



Lincoln Society of Virginia

402 East College Street
Bridgewater, Virginia 22812
www.lincolnva.org



Lincoln

February, 2010

35th Lincoln Cemetery Event Held Despite 2 Feet of Snow

Two feet of snow that fell a week prior to the 35th Annual Lincoln Cemetery Ceremony was no reason to cancel the event. Just as Abraham Lincoln, himself, would have trudged through deep snow to fulfill a commitment, Dr. Phillip Stone quipped, “Of course we’ll have it. What’s a little snow?” The day actually turned out to be one of the best. Having the snow plowed for parking, a path to the cemetery and an area to stand outside the cemetery, temperatures in the mid-30s with sunshine, it was not the windy, cold “Lincolnesque” weather usually experienced on the hill. Over 65 people attended the Ceremony. Dr. Stone presented his views of “Lincoln After 200 Years.” (see page 2)



Dr. Phillip Stone with Lincoln relatives, Rose Branham of Rush, KY (left) and her mother Zola Carroll of Sistersville, WV

Dr. Stone talks with Lincoln descendant, David Ware of Yorktown, VA after the ceremony

6th ANNUAL LINCOLN SYMPOSIUM

Dr. Craig L. Symonds

(Lincoln Scholar and Professor Emeritus at the U.S. Naval Academy)
will speak on “Lincoln and His Admirals”

Tuesday, March 2, 2010 – 7:30 PM
Boitnott Room – Bridgewater College

Free and open to the public
For information contact Elaine Dellinger (540-828-5620; edelling@bridgewater.edu)

Lincoln After 200 Years

At his presentation at the Lincoln Cemetery on February 12, LSOV President Phil Stone noted that after 200 years of intensive study and a full year of celebration of the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth, it seemed appropriate to draw some conclusions about Lincoln.

Among Lincoln's accomplishments:

1. He successfully prosecuted a very difficult war under the most trying circumstances, and saved the Union;
2. He emancipated the slaves;
3. He had a sympathetic attitude toward the defeated southern states and wanted them to be restored to the Union, not treated as conquered territory;
4. He was the best prose and speech writer ever to serve as president;
5. He provided a new understanding of what it meant to be an American and helped create federal civil rights;
6. He put together and managed "a team of rivals" in his cabinet.

Stone observed that personal characteristics and biographical circumstances include:

1. He was born into poverty and had no family wealth or influence to help him;
2. Poorly educated, he had no more than a couple years of formal education;
3. There was no animosity toward his father, as claimed by many biographers; his relationship with his father played no role in his attitude toward slavery;
4. Contrary to the claims of some of his best biographers, Lincoln not only did not disdain his ancestry but in fact he was interested in his heritage;
5. His reputation for wisdom, generosity, kindness and patience is deserved;
6. He suffered from depression;
7. He was not so driven by ambition as to act against his core values;
8. He was a great "country lawyer," the best, or one of the best, in Illinois;
9. He loved his wife and doted on his children; while his wife was emotionally disturbed and presented him with serious difficulties, he always loved her;
10. He was focused on the mission: saving the Union, later, freeing the slaves; and was not distracted by other challenges or by his ego;
11. While never a church member, by the time of his death, he expressed strong religious views and a firm belief in Providence;
12. Willing to compromise on most things, on core values he was inflexible;
13. His reputation for honesty and integrity was well-deserved;
14. He was compassionate and empathetic.

According to Stone, there are also some criticisms that can fairly be leveled and legitimate questions raised:

1. Lincoln seemed unprepared for the possibility of war or violence when he arrived in Washington, even though circumstances made violence not only possible but likely.
2. Lincoln fumbled the management of his generals on several occasions.
3. He endorsed measures which developed into Black Flag War and inflicted intentional damage to the property of non-combatants.
4. He probably trespassed too broadly on civil liberties of the people in the North.

While acknowledging that these are areas of honest criticism, Stone said that these concerns do little to detract from Lincoln's legacy. He observed: "Lincoln has consistently been rated, both by historians and the public, along with Washington, as one of our two greatest presidents. After 200 years and lots of examination of his life and record, that assessment of Lincoln is clearly right."

Lincoln Homestead Project

The LSOV has been able to obtain an option to purchase the Lincoln Homestead and a parcel of about 10 acres surrounding it, including the Lincoln Cemetery for \$452,000. The option gives the Society an opportunity to raise the purchase price in order to preserve the historic property and, eventually, to convert the Lincoln Homestead to a museum. While the board has not yet developed a plan for raising the money, there will be attempts to obtain grants and solicitations among our membership and within the broader community around Harrisonburg. For any LSOV member who wishes to contribute toward the purchase of the residence, tax-free gifts may be sent to the Society’s address (see letterhead).



The Lincoln Homestead – February 2010

“Bad promises are better broken than kept.” (From Lincoln’s last public speech, April 11, 1865)

Membership Renewal

It’s again time to renew your membership for 2010 with the Lincoln Society of Virginia. The dues are \$20 for a single membership or \$25 for a couple/family. Some of you have already sent in your form and check. For your convenience, a form is included below. If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining the LSOV, feel free to make copies of this form.

*Lincoln Society of Virginia
2010*

I would like to become a member of the Lincoln Society of Virginia and enclose my dues for 2010 in the amount of \$20 per individual or \$25 per couple/family.

*Amount enclosed: _____\$20 (individual) _____\$25 (couple/family)
(Make check payable to: Lincoln Society of Virginia)*

Name(s) and Address (please print):

Phone No:

Email Addresses:

*Return form to: Elaine C. Dellinger / 540-828-5620 / edelling@bridgewater.edu
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