
Founders Park

A Biography

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1 - Founders Park at sunrise.



Founders Park Community Association (FPCA) was incorporated in 1979 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization dedicated to improving and maintaining Founders Park and the quality of life in the Founders Park Area.

FPCA works with the City of Alexandria and other civic groups to protect, preserve and improve Founders Park's beautiful green space and to maintain its designation as a passive park.

For more information please visit: <https://www.alexandriafounderspark.org>

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Introduction

Founders Park is a quiet urban oasis in the heart of Old Town Alexandria. Since 1979, the membership of the Founders Park Community Association (FPCA) has been dedicated to improving and maintaining the Park and the quality of life in the area of the Park.



2 - Founders Park - Alexandria Virginia

The Park sits on almost 5 acres of open, tree lined Potomac shoreline bounded by the foot of Oronoco and Queen Streets to the north and south and Union Street to the west. From the river's edge one can enjoy a view that includes, the nation's capital, the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, the neon-illuminated Ferris Wheel of National Harbor across the Potomac, and all manner of water birds and watercraft.

For over 270 years this small piece of land has witnessed its fair share of our nation's history. Over that time the Park served as a tobacco inspection station, a bustling colonial waterfront, a military supply depot, and an industrial area. The Park's current, and hopefully final, incarnation is that of a peaceful gathering place for residents and visitors, young and old, two and four-legged.

The creation of Founders Park was not easy or inevitable. It emerged only after a long and contentious debate and legal battle over the future of the waterfront, the role of open space, and even ownership of the land itself. The story of the Park is a testament to the power of community, the persistence of

individuals, and ultimately compromise. What follows is not intended to be a history of Alexandria but rather a biography of a small, precious piece of a land on the waterfront of a city, described by a visitor in 1795 as "beyond all comparison, the handsomest town in Virginia, and indeed is among the finest of the United States."¹

Earliest History of the Park

The area of today's Park actually began as a part of the river. The land was originally the northern end of a large crescent shaped bay that marked the future of site of today's waterfront. The bay's most notable physical features were its relatively deep-water and comparatively easy access to the land beyond through two natural cuts in the earthen bluffs that characterized the Virginia side of the Potomac in this area (the terminus of today's Oronoco and Duke Streets).

Archeological evidence suggests that several Native American groups harvested fish, eels, and oysters from this part of the river and its associated tidal marshes for millennia.² The earliest documented non-native activity was a Spanish military expedition which sailed up the Potomac from the Chesapeake Bay in 1588 in an unsuccessful attempt to find and destroy the English colony of Roanoke.³



3 - Captain John Smith's map of his 1608 exploration including the Potomac River.

A few decades after the Spanish expedition, Captain John Smith, of Jamestown fame, conducted a detailed survey of the upper reaches of the Potomac. Smith's 1608 record of that trip included one of the first reliable maps showing the land that would 140 years later become Alexandria. In addition to noting the existence of two native settlements in the area Smith commented on the abundance of fish, writing that they were "lying so thick with their heads above the water, as for want of nets...we attempted to catch them with a frying pan..."⁴

The Park and the Founding of Alexandria

European settlement of Virginia grew steadily in the century following Smith's explorations. In the last half of the 1600s, intrepid settlers such as Margaret Brent, John Alexander, Cadwallader Jones, and Thomas Pearson carved out an existence in the untrammelled wilderness near the present site of Alexandria. In this era "tobacco was to the Potomac as gold was to the Yukon."⁵ Planting it, harvesting it, and shipping it was the path riches in the mid-Atlantic colonies. By 1700 large land holdings were cleared and tobacco production was in high gear.

In those days' tobacco farmers rolled their crop in large barrels (known as "hogsheads") across rough-cut roads to temporary storage warehouses along the river for shipment to European markets. The future site of Alexandria was ideal for this purpose because its natural features allowed ocean-going vessels to load the "outlandish weed" close to where

it was being harvested.⁶ One such tobacco warehouse (later named West's Point) was the northwest corner of today's Founders Park (the intersection of Oronoco and Union Streets). Originally built in the 1720s by Simon Pearson, the crude warehouses and simple docks were sold to Hugh West, sometime around 1735.⁷



4 - George Washington's 1748 survey of the site for Alexandria. West's Point, the northwest corner of today's Park, is point of land in the bottom right.

West's operation was subsequently designated by the Virginia Assembly to serve as an official tobacco inspecting, storing, and shipping warehouse.⁸ Business was good. Within a few years, West added warehouse capacity, a tobacco kiln and expanded a small ferry service "charging one shilling for man or horse".⁹ There is also evidence that West operated a tavern on the site (then called an "ordinary").¹⁰

The commercial success of the West's operation and associated economic

activity convinced the growing number of prosperous landowners of the area to petition the Virginia Assembly to create a town.¹¹ In 1749, the Assembly passed an act directing:

*Whereas it has been represented to this General Assembly that a town at Hunting Creek Warehouse on Potomack River would be commodious for trade and Navigation and tend greatly to the Ease and Advantage of the Frontier Inhabitants... Sixty Acres of Land, parcel of the Lands of Philip Alexander, John Alexander, and Hugh West...shall be surveyed and laid out by the Surveyor...*¹²

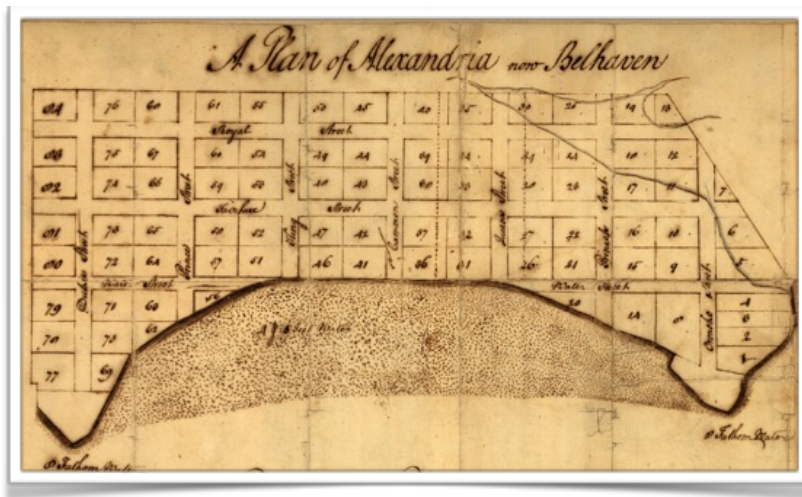
The Assembly designated a board of Trustees for the new town from the largest landowners in the area. These men were the "Founders" in Founders Park - Lord Fairfax, William Fairfax, George Fairfax, Richard Osborne, Lawrence Washington, William Ramsay, John Carlyle, John Pagan, Gerrard Alexander, Hugh West, and Philip Alexander.

The official surveyor of Fairfax County (John West, son of founder Hugh West), assisted by a young George Washington, was tasked to lay out the initial sixty-six half-acre plots for a new town. The plan included an area reserved for a public square and two public landings, Lumley Point (the foot of Duke Street) and the existing wharf at West's Point.

Braddock's Expedition Arrives at the Park

Alexandria grew slowly in those first few years. Most of the original lots had sold by 1752 but many were still without improvement. Commerce was still based on the tobacco trade and but was supplemented by a growing import business serving the wealthy family estates in the region. At this point the Park still lay mostly under the river but dry northwest was witness to one of Alexandria's first major historic events.

In March 1755 West's Point was the site of a spectacle. Two British warships, the HMS *Osgood* and HMS *Fishburn* anchored in the harbor and offloaded troops and supplies at the tobacco wharf. The arrival of 1,300 British soldiers must have been quite a sight for a town of less than 500 residents.¹³ As one historian imagined the scene



5 - The 1748 Plan of Alexandria. Braddock's Redcoats landed at the foot of Oronoco Street - bottom right.

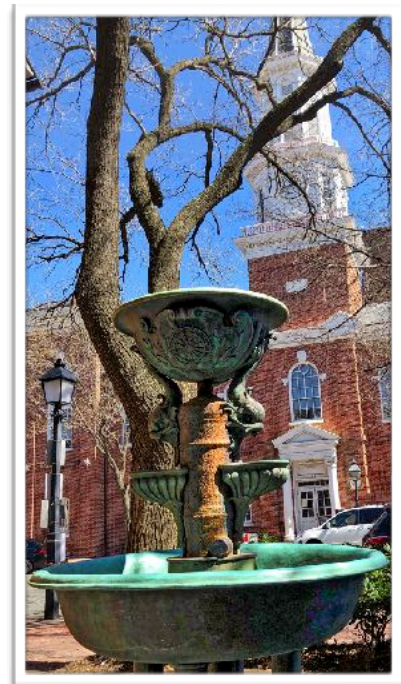
Once the soldiers of the 48th [Foot Regiment] were formed on shore and their ranks were still...their commander, Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Burton, gave the order, "SHOULder your - FIRElocks!" When each soldier had crisply raised his musket to his left shoulder, Burton marched the unit, to the rattle of drums and the piping of fifes, from the landing, past wood frame tobacco warehouses, and up the packed dirt of Oronoco Street.¹⁴

The Redcoats, many newly recruited in Ireland, were a lively bunch. Founder John Carlyle, described the soldiers as arriving "in high spirits...afraid of nothing but that the French and Indians would not give them a meeting..."¹⁵ Their ambitious commander, Major General Edward Braddock, who arrived a few weeks later, was also anxious to meet the French in battle but just as motivated to "remove the troops from Alexandria, as the greatest care and severest punishments could not prevent the immoderate use of spirituous liquors..."¹⁶

After a few months of preparation, to include the mobilization of local colonial militia led by a George Washington, Braddock's small army marched west toward the French Fort Duquesne (modern-day Pittsburgh). Braddock's expedition never reached its objective. On 9 July 1755, at the Battle of the Monongahela, a deadly combination of impatience, poor tactics, and bad intelligence, cost Braddock his life and the loss of most of his army. Alexandria's most famous son survived "by all dispensations of Providence" despite having four bullet holes in his coat and having two horses shot out from under him.¹⁷

Surprisingly, some evidence of Braddock's passage through the Park remains to this day. Several "3-pounder" cannons, believed to have been originally offloaded onto the pier at West's Point in March 1755, were left behind when Braddock's force departed.¹⁸ Later, during the Revolutionary War, several of these cannons were even put to use by Alexandria's militia and stationed south of the city at Jones Point to guard against the British Navy.¹⁹

After the Revolution, and for more than a century, the location of the cannons was a mystery. In 1908 several of them were discovered buried in the area known as the Strand (east of Union Street at the foot of Prince). In 1912, the Daughters of the American Revolution converted one into a drinking fountain placed it at the corner of Cameron and North Royal streets. The location proved to be less than ideal and was eventually "declared a public nuisance by neighbors, motorists and officials with the city's recently created health department."²⁰ After being moved several times the cannon fountain now stands, largely unnoticed, at 134 North Royal Street.²¹



6 - Alexandria Memorial
Drinking Fountain - Braddock's
Cannon.

The Park in Colonial Alexandria

Despite its slow start Alexandria rapidly developed into a thriving port. Many of the founders were employed as "factors" by large firms in England or Scotland and created a significant portion of their wealth through commissions in the brokering of trade in tobacco and later wheat. The economic potential of Alexandria in this period seemed unlimited. A visitor in 1759 described the city as a place "in one of the finest situations possible...built upon an arc of this bay; at one extremity of which is a wharf; at the other a dock for building ships; with water sufficiently deep to launch a vessel of any rate or magnitude."²²

Despite being a hotbed of revolutionary political activity and sedition, Alexandria saw little direct impact of the war itself. As it had in the Seven Years War, and would again, Alexandria would be a primary source of military volunteers and supplies. Shipbuilding proved to be important. It is likely that many of the rope makers, wood joiners, and other shipbuilding craftsmen who make their living in the area of the Park helped to outfit ships for the so-called "Potowmack Navy." In 1775 George Mason enlisted the efforts of Alexandrians John Carlyle and John Dalton to construct two row galleys armed with a single cannon to be prepared to fend off anticipated attacks by "Lord Dunmore's pirates" (in the form of the British Navy).²³

Despite significant economic disruptions during the Revolutionary War, Alexandria continued to grow. In the late 1700s and became one of the most important port facilities in the new nation. Between 1760 and 1775, Alexandria's crescent shaped waterfront was

dominated by four major piers jutting into the river from the foot of twenty to thirty-foot bluffs.²⁴ The bluffs themselves were topped by a number of warehouses along Water Street (now Lee Street). This layout proved to be very labor intensive and inefficient as the volume of commerce grew. To resolve this problem and allow continued expansion waterfront property owners simply created new land.

By 1790, the land that is now Founders Park and most of today's waterfront, was created in a process known as "banking out."²⁵ Waterfront landowners pulled the bluffs down onto the shoreline and piled earth, river dredgings and a haphazard mix of timber, refuse, and the wrecks of old vessels into the bay. The new shoreline is visible east of the newly created Union Street in the 1798 map of the city.



7 - Map of Colonial Alexandria (1798) - with the future Founders Park in yellow.

Looking south across the new waterfront from the foot of Oronoco Street in the late 1700s one would have seen quite a collection of vessels at anchor. Some, especially the smaller schooners and brigs, were manufactured and homeported in Alexandria. However, many of the larger ships flew flags from, France, Spain, Holland, Portugal and Germany. An observer at the time noted "the port of Alexandria has seldom less than 20 square-rigged vessels in it and often more."²⁶

The area of the Park was at the center of Alexandria's colonial trading life. While tobacco remained a key export, it was

the export of grain that spurred development along the new waterfront. More than half of the major merchants in Alexandria in the Revolutionary war were in the wheat purchasing, storing, and shipping business.²⁷ From the Revolutionary war to the end of the century, the area was transformed with the addition of numerous wooden piers, docks, and warehouses along Union Street.²⁸

These early merchants and their wharves tell an interesting part of the history of the Park. The original generation of merchants developed the area and operated their business during the Port City's so-called "Golden Age." The waterfront at that time was a bustling district dominated by warehouses with stout wooden wharfs. Strolling south from Oronoco down Union to Queen Street a visitor would have encountered the following.²⁹

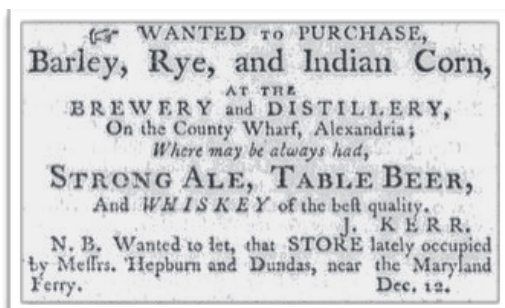
West's Point: Founder Hugh West was one of the wealthiest and most influential men in colonial Virginia. His wharf at the end of Oronoco Street served as the corner stone for the creation of Alexandria. West and his family were among the largest property owners during the town's first few decades.³⁰ In addition to its "county" wharf and

tobacco inspection duties, the wharf served a variety of commercial purposes, including shipbuilding. Thomas Kirkpatrick operated a shipyard at the location and built what was described as “one of the finest vessels of record” there in 1762.³¹ West’s Point, as a result of heavy public use, underwent several major renovations throughout this period. It remained, into the first decade of the 1800s, Alexandria’s primary tobacco inspection station and ferry wharf. From 1792 until 1807 the wharf also hosted one of Alexandria’s first breweries - the Potomac Brewery Company.³²



8 - West’s Point likely had numerous storage areas for hogsheads (top image) and a dedicated tobacco inspection facility (bottom image).

Taylor Wharf: Built and operated by Irish immigrant and twice Mayor of Alexandria Jesse Taylor. Taylor’s wharf and import business, supported his store at the corner of King and Pitt Streets. Based on the list of goods available for sale it was the equivalent of a colonial era Walmart store. Newspaper advertisements for Taylor’s establishment included notices of all manner of imported material for inside and outside the home. Examples include fabrics from the British Isles, Ireland, Prussia, Holland and Germany; all manner of tools ranging from saws and hammers to shot, lead, and gunpowder; for the kitchen crockery, pots, silverware, spice and tea; for the well-dressed Alexandrian - stockings, fine needle worked handkerchiefs, and fashionable hats for men and women; and, to round out this partial list, Taylor imported a range of spirits including wine from Portugal, an assortment of bottled beer, and rum from West India and New England.³³



9 - The north end of Founders Park hosted an early Alexandria brewpubs and distilleries.

Hunter and Allison Wharf: Merchants William Hunter and Robert Allison (who also owned a retail shop on King Street) traded in an eclectic mix of goods. This wharf advertised the import of British finery such as fabrics, silverware, along with

“excellent Jamaica spirits,” gin, and teas. In addition to the luxury goods, the wharf brought in loads of Swedish bar-iron, cordage (rope), nails, and Liverpool salt.³⁴ In addition to trading, Hunter also operated a ferry service to several points in Maryland. It is likely that on April 16, 1789 George Washington actually took a ferry from this location to Georgetown on the first leg of his trip to the county’s first

presidential inauguration in New York. Allison was also on hand to help lay the cornerstone of the new U.S. Capital with the President in 1793.

