

SC Civil War Sesquicentennial Advisory Board Meeting

SC Department of Archives and History

10:30 A.M.

April 30, 2007

Those attending: Rodger Stroup, Allen Roberson, Robin Copp, Jannie Harriot, Fritz Hamer, Steve Wise, Jeff Grigg, Randy Burbage, Rich Hatcher, Mary Morgan, Theresa Pittman, Bernie Wright, Patrick McCawley, Willie Calloway, John Tucker, Leah Brown, Marion Edmonds, Tracy Power, Marvin Dulaney, and Ben Hornsby.

Rodger Stroup called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He then asked those present to introduce themselves. After which he announced that the legislation to form the committee had not been passed by the General Assembly. He mentioned that Senator Courson had wanted to change the name to the SC War Between the States Advisory Committee and he had replied that pending national legislation with possible funding possibilities would recognize the conflict as the Civil War. He mentioned that the SC Department of Archives and History had received \$65,000 one-time money, which can be carried forward to fund travel, staff, and meetings for the commemoration. Rodger mentioned that the Virginia legislature had appropriated 2.2 million dollars for the Civil War Sesquicentennial observance there. He also mentioned that the AASLH would serve a coordinating role, providing sessions at its annual meeting and resources.

Rick Hatcher reported on various happenings with the National Park Service. He noted a meeting involving all Civil War sites would be held some time in May and the national legislation for the sesquicentennial was languishing in the House. He noted that 2016 would be the centennial of the creation of the National Park Service. He said some states including Missouri, Minnesota, and Kentucky were working on events that had special significance to them.

Stroup then steered the discussion to the role of the advisory committee and asked for input. He mentioned the group could be a coordinating board and one that encouraged others to plan special events and programs for the Civil War commemoration. He mentioned that the state's tricentennial was celebrated in a major way with visitor centers in Charleston and Columbia and the proposed one in Greenville. He also noted there seems to be no explicit records from the SC Centennial Commission.

John Tucker wants people throughout the state to understand that there is something in every county that relates to the Civil War and the state needs to find a way to promote these to people from outside the state. He also stressed the educational component of the commemoration. We need to educate people as to why certain events happened and where they took place.

Allen Roberson suggested that the group should serve as an umbrella group with the big view. He suggested that publications are a means to get the big picture presented and mentioned that publications should be sent to schools throughout the state.

Stroup told that Virginia is planning a major exhibition for the Civil War Sesquicentennial and it is being designed in 3 or 4 sections so that it can travel to various institutions around the state. He mentioned that the SC State Museum, the SC Confederate Room & Military Museum, and the

Confederate Museum in Charleston might consider exhibitions for the commemoration. Everyone agreed that it would be great if there could be a traveling exhibition that could go to towns throughout the state. Stroup asked Randy Burbage of the SCV for his thoughts about the commemoration. He thought the idea of a traveling exhibition is a good one would like to see relevant documents used in it. It was also suggested that the replica of the Hunley could travel. Mary Morgan of the state library thinks a web site with appropriate information about the Civil War would be a worthwhile educational tool. Tracy Power thinks that an overview of South Carolina's role in the Civil War would be an important part of a web site. Jannie Harriot stated that publications should represent the true role African Americans played in the Civil War. She also mentioned that it would be important to work with the state department of education and the appropriate social studies curriculum coordinators. She noted that many times local teachers did not know where to go to get resources for the classroom. Robin Copp noted that the Teaching American History program could also be used. After much discussion the consensus seemed to be that the group should work with every available educational group as well as art groups to get the message out about the sesquicentennial and to get material about it incorporated into these groups programs and conferences.

Stroup asked Marion Edmonds how PRT could help with the commemoration. He said they would probably focus on Rose Hill (Governor Gist's home in Union County) and Rivers' Bridge (in present day Bamberg County where Confederate forces held up Sherman's march through Carolina for two days, February 3, 1865). These are the two sites, owned by PRT, that relate most directly related to the Civil War. He also mentioned Hampton Plantation and Redcliffe, where the focus would be on the home front showing how both whites and blacks were affected by the Civil War. He stressed that south Carolina would get most of its publicity early on during the commemoration. He also thinks PRT could assist by having a web site, which would get information about planned programs and activities to a wide audience. Tucker agreed with Edmonds that South Carolina would get most of its publicity from the anniversary of the first shot of the Civil War. Hatcher said the action of the 54th Massachusetts should be remembered as well as the opening of the Hunley Museum. Edmonds also said Sherman's March, the Port Royal Experiment, the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation being read in the Sea Islands, and Reconstruction should be remembered. Morgan also mentioned Penn Center. Harriot suggested that local events and everyday life throughout the state should be remembered as well as the ones noted in history books.

