

COMMEMORATIONS AND MEMORIALS NAMING AND REVIEW COMMITTEE
Minutes of meeting held April 9, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 0937 in the Moody Hall Activities Room at VMI.

Attending were members of the committee:

Mr. Richard K. Hines V '66, Chair
CAD Parker Davis '21
Mr. Hugh M. Fain III '80
COL Keith Gibson '77
MAJ Catharine Ingersoll
Dr. Caroline Janney [via Zoom]
Mr. Lester Johnson '95
Mr. Anthony Moore '78
COL Kim C. Parker
Mr. S. Waite Rawls III '70
Mr. Gene Scott '80

Also in attendance were:

Mr. John William Boland '73, VMI Board of Visitors
MG Cedric T. Wins '85, Interim Superintendent, VMI
BG Dallas B. Clark '99, Deputy Superintendent for Finance, Administration and Support, VMI
COL Sean P. Harrington '94, Office of the Superintendent, VMI
COL Jeffrey Boobar '86, Chief of Staff, VMI
Ms. Cynthia Norwood, Office of the Attorney General of Virginia

Introductions and Opening Remarks

Mr. Hines thanked the members of the committee for attending, and called on them to introduce themselves, which they did. MG Wins thanked the committee for the work that it is doing, noting that it is an important step within the larger project of ensuring that VMI is inclusive for all young men and women. Mr. Boland also thanked everyone for participating and reminded the committee to stay focused on VMI's mission.

Mr. Hines also made a few opening remarks, commenting that, from his perspective, the task of the committee is "to ensure that the grounds here at VMI—to the uninitiated and to everyone, and with due respect to our wonderful yet complex history—present an inviting and a neutral landscape." Mr. Hines allowed that the task ahead of the committee is a difficult one but noted that "tradition and progress are not mutually exclusive. Rather, tradition and progress can be mutually productive and present VMI with wonderful opportunities."

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Hines called on the committee to approve the minutes of the meeting that took place January 13, 2021. Mr. Fain so moved, and Mr. Rawls seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion of Prioritizing the Items to be Reviewed

Noting that the committee had already established how it should approach the items listed in the inventory document, Mr. Hines provided an analysis of the Criteria for Review so the parameters for the committee's decision-making would be clear.

Mr. Hines mentioned that the Criteria document was heavily influenced by a position paper from the American Council for Historic Preservation following the 2017 protests in Charlottesville, the "ACHP Policy Statement on Controversial Commemorative Works." Mr. Hines continued by pointing out that as an institution, VMI has an obligation of stewardship towards its monuments but nevertheless must balance that stewardship with the needs of today's society.

Members of the committee made brief comments on the Criteria document and how it has informed the approach to the objects under discussion.

General Discussion of Prioritized Items

Mr. Hines noted that the committee has received thousands of suggestions and solutions, explaining that he winnowed those down to focus today on the three "items" about which the committee has received the most communication. They are:

- A group of objects Mr. Hines termed the "Stonewall Jackson legacy:"
 - Jackson Arch (1896) in Old Barracks, featuring the embossed letters "Stonewall Jackson" on the transom.
 - Jackson Memorial Hall (1916), erected with restitutive funds for improving The Barracks, which were damaged in the Civil War.
 - "You May Be Whatever You Resolve To Be," a quotation located prominently on second stoop.
 - The grave-marker of Jackson's horse, Little Sorrell, located on the Parade Ground near Old Barracks.
- *Virginia Mourning her Dead*, the cast-bronze statue by Sir Moses Ezekiel. COL Gibson provided a history of both the sculptor and the sculpture. Mr. Hines suggested that the committee consider re-envisioning the Ezekiel statue as a memorial to all former cadets who have died from the Mexican-American War through the Global War on Terror.
- *Charge of the New Market Cadets*, the painting by Benjamin West Clinedinst, VMI Class of 1880, located in Jackson Memorial Hall.