Hepburn & Dundas Wharf: Business partners William Hepburn and John Dundas traded primarily with merchants in Scotland and England in dry goods as well as numerous refined items like china, Egyptian teapots, and sewing supplies. The wharf hosted several other firms including John Bogue's house and ship joiner business.³⁵ John Dundas and his wife Agnes (Hepburn) Dundas had ten children. John, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, also served as the Mayor of Alexandria (1795-96), a director of the Bank of Alexandria, and an Alexandria County Justice of the Peace.³⁶



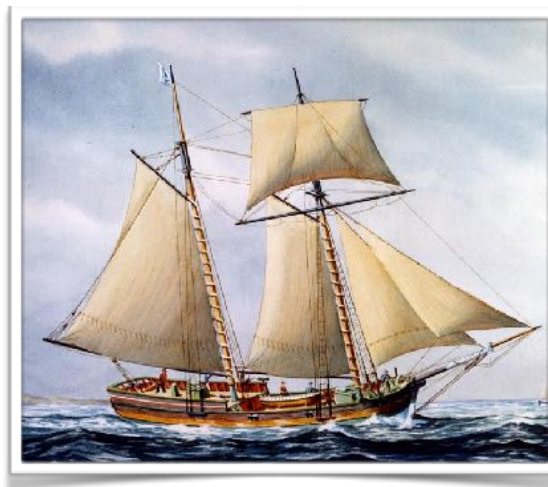
10 - Newspaper Advertisement for goods imported through the area of Founders park - 1784

William Hepburn (father-in-law to partner John Dundas) owned several large properties, a mill, and a rope walk. He is noted in George Washington's ledgers as the source of rope for refitting the future President's brig *Farmer* in 1775.³⁷ Hepburn also fathered several children by his slaves. One, Moses Hepburn, was acknowledged in his father's will and received, in addition to his freedom, an inheritance. Moses went on to become a successful property developer in Alexandria and the wealthiest free black businessmen in antebellum Virginia.³⁸

Adam's Wharf: Robert Adam was described as "a gentleman of refined taste, cultivation and wealth." He founded Alexandria's Masonic Lodge in 1783.³⁹ Born in Scotland to a family reportedly descended from Robert the Bruce, he immigrated to America in the 1750s. An early and enthusiastic supporter of independence, Adam was involved with the local Committees of Safety and Correspondence. The Committees organized local colonial resistance to harsh British rule and served as the early "insurgent network" of the American Revolution.⁴⁰ In July 1774 Robert signed onto the Fairfax Resolves which was one of the earliest and most radical public repudiations of the sovereignty of King George III.⁴¹

Robert Adam was also a successful serial entrepreneur. At various times he operated a gristmill, general store, tannery, and an iron foundry in and around Alexandria. For a time, Adams also operated a bakery on the site of the wharf until, in 1785, it "burnt with great violence" and was destroyed.⁴² He, along with sometime business partner John Carlyle, also did significant business with George Washington. Later Adam also served as the commercial agent in Alexandria for Washington's Mount Vernon estate.⁴³

Conway Wharf: Richard and Mary Beth Conway were large property owners along the waterfront and operated a large commercial wharf near the foot of Queen Street. Richard was also a part-time ship builder who, during the Revolutionary War, owned, or had an interest in four vessels bearing Continental Congress “Letters of Marque.” These lightly armed ships served as *Privateers* authorized to annoy, harass, and profit off the capture of British shipping in coastal waters.⁴⁴ Conway and his wife owned a large home known as the Beverly on the North side of West’s Point. While serving as Alexandria’s Mayor in 1783, Conway hosted George Washington at Duvall’s Tavern to celebrate his “return from the conclusion of a glorious and successful war, to domestic happiness and tranquility.” In 1789 Conway famously loaned a cash poor Washington the money (at a neighborly 6% interest) the newly elected President needed to fund his travel to the first presidential inauguration in New York.⁴⁵



11 - Commercial vessels like the Schooner Hannah were typical of the vessels operating out of Alexandria in the late 1700s.

Kirkpatrick Wharf was located at the end of Queen Street. John Kirkpatrick was a Scottish immigrant, businessman, and city trustee. From 1755-1758 he served as military secretary to George Washington who described him as “a young man bred to business, of good character...”⁴⁶ His brother Thomas Kirkpatrick was a shipbuilder, wheat purchaser, and official inspector of flour for the port of Alexandria during the late 1700s.



12 - African slaves depicted during the so-called “Middle Passage.” Slavery and the labor of the enslaved played a significant part in the life of Alexandria’s waterfront.

Kirkpatrick Wharf is also notable for its role in a painful but significant part of Alexandria’s history. In 1762, John Kirkpatrick and his brother placed an advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette* announcing,

“Just imported...a parcel of very healthy Gambia slaves, to be sold very reasonably or bills of exchange or [c]ash. The sale will begin at Alexandria on Monday the 13th instant, and

*continue till all are sold.”*⁴⁷

The Kirkpatrick brothers, like many other merchants along the waterfront owned slaves.⁴⁸ Some were active participants in the business of direct importation of African slaves until Virginia’s 1778 Slave Importation Ban ended the practice. The

law changed the character but not the nature of the waterfront's place in the South's "peculiar institution." After the end of the Atlantic slave trade, Alexandria became the commercial capital of the still profitable domestic slave trade. Thousands of men, women, and children were bought from regional slave owners, resold, and shipped to plantations (mostly in the Deep South) from Alexandria. Many, no doubt, began their journeys from wharfs that stood on today's Founders Park. This wretched trade continued until Union troops occupied Alexandria in May 1861.⁴⁹



13 - The area of the future Park was one of the start points for what became known as the 'Slavery Trail of Tears' beginning in the early 1800s.

In 1800 the waterfront between Queen and Oronoco Streets, was still the commercial keystone of a busy seaport. The business of exporting primarily wheat, flour and tobacco continued but other local commodities like whiskey, pig and bar iron, beeswax, animal hides, shingles and barrel staves, tar, flaxseed, hemp, and livestock began to claim space in warehouses along Union Street.⁵⁰ The good times however - would not last.

An unstable security situation in the early 19th century, conflicts like the Quasi War with France, the Napoleonic Wars, and American policies like the Embargo Act of 1807, all but assured Alexandria's economic stagnation. Moreover, during this period Alexandria's commercial shipping fleet was decimated by first French and later British Privateers. For example, between 1797 and 1801 more than 200 vessels from the port of Alexandria (locally owned or contracted) were seized by French Privateers.⁵¹

Regional competition from towns like Baltimore, which enjoyed better transportation networks, a more diverse manufacturing base, and growing populations, soon relegated Alexandria to a secondary and rapidly diminishing status. By 1815 Baltimore accounted for forty-five percent of all shipping in the region – Alexandria had fallen to just over six percent.⁵²

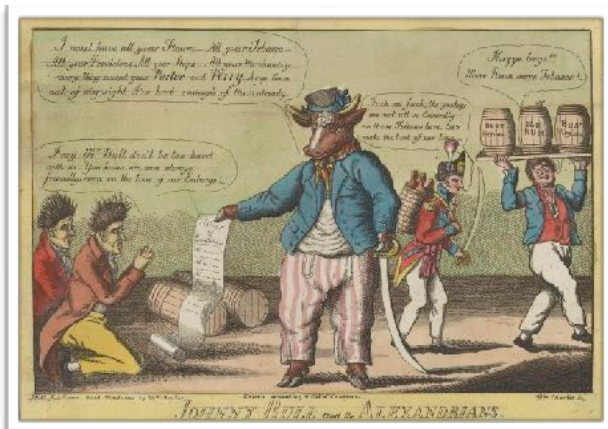
The turn of the century also highlighted the hazards of urban growth. In an era before effective public sanitation the waterfront served as much as a sewer and dumping ground as it did a commercial district and source of food. A newspaper description looking back at the Yellow Fever outbreak in 1803 (which killed more than 200 Alexandrians and drove almost half of the population to seek safety in the countryside) provides some sense the conditions in the area of the future Park:

Fill up the cove...and pile it with warehouses and dwellings that receive the sewerage from the hills above, and give it no outlet...that was the condition which surrounded the newly filled cove... Even then the poison of the disease was spent mainly on the newly made

ground, the bulk of the cases occurring below Water street and none beyond Royal Street.⁵³

Disease along the waterfront was a common occurrence in the 19th century with major incidents of Cholera (1807, 1808, and 1832), Small Pox (1862 and 1872), or Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria (1803 and the 1890s).⁵⁴ Whether caused by the unhealthy conditions along the waterfront or introduced by ships arriving from distant shores, this would not be the last era when spending time in the future area of the Park could pose a serious risk to one's health.

The War of 1812 – The Park and a Disaster Averted



14 - A sarcastic broadside published in Philadelphia ridiculing Alexandria's capitulation. The British (Johnny Bull) making demands while the Royal Navy makes off with wheat, tobacco, and rum - pilfered in part from the warehouses along today's Park

Much like the Revolutionary War, Alexandria was spared physical damage during the War of 1812. As it had some sixty years earlier, the Park once again witnessed the arrival of British warships. On 29 August 1814, a Royal Navy squadron built around the frigates *HMS Sea Horse* and *Euryalus* anchored off Alexandria's waterfront. The British commander said he had enough guns that if he needed to he could have "... laid [the town] to ashes in minutes."⁵⁵ Alexandria's leaders cognizant of the failure of Washington's defenses and lacking any local militia to put up even a symbolic defense, quickly surrendered the city.

According to the terms, British forces helped themselves to almost two-dozen vessels,

thousands of barrels of flour, large quantities of bulk tobacco, cotton, wine, and sugar from the warehouses along Union Street.⁵⁶ While the city's warehouses were being "expertly looted," the wharf at the foot of Princess street was the scene of an odd incident that almost led to the destruction of the city.

A few days after city's surrender, U.S. Navy Captain David Porter and fellow officer Orde Creighton arrived in Alexandria from the devastated Washington Navy Yard.⁵⁷ A witness to the events said the two men, in civilian clothes, "rode into town like furies down Princess street to the wharf..." Once on the waterfront, the two officers "...seized a poor unarmed (British) stripling midshipman and would have carried him off had not his neck handkerchief broke..."⁵⁸ It is unclear if Porter, who was one of the most



15 - Captain David Porter, US Navy

colorful characters in the entire history of the US Navy, was aware of the town's surrender terms or simply did not care when he decided to take a prisoner. Regardless, the incident so enraged the British commander that he ordered his ships to devastate Alexandria by bombardment. Disaster was averted only at the last minute by the fervent pleadings of Alexandria Mayor Charles Simms.⁵⁹

The Park in Antebellum Alexandria

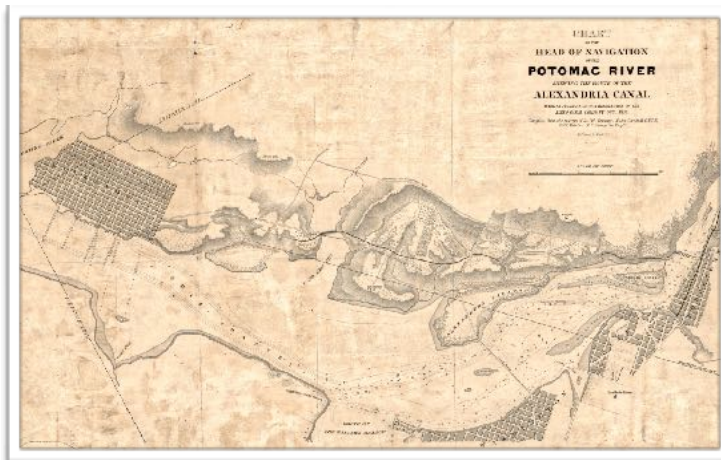
The early 19th Century did not get easier on Alexandria. The city suffered from a devastating 1827 fire, a bank collapse, high public debt, and a difficult transition from a status as an international port to a regional one. It was an economic low point for a town once described as the "Queen of the South." As one correspondent at the time noted;

*"...gone was a busy, hustling, beautiful, crowded, fashionable city...the sight has been a melancholy one – especially to those who had seen Alexandria in her beauty..."*⁶⁰

By the 1830's it was clear that the city's "golden age of commerce had long since passed"⁶¹ The city's commerce took on the character of a local market with a growing number of craftsmen who were both manufacturers and salesmen.⁶² The original wharfs built along Union Street in the area of the Park had seen better days. Most had endured several failed businesses, been abandoned, or fallen into disrepair. An observer in the 1840s described Alexandria

"...as an ancient city, with its deserted warehouses, decayed and broken wharves, and quiet, sometimes grass-grown streets...Travelers pass through its poorest streets and say with compassion 'the town is asleep, finished long years ago, and resting in peace.'

*Someone passing up the Potomac had a strong whiff of the guano wafted out and said 'Not only dead, but unburied.'"*⁶³



16 - The Alexandria Canal (shown here in construction 1838) had a major impact on the industrialization of the area around the Park.

Three changes in the years before the Civil War began to wake the "ancient city" and marked a shift in the future of the port and would impact the creation of the Park.

The first change was the building of the Alexandria-Georgetown Canal (one can see a recreation of the Potomac terminus of the canal just north of Founder's Park at Canal Park). This long hoped for but often delayed project was

finally completed in 1843. The idea of the canal was to provide an inexpensive way to move commodities more cheaply to port and, it was hoped, reinvigorate a dying waterfront. The

commodity in demand in the late 1840s was no longer tobacco or wheat but Appalachian Coal.

The entire waterfront, but especially along the future Founders Park, was transformed but the explosive growth of the coal market. As one history described it – “[o]ld warehouses were turned into storage bins; vacant lots suddenly became coal yards; and crumbling docks were fitted up as new wharves to receive the produce of countless coal barges...”⁶⁴



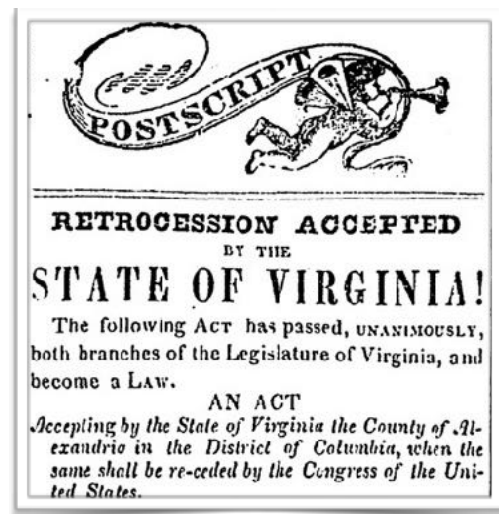
17 - Railroads transformed the city and the future park. A Civil War photo of the Roundhouse and rail yard first constructing in the early 1850s.

The second major change was the 1849 arrival of railroads to Alexandria. Like much of the development in Alexandria's history, the railroads were the product of a consortium of powerful local merchants and investors. George Smoot, who in addition to being a director of the canal project, was a member of the city government, president of a local bank, president of the local water company, and chairman Alexandria's first railroad company. The Smoot family would figure prominently in the history of the Park for much of the next century.

The rapid expansion of the railroad system, for a time, boosted Alexandria's fortunes. It led to new development and infrastructure that would transform many parts of the city in the late 1850s. The track that ran along the Park's western boundary even witnessed the test of the new railroad's first locomotive (dubbed *Pioneer*);

*"The first locomotive was put upon the track of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad yesterday and in the afternoon steam was got up and the locomotive was run over the line from the north end of Union Street (Oronoco and Union) to the tunnel on Wilkes Street."*⁶⁵

The final major change during the antebellum era was the 1846 Retrocession. The story of the Retrocession is complex one involving political disenfranchisement, public debt, commercial advantage, and race. Most residents of Alexandria were thrilled when the decision was announced and received the news "with the loudest cheers, and a salvo from the artillery." For the enslaved and free black population of Alexandria however, being forced to live under, by comparison to Washington DC, the draconian race laws of Virginia, made their already deplorable conditions even worse.⁶⁶ Over 130 years later



18 - Alexandria rejoined the Old Dominion in 1846 - Alexandria Gazette.

however, the land title and sovereignty implications of the Retrocession would play a pivotal role in the creation of Founders Park.

The Civil War – The Park in the Opening Scene and Final Act

The long simmering national schism over slavery finally came to a head in 1861. Once again Alexandria found itself facing another war. And, once again, the city emerged unscathed especially when one considers the fate of nearby Fredericksburg, Petersburg, and Richmond.

One of the first military actions of the war, and one of the few that occurred within Alexandria itself, occurred in the early morning hours of 24 May 1861. Union Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth and his colorfully uniformed 11th New York *Zouaves* boarded steamers in the Federal District and traveled down the Potomac in order to seize Alexandria.

After some desultory musket exchanges between Confederate pickets guarding the waterfront and approaching *Zouaves*, the steamers landed at the wharfs just south of the future Park. Unbeknownst to Ellsworth at the time, a Naval Officer, named R.B. Lowry and a small landing party from the gunboat *USS Pawnee* had put ashore in the area of the Park a few hours before the *Zouaves* arrived. The unauthorized operation was, according to the commander of the *Pawnee*, intended to negotiate the safe evacuation of the



19 - The USS Pawnee (stationed in the Potomac off Alexandria in 1861)



20 - 1863 Waterfront from Queen to Oronoco Street. Union Army hay barns and supply warehouses are clearly visible to the right.

Confederate forces “out of humanitarian concern for the civilian population.”⁶⁷ The gambit succeeded. Ironically, the only death in this action was that of the 24-year-old Colonel Ellsworth who was famously shot by Alexandria hotelier James Jackson after the Colonel removed a rebel flag from the top of the Marshall House on King Street.⁶⁸

During the War Alexandria became a bustling hub of economic and military activity. Given its proximity to Washington, connections to rail networks and the river, the area of the Park

“became a vast quartermaster storehouse for the Army of the Potomac.” By 1863, the remaining old warehouses and inefficient wharfs were torn down and replaced to handle an “almost fabulous amount of Army supplies.”⁶⁹ The waterfront between Oronoco and Queen and for several blocks to the west were filled with rail yards, hay barns, and supply dumps.



21 - Union Army hay barns sitting on the north end of the Park (view from rail spur on Union Street) July 1863.

The superintendent of military railroad system, based in Alexandria just west of the park on Princess Street, estimated that the city could, in a 24-hour period, “...move by rail more than 10,000 troops, 175 cars with fourteen hundred tons of supplies, and [artillery] batteries...by the scores, sick and wounded by the thousands, and animals by the hundred car-loads.” From 1861-1865 more than 412 tons of hay and feed destined for the horses of the Union Army passed through the Hay Wharf that dominated the Park. The handling and shipment of this volume of material would have been

unimaginable to Alexandrians before the war.⁷⁰

The future Park also witnessed a less dramatic event symbolically marking the end of Alexandria’s part in the Civil War. Alexandria native Edgar Warfield, departed the city as a Private in the Confederate Seventeenth Virginia Infantry the morning Colonel Ellsworth landed. Four years later in April 1865 and just shy of his 23rd birthday, he returned. Captured in the closing days of the war near Appomattox, Wheaton was one of the first of the survivors of that original group to find their way home. When he stepped off the steamer *Thomas Kelso* onto Wheat’s Wharf (between Queen and Princess Streets) Warfield was mobbed by neighbors inquiring “about their own people in the army.”⁷¹ After the war Warfield ran a successful pharmacy and was active in veteran organizations. When he died in 1934 he was the last of Alexandria’s original Confederate soldiers.⁷²

The Park as Fishtown and Site of “Outrageous Conduct”

Fishing and the associated activities have always been an integral part of life in Alexandria. The Potomac fisheries produced catches so enormous that in the late 1700s “barges and sailing longboats were heaped high with all sorts of fish and towed or sailed to Washington, Alexandria, and Georgetown where the cargo was sold before it spoiled...”⁷³

In the decades prior to the Civil War, property owners, like George H. Smoot, rented access to the waterfront between the area of Princess and Oronoco streets, for a seasonal fish-camp that became known as Fishtown.

