



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

The center of Alexandria's wholesale district

Alexandria Times, June 30, 2011

Image: The Corn Exchange, 100 King Street. Photo, Souvenir Tercentennial of Historic Alexandria, Virginia, 1907..

In 1871, Alexandria's Corn and Produce Exchange, a grain and produce market, arranged to have a new building erected at the southwest corner of King and Union streets.

The site was previously occupied by the former customs house that was used as a storehouse by the Union army during the Civil War. This old structure was demolished in June 1871, and construction on the new building started soon after.

The new Italianate-style structure was designed by Alexandria architect Benjamin F. Price, who later designed the replacement steeple when City Hall was rebuilt after a fire. He would also later design the Alexandria Armory, among other local buildings. Though Price's new building was called the new Corn Exchange, the name was officially changed to the Commercial Exchange in January 1872, just weeks before the new facility officially opened on February 1 with a banquet, toasts and speeches.



The Exchange occupied the second story, which was 25 feet high and had tall windows and an arched ceiling. Noble Lindsey's whole grocery occupied the first floor and remained in business long after the Exchange closed. At the time this photo was taken around 1907, the business was still expanding and by 1922, the Lindsey-Nicholson Corporation as it was then known had more than 20 employees. The business was described in a local paper as being the "center of the wholesale district" with a "complete line of stable and fancy groceries, notions, flour, feedstuff" as well as "tire and tubes."

The former Corn Exchange building would later be occupied by the Virginia Public Service Company and then used by the federal government. For more than 30 years, it has been the site of multiple restaurants.

"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.