Discussion of Specific Prioritized Items: Jackson Arch

Mr. Hines opened the discussion on the first item, the embossed "Stonewall Jackson" lettering that appears on the front façade of Old Barracks. Committee members engaged in a lengthy discussion covering a number of topics, including:

- the significance of the Barracks façade in the daily lives of Cadets and within the overall physical makeup of Post;
- the historical moment at which it was originally erected;
- how the various names of the arches came to be;
- the structural problems resulting from weather damage to the embossed lintel stone;

- the differences between tradition and history;
- other appropriate ways that the Institute might honor Jackson;
- options for removal, resurfacing, or relocation of the lintel stone;

Following the discussion, the committee drafted the following motion for consideration by the full Board of Visitors:

The committee recommends to the full board for its approval that the embossed name Stonewall Jackson be removed from the front of Old Barracks; the committee will use its best efforts to determine whether it would be appropriate to provide a formal new name for the archway and, if so, what that name might be at its next meeting, to be held before the full board meeting scheduled for September 2021.

Mr. Hines so moved, and Mr. Fain seconded the motion. After additional discussion, the vote was tallied:

COL Parker: abstain
 COL Gibson: aye
 Mr. Johnson: aye
 Mr. Rawls: aye
 Mr. Hines: aye
 Mr. Scott: aye
 CAD Davis: aye
 Mr. Moore: aye
 Mr. Fain: aye
 MAJ Ingersoll: aye
 Dr. Janney: abstention by default [not present for vote]

The motion passed and will be presented to the full board at its meeting to be held April 30-May 1.

Discussion of Specific Prioritized Items: Jackson Memorial Hall

Mr. Hines suggested that the earlier discussions were equally applicable to the name ascribed to Jackson Memorial Hall. He also described the removal of Jackson's name from the arch and from Memorial Hall as "a good opportunity to give voice to T. J. Jackson through the expansion or incorporation of information within the new [VMI] museum." BG Clark reported on the status of the proposed museum facility and whether or not there would be space for added attention to be given to Jackson there.

Mr. Rawls brought up Jonathan Daniels "as he is VMI's only alumnus who is a saint" and a thoughtful discussion ensued concerning the propriety of naming Memorial Hall for Daniels.

Mr. Hines called for a short lunch break at 1218. The committee reconvened at 1245.

Mr. Hines suggested to the committee that it adopt roughly the same motion that was made previously for Jackson Arch, incorporating the same emphasis that the committee will immediately look into the appropriate name of the building.

The committee drafted the following motion:

The committee recommends to the full board for its approval that the name Jackson be removed from Memorial Hall; the committee will use its best efforts to determine an appropriate new name of the building at its next meeting, to be held before the full board meeting scheduled for September 2021.

Mr. Hines so moved, and Mr. Moore seconded. After discussion, the vote was tallied:

COL Parker aye
COL Gibson: aye
Mr. Johnson: aye
Mr. Rawls: aye
Mr. Hines: aye
Mr. Scott: aye
CAD Davis: aye
Mr. Moore: aye
Mr. Fain: aye
MAJ Ingersoll: aye
Dr. Janney: aye

The motion passed and will be presented to the full board at its meeting to be held April 30-May 1.

Discussion of Specific Prioritized Items: Charge of the New Market Cadets

The next item to be discussed was the *Charge of the New Market Cadets*, located in JM Hall. Mr. Hines asked the committee to consider the original intent of the painting in light of the criteria document, what the mural means to the cadets who have attended VMI, and “what we want the public to understand.” COL Gibson explained the the subject matter of the mural, the historical context of its creation, and its current state of preservation, including the question of whether or not it could be safely moved to a different location on Post, such as the new VMI Museum, given its massive size and its integration into the plaster wall.

The committee agreed that the painting should be preserved and not removed from view or plastered over. However, the point of contention was where it should be preserved, and if there might be a more appropriate location on Post for it to be displayed.

The committee drafted a motion that was presented to the full Board as follows:

The committee recommends to the full board for its approval that the Clinedinst mural be preserved for public display; the mural will continue to be displayed in Jackson Memorial Hall, and COL Gibson will devise a program of contextualization for its current location. Mr. Hines so moved, and Mr. Scott seconded the motion.

