



February 12, 2009

North Dakota Plans for Lincoln's 200th Birthday

On February 12, 2009, North Dakotans will join the nation in commemorating the 200th birthday of its 16th President, Abraham Lincoln.

Programs marking the day will include a joint session of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly, beginning at 12:45 p.m. at the State Capitol Building in Bismarck, and at the North Dakota Heritage Center at 5 p.m. Both programs will feature Chautauqua scholar George Frein in character as President Lincoln. Joining Frein at the Heritage Center program will be Chautauqua scholar Jerry Tweton in character as William Jayne, the first governor of Dakota Territory appointed by President Lincoln.

Organizing these events are members of the Lincoln Legislative Memorial Committee, which include state legislators and representatives from the State Historical Society of North Dakota and its Foundation, the North

Dakota Council on the Arts, and the North Dakota Humanities Council. Legislators are committee chair and Senator Tony Grindberg (R-Fargo), Senator Carolyn Nelson (D-Fargo), Representative Ed Gruchalla (D-Fargo), and Representative Nancy Johnson (R-Dickinson).

That same day will also feature a performance of Herbert Mitgang's *Mister Lincoln* at 7:30 p.m. in the Askanase Auditorium at North Dakota State University (NDSU) in Fargo. This one-man show will feature NDSU graduate Mark Neukom, originally from Jamestown, North Dakota, now living in the Twin Cities. Produced by Donald Larew, the play begins with Lincoln's youth in Illinois and moves to the momentous years he spent in Washington, D.C., during the Civil War. For more information, call (701) 231-7932 or email ana.rusness@ndsu.edu.

During the week of February 9-13, a wide variety of programs and events for people of all ages commemorating the Lincoln Bicentennial, *Lincoln Life Lessons*, will also take place at the Frances

Leach High Prairie Arts and Science Complex in Bismarck. For more information, call SHSND Curator of Education Marilyn Snyder at (701) 328-2792 or email msnyder@nd.gov.

Another aspect of the State Historical Society's contribution to the Lincoln Bicentennial will be a special edition of its quarterly journal, *North Dakota History*, that concentrates on Lincoln's legacy in the 39th state. It will be published shortly before the actual bicentennial commemoration begins in February 2009.

"Lincoln is much more than the 16th President of the United States," said SHSND Communications and Education Director Rick Collin, who was appointed by Governor Hoeven in December 2005 as the state's liaison to the National Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. "He also represents, not only to Americans but to people throughout the world, many of our core values as human beings – equal rights, democracy, liberty, freedom – and those are the ideals we are remembering during our state's Lincoln Bicentennial observance."

Photograph by J. Michael McCormack, Bismarck State College



Chautauqua scholar George Frein will perform in character as Abraham Lincoln during programs in Bismarck commemorating Lincoln's 200th birthday February 12, 2009. Frein was a member of the philosophy and religion department at the University of North Dakota (UND) from 1968 to 1997, when he retired. He moved to South Carolina, where he has served as the artistic director of the Greenville Chautauqua Society since 1999. Here, he performs during a *Lincoln, Land, and Liberty* Chautauqua program July 25 at Bismarck State College.

Photograph by J. Michael McCormack, Bismarck State College



Chautauqua scholar Jerry Tweton will reprise his role as William Jayne in the February 12, 2009 program at the North Dakota Heritage Center marking the bicentennial birthday of Abraham Lincoln. A professor emeritus of history at UND, he is also the senior consultant to the North Dakota Humanities Council. Tweton has long been involved in Chautauqua, portraying such figures as Theodore Roosevelt and John Jacob Astor, in addition to Jayne. He is seen here portraying Jayne during a July 25 *Lincoln, Land, and Liberty* performance at Bismarck State College.