



## From the Director

Dear Friends,

This has been a momentous spring, a season of remembrance! We hosted Prince Charles and Camilla, our first annual Lincoln Ideas Forum, NPR's Steve Inskeep and Cokie Roberts, our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration of Lincoln's Last Ride from the White House to the Cottage on April 13, and just this past weekend, our first annual Bourbon & Bluegrass preservation event. We were thrilled that so many of you could enjoy these experiences with us here or online. In case you missed or just want to relive some of these memorable moments, we've included a [collection of photos](#) for your enjoyment.

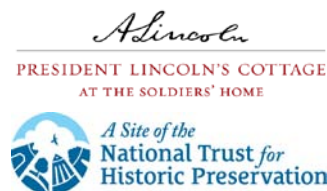


One of the great joys of being at President Lincoln's Cottage is our culture of constantly seeking and sharing knowledge and experiences. We are excited for what's next, including our final [Cottage Conversation](#) of the season - the last in a groundbreaking series of reformatted conversations between scholars, experts, and our audience we've had this year - and our annual [Memorial Day](#) event, currently the only opportunity to experience a guided tour of the neighboring USSAH National Cemetery, the predecessor and contemporary of Arlington National Cemetery. We have a small staff, but your [support](#) and encouragement makes it not only possible but worthwhile.

Our feature-length article is another platform we use to bring you new perspectives and research. In the fall we featured an article on Lincoln and the Immigrant. We're in the midst of developing an exhibit on the same topic, and need your help. For information on sharing your immigration story, [see page 3](#). This issue's feature article, "Lincoln & Women & War" by Candice Shy Hooper, is adapted from her forthcoming book, *Lincoln's Generals' Wives*. Hooper shines a light on women, particularly military wives, who petitioned Lincoln on behalf of their husbands.

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 enjoy hearing from you.

Erin Carlson Mast  
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## Memorial Day 2015

On Monday May 25, commemorate Memorial Day with a wreath laying ceremony and guided tours of the USSAH National Cemetery. 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.*

# Political Cartoons and Freedom of Speech: Michael Kahn and Matt Wuerker at Cottage Conversations



Don't miss the final Cottage Conversation of the season on **Thursday May 21!** Michael Kahn, author of "What Fools These Mortals Be! The Story of Puck - America's First and Most Influential Magazine of Color Political Cartoons," examines the storied history of *Puck* magazine. Matt Wuerker, Editorial Cartoonist for *Politico*, will join Mr. Kahn for a dynamic conversation about the contemporary challenges to artistic freedom and protections of free speech in political cartoons.

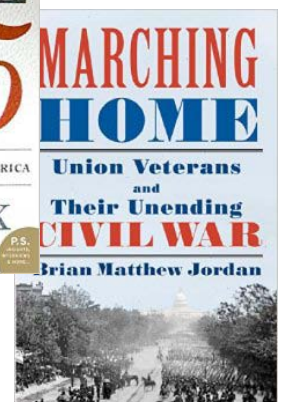
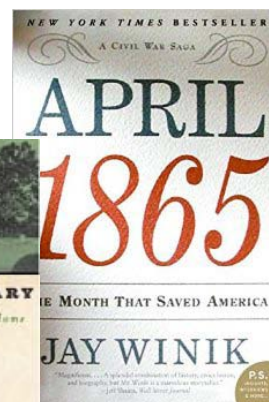
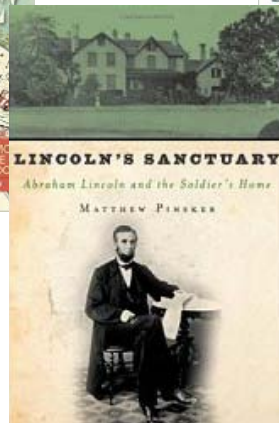
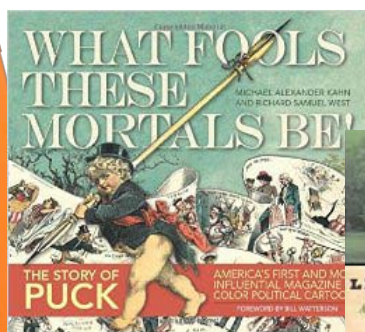


Cottage Conversations, the signature speaker series at the Cottage, offers relaxing evenings to socialize and learn something new about topics related to our 16th president from authors, collectors, and artists. Join us for wine, beer, and light appetizers at a reception in the Robert H. Smith Visitor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

**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](mailto: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.

## Great Gifts: Books and Journals for Dads and Grads

Honor Lincoln's love of literature and the written word by giving the very special dad - or grad - in your life a book. Our store features a wide range of history titles, and the Compendium journals are sure to inspire great ideas. Shop now: visit <http://shop.lincolncottage.org> or call 202-829-0436.





