

The American Experience  
June 14, 2008  
Lincoln Homestead State Park  
As part of  
The 202<sup>nd</sup> Wedding Celebration  
of  
Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln

Thomas Jefferson ( 1743-1826 )  
Third President of the United States in 1806  
Interpretation by Bill Barker - Williamsburg, Virginia  
Internet access: Bill Barker as Thomas Jefferson

Jefferson was later to become Abraham Lincoln's mentor. "All honor to Jefferson," said Lincoln, "to the man, who in the concrete struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast and sagacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and do so embalm it there that today and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of returning tyranny and oppression."

At the dedication of Lincoln Homestead State Park, on June 14, 1934, former United States Senator and Governor A. O. Stanley spoke at length of the likeness of the last

inaugural speech of Lincoln and the first inaugural speech of Thomas Jefferson. In conclusion Stanley said, “ What America would erase from the History of his Country the inspiring story of the labors and love of Jefferson or of Lincoln.”

Dr. Thomas Walker will be a part of the interpretation on June 14, 2008 and was connected to Thomas Jefferson as physician to Peter Jefferson, the father of Thomas. After Peter’s death, Walker became Thomas Jefferson guardian.

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George Washington( 1732-1799)

First President of the United States ( 1789-1797)

Interpretation by Dean Malissa - Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania

Internet Access: [www.gwashington.com](http://www.gwashington.com)

During George Washington’s first term as President, and on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1791, Washington signed the act of Congress by which Kentucky was granted admission to co-equal fellowship in the Federal Union. This act became effective on June 1, 1792. Kentucky began to boast of a Washington county in her midst in 1792.

In that year Washington county was created out of Nelson county and was the very first of the new counties formed by Kentucky after it became a state.

These were not the first dealings of our first President with Kentucky. Washington had, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September, 1789, signed and issued on Honorable Harry Innes a commission constituting him the Judge of the United States Court for the District of Kentucky.

It is well known that the eyes of Washington, as a youth, were turned intently on “the West”. Some years before he attained his majority, he entered service as a surveyor and mapped considerable tracts of wild land on the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge and across that range westward as far as the foot-hills of the Alleghenies.

After his retirement from the Presidency Washington renewed his early connection with the western country. The land hunger, with which Americans everywhere were possessed, remained a ruling passion with Washington even unto death. In fact, but a little more than a year before his death, Washington concluded a purchase from General Henry (“Light-Horse Harry”) Lee of “Stratford”, Westmoreland county, Virginia, by a deed bearing date November 5, 1798, of two tracts of land in Kentucky, one of 3,000 acres and the other of 2,000 acres. The original contract for these lands were made on December 9, 1788, some ten years before the final consummation of the trade. These lands were valued by General Lee at 500 pounds or 600 pounds, and Washington gave an exchange for them a valuable thoroughbred stallion, called “Magnolia”, which

General Lee immediately shipped to South Carolina. The lands were located on Rough Creek, a tributary of the Green River, and were thought to be valuable for the iron ore which they contained, but the deposits subsequently proved to be disappointing.

In the month of June, 1795, while Federal Government was still located in Philadelphia, Rev. James Blythe, as an agent for the “ Kentucky Academy” , established as “ Transylvania Seminary” in May, 1783, solicited and obtained a donation for the infant institution of \$100.00 in cash from President Washington.

Many of Washington’s relatives have lived in Kentucky.

Although many would believe that “The Father of His Country” was far removed from the Kentucke Territory, as seen here seen here, it is very appropriate this President be a part of the American Experience at Lincoln Homestead State Park on June 14, 2008

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18<sup>th</sup> Century Oxen and cart

Interpretation by Gerry Barker and Maria Hummel -  
Edmonton, Kentucky

In 1806 oxen were the preferred draft animal on most Kentucky farms. The oxen were also means of

transportation for many families when harnessed and used to pull carts of the day.

On June 12, 1806 many of the families attending the wedding of Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln would have arrived by cart pulled by oxen.

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“Ethiopian Spice and Seasonings Co.”

Woman African descent in Kentucky in 1806.

Interpretation by Yulanda Burgess - Detroit, Michigan  
Ethiopian is a generic name used for people of African descent in the New and Old Testaments of the Bible.

Yulanda Burgess introduces products brought to America by the earliest Africans. Included in these items are spices, herbs, vinegar, heirloom rice, nuts and yellow-eyed peas. Listen to the history about African people and their achievements and struggles to live ordinary lives in America.

