



VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION

Workgroup 1 (Coordination Committee)

September 6, 2007 – 10:00 a.m.

General Assembly Building, 6th floor

Senator John H. Chichester, Chairman

Hudaidah Bhimdi, Staff Coordinator



VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION

Commission established by HB 1440 (2006)

Commission membership:

Speaker William J. Howell, *Chair*

Sen. John H. Chichester, *Vice Chair*

Del. Albert C. Eisenberg

Del. Algie T. Howell, Jr.

Del. Johnny S. Joannou

Del. R. Steven Landes

Del. L. Scott Lingamfelter

Del. Thomas C. Wright, Jr.

Sen. R. Creigh Deeds

Sen. Janet D. Howell

Sen. Mamie E. Locke

Sen. Stephen H. Martin

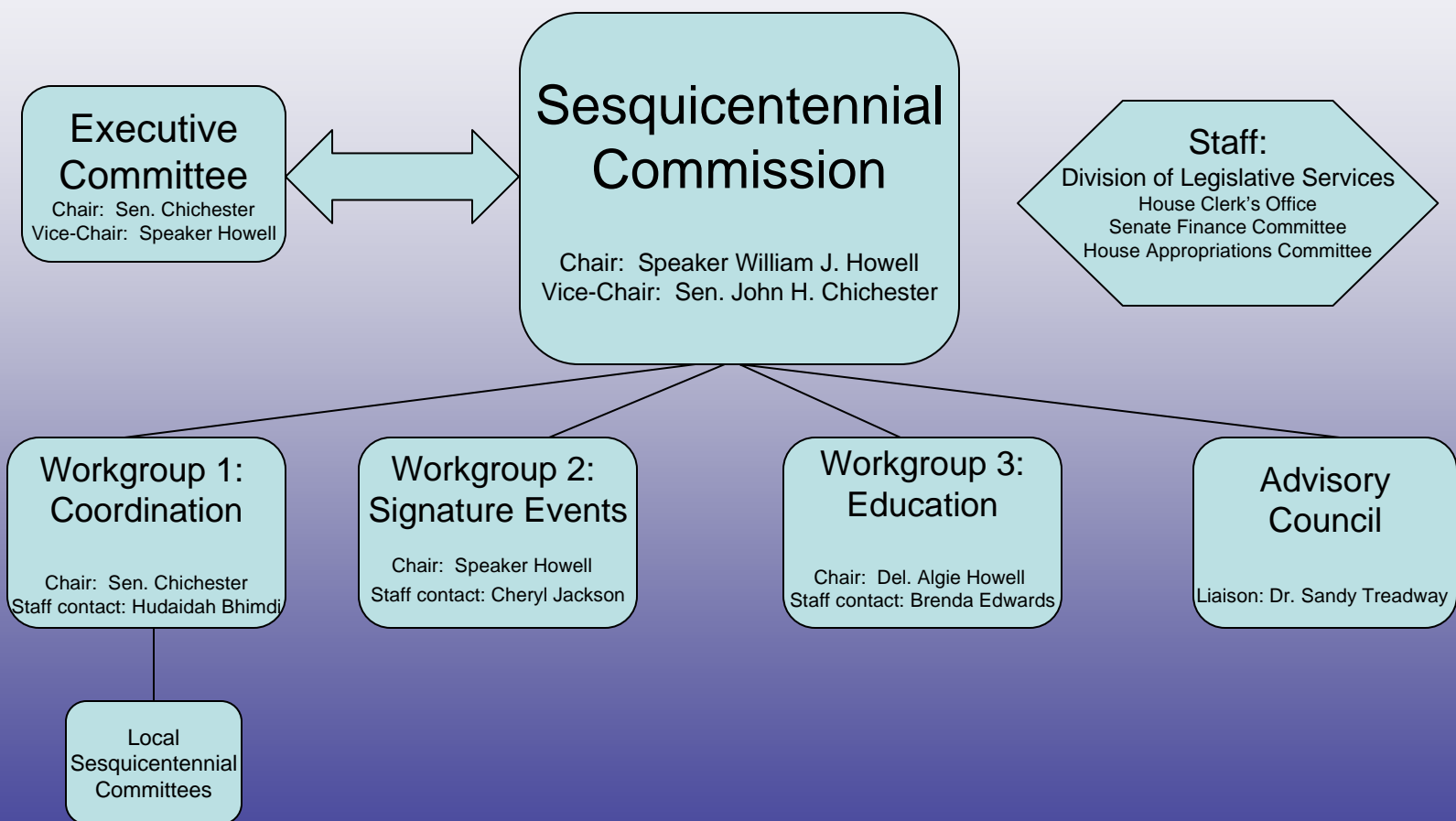
Dr. Charles F. Bryan, Jr.

Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr.

John P. Ackerly, III



VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





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Workgroup 1: Coordination

- Location, event, and information coordination throughout the Commonwealth (including coordinating museums, battlefields, parks, activities, etc.)
- Local sesquicentennial committees
- Other states' sesquicentennial commissions
- National sesquicentennial planning and events
- Welcome Center information, kiosks, and/or orientation film
- Website, publications, etc.



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Workgroup 2: Signature Events and Activities

- Establishment of unifying themes, stories, and goals for the commemoration (to tie together signature events, grant recipient programs, etc.)
- Commission-sponsored events, lectures, symposia, films, battlefield tours, etc.
- VHS Traveling exhibition
- HistoryMobile (tractor-trailer) exhibition
- Document preservation project
- Public relations



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Workgroup 3: Education

- Involvement of schools, students, teachers, administration, and PTAs
- SOL review and resources, curriculum framework, resources for teachers, etc.
- Teacher institutes
- Higher education involvement
- Law school symposia
- Public library involvement



VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION

Accomplishments of First Year

- Adopted vision statement and logo: *“Understanding Our Past, Embracing Our Future”*
- Established goals for the commemoration:
 1. Diversity: The commemoration will be inclusive of, and meaningful to, all Virginians, particularly:
 - Diverse racial and ethnic groups;
 - Immigrants and citizens who do not have a hereditary link to the American Civil War; and
 - Young people who do not understand the relevance of the American Civil War to today's population
 2. Inclusiveness: The commemoration will seek to portray a non-divisive, balanced story of Virginia's participation in the American Civil War that includes the African-American, Union and Confederate perspectives.
 3. Statewide Accessibility: The commemoration will be statewide, involving all localities and encompassing all Civil War-related institutions, museums, battlefields, parks and facilities in the Commonwealth.
 4. Education: The commemoration period have a strong education component, which will be intended to ignite a renewed interest in Virginia's historical heritage.



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Accomplishments of First Year

- Established a website: www.virginiacivilwar.org
- Encouraged other states to begin planning; offered technical assistance; monitored planning at the federal level
- Held meetings throughout the state
- Formed and convened Advisory Council – Report in packets
- Considered recommendations and endorsed programs
- Build a new building, or not?



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Centennial Center





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Plans in Development

Coordination: The Commission will lead the linkage, coordination, unification, and support of existing museums and sites, in lieu of building a new facility. The Commission will promote Civil War museums and sites through an interactive website, computer kiosks, maps and brochures at Welcome Centers and locations throughout the state. The goal will be to make it easy for visitors and citizens to identify and plan visits throughout the Commonwealth. Each locality will be asked to form a local sesquicentennial committee to liaison with the state Commission.

Traveling museum exhibition: The Commission will work with the Virginia Historical Society (VHS) to develop a major statewide traveling exhibition, rich in artifacts, documents, and high-tech components, which would open at the VHS in Richmond in February 2011, and then tentatively travel during the next three years to Roanoke, Abingdon, Lynchburg, Fredericksburg, Winchester, Manassas and Norfolk. Exhibition would be in two parts: Battlefront and Homefront.

HistoryMobile (tractor trailer) exhibition: Develop a traveling Civil War 150 tractor trailer exhibition, featuring a few key artifacts and documents, plus high-tech maps and displays. This concept is based on a highly successful program for the statehood bicentennial in Tennessee in 1996 and is currently being done in Kentucky. The tractor trailer exhibition will travel to every city and county in Virginia.



