

Virginia Commission on the Bicentennial of the War of 1812



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For Immediate Release

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Announcing the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail

The Honorable M. Kirkland Cox, *Chairman* of the Virginia Commission on the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, today announced the Commission's creation of the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail, one of many endeavors and events planned to commemorate "*The Forgotten War: America's Second War of Independence.*" Members of the Commission include legislative and nonlegislative citizen members, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Librarian of Virginia. The Commission is assisted by a Citizens Advisory Council consisting of historians, educators, reenactors, and representatives of the business community, historical societies, museums, James Madison Center, James Madison Montpelier Foundation, Ash Lawn-Highland, Society of the War of 1812 in Virginia, Madison Family Association, James Monroe Memorial Foundation, Montpelier, and the National Society U.S. Daughters of 1812.

The Commission was established by the 2008 General Assembly to plan, organize, coordinate, and implement a statewide commemoration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812 in the Commonwealth, and to promote research, historical literacy, and understanding of the war, and support local commemorative events. In addition, the bicentennial is designed to educate citizens concerning the significance of the war to democratic principles, contemporary national policies, homeland security, and diplomacy.

Legislation enacted by Congress in May 2008, established the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail to commemorate the Chesapeake Bay Campaign of the War of 1812 and events leading up to the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." However, because the federal trail focuses almost exclusively on events that occurred in Maryland in the Chesapeake Bay Campaign, Virginia's Commission has created the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail to accurately record and showcase Virginia's role and vast contributions to the war. The Virginia trail will use current and new historical markers throughout the Commonwealth to recognize historical personalities and landmarks related to the war such as, President James Madison, President James Monroe, Governor James Barbour, First Ladies Dolly Madison and Elizabeth Monroe, other Virginians who were national leaders during the war, the contributions of African Americans and role of Native Americans, fallen British soldiers on Tangier Island, the Petersburg Volunteers and Virginia Militia, the invasion of the British in Hampton Roads, the burning of the White House and occupation of Alexandria, the hiding place of the Declaration of Independence and other national treasures, the burial sites of War of 1812 veterans, historic buildings and ports dating to the war, the routes of both significant land and water battles in the Chesapeake Bay, and other historic landmarks.

On September 30, 2010, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' Board approved 13 new historical markers designated for the Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail, which include: *The War of 1812; British Naval Blockade and Cape Henry Lighthouse; Capture of Tappahannock; Capture of the Dolphin; Lt. Col. George Armistead; War of 1812 Opposition (John Randolph); British Landing at Nomini Ferry; Richmond's war of 1812 Defensive Camps; Admiral Sir George Cockburn on the Chesapeake; Governor James Barbour; African Americans in the War of 1812; British Attacks at Kinsale and Mundy Point; and Dolley Payne Todd Madison.*

Virginia, through the Commission, is an active participant in national bicentennial plans and efforts. An array of signature events, programs, and activities have been planned to commemorate the bicentennial of the War of 1812, educate the public, and display Virginia's role and contributions to the success of the war.

For further information concerning the bicentennial in Virginia, please contact Mrs. Brenda H. Edwards, Division of Legislative Services, at (804) 786-3591 or by email at bedwards@dls.virginia.gov.