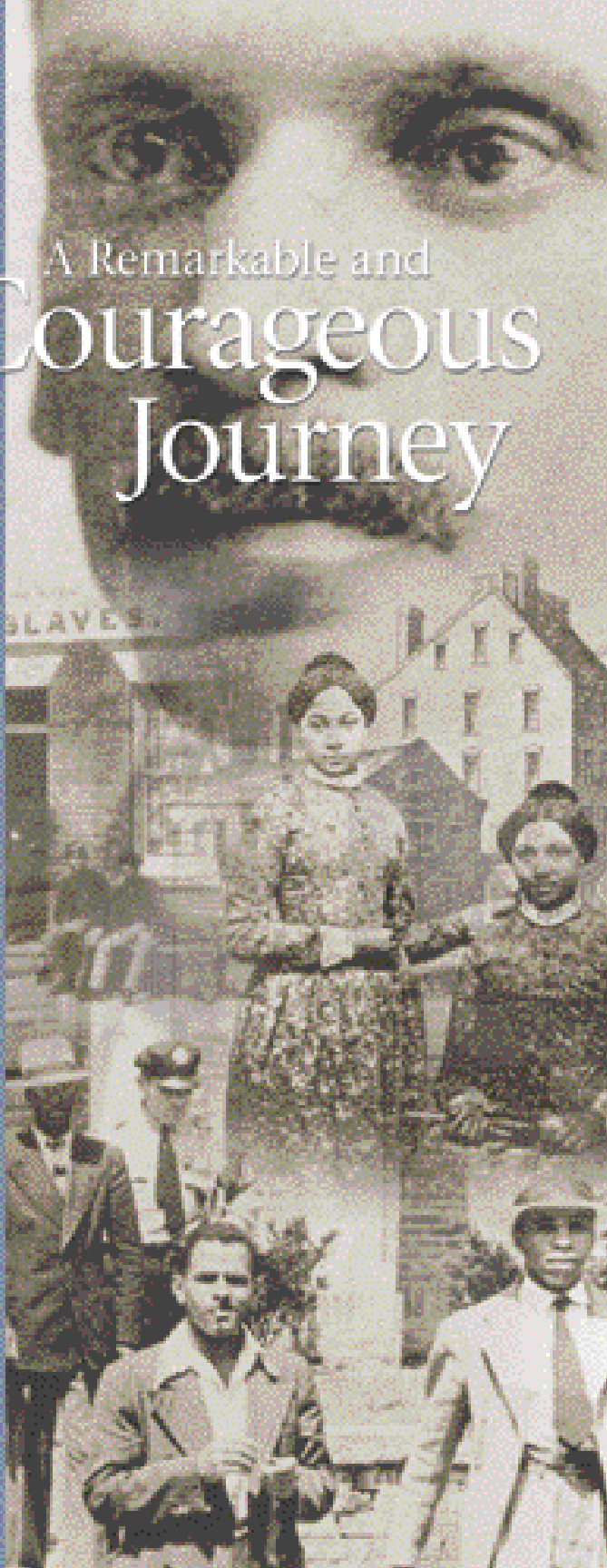
A Guide to Alexandria's African American History

A Remarkable and Courageous Journey



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, 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. Meet the Edmonsons, two enslaved sisters captured while making a courageous run for freedom. Read about the wounded United States Colored Troops who petitioned the Federal Government to allow black Civil War soldiers to be buried in the Soldier's Cemetery. 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.

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

Acknowledgements

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Sites

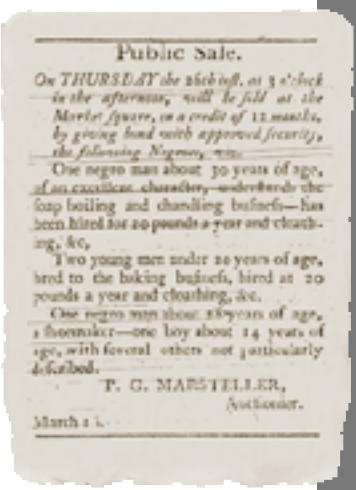
* National Register of Historic Places
(o denotes status pending)
$ Admission charge

18th Century Sites

Market Square*

300 Block of King Street. Part of the 1946 Old & Historic Alexandria District, the third oldest such district in the country. **(Map #17)**

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* advertised four slaves 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, D.C.



