

Department of Historic Resources

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STATE ADDS 13 HISTORIC SITES TO THE VIRGINIA LANDMARKS REGISTER

–New listings cover sites in the counties of Amherst, Bath, Giles, Loudoun, Mathews, Montgomery, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, Rappahannock, Sussex, and Washington, and the cities of Alexandria and Winchester–

–Two previously listed historic districts in Hopewell and Lynchburg expanded; documentation significantly updated for a listing in Gloucester County–

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

RICHMOND – A farm that served as a refuge to Jews escaping Nazi Germany, an estate that is home today to a unique educational music center, and historic districts at the heart of five towns scattered from Tidewater to the Cumberland Gap Turnpike in southwest Virginia are among the new sites added to the Virginia Landmarks Register by the Department of Historic Resources.

Hyde Park, in **Nottoway County**, a former tobacco plantation dating to the latter 1700s, was purchased in 1938 by Richmond department store owner William B. Thalhimer to create a training farm for Jewish students of the German agricultural Gross Breesen Institute who sought escape from Nazi Germany.

At Hyde Park, Thalhimer established Hyde Farmlands, a corporation devoted to dairy and poultry operations. Between 1938 and early 1941, about 30 Jewish immigrants lived and worked there, until the corporation went broke and Thalhimer, then in poor health and personally funding the farm, shut down Hyde Farmlands.

After the U.S. entered World War II, most of the male Gross Breeseners who had resided at Hyde Park enlisted in the U.S. military, eager to gain citizenship and defeat the Nazis. During and after World War II, Hyde Park continued to provide refuge and agricultural opportunities, specifically for families of soldiers from nearby Fort Pickett, and for two Polish refugees who maintained the house and grounds for 30 years.

Hyde Park also is significant for its archaeological sites affiliated with enslaved African Americans who worked the tobacco plantation, the site of a vanished mill that was once part of the plantation, and the many farm buildings constructed by the Jewish refugees. Today the property retains its large main residence, which dates to the late 1700s, with Greek-Revival and Colonial-Revival style wings added in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Garth Newel Music Center in **Bath County** is the former estate and residence of husband and wife artists William Sergeant Kendall and Christine Herter Kendall. Begun in 1923 soon after the couple moved to Virginia, the rural 114-acre property is where the Kendells painted, raised award-winning Arabian horses, and entertained guests in a main house with an open floor plan that could accommodate the private concerts often hosted there.

A distinguished artist, William Sergeant Kendall achieved international recognition as a painter in the academic style. After he died in 1938, Christine Herter Kendall, also an accomplished artist, as well as an author, musician and patron of the arts, continued to make Garth Newel her home until her death in 1981. In 1973 she co-founded the Garth Newel Music Center, bequeathing her estate to the nonprofit at her death, ensuring Garth Newel would continue as a venue for small concerts.

Today it is the only residential music center in Virginia that exists strictly for the study and performance of chamber music. The property also features a one-story modern Ranch-style residence, two other secondary dwellings, a riding arena and horse barn, and stone entrance piers and retaining walls.

In Tidewater's **Sussex County** the Waverly Downtown Historic District arose soon after the Town of Waverly was established in 1854 on the Norfolk and Petersburg (now Norfolk Southern) Railroad. Waverly's historic district is an unusually well-preserved depot town on the rail line connecting Norfolk with points west. The district's earliest building dates from about 1880, but most of its historic buildings were constructed after a 1904 fire destroyed much of the town.

Waverly's prosperity derived from the processing and exporting of the region's agricultural products and exploitation of the region's timber from the late-19th through the mid-20th centuries. The district's buildings range from plain warehouses and small stores to large and elaborately detailed Classical Revival-style structures. The storefronts of many of the buildings were altered as business owners responded to the Great Depression and post World-War II trends by re-doing older buildings with Art Deco or modern elements.

In Southside Virginia's **Pittsylvania County**, the Gretna Commercial Historic District took shape with the arrival of the Lynchburg and Danville Railroad through the area between 1872 and 1874. The railroad swelled a settlement known as Franklin Junction. In 1901, it changed its name to Elba and in 1916 to Gretna.

