

THE LINCOLN FORUM BULLETIN

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Chairman

Harold Holzer
Roosevelt House
47-49 East 65th Street
New York, NY 10065
hh433@hunter.cuny.edu

Vice-Chairman

Jonathan W. White
Christopher Newport Univ.
1 Avenue of the Arts
Newport News, VA 23606
jonathan.white@cnu.edu

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Henry F. Ballone
23 Rochelle Pkwy.
Saddle Brook, NJ 07663
treasurer@thelincolnforum.org

Chairman Emeritus

Frank J. Williams
300 Switch Road
Hope Valley, RI 02832
alincoln@courts.ri.gov

Administrator

Elaine Henderson
329 Baltimore Streete
Gettysburg, PA 17325
admin@thelincolnforum.org

Assistant Administrator

Patricia A. Dougal
6389 Saucon Valley Dr.
Fayetteville, PA 17222
patdougal@yahoo.com

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FORUM ANNOUNCES ROSTER FOR 2019 SYMPOSIUM: “THE LEADER. THE WAR. THE LEGACY: LINCOLN AT 210”

Presidential Historian Michael Beschloss to Deliver November 18 Keynote

(April 1, 2019)—Some of the most popular, dynamic and respected historians of the Civil War Era will appear at the 24th annual Lincoln Forum Symposium when it re-convenes at the Wyndham Hotel Gettysburg from Saturday, November 16 through Monday, November 18.



Michael Beschloss

The Forum announced that its 2019 keynote speaker will be award-winning author Michael Beschloss, best-selling author of 10 books, and a regular commentator on NBC, MSNBC, and PBS. *Newsweek* has called Beschloss “the nation’s leading Presidential historian,” while the *Charlotte Observer* has said he “knows more about” America’s presidents “than perhaps anyone on earth.” *The New York Times Book Review* noted that he is “easily the most widely recognized Presidential historian in the United States.” In 2005, Beschloss won an Emmy for his role in creating the Discovery Channel series, *Decisions that Shook the World*, which he also hosted. His most recent book is the critically acclaimed *New York Times* best-seller, *Presidents of War: The Epic Story, from 1807 to Modern Times* (2018).

Commented Forum Chairman Harold Holzer: “We are proud to be offering another extraordinary roster of acclaimed speakers and programs as we mark not only the 24th anniversary of The Lincoln Forum but also the 210th birthday of Abraham Lincoln. What all our lecturers and panelists demonstrate, in their scholarship and their mesmerizing personal appearances, is that the Lincoln and Civil War story, familiar as it seems, continues to inspire fresh analysis, interpretation, and discussion. It is a special pleasure to be welcoming my friend Michael Beschloss, and to be welcoming back Professor Jonathan White in his new role as Vice Chairman of The Lincoln Forum. We look forward to welcoming all of our new and returning star historians, as well as our Forum family of students, scholars, and enthusiasts.”



Gary W. Gallagher

To open the Forum on November 16, Gary W. Gallagher and Joan Waugh will return to address the perennial question: “What Caused the Civil War?” Dr. Gallagher taught for more than 20 years at the University of Virginia, where he was the John L. Nau III Professor in the History of the American Civil War and the Director of the Nau Civil War Center. He is the author or editor of nearly 30 books, including *The Confederate War* (1997) and *The Union War* (2011). Waugh is professor of history at UCLA and the author or editor of numerous books and articles, including her prize-winning *U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth* (2009), *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture* (2004), and most recently, *The American War: A History of the Civil War Era* (2015), which she co-authored with Gallagher.

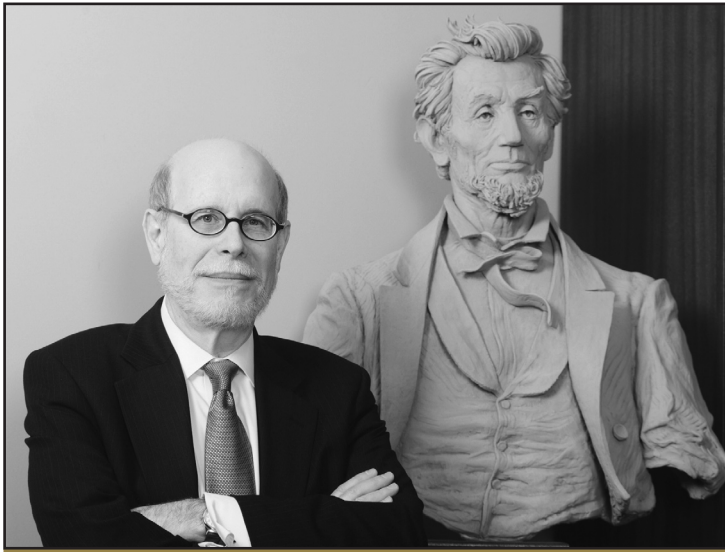
On the morning of November 17, three leading historians will discuss Lincoln’s relationship with Union soldiers. Peter S. Carmichael, the Robert C. Fluhrer Professor of Civil War Studies and Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College, will explore the experiences of ordinary soldiers based on his new book, *The War for the Common Soldier: How Men Thought, Fought, and Survived in Civil War Armies* (2018). **continued on page 12**



Jonathan W. White



Joan Waugh



MESSAGE from the CHAIR

and maintain the vitality of the organization. Be assured that “the Chief” will continue to be a major part of our programs. This year, he will return to Gettysburg to host a panel of scholars on the still-important issue of voting rights.

We hope you will join us as well. Again, as always, we have worked to attract what we think is an unmatched roster of nationally known historians to share their latest scholarship (details on Page One). Once more we will also feature a battlefield tour, up-close-and-personal breakout sessions, as well as our lectures and panel discussions, always anticipating lively question-and-answer participation from our attendees. Above all, we will continue striving to preserve our “family” atmosphere of informality and camaraderie at formal sessions, book signings, meals, and programs. This year I am delighted to be working with our new vice chairman, Professor Jonathan White, a onetime student of my longtime co-author Mark E. Neely, Jr., and now a wonderful teacher and fine, productive scholar in his own right. With this issue of the *Bulletin*, he takes over the mantle of editor as well.

