

# St. Albans

An well-known archaeological site, downtown dating to 1816, sits on 2000 acres owned by George Washington, Civil War history.

**Scenic and Natural** - Byway follows Kanawha River providing views from pulloffs and roadside parks

**Recreational** - St. Albans Roadside Park (playground, picnic, day use, boat ramp)

**Historical** - Historic Sidewalk Tours, Morgan's Plantation Kitchen, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Turner-Callihan House, Navigating the Kanawha Through History

**Archaeological** - St. Albans Native American Site Archaic People (7000-1000 B.C.)

**Cultural** - Pioneer Days Reenactment

St. Albans offers two distinct areas to explore – the scenic and archeologically important riverside and the quaint, historical downtown.

Route 60 hugs the Kanawha River through St. Albans offering beautiful scenic views, especially at St. Albans Roadside Park, which offers a playground, picnic facilities, and a boat ramp.

Just east of Roadside Park is the site of an early Native American settlement, the Archaic People (7000-1000 B.C.). During an archeological excavation in the late 1960s, it was determined to be one of the first permanent settlements in present-day West Virginia.

The early Kanawha River attracted early Native Americans because of the abundance of food it produced. Later, it made important contributions to the culture and history of the area because of its role in the development of transportation and economic growth, most importantly carrying coal and other goods to market. The West Virginia Department of Transportation presents the opportunity to discover river history at Navigating the Kanawha through History, held at St. Albans Roadside Park.

Morgan's Plantation Kitchen, also located on the scenic riverfront, is a good example of a detached kitchen typical of the 1840s. Originally part of Morgan's Plantation, near the present John Amos Power Plant, Union soldiers were served meals in the Kitchen during the Battle of Scary Creek, the area's first significant battle of the Civil War.

In town, the St. Albans Main Street Historic District dates back to 1816 and is listed on the National Register. Brochures available at City Hall help to guide visitors on the Historic St. Albans Sidewalk tour, featuring 26 properties. The tour begins with St. Marks Episcopal Church (circa 1847), occupied by Federal troops and their horses during the Civil War, and ends with the Turner/Callihan House (circa 1832), a one-and-a-half story Gothic Revival.



5.11

St. Albans

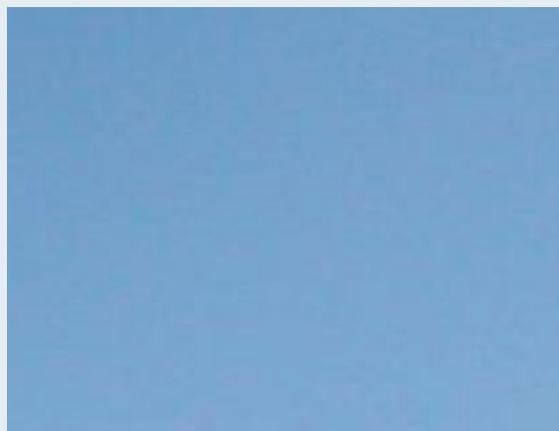
# St. Albans

Two distinct areas to explore – the scenic and archaeologically important riverside and the quaint, historical downtown.

## St. Albans Riverside

George Washington recognized the value of the riverfront land at present day St. Albans and established a 2000-acre tract called Cole River Tract in 1774. The Byway runs along the riverside at St. Albans. St. Albans Roadside Park is directly on the Byway and provides visitors picnic and playground facilities and fabulous views of the Great Kanawha River. St. Albans Riverfest brings in sternwheelers, fireworks, and entertainment. MTSHA is partnering with St. Albans to assure continued growth of the new annual Frontier Reenactment.

## St. Albans Downtown



Ravenswood House (above) and the restored Train station (right) are part of the downtown Historical Tour.



Morgan's Kitchen (circa 1846): On July 16, 1861, the day before the Battle of Scary Creek, Union troops commanded by General Jacob Cox camped on the nearby Morgan Estate and ate in this kitchen. It was relocated to this site on the Byway and Kanawha River.

# Nitro-Institute-Dunbar Loop

Approximately 10 mile excursion on the opposite side of the Kanawha River.

