

We Are the Alexandria Library Sit-In

August 5, 2020

PROGRAMMING
Librarian

An initiative of the American Library Association Public Programs Office

Welcome and Announcements

- Today's webinar is a presentation of ALA's Public Programs Office, with support from ALA's Cultural Communities Fund (www.ala.org/CCF)
- Visit www.programminglibrarian.org for more online learning sessions, programs ideas and grant announcements

About the Classroom



Microphones

Only our presenters have microphone access.



Questions?

Type them in the chat box! There will be time at the end for questions.



Tech Issues?

Send a message through Q&A.

Today's Presenter

Rose Timmons Dawson

Executive Director
Alexandria Library
Alexandria, Va.



We are the Alexandria Library Sit-In

By Rose T. Dawson

Executive Director, Alexandria Libraries

Objective

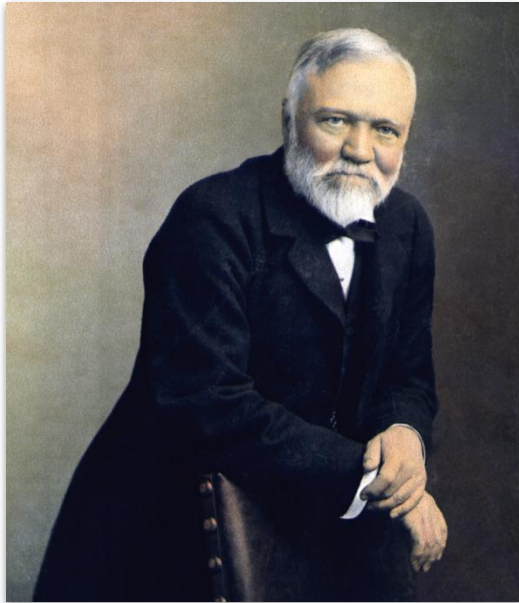
- **Objective**

- Using the 70th, 75th, and 80th anniversaries of the 1939 Sit-In as a model program for celebrating all library history

Contents

- **Introduction and History of Alexandria Library Sit-In**
- **70th Anniversary**
- **75th Anniversary**
- **80th Anniversary**

Introduction



Philanthropist
Andrew Carnegie

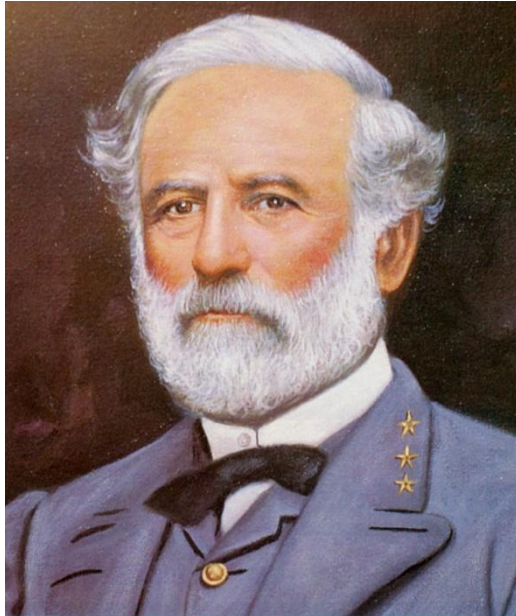


Carnegie Library
Braddock, Penn
1889

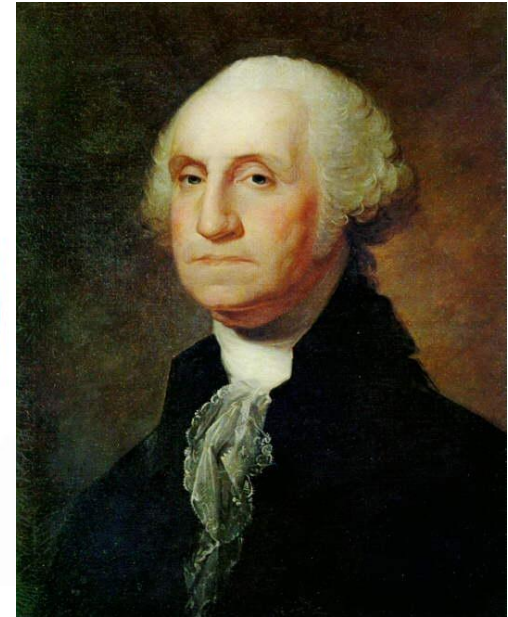
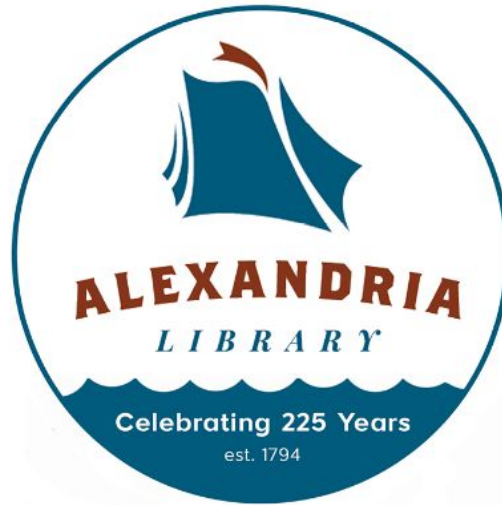


