



ABRAHAM LINCOLN
PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

2018 Annual Report
Bruce Rauner, Governor
Alan Lowe, Executive Director

From the Executive Director

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) had a very successful 2018. As Executive Director, I am proud of the work of our dedicated staff and volunteers and grateful for the support given by so many to our mission and programs.

The ALPLM is a very busy place. In this report you will see many of our accomplishments this past year. I would summarize them in this way: We strive every day to preserve and protect the resources that have been entrusted to us, and to use those resources to teach, to engage, and to inspire. As an agency of the State of Illinois, we are proud to serve the citizens of our state and present the legacies of Lincoln and of the history of Illinois to the world. Those legacies, and the lessons we draw from them, remain fascinating, powerful and ever-relevant in our lives today.



I also should note that fiscal 2018 was the first full year of the ALPLM's operations as a standalone state agency. That standalone status was established in July 2017, and it has been of tremendous assistance as we plan our path forward. It gave us the needed flexibility to institute reforms and the professional staff necessary to help oversee and implement our many programs and initiatives.

I thank you for your support of the ALPLM, and I look forward to an even more successful 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan C. Lowe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alan Lowe
Executive Director
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

Welcoming Visitors

The ALPLM offered its visitors two major temporary exhibits, new plays, additional chances to enjoy living history, and more.

As Fiscal Year 2018 opened, the museum was offering the special exhibit “Cubs vs. Cardinals: The Rivalry,” a look at the historic baseball rivalry that has split the state for more than a century. The exhibit was the result of an unprecedented partnership between the ALPLM, the Baseball Hall of Fame, Major League Baseball, and the Cardinals and Cubs organizations.

Visitors got to see gear used by baseball legends like Rogers Hornsby, Stan Musial, Fergie Jenkins and Bob Gibson. They could play a trivia game, digitally explore which team is more popular in different parts of the state, and share their own favorite baseball memories. Visitors could also hear the voices of famed announcers and see rare artifacts, like a watch fob that belonged to Mordecai “Three-finger” Brown and the home plate that Mark McGwire touched to record his record-breaking 62nd home run.

“The Rivalry” was accompanied by a wealth of special programming, including lectures by visiting authors, trivia challenges on social media, appearances by the teams’ mascots, and an art contest for the children of Illinois.

This one-of-a-kind exhibit closed late in calendar 2017. It was replaced in 2018 – the state’s bicentennial year – with “From Illinois to the White House: Lincoln, Grant, Reagan, Obama.” The new exhibit explored the lives and legacies of the four U.S. presidents with Illinois



roots. Using artifacts, documents, photos, and video, it explained how Illinois shaped these future presidents and how they, in turn, shaped Illinois and the nation.

The exhibit, which was supported by donations from PNC Bank and the John Ullrich Foundation, received an Award of Excellence from the Illinois Association of Museums. It included the table where Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant, the last axe Abraham Lincoln ever used, Ronald Reagan’s notes from his “Tear Down This Wall” speech, and a Grammy Award won by Barack Obama. It also featured an original copy of the state’s very first constitution, on loan from the Illinois State Archives.

Both of these ambitious exhibits were designed and built by ALPLM staff. Our personnel also painstakingly wrote the text and handled the logistics of borrowing, installing and then returning irreplaceable objects borrowed from other institutions.



The museum also launched a new exhibit that mixed history with the holidays. “Holidays at the White House: A Presidential Christmas” featured photos, decorations, Christmas gifts and cards from the administrations of Dwight Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Another way to engage visitors (and offer new experiences to returning guests) is through entertainment.

The museum was able to expand its Living History Program, in which actors portray figures from the past. This meant more chances for visitors to interact with Abraham Lincoln, Mary Lincoln, Civil War soldiers, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and more. An actor portraying

Ulysses S. Grant was a regular in the “From Illinois to the White House” exhibit. All this was made possible by grants from the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, Looking for Lincoln, Dr. Scholl’s Foundation and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation.

When the “Rivalry” exhibit was underway, we held a family picnic event in Union Square Park. Children got to play games and make crafts. Historic interpreters explained how baseball was played during Lincoln’s era. Actors performed the “Who’s on First?” sketch. And once the sun set, we offered a free showing of “Field of Dreams.”



As part of the programming to accompany “From Illinois to the White House,” we held a special event dedicated to the four presidents’ wives. Guests could rotate among four historians who were discussing the first ladies. In between presentations, there were desserts, drinks and music from a flute choir.

