Holzer's next

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### Dr. Gabor Boritt Wins Award of Achievement for 2007



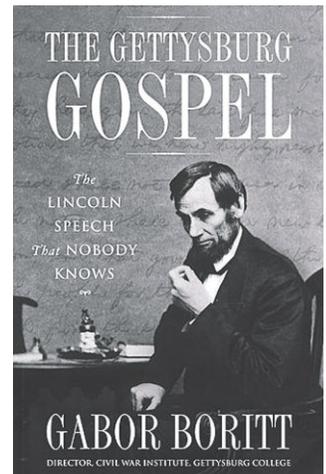
Dr. Gabor Boritt

**"The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows"** by Dr. Gabor Boritt, Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College, is the winner of the Lincoln Group of New York's 2007 Award of Achievement for the best Lincoln work of the year. We will honor Dr. Boritt and present him with his Award at our February 2008 meeting.

Paul Ellis-Graham, Award Committee Chair, commented that this work excelled in providing new and interesting insights into the Gettysburg Address as well as the importance and meaning of the historic site of Gettysburg itself (see his related article in this issue). Joseph Garrera, President of The Lincoln Group of New York, called Boritt's work a "seminal achievement in Lincoln research." The selection was a unanimous one by the Award Committee, which, in addition to Mr. Ellis-Graham, was comprised of Professor Michael Gray and Dr. Allen Kaufman.

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## 2007 Meetings Review by Steven Koppelman

*The 2007 Meetings of The Lincoln Group of New York were truly an eclectic look at the life and times of Abraham Lincoln. Incorporating art, theatre, and literature, members were entertained and educated in various ways.*

**February 7, 2007** marked the opening of both a new year and new home for The Lincoln Group of New York, the 3 West Club. Three nationally acclaimed artists, Wendy Allen, Richard Wengenroth, and David Frech were featured as they both showed and told how they use their craft to tell the Lincoln story. The artists all had different ways of looking at Lincoln, and each discussed both their inspiration and their techniques.



**Wendy Allen**, extremely enthusiastic and passionate, has painted well over 200 Lincoln paintings. She indicated that every time she sees his face and paints his face, "I can't stop."

**Richard Wengenroth** explained that he is an artist of landscape-derived work, and as such, attempted to create a landscape of Lincoln. He stated that he ultimately realized the complexity of Lincoln as he executed different styles of Lincoln from different periods in his life.



**David Frech**, the sculptor of the "Lincoln and Tad" statue, unveiled and dedicated in Richmond Virginia in 2003, amidst much controversy, described how he was approached with the idea by the United States Historical Society. Frech indicated that Daniel Chester French, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Leonard Volk were his most admired sculptors.



**April 10, 2007** Though members and guests were seated in the 3 West Club on 51st Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, they must have felt as if they were on "The Great White Way" of Broadway. That's because **Tamara Johnson**, the leading portrayer of Laura Keene (the star of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theatre, the night of



Robert J. F. Costello "Abraham Lincoln"

April 14, 1865), became Laura Keene before their very eyes, telling "her" story of how the assassination of Abraham Lincoln dramatically changed her life.

When done, Ms. Johnson received a standing ovation. Members were quoted as calling

this the "best assassination meeting ever, and the best meeting I ever attended!" She was swarmed around and asked for her autograph immediately after her presentation was over.

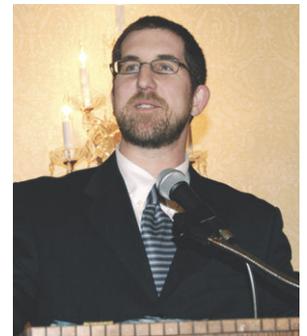


Also, on display at this meeting, was an extremely rare authentic piece of the dress Keene wore, stained with the blood of Abraham Lincoln, and the Victorian clock that was in Ford's Theatre on the night of the assassination.

This was clearly a most memorable night for those fortunate enough to have attended.

## November 27, 2007

**Jason Emerson**, author of "The Madness of Mary Lincoln," which is a new examination of Mary Todd Lincoln's insanity case (the first such examination in twenty years) and her son Robert's motivations for having her committed to a sanitarium in 1875, was the featured speaker at the final meeting of the 2007 calendar year. Called "a superior historical detective" by Harold Holzer, Emerson created a fresh interpretation on Mary Lincoln's sanity based on lost letters discovered in a steamer trunk in 2005.



Emerson's discussion was thought provoking and certainly generated some passionate opinions by the membership. A lively question and answer period punctuated the evening and proved that still today, Mary Todd Lincoln has the power to create and generate controversy.

