

## Building momentum for change

Memory, identity, hope—these are essential needs, and more than ever, the National Museum of American History can fulfill them. The Museum is a trusted and meaningful place. As a keeper of memory and identity and as a place that inspires hope in the future, the Museum invites people to connect with the symbolic objects and experiences that explain what it means to be American.

For the Museum, 2001 has been a time to gather momentum and reaffirm fundamental principles. We began the year with a major permanent exhibition—*The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden*—that garnered media acclaim and public enthusiasm. Near the end of the year, as we confronted unprecedented national tragedy, we reaffirmed the Museum's exceptional responsibility as a preserver of meaning and a link to American identity.

This annual report for 2001 provides a closer look at the collaborative effort that is behind the revitalization of the Museum. From the dedicated support of the United States Congress and private citizens, to the teamwork that resulted in the exhibition *Within These Walls...*, to the technology partnership that gave us *HistoryWired* on the Web, a dynamic enterprise is shaping a Museum in transformation.

Detail of the Star-Spangled Banner after conservators removed the stitches that attached its 1914 linen backing. The flag's true, vibrant colors are revealed.