Courageous Journey

A Guide to Alexandria's African American History

EXTRAORDINARY

Alexandria

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Foreword

Alexandria's African American history exemplifies the spectrum of black experience in the United States. Visitors today may experience the lives and stories of African Americans whose contributions to Alexandria and American history still resonate. From slavery to freedom, from freedom to equality, and from equality to integration and Civil Rights, this guide showcases the tremendous courage and accomplishments of Alexandria's African Americans from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

Learn about Benjamin Banneker, who endured harsh conditions to help establish our nation's capital. Discover the five young black men who led a non-violent sit-in protest decades before the famous Greensboro, North Carolina sit-in. Tour Alexandria's early free black neighborhoods, with their homes, churches, businesses and social organizations that formed the foundation of the community.

Information in this updated guide includes several sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see www.nps.gov/nr) as well as sites included in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (see www.nps.gov/subjects/ugrr).

The stories are themselves significant, but taken as a whole, Alexandria's African American history is truly extraordinary.

Acknowledgements

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Revised & Reprinted 2015 by Visit Alexandria

Sites

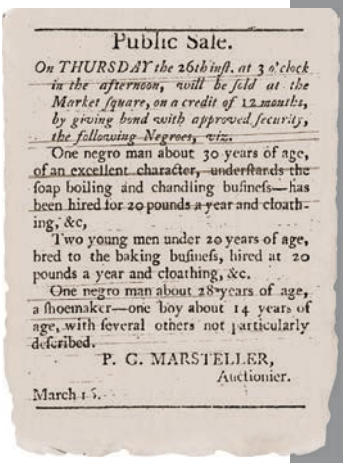
▲ **Open to the Public**
✻ **National Register of Historic Places**
○ **National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom**
$ **Admission charge**

18th Century Sites

Market Square ✻ ▲

300 Block of King Street, in front of City Hall. Part of the 1946 Old & Historic Alexandria District. **(Map #18)**

Since the founding of the City in 1749, this square has always been the center of activity. A notice that appeared in the March 16, 1801 edition of the *Alexandria Advertiser & Commercial Intelligencer* advertises four enslaved men to be sold at the Market Square on March 26. Enslaved African Americans, as well as local farmers, came to the square to sell their handiwork or produce, skimping and saving to buy their freedom. Sophia Browning Bell was one such individual. Bell was allowed to use a corner of her master's yard to grow tomatoes and vegetables to sell at market. In 1801, she bought her husband, George, for $400 and freed him. In 1807, George Bell helped establish the first school for African American children in Washington, DC.



Public Sale.

On THURSDAY the 26th inft. at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, will be fold at the Market fquare, on a credit of 12 months, by giving bond with approved fecurity, the following Negroes, viz.

One negro man about 30 years of age, of an excellent character, underſtands the ſoap boiling and chandling buſineſs—has been hired for 20 pounds a year and cloathing, &c,

Two young men under 20 years of age, bred to the baking buſineſs, hired at 20 pounds a year and cloathing, &c.

One negro man about 28 years of age, a ſhoemaker—one boy about 14 years of age, with ſeveral others not particularly deſcribed.

P. G. MARSTELLER,
Auctioneer.

March 1-5.

Alexandria Library

Carlyle House Historic Park ✻ ▲

121 North Fairfax Street, $ **(Map #8)**

Scottish merchant and city founder John Carlyle built the Carlyle House, of Georgian architectural design, in 1752. Enslaved African Americans maintained the Carlyle household and provided labor for John Carlyle's numerous business enterprises. As many as 30 enslaved people may have maintained Carlyle's lifestyle and mercantile business, including Moses, Nanny, Jenny, Joe, Cate, Sibreia, Cook, Charles, and Penny. The first reference to Carlyle's ownership of

enslaved African Americans comes in a letter written shortly after his first marriage when he notes that his "Wife's fortune Consists of Lands & Sum Negro's." The inventory of Carlyle's town property taken after his death in 1780 listed nine enslaved individuals. Among the many occupations of Carlyle's enslaved African Americans were blacksmiths, carpenters, masons and joiners who labored in his construction enterprises. In Carlyle's merchant business, enslaved people served in numerous capacities from sailing the ships to hauling the goods as wagoners.

Gadsby's Tavern Museum ✻ ○ ▲
134 North Royal Street $ **(Map #13)**

Gadsby's Tavern was a center of commerce, politics and society in late 18th-and early 19th-century Alexandria as well as the scene of George Washington's "Birthnight" balls and an inaugural banquet for Thomas Jefferson. Tavern keepers often owned the largest number of enslaved people in Alexandria. Under the management of tavern keeper John Gadsby, between 1796 and 1808, enslaved workers provided a previously unprecedented level of service to the tavern patrons – cooking, cleaning, working in the stables and serving as attendants to guests. According to an 1802 inventory, Gadsby owned 11 enslaved individuals, the most valued listed as his wine steward. In August 1808, Gadsby's long-time hostler James Lewis ran away in search of freedom. Touring the museum today offers insight into tavern life, workers, visitors, travel habits, food and drink, architecture and decorative arts of the time period.