## “A Fantastic Experience” - Events at the Cottage



Trust President Lincoln’s Cottage to give your special event the care and attention it deserves. One client recently raved about working with our team, writing “[t]hank you so very much for all your help. I don’t know how we would have managed without. You have been so gracious and made this a fantastic experience for us and for our guests. We will definitely come back for future events. The aura around the cottage is amazing and very surreal, it is truly a well hidden treasure.”

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

## Commemorate Memorial Day with Guided Tours of the USSAH National Cemetery

Commemorate Memorial Day on **Monday May 25, 2015** with a brief ceremony and **FREE** guided tours of the United States Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Home (USSAH) National Cemetery, the predecessor to Arlington National Cemetery. Pack a picnic lunch and enjoy the beautiful grounds and cool breezes on this historic hilltop after your tour! Register [online](#).

**Wreath Laying Ceremony:** 10:00 am. Meet at bandstand adjacent to Cottage at 9:30 am.

**Cemetery Tours:** 10:45 am and 12:30 pm. Meet at bandstand adjacent to Cottage at 10:15 am and 12:00 pm.



*President Lincoln’s Cottage and the Armed Forces Retirement Home are proud to partner on the Memorial Day program.*



## Honoring Lincoln's Life and Legacy

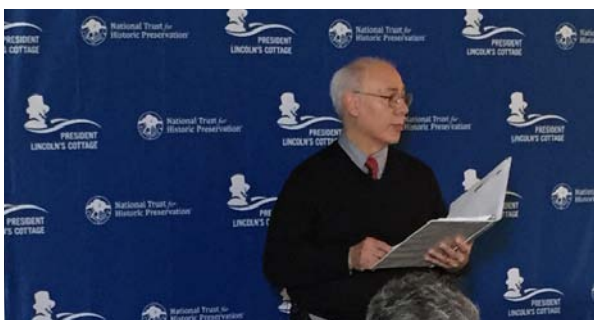
This April, President Lincoln's Cottage commemorated the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's life and legacy with exhibits, programs, and memorial tributes. Numerous news outlets including C-SPAN, Fox 5, NBC 4, The Washington Post, and the Associated Press, covered the programs.



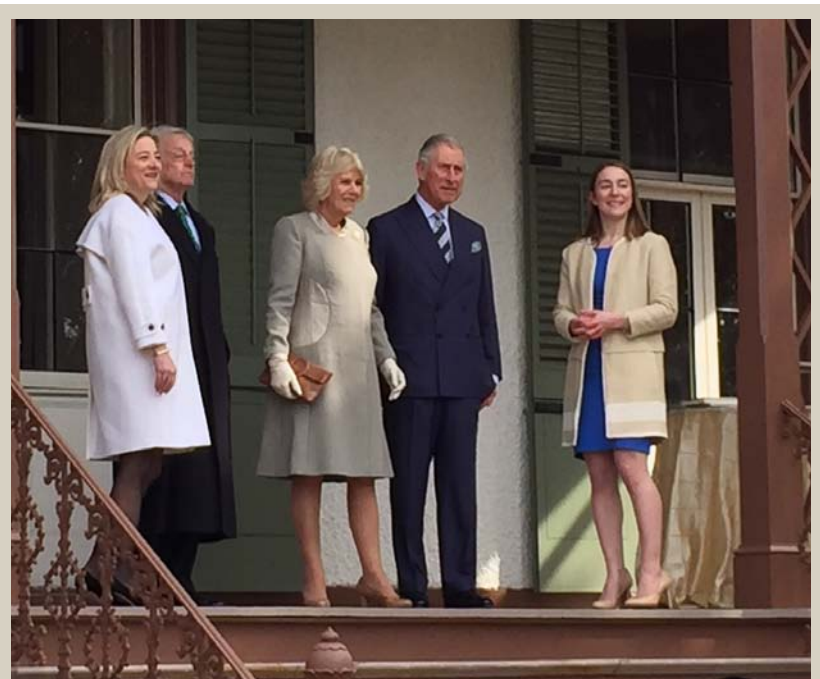
C-SPAN and The Washington Post covered Lincoln's Last Ride, the event retracing Lincoln's commute from the White House to the Cottage, on April 13. Watch a [video](#) of the ceremony and read an [article](#) about the ride. Image credit: C-SPAN (left) and Matt McClain for the Washington Post (right).



