

VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION 2013 ANNUAL REPORT



About the Commission

The Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission was created by the General Assembly in 2006. A legislative commission chaired by Speaker of the House of Delegates William J. Howell, the Commission is charged with planning programs and events to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War in Virginia.

Commission Members

Speaker William J. Howell, *Chairman*
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Del. Algie T. Howell, Jr.
Del. Johnny S. Joannou
Del. Mark L. Keam
Del. L. Scott Lingamfelter
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Sen. Walter A. Stosch
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Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr.
John P. Ackerly III

From its inception, the Commission resolved to offer programs that are available to all Virginians and will sustain a lasting legacy for future generations. Virginia remains recognized as a national leader of the sesquicentennial by virtue of its strong state support, comprehensive initiatives, and inclusive approach.

Local participation in Virginia's sesquicentennial is strong, and cross-state collaboration has become a hallmark of the commemoration. Local sesquicentennial committees in nearly all of the 134 cities and counties in Virginia are working with the Commission to plan events at the local level. The Commission supports local committees by providing a matching Sesquicentennial Tourism Marketing Grant program, maintaining a comprehensive Statewide Calendar of Events, and by bringing programs directly into the community (Civil War 150 HistoryMobile, Civil War 150 Legacy Project, and museum exhibitions). In 2013, staff conducted regional "Help Desk" sessions for local committees, with meetings taking place in Abingdon, Lexington, Winchester, Prince William, and Richmond. Additional regional briefings will be held in 2014.

Technology extends the reach of the sesquicentennial and enables people to easily plan their participation in the commemoration. The Commission's website is robust and dynamic, featuring interactive maps, video and audio podcasts, extensive teacher resources, a news feed and marketplace, and a comprehensive statewide calendar of events (www.VirginiaCivilWar.org). The popular "Walk in Their Footsteps" program makes it easy to learn more about battles fought in Virginia and to trace a regiment's engagements across the state. Last, an app for iPhone and Android devices puts the Statewide Calendar of Events just a touch away, and social media keeps followers updated on current events and activities.

Virginia's Sesquicentennial Commemoration: Programs in 2013



NCSL Outstanding Achievement Award

Throughout 2013, well-established, highly successful core programs were at the center of the sesquicentennial commemoration in Virginia, including the annual Signature Conference series, a robust touring schedule for the popular Civil War 150 HistoryMobile, new openings of the museum exhibit *An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia*, and ongoing archiving of Civil War-era documents through the digital Legacy Project.

Owing to the success of these programs, the Commission received several notable awards for its work in 2013, and was hailed by the National Conference of State Legislatures as a national model for historic commemorations. Awards include:

Virginia Historical Society - Distinguished History Service Award

National Conference of State Legislatures - Outstanding Achievement Award and Notable Documents Award

American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) - Leadership in History Awards of Merit for Civil War 150 HistoryMobile and Legacy Project: Document Digitization and Access

I. Signature Conference Series

2013 Signature Conference: *The American Civil War at Home*

Carol Sheriff and Scott Reynolds Nelson, Conference Co-chairs
College of William and Mary – April 20, 2013

The Commission held its fifth annual Signature Conference, *The American Civil War at Home*, at the College of William and Mary on April 20, 2013. The conference drew over 400 attendees hailing from 12 different states, with nearly 70 percent of the audience traveling from more than 50 miles to attend. Special features of the conference included the presentation of a Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Charles Bryan for his vision in guiding the Commission's efforts, a performance by the William and Mary Choir, and a keynote address by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Eric Foner.

A two-DVD set of the conference proceedings was released in early June, and the conference book is due to be published in February 2014. Sessions from the 2013 Signature Conference examined the Civil War home front, including discussions of emancipation and its limits, internal dissent in the Confederacy and the Union, and a full-panel question-and-answer session.



