

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial

The Memorial Building



Limestone exterior of the Memorial building.

The Memorial Building, completed in 1943, was designed and built in the spirit of Indiana in 1816. The architect described this spirit as:

Whatever is built should be a forthright expression of honesty, simplicity and dignity, qualities that we associate with Lincoln and his mother. There should be no false construction or design. Materials should be native and largely hand worked. Design should be suggested by the best practice of the days when Nancy Hanks was a young woman. Not a design suggestive of the log cabins she lived in but a type of structure that might have been built by one of the best builders of the period to commemorate an illustrious pioneer.

With this philosophy in mind, the building was designed with two halls and a connecting cloister. The resulting Memorial Court features five sculpted panels marking significant periods in the life of Abraham Lincoln. The Memorial is wholly a Hoosier creation, constructed of Indiana limestone and sandstone, with all timber cut from trees native to the area.