Please continue your support on the rewarding journey that has kept The Lincoln Forum so strong and vital for so long. With your help, we will not “wink out”—but, rather, continue to offer the best experiences to the best audiences we have ever been privileged to serve. 📌

Harold Holzer, Chairman

EDITOR'S NOTE

I am pleased to join the leadership of The Lincoln Forum this year as vice chair and as editor of *The Lincoln Forum Bulletin*. As editor I will strive to continue publishing interesting and informative articles and interviews, as you've come to expect under the editorship of my friend, Harold Holzer. Starting with this issue I am introducing a new, recurring feature, that I'm calling “They Saw Lincoln” (a nod to John E. Washington's 1942 classic, *They Knew Lincoln*). These articles will feature accounts written by people who saw Lincoln firsthand. Most of the narratives will be

previously unpublished, or little known among Lincoln scholars. The one in this issue, for example, first appeared in an obscure article in *Vermont History* in 1993 and is not available online. Other upcoming accounts will come from a Pennsylvanian who saw Lincoln in February 1861 when he stopped at Independence Hall, an African American who visited with Lincoln at the White House in 1864, and a witness to the assassination at Ford's Theatre. I invite readers to share stories with me for possible inclusion in upcoming issues of the *Bulletin*. — Jonathan W. White 📌



The Lincoln Forum Bulletin welcomes contributions from members and historians—articles and photos alike. Send to editor Jonathan W. White at jonathan.white@cnu.edu. The editor particularly thanks the contributors to the current issue.

NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE LINCOLN FORUM



Transitioning as Chairman - Frank J. Williams & Harold Holzer

(Photo by David Walker)

On November 18, 2018, the advisory board and some 300 Lincoln Forum attendees elected Harold Holzer as the new Chairman of the 900-member group. Holzer, a Lincoln Prize-winning historian who has authored, co-authored, or edited 53 books on Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War era, had served as founding Vice Chairman since the Forum's creation in 1994.

Holzer's new team includes Vice Chairman Jonathan W. White, an historian of Christopher Newport University; Secretary Michelle A. Krowl, a Civil War and Reconstruction specialist at the Library of Congress; Treasurer Henry F. Ballone, a businessman and longtime Forum photographer-of-record; Elaine C. Henderson, co-owner of Gettysburg's Lincoln Into Art Gallery and former Executive Editor of Grolier Encyclopedias (Betty Anselmo retired but remains on our advisory board); and Assistant Administrator Patricia Dougal, a 20-year veteran of the Navy Nurse Corps. Thomas A. Horrocks, author of *Lincoln's Campaign Biographies* and former director of the John Hay Library at Brown University, joins the executive committee alongside its re-elected members: Lincoln enactor George Buss and historians Edna Greene Medford of Howard University and Craig L. Symonds of the U.S. Naval War College

The Forum also named outgoing, founding Chairman Frank J. Williams as Chairman Emeritus. Williams is the retired Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court.

"Frank Williams is a tough act to follow," commented Holzer, "although the fact that we have worked in tandem all these years will make the transition seamless and the commitment to excellence as strong as ever. Frank has been an outstanding, inspiring leader, and will continue to be a major presence at our annual events for many years to come. I am honored to succeed him, and we are all thrilled to honor his long and distinguished Forum service by naming him Chairman Emeritus."

Added Holzer: "I look forward to working with our expanded executive committee, our board of advisors, and our new officers Jon White and Michelle Krowl, as well as my friend Henry Ballone. This team is poised to build on our record of success and attract yet more members, attendees, and superb speakers and programs."

Commented Williams: "To say that Harold Holzer is energized would be an understatement. His commitment to our Lincoln Forum family is a constant in his life. As such, he will, I am positive, continue our traditions and policies and will initiate more as Chairman, including programming which continues to exceed every attendee's expectations. As a co-founder and Vice Chairman for 23 years, it is only right that Harold should serve as our Chairman as we move into the future." 📌



Looking Back & Looking Forward - Harold Holzer & Frank J. Williams

THE LINCOLN FORUM TO HONOR BEST LINCOLN BOOK EACH YEAR

In November 2019 The Lincoln Forum will award its first annual book prize. This new \$1,000 prize will honor the year's best book on Abraham Lincoln, or a distinguished work in which Lincoln is a central figure. Biographies, monographs, works of synthesis and interpretation, edited collections, and documentary editions are eligible for consideration.

The new prize takes its place alongside two annual Forum honors: the Richard Nelson Current Award of Achievement for lifetime accomplishment in the history field, and the Wendy Allen Award for outstanding achievement by a history organization.

Judges for the 2019 book prize will be Dr. Thomas A. Horrocks, historian, author, and Lincoln Forum executive committee member who has held posts at both Harvard University's Houghton Library and Brown University's John Hay Library; Dr. Michelle A. Krowl, author, Lincoln and Civil War specialist at the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, and Secretary of The Lincoln Forum; and Daniel R. Weinberg, author, manuscripts expert, Forum board member, and longtime proprietor of the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop in Chicago. 📌

THEY SAW LINCOLN: A CHRISTIAN COMMISSION

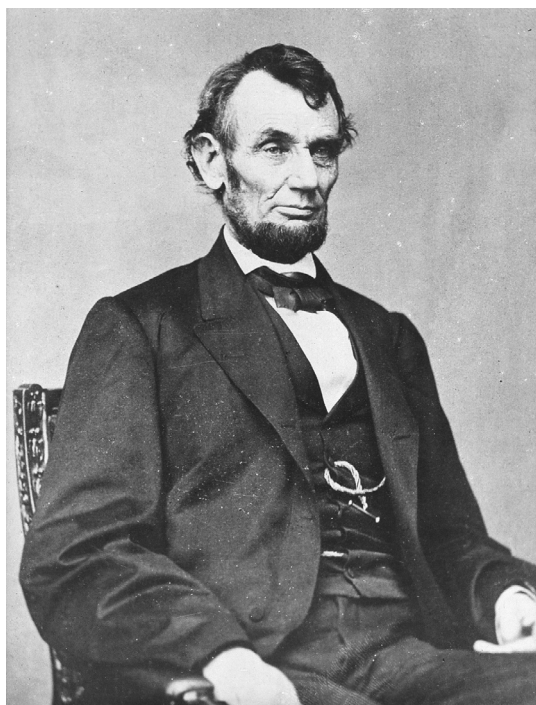
In 1864, Charles Carroll Parker (1814-1880), minister of the Congregational Church in Waterbury, Vermont, became a delegate to the United States Christian Commission with the Army of the Potomac. Between February 10 and March 29, he wrote twenty letters to his wife and four children, mostly from Brandy Station, Virginia. In this excerpt from a letter dated March 29, 1864, Rev. Parker tells two of his daughters about what it was like to meet Lincoln at a White House levee. The letter is remarkable for the detail it provides about the event, as well as its depiction of Lincoln's personality, looks, and sense of humor.

