



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Gettysburg braces for traffic battle in 2010

PennDOT has scheduled three major projects in the borough.

By ERIN JAMES, York Daily

Record/Sunday News, December 9, 2009

With three major road projects scheduled for Gettysburg borough next year, residents, commuters and tourists might need to take a more creative approach to getting around during construction season.

Almost definitely, traffic will be a hassle in 2010, borough Manager John Lawver said.

"Ride a bicycle," he advised.

Though efforts are made on the state and local levels to minimize the impact, construction season and tourist season inconveniently coincide in Gettysburg -- where millions visit every year to experience the small town that was a turning point of the Civil War.

Lawver said he expects that next year -- the 147th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg -- will be a real problem from the perspective of someone trying to navigate the town from behind a wheel.

But there is a method to the madness.

State and local officials say they want to address needed infrastructure repairs in the years leading up to 2013 -- the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and a year all expect will bring increased traffic and tourists.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation wants to "steer clear of the major roads and bridges in 2013 as much as we can," spokesman Greg Penny said.

Next year, PennDOT has plans to completely reconstruct Route 116 westbound from its intersection with Baltimore Street to just beyond the

borough limits into Cumberland Township.

"That's going to be a dig-everything-out-and-start-over job," Lawver said.

PennDOT plans to bid that project in February for an estimated cost of \$1.6 million. Lawver said he expects Route 116 West will be closed for the duration of that project, which PennDOT estimates will be finished sometime in December 2010.

Work on Route 30 west of Gettysburg will be bid in the same contract for an estimated cost of \$610,000.

PennDOT also plans to repave Route 30 East from Lincoln Square to the Rock Creek bridge. That project will be bid in May for an estimated cost of \$1 million, and construction will begin sometime after July 4. Work should be complete in October.

Traffic flow will likely change throughout that project, Lawver said, adding that he does not expect the road will close completely.

Gettysburg Park Rangers offer free lecture series

NPS Press release, December 15, 2009

Weapons of the battle, Lee's retreat and Meade's pursuit from Gettysburg, and the experience of battle on July 2 are among the topics of the 2010 National Park Service series of free winter lectures, Gettysburg: Perspectives on the Battle and Campaign at Gettysburg National Military Park.

National Park Rangers will offer the programs on weekends beginning Sunday, January 10 and running through Sunday, February 28. They are free of charge and will be held at the new Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center, in the Ford Motor Company Fund Education Center. Programs begin at

1:30 p.m. and last approximately one hour.

The lecture dates are: January 10, 16, 23, 24, 30; February 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, and 28.

For more information go to Gettysburg National Military Park's website at www.nps.gov/gett or call 717/ 334-1124 x 8023.

Gettysburg National Military Park Mid-Winter Lecture Series Gettysburg: Perspectives on the Battle and Campaign This series of indoor programs will be held Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 P.M. in the Ford Education Center at the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center.

Week #1

Sunday, January 10

Colonel Sharpe and The Bureau of Military Intelligence -- Angie Atkinson

Week #2

Saturday, January 16

Thinking Bigger -- Gettysburg in Space and Time -- Troy Harman

Week #3

Saturday, January 23

Civil War Maladies -- The Cases of Robert E. Lee, A. P. Hill and Richard Ewell -- Matt Atkinson

Sunday, January 24

E. P. Alexander and Resolving Conflicting Accounts of the Battle of Gettysburg -- Karlton Smith

Week #4

Saturday, January 30

The Weapons of Gettysburg -- Tom Holbrook

Week #5

Saturday, February 6

The Veterans and Gettysburg: How Veterans Shaped the Battlefield Park -- John Heiser

Sunday, February 7

"To Judge and Act for Myself" -- The Experiences of Colonel Charles Wainwright, Soldier & Democrat -- Bert Barnett



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Week #6

Saturday, February 13

"Unwilling Witness to the Rage of Gettysburg" – The Experience of Battle on July 2 – D. Scott Hartwig
Sunday, February 14

The Federal Fight When it Wasn't – The 24 Hours Between July 1 Collapse and July 2 Battle – Chuck Teague

