

VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



The Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission was created by the General Assembly for the purpose of planning programs and events to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War in Virginia (2006 Acts, c. 465). William J. Howell, Speaker of the House of Delegates, has served as chairman of the Commission since its inception.

Most sesquicentennial programs concluded in 2015, other than those listed below (see RD 520, 2015 for final synopsis of each program). Programs listed below came to a close in 2016, including the Civil War 150 HistoryMobile tour, and publication of a book based on images from the James I. Robertson, Jr., Sesquicentennial Legacy Collection.

Civil War 150 HistoryMobile

The Civil War 150 HistoryMobile held its last event on June 13, 2016, participating in the Alleghany Highlands Heritage Day event in Clifton Forge. Totals for the HistoryMobile tour are below:

- Five years in operation (tour began July 21, 2011)
- 188,960 visitors toured the exhibit (72,730 students)
- 216 events
- 109 localities
- Seven states

Many thanks to the many partners, hundreds of hosts, and countless volunteers who made the mobile museum tour so successful - - but most especially, to the dedicated staff whose humor, adaptability, and good cheer made it fun along the way.

"Civil War Echoes: Voices from Virginia, 1860-1891"

In 2010, the Commission began a partnership with the Library of Virginia to identify, scan, and catalog original source materials located in Virginia that are related to the Civil War and emancipation. Materials included letters, memoirs, pension materials, military passes, discharge papers, diaries, hand-drawn maps, manuscripts, and other Civil War-era material. More than 32,000 documents were preserved, and the final collection was renamed the James I. Robertson, Jr. Civil War Sesquicentennial Legacy Collection. It is available through the Library of Virginia's website (<http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/cw150>).

Its namesake, noted Civil War historian "Bud" Robertson, combed through the images to write a book with materials taken from 144 of the collections. *Civil War Echoes: Voices from Virginia, 1860-1891*, explores the emotional impact of the Civil War through correspondence between soldiers and their families. It was published in summer 2016 and is available for purchase through the Library of Virginia.

What's Next

All operational programs of the Commission have come to a successful conclusion, and its statutory authority expires on July 1, 2017. Remaining balances will be transferred to the Virginia World War I and World War II Commemoration Commission.

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