

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL  
OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION**

**Civil War Sesquicentennial  
in Virginia: Impact at the  
Halfway Mark**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



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2012**

## VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION

Speaker William J. Howell, *Chair*  
Senator Charles J. Colgan, Sr., *Vice-Chair*



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January 2, 2013

TO: The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell, Governor  
Members of the General Assembly

I am pleased to present the enclosed report, *Civil War Sesquicentennial in Virginia: Impact at the Halfway Mark*.

As you know, the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission was created for the purpose of planning for and commemorating a significant milestone in our state and national history, the 150th anniversary of Virginia's participation in the American Civil War. The sesquicentennial commemoration in Virginia is a comprehensive statewide initiative that began in 2009 with programs examining the causes of the Civil War, and continues through 2015.

As you will see in the following pages, the sesquicentennial has already been tremendously successful in increasing interest in, and visitation to, sites and events related to the Civil War across the Commonwealth. Moreover, Virginia has become recognized as a national model for sesquicentennial programs that include multiple perspectives and invite widespread participation. By any measure, it is clear that partners throughout the Commonwealth have recognized and maximized the opportunities for education, preservation, and increased travel/tourism presented by the anniversary.

On behalf of the Commission, I appreciate your continued support of these statewide initiatives and look forward to working with you as Virginia continues to lead the way in the national sesquicentennial commemoration.

Sincerely,

William J. Howell, Chairman  
Speaker of the House of Delegates

# Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission



## *Civil War Sesquicentennial in Virginia: Impact at the Halfway Mark*

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# VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION



## *Civil War Sesquicentennial in Virginia: Impact at the Halfway Mark*

### **I. Overview**

The history of Virginia is the history of the United States. The places, the people, and the stories that run through the Commonwealth form our national identity, beginning at Jamestown and continuing through today. However, no time was more defining for the nation – and the state – than the Civil War, and there is no place better than Virginia to more fully understand its complexity – its causes, gains, losses, and legacies. The sesquicentennial has been tremendously successful in increasing interest in, and visitation to, sites and events related to the Civil War, and Virginia serves as a national model for programs that include multiple perspectives and invite widespread participation.

The sesquicentennial differs from other commemorations because of its depth, duration, and reach: it encompasses one of the nation's most critical and defining times; spans a four-year period (2011 – 2015); and is geographically dispersed across Virginia. Understanding the centrality of Virginia to the anniversary, as well as recognizing its tremendous potential in terms of education, economic,



Speaker Howell leads a program marking the 150th anniversary of the First Battle of Manassas (July 2011)

tourism, and preservation opportunities, William J. Howell, Speaker of the House of Delegates, sponsored legislation in 2006 to create the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission, the first of its kind in the nation. Speaker Howell chairs the legislative commission, and Senator Charles J. Colgan, Sr. serves as vice-chair. The Commission's work is supported and enhanced by Governor McDonnell and his administration. In the absence of a federal sesquicentennial commission, **Virginia leads the nation, by virtue of its strong state support, comprehensive initiatives and partnerships, and inclusive approach.**

The Commission quickly embraced goals that would guide the commemoration: statewide reach, lasting impact, and a comprehensive approach that would examine the Civil War in Virginia from many perspectives: battlefield and home front, soldier and civilian, free and enslaved.

Programs marking the 150th anniversary of the Civil War in Virginia began as early as 2009, with Virginia hosting the first major sesquicentennial program in the nation, a Signature Conference discussing America on the Eve of the Civil War. Public attention increased exponentially by 2011 as the battle anniversaries began. The Commission joined with the National Park Service in co-hosting the 150th Anniversary Commemoration of the First Battle of Manassas in July 2011, an event that drew thousands and was recommended as the top-rated event in the United States by the American Bus Association.

By any measure, it is clear there is a vibrant interest in the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, and that partners throughout Virginia have recognized and maximized its opportunities. Virginia is leading the way in the national sesquicentennial commemoration.

## II. Civil War Tourism: Strong and Growing

Not only was Virginia at the epicenter of the Civil War 150 years ago, but it still remains central in terms of all that visitors can experience:

- More than **122 Civil War battles** were fought in Virginia – three times more than any other state. Many of these battle sites are preserved and interpreted today.
- There are **1,127 Civil War destinations** listed on the Commission’s website, over **500** of which are Civil War Trails sites.
- There are numerous **national and state battlefield parks** related to Civil War and Emancipation, along with **two national heritage areas** (Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area).
- Virginia is the only state that has **key anniversaries in each year** of the sesquicentennial (2011–2015), with sites and events that are geographically distributed across the state, inviting return visitors and widespread travel.

