**Program Explains Portsmouth-Nichinan Friendship and Celebrates Portsmouth Peace Treaty Living Memorial Cherry Trees**

Portsmouth, New Hampshire (March 14, 2017) – In April another delegation of Portsmouth High School students heads to their Sister School in Nichinan, Japan; and shortly after, the cherry trees surrounding South Mill Pond and City Hall in Portsmouth, New Hampshire will bloom. The trip and the Portsmouth Peace Treaty Living Memorial cherry trees elsewhere in the city and around the state commemorate the enduring legacy of New Hampshire citizen diplomacy.

**On Wednesday, March 22nd, Charles B. Doleac, Portsmouth Peace Treaty Forum founder and Boynton, Waldron Doleac Woodman & Scott senior partner presents a program on the Treaty, “Teddy Roosevelt’s Nobel Prize,” the cherry trees and why Nichinan is Portsmouth’s Sister City. The program, at 6 pm in the Little Theater at Portsmouth High School is free and open to the public. Families of the students traveling to Japan this year and in past years and those who have hosted students from Nichinan are especially invited to attend.**

The large cherry trees blooming so abundantly at City Hall were planted in 1985, thanks to a gift from Nichinan, Japan – Portsmouth’s Sister City and the hometown of Baron Jutaro Komura, the lead Japanese diplomat at the 1905 peace conference that led to the Portsmouth Peace Treaty ending the Russo-Japanese War. Portsmouth Peace Treaty Living Memorial trees are located in Portsmouth surrounding the South Mill Pond at City Hall and in front of the Portsmouth Middle School, at Wentworth By the Sea Hotel, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and in the Community Garden at Strawbery Banke Museum. Portsmouth Peace Treaty Living Memorial Trees are also located in Dublin, Hanover, Lancaster, Littleton, Manchester and Meredith. Wentworth By the Sea Hotel is offering a special Cherry Blossom Package including accommodations, breakfast for two, welcoming champagne and chocolate-covered cherries from April 1 through May 30. (Rates starting at $199, promotional code FVJ.)

**This year marks the 5th anniversary of the creation of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty Living Memorial.** In 2012, the 100th anniversary of the gift of the iconic Washington DC cherry trees to the US by Japan, the Japan-America Society of New Hampshire (JASNH) learned that **those famous trees were a direct result of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty, negotiated in Portsmouth NH in 1905,** ending the Russo-Japanese War. Research showed that the Mayor of Tokyo, Yukio Ozaki, who facilitated the cherry tree gift, described in his autobiography a desire to thank the US for its role in ending the War. That conclusion resulted in a 2012 op-ed in the *Washington Post* by the Ambassador of Japan to the US and the JASNH being designated to receive cherry trees descended from the Washington trees in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the diplomatic gift.

JASNH began planting those trees at key sites related to the Treaty history, as a living memorial to the Portsmouth Peace Treaty and the citizen diplomacy involved in reaching the successful conclusion. Although President Theodore Roosevelt never came to Portsmouth, having promised Japan and Russia that he would not be at the table, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906, for orchestrating the negotiations. “By planting descendants of the iconic Washington cherry trees that are a living connection to the Treaty around New Hampshire, we create a living memorial to the Treaty and citizen diplomacy,” said Charles B. Doleac. “The trees in Portsmouth are also a reminder of the special relationship we share with Nichinan and the families who have opened their homes to the students in Portsmouth and Nichinan.”

In addition to the March 22nd program, the Sister City exchange, and the cherry trees, the Portsmouth Peace Treaty is commemorated in a continuing exhibit containing Russian and Japanese artifacts at the John Paul Jones House Museum (opening May29), the Portsmouth Peace Treaty Trail maps available at the museum, Discover Portsmouth, Wentworth By the Sea and the Portsmouth Chamber visitor center and kiosk and the PortsmouthPeaceTreaty.org website. **Portsmouth Peace Treaty Day is celebrated with a bell-ringing ceremony and Governor’s Proclamation on September 5th.**

For more information about the Portsmouth Peace Treaty and the cherry trees, visit [www.portsmouthpeacetreaty.org](http://www.portsmouthpeacetreaty.org)