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Dear Friend,

Thanks to your support and encouragement, we are one of the nonprofits managing to survive despite tough economic times. We continue to manage our resources efficiently in order to provide quality programs that have long-lasting benefits to the region.

Our public activities for 2009 began with the annual spring symposium in May and focused on the significance of early African burial grounds in New England. This was one of several free educational events made possible because of donors like you.

'Juneteenth' marked the opening of Rock Rest: Black Visitors in Vacationland at the new location of the Seacoast African American Cultural Center at 10 Middle Street. This exhibit was a joint venture with the Cooperstown Graduate Program in Museum Studies, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Prescott Park Trustees' Austin-Lincoln Fund, to illustrate a reality of racial segregation as it existed in our local community. 'Rock Rest' was a guesthouse operated by the Sinclair family in Kittery Point, providing accommodations to African Americans on vacation. The well-documented house is an endangered historic property, its fate still undecided.

Plans for our 15th anniversary year in 2010 include a series of public events that will demonstrate the power of combining public history and the arts. On July 4th we will dramatize the escape of Ona Marie Judge from President Washington's home in Philadelphia and her arrival in Portsmouth prior to moving on to Greenland where she lived the rest of her life. In August, our president, Richard Haynes, will debut his new thematic paintings at the Discover Portsmouth Center, complimented by related activities available to the public during the month. Your gift will make a difference.

A model curriculum based on local black history was developed this year by a select team of Portsmouth teachers, K-12, in collaboration with the Center for New England Culture. A curriculum for Canaan also has been created, with plans for Exeter and Milford. And innovative hands-on history activities for youth are being discussed for launch next year. Educational projects such as these have ripple effects, enriching us all.

Our public activities ended the year as we began, by remembering our shared early history. A solemn gathering on November 13 focused on the unnamed dead still buried beneath Chestnut Street, site of the African Burying Ground that has attracted much attention regionally and nationally over the past six years. Then we co-sponsored the culminating event of the sesquicentennial celebrations of the publication of *Our Nig*, the first novel published by an African American woman, New Hampshire's own Harriet Wilson.

Your financial support will help us continue researching and documenting the people and places of the seacoast area – such as the West End of Portsmouth – and to inaugurate a statewide trail in 2010 that will highlight more of New Hampshire's hidden African American history.

Our all-volunteer organization depends on your generosity – we cannot do this without you.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Haynes, Jr.
President

Valerie Cunningham
Executive Director