District of Columbia Southern Cornerstone ✻ ▲
Jones Point Park. The south cornerstone is in a recess of a retaining seawall just east of the historic lighthouse.
(Map #10)

The District of Columbia's south cornerstone represents one of the oldest artifacts associated with the survey of the United States capital. Boundary stones were set in mile increments around the perimeter of the capital city's boundary. Benjamin Banneker, a free black mathematician and astronomer, was chosen to join Surveyor Andrew Ellicott's team to locate the south corner in Jones Point and maintain the survey's accuracy through astronomical calculations and measurements (see *18th-Century Profile*). To complete his task, Banneker endured harsh, cold weather while

18TH-CENTURY PROFILE

Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806)

The Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD

Benjamin Banneker, considered the "first black man of science," was a self-educated black mathematician and astronomer. Thomas Jefferson declared Banneker's 1792 *Almanack* "proof…that nature has given our black brethren, talents equal to that of other colors of men, and that the appearance of a want of them is owing merely to the degraded condition of their existence…" Banneker, while assisting with the capital sur vey, recreated from memory the entire plan for the new capital city of Washington when Pierre L'Enfant, the original planner, quit and took the plans with him.

camping out on Jones Point at the survey base camp Banneker's assignment to the survey team was a critical step in his career. Access to the team's finely-tuned instruments possibly enabled Banneker to make the necessary calculations for his 1792 publication *Almanack and Ephemeries*, which included weather, astronomical and other related tabular information, and gained him national renown.

Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum ✻ ▲
105-107 South Fairfax Street, $ **(Map #24)**

While an apothecary apprentice to a Quaker in York, Pennsylvania, at age 17, Edward Stabler (1769-1831) may have been exposed to the antislavery activity of the

Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum

Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary

Philadelphia Friends. Later, he would open his own apothecary business in Alexandria. In February 1796, he advertised a meeting of the Society for the Relief of People Illegally Held in Bondage in the *Alexandria Gazette*. The Society's purpose was to sue for the freedom of individual blacks when the legal titles to them were in doubt. Stabler continued to participate in the antislavery movement in Alexandria, including purchasing enslaved individuals and freeing them, until his death in 1831. Stabler, a Quaker, said of slavery, "…it sickens my heart to reflect upon it."

Hoffman Sugar House & Lloyd House ✻ ▲
220 North Washington Street
(the refinery no longer exists) **(Map #15)**

Jacob Hoffman, a merchant and a former mayor of Alexandria, became one of two major sugar refiners in the city after the construction of his refinery in 1802. Hoffman lived just north of the refinery in the Lloyd House. The refinery was dependent upon enslaved African American labor consisting of five men and two boys. In the early 19th century, the Hoffman Sugar House along with the Alfred Street Sugar House at 111-123 North Alfred Street, placed Alexandria as the third largest manufacturer of refined sugar in the United States, behind the entire states of New York and Maryland. Later, Quaker educator Benjamin Hallowell taught school in the Lloyd House. Many Quakers assisted blacks in gaining freedom. Hallowell's son Henry Hallowell (1829-1899), an ardent abolitionist, is thought to have been a conductor for the Underground Railroad. (*see pg. 9*)

Wedderburn, 1907

Foreground: Hoffman Sugar House; Background: Lloyd House

Alexandria Academy
604 Wolfe Street **(Map #3)**

Built in 1785 with public donations from citizens like George Washington, the Alexandria Academy was established to provide ¬white children with an education. After the War of 1812, the white school vacated the building, and a free African American school taught by the Reverend James H. Hanson, a white minister from the Methodist Episcopal Church, was established. White advocates of public schooling largely supported the free African American school and it remained in operation until 1847. At that time, Alexandria, once a part of the District of Columbia, retroceded to the Commonwealth of Virginia which forbade the education of African Americans. At one point, nearly 300 students were part of the free school system.

19th Century Sites

Dominick Barecroft Public House
315 Cameron Street, Private Residence **(Map #11)**

After gaining his and his wife's freedom, Dominick Barecroft became a successful businessman in the early 19th century. Barecroft's manumission was filed on May 5, 1800, by David Henderson, who had purchased him for $200 in February of that same year. It is not clear from the manumission how or why Barecroft was freed by Henderson. Perhaps Henderson purchased Barecroft with the deliberate purpose of freeing him, an act that occasionally occurred. Dominick paid $59 for his wife Esther on July 7, 1804 and subsequently freed her on September 10, 1804. From 1803 to 1824, Barecroft operated a very successful tavern on North Fairfax Street. It was said he only knew how to prepare crabs that were so delicious that "epicures, titled and distinguished, from Washington would come for crab suppers." In 1817, he bought a house and lot at 315 Cameron Street.

