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February 2024

Famous Kentucky Christians Club E-newsletter

The tenth president of Liberia was Alfred Francis Russell. He was from Lexington, Kentucky



Liberia is a country in Africa. In the 1800's the United States set Liberia up as a place to send emancipated formerly enslaved people. It was also a place to take people who had been captured and put on a ship to be slaves in the United States after the Atlantic slave trade became illegal in 1808. Alfred Russell was born enslaved. His grandmother was his owner. She gave him and his cousins freedom because they agreed to travel and move to Liberia. He became a missionary, a farmer and a politician. He was the vice president of Liberia when President Gardinar resigned in 1883. Russell was the president for one year.

Fish Town in Basau, Liberia, by Robert Griffin



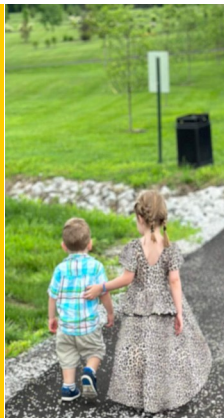
Robert Griffin painted this picture of the town of Bassau from the sea in 1856. When ships from the United States arrived in Liberia, this is what the people first saw of their new home. Everyone got some free land and supplies for one year. But lots of people got sick and died.

Julia Chinn, the “wife” of the Vice President



Richard Mentor Johnson was the vice president of the United States when Martin Van Buren was president from 1837-1841. Johnson married Julia Chinn even though, at the time, it was illegal for people in Kentucky to marry outside of their race. They got married in a church near Johnson's plantation in Georgetown, Kentucky. Not only was Julia of mixed race, she was also enslaved to her husband. He never freed her. He did free their two daughters. Julia did not live in Washington DC when her husband was the vice president. She stayed in Kentucky where she was in charge of the plantation and of a school for Native American boys, the Choctaw Academy, which was on their land. Julia died of cholera after the students at the school had an epidemic.

Visit the Kentucky Faith & Public History Education Project Walking Trail—Open and free during daylight hours at 616 Clintonville Rd, Paris, KY 40361



Labels for the Arboretum

Soon all the plants in the arboretum along the Walking Trail will have labels. When you visit use your smart phone to look up the QR codes on each plant label. It will take you to an audio prompt that will help you to discover something about each plant. There are lots of things to explore on the Walking Trail. It's always free so please come often.

Peggy Taylor, a First Lady from Kentucky

Peggy Taylor was from Kentucky. She was President Zachary Taylor's wife. She loved to pray. She did not go to the White House parties. Instead, her daughter hosted the parties. Even though she was a serious Christian, she and her husband owned slaves. In fact, they were the last people to bring enslaved African Americans at the White House. Zachary Taylor was president for just one year from March 4, 1849 to July 9, 1850. He died in office. This was just eleven years before the Civil War started that ended slavery in our country.

