

# The Important Women of Fredericksburg

Groups  
**FXBG**

Fredericksburg, VA

The women of Fredericksburg have shaped both local and national history. This itinerary explores their stories—from Mary Washington’s influence on her son, George, to Clara Barton’s life-saving efforts during the Civil War. Guests will also learn about entrepreneurial women, civic leaders, and trailblazers whose resilience and vision continue to define Fredericksburg’s character and inspire future generations.



**FXBG**  
City of Fredericksburg, VA

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## **Stop 1**

Start at the **Fredericksburg Visitor Center** where you can obtain maps and additional information on these stops. Located one block up from the Visitor Center, in the 700 block of Caroline Street, you can see the long time home of **Doris Buffet**, sister of Warren Buffet, and philanthropist who greatly impacted the Fredericksburg community. She donated money to a number of local organizations and her Sunshine Lady Foundation created a fund so that the city pool (now named the Buffett Pool in her honor) would be accessible to all city residents, regardless of income.

## **Stop 2**

**The Chimneys** -Located just across the street from Stop #1, now the location of a BBQ restaurant, is "The Chimneys" as the building is known. Built in the 1770s, the house was purchased in the 1800s by Naval Commander William Lewis Herndon. His Daughter, **Ellen Lewis Herndon** later married Chester A. Arthur, who became the 21st President of the United States. During Ellen's time at The Chimneys, she was known for her ability to sing as a soprano. She later moved to New York City and was a soloist for the Mendelssohn Glee Club.

## **Stop 3**

**Elizabeth Long Eubanks** owned the **Thornton's Tavern** house on Sophia Street. Despite being clad in modern materials, this is thought to be one of the oldest buildings in Fredericksburg. Built in 1746, the building served as a tavern, mercantile shop and base for a ferry operation across the river. Elizabeth Long Eubanks owned the property during the Civil War, at a time when it was very uncommon for a woman to own property. After the local bridges were destroyed, she helped revive the ferry in order to facilitate movement across the river.

## **Stop 4**

The "**Greetings From Fredericksburg Mural**" depicts key figures and features of the city. Fredericksburg native **Mary Katherine Greenlaw** was elected as the first female mayor of Fredericksburg in 2012. She has served on the boards of the Mary Washington Hospital Foundation and Thurman Brisben Center and she is a founding member of the Fredericksburg Festival of the Arts.

**Gaye Adegbalola**, born and raised in Fredericksburg, is a winner of the Blues Music Award and is a founding member of the blues group **Saffire - Uppity Blues Women**. Prior to becoming a full-time musician, she taught science in the Fredericksburg City School system and was involved in theater projects to help Black youth develop confidence during the desegregation era. She has won numerous awards for her work as an educator, a musician and as an activist for social justice.



## Stop 5

**Mary Washington House** - Purchased by George Washington for his mother in 1772, the Mary Washington House is a simple frame house where she spent her last 17 years. Her English-style garden has been restored and the house contains some of her prized personal possessions as well as many fine period pieces.

## Stop 6

**Jane Howison Beale**, grew up in St. James House, a colonial-era home originally built for local lawyer, James Mercer. Her diary covering the years 1850-1862 became famous for her first-hand accounts of events during the Civil War, including the experience of hiding in the basement as her home and the surrounding area was bombarded by canon fire. During the exchange her home was hit and her son was injured. St. James House is only available for touring during Historic Garden Week in the spring and during the first full week of October. Group reservations are available by appointment.

## Stop 7

**Historic Kenmore** - is the elegant, historic Georgian-style brick mansion of George Washington's sister, Betty Washington Lewis. The mansion is known for its ornate plasterwork ceilings and the Aesop's fable theme in the dining room overmantel is said to have been suggested by Washington himself. A reproduction of the 1700's wall to wall carpet shows a vibrant color scheme, similar to what would have been the original floor covering.

## Stop 8

**Mary Washington Monument and Meditation Rock** - The monument marks the grave of Mary Washington. Work on the monument started in 1789, but remained unfinished for many years. In 1893, the Daughters of the American Revolution started a fundraising campaign to finish the monument. It was completed and dedicated in 1894. The nearby "Meditation Rock" was a place where Mary Washington frequently went to pray and meditate during the last 17 years of her life when she lived in Fredericksburg.

## Stop 9

**Janetta Fitzhugh** was a founding member of the Equal Suffrage League, Fredericksburg chapter, in 1912. As one of the eight original members, Janetta was elected President of the new chapter. By 1918, the group had grown to 325. She marched in Washington, DC in 1913 in support of women's suffrage and continued to advocate for the right for women to vote until the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920. Janetta was one of the first women to register to vote in September 1920. She died in 1950 and is buried in the family plot in the Fredericksburg Confederate Cemetery, which also became a cemetery for the general public in 1844.



### **Stop 10**

The **National Bank building** on Princess Anne Street was built in the early 1800s and served as a bank, a residence, Union forces headquarters during the Civil War, and as the Freedmen's Bureau after the Civil War. It is currently the location of Foode, an upscale Southern cuisine restaurant owned by **Chef Joy Crump** and business partner **Beth Black**. Chef Crump trained at the Culinary Institute in Atlanta, competed on Bravo's Top Chef, and has cooked at the James Beard House on multiple occasions.

During the Civil War, the upper floor of this building was the residence of **Catherine Taliaferro** and her family. **Sarah**, an enslaved woman in the household, served as the family's cook. Sarah had five children and could read, an unusual skill for her time. She taught her son, John Washington, the alphabet. This helped him to later write an illuminating memoir about his experience as an enslaved Black man for 24 years before escaping. When John was 11, Sarah was sent to work for another family in Staunton, VA while John was kept in Fredericksburg.

### **Stop 11**

During the Civil War, **Clara Barton** nursed wounded soldiers at (in Stafford County) and in the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches in Fredericksburg. She later went on to become the founder of the American Red Cross.

### **Stop 12**

When she was only 23, **Mary Walker** became the second woman in the United States to finish medical school. As a doctor and field surgeon, she tended to the wounded on the battlefields, including at the **Battle of Fredericksburg**. For her work she became and remains the only female recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. She is also known for her preference for dressing in male clothing, believing that female clothing, such as corsets, caused medical issues.

# About Fredericksburg, Virginia

Fredericksburg, Virginia tells America's story - from 1608 when Captain John Smith sailed up the Rappahannock River to George Washington's childhood and adolescence to John DeBaptiste, a free Black man fighting in the Revolutionary War to the Civil War with four major battles and where 10,000 enslaved people crossed the river to freedom, to Reconstruction and the fight for Civil Rights and social justice. The region is filled with historic sites and compelling stories, a phenomenal food and drink scene and is all easily accessible just off the interstate.

## Location

Fredericksburg, VA is located fifty miles south of Washington, D.C. on Interstate 95, midway between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Virginia.



## Mileage From Major Cities to Fredericksburg

Albany.....	437
Baltimore.....	106
Boston.....	529
Charleston, WV.....	309
Cleveland.....	427
Detroit.....	577
Montreal.....	655
Newport.....	472
New York City.....	290
Philadelphia.....	210
Pittsburgh.....	295
Toronto.....	592
Washington, DC.....	50
Wilmington, DE.....	178

## Services

Itinerary Planning / Confirm reservations at historic sites, with guide service / Referrals for dining and lodging / Access to on-line Videos / Brochures

