



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

101 Creative Ideas for Celebration Events, Projects and Legacies

1. **Downtown Artwalk, Florida**

Downtowners from Delray Beach, Florida's Pineapple Grove District created an Artwalk with sculptures, murals, obelisks and information kiosks scattered throughout the area. Visitors can walk to each exhibit independently or take a conducted trolley tour. Selected sculptures remain on display for a year when artists are given the option of putting their work up for auction. While the main purpose is to entertain, educate and draw more people to the district, the organization also sees benefits through additional jobs and businesses.

2. **A Child's Life in Tennessee**

The city of Knoxville researched and wrote an original script on what life would have been like for a child in Knoxville in the 19th century, what children's lives are like today and what they will be like in the future. A video titled "A Child's Life in Knox County: Past, Present and Future" was produced for use in the local museum.

3. **Chautauqua Birthday Book, Colorado**

Schoolchildren in grades 4-9 were invited to tour Chautauqua Park in Boulder, Colorado and work with art teachers to draw the historic buildings, write their own history of Chautauqua, create a word search and crossword puzzles and write stories and poems about the historic district. The children's art and writings were combined into a 20-page *100th Birthday Book by Kids for Kids*. The book's centerpiece was a scavenger hunt to lead children (and their parents) to many of the historic landmarks. If the child found all the answers, a prize awaited at the gift shop. Ten thousand copies of the booklet were printed and given out free of charge at Chautauqua Centennial events and at the Chautauqua Dining Hall to diners with children.

4. **Welcome Center Days**

Many states allow communities or organizations to reserve a welcome center near their community during a special week like Tourism Week or for a special occasion for the community. Committee members set up displays or exhibits, serve lemonade and cookies and hand out information on special events or attractions in their community.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

5. Letters to the Editor, Pennsylvania

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania researched all of the letters to the editor from its 200-year history. The letters reflected many changes in the community over the years and addressed major issues ranging from the Civil War to Civil Rights. A playwright compiled the letters into a play that was presented to sell out crowds and gained national publicity.

6. A Fashionable Exhibit, Kentucky

The Kentucky History Center hosted an exhibit called "A Dressing Change" tracing 200 years of fashion history and its relationship to world events and societal changes. The exhibit showcased the Society's clothing collection. Programs accompanying the exhibit included a lecture on "African American Clothing and Culture" and the performance of an original play about a Kentucky dressmaker.

7. Taste of the Past, Conner Prairie Living History Farm

Historians researched foods that would have been eaten during different seasons of the year on a 19th century Indiana farm. A program called "A Taste of the Past" allowed visitors to enjoy three seasonal menus where they sampled authentic foods. A meal host discussed what would have been the culinary tastes and customs of the residents during that time period.

8. Capturing the Spirit of the West, Old Cowtown Museum

This museum in Wichita, Kansas held an event centered on photography. Activities included a photo contest with all of the pictures staged to look historic. Winning photos were displayed at the museum. A Photography Weekend included workshops on preserving photos, an opportunity to have a tin-type photo taken with visitors wearing historic clothing and photos with 1870s living history characters.

9. 48-Hour Family Live In, Norlands Living History Center

This 19th century farm in Maine invited families to experience life on the farm by role playing a member of the original family. Participants slept in a bunk house and tried their hand at farm chores, cooking, cleaning, playing period games and attending school. They also learned about the lives of the original family and the family member they were portraying.

10. Elect Jackson! The Hermitage

The Nashville plantation home of President Andrew Jackson became the setting for his 1828 run for the presidency. An exhibit traced the history of the campaign, and tour guides discussed the use of Jackson's home as headquarters for his campaign. To kick off the "campaign," a special event was held nominating Jackson for the presidency. Visitors were given "Elect Jackson" stickers to wear and could vote for the candidate of their choice – Jackson or John Quincy Adams.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

11. Museum Madness! Chicago

Thirty Chicago-area museums joined together for Museum Madness!, a program offering discounts to families who visit the museums in the summer. Families who visit three museums have a chance to win prizes. Participants enter to win by visiting a web site where the entry form is located. The entry form has two questions for each museum that was visited.

12. Heritage Corridor Tours, Washington

The Washington State Arts Commission, along with a group of partners, developed a series of heritage tours including a guidebook and audiotour to lead visitors through less traveled areas and acquaint them with the unique geography, history, arts and culture of each area. Voices of local residents are heard on the audiotour telling stories about their hometowns and their traditions.