Franklin & Armfield Slave Office & Pen
(Freedom House Museum/ Northern VA Urban League) ✱ ○ ▲
1315 Duke Street **(Map #12)**

This building served as headquarters for the slave trade operations of Isaac Franklin and John Armfield, a partnership formed in 1828. Exporting thousands of blacks south, this was one of the largest intrastate slave-trading companies in the country. Enslaved African Americans were housed in "pens"-

walled areas with males to the west and females to the east. In January 1834, J. Leavitt, editor of the *New York Evangelist*, visited the slave pens. As recounted by Leavitt:

"We were first taken out into a paved yard 40 or 50 feet square, with a very high brick wall and about half of it covered with a roof…He (Armfield) ordered the men to be called out from the cellar where they sleep…they soon came up…50 or 60. While they were standing, he ordered the girls to be called out…About 50 women and small children came in…and I thought I saw in the faces of these mothers some indication of irrepressible feeling. It seemed to me that they hugged their little ones more closely, and that a cold perspiration stood on their foreheads…"

Alexandria Black History Museum

When Union troops occupied Alexandria during the Civil War, they took control of the slave pen then operated by Price, Birch & Co.

During the Federal occupation of Alexandria, the building became a jail for captured Confederate soldiers and errant Union soldiers, as well as housing for "contrabands," blacks seeking freedom behind Union lines. The Northern Virginia Urban League developed the Freedom House Museum to preserve the story of thousands of men, women and children who passed through this place on a harrowing journey to lives of bondage and hard labor in the deep South. Experience the fascinating history of 1315 Duke Street – a legacy of triumph and foundation for the future.

Bruin "Negro Jail"
1707 Duke Street **(Map #7)**

Opened in 1843 and operated by Joseph Bruin, this business was the dominant slave dealer by 1847. While awaiting purchase, the enslaved people were housed in Bruin's "jail" on the property. In April 1848, 77 enslaved African Americans attempted to —

escape aboard the schooner *Pearl*, which left from docks in Washington, D.C. After their capture in the Chesapeake Bay, they were sold to Bruin. Two African American sisters who participated in the attempted escape, Emily and Mary Edmonson, were initially sent south to slave markets in New Orleans, but returned to Alexandria on promises that their father would purchase them (*see 19th-Century Profile*). After desperately attempting to raise funds, including traveling to New York to plead his cause, their father was able to get enough money and free the sisters with the help of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and other Northern Abolitionists. Harriet Beecher Stowe, sister of Rev. Beecher and author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, used the story as research for her book, which polarized the country around the issue of slavery.

Rusty Kennedy for ACVA

Edmonson Sisters statue at 1707 Duke Street

Bruin's business continued to operate until Alexandria was occupied by Federal troops at the start of the Civil War. Bruin attempted to escape, but was caught and imprisoned for six weeks before being released. In 1863, the U.S. Marshall confiscated his property. A statue of the Edmonson sisters stands in a plaza next to the jail.

L'Ouverture General Hospital & Barracks

Block between 1300 Duke, 1300 Prince, 200 South Payne, 200 West streets **(Map #17)**

The L'Ouverture General Hospital was a Union military hospital for African American soldiers, as well as escaped slaves, called "contrabands," and freed slaves, during the Civil War. The hospital was named after Toussaint L'Ouverture who led an African-Caribbean revolt on Hispaniola (present-day Haiti) against British, Spanish and French forces. The hospital complex included a hospital, dispensary, dead house, sink and long tents for recovering soldiers. One three-story brick structure at 217-219 South Payne Street, used as hospital headquarters, still stands.

Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church ✻ ▲
606 South Washington Street **(Map #23)**

Built in 1834, the Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church is the oldest African American church building in Alexandria. The black congregation was founded in 1830 by nine men, four white and five free blacks. Although construction began in 1831 on a site on North Columbus Street, the backlash of fear that resulted from the Nat Turner Slave Rebellion, the largest slave insurrection, forced the construction's halt. The present site of the church was purchased in 1833 with the brick building being completed in 1834. The church was modified in 1894 in the Gothic style. Originally called David Chapel after a white minister, the name was changed in 1845 when Reverend Davis agreed with the Southern Methodist Church support of slavery.

19TH-CENTURY PROFILE

Emily and Mary Edmonson

Emily and Mary Edmonson were the two youngest daughters of Paul and Amelia Edmonson, a free black man and his wife, who was an enslaved individual. Under law, all of the couple's 14 children were enslaved. Their Maryland owner hired them out in Washington as servants, laborers and skilled workers. Mary and Emily were 15 and 13, respectively, at the time of the escape attempt aboard the *Pearl*. According to historians, Emily had received a marriage proposal which she turned down. It was the rejected suitor who revealed where the escaped slaves had gone and how they left.