Public Sale.

On THURSDAY the 26th inst. at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, will be sold at the Market square, on a credit of 12 months, by giving bond with approved security, 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 18 years of age, a shoemaker—one boy about 14 years of age, with several others not particularly described.

P. C. MARSTELLER,
Auctioneer.

March 2[illegible].

Alexandria Library

Carlyle House Historic Park*

121 North Fairfax Street, $ **(Map #7)**

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.

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 survey, 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.

Gadsby's Tavern Museum*
134 North Royal Street, $ **(Map #12)**

Gadsby's Tavern was a center of commerce, politics and society in late 18th and early 19th century Alexandria. As the scene of George Washington's "Birthnight" balls and an inaugural banquet for Thomas Jefferson, the tavern is an important City landmark. Mary Hawkins, who managed the tavern from 1774 to 1777, owned five enslaved African Americans: Phyllis, Selia, Elizabeth, Moses and Alexander. These slaves worked in the tavern, cooking, cleaning, working in the stables and s e rving as attendants to guests. Later, under the stewardship of John G a d s b y, enslaved workers continued to provide service to the

tavern. In 1800, Gadsby owned 11 enslaved individuals above 16 years of age. Tavern keepers often owned the largest number of enslaved people in Alexandria, according to census records. Touring the museum 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 #8)**

The District of Columbia's south cornerstone represents one of the oldest artifacts associated with the United States Capital Survey. 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 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 #23)**

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 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°
Lloyd House, 222 North Washington Street
(the refinery no longer exists) **(Map #14)**

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 #2)**

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 #9)**

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 y e a r. It is not clear from the manumission how or why B a re c roft 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. The *Alexandria Gazette* described him in 1862 as "very dignified" and "kept a licensed public house, visited only by respectable persons…" It was said he 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)*
1315 Duke Street **(Map #10)**

This building served as headquarters for the slave trade operations of Isaac Franklin and John Armfield, a partnership formed in 1828. Exporting thousands of enslaved

people south, this was one of the largest slave trading companies in the country. Enslaved African Americans were housed in "pens" — large 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 Resource Center

Slave Pen during Civil War; Pens are visible either side of building

The slave dealing businesses were all but abandoned by the time of the Civil War. Early in the War, President Lincoln held out hope of reuniting the Union without total war and respected the federal and state laws that kept most African Americans in slavery, although runaway and freed slaves were increasingly put to work for the Union war effort. During the Federal occupation of Alexandria, the building became a jail for captured Confederate soldiers and rowdy Union soldiers, as well as housing and a hospital for "contraband," escaped or freed slaves. In 1870, the slave pen walls were torn down.

Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church
606 South Washington Street **(Map #22)**

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, including Moses Hepburn (*see pg. 8*). 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 Davis Chapel after a white minister, the name was changed in 1845 when Reverend Davis agreed with the Southern Methodist Church support of slavery.

Bruin "Negro Jail" *
1707 Duke Street **(Map #6)**

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*, then docked 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 the 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, daughter 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

1850 Mutual Insurance Society Policy; Alexandria Archaeology

1850 map of Bruin's "Negro Jail"

Jeremy Harvey

1707 Duke Street, circa 2001

slavery. 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.

Moses Hepburn Home and Townhouses
206–212 North Pitt Street, Private Residence
(Map #18)

The four townhouses were built in 1850 by Moses Hepburn, the wealthiest free African American in Alexandria. Moses inherited great wealth from his father, a prosperous white merchant and member of City Council. Esther, his African American mother, was enslaved to his father until 1816 when she and her children, including Moses, were sold to her free black sister, Harriet Jackson. Eleven days later, Harriet freed Esther and her children. Hepburn's will provided for the children, especially Moses. After receiving an education in Pennsylvania, Moses married and became a successful businessman, civic leader and a founder of Davis Chapel, later Roberts Memorial (*see pg. 6*). With his father's inheritance, historians have asserted that Hepburn became the wealthiest African American in Northern Virginia and continued to increase his wealth through his shrewd business acumen. Wanting to provide an education for his