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Friendship Spinners

Interpretation by Norma Jean Campbell from Springfield, Kentucky and the Friendship Spinners

Legend has it the Nancy Hanks was a spinner of fine yarns. As a girl in the home of her uncle and aunt, Richard and Rachael Berry, Nancy assisted with spinning and weaving. Charlotte Vawter, a school teacher, moved to Washington

County in February 1874, In 1874, Vawter wrote a letter to the Louisville Courier Journal suggesting there was evidence of the 1806 marriage of the Sixteenth President's parents in Washington County.

In this letter Mrs. Vawter also wrote about that Nancy Hanks was “adapt in the lost art” of spinning flax. It was a custom in the Beechland neighborhood in those days, Mrs Vawter wrote “to have spinning parties, on which occasion the wheels of the ladies were carried to the home of the designated, to which the competitors, distaff in hand, came ready for the work of the day.”

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Prairie Productions presents....

Hands on log cabin construction

Interpretation by Bruce and Lineley Langseth - Houston, MINN.

Nancy Hanks and Thomas were married at the home of Francis Berry in 1806. The Berry cabin now stands in Lincoln Park, some logs are original to the 200 year old home and this is the home that will once again celebrated the Wedding Anniversary of the parents of President Abraham Lincoln.

When the Lincoln, Hanks, Berrys and Mudds began arriving in the Beechland area they built their homes from the woods available in the Lincoln Run. With this hands

on demonstration you can work with Bruce Langseth to build a replica of those log homes. The pioneer homestead is recreated to amazing accuracy using tools, clothing, and day to day items used in 1806.

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Monsieur LeFaux de France

Interpreted by Tim and Kathleen Nealeigh -Greenville, Ohio

Meet Monsieur LeFaux de France who prides himself in the use of his glib tongue to entertain individual or very small groups patrons who arrive together. An ongoing “bit” might be his retreating in haste from a lady to whom he has made promised which he has no intention of keeping. Or his sighting of a “gentleman” to whom he owes payment for some scheme or other could be a another reason for taking a hasty leave from the persons whom he has engaged in conversation.

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Nineteenth Century Magic, with Richard Potter

Interpreted by Robert A. Olson - Putnam, Connecticut

Potter first performed on his own at the Columbus Museum in Boston. He advertises his show as, “An Evening’s Brush to Sweep Away Care, or a Medley to Please”. The show consists of magic with cards and cons, ribbons and boxes and a variety of other tricks of magic from over 150 years.

Potter also offers ventriloquism, a comic dissertation of noses, singing comic songs and presenting a shadow puppet called, “The Broken Bridge”.

Potter was born in 1783 in Hopkinton, MASS. His mother was black and his father was white. Potter traveled to Europe in 1798 and returned to America in 1802 to work as an assistant to Rannie The Scott, a professional musician. Potter learned the trade from Rannie and began performing on his own when Rannie left America. He continued to amaze audiences all across the country until his death in 1835.

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## 18<sup>th</sup> Century Shoemaker

Interpreted by Stephen Ratterman - Louisville, Kentucky  
Shoes in Kentucky in the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century were often adopted Indian moccasins, which better suited frontier life. Manufactured shoes were expensive and were often uncomfortable for those who not afford a custom made pair. Shoes were not refitted to a range of sizes and were not shaped for left and right feet. They were often made of wooden soles and leather uppers, usually black. In good weather, less fortunate people might save their shoes to wear in winter, to weddings or church or other special occasions.

Learn the art of the 17<sup>th</sup> century shoemaker with Stephen Ratterman.

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## Sillas Moore - The Rat Catcher

Interpreted by Bill Smith - Springfield, Ohio

Rats reached the new world in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Norway rats reached North America around 1755 on the ships with the new settlers. As a carry over from the European tradition, rat catchers were hired in the new world to exterminate rats and other reasons not related to our event. Rats were put in laboratories as early as 1828 for physiological studies and were used for experiments by 1870.

Because of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century ratcatchers rats began to be domesticated after it became apparent that the rats were not rodents but a source of research. Ratcatchers were in the cities and the settlement areas. After all, the ratcatcher was paid for his services.

Sillas Moore will be in Beechland because he travels from town to town to take care the pest problems on the day of a the wedding of Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln. He will earn a penny a tail for every rat caught on June 14 which he will catch with arsenic, tools and hands.

Sillas is traveling alone new because his wife left him for another man and took all 13 children with her.

