

“Traces of History” Alexandria’s Black History Scavenger Hunt



2019 Hunt Clues

1. **The Historic Alexandria Foundation Early Building Survey Badge** is a bronze plaque on a house that symbolizes that the owners of these special houses are stewards of Alexandria's architectural heritage. Buildings throughout the city that are at least one hundred years old, and which retain their architectural integrity can qualify. **Take a picture next to at least ten (10) HAF Early Building Survey Badges**
2. Enslaved workers would cut ice from the frozen Potomac River in the winter and haul it by cart for storage to this location. Linked directly to a certain tavern’s basement by a brick-walled and vaulted tunnel, the ice well was also accessed by the tavern’s enslaved labor force through a small hatch at street level. Once in the well, the ice was formed into a solid mound and covered with straw to preserve it for use through the summer months. **Find the ice well and take a picture next to the ice well.**
3. **Moses Hepburn Rowhouses:** These four townhouses were built in 1850 by Moses Hepburn, the wealthiest free African American in Alexandria. He was born as a slave in 1809 and freed seven years later. He was also one of the nine founders of Davis Chapel, later Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church. The houses were constructed somewhere after he purchased the property in 1850. Located in the middle of the block, they are relatively modest in scale when compared to the other existing houses on the street. The houses were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. **Take a picture of the plaque which states the homes are on the Historic Register.**
4. **Dominick Barecroft Home:** Within three years after gaining his freedom in 1800, Dominick Barecroft (formerly known as "Dominy") was running a grocery store and tavern on the west side of North Fairfax Street. By 1804, Barecroft had saved the \$59 necessary to purchase freedom for his wife, Esther. The tavern thrived, and in 1817 Barecroft bought a house and lot at 315 Cameron Street. Barecroft operated his tavern on North Fairfax until 1824. When he died in 1862, the Alexandria Gazette recalled his ability to prepare crabs so delicious that "epicures, titled and distinguished, from Washington would come for crab suppers." Barecroft was described as "very dignified" and his tavern as "visited only by respectable persons." **Take a picture in front of 315 Cameron Street**

5. **Carlyle House:** Enslaved blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, and joiners built Carlyle House. They worked on Carlyle's three plantations and in his blacksmith shop. They performed a variety of jobs in his import-export business, from sailing ships to hauling wagon loads of goods. When Carlyle died in 1780, nine enslaved blacks were living on the estate: Moses, Nanny, Jerry, Joe, Cate, Sibreia, Cook, Charles, and Penny. Enslaved African Americans working on an urban site like the Carlyle House lived where they worked - on pallets in their owners' bedrooms, above the kitchen, or in the nursery, stables, or cellar. **Take a picture of the front of the Carlyle House**
6. **GW townhouse:** George Washington owned a townhome in Alexandria. Unfortunately, the dwelling was demolished in 1855. But, in 1960, Gov. and Mrs. Richard Lowe (he was governor of Guam) had the house reconstructed. **Take a picture of the bust of George Washington that sits in the window**
7. Founded in 1838, the Athenaeum was intended to enhance public education in the community. It seems the edifice fulfilled its purpose in 1865 when it served as the meeting-place for the [Convention of the Colored People of Virginia](#). In early August, Black leaders discussed Black/white relations in Virginia and the necessity of gaining suffrage. They also called attention to America as their birthplace and repeatedly dismissed the idea of emigration. Demonstrating respect for the edifice, the committee on rules suggested, "there should be no smoking in the Hall during the business of the Convention." **Go to this location and take a picture in front of it!**
8. **Alexandria's Original Shoreline:** Ramsay bought lot 46 in 1749 at the City's founding and proceeded to bank out his lot, taking soil from the high bluffs on his property and depositing it on the mudflats as fill, until his wharf reached deeper into the Potomac to navigable water. **Go to the courtyard of the Indigo Hotel and take a picture of the depiction of the original shoreline of Alexandria**
9. Simon Fairfax, the ancestor of Virginia Lieutenant Governor Justin Fairfax, was manumitted from this house in 1798 by the ninth Lord Fairfax. One of the largest historic homes in Alexandria. **Take a picture in front of the plaque at this home,** which still bears the family name.
10. **Historic Highway Markers:** Alexandria has 18 historic highway markers, with 10 of them being connected with African American History. They are located at the following sites: Freedmans' Cemetery, Alfred Street, Franklin and Armfield Office, L'Ouverture Hospital, Shiloh Baptist Church, Robert's Memorial, Alexandria Library Sit In, Alexandria Academy, and Beulah Baptist Church. **Take a picture with at least three of the listed highway markers.**

11. African-American fraternal orders like the black Odd Fellows allowed blacks to socialize and put their skills to good use. In 1870, black builder and politician George Seaton was hired to build the **Odd Fellows meeting hall** in Alexandria. For decades the building was used to house the group and many of the social gatherings of the African-American community. In the 1980s the building was converted into condominiums. It is a three-story brick building with decorative detailing and a slate mansard roof. **Take a picture of the building**
12. This church is the oldest African American congregation in Alexandria; in fact, some of its earliest congregants were enslaved individuals from George Washington's Mount Vernon population. It has been visited by two sitting presidents, the last one being Barack Obama. **Take a photo of the historical sign near the front of the building, which sits on Alfred and Duke streets.**
13. **African American Heritage Park:** This park includes a one-acre 19th century African American cemetery. Of 21 burials on this site, six identified headstones remain and are in their original location. The focal point of the park is a sculpture group of bronze trees called "Truths That Rise From the Roots Remembered." This formation acknowledges the contributions of African Americans to the growth of Alexandria. Other smaller sculptures throughout the park commemorate historic African American Neighborhoods and the people known and unknown buried on this site. **Take a picture of your group with the bronze tree sculpture in the background.**
14. **The Sugar House Refinery** on Alfred Street in Alexandria was used in the 19th century to process sugar cane juice into sugar. The manufacturing was done by enslaved African Americans, whose labor made Alexandria the third-largest refined sugar producer in the country in the early 19th century. **Take a picture with the sign of the "Sugarhouse Spa", that exists where the old sugar house would have existed.**
15. History tells the story of Sophia Browning Bell, an enslaved woman who regularly sold produce at the farmers market in old town, until she was able to save up enough money to buy her freedom and the freedom of her family. **Go to the place where Alexandria's farmers market is located and take a picture of that area.**

****If you are able to complete all 15 tasks, please feel free to send your photos to info@manumissionstours.com for 50% off your next tour with us!****