Emerson, an independent historian based in Fredericksburg, Virginia, is currently working on a biography of Robert Todd Lincoln, whom, according to the *Washington Times*, Emerson rejects any attempt to demonize, at least in his Mary Lincoln book.

## A Very Busy Year for the Award of Achievement Committee by Paul Ellis-Graham



Paul Ellis-Graham  
Committee Chair

The year 2007 was the busiest year I have ever had serving on The Lincoln Group of New York's Award of Achievement Committee. The other committee members, Professor Michael Gray and Dr. Allen Kaufman, deserve a great deal of credit for reviewing over twenty-five publications, which came out in print this year alone!

We began our search for Lincoln titles by looking at a variety of websites and taking suggestions from fellow Lincoln enthusiasts such as Executive Committee member

Richard Sloan. The next step was to get the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the publishers so that we could order the suggested titles. This was no small task as major publishing concerns have offices all over the United States or are owned by companies other than those named on the books. Nevertheless, we were determined to evaluate as many titles as we could get within the allotted period for the Award, which runs from January 1st through December 31st.

As a result of our work, we selected Gabor Boritt's "The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows," which offered new and interesting insights into the Gettysburg Address as well as the importance and meaning of the historic site of Gettysburg itself. There were other interesting titles, which were strong competitors for the award this year. Among them were, "Lincoln's Sword" by Douglas Wilson, which was about Lincoln's development of speeches, and his thought processes. Thomas J. Craughell's "Stealing Lincoln's Body" was a description of the events surrounding the Lincoln Tomb in Springfield and the eventual relocation of the president's body in a "safer" location.

"The Madness of Mary Lincoln" by Jason Emerson was the subject of our November 2007 Lincoln Group of New York meeting. Jason's book thoroughly interested not just our members but the Award Committee as well. Honorable mention should also be given to Harold Holzer, Edna Greene Medford, and Frank J. Williams for their work "The Emancipation Proclamation: Three Views," William C. Harris's "Lincoln's Rise to the Presidency," and Richard Miller's "Lincoln and His World, The Early Years."

Each year the Award Committee tries to find books or other works that offer new insights into the Lincoln story. Many books on the market may tell a good story but many times that story is a familiar one that most people in the field already know about. That never stops writers from trying, however. As long as readers have an interest in Lincoln, new books will always be written, especially as we approach the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth.

## Ballone & Koppelman Present 2006 Award of Achievement to Doris Kearns Goodwin by Steven Koppelman

Concord Massachusetts was the fitting and proper scene for the presentation of the Lincoln Group of New York 2006 Award of Achievement. It is fitting and proper because Concord is famous for both its importance to American history as well as the literary accomplishments of many of its inhabitants. Concord is renowned for the site of Minute Man National Historical Park, including the Old North Bridge, and the home of Thoreau, Emerson, Alcott, and yes—Doris Kearns Goodwin too. Here, history truly meets literary excellence.

Executive Committee members, Henry Ballone and Steven Koppelman made the presentation to Kearns Goodwin (and her husband, Richard Goodwin, former advisor and speechwriter for John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson) for her remarkable biography on Abraham Lincoln, "Team of Rivals: The Political



Genius of Abraham Lincoln," at the Colonial Inn, located at Monument Square. The Inn itself is an historic site—its earliest section having been built in 1716. The group enjoyed pleasant conversation and an outstanding meal in a lovely setting. Ms. Kearns Goodwin delighted in winning the Award, and commented on how important Lincoln had become to her life, this was a sentiment that all shared.

Perhaps the famous Minute Man Statue at Concord's North Bridge best illustrates Abraham Lincoln. The statue, depicting a common man called upon to defend life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, is also emblematic of Lincoln's life. Lincoln, born in a log cabin, ultimately rose to save the country that so many common men before him had struggled to create. Coincidentally, the statue, commissioned in 1872, was the first work by a young, relatively unknown artist at that time, named Daniel Chester French—the very same man who would go on to sculpt the famous "seated" Abraham Lincoln statue in the Lincoln Memorial.



## Dr. John K. Lattimer, 1914 - 2007 by Richard Sloan



Richard Sloan

The Lincoln Group of New York lost one of its esteemed members on May 10. Dr. John Kingsley Lattimer died at a hospice near his home in Englewood, New Jersey at the age of 92. He is survived by Jamie, his wife of 59 years, and the couple's three children—daughter Evan, sons Jon and Gary, and one grandson.