Week #7

Saturday, February 20

Lee's Retreat and Meade's Pursuit – Troy Harman

Sunday, February 21

Gettysburg, The Turning Point . . .
But Not as You Think – Bill Hewitt

Week #8

Saturday, February 27

"More May Have Been Required of Them Than They Were Able to Perform" – Pickett's Charge – Matt Atkinson

Sunday, February 28

Pettigrew and Trimble: New Insights Into the Other Half of Pickett's Charge – Karlton Smith

Platts: Expand

Gettysburg Military Park to include train station

By KATHARINE HARMON, York Daily Record/Sunday News, December 17, 2009

The train station where President Abraham Lincoln arrived to deliver the Gettysburg Address might become a part of the Gettysburg National Military Park, if U.S. Rep. Todd Platts, R-York County, gets his way.

Platts introduced legislation this week to expand the boundaries of the military park to include the Lincoln Train Station and 45 acres of donated land in Cumberland Township, Adams County, in order to preserve it.

"The preservation of the Lincoln Train Station will help inspire future generations to better appreciate the significance of the Gettysburg Campaign, the Civil War and the bravery of soldiers who, in President Lincoln's words, 'gave the last full measure of devotion,'" Platts said Thursday in a news release.

The Lincoln Train Station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and also served as a hospital during the Battle of Gettysburg. It is home to the Pennsylvania Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

For the past two years, the station has been operated by the National Trust for Historic Gettysburg and is owned by Gettysburg borough. The two approached the park asking it to incorporate the station into its borders to ensure its preservation.

The borough's involvement with the train station goes back a decade, when the children of the late George Olinger, a Gettysburg businessman, donated the building for no compensation, but on the condition that it be restored and reopened as a museum.

The 1859 station then underwent a \$3 million restoration project and reopened to the public in July 2007.

But the Gettysburg Borough Council voted in June 2008 to sell the historic structure to the Park Service for a minimum of \$722,000. The final figure will be determined by an appraisal of market value.

Since then, the borough has been waiting for an act of Congress to move the process forward.

The National Park Service plans to use the station as an information station and orientation center in downtown Gettysburg, the news release states.

The legislation also expands the park's boundaries to include 45 acres

of land along Plum Run in Cumberland Township that was donated to the National Park Service. The donated land touches land already owned by the park service, and in protecting it all, Platts said, the legislation would forbid the use of eminent domain for acquisition of either property.

Congressman Gordon secures funding for Stones River Battlefield Park

Murfreesboro Post, December 16, 2009

Congressman Bart Gordon announced today he was able to secure funding for Stones River National Battlefield to improve the historic site and make it more accessible to visitors.

Stones River National Battlefield received \$1.5 million, which will be used to improve the entrance on Thompson Lane and continue construction of the much-needed access roads for the tour bus route.

The project will allow visitors to see new portions of the battlefield and improve the overall visitor experience.

"The Stones River Battlefield is one of the most popular attractions in Middle Tennessee. It attracts more than 200,000 people each year," said Gordon. "This project will change the face of the park, making the entrance noticeable and inviting to all, which will help to attract even more visitors and benefit Murfreesboro's local economy."

Gordon has been instrumental in obtaining funds for the Stones River National Battlefield. The Battlefield was once among the nation's 10 most endangered civil war battlefields.

Over the years, Gordon has helped secure funds that have led to nearly



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doubling the battlefield area that is now protected.

"The battle at Stones River was one of the most important fights to take place during the Civil War," Gordon said. "Historians conclude the battle was one of 45 – out of 10,500 armed battles and skirmishes – that had a significant effect on the outcome of the war. Further preserving the site is important for Middle Tennessee's history."

Gib Backlund, Chief of Operations at Stones River National Battlefield, said, "When the project is complete, it will enable us to attract many more people and help us better tell visitors the story of the Civil War battle that took place here in Murfreesboro. We are extremely grateful for Congressman Gordon's support in helping us obtain these funds."

