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THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR CENTER

At Historic Tredegar

OLD SITE WITH NEW VISION

“This building has such symbolic significance,” says Sanford Bond of 3 North, chief architect of the changes to the 1861 Tredegar Gun Foundry, which will house the Center’s 10,000-square-foot exhibit, *In the Cause of Liberty*.

Many in Richmond have memories of charitable events and parties in the Gun Foundry, but now this National Historical Landmark will be the signature artifact of the nation’s first objective treatment of the Civil War. The height of the building was such that it was possible to put in a mezzanine floor. “We wanted to keep the integrity of the building, so the new floor does not touch the outer walls,” said Bond who, with his colleagues Todd Dykshorn and Jill Nolt, stopped by at the end of July to monitor construction progress. “This has been a nice process, very practical and reasonable,” said Bond.

In addition to designing a floating second floor, the firm added a glass entry pavilion to house ticket sales and a museum store. The architects visited as the contractors had completed their work in the Foundry and were putting in the floor of the pavilion as well as laying the bluestone patio outside the front entrance. Three of the original brick arches from previous industrial buildings have been incorporated in the site design, and the glass entry doors will echo the arches. The height of the pavilion provides an airy space with a view of the river before visitors enter the exhibit in the Foundry, announcing the lofty spaces within.

The great curved entrance doors to the original Foundry have been kept in place to preserve its original external character. Inside those doors 1,100 cannon were made for the Confederate Army during the course of the Civil War. At the height of the war over half of the 2,500



Jill Nolt, Todd Dykshorn, and Sanford Bond compare the plans to the work in progress.

workers were slaves. The iron foundry business had made naval guns for the Union before 1861. “All three perspectives—Union, Confederate and African American—demand to be told on this evocative old site, and the new exhibit at last will tell the three stories with a new vision,” says Alex Wise, president of The American Civil War Center at *Historic Tredegar*.

“This exhibit is going to be tremendous,” said Bond. “There is so much interest in the Civil War, and this story has never been told. (The exhibit) is now a reference point and will have an impact on society. It is adding to our knowledge, not repeating what has been done before.”

COMPLETED CAPITAL CAMPAIGN MAKES AN EXHIBIT

The hard work of board members, staff, and volunteers enabled the Center to meet its Capital Campaign goal of \$13.6 million dollars by mid-summer, providing the means to complete the first phase of The American Civil War Center at *Historic Tredegar*. The campaign will stay open until the end of 2006 to give donors an opportunity to make or increase their capital gifts.

Chair of the Campaign Steering Committee was Al Broaddus, former president of the Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond and vice-chair of the Center’s Board of Directors. “I have been fortunate to lead a team of energetic and committed volunteers who have labored long and hard to reach the multi-million dollar goal,” he said.

Fundraising can be a joy for those who care so passionately about a cause because they see their dreams become reality. “Generous support from individuals, foundations, federal government agencies, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the City of Richmond has given this project life,” said the Center’s president, Alex Wise. “Our volunteers have worked for five years to raise funds for our extraordinary exhibit, the adaptive reuse of the Gun Foundry to house it, and for construction of the new Entry Pavilion. It has been a delight to watch

things take shape on the site.” Over the period of the campaign, fundraising has been affected by a fluctuating stock market and overwhelming natural disasters. “The Richmond community and the nation are fortunate that our supporters have placed this project high among their priorities,” said Wise.

Fundraising is a continuing process for the Center, which plans to bring education programs for K-12 students, adult programming, and a major national conference to the public in the next fiscal year. “The exhibit, a first-ever look at the whole story of the Civil War, should attract visitors, but no museum can live off entry fees,” said Wise. “Those who believe that we are an educational center must continue to give us support.”

Members of the Campaign Steering Committee were J. Alfred Broaddus, chair; Dr. Renard A. Charity; William V. Daniel; Thomas F. Farrell; Robert J. Grey, Jr.; Brenton S. Halsey; Douglas D. Monroe; Walter S. Robertson; S. Buford Scott; Wallace Stettinius; and James C. Wheat III, all of Richmond; Josiah Bunting III, Newport RI; David C. Johnson, New York; Neil S. Raymond, Boston; and John W. Rosenblum, Crozet.

The American
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At Historic Tredegar

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



September 2006

Dear Friends:

We are all influenced by our family background, our cultural background, and our education. When young, we absorb the thinking of our parents, we learn from our teachers, and we are influenced by our peers. As we become adult, we form our own opinions, born of our varied experiences.

Three different experiences of the American Civil War are presented in our new permanent exhibit, *In the Cause of Liberty*. One of these stories may be yours, gained from your own personal experience. However, we hope you will take the time to absorb and understand the passions of all three perspectives—Union, Confederate, and African American. Three groups each had a concept of liberty derived from their own interpretation of the American Revolution and the Constitution. All three cared about their view so passionately that they were willing to give their lives for the cause of liberty. The tragedy is that their three views of liberty were so different.

