

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Andrew E. Masich  
President & CEO

## Pennsylvania and the Civil War at the History Center



Over the past five years, Pennsylvania's leading history organizations have worked together to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

The History Center has been at the forefront of these efforts, along with the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC) in Harrisburg, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) in Philadelphia, and others to develop exhibitions, publications, and public programs in partnership with the PA Civil War 150 initiative.

In 2011, the History Center opened a traveling exhibition, *The Civil War in Pennsylvania* presented by People's Natural Gas, which will travel to nearly 40 History Center Affiliate Program sites, free of charge, across the western half of the state during the commemoration.

*The Civil War in Pennsylvania: A Photographic History*, a 312-page book featuring 475 rare and unpublished images that highlight Pennsylvania's role on the battlefield and on the home front, just received top honors from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

This spring, we published a statewide magazine in collaboration with PHMC and the

HSP commemorating the Civil War, including the Allegheny Arsenal explosion, women in the Civil War, Gettysburg, and the Sanitary Fair Movement. There is also a precedent-setting electronic publication that will be viewed by millions of readers.

And later this fall, we'll introduce our third statewide publication, *The Civil War in Pennsylvania: The African American Experience*, a 200-page book featuring essays written by national experts on African American life during the Civil War.

Perhaps the History Center's most ambitious project, the *Pennsylvania's Civil War* exhibition presented by Mylan, recently opened to help bring to life the personal stories of all Pennsylvanians during the four-year war—on the home and battle fronts—and those who changed the course of history. *Pennsylvania's Civil War* highlights the impact that Western Pennsylvanians had on the war and showcases the state's contributions to important conflicts such as the Battle of Gettysburg, as well as

Pittsburgh's role as the Arsenal of the Union.

More than 150 artifacts, including items on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, the State Museum of Pennsylvania, the National Civil War Museum, and the Ken Turner Collection, along with six life-like museum figures and living history demonstrations help to make the war a reality 150 years later.

The exhibition's biggest artifact—and I mean really big—is a replica of the massive 26-foot-long, 90-ton smooth bore Rodman Cannon, underwritten by Dan and Bonnie Sandman. The History Center utilized an innovative 3-D printing process to create the big cannon as an example of Pittsburgh's military production and capacity during the Civil War. The original cannon, fabricated in 1864 across the street from the History Center at the Fort Pitt Foundry, could shoot a 20-inch cannonball weighing 1,000 pounds more than four miles. Pittsburgher Thomas Jackson Rodman invented groundbreaking technology to cast the big gun, which remains the largest iron cannon ever made.

*Pennsylvania's Civil War* complements long-term exhibitions, including *From Slavery to Freedom* on the fourth floor, *Pittsburgh: A Tradition of Innovation* on the second floor, and the Sigo Falk Collections Center on the fourth floor, which features the Monongahela House bed that Abraham Lincoln slept in during his only visit to Pittsburgh in 1861.

We hope you have a chance to visit the exhibition and learn about the Pennsylvanians who, as Lincoln said at Gettysburg 150 years ago, "gave the last full measure of devotion" for our nation's "new birth of freedom."

For more information on *Pennsylvania's Civil War*, including artifact photos and updated event information, please visit [www.heinzhistorycenter.org/civilwar](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/civilwar).



The *Pennsylvania's Civil War* exhibition features a reproduction of a massive 26-foot-long, 90-ton, smooth bore Rodman Cannon, which provides a life-size example of Pittsburgh's military production and prowess during the Civil War. The cannon replica was sponsored by Dan and Bonnie Sandman.

Both photos by Rachellynn Schoen.

