This year, the Lincoln Memorial Shrine and the annual Watchorn Lincoln Dinner turn 90! These amazing milestones will be celebrated with a Lincoln Dinner completely reimagined for the celebration, like no Shrine event you’ve ever experienced. With a new location, different format, and special programming, this year’s Lincoln Dinner will be a truly extraordinary commemoration of the Shrine and its legacy.

For this year only, the Lincoln Dinner will take place at the Lincoln Memorial Shrine. Guests will enjoy a reception beginning at 5pm in Smiley Park and a spectacular program in celebration of the museum beginning at 6pm, capped off with an unforgettable fireworks spectacle. “Although we can’t get together for a traditional dinner this year, we look forward to celebrating the Shrine’s 90th anniversary with this unique program,” said Curator Nathan Gonzales. The event will take place on Lincoln’s birthday, February 12.

While everyone is welcome, reservations at a cost of $30 are required to participate within the reserved area in Smiley Park and will include hors d’oeuvres and a toast at the end of the evening.

To make a reservation, please call (909)798-7632 or email heritage@akspl.org.

Event subject to change based on the evolving health crisis. Please visit www.lincolnsrhrine.org for up-to-date information.
Greetings from the Watchorn Lincoln Memorial Association (WLMA) Board of Trustees!

In 2022, the Lincoln Memorial Shrine celebrates its 90th anniversary with an exciting, illuminating calendar of events, including a special Lincoln Dinner celebration to be held at Smiley Park and the Shrine. The WLMA trustees are a diverse group of Redlanders who take seriously our role to support and nurture the Lincoln Memorial Shrine and its extraordinary collections, exhibits, and other programming for today and tomorrow’s visitors and scholars. We are guardians of the fiscal and programmatic well-being of this museum, archive, and memorial dedicated to the life, work, vision, and legacy of Abraham Lincoln and Civil War-era America. We understand the importance of this institution for local, regional, and national audiences: from local fourth graders to internationally-known Civil War scholars and everyone in between. We are extraordinarily proud of this institution’s creative and enlightening pivot to the virtual demanded by the ongoing crisis of this global pandemic. We honor the memory of our founding family—Robert, Alma, and Ewart Watchorn—and their spirit of service to town and nation as the Lincoln Memorial Shrine enters this anniversary year with a thrilling, enlightening slate of events that we hope you enjoy.

—Dr. Kathy Feeley, President, Watchorn Lincoln Memorial Association

The Watchorn Society

Have you included the Watchorn Lincoln Memorial Association in your estate planning? If so, let the Shrine know so you may be recognized as a member of The Watchorn Society. For more information, please contact Curator Nathan Gonzales at (909) 798-7632 or ngonzales@akspl.org.
A Year of Celebrations at the Lincoln Shrine

In honor of the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial Shrine 90 years ago on February 12, 1932, 2022 will be a year of celebrations! Titled “Enduring Legacies: The Lincoln Shrine at 90,” the year will include special programs, a film series, and musical performances.

Beginning in February, visitors can explore new exhibitions focusing on the Watchorn family—the Shrine’s benefactors—and the creation of the museum, as well as some of the collections’ most popular artifacts. Also in February, check out the start of the free bi-monthly series “Lincoln in Film,” which will take place in the Contemporary Club. On November 19, the 159th anniversary of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address will be commemorated with a special program. There are many opportunities to celebrate the Shrine in 2022!

**LINCOLN IN FILM**
All films begin at 2pm in the Contemporary Club

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN** (1930)
February 19 (Not Rated)

**YOUNG MR. LINCOLN** (1939)
April 16 (Not Rated)

**ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS** (1940)
June 18 (Not Rated)

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN: VAMPIRE HUNTER** (2012)
September 17 (Rated PG-13)

**LINCOLN** (2012)
November 19 (Rated R)

**TIMELINE OF EVENTS**

**OPEN HOUSE**
Saturday, February 5

**WATCHORN LINCOLN DINNER**
Saturday, February 12

**LINCOLN IN FILM SERIES**
February - November (see list)

**SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS**
Ongoing, Open February

**GETTYSBURG ADDRESS COMMEMORATION**
Saturday, November 19

**LECTURE SERIES**
TBD

Subject to change based on the evolving health crisis. For more information, visit www.lincolnshrine.org or contact the Heritage Room at (909)798-7632 or heritage@akspl.org.
Did You Know?

Shrine benefactors Robert and Alma Watchorn gifted the Lincoln Memorial Shrine in the midst of the Great Depression in 1932. At a time when national unemployment affected up to a quarter of the population, the family’s gift created jobs for stone masons, carpenters, metal workers, plumbers, electrical workers, tile setters, roofers, and many other skilled laborers whose work brought the museum into being.

Open House Returns

The Shrine is happy to announce the return of the Open House for its 50th anniversary on Saturday, February 5, 2022, 12-4pm!

