



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Upper King Street

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Image: Looking west from the 1600 block of King Street, ca. 1935. Photo, Office of Historic Alexandria.



This photograph, looking west from the 1600 block of King Street, was likely a personal snapshot centering on the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Taken around 1935, just a few years after the memorial was completed, it captured one specific area that played an important role in the leisure activities of Alexandrians.

On the right, where the billboard-covered walls are visible, was Baggett's Stadium, a baseball park where local teams competed for 20 years. Shortly after this photo was taken, the ballpark closed and a cinema was built in the 1700 block of King. When the Reed Theatre opened in 1937, it was the largest movie theatre in the state, able to accommodate 1,400 guests, and a nearby parking lot could hold hundreds of cars.

Several commercial sites are visible in this photo, including a Sanitary Grocery at 1630 King Street and the Dixie Café at 1640 King. The Sanitary Grocery Company was a regional chain of food



Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia

stores that was acquired by California-based Safeway. By the mid-1940s, a larger Safeway store had opened at 1747 King and the old Sanitary Grocery became an Acme Market.

At the time this photo was snapped, several auto-related businesses were along Upper King. Service stations operated on both sides of King Street, including one visible on the left at Diagonal Road, where King Street Gardens is today. On the right, there was a used car lot and on the left were the Alexandria Motor Company, a Dodge and Plymouth dealer and Temple Motors, which sold Pontiacs and Buicks.

To learn more about Alexandria's automotive history, stop by The Lyceum's "Old Cars in Alexandria" show on Saturday, May 30.

"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.