Grand Army of Republic connected to Stones River Battle

MIKE WEST, Murfreesboro Post,
January 3, 2010

Once a powerful organization, the Grand Army of the Republic has slipped to an almost forgotten footnote to the Civil War. The GAR was organized by Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson on April 6, 1866, in Decatur, Ill. It was more of a fraternal organization, but it incorporated military traditions as well. It was divided into "Departments" at the state level and "Posts" at the community level and military-style uniforms were worn by its members. There were posts in every state in the U.S. and several overseas.

The organization wielded considerable political clout nationwide. Between 1868 and 1908, no Republican was nominated to the presidency without the endorsement

of the GAR. In 1868, General Order #11 of the GAR called for May 30 to be designated as a day of memorial for Union veterans; originally called "Decoration Day," it later became Memorial Day.

GAR was also active in issues including pension legislation and establishing retirement homes for soldiers. The influence of the GAR led to the creation of the Old Soldiers' Homes of the late 19th century, which evolved into the current United States Department of Veterans Affairs. By 1890 the organization had 490,000 members. Each year, the GAR held a "National Encampment" from 1866 to 1949 when final encampment was held at Indianapolis. At that session, the few surviving members voted to retain the existing officers in place until the organization's dissolution.



This GAR monument still stands in Washington D.C. It was erected in honor of the organization's founder, Dr. Benjamin Stephenson.

Because of that decision, Theodore Augustus Penland of Oregon, the GAR's commander at the time, became its last. In 1956, after the death of the last member, Albert Woolson, the GAR was formally dissolved.

Penland was a national figure during his days as a top Grand Army of the Republic official.

He was born on Jan. 23, 1849 in Elkhart County, Ind. He was living in Portland, Ore. when he died at age 101 in 1950. Only eight other surviving Union Army veterans were alive at that time, Joseph Clovese, Hiram Randall Gale, Lansing A. Wilcox, Douglas T. Story, Israel Adam Broadsword, William Allen Magee, James Albert Hard and Albert Henry Woolson.

Penland's personal war story was limited. He entered the Union Army at Goshen, Ind. at age 16, in early 1865 and served with Company A of the 152nd Indiana Infantry. He saw no combat, serving guard duty instead along the Potomac River. He was discharged a few months later at Charleston, W.Va.

However, his elder family members fought and lost their lives during some of the worst fighting of the Civil War.

His father, John Penland, died as the result of a wound he received at the Battle of Stones River.

John had enlisted as a private in K Company, 57th Indiana Infantry on Oct. 15, 1862. He was wounded in action on Dec. 31, 1862 when he was grazed in the gut by a cannon ball. He was left for dead on the Stones River battlefield and walked back to camp holding in his guts.

John died in the Union's First Division field hospital at Overall's Creek on Jan. 4, 1863 at the age of 45 and is buried in the Stones River National



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Cemetery in grave number 1444 in Section D.

Two of Penland's brothers died at Andersonville, the infamous Confederate prison near Americus, Ga. More than 12,000 Union prisoners died there due to disease, malnutrition and exposure.

As for Theodore Penland, his fame grew even into the 20th Century as his lure for adventure drew him to the American West.

In 1868, Penland literally walked from Indiana to California, living briefly in Cheyenne, Wyo. before ending up in Sacramento, Calif. and then moving onto Nevada. He worked in the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the Union Pacific Railroad through 1869 when the golden spike completed the transcontinental line at Promontory Point, Utah.

After a brief return to Indiana, Penland's other residences included Michigan, Los Angeles, San Diego, and, ultimately, Portland, Ore. Later during his long life, Penland repeated these long transcontinental walks by journeys on trains and even by airplane. His travels even took him to Australia and New Zealand. Until the end of his life he remained interested in veterans' affairs and in the fraternal and charitable activities of the Grand Army of the Republic. He attended battlefield reunions at Gettysburg as well as National and Department Encampments of the GAR.

As one of the final survivors of the Civil War, he held the top office of Commander in the Department of Oregon from 1935 until his death and was a national GAR officer from 1941. He held membership in 32 patriotic orders including the GAR. Penland enjoyed giving talks on his experiences in the Civil War, of the time he saw President Abraham

Lincoln and on the virtues of "living carefully."

