

Department of Historic Resources

For Immediate Release

July 6, 2012

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STATE ADDS 17 HISTORIC SITES TO THE VIRGINIA LANDMARKS REGISTER

—New listings cover historic sites in the counties of Alleghany, Arlington, Augusta, Fairfax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Loudoun, Mathews, and Middlesex; and the cities of Alexandria, Lynchburg, Richmond, and Virginia Beach—

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—An expanded Fort Monroe Historic District in Hampton is also approved for VLR—

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—VLR listings will be forwarded for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places—

RICHMOND – Among the 17 historic places or properties recently approved for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register by the Department of Historic Resources are a Shenandoah Valley farmhouse where painter “Grandma” Moses lived, a nearly forgotten Civil War-era cemetery established for African Americans in Alexandria, and a log-built boat that reflects a once common construction technique for the large craft used by watermen on the Chesapeake Bay.

Long before her folk-art paintings of rural scenes and farm life earned her nationwide fame and the nickname “Grandma,” Anna Mary Robinson Moses lived in **Staunton** and **Augusta County** with her husband, Thomas, and their children. The circa 1850 two-story brick farm house, called Mt. Airy, where the family lived from 1901 to 1902 has been added to the Virginia Landmarks Register, the state’s official list of historically significant sites, buildings, and structures.

Although the Moseses resided only briefly at Mt. Airy, they lived in the Staunton area from 1887 until 1905, when they returned to their home state of New York to farm. Mt. Airy was the first home the couple purchased, and it is the most intact of the surviving houses in which they lived during their time in Augusta County.

Among the 1,000-plus paintings Moses produced in her later life at least 38 depict scenes in Virginia, with many titles mentioning Staunton or the Shenandoah Valley, places she remembered fondly until her death at age 101 in 1961.

The Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery in **Alexandria** is one of the only known burial grounds in the U.S. to be established and administered by the federal government for the interment of African American “contrabands and freedmen” during and immediately following the Civil War.

The U.S. Army established the cemetery in March 1864 on property taken from a cousin of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. The cemetery, which today is an archaeological site, became the final resting place for 1,711 black migrants, refugees, and freedom seekers who died in Alexandria and its surrounds.

Today’s site gives little indication of the cemetery’s existence, and after a gas station and commercial building were constructed there in the mid-1950s, the burial ground was nearly forgotten until the latter 1980s when the Office of Historic Alexandria discovered newspaper articles recounting its establishment during the Civil War.

The cemetery also once contained the graves of 118 United States Colored Troops (USCT) who died during the Civil War. However, an 1864 protest and petition by convalescing fellow soldiers in the USCT resulted in their reburial in what is now Alexandria National Cemetery.

The City of Alexandria purchased most of the cemetery site and has embarked upon a five-year process of archaeology, research, and design and interpretation at the site to create the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial.

The *F.D. Crockett*, constructed in 1924, is a Poquoson-style log-hulled deck boat consisting of nine logs. It is one of only two large log deck boats still in existence that was built specifically for an internal combustion engine. It is also the only one with its original log bottom, and the only one remaining in Virginia.

Alexander Gaines, one of the last traditional log boat builders in the Middlesex County area, built the *F. D. Crockett* during a period when watermen on the Chesapeake Bay were turning away from sail to engine-powered boats of plank and frame construction – although traditional log-built boats were sturdier than the plank and frame ones of the time, and could better withstand storms and heavy seas.

Representative of the Tidewater region's tradition of log boat construction, which extends back to the dugout canoes Virginia Indians built, the *F.D. Crockett* is now owned by the **Deltaville** Maritime Museum, where it is on display in **Middlesex County**.

In addition to the *F.D. Crockett*, two historic sites from the Tidewater area were added to the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR). They are:

- **Briarwood**, a large Tudor Revival-style house built in 1932 in the then newly-developed resort city of **Virginia Beach**. Briarwood was designed by notable regional architect Wickham C. Taylor, who created many prominent Tidewater homes. The house was built as a summer home for realtor James Bingham and his wife and family and is the best example of the Tudor Revival style remaining in the city.
- **Riverlawn**, in **Mathews County**, is a locally significant property for its association with community leader and businessman John J. Burke III, who resided there with his wife from 1917 to 1931. Largely unaltered since 1931, Riverlawn was constructed in 1874. While Burke lived there, he was active in local and regional finance and politics, and served as director of the Bank of Mathews and publisher of the *Mathews Journal*. Riverlawn is also locally significant as an embodiment of a large and well-proportioned 1870s simplified Federal/Colonial Revival-style dwelling with sensitive updates in the 1920s and 1950s.