So come and learn how citizens of the same nation came to be in conflict over the cause of liberty. Hear how the war affected every citizen and how the nation changed in ways that could never be reversed. See exhibits that set you thinking about the legacies of this war that changed, and still shapes, our nation. We expect you will be stimulated by what you hear and see, and we know that you will want to tell us what you think. You can do that in the Visitor Feedback Area as you leave.

After nine years of dreaming, meeting, planning, working toward an exhibit that for the first time will tell the whole story of the Civil War from its origins to its outcomes, the excitement at the Center is intense. Come in and share the excitement of our exhibit, which opens to the public on Saturday, October 7 at 9 am.

The exhibit will be housed in an artifact of the war—the 1861 Tredegar Gun Foundry. Feel the atmosphere, be challenged by other views, understand the passion, and be stimulated by different stories. Our doors will be open, so enter with open minds.

We look forward to welcoming you at The American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar.

Sincerely,

H. Alexander Wise, Jr.

Calendar

OPENING EVENTS

In the Cause of Liberty
at The American Civil War Center
at Historic Tredegar

Donor Reception and Preview of the Exhibit
(by invitation only)
Thursday, October 5, 2006 5:30 pm

Dedication Ceremony, *In the Cause of Liberty*
Friday, October 6, 2006 10:00 am
(by invitation: limited openings. If you would like to be included, please contact the Center)

Grand Opening for the Public
Saturday, October 7, 2006 9:00 am
(indoor and outdoor activities for children, living history demonstrations, and period music)

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS

of The American Civil War Center
at Historic Tredegar

November 15, 2006
The Roads from Appomattox: Alternative Paths to Reconciliation after the Civil War
Seminar with Richard Blackett, Josiah Bunting, and Emory Thomas at Atlanta History Center, Atlanta GA

January 16, 2007
The Roads from Appomattox: Alternative Paths to Reconciliation after the Civil War
Seminar with Richard Blackett, Josiah Bunting, and Emory Thomas at New York Historical Society, New York NY

March 23-24, 2007
In the Cause of Liberty: How the Civil War Redefined American Ideals
Conference at Virginia Historical Society, Richmond VA



Charles B. Dew

GHOST WITH A STRONG PERSONALITY

I think Joseph Reid Anderson would heartily approve of the transformation of his beloved Gun Foundry building into The American Civil War Center.

No way to know for sure, of course. J. R. Anderson, the hard-driving Virginia entrepreneur who built Tredegar into one of the largest iron works in America on the eve of the Civil War, died in 1892, and the enterprise to which he devoted most of his adult life was still in full production at the time of his death. But Anderson loved the South, he supported the Confederacy (which he served as a brigadier general), and he favored the return of Southern loyalty to the Union once the war was over. Just as important, given the mission of the Center to tell the full story of the conflict—Union, Confederate, African American—Anderson respected, and gave job opportunities to skilled African American workers at Tredegar once freedom came in 1865.

Anderson had used slave labor extensively at Tredegar before and during the war. The question was would these men be hired as free workers once emancipation arrived? Anderson gave an emphatic answer in 1865 when he was charged by a Northern competitor with refusing to hire either African Americans, or even Unionists. "I have given employment and promise its continuance, to every colored man whilst he remains diligent and attentive and resisted successfully all effort on the part of white men to deprive them of their employment," he wrote. "And as to the employment of Union men I have never at any time before, during, or since the war, had the slightest regard to politics in giving employment to men."

The next year, Anderson added an exclamation point to his stated policy of employment based solely on skill, diligence, and a willingness to work hard. When a group of Northern laborers who had agreed to come to Richmond to work at the Tredegar rolling mill in 1866 objected to working alongside African American heaters and rollers, Anderson told the men not to come. His policy was clear and simple, he went on to say: "...we make no distinction of color in employing men and pay all the same wages as all have to live."

Joseph Reid Anderson was a Richmonder, a Virginian, a Southerner, and an American. He was also an eminently fair man who thought race had no place in determining whether a man should be allowed to take up a position at the Tredegar Iron Works. Taken together, all of these factors seem to me to point in one direction: The American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar and the legacy of Joseph R. Anderson are a very comfortable fit indeed. If he could be with us on October 6, I think he would step forward, and would do so with great pride, to help us open the doors.

Charles B. Dew
Ephraim Williams Professor of American History
Williams College

The mission of The American Civil War Center is to "tell the whole story of the conflict that still shapes our nation." The Center is located at the Tredegar Iron Works, an 8.3 acre National Historic Landmark site by the James River in Richmond. The 1861 Gun Foundry will house the 10,000-square-foot flagship exhibit *In the Cause of Liberty*, the nation's first exhibit to explore the war's causes, course, and legacies from Union, Confederate, and African American perspectives. The Center also includes the Tredegar Institute, which provides ongoing educational opportunities through community dialogues, symposia, K-12 offerings, and digital history programs.

Visit www.tredegar.org for more information about the Center and its programs.