We were also able to present two new plays. The one-man show “Mister Lincoln” – which was part of the special programming that accompanied “From Illinois to the White House” – took the audience into Lincoln’s mind as he reflected on the highs and lows of his life. During women’s history month we staged “Ladies First: The Letters of Abigail Adams, Martha Washington and Dolley Madison.”

Another special feature for visitors was the return of our “Abe & Mary Quite Contrary” walking tour. Over the summer, our staff took 338 guests on one-hour walks through historic downtown Springfield to learn about the trials and tribulations Abraham and Mary overcame in their personal and political lives.

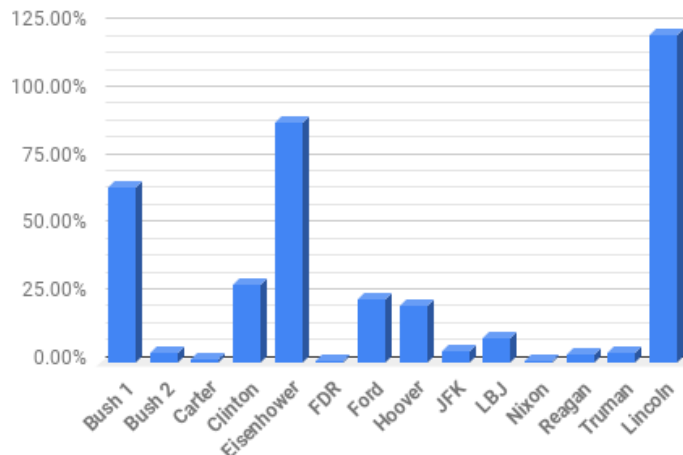
The ALPLM opened to unprecedented crowds, surpassing all expectations. Now, after 13 years in operation and more than 4.5 million visitors, attendance has begun to match the original projections.

Month	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
July	37,849	33,578	32,237
August	26,945	23,454	26,735
September	20,584	20,093	18,764
October	27,274	25,768	24,571
November	14,926	14,959	13,430
December	7,046	7,630	8,388
January	6,239	6,318	5,209
February	13,145	14,350	12,227
March	26,132	27,715	22,129
April	34,188	33,090	30,679
May	38,353	38,784	36,210
June	28,256	27,110	26,066
Total	280,937	272,849	256,645

Interest remains remarkably high, especially considering the ALPLM’s location in a small metropolitan area. For instance, ALPLM attendance is virtually the same as attendance at the John Kennedy presidential library, even though the Boston population is 22 times larger than Springfield’s.

A look at presidential library attendance compared to the local population base shows that the ALPLM is easily No. 1 in the nation.

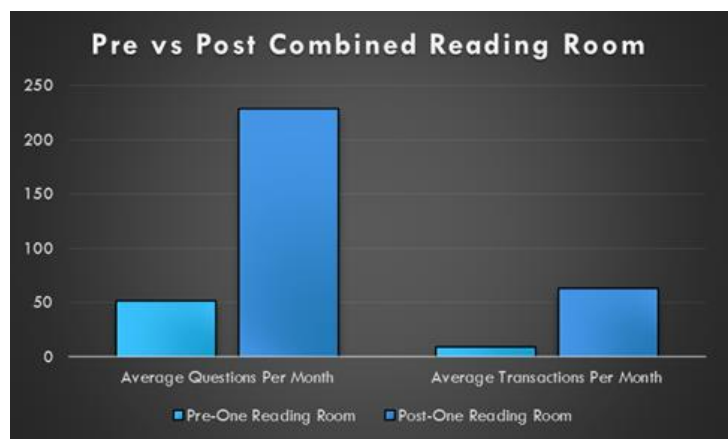
Presidential Libraries: Attendance as Percent of Population



Studying the Past

The Lincoln Presidential Library stands as one of the world's most important resources for anyone seeking to understand Abraham Lincoln's life and times. It also remains a vital repository for the history of Illinois. In ways both large and small, the ALPLM improved its services for scholars and expanded its collections in 2018.

The most fundamental change was streamlining the way materials are presented to visiting researchers. In the past, they had to go to one room to request photos, another to request documents, a third to look at newspapers and so on. Now they simply go to the library's main reading room, make a single request and have all the results brought to them. Requests for information have jumped dramatically.



