



VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Story of Virginia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 10, 2012

Jennifer Guild, Senior Officer for Public Relations and Marketing
(804) 342-9665, jguild@vahistorical.org

Virginia Historical Society Hosts Free Emancipation Nation Watch Party Historians Explore Emancipation Proclamation on 150th Anniversary

What: On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued a preliminary proclamation that ordered the emancipation of slaves in states that did not return to Union control by January 1, 1863. On the 150th anniversary of that Emancipation Proclamation, the [Virginia Historical Society](http://vahistorical.org) (VHS) is hosting an Emancipation Nation Watch Party.

As part of the [National Endowment for the Humanities](http://www.nationalendowment.gov) sponsored event, [Emancipation Nation: Celebrating Freedom on Constitution Day](http://www.ushistory.org/constitution), the VHS and [The American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar](http://www.american-civil-war-center.org) are co-presenting an Emancipation Nation Watch Party.

Watch parties will be held at satellite locations across the country. These events are modeled after gatherings held by slaves and abolitionists on the eve of the Emancipation Proclamation becoming law. The watch party at the VHS is the only Richmond-area viewing that is free and open to the general public.

This event will feature a live-streamed panel of five Civil War scholars simulcast from the Smithsonian Museum of American History. Without drawing on their knowledge of what would unfold over the next months and years, the historians will recreate the national scene and the dilemmas facing Americans in September 1862.

Following the program, VHS historians will discuss Virginia's connections to emancipation.

Who: Edward Ayers, University of Richmond President
Eric Foner, Columbia University Professor
Thavolia Glymph, Duke University Associate Professor
Gary Gallagher, University of Virginia Professor
Christy Coleman, American Civil War Center President and CEO

When: Monday, September 17, 2012, at 1:15 p.m.

Where: Virginia Historical Society, 428 North Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23220

Why: The program coincides with Constitution Day, set by Congress in 2004. The *Emancipation Nation* conversation will emphasize the immediate and long-term implications of emancipation as it relates to the U.S. Constitution. The preliminary Emancipation Proclamation is a key moment in the process that led to the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment, which outlawed slavery.

This event is part of the society's month-long commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Additional VHS events include a [behind the scenes tour](#) on Tuesday, September 11, and a [gallery walk](#) on Wednesday, September 19. It is also the one-year anniversary of the launch of [Unknown No Longer: A Database of Virginia Slave Names](#), a free online searchable resource which includes nearly 10,000 identities.