Taking place in Smiley Park, the celebration will include presentations by reenactors, live music, and much more. Don’t miss the 1st Pennsylvania Light Artillery’s hourly cannon demonstrations, cavalry presentations by the 7th Michigan Cavalry, and President Lincoln presenter Robert Broski delivering the Gettysburg Address. Also on hand will be the Sons of Union Veterans, the Camp Carleton Band, the Inland Empire LEGO User Group, and many more.

Program subject to change based on the evolving health crisis. Please visit www.lincolnshrine.org for up-to-date information.

Sponsor the Lincoln Dinner

Contribute to the collections of the Lincoln Memorial Shrine by becoming a Lincoln Dinner Sponsor! For the past six years, sponsorship-funded acquisitions have helped add wonderful treasures connected to Abraham Lincoln to the Shrine collections. New additions have included an 1861 campaign flag for Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin and documents written by Lincoln during his time as a lawyer and his presidency.

Through the generous support of our 2021 sponsors, the Watchorn Lincoln Memorial Association raised over $32,000 for the purchase of a unique item to be unveiled at this year’s Lincoln Dinner. Your contribution to the sponsorship fund will facilitate the purchase of an item to be presented at the 2023 Dinner.

Sponsors will be recognized in the evening’s program. Request a sponsorship card by calling (909)798-7632 or emailing heritage@akspl.org. Thank you!

Follow Us on Instagram

Remember to follow @lincolnshrine on Instagram to learn about upcoming events, learn facts about the Civil War, and see images of past programs. Tell your friends and family to help get the word out!
Larry Burgess Remembers:
50 Years at the Lincoln Shrine

My work as curator of the Lincoln Shrine began in 1972, in the museum's 40th year. Now we celebrate its 90th anniversary. Shrine staff have asked me to reflect upon these long ago memories when I began my professional association with the “Jewel Box Shrine,” as it was often called.

Having completed my PhD in history, I returned to my hometown of Redlands to determine where I might seek employment teaching history in college. Fate had other plans for me. One day in Smiley Library, which oversees the operation of the Lincoln Memorial, I chanced to talk with Library Director Phyllis C. Irshay. She asked me about my plans, and I related my so-far-unsuccessful job search. “Well,” she asked, “would you be interested in a part time job as curator of the Lincoln Shrine?” We then discussed my academic training that included study about the Civil War and Lincoln, through my association at the Claremont Graduate University with professor Allan Nevins, twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize. At the time he was completing his final volume on the Civil War, Ordeal of the Union.

Shortly after, I received an application, and I was offered the position, apparently having said the right things, plus I could be hired “on the cheap” (the Shrine had a penurious budget). From my position as an unemployed graduate student finishing his dissertation and expecting his PhD in June, it was a “lifeline opportunity.”

In the first week of April, 1972 I was shown around, given a few days of orientation both to the Shrine and to the Smiley. I worked a few hours a day, all open to the public. I surveyed the book cases and their contents, holding scarce volumes in my hands, many of them autographed by the authors either to the Shrine or to Robert and Alma Watchorn, the Shrine’s donors in 1932. Desk drawers and a large wooden file held original manuscripts from before, during and after the Civil War. One afternoon, while opening a manila folder containing a packet of Civil War manuscripts, I retrieved an original copy of Lincoln’s letter to James Conkling of August, 1863. One of four known copies, the letter is arguably one of the greatest statements on emancipation Lincoln ever wrote, as author Doris Kearns Goodwin exclaimed when it was shown her.
It was a valuable experience reading through the extensive correspondence files about the Lincoln Shrine’s origins and after being donated to the City of Redlands, how its administration and funding occurred. Ewart’s untimely death while in his twenties led to the Watchorn’s establishing the Lincoln Memorial Shrine in Ewart’s memory and a monument to Lincoln. Watchorn continued to add to the collection from 1932 to his death in 1944. He also turned down many offers of collections both Civil War and Lincoln. He had his reasons but as I looked at the who’s who of Lincoln collectors represented in the letters, I shook my head at what opportunity was “lost.”

In the deed of gift to the City I learned that it accepted the Shrine and the responsibility in perpetuity to operate it and that the Smiley Library trustees administrated it. After presenting the memorial to the City in 1932, during the depths of the Depression, Watchorn gave some land and securities to be spent for the Shrine. Instead the funds went to the cash-strapped City coffers. Unhappy and embarrassed over this, Watchorn, always the gentleman, in 1937 set up a permanent non-profit Endowment fund to be managed by an independent board of trustees to financially assist the City and Library Board. That explained to me that the Watchorn board funds enabled me to work as part-time curator.

Curiously, one peculiarity related to the restroom, or the lack there of, seemed an odd oversight. I later learned from the manuscripts of construction that poor Robert Watchorn was “shelled” in a public attack by W.H. Pettibone whose home was an adjoining lot directly south of the Shrine. Pettibone painted a picture of hordes of undesirables creating a nuisance and moral degeneracy if the facilities were built as planned as part of the Shrine’s basement. The old man’s wrangling became so bad that Watchorn pulled the plug on the plan and said the public visiting the Shrine should avail themselves of the Library’s facilities. It took 26 years to get the restroom in the Shrine, part of the building expansion campaign completed in 1998.

