

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Lisa Mestinsek

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project

Interview # T20-A-L-2021-030

Lisa Mestinsek, owner of Top Hat Creamery in Lincoln, Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project.

Interview date & location:

Date: Aug 11, 2021      Location: Lisa's Hair Salon, Lincoln, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Anna Sielaff

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:03 / 1.05 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on September 21, 2021.

Transcript being  
processed

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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## Abstract

### Lisa Mestinsek, Tumultuous 2020, T20-A-L-2021-030

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Lisa Mestinsek was born in June of 1977 in Lincoln, Illinois. Following high school graduation, she began school at the Hairmasters Institute of Cosmetology in Bloomington, Illinois. She spent the next seven years in New Orleans, Louisiana, as a hair stylist. In 2004 she returned to Lincoln to start a family and open her own hair salon. In 2019, at the prompting of fellow Lincoln business owners, Mestinsek and her husband, John, decided to start a new business: Top Hat Creamery. Top Hat Creamery is a unique ice cream parlor that pays homage to President Abraham Lincoln, for whom the town was named.

Top Hat Creamery opened in June of 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic began. In March of 2020 Lisa closed the shop for the first week of the state mandated lockdown. During that time, she and her team worked to make the necessary preparations to open safely for both staff and customers. Mestinsek also worked through changes in her personal life, including caring for three children at home. Some of these changes were positive, like being able to homeschool her youngest daughter and forming a “club” of downtown Lincoln business owners. Throughout the course of the pandemic, the club members led campaigns to boost sales in local businesses. Mestinsek discusses the opportunities the pandemic provided, both for business and her family.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** COVID-19 pandemic; pandemic’s impact on small businesses; pandemic’s impact in small towns; debate on vaccine mandates; homeschooling during pandemic

**Notes to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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