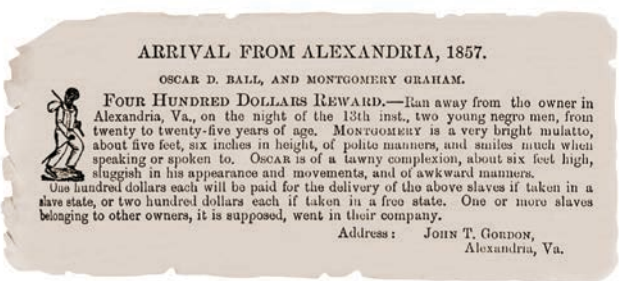
Historical Society of Washington, DC; Courtesy of Dr. Marion B.W. Holmes

Mary and Emily Edmonson

After being captured and held in bondage at Bruin's "Negro Jail" (*see pg. 6*), the Edmonson sisters were freed by their father. The women would later attend Oberlin College through the support of Rev. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Oscar and Joseph Ball Runaway Site
505 Cameron Street, Private Residence **(Map #21)**

Oscar Ball was enslaved to Elizabeth Gordon, who had agreed to let him purchase his freedom. However, Ms. Gordon kept rescinding her offer or raising the price. As a result, Oscar escaped, making his bid for freedom via the Underground Railroad. In 1858, Ms. Gordon also lost another enslaved man named Joe Ball to the Underground Railroad. After he escaped, he wrote back to friends asking them to help secure passage for his wife and four children to Toronto. Alexandria was most likely a stop on the Underground Railroad, a loose network of homes and other places every 20 or 30 miles that hid slaves escaping to the North. Alexandria was part of the "Washington Line: to freedom, which stretched from North Carolina to Alexandria before crossing the Potomac into Washington, D.C. It was a risky path, subject to night patrols that watched the roads. North of Richmond, the line was secretly marked by nails in trees and fence rails at forks in the road. Although the identities of the station-keepers are unknown, it is likely they were free black and Quaker families. Henry Hallowell (1829-1899) was one of the suspected Quaker conductors in Alexandria. Local Quaker meeting houses suspected of being stations on the Underground Railroad include Woodlawn, in Fairfax County, and Hallowell's home in Alexandria, the Lloyd House. (*see pg. 4*)



ARRIVAL FROM ALEXANDRIA, 1857.

OSCAR D. BALL, AND MONTGOMERY GRAHAM.

FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.—Ran away from the owner in Alexandria, Va., on the night of the 13th inst., two young negro men, from twenty to twenty-five years of age. MONTGOMERY is a very bright mulatto, about five feet, six inches in height, of polite manners, and smiles much when speaking or spoken to. OSCAR is of a tawny complexion, about six feet high, sluggish in his appearance and movements, and of awkward manners.

One hundred dollars each will be paid for the delivery of the above slaves if taken in a slave state, or two hundred dollars each if taken in a free state. One or more slaves belonging to other owners, it is supposed, went in their company.

Address: JOHN T. GORDON, Alexandria, Va.

William Still, *The Underground Railroad*, 1872

Reward Ad for "Oscar"

Alexandria National Cemetery (Soldier's Cemetery) ✻ ▲
1450 Wilkes Street **(Map #5)**

The Alexandria National Cemetery was one of 12 sites established by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862 to serve as military burial grounds. Out of the 3,533 Civil War veterans buried in the cemetery, 229 were

African Americans, the majority of whom belonged to the United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.). Many of these men were originally buried in Freedmen's Cemetery (*see below*) and later reburied here due to the protests from black soldiers at L'Ouverture Hospital (*see pg. 7*) who felt they had a right to be included with the white soldiers. The petition, sent on December 27, 1864, states:

"As American citizens, we have a right to fight for the protection of her flag, that right is granted, and we are now sharing equally the dangers and hardships in this mighty contest, and should shair the same privileges and rightes of burrial in every way with our fellow soldeirs, who only differ from us in color…"

Leib Image Archives, York, PA

From a recruiting poster, circa 1863

Contrabands & Freedmen Cemetery Memorial
1001 South Washington Street **(Map #9)**

Freedmen Cemetery was established during the Civil War on property confiscated by the Quartermaster General's Department from a Confederate sympathizer. Occupied by the Union Army throughout the war, the City of Alexandria became a mecca for thousands of African American migrants and refugees, known then as "contrabands" and "freemen", who fled from the devastated war zones in search of freedom and opportunity. Many contrabands and freedmen supplied labor to contribute to the Union war effort. Nevertheless, while some assistance was available from the military and aid workers in Alexandria, malnourishment, overcrowding and squalid living conditions bred disease, and thousands died. Freedmen

Cemetery, administered first by the Quartermaster Department and then by the Freedmen's Bureau, became the final resting place for 1,711 African Americans who died in the city between March 1864 and January 1869; others may have been interred here in later years. Additionally, 118 U.S.C.T (United States Colored Troops) were buried at the cemetery between May and December, 1864. Shortly thereafter, the remains of the soldiers were disinterred and reburied at the Alexandria National Cemetery (*see pg. 9*). While desecration of the site occurred in the late 19th and 20th centuries, the sacred ground has been reclaimed with the dedication of the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial in 2014. A total of 631 grave locations have been identified through archaeology, and the names of the individuals known to be buried here are reproduced on brass plaques along with a sculpture by Mario Chiodo titled "The Path of Thorns and Roses."

