Virginians bring their Civil War documents to scan for cyberspace archiving

- February 24th, 2011

Virginians all over the state are bringing their family's treasured Civil War documents to local scanning events sponsored by the Library of Virginia through a partnership with the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission.

Their mission: cyberspace eternity.

Letters, diaries, military papers, home front memoirs – most anything that describes life in Virginia during and after the Civil War is being sought and preserved. Not just for future generations – the state library and commission are making the digitized material available online to anyone in the world, be it long lost relatives, researchers or Civil War aficionados.

Local organizations from libraries to city halls throughout Virginia are inviting descendants to bring in family papers, and archivists are traveling the state to digitize their documents, guaranteeing a place in history for the soldiers and their families.

Scanning Process

Officially dubbed the "Civil War 150 Legacy Project: Document Digitization and Access," the scanning process goes like this:

- Call and make an appointment for the designated day that library archivists are in your area – while walk-ins are welcome, appointments help the event planners balance workload.
- Bring your family memorabilia to the event. Staff will ask you to sign a permission form, then they will go over a couple of handouts on how to care for your personal collection and donation possibilities.
- The archivist will review your documents with you and write down identifying information.
- Event associates will scan the material.
- Later your digitized documents will be uploaded for internet access.

Scanning Events

Coming up in the Richmond area are the following scanning events:

Hanover County, February 26, Pamunkey Regional Library in Mechanicsville at 7461 Sherwood Crossing Placefrom 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.; call Brenda Pennington (804) 559-7745.

Louisa County, March 15, Louisa County Administration building in the Town of Louisa, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call Lisa Bailey at (540) 223-5670. Louisa will also host scanning events on June 18 and September 20.

Goochland County, April 16, to be announced.

Chesterfield County, April 23, to be announced.

City of Richmond, June 18, Tredegar Civil War Center.

City of Hopewell,September 9-10, Appomattox Regional Library, 10am - 6pm

Other events are listed on an online calendar. Coordinating the events are Renee Savits (renee.savits@lva.virginia.gov) who handles the Eastern Region of Virginia and Laura Drake Davis (laura.davis@lva.virginia.gov) the Western Region of Virginia.

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