

First Edition Update

# *A Guidebook to Virginia's African American Historical Markers*



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*The Virginia Department of Historic Resources*

## REGION ONE

# NORTHERN VIRGINIA AND THE NORTHERN NECK

## CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

### E-156 RESTORED GOVERNMENT OF VIRGINIA

*To be erected.* After Virginia seceded in the spring of 1861, Unionists met in Wheeling and organized a state government loyal to the U.S. under Gov. Francis H. Pierpont. The Restored Government, which sent representatives to the U.S. Congress and raised federal troops, moved to Alexandria in Aug. 1863. Pierpont was based at the City Hotel (Gadsby's Tavern) before moving to 415 Prince St. The General Assembly, representing Northern Virginia, the Eastern Shore, and Hampton Roads, met at City Hall. Members authorized a convention that adopted Virginia's Constitution of 1864, which abolished slavery and secured other reforms. The government moved to Richmond in May 1865; its constitution was in effect until 1869.

## FAIRFAX COUNTY

### C-63 ONA JUDGE (CA. 1773–1848)

*Mt. Vernon Memorial Hwy. at intersection with Mt. Vernon Hwy.* Ona (or Oney) Judge, born into slavery at Mount Vernon, became Martha Washington's personal attendant as a child. After George Washington was elected president in 1789, Judge was brought to New York City and later to Philadelphia to serve his household. Washington periodically sent her back to Virginia to skirt a Pennsylvania law that might have granted her freedom based on long-term residency. In 1796, after learning that she was to become a gift for Martha Washington's granddaughter, Judge escaped from Philadelphia to New Hampshire. There she married, had three children, taught herself to read and write, and lived for

more than 50 years, having resisted Washington's attempts to recover her.

## CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

### C-36 DR. EDWIN BANCROFT HENDERSON (1883–1977)

*To be erected.* E. B. Henderson, whose pioneering work fostered African American participation in athletics early in the 20th century, lived in Falls Church from 1910 to 1965. After studying physical education at Harvard, he popularized basketball in his hometown of Washington, D.C., organized leagues and associations for Black athletes and referees, and wrote *The Negro in Sports* (1939). He helped organize the NAACP's first rural branch, in Falls Church, was president of the Virginia NAACP, and fought segregation in education, housing, and public facilities. Known as the "Father of Black Basketball," he was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2013.

## LOUDOUN COUNTY

### B-44 WILLISVILLE

*To be erected.* Willisville, 1.5 miles north, developed in the late 1860s around a small group of dwellings where free and enslaved African Americans had lived before the Civil War. In 1868, residents erected a building to serve as a school and church with support from Richard H. Dulany of Welbourne and the Freedmen's Bureau. Land ownership anchored residents to the community as they began purchasing lots in the 1870s. The village was likely named for Henson Willis, the first person known to be buried in the Old Willisville Cemetery (ca. 1873). The Willisville Historic District includes the school (built in 1921 after the original building burned), Willisville Store (1922-24), and Willisville Chapel (1924).

COVER PHOTO: The first stop on the 1961 Freedom Ride was Fredericksburg's Greyhound Bus Terminal. *Marker E-155*

## STAFFORD COUNTY

J-45 PALMER HAYDEN (1890–1973)

*At Widewater State Park, near Visitor Center.*

Palmer Hayden, artist, was born Peyton Cole Hedgeman nearby in Widewater. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I and later studied art at Columbia University and in Boothbay Harbor, Maine. He achieved prominence as a painter during the Harlem Renaissance. A first prize in a painting competition sponsored by the Harmon Foundation in 1926 led to a five-year stay in France. Although Hayden's works include seascapes and African themes, most notable are his portrayals of ordinary African Americans in everyday life and his depictions of the legendary John Henry. The Museum of African American Art in Los Angeles houses a large collection of his work.



ABOVE: Katherine Johnson performed crucial calculations for pathbreaking missions including the first manned moon landing in 1969. President Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015.

Marker W-175

## REGION TWO

## NORTHERN PIEDMONT, VALLEY, AND WESTERN MOUNTAINS

### ALLEGHANY COUNTY

L-16 GREEN PASTURES  
RECREATION AREA

*To be erected.* In 1937, after the Clifton Forge chapter of the NAACP decried the lack of outdoor recreation areas for African Americans, the U.S. Forest Service agreed to open a new park here for Black patrons, who were not then welcome in nearby Douthat State Park. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed Green Pastures between 1938 and 1940. With a lake, a beach, picnic areas, hiking trails, and recreational fields, the facility was popular with families, civic clubs, church groups, and other visitors from across the region. Although officially desegregated in 1950, the park was predominantly used by African Americans until the 1960s, when it was renamed Longdale Recreation Area.

L-17 ROGER ARLINER YOUNG  
(1898–1964)

*To be erected.* R. Arliner Young, zoologist, was born in Clifton Forge. After graduating with a B.A. from Howard University and an M.S. from the University of Chicago, she became the first African American woman to earn a doctorate in zoology when she completed her Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania in 1940. Her research focused on the effects of electromagnetic radiation on marine organisms, and her 1924 article in the journal *Science* won international attention. For years she taught zoology at Howard and conducted research at the elite Marine Biological Laboratory in MA. She later taught at other historically Black colleges and universities and was a civil rights activist and labor union organizer.

## BATH COUNTY

### D-48 WEST WARM SPRINGS

*To be erected.* African Americans, exercising newfound autonomy after the Civil War, purchased land here on the western slope of Little Mountain and established the community of West Warm Springs. Many early residents worked at nearby resorts, including the Warm Springs pools, or were skilled artisans and craftsmen. Central to community life were John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church (1873), Mount Pisgah Baptist Church (ca. 1880), and the Jones School, which served Black students early in the 20th century. Webb's Store (ca. 1900), restaurants, and a dance hall provided gathering places for residents. Descendants of the founding families have been instrumental in preserving the history of West Warm Springs.

## CLARKE COUNTY

### T-61 BRISTOW

*Shepherds Mill Road at intersection with Castleman Rd.* The African American community of Bristow originated in 1869 when Brister (or Bristol) Holmes purchased land near here. A public school (ca. 1883) and Bethel Baptist Church (ca. 1928) became centers of community life. Emancipated African Americans, exercising their newfound autonomy, established or settled in nearly 20 villages across Clarke County after the Civil War. Almost half of Clarke's population had been enslaved in 1860, a much higher percentage than in other Shenandoah Valley counties, reflecting this area's Tidewater-style plantation economy. Freedom for African Americans therefore led to a substantial reconfiguration of the county's settlement patterns and built environment.

