

Walking on the Path of Abraham Lincoln

A Walking Tour of Historic Lincoln, Illinois

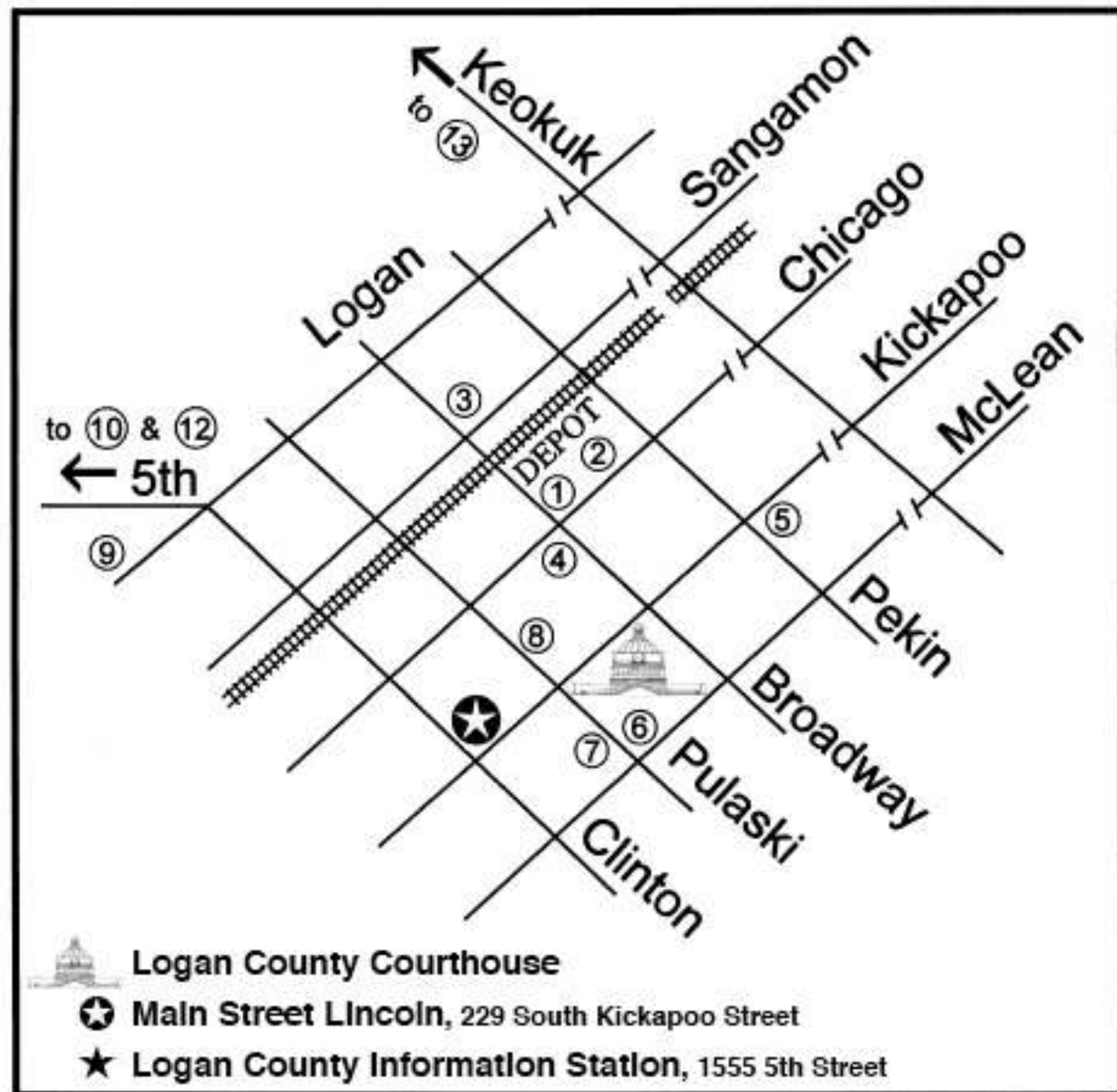
While in Lincoln don't miss

- ❖ The picturesque Courthouse Square Historic District with its beautifully restored historic buildings, numerous gift and antique shops, and a variety of locally owned restaurants.
- ❖ Nostalgic Route 66, the Mother Road across America
- ❖ The Taste of Wine, Lincoln Art and Hot Air Balloon Festival in late August
- ❖ National Daisplitter Festival in mid-September



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Other sites of interest in Downtown Lincoln include:

- Lincoln Public Library (a Carnegie building), 725 Pekin Street
- Logan County Genealogical & Historical Society, 114 North Chicago Street
- Lincoln City Hall, 700 Broadway Street
- U.S. Post Office, 102 South McLean Street
- Courthouse Square Historic District which includes historic sites, restaurants and shops



1. Town Christening Site

Broadway and Chicago Streets

In August 1853 the first sale of lots in the new town of Lincoln took place near this spot. Abraham Lincoln, in whose honor the town was named, was in attendance. When asked on the day of the land sale to officially "christen the town," Lincoln obliged. Lifting the cover off a pile of watermelons stacked on the ground by a local farmer, Lincoln picked up a melon and conducted a brief ceremony using its juice. Lincoln, Illinois is the only town named for Lincoln before he became president.



