

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Erin Bishop

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Oral History project

Interview # HP-A-L-2009-025

Erin Bishop, head of Education Services with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the *Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Legacy* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: July 28, 2009 Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Newlyn Hosea, ALPL Volunteer

Transcription by: Kay Smith, ALPL volunteer

Edited by: Marianne Lawrence and Rozanne Flatt, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 34 Total Time: 1:43 / 1.72 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on Aug 20, 2009

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

© 2009 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Abstract

Erin Bishop, IL Historic Preservation Agency Legacy, HP-A-L-2009-025

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Erin Isabel Bishop was born in Dixon Illinois on March 9, 1968. She grew up in Springfield Illinois, graduating from Sacred heart Academy in 1986. She graduated from Carroll College in Helena, Montana with a double major in history and French in 1990. After serving with the Lincoln Legal Papers from 1990-1993, Erin traveled to Ireland where she earned her MA in History in 1994 and her Ph.D. in History in 1997. Her Ph.D. dissertation resulted in the publication of two books, including *My Darling Danny*. Returning to Springfield, she accepted a Historical Research position with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Sites Division in 1997, and later accepted a position as the head of the newly created Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Education Division in 2005. In August 2009 she resigned her position with the ALPLM to relocate with her family in a different city.

Erin discusses her early duties with the Lincoln Legal Papers, including extensive research in court houses throughout Illinois attempting to locate and copy legal papers involving the cases of Abraham Lincoln. A portion of the interview details Erin's time in Ireland where she developed an interest in women's history, which in turn led to an intensive interest in Mary O'Connell, the wife of Daniel O'Connell, a famous Irishman described as the "liberator". Erin describes in detail her work with many early sites in southern Illinois, including the Jerome Mansion and the Menard home. She also describes her work with the Lewis and Clark historic site, especially the bicentennial event. The final part of the interview details her work as the head of the ALPLM Education Division. She experienced setting up of programs under intense time pressure, and her approach to dealing with the thousands of students visiting the museum. Of special interest is her development of specific programs such as the traveling Abraham Lincoln Exhibit, Traveling Trunks, Horace Mann Teacher Institute, and the Summer Scholarship Program, resulting in an exhibit on the Springfield race riots. Finally, Erin gives an overview of dealing with both gender and politics in her position.

Topics Covered: Lincoln Legal Papers; University of Dublin, Ireland; Women's history; Mary and Daniel O'Connell; Jerome Mansion; Menard Home; Illinois First Project; Springfield Race Riot; Summer Scholarship Program; Strawberry Party; Horace Mann Teacher Institute; Traveling Trunks; Springfield Visitor Bureau; Richard Norton Smith; Julie Dirksen; Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum; Hilferty and Associates; Tom Schwartz; Governor Rod Blagojevich

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.

COPYRIGHT

The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955