The online and social media audience also points to widespread popular interest in the Civil War sesquicentennial:

- Average monthly website views at VirginiaCivilWar.org: **15,000 – 20,000+**
- Website analytics show top visitors from: US, UK, Canada, Germany, Australia, France, India, Mongolia, and Italy
- Events posted on Virginia Civil War 150 Statewide Calendar of Events: **1,850+**
- Subscribers to Commission’s electronic notification list: **8,300+**
- Civil War Sesquicentennial network Facebook fans: **25,000+**
- Virginia Civil War Sesquicentennial Facebook fans: **4,200+**
- Twitter followers: **1,800+**

Data from the National Park Service further demonstrates that attendance at key events in the sesquicentennial commemoration is indicative of strong interest in the 150th across the nation, as well as new perspectives on the Civil War to Civil Rights interpretation:

<b>National Park</b>	<b>150th Anniversary Events</b>	<b>Visitation</b>
Fort Sumter NM	April 2011	29,616
Manassas NBP	July 2011	25,000
Wilson’s Creek NB	August 2011	20,000
Fort Pulaski NM	December 2011	8,513
Pea Ridge NMP	March 2012	24,400
Shiloh NMP	April 2012	104,266
Richmond NBP	June 2012	8,500
Antietam NB	September 2012	50,000
Fredericksburg NMP	December 2012	8,500

### **Tourism - On the Rise**

Overall, travel and tourism are big business in Virginia, and visitation continues to rise, making a strong positive impact on jobs and the economy. Visitors to Virginia generated **\$20.4 billion** in tourism revenue in 2011, representing an **8% increase** over the previous year. (*Economic Impact of Domestic Travel on Virginia Counties*, 2011. VTC, August 2012)

Visitor interest in Civil War history in Virginia is particularly strong, and continues to grow:

- Approximately **ten percent of all visitors to Virginia** experience a Civil War site as part of their trip.
- Civil War travel information is requested by nearly **20% of all visitors** to the Virginia Tourism Corporation website ([www.Virginia.org](http://www.Virginia.org)), making the “Civil War package” the most popular custom, printed fulfillment item.
- Civil War related views on [Virginia.org](http://Virginia.org) have **increased by 96% in the last 12 months**, and views of information about Civil War National Battlefield Parks have **increased by 181%**.
- Civil War Trails maps and brochures are among the most popular items in visitor centers across the state. In the past year alone, an additional **500,000 CW Trails maps** have been printed and distributed.
- The **blockbuster film**, *Lincoln*, directed by Steven Spielberg, was filmed entirely in Virginia and has focused national attention on the Commonwealth during the sesquicentennial. Because of the tremendous popular appeal of the film, a special “Lincoln Movie Trail” was created in Richmond and Petersburg to great response.

Research from the Virginia Tourism Corporation shows that leisure travelers to Virginia who experience a Civil War site are a valuable segment of the market. Although they are no more affluent than the average leisure traveler, they **stay 50% longer** and **spend 24% more** money. Nearly 45% of this group stay **at least four nights** in Virginia (compared to 24% of all leisure travelers), and 44% of this group **spend at least \$500** in Virginia (comparatively, less than 22% of all leisure tourists spend that much).

The Civil War Trust (CWT) likewise extols the benefits of Civil War tourism, noting that a battlefield is a powerful magnet for the best tourists in the marketplace (*Blue, Gray, and Green: A Battlefield Benefits Guide for Community Leaders*, Civil War Trust, 2012):

- At 13 battlefield sites surveyed, visitors generated a total of **\$15.2 million in state taxes** and another **\$7.8 million** in local government revenues. This amounts to approximately \$5.84 per visitor at the state level and another \$2.94 per visitor to pay for local services.
- Because of their interest in history, Civil War tourists often become **goodwill ambassadors** for a battlefield community, recommending the site to other history enthusiasts.
- Civil War tourists surveyed by CWT reported that they went shopping, used local transportation (including sightseeing trolleys and taxis), and spent money on admissions, lodging, food, and beverages during their visit. On average, they spent almost **\$80 per person, per day** –more than 54% higher than other travelers.

