History of the Lincoln Trail Hike

The Lincoln Trail Hike for Boy Scouts originated in the mind of former Scout Commissioner R. Allan Stephens of Springfield in 1926. Mr. Stephens was impressed by the story of how Abraham Lincoln on many occasions walked the 20 miles from New Salem to Springfield to borrow books from his friend, John T. Stuart, so that he might continue his study of law. He believed that Boy Scouts would acquire a greater appreciation of the obstacles Lincoln overcame in his rise to the highest office in the Nation if they, too, would walk over that same route.

Lincoln lived at New Salem from 1831 to 1837. From the time he was 22 years old until he was 28, it was while living there that he became known as " Honest Abe," and gained his reputation for great physical strength by his feats in wrestling contests and wrestling contests. The only way left open for him to get the books was to walk to Springfield, and that is what he did, often making the round trip in a single day.

This outstanding example of ambition and perseverance led Mr. Stephens to propose that Boy Scouts be encouraged to make the hike from New Salem to Springfield as Lincoln had done, and that an award be made to the Scout who successfully completed the trip. The plans were worked out by Abraham Lincoln Council, a medal was designed showing the face of Lincoln on one side and bearing the words, "Scout (the Scout's name) walked in Lincoln's steps. [The date]," on the other. On November 6, 1926, Albert Bennett became the first Scout to win a Lincoln Trail Hike medal. Three other Springfield Scouts completed the hike the same day. Since that time, some 18,000 Scouts from 27 states and Puerto Rico have made the hike and earned their medals.

Requirements

WHO MAY QUALIFY: Any registered Scout or Explorer who holds at least the rank of FIRST CLASS SCOUT or Explorer Apprentice. Registered Bcouts may also qualify.

Scouts or Explorers must wear complete Scout or Explorer uniform. During late June, July, and August, official Scout or Camp Tee Shirts may be worn.

Experience with nearly 18,000 hikers shows that older Scouts have the most successful experience in the hike. The hike must be completed in one day.

HOW TO MAKE APPLICATION: Applications to hike the hike must be made on a form by the Scout and submitted to the unit leader, the unit committee, or the Scout Executive. Application blanks are available from the office on the front of this folder.

A National Scout Tour Permit must be procured from your local council, for all units from outside the Abraham Lincoln Council.

APPLICATION INFORMATION: On proper approval has been vouched for on the blank, all leaders must fill out and return with list of prospective hikers. Hikers should be instructed to read one of the approved books on Lincoln (see list in folder) and to present a neatly written paper or typed report on at least 300 words. Be sure that each report has name of hiker, unit number and address on it. Be sure to have your hikers complete their report BEFORE MAKING THE HIKE.

Application, Registration fee of 25c plus fee of $1.50 for each hiker, and book reports should be forwarded to Abraham Lincoln Council at least 2 weeks before making the hike. The hiker and book reports cannot be transferred. Be sure that you have the correct spelling and address.

PREPARATION FOR THE HIKE:

1. There should be one adult for every 8 or 9 boys making the hike trip. Scateurs need to make the hike but are in charge of arrangements or checking. However, only Scouters who actually hike the trip need to have the fox and book reports. All other reports will be sent by mail.

2. Be sure that proper application has been made and that credentials are received before making the hike.

3. Parents permission should be received for boys making the hike.

4. Unit leaders should see that thorough instruction and training are given in hike regulations and that the boys are in good physical condition. Hike regulations are found in the application blank and book reports cannot be transferred. Be sure that you have the correct spelling and address.

ON THE HIKE:

1. Hikers should be in Lincoln's footsteps and not in paved streets.

2. Hikers should not be placed in charge of arrangements or checking. However, only Scouters who actually hike the trip need to have the fox and book reports. All other reports will be sent by mail.

3. Hikers should get proper instruction and training on the hike. Hike regulations are found in the application blank.

4. Hikers should be in Lincoln's footsteps and not in paved streets.

5. Hikers should be in Lincoln's footsteps and not in paved streets.

6. Hikers should be in Lincoln's footsteps and not in paved streets.

Accommodations Available to Lincoln Trail Pilgrims

AT NEW SALEM, ILLINOIS

1. CCC Barracks at the Park

Accommodations for 140 persons. Double beds with mattresses. Must bring own bedding. Stove available for winter use. Reservations and permission secured by writing to: Division of Parks & Monuments State of Illinois Armory Building Springfield, Illinois Please state number of adults, unit number, and address of leader, Council and date desired.

