

W FIRST AFRICANS IN VIRGINIA

The first documented Africans in Virginia arrived here in Aug. 1619 on the *White Lion*, an English privateer based in the Netherlands. Colonial officials traded food for these "20 and odd" Africans, who had been captured from a Portuguese slave ship. Among present-day Hampton's earliest African residents were Antony and Isabella. Their son, William, was the first child of African ancestry known to have been born in Virginia (ca. 1624). Many of the earliest Africans were held as slaves, but some individuals became free. A legal framework for hereditary, lifelong slavery in Virginia evolved during the 1600s. The United States abolished slavery in 1865.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, 2015

MARKING 400 YEARS: POINTS OF REFLECTION

African American
Heritage Sites in Hampton

The historic marker at Old Point Comfort, the site of the first arrival of Africans in Virginia



One Passage, Two Journeys

life and death



An early map of Hampton on display at the Hampton History Museum

Sitting along the coast of the southern end of the Chesapeake Bay where it flows into the Atlantic Ocean, Old Point Comfort got its name from the English shipmen who were relieved to come ashore after a harrowing journey across the Atlantic Ocean that many crew did not survive. An estimated 3 million Africans died during the Middle Passage that transported them from their African homeland

to the New World of British North America. Stolen from Portuguese traders, the first Africans in Virginia were captured from the Ndongo Kingdom in Angola. While Point Comfort's Lighthouse brought solace to the English returning home, the forced arrival of the first Africans aboard the White Lion ship marked the start of their second journey toward freedom and justice.



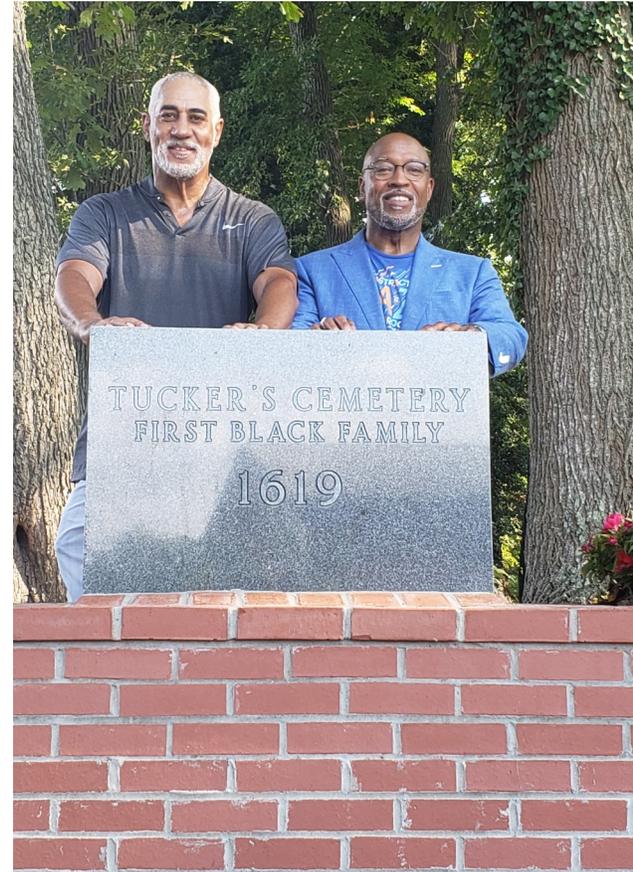
Freedom's Fortress



Frank Baker, James Townsend and Shepard Mallory escaped from their owners who were forcing them to build fortifications for the Confederate Army during the Civil War. They came to Fort Monroe and asked the commander for sanctuary. Major Butler saw this as an opportunity to get around Fugitive Slave laws—since they were being used to fight against the Union, they were like contraband and rules of war did not obligate him to return weapons to the enemy. Instead, he authorized the acceptance of all Blacks coming to the fort for sanctuary. A month later, he extended sanctuary to women and children for humanitarian purposes. By that summer, a conscription act and later a contraband act which regularized his actions beyond the Fort Monroe region. These acts would eventually lead to the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment. ~ excerpt from VICPP interview with Norfolk State University's Dean of College of Liberal Arts Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, Professor of History. Read the full interview at virginiainterfaithcenter.org/1619-2019



The august Emancipation Oak stands at the entrance of Hampton University, marking the spot where the Emancipation Proclamation was read to residents in 1963.



Walter (l), son of Carol Tucker (88 years old), the oldest living relative of William Tucker, the first recorded child born of African ancestry in Virginia. He stands with his cousin, Verrandall on the grounds of the Tucker Cemetery where more than 100 descendants are buried.

1619-2019 
COMMEMORATION
FIRST AFRICAN LANDING
AT FORT MONROE AUGUST 23-25 HAMPTON, VA

For a list of events during the 1619-2019 Commemorative Weekend visit: hamptonva2019.com