

in 1802, the central building of the complex that is now the Martha Washington Inn was constructed as a private residence for General Francis Preston and family. It was sold in 1858 and in 1860 became Martha Washington College, named in honor of the first lady. The two wings were added at this time. During this period the college also served as a Civil War hospital. It began operating as a hotel in 1935 and has seen such illustrious guests as Eleanor Roosevelt, Jimmy Carter, Elizabeth Taylor and Gregory Peck.

Completed in 1925, the current church was built following a fire that destroyed the original 1846 frame church. It is based on a 14th century English Tudor-Gothic chapel. The chancel layout is the traditional "split chance" design popular after 1840 in England and later in this country;

A courthouse on this site burned in 1864 in the aftermath of General Stoneman's Civil War raid and the present courthouse was constructed in 1869 in the Greek Revival style. The three stories are bricked in the Flemish Bond pattern with a shallow hipped roof, two columns and portico. The bracketed cornice and Doric columns reflect the Italianate style that was popular at the time. The stained glass windows were designed by Tiffany Studios and added as a memorial to the county seat on court days, whether they had business or not. They gathered behind the courthouse to exchange news, transact business, and buy and sell goods, horses, land or livestock. Horse and mule trading became so established the lot became known as "Jockey Lot."

As a wealthy merchant and businessman, White built this house in 1819 and added the store/office building to the east in 1828. The house and store were partially destroyed in 1864 in General Stoneman's raid – the same fire that burned the nearby courthouse. The buildings were restored immediately after the war, when a brick-faced Italianate cornice was added to the Federal facade.

One of Abingdon's oldest buildings, the western part of this house was built in 1792 by Andrew Russell. During the Civil War the house was used as a Confederate officers' headquarters.

built in 1815, the front portion of the house is the law office, with the original logs underneath the siding. John B. Floyd used the building as a law office 1830-1863, while serving as Governor of Virginia. Secretary of War in Buchanan's Cabinet, and Brigadier General in the Confederate Army. Judge R. M. Page had his insurance office here 1880 – 1891 and Dr. Jack Barrow had his medical offices here with Dr. George V. Litchfield in 1915.

In 1837 the original Sinking Spring congregation divided over a "new school" - old school" controversy. Part of the congregation remained at what is now Barber Theatre, while the "new school" group built Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church at the present location and dedicated it in 1851. It was built on the lines of the Greek rectangular plan of many of the Presbyterian churches found in the Valley of Virginia, with a tall steeple over the front entrance.

Built in 1884 by James C. Greenway, David Greenway and Thomas Triggs, it operated under the firm name Greenway Brothers & Company, then later became the duplex home of the Greenway and Triggs families. The Greenways lived on the east side and the Triggs lived in the mirror image western side of the house. The initials on the uppermost window paneled for the firm's name.

John Dunn built his building with its stepped gables in 1846. Known as Dunn's Hotel, the building was both a store and a hotel, with two front entrances. John Dunn & Sons' store sold hats, yard goods, boots, groceries, and paints. The western part of the building was the hotel. After John Dunn's death, his sons operated the businesses and renamed the hotel "The Virginia House." The Bank of Abingdon purchased the eastern half in 1873, while the hotel was sold in 1879 to Frank S. Findlay and renamed the Arlington House. The house was "rejoined" in 1965 under the ownership of G. R. C. Stuart. It has housed the offices of Penn Stuart Attorneys at Law since 1962.

(Considered the oldest building in Abingdon, the tavern was built around 1779 and used from its beginning as a tavern and inn for stagecoach travelers. It saw such guests as Henry Clay and President Andrew Jackson. Abingdon's first post office was located in the addition on the east side of the Tavern where the original mail slot can still be seen. The Tavern has also served as a bank, bakery, general store, cabinet shop, barber shop, private residence, post office, antique shop and restaurant. The top floor was used as a hospital during the Civil War.

This brick townhouse was built in 1845 by the Reverend Phillip Rohr as a residence. Through the years it has been used as a millinery shop, a physician's office, and the Town Library.

The western part of this house is a log building built around 1798 by Robert Duke. It was purchased in 1805 by Valentine Baugh. Two years later he purchased the eastern part of the lot, expanding the building and adding wood siding. Baugh was a surveyor appointed by the Governor of Virginia to mark the state boundary line between Virginia and Tennessee in 1802. The house descended through Valentine's son Leonidas to his daughter Minnie Baugh who added an apothecary shop in 1891 (now a clothing boutique). When the Presbyterian Church was converted into Abington's Town Hall (now Barter Theatre) in the early 1900's, Miss

In 1835, Thomas Findlay built "The Washington House," Albion's first hotel. It saw many travelers and stage drivers who had a room set aside for their regular use. Newcomers occasionally used hotel rooms for professional purposes. Dr. Gilliam, a surgeon-dentist, took one of the rooms, and in 1843, The Banner newspaper announced he was ready to serve the public with "ladies to be waited upon in their homes, if required." The building has been a boarding house, meat market, and hat shop.

Originally two separate houses, with one western half built in 1790 by Morris Morrison, and the eastern half by Matthew Willoughby in 1791. By 1798, James Longley had acquired both houses and he joined them together some time before 1817. During recent restoration work, owners found clues to the age of the house including padded raters, log floor joists, hand-and-forged rose-headed nails, and original door locks and H & L hinges. A particularly interesting feature is the holes in the sides of the exterior doorways, where curtains were hung on rods during warm weather to allow the doors to remain open.

Moreover, a carpenter and joiner, began construction of this Federal style house, with its classically symmetrical façade, in 1857. The Civil War intervened, and Mr. Roderfer filed for bankruptcy in the early 1870s.

Minne purchased the church's wood columns and used them to remodel the front porch. Minnie and her sister Ethel were instrumental in organizing the Washington County Historical Society.

built in 1888 for the Exchange Bank of Virginia. Designed as a combination bank and residence, the western side of the building had a separate front entrance, iron bars on the windows and a vault. The bank failed after the Civil War and was purchased by a brother of the first cashier, Robert Preston. Now a private residence, its dining room still has the original bank vault. The Bank is a National Historic Landmark.

home to William King Museum of Art

building was deeded to Lewis P. Summers, lawyer and historian. Summers compiled *The Annals of Southwest Virginia*, a major historical resource for the area, and authored *History of Southwest Virginia, 1746-1786*. His son, Andrew, collected materials to preserve the musical heritage of the region.

Constructed in 1851 as the original sinking spring Presbyterian Church, in 1837 the building was acquired by the Sons of Temperance who hosted performances and social events, and the building became known as Temperance Hall. In 1890, The Sons of Temperance transferred the building's title to the Town of Abingdon, to be used as a Town Hall. In 1905, the current front portion of the building was added. The Town Hall included offices upstairs, a jail in the basement, and fire department in the rear. The main floor was reserved as the Opera House. In 1933, during the Great Depression, Robert Portfield bought a group of actors to Abingdon, where they bartered theater tickets for produce, livestock, and other goods, giving the new theatre its name.

NOTE: Buildings on this tour, with the exception of three churches, are those which were shown to have existed on the O. W. Gray & Son map of 1880. Historical descriptions are from Places in Time by Nanci King.





A SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR OF ABINGDON'S MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

MAP
INSIDE



ADDITIONAL POINTS OF INTEREST

SOME OF ABINGDON'S MOST INTERESTING HISTORIC SITES ARE NOT FEATURED ON THE DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR BUT ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY CAR.



Sinking Spring Cemetery

SINKING SPRING CEMETERY AND PARSON CUMMINGS' CABIN RUSSELL RD. AND VALLEY ST.

Predating both Washington County and Abingdon, the cemetery was established as the burial ground for members of Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church, organized in 1773. Members of the congregation, led by Rev. Charles Cummings, built a log church and laid out the cemetery on 11 acres. Burials over the past 200 years reflect the long history of Washington County. On the same parcel of land, separated by Russell Road, is the burial place of the enslaved people owned by these early Presbyterians, and also free people of color.

The log house at the cemetery entrance was built circa 1773 by Reverend Cummings, the most influential leader of Presbyterianism in 18th Century Southwest Virginia. It was later relocated to its current site, at the location of the original Presbyterian Church.

WILLIAM KING MUSEUM OF ART 415 ACADEMY DR.

In 1824 the Abingdon Male Academy was built at the top of this 25 acre site. The Civil War took its toll on the



William King Museum of Art

building, and in 1872 a new brick school was erected through a legacy gift of merchant William King. The Academy closed its doors around 1905. In 1912, its trustees leased the property to the Town of Abingdon and the School District of Washington County. A new brick school building was built in 1913, using the same footprint as the Academy building. The new public school was named William King High School, operating until 1973. It now houses the museum facility.

ABINGDON MUSTER GROUNDS 700 COLONIAL RD.

Northern trailhead for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, established by Congress in 1980. In 1780 militia from Washington County assembled here to begin their 330-mile march to ultimately defeat British forces at the Battle of King's Mountain in South Carolina. Thomas Jefferson pointed to this battle as a decisive turning point in the Revolutionary War. In 1864, Union soldiers under the command of General George Stoneman camped in the same meadow. Immediately next door, "Retirement" was built by Captain Robert Craig circa 1813. The eastern portion of the house was added in 1858 by Judge Samuel V. Fulkerson.

VIRGINIA CREEPER TRAIL WELCOME CENTER 300 GREEN SPRING RD.

Probably built by Francis Findlay, this brick home now serves as the welcome center for the Virginia Creeper Trail, a 34-mile-long recreation trail that was once a railway line. The nickname, Virginia Creeper, came from the early steam engines that struggled up the steep grades. The Welcome Center also houses a collection of train photography by O. Winston Link called "A Day on

FOR MORE INFORMATION

ABINGDON VISITOR CENTER

335 Cummings Street, Abingdon VA 24210
(800) 435-3440
visitabingdonvirginia.com

VIRGINIA CREEPER TRAIL WELCOME CENTER

300 Green Spring Road, Abingdon VA 24210
Open April – November
Call the Abingdon Visitor Center for info

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

431 W. Main Street, Abingdon VA 24210
(276) 623-8337
Hswcv.org



HISTORY OF ABINGDON

the Abingdon Branch," on loan from William King Museum of Art. A Class M steam engine, nicknamed "The Old Mollie," is displayed at the trailhead.



White's Mill

WHITE'S MILL 692 WHITE'S MILL RD.

Originally built as Moffett's Mill in 1790, White's Mill was purchased by Col. James White in 1838. When White's Mill began milling grain with its overshot wheel, waterpower provided the only stable mechanized energy. Visitors to the mill can see the old equipment, as well as contemporary upgrades. It is one of the oldest water powered grist mills in Southwest Virginia. The mill is a Virginia Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Next door, the Mercantile sells White's Mill grits and cornmeal, plus hand crafts and art.

ABINGDON VISITOR CENTER/HASSINGER HOUSE 335 CUMMINGS ST. (Pictured on the cover)

Built in 1906 for John Harvey Hassinger by his older brother William Hassinger, a master builder. The brothers founded Hassinger Lumber Company, a logging company that constructed the Virginia-Carolina railroad (now the Virginia Creeper Trail). Mr. William Hassinger was known to have been quite proud of his handiwork. The foundation stones speak for themselves; the window glass is double thickness, which eliminates the need for storm windows. The exterior clapboards and interior floors and millwork are made of clear white pine, harvested from the virgin forests of Southwest Virginia, on land that is now Jefferson National Forest.

Abingdon became a major distribution point for mail and supplies on "The Great Road." The town also became known for its love of the arts. Concerts, operatic performances, and theatre were important in Abingdon life. Our affinity for the arts survives today as modern amenities flourish alongside venerable antiquities. House, 108 Court Street.

Abingdon grew slowly for the first few years. Its position alongside the Great Road leading down through the Valley of Virginia, and connecting to the road leading further west, soon encouraged merchants, tavern keepers, tanner, wagon builders and others to locate in the new settlement. The county courthouse and, in 1793, the first post office in the area drew more people to town. As the population grew, so did the number of buildings. The first structures were all built of logs. Only a few years later frame buildings with rock foundations were erected, and in 1803 the first brick house was built and still stands today: the William King of Abingdon Parish in England.

In 1776, the Virginia Assembly created Washington County and in 1778, the Town of Abingdon was incorporated as the county seat. The name is thought to be in honor of Martha Washington's ancestral home area "Wolf Hills."

Abingdon traces its roots to 1750, when Dr. Thomas Walker, who had been granted over 6,000 acres of land by King George II, explored the area. Later, Joseph Black purchased some of this land from Dr. Walker, settled on it and built a small fort. The area became known as "Black's Fort." Abingdon was the first English speaking settlement incorporated in the watershed of the Mississippi.



The Bank/Preston House



Greenway-Trigg Building



Barter Theatre



Adam Hickman House/The Cave House



Reenactors at the Abingdon Muster Grounds