Eric Foner delivers the keynote address, "Lincoln, Slavery, and Emancipation," at the 2013 Signature Conference

Attendee response to the conference was overwhelmingly positive, with numerous participants citing the quality of the panelists and crisp organization of the conference as points of success:

"I come for the speakers - to hear about the scholarship in the field - and these symposia have never disappointed me in that respect." Attendee from Raleigh, NC

"Thoroughly enjoyed all the speakers. Was delighted to have another way of thinking about the Home Front...the panels presented new, refreshing narratives."
Guest from Richmond, VA

"The quality of the speakers was outstanding and each presentation built upon the previous one. It was evident that the focus of the program had been well designed."
Participant from Newport News, VA

The annual Signature Conference series continues with *The American Civil War in a Global Context*, which will be held on Saturday, May 31, 2014, at George Mason University, and *Causes Lost and Won: The End of the Civil War*, which will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2015 at the University of Virginia. Detailed information about both of the programs can be found at www.VirginiaCivilWar.org.

II. VHS Museum Exhibition: *An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia*

ATP Gallery Exhibit

Curated by the Virginia Historical Society in partnership with the Commission and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the 3,000-square-foot gallery exhibition, *An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia*, is divided into two parts: *Surviving War* and *Waging War*. The award-winning exhibition premiered in Richmond in February 2011, and will travel to museums throughout the state through 2015, including the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (Winchester), Lynchburg Museum, Hampton History Museum, History Museum of Western Virginia (Roanoke), William King Regional Arts Center (Abingdon), and Museum of the Confederacy (Appomattox).



An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia panel exhibit

The gallery exhibition tour continued throughout 2013 as scheduled. *Surviving War* departed the Lynchburg Museum on November 18, 2012, and opened at the Hampton History Museum on December 30. *Waging War* closed at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in December 2012 and re-opened at the Lynchburg Museum, which hosted the exhibit from January 12 through May 5, 2013. The History Museum of Western Virginia (Roanoke) received both *Waging War* and *Surviving War* in May, marking the first time since their display at the Virginia Historical Society in 2011 that the two halves of

the exhibition joined in the same venue. The full exhibit opened to the public on June 8, 2013 and will remain at the History Museum of Western Virginia until May 2014. Since February 2011, nearly 110,000

visitors have experienced *An American Turning Point: Waging War* and *An American Turning Point: Surviving War*.

To serve visitors in the Northern Virginia area, Virginia Historical Society installed an enhanced version of the panel exhibition at the Fredericksburg Area Museum & Cultural Center, which opened to the public on July 4, 2013. The enhanced version combines the panel exhibition with two sections of the gallery exhibition that would not fit in the History Museum of Western Virginia installation—"Offense or Defense?" and "How Did Civilians Suffer?"—as well as "Why War" and "Did the War End at Appomattox?" Nearly 10,500 people visited the enhanced exhibition during its installation in Fredericksburg.

The Virginia Historical Society has recently made *An American Turning Point* the subject of a Skype in the Classroom lesson. Students from around the world can watch the 5-minute introductory video ("Why War?") and independently explore the *American Turning Point* online exhibition. Following the virtual tour of the exhibition, classes Skype with a curator of the exhibition for a 30-minute Q&A session.

ATP Panel Exhibit

Over 2,000 guests at eight different sites visited the *An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia* panel exhibit in 2013. Since its inception, the panel exhibit has traveled to 28 venues, with each hosting the exhibition for a two-week period. To date, over 21,000 visitors have taken in the panel exhibit. Reservations continue to be accepted and there are currently six venues scheduled to host the exhibition between January 2014 and March 2015.