This is not only more convenient for researchers but a more efficient use of our limited staff. Without the burden of staffing five different research locations, we can now devote more staff time to processing our collections and monitoring use of our materials. Communication between staff members regarding holdings in various departments has increased, too, allowing us to better fulfill research requests.

In conjunction with the switch to a single reading room, we now register visiting scholars and track what items they are using. This will provide information we can use when deciding what parts of the collection need to be strengthened and what items need preservation work. These new procedures also help us increase the security of the collections.

Another huge development was publication of thousands of documents through the Papers of Abraham Lincoln project. All known Lincoln documents from his first 33 years of life are now available online,

complete with helpful annotations and supporting information. Scholars – or everyday Lincoln fans – have instant access to an amazing trove of documents at www.PapersofAbrahamLincoln.org, with new material being added regularly.

This major step forward comes after years of delay at the Papers. A review by a panel of national experts found serious problems at the Papers and recommended a complete overhaul of its procedures. With this done, and with new director Daniel Worthington leading the project, the Papers of Abraham Lincoln is back on track to build an indispensable tool for Lincoln research in the 21st century.

The presidential library also added significantly to its collections during the year.

Donors continue to see the Lincoln Presidential Library as the best place for Lincoln-related family treasures that they want to see preserved but also shared with other people. Thanks to their generosity we have been given military passes signed by Lincoln, a fascinating letter he wrote while furious with a political ally, a legal document, and a massive painting of Lincoln as a young man reading a book after chopping down a tree.



Of course, our role as the state’s historical library means we also add non-Lincoln items to our collections.

When a German family came to America and settled near Springfield, they carried two religious tracts – one from 1730 and another from 1780. These rare pieces are now part of the ALPLM. So are the papers of the state’s first female lieutenant governor, Corinne Wood, and of U.S. Rep.

Thomas Ewing. Researchers can also find a scrapbook about the World War II exploits of pilot Kenneth Hagan and a diary of an Illinois family that went to California in search of gold in 1850.

The Oral History Program added 80 interviews, bringing its total to 871. The interviews included military veterans, government officials, educators and athletes. Such interviews capture past events, both big and small, in the words of the people who lived through them. More than 10,000 people downloaded entire interviews from our website, and an additional 20,000 downloaded excerpts.

The Manuscripts Division acquired 67 collections, containing boxes with 111 cubic feet of material, 33 folders, 14 bound volumes and more.

We added 397 new rolls of microfilm to our collection of Illinois newspapers, the largest and most extensive such collection in the world. Researchers used 5,689 of those rolls during the year, and an additional 332 requests came from researchers who were unable to visit the library in person.

A vital part of the ALPLM's work is preserving the material in our collection so that it will be accessible far into the future. The Conservation Department meticulously examined documents, made delicate repairs and constructed new frames and containers for fragile items, for a total of 1,762 preservation actions.

The department also helped inventory and assess the condition of 4,888 Lincoln manuscripts and mounted 136 items for 23 special exhibits and loans.



Sharing Knowledge

Collecting and preserving information about the past is only half of the ALPLM's mission. The other half is sharing that information with others. This includes welcoming visitors to tour the museum, of course, but that's just one tool among many.

The Education Department hosted a prestigious Gilder Lehrman seminar, sponsored in part by AT&T, where 35 teachers from around the country and one from Russia studied Lincoln's legacy and how to present it to students. We worked with Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville to offer an online graduate course for K-12 teachers on teaching Lincoln.

The department developed lesson plans and multiple teacher workshops to use in conjunction with our special exhibit "From Illinois to the White House: Lincoln, Grant, Reagan, Obama." We hosted research days for school groups in grades 5-12 and partnered with the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois State University's Classrooms in Action to share resources on the state bicentennial.

Whenever possible, the Education Department helped schools visit the ALPLM. It worked with the Winnick Family Foundation to provide transportation grants to bring nine schools to visit the museum. The department also administered transportation and lunch funding from the John Ullrich Foundation for field trips by schools in Moultrie, Coles, Douglas, Macon, and Piatt counties.

The ALPLM once again teamed with the Chicago History Museum to offer the Illinois History Day program, which involved 20,000 children from all parts of the state. It culminated with state finals to determine which students had the best research papers, websites, documentaries,



performances, and exhibits that would advance to compete at National History Day. This year Jacob Little from Lakeview Jr. High School in Downers Grove was named the 2018 James F. Harris History Teacher of the Year at the National History Day competition in College Park, MD. Two other Illinois teachers were selected to take part in a national online course about World War I.

