



[Home](#) [News](#) [Opinion](#) [Movies](#) [Music](#) [Events/Exhibits](#) [About Us](#)



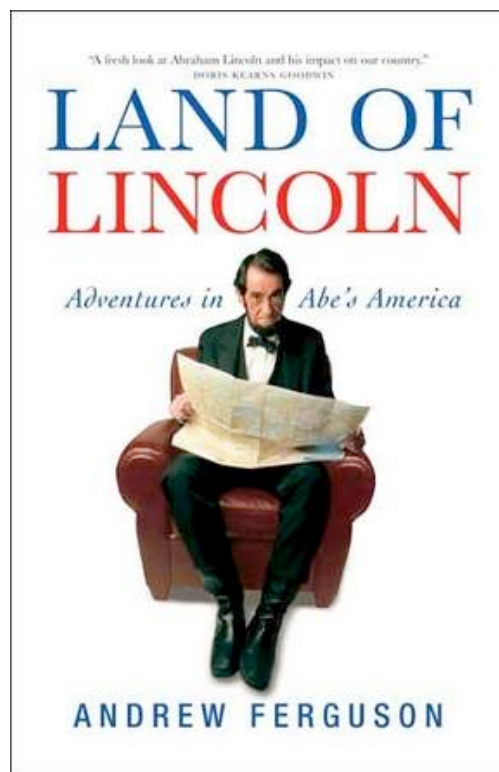
Books: Honest Abe turns a graceful 200

by Cheré Coen

This month brings a lagniappe year for Abraham Lincoln — Feb. 12 marks the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth.

In honor of the 16th president, the Louisiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission is hosting a series of poetry readings titled Imagining Lincoln: The Louisiana Poetry Project.

Louisiana poets, including Acadiana poet and director of the Louisiana Poetry Project Darrell Bourque and Lafayette author Ann Dobie, will inaugurate the series with a reading at 2 p.m. Sunday at the State Library in Baton Rouge. Additional speakers include David Madden, Sidney Creaghan, Reggie Scott Young, Ava Haymon, Bonny McDonald, Elizabeth Foos, Charles deGravelles and Jack Bedell. Each will give dramatic readings of poems that Lincoln wrote and poems that poets, such as Walt Whitman, Vachel Lindsay and Langston Hughes, wrote about Lincoln. Some of the poets also will read poems about Lincoln that they wrote specifically for the bicentennial.



Bourque and other Louisiana poets will present similar programs throughout the state during the week of Lincoln's birthday and throughout his bicentennial year. Several poets will read at 7 p.m. Thursday at Casa Azul Gifts, 232 Martin Luther King Drive in Grand Coteau, including Bourque, Creaghan, Bret Bernard, Sam Irwin, Patrice Melnick and Olan Thibodeaux.

The Casa Azul Abraham Lincoln Commemoration is an open mic event, which means participants are invited to join in with songs, poetry or other creative tributes to Lincoln.

For more information, contact Melnick at 662-1032 or casa.azul.gc@gmail.com or go to casaazul.homestead.com. For information on Imagining Lincoln: The Louisiana Poetry Project, contact Bourque at 684-3542 or at dbourque@centurytel.net. For

information about state activities, contact Madden at dmadden@lsu.edu or (225) 344-3630.

The statewide series is cosponsored by the Louisiana Center for the Book; State Library of Louisiana; Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism; Office of the Lieutenant Governor Mitch Landrieu; and the Louisiana Library Foundation.

A Lincoln log of books

In honor of the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth on Feb. 12, 1809, numerous books have been published this past year, adding to the thousands already published on the 16th president. Here are but a few:

- Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural by Ronald C. White Jr. (Simon & Schuster) was chosen by the Boston Globe as one of its favorites.
- Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America by Andrew Ferguson (Grove Press) looks at the stories about, and our fascination with, Lincoln.
- For an examination of the assassination of Lincoln, try Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer by James L. Swanson (Harper Perennial).
- Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power by Richard Carwardine (Vintage) was selected as the Lincoln Statewide Read for Illinois in 2009.
- For children, Abraham Lincoln Comes Home by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Wendell Minor (Holt) follows a boy and his father who travel to watch Lincoln's funeral train go by after his assassination.
- Did Lincoln Own Slaves?: And Other Frequently Asked Questions about Abraham Lincoln by Gerald J. Prokopowicz (Vintage) offers a question-and-answer format biography, answering questions about all aspects of Lincoln's life.
- What readings on Abraham Lincoln are complete without the poem by Carl Sandburg? Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years by Carl Sandburg (Mariner Books) includes his famous poem.

Another bicentennial birthday

Feb. 12 marks another bicentennial birthday that will be celebrated worldwide. Charles Darwin, who first described biological evolution by natural selection in *On the Origin of Species* after spending years as a naturalist on the British naval ship *The Beagle*, will be honored with a series of events this month. For information on Darwin and anniversary events, go to www.darwinday.org.

To read about the man, his work and recent controversy over evolution, try *Creationism's Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design* by Dr. Barbara Forrest (Oxford University Press), professor of philosophy at Southeastern Louisiana University and an expert witness in the first legal case involving intelligent design.

For a great new children's book that explains the life of Darwin, including his childhood where watching beetles was more interesting to him than school work, check out *One Beetle Too Many: The Extraordinary Adventures of Charles Darwin* by Kathryn Lasky, illustrated by Matthew Trueman (Candlewick Press).

 [Print this article](#)  [E-mail this to a friend](#)

Copyright ©2007 The Times of Acadiana. All rights reserved.
Use of this site indicates your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)
(Terms updated 7/20/05)