

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

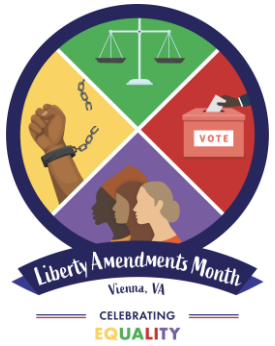
*Compiled by Sylvia Taylor and Gloria Runyon*

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

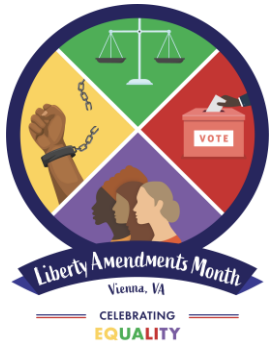
# *INTRODUCTION*

- 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 150<sup>th</sup> 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*



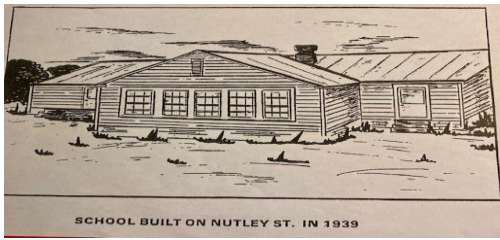
- *The 13th Amendment to the Constitution* abolished slavery within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction, stating that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crimes.
- *The 14th Amendment to the Constitution* granted citizenship to all persons born 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 -3-*

- *Stop 14 Louise Archer School* - 324 Nutley St. NW
- *Stop 15 Sarah Walker Mercer Park* - corner of Nutley St. NW & Knoll St. NW
- *Stop 16 James H. Hayes/Bull Run Elks Lodge* - 250 Nutley St. NW
- *Stop 17 Taylor Home* (on the historic register) - 214 Nutley St. NW
- *Stop 18 Thomas/Holmes Home* -128 Nutley St. NW
- *Stop 19 Minor Home* - 130 Pleasant St. NW



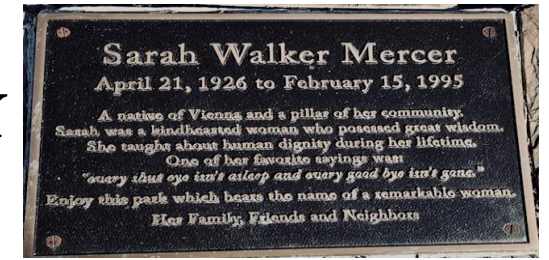
## ***\*Stop 14 LOUISE ARCHER SCHOOL 324 Nutley St. NW***



- ***Louise Archer School*** was built in 1939 as a three room school, under the leadership of principal ***Mrs. Louise Reeves Archer***.
- The school relocated from its previous location at Malcolm & Lawyers Rd. NW., which was built in the 1890s by the Town of Vienna as a one room school named ***Vienna Colored School***. In 1924, the school was enlarged to three rooms.
- Mrs. Archer began as principal and teacher at the original location in ~~1922~~ [correct date: 1924] .
- Mrs. Archer's teaching staff consisted of ***Mrs. Channie Henderson*** (first & second grades) and ***Mrs. Mabel Mack*** (third & fourth grades), and ***Mrs. Archer*** (grades 5-7)
- After Mrs. Archer's death in April, 1948, Mrs. James Ellis and former students petitioned the School Board to rename the school in honor of Mrs. Archer, the beloved first principal and teacher during the years of ~~1922~~ [1924] and 1948. The name was officially changed to ***Louise Archer School***. A dedication took place in 1950. (Corrected date S.T., 3/10/26)
- Mrs. Archer was a visionary pioneer who tirelessly pursued excellence in the education of her students.
- The expanded school became integrated in 1965 and is the only colored elementary school in Fairfax County that is still in use as an elementary school.
- The locations of ***Louise Archer School*** and ***First Baptist Church of Vienna***, which housed the first colored school in Vienna, have come full circle, as the school and the church are now neighbors.



***\*Stop 15 SARAH WALKER MERCER PARK  
Corner of Nutley St. & Knoll St. NW***



- This beautiful floral park built in 2006, honors the late *Sarah Walker Mercer* a beloved neighborhood figure who was often considered the “*Mother of the Neighborhood.*”
- She was a longtime faithful member of First Baptist Church of Vienna, and the head custodian at Louise Archer School for many years.
- Through the efforts of her neighbors and the Malcolm-Windover Heights Civic Association, the park was designed and named in her honor, and presented to the Vienna Town Council for approval. It is built next to her home.
- Engraved on the memorial plaque are the words: “*Sarah Walker Mercer April 21, 1926 to February 15, 1995. A native of Vienna and a pillar of her community. Sarah was a kindhearted woman who possessed great wisdom. She taught about human dignity during her lifetime. One of her favorite sayings was: “Every shut eye isn’t asleep and every goodbye isn’t gone.”*”
- Also planted in this park is a memorial tree and a plaque to honor *Maxine Shelley Turner*, a student at Louise Archer, a graduate of Madison High School, and a senior at Virginia Tech who was one of the victims in the Virginia Tech shooting tragedy in 2007.



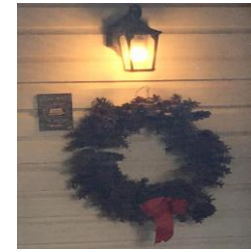
***\*Stop 16 JAMES H. HAYES-BULL RUN ELKS LODGE  
250 Nutley St. NW***

- James H. Hayes Lodge was established in 1924 by 15 members of the Vienna community.
- The Lodge was named after a Black Attorney from Richmond Virginia who played a big part in the voter registration rights for blacks in Charlottesville Virginia in the early 1900's.
- In 1928 the Elks Lodge purchased land in its current location.
- In the late 1950's some of the land was taken by Fairfax County and annexed for James Madison High School property.
- The James H. Hayes Elks Lodge played an important part in the community by supporting educational programs for the youth, supporting a program called Helping Hands, supporting the Easter Egg hunt jointly with First Baptist Church of Vienna, and supporting the Black History Heritage program and the Martin Luther King Jr. program every year.
- The Bull Run Lodge in Manassas, VA merged with the James H. Hayes Lodge in 2016.
- Today, the Lodge remains active and practices the principles of order, which are *Charity, Justice and Brotherly Love*.
- There are several descendants of charter members that remain active within the Lodge today.
- James H. Hayes-Bull Run Lodge is part of the Fraternity, Improved Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks of the World and has over 300,000 members nationwide.



## ***HISTORIC HOUSES***

***\*Stop 17 TAYLOR HOUSE - 214 Nutley St. NW***  
*(Listed on the Town of Vienna Historic Register)*



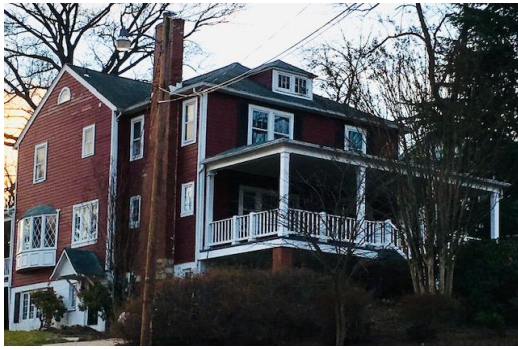
- In 1907, the deed to this house from H. L. Salsbury to Gilmore Taylor was signed.
- This house is one of the best examples left in Vienna of a home owned by a freed man and his family.
- The ownership shifted from Gilmore Taylor and his wife to their son Bentley Taylor and his wife Alice. It was commonly known as “*Aunt Alice’s House*” until 1978.
- After a series of owners, it was purchased by **Mr. & Mrs. Edward Maillett** in 1995 who registered it as a historic home in 2009.
- Descendants of Mr. & Mrs. Gilmore Taylor still reside in Vienna.
- Gilmore Taylor’s grave is located in the West End Cemetery.



## ***HISTORIC HOUSES***

***\*Stop 18 THOMAS-HOLMES HOUSE - 128 Nutley St. NW  
Corner of Nutley Street and Windover Avenue.***

- Built in 1900, this house was owned by ***Carson and Mary Dade Thomas***.
- They had 5 daughters, two of whom were prominent members of the Vienna community.
- ***Mrs. Odessa Thomas Carter*** was a Town Clerk for the town of Vienna, and the first African American to hold this position.
- Her sister, ***Mrs. Mable Thomas Mack***, was a teacher at the ***Vienna Colored School*** from 1929 through the 1950's when the school was officially renamed ***Louise Archer School*** in 1950 (in honor of Mrs. Louise Archer), the former principal. She taught grades, three & four during her tenure there. She also served as principal from April - May, 1948, following the death of Mrs. Archer.
- The current owner of the house is ***Mrs. June Holmes, widow of Tyrone Holmes, grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Carson Thomas and son of the third daughter, Harriet.***
- The Thomas-Holmes property extended from Windover Avenue to Maple Ave. including all of Village Green. This area was where the family livestock and garden were located.
- During the Christmas season, the family has an extensive Christmas light display on the Windover Ave. side of their property. All symbolic aspects of the holiday are represented.



***HISTORIC HOUSES***  
***\*Stop 19 MINOR HOUSE***  
***(Demolished in 2024) - 130 Pleasant St. NW***



- ***Andrew Minor and his wife Emma***, employees of ***Capt. Harmon Salsbury***, were also well known residents in Vienna.
- The house that stood at 130 Pleasant St. NW was built on land recorded in a deed in 1899.
- The next generation rebuilt and enlarged it.
- Minor made two land transactions with Capt. Salsbury before 1900. The first for 5½ acres at Court House Rd. & Pleasant St. extending up Pleasant St. toward Maple in 1889. ***Son Joseph and wife*** built a house at 210 Pleasant St. SW.
- A portion of the land was sold to trustees of Union New School Baptist Church of Vienna, now ***New Union Baptist Church***.