

INTERIM REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA EASTERN STATE HOSPITAL
BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY COMMISSION
TO
THE GOVERNOR
AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA



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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Department of Purchases and Supply
Richmond
1972

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Richmond, Virginia
December 20, 1971

TO: HONORABLE LINWOOD HOLTON, *Governor of Virginia*
and
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA

I. Introduction

In November, 1769, the Virginia House of Burgesses, at the urging of the then Royal Governor, Francis Fauquier, passed an act "to make provisions for the support and maintenance of ideots (sic), lunatics and other persons of unsound minds." This act created a "court of directors," consisting of some of the most prominent Virginians of the time, who were "empowered to purchase a piece or parcel of land...as convenient as may be to the city of Williamsburg, and to contract for the building thereon a commodious house or houses, fit for the reception and accommodation of such disordered persons." The first building was not completed until almost four years later and the first patient, a resident of Hanover County, was admitted October 13, 1773.

This legislation and the construction of this first mental hospital in the Western Hemisphere surely establishes the Commonwealth of Virginia as *the first to care* about the welfare of those unfortunate individuals who are handicapped with mental illness and mental retardation.

In order to recognize Eastern State Hospital as the oldest institution of its kind in America the General Assembly of Virginia, during its 1970 Session, created this Commission by enactment of House Bill No. 163.

CHAPTER 485

An Act to create the Virginia Eastern State Hospital Bicentennial Anniversary Commission; to appropriate funds. (H 163)

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. There is hereby created the Virginia Eastern State Hospital Bicentennial Anniversary Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission. The Commission shall be composed of seventeen members appointed as follows: eight shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates from the membership thereof, four by the Lieutenant Governor from the membership of the Senate, and five shall be appointed by the Governor from the State at large. All members shall be appointed for terms to expire December thirty-one, nineteen hundred seventy-three, and vacancies may be filled for the unexpired term. The Governor shall be the Honorary Chairman of the Commission. The Commission shall name five of its members to constitute an executive committee. The Commission may associate with itself an advisory group to be composed of such persons as it deems especially interested in the Anniversary.

§ 2. The Commission shall employ an executive director and such other assistance as may be required. They shall be charged with developing and coordinating the plans of public and private agencies for the Anniversary observance. All agencies of the State and all political subdivisions are authorized to cooperate with the Commission and to grant funds and property to it for the furtherance of such observance.

§ 3. (a) The Commission is authorized to enter into contracts, provided the same have been approved by the Attorney General, and to do all things proper and necessary for the proper marking of the Anniversary. The Commission is further empowered to receive and expend gifts, grants and donations from whatever source derived for the furtherance of such Anniversary.

(b) The Commission is hereby authorized to form a nonprofit corporation as an instrumentality for assisting in details of the administration of the celebration.

§ 4. The Commission is empowered to adopt a seal, and other emblems for the Anniversary observance, publish books, and to copyright the same in the name of the Commonwealth. With the approval of the Governor, the Commission may lease or sell the title to the use of such seal and other emblems and publications upon such terms and conditions as seem proper.

§ 5. In the lease or sale of any property or right of use, the Commonwealth shall provide that the revenues therefrom shall be paid into the State treasury to the credit of the Commission and they are hereby reappropriated to the Commission for its purposes.

§ 6. In the discharge of its duties, the Commission shall locate the major portion, or all, of its activities incident thereto in the Williamsburg area and shall coordinate its plans with those of other organizations and agencies holding commemorative meetings and activities in other portions of the State, to the end that public attention shall be properly focused on Eastern State Hospital.

2. There is hereby appropriated to the Commission from the general fund in the State treasury the sum of five thousand dollars for each year of the biennium beginning July one, nineteen hundred seventy for the expenses and operation of the Commission. Any unexpended balance from the first year of the biennium shall be available to the Commission for expenditure in the second year of the biennium. The Commission is authorized to use funds hereby appropriated for the preparation of plans and purchase of materials for the bicentennial of 1973.

Pursuant to this legislation, the following were appointed to the membership of the Commission: Delegate Matthew G. Anderson of Oilville, Dr. Howard H. Ashbury of Williamsburg, Mrs. Thomas F. Brummer of Williamsburg, Delegate Russell M. Carneal of Williamsburg, Senator H. Dunlop Dawbarn of Waynesboro, Delegate Ernst W. Farley, Jr. of Richmond, Senator William E. Fears of Accomac, Delegate Ray L. Garland of Roanoke, Mr. Richard S. Gillis, Jr. of Richmond, Senator Garland Gray of Waverly, Delegate John D. Gray of Hampton, Mr. Rudolph L. Gurley of Newport News, Senator Omer L. Hirst of Annandale, Dr. William Massey, III of Williamsburg, Delegate George N. McMath of Onancock, Delegate Thomas R. McNamara of Norfolk, and Dr. William Ferguson Reid of Richmond.

As stated in the legislation, Governor Linwood Holton serves as Honorary Chairman, and the Commission elected an Executive Committee, consisting of Mr. Carneal, Chairman; Dr. Massey, Vice-Chairman; Dr. Ashbury and Messrs. Anderson and Gillis.

