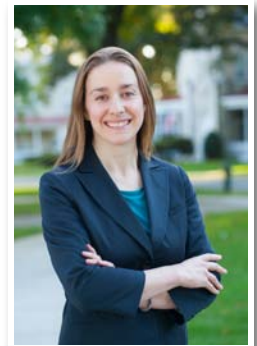




From the Director

Dear Friends,

Happy 206th birthday to President Lincoln! In honor of his birthday, we are hosting a conversation about something near and dear to Lincoln: striving for a more perfect Union. Join our #LincolnBdayWishes conversation on social media, and share your wishes for making our country and our world a better place for all people.



This President's Day marks the start of our eighth year open to the public. Highlights from the past year include a Gold MUSE award for excellence in museum technology, our first Freedom 5K featuring Olympic champion Joan Benoit Samuelson, the restoration of the Spanish tile roof on the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center, and a recent partnership with Ithaca College for high-tech 3-D imaging of the Cottage. We also developed and recently launched a new public/private collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services to raise awareness about a topic near and dear to Lincoln—the abolition of slavery—featuring a campaign that engages young people on this humanitarian crisis. These achievements are a small sample of what we've done. In the past year, we hosted 362 days of programs including tours, exhibits, and special events

We are even more enthusiastic about what this year will bring—some of which we can share now, and other news that we will reveal in the coming months. In 2015, we will roll out a new logo and a new website. We expect to greet our 200,000th visitor. And we will mark the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's last ride to the Soldiers' Home while reflecting on his legacy. A major event will be the Lincoln Ideas Forum, in which we will take a multi-disciplinary look at how Lincoln's life and work continues to influence us today, inspire our tomorrow, and shape our views of the past. Until then, you can read our feature article "Lincoln's View of 'Freedom,'" by Curtis Harris, which discusses how the Capitol building influenced Lincoln's time at the Cottage.

I hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter. Let us know what you think by joining our conversation on Facebook and Twitter, or drop me a line by email. I would be delighted to hear from you.

Erin Mast
EMast@savingplaces.org



April 13 Lincoln's Last Ride

Salute the riders from the White House to the Cottage on the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's final visit to the Soldiers' Home. Details on page 2.

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This newsletter is funded in part by the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, an agency supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

A Lincoln
PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S COTTAGE
AT THE SOLDIERS' HOME



April 2015: Lincoln's Legacy at 150

This April, join us for FREE events and exhibits commemorating Lincoln's life and legacy 150 years after his death. For program details, visit www.lincolncottage.org/legacy2015.



DRAPED IN BLACK

SATURDAY APRIL 18 - THURSDAY APRIL 30

Within days of President Lincoln's death in 1865, the Soldiers' Home (now known as the Armed Forces Retirement Home) draped the Cottage in black cambric. President Lincoln's Cottage will commemorate how the veterans and staff of the Home mourned their President by once again draping the Cottage in black for the 150th anniversary.

NOT AN AMERICAN PRACTICE:

LINCOLN'S LIFE AT RISK

ON VIEW NOW - SEPTEMBER 2015

Prints and objects from the President Lincoln's Cottage collection illuminate the efforts to protect the president at the Soldiers' Home and beyond, and contemplate how Lincoln's assassination forever changed presidential security.



LINCOLN'S LAST RIDE

MONDAY APRIL 13, 12-3 PM*

Abraham Lincoln last rode out to the Soldiers' Home on April 13, 1865, one day before his assassination. We will retrace Lincoln's final commute on horseback from the White House to the Soldiers' Home. You are invited to salute the ride from viewing stations along the route, and to welcome the horses and riders to the Cottage at the ride's end. A brief ceremony will take place at the Cottage following the ride.

*Ride begins at 12 PM. 3 PM end time is approximate.

LINCOLN IDEAS FORUM

FRIDAY APRIL 10, TIME TBD

Notable thinkers in the fields of architecture, human trafficking-prevention, and immigration will come together at President Lincoln's Cottage for a dynamic symposium. Speakers will discuss the intersection of their contemporary work with President Lincoln's life and legacy. Can't attend? Join the conversation using #LincolnIdeas.

ORIGINALS: MEMORIAL OBJECTS

FROM THE COLLECTION

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 18 - AUGUST 2015

View artifacts from the President Lincoln's Cottage collection on public display for the very first time in 150 years. Exhibit items include the goblet

that Abraham Lincoln drank from on his last visit to the Soldiers' Home and the gloves and armband worn by A.N. See, a member of Lincoln's presidential guard, at the White House funeral for Lincoln.

