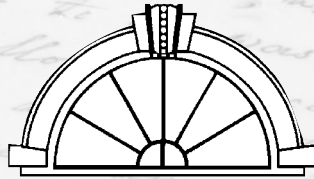


Become a friend

Support history education and historic preservation

at



LIBERTY HALL HISTORIC SITE

"A National Historic Landmark"

Become a member today



# UPCOMING EVENTS

February Teas ☞ February 8, 9, 15 & 16

Enjoy a tea-style luncheon and program on 19th century courtship and correspondence. A lovely lunch of light finger foods and an elegant atmosphere will be provided. \$16.00 per adult or \$14.00 per member. Tea begins at noon at the Orlando Brown House.

Legislative Reception ☞ March 4

LHHS hosts state legislators at the Orlando Brown House. Friends of the site are welcome. Reception from 5-7pm.

Hunger for History Lunch Series ☞ March 19, April 16 & May 21

On the third Wednesday of the month at noon bring your lunch to LHHS for a FREE program which explores the history and preservation of the site. Desserts and drinks are provided.

Family Fun Day ☞ March 29, April 26 & May 31

On the last Saturday of the month, noon-3, LHHS gears up for families seeking special weekend activities. Explore the lifestyles of 19th century Kentuckians with your family. Activities include exploring the site, hearthcooking, making Kentucky crafts, and hands-on collection investigation. Join us in March for a look into LHHS's quilt collection. Bring family photos for a scrapbook quilting activity.

Living History Home and Garden Tour ☞ May 17 and 18

The Garden Club of Frankfort is partnering with the Colonial Dames to offer a Living in History Home and Garden Tour of historic homes and gardens in Frankfort and Franklin County and a May Market on the grounds of historic Liberty Hall.



LIBERTY HALL 1796



ORLANDO BROWN HOUSE 1835



WINTER 2008

LIBERTY HALL HISTORIC SITE

VOL. 9, NO. 1

LIBERTY HALL HISTORIC SITE 218 WILKINSON STREET FRANKFORT, KY 40601 (502)227-2560 WWW.LIBERTYHALL.ORG

## LIBERTY HALL HISTORIC SITE

features two houses, Liberty Hall (1796) and the Orlando Brown House (1835), as well as a large historic garden. Liberty Hall was the home of one of Kentucky's founding fathers and first US Senators, John Brown, and his family.

### TOURS

The houses are open for guided tours March through mid-December.

Tuesday-Saturday 10:30am, 12noon, 1:30pm, 3:00pm

Sunday and Monday by appointment only

\$5 for adults and \$3 for 18 years and under

For more information, call us at 1-888-516-5101 or email us at libhall@dcr.net



218 WILKINSON STREET FRANKFORT, KY 40601 www.libertyhall.org

## An ardent reply... Love Letters to be Focus of February Teas

In 1796, as an unattached bachelor, John Brown, a United States Senator from Kentucky, put the wheels in motion towards establishing a home for himself and his future wife, whoever she might be. After purchasing four acres on the Kentucky River, he appointed his brother, Samuel Brown, to oversee the building of a residence fit for a senator.

With his career well established and most of his family settling in Kentucky, he had felt a deep desire to marry. In 1794, Senator Brown's cousin John Preston suggested that his "only chance for a wife is in Virginia, a handsome young, rich widow, (who has just put off her mourning) has fallen in love with him." According to Mr. Preston, the widow, Mrs. Theodosia Randolph, found Senator Brown to be the "model of perfection, the master of creation."

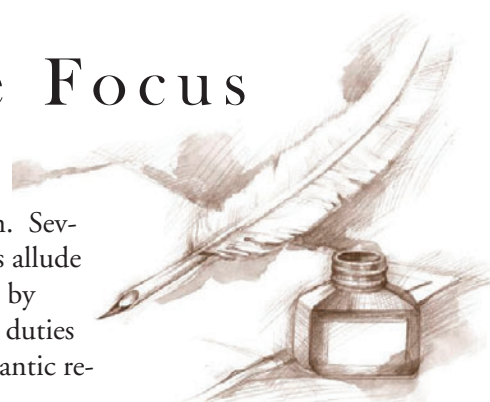
Today, we do not know how many love interests John Brown had before he met his future

wife, Margaretta Brown. Several of the family letters allude to disappointments felt by John when his political duties interfered with his romantic relationships.

