



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 1, 2008

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Dear Friends,

The month of May in 2008 will long be remembered in the history of the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition and in the preservation history of the Lincoln Legacy sites. It represents a significant milestone in the preservation and interpretation of the history of Lincoln's time in Illinois, on his journey to the White House and immortality. It will be remembered as the month the Congress passed and the President signed landmark legislation designating this, the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area. Of the 40 or so heritage areas in America, this is the only one named for a President. It gives us an extraordinary opportunity to preserve and present the history, heritage and culture surrounding the most revered President in American history.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Illinois' senior Senator, Dick Durbin, Congressman Ray Lahood and the entire Congressional Delegation, as they cosponsored and strongly supported the Heritage legislation. Without Senator Durbin and Congressman Lahood's remarkable attention to the measure, the Congress would not have considered the designation. I strongly encourage everyone to take a moment to write them a note of thanks so they know how much the designation means to all of us. I am including their addresses at the end of the newsletter for your convenience. Each of us needs to do this, as it clearly represents one of the most significant preservation efforts in Illinois history. They need to know how significant we think the designation will be to both future preservation efforts as well as the continued development of the associated tourism economy.

Our new brochures for this travel season have been distributed to visitor centers across Illinois, along with the fantastic Lincoln Douglas Reunion Tour '08 brochure, developed in conjunction with the debate communities who are planning celebrations focusing on the debates. Our Lincoln and Douglas re-enactors will perform in each of the seven sites, as well as Springfield and Bement during the summer.

Please note our brochure includes 2 new sites: the Athens Long Nine Museum and the Voices of Jacksonville driving tour, both utilizing low frequency radio signal to enhance their interpretation. We are delighted to welcome them to the brochure!

The 2 brochures are also being distributed by the National Park Service's St. Louis Arch visitors center, as a part of the Jefferson National Western Expansion site. They enjoy more than 3 million visitors a year and have agreed to display our materials in recognition of our designation as a National Heritage Area and in support of U.S. and Illinois Bicentennial efforts. The broader our reach the better for attracting even more visitors.

Lincoln and Douglas now have a date to throw out the first pitch in St .Louis on July 6th, as the Cardinals take on the Chicago Cubs. The Northsiders have also indicated they are looking for a date in Chicago, as well. We'll keep you informed as Lincoln and Douglas continue their mission to spread the word about these upcoming events! The baseball games represent our attempt to use popular entertainment broadcasts and events to reach a broader audience and to position the events as good wholesome entertainment that will be enjoyed by all ages. For further details about visit: www.lincolndouglasreunion.com, the micro site created by the Illinois Bureau of Tourism to promote the events. It is scheduled to be up by June 5th.

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