The primary method of fishing in the early years was called seine-hauling. Small boats would draw a long, weighted net into the river in wide loop and then the net was dragged to shore. The captured fish would then be sorted, cleaned, and packed on shore. A participant, writing about Fishtown in the 1840s, described a typical day along the site of the future Park;

About 60 men, white and black, were employed...the boat with which the seine was laid out packed 22 oars under the command of...a certain Joe Chaney, one of the most profane men I ever met, but he had a hard lot to manage... [when the net] was drawn near the shore the "seine-cleaners" had to wade out to the back of it sometimes up to their necks (in the water) and pull at and clean it. If any sturgeons were in the seine men with a slip noose in hand would rush in (and) catch them and drag them ashore to prevent their tearing the net...I once saw 17 sturgeon from 4 to 7 feet long taken out.⁷⁴



22 - Cleaning Shad on the docks Fishtown (late 19th/early 20th Century).

Much of the bountiful catch was packed in salt for bulk shipment or sold to local farmers who would take away wagon loads of fish to fertilize their crops. The seasonal fishing industry up and down the Potomac in the late 1800s employed more than fifty Alexandria-based vessels.⁷⁵ One newspaper account of Fishtown in the 1870s presented a rather romantic view of the scene;

In the ancient burg of Alexandria there exists a strange anomaly, nothing more or less than a city within a city....allow me to introduce you to Fishtown... where ex-contrabands are the chief dramatis personae and the

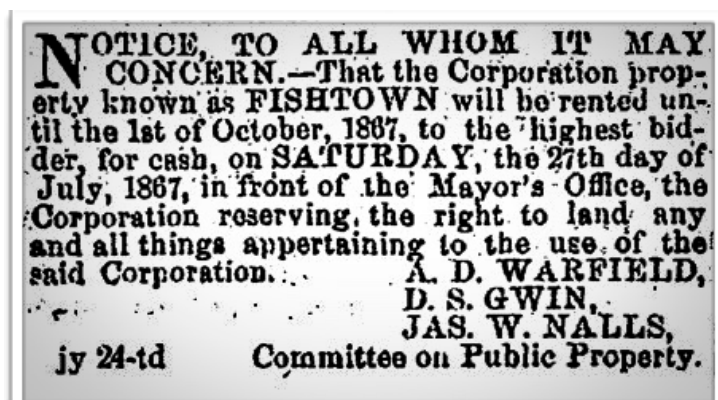
disemboweling of shad and herrin' their principle occupation...Fishtown deserves a niche in the temple of fame...It is an American version of that great London fish market about which we read with so much pleasure...⁷⁶

Despite its commercial success, Fishtown looked every bit the temporary encampment. "Cabins, ramshackle hotels, and other temporary structures near the docks" for the workers stood in stark contrast to the stately colonial homes a few blocks to the west or the well-appointed shops along King Street to the south.⁷⁷

"...the unsightly shanties became a permanent fixture which the city fathers repeatedly ordered removed, but to no avail. By the middle 1850s the upper end of the Alexandria

waterfront in the vicinity of the town wharf was known as Fishtown, an area which soon became synonymous with squalor and low-life activities during the offseason and frenetic industry during the height of the fishing season of March 1 through June 1.”⁷⁸

The transient nature of Fishtown and the fact that its location was in a semi-industrial and lightly-populated part of town gave it a “Wild West” atmosphere. As one historian



23 - 1867 Public Announcement that Fishtown was open for business.

described it, Fishtown was a collection of “bar rooms, eating houses, etc., were numerous, while it became the resort of fakers, organ grinders and Punch and Judy shows. As may be surmised it was not the most moral part of the town.”⁷⁹

To be fair, waterfronts the world over have historically been known for the seedier side of life. As a result of the retrocession of Alexandria from the Federal District in 1846, jurisdictional confusion over who was responsible to police the Virginia side of the river made

the shoreline between Rosslyn and Jones Point a bit of an “ungoverned” space. This was not always a bad thing. For decades before the Civil War, the lack of coherent policing made the area a critical part of the Underground Railroad for the enslaved seeking their freedom.

The influx of thousands of Union troops in 1861, however, only amplified the areas lawless character. One local historian colorfully described the waterfront during the Civil War

...the presence of hundreds of prostitutes in their gaudily decorated houseboats made the Alexandria-Washington harbor a floating Sodom and Gomorrah...there existed for many years the most notorious red-light district in America whose low-life grogeries and brothels were a hotbed of crime and wickedness...⁸⁰

Local news reports about Fishtown in the decades between 1850 and 1900 provide a colorful sense of the atmosphere;

- “a decent was made by the Police upon a portion of the occupants of the booths at the Fish wharves, who, by their outrageous conduct, have been a constant source of trouble”...the Police have their eyes upon some young men, who make Fishtown their headquarters, who have been long suspected of living by a means not recognized by law...”⁸¹

- “On Saturday night a couple of Wagoners who are here for the purpose of getting their fish were decoyed into one of the Gambling Shanties at Fish Town, where they were soon relieved of some twelve dollars...”⁸²

- “Reader, were you ever in Fishtown? If never, and you have nerve enough to see human nature in one of its ugliest yet most instructive aspects without either taking in tinge from its *outré* features as there displayed, on the one hand, or turning sick at the stomach on the other...go visit that huge (im)moral mushroom which springs up in the course of the first night of every spring...”⁸³

- Not surprisingly Fishtown attracted local entrepreneurs like Messrs. Broders & Company who opened a cut-rate whiskey distillery.⁸⁴ Business was sufficiently brisk that within a few years “fifty cows are kept in a stable at Fishtown and fed upon the swill of the distillery...”⁸⁵

- “...it might be added that the railroads have improved the morals of Fishtown by dispensing with the necessity for aggregation there of inflammable material, which unavoidably brought in contact with the denizens of that neighborhood, was a frightful source of unmixed and unmitigated evil.”⁸⁶

- “S. William McKee...is locked up at police headquarters on the charge of feloniously shooting a man and a boy...McKee claims [they] were jealous of him because he is especially skilled in the game of craps [and]...were about to carve him with fish knives when he drew a six shooter with which to protect himself.”⁸⁷



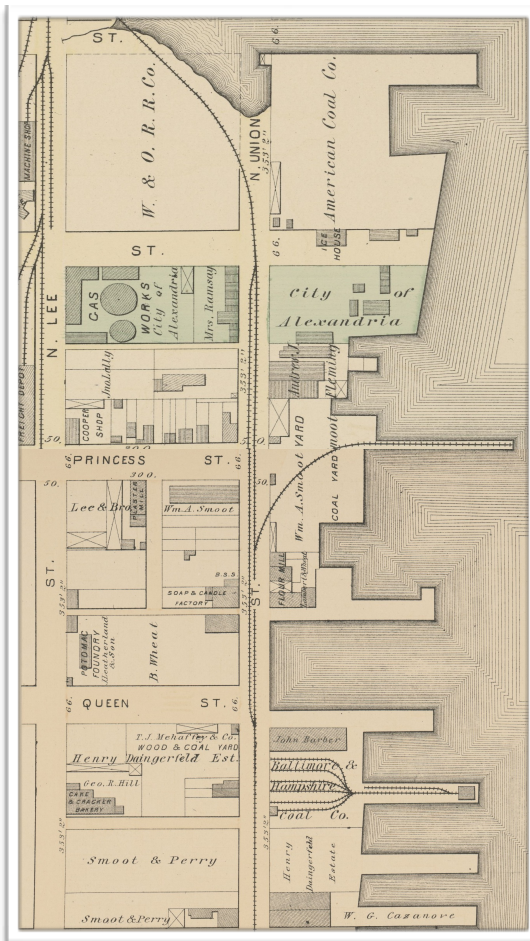
24 - Fishtown looking North from Queen Street in 1907. The lumber, coal, and chemical facilities in the background.

By the late 1800s the Alexandria police had begun to tame the worst excesses of Fishtown. The city began renting wharf to interested parties at city hall, the wharfs were lit, and regulations were put in place to ensure, for example, that when cleaning fish “the blood and offal shall go into the river.”⁸⁸ The final nails in Fishtown’s coffin were a combination of devastating wharf fires and a dramatic decline in the Potomac fishery due to overfishing and pollution. Fishtown shrank from the majority of the waterfront north of Queen Street to “a few hundred yards of wharf between the works of a fertilizer company on the north and a coal and later lumber yard on the south.”⁸⁹

The lawless days of Fishtown did make a temporary comeback during Prohibition (1920-1933). The inlets and creeks of the Potomac on both the Maryland and Virginia side of the river were inaccessible to all but to the most determined revenueurs. A thriving business in illegal stills and smuggling soon flourished. The municipal fish wharves of Alexandria received a steady stream of river vessels bringing in bushel baskets and barrels of fish, crabs, and oysters. But for those in the know,

*"the judicious removal of a few edible items from the top, the retailer would unveil glass jugs filled with what was frequently and irreverently called 'rot gut.'" Apparently, everyone got into the act. Alexandria's waterfront became "the 'Left Bank' of the Potomac because of the many alcohol-oriented social clubs, all operating under the guise of training oarsman in rowing shells."*⁹⁰

Post-War Industrialization of the Park



25 - Area of Founders Park - 1877

At the end of the Civil War, Alexandria's port transformed itself into a prosperous regional industrial center. The post-war era saw significant infrastructure investments in the area of the future Park such as refurbishing and enlarging of warehouses, wharves, the addition of rail spurs, and improvements to the road network. One Alexandrian recalled the period just after the war as one of "great activity"

*"Dozens of foreign barques, barquenten, brigs, bregateens, two, three, and four masted Yankee schooners...These coastwise vessels were engaged in transportation of goods...such as ice from the Kennebec River, coal, timbers...the foreign vessels brought cargoes from foreign lands, as well as from islands of the south seas. Guano, lime, plaster, potash...liquor, molasses, sugar etc., returning coal laden."*⁹¹

William A. Smoot, a member of one of Alexandria's most prominent business families, returned home from the Civil War and opened a waterfront business trading in commodities. Over the next few decades, the Smoot family's waterfront businesses

expanded to include trading in bulk quantities of salt, flour, plaster, lumber, and coal.⁹² The Smoot business ventures eventually covered the entire waterfront from Cameron to Oronoco Street.

Like many Alexandria veterans of the confederacy, William A. Smoot was active in the local Robert E. Lee Chapter of the Confederate Veterans.⁹³ In 1889, he led the fundraising for and dedication of the Confederate Veteran statute, dubbed



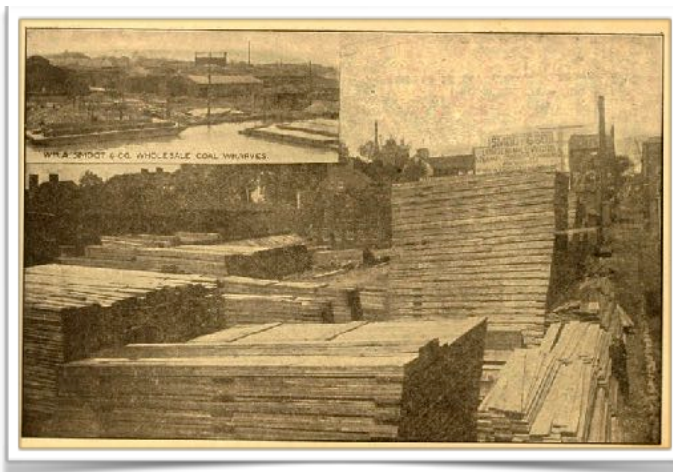
26 - William A. Smoot circa 1895. The Smoot family owned most of what is not Founders Park for almost a century.

Appomattox, which still stands at the intersection of Washington and Prince Streets.⁹⁴ He was also the president of the beloved Columbia Fire Engine Company for 34 years.⁹⁵

After the senior William A. Smoot passed away in 1917, his son, William Albert Smoot Jr., continued the family business. He established the Chamber of Commerce, became head of the National Coal Dealers Association, and found time to serve several terms as Mayor. In addition to the day-to-day management of the various Smoot Companies the junior Smoot, and his son Albert Ansley after him, served at various times in state and local government and were active in many business and charitable organizations.⁹⁶

In 1893, the Smoots sold a portion of the future park to a fertilizer company. Given its agricultural roots, it should not be surprising that Alexandria's waterfront had always had a connection to fertilizer. Advertisements dating to the late 1700s offered exotic varieties of bat guano to the local farming community.⁹⁷ By the late 1800s, importation of natural fertilizer had been supplanted by combining chemical manufacturing processes. At the turn of the new century, Alexandria boasted three fertilizer plants. The largest was the Alexandria Fertilizer and Chemical Company.⁹⁸

Built in 1893 on the remnants of a Civil War era coal and hay yards at the Northern end of today's Park, the Alexandria Fertilizer and Chemical Company became one of the longest running businesses in the history of the city. It is hard to imagine now but part of today's Park once hosted acid tanks; open storage piles of phosphate, potash, and sulfur; as well as rail cars full of organic material rendered from the refuse of regional slaughter houses.⁹⁹



27 - In 1907 the Smoot Lumber and Coal Yards covered most of Founders Park.



28 - 1909 Waterfront fire destroys most of the businesses on the site of Founders Park

Living next to such a facility was both hazardous and unpleasant. The fertilizer plant was destroyed by fire and rebuilt several times – the first time in 1896. In 1900, the plant suffered a second major fire, which only failed to spread to the nearby city gasworks and Standard Oil plant due to the heroic efforts of Alexandria fire team and the blessings of light winds.¹⁰⁰ Odors emanating from the plant was another challenge. A *Washington Post* article from 1916 noted that the company was testing a solution

to “the problem of eliminating the odor of acid which has caused some complaint in warm weather for a number of years.”¹⁰¹

The Park During a Long Goodbye to a Once Great Port

Business along the river was never easy or risk free. Business in the area of the future Park teetered between the promise of redevelopment and the economic realities of a slow steady decline. Calamities, whether due to man or the vagaries of nature, were a regular feature of news about the waterfront.

- ❖ In September 1905 a fire which began in the stables of the Smoot Coal Yard quickly spread and destroyed much of the business. The *Washington Post* reported a disaster was averted thanks to the “strenuous efforts” of the firemen and the heroism of a Southern Railway worker who volunteered to couple a switching engine to a burning oil tank car that “was expected to explode at any moment.”¹⁰²
- ❖ In June 1909 a fire destroyed the mill on the Smoot waterfront at Princess St. The replacement facility was said to be “the most modern and up-to-date manufacturing plant in the South.”¹⁰³



29 - 1921 Washington Post
Headline on largest
Alexandria fire since 1827.



30 - South end of Founder Park between Queen and Princess Streets
- 1919.

❖ A storm in January 1914 with winds reportedly reaching sixty miles per hour pushed water and vessels across the waterfront. The greatest losses in town were sustained by the Smoots. The bulkhead the foot of Queen Street was destroyed dumping several hundred tons of coal in to the river.¹⁰⁴

❖ The worst calamity of the period was the 1921 waterfront fire. Believed set by an arsonist, the three separate fires completely destroyed the Virginia Shipbuilding Corporation, the Old Dominion Glassworks, and the Lumber Mill at Smoot & Company.¹⁰⁵

In spite of these setbacks, the Alexandria Waterfront in the 1920s was still an active and increasingly



31 - Aerial view (looking east) of the future Founders park - 1919.

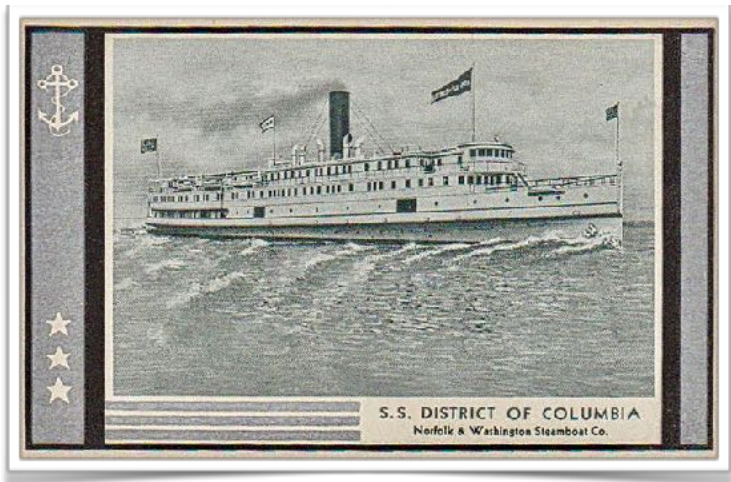
industrial port. In 1928 it handled 250,000 tons of cargo (third largest volume in Virginia) and the rail line that ran the length of Union Street saw over 7,000 rail cars per year.¹⁰⁶ But despite occasional signs of renewed vigor it was the beginning of a long last gasp.

