

LOOKING FOR LINCOLN



OFFICIAL VISITORS GUIDE
of the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area



enjoy
illinois



A MEMBER OF THE
**National Heritage
Area System**

LINCOLN Was Here!

In Ottawa IL, you can feel HISTORY all around you. Find yourself in the very place where Lincoln held his first debate! Tour downtown Ottawa, IL and come face to face with history as you gaze upon a series of murals depicting the town's exciting past. You can even learn the shocking story of The Radium Girls...All that and more awaits you in scenic City of Ottawa, IL 90 miles from Chicago in *The Middle of Everywhere!*

Murals



Washington Square Park



Radium Girls



Join Us for Debate Days in August



Find Your New Destination Here:

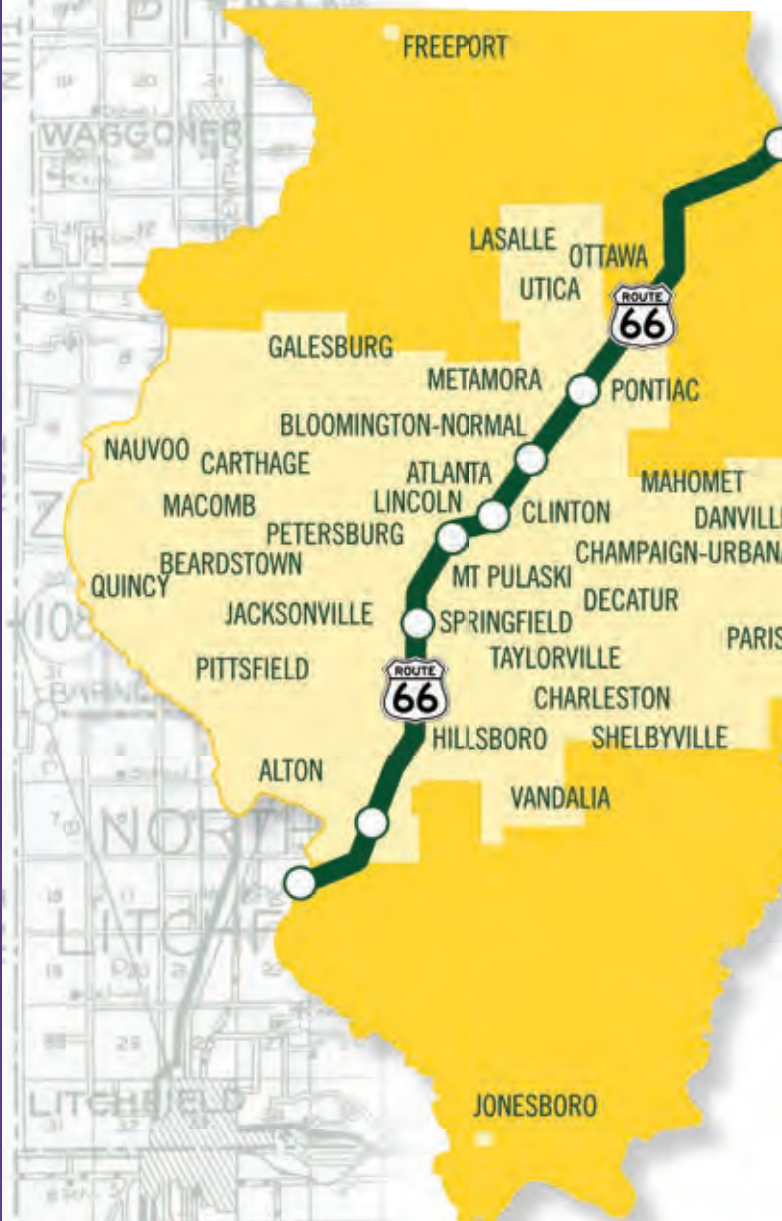
OTTAWA VISITORS CENTER
(815)-434-2737

Visit Our Website Here:

VISITOTTAWAIL.COM



The MIDDLE OF
HISTORY



WELCOME!

Illinois is immersed in American history, and exploring the life and times of Abraham Lincoln is one of the most intriguing. In 2026, with the 250th anniversary of the United States and the 100th anniversary of Route 66, we invite you to explore some of the state's additional stories, along with Lincoln, and how he became one of the most influential individuals in American history!

FIND YOUR LINCOLN STORY!



MAJOR ATTRACTIONS



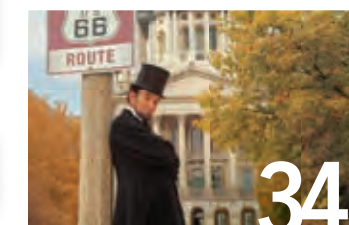
COMMUNITIES



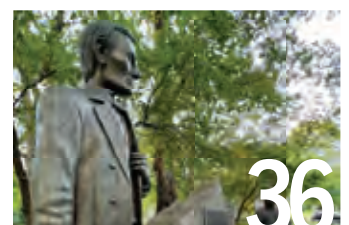
STORY TRAIL



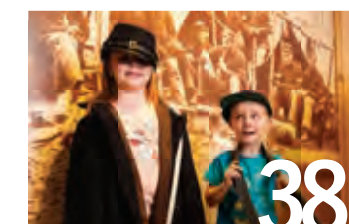
HISTORY COMES ALIVE



HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS



DEBATE SITES



FUN FOR KIDS



NPS PASSPORT





ROUTE 66

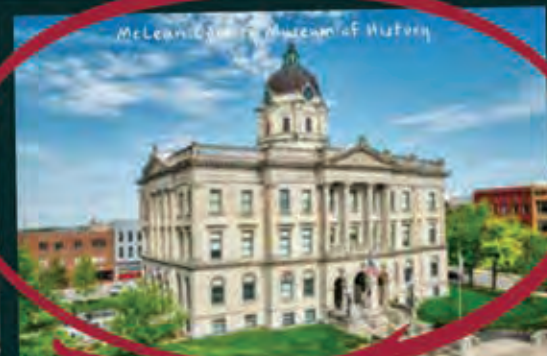
CRUISING
with Lincoln on 66

VISITORS CENTER & GIFT SHOP

Where Route 66 Meets Lincoln's Legacy

Stop by for local art, information, snacks, clean restrooms, and much more – all within a 1903 historic courthouse turned nationally-accredited, award-winning museum!

VisitBN


Explore with Lincoln himself using our mobile tour platform

Scan the QR code or visit tourient.mchistory.app to get started.




McLean County MUSEUM of HISTORY

mchistory.org • 200 N. Main St. Bloomington, IL 61701 • 309-827-0428



WHAT IS A NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA?

Lincoln at the Macomb Area Convention and Visitors Bureau Macomb

National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. Unlike national parks, National Heritage Areas are large lived-in landscapes. Consequently, National Heritage Area entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

Looking for Lincoln unfolds the rich history and story of Mr. Lincoln's life and times across the 43-county Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area encompassing over 30 years of his life spent in Illinois. Be inspired by experiencing through stories and storytellers, the facts, the figures, the places, the events, the impact of Lincoln's humble beginnings to his presidency of the United States.

Historic Route 66 bisects the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, encountering many significant Lincoln sites. In this 100th anniversary year of this historic road, and the 250th anniversary of our nation, we encourage visitors to take the opportunity to explore these locations. Visitors will discover how these two disparate aspects of America's history intersect in surprising and meaningful ways.

No matter what your historic adventure is comprised of - from the elaborate Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, to the warm Lincoln Home National Historic Site, to inspirational living history programs, to the informative Looking for Lincoln Story Trail, to stops along Route 66—you will feel welcomed by the communities sharing Lincoln's history.



MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

The breadth of Lincoln's story is woven into the fabric of the 43 counties of the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area. Discover exhibits, events, programs, and authentic historic attractions, revealing his legacy, which will make a unique impact on your understanding of Lincoln's life and times.

Lincoln Home National
Historic Site
Springfield

Abraham Lincoln Presidential
Library and Museum
Springfield

Bryant Cottage
Bement

C.H. Moore Homestead
Clinton

BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE!

Lookingforlincoln.org is brimming with hundreds of sites, museums, events, outdoor exhibits, and hidden gems, just waiting to be discovered on an easy interactive map.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

212 N 6th St, Springfield presidentlincoln.illinois.gov

Get ready to be entertained, educated, and yes, mesmerized! From the humble beginnings of a young pioneer to his rise to the presidency, the story of Lincoln's life and times is captured through original artifacts, a partial reproduction of the 1860s White House, special effects theaters with ghostly images and high action, and so much more.

BRYANT COTTAGE STATE HISTORIC SITE

146 E Wilson St, Bement

enjoyillinois.com/explore/listing/bryant-cottage

Step into the historic parlor where Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln met on July 29, 1858 to negotiate their seven joint discussions that would famously become known as the Lincoln-Douglas Debates. History credits these debates as helping to launch Lincoln's Presidential candidacy two years later. This historic site also tells the story of the home owner Francis Bryant and his family.

C. H. MOORE HOMESTEAD & DEWITT COUNTY MUSEUM

219 E Woodlawn St, Clinton

chmoorehomestead.org

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the restored, fully-furnished mansion and spacious grounds whisk visitors back to the Victorian era. The historic house was once home to Clinton attorney, Clifton H. Moore. Visitors will enjoy tours of the mansion and carriage barn, view special exhibits and displays, including stories of the law partnership, political ties, and friendship shared by C.H. Moore and Abraham Lincoln during Lincoln's time in DeWitt County.

There's a whole lot more...

