



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Lloyd House becomes home to Alexandria's history

Alexandria Times, December 6, 2012

Image: The Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington Street. Photo, Library of Congress.

This is This is the final installment of a three-part series covering the unusual history of the Lloyd House, a building a few of the city's most prominent dignitaries and characters called home.

When California oilman Robert V. New suddenly acquired Lloyd House in 1956 — just hours before its demolition — he was feted as Alexandria's architectural savior. During his first visit to the property, he was offered the opportunity to acquire other threatened landmarks, such as The Lyceum, in hopes he might be interested in spreading his wealth and generosity around.

But New's status as a preservation hero, and the hope of him restoring Lloyd House as a museum, proved short-lived. After removing all plumbing from the house, he left it vacant for several years while he pursued different options. New proposed that the house be used as a lobbying headquarters for American psychiatrists, a residence for the president of the American Red Cross, a science center and, finally, an office for one of his oil exploration companies: Green Cabin Development Corp.

But these plans fell through, and he leased the house to William and Randall Vosbeck, two young brothers who had recently founded an architectural firm in Alexandria, known as Vosbeck and Vosbeck. The firm would eventually play a major role in the '60s urban renewal project in Old Town. In fact, the redesign of the historic city's core was planned within the walls of Lloyd House.

Interestingly, the Vosbeck firm designed a nine-story, L-shaped building in a Georgian design for New that was proposed to surround Lloyd House. Though the building technically adhered to zoning, the board of architectural review rejected it as "monstrous."

Finally New applied for a demolition permit, prodding the city and Alexandria Historic Restoration and Preservation Commission to acquire the property for public use. After serving as part of the Alexandria Library for nearly 25 years, it is now the headquarters for the Office of Historic Alexandria.



"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 City of Alexandria, Virginia

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.