## CULPEPER COUNTY

### G-32 DANGERFIELD AND HARRIET NEWBY

*To be erected.* Dangerfield Newby (ca. 1820-1859), born enslaved, grew up about nine

miles southwest of here. He became free in 1858 when his white father and enslaved mother took their children to Ohio. Working as a blacksmith, Newby saved money to buy his wife, Harriet (d. 1884), and their children, who remained enslaved in Virginia and were in danger of being sold to the Deep South. When negotiations for the purchase failed, he joined the abolitionist John Brown in planning an attack designed to incite a slave revolt. During the raid on Harpers Ferry in Oct. 1859, Newby was the first of the raiders to be killed. Harriet and the children were sold to Louisiana but returned to Virginia after the Civil War.

### F-38 U.S. COLORED TROOPS IN THE OVERLAND CAMPAIGN

*To be erected.* On 5 May 1864, thousands of United States Colored Troops entered Culpeper County at Kelly's Ford, six miles southeast of here, marking the first time Black troops served alongside the Army of the Potomac. These men, including some who had escaped slavery in Culpeper and nearby counties, served in the 19th, 23rd, 27th, 30th, 39th, and 43rd USCT and the 30th Connecticut Colored Infantry, which made up the 4th Division of IX Corps. After a brief stay in Culpeper County, the troops marched south across the Rapidan River to join Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign. While in Culpeper, at least three Black soldiers were captured by Confederates and summarily executed along the roadside.

## CITY OF HARRISONBURG

### A-131 CHARLOTTE HARRIS LYNCHED, 6 MARCH 1878

*On courthouse lawn, S. Main St. at Court Sq.* About a dozen disguised people took Charlotte Harris from the custody of jailers in eastern Rockingham County on the night of 6 March 1878 and hanged her from a tree approximately 13 miles southeast of here. This is the only documented lynching of an African American woman in Virginia, and it received nationwide attention. A grand jury

that met here failed to identify any of the lynchings. Harris had been accused of inciting a young African American man to burn the barn of a white farmer. This man was later acquitted on all charges. More than 4,000 lynchings took place in the United States between 1877 and 1950; more than 100 people, primarily African American men, were lynched in Virginia.

A-87      LUCY F. SIMMS (CA. 1856–1934)  
620 *Simms Ave.* Lucy F. Simms was born enslaved and grew up in present-day Harrisonburg. She earned a teaching certificate from Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (later Hampton University) in 1877. Like fellow Hampton graduate Booker T. Washington, Simms dedicated her life to education. After teaching for a year in rural Rockingham County, she accepted a position in Harrisonburg. During her 56-year career, she taught an estimated 1,800 students spanning several generations. In 1939, the City of Harrisonburg opened the Lucy F. Simms School near her childhood home. Simms was selected in 2017 to be one of ten Virginians represented on the Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument in Richmond.

## CITY OF LEXINGTON

I-27      LYLURN DOWNING  
SCHOOL

*To be erected.* Lylburn Downing School opened here in 1927 after the Home and School League, an organization of local Black parents and citizens, campaigned for equitable schools. Built with financial support from the Black community, Rockbridge County, and the Rosenwald Fund, the countywide school first served grades 1-9 and expanded to include a high school in the 1940s. Desegregation closed the original edifice in 1965, but the newer buildings became Lexington's middle school. Lylburn Downing (1862-1937) was born enslaved in Lexington, attended Lincoln University, and was pastor of Roanoke's Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church for more than 40 years.

He was a longtime advocate for African American education.

## ORANGE COUNTY

JJ-37      LITTLE ZION BAPTIST CHURCH  
15116 *Tomahawk Creek Rd.* At the end of the Civil War, African Americans constituted a majority of the congregation at the white-led Zion Baptist Church, organized nearby in 1813. Exercising newfound autonomy after emancipation, black members withdrew and established Little Zion Baptist Church ca. 1870. The congregation first met in members' houses and then worshiped under a brush arbor before building a frame sanctuary on land donated by the Rev. Allen Banks, the church's second pastor. Many of the early members resided in Goffney Town, Little Egypt, and Little Zion, communities of freedpeople in this vicinity. The congregation moved into a new sanctuary here, 0.3 mile north of the old church, in 2001.

## SHENANDOAH COUNTY

AB-4      SUNSET HILL SCHOOL

348 *Sunset St. in Strasburg.* The Queen Street School, one of the first schools in Shenandoah County for African Americans, had opened in Strasburg by 1875. After a fire in 1929, a new school known as Sunset Hill was built here ca. 1930 to serve grades 1-7. Because the county had no high school for African American students, graduates had to go elsewhere to attend higher grades. African American residents petitioned for better facilities, and the school board considered building a new segregated elementary school as late as 1962, eight years after the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that public school segregation was unconstitutional. Sunset Hill closed in 1964 when Shenandoah County schools were fully desegregated.

## CITY OF WINCHESTER

### Q-4-2 SPOTTSWOOD POLES (1886–1962)

506 N. Kent St. Spottswood Poles, baseball player and decorated World War I soldier, was born in Winchester and lived near here. From 1906 until 1923, a period that largely predated the Negro Leagues, he starred on all-black teams such as the Harrisburg Giants, the Philadelphia Giants, and the New York Lincoln Giants. His speed, high batting average, and outstanding defensive play won him recognition as one of the best players of his era. Poles interrupted his career to serve in World War I. As a sergeant with the 369th U.S. Infantry, known as the Harlem Hellfighters, he was wounded in action during the Meuse-Argonne offensive in France. Poles died in 1962 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



ABOVE: John Chilembwe led the first major African uprising against colonial authorities in the British Protectorate of Nyasaland (Malawi). Chilembwe remains a symbol of liberation in Malawi, which became independent in 1964. John Chilembwe Day is celebrated annually on 15 Jan. *Marker Q-6-54*

## REGION THREE

# CENTRAL VIRGINIA AND CENTRAL PIEDMONT

## ALBEMARLE COUNTY

### G-6 PVT. SHADRACH BATTLES (CA. 1753–1822)

*To be erected.* Shadrach Battles, a free person of color born probably in Albemarle County, was a Revolutionary War soldier. By June 1775 he had joined the Albemarle Independent Company, a local militia unit. In Dec. 1776 he enlisted in the 10th Virginia Regiment (later renumbered the 6th). He fought at Brandywine, PA, Germantown, PA, and Monmouth, NJ, spent the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge, and participated in the Southern Campaign. Battles was one of at least 5,000 black soldiers who served in the Continental Line. By 1778, black men were a substantial presence in nearly every brigade. A carpenter, Battles lived in this vicinity after the war.