C.H. MOORE HOMESTEAD DeWitt County Museum

219 E. Woodlawn Clinton, IL 217-935-6066 chmoorehomestead.org Home of the Apple 'n Pork Festival



Open for Tours Tuesdays-Saturdays 10-5 and 1-5 Sundays (April-December)
Museum tours include the restored and fully furnished Victorian mansion which was the home of C.H. Moore, one of Clinton's earliest and DeWitt County's most prominent citizens, as well as a long-time friend of Abraham Lincoln. Also included are the original carriage barn, special exhibits featuring the Kent Collection, 19th & 20th century agriculture displays, and more. Special presentations and events are hosted throughout the year.

America 250 at the Homestead: Celebrating 250 Years of American History

*Special events taking place each
month throughout the year.*

Visit chmoorehomestead.org
for event details.



Mark Your Calendar!
Apple 'n Pork Festival
September 26 and 27, 2026

Visit our website or these
Facebook pages for more info 
Apple 'n Pork Festival
C.H. Moore Homestead & DeWitt County Museum

DAVID DAVIS MANSION STATE HISTORIC SITE

1000 Monroe Dr, Bloomington
daviddavismansion.org

Gaze through a window into the social and political life Lincoln knew at this stately 19th century mansion once owned by his friend, Judge David Davis and his wife, Sarah. History attributes part of Lincoln's success in obtaining the presidential nomination from the influence and support of Judge Davis.

FITHIAN HOME & VERMILION COUNTY MUSEUM

116 N Gilbert St, Danville
vermilioncountymuseum.org

Taking a stroll down Vermilion Street in Danville, circa 1850, you may very well have run into a tall, gangly, somewhat unkempt young attorney, rushing from his office to the nearby courthouse. That young man, probably wearing a tall stovepipe hat, would have been none other than Mr. Abraham

Lincoln. Lincoln practiced law here for about 18 years as he traveled the now famous 8th Judicial Circuit in Illinois. Explore the Vermilion County Museum, replicating that early courthouse, as well as the adjacent Fithian Home, a Lincoln site on the National Register of Historic Places. Here you'll find many stories surrounding the people and places in the life of Lincoln the lawyer. Danville is an excellent jumping-off point to explore eastern Illinois.

HISTORIC NAUVOO

290 Main St, Nauvoo
churchofjesuschrist.org

Experience the lives of the early members of the Mormon church who settled along the banks of the Mississippi River in 1839 as the people of Old Nauvoo set the stage for prairie life from 1839-1846. Over 30 historic attractions are brought to life through year-round living history interpreters and performers who tell the story of these early Illinoisans.

HISTORY MUSEUM ON THE SQUARE

332 Maine St, Quincy
hsqac.org/history-museum

The History Museum on the Square houses permanent and rotating installations, displays, and artifacts from the pioneer era through modern times. A unique feature of the structure is the large, circular corner tower over the front entrance. A sculpture garden on the grounds features architectural artifacts from Quincy buildings that are no longer in existence. Many exhibits interpret the life and times of Lincoln.

JOHN WOOD MANSION

425 S 12th St, Quincy
hsqac.org/john-wood-mansion

Once the home of John Wood, Quincy's founder and Illinois' 12th Governor, the John Wood Mansion was home to a friend and supporter of Abraham Lincoln. The Wood family moved into their third Quincy home from a nearby, two-story log cabin in 1837. Later, the mansion was moved from its original site to its current location, about a block east, so Wood could build an even larger, octagonal mansion that was demolished in the 1950s.

LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE MUSEUM, CHARLESTON

126 E St, Charleston
charlestonillinois.org

Retrace the senatorial debates of 1858 between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas. The museum offers exhibits and interactive displays that tell the debates' story through film, audio selections, artifacts, and photos.



Historic Nauvoo
Nauvoo



History Museum
on the Square
Quincy



David Davis Mansion
Bloomington



Fithian Home & Vermilion
County Museum
Danville



John Wood Mansion
Quincy



Lincoln Douglas Debate
Site and Museum
Charleston



LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE MUSEUM, QUINCY

128 N 5th St, Quincy
lincolndouglasdebatemuseum.com

Located across the street from the debate site in Washington Park, the museum includes five state-of-the-art videos and four new exhibits. The Turning Point video and exhibit panels explain why the debate was so important, how it affected United States history, and its importance in defining the morality of slavery and catapulting Abraham Lincoln to national attention.

LINCOLN HERITAGE MUSEUM

1115 Nicholson Rd, Lincoln
museum.lincolncollege.edu

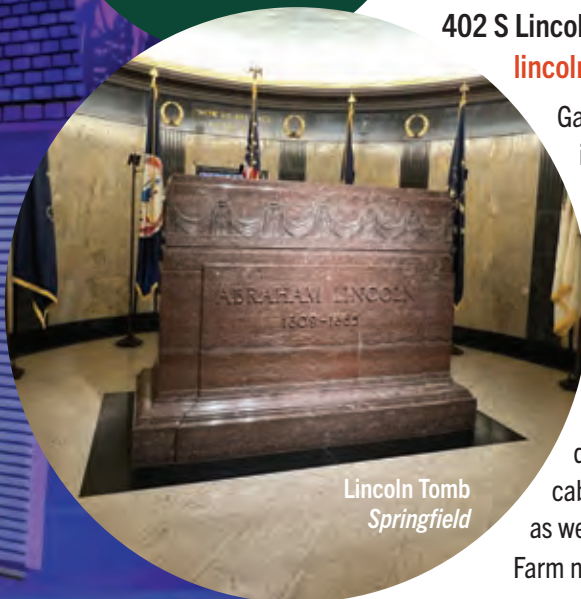
Discover over 100 rare artifacts from President Abraham Lincoln's life and the Civil War on the first floor. On the second floor, walk with Lincoln through a unique interactive visitor experience. Come see, hear, and touch history at the Lincoln Heritage Museum, ranked one of the "Most Amazing University Museums in the World" by bestcollegesonline.com in 2013.

STEP INTO HISTORY!

The Lincoln Home, Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site, and Metamora Courthouse allow you to walk in Lincoln's footsteps, and experience sites where he lived, worked, and knew personally.



Lincoln Heritage Museum
Lincoln



Lincoln Tomb
Springfield

Lincoln Home
National Historic Site
Springfield



LINCOLN HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

426 S 7th St, Springfield
nps.gov/liho/index.htm

Step into the world of the Lincoln family when you enter the only home he ever owned. Stroll through the lovely neighborhood surrounding the home for a rare glimpse into the daily life of Lincoln – as a husband and father, a neighbor and friend, a lawyer and a politician.

LINCOLN LOG CABIN STATE HISTORIC SITE

402 S Lincoln Hwy, Lerna
lincolnlogcabin.org

Gain an understanding of rural life in 1840s Illinois as you explore humble prairie farmstead the last home to Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln, father and stepmother of the man who would become President. Today, you'll find a working, living history farm developed around the two-room cabin belonging to the Lincolns, as well as the Stephen Sargent Farm nearby.



Lincoln Log Cabin
State Historic Site
Lerna



Courthouse
Metamora



McLean County Museum of History
Bloomington

LINCOLN TOMB STATE HISTORIC SITE

1500 Monument Avenue,
Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield
visitspringfieldillinois.com

Feel the majesty as you gaze upon the stunning granite monument that serves as the final resting place for our 16th president, his wife, and three of their four children. Surpassed only by Arlington National Cemetery in our nation's capital, Oak Ridge is the second most visited cemetery in the United States – welcoming visitors from around the globe.

MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND ITS CRUISIN' WITH LINCOLN ON 66 VISITORS CENTER & GIFT SHOP

200 N Main St, Bloomington
mchistory.org

Located within a historic 1903 courthouse on the Mother Road, the McLean County Museum of History and its *Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66 Visitors Center & Gift Shop* is where Route 66 meets Lincoln's legacy. Explore exhibits highlighting Lincoln's career as a lawyer and his connections to Central Illinois, or embark on a self-guided tour walking in Lincoln's footsteps. You can learn about Lincoln's Lost Speech just feet away from where he delivered it, or shop a unique selection of local products and Lincoln literature, memorabilia, and more.

METAMORA COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

113 E Partridge St, Metamora
dnrhistoric.illinois.gov/experience/sites/site.metamora-courthouse.html

Be a spectator in the rooms where Lincoln argued more than 70 cases during his years as circuit lawyer. This beautifully renovated courthouse is one of only two 8th Judicial Circuit courthouses remaining on their original sites. In the community museum on the first floor, you'll find an array of artifacts from pioneer days through the Civil War.



Visit Historic
Edwards Place
The social center of 19th Century
Springfield
Tuesday - Saturday at 1 & 2 PM
and Special Events
www.edwardsplace.org
700 North 4th Street • Springfield



Mt. Pulaski Courthouse
Mt. Pulaski

MT. PULASKI COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

113 S Washington St, Mt. Pulaski
destinationlogancountyil.com/mount-pulaski-courthouse

Visit one of only two remaining 8th Judicial Circuit Courthouses standing on their original site — and a frequent stop along the circuit traveled by Lincoln, the prairie lawyer. The Courthouse is restored, furnished and interpreted as an 1850s courthouse. Many of the court's records were destroyed in a fire years ago, but records still remain for two important patent cases tried by Lincoln in this building.

MUSEUM OF THE GRAND PRAIRIE

950 N Lombard St, Mahomet
museumofthegrandprairie.org

Explore an extensive collection interpreting life in east-central Illinois. Enjoy two floors of unique exhibits presenting the architecture, trades and occupations, decorative arts, and childhood and domestic life of Champaign County's past. In the "Champaign County's Lincoln" exhibit, you can travel in a buggy with Lincoln, see a daguerreotype camera up-close, and hear Lincoln's friends and neighbors talk about the early history of the community.