13. Centennial Garden, Colorado

To celebrate their centennial in 1998, the Colorado Chautauqua Association restored a garden that was part of Chautauqua Park earlier in the century. Commemorative bricks were sold for \$75 each as a fundraiser to cover other costs for the centennial celebration, and the garden itself creates a new gathering place and focal point for the district.

14. Public Art

Unveil a new piece of public art such as a sculpture or a wall mural. Think about ways to relate public art to the heritage of your community. Is there a well-known local artist who lives, or has lived, in your community whom you could commission to create a piece of public art? Can you use indigenous materials, such as a rock from a local quarry?

15. Public Art Contest

Hold a contest to invite artists to submit ideas for a new piece of public art that relates to the heritage of your community. Announce the winner at a community celebration and be sure to offer opportunities for the media to take photos and cover the story.

16. Traveling Exhibits, Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Humanities Council and the Oklahoma Museums Association partnered to create TRACKS, a selection of traveling exhibits. Some exhibits included supplementary materials such as brochures, posters and curriculum. Topics focused on various aspects of Oklahoma's history such as "Indians of Oklahoma," "Oklahoma in the Great Depression," and "Oklahoma's Wild West Exhibitions." The Humanities Council offered grants to cover the costs of hosting an exhibit.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

17. Create a Culture Card or Passport Card

Historic sites, arts groups and event/festival planners can work together to create a special card which provides reduced admission or discounts on purchases at the site, performances and events. The card can be distributed locally and through tourism outlets. The card can be stamped at each location.

18. Saving Our Documentary Heritage, Tennessee

Many Tennessee communities were interested in saving their historical documents as a bicentennial project. The state bicentennial office partnered with the Tennessee State Library and Archives to create a series of workshops on how to preserve historical records. Archivists conducted the workshops, and the bicentennial office publicized the series, recruited participants and handled logistics. A traveling exhibit was created and loaned to communities highlighting the ways that archival records are important to preserving history.

19. Heritage Days

Plan an event focused on 19th century history with activities of interest to children and adults. Include a number of components such as historic book publishers, genealogical research companies, etc.; workshops on topics such as preserving historical records and researching family histories, lectures on topics related to state and local history, and entertainment with historical dramatizations.

20. A Capitol Celebration, Iowa

Citizens from across the state of Iowa gathered at the State Capitol to witness re-enactments of important dates in the state's history. Costumed re-enactors performed, and the governor participated by reading messages from previous governors.

21. Historical Moments

The Smithsonian Institution produced a series of historical moments in celebration of 150 years of history. Well known celebrities were featured in the spots asking a historical question then providing the answer using an artifact from the collection. This could be adapted to a local radio or television PSA or web site promotion using local celebrities.

22. Photographer's Guide, Tennessee

A tourism organization in Southeast Tennessee published a photographer's guide to the three-county area. The guide included maps, the location of beautiful scenic views and recommended times of day for the best shots. The guide was publicized through photography magazines, photography schools and film developing businesses.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

23. Washington Portraits

The state of Washington's celebration commission chose theater groups to form a traveling exhibit acting as famous Washingtonians and historical characters. The group traveled through Washington schools and various festivities, teaching through acting about the lives of these characters.

24. Day of Public Thanksgiving, Virginia

Charlottesville, Virginia hosts an annual Day of Public Thanksgiving where residents and visitors are invited to step back into history and mingle with statesmen, soldiers and others from the Revolutionary War. The event features recreations of historic events that occurred in Charlottesville, including military skirmishes, political town meetings, religious gatherings and festive music, dancing and games. Historians in authentic costume portray famous characters as they roam through the street of downtown.

25. Wagon Train, Tennessee

The citizens of Tellico Plains recreated the route of early settlers throughout southeast Tennessee with a wagon train ride. People could sign up and pay to ride on all or part of the ride. Guides provided the history of the trip along the way and an arrival celebration was held at the conclusion of the trip.

26. Spirit of Tennessee

A train was the setting for exhibits focusing on the development of business and commerce in Tennessee over 200 years. The train stopped at 35 locations across the state during the bicentennial year. Exhibits transported visitors from the state's beginnings to the latest advancements in business.