As an important frame of reference, keep in mind the following when reviewing number of visitors:

► **Average trip spending for overnight visitors to Virginia: \$505**

### III. Virginia Sesquicentennial Programs: Making an Economic and Educational Impact

The sesquicentennial has long been recognized as an **unparalleled opportunity for education, preservation, and increased travel/tourism**. These are not mutually exclusive ideas, and it is in their combination that the greatest impact is made. Sesquicentennial programs that speak to the heart as well as the mind, in turn create personal connections to the places of history, which inspire efforts to preserve it for the future. On all fronts, the sesquicentennial in Virginia can be counted as a success. As a recent *Richmond Times-Dispatch* article noted, “*the Civil War 150th has captured minds as well as tourists.*”

In addition to presenting programs that consider a **broad spectrum** of Civil War history, an overarching goal of the sesquicentennial is that it is to be a **statewide commemoration**, intended to highlight the many museums and historic sites across the state. The sesquicentennial commemoration differs significantly from the state's centennial commemoration, which was focused primarily on building and operating the Centennial Center in Richmond, and narrowed its purpose "to strengthen the unity of the country through mutual understanding... that there was dedication and devotion on both sides." In contrast, the Sesquicentennial Commission sponsors a number of multi-perspective programs, all of which have a traveling component and statewide reach, which are intended to convey a comprehensive historical narrative, highlight a myriad of venues, and enhance travel and tourism.

#### Funding Summary

Funding for the Commission supports its primary statewide programs: "An American Turning Point" exhibitions, Civil War 150 HistoryMobile, Legacy Project, Signature Conference series, "Virginia in the Civil War" documentary for schools, grant program for localities, and ongoing operations. State appropriations for the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission are offset by non-general fund revenue sources (grants, donations, merchandise, conference registration fees). A nonprofit organization, the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Foundation, administers many of the fundraising initiatives that support Commission programs.

#### General fund appropriations

	<u>FY2008</u>	<u>FY2009</u>	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>FY2011</u>	<u>FY2012</u>
Appropriated:	2,169,400	2,170,267	2,170,267	2,000,000	2,000,000
Expended:	1,793,476	2,236,394	640,825	838,244	680,917

**Foundation and non-general fund revenue: \$1.56 million** (as of December 2012)



## Statewide Sesquicentennial Programs

### A) “An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia”

#### Gallery Exhibition

Sponsored by the Commission and curated by the Virginia Historical Society, “An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia” uses original objects, interactive technology, and state-of-the-art audiovisual programs in a 3,000 square-foot gallery exhibition to encourage visitors to consider how a single event, separated by 150 years, can influence and address the questions of today – what was gained, what was lost, what was undecided, and what was left for us to resolve?

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) awarded a **2011 Leadership in History Award of Merit** to the Commission and the VHS for “An American Turning Point.” The Leadership in History award is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of history.

The gallery exhibition is in two parts, "Surviving War" and "Waging War." It was installed at the Virginia Historical Society from February to December 2011, and will travel to six other Virginia museums from January 2012 through August 2015. Altogether, nearly **92,000 visitors** have experienced the exhibition at its various locations. The Virginia Historical Society reports that 74,678 visitors attended the exhibition during its run, with approximately 40% of those from outside the Richmond metropolitan area.

Since January 2012, the exhibition has been installed at various times and configurations in the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (Winchester), Hampton History Museum, and Lynchburg Museum. It is slated to also be installed at the History Museum of Western Virginia (Roanoke), the William King Regional Arts Center (Abingdon), and the Museum of the Confederacy: Appomattox.

#### Panel Exhibit

A derivative panel exhibit of “An American Turning Point” was developed for use by smaller museums and libraries. The panel exhibit began a statewide tour in April 2011 and has since been on display in approximately 20 venues across the state. To date, it has been viewed by more than **16,000 visitors**, and has been particularly beneficial in drawing visitors to smaller museums, libraries, and exhibit spaces that do not typically experience high visitation. Reservations to host the panel exhibit will be accepted through 2015.

### B) Civil War 150 HistoryMobile

The Civil War 150 HistoryMobile is an expandable 53-foot tractor-trailer that uses immersive spaces and interactive exhibits to draw together stories of those who experienced the Civil War across Virginia—young and old, enslaved and free, soldiers and civilians.

The HistoryMobile exhibit is divided into four sections: Battlefield, Home front, Journey to Freedom, and Loss-Gain-Legacy. From the bewildering sense of chaos experienced by soldiers, to the last letter written by a dying son to his father after sustaining a mortal wound, to a hushed conversation between an enslaved husband and wife considering the great risks and rewards of fleeing to freedom, the HistoryMobile presents the stories of real people in Virginia whose lives

were shaped by the historic events of the 1860s, and invites visitors to imagine, “What Would You Do?”

Since its tour began in July 2011, the Civil War 150 HistoryMobile has received nearly **60,000 visitors**, representing all 50 states and at least 16 other countries. Outreach to schools is a particular focus of the HistoryMobile, and in the second year of the tour, approximately **40% of visitors** were students. Elements of the exhibit have recently been developed to have even greater appeal to students, including the addition of hands-on replicas of artifacts and military uniforms.