The Great Depression had a devastating impact on commerce along Alexandria's waterfront. The construction of the new Ford Plant wharf, the building of the Robinson Terminal (between Wolfe and Duke Street), and the reactivation of the Torpedo Plant during the Second World War proved, once again, to be false signs of an industrial rebound.¹⁰⁷ To make matters worse, dredging on the Potomac was deferred during the depression and the Second World War. By the time the Corps of Engineers was ready to begin maintaining the shipping channels in the late 1940s, the task was simply too costly to justify.¹⁰⁸

By the late 1940s, the once mighty waterfront received only 35 commercial vessels annually. Most carried newsprint for the *The Washington Post* to the Robinson Terminal and a few still serviced the American Agricultural Chemical Company with phosphate from Florida and sulphur from Texas. Worse yet, the local shipping industry was also coming to an end. The schooner fleet, the workhorses of the Potomac for more than 150 years, had dwindled to a few dozen ships by mid-century. The *SS Bohemia* was the last commercial schooner to depart Alexandria's port. It carried a last load of coal from the site of the future Park to St. Mary's City Maryland in 1947.¹⁰⁹

Even the ferry business, one of the first commercial activities at the site of the Park had come to an end. A near constant presence at the wharves (at the foot of Queen Street), the business hit rock bottom just after the Second World War. As one history put it -

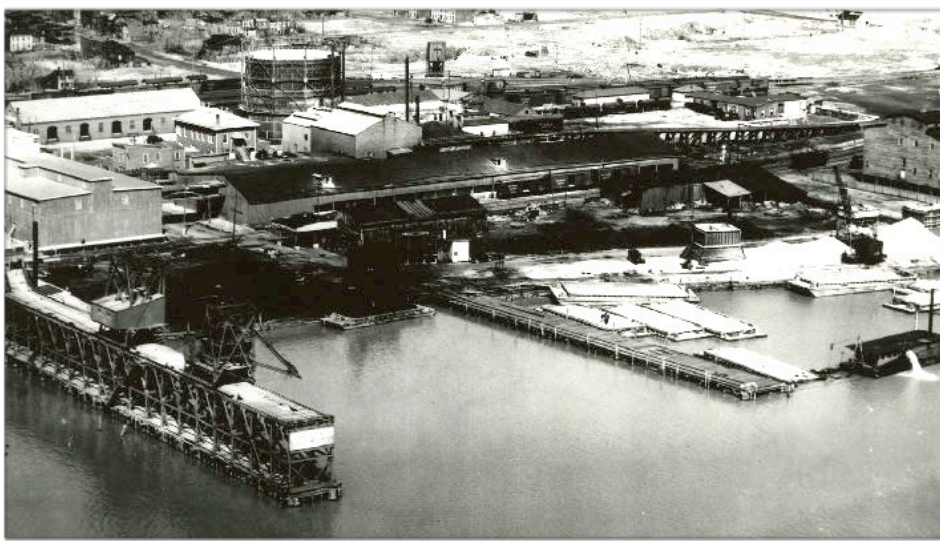
Daily use of the Alexandria docks had finally come to an end with the passing of the Norfolk and Washington Steamboat Company in 1948. The last of the company's steamers, the District of Columbia, was severely damaged in a collision on October 31, 1948. She was ultimately to be taken to Baltimore, where she was left to sink ignominiously in Curtis Bay, her smokestack protruding above the water as a final reminder of her existence. Thus concluded the long and rich maritime history of the Port of Alexandria, Virginia.¹¹⁰



32 - 1920s postcard of the last steamer to call on the Alexandria Waterfront

Life along the waterfront north of Queen street in 1940s and 1950s looked, and smelled, nothing like it does today. Residual industrial activity still included a chemical and fertilizer facility at Oronoco and on the north side of Union Street, and farther up the river a second chemical plant and the Norton rendering plant still operated. One resident recalled that the rendering plant put out a smell along the waterfront that “you can’t imagine...when they got to cooking up a bunch of dead animals, you can’t imagine.”¹¹¹

Despite the smell and dangerous state of a decaying industrial facilities, the largely abandoned property along the future park attracted more than its share of local kids in search of adventure. As local Stephen Williams recalled the area in the 1950s



33 - North end of Founders Park showing Alexandria Fertilizer and Chemical Facilities - circa 1950.

“The fertilizer factory at the foot of Oronoco Street had a high wooden loading trestle, which extended tantalizingly from inside the building a good distance out onto the river, where ships would tie up. We would stash our bikes behind some bushes and sneak up the rickety wooden ladders, up to a height

of about three stories, and then creep out on the trestle to the end over the water....Adjoining the plant was a big, open yard used for offloading crude sulfur from ships. Big nuggets of the stuff

used to get scattered on the street routinely, and we would help ourselves to what we could fit in our pockets. We learned that when chunks of it were ignited, they burned with a blue flame...”¹¹²

Scattered in between these industrial sites were “pockets of neglected lots and rotting wharfs” mixed in with “ramshackle structures.” In 1964 the Robinson Corporation built a new warehouse at the foot of Oronoco Street. It would prove to be the last significant commercial investment on the waterfront. According to the *Alexandria Gazette*, the area overall was nothing but “a gathering place for tramps, vagrants, alcoholics, and drunkards.”¹¹³ A story from *The Washington Post* in 1965 described the buildings in the area of the future Park as marked with a sign reading “hazardous building, enter this area at your own risk.” The article went on to describe the piers as “rotted and crumbling” and a water’s edge that was “thick with tall weeds, hulks of useless boats and logs slimy with algae.”¹¹⁴

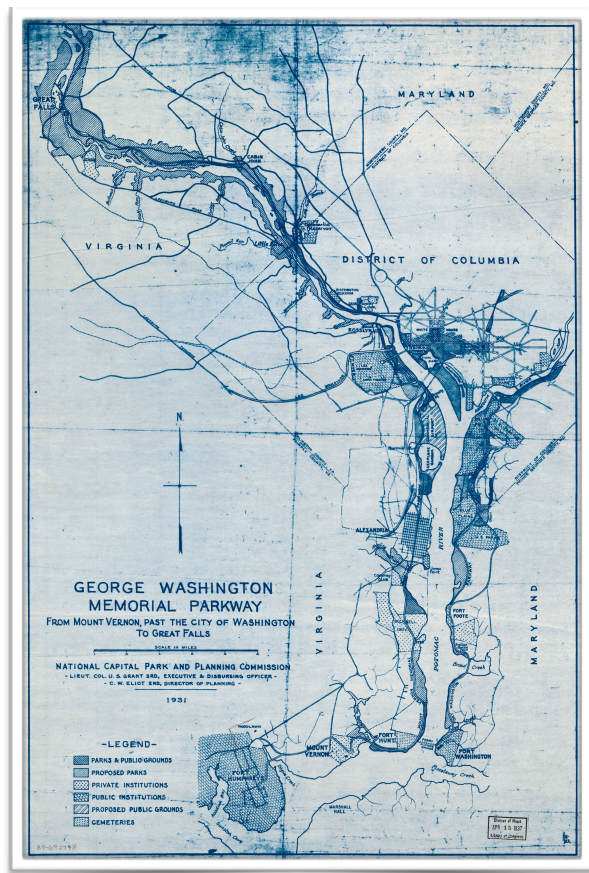
Despite, or perhaps because of, the decrepit state of the waterfront; plans, studies, and initiatives promising to restore Alexandria’s flagging industrial base, improve its commercial transportation and port facilities continued into the early 1960s.¹¹⁵ Including one idea that envisioned an elevated highway bypass running along the waterfront (including Founders Park) “enabling commuters to avoid downtown Alexandria traffic” between the airport and the soon to be constructed Woodrow Wilson Bridge.¹¹⁶ In fact it wasn’t until Alexandria published its 1974

Master Plan that the dream of restoring the industrial heart of the waterfront was finally abandoned as a matter of city policy.¹¹⁷ The question of what kind of city Alexandria would become was, for the first time since 1749, thrown wide open to debate.

The Park and Competing Visions - Preservation, Urban Renewal, or Conservation

Beginning in the 1930s a range of political, business, and citizen groups began to articulate distinct visions for the future of Alexandria. Should the city seek its future as a modern port, a historic tourist destination, a capital city business center, or a bedroom community for Washington D.C.? The questions sparked a long period of spirited, and often acrimonious, public and legal debate.

The idea of preserving the area’s colonial heritage dates back to at least 1853 and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association’s five-year campaign to purchase and preserve George Washington’s Mount Vernon.¹¹⁸ By the turn of the century a range of local civic groups formed to preserve iconic symbols of Alexandria’s colonial past. The Society for the Restoration of Alexandria, the Carlyle



34 - The decision in 1931 to route the George Washington Memorial Parkway through Alexandria proved decisive in the later battles over the waterfront.

House Museum Society, the congregation of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, the Landmarks Society of Alexandria, the American Legion, and the Daughters of the American Revolution all used the Mount Vernon example as a model to preserve important properties.¹¹⁹

The 1916 creation of the National Park Service and the declaration of a National Capital Region unintentionally put the power of the Federal government behind small groups of dedicated Alexandria preservationists and a few decades later conservationists.¹²⁰ By leveraging the power of a federal partner, these local groups were able to compete with more powerful political and economic interest groups. It was the beginning of a model of discourse between the city government and the citizenry over the balance between preservation and economically viability that continues to this day.

An example of the tension between development and preservation played out in 1946. City approved plans for development along Washington Street (now part of the federally protected George Washington Memorial Parkway), was fought by local preservationists with the backing of the federal government. Under threat of lawsuits and an expansion of a federal veto over local zoning authority, the Alexandria City Council passed, by a close vote, the “Old and Historic District” ordinance. Modeled after a similar ordinance in Charleston, South Carolina, the Alexandria Historic District would provide protections for historic buildings and establish a Board of Architectural Review aimed at preserving the colonial character of the city.¹²¹

Despite hopes for economic revitalization from “Old Town” tourism, the post-war period saw the commercial heart of the city along King Street continue to decline. The lure of new suburban shopping centers, limited parking, and dated storefronts all conspired to create what city leaders described as a “commercial slum.”¹²² In addition, a growing percentage of homes in the designated Old Town district were in substandard or unlivable condition. The proposed solution, spurred on by Federal Grant money and a growing national trend, was centrally planned “Urban Renewal.”¹²³

In 1960 the City Council approved a preliminary project that included razing most of the buildings in a 20-block area bounded by Washington, Prince, Fairfax, Princess, Pitt, and Pendleton Streets. Reaction from citizens groups was swift and strongly negative. The Old Town Civic Association declared the so-called Beggs Urban Renewal Plan, “so impracticable and so flagrantly heedless of the essential character and tradition of the Old Town area...as to destroy our confidence in the intentions and abilities of those responsible for their preparation.”¹²⁴ The plan was ultimately cancelled but the effort to find a solution to the problem of economic decline continued.

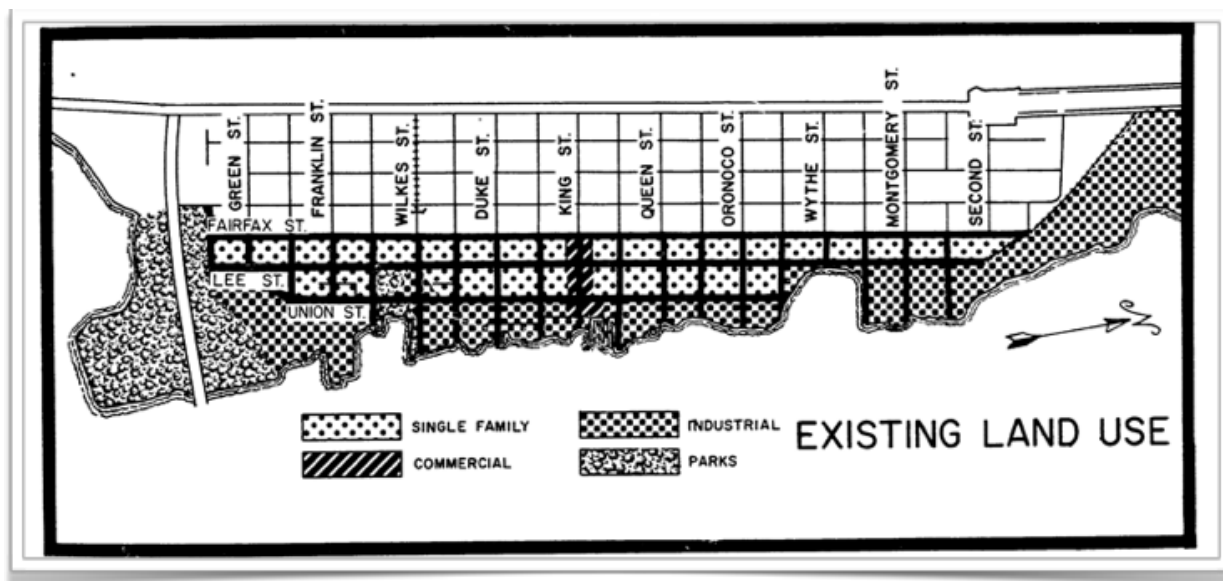


35 - Ghosts of Urban Renewal. 300-500
Blocks of Kings Street in the mid-1960s.

After several years of debate over an alternative renewal plan, the City Council approved a still controversial but more moderate three-phase effort called the Gadsby Commercial Urban Renewal Plan. Phase I began in 1964 and immediately aroused concern over the impact on the colonial character of the heart of Old Town. By the time Phase II began resistance to continuing the urban renewal project grew. Legal challenges against the city multiplied. Property owners and conservation groups complained that the city was, “willing to make a fast buck at the expense of historic monuments.”¹²⁵ When the second phase of the Gadsby plan was completed the area from the 300-500 block of King Street had been transformed into the mixed mid-century modern office architecture we see today. The episode created an increasingly vocal group of citizen-based organizations that eventually, through political and legal actions, forced the cancellation of Phase III of the project.¹²⁶

The fight between supporters of development and preservationists that began in the 1940s was a bruising political and often litigious one. As the battle moved down King Street to the waterfront in the 1960s a third group entered the fray– the conservationists.

In 1968, the city council commissioned a study of past planning efforts for revitalization of the waterfront. The report concluded that the waterfront “appears ready and waiting to again be integrated into the life of the City and to become as lively and interesting a place as it was in



36 - The Waterfront - 1968

colonial days.”¹²⁷ The report argued that the city had a historic opportunity to act since most problematic industries (the oil storage, chemical, and fertilizer plants) had all closed or moved and the Federal Government had recently announced its intention to close the Federal Records Center (the old Torpedo Factory).¹²⁸ While noting that some residual industrial activity along the waterfront would likely continue into the future, the report warned

... if the waterfront is permitted to remain in its present condition and industrial zone, Alexandria could experience at worst an influx of the type of industries which are unpleasant neighbors to residential development. At best, uncoordinated, out-of- scale office or commercial development might develop which could have a deleterious effect on the residential potential of the nearby area...¹²⁹

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the 1968 study was a set of non-binding recommendations that included beautification, parks along the waterfront, public marinas, tourist-oriented facilities, and an emphasis on residential development along the West side of Union Street. Proposing that the city “guarantee a view of the river for local residents, provide an attractive setting for Old Town, and assure public access...” was a major shift in the history of the waterfront. It created the first official call for converting a formerly commercial and industrial lot into something like Founders Park. But once again, other interests laid claim to the same five acres.

A High-Rise Development and the Future Park

In 1969 the Alexandria Board of Trade conducted their own waterfront redevelopment study. The Board’s recommendation included the aggressive development of the waterfront north of King Street to include high-rise office buildings, apartments, and hotels separated by plazas, and green space. High density development in the areas formerly zoned for mixed low-density and industrial activity, the report argued, would not only revitalize the area but restore much needed tax revenues.¹³⁰

Board of Trade Vice President Scott Humphrey said the group was sensitive to the concerns of citizens and suggested that “imaginative development” could preserve the “historical charm of Old Town.” High-rise development, he argued, would be more attractive (and produce more tax revenue) than “the masses of Old Town reproduction” townhomes then planned along North Union Street.¹³¹



37 - The Watergate Development Project proposal for high-rise towers on the area of the Park

In the wake of the influential Board of Trade study, the development of high-rise residences and office complexes along the river soon became the number one goal of city officials. The logic was simple. By quickly approving a major high-rise project the city estimated it could increase real-estate tax revenues in the area twenty-times or more. Simultaneously by raising property values along the now abandoned industrial waterfront, the remaining commercial landowners might be

incentivized to sell and, the argument went, even more development, and tax revenue, would follow. As one *Washington Post* article noted, the value of Alexandria's old port would no longer be measured "not in tons but in dollars per square foot."¹³² In keeping with the overall momentum of the still ongoing urban renewal effort, the city council rewrote existing zoning ordinances to allow buildings of "unlimited height along the river and in other commercial and industrial areas" provided the site plans included sufficient, but ill-defined, "open space."¹³³

It did not take long for a developer to step up to the opportunity. In 1970, the Watergate Improvements Corporation submitted a proposal to develop four, eighteen story condominium high-rise towers on the recently vacant waterfront land along Union Street between Queen and Oronoco Streets. The proposal soon had the full support of the city council and most commercial land owners along the waterfront.¹³⁴ The only issue raised at the time of the proposal was a pesky 180-year old question over who actually held legal title to the land along Alexandria's waterfront. However, the Board of Trade suggested this would not be a significant obstacle to development if the city would enlist the Virginia Congressional delegation to back legislation designed to settle the question and avoid the courts.¹³⁵

While the question of land title was seen by the city as a serious but surmountable challenge it was also recognized as a powerful tool by local citizen groups concerned over the direction of the waterfront and the character of the city. Just like these groups did in the creation of the Old Town Historic District in 1946, local preservationists, now joined by conservationists, leveraged the power of the Federal Government to at first resist and then prevail against the city council and developers.

Who Owns the Waterfront (and the Land under the Park)?



38 - Cecil Calvert, second Lord Baltimore.
The original owner of Founders Park

Before discussing the battle waterfront development and the formal creation of Founders Park it is worth addressing the long legal debate over who actually holds title to the land along the Potomac River.

The Alexandria waterfront consists of some 24 acres of dry land between the 1791 high water line and the modern bulkhead line (and an equal amount underwater). As one city official explained it, most of this land was in private hands and "...for 200 years...the owners have developed it; they have paid taxes on it; and they think they own it."¹³⁶ The legal precedents and often conflicting judgments over ownership can trace their roots to as far back as the Royal Charter that King Charles I gave Lord Baltimore in 1632. At that time, common law said that ownership of a river (the Potomac was specifically included in the 1632 charter) included the land up to the high-water line. Despite the twists and turns of intervening history this definition of ownership turned out to be an enduring one.

Neither the secession of Alexandria to the new District of Columbia (a process that began in 1791 and was concluded in 1801) nor the retrocession of the city back to the state of Virginia in 1846 changed the underlying legal precedent set in 1632.¹³⁷ What made matters even more confusing was the uneven and often conflicting legal decisions between 1791 and the waterfront debates of the early 1970s. In some cases, the federal government jealously asserted its sovereignty over the land up to the high-water mark. While in others, it was silent, let stand commercial agreements between Virginia and Maryland which challenged it, or actually ceded a degree of control to the city.¹³⁸

The Federal Claim over the land was articulated in 1908 in a case involving illegal fishing in the Potomac from the Virginia shore. The Federal Court of Appeals declared:

*The right of control over the Potomac River within the District has been settled so far as Virginia is concerned. The title of the United States, extending to the high-water mark of the Potomac River on the Virginia shore, had been vested in Lord Baltimore by the English Crown, and had descended from him to the State of Maryland, and, from the State, by act of cession to the United States. No jurisdiction or control over the river thus acquired had ever been relinquished by Congress.*¹³⁹

If the legal question of who actually had legal title to the land between the low and high-water marks were not complex enough, a more vexing problem arose around the issue of determining the actual 1791 line. Much about the waterfront had changed in almost 200 years and there were multiple, competing maps and scientific studies being brought forward to make a definitive case for or against a particular interpretation the 1791 line.

The Park and Fights over Waterfront Development



39 - Representative Joel T. Broyhill - Represented Alexandria for eleven terms.