John Brown's responsibilities required a great deal of travel between the Capitol, as it moved, and Kentucky. In 11 years the United States Capitol moved from New York, to Philadelphia and finally to Washington D.C. in 1800.

Finding a mate who he himself thought to be the model of perfection was not enough. She would also need to be adventurous, strong, and independent. No amount of wealth would buy the tools needed to cope with the differing worlds of Kentucky and the eastern seaboard. They were separated not only by distance but also by a cultural gap.

John Brown and Margaretta Mason met through a mutual



friend, John J. Beckley, sometime between 1796 and 1798. Mr. Beckley was the first presidential campaign manager for Thomas Jefferson. His wife Maria was a close childhood friend of Margaretta's.

Margaretta was 26 and John 41 when they married on February 18, 1799 in New York. Within the year their first child Mason was born. During the summer of 1800, between congressional sessions, John Brown traveled to Kentucky alone to check on the progress of his new home and to meet with his constituents.

John and Margaretta's time apart lasted about four months before John returned and the family moved to their new temporary home at a boarding house in Washington D.C.

In This Issue: February Teas, Call for Volunteers, and From the Director's Desk

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the widest possible audience based upon the will provide opportunities for enrichment to House, Liberty Hall Historic Site 1835 at the Orlando Brown with 1796 at the Liberty Hall and rural aspects of Kentucky life, beginning exhibit the social, domestic, and horticultural, document, preserve, conserve, and Brown and his descendants. The site will the life and times of Senator John Site is to educate the public by interpreting The mission of Liberty Hall Historic Site is to educate the public by interpreting highest professional standards.



# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

**Dr. Melissa Jurgena**

**G**reetings from the Directors Desk!

All hands at Liberty Hall are busy, busy, busy getting ready for our big move this spring to new administration space on the 2nd floor of the Orlando Brown House. This change will open up the existing rooms in the basement of Liberty Hall for much needed classroom and program space. As you can imagine, our Education Coordinator, Nicole is chomping at the bit to have room for her school groups as well as a place to show the Liberty Hall video. Having dedicated classrooms will enable the staff to host a wide variety of programs and better serve the museum's mission.

The restoration project is moving rapidly forward as the electrician, Clarence Gram, has already finished the 2nd floor of the Brown House wiring and is moving on downstairs. He is replacing the missing light in the drawing room and will be updating all of the outlets in the first floor this week. Clarence intends to be able to move on to the Liberty Hall wiring by the end of the month.

I recently sent out the Cynthia Woods Mitchell grant for the interior restoration study and we should hear back from them within a few months. This will be the first step in restoring the interior decor of Liberty Hall to its proper appearance. The study will result in sample boards, suppliers' lists, and budgetary information needed to move the project forward.

Gerry Bessinger has begun work on the needed maintenance to the fence, repairing what was damaged by the falling tree, and the replacement of rotted posts and slats. The work will depend on the weather, but should be done this spring in time for the House & Garden Tour on May 17th & 18th.

Gene Butcher continues to work on the windows right on schedule. He is also using rain days to work on the second floor of the Brown House, following the electrician with the necessary plaster work.

As most of you know, we lost Randy Huff last month. He has decided to pursue his interior design career and we wish him the best of luck. Emily has completed the inventory photographing of the Orlando Brown house collection and is moving on to the Liberty Hall library. Nicole is working on the new 1st person interpretive tour of Margaretta Brown and busy making arrangements for February Teas. We hope you will all make time to come enjoy an elegant lunch with us.

*Dr. Melissa Jurgena*



We have several upcoming projects on site that we could use your energy in order to complete. Can you help?

1. **Photo data-entry and reorganization** – Liberty Hall has a large collection of old photographs and daguerreotypes that need to be organized into a photo archive. Volunteers will label pictures, describe each picture in detail, enter the data into an inventory software called Past Perfect, and archivally store the pictures according to time period. Computer skills are necessary.
2. **Transcription project** – While there are thousands of letters already transcribed, more keep coming in every day. Want to help tell the Brown family's story? Volunteers are needed to edit, copy and organize new transcriptions into binders that can be used by researchers and staff. Of course if you would prefer to work from home, we are still looking for transcriptionists.
3. **Paint the attic** – Come help us paint the walls of Liberty Hall's attic! Brightening the space will make our storage rooms more useful (and visible). Volunteers should wear clothes they don't mind getting dirty.

