



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Freeport marks 150th anniversary of Lincoln-Douglas Debates

Lincoln and Douglas are coming to Freeport August 29 – September 1.

Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas re-enactors will visit the community as part of “Reunion Tour 2008,” the 150th anniversary of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates. Events are scheduled in the seven Debate communities as close as possible to the dates in 1858 when Lincoln and Douglas debated the issues of the day in their race for Douglas’ U.S. Senate seat. Douglas won the election, but the notoriety Lincoln gained during the Debates helped propel him to the Presidency in 1860.

The Lincoln and Douglas re-enactors will meet in Freeport to reminisce, share their recollections and discuss some of the important issues that were at the heart of the contest. An accompanying naval officer in period clothing will moderate the discussion and invite local news media and audience members to ask questions of the candidates. Lincoln and Douglas will be portrayed by two Freeport actors - George Buss will play Abraham Lincoln and Tim Connor will play Stephen A. Douglas. Silas Terry, the accompanying naval aide, will be played by Ed Finch, who will introduce Lincoln and Douglas and serve as moderator for each local press conference.

Scheduled events in Freeport include:

- Friday, August 29 - Civil War music preview, Torchlight Parade and Abolitionists Rally, and the Winneshiek Players present “Mrs. Lincoln.”
- Saturday, August 30 – All-day walking tours, Sesquicentennial Parade, First Brigade Band performance, Reunion Tour ’08 Performance at Debate Square, Lincoln-Douglas Debate Square Dedication, Winneshiek Players present “Mrs. Lincoln,” and the 1858 Grand Ball.
- Sunday, August 31 - Family Day Art in the Park; Community Duck Race; and “Lincoln’s Life: A Thomas Edison Film,” and “Young Abe Lincoln” at the Lindo Theatre.
- Monday, September 1 - Flavors of Lincoln’s Freeport Food and Music Festival.

The “Reunion Tour 2008” is the core of a weekend long celebration in each Debate community: August 22 – 23 in Ottawa; August 29 – September 1 in Freeport; September 12 – 14 in Jonesboro; September 20 – 21 in Charleston; October 3 – 5 in Galesburg; October 11 – 13

in Quincy; and October 17 – 19 in Alton. For more information visit www.lincolndouglasreunion.com.

The Reunion Tour '08 project was organized by the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition, in conjunction with the debate communities, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism and the Lincoln-Douglas Society. The Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition manages the newly designated Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, preserving and promoting the Lincoln Legacy sites across Illinois.

For more information:

Ottawa, August 22 – 23: (888) 688-2924, www.experienceottawa.com.

Freeport, August 29 – September 1: (800) 369-2955, www.stephenson-county-il.org.

Jonesboro, September 12 – 14: (800) 248-4373, www.southernmostillinois.com.

Charleston, September 20 – 21: (217) 348-0430, www.charlestontourism.org.

Galesburg, October 3 – 5: (800) 916-3330, www.visitgalesburg.com.

Quincy, October 11 – 13: (800) 978-4748, www.lincolnDouglasQuincyDebate.com.

Alton, October 17 – 19: 1-800-ALTON-IL (258-6645), www.VisitAlton.com/Lincoln.

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