April 2015: Lincoln's Legacy at 150 Programs at Partner Sites



PROGRAM: THE LINCOLN TRIBUTE

FORD'S THEATRE

511 10TH ST NW, WASHINGTON DC 20004

APRIL 14, 9 AM - APRIL 15, 4:30 PM

This around-the-clock event will mark the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's assassination. Events include: one-act play *One Destiny*, panel discussions about Lincoln's legacy, a recreation of the vigil for Lincoln, and more. Tickets required.

www.fords.org/event/lincoln-tribute



EXHIBIT: LIFE IN THE LINCOLN WHITE HOUSE

WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

748 JACKSON PL NW, WASHINGTON DC 20006

MARCH 13 - APRIL 14, MON.-SAT. 10 AM - 4 PM

This exhibit recreates President Lincoln's White House office as depicted in Carpenter's 1864 painting 'First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Lincoln,' and includes furnishings, ceramics, and literature used in the Lincoln White House. www.whitehousehistory.org

What Will Be Your Legacy?

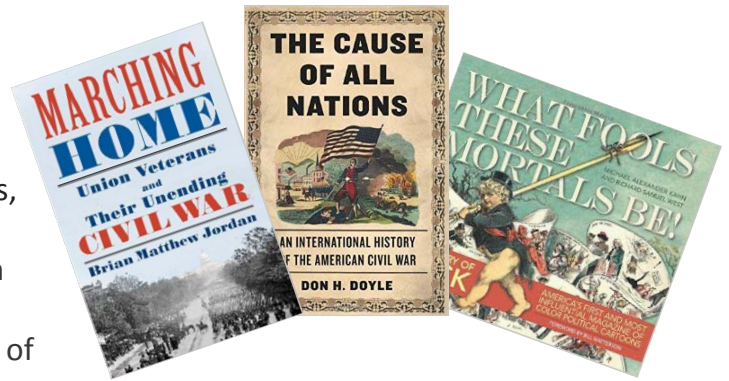
By guiding the country through the Civil War and confronting slavery, President Lincoln created a powerful, enduring legacy. At President Lincoln's Cottage, visitors are able to explore that legacy 150 years later. Despite its profound significance, the site is the only National Monument that does not receive ongoing government operating support, and it lacks an endowment. To keep the site protected, accessible, and relevant – to keep President Lincoln's Cottage a home for brave ideas – we ask that you please consider leaving a bequest to the Cottage in your will.

For more information about using your will to protect President Lincoln's Cottage, please contact John Davison, Associate Director for Development: JDavison@savingplaces.org.



Upcoming Cottage Conversations

Join us for the last 3 Cottage Conversations of the season! Cottage Conversations, the signature speaker series at President Lincoln's Cottage, offers relaxing evenings to socialize and learn something new about our 16th president from authors, collectors, and artists. Join us for wine, beer, and light appetizers at a reception in the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center atrium before enjoying a lively conversation between scholars and leading experts of a wide range of topics. A book signing follows each program.



March 5 – Brian Jordan, *Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War*.

April 9 – Don Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War*, with Sidney Blumenthal, former aide to President Clinton.

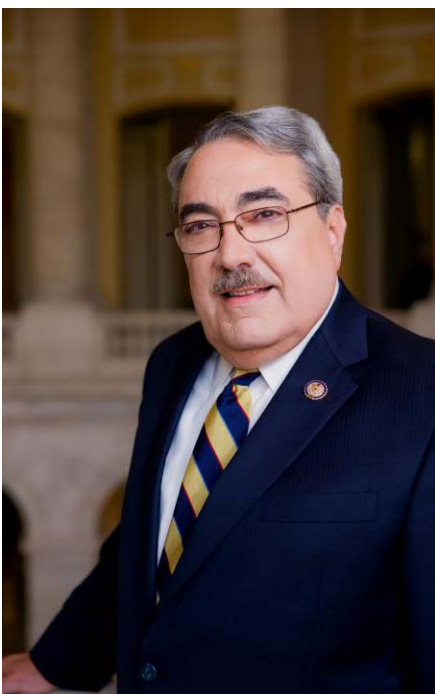
May 21 – Michael Kahn, *'What Fools These Mortals Be!' The Story of Puck – America's First and Most Influential Magazine of Color Political Cartoons*.

