



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

A champion of Alexandria's most underserved residents

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Image: Annie B. Rose. Photo, Office of Historic Alexandria.

Annie Beatrice Bailey Rose, best to the community as “Miss Annie”, fought to advance opportunities for the city’s black residents as well as Alexandria’s less fortunate.

She was born in January 1895, the daughter of the Rev. Henry Bailey. He was a former slave who was sold as a child from the notorious slave jail at 1315 Duke Street, the same building later dedicated in his honor and occupied by the Freedom House Museum and Northern Virginia Urban League.

When freed in 1863, Bailey — who was 21 at the time — walked from the Texas plantation where he was enslaved back to Northern Virginia in search of his mother, who he successfully located. He became a notable Baptist preacher after the Civil War, founding several churches in the region, even mortgaging his home to pay for the labor and materials of at least one church construction project.

In 1926, Rose made Alexandria home, where she lived for the next 62 years. She was an outspoken activist for black residents, working to improve social and human services, including in the areas of education, housing and medical care. She was particularly concerned about senior residents at risk of falling through the social safety net, becoming a founding member of the Alexandria Commission on Aging as well as the Retired and Senior Volunteer Project.

She served on the board of the Urban League, the Alexandria Red Cross, the council of Church Women United and Hopkins House, and she was the first black president of the Alexandria Women’s Civic Association. An accomplished musician, Rose played the organ weekly at Ebenezer Baptist Church.

Although her father rarely discussed his early life as a slave with her, Rose was a staunch advocate in the promotion of Alexandria’s black heritage, lecturing on the subject in local schools and lobbying city officials to establish a black history resource center, which is today known as the Alexandria Black History Museum. She was once referred to as the grande dame of black history in the city, organizing the Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage.

By the time of her death, at the age of 94, in 1989 — several years after this photograph was taken — she had been honored with dozens of local and national awards for her tireless service to humankind. Soon after, city officials renamed Pendleton House in her honor, a superior housing facility that helps meet the needs of elderly and physically challenged residents, as well as those with disabilities.





Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia

“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.