

# Lincoln expert donates his first book

By CORINNE ABATT

The interest in Abraham Lincoln which began when Weldon Petz, Flanders school principal, was a small boy, has never faded.

Through college, several careers and raising a family, the life and times of the 16th president has grown to an engrossing avocation. Petz presented one tangible result of his interest to the Farmington Public Library this week, a hard cover copy of his book "In the Presence of Abraham Lincoln."

The 104 page volume with color plates was printed last September in a limited edition of 2,000 by the Lincoln Memorial University Press of Harrogate, Tenn. The Lincoln collection of the university is the second largest in the world.

PETZ HAS SERVED AS UNIVERSITY CONSULTANT on Lincoln acquisitions. About four years ago the university asked him to do a book on some collected items which have received little, if any, public recognition.

Lincoln students are certain to find documents never seen before, adding depth to the man and that fascinating era.

The book contains the little known story and papers from the "chicken bone case." As if young attorney, Lincoln used chicken bones to illustrate a

medical point and win a settlement for an old man whose leg had been set improperly years before.

There is the president's correspondence with Cassius Clay (the original who was minister to Russia during Lincoln's administration).

Interesting, too, is Lincoln's reply to a request from Horatio Seymour, then governor of New York, to suspend the draft law. Lincoln explains in detail why he felt this reply, "a very important document."

The author includes the story of Lincoln's surprise visit to the school of Lt. John Worden, captain of the Monitor. Worden was temporarily blinded in the famous battle with the Merrimack.

Lincoln's quick departure in the middle of a cabinet meeting when he heard of Worden's grave condition reinforces the belief that he was a person who cared deeply for his fellow men.

The artifacts include the gold watch Lincoln presented to his close friend and body guard, Ward Lamon, marshal of Washington D.C.; various cases belonging to Lincoln; sheet music of the Lincoln era; beds he slept in on his travels; the bell he kept on his desk in the White House; paintings; rare vases with an Uncle Tom's cabin motif; posters, books and much more.

PETZ SAYS, "I picked out things that crossed Lincoln's life that I thought were interesting." He describes how some widely scattered memorabilia found its way to university collection.

The silver and ebony cane which Lincoln carried—the night he was assassinated—was left in the box of Ford's theater. It was picked up by one of the actors, passed down through several generations of his family, and eventually acquired by the Lincoln Memorial University museum.

In addition to writing the book and many articles on Lincoln, Petz is continually on the lecture circuit, both locally and nationally.

In the past nine days, he has given 22 talks in metropolitan area schools. Groups have a list of subjects to choose from—Lincoln and music; the women in Lincoln's life; religion; the rail splitter candidate and more. Petz, himself, has a collection of over 5,000 Lincoln items stored in bank vaults.

ALTHOUGH PETZ has been studying Lincoln and the Civil War years for most of his life, he is far from through. Presently he is working on a bibliography of Lincoln sheet music and has catalogued more than 400 songs.

The principal also wrote a master's thesis on music and Lincoln.

In the 40s Petz played trombone with the Jimmy Dorsey and Johnny Long orchestras. Later he had his own band in the Detroit area under the name Jimmy Weldon. For 19 years he was musical director of Puritan Heights ... Lutheran Church in Detroit.

In answer to a question as to how interest in one person and one period of time can be sustained at such a high level over many years, Petz has a ready answer.

"I can always find something new to learn about Lincoln. Did you know that he was an inventor and held several patents?"

He invented a device for lifting boats off shoals. It was never used, but it would have worked. He also invented a wagon whose wheels would turn independently from the axle.

"Lincoln was always under attack. There is a question of whether if he would have lived he would have been impeached. There was a plan under way to impeach him. I think it would have failed."

"Some of the anti-Lincoln songs were vicious. They used words we wouldn't dream of using. He suffered—he was a very warm person who felt every death on the battlefield."

Another thing that keeps Petz studying, researching and lecturing is audience-response.

"Everytime I talk to school kids they show a tremendous interest in Lincoln. When I'm through they ask so many questions that I just go on and on."

"Maybe, I'm planting a little seed in the minds of some children so that when they grow up they, too, will say, 'hey, we really do need things like this.'"

## Even students like the prof

By CORINNE ABATT

When students keep saying you ought to be interviewing their professor, you know you've got a live one.

Bill Frever, newly appointed head of social studies at OCC's Orchard Ridge campus, runs true to expectations.

"What would you like to talk about," he asks, relating about as much as a tightly coiled spring.

"Maybe about how students have changed in say the last 10 years?"

"That's called fishing around for a topic."

"I don't know how to answer that," he says in the only moment in the ensuing hour's conversation when there is any hesitation.

HE ROLLS the question around his mind and then reverses it to speak about how society has changed in his last decade and its effect on students.

"Social studies is problem oriented and we hope providing the kind of cognitive skills to enable students to engage in intellectual abstraction."

He gets capsule moments later with the phrase, "ability to analyze what's happening."

Using the energy crisis as an example, he asks rhetorically, "What preferred group is causing the situation to crystallize? We are being subtly manipulated by institutions, by the government, by whatever, that it's hard for students to respond."

He continues explaining what he means by manipulation, using the period of unrest and revolution in the mid '60s.

"IN MY MIND, it was a romantic time, an opportunity for young people to be absolutely free. It scared hell out of a lot of people who said 'we can't let these people be individuals.'"

