

***The African American
Historic Sites of Vienna, VA
Walking Tour***

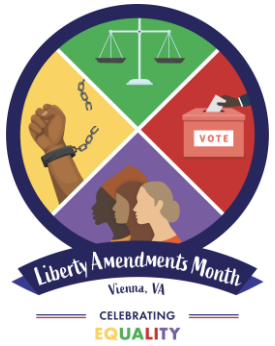
Compiled by Sylvia Taylor and Gloria Runyon

**Originally created as a riding tour,
the *Walking Tour* has been divided
into four walking segments.**

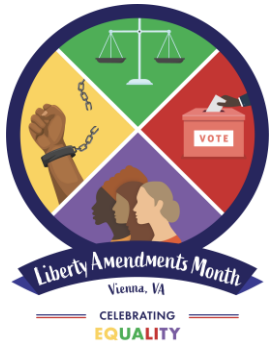
INTRODUCTION

- The *African American Historic Sites Tour of Vienna, VA*, was originally created in February, 2017, as one of the events held in celebration of *First Baptist Church of Vienna's 150th Anniversary*.
- The tour compilers, *Sylvia Taylor* and *Gloria Runyon*, are longtime Vienna residents, members of First Baptist Church of Vienna, and Board Members of Historic Vienna, Inc.

The African American Historic Sites Tour of Vienna in support of the 13th and 14th Amendments



- *The 13th Amendment to the Constitution* abolished slavery within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction, stating that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crimes.
- *The 14th Amendment to the Constitution* granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States, including former enslaved people, stating that citizens shall not be deprived the right of life, liberty, and property without due process; or without equal protection of the laws, guaranteeing all citizens equal protection of the laws.



- In support of the 13th and 14th Amendments, our Liberty Amendments event will offer a historic virtual tour of the African American presence in Vienna from 1867 to 2006.
- Although there were African Americans (and other people of color) who were free before the Civil War who lived and owned property in Vienna, after the end of the War, more people of color and the former enslaved in Vienna were given the opportunity to own homes, have schools, and churches.
- All citizens, including the formerly enslaved, were given the right to due process and protections.
- This tour will offer you a glimpse of this community in Vienna, Virginia.

Walking Tour Segment -1-

- *Stop 1 Original Site of First Baptist Church of Vienna – 214 Lawyers Rd. NW*
- *Stop 2 Salsbury Spring - corner of Lawyers Rd. & Windover Ave, NW*
- *Stop 3 West End Cemetery - 500 Lewis St. NW*
- *Stop 4 Former Residence of Vienna Town Councilman George Lovelace – 425 West St.*
- *Stop 5 West St. History*
- *Stop 6 West Court – Former property of William Alexander West*
- *Stop 7 Former Site of the home of James & Mabel Ellis - 447 West St. NW*
- *Stop 8 Former Site of the Patterson & Walker Home - 468 West St. NW*



**Stop 1*

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA, 1867
214 Lawyers Rd. NW

- First Baptist Church of Vienna, original building at 214 Lawyers Rd. NW, was founded in 1867.
- It is the *first* and *oldest* church in Vienna, VA.
- The property, owned by ***Major O. E. Hine***, who had served in the Union Army, was deeded to the trustees of First Baptist Church for the sum of one dollar.
- With the help of the Freedman's Bureau, the first trustees, ***George Mac Brown, Daniel West, and Edward Harris***, succeeded in acquiring lumber from a Civil War barracks that was being demolished.

First Baptist Church (cont.)

- This building served as a *school, church, and community assembling place* for colored people. (*Colored was the descriptor of the times.*)
- Functioning as a school during the week, boards attached to the back of the benches were used as desks, then, detached for Sunday services. The church school continued in use until 1890, when the Town of Vienna was incorporated. The Town built a one room school known as the *Vienna Colored School* at the corner of Lawyers Rd. and Malcolm Rd. NW.
- In addition to being the first church built in Vienna, it is believed to be *one of the first colored elementary schools in Fairfax County.*
- In December, 1957, *after 90 years*, the church relocated to a new edifice at *450 Orchard St. NW*. A clause in the deed stated that once the church relocated, the land would revert to the heirs of O. E. Hine.
- In 1958, the building was sold to the *Knights of Columbus.*