Jeremy Harvey

Hepburn Townhouses, circa 2001

children, he sent his son Moses, Jr. to school in Washington, D.C. Upon learning of this, Alexandria authorities threatened Hepburn with an ultimatum to leave the state or face reprisals for educating his son. In 1847, Alexandria was retroceded to Virginia, which forbade the education of African Americans. As a result, the family decided to leave, relocating to West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Oscar and Joseph Ball Runaway Site
505 Cameron Street, Private Residence (**Map #20**)

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

19TH-CENTURY PROFILE

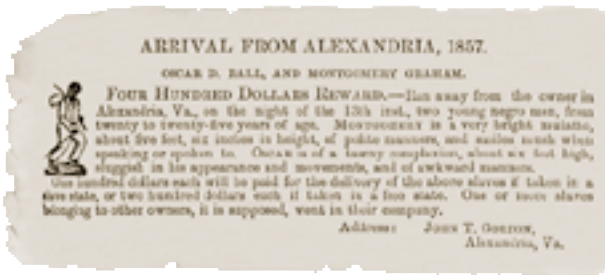
Emily and Mary Edmonson

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. After being captured and held in bondage at Bruin's "Negro Jail" *(see pg. 7)*, the Edmonson sisters were purchased by their father. The women would later attend Oberlin College through the support of Rev. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe.

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

Mary and Emily Edmonson

Railroad. After he escaped, he wrote back to friends asking them to help secure passage for his wife and four children to Toronto. From what little evidence that exists, 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 in 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. 9*).


ARRIVAL FROM ALEXANDRIA, 1857.

OSCAR D. HALL, 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 heavy 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 free 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. GORTON,
Alexandria, Va.

Still, *Underground Railroad*

Reward Ad for "Oscar"

Alexandria National Cemetery (Soldier's Cemetery)*
1450 Wilkes Street **(Map #4)**

The Alexandria National Cemetery was one of 12 sites established and dedicated 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 which belonged to the United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.). Many of these men were originally buried in Freedmen's Cemetery (*see pg. 12*) and later reburied here due to the protests from black soldiers who felt they had a right to be included with 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,

©Leib Image Archives, York, PA

From a recruiting poster, circa 1863

and we are now sharing equally the dangers and hardships in this mighty contest, and should shair the same privileges and rights of burrial in every way with our fellow soldiers, who only differ from us in color…"

Note: The dates on many gravestones do not reflect the date the soldier died, rather the dates of re-internment here from Freedmen's Cemetery.

L'Ouverture General Hospital & Barracks
Block between 1300 Duke, 1300 Prince, 200 South Payne, 200 South West streets **(Map #16)**

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.

Alexandria Archaeology

U.S. Quartermaster Map

Freedmen's Cemetery
1001 South Washington Street and 714 Church Street **(Map #11)**

Established in the spring of 1864 during the Civil War on land seized from a pro-Confederate owner, the Freedmen's Cemetery was originally created for the burials of "contrabands." A witness described the funeral of African American Pvt. John Cooley: "…funeral of a colored soldier, the first who has died here. Had a white escort and was buried in the new Freedman's Burial ground." Originally, 75 African American soldiers were buried here, but were moved in January 1865 to the Soldier's Cemetery (*see pg. 10*). Cooley became the first soldier re-interred in there. Although he died May 5, 1864, his headstone (#3451) reads January 21, 1865, the date of his re-internment. The last burial occurred in Freedmen's Cemetery in 1868. Unfortunately, the cemetery became neglected and all traces of its location disappeared until recently when the site was rediscovered. Archaeological investigation has determined that hundreds of graves remain at the site today.

