



Ford's Theatre Society
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Ford's Theatre Society and National Park Service Announce 2026 Lincoln Assassination Commemoration Activities

**Live and Virtual Events Commemorating the 161st Anniversary of the
Lincoln Assassination April 14 and 15, 2026 and Throughout April**

**National Park Service Wreath Laying at the Petersen House
April 15, 2026, at 7:22 a.m.**

**Free Online Resources, History Talks, Virtual Field Trips and Distance-Learning
Programs for Students and Lifelong Learners**

Tickets For Historic Site Visits Available Now Through May 25, 2026

WASHINGTON— Ford's Theatre Society, in partnership with the National Park Service, will mark the anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's assassination with a range of commemorative programs at Ford's Theatre and online throughout April. This year's offerings invite visitors to engage more deeply with this pivotal moment in American history through expanded museum experiences and digital programming. Tickets for entry to the Ford's Theatre campus through May 25 are available for advance reservation at www.fords.org, with a limited number of same-day tickets offered on a first-come, first-served basis at the box office.

On the evening of April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln and First Lady Mary Lincoln attended a performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre. During the play, Lincoln was shot by actor and Confederate sympathizer John Wilkes Booth. He was then taken across Tenth Street to the Petersen House, where he died at 7:22 a.m. on April 15.

“At Ford’s, we see this moment not only as a time to remember, but as a call to engage,” said **Paul R. Tetreault**, director of Ford’s Theatre. “Commemorating the assassination of Abraham Lincoln invites us to reflect on how this pivotal event shaped our nation—and to consider how Lincoln’s legacy continues to challenge and inspire us today.”

“The anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s assassination is not only a time to reflect on the events that led to his death in 1865, but also an opportunity to deepen our understanding of his leadership, his vision for a more just nation, and the enduring relevance of his legacy,” said **Kevin Griess**, superintendent of the National Park Service’s National Mall and Memorial Parks. “Through these commemorative programs, the National Park Service invites people of all ages to engage with this seminal event in American history and carry its timeless lessons forward.”

Visits to Ford’s Theatre, Ford’s Theatre Museum and the Petersen House are self-guided and open daily 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The historic site will be open all day on April 14 and 15, with two *One Destiny* performances on each day. Visit www.fords.org for details on entry schedule and availability.

Commemoration Activities

History Talks: Inside the Petersen House

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

6 p.m. ET

Virtual Program – FREE

Step across the street from Ford’s Theatre and into one of the most poignant moments in American history. After Abraham Lincoln was shot on April 14, 1865, soldiers carried the wounded president to the Petersen House, where he died the next morning. The testimonies given by the residents living at the house, who witnessed the president’s final hours, transport us to that tragic night.

This program is part of History Talks, a webinar series that investigates facets of Abraham Lincoln’s complex legacy and its relevance to today. [Register here.](#)

Petersen House Evening Open House

Tuesday, April 14

6 p.m. – 8 p.m. ET

Free, no registration required, tours every 30 minutes

Commemorate the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s assassination by joining a National Park Service ranger for an immersive evening tour of the Petersen House, where the mortally wounded Lincoln was taken from Ford’s Theatre and where he died the following morning. This 30-minute guided tour will go beyond the familiar elements of the

assassination to uncover intimate stories of Petersen House and the people who were there on the night of Lincoln's death. Group size is limited to 10 people per tour.

Ford's Theatre and the Lincoln Assassination

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

11 a.m. and 2 p.m. ET

Step into Civil War era Washington, D.C. and discover the city President Lincoln knew. Uncover the dramatic events of his assassination at Ford's Theatre and explore how Lincoln's legacy continues to shape our nation. [Register here.](#)

Wreath Laying at Petersen House

Wednesday, April 15

7:22 a.m. ET

The mortally wounded Lincoln was brought directly across the street to the Petersen House and died there the next morning. Join a National Park Service ranger outside the Petersen House at 7:22 a.m. to place a memorial wreath marking the moment of the president's death 161 years ago.

One Destiny

Throughout April and May (dates include April 14-15)

Learn about Lincoln's assassination from two men who were there. Actor Harry Hawk and Ford's Theatre co-owner Harry Ford revisit the events of April 14, 1865. As they reconstruct the sequence of events, they grapple with the question: Could John Wilkes Booth have been stopped? This 40-minute one-act play explores the key facts of the assassination while capturing the emotions of that fateful night. [Purchase tickets here.](#) *One Destiny* is also [available on demand.](#)

History on Foot – Investigation: Detective McDevitt

Throughout April and May (dates include April 14-15)

On the night of April 14, 1865, Detective James McDevitt was on duty at the Washington Metropolitan Police headquarters, one half-block from Ford's Theatre. Just before 10:30 p.m., frantic witnesses rushed in with horrifying news: President Lincoln had been shot at the theatre. Join Detective McDevitt as he revisits the sites and reexamines the clues from the investigation into the Lincoln Assassination Conspiracy. This walking tour of downtown Washington, D.C. makes several stops across the city from Ford's Theatre to the White House. Wear comfortable shoes. Tickets are \$20. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

Ranger Guided Walking Tours

Tuesday, April 14, 2 p.m. ET

Wednesday, April 15, 2 p.m. ET

Join a National Park Service ranger for a 35-minute walking tour of the Ford's Theatre neighborhood exploring sites that both Lincoln and his assassin would have recognized in 1865. See how much has changed and why we continue to remember Lincoln's Legacy. Meet the ranger by the large lamp post outside the main theatre entrance doors.

