



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

About the Commission

The Virginia World War I and World War II Commemoration Commission (the Commission) was created by the General Assembly during its 2016 Regular Session. The Commission is led by Delegate M. Kirkland Cox, Chairman, and Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr., Vice-Chairman, and members of the General Assembly, including Delegate Richard L. Anderson, Delegate John M. O'Bannon III, Senator Bryce E. Reeves, and Delegate Marcus Simon. The Commissioner of Veterans Services, the Executive Director of the Virginia War Memorial, and noted historians also serve on the Commission.

Virginia's WWI and WWII Commemoration

The Commission, in its second year, continued to plan, develop, and carry out programs and observances to mark the 100th anniversary of World War I (WWI) and the 75th anniversary of World War II (WWII). The Commission's work is guided by its purposes to:

Honor our veterans, whose sacrifices can never be forgotten. In doing so, we also communicate to today's service members that they will be remembered.

Inspire a desire to learn more by providing opportunities for Virginians to explore personal connections to WWI and WWII and by highlighting multiple aspects of the state's role in both wars.

Connect through travel and tourism by helping visitors to connect to museums, memorials, and sites in Virginia related to WWI and WWII.

An update on the Commission's 2017 commemorative programs, events, and initiatives follows.

I. Profiles of Honor Tour

In its first year of touring, the Commission's *Profiles of Honor Tour* reached a statewide audience, bringing its interactive WWI and WWII exhibit to 44 tour stops in 38 different localities in Virginia in 2017. In its visits to schools, museums, libraries, historic sites, and local events, the mobile exhibit reached nearly 20,000 visitors, including more than 6,000 students.

The *Profiles of Honor Tour*, which first opened to the public on December 8, 2016, brings to life Virginia's integral role in both world wars, highlighting the stories of Virginians who served in



Visitors explore the Profiles of Honor Tour exhibit at its first stop of the 2017 season in Stafford.

WWI and WWII, along with artifacts relating to both wars. The exhibit includes a full-scale model of an M5A1 Stuart tank, visible from the trailer's exterior. The full exhibit is housed in a 36-foot gooseneck trailer and towed by a Chevrolet Silverado. The Commission partners with Virginia Tourism Corporation and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles to staff the tour.

Applications for tour stops are accepted on a rolling basis, with priority given to sites that the tour has not yet visited. The 2018 tour schedule is in development.

II. WWI and WWII Legacy Scanning Project: Document Digitization and Access

The WWI and WWII Legacy Scanning Project was created in partnership with the Library of Virginia (LVA) to identify, scan, and catalog documents related to WWI and WWII. LVA provides technical and



Scanned WWI photograph of a wrecked plane in the Meuse Valley, collected in Richmond.

content management support for the project, which collects documents and information to be archived and made publicly accessible. The project held its first scanning event on December 8, 2016, and has traveled with the *Profiles of Honor Tour* throughout 2017, allowing visitors to the tour to digitally preserve their historic photos and documents. Mobile tour staff facilitates collection of the scans.

To provide immediate public access to the documents, *Profiles of Honor Tour* staff uploads scans, along with information provided by the documents' owners, to a Commission-run

Flickr account. Hundreds of photos of the nearly 3,000 scans collected in the first year of the project have been uploaded and captioned. The Commission also archives images received via online submissions. For permanent archival in the state's library, all scans are given to LVA.

III. 100th Anniversary of U.S. Entry into WWI

On April 6, 2017, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of America's entry into WWI, a ceremony was held at Virginia's official state WWI memorial, the Carillon Tower in Richmond. The program began with a bell concert played by carillonneur Larry Robinson and featured remarks from dignitaries and historians, including:

The Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor of Virginia
Major General Timothy P. Williams, Adjutant General of Virginia

The Honorable Jaime Areizaga-Soto, Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs

Dr. Lynn Rainville, Research Professor in the Humanities, Sweet Briar College

The Commission's Chairman, Delegate M. Kirkland Cox, served as master of ceremonies. WWI-era music for the event was provided by the John Marshall Regimental Band Alumni. After the program, the Commission's *Profiles of Honor Tour*



Dr. Lynn Rainville delivers a keynote address at the Carillon to mark the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entry into WWI.

Photo courtesy of the Virginia National Guard

was open for visitors, and several partner organizations, including Historic Maymont, the Virginia War Memorial, and Virginia Commonwealth University's Virtual Curation Laboratory, were onsite with displays highlighting Virginia's role in the conflict.

