

History Hunters

Self Guided Outdoor Tour*



Created by the One Book, One Community of Monroe 2021

COVID-19 NOTICE: Some interior spaces at various locations may not be accessible. Although the IHM facility is closed, the exterior can still be toured. The Monroe County Museum is currently open, but this is subject to change.

Stop 1 Destination: IHM Sisters Motherhouse

610 W Elm Ave, Monroe, MI 48162

Theresa Maxis was born in Baltimore in 1810, of a Haitian mother and British father. In 1845, she left the Oblates of Providence and set out for Monroe where she co-founded the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Today the Motherhouse is home to approximately 105 IHM Sisters and to offices and services supporting the IHM congregation.

For more information, visit: <http://www.sistersofihm.org/who-we-are/ihm-history/theresa-maxis.html>

Stop 2 Destination: Haircutters/Wise Guy

Not the location of the actual event – exact location unknown
6 E Front St, Monroe, MI 48161

An escaped slave, William Wells Brown, lived in Monroe in the winter of 1835. He would go on to become the nation's first black playwright, novelist, historian and travel writer, as well as an abolitionist. In his novel "Clotel," he shared his experience of setting up a barber shop in Monroe after the only barber in town turn him down for a job.

For more information, visit: <https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/historicmissourians/name/b/brownw/>

<https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/William-Wells-Brown.pdf>

Stop 3 Destination: Formerly The Uptown Bar

8 West Front Street, Monroe, MI 48161

COLORED MAN SUES RESTAURANT KEEPER: Claims Damages as a Result of Waiters Refusing to Serve Him Food

Source: Record-Commercial, Thursday, April 11, 1918 page 4

For more information, visit: <https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/City-Restaurant.pdf>

Stop 4 Destination: Armory Opera House Historical Marker

(shared with Boy Scouts of Monroe County)
E. 2nd at Washington St, Monroe, MI 48161

Booker T. Washington, a former slave from Virginia, founded the Tuskegee Institute, the vocational school for blacks in Alabama now known as Tuskegee University. He spoke in Monroe on January 30, 1899 as part of Monroe High School's winter lecture series.

For more information, visit: <https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/Armory-Opera-House-1.pdf>

<https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/Armory-Opera-House-2.pdf>

Stop 5 Destination: Loranger Square

E 1st St, Monroe, MI 48161

FIERY CROSS WAS BURNED IN SQUARE

A fiery cross was burned in front of the court house here Saturday night about 8 o'clock. Who placed the cross is a mystery. No one was seen in the vicinity of the county building about the time the cross started to burn. Although the down town streets were crowded with Christmas shoppers very few people know of the burning of the cross until after it had been put out. Two young men passing the court house knocked the cross down. The cross was about five feet long.

This is the first attempt to burn a cross in the city of Monroe, but several have been burned in villages in the county.

For more information, visit: Source: Monroe Evening News, Monday, December 24th, 1923 page 1b (<https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/Loranger-Square.pdf>)

Stop 6 Destination: Woodland Cemetery

438 Jerome St, Monroe, MI 48161

&

Stop 7 Destination: Monroe County Museum System

126 South Monroe St, Monroe MI 48161

Robert Duncanson was born to a free black family in upstate New York. He was one the first African-American painters to garner international acclaim and was especially noted for his landscapes. The Monroe County Museum has an exhibit case dedicated to his family. A tombstone was installed in 2019 to mark his burial plot in Woodland Cemetery.

For more information, visit: <https://www.monroenews.com/news/20191206/efforts-recognized-to-install-tombstone-at-local-artists-burial-site>

<https://www.monroenews.com/news/20210125/inaugural-painting-choice-has-monroe-connections>

For full articles visit: <https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/Robert-Duncanson-1.pdf>

<https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/selfguidedtour/Robert-Duncanson-2.pdf>

Take a photo at the last stop and submit it to onebookmonroe@gmail.com for a chance to win a prize. Please include your name and address with your submission.



*The tour can be walked or driven and is less than 3.5 miles. The information on this tour highlights some of aspects of black history in Monroe County. One Book, One Community of Monroe has provided links to articles for general informational purposes only. The links to news articles have not been edited or paraphrased.