* * *

Before leaving camp I had seen in the papers that the President had a reception every other Tuesday evening from 8 to 11 & I had also learned from a clerk in one of the departments who was down to the Army that I was in luck, this being the week for the reception. Of course I was bound to go. Immediately after tea, three of us delegates went to the soldiers rest, several huge low structures capable of holding thousands of men, where the soldiers going to & returning from the Army spend the night. Almost every night they are filled & every night delegates visit them to distribute papers, books & testaments & to talk to them individually or in crowds as there may be opportunity.

We were through with our work at about 8 & took the horse cars immediately for the White House & were landed at the eastern front. As we went up a crowd was beginning to press up the steps, the big flakes of snow covering us all with white. Reaching the door, we were coolly told by the janitor that the Reception was not until 8 ½ & none could be admitted. By dint of entreaty the ladies were admitted, but we masculines were compelled [to] abide in the outer court. It was nearly 8 ½ now, so we stamped about in the snow & kicked our toes against the marble steps to keep the blood in quick flow, expecting any moment the door would be open, but alas through the slowness of the Presidential time or the tardiness of Uncle Abe or the good women in their adjustments, it was nearly 9 before we heard the welcome *click* & the door flew open.

We first went into a large room where were waiters to take our coats & hats and give us checks. We then stepped into what I think is called the Green Room & lifting our eyes to the Blue Room which opens out from this, we beheld the tall, gaunt, angular, unmistakable form & features of honest old Abe with his deep large eyes wide open towards [us]. The crowd gave us no time for many looks & in a jiffie we were before him, had him by the hand & were saying "How do you do,



President Lincoln in 1864 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

President Lincoln," & he was as sagely saying, "How do you do," & then we were out of the way for the next comer. Passing the President we paid our obeisance to Mrs Lincoln who was sitting to the right & rear of the president & near the middle of the room.

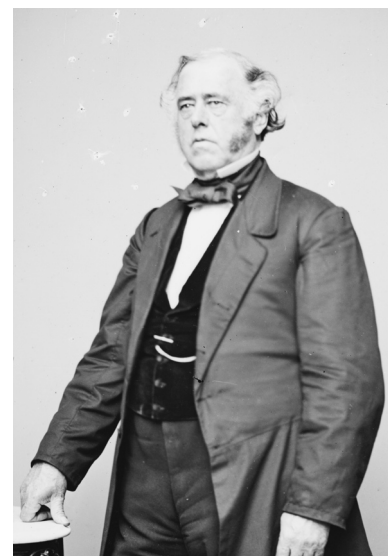
No contrast can be more complete than between the looks of the President & his wife. He is sharp & angular to the last degree, as though he had been shaped by a rail splitter. She is round & soft as though she had been moulded out of the nicest dough. In every feature of the man was written character, high, true, sterling, native character. On every feature of the woman, if perfect roundness has a

feature, was as plainly written *Characterless*. With all his homely features Mr Lincoln looked like nature's nobleman & when a smile came over his ordinarily intensely solemn face & he was about to make a funny speech, his face was singularly pleasant, every rough feature radiant with the kindness & humor & geniality of his soul. Mrs Lincoln was like a big doll, as emotionless as the lesser types in porcelain & china. So it seemed to me as I looked at the one & the other. The President was dressed in full black with white kid gloves covering the extremities of his huge, long, ape-like arms & his collar low & turned down as you always see it in his pictures. Mrs Lincoln was dressed very neatly & as described in the notices of the reception I cut from the *Republican* of the next day & which I inclose.

[Here Parker included a newspaper clipping entitled, "Levee at the Presidential Mansion," which stated that the levee was smaller because of the snow storm, and which described Mary Lincoln as wearing "a moire antique of the color of frosted silver, with white satin trimmings and a black lace shawl. A beautiful wreath of rare but modest flowers upon her head, and a necklace of pearl, were the only ornaments displayed by her on this occasion."]

I think of nothing in addition but a gold comb in her hair.

At the left of the President stood Maj B. B. French, Master of Ceremonies & who gave introductions. At his right, his private Secretary [John G. Nicolay].



Benjamin Brown French (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)



Grand Reception of the Notabilities of the Nation, at the White House 1865. (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

DELEGATE SEES LINCOLN AT A WHITE HOUSE LEVEE

After our introduction & obeisance we passed on into the East or Red Room, the large room for promenade, where we circulated or stood as we pleased. Soon the room was filled but not crowded. In an adjoining room was a big band of twenty four players who almost constantly made music for us. The only familiar face I saw was that of Mr B. F. Winslow from Pittsford, step father of the Misses Granger of Auntie Kate's School. He surprised me by calling me by name & we were mutually glad in the crowd to find an acquaintance.

Occasionally I went round to the first or Green Room & quietly watched the President as he received in the stream of old men & women, young men & maidens. To all he gave a smile & a word. Every now & then his eyes would twinkle & his face would light up



John G. Nicolay, President Lincoln, and John Hay
(Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

with fun & gladness & before we passed there [was] pretty sure to be a burst of laughter—the President bowing & swinging himself from side to side. Evidently an old friend had come & a funny story had been told. The moment they were passed & there was a break in the current, he would lift up his eyes & look through the doorway to see what next was coming & his whole look would be as solemn as though it was never blest with a smile. In a moment a familiar face would send sunshine all over it again. Near the close he took his seat & received the guests sitting.