The commemoration continued throughout the year as the Commission partnered with the Virginia National Guard to host a three-part WWI Speaker Series featuring military experts and historians:

March 29, 2017

Brigadier General Lapthe Flora

Diversity as a Force Multiplier

Bedford Welcome Center, Bedford

May 6, 2017

Alexander Barnes

Many Roads Traveled: America's Foreign-Born Doughboys

Virginia War Museum, Newport News

August 20, 2017

Chris Calkins and Alexander Barnes

Virginia's Infantrymen: From the Civil War to the World Wars

Sailor's Creek Battlefield State Park, Farmville

The Virginia National Guard, in partnership with the Commission, also held its annual Military Ball of Virginia on April 29, 2017, in Richmond. To mark the centennial, the 2017 event was held in commemoration of WWI. The event included a WWI "Doughboy" Color Guard in full dress uniform, the presentation of a commemoration from the Virginia General Assembly, and a keynote address by COL Roger Donlon (USA, Ret.).

IV. The Tide Turns: Battle of Midway Symposium

On June 2, 2017, the MacArthur Memorial and the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, in partnership with the Commission, hosted *The Tide Turns*, a symposium marking the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Midway, often referred to as the turning point in the war in the Pacific. The program was offered free with registration and was held in the MacArthur Memorial Visitors Center in Norfolk. In a series of lectures, WWII experts examined the context and significance of the events of June 4-6, 1942. Noted historians spoke at the event:

Walter Borneman, author and military historian, presented *Sailing the Seas Towards Midway: The War in the Pacific Prior to June 1942*

Elliot Carlson, author and journalist, presented *Codebreaking and the Battle of Midway: When Cryptanalysts Came of Age*

Dr. Timothy Orr, author and military historian, presented *Give Me Courage and Luck: U.S. Navy Pilots at the Battle of Midway*

Anthony Tully, author and historian, presented *New Light on the Japanese at the Battle of Midway Since Shattered Sword*

The symposium also featured commemorative exhibits and book signings. The full program was recorded and aired live by C-SPAN. An invitation-only evening reception followed for members of the U.S. military, board members from the Hampton Roads Naval Museum and the MacArthur Memorial,

Commission members, NATO representatives, local and state representatives, and representatives of the Cities of Norfolk and Virginia Beach.

V. 2017 WWI and WWII Statewide Teacher Symposium



Dr. Edmund Potter gives an overview of WWI at the Historic Masonic Theatre in Clifton Forge.

In June and July, the Commission joined with 17 museums and historical organizations in Virginia to offer a series of eight teacher institutes held in each of the state's superintendent's regions. Programs featured overviews of both wars and sessions focused on teaching WWI and WWII in the classroom hosted by several participating partners, which included the 116th Infantry Regiment Foundation, the Edith Bolling Wilson Birthplace Museum, the Fredericksburg Area Museum, the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, the Library of Virginia, the MacArthur Memorial, the George C. Marshall Foundation, the Military Aviation Museum, the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, the National D-Day Memorial, the National Museum of the Marine Corps, the National Park Service, the U.S. Army Women's Museum, the Virginia Historical Society, the Virginia Holocaust Museum, the Virginia War Memorial, and the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum. The Virginia Department of Education assisted in planning and promoting the programs.

The symposium reached 200 teachers from more than 60 localities. Dates and locations of the 2017 symposium follow:

Tuesday, June 27

Edith Bolling Wilson Birthplace Museum
Wytheville

Wednesday, June 28

Historic Masonic Theatre
Clifton Forge

Tuesday, July 11

MacArthur Memorial
Norfolk

Wednesday, July 12

Virginia Historical Society
Richmond

Tuesday, July 18

**Bedford Elementary School
and the National D-Day Memorial**
Bedford

Wednesday, July 19

Longwood University
Farmville

Tuesday, July 25

Museum of the Shenandoah Valley
Winchester

Wednesday, July 26

Fredericksburg Area Museum
Fredericksburg

Commission members attended several of the programs to meet local teachers and to discuss the commemoration. The Commission is planning four more institutes in the summer of 2018, partnering again with organizations across the state to provide teachers with in-depth background on WWI and WWII and new resources to take back to the classroom.