NBC 4 highlighted the goblet Lincoln used on his last visit. This [segment](#) was featured in a half hour special on Lincoln.



PreservationNation featured an [excerpt](#) from Milton Shinberg's presentation at the Lincoln Ideas Forum on April 10.



*We were also honored to welcome Their Royal Highnesses Prince Charles and Camilla on their official trip to the United States in March. During their visit to President Lincoln's Cottage, they learned about Lincoln's life here and discussed programs with Executive Director Erin Carlson Mast, Site Council Chair Ruff Fant, and Susan Fant.*



## Honoring Lincoln's Life and Legacy



Scenes from the commemoration, clockwise from top left: draping the Cottage in black bunting cloth, as residents of the Soldiers' Home did in 1865 following Lincoln's death; horses and riders making their way up Vermont Ave retracing Lincoln's Last Ride; and featured speakers from the Lincoln Ideas Forum at the Cottage.

## What Will Your Legacy Be?



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 accessible, protected, and relevant – to keep President Lincoln's Cottage a home for brave ideas – we ask that you 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 Erin Mast, Executive Director: [EMast@savingplaces.org](mailto:EMast@savingplaces.org).



# Calling All Teenage Abolitionists - Registration for the 2015 SOS International Summit is Open

President Lincoln’s Cottage is now accepting applications for the 2015 Students Opposing Slavery (SOS) International Summit from June 22-26, 2015. During the Summit, participants will:

- Continue Abraham Lincoln’s fight for freedom
- Create an international network of young abolitionists to develop big ideas around ending slavery
- Engage with modern abolitionists working to end human trafficking
- Participate in off-site excursions that build teamwork and raise awareness around the modern fight to end slavery

The 2015 SOS International Summit is open to students age 15-18 who have completed grades 9-12. Participation in the Summit is free and lunch is provided each day. Hours are 9:30am-3:30pm Mon-Wed and 9:30am-9:00pm Thurs-Fri. Final program schedule will be shared with participating students in June. Travel to off-site excursions is provided. **Registration is open until May 29, 2015. Download the application and apply today. Learn more at [www.studentsopposingslavery.org/summit](http://www.studentsopposingslavery.org/summit).**



*In the video (above), Molly, Cameron, and Abhishek reflect on what they learned at the 2014 Students Opposing Slavery International Summit, and share their plans for expanding the movement.*

Questions? Contact the Education Department at President Lincoln’s Cottage: 202-688-3731 or [LincolnEd@savingplaces.org](mailto:LincolnEd@savingplaces.org).





# Share Your Immigration Story

Did you or someone you know immigrate to the United States? If so, please consider sharing your story with us! In October 2015, President Lincoln’s Cottage will open a special exhibit on Lincoln and immigration, and we’d love to hear from you.

To schedule an interview, or find out more details about the interview process, please contact Callie Hawkins, Associate Director for Programs, at [CHawkins@savingplaces.org](mailto:CHawkins@savingplaces.org) or 202-688-3731.



# Show Your Support

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 ongoing 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](#)

# Follow @LincolnsCottage and Stay Connected

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



# Lincoln & Women & War

By Candice Shy Hooper

*Adapted from the forthcoming Lincoln's Generals' Wives: Four Women who Influenced the Civil War – For Better and for Worse (Kent State University Press, Spring 2016).*

President Abraham Lincoln was famously accessible to the public. Whether during daylight hours or late at night, Lincoln was almost unfailingly gracious, even if he answered the call in his nightshirt and slippers with a book in his hand. Among his many visitors were women seeking help for their husband's military careers. Abraham Lincoln's unusual personality provided an opening unique in American history for resourceful and fearless military wives to affect their husbands' careers through him. No President before or after made himself as personally available to visitors, exercised such power over individual military appointments in wartime, and had such wide-ranging and curious relationships with women.

Lincoln's reputation is that of a bumbling suitor, an awkward guest in mixed society, and a husband harassed by a harridan of a wife. None of those perspectives provides a complete picture of Lincoln's relationships with women, though. Lincoln had great respect for women, beginning with his mother and stepmother. He courageously supported legislation to give women the vote in his reelection campaign for the Illinois House of Representatives in 1836.<sup>1</sup> Lincoln established easy, open, and enduring relationships with a number of married women, including the

mother of his best friend Joshua Speed and the wife of Illinois Senator Orville Browning. For example, Mrs. Speed gave Lincoln an Oxford Bible, which he kept through his life and Mrs. Browning was a favorite correspondent and the recipient of Lincoln's famous April Fools Day letter describing his courtship of Mary Owens in thinly disguised farce.<sup>2</sup> Relationships with single women were more problematic; Lincoln nearly perfected the art of making a bad first impression. His appearance and manners were unlikely to sweep a young belle off her feet. His were virtues that revealed themselves over time, in conversation, and he especially appreciated women of learning and letters.