George Lewis Seaton House°
404 South Royal Street, Private Residence **(Map #13)**

George Lewis Seaton, *(1822–1881)* was born third of 11 children to free black parents. Seaton's mother Lucinda was born a slave to George and Martha Washington and was freed by Martha when Lucinda was an infant. George Seaton went on to become a prominent free black master carpenter, building the home at this address in 1852 in the Greek Revival style. Seaton also established a prestigious civic career including serving as a state legislator during Reconstruction. He founded the local Black YMCA and constructed the first public schools for black students, the Snowden School for Boys and the Hallowell School for Girls. Seaton also served on the jury during the trial of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. The house in which Seaton lived from the early 1870s until his death in 1881, is located in the heart of the historic *Hayti* neighborhood (*see Neighborhood G*), once an enclave of free blacks.

Odd Fellows Hall°
411 South Columbus Street **(Map #19)**

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 Fellows Joint Stock Company that leased the hall was George Seaton (*see pg. 12*), a prominent African American.

Alfred Street Baptist Church°
313 South Alfred Street **(Map #5)**

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 1885, 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.

Dr. Albert Johnson House°
814 Duke Street, Private Residence **(Map #15)**

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 the *Bottoms* (*see Neighborhood C*), the oldest African American neighborhood in Alexandria.

Alexandria Black History Resource Center

Dr. Albert Johnson, circa 1899

20th Century Sites

Parker-Gray Elementary/High School
900 block of Wythe Street (former site of elementary school — neither schools stands today) **(Map #21)**

In 1920, two separate schools for African Americans, the Hallowell School for Girls and the Snowden School for Boys, were merged to create a new school. Named Parker-Gray Elementary for the respective principals of both schools, John Parker and Sarah Gray, the school provided education for African American children from first to eighth grade. In 1927 Parker-Gray Elementary became Alexandria's first certified African American high school. Due to increased demand, the school relocated to a bigger building on Madison Street. As schools became integrated throughout the country, Parker-Gray was eventually phased out as a high school.

Alexandria Library (Barrett Branch)
717 Queen Street **(Map #3)**

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 Americans 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. The

Alexandria Black History Resource Center

1939 Sit-In Strike Ends

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 Black History Resource Center (*see back of map*).

African American Heritage Park
Holland Lane, between Duke Street and Eisenhower Avenue **(Map #1)**

Established on the site of one of the oldest independent African American burial grounds, 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, protected and preserved.

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. Sen. Edward Brooke of Massachusetts said of Tucker, "He is always on the firing line when he believes injustice is being done or some wrong needs to be righted." An officer in the all-black 366th Infantry Division in World War II, Samuel Tucker is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. In 1999, construction began in Alexandria on a new elementary school named in honor of Tucker.

Alexandria Black History Resource Center

Attorney Samuel Tucker

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 freedmen escaped. The neighborhood is referred to in the film *Remember the Titans*, about the 1971 T.C. Williams High School football team (*see Neighborhood K*).

Alexandria Black History Resource Center

"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.

The Bottoms or The Dip, (Neighborhood C)
Begun in the 18th 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. 13*) and the Odd Fellows Joint Stock Company, the oldest known African American association, were located in the *Bottoms*. Many of these structures and a number of townhouses are still visible on the 300 block of South Alfred Street.

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 the 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.

Fishtown, (Neighborhood E)

Fishtown was a seasonal area that sprang up every spring by the fish wharves, beginning in 1856. Many of the buildings appeared to have been strictly seasonal, being erected as the fishing season began and dismantled again at the end of the season. African Americans were employed as hands on the dock or as fish cleaners of shad and herring.

The Fort & Oakland Baptist Church & Cemetery, (Neighborhood F), 4301 West Braddock Road

The name refers back to the Civil War when this area was Fort Ward. Clara Adams and other residents of *The Fort* established a school and the Oakland Baptist Church, now located at 3408 King Street. Established in 1897, the Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery is the only known African American cemetery outside Old Town and its first suburb, West End, and was established on land now at the eastern bounds of Fort Ward Park. Although the buildings no longer stand, you can see foundations of one of the *Fort's* homes just east of the parking lot as you enter the park.

Alexandria Black History Resource Center

Visitors to the Fort Neighborhood, date unknown

Hayti, (Neighborhood G)

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 Archeology

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 working on railroad; Wilkes street Tunnel is in background

The Hill, (Neighborhood H)

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 I)

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 wooden pump..."