Congressional Cemetery Speaker Series

In collaboration with Congressional Cemetery

Saturday, April 18

1 p.m.

The story of our 16th president's assassination is a well-known one. Thousands of books, articles and special exhibits are just some of the ways this story has been told. But have you ever seen the story told using the graves of those involved with the assassination? Part-speaking engagement and part-docent-led tour, the Cemetery Speaker Series features keynote remarks on the Lincoln assassination from Ford's Theatre's Manager of Interpretive Resources Daiya Malone, followed by a complementary docent-led tour of the gravesites of individuals related to the assassination, including David Herold, Charles Forbes and others.

Tickets are \$10. Space is limited. [Register here.](#)

Virtual Investigation: Detective McDevitt

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

11 a.m. and 2 p.m. ET

Take on the role of investigator and assist Detective James McDevitt as he examines President Lincoln's assassination on April 14, 1865. This immersive theatrical program teleports participants back in time to revisit sites, interact with historical characters and examine primary sources to determine who is guilty of this heinous crime. [Register here.](#)

Cabinet Conversation: Life Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. ET

Revisit the founding ideals of the United States and trace the complex path from the Declaration of Independence to the Constitution in this thought-provoking conversation with leading scholars and experts. Together, we'll explore how the framers' ambitious yet imperfect vision for liberty and equality has been interpreted, challenged and expanded through the lens of constitutional law and how the arts shape and foster national memory.

Join us as we hear from scholars, artists and other thought leaders as they exchange ideas about the future of the arts, civics and history. With each conversation, we connect the

lessons of the Civil War, Lincoln's presidency, theatre, arts and education to our contemporary life. [Learn more here.](#)

[Access Resources to Teacher Lincoln's Assassination and Legacy](#)

Ford's Theatre Education's resources engage students in grades 3-12 with compelling primary source-driven content, interactive activities and newly added short-form videos that bring the power of place into your classroom. Within each grade band educators and students can select from the following themes:

- Lincoln's Assassination – Understand the events leading up to and following April 14, 1865.
- The Investigation and Trial – Dive into the search for John Wilkes Booth and the trial of the conspirators.
- Lincoln's Legacy – Analyze Abraham Lincoln's lasting impact on America today.

[New 250th Resources: A New Birth of Freedom: Lincoln the Founding and the Fourth of July](#)

As the United States marks its 250th anniversary, we invite students to reflect on what the Fourth of July has meant to different people over time. Our new classroom resources for elementary, middle and high school students explore how American leaders across eras understood the ideals of freedom and equality. Scaffolded for each grade band, students consider how changing political and social contexts shaped Americans' ongoing efforts to create a "more perfect union."

Access FREE asynchronous teacher professional development featuring Ford's Theatre Education staff and trusted educators. This format brings the power of place within reach with cinematic storytelling, compelling visuals and tons of resources for the classroom. Participants will receive a certificate upon completion. Visit www.classspark.socialstudies.org.

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Ford's Theatre Society

One of the most visited sites in the nation's capital, Ford's Theatre reopened its doors in 1968, more than a hundred years after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

Operated through a partnership between Ford’s Theatre Society and the National Park Service, Ford’s Theatre is the premier destination in Washington, D.C. to explore and celebrate Abraham Lincoln’s life and legacy.

Ford’s Theatre Society was founded under the guidance of executive producer Frankie Hewitt, who, during her 35-year tenure, established Ford’s as a living, working theatre producing performances that highlighted the diversity of the American experience. Since the arrival of **Paul R. Tetreault** as director, critics and the theatre-going public have recognized Ford’s for the superior quality of its artistic programming. With works from the Tony-nominated *Come From Away* and the nationally acclaimed *Big River*, to the world premieres of *Meet John Doe*, *The Heavens Are Hung In Black*, *Liberty Smith*, *Necessary Sacrifices*, *The Widow Lincoln*, *The Guard*, *Grace*, *Something Moving*, and *The American Five*, Ford’s Theatre is making its mark on the American theatre landscape. Under the current leadership of Board of Trustees Chairman **Phebe N. Novakovic** and through the lens of Lincoln’s leadership and legacy, Ford’s Theatre endeavors today to advance Lincoln’s “unfinished work” with programs and performances that cultivate empathy, encourage dialogue and bridge divides in American life.

For more information on Ford’s Theatre and the Ford’s Theatre Society, please visit www.fords.org.

National Mall and Memorial Parks

The National Park Service’s National Mall and Memorial Parks preserves, protects, and interprets the symbolic and monumental civic spaces, commemorative works and historic sites in the center of the Nation’s Capital that honor American ideals and values, distinguished public figures, and military and civilian sacrifices and contributions. On the National Mall these sites include Ford’s Theatre National Historic Site, the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, World War II Memorial and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. National Mall and Memorial Parks also serves as a public park and open space for active civic and cultural engagement, recreation and public enjoyment.

For more information about the National Park Service and Ford’s Theatre National Historic Site, please visit www.nps.gov/foth.

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#RememberLincoln #LincolnMatters

Ford's Theatre:

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Facebook: @fordstheatre

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Ford's Education on X: @fordsedu

Website: www.fords.org

National Park Service:

Twitter: @FordsTheatreNPS

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Website: www.nps.gov/foth