## CHESTERFIELD COUNTY

### S-77 AKA DELTA OMEGA

*To be erected.* On 26 Feb. 1921, Delta Omega became the first graduate chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. chartered on the East Coast, the fourth graduate chapter in the U.S., and the first Greek-letter organization at Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (later Virginia State University). VNII faculty members Pauline Puryear, Pearl Grigsby, Lucy Johnson, Edna Colson, Mae Hatchette, and Louise Stokes formed Nu chapter, renamed Delta Omega in 1922. Puryear later became national president of AKA, the first Greek-letter organization founded by and for African American women. Several buildings at VSU and the building that houses the Ettrick-Matoaca Library were named for Delta Omega members.

S-78 BEULAH SCHOOL,  
ROSENWALD FUNDED

*To be erected.* Beulah Baptist Church, just across the road, housed a school for African American children in the Skinquarter community until about 1920, when the school moved into a new building on this site. Contributions for the one-teacher school came from the Black community, the county, and the Julius Rosenwald Fund. This fund, created by the president of Sears, Roebuck, and Co. and inspired by the work of Booker T. Washington, helped build more than 5,000 schools for Black children in the rural South between 1917 and 1932. Beulah, one of six Rosenwald schools in Chesterfield County, served students in grades 1-7. It closed in 1948 when four elementary schools were consolidated nearby at Winterpock.

M-41 SALE OF ENSLAVED PEOPLE  
AT OAKLAND

*To be erected.* Slave sales, a foundation of Virginia's antebellum economy and a commonplace occurrence in a society that regarded human beings as property, brought terror to the enslaved. William Ransom Johnson sold 46 enslaved men, women, and children at an auction at his Oakland plantation near here on 25 March 1845. Johnson's auction, precipitated by financial trouble and poor health, attracted 18 purchasers who paid a total of \$16,705.50 and splintered several families. Petersburg slave trader Henry Davis, who regularly shipped slaves to the markets in New Orleans, bought ten people. After Johnson's death in 1849, his executor held another auction here in which 24 enslaved people were offered for sale.

**DINWIDDIE COUNTY**

S-98 CENTRAL STATE HOSPITAL  
CEMETERY

*7th Ave., on the campus of Central State Hospital.* This cemetery is the final resting place for thousands of patients treated at the nation's first stand-alone psychiatric hospital for

African Americans, originally known as the Central Lunatic Asylum and later renamed Central State Hospital. The asylum, which became a state institution in 1870, moved here from a location near Richmond in 1885. Deceased patients were interred in this burial ground from the mid-1880s until a new cemetery opened a short distance southeast of here in 1939. In some years during this period, more than 10 percent of the hospital's patients died. Graves were originally marked with small stones that deteriorated over time.

**CITY OF FREDERICKSBURG**

E-155 FIRST STOP ON 1961  
FREEDOM RIDES

*To be erected.* The Congress of Racial Equality, led by James Farmer, organized the Freedom Rides in 1961 to challenge racial segregation in interstate bus travel, which had persisted despite U.S. Supreme Court decisions barring segregation in seating (1946) and in terminal facilities (1960). After departing from Washington, D.C., on the morning of 4 May, the Freedom Riders first stopped here at the Greyhound Bus Terminal, where they integrated the restrooms and lunch counter without incident. As the riders traveled toward New Orleans, they encountered brutal resistance and arrest. Hundreds joined the campaign, prompting the Interstate Commerce Commission to issue new regulations enforcing desegregation.

**GOOCHLAND COUNTY**

SA-126 CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

*To be erected.* Central High School, Goochland County's only high school for African American students, opened here in 1938. It replaced Fauquier Training School, which stood across the street from 1923, when construction was completed with support from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, until it burned in 1937. Central High, a six-room brick building that was later enlarged, was built on an 11-acre site with a grant from the Public Works Administration, a New Deal agency.

Its academic, social, and cultural programs were central to the community. After the county desegregated its schools under federal court order in 1969, the building became a junior high school.

## HANOVER COUNTY

### ND-18 THE FIELDS FAMILY

*On courthouse green.* Martha Ann Fields and most of her 11 children were enslaved laborers on the Nutshell plantation, just northeast of here. In 1863, she led her family across the Pamunkey River to Union lines and freedom. The family settled in Hampton, pursued education, and became leading citizens after the war. James A. Fields (1844-1903), a member of Hampton Institute's first graduating class, was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1889. George Washington Fields (1854-1932), the first African American to earn a law degree from Cornell University, was a prominent attorney. His daughter, Inez Fields Scott (1895-1978), was the third African American woman admitted to practice law in Virginia.

## CITY OF PETERSBURG

### QA-40 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

*236 Harrison St.* First Baptist Church, one of the nation's oldest African American congregations, traces its origins to 1756, when worshipers known as New Lights began meeting outside Petersburg. The congregation moved to the city about 1820 and opened a sanctuary here in 1863. After the building burned in 1866 during a wave of arson targeting Petersburg's black churches, the present sanctuary was built in the Romanesque style and dedicated in 1872. Peabody High School originated in the church in 1870. During the Civil Rights Movement, First Baptist was a center for community organization. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke here in 1962 at a regional meeting of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

### QA-41 GOTHIC COTTAGE

*To be erected.* This cottage, built ca. 1860, is one of the few Gothic Revival dwellings in Petersburg. Roger Pryor Campbell (1859-1956), a barber, and Carrie Bragg



ABOVE: The Roger Pryor Campbell House, also known as Gothic Cottage, is associated with the Halifax Triangle and Downtown Commercial Historic District and Poplar Lawn Historic District in Petersburg. Architecturally, the house is the only example standing of Carpenter Gothic architecture in the city. *Marker QA-41*

Campbell (1865-1958), a musician, married in 1890 and owned this house during the first half of the 20th century. Carrie Bragg Campbell was one of eight students in the first graduating class at the Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute (later Virginia State University) in 1886. She taught music there from 1885 until 1888. In 1886, she became one of the first African American women to run a newspaper when she took over the editorship of the Virginia Lancet from her brother, George F. Bragg.

#### QA-43 READJUSTER PARTY

*To be erected.* The Readjuster Party, a biracial coalition led by former Confederate general William Mahone, won control of the Virginia General Assembly in 1879. The party's main objective, accomplished in 1882, was to refinance the state's massive antebellum debt and increase funding for public education. The Readjusters also abolished the poll tax, eliminated whipping as a punishment for crime, and established what is now Virginia State University. African American support for the party, cemented at a convention held across the street from here in 1881, was crucial to its success. The Readjusters lost the General Assembly in 1883 after Democrats campaigned on white fears of African American power.

#### QA-42 WYATT TEE WALKER (1928–2018)

209 Perry St. Wyatt Tee Walker, pastor of Gillfield Baptist Church from 1953 to 1960, served as president of the Petersburg branch of the NAACP and as Virginia director of the Congress of Racial Equality. He worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and for several years was his chief of staff. In 1960 Walker became the first full-time executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He helped organize major civil rights protests including the Birmingham (Alabama) Movement and the March on Washington. For 37 years Walker was pastor of Canaan Baptist Church of Christ in Harlem, NY. In 1978 he organized

the International Freedom Mobilization to combat apartheid in South Africa.