His distinctive singing voice was a feature of GAR firesides, with a favorite "Tenting On The Old Camp Ground." In later years, he enjoyed talking and singing on the radio – an amazing development for someone born during the beginning years of telegraphy – and speaking with young people.

Penland took the train to his final GAR encampment in Indianapolis where the few surviving members voted to retain the existing officers until the organization's dissolution, which came in 1956 following the death of Albert Woolson, the organization's last member. Woolson, like Penland, never saw action during the Civil War, but he was the son of Union soldier who died of wounds received at the Battle of Shiloh. When he died at age 106 in 1956, he was the last surviving Union Army veteran, outliving James Albert Hard of the 37th New York Volunteer Infantry (who was the last surviving Union Army combat veteran) by three years.

Before his death, Woolson deeded the GAR's property over to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. The GAR's records went to the Library of Congress, and its badges, flags and official seal went to the Smithsonian Institution.

Until its dissolution, the GAR was headquartered in one half of the 1893 Chicago Main Library on Michigan Avenue between Washington and Randolph Streets.

The current Chicago Cultural Center, which occupies all of the former library space, has preserved the entire building with special attention to the original GAR meeting hall. On a marble frieze are carved ivory inscriptions representing all the main

Civil War battles. The building is entirely free to the public. The collection of Civil War artifacts once displayed there is now preserved at the Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago.

John Brown's funeral re-enacted by descendant

By NATHAN BROWN, Adirondack Daily Enterprise, December 8, 2009
LAKE PLACID - After 150 years, Mary Brown is buried with her husband, at least symbolically.

Alice Keesey Mecoy, John Brown's great-great-great-granddaughter, had a small box of earth from her great-great-great-grandmother Mary's grave in Saratoga, Calif., near San Jose, and shoveled it onto John's snow-blanketed grave Tuesday afternoon. Simultaneously, her father was doing the same at Mary's grave with a box of earth from John's.



David Bruno (front) and Lee Clark carry a coffin that is supposed to be John Brown's out of Brown's farmhouse Tuesday afternoon as part of a re-enactment of his funeral in Lake Placid. (Enterprise photo — Nathan Brown)

Many of the militant abolitionist's descendants do not like to talk about it, and Mecoy is the only one that has been involved in the commemoration activities. She didn't find out she was



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descended from Brown until she was 16, and her father didn't admit they were descended from Brown until two years ago, by which time Mecoy had done research and started to give speeches about Brown. Mecoy said the Lake Placid event, and her father's participation, marks the "culmination of a year that has been very emotional to me."

Tuesday was the 150th anniversary of John Brown's burial at his farm in North Elba, and a couple of dozen people attended a re-enactment of a shorter version of his funeral in a tent next to the farmhouse. The re-enactors did not actually bury the coffin used in Tuesday's ceremony.

Greg Artzner, half of the folk duo Magpie, which has played at several of the events commemorating the 150th anniversary of Brown's trial and hanging for attacking a federal arsenal, played the Rev. Joshua Young, the Unitarian minister who buried Brown. Young, who was involved in the Underground Railroad, was thrown out of the church for burying Brown, according to Naj Wikoff, head of John Brown Coming Home, which has organized the commemorative activities in this area. Wikoff re-enacted the role of Wendell Phillips, a Boston orator and noted anti-slavery activist, and read the eulogy Phillips gave Brown. In his eulogy, Phillips said the raid had been effective in exposing the weakness of the slave system and intensifying support of abolition.

"God said, 'That work is done; you have proved that a slave state is only fear in the mask of despotism; come up higher, and baptize by your martyrdom a million hearts into holier life,'" Wikoff/Phillips said.

Ironically, given the Civil War that followed soon after and ended

slavery, Phillips predicted slavery would end nonviolently.

"His (Brown's) words - they are stronger even than his rifles," Phillips/Wikoff said. "These crushed a state. Those have changed the thoughts of millions, and will yet crush slavery."