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## Signora Bella - The great Italian Equilibrist

Interpretation by Jody Ellis - Fredricksburg, Virginia

This Great Italian Equilibrist has entertained audiences of all ages since her arrival on the eastern seaboard ten years ago. The Signora has traveled across the Atlantic to the New World in search of the means to earn a living entertaining people of all ages, incomes and backgrounds. The talents of this unparalleled Beauty of Balance promises to amaze you with her skills on the slack rope. She has performed on the streets of Williamsburg, Mount Vernon and Poplar Forest, retreat home of our third President, Thomas Jefferson. With great zest, Signora Bella brings to life the tradition of the traveling performers of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His Excellency, George Washington, who enjoyed theatrical diversion, once wrote of seeking a slack rope walker in Philadelphia at Rickett's Circus. Tracing her roots to the Italian theatrical style of Commedia Dell'Arte, Signora Bella has stunned the masses with her feats of balance and amazed audiences with her juggling of sharp Turkish swords and flaming torches.

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No Sweat Soap Factory

Interpretation by Deborraha Burnett Cardone -Mountain

## View, Arkansas

Using a 200 year old Burnett family recipe and a 300 year old cast pot watch this art of Scottish soap making come to life. Made one batch at a time, this lye soap treats psoriasis, exema, acne, insect bites, poison ivy, athlete's foot, spots and stains and fish bate.

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“Knock on Wood and Spin me a Superstition.”

Interpreted by Bonnie Strassel - Glencoe, KY.

Let this 18<sup>th</sup> Century story teller stir you imagination and capture your heart with stories of superstitions that were long ago woven deeply into our culture. Listen to Ms. Bonnie take you on a journey into the 1800's when superstitions played a role in the family, the community and the nation.

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Captain Tom Strassel - The Kentucky Light Artillery Company

Interpreted by Tom Strassel - Glenco, Kentucky

Captain Strassel is of the militia companies that served Kentucky and our country from the Revolutionary War to the War of 1812. These militias were armies composed of ordinary citizens rather than professional soldiers. Civilians from Kentucky came together to form this way of protection for the homesteads of the new frontier. These Militia

Batteries were a vital part of the settlement of Kentucky because there were never enough regular artilleries to guard the frontier forts and accompany troops into the field on time.

Captain Strassel shares the stories of the citizen soldier who manned the guns and fought to gain freedom of this Christian Nation.

The Captain will demonstrate the swivel cannon that was used on gunwales of ships and smaller vessels and, in America, were popular for the defense of fortifications.

The cannon will be demonstrated four times during the day.

Captain Abraham Lincoln, born May 13, 1744 in Pennsylvania, and died May 1786 in Kentucky was the grandfather of Presidents Abraham Lincoln. Captain Abraham served in the American Revolution as a Captain of a Virginia militia company.

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Donald Drewery- Player of the Dulcimer

Highland Heights, Kentucky

The name dulcimer comes from the Latin and Greek words dulce and melos, which combine to mean “sweet tune”.

The meaning and biblical connections no doubt made the word attractive to those who named the Appalachian

dulcimer. All evidence seems to indicate that the

Appalachian dulcimer dates back to 1806 when Thomas Lincoln took Nancy Hanks as his wife.

Donald Drewery will bring the sounds of the dulcimer to Lincoln Park throughout the day on June 14

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Dr. Balthazar

Interpreted by Mike Follin

Chesterville Ohio

Museum Theater Director - Ohio Historical Society

Doctor Thelonious Balthazar, the Traveling Medicine Man Extraordinaire will be arriving at Lincoln Park on June 14 to provide an amazing cure for all ailments and infirmities. This truly incredible potion will be available to all who have complaints of diverse diseases. Proven to be the best elixir found west of the Allegheny Mountains. Guaranteed continues to cure everything from the common cold and baldness to a death of two weeks standing. If not completely satisfied another bottle will be given to you with a double guarantee of effectiveness!

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Seth and Abigail Abernathy

“From Field to Flax”

Interpreted by Ann and Les Harding  
Brazil, Indiana

Orval Baylor wrote in 1934 about - “Nancy Adept in Lost Art” . As a girl in the home of her uncle and aunt, Richard and Rachael Berry, Nancy Hanks assisted with the spinning and weaving, the chief employment of the women of those days. In the field of her uncle, when the flax was mature, Nancy Hanks was found “ pulling” the flax and “spreading it to rot” After the process of “breaking”, which consisted in the separation of the flax from the stalk of which it had been covering (a work usually done by male members of the household) Nancy again took it in hand when it was “swingled” and “hackled” and made ready for the spinning wheel.

Mrs. S. S. H. Vawter, in her letter to the Louisville Courier Journal in 1874 wrote that Nancy Hanks was “ adept in that now lost art” of spinning flax.