### CITY OF RICHMOND

#### SA-127 THE AFRICAN CHURCH OF MANCHESTER

*To be erected.* The African Church of Manchester, later known as First Baptist Church of South Richmond, originated ca. 1821 when a group of free African Americans began meeting for worship in a private home near here. The congregation acquired a meetinghouse just south of here in 1823. Led by a white pastor, as required by Virginia law after 1832, they completed construction of their first sanctuary on this site in 1858. The Rev. Richard Wells was the church's first African American pastor after the Civil War. Under the leadership of Dr. Anthony Binga, pastor for nearly 50 years, the rapidly growing congregation dedicated a new church here in 1881 and relocated to 15th and Decatur Streets in 1892.

#### SA-123 CENTRAL LUNATIC ASYLUM

*SE Corner of N. 20th St. and Fairmount Ave.* Howard's Grove was a 19th-century recreational retreat near Richmond before becoming a Confederate hospital in 1862. After the Civil War, the Freedmen's Bureau operated a hospital here for African Americans suffering from mental disorders, ill health, or homelessness. In Dec. 1869 the federal government transferred the facility to the state as an asylum exclusively for the "colored insane," making it the nation's first stand-alone mental hospital for black patients. Organized as a state institution in 1870, the Central Lunatic Asylum moved to Dinwiddie County in 1885, was renamed Central State Hospital in 1894, and was desegregated in 1967.

#### SA-128 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SOUTH RICHMOND

*To be erected.* The First Baptist Church of South Richmond, originally known as the African Church of Manchester, traces its

origins to 1821, when a group of free African Americans began meeting for worship. Under the leadership of Dr. Anthony Binga, pastor from 1872 to 1919, the congregation relocated from 7th and Perry Streets to a new sanctuary here in 1892. Binga played a central role in designing the Romanesque Revival building. Dr. William L. Ransome, pastor for five decades and a local civil rights leader, oversaw the construction of an annex in 1969. For more than two centuries, the church has been distinguished by strong ministerial leadership and service to the community.

SA-125 MAGGIE LENA WALKER  
(1864–1934)

900 St. James St. Maggie Walker, an African American entrepreneur and civil rights activist, promoted economic empowerment for the Black community. In 1899 she was elected head of the Independent Order of Saint Luke, a mutual aid society and insurance company facing a dwindling membership. Under her leadership, the organization grew to more than 100,000 members. Walker founded the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank in 1903, becoming the first Black woman in the U.S. to establish and serve as president of a bank. She helped organize a major boycott of Richmond's segregated streetcars in 1904 and served on the national boards of the NAACP and the National Association of Colored Women.

SA-129 MARY RICHARDS BOWSER  
DENMAN

*To be erected.* Mary Richards Bowser Denman was born enslaved in Virginia ca. 1840. Given de facto freedom by Elizabeth Van Lew, whose family enslaved her, she was educated in New Jersey and sent to live in Liberia before returning to Richmond in 1860. During the Civil War, she participated in a secret network of free and enslaved African Americans and pro-Union whites, including Van Lew, who assisted federal prisoners of war and passed intelligence to the U.S. Army. Denman, who used various names through-

out her life, later taught in schools for the formerly enslaved in Virginia, Florida, and Georgia, gave lectures in the North, and was an activist for equal rights and full citizenship for black Americans.

SA-130 SHOCKOE HILL AFRICAN  
BURYING GROUND

*To be erected.* The City of Richmond opened the Shockoe Hill African Burying Ground here in 1816 to replace the Burial Ground for Negroes in Shockoe Bottom. The new cemetery, laid out along the northern end of Fifth Street near the city's poorhouse, began as two adjoining one-acre plots, one for free people of color and one for the enslaved. The grounds expanded greatly over time, eventually spreading down the slopes and into the valley. With an estimated 22,000 interments, it was among the largest cemeteries for free and enslaved African Americans in the U.S. during its era. After closing the cemetery in 1879 due to overcrowding, the city repurposed the site, making the burial ground unrecognizable today.

SA-124 WESTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

*To be erected.* This church traces its origins to 1872, when a group of formerly enslaved African Americans began meeting for Bible study at the home of Robert Pemberton. In 1876, the congregation's trustees purchased a half-acre lot here for \$25 for the Westwood Colored Baptist Church. The Rev. George Daggett, first pastor, served for two decades. Early baptisms took place in nearby Jordan's Branch. A vibrant African American community, originally in Henrico County and later annexed by the City of Richmond, developed around the church. Many 20th-century pastors graduated from the Virginia Union University seminary. Their oratorical skills and political leadership fostered a thriving church.

## REGION FOUR

# EASTERN VIRGINIA

## CITY OF CHESAPEAKE

### WP-14 OWENS-MELVIN HOUSE

732 *Shell Rd.* James Edward Owens and Grace Catherine Melvin Owens, the college-educated children of formerly enslaved people, built this Queen Anne-style house ca. 1915. Their son Dr. Hugo Armstrong Owens, dentist and civil rights activist, was born here in 1916. After serving in World War II, Hugo Owens worked to desegregate public facilities in Portsmouth in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1970 he became one of the first two African Americans elected to the Chesapeake City Council. Owens served eight of his ten years on council as the city's vice-mayor. He sat on the Board of Visitors of Norfolk State University and was rector of both Virginia State University and Old Dominion University.

## ESSEX COUNTY

### O-77 ANGEL VISIT BAPTIST CHURCH

*To be erected.* Angel Visit Baptist Church, one of the oldest African American churches in Essex County, was formed in 1866 when African American members withdrew from white-led Ephesus Baptist Church after Emancipation. The congregation purchased land here in 1867 and erected a sanctuary, which they replaced with a larger building after acquiring an adjoining lot in 1893. Ozeana School, one of the county's first public schools for African Americans, stood just south of the church for decades. The church burned in 1917, and the present 350-seat sanctuary opened in 1919. In the early 20th century, students and faculty from Rappahannock Industrial Academy, a nearby Baptist-run boarding school, worshipped here.

### O-78 RAPPAHANNOCK INDUSTRIAL ACADEMY

*To be erected.* The Southside Rappahannock Baptist Association opened the Rappahannock Industrial Academy here in 1902 to provide secondary education for African Americans at a time when no public high schools were available to them in the area. Supported by churches, individuals, and the sale of timber and produce, the school served boarding and day students primarily from this region but also from other parts of Virginia and beyond. It offered a range of academic courses and extracurricular activities and was accredited by the state in 1934. Its nearly 300-acre campus included a working farm. Enrollment declined after public high schools were established, and the school closed in 1948.