Lafayette Barnes for ACVA

Freedmen Cemetery Memorial

George Lewis Seaton House *

404 South Royal Street, Private Residence **(Map #14)**

George Lewis Seaton (1822-1881) was born fourth of 11 children to free black parents. Seaton's mother Lucinda was born a slave at Mount Vernon and was freed by Martha Washington as an infant. George Seaton went

on to become a prominent free black master carpenter. Seaton also established a prestigious civic career that included serving as a state legislator during Reconstruction. He founded the local black YMCA and constructed the first public schools for black students, the Seaton School for Boys and Hallowell School for Girls.

Odd Fellows Hall ✻

411 South Columbus Street **(Map #20)**

This late 19th-century brick structure was a major gathering place for African Americans following the Civil War. A number of benevolent organizations, such as the Odd Fellows, Rising Star, and the Daughters of Zion, provided social associations for both men and women. According to one historian, "Secret in principle and benevolent in purpose, these societies afforded unique opportunity for community effort, the promotion of racial consciousness and the development of leadership." As part of the *Bottoms* neighborhood (*see Neighborhood C*), the hall served an important role in developing community identity, promotion of racial consciousness and leadership skills. One of the founders of the 1869 Odd Fellow Joint Stock Company was George Seaton (*see pg. 11*), a prominent African American and builder of the hall.

Rusty Kennedy for ACVA

Alfred Street Baptist Church

Alfred Street Baptist Church ✻ ▲

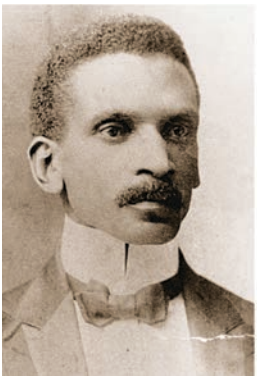
301 South Alfred Street **(Map #6)**

Alfred Street Baptist Church is one of the two oldest existing African American church structures in the city, and the oldest congregation, dating to the early 19th century. Built in 1855, the brick Alfred Street Baptist Church was probably designed and built by free black craftsmen. The site is significant for its major religious, educational and cultural role in Alexandria's free black community prior to the Civil War.

Alfred Street Baptist Church is a landmark of the *Bottoms* neighborhood (*see Neighborhood C*). The church has been remodeled and expanded over the years. The church's congregation today is one of the region's largest with over 7,000 members.

Dr. Albert Johnson House ✱
814 Duke Street, Private Residence **(Map #16)**

Built in the mid-19th century, this two-story brick house with its cast iron porch was the home of Dr. Albert Johnson (1866-1949). Dr. Johnson graduated in 1892 from Howard University Medical School, the first black medical school. The 1900 Alexandria City Directory listed Dr. Johnson as the sole African American doctor practicing in the city. The house is significant in the historic context of residential development because it illustrates the range of professions and people who lived in *Bottoms* (*see Neighborhood C*), the oldest African American neighborhood in Alexandria.



Alexandria Black History Museum

Dr. Albert Johnson, circa 1899

20th Century Sites

Alexandria Black History Museum ▲ $
902 Wythe Street **(Map #1)**

Originally the segregated library for Alexandria's African American residents, the museum documents the local and national history, culture and contributions of black America. The Museum's permanent exhibition "Securing the Blessings of Liberty," seeks to document how the area's African Americans survived slavery, helped to destroy it and eventually helped shape the community that we know today.

The Charles Houston Mural and Hall of Fame ▲
Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe Street
(Map #25)

Unveiled in June of 2013, the Charles Houston Mural and Hall of Fame honors 62 Alexandria residents for their contributions to

Alexandria's rich African American history. The inductees to the Hall of Fame were chosen by a public vote. The Hall of Fame is displayed inside the Charles Houston Recreation Center which is located at the original site of the Parker-Gray Elementary/High School. (*Map #22*) The mural is meant to complement the exhibits of the Alexandria Black History Museum, with a permanent recognition of the efforts and accomplishments of those who made outstanding contributions to the lives of African Americans in Alexandria during the 20th Century.

