

**Michigan Historical Commission
Civil War Sesquicentennial
Work Plan**

Adopted: September 17, 2008

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Michigan's commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War will foster an inclusive sense of community, educate and elevate the citizenry, and increase economic development.

Executive Order 2007-52 gives the commission responsibility for Michigan's commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. No inclusive dates were set so programs may begin before 2011 and extend beyond 2015. Commission plans cover grassroots involvement, events and projects, education, heritage tourism, marketing, and funding. Commissioner Jack Dempsey chairs the Commission's Civil War Committee; members are Commissioners Judy Tappero, Tom Truscott, and Edward Surovell.

Executive Order 2007-52

Foster authenticity

- Encourage, plan, and develop appropriate commemorative activities, events, programs, observances, and services
- Research and promote development of cultural, historical, and economic development opportunities relating to the Civil War in connection with the Sesquicentennial
- Review, plan, and recommend strategies to promote and preserve history of Michigan's role in the Civil War

Foster inclusion

- Enlist support of private citizens, businesses, nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, schools, and cultural institutions

Serve as national/international liaison

- Encourage Michigan's participation with other states and in national and international activities

Provide information

- Serve as clearinghouse for collection and dissemination of information about plans, events, programs, observances, and services

Overall Goals

1. To fully implement E.O. 2007-52 via an innovative, creative, appropriate, vigorous multi-year commemoration carrying beyond 2015
2. To create a lasting legacy focused on increasing the public's understanding of Michigan's outstanding role in helping save the Union and eliminating American slavery, making it relevant to all ethnicities as part of a discussion on equal rights for all citizens
3. To ensure an accurate recounting of events and issues
4. To involve the widest conceivable audience including incorporating plans of the Center and HAL, both here and outside
5. To broadly publicize all work, using public forums with active linking to groups and individuals who are especially interested in Michigan history, and the Civil War in particular
6. To foster the widest possible participation
7. To provide an impetus for the creation of preservation/tourism opportunities and activities that will yield commensurate respect and veneration in this State and foster a greater sense of community and pride

Action Plan

Grassroots Involvement

The Commission will use the Internet to provide guidance and information to communities, organizations and individuals, as well as a clearinghouse listing what communities, organizations and individuals elect to do to commemorate the Civil War, including their research, public programs, and events. It will not establish a seal of approval or other juried registry of events.

The “Michigan Remembers the Civil War” web site will include links to the Michigan Historical Center’s digitized collections, *Michigan History* articles on the Civil War, and the Center’s educational materials. It will have ideas and lists such as where to find songs from the era that could be used in school and community concerts or how to create a tour for the Civil War portion of a cemetery. The rest of the site will be created by direct public input and include a Wikipedia-like area where people are encouraged to share what they know about their community’s relationship to the war; a calendar of events that people can easily update; a Flickr photo group; and a heritage travel area with existing monuments that commemorate the war, cemeteries, and neighborhoods with buildings from the era. The center will not authenticate the material posted by the public. Community could be defined by geography, ethnicity, gender, or occupation.

The Commission will reach out to organizations interested in the Civil War, asking members of those organizations to comment on the plan, and asking for additional ideas. The organizations may post their events (for example reenactments, round tables) on the Michigan Remembers the Civil War website with links to their websites. It will invite representatives of major statewide groups to form an advisory task force that shares ideas and information.

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Create a website that allows input from citizens and communities across the state	Sandra	Drafting framework. Next step will be consulting with HAL and DIT	
Reach out to groups and individuals through private contact and presentations at historical and educational conferences	Jack	Making contacts and setting up a schedule of opportunities	
Form an advisory task force with others with a major stake in the commemoration	Jack	Making list and contacts. Freedom Trail Commission has named representatives	
Hold public meetings to share the plan and invite comment and participation	Jack	Starting work on format, locations and timing	

Clearinghouse

The commission is charged by the Governor to "Serve as clearinghouse for collection and dissemination of information about plans, events, programs, observances, and services" connected with the Sesquicentennial due to its central position as the executive- and legislatively-appointed state body charged with history matters. The calendar of events will contain center-sponsored and community-sponsored events, as well as those that are organized by other entities such as roundtables and universities. The web site will offer links to commemorations in other states and to national initiatives.

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Create a page on the Commission portion of the state web site that sets out the Commission's plans for the commemoration and links to other states and organizations. This will eventually link to the web presence described under Grassroots Involvement, which will fulfill this strategy.	Mary	Compiling information to submit to HAL web design and selecting the "shortcut" name to use.	
Contact other groups with compiled information, such as the Sons of Union Veterans cemetery list, to ensure that such information is available over the Internet.	Jack	Part of Grassroots Involvement.	
Establish a single point of public contact.		Mary Patrick is the point of contact.	

Events and Projects

To encourage, plan, and develop appropriate commemorative activities, events, programs, observances, and services, the commission will work with interested parties and the Center to create and publicize Sesquicentennial events and projects.