In its first year of travel, the HistoryMobile made **20 tour stops** (including a two-week blitz of stops in Southwest Virginia). In 2012 there were **52 tour stops**.



The HistoryMobile has traveled over 14,000 miles across Virginia and seen 60,000 visitors since its tour began in July 2011

Response to the HistoryMobile has been overwhelmingly positive, and – like the panel exhibit – it has served to draw attention to events and venues that may otherwise not experience high visitation. The HistoryMobile has provided an outstanding way to engage local partners, highlight local history, and provide quality programming and outreach directly to communities across the state. Following the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Williamsburg, city officials commented: “*The HistoryMobile’s presence enabled Williamsburg to include the entire community in the commemoration and to complement – not compete with or duplicate – [other] activities.*”

Equally important is the HistoryMobile’s role as a “**Welcome Center on Wheels**,” through the Commission’s partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation and the Department of Motor Vehicles, in providing Virginia travel information through touch-screen kiosks, travel brochures, and information tents set up at every HistoryMobile stop. When visitors come to the HistoryMobile, they have dedicated help planning their next visit – to restaurants, battlefields, wineries, museums, and a myriad of other local sites.

Examples of HistoryMobile visitor comments:

*“Very interesting – and fun! Loved it and would love to do it again!”* – Lynchburg, VA

*“The display was informative and interesting. It enhanced our understanding of the great sacrifices of the war.”* – New York, NY

*“It was so fun, I came back five times!”* – Bristol, TN

*“This is a really cool mobile museum! All of the staff I dealt with did a fantastic job of explaining the mobile, and making you feel welcome.”* – Richmond, VA

### **C) Signature Conference Series**

The Commission sponsors a highly-acclaimed annual Signature Conference series at different universities throughout the state, each drawing audiences from across the Commonwealth and beyond. Signature Conferences feature the finest historians in the nation, with topics that cover the full spectrum of Civil War and Emancipation history, and conversations that are geared to a general (non-academic) audience. Each program is filmed and released on DVD, and articles from the Signature Conference series are edited and published in printed volumes.

The conference series is successful, not just because it brings together world-class historians to discuss relevant topics in innovative formats, but also because of its widespread appeal and committed audiences, many of whom return each year. A significant portion of conference attendees travel great distances to attend the programs – in nearly all cases, **over 50% of the audience has traveled in excess of 50 miles to attend.**

### **America on the Eve of the Civil War**

2009 Signature Conference

University of Richmond

**Registrants: 1,964**

Local: 1,161 (60%)

From Virginia, but traveled over 50 miles: 613 (32%)

From another state (26 states): 150 (8%)

### **Race, Slavery, and the Civil War: Tough Stuff of American History and Memory**

2010 Signature Conference

Norfolk State University

**Registrants: 1,321**

Local: 560 (44%)

From Virginia, but traveled over 50 miles: 505 (39%)

From another state or country (24 states and Canada): 218 (17%)

### **Military Strategy in the American Civil War**

2011 Signature Conference

Virginia Tech

**Registrants: 1,003**

Local: 225 (24%)

From Virginia, but traveled over 50 miles: 474 (51%)

From another state or country (26 states and Australia): 231 (25%)



Panelists at "A Fireside Chat: Looking at the Emancipation Proclamation." The special program was held on the eve of the 150th anniversary of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. (September 2012)

### **Leadership and Generalship in the Civil War**

2012 Signature Conference

Virginia Military Institute

**Registrants: 371** (Note: Venue was limited in size; Conference sold out within two weeks)

Local: 35 (9%)

From Virginia, but traveled over 50 miles: 231 (62%)

From another state (20 states): 105 (28%)

### **A Fireside Chat: Looking at the Emancipation Proclamation**

150th Anniversary Special Program, September 2012

University of Mary Washington

**Registrants: 231**

Local: 107 (46%)

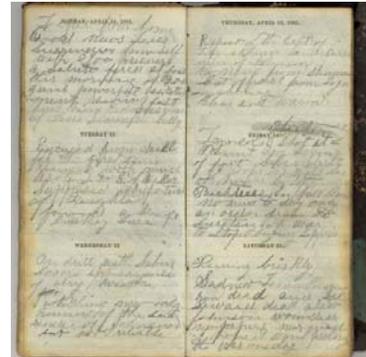
From Virginia, but traveled over 50 miles: 93 (40%)

From another state (13 states): 31 (13%)

## D) Legacy Project: Document Digitization and Access

The Civil War 150 Legacy Project: Document Digitization and Access is a partnership between the Commission and the Library of Virginia to create an online collection of original Civil War manuscripts that remain in private hands ([www.VirginiaMemory.com/cw150](http://www.VirginiaMemory.com/cw150)). The Legacy Project has shown the potential to become a premier resource for newly discovered materials from the Civil War era.