Museum of the
Grand Prairie
Mahomet



NEW PHILADELPHIA NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Broad Street, 2159E Cty 2, Barry
nps.gov/places/new-philadelphia-nhs.htm

Explore the New Philadelphia townsite, the first town in the United States to be platted and legally registered by an African American. The site interprets the story of Frank McWorter, a former slave, who founded the integrated community and the lives of other residents. The site features a walking trail and augmented reality app that allows visitors to experience New Philadelphia as it looked in the 1830s and 1840s.

NEW SALEM STATE HISTORIC SITE

15588 History Ln, Petersburg
lincolnsnewsalem.com

Explore the reconstructed pioneer village where Abraham Lincoln lived and worked as a young man over 150 years ago. Immerse yourself in the daily lives of the villagers as interpreters and actors in period dress bring history to life to tell the story of the life of Abraham Lincoln — store clerk, postmaster, citizen soldier, and more.



New Salem
State Historic Site
Petersburg

OLD LINCOLN COURTROOM AND MUSEUM

101 W 3rd St, Beardstown
lincolninbeardstown.org

Visitors are welcome to explore the courtroom where Lincoln defended Duff Armstrong in the famous Almanac Trial. Today, this is the only courtroom where Lincoln practiced that is still in use today. Below the courtroom, the Beardstown Historical Museum collection includes historically and culturally significant objects and artifacts relating to the community, region, area Native American heritage, and the Illinois River's connection to the Beardstown.

OLD STATE CAPITOL STATE HISTORIC SITE

526 E Adams St, Springfield
visitspringfieldillinois.com

Stand in the very room where Lincoln made his famous "House Divided" speech, or where he argued cases before the Illinois Supreme Court, spent hours discussing the issues of the day with his colleagues in the law library, served central Illinois as a member of the Illinois legislature, and finally, lay in state before his burial in Oak Ridge Cemetery.



Old Lincoln Courtroom
and Museum
Beardstown

POSTVILLE COURTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

914 5th St, Lincoln
destinationlogancountyil.com/post-ville-courthouse

Imagine yourself arguing a point of law in this rugged, brown frame building — a reproduction of the building that served as the seat of Logan County government from 1840 — 1848. Reconstructed in 1953, the Postville Courthouse contains historical exhibits of the 8th Judicial Circuit, and a courtroom and offices furnished as they might have been when Lincoln worked as a circuit lawyer.



Vandalia Statehouse
State Historic Site
Vandalia

VANDALIA STATEHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

315 W Gallatin St, Vandalia
vandaliaillinois.com/for-visitors/explore-vandalia/old-state-capitol/

Step back in time to the early days of Illinois, a new member of the United States. The state capitol for Illinois from 1820 — 1839, the Vandalia Statehouse was the place Lincoln worked in his first years as an Illinois legislator. It was here he honed his skills as a legislator and gifted orator, and where his fellow legislators began to recognize his qualities as a leader of men.



Old State Capitol
State Historic Site
Springfield



Postville Courthouse
State Historic Site
Lincoln



THE LINCOLN GALLERY
QUINCY, IL

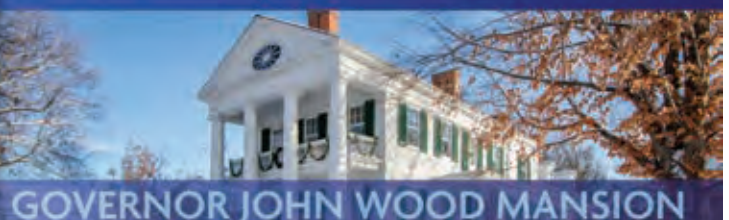


HISTORY MUSEUM ON THE SQUARE

Discover
History

Two Historic Locations,
Thousands of
Remarkable Stories

217-222-1835 • HSQAC.ORG



GOVERNOR JOHN WOOD MANSION

EXPLORE OUR COMMUNITIES

Welcoming communities are spread across the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, each showcasing a unique Lincoln adventure to explore. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Route 66, communities along the historic road are designated with the Route 66 shield  to encourage you to discover the many stories that tell the story of Illinois.

Old Lincoln Courtroom
and Museum
Beardstown



Lincoln-Douglas Debate Site
Alton



Atlanta Public
Library
Atlanta

ALTON

Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau
200 Piasa Street, Alton
(800) 258-6645 or (618) 465-6676
riversandroutes.com

Begin your Lincoln adventure at the famous Lincoln-Douglas Square, site of the last “great debate” with the issue of slavery on the minds of everyone. Walk in the footsteps of Abraham and Mary Lincoln as they visited the area, or the Civil War soldiers – Confederate captives and their Union guards – many of whom are buried here. And, take in the landscape of the small Midwestern town where U.S. Senator and Alton resident, Lyman Trumbull, would author the 13th amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States.

ATLANTA

Atlanta Public Museum & Welcome Center
114 SW Arch Street, Atlanta
(217) 746-6151 atlantamuseum.org

This small town was often a stop for Abraham Lincoln while he traveled the court circuit before becoming the 16th President of the United States. The Atlanta Public Museum tells the stories of Lincoln’s connection to Atlanta, the founding families he had close ties with, and the celebratory picnic honoring the Emancipation Proclamation. Join other travelers from around the world that make the Atlanta Public Museum and Welcome Center a stop on their cross-country traveling adventures. Other highlights include the famous Paul Bunyon statue, Hawes Elevator, the old Mine, and the American Giant’s Museum featuring oversize fiberglass promotional figures popular along American roadsides, like Route 66!

BEARDSTOWN

Old Lincoln Courtroom
101 West Third Street, Beardstown
(217) 323-3225
lincolninbeardstown.org

This charming little river town is one of the oldest in Illinois, nestled on the shores of the Illinois River. Here, Abraham Lincoln the lawyer argued many court cases at the Beardstown Courthouse, including the famous “Almanac Trial” – where Lincoln used the Farmer’s Almanac to prove his theory in a murder trial. During the Black Hawk War, Lincoln came to Beardstown to be installed as a Captain of the Sangamon County Company.





Museum of the Grand Prairie
Champaign County



C.H. Moore Homestead
Clinton

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL
Bloomington-Normal Area
Convention & Visitors Bureau
101 S. Madison Street, Bloomington
(800) 433-8226 or (309) 665-0033
visitbn.org

Outside of Springfield, Lincoln probably spent more time in Bloomington than in any other Illinois city. Here, Mr. Lincoln cultivated many close political allies and legal associates. Meet the people and hear the stories of this city during Lincoln's time with a visit to the McLean County Museum of History and the David Davis Mansion State Historic Site.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

Champaign-Urbana, Mahomet
Experience Champaign-Urbana
17 East Taylor Street, Champaign
(800) 369-6151 or (217) 351-4133
experiencecu.org

Lincoln often visited Champaign County as he rode the 8th Judicial Circuit from 1841 to 1859, working legal cases in Urbana, the county seat. Enjoy exhibits about Lincoln at the current Champaign County Courthouse in Urbana as well as at the Museum of the Grand Prairie in Mahomet. Visit Lincoln Hall at the University of IL to see the masterful friezes depicting Lincoln's life or take a stroll in Carle Park where Lorado Taft's Lincoln as Lawyer sculpture is found. Don't miss the Historic Cattlebank where the Champaign

County History Museum is located, a building Mr. Lincoln might have seen!

CHARLESTON

Charleston Tourism Office
520 Jackson Avenue, Charleston
(217) 348-0430
charlestonillinois.org/tourism

Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's father and stepmother, were among the early settlers in the Charleston area. Today, you can experience what life was like for the Lincolns on a visit to the nearby Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site in Lerna. Lincoln tried many cases here and in 1858, Charleston was the scene of the Lincoln-Douglas debate. Be sure to visit the Lincoln Douglas Debate Museum while in town.

CLINTON

Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce
100 South Center Street, Suite 101, Clinton
(217) 935-3364
clintonilchamber.com

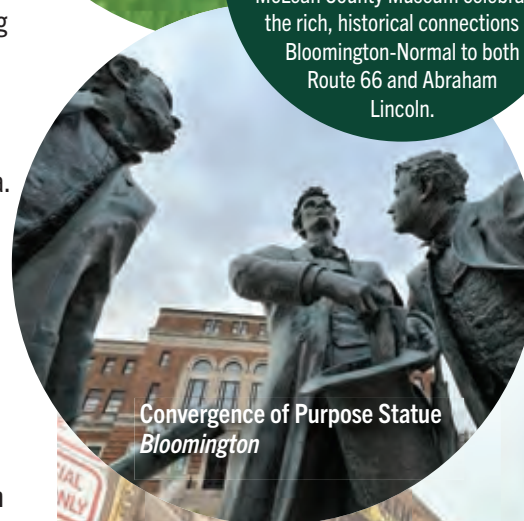
Lincoln played an important role in the early development of Clinton, beginning in 1839 as a young lawyer with the 8th Judicial Circuit until he became the 16th President of the United States. Be sure to plan a visit to the mid-Victorian mansion that was home to Lincoln's Clinton law partner, the Honorable C.H. Moore. Afterwards, stop by the Warner Library, where you'll find some of the oldest books and manuscripts in the county.



Lamson House
Danville

TWO-FER IN BLOOMINGTON!

The Cruisin' With Lincoln on 66 Visitors Center & Gift Shop at the McLean County Museum celebrates the rich, historical connections of Bloomington-Normal to both Route 66 and Abraham Lincoln.



