



Alexandria Times

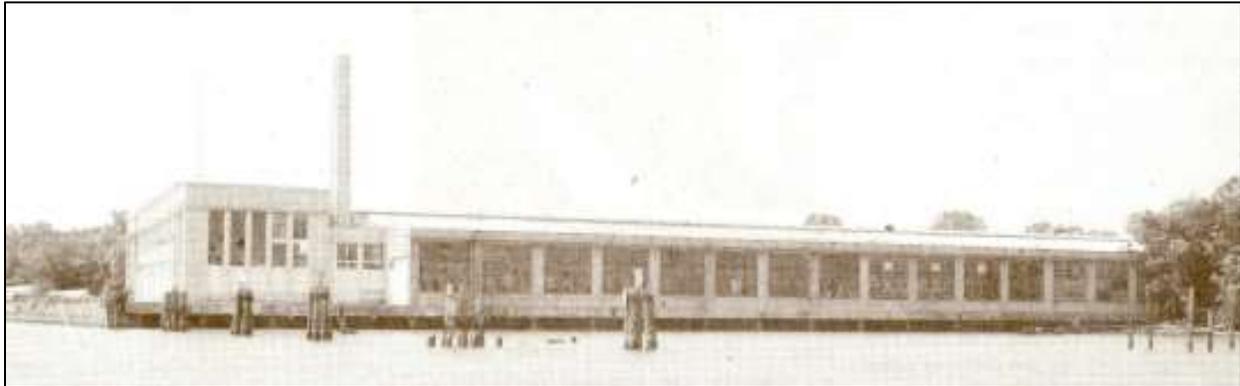
Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Ford Plant

Alexandria Times, December 4, 2008

Image: The Ford Plant. Photo, Library of Congress, HABS/HAER



In the early 1930s, the Ford Motor Company selected a site along Alexandria's waterfront to build its new plant. The location at the foot of Franklin Street was ideal because the Potomac had a deep channel at that point that would permit ships to load and unload easily. A spur of the Southern Railway further enhanced access to the site.

In 1931, the George Washington Stone Corporation sold the property to Ford and construction began quickly. The building's architect, Albert Kahn, was noted for his use of concrete in the design of factories and other industrial structures and Ford used Kahn to design several of their factories. The structure featured yellow-glazed brick, a saw-tooth roof and Art Deco elements.

The Alexandria plant was the only building in Virginia that Kahn designed.

On October 17, 1932, the Ford Plant opened for work with 225 men employed there. Operations at the plant were halted at times during the Depression, and World War II initially brought an increase in business with the War Department placing orders for vehicles from the Alexandria plant. But in 1942, the federal government purchased the plant as an annex to the Navy's torpedo factory located at King and North Union streets.

Following the war, the Navy used the plant as a reserve center, and then from 1960 to 1983, the General Services Administration used it for storage. The property was sold in 1984, and in the 1990s, the plant was demolished and the property was developed into the residential community of Ford's Landing.

"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical



**Office of Historic Alexandria
City of Alexandria, Virginia**

images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into “Out of the Attic” and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.