Reception at 6:00 pm, \$10. Lecture at 6:30 pm, \$10. Free for \$250+ members- JOIN NOW.

RSVP and ticket purchase: Michelle Martz, 202-688-3735 or MMartz@savingplaces.org.

The 2014-2015 Cottage Conversations season is made possible with generous support from: Mr. David Bruce Smith, Mr. James Tennes, and Mr. Matthew Tennes.

150 Years After the 13th Amendment with Congressman G. K. Butterfield



Commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Thirteenth Amendment and the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act at our next public program, featuring Congressman G. K. Butterfield.

On February 27 at 1:30 pm, join President Lincoln's Cottage and the Armed Forces Retirement Home at our annual Black History Month event. Keynote speaker Congressman G. K. Butterfield, Representative of North Carolina's 1st District and Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, will speak on his experiences as a student leader, Civil Rights attorney, judge, and Congressman. He has been on the front-lines of history, helping others to fully realize the promise of the Thirteenth Amendment and continuing to shape an equal and just United States. This program will also include inspirational readings and musical interludes.

Free entry, RSVP required. Register online at www.lincolncottage.org/bhm-2015. Questions? LincolnEd@savingplaces.org, 202-688-3735. Please note that seating is limited to the first 50 guests who RSVP.

Midnight Remarks at Freedom's Eve

By Dr. Edna Greene Medford

"Just over a century and a half ago, on December 31, 1862, Americans gathered across the country to await word of freedom. When the news arrived late the next day, those gathered responded with prayers and thanks that freedom had finally come. Although the provisions of the president's proclamation were limited (in that it applied only to those states still in rebellion), most people recognized the decree's awesome implications...

When the emancipating decree was issued, slavery had existed in America for more than 200 years. Although we tend to focus on the economic aspects of the institution, we must not forget that slavery was about more than exploitation of labor. It involved denial of basic human rights: the right to be safe from physical abuse; the right to protect one's children from sale; the right to be treated with dignity; the right to come and go as one pleased. With the proclamation's promise, freedmen and women could now dare to dream...

The broader significance of the proclamation is that it was the first step in committing the nation to building a more just society, to providing the equality of opportunity and fairness that President Lincoln envisioned for all Americans. It was a commitment with which we continue to struggle as a nation. But it is on occasions such as this that we have the opportunity to rededicate ourselves to making President Lincoln's vision for America a reality. As this new year begins, let us recommit to stamping out injustice and unfairness wherever we find it, and championing the human rights to which he devoted so much of his life."

Dr. Edna Greene Medford, Professor and Chair of the History Department at Howard University and former Chair of the President Lincoln's Cottage Scholarly Advisory Group, delivered these brief remarks just before midnight at Freedom's Eve. We are delighted to reprint this excerpt in The Proclamation.

Notes from the Desk - Freedom's Eve Edition

"Happy New Year, one and all! My husband and I attended Freedom's Eve at President Lincoln's Cottage this year, an annual event with a wonderful purpose and a very pleasant way to spend New Year's Eve...

For those of you who may not have visited President Lincoln's Cottage yet, it is one of the hidden gems of the Washington, D.C. area and of the Civil War history of this area. It is the place where Lincoln wrote The Emancipation Proclamation and, as such, is a sacred space. The Cottage is not the usual historical site full of dusty artifacts that one goes to view. President Lincoln's Cottage would be better described as a museum of ideas, and sophisticated technology is used to great effect in order to focus the visitors' attention on those ideas. Since they are noble and lofty ones, one tends to leave that space feeling better and more hopeful than one did upon entering it."

-Ashley Moss-Pham, Boyds, MD



Ashley Moss-Pham, a 2014 Civil War Washington Teacher Fellow at President Lincoln's Cottage, attended our Freedom's Eve celebration on New Year's Eve. She shared her experience in an email to friends and we thank her for letting us share an excerpt of that letter with you.

Freedom's Eve Rewind

Ms. Barbara Pederson was inspired to pen this reflective poem after attending Freedom's Eve.