A $5.00 deposit is to be paid by each Unit applying for use of the CCC Barracks. If, on checking out with the Park custodian, the building is properly cleaned and no damage done, the deposit will be refunded. Make check payable to Elmer J. Hoffman, State Treasurer, and have to the custodian or Night Watchman, when entering the Park. If there is damage, or if the condition is such that it requires work of men of a clearing nature, then the damage or work will be paid for out of the deposit.

2. Permission can also be obtained for the use of camping sites in the Park by writing to the above address.

3. Lincoln Trail Cabin

For use by hikers and leaders. Only, cabin equipped with stove, mattresses, fireplaces. No bedding. Accommodations for 8 hikers. Reservation made through: Abraham Lincoln Council Boy Scouts of America 750 East Vistor Street Springfield, Illinois 62703 A charge of 25c per hiker per night is required...

AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

1. Camp Innis- The Abraham Lincoln Council camp located on Lake Springfield, approximately 8 miles south of town. Camp sites available free of charge. Units required to bring their own tentage, bedding and cooking gear. Reservations are to be made in writing to the Council Office. Not available during summer camp periods.


3. Hotels: tourist courts and YMCA situation difficult to secure rooms. Groups should make own arrangements if types of accommodations are required.

4. Fairgrounds—camping facilities for tent camping may be procured during the summer season, with the exception of the State Fair period, at the Illinois State Fair Grounds. Write direct to the Director, State Fair, Fair Grounds, Springfield, Illinois.

5. Showers are desired they are available free 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays at the Springfield YMCA. A charge of 25c per hiker is required...
Required Reading

Scouts preparing to make the Illinois Lincoln Trail Hike are required to read one of the books listed below, and submit a Book Review consisting of at least 300 words, before the medal can be engraved.

1. Great Good Man
   Barton, William
   Bobbs-Merrill 1927

2. Abraham Lincoln
   Nolan, Jeanette
   Messner 1953

3. Lincoln's New Salem
   Thomas, Benjamin
   Abraham Lincoln Assoc. 1934

4. Boy for the Ages
   Bacheller
   Farrar 1937

5. Man for the Ages
   Bacheller
   Bobbs-Merrill 1917

6. Abraham Lincoln
   Foster, Genevieve
   Scribner 1950

7. Abraham Lincoln
   Dougherty, James H.
   Viking 1943

8. Abraham Lincoln,
   Friend of the People
   Judson, Clara
   Wilcox & Follett 1950

9. Boys' Life of
   Abraham Lincoln
   Nicolay, Helen
   Appleton 1906

10. Abe Lincoln
    Grows Up
    Sandburg, Carl
    Harcourt 1928

11. Abraham Lincoln:
    the Prairie Years
    Sandburg, Carl
    Harcourt 1929

12. Abraham Lincoln
    Thomas, Benjamin
    Knopf 1952

13. Abraham Lincoln
    Meadowcroft,
    Erich La Monte
    Crowell 1942

14. Personal Traits of
    Abraham Lincoln
    Nicolay, Helen
    Appleton 1939

15. Boy Scouts' Life of
    Lincoln
    Tarbell, Idas M.
    MacMillan 1921

A Message to Scouts

Every Boy Scout will be a better American citizen if he will read carefully the life of Abraham Lincoln. The opportunities which await every American boy under our system of government can be illustrated no better than in the accomplishments of our Civil War President. The entire story of his life, from his birth in a log cabin in Kentucky to his re-election as President of the United States, his refusal to accept defeat as final failure, his determination to improve his own mind, his ideals, are an inspiration to everyone. No other nation offers such possibilities to its young men.

Our Council sponsors this program and is happy to invite First Class Scouts and Explorers from other Councils to make the hike, and earn their medal.

The reading and book review is just as important as walking the 21 miles. The mind, as well as the body, should be strengthened. It is our sincere hope that every Scout or Scouter taking it, in addition to having fun and a new experience, will add to his own life some of the principles of Abraham Lincoln.

Health and Safety for Highway Hiking

1. Walk on the left hand side of the road, facing traffic; get off the pavement as cars approach.
2. Wear comfortable leather shoes and two pairs of light woolen socks.
3. Carry small roll of adhesive tape, some gauze and antiseptic; care for blisters immediately.
4. Take frequent short rests.
5. Guard against windburn and sunburn by wearing a broad-brimmed hat and long sleeves.
6. Always be careful.

THE LINCOLN TRAIL HIKE

A Message to Scouts

FOR QUALIFIED MEMBERS
OF THE
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Sponsored by
ABRAHAM LINCOLN COUNCIL
730 East Vine Street
Springfield, Illinois
Phone 8-5693