

2008 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 403

Offered February 15, 2008

Commending the Town of Ashland on the occasion of its 150th anniversary.

Patrons—Hargrove and Peace

WHEREAS, the Town of Ashland in Hanover County will joyously celebrate its 150th anniversary throughout 2008, culminating in a grand event on October 18th; and

WHEREAS, Ashland was incorporated as a town in 1858, but its history goes back some 20 years earlier when the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad Co. (RF & P) purchased 457 acres in central Hanover County and built a 20-mile rail line to the site; and

WHEREAS, in 1851 the RF & P built a hotel on the land and after a mineral spring was found nearby, the hotel grew into a resort; a village grew up around the resort and residents named the community Ashland, after the Kentucky home of Hanover County native Henry Clay; and

WHEREAS, during the Civil War, Ashland was sometimes used as a base for Confederate troops, occasionally became a target of Union forces, and served as a refuge for people from Richmond, Fredericksburg, and other battlefield towns; and

WHEREAS, Randolph-Macon College, founded by Methodists in 1830 in Southside Virginia, relocated to Ashland in 1868; electric streetcars arrived in 1907 and the trolley line helped bring about a residential growth spurt in the town; and

WHEREAS, the business district, which had grown up along the railroad tracks, was almost entirely destroyed in an 1893 fire, and most of Ashland's oldest structures date from the early 1900s; and

WHEREAS, trains are still very much a presence in Ashland as some 40 of them pass through the town every day; most are cargo trains but Amtrak passenger trains still make seven stops a day as they pass by quaint old homes that hug either side of the tracks; and

WHEREAS, Ashland has many special events and activities planned for this sesquicentennial year, including an oral history project, creation of a yearbook for the town, and, on October 18, old-fashioned games, art and sporting activities, performances by local music groups and school bands, preparation of a time capsule, and much more; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate the Town of Ashland on the occasion of its 150th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Mayor Faye Prichard on behalf of the Town of Ashland as an expression of the General Assembly's best wishes for a festive and delightful celebration.

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