

Lincoln helped the American Union stay together during the war. If the Union had split apart, the United States could have become two or possibly more separate nations. These new nations would not have become as successful as the United States is today. By preserving the Union, Lincoln changed the course of world history.

Also as President, Lincoln helped end slavery in this nation. Lincoln is known best as the, "Great Emancipator, the man who freed the slaves." However, he did not enter the war with that idea in his head. In 1862, Lincoln said, "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union and is not either to save or destroy slavery." As the war went on, Lincoln's view on slavery changed. He decided that the conflict was a moral crusade to wipe out the sin of slavery. On January 1, 1863, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation and then said, "If my name ever goes into history, it will be for this act."

Lincoln's life story too, had been very important. He rose from living a humble life in a log cabin to the nation's highest office and living in the White House. There is no doubt that Lincoln was a poor boy who made it good. And it is true that he carried his folksy manners and homespun speech to the White House. He would greet people by saying "howdy" and would ask them to "stay a spell." He would meet diplomats in the White House wearing his carpet slippers, called his wife, "mother," and tell bawdy jokes at cabinet meetings.

Lincoln may have seemed like a common man, but he wasn't. People that knew him well agreed that he was one of the most ambitious people that they had ever known. Lincoln worked hard and struggled to rise above his log cabin origins. He was very proud of his achievements. By the time he reached the presidency, Lincoln was a fairly prosperous man, earning a large amount of money from his law practice and his many investments. He had a cool, logical mind, trained in the courtroom, and a practical, common sense approach to problems. Millions of people regard Lincoln's career as proof that democracy offers all people hope of a full and free life.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The public is invited to attend the James Weldon Johnson Study Guild's three-day celebration of Black History Month. All activities are being co-sponsored by the Lincoln Library System.

Activities begin on Thursday, February 14 at 7:00 P.M., in the Lincoln Library - Carnegie Room (Main Library). Mrs. Gladys Ophelia Wilson of Fort Wayne, IN, will be the featured guest. Wilson is an artist, writer, and poet. There will be a reception immediately following her presentation.

Friday, February 15 at 10:30 A.M., a "Story Hour for Children" will be held in the Lincoln Library Reading Room (Southeast Branch). Mrs. Gladys Ophelia Wilson along with other local community leaders will be reading to the children. Mrs. Wilson will have available her original books for sale and autographing after the Story Hour.

Saturday, February 16 at 1:30 P.M., in the Lincoln Library Reading Room (Southeast Branch) presentations will be given to the participants of the Literary contest. Certificates will be given to all participants, with prizes being awarded to the winners. Mrs. Gladys Wilson will present the winners with their awards. Each winner will read their entry. There will be a reception following the event.

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The Study Guild named in honor of the author James Weldon Johnson has been meeting

for several years in the homes of members to study, read and discuss current events, art, music and literature. Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month, from 4:00 - 5:00 P.M., with a coffee hour following. The president is Theresa Cummings. (Theresa also is a member of the Sangamon County Historical Society). New members are welcome - for information, please call Theresa Cummings at home in the evening at 546-8647.

TRAVEL NOTES - THE SPRING TOUR

The tour committee has met - can Spring be far behind? Kim Efird reports that the Spring Tour is set for Saturday, May 4, leaving Springfield at 8:00 A.M., and following the general route of the old Northern Cross Railroad to Meredosia, passing through Jacksonville along the way to view some historic homes. From Meredosia, on the Illinois River, the tour will go south down river, to Greene County, with a tour of the historic district in Carrollton. After lunch in Carrollton, we'll proceed to Alton to visit some historic sites, including the old penitentiary, the first in the state, where there is now an interesting museum. From there the tour will take us to the Lodge at Pere Marquette State Park where we'll have dinner, ordering from the menu. Plans are to arrive back in Springfield about 9:00 P.M. The cost to members will be \$25.00 (\$30.00 for non-members) which will cover the bus transportation and any gratuities and admission charges. More detailed information will appear in the March and April HISTORICOS.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

The Lincoln Chronicle has resumed publication. After the death of its editor, Tom Dyba, in early 1989, the newsletter, which carried information on the Lincoln Collection at Illinois Benedictine College and the Lincoln Group of Illinois (of which Tom was one of the founders) was not printed for a time, but friends and co-workers have joined to continue its publication. Mr. Dyba, the Executive Vice-President of Illinois Benedictine College, was an active Lincoln scholar and a member of our Society. He was the co-author with George Painter of "Seventeen Years at Eighth and Jackson", the story of the Lincolns in their home in Springfield.

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