Dr. Lattimer grew up in Jackson Heights, New York, and attended public schools 69 and 89 in Elmont (back then, he was known as Kingsley). In his younger days, he

was quite an athlete. While attending Columbia University he was a decathlon and hurdles champion. Later, as an Army physician, he treated hundreds of casualties in the field after the invasion of Normandy, was attached to General Patton's Third Army, and participated in Patton's drive across France. He was general medical officer during the Nuremberg trials and treated the Nazi hierarchy. He went on to become Chairman Emeritus, at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, where he had a distinguished career as a practicing physician, a surgeon, a teacher, a mentor, and a ballistics expert. In 1980, *New York Magazine* listed him as one of the nation's 100 top doctors.



Dr. John K. Lattimer

He treated Charles Lindbergh at the hospital during his final illness, as well as Marilyn Monroe, Greta Garbo, Rosalind Russell, Claudette Colbert, Katharine Hepburn, and many other luminaries. At a memorial service at the hospital (which I attended as our representative), a giant-sized color painting of him was projected on screen while doctors took turns beneath it to praise him as one of the institution's giants, "a visionary leader," and a "Renaissance man." This was where I first learned that he was also the father of pediatric urology, and is credited with developing a cure for renal tuberculosis, which saved the lives of thousands of children and adults all over the world.



**First Meeting** - left to right: Richard Sloan, Bill Kaland, Harold Holzer, Dr. Mark Neely & Dr. John K. Lattimer with Payne's Dagger

We knew Dr. Lattimer for another facet of his life—as a passionate lover of history and as a collector. His appreciation for history was inspired first by having been descended from Ethan Allen, and then by his service in the Army during World War II. He collected swords, medieval armor, and Nazi memorabilia, but it was not until 1960 that he turned to collecting Lincoln. It started with the dagger which Booth co-conspirator Lewis Payne stabbed Secretary of State William Seward. Before purchasing it, he conducted a great deal of research to establish its provenance, and wound up fascinated with medical aspects of the President's assassination.

He was one of our earliest members, and he brought that same dagger to our first meeting in 1978. A few years later, he became a member of our Executive Committee, a position he retained until his death. As his passion for collecting grew, so grew the challenge of storing his acquisitions. His 30-room house and garage in Englewood became a virtual museum, overrun by all of his artifacts—including a suit of armor, and a beheading axe (he even had cannon balls and a working cannon on his lawn!).



Dr. Lattimer generously loaned many of his Lincoln artifacts to institutions for special displays, including one in conjunction with the observance of the 125th anniversary of Lincoln's Cooper Union speech, and one at the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center on the 125th anniversary of the assassination. He lectured before many history groups, civil war round tables, and at Ford's Theatre. For more than 25 years he participated in many of our meetings, and favored us—more than any other organization—with almost every relic in his vast Lincoln collection. He also presented his widely popular slide lecture on the

Continued on page 5

## Dr. John K. Lattimer, 1914 - 2007 - continued

medical aspects of the assassination, addressed the erroneous claim that the President suffered from Marfan's Syndrome, and debated (with me) over the guilt or innocence of Dr. Mudd. His best remembered debate however, was with a physician who charged that Charles Leale, one of the doctors who tried to save Lincoln's life in Ford's Theatre, had actually killed him by poking his finger into Lincoln's head, exacerbating his wound (Dr. Lattimer decimated his adversary that evening!).



Dr. Lattimer's large and far-ranging Lincoln relics include one of Nancy Hanks' thimbles, a chair from Lincoln's law office, the folding brass dividers he used at the War Department to measure troop movements on maps, a maul, wedge, and axe he used to split logs, one of the inkpots he used to sign the Emancipation Proclamation, the tablecloth on which the president ate his last meal, his bloodstained shirt collar, the key to the presidential box at Ford's Theatre, one of Dr. Leale's handwritten accounts of the assassination, one of the coins placed on Lincoln's eyelids when he died, a piece of fabric from the underside of the assassination rocking chair, the silver handles from Lincoln's casket, an early letter young John Wilkes Booth wrote to future co-conspirator Michael O'Laughlen (a boyhood friend), two of Booth's stage daggers, Dr. Mudd's pardon, and perhaps his most controversial relic—a wooden case allegedly owned by Edwin Stanton, containing portions of the purported nooses and scaffold beams used in hanging Mrs. Surratt and Lewis Payne.