Our education team created presentations that mixed history and science to teach about Civil War technology and provided exhibit-related programming for families, school groups, and teachers. It also set up activity tables for young visitors during the summer, threw the third annual “Back to School Bash” for nearly 200 students and sponsored a statewide art contest.



New partnerships sprang up throughout the year.

ALPLM staff collaborated on offsite exhibits with the White House Historical Association, Illinois State Museum and National Constitution Center. The library also loaned items to institutions such as presidential libraries and the White House. Meanwhile, we borrowed material from 31 other institutions for use in temporary exhibits.

The Oral History Program wrapped up its ambitious research into Gov. James R. Thompson’s administration with a special event at the Chicago History Museum and began planning a similar project on Gov. Pat Quinn. It also collaborated with Illinois Public Media on an interview project involving Vietnam veterans. Projects with Looking for Lincoln and the Illinois State Museum got underway, too. The program’s director, Dr. Mark DePue, frequently delivers lectures on key battles in history, and his

presentations dominate the list of most-watched videos on our YouTube channel.

The Communication and Public Affairs Department partnered with the Illinois State Museum and Mid-West Family Broadcasting to produce a series of daily “Bicentennial Minutes” available to broadcasters around the state. These radio spots highlighted fascinating moments in Illinois history, from America’s first auto race to the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

Communications, with assistance from The State Journal-Register, also organized the Illinois Top 200 project, which allowed people to vote online for the top people, places and things in Illinois history.

They chose a top 10 in 20 different categories, such as books or athletes. The result was a list of 200 winners for the state’s 200th birthday.



The state bicentennial was also the focus of the Illinois History Forum for 2018. This series of lunchtime events featured experts leading discussion of books on Illinois history. The forum met every two months, with an average audience of 50.

During the second half of fiscal 2018, the ALPLM teamed with the Illinois State Museum for a series of “Tales from the Vault” events. Each one offered the audience a special look at rare items from the vault of the presidential library or the state museum, from Victorian clothing to one of the earliest newspapers published in Illinois.

The library also presented the annual Conference on Illinois History. Dozens of historians shared their latest findings during panel discussions, roundtables and workshops. About 300 people attended.

ALPLM staff were generous in sharing their expertise with others. The Oral History Program conducted workshops to train interviewers, transcribers and editors. Conservation answered dozens of questions about best practices, conducted eleven tours, and presented four programs on protecting historic materials from damage. The ALPLM conservator served as co-chair of the Preservation Committee for the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois and wrote an article for the consortium on environmental monitoring. Reference staff welcomed student groups and gave tours to professionals from other libraries.

Serving the Community

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum believes strongly in giving back to the community, whether that means helping the less fortunate, collaborating with other organizations or sharing our expertise.

A great example of this spirit is the ALPLM's annual backpack drive, where we collect backpacks for Springfield schoolchildren. As a token of appreciation, donors receive a voucher for a free museum admission for each backpack they give. Through the generosity of our guests, staff and volunteers during the 2017 event, 1,751 students were better prepared for a successful academic year.

Of course, the library and museum also helps students across Illinois by offering free admission to school groups nine months out of the year. During fiscal 2018, nearly 25,000 students visited free of charge.



We joined forces with The Real Estate Group and WICS TV for the backpack drive. We also worked with WICS in December on the “Joy of Sharing” event, where we collect food, clothes, toys, and cash for the needy. The station broadcast live from the library during the event, and many of our staff appeared on air to promote the event and the ALPLM.

The ALPLM also continued its tradition of setting up an “angel tree” where people can drop off donations for a local charity. For Christmas 2017, the beneficiary was Sojourn Shelter and Services, which assists families that have suffered from domestic abuse.

Another example of giving back to the community was “Fun Frosty Friday” on the day after Thanksgiving. Almost 1,600 people attended this free event, where children got to explore a life-sized Candy Land

Adventure, play games, learn about science and history, make art, get their faces painted and more.

The ALPLM's volunteers play a huge role in the success of these charity events. We would not be able to help so many people without the volunteers' time and talent. They also provide important assistance for other kinds of community involvement. When we teamed up with the Looking for Lincoln program on a booth at the Illinois State Fair, for instance, volunteers provided much of the necessary manpower.

The Volunteer Services Division also works with Lincoln Land Community College, the Lincoln Home National Historic Sites and state historic sites in Springfield to coordinate training and education. The goal is to broaden the pool of volunteers for all sites and to make sure everyone can tell visitors what's going on throughout the community.