Undaunted, the city and developer moved quickly to clear the way for construction through creative rezoning within Alexandria and a major legislative push to clean up the title mess. In late 1970, Virginia Senator William B. Spong (D-Va) quickly introduced a piece of legislation (S. 4481) that would direct the Department of the Interior to transfer clear title to the city. The city had additional legislative support for its position in a bill (H.R. 19842) introduced by Representative Joel T. Broyhill (R-Va 10). Congressman Broyhill was candid when introducing the legislation to transfer title to Alexandria when he said he hoped to support that the “people who are trying to develop the waterfront...will be able to proceed, relaxing that something is in the mill to work out this (title) problem.”¹⁴⁰

The Broyhill bill was designed to simply “cede” all right, title, and interest of the United States...to that portion of land along the Potomac River...to the city of Alexandria.” The Congressman noted

that his intent to get Congress moving forward to settle “not a dispute, but a confusion as to title to underwater land...” because the waterfront was “decayed, run-down, and unattractive,” and a drag on city plans for economic development. “The urgency of the matter” He went on the note “is the fact that there are investors who would like to develop the waterfront immediately.”¹⁴¹

Both pieces of rushed legislation were opposed by Department of the Interior the grounds that according to existing statutes, settlements could only be made through specific title suits facilitated by the Secretary. In addition the National Park Service Director, while acceding to the city’s argument that economic development was a necessity, argued that it had to be done carefully to “preserve the values” of the community – “you just simply don’t put the bathtub in the living room, and this is something we too frequently do in some of these high-rise developments.”¹⁴²

The Army Corps of Engineers also opposed the legislation but for the reason that under the Commerce Clause of the Constitution and subsequent statutes, filling of land in a navigable river requires a federal certification of “non-navigability.”¹⁴³ Awakened the Corps of Engineers on this issue sent shock waves through many waterfront owners. Despite having not exercised its authority consistently over the previous 100 years, the Corps now argued that existing and future fill land fell under its legal authority.¹⁴⁴

The City’s position, as argued by Alexandria Mayor Charles E. Beatley before a House Committee, was simply that the lack of clarity on the title and out-of-date zoning were the core of the waterfront’s problem. Moreover, the future of the waterfront should not be an issue for the Federal Government.

“...[w]e do have a really concrete idea of what we want, but we just need the tools to do it...It is the last of the waterfront areas in the Washington Metropolitan Area...I am convinced that if we were given the tools, this last tool, that you would be happy with the development that will come along there...We have a very fine Council. We are a happy mixture of pragmatists and dreamers and are also very much environmental and citizen oriented.”¹⁴⁵

The *Alexandria Gazette*, which supported the legislation, was more transparent about what was happening when it argued that “on this (legislation) hinge(s) the future of what could be a multi-million-dollar development that can completely change the internal and external vista of the city and help solve some of our fiscal problems.”¹⁴⁶ Ultimately, both pieces of legislation failed because they were introduced late and were caught up in process disagreements over Congressional committee jurisdiction.

In 1972 a new batch of legislation was introduced, this time with provisions for a set of development restrictions and requirements for public access, walkways, and parkland that had been negotiated between the city and various Federal Agencies.¹⁴⁷ The city’s plan carefully threaded several issues. It made sure the Watergate Project was defined as outside the restrictions associated with the Historic District, it gave itself twenty years to create required open-space, and it would allow new parkland to be created on new “fill” land out to the bulkhead line.



40 - Ms Ellen Pickering at Founders Park 2008.

To bolster its position, the city lined up, in addition to all members of the Virginia Congressional delegation, support from the State legislature, the Alexandria Planning Commission, the Northern Virginia Regional Planning Commission, the Governor's Council on the Environment, the Alexandria League of Women Voters, the Alexandria Board of Trade, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, the Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission, the editorial boards of the *Alexandria Gazette* and *Journal* as well as the local television station.

Pushback from citizen groups, which had been growing since the Watergate project was first announced, rose to a fever pitch by 1972.¹⁴⁸ Conservationists decried any deal between the Federal Government and the city as a “giveaway” of public lands

because the city planned to sell to a developer and harm the river by allowing additional fill.¹⁴⁹ One of the most determined critics of the project was Ellen Pickering. Speaking as President of the Alexandria Beatification Committee to a packed city council considering the project, she likened the Watergate proposal to “slashing pictures in a museum.” Pickering’s plea that the council to “not open the door that lets in vandals who will mutilate the Potomac” had no impact and the Council voted unanimously to proceed.¹⁵⁰

Groups like Northern Virginia Conservation Council (NVCC) opposed the city’s manipulation of the zoning codes in a way that would allow structures 15 stories taller than any other building in the Historic district. Robert Montague III, at the time the president of the NVCC, recalled that the city “had gerrymandered it (the area of the future Founders Park) out of the boundaries of the historic district...” when the district was set up. This, he continued, was a mistake because it made something the the Watergate possible.¹⁵¹ In 1972 Montague told Congress that

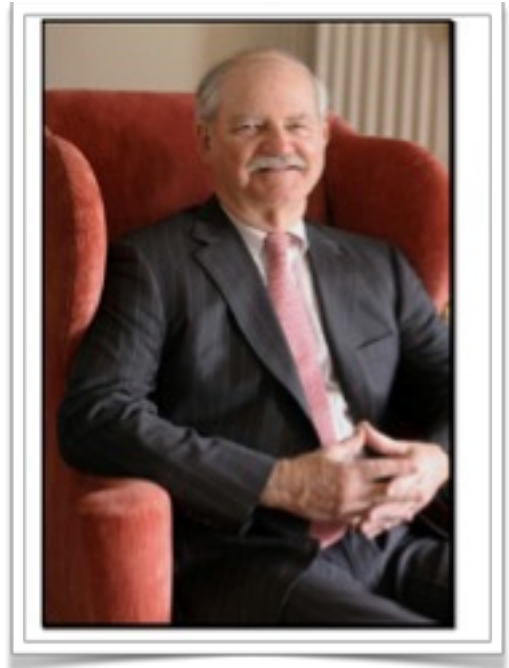
“at the present time there are no buildings in the area between Oronoco and Queen Streets; but it is not true that this area is lacking in historic importance...It is essential, we believe, that this area either go into park uses or into seaport facilities of the type that have been from the days of the founding of the city.”¹⁵²

The entire process, the NVCC argued, amounted to “nothing short of a Federal subsidy to a luxury apartment developer...” In the spring of 1972, the NVCC and a group of Alexandria residents filed a lawsuit against the City and the Watergate developers to stop them from creating new fill land between Queen and Oronoco Streets.¹⁵³ The NVCC’s blunt assessment of the Watergate Development was that it was a

“... monstrous apartment complex...[which] will overshadow the Old and Historic District of the City of Alexandria...It will be unaesthetic, unappealing, and totally out of place. Moreover, it will generate congestion and traffic problems with will severely undermine the pleasantness and attractiveness of the Old and Historic District.”¹⁵⁴

The Old Town Civic Association (OTCA) argued that on one side were the current land owners who along with the city who want to maximize land value. On the other side the area residents who want to “maintain the integrity and character of the historic area...” and enhance or restore the health of the river. The problem was that the city “tended to be predisposed to favoring the former set of interests to the detriment of the latter...”¹⁵⁵

The other problem was a growing lack of trust between the city and the opponents of the development. Robert McCaw of the NVCC, argued that city hid its intent and “... has refused to come forward with a plan...the citizens have a right to know what will be built on it.”¹⁵⁶ Ellen Pickering, challenged the notion that city even had a right to even consider the development because, she argued, it “doesn't seem to realize that the Alexandria waterfront belongs to everybody and not just to them...the Potomac River is our national river.”¹⁵⁷



41 - Robert Montague III - 2006

In May 1972, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior Nathaniel Reed announced that, based on progress in negotiations with the city, his department would back the pending legislation and would work to help “sweep away” the remaining legal disputes.¹⁵⁸ A compromise bill acceptable to the city and some critics made it out of a House committee and was compatible with a bill already passed by the Senate.

Then, to the surprise of almost everyone involved, the Bill was soundly rejected by the full chamber in a September 1972 vote. The collapse of the compromise bill, and with it almost three years of effort, came down to concerns that it amounted to a “give-away” of federal property. Representatives John Saylor (R-Pa) and Earle Cabell (D-Tx) expressed concerns that the bill set a “dangerous” precedent.¹⁵⁹

A “dismayed” Vice Mayor Wiley Mitchell said he hoped the critics had a better idea. Supporters of the bill, like Representative Stewart B. McKinney (D-Conn), complained that thanks to Congress “the only thing in a healthy condition on the Alexandria Waterfront now are the rats...” The bill’s sponsor lamented that the issues at hand were simply misunderstood and that now the city is stuck with “the status quo...one heck of a mess.”¹⁶⁰

The Fate of the Park and the Courts

The failure of two back to back legislative attempts to resolve the complex standoff over the waterfront did not bring an end to the fight. Rather, it set the conditions for more “hardball” negotiations, compromise, and, almost as a by-product, a park. In early 1973, the policy debate went back to a set of original arguments about what actually constituted the 1791 high-water line. Competing historical maps and references led the Department of the Interior to commission a detailed soil study to find the definitive boundary.¹⁶¹ In the meantime, Rep Stanford R. Parris (R-Va) crafted a new House bill designed to remove the claim of a “giveaway” by establishing a fund where proceeds from development would be used to develop, extend, or maintain waterfront parks.¹⁶²

The combination of public political pressure and behind the scenes lobbying by groups opposed to the development of the Watergate Complex finally paid off. In May 1973 the Department of the Interior reversed its earlier position on support for compromise legislation and instead referred the title case to the Justice Department recommending it file a “quiet title” suit to resolve the issue. A senior Interior Department official noted with obvious exasperation “we’ve been trying for two and a half years to get everyone together on this...but we’ve just been beaten to death on it by the narrow views of everyone involved.”¹⁶³

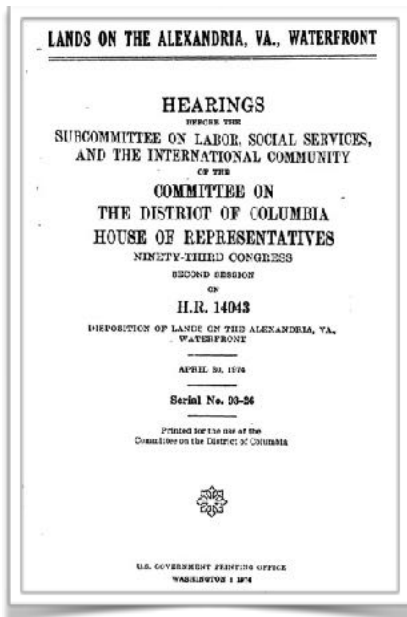
For all sides involved a federal title suit was not without serious risks. If the outcome of a suit was that the Federal Government had legal title over a significant portion of the waterfront the implications for property owners and the city’s tax base would be devastating. On the other hand, if the government lost its claim in court, the development debate, and other actions like the NVCC lawsuit, could go on for years. As Vice Mayor Wiley Mitchell lamented “no matter who wins the suit, the city loses.”¹⁶⁴

The loss of a quick legislative solution and risk of the federal suit made it clear to the city and the developer that the Watergate Development could not proceed. In September 1973, the city and the developer agreed to swap the waterfront land between Queen and Oronoco for another parcel located in North Old Town at the site of the former Ficklin Elementary School (North Royal and 2nd Street).¹⁶⁵ With the development off the table, and despite the looming threat of the federal suit, optimism began to emerge that a timely solution that had something for everyone may be in sight.¹⁶⁶ Even Vice Mayor Mitchell saw light at the end of the tunnel arguing that “[y]ou can’t place a dollar value on the harmony this exchange seems to be promoting...and if we get a bill out of this, well you can’t place a dollar value on that either.”¹⁶⁷

The compromise solution to move the Watergate development off of the site of the future park was a major victory for preservationists but only a partial one for conservationists. The question of what would be done with the waterfront now at the forefront of the fight. Ellen Pickering was quick to remind everyone of the city’s rush to urban renewal just a few years before with “I just don’t trust the city not to make half of it a parking lot.”¹⁶⁸

Conservationists like Robert Montague now shifted focus from stopping the development to developing as much of the waterfront as possible into parks. He argued that any renewal should have “...as much parkland on the waterfront as we can possibly get” and “we want to see it start

happening in time for the Bicentennial.” Not surprisingly, city officials were frustrated by what they saw as opponents constantly moving the goal posts.



42 - The failure of the 1974 legislation proved pivotal to the creation of the Park.

Alexandria Mayor Charles E. Beatley said of the re-energized conservationists “[t]hey’d gripe if we had park from the river to I-95.” The problem, he argued, was not the upfront costs of creating extensive parks along the waterfront but the cost of policing and maintain parks – and parks don’t generate tax revenues.¹⁶⁹

In December 1973 the Justice Department followed the Interior Secretary’s recommendation and filed suit to determine for once and for all who held the title to the land along Alexandria’s waterfront.¹⁷⁰ The decision to proceed with the suit complicated but did not end the quixotic legislative efforts. Over the next six months, Representative Stanford Parris (R-Va.) put forward several more pieces of legislation in an attempt for force a settlement and render the federal suit moot. The final version of the bill in May 1974 represented a significant compromise that had been “drafted and redrafted, cussed and discussed.” It limited waterfront development to 6-10 acres out of a total of 48 in question (dry land and potential fill land). The remainder would be developed over time as parks, pedestrian malls, marinas, or remain as open water.¹⁷¹ Once again, the

legislation to transfer title to the city died in committee. Vice Mayor Mitchell pointedly addressing opponents like Ellen Pickering said “those responsible for the death of this bill when all the dust is settled will rue the day, they killed it.”¹⁷²

The once unified opposition to the development of the Watergate now split over the way forward. NVCC president Robert Montague III supported compromise but the organization did not. NVCC attorney McCaw who helped to draft the compromise language for the legislation – resigned. The OTCA supported a compromise and, putting aside earlier skepticism, argued that “a commitment by the city is better than no commitment from the federal government.”¹⁷³ Ellen Pickering, who did not support the bill because of what she said were major loopholes that would be exploited by the city and developers, was delighted with the failure “now we have the opportunity to go forward with a really meaningful national historic park there.”¹⁷⁴

The “Free-State” of Founders Park is Born

While the legislative and legal battles over the fate of the waterfront raged between Alexandria and Washington D.C. life along the river, like it always had, kept on moving. Beginning in late 1970, the local real estate firm of Golubin & Warwick began construction of a new townhome development along the west side Union Street between Oronoco and Queen. Skeptical locals, who dubbed the development “Golubin’s Golden Getto,” questioned how an area characterized by its recent industrial past, heavy flooding from Hurricane Camille, and of course basic questions over land titles, could ever be a viable residential community.

The conventional wisdom about developing this site was wrong. Homebuyers, who saw the potential of a waterfront repurposed, bought into the development. Property values and interest in other areas along the once abandoned waterfront rose. This small, but tangible, example of what “could be” added a new dimension to the larger debate. Given the economic implications of the legal and political battles being fought out over the future of the area, it was not surprising that many of those new residents opposed the Watergate development and supported the development of waterfront parks.

By 1973, the open waterfront land between Queen and Oronoco Streets had, despite its general “abandoned lot” aesthetic, become an informal outdoor gathering point for residents of Old Town. Ellen Pickering observed that on any given Sunday morning “if you go down there you will find lots and lots of people, just using it freely as a pseudo-park...”¹⁷⁵ Some of the neighbors took to calling the area of the park a “free-state” given the long-running legal debate over which government entity actually had jurisdiction.¹⁷⁶

The fight over the future waterfront was, of course, about more than just the Watergate development. In fact, strident conservationists wanted the city to tear down the Torpedo Factory (located at the foot of King Street) to make way for a continuous, development free, waterfront park from the Canal Lock to Jones Point. The local arts community, led by the Art League’s Marian Van Landingham, convinced the city to instead convert the Torpedo Factory into an art center in celebration of the Bicentennial.¹⁷⁷ In a later interview Marian Van Landingham recalled that in late 1973

...there was a major campaign against us that spring—you may remember it—of people in the neighborhood who wanted all these buildings torn down and wanted parkland all along the river. And so one of the other major issues—we ran counter-petitions of course, and we suggested there were other areas they could make into parkland, one of them being where they hadn’t planned a high-rise, just north of the Torpedo Factory buildings....I named Founders Park, incidentally. Because that was Oronoco Street there, where the first tobacco warehouse was. So I said, “Why don’t you call that Founders Park?”¹⁷⁸

In the wake of the Watergate land swap, and while still battling over the final shape of the waterfront, the city decided to formally recognize the Park.¹⁷⁹ The informal collaboration of neighbors in new North Union Street neighborhoods helped persuaded the Alexandria City Council to spend \$18,000 for improvements to the park’s shoreline and landscaping. The newly named Founders Park was dedicated as part of the city’s Bicentennial Festival on 13 July 1974.¹⁸⁰

Over the next five years, the back-and-forth of the legal and political drama over the waterfront continued to play out. Despite new townhomes and the emergence of Founders Park, overall the Alexandria waterfront was still haunted by the dregs of a post-industrial port. As a *Washington Post* article from 1978 described it, the waterfront was dominated by

“...two power plants, the Robinson Terminal Warehouses where The Washington Post stores its newsprint, and a rendering plant, the old torpedo factory...several boat repair shops. Acres between these establishments is dotted with abandoned tractor, steel pilings, and unused

storage tanks. Along the Alexandria waterfront today, silence is the overwhelming impression.”¹⁸¹

The Park and the End of a 190-year Old Dispute

Local newspapers in the late 1970s were filled with stories of the increasingly heated debates between advocates for various levels of waterfront development and promoters of parks. Accusations of “back-room deals” from one quarter were met with counterclaims that certain advocates were nothing more than “irresponsible citizens and pests” who are unwilling to compromise.¹⁸²

Even as Founders Park was quietly becoming a treasured part of Old Town, the title status of not only the park but 153 other waterfront property owners remained in doubt. In the fall of 1979 negotiators for the Federal Government and the city agreed upon a preliminary set of conditions for a settlement including a set of permanent title restrictions such as building height limits along the waterfront. Mayor Charles E. Beatley said “I think it’s great. It shows we may be getting close to ending the impasse.”¹⁸³

It would take yet another two years of complex negotiations to finalize an acceptable plan. In October 1981, the city and the Federal Government agreed to the transfer title of 15 acres of land for waterfront parks (including the land under Founders Park). The agreement put an end to the part of the Federal lawsuit covering public lands. In return, the city agreed to specific land-use and zoning restrictions recommended by the National Park Service (including the very building-height restrictions that were at the heart of the original objections to the Watergate development eight years before).¹⁸⁴ This agreement was only with the city, the private title settlements would continue for an additional thirty years.¹⁸⁵

Not surprisingly, not all interested parties were satisfied with the outcome. City Attorney Cyril D. Calley said “these (opposition) groups are trying to get the federal government to intervene to prevent development...it’s a local problem and they don’t trust the local people.” Opponents would agree with his assessment. A representative from the OTCA, harkening back to the origins of the dispute, noted that the “the city is ravenous for income that would be produced in that area...that’s prime sirloin as far as a carnivorous City Council is concerned.”¹⁸⁶ Ellen Pickering said with apparent satisfaction that she had “not one single, tiny regret...if not for the suit there wouldn’t be any Oronoco Bay Park, no Founders park, no Pomander Walk Park, [and] the foot of King Street would not have been recaptured...”¹⁸⁷

The end of the 190-year-old boundary dispute and eight-year federal lawsuit was a major milestone in the history of Alexandria. The long-dilapidated waterfront was finally ready to be reintegrated into Old Town. After twenty years of study and planning, the city could finally begin generating needed tax revenues from one of its most valuable assets. One of the legacies of the long fight was the role of citizen organizations and advocacy groups had in pushing back against what, in the early 1970s, appeared to be impossible odds.