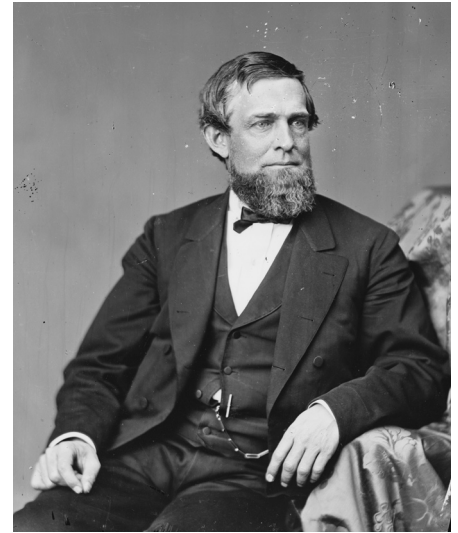
Among the guests was Mr [Schuyler] Colfax, Speaker of the House. As he passed the President with a lady on each arm, he stopped & they had some very pleasant talk about Mr Lincolns likeness. The president asked him if he had seen the one taken in Chicago, with the long nose, taking hold of his nose as he said it & then joining a hearty laugh. He then spoke of an other one & Mr Colfax asked him if it was good. He replied y-e-s if you could call an *accurate* likeness *good* & then both joining in a laugh. The President then asked him if he had ever had his bust taken & described in a laughable way the process of lathering the face with the soft plaster & the sensation produced. Two boys could not have talked with more child like simplicity than they. A crowd gathered around them & I was fortunate enough to be so near as to hear. It was small talk, but it was the President & the man that stands only third from him in rank that were talking.

Very soon Maj French indicated to the President it was time for the final Ceremony. The President rose & walked around past Mrs Lincoln with a smile & queer wrinkles at the spring of his nose such as we

sometimes see when one feels a [illegible word] & a little silly, he offered his arm not to Mrs Lincoln but to a not handsome, but nonetheless elegant looking lady of middle age & marched to the East Room & began the promenade with which all receptions close. Mrs Lincoln followed them in four couples behind on the arm of Gen [Robert C.] Schen[c]k, now member of the House. Perhaps the lady on the Presidents arm was Mrs S. As I looked at the President, tall, awkward, but dignified & solemn, as he walked round the room leading the whole throng & thought of him as a once poor boy, a rail splitter & flat boat man, now having in his hand power hardly surpassed by any man on earth & with cares & responsibilities such as perhaps no other man ever had, a feeling not much removed from awe came over me & I felt I would pray for him as I had never done before.

After a few circuits of the room he led the way out & the reception was over & we went away, some of us at least saying with unwonted emphasis "God Bless Abraham Lincoln—He is God's noblest work, an honest man."

(This letter was originally edited and published unabridged by Reidun D. Nuquist in Vermont History 61 (Fall 1993): 233–39. The original manuscript is held at the Vermont Historical Society Library, Barre, VT, in Misc. File 1039-1041. This excerpt is reproduced with permission.) 📖



Schuyler Colfax

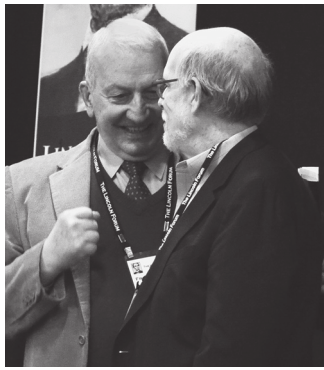
(Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

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LINCOLN FORUM



Margot & Wayne Chapman



Frank J. Williams & Harold Holzer



Pat Dougal



Providence Brigade Band



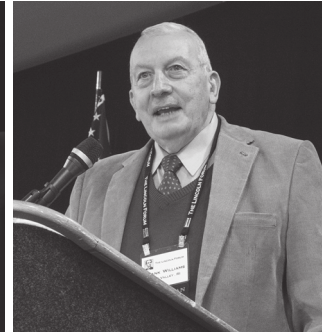
Edward L. Ayers & Harold Holzer



Stuart Schneider & Joe Card



John Marszalek & Craig Symonds



Fairwell Address - Frank J. Williams



Catherine Clinton & Nick Coates



Edna Greene & Thomas Medford



George Saunders



Dan Weinberg & George Buss



Marilyn & Ted Pawlik



Darla & David Moe



Frank J. Williams & Executive Chef Andrew Ernst



Mary Thompson & William Redd



Edith & Harold Holzer



Melissa Winn, Dana Shoaf, & Tom Horrocks



Teacher Scholars - Ruth Squillace, Kevin Wagner, Harold Holzer, Heidi Kwalk, Melinda Reay, Frank J. Williams, & Lisa Smith



Kate Masur



Gabor Boritt & Joe Fornieri

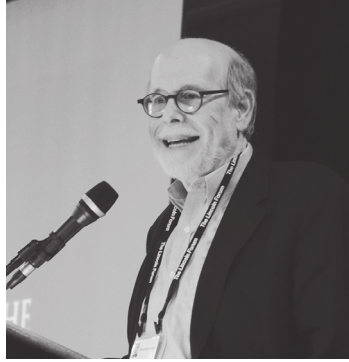
XXIII MEMORIES



David Blight, Harold Holzer, & Frank J. Williams
Richard Nelson Current Award



Marylou & Craig Symonds with Candice Shy Hooper



Harold Holzer



David Walker & Jon Willen



Joe Card, Michelle Krowl & Charlie Doty



Wendy Allen, Bill Pederson, Harold Holzer, & Frank J. Williams:
Wendy Allen Award for Institutional Excellence



Ron Robinson & Henry F. Ballone



Joe Truglio & Jim Hessler



Nikki & Al Notarianni



Antoinette & Ernest Pecaski & Tim Branscum



Charlie Doty, Linda, Jack & Chris Densmore



Dennis J. Curran, Marius Glavlund Laursen, & Bonnie Curran



"Some Words from Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Douglass":
George Buss



Student Scholars - Harold Holzer, Thomas Horrocks, Abe Selvas, Aiden Carr, Alyson Sebold, & Frank J. Williams



Frank J. Williams



Joe Card, Dave Walker, Tim Branscum, & Henry F. Ballone



Wendy Allen, Elaine Henderson, & Virginia Williams

LINCOLN FORUM PRESENTS ANNUAL CURRENT AWARD TO HISTORIAN DAVID W. BLIGHT

The Lincoln Forum presented its annual Richard Nelson Current Award of Achievement on November 18 to historian David W. Blight, the prize-winning author of both *Race and Reunion* and the acclaimed new biography of Frederick Douglass, *Prophet of Freedom*. Blight, who directs the Gilder Lehrman Center at Yale and teaches in its history department, accepted the award and delivered the keynote address at the 23rd annual Lincoln Forum Symposium at the Wyndham Gettysburg.

