

## Department of Historic Resources

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## **EIGHT NEW STATE HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKERS APPROVED**

*—Markers cover topics in counties of Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Fairfax, Orange, Stafford, cities of Hampton and Lynchburg (2)—*

**[Note: The full text for each marker is reproduced at the end of this release.]**

RICHMOND – An “old folks” home for former slave women, a Confederate camp that emerged as a refuge for freed slaves after the Civil War, a resort hotel and four schools built to serve African Americans during the era of segregation, and the origins of the Town of Reston are highlighted in eight new historical highway markers recently approved by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

In **Lynchburg** a new marker will recall Amelia Perry Pride’s Dorchester Home. “Established in 1897 by Hampton Institute graduate and Lynchburg public school principal Amelia Perry Pride,” according to the sign’s text, the home “provided shelter, fuel, clothing, and food for its residents until their deaths.” Pride, who adhered to “Hampton Institute’s principle of uplifting her race through self-help,” was “a passionate advocate of African American and Virginia Indian education,” in the words of the forthcoming marker.

Another **Lynchburg** marker will highlight Camp Davis, “a Civil War mustering ground for Confederate troops from Virginia under the command of Colonel Jubal A. Early.” The camp was located in a part of the city that emerged as an African American neighborhood during Reconstruction, “when Camp Davis became an important refuge for freed slaves,” according to the approved marker’s text. The camp was also the site before 1870 of a Federal military headquarters, a Freedmen’s Bureau’s Camp Davis School, and a black Methodist Episcopal church.

Both Lynchburg markers are sponsored by Old City Cemetery, the Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum, and the Lynchburg Historical Foundation.

In the City of **Hampton**, a marker will rise to commemorate Bay Shore Hotel, which opened “in 1898 as a cooperative venture by 60 African Americans to establish a coastal resort for blacks from across the South during the segregation era,” the sign will read. Operating until 1973, the hotel had a dance pavilion, café, private beach, and amusement park. Among jazz greats who performed at the hotel were Cab Calloway,

Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Newport News native Ella Fitzgerald. The marker is sponsored by the Hampton Convention and Visitor Bureau.

Among the four black schools to be recognized by historical markers are two Rosenwald schools, Saint Paul's Chapel School in **Brunswick County** and Orange Graded School in the **Town of Orange** in Orange County.

Rosenwald schools were built with plans and matching funds provided by the Julius Rosenwald Fund between 1917 and 1932. Rosenwald, a philanthropist and president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, established the fund through his initial collaboration with Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute. The fund gave rise to more than 5,000 schools in mostly rural black communities in the segregated South. As many as 367 Rosenwalds schools are believed to have been built in Virginia.

Constructed in 1920, Saint Paul's Chapel School was a one-teacher school plan and among the earliest of the dozen-plus Rosenwald schools built in Brunswick County. Former student Erwin L. Avery restored the school in 2004 and it is listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places. The marker is sponsored by William A. Olson of Woodbridge, Virginia.

The Orange Graded School, built in 1925, replaced an older African-American schoolhouse in Orange. A standard four-teacher Rosenwald plan school, it was one of the larger Rosenwalds built in Virginia. The Orange County School Board is sponsor of the marker.

In Stafford County, the Stafford Training School, also known as H. H. Poole School, will be honored with a marker that recalls the school's construction in 1939 by the Public Works Administration, a program of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency. "African American parents raised money to buy the land" for the school, according to the forthcoming marker. Two students at the school led efforts to desegregate the all-white Stafford Elementary School in September 1961. The marker is sponsored by Stafford County.

The Dinwiddie Normal Industrial School in **Dinwiddie County** was "the first African American High School built in the county during the segregation era," the marker will read. The school building burned in 1953 and a new school, renamed Southside High School, opened in 1954 and operated until 2012. Southside High School Alumni and Friends is sponsoring the marker.

In **Fairfax County** the marker "Reston—a 'New Town'" will commemorate this community's development. Beginning in 1961, Reston arose on 6,750 acres of a former farm "as a community open to all races, ages, and incomes," according to the future sign. "With innovative zoning, Reston became one of the first master-planned communities in the United States, with residential clusters, mixed-use development, landscape conservation, ample recreational space, walking and biking trails, and public art," the

marker will read. In 2002, Reston received the American Institute of Certified Planners' National Landmark Award. The Reston Historic Trust is sponsoring the marker.

The texts for these eight new historical markers were approved by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources during its quarterly meeting in March.

The Virginia highway marker program, which began in 1927 with erection of the first historical markers along U.S. Rte. 1, is considered the oldest such program in the nation. Currently there are more than 2,500 official state markers, most of which are maintained by Virginia Department of Transportation, except in those localities outside of VDOT's authority.

The manufacturing cost of each new highway marker is covered by its sponsor.

More information about the Historical Highway Marker Program is available on the website of the Department of Historic Resources at <http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/>.