Convergence of Purpose Statue
Bloomington



Lincoln's Lost Speech Mural
Bloomington

DANVILLE

Danville Area Visitors Bureau
100 West Main Street #146, Danville
(800) 383-4386 or (217) 442-2096
visitdanvillearea.com

The city of Danville was part of the now famous 8th Judicial Circuit in Illinois where a young prairie lawyer, destined for greatness, would practice law. Today, you can walk where Lincoln walked as you take a stroll down Vermilion Street and explore the Vermilion County Museum – replicating that early courthouse where Lincoln argued cases for his clients. Next door, you'll find the Fithian Home, a Lincoln site on the National Register of Historic Places. The people of Danville love sharing their many stories about Lincoln's time in their community.



Vermilion County Museum
Danville



Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site,
Lerna/Charleston

The David Davis Mansion Over 150 Years of History



1000 Monroe Drive Bloomington, IL
309-828-1084

Tours: Wednesday-Saturday
9am to 3:30pm

Tours

Take a guided tour of the mansion and grounds, including Sarah Davis' beautiful heirloom garden, and two special exhibits.

Events

Enjoy one of our 20+ yearly public events, including a celebration for Lincoln's Birthday, a Spring Festival and Easter Egg Hunt, seasonal car shows, the Glorious Garden Festival, Christmas at Clover Lawn, and more!

Shopping

Explore our collection of books, souvenirs, gifts, and more in the Clover Lawn Museum Shop, located inside the mansion.

Visit daviddavismansion.org to learn more and view our event calendar!



Macon County History Museum
Decatur



LINCOLN 'FIRSTS'

Decatur is home to many 'firsts' in Abraham Lincoln's life: First home of the Lincoln family, Lincoln's first political speech, and location of his first presidential nomination!

DECATUR

Decatur Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
202 East North Street, Decatur
(217) 423-7000
decaturcvb.com

Decatur and Macon County have a landscape rich in Lincoln history. Many "firsts" in Lincoln's life happened in and around Decatur. It was the first home of the Lincoln family when they moved to Illinois. Downtown Decatur was the site of Lincoln's very first political speech, and it was here that he was first nominated for the Presidency at the State Republican Party Convention. Today, the log courthouse where cases were heard still exists in the Prairie Village at the Macon County History Museum.

Lincoln Trail Homestead
State Park & Memorial
Decatur



FREEPORT

Greater Freeport Partnership Visitor Center
110 W. Main Street, Freeport
(815) 233-1350
greaterfreeport.com

When the nation's struggle over slavery was the largest talk in political debates in 1858, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas reached a tipping point at the second of their seven debates in Freeport. Painted into a corner by Lincoln's questioning, Douglas shed light on his true feelings regarding slave ownership and rights in what is now known as the "Freeport Doctrine." This pivotal moment can be traced to a movement that eventually won Lincoln the presidency in 1860.



FIND EVEN MORE LOOKING FOR LINCOLN INFORMATION ONLINE



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CHECK IN
WHEN VISITING A PARTICIPATING LOCATION, SIMPLY ENABLE LOCATION SERVICES, CHECK IN, AND EARN POINTS TOWARD REDEEMING PRIZES!

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SOUTHERNMOSTILLINOIS.COM
@SOUTHERNMOST_ILLINOIS

GREETINGS FROM
Abe & Abe!

Two Abes welcome you to the **Bloomington-Normal area**, one who skated into town and one who helped shape a nation. Explore Lincoln's local legacy at the **McLean County Museum of History** and step inside the elegant **David Davis Mansion**, where Lincoln's close friend and advisor once hosted the conversations that helped change America. Connect with history at **VisitBN.org**.

VisitBN
enjoy illinois

GALESBURG

Galesburg Tourism and Visitors Bureau
2163 East Main Street, Galesburg
(309) 343-2485
experiencegalesburg.com

Be sure to visit Old Main at Knox College in Galesburg, the only remaining original Lincoln-Douglas debate site – commemorated by large bronze tablets flanking the east door. Poet Carl Sandburg, possibly one of the most famous of all Lincoln scholars, was born in Galesburg and his birthplace is open to visitors.

FIND EVEN MORE LOOKING FOR LINCOLN INFORMATION ONLINE



LOOKING FOR LINCOLN STORIES PODCAST SERIES

Looking for Lincoln Stories is a video and podcast series about the people, events, and places of Abraham Lincoln's life and times. These narratives of real-live events paint a picture of the vibrant history of the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area.

Listen on your favorite podcasting app while traveling through the Heritage Area, or play on your desktop.

www.lookingforlincoln.org/education/stories

LISTEN TODAY!

Shawnee National Forest
Jonesboro

HANCOCK COUNTY: CARTHAGE

Carthage Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 247, Carthage
(217) 357-3024
carthage-il.com

Located in west-central Illinois, Hancock County is home to 11 Looking For Lincoln wayside exhibits. Carthage, the county seat, is where Lincoln tried a murder case (and lost) and gave a speech during the 1858 senatorial campaign. Discover the community's Lincoln connections by visiting the Kibbe Hancock Heritage Museum and six of the Looking for Lincoln wayside exhibits.

HANCOCK COUNTY: NAUVOO

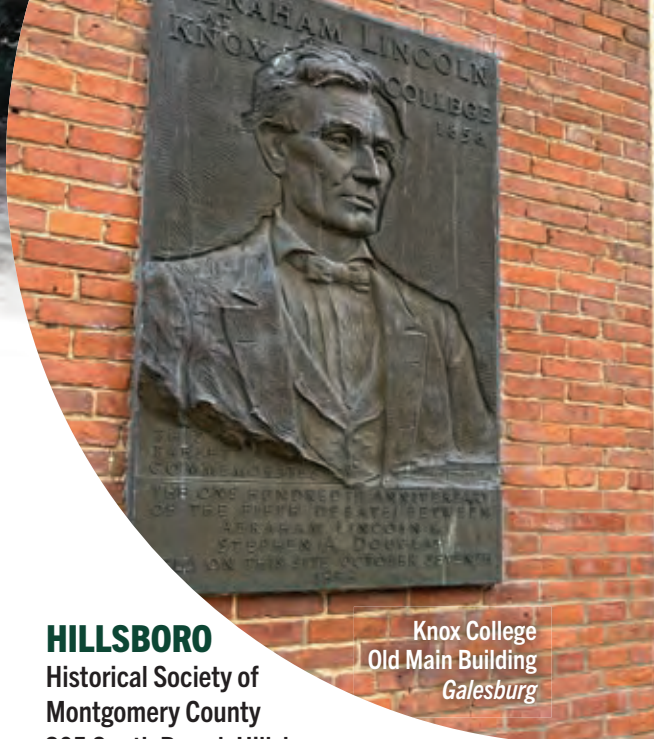
Historic Nauvoo
1445 Mulholland Street, Suite A, Nauvoo
churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/history/sites/historic-nauvoo

At nearby Nauvoo, experience the lives of the early members of the LDS church who settled along the banks of the Mississippi in 1839. Over 30 historic attractions are brought to life through year-round living history interpretations and performances that share the stories of these early Illinoisans.

HILLSBORO

Historical Society of Montgomery County
305 South Broad, Hillsboro
montgomerycountyhistorical.com

One of the newest Looking for Lincoln communities, this historic town features three sites on the National Register of Historic Places and offers countless Lincoln stories waiting to be discovered. Lincoln visited Hillsboro many times as a lawyer, and continued visits until elected to the presidency. He filed court cases, spoke at rallies and campaign events, and visited close friends. Explore 13 sites on Hillsboro's Lincoln Walking/Driving Tour, and get your Looking for Lincoln passport stamped at the Hillsboro Public Library. Don't miss the Lincoln statue, "Among Friends" across from the historic Montgomery County Courthouse.



Knox College
Old Main Building
Galesburg



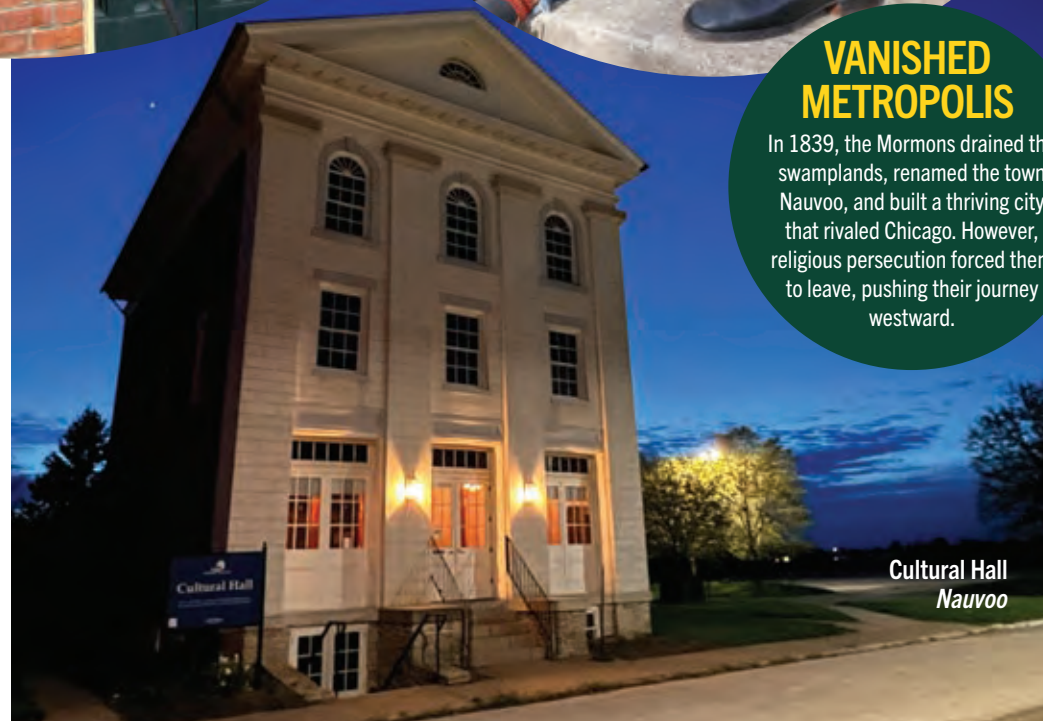
Lincoln Plaza
Hillsboro



Lincoln Memorial Park
Jonesboro

VANISHED METROPOLIS

In 1839, the Mormons drained the swamplands, renamed the town Nauvoo, and built a thriving city that rivaled Chicago. However, religious persecution forced them to leave, pushing their journey westward.



