



News Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New harness racing exhibit to be off and running on Kentucky Derby Day

***“The Story of Harness Racing by Currier & Ives” debuts at
Presidential Library May 1, 2010***

SPRINGFIELD – It’s a safe bet that visitors will jockey for position to see a new exhibit about the history of a popular pastime.

A new temporary exhibit about harness racing featuring original lithographs and historical artifacts opens at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois at noon on Kentucky Derby Day, May 1, 2010. The centerpiece of “The Story of Harness Racing by Currier & Ives” will be 35 framed original, pristine condition Currier & Ives lithographs depicting equestrian scenes from the 1800s. These color illustrations will be complemented by original artifacts from the Presidential Library’s collections. The exhibit may be viewed weekdays free of charge through August 31, 2010.

The Currier & Ives lithographs made from original paintings include studies of great trotting horses, mid-19th century scenes and comedic adventures that convey a picturesque part of Americana prior to the development of photography. The lithographs

are on loan from The Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame in Goshen, New York (www.harnessmuseum.com.)

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library will add items from its own collections that reflect the state's rich horse racing industry history. These will include:

- The 1836 race results and membership lists of the Petersburg, Illinois Jockey Club, a group that used the race track surveyed by Abraham Lincoln.
- Lincoln's January 9, 1864 endorsement for the purchase of horse liniment for the military.
- Two publications by Denton Offutt, Lincoln's neighbor at New Salem in the 1830s and someone we would refer to today as a "horse whisperer:" *A New and Complete System of Teaching the Horse on Phrenological Principles* and *The Educated Horse*.
- Photographs of Old Bob, the last horse Lincoln owned before leaving Springfield as President-elect; and photographs of Ulysses S. Grant's three black horses and his saddle used in the Civil War.
- A published history of Grant's Arabian stallions "Leopard" and "Linden" presented to him by the Sultan of Turkey in 1879.
- Lithographs showing the Grant family and their horses, plus an image titled "Speeding Ticket" showing Grant, well known at the time for his habit of speeding, traveling very quickly in his horse-drawn carriage.
- Vintage photographs, postcards and publications from horse races at the DuQuoin and Illinois State Fairs.

The Harness Racing exhibit may be viewed free of charge on Saturday, May 1 from noon to 5 p.m.; Sunday, May 2 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and then every weekday through August 31.

For more information about the programs and collections of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, visit www.presidentlincoln.org. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is the state's chief historical and genealogical research facility and is open free of charge weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The adjacent Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum is an immersive, state-of-the-art experience that gives visitors an emotional attachment to the Abraham Lincoln story. Paid admission is required to tour the Museum, which is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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