



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Banner Laundry

Alexandria Times, March 4, 2010

Image: Laundry van outside 607 Cameron Street, 1920s. Photo, Library of Congress.

Banner Laundry opened in Alexandria around 1910, occupying the former site of a bakery at 909 Oronoco Street. Also known as Banner Steam Laundry, it expanded over the next 40 years to occupy the northwest corner of Oronoco and North Alfred streets.

Banner Laundry served commercial and residential customers but advertised to women specifically, encouraging them in a 1923 newspaper ad to relieve themselves “of all the troubles and worry that attend wash day” by using a modern steam laundry. Banner provided pick-up and delivery service to homes. A 1917 fire heavily damaged a stable behind Banner Laundry but its delivery vehicle was unscathed. A later delivery van, seen in this photograph from the 1920s outside 607 Cameron Street, advertised Banner’s three-digit phone number before seven digit dialing existed.



Owned and operated by Otis H. Hullings, Banner was a member of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and employed press operators, seamstresses and washers. By the mid-1930s, it offered services such as “damp wash” and “family finish,” as well as rug cleaning, and it later opened a dry cleaning operation.

Hullings was active with civic organizations and served on the board of directors of the Alexandria National Bank. He died in 1940 but Banner continued operating into the early 1950s. A fire in 1953 caused extensive damage to the brick structure. The Banner Laundry plant became Harper Laundry by 1959. In 1977, the plant was demolished and townhomes were built there the following 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
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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.