



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

'An Artistic Little' Rosemont Station

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Image: The former Rosemont Station, with West Rosemont Avenue in the background. Photo, Alexandria Library Special Collections.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Washington, Alexandria & Mount Vernon Railway electric streetcar system traveled west from Alexandria and turned north toward Washington, D.C., traveling in the center of what was then called Washington Avenue but later became Commonwealth Avenue. In 1908, as the first properties were sold in the new residential community of Rosemont, a station was added to the electric railway line and work on a permanent structure began the next spring.



While most stations along the route were simple wooden shelters, Rosemont's station, located at the foot of West Rosemont Avenue, was designed by architect Milton Dana Morrill. The "artistic little station," as one local paper described it, had doors, windows, electricity and telephone cable, and sat atop a granolithic platform. Grass and small trees were planted around the station which, the newspaper said, "any suburb of New York might well be proud of."

Once completed, Rosemont Station, seen in this photo with West Rosemont Avenue in the background, served as more than a trolley stop. The leadership of Rosemont Citizens Association held meetings there and police used it as a substation. In 1929, as the population grew, the station became a polling place for elections.

In 1930, a Del Ray resident sought to open a newstand at the station but was denied. Even after service on the railway ended in 1932, the Rosemont Station remained in use and served as a polling site at least until 1937.

As the City of Alexandria was converting Washington Avenue into a wide, divided boulevard around 1939, the station had to be removed. But today, West Rosemont Avenue remains a divided road at 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.



**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.