



OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS

Contact: *Kim Schuette*

614.297.2314 or 800-340-6131

kschuette@ohiohistory.org

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Ohio Historical Society Names Civil War Sesquicentennial Advisory Group Members Represent Statewide Effort To Ensure Successful Commemoration Effort

(COLUMBUS, OHIO)—In response to Gov. Ted Strickland’s directive to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War in Ohio (2011-2015), the Ohio Historical Society has appointed 15 Ohioans to the Civil War 150 Advisory Committee, announced Jim Strider, acting executive director.

Made up of individuals from around the state, the committee will provide guidance to the historical society on programs and activities to ensure a successful commemoration effort at both the state and local levels. Meeting will run quarterly, and members will serve until the end 2015.

“These individuals represent men and women who have a deep interest in Ohio history, particularly its Civil War heritage,” Strider said. “Advisory committee members also will contribute their professional expertise in history, education, state government, historical organizations, media and tourism.”

The Civil War 150 Advisory Committee includes:

James Bissland is from Bowling Green in Wood County. He taught in the journalism program at Bowling Green State University for 20 years and serves today as an associate professor of journalism emeritus. Bissland is the author of “Blood, Tears, & Glory: How Ohioans Won the Civil War,” published in October 2007.

Tom Brinkman Jr., a former Ohio legislator (2001-2008) from Cincinnati, has an educational background in history and experience with former commemorative initiatives in Ohio. He lives in Cincinnati in Hamilton County.

Andrew Cayton is a Distinguished Professor of History at Miami University. He lives in Oxford in Butler County. He is the author of “Ohio: The History of a People,” published in 2002. He has earned many honors and distinctions for both his scholarship and his teaching, including a Fulbright position in American Studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

Bob Davis serves as commander of the Department of Ohio, Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. This patriotic and educational organization seeks to preserve the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic and to care for GAR memorials and identify the location of union veterans’ gravesites. Davis lives in Canal Winchester in Fairfield County.

Gainor Davis is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Western Reserve Historical Society of the Western Reserve Historical Society, an organization whose collections include an extensive and unique Civil War-era collection. She has more than 27 years of experience, including leadership roles in history organizations in Pennsylvania, Vermont and Louisiana. She resides in Cleveland Heights in Cuyahoga County.

Paul LaRue is a social studies teacher at Washington High School and lives in Washington Court House in Fayette County. He has been honored for his innovative methods of teaching Civil War history by the American Legion (2003 Educator of the Year) and the Civil War Preservation Trust, among others.

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Roger Micker, from Wheeling (West Virginia), is a social studies teacher at Steubenville High School in Steubenville, Jefferson County. He is president of the Ohio Valley Civil War Roundtable, a re-enactor, a member of the Ohio Historical Society Teacher Advisory Committee, and a Teaching American History program participant.

Bob Minton is Colonel of the Army of the Ohio Reenacting Battalion and involved in Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island. He has also raised funds to conserve two Ohio Civil War battle flags. Minton lives in Fostoria in Hancock County.

Don Murphy, from Cincinnati in Hamilton County, serves as chief executive officer of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati. He is the former deputy director of the National Park Service and before that served for seven years as the director of California State Parks.

Rep. Mark Okey represents House District 61, which includes Carroll County and parts of Mahoning, Stark and Tuscarawas counties. The McCook House, an Ohio Historical Society site, is within his district. His interest in Civil War history is evidenced by his personal collection and research. He resides in Carrollton in Carroll County.

Dave Roth is the co-founder and publisher of *Blue & Gray Magazine*, which focuses on Civil War battlefields and provides in-depth information on Civil War sites for its readers. The magazine has surpassed 25 years of operation and 150 issues. Roth lives in Columbus in Franklin County.

John Switzer is a journalist with the *Columbus Dispatch*, who lives in Columbus in Franklin County. Previously a weather columnist, today he writes a Sunday Metro column, often revealing his interest in historical topics.

Diana Thompson is the executive director of the Miami County Visitors & Convention Bureau. She has 26 years of experience in the hospitality field and is active in the Ohio Travel Association, including teaching for the Ohio Tourism Leadership Academy. Thompson lives in Piqua in Miami County.

Catherine Wilson is the executive director of the Greene County Historical Society. She has experience in archives, genealogy, history scholarship and Civil War re-enacting. She has authored a number of articles on topics of relevance to Civil War history as well. She resides in Xenia in Greene County.

Eric Wittenberg, from Columbus in Franklin County, is an attorney who has authored more than 10 books about the Civil War and also writes a blog, *Rantings of a Civil War Historian*. He is a member of the Central Ohio Civil War Roundtable and Vice President of the Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation.

About the Civil War 150

Ohio's leadership before, during and after the Civil War had a profound influence on American history. Decades later, Gov. Ted Strickland wants to make sure that all Ohioans remember the past of their great state and the sacrifices that were made to preserve the Union. He chose the Ohio Historical Society to lead the effort because the state history organization is "uniquely positioned" to direct the initiative.

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"It is important not only to commemorate the historic significance of the Civil War, but to also celebrate the role that Ohio and Ohioans played in achieving the monumental victory," Gov. Strickland said in his directive to historical society last April. "The Ohio Historical Society is uniquely positioned with the expertise and physical resources to lead the state in commemorating the Civil War in Ohio."

Civil War 150 Efforts Underway

In addition to establishing the Civil War 150 Advisory Committee, the historical society has organized a statewide network of organizations and historic sites so that the Civil War tribute can be organized seamlessly. One goal is to raise awareness of the upcoming sesquicentennial and encourage Ohioans to visit the many Civil War sites across the state.

"Ohio's link to the Civil War is a very significant one," Strider said. "Ohioans had a deep and lasting influence on the war, and the war spurred an age of great prosperity and political power for the state."

To help raise awareness about Ohio's pivotal role in Civil War history, the Ohio Historical Society and Cleveland State University's Center for Public History and Digital Humanities recently launched www.ohiocivilwar150.org to commemorate the upcoming 150th anniversary of the war in 2011 to 2015. The Web site is a collection of information as well as a dynamic tool for the public, educators and local history groups to collaborate and share their knowledge of Ohio's fascinating Civil War history.

The Ohio Historical Society is a nonprofit organization that serves as the state's partner in preserving and interpreting Ohio's history, natural history, archaeology and historic architecture. For more information about programs and events, visit www.ohiohistory.org.

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