Software Developer
Bill Gates

The History of Alexandria, Virginia



Civil War Commander
General Robert E. Lee



1st President of the U.S.
George Washington

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Significant African American Events



1954
Montgomery
Bus Boycott



1960 Sit-In
of
Woolworth's Counter



1963 March on
Washington

1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In



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Alexandria of Yesterday



Barrett Branch



Robinson Library

Alexandria Today



Beatley Central Library



Barrett Branch



Burke Branch



Duncan Branch



Local History/
Special Collections



Law Library

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70th Planning and Assessment

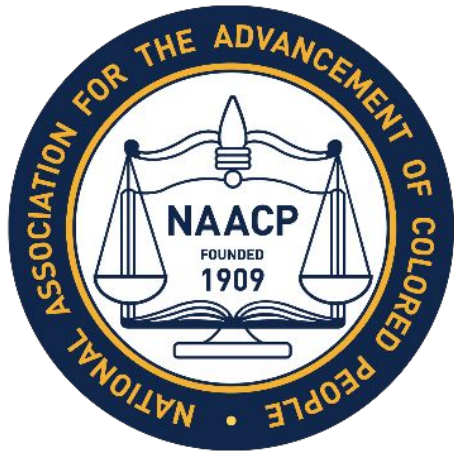
- **NONE!**

- Partnership with Alexandria Black History Museum (ABHM)
- Song
- Speaker
- Reenactment
- Postal Service First Day Cover



75th Planning and Assessment: Committee Creation

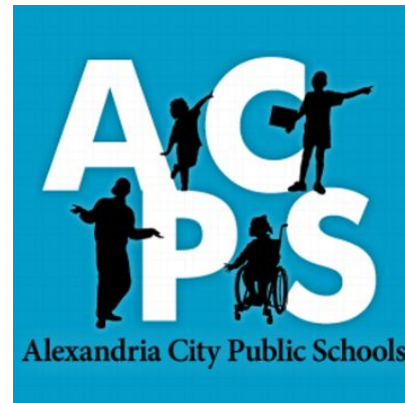
- **Internal members:** Representatives from all branches and departments
- **External members**



NAACP –
Alexandria Chapter



Alexandria Black
History Museum



Alexandria City
Public Schools



Shiloh Baptist
Church

75th Planning and Assessment: Brainstorming

- Logo/Tagline
- Event Publicity
- Press Releases
- Proclamations
- Signature Sit-In Event
- Website
- Domain Name (librarysitin.org)
- Postcard
- Exhibit
- Giveaways (pencils, pens, DVDs)
- Historic Marker
- Wayfinding Sign



75th Implementation

Beatley Central Library
703-746-1702

Title: Samuel Wilbert Tucker: the
story of a civil righ
Call number B TUCKER, SAMUEL
SIL

