

Alexandria Times

Denise Dunbar
 Publisher & Executive Editor
 ddunbar@alextimes.com

Margaret Stevens
 Director of Sales & Marketing
 mstevens@alextimes.com

Sydney Kodama
 Managing Editor & Reporter
 skodama@alextimes.com

Hannah Shibliq
 Reporter & Photographer
 hshibliq@alextimes.com

Jim McGrath
 Sports Reporter
 jmcgrath@alextimes.com

Julia Gwin
 Reporting Intern
 jgwin@alextimes.com

C.J. Hanauer
 Photo Intern
 chanauer@alextimes.com

James Libresco
 Reporting Intern
 jlibresco@alextimes.com

Chloe McCann
 Social Media Intern
 atsocials@alextimes.com

Elona Michael
 Reporting Intern
 emichael@alextimes.com

SALES & MARKETING

Margaret Stevens
 mstevens@alextimes.com

Marty DeVine
 mdevine@alextimes.com

Patrice V. Culligan
 pculligan@alextimes.com

Tina Franco
 Business Operations Manager
 tfranco@alextimes.com

DIRECTOR OF ART & DESIGN

Jessica Kim
 graphics@alextimes.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Gayle Converse, Kim Davis,
 Mark Eaton, Mark Edelman,
 Thompson Eskew, Kim Gilliam,
 Kehinde Hopkins,
 Erin Shackelford

ACM BOARD

Denise Dunbar
 President

Russell Bailey
Suzanne Brock
Carter Flemming
Traci Miller
Joe Sestak

Tax-deductible donations
 can be mailed to:
 Alexandria Times
 908 King Street, Suite 200
 Alexandria, VA 22314

Alexandria
 COMMUNITY MEDIA

The history of George Washington High School

This year marks the 55th anniversary of George Washington High School's conversion to George Washington Middle School. The school opened in 1935 and was the only Alexandria public high school for white students for 20 years.

The city's Black students attended Parker-Gray School. George Washington High School had an all-white student body until 1965, when the Alexandria public school system integrated. It remained a high school until 1971, and was converted into the middle school it remains today.

George Washington High School's famous former students include NBC TV personality Willard Scott and two members of The Mamas & the Papas vocal group – John Phillips and Ellen Cohen, also known as “Mama Cass” Elliott. Perhaps the high school's most famous student was Jim Morrison, lead singer of The Doors band.

Two other alumni were military hero Francis Hammond, for whom a naval ship and another Alexandria high school were named, who lost his life during the Korean War, and as-



PHOTO/H. TOWNLEY MCELHINEY, COURTESY OF THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

George Washington Middle School in 2014.

tronaut Guy Gardner.

Besides its famous students, George Washington High School's field was the site of two historical events. On Aug. 24, 1960, then-Senator John F. Kennedy kicked off a tour of southern states in Alexandria at the field. Kennedy went on to lose Virginia but win the presidency that year.

In August of 1965, Joe Namath played the first game of his professional career at George Washington High School in an exhibition game between the New York Jets and the Houston Oilers. Houston won the game 21-16, but less than four years later, Namath led the Jets to a stunning upset of the Baltimore Colts in

Super Bowl III.

The field also is home to a time capsule, buried in 1949 by President Harry S. Truman and others to celebrate Alexandria's 200th birthday. It is to be opened in 2049 when the city turns 300.

In 2002, the George Washington High School Alumni Association unveiled a Virginia Historical Marker at the school, recognizing its importance to both state and national history. The plaque reads:

“The City of Alexandria purchased 15.5 acres in 1933 and opened George Washington High School in 1935. For two decades, this was the city's only public high school for white students. The Art Deco-style

building was constructed with funding from the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, a New Deal agency that helped modernize the nation's infrastructure during the Great Depression.

“Later expanded, the school served as an important community gathering place for the arts and athletics. Alexandria's school system was desegregated in 1965. This campus, which closed as a four-year high school in 1971 and later became a middle school, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.”

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