

Walking Tour of HISTORICAL HODGENVILLE

"I walk slowly, but I never walk backwards." - Abraham Lincoln

1) HODGENVILLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 The Hodgenville Christian Church began with services conducted under the shade of an oak tree in the yard of J.W. Gore, weather permitting. In 1872 a group of 40 people met in the courthouse and organized the Hodgenville Christian Church. Soon a church building was constructed and completed in 1877. The church is the oldest standing building on the square. The wood cross behind the altar and above the baptistery was carved from the Boundary Oak tree that stood as a property marker at Sinking Spring Farm where Abraham Lincoln was born.

2) THE OLD LARUE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
 After LaRue County separated from Hardin County in 1843, with Hodgenville becoming the county seat, a courthouse was erected to conduct county business and court proceedings; it was completed in 1844. During the Civil War it was used as Union barracks. The courthouse was burned by guerrillas in 1865. Miraculously, all the records were saved. A new courthouse was constructed in the same location, however, in the mid 1960s it had fallen into disrepair and was torn down.

3) MASONIC LODGE
 There once was a blacksmith shop on this corner. In 1917 members of B.R. Young Masonic Lodge 123 A & FM purchased this property and in 1922 a three story building was constructed. The second floor once housed the Cardinal Theater where the Lincoln Jamboree was held in its early days. In the balcony there is a ceiling tile where the legendary Joel Ray Sprowls' signature can still be seen.

4) HODGENVILLE WOMAN'S CLUB
 The Hodgenville Woman's Club was established in 1919. The Club purchased a building on the square in 1921 which formerly housed The LaRue County Herald News. That building is where the kitchen is located at the current clubhouse through funds they received from the Works Progress Administration created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The building was given a stone façade; the stones came from a local farm.

5) HAZLE BUILDING
 The Hazle building was once the Hazle Hotel and Cafe. Current owner Ron Mather did extensive renovation in the early 1990s. Today the building houses Mather Law Offices and Before and After Salon.

6) LINCOLN NATIONAL BANK
 The Lincoln National Bank Building was once the Lynn Hotel. The second floor still has rooms that were left untouched during renovations.

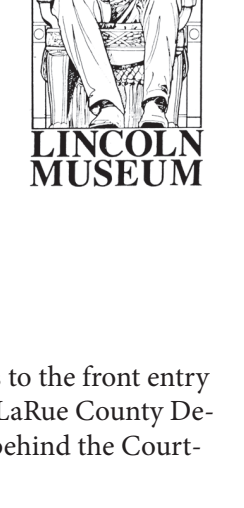
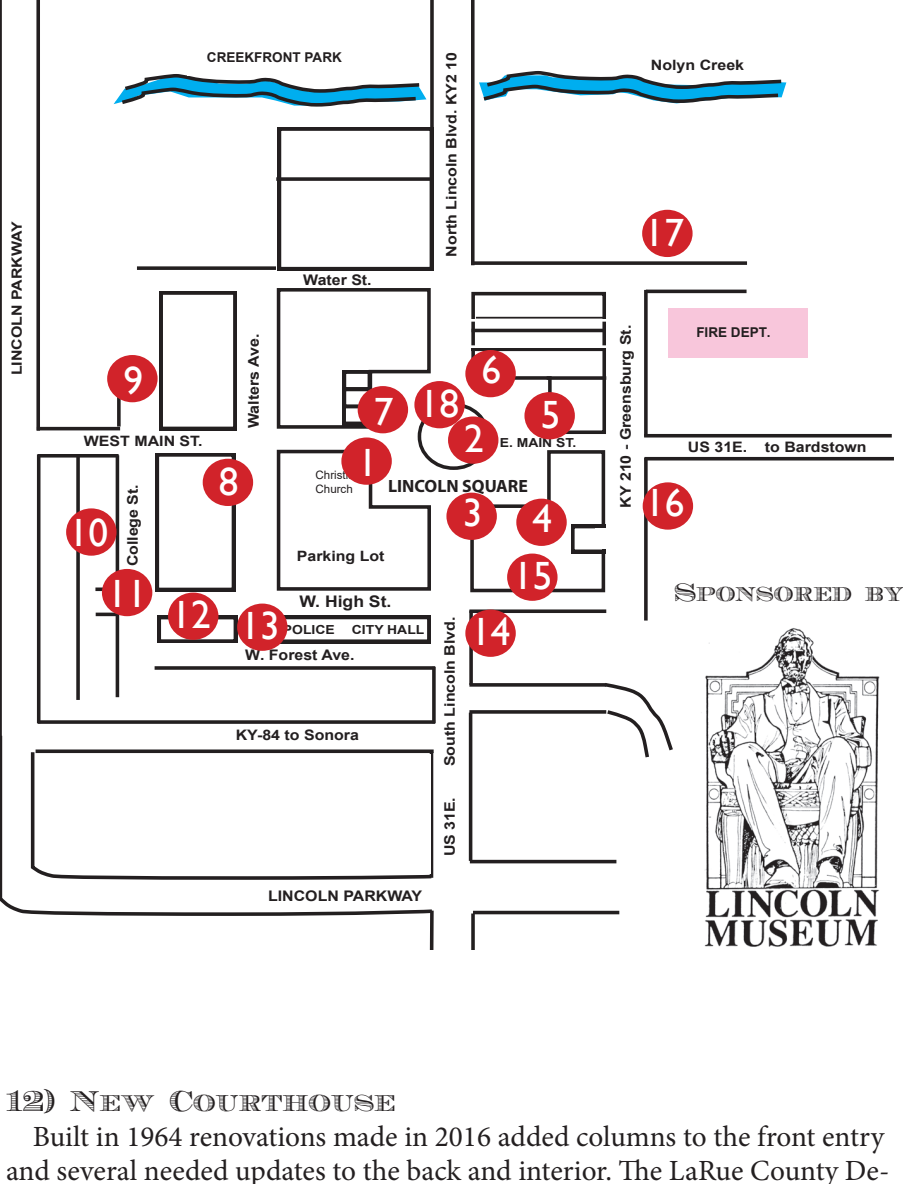
7) THE LINCOLN MUSEUM
 The Lincoln Museum was organized in 1988 as Kentucky's tribute to the 16th U.S. President born here in Hodgenville. Efforts from countless volunteers led to the museum being the single largest volunteer effort in the community in the last 100 years. The buildings that house the museum were constructed in 1914 after a devastating fire destroyed that entire quadrant of the square. The building on the right was once a family owned department store, Middleton and Marcum, which closed in the mid 1980s. The building on the corner served several occupants from a saloon, grocery store, business offices, LaRue County Board of Education, Lincoln Days office, and a Dollar General Store.