My mind largely focused on the short-term future. I was yet to realize the potentials or the path that would lead to my 40 years of employment with the Lincoln Memorial Shrine and A.K. Smiley Public Library. What an unexploited treasure trove, I thought. What potential for lectures, symposia, conferences, Civil War music concerts, publications, and historians as speakers at the annual Lincoln birthday dinner begun by Watchorn in 1932. As a child I had come for tours to the Shrine, mostly with my Cub Scout den. What possibilities, I pondered, for expanded school tours of all ages.

The more I dreamt about possibilities, the more I could sense the need and importance of what the Lincoln and Civil War museum should mean to Redlands residents, and for those in all of Southern California. Indeed, the Shrine operation was then, and remains today, the only full time monument and memorial, library, museum, and exhibit site west of the Mississippi River. Its mission is to serve, educate, and inspire visitors and researchers. As Robert Watchorn said at the dedication of the Lincoln Shrine, “Mr. Grey and Mr. Taylor and countless others have made it and it will stand for other generations to be inspired by the example of the great American who turned the currents of freedom into the souls of millions of fellow men.” I was hooked.

During those months in 1972, I turned my energy to school tours and to the parents and teachers that accompanied them. By the end of April, I realized the need for a volunteer docent program. The Latin word for docent is docere. What a wonderful name for such volunteers, “to instruct, teach, or point out.” Implicit is the goal to make students enjoy learning. I put together a docent handbook, rudimentary by today’s sophisticated guide for docent instruction. Training began on July 14, 1972. Because of their support, we increased the afternoon hours and weekends followed, with morning hours reserved for the increasing number of tours. With the encouragement of Library
Director Irshay, I began to reach out to service clubs and other private cultural organizations offering talks about the Lincoln Shrine holdings and exhibits. This led to exposure to people who had Civil War materials in their home collections. We began to focus on a serious materials acquisition plan.

June of 1972 made the difference in my life and in the path I took as a historian. On Friday the twenty-third, I began as Archivist, Head of Special Collections for Smiley Library, a new division and a new position created by the Trustees in concert with the goals of Director Irshay. The Special Collections now included the Lincoln Shrine and the collections of local history, Southern California, materials about the West, the Library’s art, as well as special collections of books and objects. As August as this all reads, I must say a saving grace on the day of my hiring as Head of Special Collections helped define my career coming down to a “sense of humor.”

As I seated myself in Phyllis Irshay’s office on my first day, the door suddenly opened and the City Manager, Pete Merritt Jr., a tall man, clearly on a mission and in a hurry, brushed past me, and said to Phyllis who was seated at her desk, “I want to talk to you about this person who is the new arch-cha-vist.” He then continued to complain to her about the Board authorizing the position, finally threw up his hands, and said, “Well at least I said my piece.” Unflappably, Phyllis said to him, “Would you like to meet him? He’s sitting right behind you.”

The Board, by state law, had authority to make such an appointment. I quickly learned then, and still realize now, that politics, not education is usually the stronger force. After he left with a curt “Hello,” to me, I left work at days end only to find further indignity. Affixed upon my windshield, a pink parking ticket. As I walked along the driveway in front of the Library, I examined it and smiled, “Welcome to Redlands.” The parking ticket later was cancelled, a zealous parking official having not realized the police had no authority on a street that was not a street. I could only laugh.

Undaunted, I continued to lay the groundwork for expanding the collection and the service to patrons as the founding archivist of A.K. Smiley Public Library. As we look to the Lincoln Shrine anniversary and to its role as part of Archives and Special Collections, I can only reflect with grateful memory upon the many people, colleagues, donors, and friends who supported expansion of the Shrine, purchased and gave valued materials, attended the symposia and programs, joined in tours of Civil War sites in the East—-all led by professional staff--and loyal volunteers who bring a diverse variety of expertise.

I continue to marvel at what Robert and Alma Watchorn gave, and that it continues to serve and educate beyond their wildest imaginations.

—Dr. Larry Burgess is Director Emeritus of A.K. Smiley Public Library and serves on the Watchorn Lincoln Memorial Association Board of Trustees
Interested in the LINCOLN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION?

If you or a friend would like to become an annual supporter of the Lincoln Memorial Association, please mail a check payable to:

Lincoln Memorial Association
125 West Vine Street, Redlands, CA 92373

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
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☑ $25 Individual ☐ $35 Family
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Annual support is January - December. Individual supporters may purchase one discounted ticket to the Lincoln Dinner, and Family and Sustaining supporters may purchase two.

SUPPORT THE WATCHORN LINCOLN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

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125 West Vine Street
Redlands, CA 92373

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