Uptown, (Neighborhood J)

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.

Courtesy of Lillian Patterson

Home in Uptown Neighborhood, circa 1926

Macedonia & T.C. Williams High School, (Neighborhood K), 3330 King Street

Macedonia, also called Mudtown, was a black neighborhood located where Woods Place and T.C. Williams High School now stand. It included a cemetery, whose stones are no longer extant, and the Seminary School. T.C. Williams High School was the subject of the feature film, *Remember the Titans*. The movie dramatized the integration of the Alexandria school system in 1971. Parker-Gray, the black school, merged with the two predominately white schools of George Washington and Francis Hammond. The integrated T.C. Williams football team went on to become the state champions.

Alexandria Library

Request a Visitors Guide

For more information on Alexandria, call (800) 388-9119 for a free *Official Visitors Guide to Alexandria.*

Accommodations

Alexandria is proud to offer visitors the best in accommodations. Select from a large resort property to mid-size, full service hotels to a small European-style manor house. For hotel reservations call (800) 296-1000 or log onto www.FunSide.com.

Transportation to Alexandria

Alexandria is conveniently located near three major airports (Reagan National, Dulles International and Baltimore/Washington International), two Amtrak stations, and the major highways such as I-95/I-495, I-270 and I-66.

Metro Subway System

The Metro is a safe and convenient means of transportation that links Alexandria to Washington, D.C. There are five Metro stops in Alexandria (King Street, Braddock Road, Eisenhower Avenue, Huntington Avenue and Van Dorn Street).

For more information on Alexandria's African American Heritage:

Alexandria Black History Resource Center & Watson Reading Room

638 North Alfred Street & 906 Wythe Street
(Map #25)
(703) 838-4356; ci.alexandria.va.us/oha/bhrc
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 Resource Center, 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 Center 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 #24)
(703) 838-4399; www.AlexandriaArchaeology.org
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 #26)
703/838-4994; ci.alexandria.va.us/oha/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

405 Cameron Street
703/838-4554; ci.alexandria.va.us/oha
The Office of Historic Alexandria is the City office that administers the local history programs, museums and preservation.

Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association
421 King Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 838-4200
(800) 388-9119
acva@FunSide.com

Ramsay House Visitors Center
221 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 838-5005
(800) 388-9119