### O-79 THOMAS WASHINGTON LYNCHED

*To be erected.* Thomas Washington, an African American man, was lynched on 23 March 1896 for allegedly attempting to assault the young daughter of a prominent white citizen. A boy found Washington's body hanging from a tree about 1/8 mile southwest of here. A coroner's jury did not identify the killers. The body, buried near the tree, was later given a proper burial by relatives. This was the only documented lynching in Essex County. The case attracted publicity across the state, but no one was ever brought to justice. More than 4,000 lynchings took place in the U.S. between 1877 and 1950; more than 100 people, primarily African American men, were lynched in Virginia.

## GLOUCESTER COUNTY

### NW-24 WOODVILLE ROSENWALD SCHOOL

4310 *George Washington Memorial Highway (Rte. 17)*. Thomas Calhoun Walker, community leader and advocate for African American education, led local efforts to secure support from the Julius Rosenwald Fund for

the construction of six schools and one teacher's cottage in Gloucester County. Woodville School, built here ca. 1923, is the only one of the seven structures that remains. Rosenwald, the president of Sears, Roebuck, and Co., inspired by the work of Booker T. Washington, helped construct more than 5,300 school buildings for Black children across the rural South. Contributions for Woodville came from the Black community (\$2,500), the county (\$300), and Rosenwald (\$700). The two-teacher school closed by 1941.

## CITY OF HAMPTON

W-175 KATHERINE COLEMAN GOBLE JOHNSON (1918–2020)

*To be erected.* Katherine Johnson, mathematician, graduated from West Virginia State College and was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She was a teacher before the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (later NASA) hired her in 1953 to work in the segregated West Area Computing Unit at Langley Aeronautical Laboratory. Soon transferred to the Flight Research Division, she performed crucial calculations for pathbreaking missions including the U.S.'s first manned spaceflight (1961), first orbital spaceflight (1962), and the first manned moon landing (1969). Before retiring in 1986, she also worked on the Space Shuttle. Pres. Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015.

## JAMES CITY COUNTY

WT-6 ANGELO (FL. 1619–1625)

*Jamestown Rd. near Historic Jamestown.* Angelo (Angela) was likely born in the West African kingdom of Ndongo, part of present-day Angola. Captured and sold to slave traders, she was forced onto a Portuguese ship. Two English privateers, the White Lion and the Treasurer, attacked the ship as it neared Spanish America, removing Angelo and some 60 other Africans. The White Lion arrived at Point Comfort, VA, in Aug. 1619, followed by the Treasurer, with Angelo

aboard. There she and about 30 others, the first documented Africans in Virginia, were sold. Angelo labored in the Jamestown household of Capt. William Peirce, planter, merchant, and political and military leader. She last appears in colonial records in the muster of 1625.

## MIDDLESEX COUNTY

OC-38 STINGRAY POINT CONTRABAND

*17147 Gen. Puller Hwy.* Six enslaved men (Alexander Franklin, David Harris, John Hunter, Miles Hunter, Peter Hunter, and Samuel Hunter), fearing impressment into Confederate service, sought refuge in the Stingray Point Lighthouse near here on 15 July 1861 and hailed the USS Mount Vernon. Similar escapes followed. The U.S. Secretary of the Navy, following the contraband theory established at Fort Monroe, authorized the employment of self-emancipated men and, in Sept. 1861, approved their enlistment in the U.S. Navy, nearly a year before black men could enlist in the U.S. Army. After serving in the Navy, Harris is the only one of the six men known to have returned to this community, where he had been enslaved.

## NEW KENT COUNTY

WO-39 SAMUEL WILSON CRUMP (1919–1995)

*Rte. 249, in front of old courthouse.* Samuel W. Crump, a native of New Kent County and a veteran of World War II, was among the first African Americans elected to public office in Virginia under the state's Constitution of 1902, which disfranchised many black voters. Elected to the New Kent County Board of Supervisors in 1955, Crump became the board's first African American member since the 19th century. His victory followed a countywide effort to increase the number of qualified voters. During Crump's 12 years of service, he often provided the lone vote against measures designed to maintain school segregation. New Kent's branch of the NAACP named Crump one

of the county's "trailblazers" of the century in 2009.

WO-41 CALVIN COOLIDGE GREEN,  
TH.D., ED.D., PH.D. (1931–2011)

*11825 New Kent Hwy. (Rte. 249).* Dr. Calvin C. Green, civil rights activist, led the movement for school integration in New Kent County. An educator, pastor, Korean War veteran, and later a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, Green chartered the New Kent branch of the NAACP in 1960 and was its president for 16 years. After the county school board denied his petition to desegregate schools, Green worked with other county residents and the state NAACP to file a federal lawsuit in 1965 in the name of Charles C. Green, his youngest son. On 27 May 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Green v. New Kent Co.* that localities must swiftly integrate public schools, leading to a decline in school segregation across the U.S.

## CITY OF NORFOLK

KV-34 SGT. WILLIAM H. CARNEY  
(1840–1908)

*To be erected.* William Carney, born into slavery in Norfolk, gained his freedom and settled in New Bedford, MA, ca. 1858. He enlisted in the 54th Massachusetts Vol. Infantry Regt. in Feb. 1863, shortly after the Emancipation Proclamation authorized African American men to serve in combat in the U.S. Army, and was soon promoted to sergeant. On 18 July 1863, as the 54th led an attack on Fort Wagner near Charleston, SC, Carney retrieved the American flag from the regiment's wounded color guard. Under heavy fire, he carried the flag to the fort's parapet and then, despite serious wounds,

withdrew it when his unit was pushed back. For this action Carney received the Medal of Honor on 23 May 1900.

KV-35 EVELYN THOMAS BUTTS  
(1924–1993)

*To be erected.* Evelyn Butts, civil rights activist and community organizer, worked to secure voting rights for African Americans. In 1963 she initiated a federal lawsuit asserting that Virginia's poll tax, which citizens had to pay before they could register to vote, violated the U.S. Constitution. The case, combined with a similar suit filed in Fairfax County, reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in *Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections* (1966) that the poll tax requirement in state elections was unconstitutional. Butts conducted voter registration drives and helped establish Concerned Citizens of Norfolk, which resulted in the election of African Americans to public office.



RIGHT: *Carte de Visite* of Sgt. William H. Carney. Marker KV-34

## SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY

### U-29 BLACKHEAD SIGNPOST ROAD

*To be erected.* In Aug. 1831, following the revolt led by enslaved preacher Nat Turner, white residents and militias retaliated by murdering an indeterminable number of African Americans—some involved in the revolt, some not—in Southampton County and elsewhere. At this intersection, where Turner’s force had turned toward Jerusalem (now Courtland), the severed head of a black man was displayed on a post and left to decay to terrorize others and deter future uprisings against slavery. The beheaded man may have been Alfred, an enslaved blacksmith who, though not implicated in any revolt killings, was slain by militia near here. The name of this road was changed from Blackhead Signpost to Signpost in 2021.

## CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG

### W-110 GOWAN PAMPHLET (CA. 1748–CA. 1809)

*N. Nassau St. at intersection with Scotland St.* Gowan Pamphlet, ordained Baptist preacher, led clandestine religious gatherings of enslaved and free African Americans by the late 1770s. To avoid patrollers, they met in wooded areas outside Williamsburg. An enslaved worker at the Kings Arms Tavern and likely literate, Pamphlet molded the loosely knit worshipers into an organized Baptist church by 1781. In 1793, he gained membership for the 500-member church in the white regional Dover Baptist Association. Freed in 1793, Pamphlet owned part of a lot in Williamsburg and 14 acres in James City County by 1805. The congregation, later known as First Baptist Church, began worshiping on Nassau Street in Williamsburg early in the 19th century.

## REGION FIVE

## SOUTHERN PIEDMONT, BLUE RIDGE, AND SOUTHWEST

## AMHERST COUNTY

### R-26 CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

*Rte. 777, just south of US 60.* Amherst County opened Central High School here in 1956 to serve African American students. The school, established at the same time as the all-white Amherst County High School, was built in an effort to create “separate but equal” facilities despite the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) that segregated public schools were “inherently unequal” and thus unconstitutional. Central, the county’s first school to offer 12th grade to African Americans, replaced the Madison Heights Negro School and the Amherst County Training School. After the county desegregated its schools under federal court order in 1970, Central High became a junior high school.

## BEDFORD COUNTY

### KM-8 SUSIE G. GIBSON HIGH SCHOOL

*To be erected.* Susie G. Gibson (1878–1949), teacher and community activist, was Bedford County’s supervisor of African American education for 22 years. Her work was sponsored by the Jeanes Fund, established by Anna T. Jeanes in 1907 to enhance opportunities for black students in the rural South. Susie G. Gibson High School, named in her honor, opened just northeast of here in 1954 to serve African American students in the Town and County of Bedford. Designed by noted architect Stanhope Johnson, the school reflected an effort to equalize educational facilities rather than desegregate them. Gibson High closed in 1970 when the U.S. government required county schools to desegregate fully.

## CITY OF BRISTOL

### K-166 DR. CHARLES SPURGEON JOHNSON (1893–1956)

*To be erected.* Charles S. Johnson, sociologist, author, and civil rights leader, was born in Bristol, son of a 42-year pastor of Lee Street Baptist Church. He attended Virginia Union University and the University of Chicago and served in combat during World War I. A scholar of race relations, he was the primary author of a seminal analysis of the Chicago race riots of 1919. He became the first director of research at the National Urban League and was a driving force behind the Harlem Renaissance as editor of Opportunity magazine. At Fisk University, Johnson led the social sciences department, published widely, and established annual Race Relations Institutes. In 1947 he became Fisk's first Black president.

### K-84 LEE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

*To be erected.* In 1865, at the dawn of their freedom from slavery, 42 former members of the white-led Goodson (now First) Baptist Church organized the Anglo African Baptist Church. The congregation met in a series of buildings until, under the leadership of the Rev. Charles Henry Johnson, they built a new edifice just across the street from here in 1905. The Rev. Johnson served the church, later renamed Lee Street Baptist, until he died during his 42nd year as pastor in 1932. After six decades here, the original brick-veneer church, weakened by the periodic flooding of adjacent Beaver Creek, was razed. In 1966, the congregation moved into a new building at 1 West Mary Street.

## BRUNSWICK COUNTY

### SN-71 LT. COL. JOHN LYMAN WHITEHEAD JR. (1924–1992)

*To be erected.* John L. Whitehead Jr., fighter pilot, was born in Lawrenceville. He joined the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II at the age of 19, completed pilot training at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Sept. 1944,

and was deployed to Italy with the 301st Fighter Squadron. In 1949 he became one of the U.S. Air Force's first African American jet pilot instructors. After flying more than 100 combat missions in Korea early in the 1950s, he became the Air Force's first Black experimental test pilot. Whitehead flew combat missions in Vietnam before retiring in 1974. He later served as national president of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., an organization dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.

## CAMPBELL COUNTY

### L-24 CAMPBELL COUNTY TRAINING SCHOOL

*1470 Village Highway, Rustburg.* Campbell County Training School (CCTS) opened here ca. 1923 after African American citizens campaigned for better schools. The black community, the county, and the Julius Rosenwald Fund paid for its construction. Rosenwald, inspired by the work of Booker T. Washington, helped build more than 5,000 schools for black students. The Rev. Thomas Tweedy and Gabe Hunt are recognized as major local contributors to CCTS, which provided the county's first two-year high school program for African Americans and later included a teacher cottage, cafeteria, shop, and auditorium. In 1951 a new CCTS opened nearby. Named Campbell County High School in 1952, it closed in 1969 when desegregation was completed.

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY

### MJ-3 SAMUEL P. BOLLING (1819–1900)

*To be erected.* Samuel P. Bolling was born enslaved in Cumberland County and became a skilled mechanic. After the Civil War he purchased several lots in Farmville, where he established a successful brickyard by 1874. He later acquired more than 1,000 acres in Cumberland. About 1880 he aligned with the Readjuster Party, a biracial coalition that refinanced the antebellum state debt to pay for

public education and other services. In 1885 he was elected to represent Buckingham and Cumberland Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates; his son, Philip S. Bolling, had won this seat in 1883. Bolling later donated land to establish a school. His daughter, Eliza Bolling, was a noted local educator.

## CHARLOTTE COUNTY

FR-31 JOSEPH R. HOLMES  
(CA. 1838–1869)

*To be erected.* Joseph R. Holmes, formerly enslaved in Charlotte County, campaigned for civil rights and education after emancipation. He served as a delegate to the Virginia Republican Party conventions in 1867 and 1869 and was elected to represent Charlotte and Halifax Counties in Virginia's Constitutional Convention of 1867-68, held as a precondition for the state's readmission to the Union. On 3 May 1869 Holmes was shot dead here on the courthouse steps. Brothers John and Griffin S. Marshall, along with William T. Boyd and Macon C. Morris, all white, were charged with his murder. The men fled and were never tried. The murder drew international attention to the plight of freedpeople during Reconstruction.

## CITY OF DANVILLE

Q-45 YANCEY HOUSE AND  
GRASTY LIBRARY

320 *Holbrook St.* The Yancey House (320 *Holbrook St.*) was a lodging place for African Americans during the segregation era. From the 1930s to the 1960s, it was listed in the *Green Book*, a guide to facilities that served black travelers. The house later became headquarters of the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. From 1950 to 1969, the Grasty Branch of the Danville public library system, for black patrons, operated next door. After African Americans were denied service at the main library in April 1960, an NAACP lawsuit led to a federal court order requiring equal access. In response, the city closed the libraries. They were reopened

on an integrated basis in Sept., but without tables and chairs.

