

Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission

September 19, 2012

The first meeting of the 2012 legislative interim for the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission (Commission) and its Citizens Advisory Council (Council) was held on September 19, 2012, in Richmond to continue the plans for the commemoration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812.

Citizens Advisory Council

The Council was briefed on commemorative activities occurring in- and out-of-state, and bicentennial updates were featured, including summaries of numerous speaking engagements extended to Council members and the Commission's participation in the annual wreath-laying ceremony for Presidents James Madison, James Monroe, and John Tyler. David Bailey, representing Blue Ridge PBS, indicated that the station remains committed to producing a documentary on the War of 1812, as previously discussed. Dr. John Quarstein updated the Council regarding the status of the book *Tread of the Tyrant's Heel*, which is planned as a legacy product for the bicentennial, and he affirmed that he would submit the transcript for the PBS documentary to the Commission.

The Council also agreed to several recommendations that were submitted to the Commission for its approval.

Recommendations

- Establish a schedule for the dedication of the new historical markers on the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail and identify the localities responsible for maintaining their own roads.
- Confirm the number of advance copies of *Tread of the Tyrant's Heel* to which the Commission should commit and establish a list of potential entities to receive a copy of the book, including one copy for each public secondary school and public library in Virginia, institutions of higher education across the Commonwealth, members of the General Assembly, and members of the Commission and Council.
- Confer with persons knowledgeable and experienced in developing directional signage.
- Establish a speakers list for upcoming signature events, i.e., 2014 Symposium.

- Organize and plan the Chesapeake Bay Tour in June 2013.
- Update the Commission's brochure and case statement to accurately reflect the schedule of remaining signature and other commemorative events, including the schedule for the dedication of new historical markers on the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail.

National Commemoration

Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

Christine Lucero, National Park Service (NPS) Partnerships Coordinator, addressed the Commission concerning the status of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (Trail), which was officially opened to tourists on July 30, 2012. The Trail is marked by three-sided signage kiosks, wayside and interpretive signs, and highway markers to provide a combination of land and water-based sites designed to highlight Maryland's role in the War of 1812. She indicated that web-based, print, and other media resources will be made available to the public and for students and teachers, such as the NPS Junior Ranger Program, a virtual resource center for educators, a new mobile application and pocket guide, an illustrated history, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration buoys for real-time information on water and weather conditions. Regarding overlapping areas of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail, Ms. Lucero stated that the NPS would be receptive to discussing co-branding of signage. The Commission expressed its interest in co-branding of signage and in developing by 2014 a Teacher Resource Guide focused specifically on Virginia similar to that created by NPS for the state of Maryland.

Virginia War of 1812 Commission

Staff Report

The Commission launched Virginia's commemoration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812 on January 11, 2012, with a concert in collaboration with the Richmond Symphony, its first signature event. The concert, a public and sold-out affair, was followed by a reception. The concert was re-broadcast in its entirety after the Joint Session of the General Assembly, and the concert received very favorable media coverage. The concert has become the model for similar events and partnerships with the Richmond Symphony.

The Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission participated in wreath-laying ceremonies for Presidents Madison, Monroe, and Tyler.

OpSail 2012
received the
prestigious 2012
Grand Pinnacle
Award from the
International
Festivals and Events
Association.

Other commemorative events included the Commission's participation in the annual wreath-laying ceremony for President James Madison at Montpelier on March 16, 2012, President John Tyler on March 29, 2012, in Richmond, and President James Monroe on April 28, 2012, in Richmond, at his birthplace in Westmoreland County and his law office in Fredericksburg.

Virginia's localities were requested to participate in the commemoration by passing resolutions or proclamations regarding the bicentennial of the War of 1812. To date, the Commission has received resolutions and proclamations from the following localities.

- Appomattox County
- City of Williamsburg
- Nelson County
- Town of Independence
- Town of Louisa
- Town of Smithfield
- Town of Stanley
- Town of Warsaw
- Town of Vinton

OpSail 2012 Virginia

One of the Commission's signature events, OpSail 2012 Virginia, was held on June 1-12, 2012, in Hampton Roads, and was the highlight of the multiyear bicentennial of the War of 1812 in Virginia. Organized and coordinated by Norfolk's Festevents, Inc., the event featured the tall ships of more than 32 NATO countries, exhibits, book signings and lectures, other activities, students of public and private schools, and representatives of the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Naval Command, and several localities. OpSail 2012 Virginia has been honored to receive the prestigious 2012 Grand Pinnacle Award from the International Festivals and Events Association. A final report concerning OpSail 2012 Virginia will be submitted by Festevent to the Commission early next year.

Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail: Historical Markers

The Board of Historic Resources has approved 15 new markers for the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail. One such marker, the Dolly Madison historical marker, was dedicated on March 16, 2011. The Commission was informed that at least two other historical markers have been installed by the Virginia Department of Transportation; however, these

markers have not been dedicated. The Department of Historic Resources advised that the cost of making markers has increased, and that the Virginia Department of Transportation must determine the appropriate location for each marker. It was agreed that the Commission would identify which localities have responsibility for the maintenance of their roads in order that the installation and dedication of the markers may be determined. Working in cooperation with the Department of Historic Resources, the Commission further agreed to establish a schedule for the dedication of historical markers, beginning in March 2013.

Other Business

The Commission reviewed its budgetary affairs; discussed HJR 415 (2012), which commends the United States Coast Guard for its American War of 1812 Revenue Cutters Service; and discussed the necessity of appointing the signage and Chesapeake Bay Tour subcommittees to plan these activities. The Commission also adopted the recommendations submitted by the Council, and staff was requested to follow up with items pertaining to the National Park Service.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Commission will be posted on the Commission and General Assembly websites as soon as information is available.



VIRGINIA BICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN WAR OF 1812 COMMISSION

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