

## Governor Quinn Announces Events for 150th Anniversary of Gettysburg Address

Written by Brooke Anderson

Tuesday, 24 September 2013 11:44

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*Commemoration Includes Special Display of Address, Letters and Videos from the Public, Films and Educational Events*

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Pat Quinn today announced an ambitious series of events to mark the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address and help people across Illinois appreciate the famed speech’s impact on history. This announcement is part of Governor Quinn’s agenda to increase international, state and local understanding and appreciation of the profound impact of President Abraham Lincoln on our shared history.

“The Gettysburg Address made clear what was at stake in the Civil War – ‘a new birth of freedom,’” Governor Quinn said. “Every American should understand the power of that speech. Luckily, we here in Illinois have one of the few handwritten copies of the Gettysburg Address housed in the nation’s top institution devoted to Abraham Lincoln’s legacy.”

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) will present that copy of the address in a special evening display Nov. 18. An honor guard will watch over the address as visitors file past to see it in person before the fragile document returns to the library’s vault for an extended period. Visitors will also be able to visit a special exhibit of Gettysburg artifacts and enjoy dramatic readings from the acclaimed book “Team of Rivals.”

Then at midnight, when the speech’s actual anniversary arrives, “Abraham Lincoln” (in the form of historic interpreter Fritz Klein) will emerge to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

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“Few speeches in all of history can match the eloquence and influence of the Gettysburg Address,” Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Director Amy Martin said. “The 150th anniversary is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Illinoisans to celebrate the speech and the continuing success of government ‘of the people, by the people, for the people.’”

The anniversary events continue through the rest of Nov. 19, with Klein delivering the address again at 1 p.m. – approximately the same time Lincoln delivered the speech in 1863. Historian James Cornelius will also host two screenings of a short film about the address and then take questions from the audience.

Historians will gather on Nov. 20 for a roundtable event to discuss the speech’s significance, followed by a dramatic presentation about other important speeches that have built on the legacy of the Gettysburg Address.

Events for schoolchildren include a series of games before the anniversary week and then, when the anniversary arrives, workshops explaining the impact of the Gettysburg Address on people from different walks of life. A live webcast about the address will also be available to schools nationwide.

The ALPLM’s Papers of Abraham Lincoln project is producing a booklet exploring the issues Lincoln wrestled with between the Battle of Gettysburg and his speech. “On Lincoln’s Mind” will reproduce documents to and from Lincoln, with commentary on their significance. The booklet will be given away throughout the week of Nov. 18 – 24.

Several of the state’s historic sites with Lincoln connections will host special events and activities leading up to the Gettysburg Address 150th anniversary. For more information, visit [GettysburgAddress150.com](http://GettysburgAddress150.com)

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### Gettysburg Address 150th Anniversary Schedule of Events

- **Building Anticipation:** Mid-October – Nov. 17

Starting in October, the Lincoln Presidential Museum will have video monitors running recordings of average citizens delivering the Gettysburg Address. Some may run at full length, while others will be montages of multiple people delivering the speech. The videos will also be available online.

The museum will also display essays from the 272 Words project. The library's foundation has been contacting prominent figures and asking them to write 272-word essays (the same number of words as in the Gettysburg Address) about something important to them. Essays from ex-presidents will be on display in the Treasures Gallery.

On Nov. 5-7, the museum will host a competition in which groups from different schools race to reassemble the words of the Gettysburg Address. The puzzle, when completed, will be 18 feet by 30 feet, and the students will compete in the center of the museum.

On Nov. 16, the Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the address and of Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation. The address will be recited at 2 p.m., followed by a performance by the 33rd Illinois Civil War Band. Free.

Throughout the week of Nov. 10-16, the Old State Capitol will have flags on its lawn representing soldiers killed at Gettysburg. Visitors can tie ribbons to the flags to honor modern service members, living and dead. On Saturday the 16th, the Old State Capitol will be the site of a "Remembrance Day" ceremony.

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- **Evening Vigil:** Nov. 18

The museum owns one of just five copies of the Gettysburg Address written in Lincoln's own hand, and it will be shown off the night before the anniversary. The address will be on special display in the center of the museum, flanked by an honor guard in Civil War military garb. Visitors will be able to view the address up close before it returns to the ALPLM vault for an extended rest.

The evening will also offer music from a string quartet, live readings from the acclaimed "Team of Rivals" and a special exhibit of Gettysburg artifacts.

When the actual anniversary arrives at midnight, a Lincoln historic interpreter will deliver the Gettysburg Address.

- **Anniversary Day:** Nov. 19

The 150th anniversary of the address begins with Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts raising the flag outside the Lincoln Presidential Museum. The education staff will conduct workshops to help children explore the significance of the address through the eyes of different people during the Civil War.

Lincoln historian James Cornelius will host two showings of the short film "The Perfect Tribute" and take questions from the audience afterward. A historic interpreter will deliver the Gettysburg Address during the afternoon, and other costumed interpreters will mingle with visitors throughout the day.

At the Old State Capitol, students from Springfield's Japanese sister city, Ashikaga, will deliver the address.

The day ends with a flag-lowering ceremony by Civil War military re-enactors.

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- **Expert Roundtable:** Nov. 20

A roundtable of experts will gather at the museum to discuss the address and its legacy. This will be followed by a dramatic presentation on other important speeches that have built on Lincoln's address. During the day, more educational workshops will be held.

- **Learning Opportunity:** Nov. 21-22

Outreach to children continues with additional workshops on Thursday and a special webcast on Friday. The webcast, available to schools around the country, features historian James Cornelius and an English professor explaining the speech's significance.

- **The Gettysburg Story:** Nov. 23-24

Filmmaker Jake Boritt has just finished a documentary about the Battle of Gettysburg and the battlefield where Lincoln delivered his address. Boritt will screen the movie and take questions, first on Saturday for members of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation and then Sunday for the general public.

- **Extras:** Nov. 18-24

The ALPLM's Papers of Abraham Lincoln project is producing a booklet exploring the issues Lincoln wrestled with between the Battle of Gettysburg and his speech. "On Lincoln's Mind" will reproduce documents to and from Lincoln, with commentary on their significance. The booklet will be given away throughout the week.

The ALPLM also is producing a child-friendly poster about the address. It features the text of the address along with drawings of Lincoln, soldiers and a monument at the battlefield.

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The museum gift shop will be selling an array of merchandise related to the anniversary, including graphic novels. It is also hosting historian Michael Burlingame and photographer Robert Shaw on Nov. 19. They'll sign their book "Lincoln Traveled This Way."

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