Few events in American history offer scholars such a rich cache of resources to delve into the hearts and minds of mid-19th century Americans as the Civil War. The home front and battlefield were sometimes indistinguishable, creating one of the most complex conflicts in American history. The proximity of the war to the homes of so many American citizens made it impossible for families to escape the dreadful realities of war. Nowhere was this truer than in Virginia, where nearly every family was affected by the war and has unique stories to tell.



Diary of William H. Dedrick of the 2nd Ohio Cavalry. Includes entries from April 1865 regarding the assassination of President Lincoln. Scanned in Williamsburg.

Designed to digitize privately owned manuscripts for use by historians and researchers, the Legacy Project started in June 2010 with the hiring of two archivists to coordinate the project. In an effort to best cover the state, the coordinators divided the state in half so that they would each be responsible for roughly 65 Virginia localities. The coordinators spent the first few months determining the details of the project – from designing the permission forms to be signed by “digital donors,” to purchasing scanning equipment and establishing scanning resolutions and guidelines, to contacting localities. The first scanning events were held in September 2010, simultaneously in Charlotte County and Virginia Beach. The outpouring of materials and donor interest at these first events – where over 600 images were scanned – showed the great enthusiasm in the project.

Over the next two years **141 scanning events were held**, covering almost every locality in Virginia. Over **90% of localities** in Virginia have held scanning events, with some localities holding two or more. Not only were citizens lining up to have their family documents scanned, but several Civil War collectors also allowed scanning of immense collections for the project. An immeasurable, but important, benefit of the project is the “family reunion” feeling that characterizes a scanning event, as donors share family recollections and stories passed down through the generations.

The Legacy Project has collected over **29,650 scanned images** and had more than **650 participants** to date. While regional scanning events will still be held, the project is now in its second phase, which concentrates on editing, cataloging, and posting the images online.

## E) Walk in Their Footsteps Database

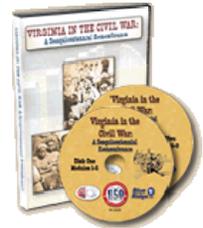
Personal connections to history are powerful, and walking on a battlefield or standing at a momentous site on an anniversary date can provide a profound moment of connecting past and present. Understanding the force of “Identity Travel,” and particularly the familial connection that so many share with the Civil War, the Commission developed “Walk in Their Footsteps,” an unprecedented and innovative online research tool that enables visitors to search a soldier’s Civil War history and track all the places in Virginia where his regiment fought

(www.VirginiaCivilWar.org/footsteps). Not only has the online database been wildly popular, but the tagline also served as the national marketing campaign for Virginia's sesquicentennial.

Hits to "Walk in Their Footsteps": (last 12 months) **68,000+**  
Regiments listed: **1,363**

## F) "Virginia in the Civil War: A Sesquicentennial Remembrance"

In one of its first actions, the Commission funded the production of a documentary, produced by James I. Robertson, Jr., that was **distributed free of charge to every public elementary, middle, and high school in the state**. The documentary has won numerous awards and been widely embraced by teachers as an outstanding resource in teaching the Civil War. Altogether, nearly **1,000** copies have been sold or donated to schools and libraries.



The first of its kind, the three-hour DVD is divided into nine 20-minute segments for ease of classroom use. The segments consider the Civil War from a variety of perspectives: the background of the war, military campaigns, the African American experience, leading Virginia personalities, the common soldier, survival on the home front, and legacies of the war.

Because of his leadership in both the centennial and sesquicentennial commemorations, and his passion for ensuring that the stories of the past are never lost, Dr. Robertson has served as one of the chief guiding forces in Virginia's commemoration, and this classroom documentary – which he calls "my greatest achievement" – will live on for generations to come.

## G) Sesquicentennial Tourism Marketing Grant Program

The Commission partners with the Virginia Tourism Corporation to provide matching grants to local sesquicentennial committees to promote tourism related to the sesquicentennial. To date, a total of **\$153,940 in grant funds has been awarded**. These funds have been **leveraged by recipients to create an additional \$240,142** in matching funds, which is almost a **160%** match of funds invested in Virginia localities through the program.