Cultural Hall
Nauvoo

JACKSONVILLE

Jacksonville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
310 East State Street, Jacksonville
(217) 243-5678
jacksonvilleil.org

Follow in Lincoln's footsteps via the "Voices of Jacksonville" audio tour, highlighting seven sites where you can see the places and hear the stories of Lincoln and his association with historic Jacksonville. Explore the Governor Duncan Mansion and Woodlawn Farm, which was a stop on the Underground Railroad, where you'll discover extraordinary stories of courage and perseverance. The Jacksonville Area Museum showcases artifacts and exhibits that highlight the city's rich past. Additionally, visit the Jacksonville African American Museum to uncover the pivotal role the community played in shaping local and national history.

JONESBORO

Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau
P.O. Box 378, Anna
(618) 833-9928
southernmostillinois.com

Located in southern Illinois, the community of Jonesboro was the site of the third Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858. Lincoln spent the two nights surrounding the debate at the home of David L. Phillips in the adjacent town on Anna. Today, you can visit Lincoln Memorial Park in Jonesboro, the site of the debates. Plus, it's a great starting point of the Shawnee National Forest, one of the most beautiful areas of Illinois.



Governor Duncan
Mansion
Jacksonville



Carthage Jail
Carthage

Washington Square
Ottawa



World's Largest Covered
Wagon
Lincoln



Watermelon Memorial
Lincoln

LINCOLN, IL ON ROUTE 66

Don't miss the quirky memorial watermelon, plus the other many Route 66 sites, including the worlds largest covered wagon (with Lincoln), the Tropics sign, the Mill Museum, the downtown Lincoln penny mural, and more!

ROUTE 66 LINCOLN

Destination Logan County
101 North Chicago Street, Lincoln
(217) 732-8687
destinationlogancountyil.com

The only town to be named for Lincoln – before he became President, Lincoln has a rich connection with this city and Logan County. As a lawyer on the 8th Judicial Circuit, Lincoln argued many cases at Postville Courthouse, a state historic site. The Lincoln Heritage Museum houses a collection of rare Lincoln artifacts, including treasures such as china, books, and mourning clothing belonging to Mary Lincoln, as well as original correspondence from President Lincoln written during the Civil War. Don't miss the Route 66 icons, including the world's largest covered wagon, the watermelon memorial, downtown penny mural, and Mill Museum.

MACOMB

Unforgettable Forgottonia— Macomb
Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
120 E. Calhoun Street #1, Macomb
(309) 833-1315
visitforgottonia.com

Located in the western Illinois region legendarily known as Unforgettable Forgottonia, Macomb is a place of history, nature, and recreation. Don't miss the Living Lincoln Topiary Monument in which live flowering plants create Lincoln's beard, and the Underground Railroad mural in Macomb Amtrak station, highlighting the city's connection to this historic movement. The city is known for legends like musician "Big" Al Sears and civil rights activist C.T. Vivan, and Elizabeth "Lizzie" Magie, inventor of Monopoly. The downtown square has been transformed into "Macombopoly," the world's largest Monopoly board, including a free playable app.



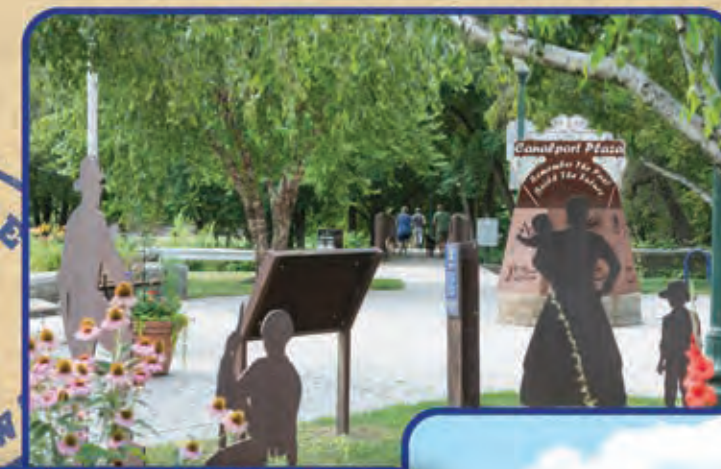
Mural
Macomb

LASALLE COUNTY

LaSalle, Ottawa, Utica
Ottawa Visitor Center
1028 La Salle Street, Ottawa
(815) 434-2737
visitottawail.com

Abraham Lincoln was no stranger to LaSalle County. He tried court cases in the community, was mustered out of the militia during the Blackhawk War, traveled on the Illinois & Michigan Canal and also served as an I&M Canal Commissioner. His most notable visit to LaSalle County took place on August 21, 1858. The first of seven Lincoln-Douglas senatorial debates was held in Ottawa's historic Washington Square. Be sure to take a journey back in time aboard the "Volunteer," a mule-pulled 1840's replica canal boat, as it coasts gently up and down the Illinois & Michigan Canal. Retrace Lincoln's footsteps in LaSalle County.

Experience *Lincoln's* Rich Legacy



Our Communities

Joliet

Ottawa

La Salle

Pontiac

Lockport

Princeton

Morris

Utica

LaSalle County



Request Your *free*
Travel Guide Today!

HCDestinations.com

Practicing law in Pontiac, debating for a Senate seat in Ottawa, addressing crowds at rallies in Joliet and Princeton, and traveling the historic Illinois and Michigan Canal through Lockport, Morris, Utica, and La Salle.

These cities provide a rich backdrop for your next historical adventure!

METAMORA

Metamora Courthouse
113 East Partridge Street, Metamora
(309) 367-4470
villageofmetamora.com/history

Step back in time on the beautiful Metamora town square, surrounding the Metamora Courthouse. Metamora is also the hometown of Adlai E. Stevenson, U.S. Vice President under Grover Cleveland. Both Stevenson and Lincoln practiced law in the Courthouse here. Today, you can visit the courthouse and walk in Lincoln's footsteps.



Mt. Pulaski Town Square
Mt. Pulaski

MT. PULASKI

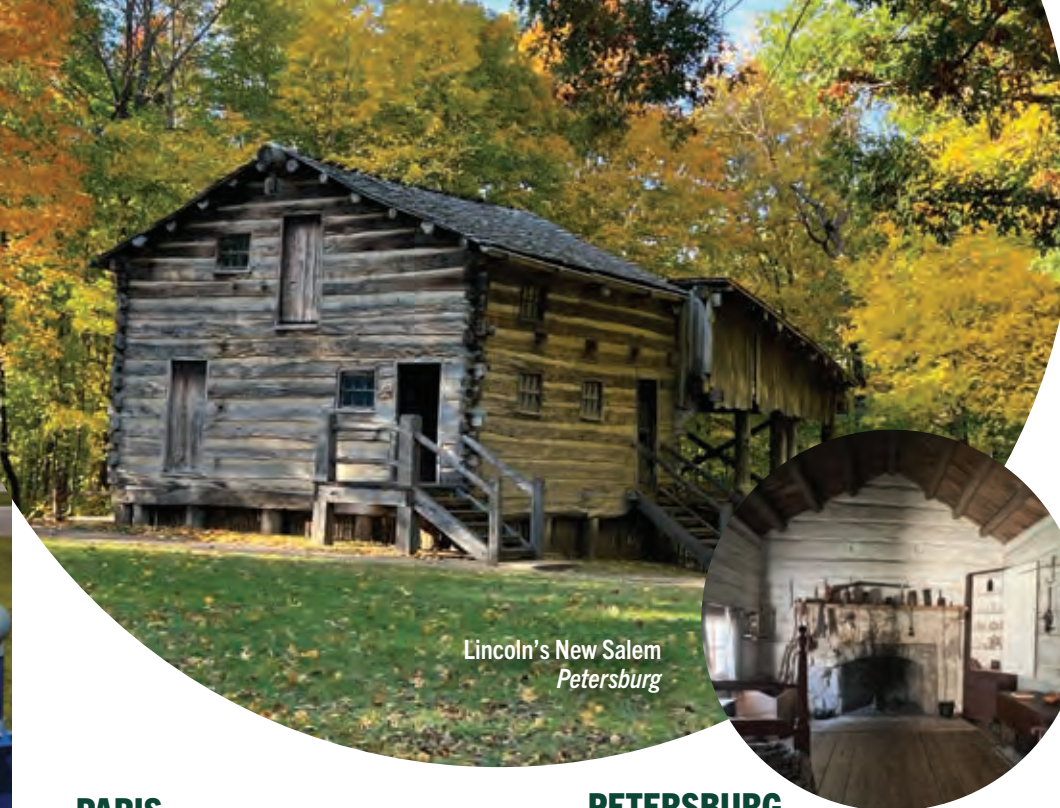
Destination Logan County
101 North Chicago Street, Lincoln
(217) 732-8687
destinationlogancountyil.com

A small rural community in the heart of Illinois, Mt. Pulaski boasts a charming town square whose crown jewel is a beautiful red brick Greek Revival building that was the courthouse where Lincoln spent much of his time. You'll also find the Mt. Pulaski Museum and Welcome Center, as well as several quaint shops and restaurants. A trip to Mt. Pulaski is a chance to get off the interstate and explore the landscape that Lincoln the lawyer traveled throughout central Illinois.

