Office of Historic Alexandria
City of Alexandria, Virginia

Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as The Alexandria Times and Advertiser

Out of the Attic

Rural Lincolnia

Alexandria Times, June 18, 2009

Image: Lincolnia. Photo, Fairfax County Public Library Photographic Archive.

In the early 19th century an unincorporated village known as Lebanon was founded along the Little River Turnpike where the I-395 interchange is today. A meetinghouse that was used as a church and a school was constructed in 1833, and a cemetery was also established around that time.

During the Civil War, the original building was destroyed by Union troops, and a second structure, known as Lebanon Union Church, was built a few years later. After the war ended, the village was renamed Lincolnia in honor of Abraham Lincoln and in a post office was established 1870. To recoup the loss of the first building, a claim was filed against the federal government. In 1915, Congress awarded $850 to the trustees, but by that time three new churches served the Lincolnia community.

Most families in Lincolnia operated farms, raising chickens and dairy cows along with fruits and vegetables. This 1931 photograph shows the property of Neil Miller whose family, like the Lewises, Barnums and Cowlings, had been in Lincolnia for multiple generations.

The growth of the suburbs in the 1940s saw a change to the rural way of life, bringing with it the need for more housing and the construction of Shirley Highway. Alexandria's annexation of land from Fairfax in the early 1950s cut through Lincolnia, with the cemetery grounds inside the city limits and historic Cottage Farm in the county.

"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.