O
n May 20, 1861, delegates meeting in the State Capitol voted to take North Carolina out of the Union and align with the Confederate States of America. For the next four years North Carolinians, other Southerners, and those in the North engaged in a protracted and calamitous war touching every part of society. As it has for generations, the Civil War engages and fascinates students of history, like no other topic. The generation that took part in the conflict organized reunions and erected monuments to commemorate their achievements. African Americans, promised the rights of citizenship during the Reconstruction era, saw those rights stripped away by Jim Crow legislation. The centennial of the war coincided with the apex of the civil rights movement. Today the nation still is divided along partisan lines with the rancor of debates rivaling those of the nineteenth century.

A planning committee within the North Carolina Office of Archives and History invites you to join eighteen presenters on May 20, 2011 for a conference to examine memory and the war. Subjects to be considered include literature, historiography, statuary, monuments, dissent, race, prisons, suicide, women, heritage organizations, and other legacies. Historical work on memory has proliferated over the past twenty years. What is most important to remember about the Civil War? How have past generations gone about commemorating the conflict? What lessons can we take from the past?

In 2013, timed to coincide with the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, a conference is planned on the theme of freedom, in Winston-Salem in conjunction with Wake Forest University. And, in 2015, with the anniversaries of the fall of Fort Fisher, Sherman’s March, and the close of the war, a symposium around the theme of sacrifice will take place at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.
PRESENTERS

David W. Blight, Class of 1954 Professor of History at Yale University, is the author of Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory. His most recent book was received the Bancroft, Lincoln, and Frederick Douglass Prizes.

John Coffey is the deputy director for art at the North Carolina Museum of Art, where he has also been the Curator of American and Modern Art.

Adam H. Doody is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His current research explores the memory of dissent and intra-community violence in North Carolina.

Mark Elliott is associate professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Along with John David Smith, he co-edited Undaunted Radical: The Selected Writings and Speeches of Albion W. Tourgee.

John Haley is a retired professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. The study of race relations and the Civil War and Reconstruction are his areas of specialty.

Michael C. Hardy maintains the blog “North Carolina and the Civil War.” In 2010, he was named North Carolina Historian of the Year by the North Carolina Women of History. He is co-author of Race, War, and Remembrance in the Appalachian South: Writing the South through the South.

Elizabeth C. King is a survey specialist of the State Historic Preservation Office. She is completing a comprehensive survey of historic architectural resources in Beaufort County.

Raymond Gavins is professor of history at Duke University and a director of the Behind the Veil project. He is the author of The Persuas and Propaganda of Southern Black Leadership.

John Coffey’s teaching area is nineteenth-century U.S. history.

Jaime Martinez is an assistant professor of history at the University of Mississippi. His current research explores the memory of American and Modern Art.

John Coffey is the deputy director for art at the North Carolina Museum of Art, where he has also been the Curator of American and Modern Art.

Erica St. Lawrence is a Master’s degree candidate in public history at North Carolina State University. He is the author of Moments of Dispute: Suicide, Disease, and Debt in Civil War Era North Carolina.

Tom Vincent is a local records management analyst for North Carolina State Archives and serves as chairman of the subcommittee of the North Carolina Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee.

Suzanne Michelle Lee, assistant professor of history at North Carolina State University, is working on book manuscript on southern citizenship after the Civil War and on civilians in Virginia during the Civil War.

RESPONDENTS

Bob Byrd is director of field operations for the North Carolina Division of Historic Sites and Properties and began his career at Reelfoot Battlefield. He directed North Carolina’s 125th Civil War commemoration.

Fitzhugh Brundage is the William B. Umstattd Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he co-edited Behind the Veil project. He is the author of The Persuas and Propaganda of Southern Black Leadership.

John A. Hardison is director of the North Carolina Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee. He served as director of Beaufort, the home of Jefferson Davis.

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