FIND EVEN MORE LOOKING FOR LINCOLN INFORMATION ONLINE



Metamora Courthouse
Metamora



Lincoln's New Salem
Petersburg

PARIS

Paris Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
105 North Central Street, Paris
(217) 465-4179
parisilchamber.com

The county was part of the Eighth Judicial Circuit from 1845 until 1853. During those years, Lincoln tried 50 cases in Paris, the county seat. Edgar County was one of the most populated counties on the circuit, and his legal practice here was instrumental in furthering his political career. Lincoln was also in the county in 1856 and 1858 giving political speeches. Milton Alexander, a prominent man in Paris, often entertained Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas at his home when they were in town.

PETERSBURG

Petersburg
(217) 632-4000
visitmenardcounty.com/history

History comes alive in New Salem at this reconstructed historic pioneer village where Lincoln lived and worked as a young man. Just two miles to the north, is the picturesque community of Petersburg, where many of New Salem's residents are buried in the historic Oakland Cemetery – including Ann Rutledge – believed by many to be Lincoln's sweetheart during his time in New Salem. Famed author, Edgar Lee Masters, lived here and wrote about Lincoln and many inhabitants of New Salem. His home still stands in Petersburg.



Alexander Home
Paris

The Lincoln Danville Knew



Danville & Vermilion County

Taking a stroll down Vermilion St in Danville (1850), you may well have run into a tall, gangly, somewhat unkempt young man, wearing a stovetop hat, rushing from his office to the nearby courthouse. Danville knew that young man well, as Abe Lincoln practiced law here from 1841-1859 as he traveled the now famous 8th Judicial Circuit in Illinois.

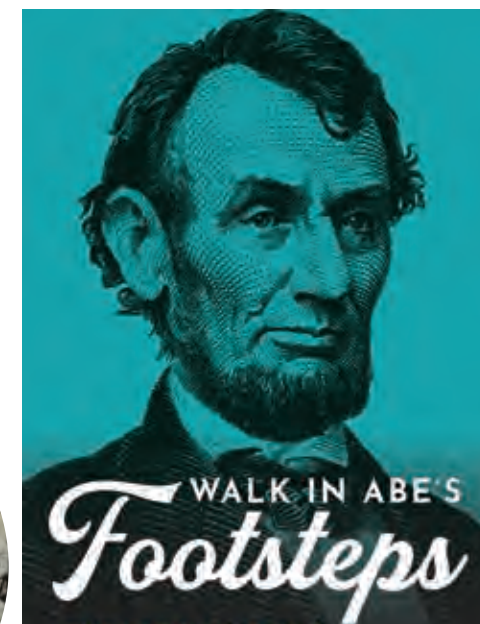
"If I find I have blessings at my disposal, Old Vermilion will come in for a bountiful share."

Abraham Lincoln
Noon February 11, 1861 • On his way to Washington

Today, Danville is proud to be part of the Looking for Lincoln National Heritage Area, home to the Vermilion County Museum, replicating that early courthouse, and adjacent to the Fithian Home. (Lincoln site on the National Register of Historic Places).



100 W. Main St., Suite 146
Danville, IL 61832
(800) 383-4386
www.visitdanvillearea.com



EXPLORE LINCOLN SITES AND OTHER HISTORIC LANDMARKS

Abraham Lincoln may have made his home about a half-hour up the road, but the history of Jacksonville, IL, still bears his influence. Uncover the stories of local legends on the Looking for Lincoln wayside exhibits at historic sites around town. Stand where Lincoln spoke out against slavery during his 1858 Senate campaign speech, tour the Governor Duncan Mansion, and see the beautiful homes once owned by Lincoln's colleagues, allies, and friends. Afterward, explore the restaurants and shops breathing new life into storefronts that have stood for generations. No matter what your idea of a good time is, creating your own experiences comes as easily as discovering a bit of the past.

jacksonvilleil.org



enjoy
illinois

Shastid House
Pittsfield



PIKE COUNTY

Pike County Visitors Center
224 West Washington, Pittsfield
(217) 285-2971
pikelincoln.com or pikeil.org

Pike County is home to the charming community of Pittsfield, as well as New Philadelphia National Historic Site. A walking trail and augmented reality app combine to allow visitors to experience New Philadelphia as it looked in the 1830s and 1840s. While visiting the nearby community of Pittsfield, be sure to experience the Talking Houses of Pittsfield / Looking for Lincoln Story Trail. Here, you will learn stories about early Pittsfield residents who knew Abraham Lincoln, including some who accompanied our 16th President all the way to the White House.

66 PONTIAC

Visit Pontiac Illinois
115 West Howard Street, Pontiac
(815) 844-5847
visitpontiac.org

While riding the 8th Judicial Circuit, Abraham Lincoln frequently visited Pontiac. Lincoln represented a number of local citizens in legal actions, and made connections here that helped him to rise to prominence in state and national politics. Today, the Lincoln Story Trail tells the many stories of Lincoln's connections to the area. Each year, travelers from around the world make Pontiac a stop on their cross-country U.S. Route 66 adventure and visit many of the attractions.

Courthouse Square
Pontiac



Lincoln-Era Log Cabin Village
Quincy

QUINCY

Quincy Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
532 Gardner Expressway, Quincy
(800) 978-4748 or 217-214-3700
seequincy.com

Located along the mighty Mississippi, Quincy was a frequent stop for Mr. Lincoln where he counted some of its residents among his closest friends. Visit the historic Lincoln-Douglas debate site and the Lincoln-Douglas Debate Museum in the heart of downtown. Tour the home of famed abolitionist and Underground Railroad Conductor, Dr. Richard Eells, whose case was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. Get to know one of Lincoln's close political allies, John Wood, as you explore his impressive mansion.



Courthouse Square
Pontiac

SHELBYVILLE

Lake Shelbyville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
315 East Main Street, Shelbyville
(217) 774-2244
lakeshelbyville.com

In his years as a circuit-riding attorney, Lincoln was often in Shelbyville practicing his trade at the Shelby County Courthouse. The Courthouse features a painting of the Lincoln-Thornton Debate. While the Lincoln-Douglas Debates are certainly more famous, the earlier Thornton Debate was Lincoln's first public appearance as a Republican and the first time he publicly addressed the anti-slavery notions that would be so important in his later years. This charming community overlooking beautiful Lake Shelbyville is a must-stop on your Lincoln adventure.



Eells House
Quincy

Looking for Lincoln in Hillsboro

Lincoln visited Hillsboro numerous times from his early legislative years until he was elected President. On this tour, you will visit places where Lincoln made speeches and spent time with friends, as well as sites related to the Lincoln era. Join us as we step back in time and discover the Hillsboro Lincoln knew. Walk these historic streets, explore the places he visited, and connect with the stories that helped shape a president and a nation.



HeadtoHillsboro.net



Virtual Walking
Tour





Edwards Place
Springfield



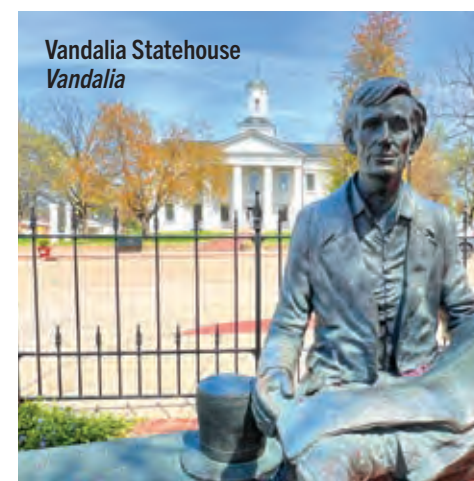
ROUTE 66 SPRINGFIELD
Springfield Visitor Center
Temporarily Located at:
109 N. 7th Street, Springfield
(800) 545-7300 or (217) 789-2360
visitspringfieldillinois.com

Located in the heart of the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, Springfield is the city Lincoln called home for nearly half his life. Springfield and central Illinois had a profound effect on Lincoln's life, as captured in these immortal words, "To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything." Today, Springfield, Illinois' capital city, is home to numerous historic sites, attractions and events—including the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, the Lincoln Tomb, the Old State Capitol, Edwards Place, and the popular "History Comes Alive" program. In this city he loved, you'll truly experience Lincoln, the man.

TAYLORVILLE

Greater Taylorville Chamber of Commerce
108 West Market Street # 2, Taylorville
(217) 824-4919
taylorvillechamber.com

Taylorville is often referred to as "the last stop" because when Lincoln and other lawyers traveling the 8th Judicial Circuit arrived here, it was usually their last stop before heading home to Springfield. The downtown courthouse square features the only statue of Abraham Lincoln with a pig commemorating Lincoln's famous "writ of quietus." The old courthouse that was the site of many Lincoln trials has been preserved at the Christian County Historical Museum complex. Totally restored using original construction specifications, this 1839 building includes interior furnishings echoing courtrooms of the period.



Vandalia Statehouse
Vandalia



Courthouse Statue
Taylorville

QUIET IN THE COURTROOM!