Participants in the battle to defeat the Watergate Development and establish a balanced waterfront recognized that the future of the park could not be left to chance. Future city councils

or zoning boards could undue many of the protections the preservationists and conservations just secured. There was a clear need to watch over the Founders Park and to work with the city government in future years to ensure its viability.

The Founders Park Community Association is Born

In 1978, now City Councilwoman, Ellen Pickering worked closely residents in the area of Founders Park to help them monitor issues such as city requests for Federal grants to improve the park as well as proposed changes to the city's zoning ordinances that might impact the park.¹⁸⁸ By December of that year the imperative for a standing civic organization to watch over the Park had taken root and the Founders Park Community Association (FPCA) was born. Soon thereafter, the FPCA was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization dedicated to improving and maintaining Founders Park and the quality of life in the Founders Park Area.

In April of 1979 the FPCA held its first Park Cleanup Day. That first community effort included thirty-eight neighbors, including assorted doctors, lawyers, Congressmen, military officers, business men and women, and civil servants. Their efforts resulted in forty-two bags of trash and several large piles of driftwood and debris. The monthly Park Cleanup Day remains to this day the most visible, but not only, example of the membership's dedication to the Park. The FPCA works with the City of Alexandria and other civic groups to protect, preserve, and improve Founders Park's beautiful green space and to maintain its designation as a passive park.

A complete list "founders" of the FPCA would probably include a significant number of the residents of neighborhood around the Park in the late 1970s. Some, like Ellen Pickering and Patricia Golubin, the original developer along North Union Street, worked toward the Park in the very early days when the odds seemed impossibly stacked against them. Later, neighbors adopted an abandoned lot as a Park, raised their voices at city council meetings, wrote letters to the editor, and invested sweat equity during Saturday morning clean-ups, helped make Founders Park a reality.



44 - One of the FPCA "Founders" Chuck Hamel and his wife Kathy.



43 - Period Founders Park clothing. Circa 1985.

The first generation of FPCA leaders include residents like Chuck Hamel (a veteran bureaucratic warrior), Dr. David Charney (a noted psychiatrist), Bruce Clubb (an attorney and expert in international trade law) and Fred Tilp (historian and beloved chronicler of all things Potomac River).¹⁸⁹ The practical role of the FPCA has from the beginning been to serve as the voice for the Park to both the city government and the public at large. As the history of the Park, as well as the broader



45 - Members of FPCA updating the “Grove” in 2018.

history of change in Alexandria indicates, only active engagement by residents (sometimes in concert with and other times in opposition to elected officials) is the essential ingredient to shaping and preserving the city’s character.

The utility of the FPCA was made clear from the beginning. For example, soon after the creation of the Park, the city proposed converting it from passive use to the opposite - soccer fields. No one questioned the city’s need to develop recreational

facilities but many questioned locating them on such a scenic location. Chuck Hamel (also known as the ‘mayor’ of Quay Street) was a man once described by a neighbor as “a guided missile...” went to work through the FPCA and successfully kept the Park reserved for passive use. Chuck was also instrumental in getting a noted landscape architect from George Washington University to design the park we see today.¹⁹⁰

As the overall redevelopment of the waterfront proceeded in the 1980s, the city could not resist the pressure to broaden the definition of “passive use” to include city sponsored or approved events. For example, in 1984 the park was festooned with a dozen large outdoor sculptures for the Second Annual Alexandria Sculpture Festival. A year later the Red Cross ran a fundraiser on the Park including a fashion show and music event with a large bandstand. It soon became clear that such events, despite their often-noble civic purposes, were incompatible with the Park’s purpose. To say nothing of the neighborhood disruption, traffic jams and damage to efforts to establish sustainable turf and plants.¹⁹¹



46 - The FPCA Garden Crew



47 - FPCA - Rain or Shine!

In 1993, in response to advocacy from the FPCA, the city adopted a relatively restrictive definition for “passive use” to small one-day events of “minimal impact.” But within a few years a new group of city officials to challenge the definition of passive use. In 2006, as part of the 400th Anniversary celebration of the founding of Jamestown, the city proposed

“...an event for the [Founders] park that would draw “about 2,500 to 3,000 visitors a day with four days of loading and unloading tents, tops and generators. Current plans call for a soundstage, an “anniversary village,” a hospitality tent, a production office and a “New World Simulator” that simulates the experience of sailing in a 17th-century ship.”¹⁹²

In pushing back against the city, Chuck Hamel pointed out the obvious “if you have one day of rain, the kids are going to be sloshing around in mud...if you have three days of rain, the park will be ruined.”¹⁹³ James Dorsch, then president of the FPCA, called the event “a poison apple” that would turn the small park into a “mud pit.”¹⁹⁴ The city’s proposal was successfully defeated.

A few years later, the city once again sought to redefine a “passive use” by formally changing the city code to allow “awareness activities” on the southern end of the park so long as they are limited to 500 people and are restricted to small tents, no cooking, and no “amusement park equipment.”¹⁹⁵ As one FPCA member’s letter to the editor during the debate put it “this is wrong, and it speaks to a slippery slope that will forever change the bucolic greenway of this park to a noisy and crowded place with attendant problems.”¹⁹⁶ The proposal, which had some support from members of the local community, was once again defeated.

The FPCA is not simply a “protective” organization. Improving and maintaining (and occasionally restoring) the Park is always at the forefront of community priorities. In 2003, the region was hit with the remnants of Hurricane Isabel. The flood waters did significant damage to the park. The FPCA stepped up to work with the city by donating \$10,000 to help the city restore the park after Hurricane Isabel. The Director of the Alexandria Parks Department at the time, Sandra Whitmore, noted that

“[t]he neighbors have not just given their time...they have [over time] contributed \$40,000 to pay for landscaping, an underground sprinkler system, benches and now for the renovations that are needed because of Isabel. This is truly one of the best examples of how the city can work cooperatively with private groups of neighbors to develop something wonderful.”¹⁹⁷

The decade long battle over the Park’s creation and the forty-years of public-private partnership between the city and the FPCA that have sustained the Park since is a reflection of the talent, passions, and compromises that define Alexandria’s history. The FPCA continues its mission with a membership that evolves as the neighbors come and go to the area.

It is unlikely that Captain John Smith ever imagined a city like Alexandria or a public space like Founders Park during his 1608 travels up the Potomac River. However, it seems reasonable to apply Smith’s first impression of Virginia as “heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man’s commodious and delightful habitation” to the green five-acre jewel in Old Town’s crown - Founders Park.¹⁹⁸



48 - FPCA member Howard Bergman engages city officials on proposed changes to Founders Park “passive-use” definitions



49 - Founders Park

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1. (Cover) Founders Park at Sunrise - FCPA
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5. Washington, George. A plan of Alexandria, now Belhaven. [1749] Map. Library of Congress <https://www.loc.gov/item/98687108/>.
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11. Continental schooner Hannah, 1775. Artwork by John F. Leavitt. Original painting was donated by Mr. Reynolds Girdler to USS Glover (AGDE-1). John Glover was of Marblehead, Massachusetts and was owner of Hannah. She was the first armed vessel fitted out and in the service of the United States, September 1775. Courtesy of the Navy Art Gallery. NHHC Photograph Collection.
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 41. Robert Montague III 2006 - Alan Palm, "Interview with Robert Montague III," Alexandria Legacies Oral History Program,,(Office of Historic Alexandria, 6 October 2006). Photo credit Rita Yurow.
 42. Government Printing Office – Hearing Report H.R. 14043.
 43. FPCA Picture
 44. Chuck and Kathy Hamel - Alexandria Gazette Packet, April 2-8, 2009, p. 3. Photo credit – Louise Kraft.
 45. FPCA Picture.
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 48. Alexandria Gazette Packet, May 16-22, 2013, p.7 Photo by Jeanne Theismann. FCPA Picture.
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Endnotes

¹ Duke De La Rochefoucault Liancourt, *Travels Through the United States of North America, the Country of the Iroquois, and Upper Canada in the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797*, Second Edition, Volume III (T Gilbert, London: 1800), p. 664-665.

² Captain John Smith's 1608 exploration of the area identified several native settlements and distinct tribes both north and South of present-day Alexandria; Tauxenent (near present day Mount Vernon), Nameroughquena (near present day National Airport), Assaomeck (near present day Alexandria), and Namassingakent (near the mouth of Hunting Creek). The various tribal groups at the time of the first European settlers were all part of the Powatan confederation. James Mooney, "Indian Tribes of the District of Columbia," *The Aborigines of the District of Columbia and the Lower Potomac – A Symposium*, *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (July 1889), pp. 259-260.

³ Hall, Joseph. "Glimpses of Roanoke, Visions of New Mexico, and Dreams of Empire in the Mixed-Up Memories of Gerónimo de la Cruz." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 72 No. 2, (2015), pp. 323-350.

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- ⁴ Donald G. Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria: An Evaluation of Submerged Cultural Resource Potentials at Alexandria, Virginia*, Alexandria Archeology, Office of Historic Alexandria, (January 1985), p. 4.
- ⁵ Frederick, Tilp, *This was Potomac River*, self-published (1978) P. 11
- ⁶ The term "outlandish weed" is from a poem by Dr. William Vaughn, 1617. (<https://www.nps.gov/jame/learn/historyculture/tobacco-the-early-history-of-a-new-world-crop.htm>).
- ⁷ Ted Pulliam, "Alexandria's First Wharf," City of Alexandria Office of Historic Alexandria, Alexandria Archaeology, Studies of the Old Waterfront, (2008).
- ⁸ A series of acts passed by the Virginia Assembly between 1619 and 1730, required standards for tobacco warehousing and quality inspection. This in turn stimulated the creation of towns along the colony's major navigable rivers including Norfolk, Urbanna, Yorktown, Alexandria, Fredericksburg, Petersburg, and Richmond.
- ⁹ Zack Spratt, "Ferries in the District of Columbia," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, Vol. 53/56 (1953/56), pp.189-190.
- ¹⁰ Mackay, James Cobham III. "The Development of Taverns in Alexandria, Virginia 1750-1810" Masters thesis, (George Mason University, 1995), p. 9.
- ¹¹ Owing to the Scottish heritage of many of the early settlers the area of Alexandria was then called Belhaven in honor of John Hamilton, the second Baron of Belhaven (1656-1708). On the confusion over what to call the new town see Diane Riker, "Alexandria and Belhaven: A Case of Dual Identity," (April 2009).
- ¹² Act of the General Assembly 1749, "An Act for Erecting a Town at Hunting Creek Warehouse in the County of Fairfax" reprinted in Constance K. Ring and Wesley E. Pippenger, *Alexandria, Virginia Town Lots 1749-1801*, (Heritage Books: 2008), pp. 189-191.
- ¹³ Braddock's expedition was part of a series of colonial skirmishes between England and France that led to the Seven Years War (1756-1763) that engulfed most of Europe's major powers
- ¹⁴ Ted Pulliam, "A British Fleet Sails into Alexandria," *The Alexandria Chronicle*, (Spring, 2009), p.3. The British Fleet that eventually arrived off Alexandria (in addition to the Fishburn and Osgood) included the HMS Seahorse, HMS Nightingale, the support ships Whiting, Newall, Nelly, Halifax, London, Industry, Prince Frederick, Isabel and Mary, Terrible, Fame, Molly, Concord, and Severn.
- ¹⁵ Letter from John Carlyle to George Carlyle, 15 August 1755, in "General Edward Braddock in Alexandria," ed. W.W. Abbot, *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 97, No. 2 (April 1989), p. 209.
- ¹⁶ Winthrop Sargent, *The History of the Expedition against Fort Du Quesne, in 1755* (J.B. Lippincott & Co.: 1856), p. 297.
- ¹⁷ Letter from George Washington to John Augustine Washington, 18 July 1755, in Founders Online, National Archives, version of January 18, 2019, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/02-01-02-0169>. Approximately 1,500 British and colonial troops (mostly from Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina) faced a combined force of 300 to 600 Indians and 30 French troops. Casualties for the British and colonial force were 878 killed and wounded (including a high percentage of the officers on horse-back) while casualties among the Indian and French force was estimated to be only 30 killed and likely three times that number wounded. For a detailed account of the battle see <https://www.britishbattles.com/french-indian-war/battle-of-monongahela-1755-braddocks-defeat/>.
- ¹⁸ A newspaper account published in 1868 said that a total of seven cannons were left behind when Braddock departed Alexandria. T. Michael Miller, *Pen Portraits of Alexandria, Virginia, 1739-1900* (Heritage Books, Inc., 1987), p.10.
- ¹⁹ Mary Gregory Powell, *The History of Old Alexandria, Virginia, from July 13, 1749 to May 24, 1861* (The William Byrd Press, Inc.: 1928), p.192.

²⁰ “Old Town fountain didn’t hold water with residents,” *Alexandria Times* (11 October 2012) <https://alextimes.com/2012/10/old-town-fountain-didnt-hold-water-with-residents/>

²¹ See Powell, *The History of old Alexandria, Virginia*, pp. 267-271 and Anne S. Paul, “The Alexandria Memorial Drinking Fountain,” *The Alexandria Chronicle*, Vol. IX, No. 3, (Fall, 2001). A second “Braddock cannon” now stands guard over commuters at the intersection of Russell and Braddock Road along the former muddy track that the expedition took to its demise.

²² Reverend Andrew Burnaby, *Travels through the Middle States in North America*, 3rd edition, (London: 1798), p. 40.

²³ Dean C. Allard, “The Potomac Navy of 1776,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 84, No. 4 (October 1976), pp. 411-412. A row-galley was approximately 80 feet long, powered by a crew of forty-five along with one or two sails. The single cannon was approximately eleven feet long with a five inch bore (known as an “18-pounder”).

²⁴ One can still get a sense of this original terrain today by standing at Union Street and looking West to Lee Street across today’s Windmill Hill Park.

²⁵ For a description of the “banking out” process in Alexandria see Steven J. Shephard, “Reaching the Channel: Some Documentary and Archaeological Evidence of Extending Alexandria’s Waterfront,” *The Alexandria Chronicle*, (Spring 2006).

²⁶ Gay Montague Moore, *Seaport in Virginia – George Washington’s Alexandria* (Garrett and Massie: 1949), p. 32 - 35. On ships manufactured in Alexandria in the late 18th Century see Thomas M. Preisser, “Eighteenth-Century Alexandria, Virginia, Before the Revolution, 1749-1776,” PhD Diss., College of William and Mary (1977), pp. 102-106.

²⁷ Robert Carter and Kate Mason Rowland, “Merchants and Mills,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (April 1903), p. 246.

²⁸ Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, p. 87.

²⁹ Except as noted the material on original wharves is drawn from Alexandria Archeology, Office of Historic Alexandria, (City of Alexandria), *Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan, Appendix 6: Alexandria Waterfront History Plan - Alexandria, A Living History* (2010), pp. 94-95; and “North End Wharves and Warehouses,” *The Fireside Sentinel*, The Alexandria Library, Lloyd House Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 3 (March 1988).

³⁰ The West family, in addition to owning large tracts of farmland West of the Potomac, owned or controlled 28 of the original (expanded) 84 plots of land for sale in Alexandria. See Jim Bish, “Hugh West and the West Family’s Momentous Role in Founding and Developing Alexandria and Fairfax and Loudoun Counties, Virginia,” *The Alexandria Chronicle* (Spring 2010).

³¹ Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p. 82.

³² Garrett Peck and Greg Kitsock, *Capital Beer: A Heady History of Brewing in Washington, D.C.* (American Palate: 2014), p. 167; Timothy J. Dennee, *Thomas Portner and his Brewing Company*, (Saul Centers, Inc.: 2010), p. 3; and T. Michael Miller, *Artisans and Merchants of Alexandria Virginia 1784-1820*, Volume I (Heritage Books, Inc.: 1991), p. 251. The brewery was founded by James Kerr and later owned by Thomas Cruse.

³³ T. Michael Miller, *Artisans and Merchants of Alexandria Virginia, 1780-1829* Volume II, (Heritage Books, Inc.: 1992), pp. 174-177.

³⁴ Miller, *Artisans and Merchants of Alexandria Virginia*, Vol I, pp. 10 and 223.

³⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, 19 April 1794, cited in Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, p. 92.

³⁶ “Biography – Dundas/Hepburn Family,” vertical files, drawer 2, Local History / Special Collections, Barrett Branch Library, Alexandria, Virginia. Dundas served as a private in his hometown Philadelphia Militia during the Revolutionary War.

³⁷ The Diaries of George Washington - April 1775, in Founders Online, National Archives, version of January 18, 2019, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/01-03-02-0005-0008>. [Original source: *The Diaries of George Washington*, vol. 3, 1 January 1771–5 November 1781, ed. Donald Jackson. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978, pp. 319–323.]

³⁸ One of the Moses Hepburn’s rowhouse developments can be seen today at 206-212 North Pitt Street. See Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association, “A Remarkable and Courageous Journey - A Guide to Alexandria’s African American History,” (n.d.) <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/blackhistory/BHCourageousJourney.pdf>; Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, “Moses Hepburn Properties,” African American Historic Sites Database, accessed January 7, 2019, <http://www.aahistoricsitesva.org/items/show/279>. The Moses Hepburn story provides important insights into the complex family and social context of enslaved and free blacks in the antebellum Alexandria. See Curtis L. Vaughn, “Freedom Is Not Enough: African Americans in Antebellum Fairfax County,” PhD Diss., George Mason University (2014), pp.108-114.