***Stop 2 SALSBURY SPRING**
*Corner of Lawyers Rd. &
Windover Ave. NW*



- *Salsbury Spring* is the site of the Town's oldest natural spring.
- In the early 1940s, it was the only water source for the students at the *Vienna Colored School (now Louise Archer School)*. Boys daily brought containers of water from the Spring to the school which was a mile away.
- This site, now a park, is cared for by members of the *Ayr Hill Garden Club* and *Town of Vienna Parks & Recreation Dept.* A few years ago, a Boy Scout troop was engaged in planting wild flowers on the site.
- There are two markers at the Spring. On the first is inscribed: *“Salsbury Spring provided drinking water and cooled the milk for the 250 acre dairy farm of Capt. Harmon L. Salsbury (1838-1913), commander of the US Colored Troop Company D, 26th Regiment from New York during the Civil War. The spring was the only source of water for the Vienna area during the drought of 1930 which dried up most wells. In 1938, Capt. Salsbury's wife and children donated this site to the Town of Vienna to be designated a park in his honor.”*
- The second marker reads: *“Dedicated to Ayr Hill Garden Club Members who have worked to keep Vienna green since 1929.”*



**Stop 3 WEST END CEMETERY*

500 Lewis St, NW

- The cemetery is on land once owned by *Captain Harmon L. Salsbury* in the subdivision known as Windover Heights.
- The cemetery has been known over the years as the Borgus, the North-South, the Lewis Street, and the Windover Cemetery.
- It was named *West End Cemetery in 1986* when restoration was being planned by Historic Vienna, Inc.
- After the restoration, over 250 people attended a dedication ceremony at the cemetery on April 26, 1987.
- The cemetery contains 47 gravestones plus other stone markers. The earliest death date was 1884; the most recent was 1978.
- The engraved marker reads: *“Historic Vienna Inc. dedicates this marker to Captain Harmon L. Salsbury, who granted this land on February 25, 1884, for use as a cemetery by colored people. 1986.”*
- This was done through the efforts of *Theodore Thomas*, Vienna African American historian, and *Maud Robinson*, wife of former mayor Charlie Robinson.
- In front of the engraved marker is a Town of Vienna Historic marker which designates that the cemetery is on the Historic Register.





****Stop 4 WEST ST. NW NOTABLE
FORMER FAMILIES
Town Councilman George Lovelace
425 West St. NW***



~Then~

~Now~

- Originally from Evansville, Indiana, George Lovelace graduated with a major in physics from historically Black Lincoln College in Missouri, and entered the Army via ROTC in 1959.
- Prior to moving to Vienna, he served in combat support position in Vietnam, earned an advanced degree in telecommunications management, and was promoted to a senior staff position to a NATO communications board. He retired as lieutenant colonel in 1979.
- ***Col. Lovelace*** moved to Vienna in 1975. He became active in the community and got his political start in Vienna organizing homeowners to get better water and street services.
- Along with help of ***Mrs. Monica Thompson***, a resident in the Malcolm Heights neighborhood, the ***Malcolm-Windover Heights Civic Association*** was founded in 1976.
- He was the first President of the Association and continued to serve as President until 1980.
- ***He also served on the Vienna Town Council 1982-2010, and was Vice-Mayor for 3 terms.***
- He became the first African American elected from Northern Virginia to serve in the General Assembly in Richmond since Reconstruction.
- He was elected to Virginia's 35th House of Delegates District, 1996-1997.
- He and his wife relocated in Locust Grove, VA in 2010.



****Stop 5 WEST ST. NW***

Remembering the Past – The West Family

- This street was named for the *West Family* which has a long history in Vienna and Fairfax County.
- ***Thomas West (1814-1880)***, was born a slave, who became the personal assistant for Maj. John Chichester during the Civil War, was one of Vienna's first colored landowners.
- Both Thomas West and ***his son Daniel (1845-1907)*** obtained their freedom after the Civil War. After the War, Daniel came to Vienna from the Chichester plantation, and worked as a laborer for ***Maj. O.E. Hine***, an ex-Union Army officer who decided to live in Vienna.
- Daniel's father, Thomas, also worked for Maj. Hine, and they were instrumental in asking for and receiving assistance from the Major in the purchase of the land and the building of ***First Baptist Church of Vienna in 1867***.
- Both father and son assisted in the construction of the building.
- They are buried in the West End Cemetery.

