



Frequently Asked Questions

How many people visit the Lincoln Memorial each year?

Approximately 7.9 million people visit the Lincoln Memorial annually, making it the fourth most visited site in the national park system.

What is the history of the Lincoln Memorial?

The Lincoln Memorial stands at the west end of the National Mall as a neoclassical monument to our nation's 16th president. A commission to plan a monument was first proposed in 1867, shortly after Lincoln's death. The design for that plan called for six equestrian and 31 pedestrian statues of colossal size, with a 12-foot statue of Lincoln in the center, but that project was never started for lack of funds. Construction began in 1914, and the memorial was opened to the public in 1922.

Lying between the north and south chambers is the central hall containing the solitary figure of Lincoln sitting in contemplation. The statue was carved in four years by the Piccirilli brothers under the supervision of sculptor Daniel Chester French. The statue of Lincoln is 19 feet high and weighs 175 tons. The original plan was for the statue to be only 10 feet high, but this was changed so that the figure of Lincoln would not be dwarfed by the size of the chamber.

Marian Anderson gave her Easter morning concert here in 1939 after having been denied the use of Constitution Hall because of her race, and Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech from the steps of the memorial in 1963.

What is the architectural style and building materials?

Designed as a neoclassical tribute by architect Henry Bacon, the Lincoln Memorial was modeled after the Parthenon, the Greek temple located on the Athenian Acropolis. Bacon felt that a memorial to a man who defended democracy should be based on a structure found in the birthplace of democracy. The memorial stands 190 feet long, 119 feet wide, and almost 100 feet high. It is surrounded by a peristyle of 36 fluted Doric columns, one for each of the states in the union at the time of Lincoln's death, and two columns in antis at the entrance behind the colonnade. The north and south side chambers contain carved inscriptions of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address and his Gettysburg Address, with murals above each signifying *Unity* and *Emancipation*, respectively.

Henry Bacon not only wanted to build something beautiful, but wanted to explain the reunification of the states following the Civil War by using a wide variety of stone from around the United States—north and south. The terrace walls and lower steps are comprised of granite blocks from Massachusetts; the upper steps, outside façade, and columns are built of Colorado Yule Marble; the interior walls and columns are Indiana limestone; the floor is pink Tennessee marble; the ceiling tiles are Alabama marble; and the statue of Abraham Lincoln is built from 28 pieces of Georgia marble.

What's the significance of the murals?

Above the engraved speeches on the north and south interior walls of the Lincoln Memorial are 60-by-12-foot murals painted by Jules Guérin graphically portraying governing principles evident in Abraham Lincoln's life. Both scenes contain a background of cypress trees, the emblem of eternity. The murals

were crafted with a special mixture of paint which included elements of kerosene and wax to protect the exposed artwork from fluctuations in temperature and moisture conditions from the exposed environment of the chamber.

The mural on the south wall above the Gettysburg Address is titled *Emancipation* and represents Freedom and Liberty. The central panel shows the Angel of Truth releasing slaves from the shackles of bondage. On the left side of the mural, Justice and Law are represented. On the right side, Immortality is the central figure surrounded by Faith, Hope and Charity.

Above the Second Inaugural Address on the north wall, the mural titled *Unity* features the Angel of Truth joining the hands of two figures representing the north and south. Her protective wings cradle figures representing the arts of Painting, Philosophy, Music, Architecture, Chemistry, Literature, and Sculpture. Emerging from behind the Music figure is the veiled image of the future. The left group represents Fraternity while the right group represents Charity. The fourth figure from the left of the Angel of Truth is Lincoln Memorial architect Henry Bacon.

What's the total deferred maintenance and maintenance budget for the memorial?

The total amount of deferred required maintenance at the Lincoln Memorial is \$20,309,197 (of that total, \$20,159,997 is for the building and \$149,200 is for the grounds). In fiscal year 2015, the maintenance budget for the Lincoln Memorial was approximately \$490,000.

What funds will the National Park Service contribute to this project?

As the more visible projects made possible by Mr. Rubenstein's donation get underway, the National Park Service will work to address the memorial's additional deferred maintenance needs. In fiscal year 2016, we'll invest \$800,000 from the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. And, as part of the President's fiscal year 2017 budget, we have requested \$2.2 million to replace the roof.

What is the timeline for the project?

The project will take place in four phases over four years, from 2016 through 2019. During Phase I, the National Park Service will restore the roof, clean the sculpture and conduct masonry repairs. At the same time, design of the space and exhibits for the renovated visitor space will begin. Phase II involves the major underground work to renovate and create the new visitor spaces. During this time, the National Park Service will also begin to design and produce the new exhibits. During Phase III, the NPS will install state-of-the-art exhibits in the finished underground spaces. During Phase IV, the NPS will enhance the surrounding landscaping.

Will the memorial remain open to the public during the work?

Although elements of the project may require access to be limited to individual areas of the site, the Lincoln Memorial will remain open during the renovation.