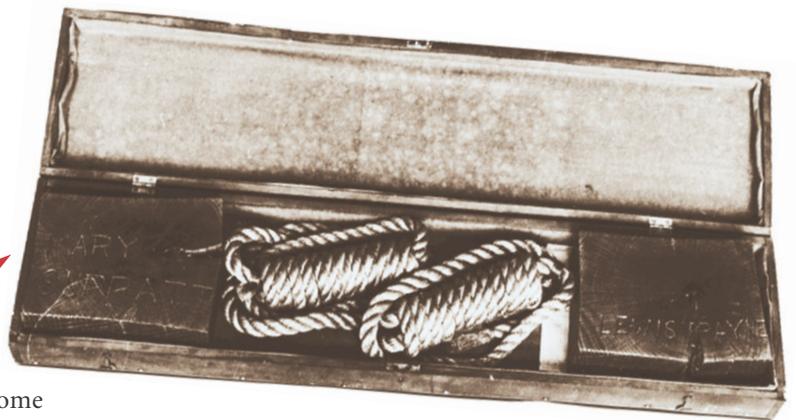
Between 1964 and 1981, Dr. Lattimer wrote some wonderfully interesting medical papers about Lincoln. These were published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The Journal of the American Dental Association*, and *The New York State Journal of Medicine*. The topics included, "Autopsy on Abraham Lincoln - Retrieval of a Lost Report," "Similarities in Fatal Woundings of John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald," "The Wound That Killed Lincoln," "Lincoln Did Not Have Marfan's

Syndrome," "The Stabbing of Lincoln's Secretary of State..." and "An Historic Case of Jaw Fracture."

Dr. Lattimer's medical background, his expertise on guns and ballistic wounds, and his impeccable reputation led the Kennedy family to grant him permission, in 1965, to be the first non-government physician to examine the X-rays of President Kennedy's skull and his autopsy papers. That examination, his interviews with the doctors who had worked on the President at Parkland Hospital, and sophisticated ballistics tests conducted with his son, Dr. Gary Lattimer, led him to make what is still a controversial conclusion—that Lee Harvey Oswald, to the exclusion of anyone else, shot the President, thus corroborating the original finding of the Warren Commission (his work is cited in many of the books on the case).

Dr. Lattimer owned Oswald and Jack Ruby artifacts and letters, including Oswald's Marine Corps rifle score card, which, he contended, proves that Oswald was an expert marksman capable of accomplishing the shooting by himself. He also authored or co-authored seven important papers on the Kennedy case, which he incorporated with his Lincoln (and John Wilkes Booth) studies and findings in his lavishly illustrated 1980 book, "Kennedy and Lincoln." This led to even more lectures as well as frequent appearances on radio and television.

Over his final few years, he had his share of medical problems, but persisted in going into his Manhattan office and attending an occasional Lincoln Group of New York meeting, first with the help of a walker, and later with a wheelchair. It was sad and painful to watch the six foot four inch man, with that marvelous military bearing, transform into a frail man who could no longer walk. However, he never lost his charming smile or his great enthusiasm for history. He was a remarkable man with a remarkable career and a remarkable hobby. We are fortunate that he was such an important part of our lives, and we are proud that we were such an important part of his.



My thanks to Harold Holzer and Steven Carson for information gleaned from their published interviews with Dr. Lattimer. "Relics of Lincoln's Slaying" by Harold Holzer appeared in the May-June 1981 issue of *Americana magazine*. Steven Carson's interview appeared in the Fall 1992 issue of *The Manuscript Society News*. I also referred to "Lincoln Group of New York's Tenth Anniversary, 1978 to 1988," a booklet which chronicled our members' activities and published writings. — RS

## President's Letter - continued

book due out in October of this year. Holzer will detail President-elect Lincoln's actions from Election Day until his March inaugural. This book is certain to offer new perspectives, which will enlarge our understanding of Lincoln and his thoughts.

In 2009, the Lincoln Group of New York will convene a special Bicentennial celebration in Manhattan. Our executive committee will soon meet to begin planning our 200<sup>th</sup> Lincoln birthday activities. Please remember that we always welcome your thoughts and ideas for events. I would appreciate hearing from as many members as possible about your ideas on how the LGNY can best celebrate and honor the Lincoln Bicentennial in 2009.

In the near future, we will make a special fundraising appeal to our members to help support our Bicentennial Celebration. In the meantime, thanks again for everyone's support. Every member in this organization is extremely important and vital to our success. **We couldn't make it without you!**

With Best Regards,

**Joseph Garrera**  
President

## 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.*



## In Memoriam: Larry Appel

On October 18, 2007, The Lincoln Group of New York lost one of its outstanding members as Larry Appel succumbed to illness at the age of 81. Members will remember Larry's upbeat friendly personality, winning smile, and ever present bow ties. He had been teaching a course on Abraham Lincoln at Marymount College on Manhattan's Upper East

Side for the past few years. Larry was a "prince of a man" whose presence will be greatly missed. Memorial contributions may be made to Lymphoma Research Fund C/O Dr. David Straus, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, 1275 York Avenue, New York, NY 10065.

**Award Committee:** *A special thanks to our dedicated members that serve on the award committee.*  
Educator Paul Ellis-Graham, Chair • Professor Michael Gray • Dr. Allen Kaufman

**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.

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.