

Kids Korner

Abraham Lincoln Lives In Gettysburg

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GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.)

— James Getty, who looks a lot like the 16th president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, lives in Gettysburg.

Mr. Getty has always been fascinated with Abe Lincoln and, when a friend suggested that he could do impersonations, he decided to give it a try.

Today, Mr. Getty impersonates Abe in a theater at Gettysburg as well as in schools and Civil War-related programs around the country.

Children who meet Mr. Getty are always impressed with his ability to think, stand, move, and talk exactly as we have always

pictured Mr. Lincoln.

He speaks as though it was still 1862 and the Civil War was raging throughout the land.

Ask him about his mother, Nancy, his sister, Sarah, or his father or stepmother, and he will give an honest answer.

He remembers playing in the creek in Kentucky and seeing slaves passing by in chains. "It was at that time that I decided slavery was wrong," he says.

Mr. Lincoln speaks of his great love for books as a young man and tells humorous stories of the "blabb school," he attended in Kentucky.

When someone reveals where his home town is located, Mr. Lincoln can immediately relate the part that area of the country played in the Civil War.

He ends each of his presentations by reciting the Gettysburg Address which was first given at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863. That was a cold, late autumn day and Mr. Lincoln was invited to speak along with the great professional speaker, Edward Everett.

Mr. Everett spoke for two and 1/2 hours. Imagine going to church and listening to the minister speak for that long.

Then, it was Mr. Lincoln's turn and his speech took only a few minutes.

It was several years before the American people realized just how important the words uttered in those few minutes were or how well they had been written and delivered.

Mr. Lincoln was wrong on one account. "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here," he said in his speech. Today, the Gettysburg Address is an important part of almost every American history class.

Presenting this realistic portrayal of Mr. Lincoln did not come easily. "I studied and read every book I could find on "Honest Abe," smiles Mr. Getty.

He visited the place where Lincoln was born, the rural area in

Kentucky where he grew up, the farmland in Indiana where the Lincolns next lived, and the small town in Illinois where Lincoln tried his hand at being a businessman.

When he tells people in each of the areas he visits what he is doing, they are happy to take him to locations or graves where friends or families of Lincoln lived or are buried.

By visiting these sites, Mr. Getty says he gets a real feel for how Mr. Lincoln must have reacted to each of these individuals who played an important role in his life.

"My favorite presentations are always given to school children," says Mr. Getty. "I love helping them to see what a magnificent person President Lincoln really was."

"Without him, this country might have taken an entirely different course and it might not be the great country it is today.

Your school could contact Mr. Getty about doing a Lincoln performance by calling him at the Conflict Theater in Gettysburg, at (717) 334-6049.



James Getty poses as Mr. Lincoln during a ceremony held recently in Bedford.



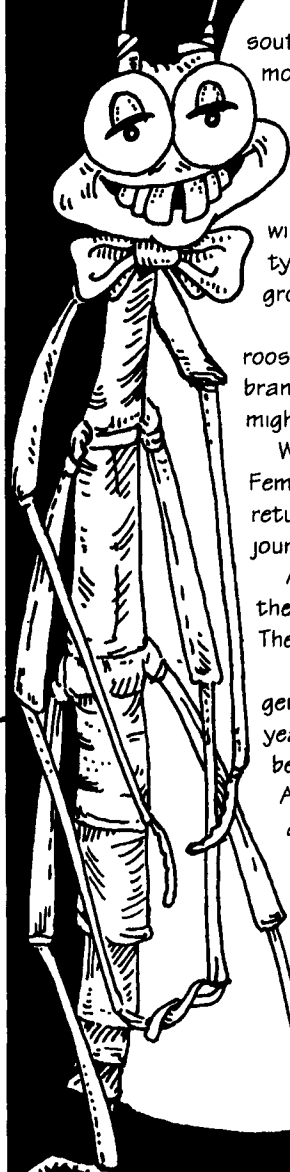
Is this the real Abe Lincoln?



Mr. Getty studied every book written about Pres. Lincoln in order to give a true representation of Lincoln's mannerisms.

Smart Stuff

WITH TWIG WALKINGSTICK



Where do butterflies spend winter?

Geese aren't the only winged critters that head south when the weather gets cold. Monarch butterflies fly more than 1,800 miles to spend the winter in warm, sunny Mexico.

Our entomology friends think shorter days and cooler temperatures put the distinct orange-and-black flying insects in the mood to migrate. About mid-August, monarchs will shut down their reproductive systems — monarchs typically lay eggs all summer — and rest at night in big groups, called roosts. And they move south during the day.

Most monarchs arrive at their central Mexico mountain roosts by early December. Once there, they hang out on branches and tree trunks and rarely move. (Though they might go hunt for sweet nectar on warm days.)

When it warms up in February, monarchs begin moving north. Females lay eggs on milkweeds along their route north. Most returning females die along the way. Their young continue the journey north, mating and laying eggs as they move.

Around the end of May, the monarchs will have reached their summer homes, some as far north as central Canada. Then, the travels start all over again in the fall.

But remember — migrating monarchs are at least three generations removed from the ones that flew to Mexico last year. They return to the same roost site without ever being there or having an elder show them the way. And this has entomologists really stumped — they don't know how the monarchs do it!

Scientifically yours,

Twig



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