The Current Award was presented by Harold Holzer, newly elected Forum Chair, who praised Professor Blight “for reminding us in his work why the Civil War was fought, and how long the fight lasted beyond 1865; for helping us, compelling us, and inspiring us to awaken from historical amnesia and acknowledge, reconsider, and reshape national memory; for revivifying the life, struggles, and words of the American prophet Frederick Douglass and convincingly advocating for his heroic place in the national story; for defining the arc of the struggle for equality that has roiled our past and continues to challenge us today; for inspiringly engaging the public in the search for the usable past; and for compelling all of us to contemplate an imperfect reunion in the 19th century in order to form a more perfect Union in the 21st.”

Blight serves as Class of 1954 Professor of American History and Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University. Earlier, he taught at both Amherst College and in a public high school. His widely hailed 2001 book,

Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory won the Frederick Douglass Prize, the Bancroft Prize, and two prizes from the Organization of American Historians. It awaked interest in “memory history” and the painful impact of post-war reunion that emphasized sectional over racial

reconciliation. Blight’s newly published book is *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*.

The Current Award is in the form of a newly created Lincoln bust by sculptor (and Current Award laureate) John McClarey. Previous winners are: Gabor Boritt (1996); Brian Lamb (1997); John Hope Franklin (1998); Senator Paul Simon (1999); David Herbert Donald (2000); Garry Wills (2001); James M. McPherson and an honorary award to Richard Nelson Current himself (2002); Sam Waterston (2003); John Y. Simon (2004); sculptor John McClarey

plus an honorary award for founding chairman Frank Williams (2005); Doris Kearns Goodwin (2006); Jeff Shaara (2007); Ken Burns (2008); Justice Sandra Day O’Connor (2009); Mark E. Neely, Jr. (2010); Ed Bearss (2011); Eric Foner (2012); Tony Kushner (2013); James Getty (2014); Edward Steers Jr. and William C. “Jack” Davis with an honorary award to Harold Holzer (2015); James I. “Bud” Robertson (2016), and Ron Chernow (2017). 🏆



David Blight, Harold Holzer & Frank J. Williams

DELBANCO VOTED HIGHEST-RATED SPEAKER AT LINCOLN FORUM XXIII

Attendees at the 2018 Lincoln Forum ranked Columbia University Professor Andrew Delbanco first among speakers at the 23rd annual symposium. Delbanco lectured on “The War Before the War: Fugitive Slaves and the Struggle for the Soul of America.” Audience members, asked to rate speakers on a scale of 1-10, rewarded Delbanco with a sterling rating of 9.8.

Following him closely in the 2018 rankings were the Richard Nelson Current Award winner David Blight of Yale, who spoke on Frederick Douglass (9.7), Harold Holzer, who debuted his new biography of Lincoln Memorial sculptor Daniel Chester French (9.3), the team of Craig Symonds and John Marszalek (9.2), and historian Kate Masur (9.0).

Once again, attendees ranked the entire Forum highly (9.3), praising the meals and service (9.1), and proposing new ideas, themes, and honorees for future symposia. “The symposium was very well done,” commented one attendee. “The organization and attention to detail is impressive. Information shared and learning opportunity are excellent.”

“Enjoyed the variety of topics related to aspects of Lincoln’s accomplishments and attributes especially his role in the pivotal issues of the day,” noted yet another. “It is appreciated.”

Wrote another attendee: “I look forward to The Lincoln Forum each year. I have thoroughly enjoyed this year’s conference. The variety of topics was so interesting.” Still another declared, “I love the opportunity to speak with authors up close and personal.” Declared yet another: “Exceeded expectations, as usual!”

“The conference is always well-run and organized,” reported an attendee who travelled some 1,600 miles for the 2018 symposium. “I truly appreciate the value for money spent. I’m an educator, so it’s difficult to leave



Andrew Delbanco

school at this time of year, but it’s always a great experience. Thank you for your hard work behind the scenes each year!”

Among the suggestions for improvements were requests for additional power point images and a return to the “Getting to Know You” quiz questions pioneered by Virginia Williams. While some attendees lamented the inclusion of a “fiction” session on last year’s program, a number of evaluation sheets registered appreciation for featuring novelist George Saunders at this unusual dramatic reading. “I guess I’m not intellectual enough to appreciate it,” confided one respondent. Another

disagreed: “I honor The Lincoln Forum for thinking outside the box. Please consider continuing this behavior.”

Other attendees urged more future presentations on women’s history, and a greater focus on African-American history. Several teachers proposed that the Forum gather teachers for an organized workshop or other professional exchange during the symposium.

Last year’s participants put their generosity where their opinions were: the used book sales and silent auctions yielded \$715 for student scholarships.

Finally, several evaluation sheets took note of the leadership succession for which the membership voted on November 18. “Thank you, Judge,” went one comment. “Good luck, Harold.” 🏆

THE LINCOLN FORUM HONORS HISTORICAL ORGANIZATION

On November 17, 2018, The Lincoln Forum presented its annual Wendy Allen Award for achievement by a Lincoln organization or society to the International Lincoln Center for American Studies at LSU Shreveport. Chairman Emeritus Frank J. Williams presented the award to the institute's director, William D. Pederson, a longtime Forum Advisory Board member.

"The International Lincoln Organization has introduced and sustained the Lincoln legacy in many countries where his example is still desperately needed to light the way to freedom," Chief Justice Williams said in his presentation. "Bill Pederson and the Center have made sure that this vital story remains alive and well in every corner of the globe while reminding Americans of Lincoln's deservedly outsized impact on the global image of the United States."

Founded in 1983, the Center was the first Lincoln organization founded in the Deep South. It offers a year-round cycle of events and programs for students and the community, including lectures, conferences, publications, and visits to Lincoln sites around the country and the world. In his acceptance speech, Professor

Pederson noted the many honors given to Lincoln abroad, including the minting of Lincoln postage stamps in most countries.

