

# Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission



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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Commemorating the 253rd Birthday of President James Monroe** **Bicentennial of the War of 1812 in Virginia**

The Honorable M. Kirkland Cox, Chairman of the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission, today announced that the Commission will commemorate the 253rd Birthday of President James Monroe, together with The James Monroe Memorial Foundation, with ceremonies in Richmond on Thursday, April 28, 2011, and in Westmoreland County on Saturday, April 30, 2011.

The annual Presidential wreath laying ceremony commemorating the 253rd birthday of President James Monroe will be held on April 28, 2011, at 11:00 a.m., at the Monroe Monument in Hollywood Cemetery, 412 South Cherry Street, in Richmond. Major General James L. Hodge, United States Army, will present a wreath on behalf of President of the United States Barack Obama. Representatives of the Office of the Governor, and patriotic and War of 1812 heritage societies will also make special presentations. The keynote speaker for the occasion is the Honorable Christopher K. Peace, member of the Virginia House of Delegates and of the Bicentennial Commission. Following the ceremony, a reception will be held at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 South Belvedere, in Richmond.

On Saturday, April 30, 2011, at 11:00 a.m., the Annual James Monroe Day Program will be held at the James Monroe Birthplace, 4460 James Monroe Highway, Colonial Beach, in Westmoreland County. Mr. William Hall, President of Dominion Foundation, is the keynote speaker. A luncheon reception will follow at the Colonial Beach Moose Lodge which is adjacent to the birthplace and part of the farm originally owned by the Monroe Family during the 18th century. The museum at the Visitor and Education Center will open at 10:30 a.m.

James Monroe was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia on April 28, 1758 and died on July 4, 1831, Independence Day. James Monroe was educated at the College of William and Mary and in 1775 postponed his studies to fight in the Revolutionary War, serving with General George Washington. In 1782, with his election to the Virginia General Assembly, James Monroe embarked upon an illustrious career of public service that would include: Governor of Virginia; member of the Confederation Congress; member of the United States Senate during the first Congress; Minister to France, Spain, and Great Britain; Secretary of State; Secretary of War; and President of the United States, in which he served two terms from 1817 to 1825. During the War of 1812, he served as acting Secretary of State and Secretary of War, simultaneously. It is believed that James Monroe was one of the first leaders to view America as a nation, rather than as a mere collection of states.

The Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission was established by the 2008 General Assembly to (i) plan, organize, coordinate, and implement a statewide commemoration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812 in the Commonwealth; (ii) promote research, historical literacy, and understanding of the war; and (iii) educate citizens concerning the significance of the war to democratic principles, contemporary national policies, homeland security, and diplomacy. Through the Commission, the Commonwealth is actively involved in national and international bicentennial plans and efforts. Various signature events, programs, and activities have been planned by the Commission to showcase Virginia's many significant contributions to the war's successful outcome.

For further information concerning Virginia's commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, please contact Mrs. Brenda H. Edwards, Division of Legislative Services, at (804) 786-3591 or by email at [bedwards@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:bedwards@dls.virginia.gov).