For more information about any of these projects, please contact Nicole Cox Markle at 502-227-2560 or email her at libhall@dcr.net

called Huddleston's. Sometime between March of 1801 and February of 1802, John brought his family to Kentucky to live in their new home which was referred to as Liberty Hall by their grandchildren.

John quickly returned to Washington D.C. to fulfill his duties as a senator and would continue to travel back and forth between there and Frankfort, Kentucky twice a year until 1805.

These early years provide the greatest wealth of information about Margaretta and John Brown's relationship. They also reveal the power of the written word and a lost lifestyle of communicating through letters. The following is a selection of their correspondence.

July 3, 1800  
Margaretta Brown to John Brown  
New York, New York

By this time I hope my Love has nearly completed his journey & that this letter may find him safely arrived in Frankfort – Oh when will that happy time arrive, when, blessed with your constant society, I shall have no room for imaginary fears, & when in every exigency we may administer mutual assistance – I need not entreat you, my love, to foster that period by every possible mean – I know you desire it as ardently as I do – May heaven prosper your endeavors & restore you, in due season to the arms of your affectionate Margaretta Brown

July 20, 1800  
Margaretta Brown to John Brown  
Hackensack, New Jersey

Can we calculate upon any thing else, than mortification and regret during our separation? Is not the fountain of our pleasures (the constant interchange of sentiment and endearments which we once enjoyed) deprived of all its sweets, by the distance which is between us? To me indeed, every enjoyment is insipid; even the charms of our dear Boy lose half of their power to please, because you can not share in the bliss they impart

July 31, 1800  
Margaretta Brown to John Brown  
New York, New York

It is eight weeks this day since we were separated – I now begin to console myself with the reflection, that nearly one half of the time is already elapsed & that in eight weeks you will return to the arms of your Margaretta & your son – why must you be deprived of his caresses – restore his dear father in safety to us, and crown this long & painful separation with a speedy and happy meeting – Adieu my Love

August 6, 1800  
Margaretta Brown to John Brown  
New Rochelle, New York

I shall leave the Atlantic-states without casting ( I will not say a regretful) “one longing, lingering look behind” – But I shall be blest with the Society which is nearest to my heart – from you, my Love, I hope never to be again separated – Yet I do not wish to hurry you I know you will make all possible haste to return to us, my confidence in your love and tenderness is as unbounded, as my Love & tenderness for you

December 21, 1801  
Margaretta to John Brown  
Frankfort, Kentucky

Indeed my Love, it is a fortunate circumstance that I have some employments which will necessarily abstract my mind from the loneliness of my situation – my children by their little endearments serve only to remind me that you are not here to share them

December 31, 1801  
John Brown to Margaretta  
Frankfort, Kentucky

I never felt greater anxiety my Love to hear from you & my Dear Boys – pray write by every mail – were it only one line – My happiness depends upon a knowledge of your welfare – This night terminates the Year – My God! how different the end from the beginning – I can not dwell upon the subject – Adieu My Love may the New Year be a happy one to you. Continue to Love me & rest assured of my unalterable affection

March 5, 1802  
Margaretta to John Brown  
Frankfort, Kentucky

Once more, my Love, I am seated in our own habitation; but can scarcely believe myself at home in any situation, when deprived of your society. I do not now laugh at the romantic details which we met with in Novels, of so much happiness in a Cottage; for I was myself, infinitely happier with you at Huddleston's, that I am in our Castle at Frankfort without you.

These and other endearments taken directly from the letters written by Brown family couples will be the inspiration for this year's February Teas at the Orlando Brown House. The teas begin at 12:00 noon on February 8th(Fri), 9th(Sat), 15th(Fri), and 16th(Sat). Tea reservations are \$16.00 per person and should be made in advance.

To make reservations contact LHHS at 502-227-2560 or at libhall@dcr.net.

Join Us for  
February Teas

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February 8, 9,  
15, & 16

at the  
Orlando Brown  
House