Q-91 CAMILLA ELLA WILLIAMS  
(1919–2012)

*West End Ave., where street dead ends at Central Blvd.* Camilla Williams, operatic soprano, grew up in Danville. In 1946 she became the first African American woman to secure a contract with a major U.S. opera company, making her debut in *Madama Butterfly* with the New York City Center Opera. Williams starred in Columbia Records' recording of *Porgy and Bess* (1951), performed with the Vienna State Opera and other prominent companies, toured internationally as a soloist, and served as a cultural ambassador for the U.S. State Department. In 1963 she performed in Danville to raise funds for civil rights demonstrators, and she sang the national anthem at the March on Washington before Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

## CITY OF LYNCHBURG

Q-6-54 JOHN CHILEMBWE  
(CA. 1871–1915)

2234 *Dewitt St.* John Chilembwe was the leader, in 1915, of the first major African uprising against colonial authorities in the British Protectorate of Nyasaland (Malawi). Chilembwe had come to Lynchburg in 1897 to study at Virginia Seminary under its president, Gregory Hayes. He returned to Africa by 1900 and set up Providence Industrial Mission before launching the revolt of 1915. A military patrol shot and killed Chilembwe on 3 Feb. 1915. The British Official Commission asserted that a main cause of the revolt had been Chilembwe's education in the United States. Malawi, where Chilembwe remains a symbol of liberation, became independent in 1964. John Chilembwe Day is celebrated annually on 15 Jan.

A-6-52 MORRIS STANLEY ALEXANDER  
(1891–1977)

3409 Rivermont Ave. Morris Alexander was the first caddy master and a longtime golf professional at Oakwood Country Club, which opened here in 1914. For more than 50 years, this African American golfer taught fundamentals and golf etiquette at the club, which was all white during the segregation era. Alexander tied the course record in 1928, earning national attention in the black press. The Morris Alexander Junior Golf Tournament attracted young golfers to the course during the 1950s. Four of Alexander's students later won Virginia amateur state championships, and two were United States and British amateur champions.

**CITY OF MARTINSVILLE**

A-136 DRY BRIDGE SCHOOL

*To be erected.* Henry County opened a new Dry Bridge School just south of here in 1928 after the School Improvement League, an organization of African Americans living east of Martinsville, campaigned under the leadership of the Rev. W. F. Geter to replace the original Dry Bridge Colored School. Funding came from the African American community, the public, and the Julius Ros-

enwald Fund, which helped build more than 5,000 schools for African Americans in the South. The school, led by teaching principals J. L. Hairston and the Rev. R. T. Anderson, served students in grades 1-8. Known as East Martinsville School after the city annexed this area in 1948, it was closed in 1968 as the city desegregated its schools.

**NOTTOWAY COUNTY**

M-40 THE AFRICAN PREACHER  
(CA. 1746–1843)

*To be erected.* Nearby lived John Stewart, also known as Jack, the African Preacher, who won renown as a minister and biblical scholar. Kidnapped from Africa as a child, he was brought to Nottoway County as a slave in the mid-18th century. The preaching of Presbyterian clergymen drew him to Christianity. Taught to read by his owner's children, he immersed himself in the Bible and became a licensed Baptist preacher. His wisdom and oratory made him a leader of the black community and so impressed his white neighbors that they contributed toward the purchase of his freedom. Prominent religious journals published stories about Stewart, and he was the subject of a biography titled *The African Preacher* (1849).



LEFT: Camilla Williams, operatic soprano, grew up in Danville. In 1946 she became the first African American woman to secure a contract with a major U.S. opera company, making her debut in *Madama Butterfly* with the New York City Center Opera. In 1963 she performed in Danville to raise funds for civil rights demonstrators, and she sang the national anthem at the March on Washington before Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. *Marker Q-91*

## PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

### L-15 EX PARTE VIRGINIA

*To be erected.* Here in March 1879, a federal marshal arrested James Coles, Pittsylvania County judge, on charges that he had violated the Civil Rights Act of 1875 by refusing to seat Black men on juries. Coles and the Commonwealth of Virginia petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court for his release, arguing that Congress had no authority to regulate state juries. Denying the petition, the court ruled in *Ex Parte Virginia* (1880) that the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution empowered Congress to enforce the right of Black citizens to serve on juries. The ruling, though often disregarded in subsequent decades, demonstrated the broad promise of the 14th amendment to protect the civil rights of all Americans.

## PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

### M-39 BARBARA ROSE JOHNS (1935–1991)

*900 Griffin Boulevard, in Farmville.* Barbara Johns, civil rights pioneer, was born in New York and moved to her parents' native Prince Edward County as a child. In April 1951, at age 16, she led a student walkout to protest conditions at the segregated Robert Russa Moton High School, where facilities were vastly inferior to those at the county's white high school. The students, demanding a new school, sought aid from the Virginia NAACP, which instead offered to represent them in a lawsuit seeking an end to segregation. *Davis v. Prince Edward* was the only student-initiated case consolidated into *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public school segregation was unconstitutional.

## CITY OF ROANOKE

### K-128 BURRELL MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

*611 McDowell Avenue, NW.* Five African American physicians opened Burrell Memorial Hospital in a house at 311 Henry St. in

March 1915. They named it in honor of their colleague Dr. Isaac D. Burrell, who had died in 1914 after traveling by train to undergo surgery in Washington, D.C., as local hospitals treated only whites. Burrell Memorial, which became the region's largest medical facility for black patients, moved into a former school on this site in 1921 and occupied a new building here in 1955. The hospital's nursing school prepared African Americans for careers as registered nurses before closing in the 1930s. A school for practical nurses opened here in the 1950s. Burrell Memorial Hospital closed in 1978.

### K-83 HUNTON LIFE SAVING AND FIRST AID CREW

*Wells Avenue NW approximately 90 feet east of intersection with Henry Street NW.* Alexander A. Terrell organized the Hunton Life Saving and First Aid Crew in Dec. 1941, shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The crew, reputed to have been the first all-black volunteer rescue squad in the United States, was originally headquartered here in the William A. Hunton Branch YMCA. On call 24 hours a day, members responded to medical emergencies using their own vehicles before they acquired an ambulance. The crew also provided safety and first-aid training in the community. In March 1956, the Women's Auxiliary of Hunton Life Saving was organized. The crew moved to new headquarters several blocks northwest of here in 1964 and suspended operations in July 1987.