****Stop 6 FORMER PROPERTY OF
WILLIAM ALEXANDER WEST
~NOW~***



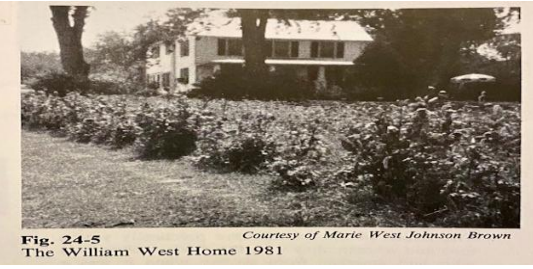


Fig. 24-5
The William West Home 1981

Courtesy of Marie West Johnson Brown

**Stop 6 WEST COURT NW
FORMER NOTABLE FAMILIES
William Alexander West*



- **WEST COURT** was the former property and home of William Alexander West, eldest son of Daniel West.
- William (Billy) West owned 5 acres of property and lived where West Court is now.
- His house and property have been replaced by nine houses in this court and other nearby houses.
- William A. West was born in his father's three room log cabin on Lawyers Rd. near Salsbury Spring in 1874.
- He went to school at First Baptist Church/School and graduated at age 15.
- He received special tutoring by Mrs. O. E. Hine, then entered a three year education course at Howard University.
- He became a teacher and taught at Vienna Public School A (a.k.a. Vienna Colored School) at the corner of Lawyers and Malcolm Roads.
- In 1944, he helped to organize the Fairfax County NAACP, and served as chapter secretary for many years.
- In 1952, William West ran for Vienna Town Council, and lost by one vote. He was well known and greatly respected by both white and colored residents.
- He died in 1978, at age 104.



****Stop 7 WEST ST. NW FORMER NOTABLE FAMILIES
Former Site of James & Mabel Ellis House
(Demolished) - 447 West St. NW***

- Mr. & Mrs. Ellis were both active in the community. They began living on West St. around 1940.
- After the death of Mrs. Louise Archer, principal of the Vienna Colored School, on April 1, 1948, Mrs. Ellis wrote a letter to the School Board dated April 17, 1948, along with a petition, signed by 20 former students of Mrs. Archer and graduates of the school.
- The letter and petition were presented to the Fairfax Co. School Board requesting that the name of the school be changed from Vienna Colored School, as it was officially known by Fairfax Co., to Louise Archer School. The Board approved, and the name was officially changed. The dedication ceremony was held on April 16, 1950 in the school auditorium.
- Prior to living on West St., ***James Ellis*** and his friend ***Fred Drew*** built a log cabin on Cabin Rd. c. 1937 at the request of ***Mrs. Katrina Hine Echols***, daughter of Maj. O. E. Hine. The Ellis family lived in the cabin before moving to their home on West St.
- The house previously owned by Mr. & Mrs. Ellis was sold and replaced with a new house.



****Stop 8 WEST ST. NW FORMER NOTABLE FAMILIES
Former Site of Cora Patterson and Naomi Walker Family House
468 West St. NW***

(The building was demolished in 2017 and replaced with a new house)

- This plot of land was the location of the home of Mrs. Naomi Walker and her family who moved into the house in 1963, and lived there until they sold the house and relocated to Manassas, VA. in October, 2016.
- Mrs. Walker bought the house from Mrs. Mary Louise Fenwick, who said it is believed that Mrs. Cora Patterson, a woman of color and the original owner, paid \$1.00 for the house as a settlement awarded to her because the house was not built to her specifications.
- The house was built in 1889, one year before Vienna was incorporated as a town. It was enlarged by an addition to the side of the house in 1925.
- Legend has it that Mrs. Patterson operated a guest house where teachers from the District of Columbia came in the summers to relax and enjoy the “country side.” It was considered to be one of the nicest homes in the Vienna area.
- Some of the unique features of the farmhouse style were the cupola on the roof, the colonial windows, a number of fireplaces and French doors inside, and the large wrap around front porch.