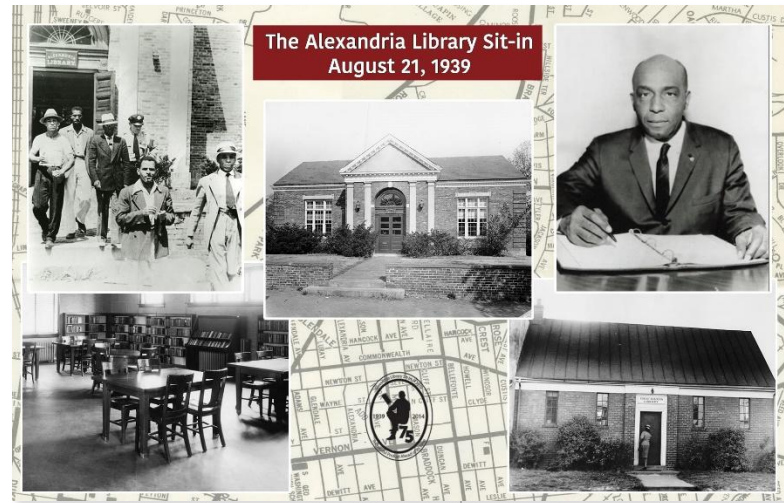
Item ID: 39012011261112

Date due: 6/27/2014,23:59

Date charged: 2/28/2014,11:26

Celebrating 75 Years of
the Alexandria Library Sit-In

Checkout receipts



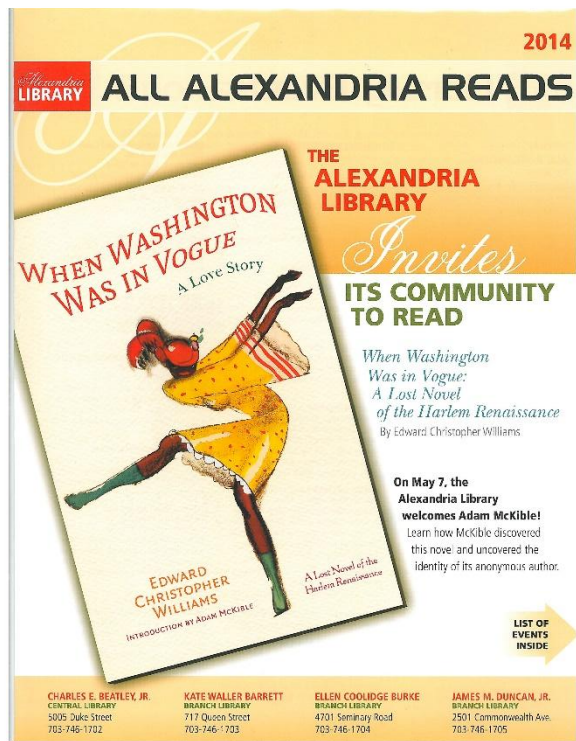
Center: Barrett Library circa 1940
Top Left: Protest participants (left to right) - William Evans, Otto L. Tucker
Edward Gaddis, Morris Murray, Clarence "Buck" Strange.
Top right: Samuel W. Tucker
Bottom right: Robinson Library, circa 1950
Bottom left: Interior, Barrett Library adult reading room, 1937

Direct Mailer Postcard

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75th Implementation (Programs)



All Alexandria Reads



Le Tour d'Alexandria Bike Tour

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75th Anniversary Celebration

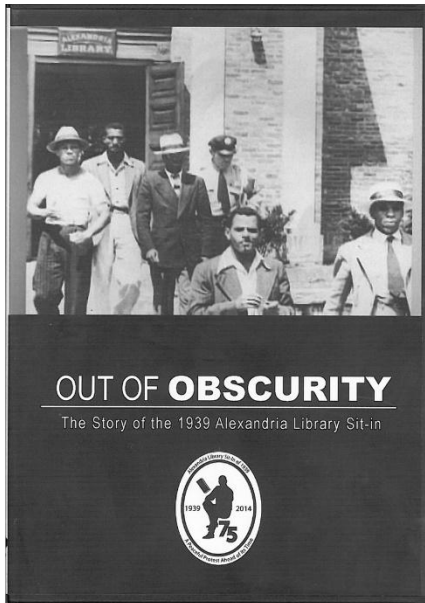
Library Board Members
Decorating City Hall
Christmas Tree



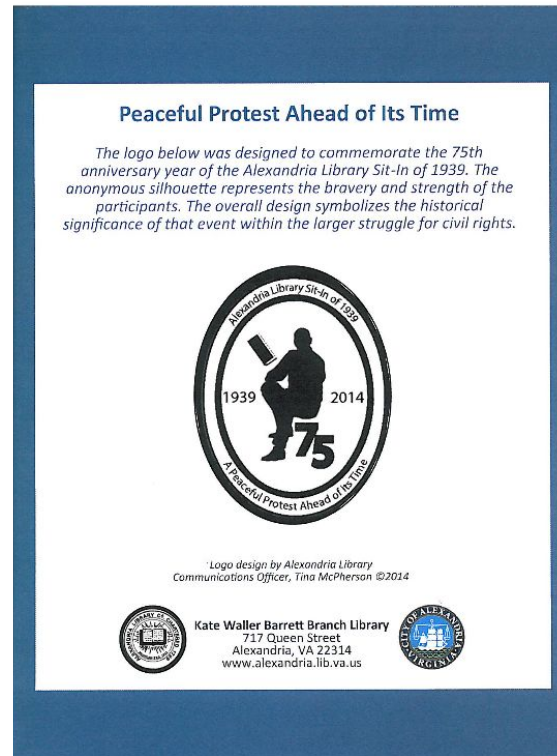
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75th Implementation-Giveaways



DVD Video



Lapel Pin



Giveaway Bag

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75th Evaluation: News Media



Alexandria director of libraries Rose T. Dawson, invited guests, elected officials and neighborhood children help with the unveiling of the new Virginia State historic marker recalling the 1939 sit-in at the library.