The award, named for the premier Lincoln artist and Gettysburg resident Wendy Allen, is in the form of a print based on one of her paintings of the 16th president. 📖



Wendy Allen, Bill Pederson, Harold Holzer, & Frank J. Williams

LINCOLN BRONZE BY FRANK PORCU: THE FORUM'S GIFT TO LINCOLN, ARGENTINA

A 30-inch-high, original bronze bust of Lincoln—the work of New York-based sculptor Frank L. Porcu—has been gifted by the Forum to the South American township of Lincoln, Argentina.

The town—some four hours northwest of Buenos Aires—is believed to be the first municipality outside the United States named for Abraham Lincoln. The designation was ordered by Argentinian president Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), a passionate admirer of the American president. Sarmiento went on to write and publish a Spanish-language Lincoln biography.



U. S. Ambassador to Argentina Edward Prado officially receives Lincoln bronze at the American embassy, the Bosch Palace in Buenos Aires, in mid-April. From left to right: Nancy Roseti (reading official donation statement from the Forum), Salvador Serenal, mayor of the municipality of Lincoln, Argentina, and Ambassador Prado.

Forum Vice Chairman Harold Holzer visited the city in 2013 on a State Department mission to introduce the Steven Spielberg film, *Lincoln*, to Argentinian audiences. There he discovered that the town's main school was named for Lincoln, that

the building boasted a handsome Lincoln portrait, and that all students were required to learn and perform the city's Spanish-language "Hymn to Lincoln."

What the town has lacked—until now—was a publicly displayed sculptural tribute to the American icon for whom it was named. Last year, the Forum Board of Advisors executive committee authorized the acquisition, and in turn the donation, of the Frank Porcu bust for the town square outside City Hall.

"The city of Lincoln, the Municipality of Lincoln, our entire population, and I personally thank you for your great gesture of the donation of a bust of Abraham Lincoln for our city," said Mayor Salvador Serenal in a letter to Holzer. "The bust will be placed in front of the Municipal Palace in the Civic Courtyard so all the inhabitants of this city can visualize the figure who gave us his name and identity."

Crafted in 2012, the bust was commissioned by New York businessman Shawn Thomas. Artist Porcu, who displayed the bronze at The Lincoln Forum symposium in 2014, is a sculptor and artist who earned his B.F.A. from Pratt Institute and MFA from the New York Academy of Art. His Lincoln bust was unveiled in 2013 at the New-York Historical Society.

"Every artist's highest aspiration is to create a work of art that truly resonates with humanity," commented Porcu as he prepared for his trip to South America. "It is a great honor to be acknowledged by The Lincoln Forum and the people of Lincoln, Argentina. Most of all I am proud to have my portrait of Lincoln be the personification of their namesake to inspire the people of Lincoln for generations to come."

Commented Shawn Thomas, who commissioned the bronze: "I am thrilled and extremely gratified knowing that the work of art I commissioned because of my desire to the Lincoln legacy is now reaching a larger, international audience."

As this issue went to press, the sculpture was to be dedicated at formal ceremonies in the town square on April 15, the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's death. A complete report on the unveiling will be published in the Fall *Bulletin*. 📖

THE LIMITS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S CLEMENCY:

By Burrus M. Carnahan

On the evening of September 25, 1862, eight days after the battle of Antietam, Abraham Lincoln rode from the White House to his cottage at the Soldiers Home, accompanied by his secretary John Hay. During the ride, the president told Hay he had learned of a disturbing rumor. According to Hay's diary, "he said he had heard of an officer who said they did not mean to gain any decisive victory" at Antietam, "but to keep things running on so that the army might manage things to suit themselves." If such language had been used, Lincoln thought the officer's "head should go off."¹

By the next day the president had found out the details of the incident. The officer in question was Major John J. Key of General in Chief Henry Halleck's staff. He confronted Key with the accusation and offered him the opportunity to defend himself personally.



Battle of Antietam

(Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

“Washington. Sep. 26. 1862

“Sir:

“I am informed that in answer to the question ‘Why was not the rebel army bagged immediately after the battle near Sharpsburg? [i.e., the battle of Antietam]’ propounded to you by Major Levi C. Turner . . . you answered ‘That is not the game. The object is that neither Army shall get much advantage of the other; that both shall be kept in the field till they are exhausted, when we will make a compromise & save slavery.’

“I shall be very happy if you will, within twenty-four hours from the receipt of this, prove to me by Major Turner, that you did not either literally (sic), or in substance, make the answer stated.”

John Hay noted that this letter was delivered to Major Key at 10:25 AM on September 27. Major Turner was on the headquarters staff of the Army of the Potomac, as was Major Key's brother, Thomas Marshall Key.

Majors Key and Turner presented themselves at the White House around 11:00 the same day. Turner reaffirmed that Key had made the alleged statement, although the wording differed slightly from what was originally reported to the president. “As I remember it,” Major Turner said, “the conversation was, I asked the question why we did not bag them after the battle at Sharpsburg? Major Key's reply was that was not the game, that we should tire the rebels out, and ourselves, that that was the only way the Union could be preserved, we come together fraternally, and slavery be saved.” Key did not deny that he had made the statement, but argued he was loyal to the Union cause. Turner confirmed that he had never heard Key express disloyal sentiments.

For Lincoln, however, loyalty was not the issue. The president replied that “if there was a ‘game’ even among Union men, to have our army not take an advantage of the enemy when it could, it was his object

to break up that game.” He informed the War Department that in his “view it is wholly inadmissible (sic) for any gentleman holding a military commission from the United States to utter such sentiments as Major Key is . . . proved to have done. Therefore let Major John J. Key be forthwith dismissed from the military service of the United States.”²

It must be noted that Lincoln ordered that Key be “dismissed” from the army, not merely discharged. “Discharge” was the term ordinarily used when officers were honorably released from active duty at the end of their term of service or for medical or administrative reasons. When an officer was “dismissed” by sentence of a court-martial, it was the equivalent of a dishonorable discharge for an enlisted soldier. Key was not court-martialed, but dismissed by the president after a summary hearing. In the nineteenth-century U.S. Army, dismissal by the president, while not technically a punishment, nevertheless had “the moral effect of punishment, in that it not only deprives the party of that which is valuable to him but affixes a reproach upon his reputation.”³ Key was not merely thrown out of the army, he was publicly stigmatized by the president. The administration later made sure that Key's fate, and the reasons for it, were published in the *New York Times* and, to spread the word in the West, in a paper in Missouri.⁴

