



New Market Battlefield State Historical Park
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Voted Civil War Discovery Trail Site of the Year by the Civil War Preservation Trust
Administered by the Virginia Military Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 14, 2010

New Market Battlefield Program Highlights **Civil War Commemorations, Offers Document Scanning**

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NEW MARKET, VIRGINIA—As commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War moves into high gear, an upcoming program at the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park will highlight Virginia's Sesquicentennial plans, while also looking back on observance of the era in the 1960s and 1980s.

Virginia Remembers: Commemoration of the Civil War from the 1960s to Today will feature talks by James Geary, Executive Director of the Virginia Civil War Centennial Commission; Cheryl Jackson, Executive Director of the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission; and Scott Harris, Director of the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park. Nineteenth-century music will be performed by The Professor and Mrs. Gibson, and Civil War-period refreshments will be served. The free program will begin at 1:00 PM on Saturday, November 6 in the Park's Hall of Valor Museum.

James Geary, who currently resides in Harrisonburg, Virginia, was an experienced Associated Press reporter in Richmond when he was named Executive Director of the Virginia Civil War Centennial Commission in 1958. His contacts in journalism and state government aided his efforts to coordinate the Commonwealth's various commemorative activities over seven years until the Centennial's conclusion in 1965. In that year Mr. Geary was hired by the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) as the first Director of the New Market Battlefield, a post he held for 16 years. The exhibits housed in the Civil War Centennial

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Center in Richmond were transferred to New Market to form the centerpiece of the Hall of Valor Museum, which opened in 1970. James Geary's service was recognized by VMI during the New Cadet Oath Ceremony held at the New Market Battlefield on September 5. His talk on November 6 will recall his experiences with the Civil War Centennial.

Cheryl Jackson of Richmond has been employed in the Virginia General Assembly's Division of Legislative Services since 1997. In 2006 she was appointed Executive Director of the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission. Mrs. Jackson will speak on the broad spectrum of Sesquicentennial Commission activities that began in 2009 and will run through 2015. These include annual signature conferences, publications, traveling exhibits, the Commission website, and numerous events that will occur throughout the Commonwealth.

Scott Harris has been Director of the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park since 2001. A native of Augusta County, Mr. Harris previously served as Director of Historic Resources for the City of Manassas and was employed by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. A past president of the Virginia Association of Museums, he has taught Civil War history and museum studies at the collegiate level and is currently a member of the Sesquicentennial Commission's advisory council. Mr. Harris will speak on the Civil War in scholarship, historical interpretation, and popular culture in the latter 20th century, including the 125th anniversary commemoration.

In conjunction with the *Virginia Remembers* program, the Hall of Valor Museum will also host a document digitization activity as part of the Virginia Civil War 150 Legacy Project. The CW 150 Legacy Project is a multi-year effort to locate, digitize and provide world-wide access to the private documentary heritage of the American Civil War era located throughout Virginia. The Virginia Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission and the Library of Virginia are partnering on this project, which will give individuals an opportunity to have their historic letters, diaries and other collections scanned to preserve their valuable intellectual content.

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This free November 5-6 event, offered through the Shenandoah County Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee, takes place from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Friday and 9:00 AM to Noon on Saturday.. The public is invited to bring original photographs, diaries, letters, and other documents from the Civil War era for evaluation and digital scanning. **Those taking part must schedule an appointment in advance by e-mailing nmbshp@vmi.edu or calling 866-515-1864, Monday through Friday, between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM.**

For more on the Civil War 150 Legacy Project, please visit

<http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/cw150> or <http://www.virginiacivilwar.org/legacy/>.

Virginia Remembers and the CW 150 Legacy activity are cosponsored by the New Market Battlefield and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, which preserves, interprets, and promotes the Civil War history of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. “The *Virginia Remembers* program gives us a chance to look back at the Centennial, and explore the intriguing way that it and the intervening years have shaped our view of the war and our approach to the Sesquicentennial,” says Terry Heder, Program Manager for Field Services with the Battlefields Foundation. New Market Battlefield Director Scott Harris echoes Heder’s comment, noting “The exhibits in the Hall of Valor were created originally for the Centennial, and have educated thousands of visitors from that era to the present. By bringing the leaders of the two commemorations together, we are emphasizing the continuity of the Civil War legacy in Virginia.”

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