

"WARTIME ODYSSES: A SEQUEL"

"... And there dwelt in the Sangamo Country a retired surgeon and nurse and they found it was good. But they remembered old friends and times past in wartime England and they travelled there and more in their memories." So reads the inscription in your editor's copy of Dr. Floyd Barringer's sequel to his earlier book, "Wartime Odyssey" (1987) which covered the years from July, 1941, to the end of July, 1944. Floyd was a volunteer in medical service with "Doctors for Britain" and the 1987 book is composed of his letters to his father, Dr. Bert M. Barringer of Emden, Illinois. After completing this earlier book many of its readers contacted Floyd, wanting to know "the rest of the story"- including his marriage to British nurse Winifred Wain and his further wartime experiences. "Wartime Odyssey: A Sequel" contains Floyd's entries in his personal journal from Feb. 1, 1945, through Mar. 30, 1946. On that March date Floyd and Wyn were leaving England aboard the Ile de France, bound for Halifax, Nova Scotia, and, eventually, "home" - in Central Illinois. The entries are a fascinating account of the author's first-hand experiences both as a surgeon in the operating room and as a U.S. citizen observing world events from abroad. The German surrender, Churchill's resignation, the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan, the surrender of Japan and the end of the war are only a few of the earth-shaking events which are noted. On a more personal basis is an account of the types of surgery performed by Dr. Barringer at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, England. (Where else could your editor become aware of such terms as pneumoventriculography and suboccipital craniectomy?) These were among the operations performed for both civilian and military casualties. A postscript brings the reader further up-to-date, relating how Floyd and Wyn eventually came to Springfield. Floyd, then the only neurosurgeon in Illinois outside of Chicago, opened his office here in Sept., 1947, and practiced there until his retirement in 1982. Our own postscript notes that the Barringers are charter members of the Sangamon Co. Historical Society, and were our first Life Members. Floyd served as our third president (1963-1964) and is on the board as the Society's historian.

LINCOLN ESSAY CONTEST

The fourth Annual Lincoln Essay Contest sponsored in February by the National Park Service at the Lincoln Home attracted over 70 eighth grade history students statewide, who wrote on the theme of "Lincoln's Legacy." The papers of the five winners appear in the HISTORICO, with the first place winner in last month's issue. The second prize winner is Jennifer Yeoward of Washington Middle School in Springfield.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

by

Jennifer Yeoward

What do we remember about Abraham Lincoln? We remember his courage in the Civil War, we remember him freeing the slaves, we remember his speeches... but is that all he has done? Is that his legacy? Surely not! We should remember other things about him that history books don't emphasize. We should remember how he related to the people and how they related to him.

Abraham Lincoln respected all mankind. He thought that "all men were created equal," even the slaves. He proved this by signing the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. This is one reason why people respected him. One month before he died he was still saying "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right." He was a president with heart and feeling toward others.

Another reason why people respected him was because he listened to them and their views. When a twelve year old girl wrote a letter and told him he should grow a beard, he did and wore one for the rest of his life. He read every letter he got. When the people thought he should do something that, would make him a better president, he eagerly tried it. He was the "people's" choice.

When he was young his family was poor. His father did not encourage education but his step-mother told him to go to school and get an education. He got most of his education from books but soon learned that not all there is to education is found in books. He realized that he learned from people too. When he was learning to become a lawyer one of his friends told him to be understanding and friendly with his clients and not just act professional. He was learning all of his life, through his wins and his defeats.

John Wilkes Booth felt he had to kill Abraham Lincoln. It was April 14, 1865, and Abraham Lincoln and his wife were at Ford's Theater in Washington. They were watching a performance of "Our American Cousins" when John Booth, who felt Lincoln had started the Civil War, shot Lincoln in the head. Abraham Lincoln died on April 15 at 7:22 a.m. and was buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois.

Abraham Lincoln was a great man and president. He not only listened but learned from the people. We could say he was a great president but that is not all he was. Like he said in his Gettysburg Address, "The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did." This is very true for although we really don't remember everything Abraham Lincoln said, we will never forget what he stood for.

MILITARY HUMOR

In a recent issue of the "Air Force Times" (dated Mar. 12, 1990), Springfield editor and publisher James E. Myers is one of several people featured in an article on humor in the military forces. Jim, owner of the Lincoln-Herndon Press, is a member of our SCHS and has served on our board. He recently edited the first broad anthology of humor in the American armed forces, "A Treasury of Military Humor," containing over 1000 examples of songs, stories, slang, jokes and drawings, dating from the Civil War through Vietnam. Humor helps people in the military services express and face situations which otherwise could be devastating, and Jim's book, a veritable "history of U.S. military humor", demonstrates how the changing situations over the years have determined the types of humor enjoyed by the military.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

A mural by SCHS member, artist Bob Larson, has been donated to Southeastern Illinois College near Harrisburg. The painting, "Pristine Midwestern Landscape", features the long-grass prairie, hardwood forests and untamed rivers which make up the habitat of the Midwest's flora and fauna.

Sangamon State University is celebrating its 20th birthday. In the past two decades over 11,000 students graduated from SSU, which has its main campus in Springfield, and also offers courses at a Downtown Center and at Millikin University in Decatur.

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