III. Civil War 150 HistoryMobile

The Civil War 150 HistoryMobile is a mobile museum housed in a 53' expandable tractor trailer that travels throughout Virginia and beyond. The exhibition draws together stories from all over Virginia, using technology and immersive exhibit spaces to present individual stories of the Civil War from the perspectives of those who experienced it - young and old, enslaved and free, soldiers and civilians. The HistoryMobile is an award-winning collaboration between the Commission, the Virginia Tourism Corporation, and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The HistoryMobile began its 2013 tour at Stratford Hall in January and continued through mid-November, generating enthusiastic and positive visitor response. In 2013, the HistoryMobile traveled to 40 events across 36 localities, drawing attention to a number of special events, historical sites, and tourism destinations. The Commission is committed to education outreach, and nearly 40% of visitors in 2013 were students. The Department of Education works with the Commission to ensure that school divisions and teachers are aware of the HistoryMobile and its companion resources, which integrate Virginia Standards of Learning with the content of the exhibit.

In recognition of the HistoryMobile's success, the Commission received a Leadership in History Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. The Award of Merit is one of the nation's most prestigious recognitions of achievement in state and local history. In addition, due to high demand, the Commission has extended the HistoryMobile tour an additional year and is now slated to run through spring 2016.

HistoryMobile Tour at a Glance - 2013

49,392 total visitors, hailing from 47 states and 11 countries, including Belgium, Denmark, England, Germany, Scotland, Australia, Canada

19,086 students from 57 schools

40 events, including an out-of-state visit to the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg

122 volunteers and Welcome Center staff

Cumulative number of visitors since tour began: 104,967
(July 2011 - November 2013)



The Civil War 150 HistoryMobile crosses into Pennsylvania for the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg



Visitors experiencing the Battlefield exhibit in the HistoryMobile

Sampling of Visitor Comments

"Thank you! Very informative and professionally executed—a must see!"
Virginia State Fair

"Love the HistoryMobile! Very informative and great for people of all ages!" Doswell, VA

"This is wonderful! The exhibits are well done and excellent. Thank you!" Gettysburg, PA

V. Civil War 150 Legacy Project: Document Digitization and Access

The Civil War 150 Legacy Project was created as a partnership between the Commission and the Library of Virginia to identify, scan, and catalog documents located in Virginia that are related to the Civil War. Archivists from the Library of Virginia spent much of 2010 and 2011 traveling the state to scan privately-held collections. In 2013, the Legacy Project entered its second phase, which focuses on cataloging and providing access to the documents, with only a handful of regional scanning events each year.

Statistics from the Legacy Project include:

- 32,123 total scans – 1,570 scans in 2013
- 699 donors – 35 donors in 2013
- Five scanning events held in 2013

Scanned documents are posted on the Library's website and consideration is being given to publishing selections. For more information, see: <http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/cw150>.

VI. Sesquicentennial Marketing Program Grants

The Tourism Marketing Grant program, which is administered by the Virginia Tourism Corporation in collaboration with the Commission, has completed 13 grant cycles. Funds are available on a 1:1 matching basis with a maximum award of \$5,000. To date, the Commission has awarded \$216,486 that has been matched by \$306,009 for various sesquicentennial projects, bringing a total of \$522,495 to the marketplace to fund projects related to the sesquicentennial. Grant recipients from 2013 are listed below:

Fall 2013 (Round 13 - Approved January 2014)

1. City of Fairfax Office of Historic Resources

Virginia Civil War Trails Marker at the City of Fairfax Cemetery

- Amount of award: \$1,400; Amount of match from recipient: \$1,400
- Grant funds would be used for the design, fabrication, and installation of a Virginia Civil War Trails marker at the City of Fairfax Cemetery. Funds would also be used for the design and publishing of a self-guided walking tour/map of the cemetery, which will be available in both print and as a downloadable PDF from various websites.

2. Town of Abingdon

Abingdon and Washington County's 2014 American Civil War Commemoration Project

- Amount of award: \$2,448.50; Amount of match from recipient: \$2,448.50
- Funds will be used to install a new Civil War Trails interpretive marker that describes the home front experiences of citizens in Abingdon, and for reprinting and distribution of brochure, "The Washington County, Virginia Home Front During the American Civil War."

3. Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

Civil War Trails Markers: "War and Peace in the Valley - A Farm at the Crossroads of History"

- Amount of award: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient: \$5,400
- Project includes 4 Civil War Trails markers to interpret the Huntsberry Farm (a new Civil War site) on the Third Winchester Battlefield. These markers will tell the story not just of the battle, but also of the farm and family that were caught up in the maelstrom - as well as the story of the historic Great Wagon Road and smaller lanes that made the farm a "crossroads of history."

4. Spotsylvania County Economic Development and Tourism

150th Anniversary Wilderness and Spotsylvania Courthouse Living History Weekend

- Amount of award: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient: \$5,000
- Funds will be used (i) to design and air a cable TV commercial for the 150th commemoration; (ii) for the creation and release of an iPhone/iPad tour app of Civil War destinations near Spotsylvania Courthouse; and (iii) for trade show banners.

5. Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

Civil War Trails Markers for Australia Hot Blast Furnace and Lucy Selina Cold Blast Furnace - Suppliers to the Ironmaker of the Confederacy

- Amount of award: \$2,600; Amount of match from recipient: \$2,600
- Civil War Trails interpretive markers will be designed and installed that describe the Australia Hot Blast Furnace and Lucy Selina Cold Blast Furnace - Suppliers to the Ironmaker of the Confederacy.

6. Bed and Breakfasts of Historic Shenandoah Valley (BBHSV)

The BBHSV Social Media Marketing Project

- Amount of award: \$2,510.36; Amount of match from recipient: \$2,510.36
- The grant funds would be used for the Historic Bed and Breakfasts of the Shenandoah Valley to finance their social media marketing project, which will engage internet users and spark consumer interest in historic lodging and attractions in nearby areas.

7. Fauquier County Department of Economic Development, Bull Run Civil War Roundtable, and Fauquier Sesquicentennial Committee

Auburn Battlefield Civil War Trails Marker

- Amount of award: \$1,240; Amount of match from recipient: \$1,360
- Funds would be used to produce and install Civil War Trails signage at Auburn Battlefield, located in Fauquier County.

Summer 2013 (Round 12 - Approved October 2013)

1. Pulaski and Montgomery County Sesquicentennial Committees

The Battle of Cloyd's Mountain Civil War Trial Marker

- Amount of award: \$1,550; Amount of match from recipient: \$1,550
- Grant funds would be used to place a Civil War Trails interpretive marker at the Cleburne Wayside off Route 100 to detail the 1864 Battle of Cloyd's Mountain.

2. Town of Abingdon

Abingdon and Washington County's 2014 American Civil War Commemoration Project

- Amount of award: \$2,448.50; Amount of match from recipient: \$2,448.50
- Funds will be used to install a new Civil War Trails interpretive marker that describes the home front experiences of citizens in Abingdon, and for reprinting and distribution of brochure, "The Washington County, Virginia Home Front During the American Civil War."

3. Petersburg Area Regional Tourism

"The Campaign that Decided the Civil War - 150 Years Later" Visitor Guide

- Amount of award: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient: \$5,000
- The funds will be used towards creating and printing 100,000 copies of a Special Edition 150th Visitor Guide that will encourage visitors to experience the longest seige on American soil, and other locations in the Petersburg area.

4. Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

Civil War Trails Markers: "Battlefield, Homefront, and Tragedy"

- Amount of award: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient: \$5,400
- Project includes 4 Civil War Trails markers to interpret three different facets of the war: "Battlefield" (Third Winchester), "Homefront" (the historic Lee-Jackson Building), and "Tragedy" (the Summers-Koontz Incident).

5. Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

Jackson River Depot Civil War Trails Historical Marker and Marketing Materials

- Amount of award: \$4,500; Amount of match from recipient: \$4,500

- An interpretive Civil War Trails marker will be designed and installed that describes the well-documented Union Army's Civil War raid on the Jackson River Depot on May 20, 1862, an important transportation and logistics center at the time. A rack card and landing page will be developed to highlight this site.