³⁹ Miller, *Artisans and Merchants of Alexandria*, p.1 and Donald M. Robey, “Alexandria Lodge No. 39 Alexandria, Virginia 1783-1788,” Unpublished Monograph - Barrett Branch Library, Alexandria, Virginia, (September 1999), p. 3.

⁴⁰ See Arthur M. Schlesinger, “The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763-1776,” in *Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law*, ed. by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, Vol. LXXVIII, No. 182, (New York: 1918).

⁴¹ “Biography – Adam Family,” vertical files, drawer 2, Barrett Branch Library, Alexandria, Virginia. On the Fairfax Resolves see Donald M. Sweig, “A New-Found Washington Letter of 1774 and the Fairfax Resolves,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Apr., 1983), pp. 283-291.

⁴² *Virginia Journal & Alexandria Advertiser*, 17 November 1785, cited in T. Michael Miller, “From Princess to Queen: Wandering Along the Alexandria Waterfront,” *The Fireside Sentinel* (August 1988).

⁴³ Moore, *Seaport in Virginia*, p. 91. Of note - Adam’s original wharf appears to have outlasted most of the original commercial facilities in the area of the future park. In 1840 A.W. Eastlack established a business servicing longboats and barges on the site which operated until the Civil War. See Tilp, *The Was Potomac*, p. 82.

⁴⁴ Richard Conway’s privateer “Navy” included interests in; the Virginia sloop *St. Patrick*; schooners *Hope* and *Hopewell*; and a Maryland brigantine named *Alexandria*. See Library of Congress, *Naval Records of the American Revolution, 1775-1788*, (Government Printing Office: 1906), pp. 224, 341, 344, and 465.

⁴⁵ Ron Chernow, *Washington: A Life* (Penguin Books: 2010), p. 554.

⁴⁶ “Letter from George Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, 13 October 1755” cited in Mary S. Beal, “The Military and Private Secretaries of George Washington,” *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, Washington, D.C., Vol.1 (1897), p. 90.

⁴⁷ *The Maryland Gazette*, 4 September 1762 cited in Miller, *Pen Portraits of Alexandria*, p. 17.

⁴⁸ The Free Blacks and Slaveholders in the Alexandria Personal Property Tax Assessments of 1790, identifies Jessie Taylor, John Hunter, William Hepburn, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Richard Conway, and John Allison as slave owners. See <http://www.freedmenscemetery.org/resources/documents/1790taxes.shtml>

⁴⁹ For a survey of this history and Alexandria's role in it see Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (Oxford University Press, 2005); The Black History Museum, "A Loathsome Prison: 'Slave Trading in Antebellum Alexandria,'" <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/blackhistory/BlackHistoryLessonPlanSlaveTrading.pdf>; Michael Lee Pope, *Hidden History of Alexandria D.C.*, (History Press: 2011), pp. 73-86; and Donald Sweig, "Alexandria to New Orleans: The Human Tragedy of the Interstate Slave Trade" (Four Part Series), *Alexandria Gazette Packet* (October 2014). Partial manifests for ships moving slaves in and out of Alexandria's port can be examined at <http://digitalcollections.nyhistory.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A130602>.

⁵⁰ G. Terry Sharrer, "Commerce and Industry," in *Alexandria: A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900*, John D. Macoll, ed., (Alexandria Historical Society: 1977), p. 20.

⁵¹ A. Glenn Crothers, "Commercial Risk and Capital Formation in Early America: Virginia Merchants and the Rise of American Marine Insurance, 1750-1815," *The Business History Review*, Vol. 78, No. 4 (Winter, 2004), p. 624.

⁵² Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, P.149.

⁵³ *Alexandria Gazette*, Sept.12,1878 cited in Diane Riker, "Fitzgerald's Warehouse King and Union Streets," *Alexandria Archaeology Studies of the Old Waterfront*, City of Alexandria, Office of Historic Alexandria, (2008).

⁵⁴ Krystyn R. Moon, "A Brief History of Public Health in Alexandria and Alexandria's Health Department," (University of Mary Washington: 2014), pp. 4-5.

⁵⁵ Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, p.124. The Royal Navy frigate HMS *Euryalus* (F15), the modern namesake of one of the menacing 36-gun Apollo class frigates that sat off the future Founders Park in 1814, paid a port visit to Alexandria on 12 May 1987 - under much friendlier circumstances.

⁵⁶ For a detailed description of the decisions and actions of the town's leaders see Allen W. Robins, ed., "Alexandria in the War of 1812," *Alexandria History*, Vol. VI, (1984), pp. 17-24.

⁵⁷ The Navy Yard and most of the vessels in it were set on fire by retreating U.S. forces as the British captured Washington.

⁵⁸ Powell, *The History of Old Alexandria*, pp. 255-256. Until January of 1814 Porter commanded the *USS Essex*, which was lost in battle to British forces off the coast of Peru. Porter was in Washington to take command of a new *Essex* but that ship burned in the sacking of Washington. Detailed accounts of Porter's wild ride in Alexandria vary. Early accounts identify Princess Street as his route to the waterfront however later accounts have him riding down Prince and even others King Street. See Ted Pulliam, "Alexandria and the War of 1812: A Series of Articles Telling How Alexandrians Were Affected 200 Years Ago by the War of 1812," Alexandria Archaeology Publications, Number #127 (2014), pp. 26-27.

⁵⁹ See Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, pp. 117-132. Porter was not finished after his failed raid. A few days after the incident at Alexandria, Porter led a motley band of sailors, marines, and local militia in a harassment attack on the British squadron some thirty miles south of Alexandria as they headed toward the Chesapeake with their booty. For Porter's version of events See David Long, *Nothing Too Daring: A Biography of Commodore David Porter, 1783-1843*, (Naval Institute Press, 1970) pp.170-171.

⁶⁰ *New York Daily Express* cited in Harold W. Hurst, *Alexandria on the Potomac: The Portrait of an Antebellum Community*, (University Press of America:1991), p. 3.

⁶¹ Hurst, *Alexandria on the Potomac*, p. 2

⁶² G. Terry Sharrer, "Commerce and Industry," in *Alexandria – A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900*, pp. 18-22.

⁶³ Joseph Packard, *Reflections of a Long Life*, (Byron S. Adams:1902), p.165.

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- ⁶⁴ Hurst, *Alexandria on the Potomac*, p.5. See also Arthur G. Peterson, "The Old Alexandria-Georgetown Canal and Potomac Aqueduct," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. XL, No. 4 (October 1932).
- ⁶⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, 6 May 1851 cited in Joyce E. Wilkinson, "The Early Orange and Alexandria Railroad, 1849-1854," *Material Culture*, Vol. 50, Issue 2, (Fall 2018), p. 22.
- ⁶⁶ See Mark David Richards, 'The Debate over the Retrocession of the District of Columbia, 1801-2004,' *Washington History*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2004), pp. 54-82.
- ⁶⁷ "Report of Commander Rowan, U. S. Navy, commanding U.S.S. Pawnee, transmitting report of Lieutenant Lowry, U.S. Navy, regarding the occupation of Alexandria, Va," (29 May 1861) in *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, Series 1, Volume 4 (1896), p. 478.
- ⁶⁸ See Marc Leepson, "The First Union Civil War Martyr: Elmer Ellsworth, Alexandria, and the American Flag," and Ted Pulliam, "The Civil War Comes to Duke Street," in *The Alexandria Chronicle* (Fall 2011). Ellsworth was a friend of President Lincoln. After his death he laid in state at the White House before being sent home to New York where his funeral became a battle cry for Union vengeance.
- ⁶⁹ Williams, "Transportation," in *Alexandria – A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900*, p. 59.
- ⁷⁰ William G. Thomas III, Kaci Nash, Robert Shepard, "Places of Exchange: An Analysis of Human and Materiel Flows in Civil War Alexandria," *Virginia Civil War History*, Volume 62, Number 4, (December 2016), p. 366. In addition to Hay, the wharves of the North End also helped move some 81 million pounds of corn and 530 million pounds of coal. William Seale, *A Guide to Historic Alexandria*, (City of Alexandria, 2000), p. 53.
- ⁷¹ Edgar Warfield, *A Confederate Soldier's Memoirs* (Masonic Home Press: 1936), p. 211.
- ⁷² T. Michael Miller, "Edgar Warfield – Alexandria's Last Surviving Confederate Soldier – 'In Remembrance of Duty Faithfully Performed'" (speech delivered 14 October 2000) in *The Alexandria Chronicle*, Vol. IX, No. 1, (Spring 2001), pp. 1-6.
- ⁷³ Tilp, *This was Potomac*, pp. 13-14.
- ⁷⁴ Betty Rhoads Wright, ed., *Alexandria History*, "Doctoring and Fishing on the Potomac in 1843," (an extract from the reminiscences of Warwick Price Miller [1824-1911] written in 1896), Vol. II (1980), p. 29.
- ⁷⁵ Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p. 19.
- ⁷⁶ *The Cleveland Morning Daily Herald*, "Washington," Issue 90, (15 April 1873).
- ⁷⁷ Hurst, *Alexandria on the Potomac*, p. 37. The Fishtown business remained profitable through the early 1900s. In the late 1800s numerous local companies and businessmen made the most of the seasonal opportunity including; Hefflebower & Henderson, U.M. Moore & Co., Gemeny & Co., Adams & Co., J.E. McGraw, G.W. Harrison, S.J. Reid, J.T. Armstrong, and W.H. Smith. See Local News, *Alexandria Gazette*, (March 29, 1869).
- ⁷⁸ Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, p. 179.
- ⁷⁹ Powell, *The History of Old Alexandria, Virginia*, p. 36 and G. Terry Sharrer, "Commerce and Industry," in *Alexandria: A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900*, pp. 26-27.
- ⁸⁰ Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p. 67
- ⁸¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, 25 April 1851, p.2.
- ⁸² *Virginia Sentinel*, 18 April, 1854.
- ⁸³ "Local Items," *Alexandria Gazette*, 7 April 1857, p. 3.
- ⁸⁴ "Local Items," *Alexandria Gazette* 18 April 1867, p.3
- ⁸⁵ "Local News," *Alexandria Gazette*, 13 February, 1871, p.3.
- ⁸⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, 5 May 1871
- ⁸⁷ *The Washington Post*, 19 April 1905
- ⁸⁸ *Alexandria Charter and Laws* (1874) p. 112.

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- ⁸⁹ *Baltimore Sun*, 24 April 1899. The decline in the fisheries is perhaps most noticeable stocks of Sturgeon. In 1880 some 288,000 pounds were taken, by 1890 than number was down to 60,000 pounds, 45,000 at the turn of the century and by 1976 – 170 pounds. Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p.20.
- ⁹⁰ Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p. 294
- ⁹¹ T. Michael Miller, "Recollections of J. Fred Birrell – The Alexandria Waterfront during the 1870s and 80s," Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical Files (N.D.), p. 1. The volume of shipping was significant. Between 1892 and 1896, some 20,000 Great Schooners arrivals and departures were recorded by harbor masters at Alexandria and Georgetown. Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p. 44. The Great Schooner class of ships (manufactured between 1880 and 1920) were impressive vessels. The four-mast version was over 200 feet long and 50 feet wide. They carried 5,000 yards of sail and could haul more than 1,500 tons of coal. See Ingrid Grenon, *Maine Coastal Schooners: From Glory Days to Ghost Ships*, (The History Press: 2010), pp. 26-28.
- ⁹² See Smoot advertisements in *Alexandria Gazette*; flour, 26 September 1865, p. 3; cider, 29 September 1865, p.1; coal, 15 November 1865, p.2; plaster, 14 February 1866, p.3; and lumber, 1866.
- ⁹³ Smoot commanded the Black Horse Troop, Company H, of the 4th Virginia Cavalry (Confederate States of America). Warfield, *A Confederate Soldier's Memoirs*, p. 231. Smoot also served as the commander of the Grand Camp of United Confederate Veterans (Department of Virginia) See also biographical entry in *The Confederate Veteran Magazine*, 1895, republished (Blue and Gray Press: 1971) p. 349.
- ⁹⁴ "Honor for Brave Men – A Monument to the Confederate Dead at Alexandria," *The Washington Post*, 25 May 1889, pg. 1
- ⁹⁵ "Welcome for troops," *The Washington Post*, 5 January 1917, p. 2.
- ⁹⁶ "Smoot Funeral Today," *The Washington Post*, 12 July 1917, p.5 and "Albert A. Smoot dies," *Alexandria Packet*, 13 August, 1980.
- ⁹⁷ See Hurst, *Alexandria on the Potomac*, pp. 8-12. Fertilizer until the late 1800s was primarily organic. Local sources from Potomac fisheries were augmented with more exotic materials like bat guano from Peru which, in the mid-1800s, was just another commodity offloaded on Alexandria's waterfront.
- ⁹⁸ The fertilizer plant was built on waterfront land purchased from W.A. Smoot in 1889, "Neighborhood News," *The Washington Post*, 21 June 1889, p. 6.
- ⁹⁹ "North End Wharves and Warehouses," pp. 25-26.
- ¹⁰⁰ "Alexandria News in Brief," *The Washington Post*, 19 August 1900, p. 5.
- ¹⁰¹ "Improving Fertilizer Plant: Alexandria Concern Hopes to Banish Disagreeable Acid Odors," *The Washington Post*, 19 July 1916, p. 3.
- ¹⁰² "Nine Horses Dead in Fire," *The Washington Post*, 20 September 1905, p. 3.
- ¹⁰³ "Plans Modern Plants," *The Washington Post*, 13 June 1909, p. C8.
- ¹⁰⁴ "Wreck by Big Storm," *The Washington Post*, 4 January 1914, p. 4.
- ¹⁰⁵ "262,000 Fire Loss – 3 Blazes at Same Time Threaten Alexandria Waterfront," *The Washington Post*, 11 September 1921, p.1.
- ¹⁰⁶ Report of the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army, 1928, Part1 (Government Printing Office: 1928) pp. 471-473.
- ¹⁰⁷ "Alexandria Moves to Put U.S. Plants on Lucrative Basis," 24 March 1928, p.2; "Land in Alexandria Purchased by Ford, 19 November, 1931, p. 3; "Building Permits Indicate Alexandria Construction Rise," 13 August 1939, p.12; *The Washington Post*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, pp. 307-314.
- ¹⁰⁹ Tilp, *This was Potomac*, p. 34. The number of ships increased through the 1950s but dropped rapidly after 1960.

¹¹⁰ Shomette, *Maritime Alexandria*, p. 314.

¹¹¹ JoAnn LaFon, "Interview with Martin Adem," Alexandria Legacies Oral History Program, (September 27, 2005), pp. 7-8.

¹¹² Stephen Williams, "A Nostalgic Account of Growing up in Old Town in the 1950's," *Historic Alexandria Quarterly* (Fall, 2002), pp. 5-6.

¹¹³ Ted Pulliam, *Historic Alexandria – An Illustrated History* (Historical Publishing Network: 2011), p. 61.

¹¹⁴ Peter N. Diggins, "Alexandria Port May Come Alive with Rezoning: Weeds, Algae Fishing Is Good," *Washington Post*, (23 September 1965), p. H4.

¹¹⁵ See for example Ralf Reikowsky, "Port Revival at Alexandria Held Possible: Deeper and Wider Potomac Need, Virginia Report Says," *The Washington Post* (25 July 1957), p. B1.

¹¹⁶ "Alexandria Will be Hub of New Highway Network," (caption), *The Washington Post*, (12 March 1958), p. A24.

¹¹⁷ Consolidated Master Plan of the City of Alexandria Virginia, 1974, p. 24.

¹¹⁸ The story of the preservation of Mount Vernon is a fascinating preview of the debates a century later over private property rights, historical preservation, public-private partnerships, and public access. See Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, *Historical Sketch of Ann Pamela Cunningham*, (Marion Press, 1911) and Elswyth Thane, *Mount Vernon is Ours: The Story of Its Preservation* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce: 1966).

¹¹⁹ Peter H. Smith, "The Beginnings of Historic Preservation in Alexandria – Moving Toward the Creation of the Old and Historic District," *The Alexandria Chronicle*, Vol IV, No. 4 (Winter 1996). p.2. Examples of early civic organizations undertaking preservationist work include, the Carlyle House Museum Society, the congregation of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, the Landmarks Society of Alexandria (Apothecary Shop) and the American Legion with the Daughters of the American Revolution (Gadsby's Tavern).

¹²⁰ The National Park Service (NPS) was established in 1916 under the Department of Interior (An Act to Establish a National Park Service, and For Other Purposes – 39 Statute 535) with broad powers to ensure proper use and management of parks, monuments and reservations under its jurisdiction (including a significant number of places in the National Capital Region). The George Washington Memorial Parkway was created by an act of Congress in 1930 (opened in 1932). The Parkway, which runs down Washington Street in Alexandria, was placed under the purview of the NPS and became the focus of early friction between federal and local interests that would continue through the 1980s. See Poul Martin Hertel, "George Washington Memorial Highway – The National Road," a monograph (undated) <https://www.oldtowncivic.org/assets/Library/historyofgwpkwy.pdf>

¹²¹ Peter H. Smith and Al Cox, "Historic Preservation in Alexandria, Virginia, and the Creation of the Old and Historic Alexandria District," *Preservation Leadership Forum*, Vol.1, No.13 (Fall 1998).

¹²² Mechlin Moore, "Alexandria Threatened by Slums," *The Washington Post*, 1 July 1957, p. A-11.

¹²³ The 1954 Federal Housing Act led to a dramatic expansion of federally-funded urban renewal projects from 290 in 1953 to more than 1,200 in 1962. Alexandria was one of those designated for Federal grants. These efforts often ran into local opposition over issues of race, class, and preservation. See Richard M. Flanagan, "The Housing Act of 1954: The Sea Change in National Urban Policy," *Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Nov 1997), pp. 265-286; Krystyn R. Moon, "The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria Virginia, 1930s-1960s," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol 124, No. 1 (2016), pp.28-68.

¹²⁴ "Alexandrians Opposed to Urban Renewal Plan" *The Washington Post*, 22 July 1960, p. D3. The plan was developed by urban planner John Beggs of New York City.

