

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Susan Haake

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Architectural Gems* Oral History project

Interview # AG-V-L-2019-020

Susan Haake, curator for Abraham Lincoln's home in Springfield, Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's (*name of project*) Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Dates: May 9 & May 21, 2019

Location: Abraham & Mary Lincoln home in Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Technical Support (cameraman, etc.): Justin Davsko, & Tony Bateman

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

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

Transcript  
being processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 0:57 + 1:09 / 0.95 + 1.15 = 2.1 hrs.

Session 1: Video tour of the first floor of the Lincoln home

Session 2: Video tour of the second floor, kitchen and back yard of Lincoln home

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on September 10, 2019.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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# Abstract

Susan Haake, *Architectural Gems*, AG-A-L-2019-020

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Susan Haake was born in Chicago Heights, Illinois in December 1967 and grew up in Murphysboro. She attended Southeast Missouri State University where she majored in historic preservation, graduating in 1989. She earned a masters' degree in historical administration in 1991. In that year she also began working at the Lincoln Home in Springfield, Illinois, operated by the National Park Service.

Susan conducted an in-depth video tour of the Lincoln home, starting with a street view of the home and a discussion of the Lincoln's purchase of the home. The inside tour began with the first floor, with Susan pointing out those artifacts which are original to the home, and others that are typical of the period in which the Lincolns lived in the home. The Lincolns first moved into the home in 1844, and substantially expanded it in 1855-56 when they added a second floor. The home has been painstakingly remodeled to return it to its appearance at the time the Lincoln family moved to Washington, D.C. in 1861. The tour included every part of the home, including all first-floor rooms, the second floor and kitchen and pantry areas. Susan also discussed the neighborhood at the time, as well as an extended conversation about the back yard, and the several animals that were part of the household.

While touring the home, Susan offered many insights into the Lincoln family while in Springfield, what life was like for them, their daily routines and the help Mary sometimes employed. Susan painted a picture of a busy, lively middle-class family in the mid-19th century, and brought Abraham and Mary Lincoln to life in ways that the public today can relate to and understand.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Abraham Lincoln home; Mary Lincoln; the Todd sisters; Robert Lincoln; Willie Lincoln; Tadd Lincoln; life during the mid-19th century in America; National Park Service; decorative arts during mid-19th century America; sanitation during 19th century; Lincoln home life; French influences

**Note 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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