



# Tour to Center on Enlightenment

“Every man’s reason is his own rightful umpire,” Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1814. “This principle, with that of acquiescence in the will of the majority, will preserve us free and prosperous as long as they are sacredly observed.”

These words, from a letter to John F. Watson, reveal Jefferson as both a product and a proponent of the Enlightenment, the 18th-century intellectual movement that celebrated the free exercise of reason as the pathway to human progress.

“The optimistic faith of the Enlightenment informed all of Jefferson’s work. We see it in Jefferson the scientist, Jefferson the educator, Jefferson the statesman – all facets of the multifaceted genius,” noted Jefferson scholar Merrill D. Peterson wrote in 1994.

Visitors to Monticello will be able to explore Jefferson’s deep involvement with this influential school of thought on the 2004 Winter Tour, *Feast of Reason: The Enlightenment at Jefferson’s Monticello*.

Jefferson’s Enlightenment ideas were reflected in the furnishings at Monticello, many of which were meant to educate, not merely decorate. Foremost among these were his displays of maps, natural history specimens, American Indian objects, and the likenesses of both historical and contemporary figures, including portraits of men important to Enlightenment thought such as John Locke, Isaac Newton, and Francis Bacon, whom Jefferson considered the “three greatest men that have ever lived.”

In addition to these objects in the permanent collection, the Winter Tour will feature pieces related to Jefferson’s Enlightenment interests that are not

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-  LEWIS & CLARK GIFT
-  MONTICELLO NICKEL
-  NEWS & NOTES
-  PRESIDENT’S LETTER
-  TRAIL DAMAGE
-  TUNISIAN ENVOY

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

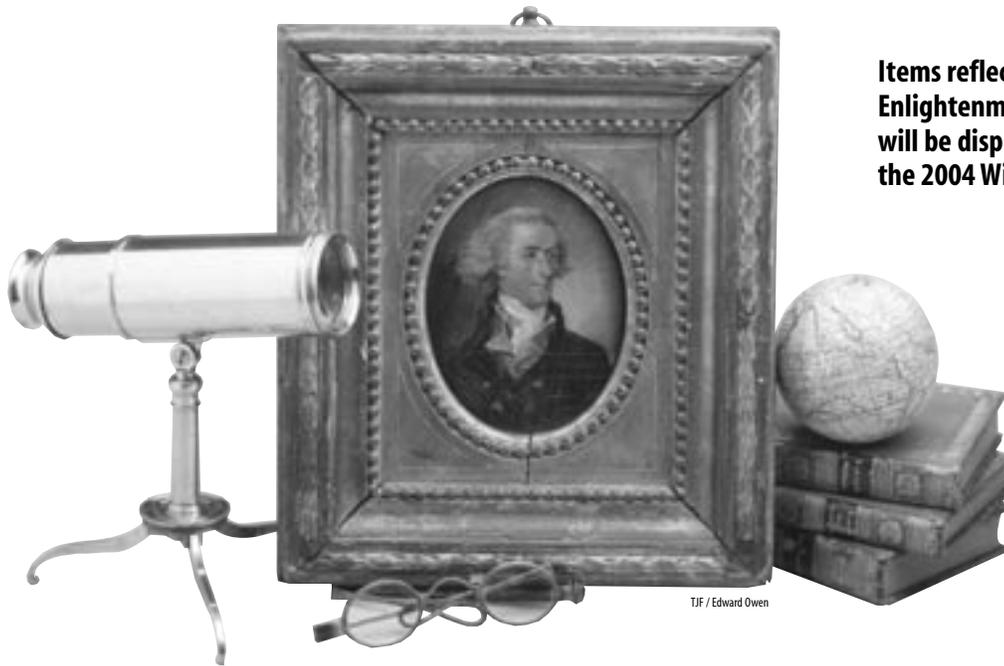
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# MONTICELLO



## Winter Tour

CONTINUED, PAGE **TWO**



**Items reflecting Jefferson's Enlightenment interests will be displayed during the 2004 Winter Tour.**

usually on display, including a miniature globe, a pocket telescope, a brass hygrometer (used to measure humidity), an ivory hydrometer (used to measure the gravity of liquids), books that figured prominently in the Enlightenment, items of Jefferson's clothing, and personal articles.

On the extended tours of the house, Monticello interpreters will discuss these objects as material manifestations of Jefferson's Enlightenment attitudes and activities. The guides will also outline for visitors how this intellectual movement inspired Jefferson's wide-ranging interests in the natural sciences and the humanities; how it informed his core values about life, society, religion, government, and the rights of man; and the extent to which Jefferson's Enlightenment-based articulations of democratic values, individual liberties, and the importance of education remain relevant today.

The Winter Tour will be offered daily from Jan. 1 through Feb. 29.

**COMMENTS? [newsletter@monticello.org](mailto:newsletter@monticello.org)**