27. Gardening Exhibit, Alabama

The Alabama Folklife Center created an exhibit titled *In the Garden: Traditional Culture and Horticulture in Alabama*. The exhibit documents the many types of gardening for vegetables and flowers including traditions from Alabama and traditions brought by immigrants from other cultures.

28. Visitors through the Years, The Hermitage

Staff at the Hermitage, home of President Andrew Jackson in Nashville sent out a press release asking people to write in with their memories of visiting the site. People from all over the state, as well as other states, shared their memories and many sent photographs. Hermitage staff used the pictures and stories (supplemented by pictures in the site's archival files) to create an exhibit "Visitors through the Years" tracing visitors to the site since it opened to the public in 1889.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

29. Downtown Birthday Bash

The city of Decatur, Georgia celebrated its 175th birthday with a downtown birthday bash featuring a six-foot wooden cake decorated with 175 candles with special candle holders. Businesses, residents, schools, artists and organizations were invited to get in on the fun by decorating a candle holder to be placed on the cake. Participants could either make the candle holder from scratch or buy one and decorate it themselves. Candles were auctioned off at the end of the event.

30. Print and Play Travel Games

As part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration, organizers created a series of "Print and Play" travel games for children. Games helped children learn about the history of the Lewis and Clark expedition while they were traveling to visit various sites. Games were posted on a web site and could be printed to take along in the car.

31. Pennsylvania Road Trips

The Pennsylvania Office of Tourism created a series of thematic road trips and placed the itineraries on their web site. Travelers are invited to write about their experiences including recommendations to help other travelers plan their trips. Travelers post their stories on the state tourism web site.

32. Portsmouth Flood Wall Murals, Ohio

Citizens in Portsmouth, Ohio decided to make an unattractive flood wall into a community asset. Artists have painted a series of mural along the 2,000-foot wall depicting each historical era. Paintings were added over a number of years, creating interest and excitement in the community and with visitors each time a new mural was finished.

33. National Storytelling Festival, Jonesborough

In 1973, a small festival began in Jonesborough, Tennessee to honor the tradition of storytelling. The event has now grown into the National Storytelling Festival. Held each October, the event draws visitors from across the country to this small town in Northeast Tennessee. The National Storytelling Center has been established in Jonesborough to provide a year-round opportunity for visitors to enjoy storytelling. Additionally, a local tour guide has developed historical tours of Jonesborough using storytelling as the basis of the tours.

34. Remembering Lincoln

The Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana developed an exhibit which looks at how Lincoln's name and image are used in television, movies, print and other media. The exhibit also examines how politicians of all political parties claim his legacy. Visitors can see "Lincoln at the Movies," test the accuracy of popular Lincoln legends, send letters to Mr. Lincoln and cast their votes regarding the past, present and future of America's experiment in government.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

35. 150th Anniversary, Washington County, Minnesota

This county's sesquicentennial celebration incorporated regional history into a number of community activities. A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was conducted in 150-year-old costumes and in old-fashioned modes of speech. A photography contest was designed to produce images commemorating the county's unique qualities.

36. Washington's Birthday Celebration, Laredo, Texas

Every February the Texas-Mexico border town of Laredo takes on a strange look. Leading citizens wear costumes from colonial Virginia and take part in a series of event celebrating the birth of George Washington. In the 1890s, members of the Society of Red Men (recent immigrants from the north) decided to bring American-style holidays to the largely Mexican community. They settled on the birthday of George Washington, and the first celebration took place in 1898. Today the event has evolved into a two-week regional festival including a parade, carnival, fireworks and musical entertainment.

37. Ohio Chautauqua

Ohio Chautauqua is a traveling tent show that presents history in the compelling format of first-person historical characterizations. Over a series of five days, historic figures from the Ohio Frontier were brought to life. Additionally, each character made special public appearances and presented behind-the-scenes programs for children and adults. Family picnics and musical entertainment opened each evening's entertainment.

38. Oregon Encyclopedia of History and Culture

As part of the plans for the state's 150th birthday, an official state encyclopedia will be developed. The encyclopedia will include contributions from thousands of Oregonians and will include 1,500 entries on the history and culture of the state. The encyclopedia will be available on the internet and a printed version will be published.

39. Oregon Day of Volunteerism

To encourage Oregonians to give back to their state on its 150th, there will be a statewide day of volunteerism coordinated by state organizers. Volunteers will work together to preserve, restore or enhance a public space, including historic areas, natural areas and community spaces.