*Mary Todd Lincoln in 1846.  
Image courtesy Library of Congress.*

He had been drawn to Mary Todd as much for her shrewd understanding

of politics as for her beauty, and he valued her political insight all of his life. Mary was nearly as ambitious as Lincoln, but in 19th century society, her political aspirations were limited to finding and supporting a husband who would achieve political distinction. That she perceived the jewel beneath Lincoln's homespun exterior is considered by many historians a sign of her political acuity. That she coveted her diamond in the rough could not be doubted: Mary Lincoln was a jealous woman. As a result, her husband's innate awkwardness around women was likely compounded by his knowledge that Mary would react with fury to his interactions with other women.

There were, however, some women whose company he could keep while risking minimal marital friction: widows, wives, daughters, and mothers who streamed through the White House as supplicants for Presidential favor. Particularly in those brief encounters with female strangers, Lincoln could demonstrate his deep compassion or his playful sense of humor with little fear of Mary's wrath. Yet he rarely allowed his respect or sympathy for women to affect his evaluation of their requests. "President Lincoln was a soft touch for women with a genuine case," according to one historian, "but was a hard case when it came to those women who sought to manipulate him."<sup>3</sup>

Echoes of two of those meetings with wives of military officers can still be heard inside and outside



the walls of President Lincoln's Cottage, even though the meetings took place in the White House. The first meeting is a tale of thwarted emancipation. A tangible tie to the second meeting exists just beyond the Cottage grounds, but like knowledge of the meeting itself, it has all but disappeared.

Today's visitors to the Cottage learn it was the sanctuary where Lincoln formulated his reasoning behind the Emancipation Proclamation he signed on January 1, 1863. He had campaigned for the presidency on a platform to stop the spread of slavery into new states. When the Civil War erupted in April, 1861, he was still wrestling with the question of whether a President had the Constitutional authority to free slaves in the existing states. Then, in early September of that same year, Lincoln opened a newspaper and read that one of his generals in Missouri had issued a proclamation freeing slaves.

Lincoln had appointed John Charles Frémont Commander of the Western Military District in May 1861. By July, when General Fremont and his wife Jessie finally arrived in St. Louis, bloody guerrilla actions were tearing apart that volatile state. At his wits' end to bring order to mounting civilian and military chaos, Frémont issued an order for martial law throughout Missouri and included a proclamation of immediate emancipation of slaves belonging to rebels.<sup>4</sup>

Lincoln could not allow a military officer to free slaves. That was a power he believed belonged only to the President, if it existed at all. At that point, he was not sure

it did. It took another year before Lincoln the Lawyer resolved that emancipation was in fact part of Lincoln the President's war powers. In the meantime, Frémont's proclamation prompted Union soldiers to abandon their posts in Kentucky and raised fears of slave insurrection among Border State slave owners loyal to the Union. Lincoln asked Frémont to withdraw his proclamation. Frémont refused. Shortly thereafter, his wife boarded a train for Washington.

During the Civil War, many women urged Lincoln to end slavery. Jessie Benton Frémont was the only woman to ask Lincoln to let her husband do it. She was a brilliant, bold woman, who adored her husband and hated slavery with near equal passion. Her rush to Washington ended badly for both causes. Every account, told through the lens of Lincoln or Jessie, emphasizes their mutual dislike, even fury, by the conclusion of the meeting. Lincoln told a visitor later that evening that Jessie threatened General Frémont would challenge the President's authority if he didn't cooperate. Despite the fact that Jessie wanted to be treated as his intellectual equal, she took great offense when Lincoln called her "Quite a female politician." Worse, though, Jessie telegraphed her husband after the meeting that he should "have copies made" of the proclamation. When Lincoln learned the General distributed copies of the proclamation more than two weeks after his order rescinding it, the President relieved Frémont of his command.