Projects already underway are noted in the Action section. Other items under consideration include:

- Working with the Center for Creative Studies (Rick Rogers) to get students involved in creative interpretations involving art and graphics (lead: Judy)
- Creating a graphic novel about Michigan's role in the war (lead: Judy)
- Center exhibit possibilities: mini Archives, major Museum, Small concurrent with Civil War timetable; Kiosk outside Civil War Gallery; image of the month; artifact of the month; a case to display individual families' collections.
- Promotion of the "Save the Flags" project
- Inventorying Civil War era buildings and sites in Michigan
- Identifying and planning for Civil War era historic sites that need restoration; consult with SHPO about sites that are at risk and/or would be a good focus
- Publication of new or compiled *Michigan History* magazine articles on Michigan in the Civil War
- Monument to Elon Farnsworth at Gettysburg

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Make some or all of the blue books from the Michigan Civil War Centennial Commission available on-line.	Sandra	Sending the books to staff and academics for evaluation of the extent to which they meet current standards	
Internet publish a word-searchable digitized copy of <i>Michigan in the War</i> by John Robertson.	Mark Harvey	Spring 2009	
Civil War Monuments in Michigan	Roger Rosentreter	Weldon Petz has a list, and the Sons of Union Veterans are working on something. Roger will work with Weldon on a possible book once they finish the current Lincoln project.	Bruce Butgereit-Veterans orgs
Place all Civil War materials in the Archives of Michigan online in digitized format at the Seeking Michigan web site	Mark Harvey	Photographs are online Government Records 2008 Manuscripts 2009	Funded with grants
Conference (March 2009) on the connections of John Brown to Michigan at UofM-Dearborn, organized by Prof. M. Hershock. Majority of conference would be academic.	Jack	Selecting date and outlining program. Considering what might be developed as a lasting product.	
Make Civil War part of GVSU annual Great Lakes Conference in 2010.	Jack	Contact has been made and GVSU is interested.	

Education

Principal beneficiaries of the Sesquicentennial must be Michigan's schoolchildren. The Commission will work with and encourage the education community to include Sesquicentennial events and programs in curricula and other educational programs. The Commission will particularly encourage schools to take advantage of what the Center creates in response to the State Board of Education content expectations.

Confirmed projects are in the action section. Items under consideration include:

- Promoting MGTV's program on the Civil War flags
- A new MGTV program
- Training volunteer reenactors in curriculum so they can visit schools and do programs.

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Develop teacher's materials for using the on-line Archives of Michigan materials	Maria Leiby	2009	
Develop other classroom materials for the Teach section of the Seeking Michigan web site and for in-museum experiences around Michigan's and the Civil War.	Maria	2010 and forward	
Hold professional development sessions for teachers	Maria	2010 and forward	

Heritage Tourism

Although Michigan is not the site of any Civil War battlefields, it contains a number of assets that can attract tourists interested in the war. Such visits can help drive the state's economy. The commission will work to create programs that publicize such sites in order to drive a greater level of tourism. For this initiative to work, the commission must ensure that each site can provide an exceptional visitor experience.

Projects already underway are noted in the Action section. Other items under consideration include:

- List monuments on the website
- Tours on the Travel Michigan web site around a theme; walking and driving tours inside and outside the state; included could be monuments, museums with Civil War exhibits, communities with areas that were largely built before the Civil War.
- Encourage communities and museums to hold Civil War Days with non battle-related activities (Marshall gives cemetery tours with people in costume and in character; Tecumseh gives tours; Pentwater and Ludington have many CW soldiers buried in their cemeteries; Benzonia; Bruce Catton writings)
- Link to Underground Railroad sites, as developed by the FTC

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Assemble list of Civil War Markers	Tom	Done 4/23. Organizing by county.	
Encourage participation in the Civil War Preservation Trust discovery trail	Jack	Information on the trail is in hand	
Develop Michigan Civil War Heritage Trail sites list	Jack	Beginning to collect information on sites and museums	

Marketing

Marketing and outreach for the program require a degree of creativity to build new media interest and will depend on establishing lasting media partnerships. The Commission will work with marketing volunteers to develop the means to gain publicity for the Sesquicentennial.

Projects already underway are noted in the Action section. Other items under consideration include:

- Developing ideas for the center/museum store appealing to kids (eg, infantry hat with Michigan unit designation)
- Developing "this day (or week) in Michigan Civil War history" link on website for use by media; podcasts
- Developing a plan for radio coverage; various people could give "Michigan tidbit" on Paul W. Smith show

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Archives Civil War open house and magazine articles when all archives collections are on-line	Mark Harvey	2009	
Partnership with a publication such as <i>Hour Magazine</i> or <i>Ambassador Magazine</i> that will result in a major early photo story followed by other pieces featuring both creative interpretive materials and historic materials throughout the commemoration	Judy	Contacts have been made	

Funding

Critical to a successful commemoration is procurement of the appropriate additional resources that support the plan. The Commission will work to obtain necessary funding for those initiatives that require expenditure of dollars.

The Commission has taken official action to approve reliance on the Michigan Historical Center Foundation (MHCF) to serve as the conduit for incoming funds. The MHCF already serves this purpose for the Center, and there is no need to re-invent the wheel. Using this conduit also ensures the tax deductibility of contributions.

As for funding itself, the plan assumes availability of no public tax dollars. Consequently, activities will need to involve no outlay of funds or rely on purely private donations.

Action	Lead	Status	Funding
Formalize financial arrangement with the MHCF with request from Historical Commission that the MHCF set up a formal account to accept these funds.	Jack	Working with Pat Clark	
Identify funding needed for each aspect of the plan	All Leads		
Identify possible funding sources	Jack		

Notes:

Senator Allen has offered to convene an informal meeting with Senators, with the goal of ensuring a positive reaction to and support for the implementation of the Executive Order (This dovetails with the Heritage Caucus proposal.)