

# HISTORY SCAVENGER HUNT #1

Welcome to the Town of Colonial Beach, Virginia



**All of the historical sites below can be found within the boundaries of the Town of Colonial Beach.**

Most sites are private properties and not open to the public. Try to discover the location or address of the sites below but **please do not disturb** the residents or patrons of the properties.

The distance in this hunt requires a golf cart or a car.

For more information about Colonial Beach history:

Visit the **Museum at Colonial Beach** 128 Hawthorn St. Open Sat. and Sun. 1 to 4 pm.

[www.museumatcolonialbeach.com](http://www.museumatcolonialbeach.com)

Most information came from two historical surveys (2001 and 2017) of Colonial Beach completed for the VA Dept. of Historic Resources applications.



1. The one-story wooden building was once an automobile repair garage where a local mechanic could work on a Ford Model A or later a Ford Model T in a sunken work bay. The building dates from the 1920s, a time when local residents were beginning to own their own automobiles. There were reportedly quite a few horses and buggies still around in 1930.



2. A local church is located on the property where a small wooden frame building was built prior to 1887. The early nondenominational church was organized by the "Ladies of Colonial Beach Union Chapel Association". When the town was incorporated in 1892 our local year-round population was too small to organize churches of various denominations. The church bell from that first little church is featured in front of this current church.



3. From 1892 until mid 1960s, the schools in town and all of Virginia were segregated. There were separate schools for white students and African-American students. Built in 1942, this was the last African-American elementary school in town. There are residents in Colonial Beach who recall attending this one-story wood frame two-room school.



4. Since our town was always a resort town there were many summer cottages meant for warm weather use only. Some cottages were here prior to 1892. The cottages vary in design, floor plan, and architectural detail. Most were small wood frame buildings with front porches. Many have now been weather-proofed for year-round use. The W. W. Daley cottage is a one story, three bay, center passage cottage facing the river. The building was built on stilts that were replaced.



5. The spacious eleven-bedroom house is currently a family home. It was built in 1892 and has a long history as a boarding house. It is currently named River Breeze Manor. Previously, it had been named The “New Willard” and “The Colony House Inn”. In the early 1900s it was owned by a former vaudeville performer and many performers have stayed here. Kate Smith, a popular singer on radio and an early TV star, reportedly spent time here. She also occasionally performed locally.



6. When the town began, this was established as a public park which had many shade trees but no buildings. It was known as a Tourist Camp and was a public campground for years. Huge platform tents could be rented by families who came to town on large steamboats bringing their summer gear and planning to camp here for weeks or the whole summer. Look around Irving Ave.



7. When the town was young, most items needed by town residents and summer visitors could be purchased in a single “general” store. This early store had the only safe in town before the bank (which can still be seen on Hawthorn St.) was built in 1904. Other merchants used the safe in this building before the bank was built.



8. In 1892, the year our town was incorporated, this church was formed. The tiny congregation met in a private home in town before they were able to build their first one-room building on this same lot. The church oral history indicates that the founding members of this church were the sons and daughters of slaves.



9. There are (at least) two wooden-frame homes in town that were built with plans and kits designed and sold by Sears. One is an example of a very early Sears home. Endurance (green at top) was built in 1906, is located near many other historic homes and has been found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The second white frame house, which overlooks the river, is a 1930s Sears home which was once occupied by a town physician. It has been modified but is considered a significant example of a later version of a Sears kit home.



10. Built in the very early 1900s, Vernon House (now called Riverside House) was built again after it was destroyed by a coal oil lamp fire in 1912. Coal oil, a precursor of kerosene, was first made of coal gas and coal tar. Later “coal oil” was actually made of petroleum. Either way it was highly flammable. The house is near the river and was a boarding house destination for visitors coming on steamboats.



**The locations (answers) for this hunt can be found on the Colonial Beach Museum website: [museumatcolonialbeach.com](http://museumatcolonialbeach.com)**

## HISTORY SCAVENGER HUNT #1 Answers/Addresses

1. Auto Repair Shop from 1920s **324 and 328 Washington Ave.**
2. Colonial Beach Methodist Church **1 Washington Ave.** The original church was one of the first buildings on Washington Ave. The 1800s bell is in the front church yard.
3. African-American School On **Lincoln Ave. between Jackson St. and Kintz** This is the blue one-story wooden building behind the new elementary school and on what is still Colonial Beach school property.
4. W. W. Daley Cottage at **719 Irving Ave.**
5. River Breeze Manor **107 Lincoln Ave.** (Corner of Washington Ave. and Lincoln)
6. Eleanor Park This is the huge empty lot with trees **on Irving Ave. between Lawrence Ln. and Dandridge Ln.** overlooking the Potomac River.
7. Karn House/Fox Merchandise **2 Irving Ave.** (Corner of Boundary and Irving)
8. First Baptist Church **619 Jackson St.**
9. Endurance (Sears Home) **29 Irving Ave.**  
  
Caruthers (Sears Home) This home is **next to Doc's Motor Lodge which is at 11 North Irving. The house is overlooking the Potomac River.** To see the Sears house walk along the sidewalk at the back of Doc's Motor Lodge – on the sidewalk across the street from the boardwalk along the Potomac River.
10. Riverside House known locally as Vernon House **125 Wilder Ave.** This is the white home next to Nancy's Ice Cream.