www.FunSide.com

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Locations

African American Sites

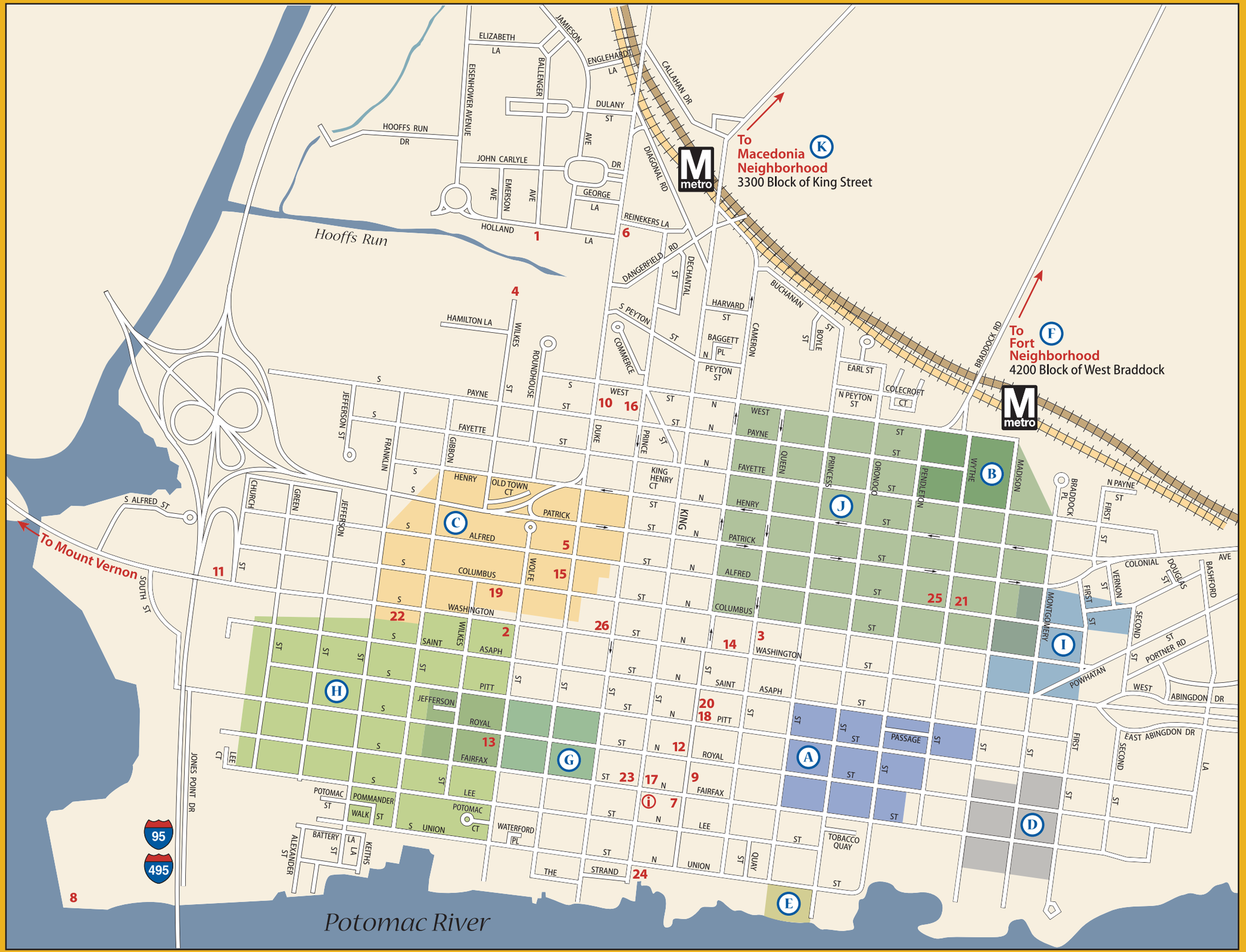
1. African American Heritage Park
2. Alexandria Academy
3. Alexandria Library (Barrett Branch)
4. Alexandria National Cemetery (Soldier's Cemetery)
5. Alfred Street Baptist Church
6. Bruin "Negro Jail"
7. The Carlyle House Historic Park
8. District of Columbia Southern Cornerstone
9. Dominick Barecroft Public House
10. Franklin & Armfield Slave Office & Pen (Freedom House)
11. Freedmen's Cemetery
12. Gadsby's Tavern Museum
13. George Lewis Seaton House
14. Hoffman Sugar House & Lloyd House
15. Dr. Albert Johnson House
16. L'Ouverture General Hospital & Barracks
17. Market Square
18. Moses Hepburn Home and Townhouses
19. Odd Fellows Hall
20. Oscar and Joseph Ball Runaway Site
21. Parker-Gray Elementary/High School
22. Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church
23. Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum

Neighborhoods

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

For more information on Alexandria's African American Heritage:

24. Alexandria Archaeology Museum
25. Alexandria Black History Resource Center & Watson Reading Room
26. 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
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Potomac River
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JAMIESON
ENGLEHARDT LA
CALLAHAN DR
DULANY ST
HOOFFS RUN DR
EISENHOWER AVENUE
BALLENGER
JOHN CARLYLE
EMERSON AVE
GEORGE LA
HOLLAND LA
DIAGONAL RD
REINEKERS LA
DANGERFIELD RD
DECHANTAL ST
HARVARD ST
BUCHANAN
BOYLE ST
CAMERON
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COMMERCE
HAMILTON LA
WILKES ST
ROUNDHOUSE
PAYNE
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EARL ST
N PEYTON ST
COLECROFT CT
BRADDOCK RD
JEFFERSON ST
FAYETTE
FRANKLIN
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KING HENRY CT
QUEEN
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BASHFORD
SECOND ST
PORTNER RD
POWHATAN
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EAST ABINGDON DR
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JONES POINT DR
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