In addition to the Mt. Airy and the Contraband and Freedmen Cemetery listings, five other sites from Northern Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley (the area covered by DHR's Northern Regional Preservation Office) were added to the VLR:

- **Furr Farm** in **Loudoun County** was the site of a fierce cavalry skirmish during the Civil War Battle of Aldie, fought in June 1863. The Furr Farm House, portions of which date to circa 1790, served as a field hospital during the battle at Furr Farm. Today the property remains largely unaltered from its appearance 150 years ago. Among the farm's historic landmarks are a stone wall that figured in the battle and an 1891 monument to the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry Regiment, commemorating Union soldiers who died during the battle.
- **Galemont** in **Fauquier County** is a 237-acre farm located on the western approach to Thoroughfare Gap, the mountain pass through which a colonial road extended west toward Winchester by the mid-1700s. The house, which dates to the late 1700s, evolved with expansions in 1857, 1872, and between 1887-1904, resulting in a unique combination Federal/Greek Revival and Folk Victorian stylistic elements. Galemont

also witnessed the 1862 Civil War Battle of Thoroughfare Gap. Traces of the colonial-era road are visible today on the property.

- Georgetown Pike, in Fairfax and Arlington counties, was constructed between 1813 and 1827 by two privately organized turnpike companies to connect Georgetown markets with agricultural and manufacturing interests in Leesburg and beyond. The pike's construction met the best engineering standards of its day by utilizing two layers of stones fitted closely together and crowned in the center to improve drainage and wear. In the 1920s, Georgetown Pike was adapted as a toll road for automobiles, and in 1934 the Commonwealth of Virginia acquired it.
- The Lovettsville Historic District in **Loudoun County** includes the town's core and several settlement-era cemeteries and a church on its perimeter. Settled by German immigrants in the late 1700s, the Lovettsville community was home to farmers, merchants, and craftsmen whose slave-holding was limited. It was one of only a handful of Virginia communities that strongly opposed secession and supported the Union at the onset of the Civil War. With its location on a main route between Leesburg and a strategic Potomac River crossing just two-and-one-half miles distant, Lovettsville found itself in the path of Union and Confederate forces often during the war. Today's historic district features varied architectural and cultural resources such as an 18th-century burial ground with German stones, more than a dozen pre-Civil War residences and buildings, and a large number of late-19th- and 20th-century commercial structures and dwellings, as well as a landmark African-American church and burial ground.
- Sydenstricker School, in Springfield, in **Fairfax County**, was the last one-room schoolhouse built prior to school consolidation in Fairfax County, as well as the last operating one-room schoolhouse in the county when it closed in 1939. In 1954, the Upper Pohick Community League -- the oldest community association in the Springfield area, and one of the oldest in Fairfax County -- purchased the building from the county, and it has since owned and maintained the schoolhouse.

In central and Southside Virginia, the area covered by DHR's Capital Regional Preservation Office, the following six sites were approved for listing in the VLR, beginning with four in Richmond:

- The Armitage Manufacturing Company building complex dates back to 1900. The complex has been associated with two major industries significant to the industrial history of **Richmond**: building supplies and roofing paper and corrugated cardboard container manufacturing, beginning with Armitage in 1900 and continuing with the Fibre Board Container Co. in 1916-1956. The Armitage building is a fine example of turn-of-the-20th-century heavy-timber construction and is the earliest known industrial design of the Richmond-based architectural firm of Noland & Baskervill (present day Baskervill & Son).
- The Forest Hill Historic District in **Richmond** arose as a trolley car suburb in an area just south of the James River and the city's historic central business district. One of several street car neighborhoods that arose in Richmond during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries, Forest Hill features a blend of house sizes, from the large and sprawling Victorian Queen Anne and Colonial Revival-style mansions on park-like lots to modest, small-scale Craftsmen-style bungalows and Tudor Revival dwellings on smaller lots, among other popular architectural styles.
- The Southern Biscuit Company building in **Richmond** dates to 1927, and served the company (also known as FFV and Interbake) until it relocated its cookie and cracker production elsewhere in 2006. The building is an excellent example of industrial design by Francisco & Jacobus, a successful New York firm. During the 1930s, Southern Biscuit Company, founded in 1899, became the first company to produce the Girl Scouts of America's now-famous cookies.
- The Three Chopt Road Historic District encompasses a remarkable group of large architect-designed upscale houses and churches that arose along a 1.3-mile stretch of **Richmond's** Three Chopt Road during

the first half of the 20th century. In contrast to most street car suburbs of its day, which were typically laid out in street grids, the Three Chopt Road district developed as residential clusters along the historic roadway and near to two streetcar stops. Today's district features some of Richmond's finest residential architecture and includes the work of numerous notable Virginia architects.

