

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

## **Report on Briefings Army War College and Army Heritage and Education Center Carlisle, PA March 24, 2009**

On behalf of the Commission, Del. L. Scott Lingamfelter requested meetings with the leadership of the Army War College and the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) to review plans to date and discuss a strategic partnership. Meeting with Del. Lingamfelter and Cheryl Jackson were:

Major General Robert M. Williams  
Commandant, Army War College

Col. Robert J. Dalessandro  
Director, Army Heritage and Education Center

Michael E. Lynch  
Historian and Chief of Education and Historical Programs

Dr. Richard J. Sommers  
Senior Historian

The meetings were highly productive, resulting in a number of recommendations and ideas for new programs. General Williams is supportive of the Commission's plans and will consider ways in which the Army War College can be involved as a strategic partner. All were in full agreement with Del. Lingamfelter's comments that the sesquicentennial must offer something for everyone, and that the Commission must work to provide multiple entry points for audiences who come to the topic of the Civil War with varied interests and backgrounds.

A representative of AHEC works with Pennsylvania's Sesquicentennial Commission, so a partnership with Virginia seems likely. Col. Dalessandro offered the full support of his organization, including lending the talents of his staff to review programs and make suggestions as appropriate. Specifically, Ms. Jackson will send much of the Commission's material to Col. Dalessandro, Mr. Lynch and Dr. Sommers ("review group") for review and comment, reporting back to the Executive Committee and Commission.

Discussion, Recommendations and Action Items	Followup	Disposition
<p>1. <b>Army War College Board of Visitors:</b> General Williams requested 20 briefing packets for distribution at an upcoming meeting of the Board of Visitors.</p>	<p>Del. Lingamfelter and Ms. Jackson offered to return at any time for followup meetings.</p>	<p>4/7: Packets sent to Col. Dalessandro</p>
<p>2. <b>New program: Staff Ride program:</b> Del. Lingamfelter would like to extend the Staff Ride program to educators, creating a hierarchy of college professors and K-12 classroom teachers who will in turn pass the lessons down to students and others.</p>	<p>A. If endorsed by Executive Committee, a letter will be sent from Speaker Howell and Sen. Colgan seeking a relationship with the Army War College to create a Staff Ride program for teachers in Virginia.</p> <p>B. Mike Lynch will invite Speaker Howell and Sen. Colgan to the Overland Staff Ride in early May.</p>	<p>Further discussions are needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget impact</li> <li>- Staff ride personnel</li> <li>- Selection of teachers</li> <li>- Scholarships issued?</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>New program: "Walk in their Footsteps":</b> Del. Lingamfelter would like to enable people nationwide to electronically trace their Civil War ancestors to the battles in Virginia in which they fought, then be able to visit those battlefields. Information would be as precise as possible, even down to the level of troop movements, when available. It is a way to put families in touch with their personal history (e.g., see a register signed by their relative online, view a list of battles in which he fought, positions where his company engaged in battle, etc.)</p>	<p>A. If approved, need to develop a workgroup of experts to determine the parameters of the project, how to accomplish it, and budget requirements.</p> <p>B. This could dovetail with a larger marketing campaign for the 150th overall</p>	<p>Further discussions are needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specialized workgroup</li> <li>- Budget impact</li> <li>- Marketing tie-in</li> <li>- Outsource R&amp;D</li> <li>- Technical specs</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>New program: Traveling Quarters exhibition:</b> AHEC has created an Army Heritage Trail that over 20,000 students visit each year (closed in the winter). It is a build-out of quarters during WWII: barracks, mess hall, chapel, fortifications, motor repair unit, and more, allowing students to see and feel what it was like to serve in the Army. Del. Lingamfelter suggests reproducing Civil War winter and summer quarters and mounting on a flatbed truck for travel to schools. Can work with Va. Realtors Association and Building Contractors for in-kind donation of materials, with the Engineering school at VMI building it as a Cadet project.</p>	<p>If approved, need to determine full project scope and budget, plus coordination of travel, permitting, etc.</p>	<p>Further discussions are needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget</li> <li>- Coordination/overlap with <i>HistoryMobile</i> travel</li> <li>- Partnerships for donations of material</li> <li>- VMI participation</li> </ul>