Most of Brown's actual funeral ceremony 150 years ago was held inside the farmhouse, said Brendan Mills, the state historic site's caretaker who also enacted the role of one of the mourners. It was a cold day, Mills said, and Mary Brown was exhausted by the six-day trip back from Virginia with her husband's body.

Artifacts reveal lesser-known side of Lincoln's murder

By James R. Carroll, Louisville (KY) Courier-Journal, January 4, 2010
WASHINGTON — It is the size of a thumbnail, its once-round form now oblong with misshapen edges.

This little object is the handmade ball of britannia — an alloy of tin, copper, lead and antimony — that John Wilkes Booth fired out of his Philadelphia Derringer on the night of April 14, 1865, into the head of President Abraham Lincoln.

The bullet that killed the Kentucky-born 16th president is among a number of artifacts associated with his murder and autopsy in an exhibition called "Abraham Lincoln: The Final Casualty of the War."

The exhibit is running indefinitely, as part of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial, at the National Museum of Health & Medicine on the campus of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Of the many exhibitions marking the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth near Hodgenville, Ky., this compact

medical museum offering is the most unusual and, perhaps, macabre to some.

But even now, Booth's bullet has a power and mystery to it that strikes the modern viewer in the same way it did Dr. Edward Curtis, one of the Army surgeons who conducted the autopsy on Lincoln less than five hours after the president died.

Working in a guest room on the second floor of the White House, Curtis and another surgeon had opened Lincoln's head and removed the brain down to the track of the lead ball, which ran from the left rear of the president's skull to just behind his left eye.

Curtis later wrote a letter to his mother describing what happened next: "Not finding (the ball) readily, we proceeded to remove the entire brain, when, as I was lifting the latter from the cavity of the skull, suddenly the bullet dropped out through my fingers and fell, breaking the solemn silence of the room with its clatter, into an empty basin that was standing beneath.

"There it lay upon the white china, a little black mass no bigger than the end of my finger — dull, motionless and harmless, yet the cause of such mighty changes in the world's history as we may perhaps never realize."

The assassin's bullet has been on display for years at the medical museum as part of a larger exhibit on Civil War medicine.

"The bicentennial gave us an opportunity to expand upon the story that we were already telling," said museum spokesman Tim Clarke Jr.

Lincoln's murder and the autopsy was a special focus of the museum from the moment of the assassination. Museum doctors were in attendance at Lincoln's death, and museum illustrator Hermann Faber sketched



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the room in the Petersen House minutes after the president's body was removed.

The fragile pencil sketch on paper is part of the special Lincoln exhibit.

Curtis' account of the autopsy and other autopsy notes also are included, along with the doctor's blood-stained cuff, which his wife cut from his shirt and saved.

The primitive state of medical knowledge and treatment in 1865 is underscored by another artifact in the exhibition: a probe used by Surgeon General Joseph K. Barnes to search for the bullet.

Barnes poked around inside Lincoln's head about four hours after the shooting. It's unlikely he or other doctors had any hopes of saving their patient.

In fact, the diagnosis was pronounced only minutes after the shot was fired. Dr. Charles A. Leale, an Army surgeon, was the first to reach Lincoln in his box at Ford's Theatre.

"As I looked at the president, he appeared to be dead," Leale wrote in a 1909 pamphlet, "Lincoln's Last Hours," that is part of the exhibition. "His eyes were closed and his head had fallen forward. He was being held upright in his chair by Mrs. Lincoln, who was weeping bitterly."

The doctor had Lincoln put on the floor. Straddling the president, Leale cleared Lincoln's airway, performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and massaged the heart through the chest. After some minutes, Lincoln appeared to improve slightly.

But finding the deep wound behind the president's left ear and noting his comatose condition, Leale declared: "This wound is mortal. It is impossible for him to recover."

Leale wrote: "In the dimly lighted box of the theatre, so beautifully decorated with American flags, a

scene of historic importance was being enacted. On the carpeted floor lay prostrate the president of the United States. His long, outstretched, athletic body of six feet four inches appeared unusually heroic."

After Lincoln was carried to the Petersen House across the street from the theater, Leale and other doctors made their patient as comfortable as possible and awaited the inevitable.