The Virginia Advisory Legislative Council and the Division of Statutory Research and Drafting made staff and facilities available to carry out this study; they assigned the necessary employees to assist the members and the study group at all times.

II. Major Purpose of the Celebration

The 1970 Session of the General Assembly increased appropriations of the Department of Mental Hygiene and Hospitals in order to implement major recommendations of the Hirst Commission on Mental, Indigent and Geriatric Patients. That Commission will be making additional recommendations to the Governor and the 1972 Session of the General Assembly, which it is hoped will be well received. These will probably be the most substantial efforts that have been made to increase mental health and mental retardation services in Virginia since the founding of her first mental hospital and should place Virginia well on the way to reassuming its rightful place in this area.

The latest recommendations of the Hirst Commission will place highest priority on the training, recruitment and retention of well-qualified professional staffs and greater community involvement in providing mental health and mental retardation services. To effectively implement such priorities will require a great deal of public support from both within and outside of our Commonwealth. The communities must be told of the important role which they must play. The appropriate professions must be told of the new and innovative directions Virginia is taking to upgrade her services, if we can be expected to recruit and retain the best-qualified professionals.

Therefore, the major purpose of this celebration will be much more than to recognize Eastern State Hospital as the oldest institution of its kind in America and to celebrate the foresight and wisdom of Colonial Governor Francis Fauquier and his associates. The primary emphasis will be to forward the cause of those who are presently mentally ill and mentally retarded, both locally and nationally, to point the way for advancement and improvement in the

future, to provide a forum for the dissemination and knowledge concerning mental illness and retardation from the professional, political and humanitarian sectors, and to say that, as in the beginning, *Virginia now cares*.

III. Planned Programs

The major accomplishments of the Commission thus far have been the development of tentative plans for the following activities:

1. *Divisional meeting of the American Psychiatric Association*. Although it is the policy of Colonial Williamsburg to discourage conventions during the tourist seasons, they have approved a divisional meeting of this important association during the week of celebration in October 1973.

2. *Address by the President of the United States*. This plan is for the then President of the United States to deliver a major address on mental health in Williamsburg during the week of celebration.

3. *Publication of History*. "Disordered Minds", a History of Eastern State Hospital, by Norman Dain, has recently been published and will be used in the promotion of this celebration.

4. *Model of original building*. Mainly because of prohibitive costs, an idea to restore the original site of the hospital has been abandoned and the State Hospital Board will build a scale model of the original building for display.

5. *Television documentary*. One of the major television networks will be encouraged to prepare a documentary on Eastern State Hospital History for presentation nationwide.

6. *Selection of a slogan—"The First To Care"*. This slogan was selected from almost one hundred others which were considered. It was first suggested by Mr. M. Costen Forest, Jr., an employee of Eastern State Hospital.

7. *Commemorative stamp*. A United States Postal Commemorative Stamp is being designed and both of the United States Senators from Virginia will introduce such design into the appropriate Congressional committee.

8. *Regional celebrations*. All the Virginia State hospitals will conduct celebrations within their localities during the appropriate week of celebration to emphasize their present programs and plans for the future.

9. *Exhibits*. An exhibit of historical equipment to depict the treatment of mental disorders of two hundred years ago will be prepared.

10. *Historical play*. A drama presentation will be written and presented during the week of celebration. The William and Mary College players will be asked to present this and it will be filmed for television viewing.

11. *Slide shows*. A show-and-tell slide presentation will be prepared for showing to mental health associations, community groups, Williamsburg visitors and others.

12. *Commemorative plaque*. A bronze plaque will be erected on the grounds of Eastern State Hospital to commemorate this occasion.

13. *Medallions*. A commemorative seal will be designed and set upon medallions which will be produced to commemorate this 200th Anniversary.

14. *Scroll*. A scroll will be presented to the hospital from the American Medical Association through Dr. George Mixter of Chicago.

IV. Budget Requests

The legislation which created this Commission appropriated \$5,000 for each year of the present biennium. However, it is readily apparent that much larger funds will be needed during the forthcoming biennium, as the celebration approaches, to hire an Executive Director and the necessary staff as the legislation requires, and to conduct the planned programs. A budget request for such purposes has been prepared and submitted to the Governor. This request is for \$67,100 for both years of the biennium and it is felt that this is a realistic minimum of what is actually needed.

Less than 10% of the appropriation for the current biennium has been used by this Commission and \$1,000 has been donated by the AMA Virginia Steering Committee on Mental Illness and Health to be used towards the expense of the drama presentation. Therefore, when these unused funds and the donation is subtracted from the total requests for the next biennium, only about \$57,000 of new money is being requested.

The Commission is presently in the process of trying to recruit a top-quality public relations man to serve as Executive Director, a position which should be the key to the success of this celebration. The Executive Director and his small staff will serve full-time for a period of about 15 months beginning October 1, 1972.

Respectfully submitted,

RUSSELL M. CARNEAL, *Chairman*

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