

# Civil War Anniversary Planning Well Under Way

Virginia is rich in Civil War history, with more battles on state grounds than any other state in the Union.

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Conditions were less than perfect for Civil War celebration planners, who battled vicious winds Tuesday- pun intended- to take in the Shenandoah Valley's Civil War history.

The commission is led by House Speaker Bill Howell, who explained the four-year-long commemoration will offer a little bit of everything.

"We wanted to do more than just battle reenactments," said Howell. "That's a very important part of the commemoration- the historic significance of the battles; but it's also very important from an educational standpoint to talk about what was happening on the home front."

Symposiums at Virginia universities, kiosks, and yes, even reenactments, are all planned for the sesquicentennial.

In the Shenandoah Valley alone, there were 15 battles during the Civil War era. Virginia was the site of 120 battles during that time period.

"One-third of all the Civil War battles were fought in Virginia," noted Howard Kittell, the executive director for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation. "More battles were fought here than in any other state in the Union during the Civil War."

While the state's plentiful battlefields is a nice perk, there are other reasons Virginia leads the national effort to commemorate the Civil War.

"This area is so rich in resources," said Howell. "Not only the physical resources, but the intellectual resources. We have some of the best scholars in the country on the Civil War."

The sesquicentennial commission has already been meeting for more than a year.