Library Sit-In: 75 Years Later

Seventy-five years ago, on Aug. 21, 1939, Alexandria residents William Evans, Edward Addis, Clarence Strango, Otto Tucker and Morris Murray entered the Kate Walker Barrett Library on Queen Street and requested registration forms for library cards. The request was denied to each. After being denied cards, each man picked up a book and took a seat in the reading room and began reading. Two hours later, the police were called and the men were arrested for their act of civil disobedience, sitting quietly in the reading room and reading. The men were African American and the Barrett Library was a segregated whites-only building.

Local attorney Samuel W. Tucker had applied earlier that year for a library card and his request had also been denied. Tucker, who helped plan the protest, represented them in court. The judge never issued a ruling. In 1940, Alexandria opened the Robert Robinson Library for African Americans. Desegregation of the library system began by 1959. Samuel W. Tucker died in 1990.



Al-Kel reads the newly unveiled historic marker with state Sen. Rob Krupicka.



Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority commissioner Melvin Miller talks with LaVerne Spencer. Spencer was playing around the corner in her cousin's yard on N. Columbus Street when the five men were arrested 75 years ago.



Kwame Ansah-Brew conducts an African storytelling program for the children inside the Barrett Library.



Local education pioneer Ferdinand Day poses with a sign marking the site of Samuel W. Tucker's 1939 library sit-in. City officials commemorated the 75th anniversary of the demonstration at a ceremony last week.

Remembering a key Civil Rights event

Alexandria library sit-in's 75th anniversary commemorated

BY DERRICK PERKINS

Patricia Timmons-Goodson, a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, did not mince words when it came to famed Alexandria attorney Samuel W. Tucker and the five young black men he sent into a city library in 1939.

"It's just amazing to me how much good can be done for everyone else by very few," she said during Thursday's ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the library sit-in. "We owe a tremendous debt to those five great heroes and their legal counsel."

On that warm August day decades ago, Tucker decided to make a statement. The 26-year-old lawyer instructed his five young compatriots to enter the whites-only library

and sit down. "I just retired and my wife wants me out of the house." They'll come in and say, "Where do I start?" They start with George or one of his three staffers.

"I've got a shelf or part of a shelf with books for every county and jurisdiction in Virginia," George said. "That's history, genealogy, maps."

The focus is naturally on Alexandria. Vertical files detail famous Alexandria families. There are files on different streets in town, too, with pertinent newspaper articles, board of architectural review

SEE TUCKER | 6

Alexandria Times



Going back in time at Alexandria's Barrett Library



John Kelly's Washington

paper printed with genealogies that are as detailed and complex as any Plantagenet king's.

The family trees do depict royalty, at least as far as the South is concerned. The library is the official depository of the Society of the Lees of Virginia, an organization open to people who can trace their ancestry back to Richard Lee, who came to Virginia in 1639. (He's known as "the Emigrant.")

Genealogy is what draws most people to this corner of the Barrett Library, the staff of which has graciously assisted Answer Man in his vital work. George K. Combs, the special collections manager, said budding genealogists often come in and profess research on their ancestors with, "I should have asked my grandfather when he was alive."

Said George: "We hear that every day. And often it's, 'I just retired and my wife wants me out of the house.' They'll come in and say, 'Where do I start?'"

"I've got a shelf or part of a shelf with books for every county and jurisdiction in Virginia," George said. "That's history, genealogy, maps."

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George K. Combs, special collections manager, with some of the historic materials in Alexandria's Barrett Branch Library.

history. "A lot of people when they buy a home in Old Town, they're buying it for the cachet," George said. "They want to know who lived here then, what did they do?"

To help find out, the library has city directories, some dating to the 1700s. There are files for cemeteries and churches. Sanborn fire insurance maps detail buildings and what they were made of, whether brick or frame. The Alexandria Gazette newspaper is on microfilm. The collection also includes more than 50,000 images, mostly photographs but also drawings and illustrations.

Alexandria — founded in 1749 — is about as historic as it comes around here. That means many residents know their stuff. Sometimes, however, unsubstantiated legends take on the patina of fact.

"Take Alexandria's cobblestone streets. The story was it was Hessian prisoners of war during the Revolutionary War who

George said. "However the streets didn't get cobbled till many years after the war. 'If they were Hessian prisoners of war, no one told them that the war was over.'"