The next day Key sent the president a written rebuttal, again declaring his loyalty and arguing that he was referring only to the Confederate army. “I have often remarked, that the Rebels would never let this contest be decided (sic), if they could help it — by a decided (sic) battle between us, but would protract this war — as they hoped to make a compromise in the end & that they were fighting with that end in view —

“In conclusion I solemnly aver — that if this war terminate in the entire destruction of the South — they have brought it on themselves.”⁵

Key sent this request for reconsideration through his old boss, commanding general Henry Halleck, who sat on it for almost two months. In the meantime, Key's son, Captain James R. Key, had died of wounds received at the battle of Perryville, Kentucky. When the president finally saw Key's letter, his reply offered condolences on the loss of the author's son. The expression of sympathy was undoubtedly sincere, since Lincoln had lost two sons of his own. However, neither sympathy nor the passage of time inclined the president toward leniency.

“In regard to my dismissal of yourself from the military service,” Lincoln wrote, “it seems to me you misunderstand me. I did not charge, or intend to charge you with disloyalty. I had been brought to fear that there was a class of officers in the army, not very inconsiderable in numbers, who were playing a game to not beat the enemy when they could, on some peculiar notion as to the proper way of saving the Union; and when you were proved to me, in your own presence, to have avowed yourself in favor of that ‘game,’ and did not attempt to controvert the proof, I dismissed you as an example and a warning to that supposed class. I bear you no ill will; and I regret that I could not have the example without wounding you personally. But can I now, in view of the public interest, restore you to the service, by which the army would understand that I indorse (sic) and approve that game myself? If there was any doubt of your having made the avowal, the case would be different. But when it was proved to me, in your presence, you did not deny or attempt to deny it, but confirmed it in my mind, by attempting to sustain the position of the argument.

“I am really sorry for the pain the case gives you, but I do not see how, consistently with duty, I can change it.”⁶

Lincoln still seems to have had doubts by his action. On December 27, 1862, he examined the file again and concluded that “On full re-consideration, I can not find sufficient ground to change the conclusion therein arrived at[.]”⁷

Dismissing an officer for a single casual remark in a private conversation seems a punishment vastly excessive in light of the offense. (Lincoln himself later described Key's remarks as “silly.”⁸) Lincoln was, deservedly, known for his clemency towards offenders. So why did the

THE POST-ANTIETAM CASE OF MAJOR JOHN J. KEY

president stubbornly refuse clemency to Key? He twice referred to the treatment of Key as an “example.”⁹ In politics, examples are used to illustrate a rule or policy, and to warn against the consequences of violating the rule or policy. What policies involved in Key’s case would be so important to President Lincoln that they would override his usual inclination towards leniency? Two policies suggest themselves. First, and more obviously, to counter suspected disloyalty among the officers of the Army of the Potomac. Second, to reinforce the president’s policies on slavery.

By the end of September 1862, the President had ample cause to doubt the loyalty of the officers of the Army of the Potomac. Major General George B. McClellan was commander of that army for most of the period between July 27, 1861, and November 5, 1862. Under his command the Army of the Potomac adopted a conciliatory policy towards the white civilian population of the Confederacy. He urged the president to conduct the war “upon the highest principles known to Christian Civilization.” “Neither confiscation of property, . . . or forcible abolition of slavery should be contemplated for a moment.”¹⁰

In early 1862, Lincoln became increasingly frustrated with McClellan’s reluctance to aggressively attack the enemy. After a desultory campaign in the spring of 1862, the general was defeated outside Richmond and driven back to the James River. The president then created a new Federal army, designated the Army of Virginia, to operate in northern Virginia under the command of Major General John Pope. One of the few abolitionist officers of the pre-war U.S. Army, he adopted a less lenient policy towards southern civilians than those of McClellan and his supporters. Unfortunately for Pope, his army was soundly defeated by the Confederates at the battle of Second Bull Run at the end of August 1862.



Lincoln & McClellan

(Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

Pope blamed his defeat on the disloyalty of one of his subordinates, Major General Fitz John Porter. Porter had close ties to McClellan and allegedly disobeyed Pope’s order to attack the enemy on August 29 in order to discredit Pope as an alternative to McClellan. Porter was later court-martialed for disobedience and dismissed from the service, a sentence President Lincoln quickly approved.

Following the Union defeat at Second Bull Run, General Lee invaded Maryland and was in turn defeated by McClellan and the Army of the Potomac at the battle of Antietam, Maryland, on September 17, 1862. However, despite the President’s urging, McClellan failed to pursue Lee’s army into Virginia. It was in this context that, on September 25, Lincoln heard of Major Key’s remarks. They provided an explanation for both Porter’s disobedience and McClellan’s reluctance to pursue the enemy after Antietam. As Lincoln later explained to John Hay, he began to suspect

that McClellan and his officers were “playing false,” and that they “did not want to hurt the enemy.”¹¹ As a public example of what could happen to them, the president’s dismissal of Key might persuade McClellan and his supporters to take a more aggressive approach towards the enemy. However, if McClellan understood the message of Key’s dismissal, he did not heed it. His continued a dilatory pursuit of Lee until Lincoln removed him from command on November 5, 1862.

Finally, it is significant that Key’s remarks came only three days after Lincoln issued his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. Key had, after all, declared the purpose of the “game” was to “save slavery.” The president had already reversed two efforts by the military to set policies toward slavery. In September 1861 he countermanded a proclamation by General John C. Fremont freeing the slaves of Confederate supporters in the Department of the West; the proclamation had adversely affected public opinion in Kentucky, at that time still wavering between remaining in the Union and joining the Confederacy.¹² More recently he reversed a similar proclamation issued by General David Hunter in the Department of the South. At that time he publicly declared that he reserved to himself the power to make policy on slavery and that no military officer in the field was authorized to make such policy.¹³ Now the president was faced with a possible cabal of officers to undercut his Emancipation Proclamation. More than anything else, this made Major Key’s action unforgivable.