VI. Virginia WWI and WWII Tourism Marketing Program Grants

The Virginia WWI and WWII Tourism Marketing Program, administered by the Virginia Tourism Corporation in collaboration with the Commission, completed three rounds of grants in 2017. Grants are designed to assist communities and WWI-related or WWII-related sites in marketing commemorative events and destinations. Funds are available on a 1:1 matching basis, and, in 2017, the Commission raised its maximum award per grant from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Commission and Virginia Tourism Corporation staff traveled to Bedford, Richmond, Manassas, Woodstock, and Virginia Beach in August 2017 to provide direct support for partners seeking grants.

To date, 20 grants have been awarded in four rounds, the first of which opened in 2016. Grant awards total \$77,811 and have been matched by \$297,332 from 71 partners. Currently, \$122,189 remains available in the Commission's grant fund. A fifth round of grants will open in January 2018.

Grant recipients from 2017 follow.

1. Lead partner: Fauquier Historical Society/Fauquier History Museum at Old Jail

Project name: *Honor Our Vets . . . Lest We Forget: Preserving World War Legacies in the Piedmont*

Award amount: \$992; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$997

Summary: The project spotlights local men and women who played a part in both wars from Fauquier and Orange Counties. The partnership includes the Fauquier History Museum, the Cold War Museum, and the James Madison Museum, whose combined abilities to advertise each element of the overarching program helps draw visitors to different locations and showcase the beauty and diversity of the area.

2. Lead partner: Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

Project name: *Marketing the Profiles of Honor Tour*

Award amount: \$750; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$750

Summary: The grant brought awareness to WWI and WWII by funding advertising for the *Profiles of Honor Tour*, which visited Clifton Forge at the Stars and Stripes Celebration on July 3 and July 4, 2017.

3. Lead partner: Historic Smithfield

Project name: *Swinging to the 40s and Veterans Salute with Profiles of Honor*

Award amount: \$984; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$984

Summary: Historic Smithfield, the Montgomery County WWI and WWII Commemoration Committee, the Montgomery County Tourism Office, and supporting partners requested marketing funds to advertise a special educational event, "Swinging to the 40s Big Band Concert and Veterans Salute," alongside the *Profiles of Honor Tour* exhibit on September 24, 2017.

4. Lead partner: National D-Day Memorial Foundation

Project name: *73rd Anniversary of D-Day Commemoration*

Award amount: \$3,150; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$3,150

Summary: Funds were used for marketing the 73rd commemoration of the D-Day Invasion, with a ceremony honoring the surviving veterans and those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Jerry Yellin, the pilot who flew the final combat mission of WWII, was the event's keynote speaker.

5. Lead partner: South Boston-Halifax County Museum of Arts and History

Project name: *Halifax County in a World at War*

Award amount: \$1,500; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$2,000

Summary: Grant funds were used to promote the initial phase of a series of exhibits hosted at the South Boston-Halifax County Museum of Fine Arts and History related to the historical impact of WWI and WWII.

6. Lead partner: Virginia Arts Festival

Project name: *Virginia International Tattoo Commemorates World War I Centennial*

Award amount: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$209,579

Summary: The Virginia International Tattoo partnered with the United States WWI Centennial Commission to present a special edition of the annual Virginia International Tattoo in 2017 that commemorated the WWI centennial. Performers from countries that participated in WWI were featured, including performers from Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. WWI-era music was featured in the Tattoo.

7. Lead partner: Vint Hill Entertainment

Project name: *Inn at Vint Hill Website Redevelopment and Marketing Plan*

Award amount: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$5,000

Summary: The Vint Hill Tourism Marketing Project is applying Commission funds to the development of a new website for the Inn at Vint Hill, which began offering overnight accommodations in the fall, and to online advertising to market the Inn and its historical connection to WWII during the 75th anniversary years. The U.S. Army purchased Vint Hill Farms in 1942 and turned the property into a military listening station to intercept and decode radio transmissions from Europe and the Pacific theater.

8. Lead partner: William King Museum of Art

Project name: *Remembering World War I in Southwest Virginia*

Award amount: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$5,000

Summary: The funding was used to supplement the William King Museum of Art's marketing of two companion exhibitions that opened in September: *The Great War: Printmakers of World War I* (on loan from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts) and *In the Trenches*, a collection of WWI memorabilia, including uniforms, helmets, mess kits, letters, and trench art.

9. Lead partner: Middlesex County Museum

Project name: *Heroes of Middlesex County*

Award amount: \$1,500; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$1,500

Summary: The project honors three distinguished veterans of Middlesex County: Beryl Newman, George Taylor, and Chesty Puller, telling their stories through a series of videos, oral histories, posters, and exhibits at Museums of Middlesex, along with an ongoing social media campaign.

