

Alexandria Times

Denise Dunbar
 Publisher & Executive Editor
 ddunbar@alextimes.com

Margaret Stevens
 Sales Director
 mstevens@alextimes.com

Caitlyn Meisner
 Editor
 cmeisner@alextimes.com

Sydney Kodama
 Reporter/Photographer
 skodama@alextimes.com

Andrew McCabe
 Photo Intern
 amccabe@alextimes.com

Ella Mitchell
 Reporting Intern
 emitchell@alextimes.com

ADVERTISING

Margaret Stevens
 mstevens@alextimes.com

Marty DeVine
 mdevine@alextimes.com

Patrice V. Culligan
 pculligan@alextimes.com

Stephanie Santiago
 ssantiago@alextimes.com

Tina Franco
 Office Administrator
 tfranco@alextimes.com

DIRECTOR OF ART & DESIGN

Jessica Kim
 graphics@alextimes.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Kim Davis
Mark Eaton
Mark Edelman
Thompson Eskew
Kim Gilliam
Ryan Hopper
Lexie Jordan
Louise Krafft
Brianne McConnell
Jim McGrath
Erin Shackelford
Dr. Vivek Sinha
Kathryn Ziemer

ALEXTIMES LLC

Denise Dunbar
 Managing Partner

The Ariail family
Suzanne Brock
William Dunbar

The Colored Rosemont State Highway Marker: A dedication decades in the making

Historic Alexandria invites the public to a dedication ceremony for a Virginia State Highway Marker recognizing the Colored Rosemont neighborhood on Saturday from 3 to 4 p.m. at the corner of Wythe and West Streets. Admission is free.

The City of Alexandria will dedicate a Virginia State Historical Highway Marker recognizing the Colored Rosemont neighborhood. Mayor Alyia Gaskins, Krystyn Moon, Ph.D. and representatives from the Office of Historic Alexandria, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Colored Rosemont Descendant Group will deliver remarks at the ceremony.

The residential neighborhood of Colored Rosemont was founded in 1926 with the sale of individual plots to African American families by real estate broker Virginia F. Thomas. Former residents remember the neighborhood's limits as Pendleton, Fayette, Madison and N. West streets. Real estate assessments show development on the block completed by 1939.

Given its small geographic area, Colored Rosemont was often mistaken for part of the Uptown neighborhood. In the 1960s, the Alexandria Redevel-

opment and Housing Authority used court orders to compel many residents to sell their homes and demolished them.

ARHA then built the Andrew Adkins Public Housing project. Today, Colored Rosemont is considered part of the Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District on the National Register.

"We are beyond thrilled for this sign dedication, which honors the important legacy of Colored Rosemont," Gretchen Bulova, director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, said. "At the same time, this sign is a somber reminder of how racist housing policies and practices led to the displacement of a thriving African American community."

Some of the original residents of the area were the Berry, Burke, Churchill, Dundas, Jackson, Johnson, Hickman, McCray, Morrison and Watson families. The State Highway Marker is part of a collaboration between the Office of Historic Alexandria and former and current residents of Colored Rosemont, including the Greene family.

"None of this would have been possible without Stanley Greene's resolute advocacy and the work of the Colored



The mile marker for Colored Rosemont that will be unveiled on Saturday.

PHOTO/OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

Rosemont Descendant Advisory Group," Audrey Davis, director of the Office of Historic Alexandria's African American History Division, said. "Since 2022, city staff have collaborated with the advisory. This dedication is only the beginning, as we continue to conduct and publish further research about Colored Rosemont and the displacement of its residents."

The State Highway Marker reads:

"The house here at 1312 Wythe St. is the only original dwelling from the once-thriving, predominantly African American neighborhood known as Colored Rosemont. Virginia F.W. Thomas, a White real estate entrepreneur, inherited and purchased land in this area early in the 20th century.

She sold home lots without restrictive racial covenants, despite their common use then. By about 1950, many Black middle-class families lived between Madison, Pendleton, N. Fayette and N. West Streets. In the 1960s, the City of Alexandria expropriated property in Colored Rosemont, compensated the owners and constructed a public housing project, undeterred by a lawsuit and vigorous opposition from the neighborhood."

Readers can learn more about the history of the neighborhood at alexandriava.gov/cultural-history/the-colored-rosemont-community-history-initiative.

Out of the Attic is provided by the Office of Historic Alexandria.