Measures of success submitted by grant recipients show that the program is making a positive impact on local tourism:

*"Our overall 2010-2012 marketing campaign, of which the [funded program] is a key piece, has been a booming success. Our Shenandoah At War visitors guide is flying off the shelves (far outpacing our forecasts for usage), we've almost exhausted the second print run of the Valley Campaign rack card, our website visitation is through the roof, and the number of people reading our monthly e-newsletter has grown by 50%."* – Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

*"This program was so successful, a second shipment of maps and brochures were ordered, totaling 18,000 copies combined. We also created souvenir mugs and t-shirts."* – City of Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services

*"Our website analytics show that visitation to the website was up significantly during the months we were advertising. . . During April 2011, visitation was 41% higher. . . 43%*

*higher in May 2011; 45% higher in June 2011; and 39% higher in July 2011.” – Fauquier County Department of Economic Development*

**Sesquicentennial Tourism Marketing Grant Program Recipients**

<b>Grant Cycle</b>	<b>Recipients – by locality</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Matching Funds Leveraged</b>
Spring 2009	Shenandoah; Washington; Stafford; City of Richmond	\$ 8,800	\$ 33,460
Fall 2009	Harrisonburg; Page; Gloucester; Norfolk; Richmond; New Market	\$ 24,499.50	\$ 51,064.50
Spring 2010	Blacksburg/Radford; Arlington; Chesterfield; Augusta; Williamsburg	\$ 22,150	\$ 35,225
Winter 2010	Falls Church; Lynchburg; Fairfax; Fauquier	\$ 13,000	\$ 18,000
Spring 2011	Washington; Chesterfield	\$ 6,844.60	\$ 6,844.60
Summer 2011	Harrisonburg/Rockingham; Williamsburg; Giles; Hanover; Franklin	\$23,000	\$25,650
Fall 2011	Loudoun; Staunton/Waynesboro/Augusta; Brunswick	\$11,300	\$15,800
Spring 2012	Montgomery; Lynchburg; Rappahannock; Franklin; Lee; Harrisonburg; Manassas	\$22,295	\$31,247.60
Summer 2012	Shenandoah; Petersburg	\$10,000	\$10,400
Fall 2012	Mecklenburg; Warren; Abingdon; City of Richmond	\$12,051	\$12,451
	<b>TOTAL GRANT FUNDING</b>	<b>\$ 153,940.10</b>	<b>\$ 240,142.70</b>

**H) Transportation Enhancement Program Initiatives**

A number of agencies, led by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), and the Sesquicentennial Commission, worked together to develop initiatives funded through federal Transportation Enhancement grants. A common theme to each of these initiatives is to encourage visitors to explore Virginia’s Byways. These initiatives were also launched concurrently with the Civil War sesquicentennial to promote visitation to historic sites and special events:

- “Virginia, By the Way” **interactive map kiosks** were created, featuring Virginia Byways, Civil War sites, wineries, and an array of other tourist destinations. The touch screen application enables visitors to explore Virginia’s destinations, create customized trip itineraries, and even provides directions once a visitor has selected a route. A mixture of large touch screen kiosks and smaller tabletop units are located in the interstate Welcome Centers and at the HistoryMobile.



“Virginia, By the Way” kiosk at Welcome Center in Lambsburg

- Booklets associated with the HistoryMobile were published, which expand on the exhibit and highlight sesquicentennial sites that are accessible from Virginia Byways.

- VDOT created a sesquicentennial-themed companion map to its popular *Map of Scenic Roads in Virginia* that features Virginia Byways and Civil War-related sites throughout the Commonwealth. This map is distributed at Welcome Centers, visitor centers, and museums across the Commonwealth.
- VDOT partnered with the Civil War Trust to create a series of GPS-enabled "battle apps" that serve as visitor guides to Virginia battlefields. To date, the partnership has resulted in **seven battle apps** – for First Manassas, Cedar Creek, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, Malvern Hill, Petersburg and Second Manassas – with three more expected in 2013. The battle apps have had nearly **100,000 downloads** since 2011.

## I) Battlefield Preservation

In November 2007, the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission endorsed the creation of a state matching grant program to preserve Virginia Civil War battlefields as a lasting legacy of the sesquicentennial commemoration. Since then, the Commonwealth has awarded more than **\$8 million** in matching grants through the Virginia Civil War Sites Preservation Fund. The fund, administered by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, has been extremely effective. Matching grants have helped **protect 4,700 acres of battlefield land**. The value of this battlefield land is more than **\$30 million** — a return on investment of nearly 4-to-1.