8) POST OFFICE
 The historic post office in Hodgenville, Kentucky was constructed in 1937 with federal Treasury Department funds. Hodgenville Post Office is unique because Hodgenville is one of only four United States cities that doesn't require a postal zip code in order to deliver mail. Collectors from all over the world send in their stamps to be stamped without a zip code at Hodgenville, Birthplace of Abraham Lincoln.

9) HODGENVILLE TRAIN DEPOT
 The first train came to Hodgenville in 1888. The Illinois Central Rail Road built a branch line from Cecilia with stops at Elizabethtown, Tonieville and Hodgenville. The depot was located at the junction of Water Street and West Main Street.

10) HODGENVILLE ROLLER MILL
 The concrete structure is all that remains of the Hodgenville Roller Mill after fire destroyed the building in 1975. Built around 1900 by Sam Boyd and Ernest Jeffries, later sold to Jim McDowell and E.A. Ferree and then sold again to Dr. A.T. Boyd. In 1919 it sold once more to J.M. Howell of Otter Creek. The mill remained in operation until the late 1960s.

11) LARUE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
 In the late 1800s this building was Kenyon College. The college was closed around 1920 and the building was used as Hodgenville High School. When the county high schools consolidated in 1954 a new high school was built and this building became the Hodgenville graded school. It now serves as the LaRue County Board of Education, Early Learning Center and Adult Education Center.



12) NEW COURTHOUSE
 Built in 1964 renovations made in 2016 added columns to the front entry and several needed updates to the back and interior. The LaRue County Detention Center is located in the lower level of the Annex behind the Courthouse.

13) POLICE STATION CITY HALL, CIVIC CENTER AND GENEALOGY LIBRARY
 Formerly First Baptist Church Hodgenville, these buildings now serve as the Police Station, City Hall and the Hodgenville Civic Center. The LaRue County Genealogy Society Library is also in the Civic Center where volunteers work to research and preserve LaRue County family history.

14) LARUE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
 The Ladies Lincoln League founded the county's first public library in 1919. Books were kept in a makeshift library—a room behind a bakery located on the Square. In the 1930s WPA funds allowed the League to build The Lincoln Memorial Library at this location. League volunteers were responsible for the operations until the 1960s when the original building was moved to Lincoln Farm Road where it still stands as part of LaRue County Baptist Church.

The building before you served as LaRue County Public Library from the 1960s until 2019 when a new state of the art library was opened just south of town near the schools.

15) OLD JAIL
 Located on E. High Street beside Garrett Furniture, the original county jail is a Kentucky Landmark. This two-story brick was furnished with a wood stove, single sink, couple of light bulbs and sturdy bars.

The house on the corner to the right was once the jailers quarters. Inmates were held in the basement—some of the cells are still there.

16) LOG HOUSE
 The house at the foot of South Greensburg Street on the right is the oldest home in Hodgenville. Part of the home is constructed of logs that are still visible from the interior of the home.

17) HODGEN'S MILL
 This is the approximate location of Hodgen's Mill on Nolin Creek. In 1788 Robert Hodgen petitioned Nelson County to erect a mill on Nolin Creek. When Robert Hodgen died his family petitioned Hardin County to use the land set aside by Hodgen in the establishment of a town. On February 9, 1818, Hardin County court approved the petition and Hodgenville was established.

18) THE STATUE PLAZA
 The Presidential statue of Abraham Lincoln was dedicated in 1909 to commemorate the 100th birthday of the martyred 16th President. It is older than the one at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. The Boy Lincoln Statue was placed here in honor of Lincoln's years in Kentucky and was dedicated in 2008 for his Bicentennial Celebration.

