Annual Report
Abraham Lincoln
Presidential Library
Foundation
FY ’20
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
From the Chair

Sergio "Satch" Pecori

We are living in historic times. Thank you for helping us present the case for history and why Lincoln’s legacy matters right now. With your help, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation supports our museum and library in sharing our nation’s past, so that we can avoid past mistakes and make better decisions for our future.

We are grateful to all of you who have supported our efforts during this past year. Our hearts go out to all who are struggling. We hope you can find inspiration in the lives of those who came before.

Your support helps us feature the stories of inspirational people. Last fall, we showcased the experiences of members of the Greatest Generation, taking visitors from Pearl Harbor to the beaches of Normandy and from Nazi death camps to a Japanese prison. This exhibit, In This Great Struggle: The Greatest Generation Remembers World War II, featured interviews with Illinois men and women who served and fought in World War II. With support from UPS and generous individuals, we presented “Woody” Williams, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient to have fought in the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Our museum showcased extraordinary people and events from Lincoln’s life and times. Local actors portrayed Living History characters such as Mary Elizabeth Bowser, Kate Warne and Elizabeth Keckley. Bowser was a freed slave who became a spy for the Union Army; Warne was one of the first female detectives, working for Alan Pinkerton; and Keckley was a dressmaker for Mary Lincoln. An actor portraying the Black Civil War soldier Andrew Lewis answered students’ questions from his perspective about what life was like in the Civil War era and provided some context for today’s racial issues. On Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, actor Reggie Guyton read King’s iconic “I Have a Dream” speech, and we presented music from gospel group The Four Sopranos. Actors playing Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth engaged visitors and answered young people’s questions.

In February, we awarded The Lincoln Leadership Prize to David Rubenstein, patriotic philanthropist, who brought hundreds of Congress members, from both parties, together to learn about American history. He hoped that “in exercising their various responsibilities, our senators and representatives would be more knowledgeable about history and what it can teach us about future challenges.” He shared lessons from our most celebrated historians and his new book, The American Story: Conversations with Master Historians, with our donors and friends.

After our museum was closed due to COVID-19, we quickly pivoted to providing virtual programming that showcased past icons, like the astonishingly brave Harriet Tubman (portrayed by Kathryn Harris) and Mary Lincoln (portrayed by Pam Brown). Members were delighted with these programs and the author talks we presented featuring Ted Widmer and Richard Striner. You can watch these great programs online, and upcoming programs featuring new authors will be available soon. Our new online programming was generously supported by Union Pacific Railroad and the Dr. Scholl Foundation.

Our foundation continues to help tell meaningful stories about Lincoln and many others who endured and accomplished great things during our nation’s past. We could not do this without our donors, volunteers, friends, members, and community partners. Thank you all for your dedication, commitment, and support. I wish you good health and resilience and am honored to work with you.
To advance our mission to support the educational and cultural programming of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the ALPL Foundation receives donations, grants, and sponsorships from individuals, members, corporations, foundations, and the annual Lincoln Leadership Prize fundraising event. In fiscal year 2020 the ALPL Foundation received grants to support field trips for students in Illinois and District 186, the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, the Gilder Lehrman Institute seminar, the Living History program, tourism, theater, education and the Oral History Program. Contributions to the Permanent Home Campaign and the 2nd annual Lincolniana Gala featuring Hershel Woody Williams allowed the Foundation to reduce the outstanding loan balance. We are proud that our foundation continues to provide valuable financial support and resources to the ALPLM.

The foundation’s revenue was down this fiscal year largely due to the covid-19 pandemic which resulted in the close of the museum during the last quarter. Although the end of fiscal year 2020 presented unique challenges, the foundation’s net assets were up from the previous fiscal year.

Investment assets for fiscal year 2020 dropped in March at the height of the pandemic, but have since recovered and continue to improve in the subsequent months. Our investment asset base is conservatory managed with a mandate to hold 70% of our assets in bonds and short-term secure instruments and 30% in diversified equities. This mix has provided consistent returns over the years with a minimum of risk and volatility.

We appreciate the loyalty, trust, and support from our many members, donors, and supporters at all levels. Without you, we would be unable to provide essential financial support to the ALPLM and the institution’s exceptional programs and exhibits.
With major support from generous donors including The Shapell Manuscript Foundation, Iron Mountain, The National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and the Abraham Lincoln Association, The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum has finished publishing every known Lincoln document from his birth to the end of his single term in Congress, an important milestone on the way to making all Lincoln documents available online. The Papers of Abraham Lincoln project had previously released all Lincoln documents through the end of his Illinois legislative career in 1841. Now the project has added 509 documents that extend through March 3, 1849, when Lincoln left Congress.