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Plans under Discussion

Digitization project: Launch a major initiative to collect, catalog, preserve and digitally scan Civil War documents and artifacts (coordinated by VHS and the Library of Virginia). May be combined with the HistoryMobile to facilitate ease of scanning original documents.

Grants: Establish a fund to award competitive grants for a variety of Civil War 150 programs, including teacher workshops, in-school activities, conferences, exhibits, speakers' bureaus, etc.

Films: Sponsor a three-hour DVD, with Blue Ridge Public Television and the Virginia Tech Center for Civil War Studies, which will be distributed free of charge to every school, library, archives, and historical society in the state. Will be divided into nine 20-minute segments to allow for ease of teacher use in the classroom. The nine segments will focus on the background of the war, military campaigns (3 installments), African-American experience, leading Virginia personalities, the common soldiers, home front activities (including women and medical care) and the legacies of the war for all Americans.



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Signature Events and Activities: Options

- Signature Conferences
- Signature Tours
- “Ask an Expert” Webcasts

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation



The Commission Battle Maps Education Ask an Expert News Events



Ask an Expert
Submit your Civil War related question and it may be answered in an upcoming webcast

Submit

Battle Maps
Sixty percent of the Civil War's battles - three out of every five - were fought in Virginia

Explore Virginia's Key Battles

Donate Now
Make a tax-deductible gift to the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Fund

DONATE

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What Lies Ahead for Workgroup 1?

- Local sesquicentennial committees: Provide guidance, technical assistance, coordination of activities and events
- Identify all Civil War-related institutions, museums, battlefields, sites, historic homes, cemeteries, etc. for coordination through Commission's interactive website, kiosks, pamphlets, etc.
- Website calendar of events: Criteria for inclusion of events



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Centennial Civil War Commission

- Created in 1958
- Mission: Inspiration
- Chief purpose: *“to strengthen the unity of the country through mutual understanding that there was dedication and devotion on both sides. Both North and South gave all they had in support of what they believed was right.”*



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Vision statement adopted by Centennial Commission

1. To Honor our heroes
2. To Promoted Virginia as the place to come during the Centennial
3. To Tell the true story of Virginia's people – peacemakers, warriors, restorers and rebuilders
4. To Dramatize the great ideas that are the basis of our freedom and tradition: individual responsibility, faith in God and service to country



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Centennial Programs

Central program: Activities of statewide significance
sponsored by the Commission

Centennial Center	Commemorations
Reenactments	Scholarships
Directional markers	Publications

Grass-roots program: Activities on the local level
sponsored by local committees



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Centennial Events: Suggestions for Local Committees

- State Commission published *Virginia's Opportunity - The Civil War Centennial 1961-65: A Manual For Its Observance in the Counties and Cities of the Commonwealth of Virginia*
- Included information on the purposes of the centennial, the responsibilities of the local committees, advice on public relations, the program in the schools, etc.



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Advice to Local Centennial Committees

- Publish pamphlets on the locality's Civil War history, including series of photographs
- If possible, establish a Civil War museum or exhibit that tells a story of the locality's involvement
- Focus on preservation, restoration, clean up and improvement of Civil War ruins, battlefields, etc.



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Advice to Local Centennial Committees

- Bring the Centennial program into the schools
- Sponsor “Rededication Days” and other special events
- Improve highway signs and markers
- Collect and preserve documents
- Compile troop units enlisted from the locality



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Local Sesquicentennial Committees

- Spotsylvania has formed local committee; Letters to all counties going out in September
- Suggested membership:
 - Office of the chief administrative official
 - Governing body (i.e., City Council or Board of Supervisors)
 - Tourism industry organizations
 - Chamber of Commerce or economic development office
 - Education community (e.g., Superintendent, teachers, PTA representatives, etc.)
 - Local battlefields and National Park Service personnel
 - Civil War museums and facilities
 - Public and private nonprofit organizations and agencies engaged in commemorating historical events