In the same vein, we've joined forces with other institutions in SMASH, which takes its name from Springfield Museum and Site Heads. Director Lowe now meets regularly with the leaders of key Springfield institutions to share information, discuss ways to assist one another and plan for the future.

Director Lowe and State Historian Samuel Wheeler also served on the Illinois Bicentennial Commission, helping to plan the celebration of the state's 200th birthday. During many hours of meetings, they offered their insights on history, how it could be shared with the public, and how it might enrich bicentennial events. They also played important roles in explaining the bicentennial to the public through public appearances and news interviews.



Behind the Scenes

The library and museum's many programs would not be possible without the hard work of people behind the scenes. Maintenance staff keep the place clean and repaired. Technicians make sure the computers are running. Marketing and communications staff encourage people to visit. Volunteers donate time to just about every department.

Facility Management added picnic tables, games and music in Union Square Park, part of the ALPLM campus, giving new entertainment options for visiting groups or just Springfield workers on a lunch break. The team also installed new electronics and motors in the special moving shelves that hold the library's vast collections. They upgraded security, built a recording studio for the Oral History Program and created an intake area to quarantine new acquisitions until they can be inspected for anything, such as mold or bugs, that might damage other items.

The **Volunteer Services Department** provides assistance in virtually every ALPLM division, from greeting visitors to transcribing oral histories to repairing documents. The 539 volunteers donated nearly 41,000 hours of service with a value of \$1 million.



The **Human Resources Department** oversaw hiring a new director for the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, an iconographer to oversee the audio-visual collection and a Lincoln historian. Two new actors were trained for the museum's "Ghosts of the Library" show, which takes 2-3 months per actor. HR also clarified job descriptions in approximately half the agency's organizational units.

The **Marketing Department** concentrated on analyzing the best strategies

for promoting an ALPLM that is now on its own, distinct from any other state agency or historic site. This led to a targeted digital marketing plan, new promotional materials with a fresh, cohesive look, and a new slogan: “ABEmazing.” The slogan, presented in a modern design style, is featured on two highway billboards and banners on downtown Springfield light poles.

The new emphasis on digital marketing is bringing, on average, 3,000 more visitors to our events page each month. The click-through rate on ALPLM ads is 22 percent, compared to the industry standards of 2 percent. The “bounce” rate on the ALPLM website has fallen by 2 percent, meaning more visitors are finding what they need and staying on our site. In addition, our Facebook campaigns have served almost half a million impressions and encouraged 1,475 post engagements.

Communications and Public Affairs issued 86 news releases, coordinated five news conferences and arranged scores of television, radio and newspapers interviews about ALPLM activities.

The department oversaw the library and museum’s social media accounts, producing 1,067 Facebook posts with a total reach of 2.8 million and 995 Twitter posts with 1.4 million total impressions. Social media activity jumped dramatically during the second half of fiscal 2018, thanks largely to posts about the ALPLM’s Illinois bicentennial projects. Facebook reach climbed 22 percent over a year earlier, and Twitter impressions climbed 133 percent.



The Illinois Top 200 project succeeded in sharing information about the state’s history and putting the ALPLM’s name in front of people. A search of news websites shows more than 400 stories about the project, with a

total audience of 124.6 million. This is in addition to frequent mentions during live news broadcasts or in the pages of news organizations that didn't put their stories online.

The **Facilities Rental Office** produced 76 bookings in fiscal 2018, generating \$131,798 in revenue. Repeat business tends to be a strength: more than one-third of our FY2018 clients had held events here within the previous two years.

More than half the bookings were for dinners or receptions. Thirty-one percent were meetings or conferences. To increase day-time bookings, planning is underway for new food options, pricing, and visitor enhancements for day-time events.

In national voting conducted by Unique Venues magazine, the presidential library and museum was runner-up in the categories of Best Small Market Venue and Best Venue for Small Gatherings.



The past year saw the **Legal Department** incorporate new training for all employees. In addition to the annual ethics training required of all state employees, the ALPLM was selected as a pilot agency to implement newly required sexual harassment training. All agency staff participated in the on-line training with full agency completion in 30 days. Additionally, the legal team fielded dozens of Freedom of Information Requests by members of the media and concerned citizens.