40. Top 100 Places to Visit, Vancouver

As part of the city of Vancouver's centennial celebration, the Centennial Task Force compiled a list of the Top 100 Places of Interest and Historical Significance in the city. The list can be downloaded from an internet site. Residents and visitors are invited to visit all 100 places during the Centennial year.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

41. Centennial Flower, Vancouver

The Centennial Geranium is the City of North Vancouver's official Centennial flower. The flower was first discovered by a city gardener and is planted throughout the city in city parks. The flowers are sold in 6-inch pots for \$6.99 to fund centennial projects.

42. Centennial Tours, Detroit

Ford Motor Company and General Motor's Buick Division both celebrated their 100th birthday in 2003 and REO celebrates 100 years in 2007. To help celebrate, Detroit, along with committees from Flint, Lansing and Middle Rouge, created self-guided driving tour books that highlight many of each company's historic resources and stories. Tours can be downloaded from the MotorCities National Heritage Area web site.

43. Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Symposium, Harvard

As part of the Lincoln Bicentennial celebrations, Harvard University's Houghton Library will cosponsor with the Lincoln Forum and the Lincoln Group of Boston a symposium on *Abraham Lincoln at 200: New Perspectives on His Life and Legacy* on April 24-25, 2009. The event will re-examine several aspects of Lincoln's life and career including his views on race and slavery, his role as Commander-in-Chief, his use of the press to shape public opinion, his relationship with Congress, his influence on the legislative process and his role as a politician and party leader. The symposium will coincide with an exhibition featuring books, manuscripts and artifacts from the library's Lincoln Collection.

44. Anecdotal History Tour, Washington, D.C.

Cultural Tourism D.C. offers tours that encourage visitors to Washington D.C. to look beyond the monuments and experience other authentic parts of the city's history and culture. The Anecdotal History Tour offers unique tours such as a two-hour hike through the Victorian Adams Morgan neighborhood or a motorcoach tour past the homes of 20th century presidents. Each tour is carefully researched and information is presented to visitors in a lively, storytelling fashion by certified local tour guides.

45. E-Card, Saskatchewan 2005

As part of the Centennial celebration in Saskatchewan, Canada, organizers created an area on their web site with Centennial postcards. Residents could pick a postcard and email it to friends and family directly from the web site inviting them to come and participate in the celebration.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

46. Scavenger Hunt, San Diego

The Hillcrest History Guild created a scavenger hunt game that took residents and visitors through the historic Hillcrest neighborhood searching for answers to 100 questions about this area of San Diego. The search also took participants to shops and restaurants, encouraging economic impact to the community.

47. Time Capsules

Many communities fill and bury time capsules to commemorate milestones. For the Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration, time capsules could be filled with essays written by children about Lincoln. Excerpts from the essays could be placed on interpretive panels and placed near the site of the time capsule to attract residents and tourists to the site.

48. Festival of Banners, Canada

Jasper National Park in Canada celebrated its Centennial in 2007. A Festival of Banners was part of the celebration. Banners were designed and painted by residents to depict the last 100 years of the park. Banners were displayed for visitors to the park to enjoy.

49. 100 Aviation Heroes

The First Flight Centennial Commission, celebrating the 100th anniversary of flight in 2003, created a list of 100 Aviation Heroes. People who were pivotal in the development of flight were selected, and their names and biographical information was placed on a web site.

50. Wall of History, Tennessee

For the state's 200th birthday, the state of Tennessee created a 19-acre Bicentennial Capitol Mall near the state capitol building. One popular feature of the park is the Wall of History. This 200-foot granite wall is carved with important events and dates. Information is arranged by decade, so visitors can walk the length of the wall and learn about the state's history.

51. Poetry Forecast

Organizers of the bicentennial celebration of the birth of American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 2007 researched poems that made references to the weather. They provided the excerpts to weather forecasters across the country along with information about Longfellow and the bicentennial celebration.

52. Lewis and Clark Publication

The Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration Committee developed a souvenir edition of *Destination – the Pacific* which included information on Signature Events, the history of the expedition and a travel planner. Sales of the publication helped fund commemoration events.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

53. Bike Tour, Arkansas

A 73-mile bike tour through the Arkansas Delta was developed as part of Arkansas's efforts to commemorate the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase in 2003. The ride began at a state park and traveled through several historic communities. A shorter 2.2 mile "Ride the Ridge" ride was also offered for families at a state park.