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<p><b>5. "America's Great Turning Point" exhibition:</b>  AHEC has extensive experience with gallery exhibitions, including the recent installation of a 10,000 sq. ft. exhibit in the Pentagon (approx. cost: \$600,000), as well as traveling exhibitions and vehicle wrapping. The review group has offered to look over plans for the Commission's exhibitions and provide comment and guidance as appropriate.</p> <p>In addition, AHEC has fabricated a specialized format for low-security panel exhibitions that VHS may want to consider. The panels are contained in plexi-glass fronted wooden cases on wheels that fold down to 3 x 4 cubes. Consumable reproductions are included with each panel and lights are mounted inside.</p>	<p>A. Col. Dalessandro will conduct a peer review of the plans in development for the gallery and panel exhibitions (from VHS) and the mobile exhibition (from Out of Bounds).</p> <p>B. Request that VHS invite Col. Dalessandro to join the panel of advisors for the exhibition.</p> <p>C. Col. Dalessandro will send specs for wooden boxes.</p>	<p>4/7: NEH grant application packet sent to Col. Dalessandro. Includes narrative walkthrough and sketches received to date.</p> <p>4/16: VHS is meeting with Haley Sharpe, fabricators of the exhibition. Notes from that meeting will be sent to review group.</p>
<p><b>6. "Then/Now" interactive map:</b> The review group recommends that information submitted by local committees to populate the map be vetted by a panel of qualified historians before being posted. The group further recommends three graduated levels of importance of sites listed: (i) National or statewide (e.g., National Register of Historic Places), (ii) regional, and (iii) local importance. The peer review panel would issue guiding principles or tests to classify the level of importance of the site.</p>	<p>A. Assemble panel of historians for the peer review process  - Who will lead the group, invite the historians, etc.?  - Experts for each region?</p> <p>B. Panel to establish principles/tests.</p> <p>C. Graduate student intern to pre-qualify entries in accordance with the tests.</p>	
<p><b>7. Document Digitization program:</b> AHEC has the largest collection of military history in the world and staff members are experts in digitization. The review panel has a number of questions and concerns with the Commission/LVA document digitization project as currently constituted and has offered to consult with LVA to refine the program.</p>	<p>A. Ms. Jackson will meet with LVA staff to share comments from the review panel and will request that they invite Mike Lynch to serve as an advisor to the program.</p> <p>B. Mike Lynch recommends that LVA contact Marie Malero at the Smithsonian to seek advice.</p> <p>C. Recommend deferring the NEH Access grant to July 2010. Pilot projects will continue with Roller-Bottimore grant funding.</p>	<p>4/1: Commission staff meeting with LVA staff to redefine project scope. Will report to Executive Committee.</p>

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<p>8. <b>Signature Conferences and Annual Themes:</b> The review panel highly praised the Commission's establishment of themes and line-up of Signature Conferences, especially the broad mix of topics and the sites of the conferences.</p> <p>Suggestions include further engaging the audience by making some level of the conference participatory (e.g. questions submitted, breakout sessions), and complementing the large annual conference with smaller events that promote discussion.</p>	<p>A. Ms. Jackson will send Signature Conference plans to group for further review and comment.</p> <p>B. Commission discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to best continue discussions that the Annual Conference begins?</li> <li>- How can local committees and museums throughout the state work to expand on the conference topic and annual themes?</li> </ul> <p>C. Does VAM's Time Travelers program, which promotes visitation to museums by school groups, fit into this? Can it serve as a model for something larger?</p>	<p>4/7: Plans sent to review group.</p>
<p>9. <b>Graduate student intern program:</b> AHEC employs graduate students in every operational area: library services, research, marketing, etc. Recommend expanding our intern program with VCU to include graduate students from institutions statewide, in a variety of disciplines.</p>	<p>A. Ms. Jackson will talk with Dr. John Kneebone (VCU) about bringing on students in the public history program rather than just those in the academic history program. Will also look into getting interns to help with PR/Marketing. Tasks for interns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research</li> <li>- Then/Now map review</li> <li>- Timeline for website</li> <li>- Developing educational resource materials to accompany DVD</li> <li>- PR/marketing tasks</li> <li>- Administrative tasks</li> <li>- Conference planning assistance</li> </ul>	
<p>10. <b>Education resource packets:</b> AHEC graduate students have created resource packets to accompany the Army Heritage Trail and many exhibitions. The packets are customized by age level/grade. Recommendation is that we develop similar education resource packets to accompany the DVD and for the gallery exhibition.</p>	<p>A. If concept is approved for DVD, graduate student can review the DVD and work with Dr. Robertson and Jack Davis to develop questions for classroom use.</p> <p>B. VHS can do a similar project for the gallery exhibition, distributing it to each host site.</p>	

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11. <b>Commemorative print:</b> It may be possible to approach artist Don Troiani to commission a commemorative print to help raise funds.	Col. Dalessandro will explore topic during an upcoming meeting.	