These eight years were pivotal in the personal life and career of Lincoln. Personally, he married, welcomed the birth of his first two sons, and purchased the land on which he would build his first and only home. Professionally, he saw his law practice flourish in partnership with Stephen T. Logan and William H. Herndon. Politically, he rose up the ranks of the Whig Party, ascending from a little-known state politician to a U.S. congressman and a rising star in the party. Lincoln’s “Spot” Resolutions and speeches on the Mexican War, internal improvements, and the presidential question garnered him national attention, and his stump speeches for Zachary Taylor helped “Old Rough and Ready” to win the presidency in 1848.
Documents from this period include:

- The letter in which Lincoln first uses the “house divided” metaphor that would later be the theme of one of his most famous speeches;
- The marriage certificate for Lincoln and Mary Todd;
- A satirical newspaper column that almost led to Lincoln fighting a duel;
- A brief message that is Lincoln’s first known use of the telegraph; and
- The “spot resolutions” Lincoln introduced in Congress to demand an accounting for what he considered an illegal war against Mexico.

With the completion of the Congressional Digital Edition and Archive, scholars, students, and Lincoln enthusiasts now have a comprehensive documentary record 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).

These documents open new vistas into Lincoln’s life and career during this crucial period. One can see Lincoln as a son, husband and father; as a friend, colleague, and adversary; as a defense counsel, circuit attorney, and legal adviser; as a politician, legislator, and party operative; and as a poet and political speech-maker.

“We are grateful for the continued support of our donors for helping us make evidence from this period of Lincoln’s life accessible to all.” Dr. Daniel Worthington, Director, *Papers of Abraham Lincoln*.
Virtual Support

Individuals and companies alike have made a huge difference in our work by supporting us in making the move to online programming during this pandemic. One such donor is our longtime partner, Union Pacific, who has extraordinary ties to President Lincoln, as he led the charge to establish a transcontinental railroad by issuing The Pacific Railway Act. This Act gave the work of building the railroad to two companies: Central Pacific, an existing California railroad, and a new railroad chartered by the Act itself—Union Pacific. Union Pacific has supported nonprofit organizations during this time of need which has enabled us to continue to serve scholars, teachers, curious citizens, and students of all ages.

During the pandemic, one of our most popular programs, *Living History*, has made the move online. The Dr. Scholl Foundation has supported this program for many years, and we can’t thank them enough for continuing to bring the lives of extraordinary people of the past to life. Through *Living History*, our members and friends recently joined Harriet Tubman, Conductor on the Underground Railroad and Jamie Stout, Director of Membership for ALPLF for a conversation about her life, time period and much more. Kathryn Harris presented a first-person historical program as Harriet Tubman—the abolitionist, humanitarian, and civil rights activist who guided slaves to freedom via the Underground Railroad before the Civil War. Following her presentation as Tubman, Harris answered questions from the audience about the historical interpretation.

Audience members overwhelmingly approved of the program in surveys and responses included:

“I love the convenience of not leaving home. ALPLM is such a gift. Thank you, Jamie, you are a marvelous facilitator. Kathryn Harris truly brings Harriet to life. She is so engaging.”

“Kathryn presented a vast amount of information that she has gleaned from all the research that she has done over the years.”

We appreciate everyone’s feedback about each of the programs. We are extremely interested in what you have to say, and it helps us keep providing what is most interesting to you. Also, as much as we would love to see more of you in person if that were possible, it helps to know we are able to reach more of you through virtual programs than ever before. One of you answered our survey with the following response:

“This online stuff is a hit in my book. I moved and no longer get into the museum on a regular basis. I feel like I never left. This should be something that all museums should do for people across the country.”

We couldn’t agree more, and we look forward to seeing more of you on Facebook and Zoom in the near future. Please join us live when you can and know that our programs are also recorded and available at your convenience so you can watch it later.

Please stay tuned for all of our programs, particularly an coming talk entitled *Lincoln and the Railroad* with Patricia LaBounty, Curator of the Union Pacific Railroad Museum on Tuesday October 27th at 7 p.m. We are also looking forward to conversations with Sojourner Truth (Tuesday, November 17th at 7pm) and Frederick Douglass (Tuesday, December 15th at 7pm). Please join us on our Members Only Facebook events page.

Every community was impacted by the pandemic in its own way, and the COVID-19 Relief Grants allowed nonprofit organizations to provide customized, essential services and, in some cases, keep the lights on. At the same time, it’s important for us to continue supporting organizations that ensure the communities where our employees live and work remain safe and vibrant, while providing opportunities for family-supporting jobs.

— Scott Moore, Union Pacific senior vice president and chief administrative officer, and Union Pacific Foundation President.
Lincoln Leadership Prize

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation offers its special thanks to the following donors for their support in making the Lincoln Leadership Prize honoring David M. Rubenstein one of our most successful fundraisers to date.

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

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation offers its gratitude to the following donors for their support of the 2nd annual fall fundraiser held in Springfield this past December. The event featured Medal of Honor recipient Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams and benefited the campaign to secure a ‘permanent home’ for the Lincolniana Collection.

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