



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Beachcombers Restaurant

Alexandria Times, September 17, 2009

Image: Beachcombers Restaurant, 1948. Photo, Alexandria Library Special Collections, John C. Richards Collections.

This mid-20th-century building along Alexandria's waterfront was in fact constructed above the waters of the Potomac River and operated as a seafood restaurant in its early years.

In 1945, Clarence J. Robinson, founder of the Robinson Terminal Warehouse Corporation, leased a parcel east of the Strand at Prince Street to Edward Wayne, Thomas A. Hulfish, Jr., and John Bethea, who planned to open a restaurant there. Construction soon began and within a year, the Beachcombers Restaurant, a two-story cinder block building, was built upon pilings in the Potomac.



Customers accessed Beachcombers from a walkway and once inside, they could have dinner in the second floor dining room or outside. From a wraparound porch or the rooftop, patrons could enjoy a panoramic view of the Potomac and the Maryland shore. Guests later recalled watching the evening ferry to Norfolk loading at the nearby dock. One frequent customer, Alice Roosevelt, the daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt, appreciated the view of lily pads and other aquatic plants.

In 1948, around the time this photograph was taken, Beachcombers touted its fresh seafood and other specialties in newspaper ads, offering lobster supreme, full-bodied shrimp, steaks "prepared to perfection," and a "fine stock of imported and domestic wines and beer."

On January 23, 1954, Beachcombers, vacant at the time, suffered significant damage in a fire. The owners decided not to continue their restaurant business and sold the building later that year.

"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.



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

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.