The **Financial Office** faced a number of challenges during FY 2018. Chief among them was the responsibility of establishing the ALPLM as a legal non-profit business entity while simultaneously closing the financial records for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the former parent agency of the presidential library. New business relationships and procedures had to be established while also implementing the requirements of the state's first budget in two years. A further challenge

was separating the ALPLM’s finances, specifically unpaid bills from the no-budget years, from those of the Department of Natural Resources, which absorbed the Historic Preservation Agency.

In the end, though, these tasks were accomplished while the office also continued monitoring expenses to ensure all funds were expended efficiently and effectively and all receipts were properly recorded.

FY2018 Budget Summary

Fund Name	Purpose	Appropriation	Total Expenditure
General Revenue Fund	Ordinary & Contingent Expenses	\$7,871,900	\$7,871,899
General Revenue Fund	CMS/DoIT Bills	\$573,300	\$573,300
Pres. Library & Museum Op	Ordinary & Contingent Expenses	\$2,500,000	\$1,834,381
	Total	\$10,945,200	\$10,279,580

Analyzing Year One

The ALPLM was separated from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and established as an independent agency by Executive Order 2017-1. This was later written into law by Public Act 100-120, and the new structure took effect July 1, 2017. The executive order required three annual reports from the presidential library analyzing “the effect of the reorganization on State government and the Illinois taxpayers.”

With more than a year of results to judge by, it is clear the new structure has improved operations and benefited taxpayers. The ALPLM now has the tools to more quickly review procedures, create and implement new policies, and make important decisions in areas such as human resources, legal matters, and partnerships.

In the past, staff would identify problems and propose solutions to the ALPLM Executive Director, who then took matters to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency’s director and/or to the agency’s trustees. Each step involved explaining the issues to new people, repeating possible courses of action and waiting for decisions. Even relatively minor matters could be held up for weeks, sometimes months. Now that the ALPLM is a freestanding agency, problems can be identified quickly and resolved efficiently.

An example of that flexibility is the introduction of a new system for serving researchers. Rather than sending them to multiple locations in the library, each of which required staff, we now have researchers work in a central location where they have access to all materials. This allows staff to spend more time on their many other duties. It

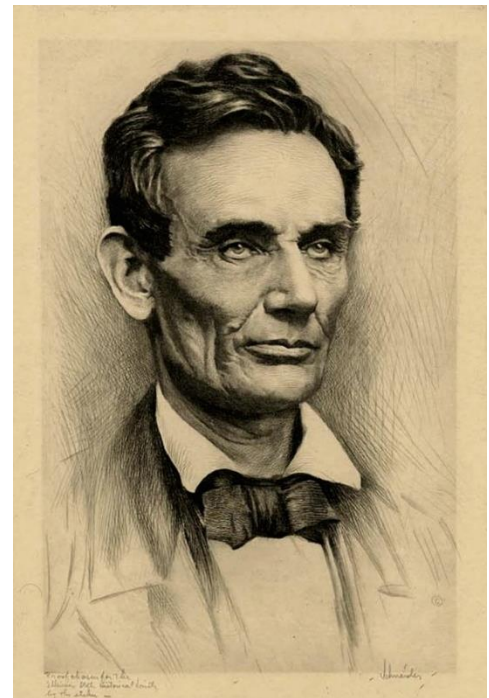


also helps us maintain security for our collections.

Having senior staff dedicated to the ALPLM, rather than dividing their time between the ALPLM and 26 other state sites, also has made a significant difference. The human resources director, for instance, has been able to work on filling key positions and updating job descriptions. Access to immediate, high-quality legal advice from our general counsel has been simply invaluable in allowing us to be more agile in our actions and more certain of our legal parameters.

Similarly, maintenance crews dedicated to the ALPLM, instead of shared with historic sites, can better protect the facility and make quick repairs. Over time, this will save money while also providing our guests with a much better experience.

Having standalone status also makes it easier to establish partnerships that can make the ALPLM more efficient and effective. We have established new relationships, or strengthened old ones, with organizations like the Peoria Riverfront Museum, the Railroad Hall of Fame in Galesburg, the Chicago History Museum, and the Newberry Library. Outside of Illinois we have worked with the White House Historical Association, the Gilder Lehrman Institute, and others.



The ALPLM's first year as a standalone agency went smoothly and points to a bright future. The new structure created by the Governor and the General Assembly allows for quicker action, dedicated personnel, new partnerships, and improved planning. The result is an institution that can offer better services to its visitors and use taxpayers' money more efficiently.