



Kevin J. Wood
Portrayals of President Abraham Lincoln
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Lincoln on the Gettysburg Address

Program for Libraries, Senior Residences, Community Groups, Etc.

The Gettysburg Address is Abraham Lincoln's most well-known speech, but while many people are familiar with the words and have a general idea of the context – a dedication ceremony for a cemetery for those soldiers who died in the great battle which took place there – they are unfamiliar with many other interesting aspects of the speech and Mr. Lincoln's trip to Gettysburg.

The audience will enjoy hearing a first-hand account from Abraham Lincoln himself of the genesis and development of his famous speech. He provides background and context to the familiar phrases, from "Four score and seven years ago" to "government of the people, by the people, for the people", and many more in between. He explains how he wrote his speeches, thus debunking a common myth about when and how he wrote this, his most famous, one. In fact, the audience will essentially witness him create his speech over the period of the program before their very eyes. He also discusses other events happening around the same time, e.g. the military situation, a very important social event, and seeing a certain John Wilkes Booth in a play at Ford's Theatre. He talks about his trip to Gettysburg, including his 'pre-speech' the evening before upon being serenaded. And he shares some of the extremely varied and interesting responses to his speech at the time, as his words were alternatively characterized as thrilling, inspiring, and eloquent, or silly, dishwatery, and ludicrous.

This program is appropriate for both adults and for children from nine years old on up. It is structured as a one-man play of either one act (one hour plus Q&A) or two acts with an intermission (1:45 plus Q&A). It is also available virtually, whether live via video conferencing (Zoom) or live-streaming (Facebook Live or YouTube Live) or as a pre-recorded video. And it is also available in Spanish (*Lincoln sobre el Discurso de Gettysburg*). An especially appropriate time of year for the program would be around the anniversary of the speech, November 19.

Mr. Lincoln is portrayed by Kevin Wood, a professional Lincoln presenter who bears a remarkable resemblance to "the Great Emancipator" and who is extremely knowledgeable about his life and times. Mr. Wood has been portraying Mr. Lincoln since the year 2000, and on a professional basis since 2015. He has made over 1,300 appearances in 31 states plus Washington DC and two foreign countries: Canada and Spain. Mr. Wood also writes a blog – "*Loath to Close... Still!*" – which encourages others to reflect upon and learn from President Lincoln's life and legacy. For more information, visit www.mrlincoln.com.