

Virginia leads the way in the American Civil War sesquicentennial commemoration

- January 24th, 2011 10:13 pm ET

The [Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission](#) is the first of its kind in the nation.

Created by the state legislature in 2006 , the organization's mission is to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Virginia's participation in the American Civil War. Diversity, inclusiveness, accessibility throughout the state and education are the key goals of the commission.

Over 60% of the war's battles were fought on Virginia soil, and nearly 500 sites have been marked as part of the Civil War Trails program in the state. Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, lies just 100 miles south of the U.S. capitol in Washington, D.C. and is central to 13 battlefield parks and many other significant sites.

Among the important events and exhibits the commission has scheduled between 2011 – 2015 are:

- *An American Turning Point – The Civil War in Virginia*, a major exhibit produced in conjunction with the Virginia Historical Society. This 3,000 square foot exhibition opens February 4 in Richmond and will travel to seven towns and cities in Virginia between 2012 and 2015. It features over 200 objects and 17 audio-visual programs.
- *Civil War 150 HistoryMobile* is a traveling exhibition that will launch July 21 in Manassas during a commemoration marking the first battle of the war. This 53 foot Volvo tractor trailer will present battlefront and home front stories with local history and tourism information.
- *Civil War 150 Legacy Project* is a document digitization and access program that involves archivists from the Library of Virginia traveling throughout the state to capture original manuscript material concerning the Civil War.
- *Virginia in the Civil War: A Sesquicentennial Remembrance* is an award-winning DVD educational resource that has been distributed to schools throughout Virginia. It was produced by the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies at Virginia Tech in cooperation with Blue Ridge PBS in Roanoke.
- *Civil War in Virginia: Walk In Their Footsteps* is a new web resource and app that will enable people to identify places that their ancestors, Union or

Confederate, fought in Virginia. People will be able to print out a “battle plan” of Civil War sites that allows them to walk in their ancestors’ footprints.

- *Signature Conference Series* is a program that has set a national standard for sesquicentennial commemoration. The first conference was held at the University of Richmond in 2009 and the second at Norfolk State University in 2010. Topics cover the full spectrum of Civil War history.

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