Among the sites protected as a result of this program are some of the most storied battlefields of the Civil War: Appomattox, Brandy Station, Cedar Creek, Chancellorsville, Gaines Mill, Petersburg, Port Republic and the Wilderness. Among the groups that have partnered with the Commonwealth to save these properties are the Civil War Trust, the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and the Richmond Battlefields Association.

## IV. Reports from Local Sesquicentennial Committees

Each of the Commonwealth's **134 counties and cities** are involved in the commemoration, with most having formed active local sesquicentennial committees specifically to work with the state commission and to plan programs and events that highlight the locality's history. State commission staff connects with local committee representatives at regional meetings, which are held at regular intervals, and through a listserv that numbers over 300 members.

Reports from local committees universally indicate that sesquicentennial programs and activities are making a **strong impact** throughout the state. Even localities that are not typically thought of as Civil War tourism destinations (e.g., Franklin, Pittsylvania, Montgomery, Gloucester, Isle of Wight) have held dozens of programs, drawing sizable audiences. Localities responding to this survey report that visitation at museums, historical parks, and at special events has **increased**, and that there is **significant interest** in sesquicentennial programs. Moreover, local committees across the state uniformly report **unprecedented levels** of regional collaboration, partnership, and coordinated planning that were created for the commemoration, but will have a strong lasting impact far beyond the sesquicentennial. As one local group reported, *"The 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Mountain brought international attention, news stories, an increase in tourism, new programs, and*

*stronger partnerships. [We are] a stronger board and, because of the programming, attracted volunteers to help with future preservation activities."*

It is clear that local sesquicentennial committee leaders and members are dedicated to a successful sesquicentennial commemoration that has positive and lasting outcomes. While hundreds of measures of success have been submitted by local committees, the sampling below makes clear that the intent to ensure that the commemoration is statewide, benefitting localities across Virginia, has been effective:

- **Manassas and Prince William**

- Attendance at Prince William historic properties and programs since the beginning of 150th commemoration has exceeded **160,000**
- A **special program** marking the 150th anniversary of the First Battle of Manassas was sponsored jointly by the National Park Service and Sesquicentennial Commission, and featured remarks by Governor Robert F. McDonnell and NPS Director Jon Jarvis, with keynote address by Edward L. Ayers. Despite soaring temperatures and high humidity, hundreds gathered for the outdoor program.
- 150th Anniversary of First Battle of Manassas battle reenactment (July 2011)
  - Average daily spectators: **11,250**; Average daily reenactors: **950**
  - Meals tax collected: **31% increase** in Old Town Manassas (historic district)
  - Sales tax collected: **55% increase** in Old Town Manassas
  - 350 media outlets covered events
  - Enhanced (and in some cases, new) partnerships across local governments and with nonprofits; EMS preparedness and coordinated response was excellent during weekend activities, when temperatures exceeded 105°
- **34% increase** in visitors during the 150th anniversary of the Second Battle of Manassas (August 2012).

- **Richmond Region**

- Visits to OnToRichmond.com travel planning website **increased 459%** from the previous year
- Visitors to “Civil War and Emancipation Day” – a citywide day of special museum programs and coordinated events – have grown from **2,200 to 4,700** since it began in 2010.
- 150th anniversary of Seven Days' Battles – attendance was **70% higher** than expected, during 60 days of events held by Richmond National Battlefield Park
- Chesterfield County held more than 10 special exhibits and programs marking the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Drewry's Bluff (May 2012), drawing over **3,000 attendees**.



Richmond Mayor Dwight Jones welcomes visitors to Civil War and Emancipation Day at the American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar (April 2011)

- Museums report seeing a spike in interest during 2011. For example, attendance at the Museum of the Confederacy **exceeded 2010 levels by 20%**. The American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar similarly reports strong visitation July 2011 – June 2012, with visitors up, and **revenue growth of 11%** over the previous year
- *The Future of Richmond's Past* was created as an outgrowth of the 2009 Signature Conference, and remains an **unprecedented collaborative effort** among leaders of Richmond's historical societies, museums, commissions, cultural and tourism organizations, and educational institutions to sponsor programs, special events, and inclusive conversations to advance a better understanding of Richmond's shared history.