10. Lead partner: National D-Day Memorial Foundation

Project name: *74th Anniversary of D-Day: Conference and Commemoration*

Award amount: \$8,855; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$8,855

Summary: The National D-Day Memorial is planning two major back-to-back events in June 2018 to commemorate the 74th Anniversary of D-Day. First, on June 5, there will be a major academic conference co-sponsored with Liberty University, "WWII in Film," bringing in scholars and students from across the nation to explore how WWII has impacted our cultural memory. On June 6, the

annual commemoration at the Memorial in Bedford will pay tribute to those who achieved victory in Normandy.

11. Lead partner: Northern Virginia World War History and Heritage Trail

Project name: *Discover Prince William and Manassas*

Award amount: \$5,000; Amount of match from recipient and partners: \$5,000

Summary: Tourism partners Discover Prince William and Manassas, Visit Loudoun, Visit Fairfax, Stay Arlington, and Visit Alexandria have partnered to create a brochure for the Northern Virginia World War History and Heritage Trail that will be distributed through welcome centers, tourist attractions, and Northern Virginia tourist information centers. Funds will also go toward online advertising.

VII. Continuing Statewide Initiatives

In addition to providing matching funds through the WWI and WWII Tourism Marketing Program, the Commission supports local organizations by promoting statewide programming and working with Virginia Tourism Corporation to make the public aware of the Commission's work and that of its partners.

The Commission maintains communication with the public through an active social media presence, email newsletters, and the Commission's comprehensive and frequently updated website, www.VirginiaWWIandWWII.org. The site features information on the Commission and its programs, an interactive map of places to visit in Virginia related to WWI and WWII, and a Statewide Calendar of Events highlighting programs hosted by local organizations, among other features. Commission staff regularly travels to meet and collaborate with local partners. WWI and WWII Commission signage is in place at welcome centers across Virginia, and rack cards and window clings are regularly distributed to promote the commemoration. Partners can also apply for use of the Commission's logo to aid in promoting local WWI and WWII initiatives.

In 2016, WWI and WWII commemorative coins were minted and distributed to 80 living veterans of WWII at the Commission's event commemorating the U.S. entry into WWII, *Dawn of Infamy*, on December 8. Commission members and staff, on behalf of the Commission, continue to distribute coins to veterans and to those who contribute significantly to the commemoration of WWI and WWII, with gratefulness for their service.

Looking Ahead

The Commission will continue its commemoration by marking significant WWI and WWII anniversaries, including the end of WWI, and hosting programs examining history that spans both wars.

WWI Symposium: American Leadership and Ethics during the Great War

The Commission will partner with the Virginia Military Institute Center for Leadership Ethics to present a two-day program featuring nationally recognized American WWI scholars and focusing on leadership at varying levels of the war.

2018 WWI and WWII Statewide Teacher Institutes

In the summer of 2018, the Commission, in partnership with museums and historic sites across the state, will host four teacher institutes dedicated to exploring history and classroom resources related to WWI and WWII.

100th Anniversary of Armistice Day

On November 11, 2018, a major event in Richmond will mark the centennial of Armistice Day. The event will include talks, living history, music, and museum displays, and will feature the annual Commonwealth's Veterans Day ceremony, hosted by the Virginia War Memorial. An 11:00 a.m. bell ringing at the WWI Memorial Carillon will be held.

The Commission has several commemorative programs in development to take place beyond 2018, including:

- A major event marking the 75th anniversary of D-Day on June 6, 2019, in Bedford
- A commemoration of the signing of the surrender documents that ended WWII for the United States, with a ceremony to take place aboard the USS *Wisconsin* in Norfolk on September 2, 2020, and a symposium to follow
- Continuation of the *Profiles of Honor Tour* and the WWI and WWII Legacy Scanning Project
- Continuation of the Virginia WWI and WWII Tourism Marketing Program
- An ongoing speaker series dedicated to the history of WWI and WWII
- Programs and events throughout the state continually posted on the Statewide Calendar of Events (www.VirginiaWWIandWWII.org/events), sponsored by local committees, museums, foundations, and historical societies

The year 2017 marked the Commission's last year with its Executive Director, Cheryl Jackson, who served the Commission since its beginning and previously headed initiatives for the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the Civil War Commission. She will continue to serve the General Assembly as Deputy Clerk of the House of Delegates. In December, the Commission welcomed Ginny Edwards, who will direct commemoration efforts in the coming years.

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