20TH-CENTURY PROFILE

Samuel Wilbert Tucker (1913-1990)

Samuel Wilbert Tucker, an unsung patriarch of the Civil Rights movement, was born and practiced law in Alexandria. He read law under another attorney (because African Americans were barred from Virginia law schools) and graduated from Howard University. He orchestrated the first Civil Rights sit-in strike at the Alexandria Library in 1939 and became a champion of integration in education (*see pg. 14*). Tucker became a well respected lawyer and appeared five times before the Supreme Court on civil rights cases. An officer in the all-black 366th Infantry Division in World War II, Samuel Tucker is buried in Arlington Cemetery. An elementary school now bears his name.

Alexandria Black History Museum

Attorney Samuel Tucker

Alexandria Library (Barrett Branch) ▲
717 Queen Street **(Map #4)**

Two decades before the Civil Rights movement, black attorney Samuel Tucker led a sit-in at the Alexandria Public Library (*see 20th-Century Profile*). In 1937, the Alexandria Free Library opened, although African American were denied its use. After several attempts to argue his case for a true public library to no avail, Tucker organized the protest in August 1939. He instructed five African Americans, Otto Tucker, Edward Gaddis, Morris Murray, William Evans and Clarence Strange, to go into the reading room and refuse to leave. Tucker also gave instructions to the men to be respectably dressed and peacefully uncooperative. The five men were arrested, charged and soon after released.

Alexandria Black History Museum

1939 Sit-In Strike Ends

The case was never dismissed nor ruled upon by a judge as Tucker had wanted. Rather, the charges were simply dropped. As a result of the case, the City built the small Robinson Library for African Americans in 1940 which is now incorporated into the Alexandria Black History Museum (*see pg. 13*).

African American Heritage Park ▲

Holland Lane, Between Duke Street and Eisenhower Avenue **(Map #2)**

Established on the site of the oldest known independent African American burial ground, the black Baptist Cemetery, the park with its bronzed memorial, *Truths that Rise from the Roots – Remembered* by Jerome Meadows, honors the contributions of African Americans to the growth and success of Alexandria. The cemetery, chartered in 1885 by the Silver Leaf Colored Society of Alexandria, was found during an archaeological investigation. Some 21 gravesites and five grave markers were discovered and are now protected and preserved.

T.C. Williams High School

3330 King Street

The Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools were unconstitutional and should be ended "with all deliberate speed" with its 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. However, the City of Alexandria did not begin to integrate its school system until almost a decade later in 1963. Two years later, T.C. Williams High School opened as an integrated school. Alexandria's two other high schools were merged into T.C. Williams in 1971, making it the largest high school in the state. The legend of how the T.C. Williams High School football team won the 1971 Virginia State Championship was retold in the popular film "*Remember the Titans*." Its current campus opened in 2007.

Neighborhoods

Alexandria's Free Black Neighborhoods

The Berg, (Neighborhood A)

African Americans escaping slavery established the *Berg* during the Civil War in Union-occupied Alexandria. Oral history with long-time resident Henry Johnson yielded the derivation of the neighborhood's name. He reported that the term refers to Petersburg, Virginia from where many freedman escaped. The neighborhood is referred to in the film *Remember the Titans*, about the 1971 T.C. Williams High School football team.

Alexandria Black History Museum

"Colored" Rosemont, (Neighborhood B)

"Colored" Rosemont was a small African American neighborhood established in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1950, the Parker-Gray High School, a school for black students under state segregation, was built in this neighborhood. A few houses survive on North West and Madison streets.

The Bottoms or The Dip, (Neighborhood C)

Begun in the 19th century, the *Bottoms* was the first black neighborhood in Alexandria. The *Bottoms* rests at a lower elevation than surrounding streets, hence its name. The Lawrason family entered into long-term ground rent agreements with several free blacks on the 300 block of South Alfred Street, which became the nucleus of the *Bottoms*. The Colored Baptist Society, eventually the Alfred Street Baptist Church (*see pg. 12*) and the Odd Fellows Joint Stock Company (*see pg. 12*), the oldest known African American association, were located in the Bottoms. These structures and a number of townhouses still stand.

Cross Canal, (Neighborhood D)

The *Cross Canal* neighborhood was a quiet and rural area established in the Civil War era.

The neighborhood's name was derived from its location at the northeast section of the city, just across the Alexandria Canal. Residents of this area were commonly employed on the wharves or at the Old Dominion Glass Factory, established in the early 20th century on North Fairfax Street. None of the buildings survive; however, a plaque at North Fairfax and Montgomery streets commemorates the neighborhood.

Credit ACVA

Fort Ward Gate

The Fort & Oakland Baptist Church & Cemetery, (Neighborhood E), Fort Ward, 4301 W. Braddock Rd.

