

TRAVEL

SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2013 :: LATIMES.COM/TRAVEL

LETTERS

True meaning of Gettysburg

Hamm's story about what happened seven score and 10 years ago is timely, as we mark the Fourth of July and empower new leadership in Los Angeles.

The article and the Gettysburg Address remind us that the holiday is not just a day off from work, but a day to reflect and cherish an ever-challenged nation, which will unquestionably survive as long as we have a document called the U.S. Constitution as the law of the land.

Taken together, they help us see a vivid, timeless story without traveling to Gettysburg.

All Angelenos, including our new mayor and council members, should read her article and Lincoln's speech to stay focused on the true meaning of democracy and be inspired to nobly address "the unfinished work" and "the great task remaining before us," work of, by and for you know whom.

Genuineness and candor are treasured human qualities, the elements that made President Lincoln's handwritten speech, revised up to the last minute, so powerful (rather than speeches delivered today, which are produced by

professional writers and edited to death by a bevy of White House aides worried about how it will play on the evening news and on social media sites).

It is ironic that we do "note" and "long remember" the Civil War battle, in large part because of Lincoln's sincerity.

To be remembered and to inspire others after we pass is the ultimate ideal legacy for anyone — Lincoln and the soldiers at Gettysburg achieved this for all of us.

CALVIN NAITO
Los Angeles