"Knowledge that frequently just before departure recognition and reason return to those who have been unconscious caused me for several hours to hold his right hand firmly within my grasp to let him in his blindness know, if possible, that he was in touch with humanity and had a friend," Leale wrote. "The protracted struggle ceased at twenty minutes past seven o'clock on the morning of April 15, 1865, and I announced that the president was dead."

This being a medical museum, tiny fragments of Lincoln's skull, retrieved during the autopsy, also are on view. Lincoln's wife, Mary, asked for a lock of her husband's hair. While the doctors were complying with her request, they also snipped locks for each of the surgeons at the autopsy. Some of those thin strands from that famous head are in the glass case with the skull fragments.

Lest all these bits and pieces of Lincoln and the implements of medicine get in the way of the larger picture, the exhibition offers these words from Walt Whitman, who often had seen the president passing his home:

"This dust was once the Man,
"Gentle, plain, just and resolute —
under whose cautious hand,
"Against the foulest crime in history
known in any land or age,

"Was saved the Union of These States."

Texas Fisherman Dies After Boat Hits Sunken Confederate Steamboat

AP, January 6, 2010

Services are Thursday for a Texas fisherman who died after his boat hit a mostly submerged Confederate steamboat in the Navidad River.

Justice of the Peace Dwayne Taylor said the death of David Martin, 62, of Victoria has been ruled an accidental drowning.

A relative reported Martin missing after he failed to return from a fishing trip Friday near Lolita.

A boater spotted Martin's wrecked boat.

The Jackson County Sheriff's Office said Martin's body was recovered Sunday from the river.

Rex Mayes of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department said other boaters have struck the Mary Summers and attempts to mark it have been unsuccessful.

Mayes says a low tide Friday exposed about a foot of the steamboat.

Historian Frank Condron said the ironclad was a blockade-runner during the Civil War.

Florida Town Cemetery Regulations Revised

By Suzie Schottelkotte, THE LEDGER, December 15, 2009

LAKE WALES, FL, American and Confederate flags, flat grave site borders and memorial bricks are now allowed in the Lake Wales Cemetery.

The Lake Wales City Commission gave final approval Tuesday night to revised regulations for the city-owned cemetery. The changes came after families of those buried there stormed a City Commission meeting in



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October, complaining that the city removed their grave decorations without warning.

The protest led to a citizen-based committee that drafted proposed revisions to the city's policies for the cemetery. Commissioners approved those changes Tuesday, but not until they agreed to allow Confederate flags on veterans' grave sites.

Commissioner Jonathan Thornhill said representatives from Daughters of the American Confederacy told him they want to honor veterans who fought for the South in the Civil War by placing small Confederate flags on their grave sites each April 26, the state-recognized Confederate Memorial Day.

"They should have the opportunity to put Confederate flags there," he said. "It is a state-supported holiday."

Mayor Jack Van Sickle said he supported the measure because it honored veterans.

Terrye Howell, who opposed the proposal, said the regulations should be limited to American flags.

"If they're Americans," she said, "they'll put an American flag on their grave. If they aren't American, then they will have no flag."

Commissioner Alex Wheeler said he agreed with Howell that only American flags should be allowed.

But Thornhill said Confederate veterans weren't considered Americans during the Civil War, which means that flag wouldn't apply to them.

In the end, Howell and Wheeler voted against the Confederate flag provision, while Commissioners John Paul Rogers, Sickle and Thornhill supported it. With that issue resolved, commissioners approved the overall revisions to the cemetery guidelines.

The revisions allow ground-level borders around grave sites and give

families the option of placing memorial bricks on grave sites. Families must purchase a \$25 permit from the city before installing a monument, and a representative from the city must inspect it before construction can continue.

Voice of Disneyland's Lincoln takes criticism

The animatronic president is set to debut after getting a high-tech update. But scholars say his speech, unchanged from when it appeared decades ago, is not like the real thing.

By Dawn C. Chmielewski, Los Angeles Times, December 18, 2009
It looks like Abraham Lincoln. It moves like Abraham Lincoln. And it quotes Abraham Lincoln. But historians say it still doesn't sound like Abraham Lincoln.

