



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Travel guides for safe motoring

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Last month, the Alexandria Black History Museum reported on entering the Moss Kendrix Collection in the Virginia Association of Museums' Top 10 Endangered Artifact competition. As an honoree, the Museum was awarded \$250 from VAM and received \$1,200 in private donations toward conserving some of the damaged photographs and documents in the Collection.

Much of the Moss Kendrix Collection relates to Kendrix's association with The Coca-Cola Company, one of his public relations firm's most important clients. In the collection, we have two issues of "Go Guide to Pleasant Motoring," dated 1961-1962 and 1963. Coke placed advertisements in the publications and made complimentary copies available.

"Go Guide" and the more well-known "Green Book" were essential tools for the African American traveler during the Jim Crow era, especially in the South. Local and state laws legalized racial segregation and violation of these rules often resulted in arrests, fines, incarceration, violence or death.

As automobile touring became increasingly popular during the 20th century, it was critically important for African Americans to know where to safely obtain goods, services, food and lodging without facing discrimination. It could be a matter of life and death to stay after nightfall in "Sundown Towns," where African Americans could only work, shop or drive through during the day, but had to leave by dark.

Some cities and towns even posted signs that African Americans weren't welcome. Much has changed since the 1960s when many Jim Crow laws were abolished during the civil rights movement, but racism and segregation have not been completely eliminated.

While "Green Book," published by Victor H. Green from 1936 to 1967, had a longer publication run and was featured in a major motion picture, "Go Guide," published by Andrew F. Jackson Associates, Inc. from 1952 to 1965, was an important annual directory of accommodations.

The guide listed by state, plus the District of Columbia, the Caribbean and Canada, where African Americans could safely stay while traveling. Included in the guides were welcoming messages from many, but not all, state governors, inviting them to visit. Each state listing contained some facts, such as interesting places to visit, when it was admitted to the Union, its state bird, flower and capital.

This Black History Month, the Alexandria Black History Museum is offering several virtual programs, including opportunities to learn more about Moss Kendrix and "Green Book."

On Feb. 17 at 7 p.m., a lecture by Brenna Wynn Greer, Ph.D, will trace how Moss Kendrix enlisted white corporate America in a campaign to redefine Black citizenship after World War II, and on Feb. 24 at 4 p.m., Susan Hellman's lecture will explore Virginia businesses listed in the "Green Book."

Both lectures are sponsored by the Alexandria Black History Museum and cost \$6 each. To purchase tickets, visit [AlexandriaVa. Gov/Shop](http://AlexandriaVa.Gov/Shop). To learn about additional programming, visit www.alexandriava.gov/BlackHistory

Next week, learn more about one of the museum's newest acquisitions, the Ben Holt Collection, featuring the life of an accomplished young opera star.



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 staff of the Office of Historic Alexandria and invited guests.