54. Court Days Festival, Harrisonburg

Harrisonburg, Virginia recreates an 1850s Court Day with a festival each June. Re-enactors begin training in living history workshops in January to learn what to wear and what to say. Festival goers can enjoy heritage lecturers, living history presentations, music and dancing, exhibits, food and drink and more – all in a mid-19th century atmosphere.

55. Cab Calloway Centennial, New York

The centennial of the birth of entertainer Cab Calloway included a fine art exhibition. Professional artists were invited to submit images showing their impressions of Calloway along with a statement about their work. The pieces were entered in a juried competition and exhibited as part of the celebration.

56. Ilwaco Heritage Museum, Washington

The museum created a special exhibit as part of the Lewis and Clark expedition bicentennial commemoration titled "Don't Bother Me with the Facts: Uses and Abuses of the Lewis and Clark Theme in Popular Culture." The exhibit included souvenirs, art and maps and information on how many collectibles misrepresented the exhibition.

57. Centennial Medallion, Alberta, Canada

A special Centennial Medal was created as part of Alberta's celebration activities and presented to 8,000 outstanding Albertians. A Wall of Honor was also created with the names of 100 Great Kids from Alberta. Additional awards are made each year.

58. Film Series, Independence, Missouri

The Truman Library and Archives in Independence, Missouri has hosted a three-year series of the greatest movies about World War I. Communities in Illinois could gather all movies made about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War and host an "Abraham Lincoln Film Festival" as part of their bicentennial activities.

59. Indiana "One Tank Trips"

The Indiana Division of Tourism promoted a series of "One Tank Trips" on local television to encourage residents in Indianapolis to visit sites throughout the state that were accessible as a weekend trip using one tank of gas.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

60. Searchable Database

As a follow up to the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemoration, organizers created a permanent web site, www.lewisclarkandbeyond.com. The site provides a searchable database to find information on events and activities held during the commemoration years as well as current activities related to the expedition.

61. Public Art Program, Albuquerque, New Mexico

In 1978, Albuquerque created a 1 percent tax on new city construction to be reserved for public art projects. Since that time, more than 350 public works of art have been installed commemorating various aspects of the city's past and present. The public art program has been incorporated into the city's cultural plan.

62. Amana for Kids, Amana Colonies, Iowa

The Amana Heritage Society created "Amana for Kids" to provide activities for a key audience targeted by the tourism bureau – the regional family traveler. A scavenger hunt made it fun to explore the seven distinctive German villages by following clues that lead to museums, artisans, restaurants and merchants in each village. More than 1,000 children completed the scavenger hunt during the six week program.

63. Lincoln Interviews

Work with your local paper to publish a series of "person-on-the-street" interviews to ask local residents or visitors what they think of Abraham Lincoln. Publish a photo of the person along with their responses on a regular basis.

64. City Exhibit, New Orleans

The New Orleans Public Library created an exhibit titled "A Great and Growing City: New Orleans in the Era of the Louisiana Purchase" as part of the 2003 bicentennial celebration of the Louisiana Purchase. The exhibit included original documents and maps from the city's archives. A permanent online exhibit was also created.

65. Centennial Sponsorships, Naramata

The Naramata (British Columbia) Centennial Celebration Committee developed a variety of sponsorship levels to raise funds for event coordination and promotion. Levels included \$100 – Good Citizen Sponsor; \$250 – Family Sponsor; \$500 - Naramata Legend Sponsor; \$1,500 – Naramata Historian Sponsor; and \$4,000 – Naramata Century Sponsor. Each level offered differing kinds of recognition, ranging from press releases, to inclusion on a display board, presentation of a recognition plaque, check presentation photos, and logos on celebration materials.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

66. Eisenhower Memorial, Washington, D.C.

Supporters of a memorial to President Eisenhower received approval from Congress in 2006 for a permanent memorial in Washington D.C. As part of the planning process, they have created a survey on the Eisenhower Library and Archives web site and invited the public to share their thoughts on what should be included in the memorial.

67. Photo Contest

Collect a series of quotes from Lincoln about places that he lived or worked in Illinois, and sponsor a photo contest to illustrate these sites as they appear today. Publish the top photos (along with the Lincoln quotes) as an insert in the local paper along with information about visiting these sites. Print an overrun of this insert to be available to visitors during the bicentennial at key distribution locations.

68. Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana celebrates Lincoln's birthday by baking a giant birthday cake using the recipe for Lincoln's favorite cake. Slices of cake (and a copy of the recipe) are provided to every visitor coming to the museum around the time of Lincoln's birthday.

69. Original Piano Music, Oklahoma

A performer and composer created an original piano suite for the Oklahoma Centennial including four original works: Oklahoma Land Run!, Scenes of Red Earth, Flight O'er the Wichitas, and Bedlam Bash. Each included a textual description that describes some of the state's history and the inspiration behind each work. The entire work painted a musical portrait of Oklahoma's diverse landscape and its people.

70. Witness Trees, Oklahoma

This project identified trees which "witnessed" Oklahoma's statehood in 1907 and located the first trees planted by state settlers. Eligible trees had an estimated age of over 100 years.

71. Centennial Legacy Fund, Tomball, Texas

All proceeds from Centennial events, commemorative items and donations for the Tomball, Texas Centennial will go to the Legacy Fund which will be used to build a legacy for future generations. The legacy will not be determined after the 2007 celebration but could include a park, scholarship, fountain, public area or monument.

72. Traveling Historic Display Case, East Lansing, Michigan

In honor of East Lansing's 100th birthday, the East Lansing Historical Society and Centennial Commission asked residents to donate or loan historic keepsakes to the East Lansing History Behind Glass display case. The display case featured a number of historical items consistent with four themes: schools/neighborhoods, local businesses, city government and religion.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

73. Bicentennial Bike Ride

Organize a 200-mile long bike ride (or a different distance if that works better) that connects significant Lincoln sites in Illinois. This ride could take place over more than one day, with a mid-way stop at a particularly significant Lincoln site. Evening activities at the site could be provided as entertainment for riders and their support crew who could be invited to join them mid-way.

74. Looking Back, Wellington, Colorado

To commemorate the Centennial of Wellington, the local newspaper produced a series of articles throughout the year including features on early festivals and highlights of major events in the community's history.

75. Centennial Trivia Night, North Augusta, South Carolina

Centennial organizers created a series of questions about the community's history and placed it on the celebration web site. A dinner was held, and during the evening answers were provided to all of the questions.

76. City Limits Anthology, Panama City, Florida

In preparation for the city's Centennial in 2009, organizers are publishing "City Limits," a literary anthology. Writers are invited to contribute short fiction, poetry, personal memoirs, black and white line art, and black and white photography about Panama City. The best entries will be selected for a three volume anthology to be published for sale during the Centennial.

77. Pennies for Lincoln

Sponsor a fundraising event that encourages local schoolchildren to collect Lincoln pennies to benefit a specific non-profit organization in your community, such as the local historical society or library for a specific Lincoln Bicentennial project. Offer a prize to the child who collects the most pennies.

78. Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado

To celebrate the opening of a new wing at the Denver Art Museum, the museum was open for a consecutive 24 hours to allow visitors to experience the museum in a new way. The 24-hour opening provided great opportunities for local press coverage of the event.

79. Parade of Decades, Greensboro, North Carolina

During the 200th birthday celebration of Greensboro in 2008, the city will hold a Parade of Decades. The parade will include historical and cultural themes from the city's 200 years.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

80. Lincoln Lunch

Find out what kinds of foods Lincoln liked best, then work with local restaurants to create an authentic "Lincoln Special" on their menu as a bicentennial offering. Include a quote from Lincoln or a Lincoln scholar that explains why that particular item is a Lincoln special.

81. Passport in Time, Virginia

Virginia offered a successful Passport in Time program that offers small prizes for tourists who successfully visit a certain number of historic sites. During the bicentennial of George Washington's death, a special add-on was offered that highlighted Virginia sites connected to Washington.

82. Artist-in-Residence

As part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, an artist-in-residence was commissioned to work with several communities along the route. The artist worked closely with residents to create a work of public art that related to an aspect of Lewis & Clark's travels through their community that residents felt was particularly meaningful.

83. Lincoln Run/Walk

Sponsor a run (or walk) that links together Lincoln sites in your community. This could be offered as a fundraiser, with runners/walkers collecting pledges that benefit a specific non-profit organization within your community such as your historical society or library. Commemorative T-shirts from the event could include an appropriate Lincoln quote or historical image of Lincoln.