After a four-year absence, Walt Disney Co. pulls the curtain back today on a new high-tech version of Lincoln for its "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln" show at the Opera House on Main Street in Disneyland.



Abraham Lincoln has the same voice as before but now has cutting-edge technology that gives him nuanced facial expressions. (Don Kelsen / Los Angeles Times / July 17, 2001)

The animatronic Lincoln, incorporating cutting-edge technology that gives the mechanical man

nuanced, lifelike facial expressions and lip movements, first premiered debuted at the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

While Although Disney imagineers spent the last year sweating such technological details as how to coax Lincoln's synthetic lips to purse as if he were saying "ooh," they nonetheless left the audio pastiche of Lincoln quotes that the figure speaks unchanged.

Instead, Disney dusted off and remastered the original 40-plus-year audio recordings made by character actor Royal Dano. And Dano's rendition, despite being identified in the public's mind as the voice of Lincoln, didn't sound much like that of the 16th president of the United States, prominent Lincoln historians say.

"I'm listening to Royal Dano again," said Lincoln expert Harold Holzer, who has written 35 books about the Civil War-era president. "You know, I am an absolutely committed Sam Waterston man. ... I will take his readings of Lincoln over anyone's on Earth."

To be sure, no one living today has ever heard Lincoln speak -- and there are no recordings. Much of what scholars have deduced about Lincoln's delivery comes from contemporary accounts of his relatively high-tenor voice. "He often was so nervous at the beginning, he would almost shift up into a falsetto before he settled himself," said historian Ronald C. White Jr., author of "A. Lincoln: A Biography."

The rest is inferred from a collection of Works Projects Administration recordings of regional accents, which captured a kind of the early- to mid-20th century patois of people living in rural Kentucky, where Lincoln was



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raised. Waterston, for example, studied these recordings in the Library of Congress for his role as the president in an NBC miniseries, "Gore Vidal's Lincoln."

"The very best of the Lincoln impersonators will speak in that dialect," said White said, a La Canada resident. "They'll speak as if they're from rural Indiana, rural Kentucky."

As in: Thank you, Mr. Cheerman (not Mr. Chairman).

Getting Mr. Lincoln pitch-perfect has been the subject of considerable interest -- and not a small amount of controversy -- among historians. "I do think the voice is important -- to get the accent right," Holzer said. "We've been all over the lot on this. Is it Raymond Massey? Is it Richard Boone? Gregory Peck played Lincoln in a miniseries ("The Blue and The Gray")."

But other historians note that Disney doesn't misrepresent Lincoln, even if the audience that sits for the 15-minute presentation may not necessarily glean the richer context behind the five speeches that have been excerpted.

"What the people at Disney have done, and their genius of sorts, is that they do understand that people going to their venues aren't going necessarily for a history lesson," said Thomas Schwartz, Illinois' state historian and the chief consultant on the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Indeed, the primary objective of Disney's imagineers was to restore the sense of skin-prickling awe audiences experienced in 1964, when they first saw Mr. Lincoln rise, somewhat herky-jerky, from his chair to speak.

In their latest effort, the engineers worked to create a more lifelike

Lincoln, with sculptors consulting 26 original photographs, and his life and death masks to re-create his visage -- down to the asymmetry of his mouth and eyebrows. Then, engineers figured out how to capture the musculature of the face using 16 micro-miniaturized motors pushing and pulling silicone skin. Besides, say Disney executives, a voice is often in the ears of beholders.

Tony Baxter, senior vice president for creative development for Walt Disney Imagineering, said criticisms about the authenticity of Dano's performance are all based on third-person accounts of Lincoln's voice -- no one knows for sure. And while although Baxter acknowledges that Dano tends not to be as soft-spoken as the president is described, the late actor nonetheless evoked a Lincoln that is "emotionally right." Moreover, past attempts to change the beloved attraction met with fierce backlash. "Weighing it all, it felt like more of a humbling voice that we felt was more appropriate with what we were trying to do," Baxter said. "We changed the voice in the previous show and we got tremendous negativity, so we brought back this voice, which has kind of been the voice of Abraham Lincoln for 45 years."

