



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Mount Auburn

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Image: Mount Auburn, 1937 aerial photo. Photo, U.S. Geological Survey.

The lifelong home of Helen Chapman Calvert, a descendant of some of Alexandria's earliest landowners, Mount Auburn was positioned on a hillside southwest of where Mount Vernon Avenue and Sanborn Place meet today.

Mount Auburn, seen at the end of a winding driveway on the left of the above 1937 aerial image, was relatively modest. It contained six rooms in the main house and a few outbuildings further west, including a barn that caught fire in 1920. Mount Auburn held antique furnishings and portraits of Calvert's ancestors, and she often held special events there, such as a League of Women Voters picnic and dinner for the Women's Auxiliary of Christ Episcopal Church.

Thomas Swann, Calvert's grandfather, had moved to Mount Auburn in the 19th century when it was located north of the city limits. Over the next century, the property was divided and developed. In 1927, the Alexandria Water Company built a reservoir north of the home and south of the railroad tracks along West Glebe Road. Then in the late 1930s, the eastern part, still undeveloped in this photo, was sold and developed into Auburn Gardens – known today as Auburn Village. The Warwick swimming pool was built in 1958 on Landover Street to the west of the reservoir.

In the early 1960s, the remaining property was developed, with high-rise apartment buildings erected on separate parcels. Construction began on The Calvert, located at 3110 Mount Vernon Av., in the summer of 1962, just months after Helen Calvert's death.

Two years later, following the demolition of Mount Auburn, Landover House opened at 3201 Landover St. Landover House was later renamed Aspen House and the parking lot to the south of it occupies the site where Mount Auburn once stood.



“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.



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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.