

Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln was our 16th president. He was born on February 12, 1809, in Kentucky to farming parents. Both his parents were originally from Virginia. His mother died when he was 10 years old. He loved to read and was a self-educated lawyer. He married Mary Todd and had four boys, only one of whom lived to be an adult. He was our president during the Civil War and is remembered as our president who held our country together. Various tributes have been given to Abraham Lincoln, including the Lincoln Memorial and his likeness on the U.S. penny and five dollar bill.

Lincoln Memorial

The Lincoln Memorial is a national memorial authorized in 1911. Located in Washington, D.C., the structure commemorates United States president Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865). The marble, granite, and limestone building is situated in Potomac Park on the east side of the Potomac River. It was designed by architect Henry Bacon in 1912, to resemble a classic Greek temple and cost nearly \$3 million to build (equal to more than \$26 million in the mid-1990s). Construction began in 1914, and the memorial was dedicated in 1922, on Lincoln's birthday, February 12. Lincoln's only surviving son, Robert Todd Lincoln, was the guest of honor at the dedication.

The outside of the building features a series of 36 Doric columns that represent the states in the Union when Lincoln died in 1865. Each column is 13 m (44 ft.) high and inscribed with the name of a state. Above these 36 names are the names of the 48 states of the Union when the memorial was built. The inside of the building contains three chambers. The central chamber is 18 m (60 ft) high and features a marble statue of the seated Lincoln. The statue is 5.8 m (19.0 ft) high and was designed by American sculptor Daniel Chester French. It was assembled from 28 blocks of Georgia marble that were carved by the Piccirilli Brothers, a well-known family of marble sculptors. An inscription etched above the statue reads: "In this temple, as in the hearts of the people for whom he saved the Union, the memory of Abraham Lincoln is enshrined forever." Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is etched into a stone tablet in the south chamber and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address is inscribed on a tablet in the north chamber. Above the Gettysburg Address is a mural on the theme of emancipation by illustrator Jules Guerin; above the inaugural address is a Guerin mural on the theme of unification. The murals were done in oil on canvas and are each 18 m (60 ft) long and 3.7 m (12.0 ft) high.

The memorial was the site of a number of historic events. In 1939, famed black singer Marian Anderson performed at the memorial after being denied the use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution. In 1963, during the March on Washington for civil rights, Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial.