City of Alexandria Launches Initiatives to Chronicle the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Legacy of George Floyd

The City of Alexandria has launched two initiatives to recognize and record the Alexandria community’s response to two ongoing, historic events: the global COVID-19 pandemic, and the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd on May 25. The City’s Office of Historic Alexandria is seeking personal stories, objects, photographs, and documents that capture these unprecedented moments in history. These initiatives reach out to residents, businesses, schools, healthcare workers, faith communities and civic organizations to tell these national stories at the local level.

For the first initiative, “Chronicling the Pandemic,” the community is encouraged to share stories about living or working in Alexandria during the pandemic; describe how they and their families’ lives have changed; show how they have been able to help others; narrate how others have helped them; or illustrate what became different in Alexandria because of the pandemic. Participants can also share artwork, homemade items, photographs, journals, or other artifacts that can help document the impact of COVID-19 on the community. To share a story, or to provide information
about objects to be considered for acquisition into the City’s historical collections, simply complete and submit the Chronicling the Pandemic form.

The second initiative, “The Legacy of George Floyd and Alexandria’s Response,” invites the community to share signs, t-shirts, flyers, photographs, journals, personal stories, and artifacts that document local vigils and protests. Items accepted for donation to the City’s historical collections will be housed at the Alexandria Black History Museum. To share a story or to provide information about objects that might be considered for the project, complete the Legacy of George Floyd: Documenting Alexandria’s Response form.

In compliance with the governor’s Stay-at-Home order, the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) sites are closed and public programs are cancelled. OHA staff will reach out to guests who have made reservations for these events, as well as for pre-arranged tours, rentals, and birthday parties scheduled during this time. Please refer to the Calendar for the status of Commission and other departmental associated meetings.

Due to the changing nature of the situation, we are not announcing a reopening date at this time and will provide updates on our website. For additional information about the City of Alexandria’s actions, visit alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus.

HistoricALX2U This Week

The Historic Alexandria museums are temporarily closed, but that doesn’t mean we stop sharing the stories of our City and its history. We are pleased to introduce you to #HistoricALX2U!

Each weekday we share stories and content - from virtual tours of the sites and museums to educational activities. This week, join us for:

- #MakeItMonday: Add your words to #MyWishForUS, a nation-wide campaign led by History Made By Us.
- #TourTuesday: Assistant Director Brian Briones explains the symbolism of Fort Ward’s Ceremonial Gate.
- #WaterfrontWednesday: Consider how changing shorelines are captured by map makers.
- #ThrowbackThursday: Learn about Hannah Nokes, an openly transgender African American woman in the 1930s.
- #FactCheckFriday: Did you know that today is Juneteenth, a celebration of the emancipation of enslaved people?
Follow the Historic Alexandria Facebook page or explore our center of learning website at alexandriava.gov/Historic. To add more to your learning, many Historic Alexandria sites have their own channels on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

**THIS WEEK IN ALEXANDRIA’S HISTORY**

On June 17, 1899, druggist John Janney closed the pharmacy he had operated at the northwest corner of King and Washington Streets and left Alexandria to open a new drugstore in Newport News. It was the first time in over 50 years that Alexandrians could remember the store being closed and vacant. The store subsequently was acquired by Ernest Allen and, in 1906, became Timbermann’s Drug Store, which operated at the prominent corner until moving one building north in 1950.

**UPCOMING COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE EVENTS**

All Committee and Commission meetings are cancelled through July. Further updates will be sent out in the event more cancellations are required.