84. History Walk, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

The City of Harrisburg created a History Walk with more than 100 interpretive signs placed throughout the city. The signs featured historic photographs of buildings with text explaining their historical significance. Signs were placed in the same position that the historic photograph was originally taken to give a perspective of the buildings' original surroundings.

85. 200 Years Ago Today

Include a section in your local paper called "200 Years Ago Today" during the Lincoln Bicentennial to show the kinds of issues that were in the news at that time. In addition to news items from Lincoln's time, this section could also include descriptions of everyday life--fashion, food, games, recreation, etc.

86. George Washington's Funeral March, Mount Vernon, Virginia

During the bicentennial of George Washington's death, a special funeral march tour was offered at Mount Vernon. Participants were offered black armbands to wear, and the tour followed in the footsteps of the funeral march that left from Mount Vernon 200 years ago.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

Fun Facts

Research 200 fun facts about Abraham Lincoln (one for every year of the bicentennial), or alternatively 56 fun facts (one for every year Lincoln lived) to use in a variety of ways. For example:

87. Publish in Local Paper

Publish one "fun fact" in the local paper on a regular basis throughout the Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration. Or, publish a question about Lincoln and ask readers to email the correct response to the paper. The correct answer (along with the name of the first person to answer the question correctly) can be published along with the next Lincoln Trivia question.

88. Bicentennial Countdown

Celebrate the 200 days leading up to the actual bicentennial celebration day on February 12, 2009, by publishing a different fun fact about Abraham Lincoln in the local paper each day.

89. Lincoln Trivia Contest

Sponsor a "Lincoln Trivia" contest with a quiz that participants (residents and visitors) can complete and submit to be eligible for a prize drawing (only correctly completed quiz forms will be eligible to win). Alternatively, sponsor a live "Lincoln Trivia" contest in conjunction with local schools and encourage television coverage of the event.

90. Work with Local Restaurants

Work with local restaurants to have a "Lincoln Trivia Quiz" using the fun facts. The quiz could be included on menus, table tent cards, or as a handouts for kids (and kids at heart).

91. Trivia Quiz

Create a "Lincoln Trivia Quiz" that is available at key distribution points throughout your community, including questions that can be answered by visiting key Lincoln sites in your area. Set a timeframe and invite people to submit their completed quiz form to a central location for a prize drawing. (For example, to win a trip to Springfield to visit the Lincoln Library).

92. Work with Local Merchants

As an incentive to visit local merchants, provide each downtown merchant with the answer to one of the questions about the Lincoln "fun facts." Run a promotion that lists the questions and encourage residents and visitors to visit designated "Lincoln bicentennial merchants" to find the answers to the questions. Identify the best time of year for this promotion, whether it is in February during the month of Lincoln's birthday, during May (National Preservation Month) or a different time of year which would be most helpful for local merchants.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

French and Indian War 250th Commemoration

Communities in New York planned a number of activities to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the French and Indian War. Activities in Lake George included:

93. Concert

A concert by the local symphony featured music that was popular in the mid 18th century. Fireworks and cannon fire rounded out the event.

94. Lake George Restaurant Week

In observance of the 250th anniversary, local restaurants offer a fixed price, three course dinner. Reservations were necessary for this popular event.

95. 1757 Hands on Living History

This event included reading a historical fiction account of growing up in Schenectady, New York in the mid 1700s and fighting in the French and Indian War. Participants were able to create a wax seal, write a letter with a quill pen, build a simulated black powder cartridge and practice button sewing.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference

Jamestown 400 – Virginia

Communities across the state participated in the 400th anniversary Jamestown celebration in 2007. Among the activities were:

96. Abington

The famed Barter Theater commissioned an original production about Jamestown and Virginia history.

97. Big Stone Gap

Developed an exhibit called "Crafts of the World" which displayed crafts of the types brought by settlers to Jamestown. The exhibit also discussed efforts to preserve craft traditions.

98. Danville

The community planted 400 trees and plants in honor of Jamestown's 400th anniversary.

99. James River Plantations

Organizers created the Jamestown Discovery Trail including 12 sites, four parks and 33 highway markers. They also developed a Four Centuries Progressive Candlelight Tour and Dinner.

100. Orange County

The community hosted a "Constitution Celebration" celebrating 400 years of representative government.

101. Patrick County

Organizers created an internet game called "Could You Have Survived?" for fourth and fifth graders. The game challenged children to "experience" the hardships of Jamestown settlers 400 years ago.



Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial
Community Planning Conference