



# Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

## Out of the Attic

### Hayman's anchored the fashion hub of Northern Virginia

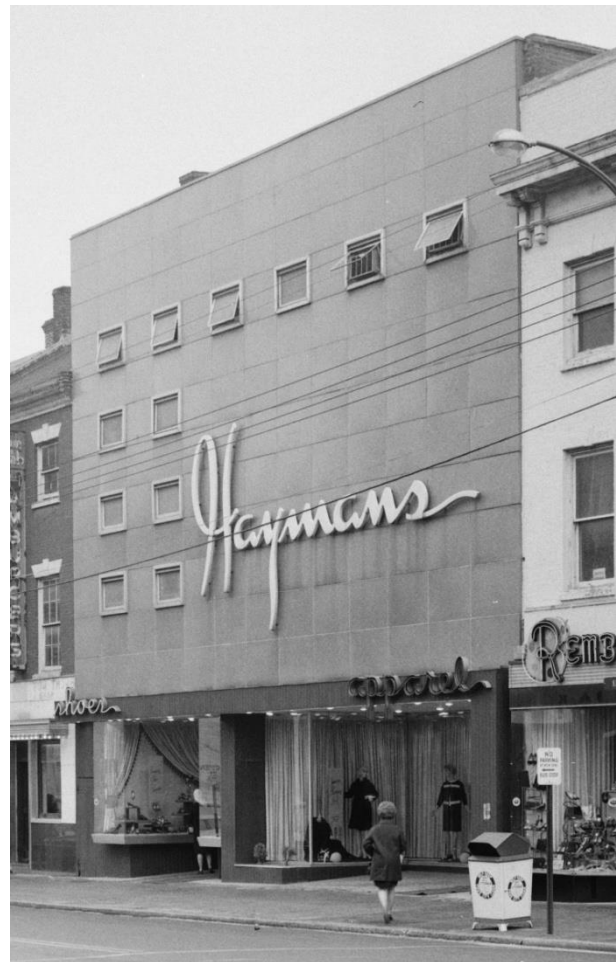
*Alexandria Times, March 29, 2012*

*Image: Hayman's Department Store, 526-530 King Street. Photo, Library of Congress.*

One of Alexandria's legendary emporiums for ladies wear after World War II was Hayman's located at 526-530 King Street, just west of where the Alexandria Courthouse currently stands. Joseph Hayman (born Hait) had emigrated to Alexandria from Eastern Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and soon after married Rose Spitzer. By 1902 he maintained a small variety shop and residence at 118 North Royal Street, just opposite Market Square. His young sons, Reuben and Benjamin, twice won City Council contests for killing the most flies at the insect-plagued open market, and were photographed with their gallon jugs of swatted Diptera as part of the award ceremonies. The young men graduated from high school in Alexandria in 1923 and 1924 respectively and entered college. But after Benjamin's father found out that he had secretly married at the age of 20, he determined that it was time for both brothers to leave school and enter the family business.

After the Second World War ended, Benjamin established several new stores on properties owned by his father along King and St. Asaph Streets. Assisted by his wife Bessie and son James, these stores focused on finer ladies apparel, fur coats and shoes for an upscale market at a time when Alexandria was the retail hub for Northern Virginia. Hayman's was well-known for its line of Hanes hosiery, special occasion dresses and store charge accounts in the days before credit cards. To compete in a changing retail market, the traditional façade and cornice of the building was replaced with modern "super-cell" metal panels that shielded not only the storefront, where beautiful display windows were often enhanced by live models, but also rental apartments on the upper floors.

Hayman's relocated as an anchor of the new Tavern Square after urban renewal demolished the entire 500 block about 1970. That store closed in 1992, ending the Hayman's 90-year retail dynasty in Alexandria.





## Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia

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*"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.*