



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Traffic Training

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Image: Traffic training at Jefferson School, 1940s. Photo, courtesy Norman Grimm.

Alexandria police believed it was never too early to educate young people about the importance of safe driving.

In the 1940s, Sergeant Henry Grimm, seen to the right of the traffic light in this photo, set up a course just for kids at the Jefferson School. The school, which opened in 1923, was located on North West Street facing Queen Street, just south of where Jefferson Village apartments are today.

Grimm, a longtime motorcycle officer and member of the traffic unit, designed the realistic course with stop signs, crosswalks, and two directions of traffic for children to practice their motoring skills. The intersection was equipped with a fully-functioning traffic signal, and the young drivers practiced using manual turn signals while other waited patiently for a green light.

The kids drove toy cars sponsored by local businesses and public safety groups, including the Virginia State Police and Herby's Motors. Herby's was first located on North St. Asaph Street and moved to Duke Street near Holland Lane where it was known as Herby's Ford.

Grimm, who was later promoted to the rank of lieutenant, oversaw the safety patrol and was active with other programs for young people, including the Alexandria Police Boys Camp, today known as the Alexandria Police Youth Camp. Located in the Northern Neck, the camp was dedicated in memory of Grimm's son, Charles Herbert Grimm, a Marine who was killed fighting at Iwo Jima during World War II.



“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 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.