These same scared people, he includes President Nixon in the group, he says, convinced a "skills scare."

"There was a movement away from liberal education, a movement away from critical education. The emphasis now is on 'you don't have time to do

that — go get a skill and plug into society. The only way to survive is to get that special skill. There never was a great shortage."

He continues, "It's an anti-intellectual movement that is as artificial as the energy crisis. We do not have a demand for all these skills. Ten years hence the skill thrust will be seen as a fraud. Instead of a liberal education, there is no time to think about politics or social reform. They are killing idealism by scaring us with threats of no food, no job, it's a psychic rip-off."

How does a social studies teacher combat what he feels to be a genuine threat?

"YOU TRY to teach them to be discerning."

He admits there is a risk. "They can become disillusioned. Maybe it's better to let them be happily trained."

But as he speaks, it is obvious that Frever will not settle for letting his students be happily trained and plugged unless they choose to be.

He is all for encouraging students who have the desire and the financial resources to resist being programmed, "and go for the liberal education and postpone the future."

"We say everybody must work, but society does not provide jobs. There is a declining need for people, yet, we are still defining the only way to get ahead is to be employed."

He objects to the definition of success in terms of the product produced.

"THE GROSS national product is the only measure of success in our society."

In the face of skill emphasis, he wonders what will happen to the service oriented professions and then launches into a discussion of television. It is very difficult for young people, born in the television age, to be objective about what they see and hear on TV.

## Shaving off a beard...it hurts most inside

By CARL STODDARD

Dan Klawender had a hairy face for about four years. Friday he shaved his beard off—so he could enter the sesquicentennial beard growing contest.

Klawender is a barber at Andy and Bob's Korner Barbershop, 33342 Grand River. The shop is helping sponsor the contest, in observance of Farmington's 150th anniversary.

Klawender decided to enter the contest, but he ran into one minor hitch. According to Gerald Potter, chairman of the Founders' Day Festival committee, the rules require men to be clean-shaven when they register.

Contestants may register March 8 or anytime after. The contest runs from March 8 to July 25. Potter said persons can register at Andy and Bob's or at the Westbrook Barber and Beauty Salon, 13 Mile and Orchard Lake roads.

The two barbershops are sponsoring the contest and will provide the trophies for the winners.

Awards will be given for the most growth from the chin, most growth from the chin for grey, red or blond beards and the most artistic beard.

In addition, a special judges' award will be presented for the most original or outstanding beard, Potter said.

Awards will be given out July 25 during the Founders' Day festival for the winner and runnerup.

"You don't have to enter the contest to grow a beard," Potter pointed out. But as Dan Klawender learned, you have to shave your beard to enter the contest.



DAN KLAWENDER goes through the emotionally painful ritual of preparing for the beard growing contest.

## Complete sesquicentennial calendar lists all events

- March 8 KICKOFF BREAKFAST 8:30 a.m. at the Botsford Inn, is the first drawing of the mystery photo contest. Guest speaker is Philip H. Power, co-publisher, Observer & Eccentric newspapers.
- March 18-22 SPELLING BEE - Rita Dodd
- March 22, 23 JAYCEES PLAY - "Farmington History" 8:15 p.m. at Farmington High School, 5200 Shiawassee. Special showing Thursday for sponsored groups.
- March 23 FARMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Sesquicentennial party will feature informal dress, styles from 1824 on. Everyone is welcome.
- March 25 FARMINGTON AREA NATURALISTS - "Our Rolling Land—the Impact of Glaciers on Farmington," will be presented at 8 p.m. at the Farmington Community Center.
- April 22 FARMINGTON AREA NATURALISTS - "Plant life in the Farmington Area," by Betty Frankel will be presented at 8 p.m. at the Farmington Community Center.
- April 23 ALL-STAR COOKE'S FILM SERIES "AMERICA" will be presented by the American Association of University Women, at 8 p.m. at the Farmington Public Library, 32737 W. 12 Mile Road. It will continue April 23, 30, May 14, 21, 28 and June 4.
- MAYE WHORF SHOW - "Farmington 1824-1974," will feature the Max Davey Singers at 8:30 p.m. at Mercy High School, 11 Mile and Middle Belt roads.
- May 16 MICHIGAN LOTTERY - Super drawing at 9 a.m., at the Botsford Inn.
- May 18-25 MICHIGAN WEEK - May 18-community pride day (mystery photo drawing); May 19-spiritual foundations day; May 20-our government day; May 21-our heritage day; May 22-our livelihood day; May 23-education day; May 24-hospitality day; May 25-our youth day.
- May 20 FARMINGTON AREA NATURALISTS - "Animals Without Backbones in Farmington," is a 8 p.m. at the Farmington Community Center.
- May 27 MEMORIAL DAY PARADE
- June 1 SESQUICENTENNIAL BALL - 8 p.m. at Vladimir's. Everyone welcome.
- June 1-7 FIELD DAY - Jerry Morawski is sponsor. All schools, all levels, but with emphasis on upper grades. All will try out for four or five special "sesqui" events.
- June 24 FARMINGTON AREA NATURALISTS - "Fish, Amphibians and Reptiles in Farmington," by Hartley Thornton.
- JUNE 19, 20, 21 JAYCEE LODGE - Farmington Rd. at W. 12 Mile Rd.

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