Beyond Richmond, two other sites from DHR's capital regional office's coverage area were also approved for listing in the VLR by the Board of Historic Resources when it convened for its regular quarterly meeting on June 21 to consider new nominations to the Virginia Landmarks Register:

- **Lynchburg's Armstrong School** was built for African American students during Virginia's era of segregated education. Constructed just prior to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* that struck down racial segregation in public schools, the school was a so-called "equalization school," intended by racial segregationists to forestall integration by offering modern amenities approximately equal to those of whites only elementary schools in Lynchburg at the time.
- **Seay's Chapel Methodist Church** is a modest Gothic Revival church in **Fluvanna County**. Built in 1893 by James Henry Anderson, who constructed two other Methodist churches in the county, Seay's Chapel is unusual in that it retains its original look and feel, having been little altered since its construction. It remains an active place of worship.

One historic district in the area of the state covered by DHR's Western Regional Preservation Office was also approved for listing in the VLR:

- The **Clifton Forge Residential Historic District** in **Alleghany County** occupies 174 acres of the town's original 1890 plat map and centers on the core concentration of housing that is associated with the period of growth and prosperity of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, which established rail yards and terminal facilities there in 1890. The district contains single-family vernacular houses dating to the turn-of-the-20th century, and numerous churches and schools, including several that are associated with the district's African-American community. The district also includes the 1920s-era Clifton Forge High School and Public Playground (now Memorial Park), and the 1940-41 armory building, as well as the town's first cemetery, Crown Hill.

Fort Monroe:

The Board of Historic Resources also approved an expanded boundary for the **Fort Monroe Historic District** in **Hampton**, previously listed in the state and national registers. The new Fort Monroe Historic District nomination form, resulting from the district's boundary increase, significantly updates information about the district, providing for the first time detailed documentation about the fort's history and its significance both nationally, statewide, and locally. The form also offers a comprehensive inventory of contributing (and non-contributing) buildings and structures within the district.

The newly expanded 400-acre Fort Monroe Historic District includes an impressive collection of intact, architecturally varied historic buildings and structures constructed by the U.S. Army between 1819 and 1960. Designated a National Historic Landmark (a separate designation from the National Register of Historic Places) in 1960, Fort Monroe is one of the oldest military posts under continuous use by the U.S. Army. Construction started in 1819 and it remained garrisoned through September 15, 2011, when it was decommissioned and returned to the possession of the Commonwealth of Virginia under a 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) decision.

Strategically located at Hampton Roads, Fort Monroe served as a defensive fortification on the East Coast, guarding the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay and the nation's interior, a role it assumed in the years soon after the British burned Washington DC during the War of 1812.

During the Civil War, Fort Monroe was a vital Union military asset and installation. General Benjamin F. Butler made his seminal “contraband” decision in 1861 while in command at Fort Monroe when he declared that enslaved African Americans employed by the Confederates could be confiscated as contraband of war and thus would not be returned to their former owners.

Fort Monroe is also closely associated with Robert E. Lee who oversaw completion of the fort’s construction while he resided there in the early 1830s as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. During the Civil War, Lincoln stayed at the fort during visits with his military commanders, and after the war Confederate President Jefferson Davis was imprisoned there for a time.

Fort Monroe is the fourth known fortification to have been built at Old Point Comfort since the settlement of Jamestown, and the newly expanded historic district has the potential for significant archaeological resources, including prehistoric cultural deposits.

The new state VLR listings approved during June’s board meeting will be forwarded by DHR Director Kathleen S. Kilpatrick to the National Park Service for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Listing a property in the state or national register places no restrictions on what a property owner may do with his or her property.

Designating a property to the state or national registers – either individually or as a contributing building in a historic district – provides an owner the opportunity to pursue historic rehabilitation tax credit improvements to the building. Such tax credit projects must comply with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. An owner of a register-listed landmark may also donate a preservation easement on the property to the Commonwealth of Virginia in return for state tax credits.

As a state, Virginia is a national leader in the U.S. in listing historic sites and districts in the National Register of Historic Places. The state is also a national leader for the number of federal tax credit rehabilitation projects proposed and completed each year.

Together the register and tax credit rehabilitation programs have played a significant role in promoting the conservation of the Commonwealth’s historic places and in spurring economic revitalization in many Virginia towns and communities.

The nomination forms, which provide detailed information about each of the above listings, can be accessed on the DHR website at the following address: <http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/boardPage.html>.

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