### Q-6-59 AUGUSTUS NATHANIEL LUSHINGTON, VMD (CA. 1861–1939)

*To be erected.* Dr. Augustus Lushington, veterinarian, practiced in Lynchburg for nearly four decades. A native of Trinidad, he attended Cornell University and the University of Pennsylvania, where in 1897 he became one of the first Black men in the U.S. to earn a degree as a doctor of veterinary medicine. By 1900 he had moved to Lynchburg and opened his practice as a large-animal veterinary surgeon, primarily caring for horses and

cattle on nearby farms. He served as a statistical reporter to the federal Bureau of Animal Industry, charged with combating disease in livestock. He also worked as a probation officer and was president of the Lynchburg Negro Business League. Lushington lived here at 1005 5th St.

## SCOTT COUNTY

### KA-22 PROSPECT PUBLIC SCHOOL

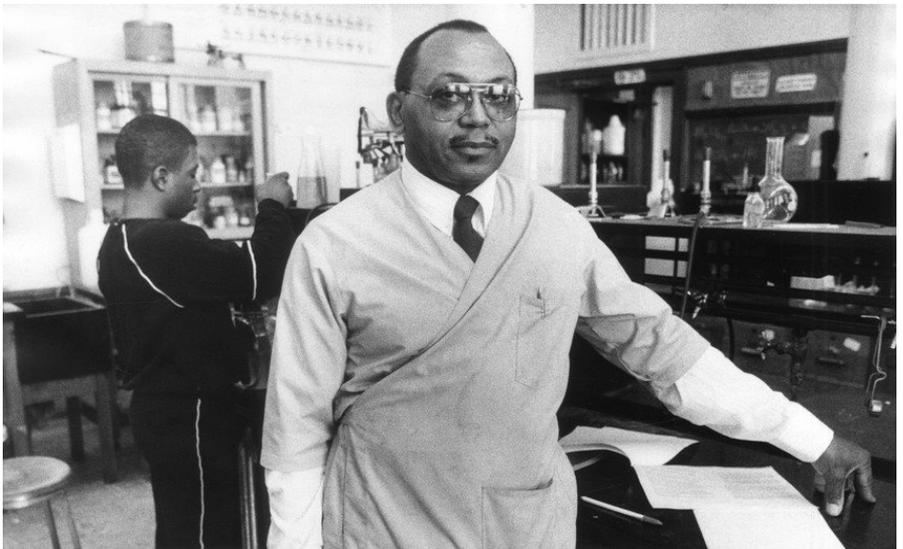
*Main Street (Rte. 58) approximately 4,000 feet west of intersection with Wadlow Gap Highway (Rte. 224).* Prospect School, for six decades Scott County's only public school for African Americans, moved into a new building 1.5 miles northwest of here ca. 1919. Contributions for the two-room school came from the black community (\$1,200), the county (\$600), and the Julius Rosenwald Fund (\$500). This fund, created by the president of Sears, Roebuck, and Co. and inspired by the work of Booker T. Washington, helped build more than 5,000 schools for

black children in the South and supported two additions to Prospect in the 1920s. The school offered grades 1-7; black students who sought further education had to leave the county. Prospect School closed in 1965 with desegregation and was later demolished.

## SMYTH COUNTY

### KD-14 "THE CRYING TREE"

*West Court Street in Marion.* Sarah Elizabeth "Sallie" Adams (1841-1913) was about five years old when she and her family were sold at a slave auction outside the Smyth County Courthouse. Thomas Thurman, whose house stood near here, bought Sallie to be a body servant for his sickly wife. A slave owner from Lynchburg purchased Sallie's mother, whom she never saw again, and her siblings. In later years, Sallie told her children that, when possible, she would slip out of Thurman's house and cry next to a white oak tree in the yard. She would sometimes hug the tree and tell it about her burdens and



ABOVE: Dr. Calvin C. Green, an educator, pastor, and Korean War veteran, a civil rights leader, filed a federal lawsuit in 1965. On 27 May 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Green v. New Kent Co.* that localities must swiftly integrate public schools, leading to a decline in school segregation across the country. *Marker WO-41*

sorrows, and it became her friend and confidant. That tree ultimately became known in the community as “The Crying Tree.”

**KD-15 MOUNT PLEASANT  
METHODIST CHURCH**

*320 South Main Street in Marion.* African Americans, exercising newfound autonomy after the Civil War, withdrew from white-led congregations and established new churches, including Mount Pleasant Methodist Church in Marion ca. 1871. After sharing a frame sanctuary with a local Baptist congregation, Mount Pleasant erected a new brick sanctuary here in 1914. Black brickmasons constructed the building in the Gothic Revival and Romanesque Revival styles. The church became a cultural center for the African American community, hosting musical performances, lectures, and meetings of the local branch of the NAACP and other organizations. Mount Pleasant closed in 2002.

**KD-16 CARNEGIE HIGH SCHOOL**

*602 South Iron Street in Marion.* The Rev. Amos Carnegie came to Marion by 1927 as pastor of Mount Pleasant Methodist Church. Finding the town’s school for African Americans “hardly fit for a stable,” he organized a campaign for a new building. When the school board delayed, Carnegie raised money from the black community and secured a grant from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, which supported more than 5,000 schools for black students across the South. The four-teacher building, constructed by black craftsmen who donated their labor, opened in 1931 and closed in 1965, when local schools were desegregated. Katherine Johnson, who later made crucial contributions to the U.S. space program at NASA, taught here for several years.

**TAZEWELL COUNTY**

**X-33 MAPLE HILL CEMETERY,  
AFRICAN AMERICAN SECTION**

*To be erected.* About 300 African Americans, including some who had been born enslaved, were interred here in the “colored section” of Maple Hill Cemetery between the 1890s and the mid-20th century. African Americans had been a significant presence in Tazewell County since its founding, representing more than 10 percent of the population in 1800. After emancipation, many remained in this area. Later in the 19th century, coal mines and railroads drew African Americans here from other regions. They helped build the town of Graham (later Bluefield), often working as brick and stone masons, cooks, and midwives. In 2006 a fence dividing the cemetery’s white and neglected black sections was removed.

**WISE COUNTY**

**XB-27 LEONARD WOODS LYNCHED**

*To be erected.* Leonard Woods, a black coal miner from Jenkins, KY, was lynched near here on the night of 29-30 Nov. 1927. Officers had arrested Woods for allegedly killing Herschel Deaton, a white man from Coeburn, VA, and had taken him to the Whitesburg, KY, jail. On the day of Deaton’s funeral, a white mob numbering in the hundreds broke into the jail and brought Woods close to this spot, where they hanged, shot, and burned him. No one was ever arrested. In the aftermath, at the urging of Norfolk editor Louis Jaffé, Norton’s Bruce Crawford, and other journalists, VA Gov. Harry F. Byrd worked with the General Assembly early in 1928 to pass the nation’s first law defining lynching as a state crime.