2. Lincoln Railroad Depot

101 North Chicago Street

Abraham Lincoln frequented this city by train after its founding. As president-elect, Lincoln came here on November 21, 1860. He stopped near this spot to make a few remarks from the rear of his train. This was his last speech in Logan County and the last time Lincoln would visit his namesake city, until his funeral train stopped here on May 3, 1865. The current depot was built several decades later, in 1911.

3. State Bank of Lincoln

111 North Sangamon Street

Abraham Lincoln met sculptor Leonard Volk for the first time on the boardwalk in front of the Lincoln House Hotel. Volk asked Lincoln to pose for a bust and life mask of his face and hands. Signed copies of the life masks by Volk, as well as original artwork by Lloyd Ostendorf of Lincoln in Logan County, are on display in this building's lobby.



4. Site of the Lincoln House Hotel

501 Broadway Street

The Lincoln House, one of the grandest hotels between St. Louis and Chicago, stood on this spot from 1854 to 1870. All the political luminaries of the day crossed its threshold at one time or another including Abraham Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, David Davis and Richard Ogelsby. The Lincoln House was a two-story frame structure that fronted the railroad tracks and featured a large veranda.

5. Robert Latham Home Site

400 North Kickapoo Street

Robert B. Latham joined John D. Gillett and Virgil Hickox in founding the town of Lincoln in 1853. Abraham Lincoln, judges, and lawyers were guests that stayed at his house often.

6. Logan County Courthouse

When Lincoln became the county seat in 1853 a courthouse was built on this spot. A second courthouse was built in 1858 and remained in use until the early 20th century when it was replaced with the current building. Abraham Lincoln practiced law and attended political functions in the first two courthouses built on this square. A statue of Lincoln overlooks the rotunda of this courthouse. A Civil War monument and cannon sit on the northside of the courthouse grounds.

7. Lincoln Lot Site

523 Pulaski Street

A plaque located on the right hand side of this store identifies the location as a lot Lincoln once owned. James Primm, in need of money, approached former Illinois Governor Joel Mattoon for a \$400 advance. Mattoon directed him to have Lincoln sign a note as Primm's guarantor. Lincoln co-signed the note. Later Primm defaulted and Lincoln had to pay the note. Eventually Primm deeded Lincoln this property in recompense.

8. Rustic Inn

412 Pulaski Street

In 1876 members of a counterfeiting gang met here to hatch a plot to steal Lincoln's corpse from its burial vault in Springfield. The gang had planned to hide Lincoln's body in the Indiana sand dunes on the shore of Lake Michigan and negotiate with the governor of Illinois for \$200,000 in cash and the release of Ben Boyd. The bartender at the Rustic Inn overheard the plot and reported it to the authorities. The Secret Service later apprehended the gang members. Robert Todd Lincoln had his father's coffin encased in several tons of cement to prevent future attempts to steal the body.



Other Lincoln Sites in Lincoln

9. Stephen A. Douglas Speech Site

Corner of 4th and Logan Streets

Stephen Douglas visited this city during the famous 1858 Illinois Senatorial campaigns. Douglas paraded with all his supporters through the decorated streets to the tent that was pitched on this site. Lincoln, who was also in town, listened to his opponent from the back of the crowd. In the end, a majority of Logan County voters favored Lincoln, but Douglas won the 1858 election.



10. Postville Courthouse

914 5th Street

This State Historic Site is a replica of an 1840 Courthouse where Lincoln argued, won and lost cases while he traveled the Eighth Judicial Circuit.

11. Site of Deskins Tavern

915 5th Street

Lincoln often stayed at Deskins Tavern when he traveled to Postville. A well where he quenched his thirst is also on this site.

12. Postville Park

1300 5th Street

Abraham Lincoln was well known for his athletic abilities and he frequently joined in games of "town ball" at this village park.

13. Lincoln College & Museum

300 Keokuk Street

A Nationally Registered landmark, Lincoln College was founded and named for President Lincoln on February 12, 1865. The Museum houses an extensive collection of memorabilia on the life of Abraham Lincoln.