### **Full Text of Markers:**

*(Please note that locations are only proposed; they have yet to be confirmed with VDOT or other officials in jurisdictions not overseen by VDOT; also, some texts may be slightly modified before installation.)*

#### **Saint Paul's Chapel School – Rosenwald Funded**

Among the earliest of the more than a dozen Julius Rosenwald Schools built in Brunswick County, Saint Paul's Chapel School was constructed as a one-teacher standard plan in 1920 under the initial wave of Tuskegee Institute-administered building funds. Contributors included the Rosenwald Fund (\$300), local black families (\$450), and public money (\$750) for a total of \$1,500. Between 1917 and 1932, the Rosenwald Fund helped build more than 5,000 African American schools across the rural South. Former student Erwin L. Avery restored the school in 2004. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

**Sponsor:** William A. Olson

**Locality:** Brunswick County

**Proposed Location:** VA State Route 844, just off Interstate 85.

#### **Orange Graded School – Rosenwald Funded**

Orange Graded School, built in 1925 to replace the African American schoolhouse on West Main Street stood here. Of the several county schools for black students, Orange Graded was the only one built using the Julius Rosenwald Fund, which was established in 1917 by the president of Sears, Roebuck and Company to construct schools for African Americans across the rural South. Of the \$6,200 building cost, 40 percent was raised by the local African American community. This four-teacher standard plan school was one of the larger Rosenwalds built in Virginia. Gussie Baylor Taylor was recruited to teach in 1925 and later served as the school's supervisor.

**Sponsor:** Judith P. Carter, chairman Orange County School Board  
**Locality:** Orange, Virginia  
**Proposed Location:** 200 Dailey Dr.

### **Stafford Training School**

Stafford Training School, later known as H. H. Poole School, was constructed in 1939 by the Public Works Administration after African American parents raised money to buy the land. During the segregation era, this was the only school in Stafford County offering black students an education beyond seventh grade. After an earlier attempt failed, two young students from this school, Doretha and Cynthia Montague, successfully entered the all-white Stafford Elementary School on 5 Sept. 1961, seven years after the Supreme Court's *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision ruled school segregation unconstitutional. Thereafter school systems in the Fredericksburg region desegregated.

**Sponsor:** Anthony J. Romanello, County Administrator, Stafford County  
**Locality:** Stafford County, Virginia  
**Proposed Location:** 1729 Jefferson Davis Highway

### **Dinwiddie Normal Industrial School (Southside High School)**

Dinwiddie Normal Industrial School, the first African American High School built in the county during the segregation era, stood three miles southeast. The building burned in 1953 though plans were in progress to construct a modern facility on this site as part of county efforts to build "separate but equal" schools. Bids came from across the region, and in Aug 1952, the school board chose Farmville's Mottley Construction Co. to build the new school, which was renamed Southside High School. The school opened in spring 1954 with 520 students. Dr. Roy Watson served as principal. The school was closed in 2012.

**Sponsor:** Southside High School Alumni and Friends  
**Locality:** Dinwiddie County  
**Proposed Location:** 12318 Boydton Plank Rd., Dinwiddie, VA, 2 miles north of Dinwiddie Courthouse

### **Amelia Perry Pride's Dorchester Home**

Near this spot stood a small frame house known as Dorchester Home or Old Folks Home for impoverished former slave women. Established in 1897 by Hampton Institute graduate and Lynchburg public school principal Amelia Perry Pride (1857-1932), it provided shelter, fuel, clothing, and food for its residents until their deaths. Following Hampton Institute's principle of uplifting her race through self-help, Pride was a passionate advocate of African American and Virginia Indian education. In Lynchburg, she provided scholarships for many young women seeking higher education and established sewing and cooking schools for women and men entering vocational fields.

**Sponsor:** Old City Cemetery, Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum, Lynchburg Historical Foundation  
**Locality:** City of Lynchburg

**Proposed Location:** 1305 Pierce Street

### **Camp Davis**

Camp Davis, a Civil War mustering ground for Confederate troops from Virginia under the command of Colonel Jubal A. Early, once occupied this area. At least 130 Southern soldiers died at the camp's own Pratt Hospital and were buried in Lynchburg's Old City Cemetery. The neighborhood's historically African American identity took shape during Reconstruction, when Camp Davis became an important refuge for freed slaves. Before being annexed by the city in 1870, it was the site of Federal military headquarters, the Freedmen's Bureau's Camp Davis School, headed by Jacob Eschbach Yoder, and a black Methodist Episcopal church.

**Sponsor:** Old City Cemetery, Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum, Lynchburg Historical Foundation

**Locality:** City of Lynchburg

**Proposed Location:** Pierce Street, halfway between 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> streets, northside

### **Bay Shore Hotel**

Bay Shore Hotel opened here in 1898 as a cooperative venture by 60 African Americans to establish a coastal resort for blacks from across the South during the segregation era. Ravaged by an August 1933 hurricane, it was rebuilt and operated until 1973. It had a dance pavilion, café, private beach, and amusement park, and hosted state and national conferences, sporting events, and concerts, along with honeymoons, family vacations, and day trips. Jazz greats Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, and Duke Ellington performed here, and pioneering African American groups, the American Bridge Association and Tri-State Dental Association, now the National Dental Association, held their founding meetings here.

**Sponsor:** Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau

**Locality:** City of Hampton

**Proposed Location:** TBD, near Buckroe Beach (slightly south)

### **Reston – a “New Town”**

In 1961, Robert E. Simon Jr. began developing 6,750 acres of Sunset Hills Farm as a community open to all races, ages, and incomes. Simon engaged the architectural firm of Whittlesey & Conklin, who designed a "New Town." Construction of Lake Anne Village, its lake, central plaza, stores, and townhouses, began in 1963. With innovative zoning, Reston became one of the first master-planned communities in the United States, with residential clusters, mixed-use development, landscape conservation, ample recreational space, walking and biking trails, and public art. Reston received the American Institute of Certified Planners' National Landmark Award in 2002.

**Sponsor:** Reston Historic Trust

**Locality:** Fairfax County

**Proposed Location:** Intersection of North Shore Drive and realigned Village Road, off Baron Cameron, Reston.