By 1868 the war was over and slavery had been banned by the 13th Amendment. On July 15 of that year the War Department quietly revoked Key’s dismissal and honorably discharged him, as of September 27 1862.¹⁴ This allowed his widow, Hattie Ann Key, to claim a government pension in 1890. ■

¹ *Inside Lincoln’s White House: The Complete Civil War Diary of John Hay*, ed. Michael Burlingame and John R. Turner Ettlenger (Carbondale: So. Illinois Univ. Press, 1997) 41.

² “Record of Dismissal of John J. Key, September 26-27, 1862,” in *Collected Works of Lincoln*, Vol. 5, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1953) 442-43. The document was written in Lincoln’s hand.

³ William Winthrop, *Military Law and Precedents* (Washington D.C., GPO, 1920 reprint of 1886 ed.) 737.

⁴ “The Dismissal of Major John J. Key,” *New York Times*, Oct. 18, 1862, p. 8, Stephen W. Sears, *Lincoln’s Lieutenants: The High Command of the Army of the Potomac* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017) 423

⁵ John J. Key to Abraham Lincoln, September 27, 1862, Lincoln Papers in the Library of Congress.

⁶ To John Key, November 24, 1862, in *Collected Works of Lincoln*, Vol. 5, 508.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Inside Lincoln’s White House* 232.

⁹ To John Key, November 24, 1862 in *Collected Works; Inside Lincoln’s White House* 232.

¹⁰ To Abraham Lincoln, July 7, 1862, in *The Civil War Papers of George B. McClellan: Selected Correspondence 1861—1865* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1989) 344.

¹¹ *Inside Lincoln’s White House* 232.

¹² To John C. Fremont, September 11, 1861 in *Collected Works of Lincoln*, Vol. 4, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1953) 517.

¹³ Proclamation Revoking General Hunter’s Order of Military Emancipation of May 9, 1862, May 19, 1862, in *Collected Works of Lincoln*, Vol. 5, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1953) 222.

¹⁴ War Dept, Adj. General’s Office, to Commissioner of Pensions Feb 28, 1891 in *Reports of Committees, House of Representatives, First session of the 52nd Congress*, United States Congressional Serial Set, Volume 3049 (Washington Government Printing Office, 1891) 514.

FORUM ANNOUNCES ROSTER FOR 2019 SYMPOSIUM: “THE LEADER. THE WAR. THE LEGACY: LINCOLN AT 210”



Peter S. Carmichael

History of the Civil War (2019). And Brian R. Dirck, professor of history at Anderson University, will explore Lincoln’s lifelong relationship with death—from the loss of his mother in 1818 to the terrible carnage of the Civil War—based on his latest book, *The Black Heavens: Abraham Lincoln and Death* (2019).



Brian R. Dirck

House aide Sidney Blumenthal, who will discuss the latest installment in his multi-volume biography, *The Political Life of Abraham Lincoln*.

On November 18, maritime historian Anna Gibson Holloway and the new Lincoln Forum Vice Chair Jonathan W. White will each discuss their recent co-authored book, *“Our Little Monitor”*: *The Greatest Invention of the Civil War* (2018). White will explain Lincoln’s connections to that famous ironclad vessel—including his 1862 visits to see her—while Holloway

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Elizabeth R. Varon, the Langbourne M. Williams Professor of American History at the University of Virginia, will discuss how northerners were drawn to Lincoln’s Unionist message, based on her widely praised new book, *Armies of Deliverance: A New*



Elizabeth R. Varon

Other speakers that day will include Forum Executive Committee member Edna Greene Medford of Howard University, who will focus on Lincoln, race, and freedom; and Lincoln biographer and former White



Edna Greene Medford



Anna Gibson Holloway

will offer a colorful and engaging portrayal of the *Monitor’s* image in American popular culture from the 1862 Battle of Hampton Roads to the present.

One not-to-be-missed panel session on November 17 will explore the controversial Confederate monument issue, featuring Gallagher, Medford, and Varon, with Holzer (who addressed the topic as the Gettysburg National Cemetery Remembrance Day speaker in 2017) as moderator. On November 18, Matthew Pinsker, the Pohanka Chair in

American Civil War History at Dickinson College, and William A. Blair, Penn State’s Helen P. Ferree Professor of Middle American History and director of the Richards Civil War Era Center, will join White and Forum Chairman Emeritus Frank J. Williams to discuss the elections of 1860 and 1864—focusing on who voted, who didn’t, and who couldn’t. Peerless Lincoln enactor George Buss will present two different readings from the 16th president’s storied writings, including, as always, the Gettysburg Address.

The small-group breakout sessions on November 18 will include the perennial Forum favorite, “Cooking with the Chief (Frank Williams) and the Chef (the Wyndham’s Andrew Ernst),” as well as a battlefield tour concentrating on Pickett’s Charge.

Other breakout sessions will offer one-on-one discussions on the Civil War Navy (featuring Lincoln Prize-winning naval historian Craig L. Symonds and Anna Holloway), Lincoln and the Constitution (White and Dirck), bibliophile Daniel R. Weinberg (“Artifact Stories: What’s New in Lincolniana”), plus a session on Lincoln sculpture (featuring the unveiling of a long-lost Lincoln bronze mask by the proprietors of a leading North Carolina art gallery).



Sidney Blumenthal

Keeping with tradition, The Forum will present its annual lifetime achievement citation—the coveted Richard Nelson Current Award—as well as its Wendy Allen Award for institutional excellence. This year, the Forum is also inaugurating a \$1,000 prize for the finest Lincoln book of the year. As always, The Forum offers enrollees two breakfasts, two lunches, and three banquet dinners.

For more information on Forum XXIV, consult the organization’s website: www.thelincolnforum.org. 📌

Administrator • Elaine Henderson • 329 Baltimore Street • Gettysburg, PA 17325 • Phone: 203-770-2305 • admin@thelincolnforum.org
Assistant Administrator • Patricia A. Dougal • 6389 Saucon Valley Dr. • Fayetteville, PA 17222 • Phone: 717-352-6168 • patdougal@yahoo.com

THE LINCOLN FORUM

Jonathan W. White - Editor
jonathan.white@cnu.edu

Henry F. Ballone - Designer
treasurer@thelincolnforum.org