



# **Sidney Blumenthal Is Featured Speaker at Abraham Lincoln Birthday Banquet on February 19**

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SPRINGFIELD – Prominent journalist, political insider, and author Sidney Blumenthal will be the featured speaker at the Abraham Lincoln Association (ALA) Birthday Banquet on Sunday, February 19 in Springfield. Four renowned Lincoln authors and historians will highlight the Benjamin P. Thomas Symposium earlier in the day, which will feature discussions on the 1860 Republican Convention, Lincoln and Native Americans, Lincoln family spiritualism, and a slave trader pursued through the courts by the Lincoln administration.



The annual Lincoln Birthday Symposium and Banquet, usually held on February 12 on Lincoln's actual birthday, has been moved to February 19 to take advantage of the three-day Presidents' Day weekend.

Sidney Blumenthal has been at work for more than a decade on a five-volume

The banquet is one of many activities scheduled each year to commemorate Lincoln's birthday. The Abraham Lincoln Association's annual Benjamin P. Thomas Symposium will also be held on Sunday, February 19 beginning at 10 a.m. at the President Lincoln Hotel in downtown Springfield. The free presentations begin with Edward Achorn, a career journalist whose upcoming book is *The Lincoln Miracle: Inside the Republican Convention that Changed History*.

The next session, which begins at 10:45 a.m., will feature Michael Green, the author of *Lincoln and Native Americans*. Green is the Executive Director of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association and is a professor at the University of Nevada—Las Vegas.

The Thomas F. Schwartz Symposium Luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, where the featured speaker at 12:15 p.m. will be Terry Alford, the author of a widely known biography of John Wilkes Booth. Alford has also written the new book *In the Houses of Their Dead* which describes the engagement with spiritualism of the Lincolns and of the family of John Wilkes Booth.

The final program to follow the luncheon will be presented at 1:15 p.m. by Jonathan W. White, a leading younger figure in the Lincoln field, who will discuss Appleton Oaksmith, a New York slave-trader pursued through the courts in 1861-62 by the Lincoln Administration. A roundtable discussion led by Prof. Michael Burlingame, Lincoln author and distinguished professor of history at the University of Illinois Springfield, will follow. All six authors, including Blumenthal and Burlingame, will sign their books from 3 to 4 p.m. at the hotel.

The Symposium talks and roundtable discussion are free and open to the public. Lunch will be offered, and lunch reservations are required. The luncheon is \$35 per person and reservations can be made at [www.abrahamlincolnnassociation.org](http://www.abrahamlincolnnassociation.org) or by calling (217) 546-2656 (217-LINCOLN). The reservation deadline for the banquet or symposium lunch is February 3.

The Symposium is named for Benjamin P. Thomas (1902-1956), the renowned Lincoln biographer and one-time Executive Secretary of The Abraham Lincoln Association. The symposium is supported by a generous gift of Thomas's daughter, Sarah Thomas, and her family to The Abraham Lincoln Association Endowment Fund. For more information about the Abraham Lincoln Association, please visit [www.abrahamlincolnnassociation.org](http://www.abrahamlincolnnassociation.org).