

Plans coming together for Civil War sesquicentennial

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In 2006, the Virginia General Assembly created the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission (HB 1440) to prepare for and commemorate the sesquicentennial of Virginia's participation in the American Civil War.

Locally, plans are beginning to be made for Pulaski County to commemorate the 150 years that have passed since the Civil War.

At their most recent meeting, members of the Pulaski County Courthouse Exhibits Committee designated a committee of local leaders, historians, educators and interested citizens to plan events to commemorate this historic anniversary. The committee will tentatively hold their first meeting in July.

According to the website dedicated to Civil War Sesquicentennial in Virginia, the purpose of the General Assembly's commission is to develop and carry out programs and activities appropriate to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the war between the states, encourage interdisciplinary examination of the war, facilitate balanced activities related to the Civil War throughout Virginia, encourage civic, historical, education, economic and other organizations throughout the state to participate in activities to expand the understanding and appreciation of the significance of the Civil War, develop programs and facilities to ensure that the sesquicentennial commemoration of the Civil War results in a positive legacy and long-term public benefit, and to encourage the development and conduct of programs designed to involve all citizens in activities that commemorate the Civil War.

"The approaching Sesquicentennial offers a splendid opportunity to explore Virginia's home front during the war years," said James I. Robertson, Jr., alumni distinguished professor at Virginia Tech, in his remarks to the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission, which are included on the website www.virginiacivilwar.org. He went on to say "we must remember, because we cannot forget. And we must remember with a deep sense of reverence. The Sesquicentennial should not be an occasion to re-fight battles, second-guess generals, reopen wounds, or argue anew over principles long resolved by time and events. Nor is the 150th anniversary of the Civil War an occasion for celebration. Rather, it is the opportunity for commemoration: a solemn reflection of what two generations of Americans bequeathed to us through their suffering."

To make suggestions or for more information about the sesquicentennial events being planned in Pulaski County, contact Robert Hiss, assistant county administrator at 980-7705 or rhiss@pulaskicounty.org, or Sharon Hardy, Pulaski County Courthouse Exhibits Committee member, at 980-2892 or vic@i-plus.net.

For more information, visit www.virginiacivilwar.org.