The Fort neighborhood got its name because it occupied the property on and adjacent to Fort Ward, one of 164 forts and batteries built by the Union to encircle Washington and ensure its defense during the Civil War. The roots of *The Fort* community go back to at least as early as 1870, when census documents note that Burr and Harriett McKnight Shorts lived in the vicinity. By the turn of the century, a number of African American families, including the Adams, Ashbys, Jacksons, McKnights, and Millers, as well as the Shorts, owned the land that had once served as the fortification area. The Fort neighborhood contains the buried foundations of numerous homes, along with those of a schoolhouse (which later served as a church and then a residence). In addition, the community has at least five known grave and cemetery areas – the Old Grave Yard, Jackson Cemetery, and the Adams and Clark burial areas, as well as the Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery, which is associated with Oakland Baptist Church located at 3408 King Street. The church was founded in 1888 by some of *The Fort* families and others in the nearby Seminary neighborhood.

Alexandria Black History Museum

Visitors to the Fort Neighborhood, date unknown

Hayti, (Neighborhood F)

The *Hayti* (pronounced *hay-tie*) neighborhood was established in the early 1800s around the 400 block of South Royal Street and was the home of many black leaders. Haiti, site of the only successful slave uprising in the western hemisphere, inspired the name for this free black neighborhood. Trinity Methodist Church, whose members were both black and white, may have grown as a result of *Hayti's*

Alexandria Archaeology

Artist depiction of Hayti

development. Quakers supported the growth of *Hayti* by renting and selling property to free black families. Today, several wood and brick townhouses still survive on the 400 block of South Royal and the 300 block of South Fairfax streets. The Wilkes Street Tunnel, built for the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in 1856, is a *Hayti* landmark.

Richard Dodson Collection

Contraband workers moving rails near Wilkes Street Tunnel and Union Street during the Civil War

The Hill, (Neighborhood G)

The *Hill*, or *Vinegar Hill* as it was sometimes called, was an African American residential area adjoining the *Hayti* neighborhood. The *Hill's* name came from the expression "out on the hill" in reference to the African Americans that moved into the southern city limits during and after the Civil War. Saloons, groceries and black schools were also part of the *Hill* neighborhood. The 400 block of Gibbon Street today is reminiscent of how the black neighborhood appeared in the early 19th century.

The Hump, (Neighborhood H)

The Hump neighborhood was home to both African American and working class white citizens. Developing at the end of the 19th century, the *Hump* was one of the smaller African American neighborhoods. Henry Johnson remembered life here as a child in the early 20th century: "It was so cold that you could go to bed and see the moon shining (through the walls). The snow'd come through them cracks on your feet…Ice'd freeze on the washstand…It'd freeze in your bedroom…We had to go to a pump to get water to wash with. The pump was right in the street on just 'bout every corner – great big old wood pump…"

Uptown, (Neighborhood I)

The *Uptown* neighborhood developed before the Civil War. By 1870, with many African Americans migrating to Alexandria during and after the War, *Uptown* grew into a large neighborhood. Many black churches developed here. The Parker-Gray historic district protects the historic structures in *Uptown*. The total area of *Uptown* is about 24 blocks, making it the largest of the historic African American neighborhoods in Alexandria.

Home in Uptown Neighborhood, circa 1926

Macedonia, Seminary School and T.C. Williams High School 3330 King Street

Seminary is a black neighborhood where T.C. Williams High School now stands. It included a cemetery, whose stones are no longer extant, and the Seminary School (1927-1950) was built on land donated by resident Douglass Wood, Sr. and partially funded by the Julius Rosenwald Foundation and other black contributors.

Locations

African American Sites

1. Alexandria Black History Museum
2. African American Heritage Park
3. Alexandria Academy
4. Alexandria Library (Barrett Branch)
5. Alexandria National Cemetery (Soldier's Cemetery)
6. Alfred Street Baptist Church
7. Bruin "Negro Jail"/Edmonson Sisters Statue
8. Carlyle House Historic Park
9. Contraband and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial
10. District of Columbia Southern Cornerstone
11. Dominick Barecroft Public House
12. Freedom House Museum (N. VA Urban League)
13. Gadsby's Tavern Museum
14. George Lewis Seaton House
15. Hoffman Sugar House & Lloyd House
16. Dr. Albert Johnson House
17. L'Ouverture General Hospital & Barracks
18. Market Square
19. Carver School
20. Odd Fellows Hall
21. Oscar and Joseph Ball Runaway Site
22. Parker-Gray Elementary/High School
23. Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church
24. Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum
25. Charles Houston Mural and Hall of Fame

Neighborhoods

- **A.** The Berg
- **B.** "Colored" Rosemont
- **C.** The Bottoms or The Dip
- **D.** Cross Canal
- **E.** The Fort & Oakland Baptist Church & Cemetery
- **F.** Hayti
- **G.** The Hill
- **H.** The Hump
- **I.** Uptown

