

## Central Pennsylvania coordinates for Civil War sesquicentennial

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It was almost 150 years ago that President Abraham Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address, which would become arguably the most-recited speech in the world.

In remembrance of this speech and the historical events of the Civil War, Central Pennsylvania, along with the rest of the country, will commemorate the war's sesquicentennial with regional events from 2011 through 2015.

Barbara Franco, executive director of the [Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission](#), said 2013 is expected to be the year the state will receive the most attention because of the 150th anniversary of the battle at Gettysburg.

[Pennsylvania Civil War 150](#), a statewide effort to coordinate events and marketing for the sesquicentennial, is using a consistent brand approach on its Web site and will soon add blogs and discussion groups, Franco said. Visitors to the site can upload their family stories and photographs.

One of Pennsylvania Civil War 150's major initiatives is the [Pennsylvania Civil War Road Show](#). A 53-foot expandable truck will traverse the state and visit all 67 counties over four years. Applications for host organizations and event dates in each county are under review.

"Some communities are tying it to what they do anyway — county fair, re-enactments," Franco said. "Others are creating events and new partnerships, which we think is a great idea."

Janice Mullin, executive director of the [National Civil War Museum](#) in Harrisburg, said Dauphin County applied for the show to visit during either The Patriot-News [Artsfest](#) over Memorial Day weekend or the city's Labor Day-weekend [Kipona](#) festival.

"It would provide the greatest access to those in the area and the greatest impact on those coming to the area," she said.

To more completely understand the anticipated statewide economic and tax benefits of the Civil War Road Show, the [Pennsylvania Humanities Council](#) hired Philadelphia-based [Econsult Corp.](#) to produce an impact study.

The study predicts 180,000 people will visit the road show each year during the core tourist season, April through October. Of those, 81,000 will be new visitors attending the event specifically for the road show, with 75 percent, or 54,000, originating from within the state.

During the non-core tourism periods, 51,000 visitors to the road show are expected each year, with 12,800 visitors specifically attending for the road show. Again, 75 percent, or 9,600 visitors, are expected from within the state.

The study predicts the road show will cost \$5 million in direct expenditures over the four-year period, but will produce an economic impact of \$75 million throughout the state and create more than 1,000 jobs for Pennsylvanians.

The target audience for the commemorative events the National Civil War Museum created includes families, students — both college age and younger — and Civil War buffs.

"There's a big drive to incorporate all audiences," Mullin said. "With the 100th anniversary of the Civil War, they concentrated on battles and dates and things like that. There's a trend for the 150th commemoration to look more at socially related themes with a general appeal."

The expected economic impact on Adams County of the five-year sesquicentennial commemoration is \$1.5 billion, said Norris Flowers, president of the [Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau](#).

Four million visitors are expected to visit Gettysburg in 2013, the year of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in July and the Gettysburg Address in November. On annual anniversaries of the battle, about 3 million visitors attend.

"We can't now handle the number of people that come during peak times," Flowers said. "Cumberland, Harrisburg, York, (and) Emmitsburg and Frederick, Md., will benefit from what we do here in Gettysburg."

Tourism is the second-largest industry in terms of Pennsylvania tax revenue, he said.

In Cumberland County, business representatives have joined to create a steering committee for the county's Civil War commemorative events. The group hopes coordinated marketing and event-planning efforts will focus on visitors throughout the year, rather than solely during the core tourist season, said Shireen Farr, director of tourism for the [Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau](#) and co-director of the committee.

The economic impact on of the county will resonate not just with hotels and restaurants, but also specialty retailers and battle-themed shops, such as Perry County-based period clothing creator Barbara Shaputis's company, [Yesteryer](#), Farr said.

"We have a local seamstress who makes a living off sewing period clothing," she said. "She is going to need to hire some major help and teach others how to do this. People will want to dress the part."

According to the [Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau](#), the main tourist demographic is within a five-hour radius of the area. Forty-five percent of those visitors make the trip purposely to visit a museum, said Rick Dunlap, communications and public relations director. The major Civil War commemorative event in Harrisburg is the U.S. Colored Troops Association Grand Review in November.

A major increase in visitors to the county is not expected within the next five years because the area already is a major tourist destination for sports, conventions and Hersheypark, Dunlap said.

"We have 8,000 bedrooms that are already filled with sports teams, convention-goers, etc.," he said. "It would just be hosting a new kind of crowd, the historic traveler."

Other significant regional endeavors to commemorate the Civil War include [Dutch Country Roads](#) and the [Pennsylvania Civil War Trails](#), both of which require partnerships between various counties.

"Because of the economy, we are on the upswing now from a tourism standpoint," said Alison Smith, public relations director at the [York County Convention and Visitors Bureau](#). "The heritage traveler is on the rise."

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Click [here](#) to view a PDF file of the study.



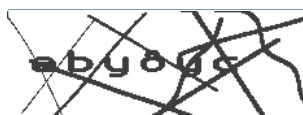
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