Fort Monroe Eyed for Private Sector

By David Macaulay, AP, December 7, 2009

Abraham Lincoln planned the attack on Norfolk while staying in Old Quarters 1 within the walls of Fort Monroe during the Civil War.

Today, it is the base of operations for another daunting, albeit less bloody task for Bill Armbruster, a former military man who is overseeing the departure of the Army from Fort

Monroe and planning for an uncertain future.

Armbruster is the executive director of the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority, the body created in 2007 to find a new use for the post when the Army leaves.

Last month, the authority made a landmark decision when it voted to create a national park out of historic parts of Fort Monroe.

But the National Park Service would only take over a small portion of the site, assuming the move is backed by Congress.

Armbruster, who traveled to Washington, D.C., at the end of last week to talk to lawmakers, estimates the National Park Service will take over about 60 acres of the 564-acre site, but the size of the park is yet to be finalized.

That's not to say large tracts will be opened up to developers.

"About 40 percent is open green space and wetlands, the natural areas that we want to protect," he said.

Armbruster, a 74-year-old former Pentagon official with a Navy background, is pleased that the future of Fort Monroe is now clearer.

"There's been a lot of misinformation out there," he said. "There were those that felt the property was going to be sold to developers and that the choice was either a national park or high-rise condos. I've even heard casinos. I've heard all sorts of stories out there. It's simply not true," he said.

He said it is part of the development authority's plan for the land at Fort Monroe to belong to the commonwealth of Virginia.

However, Armbruster and his team have a duty to make the future Fort Monroe viable and the authority will have to work with a large number of



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private sector partners to successfully run what he describes as a "small city."

"Economic sustainability is crucial. We've got to make this place pay for itself."

Under the plan backed by the development authority's board last month, the National Park Service would take over Old Quarters 1, the historic stone fort that is the largest of its kind in the United States, the moat, the outer works, Irwin and Parrot batteries that were built just after the Spanish-American War of 1898, and a radar station on the parapets.

The radar station, used for anti-submarine monitoring in World War II, is an example of the famous Bauhaus school of architecture, Armbruster said.

Old Quarters 1 is also famous.

"This is the oldest building on Fort Monroe other than the lighthouse. In 1819, Lafayette entertained there. Lincoln spent four nights there," Armbruster said.

"So much of the planning for the campaign on the Peninsula and the attack on Norfolk was planned from here."

Armbruster hopes tax credits can be used to "adaptively reuse" historic buildings on the site, with no new building proposed within the moat of the historic fort.

"We can't tear them down. We don't want to," he said. "We are bound to preserve them, but we do need to make them useful to 21st-century occupancy."

He proposes "limited development" compatible with the historic fabric of the existing buildings. Although the private sector will be brought in, developers won't own any land.

"There will be no high rises," Armbruster said. Building heights will be limited to three stories.

The new structures are likely to be office space and new homes. Armbruster said the development authority is talking to a number of potential tenants, nonprofit organizations, museums, and state and federal agencies. They include the Hampton History Museum, the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Museum of the Confederacy.

"This has more of an academic campus feel than it does a military feel," he said.

He wants the future Fort Monroe to be a "living, vibrant community" rather than a park that opens in the morning and closes in the evening.

"We see some opportunities for tourism-related hospitality type facilities, maybe some small tea rooms or restaurants that will support a growing tourism base. FMFADA project tourism numbers of up to 250,000 a year.

"There already is a surprising number of tourists who come here and go to the Casemate Museum," he said.

Armbruster said that in the future Fort Monroe would link to the Historic Triangle of Williamsburg, Yorktown and Jamestown to expand tourism.

Steve Corneliussen, of Citizens for Fort Monroe National Park, said the group is pressing for as large an area as possible to be included in the national park.

"It's all a national historic landmark and all an environmental treasure, so we hope Virginia's congressional delegation seeks as large a national park as makes practical sense," he said Saturday.