FREEDOM'S EVE - A POEM

A cold air wrapped around the city,
 Holiday lights glowed on every street,
 Echoes of our footsteps sounded,
 As would history this night we'd soon repeat!
 The Cottage stood in subtle glow,
 As we entered there the front door,
 Mostly empty, a few tables and chairs,
 Where he once walked on these wooden floors!
 It was here, this summer cottage, where he stayed,
 Across from the Old Soldiers' Home,
 He left the White House behind several months a year,
 During and while the Civil War bore on!
 As the dim lights cast cool shadows around us,
 My thought - 'tis as 'twas then!
 It was here he drafted the very words,
 At a desk where we think he held the pen!
 O', the power of that one proclamation,
 Affected and changed for better these United States,
 Written and signed by President Lincoln,
 It was the key that opened Freedom's gates!
 So, 'twas on New Year's Day,
 The President of this future united Nation,
 In the year eighteen hundred and sixty-three,
 Signed the Emancipation Proclamation!
 As she walked forward with quiet dignity,
 To speak of this profound, powerful deed,
 I thought if Lincoln could only be here,
 He'd be a proud man, and honored indeed!
 As the clock threw its hands up declaring,
 The year two thousand and fifteen,
 It also marked one hundred and fifty-two years,
 We've come O' so far, yet we've a new page to begin!

What Would You Miss If Your Freedom Were Taken From You?

#WhatIWouldMiss

What would you miss if your freedom were taken from you?

What would you miss if you were a victim of **human trafficking**?

CREATE . SHARE . EMPOWER .

As the cradle of the Emancipation Proclamation, educators at President Lincoln's Cottage work closely with young abolitionists today to build on Lincoln's legacy and commit themselves to his unfinished work. This winter, we are proud to partner with the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on #WhatIWouldMiss, an interactive, social media campaign aimed at raising awareness of human trafficking among teenagers - a vulnerable demographic that is targeted by traffickers.

Spread the word! **Create** a unique post about what you would miss if you were a victim of human trafficking, and include a statistic on human trafficking. Get creative! Use the creative medium of your choice—poetry, visual art, photography, music, video, etc.— to express yourself. **Share** it on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Tumblr](#), [Twitter](#), [Vine](#), or [YouTube](#) using the campaign hashtag **#WhatIWouldMiss**. **Empower** others to take up the fight against human trafficking. Visit www.lincolncottage.org/whatiwouldmiss for contest rules, resources, and more.

All posts submitted by February 27, 2015 will be judged by a jury of representatives from President Lincoln's Cottage, Students Opposing Slavery (SOS), and other anti-trafficking organizations. One winner (aged 14-19) will earn a spot at the 2015 SOS International Summit, and five winners will have their posts featured on the [SOS website](#). Contact the President Lincoln's Cottage Education Department at LincolnEd@savingplaces.org to learn more.

Preservation in Progress: 3D Laser Scanning Records President Lincoln's Cottage in Extraordinary Detail

Dr. Michael Rogers and Dr. Scott Stull recently led a 3D laser scanning team of undergraduate researchers from Ithaca College to survey the interior and exterior of President Lincoln's Cottage. Using a Leica C-10 3D laser scanner that takes 50,000 readings per second, the 3D high resolution scanning recorded all aspects of the building. As Preservation Manager at President Lincoln's Cottage Jeffrey Larry notes, "[t]his is a great opportunity for us to not only document the existing conditions of the Cottage, it provides a platform for us to document, manage and present to the public future preservation projects." Images collected from the scanning will support preservation research and planning at President Lincoln's Cottage.



MICHAEL ROGERS
Associate Professor, Physics and Astronomy,

Media outlets including *The Washington Post*, Fox 5, Voice of America, DCist, and *The Northwest Current* covered the story. Click the image at left to watch the PostTV video that accompanied the digital edition of *The Washington Post* article.

Interested in learning more? Contact John Davison, Associate Director for Development, at JDavison@savingplaces.org.

Banjos and Bourbon: A Party for Preservation

On Sunday May 17, enjoy live bluegrass, sip bourbon on the verandah, and support preservation efforts at President Lincoln's Cottage at our first-ever preservation party! Details to follow.

Contact John Davison, Associate Director for Development at President Lincoln's Cottage, at JDavison@savingplaces.org, for information on the event and to learn how you can support efforts to preserve this historic site.

Photo courtesy Max Krupka, Washington Executive Photography Services.



Follow @LincolnsCottage and Stay Connected

Get the latest updates from the Cottage by following our social media accounts:



Wedding Packages at President Lincoln's Cottage

Wedding Packages



PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S COTTAGE
AT THE SOLDIERS' HOME

President Lincoln's Cottage offers couples an enchanting opportunity: a dream wedding on a hilltop oasis in the center of Washington, DC. The expansive grounds, sweeping views, and historic spaces provide an unforgettable and unique backdrop for wedding ceremonies and celebrations. *Washingtonian Bride & Groom* recognized President Lincoln's Cottage as a Best Wedding Vendor for 2015.

