



NEWS RELEASE

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Louisa May Alcott's ORCHARD HOUSE – Home of *Little Women*
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Photo Opportunity at Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House Raises Awareness for "Saving America's Treasures Week"

Concord, MA - On Tuesday, April 6, 2010, staff, supporters, and friends of Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House joined many other historic sites and communities across the country in a national celebration called "*Saving America's Treasures Week*" – an initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation – to raise awareness for federally-funded programs like *Save America's Treasures*, *Preserve America*, and *National Heritage Areas*.

Despite the enormous benefits and positive impacts to our nation's historic sites, collections, and communities, these programs are currently threatened with elimination in the new Federal budget. As members of Congress recess for the week of April 5th - 9th, it was vital for Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House to join in the national effort to restore funding for these initiatives. "We're thrilled to participate in this national event, since we have benefitted directly from *Save America's Treasures*. Orchard House today is proof positive that these vital preservation programs are worth the investment," said Executive Director Jan Turnquist.

On the grounds of Orchard House on Tuesday, April 6th, a photo was taken of supporters, staff, Board members, area students, girl scouts, and international visitors proudly displaying their gratitude toward *Save America's Treasures* and support for reinstatement of funding for Federal preservation programs. The National Trust for Historic Preservation created "*Saving America's Treasures Week*" to give local communities an opportunity to spotlight their treasures and highlight the importance of these critical preservation programs. Orchard House's event was intended to complement the National Trust's creative advocacy campaign that blends grassroots efforts with traditional and social media outreach.

By the year 2000, Orchard House was literally sinking unevenly into the ground due to powder post beetles, water damage, and structural instability caused by lack of a foundation under the original back half of the house. A \$400,000 grant from *Save America's Treasures* enabled Phase I of a multi-phased Preservation Project – the likes of which were not seen before in the site's nearly 90-

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year history — to begin. The imprimatur of the grant, along with strong local, national, and international support for the beloved site where *Little Women* was written and set in 1868, led to a triple match of grant funds and the completion of Phase I work by the Summer of 2002. Work continues to this day on subsequent phases, still fueled with the momentum created by the *Save America's Treasures* grant.

While funding for *National Heritage Areas* is slated to be halved in the 2011 Federal budget, programs like *Save America's Treasures* and *Preserve America* are to be eliminated. Launched in 1999 as the centerpiece of the White House's Millennium Celebration and now in its 11th year as a successful public-private partnership between the National Park Service and the National Trust, *Save America's Treasures* has been the driving force in the effort to protect the places, collections, and artifacts that tell America's story.

To date, the program has provided almost \$300 million in federal challenge grants to 1,110 important preservation projects, increased community awareness and support by leveraging an additional \$377 million in private and public funding, and created well-over 16,000 jobs in small towns, big cities, and rural communities coast-to-coast. "31 jobs were created by Phase I work at Orchard House alone," noted restoration architect David Hart. "In the past ten years," continued Hart, "*Save America's Treasures* has poured over \$16 million to stimulate the Massachusetts economy, while simultaneously preserving our irreplaceable past."

The public is also invited to join in on "Saving America's Treasures Week" by contacting their Congressional representatives, and/or visiting an Official Project that has benefitted from the program's funding. The National Trust website (www.preservationnation.org) has an easy, on-line submission form to contact Congress, as well as a list of *Save America's Treasures* projects throughout the country.

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About Orchard House

Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House (ca. 1690), deemed "Simply the Best" by *Yankee Magazine's Travel Guide to New England*, is most noted as the home where Louisa May Alcott wrote and set her classic, *Little Women* (1868). Opened to the public in 1911, it is an authentically preserved house museum and education center that shares historical facts and the legacy of the Alcott family as examples of tireless workers in education, the arts, humanities, and social justice. Orchard House re-connects people with the timeless values of self-reliance, independence, and inner strength that were embodied by the Alcotts. For more information, visit www.louisamayalcott.org. For interviews and/or press statements, please contact Executive Director Jan Turnquist at 978.369.411 x102 or jturnquist@louisamayalcott.org.

About The National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.preservationnation.org) is a non-profit membership organization bringing people together to protect, enhance and enjoy the places that matter to them. By saving the places where great moments from history – and the important moments of everyday life – took place, the National Trust helps revitalize neighborhoods and communities, spark economic development and promote environmental sustainability.