

Earl's Diary - Saturday - May 25, 2013

Dear Loyal Readers,

Our day started with breakfast with other residents of the RV park. We were treated to pancakes, sausage, bacon, biscuits, gravy and juice. While we were there about 10 other residents came in. This morning it was overcast and a little rainy. That didn't look good for our trip to Springfield! But - we headed off anyway.

When we got to downtown Springfield it was actually raining. We scurried into the Lincoln Presidential Museum.

The museum was so well done that we spent three hours learning everything about Abraham Lincoln that anyone would ever want to know. We could take photographs in the entry Plaza, but not in any of the galleries. Therefore I was limited as to what parts of the museum to show. I did take most of the photos in this report. There are a couple taken inside the galleries I found on the internet.



Life-like statues of the entire Lincoln Family standing in front of a White House replica in the entry plaza were on hand for all to photograph. It looks like someone snuck in!

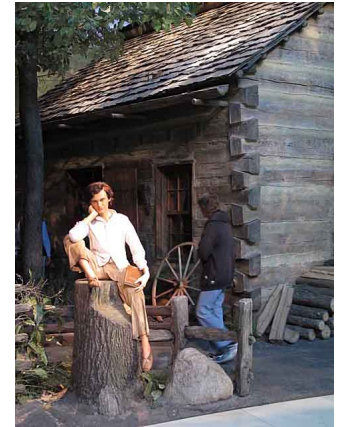


Life-like figures on the porch of the White House replica.

Mary Lincoln is ready to entertain Washington elite.



The Plaza is at the center of the museum, an open gathering place from which all the areas of the museum are accessed. All galleries and experiences are arranged around the Plaza, which becomes a central orientation point. It welcomes and invites visitors to journey through the remarkable life and times of Abraham Lincoln, from his childhood through his presidency.



The museum contains life-size dioramas of Lincoln's boyhood home, areas of the White House, the presidential box at Ford's Theater, and the settings of key events in Lincoln's life, as well as pictures, artifacts and other memorabilia. Original artifacts are changed from time to time, but the collection usually includes items like the original hand written Gettysburg Address, a signed Emancipation Proclamation, his glasses and shaving mirror, Mary Todd Lincoln's music box, items from her White House china, her wedding dress, and more.



One of the museum's permanent exhibits, *Campaign of 1860*, features the late "Meet the Press" anchor Tim Russert. It was very entertaining as it superimposed today's TV campaigning on 1861's election.

In addition to its exhibits, the Lincoln Museum runs two special effects theater shows, *Lincoln's Eyes* and *Ghosts of the Library*. Both shows run several times an hour.



Occupying an entire city block in downtown Springfield, Illinois, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum is the largest Presidential Museum. With over 50,000 square feet devoted to state-of-the-art full-immersion exhibits, special effects theaters and displays of original artifacts, it is also the first major **Experience Museum** of its kind.

The Lincoln Home

It was really raining when we came out of the museum but we stopped by the Lincoln Home anyway. The tickets for the free tour were all gone for the day so we decided to forgo that experience. We did walk by (in the rain) to take a couple of pictures.

The Lincoln family lived in this house from 1844 until they left for Washington. The Lincoln Home is located in a historic four-block neighborhood that looks much as it did in the mid-1800s, complete with wooden sidewalks. Beautifully restored to its 1860 appearance, the Greek Revival house was Abraham and Mary Lincoln's home for 17 years. In 1844 they bought it for \$1,200 and some land from the Rev. Charles Dresser, who performed their marriage ceremony in 1842. Three of the four Lincoln sons were born

here, and one (Edward) died here in 1850 at nearly four years of age. When Lincoln became a presidential candidate the house became a magnet for visitors, parades, rallies and other political festivities. After holding farewell receptions there in 1861, the Lincolns rented it, sold most of their furniture, and entrusted the family dog to a neighbor.

Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln donated the family home to the State of Illinois in 1887 under the condition that it would forever be well-maintained and open to the public at no charge.

Lincoln's Tomb



Along with the Lincoln Home, several other structures within the four-block area are also preserved. All the homes have been restored to their appearance during the time Lincoln lived in the neighborhood.

It was still raining when we stopped by Lincoln's Tomb. However, we pushed onward anyway!

The Lincoln Tomb is the final resting place of Abraham Lincoln, his wife Mary, and three of their four sons, Edward, William, and Thomas. Their eldest son, Robert T. Lincoln, is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



Large pedestals serve as bases for four bronze sculptures, each with a group of figures representing one of the four Civil War services—infantry, artillery, cavalry, and navy. A taller base on the obelisk's south side holds a heroic bronze statue of Lincoln.



Interior rooms of the Tomb are finished in a highly polished marble trimmed with bronze. The south entrance opens into a rotunda, where hallways lead into the burial chamber. The rotunda and corridors contain reduced-scale reproductions of important Lincoln statues as well as plaques with excerpts from Lincoln's Springfield farewell speech, the Gettysburg Address, and his Second Inaugural Address. Lincoln's remains rest in a concrete vault ten feet below the marble floor of the burial chamber. A massive granite cenotaph marking the gravesite is flanked by the Presidential flag and flags of the states in which the Lincoln family resided. Crypts in the chamber's south wall hold the remains of Lincoln's wife and three of their sons.



The site was dedicated in 1874.



Wouldn't you know it, after we left Lincoln's Tomb it stopped raining and the sun tried to come out. Oh well, you know what they do in Texas about rain? Let it rain! Perhaps tomorrow will be a better day!

Since we were in town most of the day, Alan and Michele thought I should have one more experience - dinner at Cracker Barrel. Now THAT was a first time experience. The dinner was very good and there was a lot to choose from on the extensive menu. Shopping at the country store afterwards provided the evening's entertainment. Fortunately my Impulse Buying Filter was engaged so I walked out without buying anything!

Do you remember several days ago I told you about this German style Market (Aldi) that Michele has shopped at in Germany? They are also here in the midwest. We ran across another one here in Litchfield. Since I had my camera handy, I will give you a peek. They all look very similar.



No carts all over the parking lot. To use one, you place a quarter in the slot. Upon returning the cart to the line, your quarter is released from the lock.



Wide aisles with products displayed in their original cases.



Notice cashier sitting down (Sitting down? What's this world coming to?) placing purchases back in cart. No bagging groceries! You do that yourself at another table! Oh yes, bring your own bag or box OR pay for one of their bags. (What's this world coming to?)



Wow! What an interesting and educational day for me. It was truly exciting to see so many interesting things. Tomorrow we are returning to Springfield to see what else we can see. Until then, thanks for coming along with me again! Bye for now - - Earl