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December 1, 2015

Dear Friend:

With the holiday season upon us, many of us are creating our lists for year-end charitable gifts. When you add the Tennessee Historical Society to your list, you demonstrate your support of the Society's 166 year old mission to preserve and promote the heritage of the Volunteer State.

Why is this mission important? We believe that state historical societies preserve irreplaceable and vital evidence of our democratic republic, making it available to future generations. We believe that history provides a sense of place that builds community, through understanding the shared history that connects us. And we believe that knowledge of history is essential to civic engagement, helping us to understand the issues we face today.

As you consider your year-end gifts, please include the Tennessee Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit. You will support the Society's work to preserve and to make accessible the authentic stories, documents, and objects that serve as resources for understanding the past – collections we make available to the public at the Tennessee State Museum and Tennessee State Library and Archives.

What else does your gift support? Through our year-round Tennessee History Day program, we serve over 7,000 schoolchildren in 38 counties across the state. More than 300 of these students will advance through six district competitions – from Johnson City to Memphis – to compete at the state contest in April 2016. The winners will go on to National History Day – 62 students went in June 2015.

We also publish the stories of Tennesseans past. Our 10-volume book series *Tennessee in the Civil War* has just concluded with *Reconstruction and the Civil War's Legacy*. The *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* will enter its 75th year with stories ranging from efforts to kidnap the Kaiser to the lost diary of Randall McGavock. And future programs will look at Tennessee artists, World War I, historic pikes, and Andrew Jackson's impact today. And your support continues our free on-line reference work, *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*.

With your gift, in 2016 we will promote an interest in Tennessee's past and how history helps each of us to understand who we are. We will work to let students know that history isn't just something we have to memorize to pass a test but that it's real stories about real people.

Thank you for your support, and best wishes for the holidays!

Ann Toplovich
Executive Director

P.S. A donation reply card is enclosed for your convenience -- all gifts are fully tax deductible. The Society also welcomes gifts of stock and real estate. Thinking of future years? Please consider joining me in remembering the Society with a bequest.