

CALLING ATTENTION TO BURYING GROUND

Web site raises awareness, funds for memorial park

BY DEBORAH MCDERMOTT
dmcdermott@seacoastonline.com

PORTSMOUTH — A new Web site is just one of the efforts under way as city and Seacoast residents work to raise awareness and funds for the African Burying Ground Memorial.

The Web site, www.africanburyinggroundnh.org, contains information about the proposed \$1.2 million memorial park on Chestnut Street that will honor the slaves — perhaps as many as 200 — who were buried there in the 18th century.

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The site is "still a work in progress," but will become more layered and deep as the months progress, said Stephanie Seacord, a public relations volunteer for the African Burying Ground Committee.

It is intended to be "educational in nature," she said, so that as people become more aware of the committee and its work, it will have an online presence.

The committee is charged with raising awareness about the memorial, which is centered around the design of

African-American artist and sculptor Jerome Meadows of Savannah, Ga.

The National Trust has invited the committee to submit a grant proposal and will inform the group by mid-July if it has been successful in its application for a \$100,000 grant, Seacord said.

The city of Portsmouth has already committed \$100,000 to the project.

A separate fund-raising committee is busy at work, said member Jane James of Marple and James Real Estate. James donated \$114 to the city so it could purchase the Web site's

domain name. She said the fund-raising group is in talks with potential donors and initial conversations have been positive.

"We're making headway," she said, adding that the Rev. Arthur Hilson of the New Hope Baptist Church and city native Elaine Krasker have also agreed to join the committee.

Among those who don't have to be convinced of the burying ground's importance is George Carlisle of Olde Port Properties, who is holding a fund-raising house party in August, the first of what he hopes will be many.

"This is a fantastic project for a whole bunch of reasons," he said. "It not only has historical significance, but cultural and artistic significance as well. On a whole lot of fronts, this is one of the most exciting community efforts in my lifetime."

The memorial, he added,

"speaks to life in the Seacoast in so many different ways. A first-class memorial park will speak more about Portsmouth today than it does about our history. That's why I'm excited about it."

Fund-raising committee member Morey Goodman of Portsmouth joins James in the conviction that the memorial has national significance. It will be the first such burying ground memorialized north of New York City.

"We're hoping that people will have an interest in coming to the site from all over the country," he said. "We're recognizing and restoring the dignity to people who have been forgotten for so long."

The city's Art-Speak Cultural Commission is accepting donations for the memorial. For information or to arrange a contribution, call coordinator Sue Cobler at 610-7222.

SUNDAY LOTTERIES

Tri-State Daily:

Day: 0-4-9 / 2-9-9-5

Evening: 1-6-6 / 0-6-3-1

T-S Megabucks (Sat.): 2-7-15-17-18 +3

Powerball (Sat.): 18-36-39-41-57 +12 / 4

Mass Daily: 9-5-1-5 / 7-8-6-3

Mass Megabucks (Sat.): 14-17-26-35-

38-42