



ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

For Immediate Release:

January 23, 2006

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Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum to unveil new temporary exhibit *Mr. Lincoln's Attic*

Exhibit showcases recent acquisitions of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

SPRINGFIELD, IL: On January 28, the Illinois Gallery will open its doors to the public to reveal *Mr. Lincoln's Attic*, an exhibit that will showcase recent acquisitions to the ALPLM. What makes this exhibit unique is that several of the items in *Mr. Lincoln's Attic* reflect how Abraham Lincoln is still an inspiration to many - even 140-years after his death. Publicity generated by the construction and opening of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum over the past few years has motivated a number of individuals to rummage through their own attics, looking for Lincoln-related items. The result has been an increase in donations of especially rare and historically significant artifacts to the ALPLM. Some of these gifts will be on public display for the first time.

"Since the ALPLM has never had an acquisitions budget, we are dependent, like Blanche Dubois, on the kindness of strangers for donations of Lincolniana. The last year has been among the most fruitful since the establishment of the Old Illinois State Historical Library in the 19th century," said Richard Norton Smith, Executive Director of Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Items on display include:

Portrait of Lincoln by Francis Bicknell Carpenter: Lincoln granted the prominent New York portrait painter unprecedented access to the White House for six months (February-July 1864). During that time, Carpenter transformed the state dining room into a White House studio. He produced many life sketches of Lincoln and companion portraits of him and Mary during his stay at the White House.

Judge Abraham Lincoln Marovitz collection: The son of Jewish Lithuanian immigrants, Abraham Lincoln Marovitz's parents gave their son this name out of their admiration for Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln Marovitz was a life-long student of Lincoln and had great respect for him. Appointed in 1963 by John F. Kennedy as a federal judge in the Northern Illinois U.S. District, Judge Marovitz owned every book ever written about Abraham Lincoln's legal career. His judge's chamber was a small museum of Lincoln-related items. Upon his death in March 2001, at the age of 95, his estate donated the judge's extensive collection to the ALPLM.

Personal artifacts of Grace Bedell: Just eleven years-old in the autumn of 1860, Grace Bidell wrote a letter

to Lincoln after seeing his image on a campaign poster. Saying Lincoln's image was "*rather disappointing*" she wrote a letter to Lincoln suggesting he might "*look a great deal better*" with whiskers. Lincoln responded with a letter that became a treasured item to Grace. The two eventually met on February 16, 1861 as Lincoln's inaugural train passed through Grace's hometown of Westfield, New York.

Items on display in this collection include Bedell's ring and bible.

Albert Emile Bachelet Stereoscope: Albert Emile Bachelet suspected he was seeing more than doubles of various Lincoln photos at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. This Bell Labs scientist—holder of 36 patents in the field of long-distance broadcasting and satellite communication technology—was also a Lincoln aficionado. When he learned that famed Civil War photographer Matthew Brady sometimes used multiple-lens cameras he became convinced that what appeared to be multiple copies of Lincoln poses were really stereoscopic pictures shot simultaneously by the special lens cameras to produce a three dimensional image. He built a stereoscope in the Bell Labs model shop and tested his theory during the mid-1940s. He concluded that Brady had intended more than just the rapid production of commercial images.

The stereopticon—popular from Lincoln's time up through the early twentieth century—was that earlier era's version of the View Master, a device for producing a three-dimensional effect from a two-dimensional image. Bachelet's widow, Janet Bower Bachelet, generously donated her husband's stereoscope, negatives, and research notes to the Illinois State Historical Library (predecessor of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library).

Other items on display include oil paintings, Lincoln busts, books, vases, fine china, collectables and more — all enriching the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum for countless visitors to come.

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