*“Possibly as important as attendance, events for the 150th continued to redefine an often-divisive period of history. In expanding the commemoration to include the 150th anniversary of both Civil War and Emancipation, the Richmond region broadened the audience for historic tourism and eased tensions surrounding a signature period of Richmond and America's history.” (Richmond Times-Dispatch, “Crowds Top Expectations at Civil War Observances,” Aug. 5, 2012)*

- **Fredericksburg**

- Dozens of programs were held in December 2012 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg, including two "Fire on the Rappahannock" reenactments that saw nearly **10,000 participants**. *"Re-enactors and visitors attending sesquicentennial events filled area hotels, jammed restaurants and kept merchants' cash registers ringing."* (*Fredericksburg Free-Lance Star*, "Battle Brings Big Bucks to 'Burg," Dec. 11, 2012)

- Dozens of powerful **interpretive programs and real-time tours** were offered by the National Park Service that focused on "the sacrifice of soldiers . . . the ordeal of a town . . . the grief of a nation . . . on the eve of emancipation."

- A community procession and culminating event saw **nearly 1,000** participants marching through the city in a program of music, words, reflection, and salutes. The event featured the simulated explosion of 100 shells per minute, tolling bells, drums, and silent reflection.



Community procession during culminating event for the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg (December 2012)

- **Prince Edward County**

- High Bridge State Park has seen over **165,000 people** since opening bridge access in Spring 2012
- Visitation to the Heartland Regional Visitor Center is **up 77%** over last year
- Requests for information from three marketing campaigns is **up 38%** over last year

- **Appomattox**

- A new branch of the Museum of the Confederacy opened in March 2012, and has already seen **29,500 visitors** from all 50 states and 27 other countries. Revenues exceed \$300,000, and over 1,000 members have joined the new museum.
- Press coverage of the MOC-Appomattox has been similarly positive: *“This new outpost is so rich with artifacts, presented in such informative and interesting ways, that you may well want to plan two days here. After your first trip through the 5,000 square feet of gallery space, you’ll want to turn right around and go through again, afraid that you’ve missed something.”* (Wall St. Journal , Mark Yost, June 26, 2012)

- **Sailor’s Creek Battlefield Historical State Park**

- **40% increase** in visitation from 2011 to 2012
- Park personnel report fielding questions constantly about plans for the 150th, and that out-of-state and out-of-country visitors make clear that 150th events are what attracted them to Virginia and the surrounding area.
- Visits by Civil War Roundtables are increasing as members track 150th events across the state.

- **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation**

- Partners held over **40 programs** from March – June 2012 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Stonewall Jackson’s Valley Campaign. An estimated **13,045** people attended the programs, hailing from at least 14 different states.
- More than **200 children** from seven states signed up for SVBF “Junior Ranger” program.
- Virginia Museum of the Civil War (New Market Battlefield) conducted a survey and found at least **one-third of visitors** to the battlefield planned to visit additional destinations.
- Total at Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park **increased 64%** from 2011 to 2012.
- Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation presented two extra reenactments in 2012 (Jackson’s Valley Campaign and Second Manassas), leading to attendance increase of more than **5,000 people**.



James I. Robertson, Jr. delivers the keynote address as the sun sets at Port Republic, marking the 150th anniversary of Stonewall Jackson's Valley campaign (June 2012)

- **Spotsylvania County**

- Battle reenactments for 2011 and 2012 saw more than **13,000 participants**

- **Petersburg National Battlefield**

- More than **175,000** visited in 2010 and spent about **\$8.7 million** in the community, representing a **15% increase**, according to National Park Service reports.

- **City of Williamsburg and Historic Triangle**

- Visitors to the CivilWarWilliamsburg.com website are **up 35%** over last year
- **30,000** copies of the Williamsburg Area Civil War brochure have been distributed in the last 18 months.
- Battle of Williamsburg Commemoration Weekend (May 3-5, 2012) saw a **comprehensive and well-attended series of events in various locations** in City Square, including:
  - Several key Civil War 150 programs came together in one area: the HistoryMobile saw **900 visitors**; "An American Turning Point" panel exhibit was set up in the Williamsburg Community Building and viewed by at least **200 guests**, including at an opening reception; and the Legacy Project **scanned 150 pages** of documents, including period diaries and letters.
  - More than **400 people** attended five presentations offered at the regional library (lectures by Dr. Bob Engs, Michael Cobb, Michael Moore, John Quarstein, and historical interpretation by Valarie Holmes), and three complete showings of "Virginia in the Civil War: A Sesquicentennial Remembrance."
  - Approximately **100 people** turned out for a tour of Redoubts One and Two in the Battle of Williamsburg by historian John Quarstein.
  - Colonial Williamsburg programs were crowned by a moving speech by Dr. James Robertson with a "pass in review" by Union and Confederate reenactors on Market Square before an audience of **over 1,000**.



At the opening ceremony for the Battle of Williamsburg weekend, a living history interpreter talks with Executive Director Cheryl Jackson, Williamsburg City Manager Jack Tuttle, and Mayor Clyde Haulman (May 2012)

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