



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Lynhaven Community

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Image: Aerial view of the site of Lynhaven, around 1934. Photo, Collection of Jim Foley.



At the turn of the 20th century, William H. Brown owned a triangle-shaped tract of land containing almost 33 acres. When this photo, facing south with East Reed Avenue in the foreground, was taken about 1934, just a few homes were present along the northern and southern boundaries.

Compared to the St. Elmo development in the background, it was still largely undeveloped. But within 10 years, the property would be transformed into the Lynhaven community.

In early 1941, Wesmond Building and Investment Company broke ground on a 320-home residential development, north of East Glebe Road and bounded on the east by Jefferson Davis Highway, visible on the left. Wesmond was headed by J. Wesley Buchanan, a real estate salesman and property developer who established his own real estate company in 1931.

Buchanan's successful Lyndale community, built in 1939 in Washington, D.C., served as a model for the new Lynhaven neighborhood. The names of both developments came in part from Buchanan's daughter Rosalyn, who went by Lyn, and one of the new roads in Lynhaven was designated Evans Lane, reflecting Buchanan's wife's family name.

The first homes, brick and cinderblock row houses with two floors and a full basement, were built along Wilson Avenue and Lynhaven Drive and sold for less than \$6,000. They had air conditioning, automatic oil heat, and porches and were soon followed by construction on Wesmond Drive and Evans Lane. Lynhaven homes had two- and three- bedroom floor plans and were advertised as affordable for people who "earn more than \$30 weekly."



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

Lynhaven construction was not completed until after World War II. In the late 1940s, Wesmond Building and Investment erected homes along East Reed, as well as a 28-unit apartment complex called Lynhaven Gardens on Commonwealth Avenue.

“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.