¹²⁵ Jamila Jordan, "The Making of Old Town," *Boundary Stones*, WETA History Blog (18 March 2016). <https://blogs.weta.org/boundarystones/2016/03/18/making-old-town>

¹²⁶ Maurine McLaughlin, "Alexandria's Urban Renewal Opposed: Phase III in Trouble Legal Action Election Issue Other Projects," *The Washington Post*, 10 July 1966, p. B2.

¹²⁷ Department of Planning and Regional Affairs, Alexandria, "Special Study, Report No. 18, Alexandria's Waterfront – A Summary of Past Studies and the Adopted Plan," (July 1968), p. 6. (The two past studies considered were from 1965 and 1966).

¹²⁸ "Special Study, Report No. 18" (July 1968), p.17. Some limited commercial activity did continue in the late 1960s. For example, ships were still bringing in newsprint from Canada and Scandinavia to the Robinson Terminal (some 165,000 tons in 1967). In addition, the Robinson Corporation's sand, rock, and gravel business (located on the site of the future park) sold 72,000 tons of product.

¹²⁹ "Special Study, Report No.18" (July 1968), p.18.

¹³⁰ City finances in 1969 and 1970 were under significant strain. After two back-to-back annual property tax increases in 1968 and 1969, the city was still forced to submit a reduced budget for 1970. It is not surprising that local politicians would seek to maximize the tax revenue potential of a redeveloped waterfront. One 1970 estimate pegged the value of a typical post-industrial five-acre waterfront lot at \$3 per square foot which, at the tax rates of the time, would generate \$12,000 in tax revenue per year. That same five-acre lot redeveloped as commercial, office, or high-rise apartments, could be worth \$25 per square foot and generate up to \$250,000 in city tax revenue per year. See Maurine McLaughlin, "Alexandria Budgets Unveiled," *The Washington Post*, 10 April 1968, p. B8; "Alexandria Realty Tax Rises 41c," *The Washington Post*, 10 May 1969, p. B1; "Alexandria Adopts Reduced Budget," *The Washington Post*, 27 May 1970, p. B8; and Paul G. Edwards, "Alexandria Shore Revival Gleams: Docks Awash in Optimism," *The Washington Post*, 30 July 1970, p. F1.

¹³¹ Maurine McLaughlin, "Civic Center, Hotel Proposed for Alexandria," *The Washington Post*, 30 Sep 1969

¹³² Paul G. Edwards, "Alexandria Shore Revival Gleams," *The Washington Post*, 30 July 1970, p. F1.

¹³³ Paul G. Edwards, "8-Acre High Rise Site Eyed," *The Washington Post*, 22 July 1970, p. C1 and "Alexandria Shore Revival Gleams," *The Washington Post*, 30 July 1970, p. F1

¹³⁴ Paul G. Edwards "Alexandria Group Formed to Develop Waterfront Land," *The Washington Post*, 25 July, 1970, B2.

¹³⁵ Paul G. Edwards, "8-Acre High Rise Site Eyed," *The Washington Post*, 22 July 1970, p. C1

¹³⁶ Testimony of Wiley F. Mitchel, Jr., Vice Mayor Alexandria, "Alexandria Waterfront," Hearing before the Committee on the District of Columbia, Ninety-Second Congress, Second Session on S. 3861, (17 August 1972), p. 24.

¹³⁷ See Amos B. Casselman, "The Virginia Portion of the District of Columbia," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, Washington, D.C., Vol. 12 (1909), pp.115-141 and Mark David Richards, "The Debates over the Retrocession of the District of Columbia, 1801-2004," *Washington History*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Spring/Summer, 2004), pp. 54-82.

¹³⁸ In a 1922 court case asserting the Federal Claim, a judge found for the Federal government that a man using a dip net to fish on the Virginia side of the river between the low- and high-water mark was illegally fishing in the District of Columbia. In contrast, in 1826, Congress gave the Alexandria Common Council (forerunner to today's City Council) extensive powers to "preserve the navigation" and erect, repair, and regulate public wharves, deepen docks and basins..." on the waterfront. See the Report on the Waterfront, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Labor, Social Services, and the International Community, Committee on the District Of Columbia, House of Representatives, Ninety-Third Congress, Second Session, on "H.R. 14043 Disposition of Lands on the Alexandria, Va., Waterfront," (30 April 1974), pp. 89-102.

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- ¹³⁹ Evens v. United States, (Potomac River: Fisheries: Boundaries of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia) in Charles Cowles Tucker, Reports of Cases Adjudged in the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia (From March 16, 1908, to June 18, 1908), Vol. 31, (The Lawyers Co-Operative Publishing Company, NY: 1908), p. 553.
- ¹⁴⁰ Hearing Before Subcommittee No. 5 of the Committee on the District of Columbia, "Potomac River Waterfront Property, Alexandria Virginia (H.R. 19842), 91st Congress, 2d Session (10 December 1970), p. 2.
- ¹⁴¹ Hearing on H.R.19842, December 10,1970, pp.1-3.
- ¹⁴² The Interior Department, in its response to Senator Spong's bill (S. 4481), argued that in "1912 an act of Congress required the Attorney General to bring suit to clear the title of the United States to any disputed parcel of land or water in the District of Columbia, in, under and adjacent to the Potomac River (Public Law 62-138, 37 Stat.'93). A later 1934 act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the settlement of disputed claims by granting quitclaim deeds to riparian owners, upon the approval of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Attorney General (Public Law 73-271, 48 Stat. 836). Report (To Accompany S 4481), "Ceding to the City of Alexandria, Va., Certain Waterfront Land," No. 91-1506, 91st Congress, 2d Session (18 December 1970).
- ¹⁴³ Hearing H.R. 19842, December 10, 1970, pp. 9-19.
- ¹⁴⁴ Editorial, "The Army, The City, The River," *Alexandria Gazette*, 23 November 1971.
- ¹⁴⁵ Hearing before Subcommittee No. 5 of the Committee on The District of Columbia, House of Representatives, Ninety-First Congress, Second Session on H.R. 19842, December 10, 1970, (GPO: Washington 1971), pp. 20-21.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 4, 1970.
- ¹⁴⁷ S. 3861 "To Convey to the City of Alexandria, Virginia Certain Lands of the United States, and for Other Purposes," (August 1972) and H.R. 15550 "A Bill to convey to the city of Alexandria, Va., certain lands of the United States " (11 September 1972).
- ¹⁴⁸ Paul G. Edwards, "Conservationists Joint Riverfront Feud," *The Washington Post*, 24 May 1971, p. C1.
- ¹⁴⁹ Paul G. Edwards, "Alexandria to Get Waterfront Land," *The Washington Post*, 10 June 1971, p. B4.
- ¹⁵⁰ Paul G. Edwards, "Alexandria Will Sell Waterfront Acreage," *The Washington Post*, 23 February 1972, p. C3.
- ¹⁵¹ Alan Palm, "Interview with Robert Montague III," *Alexandria Legacies Oral History*, (October 6, 2006), p. 8.
- ¹⁵² Testimony of Robert L. Montague, III, on behalf of the Old Town Civic Association of Alexandria and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, and the National Trust for Historic preservation before the Hearing on S. 386, (17 August 1972), pp. 90-94.
- ¹⁵³ Statement of Robert B. McCaw, Esq., Representing the Northern Virginia Conservation Council, Hearing before the Committee on the District of Columbia, 92d Congress, Second Session on S. 3861 (17 August 1972), pp. 59-66 and Letter from Wiley F. Mitchell, Jr., Vice Mayor Alexandria to Congressman William S. Stuckey Jr., 16 June 1972, pp. 170-173.
- ¹⁵⁴ Testimony of Robert B. McCaw, Esq., Hearing on S. 386, (17 August 1972), p. 62.
- ¹⁵⁵ Statement of Mrs. Ellen Pickering, Past Chairman, Alexandria Beautification Committee, Hearing before the Committee on the District of Columbia, 92d Congress, Second Session on S. 3861 (17 August 1972), pp. 97-98.
- ¹⁵⁶ Paul G. Edwards, "Conservationists Fight Riverfront Plan," *The Washington Post*, 19 May 1972, B1.
- ¹⁵⁷ Hearing before the Committee on the District of Columbia, 92d Congress, Second Session on S. 3861 (17 August 1972), pp. 82-9.

¹⁵⁸ Paul G. Edwards, "Alexandria Votes Two Rezoning on Waterfront Tracts," 22 March 1972, C1; "Alexandria High-Rise Plan Approved, 25 March 1972, E4; and "U.S. Backs Va. Waterfront Sale," *The Washington Post*, 17 May 1972, p. B2.

¹⁵⁹ The compromise bill submitted by Congressman Broyhill proposed the title transfer of 48 acres to city, sets 15-year horizon to establish parks, open space, and public recreation facilities. Money from land sales on the waterfront would be used for acquisition, maintenance, and development of pedestrian mall (25 ft wide) accessible to public. The city would create public parks totaling 11 acres between Oronoco and Gibbon Streets. Zoning restriction would maintain density, 50' height restriction, architectural controls, and no construction within 100 of river. Nancy Scannell, "Bill Seeks to Settle Waterfront Dispute," *The Washington Post*, 16 June 1972, p. C4.

¹⁶⁰ Stephen Green, "Va. Shore Land-Use Rejected," *The Washington Post*, 12 September, 1972, p. C1.

¹⁶¹ Joanne Omang, "Conservationists Claim U.S. Owns Va. Waterfront Tract," *The Washington Post*, 16 March 1973, C7.

¹⁶² Joanne Omang, "Alexandria Waterfront Bill Sent to Hill," *The Washington Post*, 23 June 1973, B5.

¹⁶³ Joanne Omang, "Waterfront Suit Weighed in Alexandria," *The Washington Post*, 1 May 1973, C2. An action to "quiet title" is a lawsuit to establish a plaintiff's title to land by compelling the adverse claimant to either establish a claim or to be quiet about his/her challenges or claims to the title. It establishes a party's title to real property against everyone.

¹⁶⁴ Joanne Omang, "Waterfront Suit Weighed in Alexandria," *The Washington Post*, 1 May 1973, C2.

¹⁶⁵ The land-swap was creative and it had a cascading effect. The Alexandria City planner at the time, Engin Artemel, recalled that the settlement opened the way for acquisition or transformation of other waterfront properties. Using a combination of land swaps, donations, even purchases, areas North and South of the future Founder's Park were cleared for eventual development as part of a waterfront park system. For example, after the Watergate land-swap,

"...the CEO of Texaco, a United Way Board member, announced plans to donate Texaco's tank farm at Oronoco Bay to the United Way, the City asked for a part of the property donation and created Oronoco Bay Park. When Virginia Concrete no longer needed barge traffic to operate, the City exchanged this waterfront property to create Waterfront Park. Efforts such as these achieved a great deal with minimal cost." See "Living Legends of Alexandria, Engin Artemel," <https://alexandrialegends.org/engin-artemel/>

¹⁶⁶ Joanne Omang, "Va. Land Swap in Sight," *The Washington Post*, 7 Sep 1973, C1.

¹⁶⁷ "Alexandria Votes for Land Swap," *The Washington Post*, 12 Sep 1973, B2

¹⁶⁸ Joanne Omang "Alexandria's Waterfront: Debate Enters New Phase," *The Washington Post*, 28 September 1973, p. C1

¹⁶⁹ Joanne Omang "Alexandria's Waterfront: Debate Enters New Phase," *The Washington Post*, 28 September 1973, p. C2

¹⁷⁰ Joanne Omang, "U.S. Sues for Title to Alexandria Land," *The Washington Post*, 22 Dec 1973, P. C1

¹⁷¹ Laura A. Kiernan, "Alexandria Waterfront Bill Offered," *The Washington Post*, 27 February 1974, p. A20.

¹⁷² Joanne Omang, "Waterfront Bill on Alexandria Seems Doomed: Waterfront Title Bill Seen Dead," *The Washington Post*, 24 May 1974, C1.

¹⁷³ Joanne Omang, "Alexandria Waterfront Fight Goes to Capitol Hill," 1 May 1974, p.C1 and "Waterfront Bill on Alexandria Seems Doomed," *The Washington Post*, 24 May 1974, p. C1.

¹⁷⁴ Joanne Omang, "Waterfront Bill on Alexandria Seems Doomed: Waterfront Title Bill Seen Dead," *The Washington Post*, 24 May 1974, C1.

¹⁷⁵ Ellen Pickering testimony to a Hearing before the Committee on the District of Columbia, 92d Congress, Second Session on S. 3861 (17 August 1972), pp. 82-91.

¹⁷⁶ Author's discussion with resident of North Old Town at the time.

¹⁷⁷ Paul Richard, "In Old Alexandria, A Gift for Artists," *The Washington Post*, 25 February 1974, p. B1 and Gene Baro, "Abandoning Torpedoes for the Arts Instead," *The Washington Post*, 15 July 1974, p. B11.

¹⁷⁸ Alice Reid, "Interview with Marian Van Landingham," Alexandria Legacies – City Preservation Movement (November 1, 2007), pp. 6-7. Ms. Landingham, an accomplished Alexandria artist and founder of Alexandria's Torpedo Factory Art Center was also a Delegate to the Virginia General Assembly, where she represented Alexandria for 24 years, from 1982 to 2006.

¹⁷⁹ The city, as part of the land swap with the Watergate developers, purchased the future park on 18 January 1974 for \$1,310,000. See City of Alexandria, Office of Real Estate Assessments, Detailed Property Description 351 North Union Street, Alexandria Virginia (Map/Lot Number 065.03-06-02).

¹⁸⁰ "Alexandria Festival Events Today" *The Washington Post*, 13 July 1974, p. D2.

¹⁸¹ Edward Cue, "Alexandria Waterfront: Revitalization Still Up in the Air," *The Washington Post*, 7 March 1978, p. B1. The City Manager at the time, Douglas Harman, was seeking a "middle course" between all park and all commercial (a continuous walkway along the river, 27% of waterfront land developed as park, 45% industrial/mixed use, and the rest to remain submerged).

¹⁸² Eduardo Cue, "U.S. Informs Alexandria Waterfront Not Historic," *The Washington Post*, 11 April, 1978, C1; Robert Meyers, "Meeting Softens Waterfront Impasse," *The Washington Post*, October 7, 1978, B6; "Waterfront Talks are Ended Abruptly," *The Washington Post*, 29 September 1979, p. C3; and "Land Title Dispute Upsets Alexandrians," *The Washington Post*, 4 October 1979, p. VA1.

¹⁸³ Robert Meyers, "Waterfront Dispute May End Soon, Says Alexandria Mayor," *The Washington Post*, 18 October, 1979, P. VA2 and "U.S. Agrees on Use of Alexandria Land," *The Washington Post*, 7 Dec 1979, B4

¹⁸⁴ Robert Meyers, "Government Expands Claim to Alexandria Waterfront," 15 May 1980, VA14; Robert Meyers, "Alexandrians Brimming with Ideas for Waterfront," 30 June 1980, VA3 and "A Waterfront Peace Offer," 20 November 1980, VA16; Paul Hodge, "U.S., Alexandria Accord to End Dispute Over City Waterfront," 2 April 1981, p. B1 and "Alexandria Waterfront Plan Receives Wary Reception," 21 May 1981, P. VA3; James Alexander, "Compromise Seen Near On Alexandria Waterfront," 10 July 1981, P. C8; and Mary Battiata, "Alexandria Approves Waterfront Agreement," 7 Oct 1981, C2 - *The Washington Post*

¹⁸⁵ See John Arundel, "Historic Boat Club Triumphs over Feds, Ending Decades in Court," Local Kicks, (19 January 2011) <http://www.localkicks.com/community/news/historic-boat-club-triumphs-over-feds-ending-decades-in-court> and United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit, United States of America, Appellant v. Old Dominion Boat Club, Appellee (Nos. 09-5363, 09-5369) <https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-dc-circuit/1552017.html>.

¹⁸⁶ Mary Battiata, "2 Groups Object to Alexandria Waterfront Plan," *The Washington Post*, 11 November, 1981, p. B5.

¹⁸⁷ Caryle Murphy, "Waking Up a Waterfront – Alexandria Lifts its Old Face," *The Washington Post*, 29 November 1981, p. A1. The Pomander and the old Lee Street Parks were combined into what is now known as Windmill Hill Park.

¹⁸⁸ As a result of Ms. Pickering's efforts, Alexandria won a \$200,000 federal grant in 1983 to revitalize the landscaping of both Oronoco Bay and Founders Park. Paul Hodge, "Funding for City Parks," *The Washington Post*, 9 March 1983, p. VA8.

¹⁸⁹ Michael Lee Pope, "A Clearing in the Distance," *Alexandria Gazette Packet*, 2 April 2009, pp. 3, 5, and 20.

¹⁹⁰ Pope, "A Clearing in the Distance," p. 20.

¹⁹¹ Jo Ann Lewis, "Waterfront Views," *The Washington Post*, 13 September 1984, p. E7 and "Highlights of Alexandria's Red Cross Waterfront Festival," *The Washington Post*, 15 June 1985. The concern voiced by FPCA seemed justified only a few years later when the annual Red Cross fund raiser featured the 1960s rock band *Steppenwolf* at Oronoco Park. The event attracted an estimated 100,000 people and caused significant damage to a rain-soaked Oronoco Park. See Vivien Lou Chen, "Alexandria Waterfront Festival Irks Residents," *The Washington Post*, 2 July 1992, p. D6.

¹⁹² Annie Gowen, "Alexandria Delays Vote on Jamestown Festival' Neighbors say Founders park is Not a Suitable Site," *The Washington Post*, 2 February 2006, p. E3.

¹⁹³ "Docking Godspeed," *The Connection*, 9 February 2006. <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2006/feb/09/docking-godspeed/>

¹⁹⁴ Annie Gowen, "Alexandria Delays Vote on Jamestown Festival' Neighbors say Founders Park is Not a Suitable Site," *The Washington Post*, 2 February 2006, p. E3.

¹⁹⁵ Jeanne Theismann, "Opposition Heats Up over City's Plans for Founders Park," *Alexandria Gazette Packet*, 16-22 May, p. 7.

¹⁹⁶ Linda Couture, Letter to the Editor, "Founders Park Threatened," *The Connection*, 24 April 2013. <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/apr/24/letter-editor-founders-park-threatened/>

¹⁹⁷ "Neighbors Pitch in For Park," *The Connection*, 18 November 2003. <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2003/nov/18/neighbors-pitch-in-for-park/>

¹⁹⁸ John Smith, *The Complete Works Of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*, Volume II, edited by Philip L. Barbour, (University of North Carolina Press:1986), p.136. <http://www.virtualjamestown.org/exist/cocoon/jamestown/fhajs/SmiWorks2>