Mr. Hines so moved, and Mr. Scott seconded the motion. After discussion, the vote was tallied:

COL Parker aye
COL Gibson: aye
Mr. Johnson: aye
Mr. Rawls: aye

Mr. Hines: aye
Mr. Scott: aye
CAD Davis: aye
Mr. Moore: aye
Mr. Fain: aye by proxy [Mr. Hines]
MAJ Ingersoll: aye
Dr. Janney: aye

The motion passed and will be presented to the full board at its meeting to be held April 30-May 1.

Discussion of Specific Prioritized Items: Virginia Mourning her Dead

The next object to be discussed was the cast-bronze statue, *Virginia Mourning her Dead*. Mr. Hines, among other things, noted that within the past year efforts had already been underway to broaden the New Market Ceremony and Parade to an Alumni Memorial Ceremony and Parade as a way of memorializing all VMI alumni who have died in armed conflict from the Mexican-American War to the Global War on Terror. Mr. Hines suggested that the Institute likewise expand the symbolism of the statue by removing the plaques listing the names of all of the cadets that participated in the Battle of New Market in 1864 and replacing them with new ones to appropriately reflect the approximately 600 alumni in total that have died in military service.

Discussion ensued among the committee members. The committee members all concurred that there exist a number of different ways that the plaques at the base could be made appropriate to the memory of all VMI alumni who died in service, but that the specific plans for such a project would need to be formulated by a designer.

The committee drafted the following motion:

The committee recommends to the full board for its approval that the symbolism of the sculpture *Virginia Mourning her Dead* be expanded to honor all former cadets who have died in wars and military conflicts from 1839 to the present day and that the bronze placards on the base of the statue be replaced with plaques that appropriately memorialize all former cadets who have died in military service.

Mr. Hines so moved, and Mr. Moore seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the vote was tallied:

COL Parker: abstention by default [not present for vote]
COL Gibson: aye
Mr. Johnson: aye
Mr. Rawls: aye
Mr. Hines: aye
Mr. Scott: aye
CAD Davis: aye
Mr. Moore: aye
Mr. Fain: aye by proxy [Mr. Hines]
MAJ Ingersoll: aye
Dr. Janney: aye

The motion passed and will be presented to the full board at its meeting to be held April 30-May 1.

Discussion of Specific Prioritized Items: "You May Be Whatever You Resolve To Be"

Mr. Hines next raised for discussion the "You May Be Whatever You Resolve To Be" quotation attributed underneath to "Stonewall Jackson." Mr. Hines proposed that "Stonewall Jackson" should be removed and an appropriate explanatory plaque should be affixed to the wall of the archway. COL Gibson explained the issue with the originality of the quotation, citing two books published before 1852 that contained the same saying and suggesting that Jackson likely copied it down from one of those. The committee discussed its views on the issue, particularly the issue of the accurate attribution of the quotation. The members also debated the most appropriate way to clarify the maxim's originator and if "Stonewall Jackson" was the correct way of referring to Jackson in this context.

The committee drafted the following motion:

The committee recommends to the full board for its approval that the quotation, "You may be whatever you resolve to be," on the second stoop inside of Jackson Arch remain, but that it should be properly attributed to Professor Thomas J. Jackson. A plaque in the archway will provide co-attribution to William Alcott and the Rev. Joel Hawes, who included the quotation in publications in 1834 and 1851 respectively.

Mr. Hines so moved, and Mr. Moore seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the vote was tallied:

COL Parker: aye
COL Gibson: aye
Mr. Johnson: aye
Mr. Rawls: aye
Mr. Hines: aye
Mr. Scott aye
CAD Davis: abstain
Mr. Moore: aye
Mr. Fain: aye
MAJ Ingersoll: abstain
Dr. Janney: abstention by default [not present for vote]

The motion passed and will be presented to the full board at its meeting to be held April 30-May 1.

Adjournment

Mr. Hines thanked the participants, then proposed a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Fain seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 1506.

Respectfully submitted,
MAJ Catharine Ingersoll