Lincoln must have thought of Frémont often in the Cottage as he framed his own Emancipation Proclamation. In a meeting with

abolitionists at the White House in late January 1863, Lincoln speculated that Frémont's fate was not unexpected, at least not if history were a guide. "[T]he fact is that the pioneer in any movement is not generally the best man to carry that movement to a successful issue. It was so in old times, wasn't it?" he mused. "Moses began the emancipation of the Jews, but didn't take Israel to the Promised Land after all."<sup>5</sup> Jessie, who likely heard of Lincoln's philosophical observation from her friends in the meeting, probably did not find Lincoln's perspective comforting. She forever blamed Lincoln for robbing Frémont of credit for emancipating slaves. Until her death in 1902, Jessie never stopped fighting for her husband's legacy.



*Caroline Reynold Slemmer.  
Image courtesy Library of Congress.*

Fighting for her husband came naturally to another military wife, who also took her cause to a man in Washington. Caroline Reynold Slemmer was one of the 19th century's most beautiful women on either side of the Atlantic Ocean. When challenged by a friend to point out the room in a home near

London where she had received three marriage proposals on the same evening, she protested: "Oh, no, that is absurd; one was in the garden."<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, Lincoln was a famously homely man, who took the advice of a young girl and hid part of his face with a beard to improve his looks. The two met in 1861, when she traveled to the White House to petition Lincoln to promote her husband.

Lieutenant Adam J. Slemmer was one of the earliest heroes of a war that did not begin until after his name had been splashed across headlines. On the same day in January 1861 that Florida adopted its resolution of secession, its "Southern Militia" determined to seize the vulnerable federal naval yard near Pensacola, Florida. The two most senior officers were away on leave, so young Lieutenant Adam J. Slemmer ordered a perilous transfer of the eighty-one-man garrison from Fort Barrancas to the marginally more defensible Fort Pickens. Lt. Slemmer held Fort Pickens against overwhelming Rebel odds, and the fort remained in Union hands throughout the Civil War.

Caroline believed her husband deserved a promotion for his brave defense of the Union, but none was forthcoming during the Buchanan administration's final days. Frustrated but determined, the woman who would later count Alfred Lord Tennyson, George Eliot, and Mark Twain in her social circle, decided to take matters into her own hands after the new President took office. Many years later, her niece recalled "one of the many legends about Aunt Cara," writing:

"She went, with two brothers-in-law, to an arranged interview with the President; saying to herself, 'After all he's only a man like any other,' by which she meant that, of course, she could get him to do what she wanted... They found the President sitting at a writing table;... presently Aunt Cara, who was standing beside him, laid her hand light on his shoulder, as she put forward her plea. Mr. Lincoln smiled, and gently placed his hand on hers for a moment, and the ice was broken... Aunt Cara always said that Lincoln was the greatest man she ever met, so perhaps she had not found him quite so easy to manage as she had expected."



*Soldiers standing at the entrance to Ft. Slemmer.  
Image courtesy Library of Congress.*

Lincoln did respond to beautiful "Aunt Cara" and her plea. In the middle of 1861, Lincoln wrote: "List of officers I wish to remember, when I make appointments from the officers of the regular Army -- Maj. Anderson, Capt. Doubleday, Capt Foster, Maj. Hunter, Lieut. Slemmer — His pretty wife says, a major, or first captain." Indeed, Slemmer was soon promoted to Major, and later to Brigadier General.

Another honor came Slemmer's way that first year of the war, a military addition to Lincoln's summer neighborhood. Mounting four guns inside a ninety-three-yard earthen perimeter, Fort Slemmer was one of the smallest links in the vital chain of military outposts hastily built to protect the nation's capital. Named for one of the war's first heroes, it can also be remembered as a tribute to his loyal, audacious wife. Today, faint traces of Fort Slemmer lie less than a mile southeast of the Cottage.

Indeed, the nearly invisible Fort Slemmer may perfectly symbolize those women, often lost to history, who bravely petitioned Abraham Lincoln on behalf of their husbands who fought to save the Union.

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1. Michael Burlingame, *Lincoln, A Life, Vol. 1*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 136.
  2. David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1995), 69.
  3. Richard K. Behn, "Mr. Lincoln and Friends," Gilder Lehrman Institute website, [www.mrlincolnanfriends.org](http://www.mrlincolnanfriends.org)
  4. Allan Nevins, *Frémont: Pathmarker of the West*, (New York: Longmans Green, 1955), 501, 502.
  5. Quoted in Allan Guelzo, *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 77, 78
  6. All quotes about Caroline Slemmer from Gwen Ravenat, *Period Piece, A Victorian Childhood* (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1952), 88-92.
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*Candice Shy Hooper holds a journalism degree from the University of Illinois, a law degree from Georgetown University and a Master of Arts degree in history from George Washington University. She is a member of the President Lincoln's Cottage Site Council.*

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