During a trial in Taylorville, squealing pigs were loose under the courthouse, and Lincoln humorously asked for a "Writ of Quietus" to calm the noise. A statue of Lincoln with the pig marks this amusing event.



Vandalia Statehouse
Vandalia

VANDALIA

Illinois South Tourism
4387 N. Illinois St., Suite 200, Swansea
618) 257-1488
downstateil.org

The capital city of Illinois from 1820-1839, Vandalia was the place where a young Abraham Lincoln officially began his political career as an elected state legislator from the village of New Salem in 1834. Mr. Lincoln would play an important role of the controversial effort to move the state capital to the city of Springfield. Today, the Vandalia Statehouse stands as an elegant reminder of Illinois' early history as a new state. Nearby is the Fayette County Museum, featuring Lincoln-era memorabilia and the story of the people of Vandalia and Fayette County.

WHERE THE MOTHER ROAD Meets the River Road

Take a road trip like no other through the only place in America where the Mother Road of Route 66 meets the scenic beauty of the Great River Road. Walk in Abraham Lincoln's footsteps in the historic river city of Alton. Dine at historic roadside cafes, take a walk through the river bluffs and prairies and relax with a glass of locally crafted wine beside the Mighty Mississippi River. Your one-of-a-kind adventure begins at RiversandRoutes.com.

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ALTON 66

LASALLE COUNTY

WHERE LINCOLN'S VOICE WAS FIRST HEARD!

Award Winning Lodging Home of Starved Rock State Park Outdoor Music & Dining

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FIND HISTORY ALONG THE STORY TRAIL

The Looking for Lincoln Story Trail is like an engaging open-air story book, with a treasure hunt for dynamic learning.

FIND AN EXHIBIT

[LookingForLincoln.org/explore/communities](https://www.lookingforlincoln.org/explore/communities)

Finding the over 250+ wayside exhibits and locations around the Looking for Lincoln area can be tricky - history sometimes didn't happen on a main road. On our website, we've included an interactive map with precise locations for use on your mobile mapping device.

The Looking for Lincoln Story Trail is like an engaging open-air story book, bringing to life for the Lincoln stories in many of the actual locations where the story is told.

Over 250 roadside exhibits and interpretive signs are placed at significant sites in over 50 communities within the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area. Each represents intriguing stories of Lincoln and the local people and places that played a key role in Lincoln's time in Illinois. After encountering each unique exhibit, the visitor is sure to walk away with added knowledge, helping to bring a deeper understanding of our nation during this 250th anniversary year.

Just as Lincoln was a one-of-a-kind person and president, you will have the opportunity to view a one-of-a-kind medallion with an image representing each exhibit. Collect the medallion rubbings with paper and pencil, and create your own tangible keepsake of your Illinois adventure. This is a fun activity for all ages to help you discover amazing stories and treasures of history.

The Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area invites you to find an array of itineraries and locations for all the exhibits and related historic Lincoln sites on the Looking for Lincoln website at: [LookingForLincoln.org/explore/communities](https://www.lookingforlincoln.org/explore/communities)

LET'S GO FIND YOUR LINCOLN STORY



Beardstown



Clinton



Quincy



Mahomet

HISTORY COMES ALIVE

Springfield, IL June 4-August 8, 2026

2026 THEME

CELEBRATING AMERICA: STORIES THAT BUILT A NATION

Experience the spirit of Lincoln's hometown in 2026, celebrating both America's 250th and the 100th Anniversary of Route 66. History is revealed throughout the city with live performances, musical events, historical demonstrations, unexpected encounters, and more.

Springfield, Illinois' history celebration gets better each year!

Check out just some of the highlights below, but there's plenty more to discover. Programming runs Tuesdays thru Saturdays. A full schedule is available at:

visitspringfieldillinois.com/HistoryComesAlive



HISTORIC SITE ACTIVATIONS

Check the online schedule for times

The Lincoln's Springfield is buzzing with daily programs and character encounters during History Comes Alive. Spend time with the Lincolns and other historic figures—chat with them about their remarkable history, or simply enjoy their company during a game or demonstrations. Be sure to catch Springfield's acclaimed a cappella ensemble, the Lincoln Troubadours, performing Abe's favorite Civil War—era songs. You never know who you'll meet!

LINCOLN TOMB FLAG-LOWERING CEREMONY

Tuesdays, 7 pm

Experience a breathtaking flag-lowering ceremony at the Lincoln Tomb in Oak Ridge Cemetery. The event includes drumming from the 114th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, musket firing, and a cannon salute. Each week, one audience member is honored with the presentation of the flag.

TASTE HISTORY

Check the online schedule for times

The hugely popular food demo, History Cooks! is back for another season! Experience the flavors and stories behind the dishes of the past, as we bring history to life through food.

OLD-FASHIONED ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Wednesdays, 2-4 pm

Step back in time and enjoy a complimentary cup of delicious ice cream on the historic porch of Edwards Place while the Springfield Municipal Band serenade you during a special outdoor concert.

FREE SUMMER TROLLEY

Runs Tuesdays-Saturdays during History Comes Alive

Hop aboard an air-conditioned trolley and explore the city's sites and attractions at your own pace.

Simply hop on at any of our designated stops, hop off to visit your favorite attractions, and hop back on when you're ready to continue the adventure.

The trolley is accessible and ADA-compliant.



HEGELER CARUS MANSION
A National Historic Landmark



Join us for a journey back in time through the history of the Hegeler Carus Mansion. The Mansion is an 1876, Second Empire, **National Historic Landmark** (2007) by architect W. W. Boyington and interior designer, August Fiedler, showcasing intricate parquet floors and hand-painted ceilings. The mansion played a pivotal role in industry, philosophy, publishing, and religion locally, nationally, and internationally.

TOUR DATES AND TIMES ARE LISTED ON WEBSITE
Closed major holidays



1307 7th St., LaSalle, IL
10 minutes west of *Starved Rock*
815-224-6543 * hegelercarus.org

LOOKING FOR LINCOLN

MUST DO EVENTS!

GRAND LEEVE
June 29, 2026 from 10 am - 4 pm
Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site
315 W Gallatin St, Vandalia, IL
Celebrate at one of Illinois' earliest statehouses with 1800's period arts, presentations, music, petting zoo, food trucks, kettle korn, and more.

APPLE 'N PORK FESTIVAL
SEPT. 26 & 27, 2026
C.H. Moore Homestead and DeWitt County Museum
219 East Woodlawn Street, Clinton, IL
One of the largest fall festivals in downstate Illinois featuring food, flea market, Lincoln re-enactors, and more. The event is held on the historic mansion grounds of C.H. Moore, a close confidant of Abraham Lincoln.

HARVEST FROLIC
September 26-27, 2026
Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site
402 S Lincoln Highway Rd, Lerna, IL
The 19th-century home and farm of Abraham Lincoln's father and step mother hosts an annual history festival each fall, with music, crafts, and historic presentations.



Discover more by scanning the QR code!

- * Recreation
- * Lodging
- * Attractions
- * Event Calendar
- * Lincoln
- * Area Maps
- * Guest Services





lakeshelbyville.com



DISCOVER LINCOLN



discover **DOWNSTATE ILLINOIS**



www.downstateil.org | 618.257.1488 **illinois**

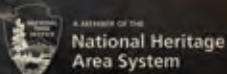
A NEW TRAVELING EXHIBIT FROM LOOKING FOR LINCOLN

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

ILLINOIS' Underground Railroad

The courageous stories of freedom seekers, and the multi-racial conductors who assisted them, are highlighted in a new exhibit about the Underground Railroad in Illinois. Learn about the network of people who collaborated to assist those searching for freedom and dignity.

Presented by **Looking for Lincoln**

Find info, videos, schedule, and locations at www.IllinoisUGRR.org

HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS



Lincoln extensively traveled Illinois as a prairie lawyer and politician, winding his way through the landscape of Illinois. You are invited to travel the many historic roads that crisscross the Heritage Area. 2026 is the 100th anniversary year of Route 66, which is the perfect opportunity to discover the historic and scenic byways that will lead you on a drive of discovery, with attractions and sites steeped in the history of Lincoln's journeys.



HAPPY 100th ROUTE 66!

Two distinct eras in American history overlap in Central Illinois: Lincoln and Route 66. Discover the many sites from both stories along this historic route!

GREAT RIVER ROAD IN ILLINOIS

greatriverroad-illinois.org

For over 500 miles on Illinois' western border, you'll find the breathtaking views and majestic landscapes along the mighty Mississippi. And, for many of those miles, you'll be traveling in the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area. Explore the country Lincoln loved as he rode from town to town as a prairie lawyer and a future president. Enjoy the banks and bluffs, the fields and prairies, and the waterways just as travelers during Lincoln's day would have experienced.

HISTORIC NATIONAL ROAD

nationalroad.org

America's first highway, known as the Historic National Road, was built on big plans to join the already civilized East Coast with the western frontier. From 1830 to 1838, as a young Abraham Lincoln was finding his way as a prairie lawyer and state legislator, construction of the Illinois portion of the road was underway. Although by the 1850s,

railroads became the preferred method of East-West travel in the U.S. The Illinois section of the National Road holds the stories of nearly two centuries of American history.

ILLINOIS RIVER ROAD

illinoisriverroad.org

On the Illinois River Road, you'll travel the same path as early French explorers. Whether you want to hike the bluff trails, bike the historic canal towpaths, throw in a fishing line, canoe in one of the beautifully restored wetlands along the way, or just soak in the natural beauty as you travel between Looking for Lincoln communities – this is the perfect chance to immerse yourself in the rich history and beauty of the Illinois River Valley.