**Scenic** - Dunbar Wine Cellar Park

**Natural** - Kanawha River

**Archaeological** - Shawnee Reservation Mound and approximately ten other burial mounds

**Recreational** - Shawnee Park, Wine Cellar Park, Nitro BMX Track and Ridenour Lake

**Historical** - George Washington surveyed and owned land in the area, WV State University, Historic East Hall, Cabell Cemetery, Wine Cellar Park, and nearby Nitro War Museum and Civil War Battle of Scary Creek

**Cultural** - WVSU, a historically black college and Booker T. Washington Institute

Across the Kanawha River and intermittently in the direct viewshed of the Midland Trail, Route 25 runs 8 miles between the Nitro-St.Albans Bridge and the Dunbar Bridge.

Native Americans who originally inhabited this area on both sides of the Kanawha River (1000 B.C. - A.D. 500) built a large complex of burial mounds. Eleven of the remaining mounds are on the north side of the Kanawha River.

In the late 1700s much of the land along Route 25 was surveyed by George Washington and given to leaders in his regiments for their military service.

## Nitro

*Created by the U.S. government to produce nitroglycerin for the war effort during WWI*

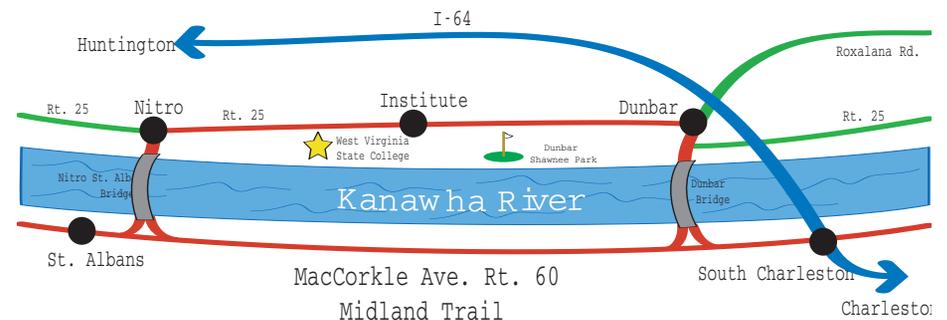
Nitro was born when the U.S. government, caught short of gunpowder during World War I, launched a crash project to build a manufacturing plant for the explosive nitroglycerin and homes for the plant

workers. Although the war ended just after the first shipment of explosives was sent to the front, the chemical industry continued to grow in the area, providing jobs and good standard of living.

Today, many industrial companies and antique dealers are based in Nitro. (continued next page)

**Getting There:**  
Access Route 25 and the north side of the Kanawha River by crossing the St. Albans-Nitro Bridge; or in South Charleston, use the Dunbar Bridge for an interesting trip along the Nitro-Institute-Dunbar Route 25 loop.

St.Albans-Nitro Bridge spans the Great Kanawha River giving access to an interesting side trip on Route 25.



Population? Nitro 6824, Dunbar 8154, Institute

# Institute

*Home of WV State University, a historically black college on the Great Kanawha River, with a rich unique history - "a living laboratory of human relations."*

Originally the rich river valley of Institute was home to Samuel Cabell and known as the Cabell Plantation.

Unprecedented at the time, Cabell willed the plantation to his slave mistress, Mary Barnes. Upon Cabell's death in 1865, Mary Barnes and their thirteen children inherited the plantation. When the state of West Virginia was looking for land to build a land-grant institution for African-Americans in 1890, one of Cabell's daughters, Marina, agreed to sell thirty- acres of the land to the state.

West Virginia Colored Institute, later West Virginia State College, opened on the site for an "experimental term" in 1891. The first two students to enroll, Lottie Brown and Flayvilla Brown, were Cabell descendants.



Graves of plantation owner Samuel Cabell and his slave mistress, Mary Barnes, are on the WVSU campus.

In 2004, WV State College gained University status and now serves a diverse student population of 5000, while preserving its land-grant heritage with research and community outreach projects.

The graves of Samuel Cabell, his slave mistress, and others are found on what is now the campus of West Virginia State University.