For more information on Alexandria's African American Heritage

26. Alexandria Archaeology Museum
27. The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum

To Macedonia Neighborhood
3300 Block of King Street
To Fort Neighborhood
4200 Block of West Braddock
To Mount Vernon
Hooffs Run
Potomac River
ELIZABETH LA
JAMIESON
ENGLEHARDT LA
CALLAHAN DR
EISENHOWER AVENUE
BALLENGER
DULANY ST
HOOFFS RUN DR
JOHN CARLYLE
AVE
DR
EMERSON
GEORGE LA
HOLLAND LA
REINEKERS LA
DIAGONAL RD
DANGERFIELD RD
DECHANTAL
HAMILTON LA
WILKES
ROUNDHOUSE
S PEYTON
COMMERCE
HARVARD ST
BUCHANAN
CAMERON
BOYLE
BAGGETT PL
PEYTON ST
EARL ST
COLECROFT CT
N PEYTON ST
BRADDOCK RD
PAYNE
FAYETTE
JEFFERSON ST
FRANKLIN
GIBBON
DUKE
PRINCE
KING HENRY CT
WEST
QUEEN
PRINCESS
ORONOCO
PENDLETON
WYTHE
MADISON
BRADDOCK PL
N PAYNE
FIRST
HENRY
OLD TOWN CT
PATRICK
KING
ALFRED
S ALFRED ST
CHURCH
GREEN
JEFFERSON
COLUMBUS
WOLFE
WASHINGTON
SAINT
ASAPH
WILKES
PITT
JEFFERSON
ROYAL
FAIRFAX
LEE
POTOMAC
POMMANDER WALK
S UNION
WATERFORD PL
BATTERY
KEITHS
ALEXANDER ST
JONES POINT DR
SOUTH ST
THE STRAND
UNION
QUAY
TOBACCO QUAY
PASSAGE
MONTGOMERY
POWHATAN
COLONIAL
VERNON
DOUGLAS
BASHFORD
SECOND
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Explore Extraordinary Alexandria

Minutes from Washington, DC on the Potomac River waterfront, Alexandria, Virginia, is nationally recognized for its rich and diverse history. Old Town's 18th- and 19th-century architecture is an incredible backdrop for family friendly museums and tours; thriving boutiques, galleries and home décor shops; acclaimed, chef-driven restaurants; vibrant arts & culture; and a welcoming, walkable lifestyle. Alexandria is an ideal home base for a DC vacation, and an unforgettable getaway of its own. For the most up-to- date information on hotels, dining, shopping, and things to do in Alexandria, check out VisitAlexandriaVA.com.

Visitor Center

The Alexandria Visitor Center is your one-stop shop for visitor information, attraction tickets, maps, walking tours, and brochures. Stop by the Center at 221 King Street (across from Market Square) or call them at 703-746-3301.

Looking to plan a family reunion, business meeting, group outing or a wedding in Alexandria? Our sales team can help with expert assistance on venues, hotels, restaurants and activities, as well as promotional materials and brochures. Make your next group event extraordinary. Visit MeetAlexandriaVA.com or call 703-652-5369.

ExtraAlex blog, Blog.VisitAlexandriaVA.com
A behind-the-scenes look at what's trending in the city

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For more information on Alexandria's African American Heritage:

Alexandria Black History Museum & Watson Reading Room

902 Wythe Street
(Map #1)
703-746-4356; AlexandriaVA.gov/BlackHistory
Responding to the 1939 African American sit-in at the Alexandria Library, the City built this library, originally called the Robinson Library, for African Americans in 1940. The library remained in operation until desegregation in the early 1960s. Today, it is an integral part of the Alexandria Black History Museum, which, along with the Watson Reading Room, seeks to research and preserve the history of Alexandria's and Northern Virginia's African American heritage. The Museum also has a comprehensive collection of documents and resources on African American history.

Alexandria Archaeology Museum

Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Studio 327 (Map #26)
703-746-4399; AlexandriaVA.gov/Archaeology
The Alexandria Archaeology Museum has excavated 25 African American sites in the City of Alexandria and has recovered thousands of artifacts relating to enslaved and free African Americans. The museum also contains historic maps, oral history, literature and publications on African American culture in Alexandria, and educational lessons pertaining to African American neighborhoods. The museum includes a public laboratory and a number of exhibits highlighting Native American, African American, and European heritage, as well as urban development.

The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum

201 South Washington Street (Map #27)
703-746-4994; AlexandriaVA.gov/Lyceum
As the community museum, The Lyceum preserves and interprets all facets of local history, including the experiences of African Americans.

Office of Historic Alexandria (Lloyd House)

220 North Washington Street (Map #15)
703-746-4554; AlexandriaVA.gov/Historic
The Office of Historic Alexandria administers the City's museum, archives and archaeology programs.

EXTRAORDINARY
Alexandria

Visit Alexandria
221 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 746-3301
(800) 388-9119

VisitAlexandriaVA.com

For more information on Alexandria's African American Heritage visit:
VisitAlexandriaVA.com/BlackHistory

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