ILLINOIS ROUTE 66

illinoisroute66.org

U.S. Route 66 is arguably one of the most famous roads in the world, and part of that iconic road crisscrosses the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area in Illinois. For gener-

ations of travelers, Route 66 represents the freedom of the road – the chance to leave the everyday behind and step back to a simpler time – to the main streets of small town America. Mr. Lincoln may have made his road trips on the back of a horse or in a buggy, but your trip along Illinois Route 66 will let you follow his trail through central Illinois.

MEETING OF THE GREAT RIVERS

riversandroutess.com

Return to a time of simplicity and American values along the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway where the mighty Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois Rivers converge. The 33-mile Byway meanders its way through the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, beginning in Hartford and ending in Grafton at Pere Marquette State Park. Make plans to explore the spectacular scenery, archaeological finds, historic happenings, cultural experiences and memorable recreation along the way.

Discover Abraham Lincoln in Coles County



Charleston

- Lincoln Douglas Debate Museum
- Rally after the Debate Wayside
- Charleston Riot Marker
- Coles County Courthouse



Mattoon

- Historic Train Depot
- Lincoln's Last Visit Wayside
- Mattoon Public Library Local History Center
- Dodge Grove Cemetery



Lerna

- Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site

Contact us for more ways to look for Lincoln in Coles County!

Charleston Tourism
217.348.0430 • tourism@co.coles.il.us

Mattoon Tourism
1.800.500.6286 • tourism@mattoonillinois.org

discover **DOWNSTATE**
ILLINOIS enjoy **illiniois**

LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE SITES

Across Illinois in 1858, Abraham Lincoln and incumbent Senator Stephen Douglas held a series of debates, mainly focused on the issue of slavery. Although Lincoln lost the election, it raised Lincoln as a national figure, and laid the groundwork for his 1860 presidential campaign.



OTTAWA, IL August 21, 1858

Visit the first debate site in beautiful Washington Square Park to admire the commemorative sculpture and fountain. Don't miss the Reddick Mansion across the street, and the historic I&M Canal.

101 E. Lafayette Street, Ottawa



FREEPORT, IL August 27, 1858

Debate Square, next to the Union Dairy, is the first statue ever erected to include both Lincoln and Douglas. This charming location highlights the northernmost debate site, and features bronze statues.

114 E. Douglas Street, Freeport



JONESBORO, IL September 15, 1858

Lincoln Memorial Park has bronze sculptures of the debate participants, and features walking trails and picnic areas. It is a great place to begin your visit to the Shawnee National Forest.

521 N. Main Street, Jonesboro



CHARLESTON, IL September 18, 1858

A museum offers exhibits and interactive displays that tell the debates' story through film, audio selections, artifacts and photos. Bronze sculptures are also present to help bring the site to life.

126 E. Street, Charleston



The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield recreates the Galesburg debate.



Charleston debate museum and sculptures



GALESBURG, IL October 7, 1858

Old Main at Knox College is the only remaining original debate site, commemorated by large bronze tablets flanking the east door. Inside, visitors will find excellent exhibits and displays.

398 S. Cherry Street, Galesburg



QUINCY, IL October 13, 1858

Sesquicentennial Plaza offers a bas-relief sculpture by renowned artist Lorado Taft. Across the street, a debate museum provides a full interpretive experience of the debate's importance.

128 N. 5th Street, Quincy



ALTON, IL October 15, 1858

From a scenic plaza overlooking the Mississippi River, see life size bronze sculptures intensely debating the issues of the day, accompanied by interpretive panels interpreting the final debate.

Broadway and Market Streets, Alton

DISCOVER ILLINOIS' UNIQUE HISTORY IN THE STATE'S OTHER HERITAGE AREAS



BRONZEVILLE- BLACK METROPOLIS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

In the 20th century, the Bronzeville area of Chicago became known as Black Metropolis, a mecca of African American business, arts, music and culture, politics and more that would influence our nation.

The Bronzeville-Black Metropolis National Heritage Area plays a distinct role in telling the story of the growth of the National Labor Movement through the efforts of African Americans, the Civil Rights movement, and the creation of civil rights organizations. From political rallies and cultural renaissances to key legislation and social movements, these events mark the heartbeat of Bronzeville and continue to inspire its future.

Learn more at www.blackmetropolis.org



I&M CANAL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

The Illinois & Michigan Canal was the nation's first National Heritage Area (NHA) and overlaps the northernmost edge of the Abraham Lincoln NHA. The I&M Canal NHA is an outdoor museum where visitors can learn about how this early transportation connection changed our nation.

Plus, it's a place to walk in the footsteps of Native Americans, French Explorers and Voyagers, canal workers, immigrants and even Abraham Lincoln. As a member of the Illinois legislature, Lincoln voted for the construction of the canal, served as a canal commissioner, and traveled along it as a canal boat passenger.

Learn more at www.iandmcanal.org

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www.LincolninBeardstown.org

PASSPORT TO YOUR NATIONAL PARKS

Explore and travel the Land of Lincoln and have it officially documented by a stamp on your passport.

Offering an entertaining way to explore the communities and landscapes where Lincoln lived, worked and traveled, the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area partners with the National Park Service to highlight the Passport to your National Parks program.

The program allows you to collect cancellation stamps at specific sites in participating Looking for Lincoln Communities, all while learning more about our 16th President.

Double your fun and rewarding experiences by combining your adventures of Looking for Lincoln while visiting National Park sites and recording it with a passport cancellation stamp. There are over 40 passport stamp locations designated in the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area.

For the most up-to-date list of all the cancellation stamp locations, visit: LookingForLincoln.org/explore/passport-program



FUN FOR KIDS

Museum of the Grand Prairie
Mahomet

The Lincoln area has lots for younger historians to enjoy!

Find lots of kid-friendly listings at LookingForLincoln.org on our interactive map, and sort 'Good for Kids.' To make it even more fun, you can download Flat Lincoln, or pick him up at many of the area historic sites. Take pics with Flat Lincoln, and post it on Facebook or Instagram using #FlatLincoln, and see if you make our favorites on our Looking For Lincoln social media pages!



Where a President's Journey Begins

Abraham Lincoln in Macon County, Illinois

In 1830, Abraham Lincoln built his first Illinois home in Macon County, beginning a journey that would shape a president. Here, the young frontier lawyer developed the grit and determination that later earned him the nickname "The Rail Splitter." Today, visitors can explore historic streets, interactive Wayside Exhibits, and the stories that bring his lasting legacy to life.

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Lincoln's first Illinois home was in Macon County

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New Philadelphia is the first town in the U.S. founded and legally registered by an African American, Frank McWorter, in 1836. He and his wife Lucy liberated themselves — eventually 16 family members in total — from slavery. The McWorters also were known to help other freedom seekers, and New Philadelphia became a stop on the Underground Railroad. Explore this National Historic Site, today also a national park, at 29766 306th Lane, Barry, Illinois.

Find out what to expect during your visit and more:
www.nps.gov/neph/learn/park-in-progress.htm

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TAKE A DEEPER DIVE INTO HISTORY

BOOKS & GUIDES TO THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Want to learn more about the life, times, and legacy of Abraham Lincoln in central Illinois? Need some help planning your next Lincoln exploration? The Looking for Lincoln book series will help you do just that.

The book series examines Lincoln's rise to greatness from his central Illinois roots and shares the region's history, culture, and significance in not only the Lincoln story — but in the story of our nation. The series, a collaborative effort between Southern Illinois University Press and the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition, currently features four full-color, heavily illustrated guidebooks.



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lookingforlincoln.org/education

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Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area Tourism Offices



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Bloomington-Normal Area CVB

101 S. Madison Street, Bloomington
(800) 433-8226 or (309) 665-0033
visitbn.org

Charleston Tourism Office

520 Jackson Avenue, Charleston
(217) 348-0430
charlestonillinois.org/tourism

Danville Area Visitors Bureau

100 West Main Street #146, Danville
(217) 442-2096
visitdanvillearea.com

Decatur Area CVB

202 East North Street, Decatur
(217) 423-7000
decaturcvb.com

Destination Logan County

101 North Chicago Street, Lincoln
(217) 732-8687
destinationlogancountyil.com

Discover Downstate Illinois

4387 North Illinois Street, Suite 200
Swansea
(618) 257-1488
downstateil.org

Experience Champaign Urbana

17 East Taylor Street, Champaign
(800) 369-6151 or (217) 351-4133
experiencecu.org

Galesburg Tourism and Visitors Bureau

2163 East Main Street, Galesburg
(309) 343-2485
experiencegalesburg.com

Greater Freeport Partnership Visitor Center

110 W. Main Street, Freeport
(815) 233-1350
greaterfreeport.com

Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau

200 Piasa Street, Alton
(800) 258-6645 or (618) 465-6676
riversandroutes.com

Jacksonville Area CVB

310 East State Street, Jacksonville
(217) 243-5678
jacksonvilleil.org

Lake Shelbyville Area CVB

315 East Main Street, Shelbyville
(217) 774-2244
lakeshelbyville.com

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Macomb Area CVB**

c/o Train Depot
120 East Calhoun Street, Macomb
(309) 833-1315
visitforgottonia.com

Nauvoo Tourism Office

1445 Mulholland St, Suite A, Nauvoo
beautifulnauvoo.com

Ottawa Visitors Center

1028 La Salle Street, Ottawa
(815) 434-2737
visitottawail.com

Peoria Area CVB

456 Fulton Street, #300, Peoria
(800) 747-0302 or (309) 676-0303
peoria.org

Quincy Area CVB

532 Gardner Expressway, Quincy
(800) 978-4748 or (217) 214-3700
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