

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ON ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER RECEIVES ONLY KNOWN LINCOLN SIGNATURE FROM GETTYSBURG

Philadelphia, PA (July 2, 2008) – On the eve of Independence Day, and in honor of the 145th anniversary of the conclusion of the Battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, the National Constitution Center announces that it has acquired for display the only known signature made by President Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg when he gave his historic Gettysburg Address. While almost every American is familiar with the Address, many do not know that President Abraham Lincoln’s famous opening words – “Four score and seven years ago” – were a reference to July 4, 1776, in acknowledgment of the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

The signature is on the first page of an autograph book from the dedication of the Gettysburg Cemetery. Acquired at auction by businessman and philanthropist Lewis Katz on behalf of a Trust for his grandchildren, the signature will be on loan to the Center for ten years and displayed in the Center’s permanent exhibition, *The Story of We the People*.

The autograph book was purchased amid intense public and media interest at Sotheby’s on April 8, 2008, among twenty other Lincoln documents, and was the second highest purchase at the auction.

“We are extremely grateful to Lewis Katz for bringing this important treasure to our museum and understanding the role it can play in the story we tell,” said Joseph M. Torsella, President and CEO of the National Constitution Center. “It is an honor to obtain such a rare piece of history to include in our permanent exhibition. Lincoln’s role at Gettysburg signaled a major turning point in American constitutional history, and this treasure will connect visitors in a unique and tangible way to that defining moment.”

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ADD ONE/LINCOLN SIGNATURE

"Pennsylvania is known for its rich historical legacy, and I am thrilled that this rare artifact has returned," said Edward G. Rendell, Governor of Pennsylvania. "I am not surprised that Lewis Katz understood that this important piece of our past belongs at the National Constitution Center."

"In making this loan, we hope to achieve two important objectives," said Lewis Katz. "First, we want visitors to the Center to connect to history in a personal way. Signatures offer a unique opportunity for visitors to imagine the moment the pen touched the paper. Second, it is our sincere hope that others share great treasures with the National Constitution Center – through loan and purchase – so that the American story can be told, in part, through documents and objects."

Signatures of Simon Cameron, Lincoln's Secretary of War; William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State; and the Governor of Pennsylvania, A.G. Curtin, share the first page with Lincoln's signature, *A. Lincoln*. All three of these men were seated on the main platform with Lincoln at the dedication ceremony. The remaining pages of the autograph book include signatures from John Hay, one of Lincoln's secretaries; Henry Mercier, the American-born Minister from France; Reynaud, the Admiral commanding the French Naval Division of the Gulf and North America; Ulissa Isola, an Italian Army captain; Joseph Bertinatti, the Minister from Italy; Abner Doubleday, a Union General who fought at Gettysburg; A.W. Bradford, the Governor of Maryland; John. G. Nicolay, Lincoln's private secretary; and George Sykes, a second Union general at Gettysburg.

The signatures, all gathered on the day of Lincoln's unforgettable address, were obtained either at the main platform at the dedication ceremony, or at the Gettysburg railroad station following the dedication, and were probably gathered by a member of the President's traveling party. No one else would have had access to so many people of prominence.

Beginning in February 2007 with the acquisition of a rare copy of the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln, and continuing with the Lincoln signature, the

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ADD TWO/LINCOLN SIGNATURE

Center is working to build a collection of treasures through long-term loans and permanent acquisitions, including rare and important documents and items with iconic status that uniquely capture crucial moments in American history.

The autograph book is a significant addition to the icons of American history that have been displayed at the National Constitution Center. Over the years, these have included treasures such as Benjamin Franklin's copy of the Constitution, Thomas Jefferson's manuscript draft of the Declaration of Independence, FDR's leg braces, and tools used by the Watergate burglars.

Admission to the National Constitution Center is \$12 for adults, \$11 for seniors ages 65 and up and \$8 for children ages 4-12. Active military personnel and children ages 3 and under are free. Group rates are also available. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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