From Mary Litsey of the “ Original Lincoln Country” Mrs. Vawter learned the “ Nancy Hanks generally bore the palm, her spools yielding the longest and finest thread”, when the spinning contest were held. Sarah Mitchell, whose descendants yet remain in Washington County, was a pupil of Nancy Hanks in learning to spin flax.

As an expert “ in that now lost art”, Nancy Hanks was usually entrusted with the exclusive privilege of spinning and weaving in the Berry home. “ A curious mode had

she,” we are told, “ of testing the fitness of the thread she was spinning”. When a hank, comprising fifteen hundred distinct threads, could be run through her finger-ring, she considered the yarn fine enough to answer for shirt fronts for the male and for the finer dress for the women folk. See this “lost art” come to life with Seth and Abigail Abernathy.

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The Paper Paint Brush  
Anne Leslie - Alexandria, Virginia  
and  
Joyce Yarbrough - Saint Charles, Missouri

Shadow portraits or, as we know them , silhouettes became popular in the days when only affluent families could afford painted portraits and ordinary families employees artists to cut portraits of their loved ones form paper and scissors. The early silhouettes that have survived are priceless to the families that have those records of their ancestors profiles. Leave this legacy to your descendants and have the famed Anne Leslie cut your silhouette. A fee will be charged for this service.

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“Jack and Mattie”  
Common Stock Entertainment

Pat Richardson and Becky McCay

Indianapolis, Indiana

Jack Milgrew and Mattie Bliss will entertain you beyond your imagination with “hobby animals”, songs, strolling puppets, “curio cabinets” and “bells and whistles”. They will entertain you as you have never been entertained before. Open your imagination to their wonderful world of fun.

Come see how common folk traveled to fairs and trading days to “pick up the extra money that was exchanging hands from the merchants and shoppers”.

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Flintnapper

Bob Stewart

Cincinnati, Ohio

The community of Willisburg, in Washington County, was formerly called Paeola which was derived from the Miami Indians. Some anthropologists think this name of Paeola could have originated with the Adena Indians who had a settlement in Willisburg between 800 and 200 BC.

Bob Stewart brings to Lincoln Park his Archaic tools and his knowledge of ancient everyday life that would have been a part of this area. You can even adventure into the ancient world of the stone age of the last Ice Age.

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" Westward into Kentucky,  
Tools of the Frontiersman"  
Mel Hankla - Jamestown, Kentucky

The early frontiers men of Kentucky were the product of a century of conditions; German, Scotch, Irish and English . They had been brought together on the Virginia frontier to produce a special breed of men, hardy, self-reliant and therefore very independent. They lived by hunting and by hunting alone! Most were married and were gone from their families for long periods of time. Lyman P. Draper, noted 19th century journalist and perhaps the greatest archivist of all times, dubbed these men "Longhunters".

Above all else these Longhunters prized a good rifle. Other necessities would have included a supply of powder ( powder horn) and lead, a good side knife, and an axe or tomahawk. A wealthy man or a high ranking military officer might have also carried a pistol or sword. Something also to use was a canteen and it would have been needed not only to carry

water, but rum or whiskey for medicinal purposes as well as pleasure. Tobacco was heavily used in the form of both snuff and to smoke; and a snuffbox would have been needed to contain this pleasure.

On June 14, at Lincoln Homestead State Park, Mel Hankla's exhibit, the "Tools of the Frontiersman", brings us the opportunity to achieve a greater appreciation for the principles of democracy and the concept of "liberty and freedom" and how they were achieved during our fight of independence. Captain Abraham Lincoln was a part of that struggle for independence before he migrated to Beechland in 1782.

On this rare occasion you may view:

- W.Y. Tomahawk - Captain John McKittrick, founder in 1786 of "Mackville", Washington County, Kentucky owned this frontier era
- Kentucky Rifle signed " C. Humble - circa 1785
- Flintlock Kentucky Pistol - Revolutionary War owned by Col William Linn of Louisville
- Revolutionary War Sword - come through the Ross

family of Russel County, Kentucky

- American Dagger - owned by George Rogers Clark
- Items belonging to Isaac Shelby - Soldier, states man, surveyor and Kentucky's first Governor
- Wilderness Road Contract - entered into with Joseph Ballenger, July 4, 1794 in order for him to supply provisions to garrisons in route from the Cumberland Gap across Kentucky
- 1794 Land Grant - "laying in the county of Lincoln", in Kentucky, "on the waters of the South Fork of the Kentucky River. The document is signed three times by Governor Isaac Shelby.

**See you on June 14<sup>th</sup> At Lincoln Park!**