Click [here](#) to learn about site rentals at President Lincoln's Cottage. Contact Sahand Miraminy, Events Coordinator, at 202-688-3732 or at SMiraminy@savingplaces.org with inquiries.



Have You Met The Cottage Tycoon? Bring Home Your Very Own - Exclusive in Our Store!

This plush, loveable little Lincoln pillow explores the rooms, exhibits, and grounds of President Lincoln's Cottage every Friday! Follow his adventures at #CottageTycoon on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

And now, enjoy a Tycoon of your very own! Available exclusively in the President Lincoln's Cottage online store. Shop now - limited number available:

<http://shop.lincolncottage.org>.



Education Programs at President Lincoln's Cottage



Inspire your students at the Cradle of the Emancipation Proclamation! On-campus programs are available for K-12 students, and include a specialized tour of the Cottage and an interactive program component that meets Common Core and national standards of learning. Teacher materials and lesson plans are available to prepare students for their visit.

Contact the Education Department and schedule your class field trip to President Lincoln's Cottage today. Call 202-688-3735 or email LincolnEd@savingplaces.org.

Double Your Impact

When you donate to President Lincoln's Cottage, the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation generously matches your contribution. For example, a gift of \$250 becomes \$500. Your support is critical because President Lincoln's Cottage:

- *is the only National Monument in the country that receives no government operating support;*
- *has no endowment (but budgets responsibly and has no debt either); and*
- *is making a substantial difference through original, transformative programs such as our international Students Opposing Slavery initiative and our effort to bring every DC public school student to Lincoln's beloved home free of charge.*

Help us build a sustainable future for this historic treasure by making a gift today!



**Click here
to donate**

Lincoln's View of "Freedom"

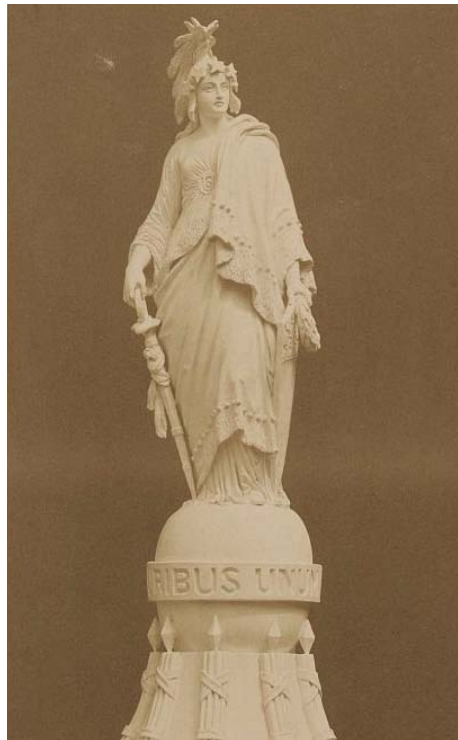
By Curtis Harris

Note from the author: *At President Lincoln's Cottage, Historical Interpreters strive to foster understanding of personal liberty, democracy, citizenship, and opportunity. In order to fully appreciate all facets of all those ideas, one must have a sense of history – the story of how those principles have been fulfilled and denied for Americans. One particularly stunning tool at their disposal in that task is viewing the United States Capitol Dome – and its Freedom statue – from the Cottage. Although a breathtaking view aesthetically, the historical connection between the Dome, Freedom, and the Cottage is transcendent and takes visitors well beyond a hilltop vista in Northwest D.C.*

Ever-Present yet Little-Known

The Dome atop the United States Capitol is one of the most recognizable structures in the country. News media routinely set up shop outside the Capitol to report on the latest congressional rumblings, utilize the Dome as their backdrop when talking heads go tête-à-tête, and roll their credits over a shot of the building as the camera angle zooms in on the Statue of Freedom. However, for all its coverage, the Dome's rich history and powerful symbolism is little known. And much like the United States, it is fundamentally grounded in the peculiar institution of slavery. The Capitol building itself was the product of enslaved black and immigrant Irish labor. The miserable nature of 1790s Washington, D.C., meant that only the desperate

(immigrants) or the coerced (slaves) would work in such conditions. By the 1850s, plans were underway to expand the Dome atop the Capitol to befit the growing Union whose congressmen met beneath it. Indeed, by 1850, the number of states in the Union had ballooned from 13 to 30. And with recent territorial conquests from Mexico, the number was sure to grow quickly.