East Hall, built in 1893, has served as a dormitory, library, chemistry laboratory, printing

department, President's home, and most recently the College's Office of Planning and Advancement. Named to the National Register of Historic Places, distinguished visitors to the home include Booker T. Washington, Dr. George Washington Carver, Dr. W. E. B. Dubois, Mary McLeod Bethune, Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Eleanor Roosevelt.

The University's Drain-Jordan Library has a collection of African-American artifacts relative to local history. The University's Booker T. Washington Institute "preserves and promotes the rich legacy" of the famous educator who once made his home in the area.



West Virginia State University



West Virginia State University



Historic East Hall, circa 1893, is on National Register of Historic Places



# Shawnee Park

*Recreation and archaeology*

Shawnee Park, operated by Kanawha County Parks and Recreation, serves the community with its boat ramp, golf course, swimming pool, picnic facilities, playground, and tennis and basketball courts.

The Shawnee Reservation Mound mentioned under archaeology is located here.

Three large, restored, stone walk-in wine cellars still stand. They date pre-Civil War and were used to store wine made on the premises from grapes grown in the vineyards there. The park is enjoyable for picnics, family gatherings, and fishing at its well-stocked seven-acre lake.



**Ancient Burial Mound in Shawnee Park**

# Dunbar

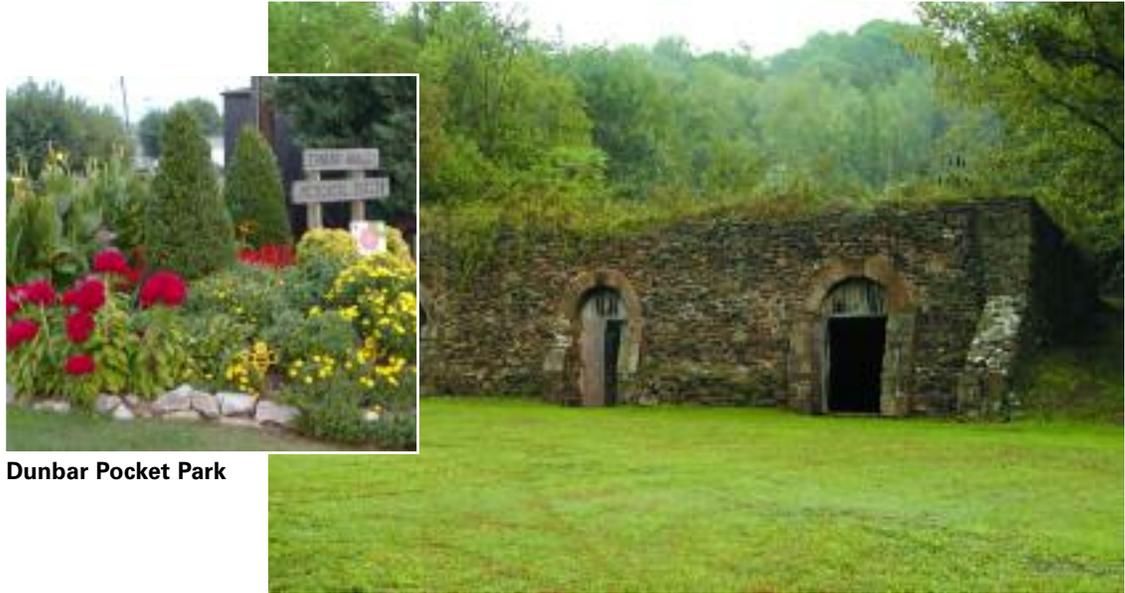
*George Washington was the first landholder of this town steeped in history.*

Dunbar, like most of the area, is on land originally occupied by the Native Americans known as Mound Builders. Archaeologists have identified eleven remaining mounds in the residential areas of Dunbar. (See Archaeological Qualities).

First surveyed in 1774, the land was granted to George Washington for his military service. It is believed the town is named for Mary Dunbar, who inherited the land from her ancestor, Washington.

In 1912, the farming community began to evolve into an industrial community with the opening of glass and bottling plants. The Gravely Plow, invented and patented in Dunbar in 1916, was produced here until the plant's move to Ohio.

Dunbar boasts several parks, including Wine Cellar Park, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



**Dunbar Pocket Park**

**Dunbar Wine Cellars**