Spring 2013 (Round 11 - Approved April 2013)

1. Franklin County Sesquicentennial Committee

Franklin County Marketing Initiative

- Amount of award: \$2,500; Amount of match from recipient: \$2,500
- The project will entail the creation of marketing materials that highlight the attractions, destinations, and events within Franklin County that are associated with the commemoration of the Civil War sesquicentennial, and the distribution of same through various forms of social media with the goal of significantly increasing Civil War-related visitation to the County and the Commonwealth.

2. Barter Theatre

Freedom: Commemorating the Struggle

- Amount of award: \$4,500; Amount of match from recipient: \$5,900
- Attract local, state, and national attention to the history surrounding the American Civil War in Southwest Virginia by exploring the Battle of Saltville (150th anniversary of which is October 2014), which will allow participants to walk in the footsteps of key individuals and examine life on the home front through the use of Barter Theatre's production of "Freedom," along with educational exhibits and lectures in partnership with the Museum of the Middle Appalachians.

3. Town of Abingdon

Abingdon and Washington County: Second 2013 American Civil War Commemoration Program

- Amount of award: \$3,898.50; Amount of match from recipient: \$3,898.50
- The funds will be used to install two Civil War Trails markers: one to be installed at the Fields-Penn 1860 House Museum that will chronicle the life and accomplishments of Abingdon native son Francis Preston Blair; and the second, to be located at the Abingdon Muster Grounds, that will highlight the contributions of the 48th Volunteer Infantry Regiment as well as Washington County native Col. John Arthur Campbell.

4. Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

Battlefield Driving Tours

- Amount of award: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient: \$6,000
- The grant project will be used to develop and produce 11 printed driving tours -- 10 for Shenandoah Valley Civil War battles/battlefields and one on The Burning -- tours designed to increase visitation by making it easier for visitors to find and understand key sites.

5. Prince William County Historic Preservation Division

Bristoe Station Campaign Cell Phone Tour

- Amount of award: \$1,500; Amount of match from recipient: \$1,500
- The Bristoe Station Campaign Cell Phone Tour will be a multi-faceted media tour (with cellular and smart phone technology) to provide out of town visitors and the local population a chance to learn more about the sites and actions that related to the Bristoe Station Campaign of 1863, and to enjoy the local neighborhoods and areas that are along the tour route.

6. Hanover Tavern Foundation

"War Comes to Hanover, 1861-1865" Civil War Brochure

- Amount of award: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient: \$5,000
- Funds are to be used to update and re-print the popular Hanover County Civil War brochure, as well as cover the cost to distribute the brochure at Virginia Interstate Welcome Centers and the HistoryMobile through 2015.

Looking Ahead to 2014

Virginia will continue to lead the way in the nation's commemoration of the Civil War with strong programs that invite discovery and present the story of Virginia's participation in the Civil War from multiple perspectives: battlefield and home front, slavery and freedom, and causes of the war and enduring legacies. Look for:

- 2014 Signature Conference, *The American Civil War in a Global Context*, to be held at George Mason University on May 31.
- 150th anniversary programs marking key events, including the Battle of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Courthouse, the Battle of New Market (Shenandoah), Battle of the Crater and Siege of Petersburg, Hunter's Raid, Second Kernstown and Third Winchester, Battle of New Market Heights (Henrico), and many more.
- Exhibits that travel the state and beyond, including the Civil War 150 HistoryMobile and *An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia* gallery and panel exhibitions, and the Civil War 150 Legacy Project document digitization program.
- Hundreds of programs and events throughout the state sponsored by local sesquicentennial committees, local museums, and historical societies. For more information, see the Statewide Calendar of Events: <http://www.virginiacivilwar.org/committeeevents.php>.