Gretna's historic district contains 26 contributing buildings constructed between 1881 and the early 1960s, with many dating to Gretna's early period of development. Representing historic purpose-built commercial, governmental, and civic organizational buildings, their architecture ranges from the popular Commercial Style to the Colonial Revival style of the former Gretna Fire Station and Town Hall, to a Classical Revival social lodge building, and the Art Deco style of an early-20th century service station.

In mountainous southwestern Virginia, the Department of Historic Resources listed three new historic districts.

In the New River Valley's **Montgomery County**, the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District dates to 1792, when the town was established as a county seat and laid out in a courthouse square plan with its two main streets intersecting at the square. The district covers the historic governmental, institutional, and commercial core of the town along with its courthouse square and associated monuments.

Its buildings embody popular architectural forms and styles built between the 1850s and the early 1960s. Common architectural details include parapets, storefronts, and decorative sign panels of the Commercial Style, and less common Art Deco details such as low-relief motifs. Although the earliest courthouses in Christiansburg no longer stand, the historic monuments and 1937 Work Progress Administration–built Post Office distinguish its town square. The earliest building in the district is the Christiansburg Presbyterian church, completed in 1853.

The Glade Spring Commercial Historic District in **Washington County** comprises the core of a 19th-century community oriented toward the railroad. The oldest existing building in the district is a hotel building constructed in 1866. Representative of towns in the Valley of Virginia that arose with the arrival of the railroad, Glade Springs's role as a local commercial hub and an incorporated town is significant in the economic history of Washington County.

The Glade Spring district retains many of the commercial buildings constructed during its heyday, displaying a variety of storefront facades, with some also exhibiting impressive and elaborate masonry techniques. Like many towns once dependent on the railroad, Glade Spring's economy suffered a decline beginning in the mid-20th century with the advent of improved roads, Interstate highways, and a growing trucking industry that competed with the railroads for shipping freight.

Located **Giles County**, the Narrows Commercial Historic District arose as a result of its strategic location on the New River and major transportation routes. Originally settled in the late-18th century at the narrow gap in the mountains through which the New River passes, the Town of Narrows developed on the Cumberland Gap Turnpike, the route of which formed the two main streets in the district. The arrival of the Norfolk & Western Railway in 1882, followed by the Virginian Railway in 1907-1909, established Narrows as the major industrial town in the region and the largest town in the county.

With its natural resources and access to transportation for shipping, Narrows attracted various industries including mills, tan yards, power plants, and rail-related enterprises. Today, many of the district's commercial buildings date to the 1940s and later, after the nearby Celco Plant opened in 1939, spurring the town's growth. Celco globally dominated the production of cellulose acetate and related products after World War II and through to the latter 20th century, until environmental regulations and foreign competition combined to impact the plant's operations.

Other new listings in the Virginia Landmarks Register approved by the two boards of the Department of Historic Resources during their joint quarterly meeting on March 21 include the following:

- Arcola Elementary School in **Loudoun County** was constructed in 1939 as part of New Deal's Public Works Administration building campaign under President Franklin Roosevelt's administration. During the era of segregation, the school was the county's first elementary school for white students that offered individual classrooms for each grade. Marking a shift in the county away from one-room schools with limited curriculums, the multi-room school had space to support an expanded grade-based curriculum. In 1951 and 1956, additional classroom wings were added to the school. Today's site retains its original five-acre tract of open space.
- Dulwich Manor in **Amherst County** was constructed in 1909 as a summer house for Norfolk real estate mogul Herman Lawrence Page. The Neoclassical mansion is one of the largest and most ornate houses constructed in the county during the first half of the 20th century. Used for recreation and entertainment by the Page family for more than four decades, the house boasts large and open public spaces on the first floor.
- The Charles M. Goodman House in **Alexandria** was the home of Washington, D.C.-area architect Charles Morton Goodman, who brought the Modernist aesthetic to middle-class residential American architecture. After he purchased a circa-1870 Victorian farmhouse in 1946, Goodman modified and expanded it in the International Style with an open floor plan, natural textures and materials, and the blending of inside and outside spaces through the extensive use of glass. From the 1940s through the 1960s, Goodman designed more than 450 houses in Hollin Hills in Fairfax County and in other Washington suburbs. He also created prefabricated plans for the National Home Corporation that informed 100,000 homes, and designed the 1957 Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA) Care-Free Home. The Goodman House retains much of its original setting on a wooded suburban lot, and the property also includes a circa-1870s stone-lined well, and 1950s wooden fence and stone walls.
- Located in **Winchester**, Hawthorne is a handsome Late Georgian- to Federal-style residence constructed of stone. Partially built on an 18th-century foundation, the main block of the house dates to around 1811 and was expanded with a rear wing around 1840. The five-acre property features a circa-1816 Federal-style springhouse. The property's Old Town Spring was an early municipal water distribution system purchased by the City of Winchester in 1840 and believed to be one of the earliest such operations in Virginia. Hawthorne also is important as the one-time home of Civil War-era diarist Cornelia Peake McDonald. Her diary and recollections are a significant source of first-hand information about the impact of the war on the Shenandoah Valley's civilian population, particularly its women.
- The Locust Grove/R.E. Luttrell Farmstead in **Rappahannock County** dates to about 1815, when the main house was constructed. The farmstead evolved until about 1940, when major construction and alterations ceased on most of the 19-acre site's agricultural buildings. Representative of a Virginia Piedmont farmstead, Locust Grove was initially devoted to

subsistence farming before it became a horse farm in the 1920s. The main dwelling was constructed as a two-story, five-bay, frame I-House, with massive exterior-end stone and brick chimneys. It was expanded in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries. The interior retains period materials including door and window trim, chair rails, floors, doors and hardware, and has some very unusual mantels, unseen elsewhere in the region.

- Exemplifying a unique evolution of architectural style in **Mathews County**, Springdale preserves two important stages of construction. The original portion, built in the latter 18th century, is a simple but elegant Georgian-style two-story residence. Around the 1840s, a new owner significantly expanded the house with a Federal-style wing that uses a central hyphen to connect the Georgian and Federal portions. The house also features a locally distinctive lunette window. Located on an inlet of Put-In Creek, Springdale preserves the central domestic portion of a historic plantation landscape that thrived from about 1774 into the 20th century in Mathews County.

In other actions, DHR's two boards also approved the expansion of two previously-listed historic districts:

- In **Lynchburg**, the Rivermont Historic District was increased to include the Gothic Revival style St. John's Episcopal Church, designed by prominent Lynchburg architects Stanhope Johnson, Clarence Henry Hinnant, and Joseph Everette Fauber, Jr. The church property is oriented toward Rivermont Avenue and highly visible along it. St. John's was constructed in 1911-1912, and expanded most notably in 1926-1928 with a new sanctuary that more than doubled its facilities.
- The Downtown Hopewell Historic District was expanded to include 9 buildings constructed between 1944 and 1960, during the economic boom that followed the end of World War II. It also includes a building constructed in 1928.

The boards also approved a significant update to the nomination for the Gloucester Woman's Club, which was originally listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

- Situated on the edge of historic downtown **Gloucester**, the Gloucester Woman's Club building showcases nearly 250 years of history that includes its use as a residence beginning as early as 1770, as a mercantile and retail operation during the first half of the 19th century, as a carriage-manufacturing shop during the latter half, and its longest-held function as the headquarters of today's civic organization. Founded in 1913, the Gloucester Woman's Club has supported public programs in education, opportunities for girls and women, and the preservation and interpretation of its historic headquarters and other county sites.

All of these listing, including updates and district boundary increases, will be forwarded 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.

Virginia is a national leader among states 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 significant roles in promoting the conservation of the Commonwealth’s historic places and in spurring economic revitalization and tourism in many towns and communities.

Photographs and the nomination form for each of these properties can be accessed on the DHR website here: <http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/boardPage.html>.

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