Model of Freedom, the statue on top of the Capitol Dome. Image courtesy Library of Congress.

Just as explosive in this era was the question of whether those states would be free or slave. Unable to vote in the vast majority of states, and largely enslaved, black Americans pennilessly toiled from sunup to sundown growing crops

that brought massive wealth to the United States. Their resistance to slavery never wavered, but what changed by the 1850s was the increasingly loud drumbeat from sympathetic white Americans that slavery be curtailed, and perhaps even abolished.

A grand compromise – that satisfied no one – on slavery in 1850 collapsed just four years later. Border Ruffians and Jayhawks took to guerilla warfare in Kansas to resolve the slavery question. Congress wasn't much better. In May 1856, Senator Charles Sumner from Massachusetts leveled a scathing verbal assault on his colleague, Andrew Butler of South Carolina, for the bloody mess in Kansas. Two days later, Butler's cousin, Representative Preston Brooks, caned Sumner on the Senate floor in retaliation. Thereafter, many congressmen carried firearms to conduct their duties in the Capitol, Massachusetts defiantly re-elected Sumner that fall despite his severe injuries, and Brooks was deluged with a flood of congratulatory canes from Southerners. It seemed that a prairie lawyer's biblical invocation was true: a house divided could not stand permanently half-slave, half-free.

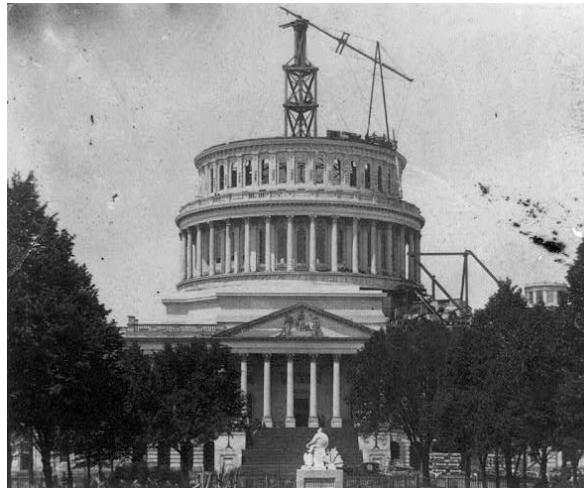
As the country politically fell into chaos, plans for the new Dome continued. Capitol architect Thomas Walter designed a new cast-iron dome in December 1854 and President Franklin Pierce signed legislation in March 1855

funding the proposal. Two months later, May 1855, Thomas Crawford was commissioned to design the statue to adorn the top of the Dome. A year later, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, who oversaw implementation of the project, took issue with Crawford's design for the statue, *Freedom*. Crawford's statue would feature a liberty (or Phrygian) cap, which was long a symbol of freedom from oppression and tyranny. Slaves from Ancient Rome through 1790s Haiti had used the cap as iconography for their liberation. This long association with anti-slavery sentiment soured Secretary Davis, later the President of the Confederacy, on the liberty cap. Davis summed up his objection: "American liberty is original and not the liberty of the freed slave". The liberty cap was scrapped in favor of a war headdress, but *Freedom* would nonetheless be associated with "the liberty of the freed slave" thanks to Philip Reid and Abraham Lincoln.

Construction of the Dome commenced in the fall of 1856 and in March 1859 a plaster cast of *Freedom* arrived in Washington, D.C., from Rome, Italy. However, the Italian sculptor who arrived with the plaster model refused to disassemble it without a pay raise. It is at this moment that Philip Reid, an enslaved American and expert iron worker, volunteered to discern the hidden seams. Painstakingly, but assuredly, Reid found the seams separating the cast into its five parts, much to the delight of the Americans and chagrin of the Italian sculptor.

And the War Came...

As Philip Reid began his labor on *Freedom*, the United States was dissolving into civil war. In December 1860, as South Carolina was exiting the Union, Georgian Alexander Stephens corresponded with the president-elect, Abraham Lincoln, urging a more conciliatory tone on slavery. Lincoln's conclusion



*Construction of the Capitol Dome, 1861.
Image courtesy Library of Congress.*

to Stephens succinctly summed up the friction setting the country afire: "You think slavery is *right* and ought to be extended; while we think it is *wrong* and ought to be restricted. That I suppose is the rub. It certainly is the only substantial difference between us." This is the moral kernel from which Lincoln would grow tremendously during his time as President and at the Cottage.