Jeff Grigg mentioned there is no place to go to find all the Civil War sites in the state. He thinks this group needs to go to the counties and find out what is there. He noted that is only recently that the Harriet Tubman raid has been documented. Steve Wise asked Edmonds about the historic trails program, which covered the entire state. Stroup noted that while the trails program was no longer maintained, the Archives has copies of each. Edmonds suggested that the sesquicentennial should focus on electronic guides for people to find out what is happening in various parts of the state.

Harriot said she likes the idea of going to various parts of the state to ask local citizens how they would like to see the sesquicentennial of the Civil War commemorated. She wants to make sure some of the meetings are held in small towns; she also wants to know what these people know about the Civil War. Much discussion followed as to the best methods to gather citizen input. Various means were suggested such as local historical societies, public libraries, the SC Humanities Council, Confederation of SC Local Historical Societies, and the Palmetto Trust. Bernie Wright noted that the Humanities Council often funds groups, which encourage and promote public discussion forums. Morgan suggested working through the library program "Let's Talk About Its Series." Wright suggested working through the state's 64 institutions of higher learning, which includes college and universities as well as technical colleges.

Stroup suggested checking with Southern Studies to determine if they are interested in developing programming for the sesquicentennial. Burbage said the Hunley Museum should be in operation by 2013 and this would allow for great publicity and programs. He also mentioned that the Southern Maritime collection would be a part of the Hunley Museum. Stroup mentioned the Heritage Preservation Trust fund administered by PRT. The purpose of the fund is to acquire Civil War properties. A separate state commission will eventually manage the fund.

Stroup asked Theresa Pittman, president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy about her ideas for the sesquicentennial. She told of the work of the UDC, mentioning marker dedications, the Jefferson Davis Highway, and general education. She mentioned that she was interested in seeing all sides of the Civil War presented as well as all the participants appropriately recognized. She agreed that visiting the state to determine the wishes of the citizens was very important. She wants South Carolinians to know about events prior, during, and after the Civil War. She mentioned local Edgefield heroine, Lucinda Horne, who accompanied her husband and son in the Civil War, and said most people knew nothing about her and that her life had not been accurately portrayed. She also said most of the men who served on the Confederate side were privates.

Fritz Hamer said a key to any commemoration is funding sources. People out in the local communities would want to know about their availability. He suggested that Randy Akers of the Humanities Council be invited to the next meeting as the Council offers grants for public discussion. Pittman said people like to volunteer for worthwhile causes.

Harriot again suggested the need for community meetings across the state to get citizen input for the sesquicentennial. She wants these meetings open to a wide range of citizens and wants them to be held in public places where everyone feels welcome. Wright suggested a number of steps to obtain wide citizen and elected officials' participation. Among these are contacting county councils, African American churches, and community action agencies. He said a goal of the group should be to dispel ignorance, as many African Americans do not know the role they played in the Civil War.

Steve Wise asked Power if the National Register program conducted public meetings around the state. He responded that public meetings were held to get input about certain historic districts. Harriot mentioned that the African American Heritage Commission was holding a series of workshops around the state to educate citizens about its work and to give them information as to where to go to get assistance with history and preservation matters. Wise suggested working through the regional councils of government to organize meetings around the state.

Stroup suggested that the group plan to hold meetings in 10 communities in September and October to determine how people wish for the sesquicentennial to be observed. He asked Tucker, Harriot, Morgan, and Roberson to serve on a committee to plan and organize these meetings. The consensus seemed to be that the meetings be held at libraries and various elected officials such as county council chairs should be invited to them.

Stroup asked Hamer and Roberson to think about a major exhibit for the sesquicentennial (possible objects-Ordinance of Secession, tables in Union County Museum and Columbia's First Baptist Church, chairs in Charleston Museum). Many thought it would be a good idea if the exhibit could be a traveling one. Hamer suggested that Southeastern Freight might be a possible sponsor or provider.

Stroup also suggested that a major symposium in three sections of the state would be a worthwhile goal and said he would discuss the idea with Walter Edgar and Cleveland Sellers.

Harriot again reiterated the importance of asking people how they would like to see the sesquicentennial commemorated. It was suggested that the Road Trip program on Civil Rights could serve as a model for one of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War.

The consensus was that the group would meet again in August to firm up plans for the fall meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.