Four months later, April 1861, Lincoln was President of a fractured Union, Stephens was now Vice President of the Confederacy, and the rancor finally exploded into open warfare. Despite the threat of rebel attack upon the federal capital throughout the summer of 1861, Congress assembled to debate the

country's business while Lincoln continued his work at the White House up Pennsylvania Avenue. And work on the Dome and its statue continued – for practical and inspirational reasons.

Practically speaking, the contractor supplying the government with material for the Dome wanted work to continue so as to continue receiving payment. Not missing a beat, however, Lincoln drove home the symbolic value of raising the Dome while also trying to preserve the Union it served: "If people see the Capitol going on, it is a sign we intend the Union shall go on." And so work on the Dome continued apace. *Freedom* was finished by the end of 1862. Although, finishing touches on the Dome's interior weren't completed until 1866, the exterior was complete in December 1863 and the statue placed atop. So, as Lincoln delivered his Second Inaugural Address, the Union's Capitol was symbolically complete as he meditated on the nation's waning civil war and collapse of slavery.

The Cottage, the Dome, and *Freedom*

All things considered, it is with surprising rapidity that America's bondsmen were legally freed in 1865. As Lincoln attested in his Second Inaugural, "Neither [side] anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease." For Lincoln personally, his heartfelt, unequivocal anti-slavery sentiment became a determined emancipationist zeal during those four years.

In April 1862, Lincoln signed a bill from Congress that outlawed slavery in the District of Columbia. This act made Philip Reid a free man during the final year of *Freedom's* construction. While summering at the Cottage in 1862, Lincoln then labored over the details of the Emancipation Proclamation. During his final year in office, Lincoln helped orchestrate the total abolition of slavery with the 13th Amendment. These events did not happen in a vacuum. Abraham Lincoln's daily experiences living at the Cottage and commuting to the White House provided a host of opportunities to reflect on democracy and liberty.

Still visible from the Cottage today, the Capitol Dome surely gave President Lincoln inspiration. As he mounted his horse for the daily commute, progress, albeit incremental, was visible for the Dome and by extension the country. The cost of that progress was racking up at a far more furious pace, though. Failed campaigns in Virginia and the carnage of Antietam swelled Washington with casualties. The Soldiers' Home Cemetery – just a few hundred yards from the Cottage – received Union soldiers for burial at a harrowing clip during Lincoln's first summer at the Cottage. The pace slackened somewhat in 1863, but only subsided in 1864 because there was simply no room left.



View of the Capitol Dome from President Lincoln's Cottage.

Nearing the city, Lincoln would increasingly have encountered the refugee camps of freed and escaped slaves, as well as the hospitals that tried valiantly to keep wounded and sick soldiers from joining the deceased at the Soldiers' Home Cemetery. It's these scenes – all cascading together – that could lead Lincoln, just a month before he officially enforced the Emancipation Proclamation, to report to Congress that, "In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free -- honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail."

The very same month, December 1862, *Freedom* was finished just in symbolic time for Lincoln's Proclamation to take effect on January 1, 1863. With time, further contemplation, and exhortations from outsiders, Lincoln grew well

beyond the confines of mere emancipation. He enthusiastically defended the service of black men in the U.S. Army, worked strenuously in support of the 13th Amendment, and, days before his assassination, endorsed the right to vote for black men in Louisiana. This self-examination and growth is critical for a democracy like the United States and its citizens.

For visitors to the Cottage, the view down to the Capitol Dome's *Freedom* is the greatest link between our contemporary struggles to achieve liberty and those of Lincoln's generation. Lincoln's daily experiences and commute from the Cottage – and the ensuing sights, thoughts, and people – becomes crystal clear seeing the Dome. Simply seeing *Freedom* solidifies that American democracy for the last 150 years has debated liberty, mourned great leaders, and protested injustice all underneath its vigil. Instantly, people like Lincoln and Reid become real when the Dome and *Freedom* come into view. Their experiences become continuous and relevant with our own. A country's long history becomes as important and personal as a childhood memory.

Curtis Harris is a Program Instructor at the Close Up Foundation, and a former Historical Interpreter at President Lincoln's Cottage.