The Barrett branch library has its own interesting history. Built in 1937 on an old Quaker burial ground, it is descended from a private, subscription-based library founded in 1794 by some of the city's leading figures. That was called the Alexandria Library Company. Some of its books — purchased on buying trips to England — are still in the collection, though an unknown number disappeared during the Civil War, pilfered by souvenir-hunting Union soldiers.

In 1939, the building was the site of a sit-in by five African American Alexandrians protesting the segregated library. The sit-in was organized by lawyer Samuel Tucker.

"A lot of people tend to think that history stops after George Washington and Robert E. Lee."

history that comes after that." And George is always on the lookout for it. He's excited about a new collection of Alexandria billboards — the decorative stationery used by businesses for receipts — and a bunch of A&W bus schedules from the 1930s.

George joined the library as an intern in 1992, when he was a student at Catholic University. "I realized, gee, I don't want to leave," he said. A special collections librarian is, well, special.

"Most librarians, you're with them five or 10 minutes," George said. "We spend three, four hours with people."

Or longer. George said he has one customer — now in his 80s — who's been chasing down the same ancestor for almost 20 years.

"He's got her name," George said. "He's got her in one place, then in another place."

Is she the same person, or two different people? Said George: "After a year of not seeing him, he'll walk in and say, 'You found her yet?'"

George added: "You've got to enjoy it in order to do it. It's like putting together jigsaw puzzles."

Alexandria Library Special Collections — Kate Walker Barrett Branch, 717 Queen St., Alexandria, 703-746-1706. Open Mondays 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Tuesdays 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Fridays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Sundays and Thursdays. Free.

Have a question about the Washington area? Don't keep it to yourself. Send it to answerman@washpost.com. For previous columns, visit

Washington Post

Alexandria Gazette

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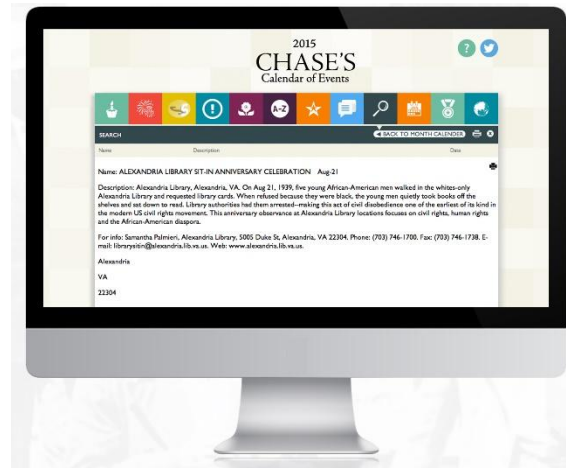
75th Evaluation: Digital Media



LibrarySitIn.org
Website



46"
Digital Display

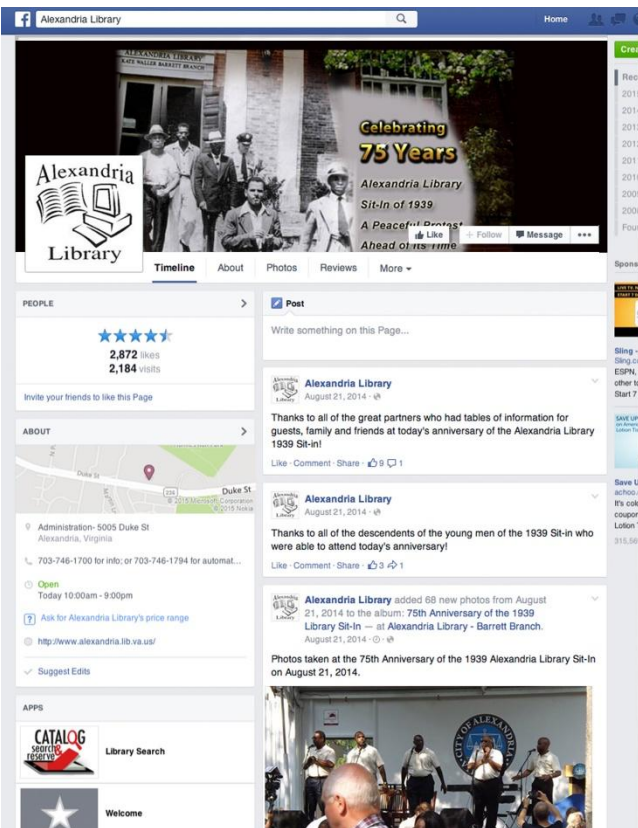


Chase's Calendar
of Events

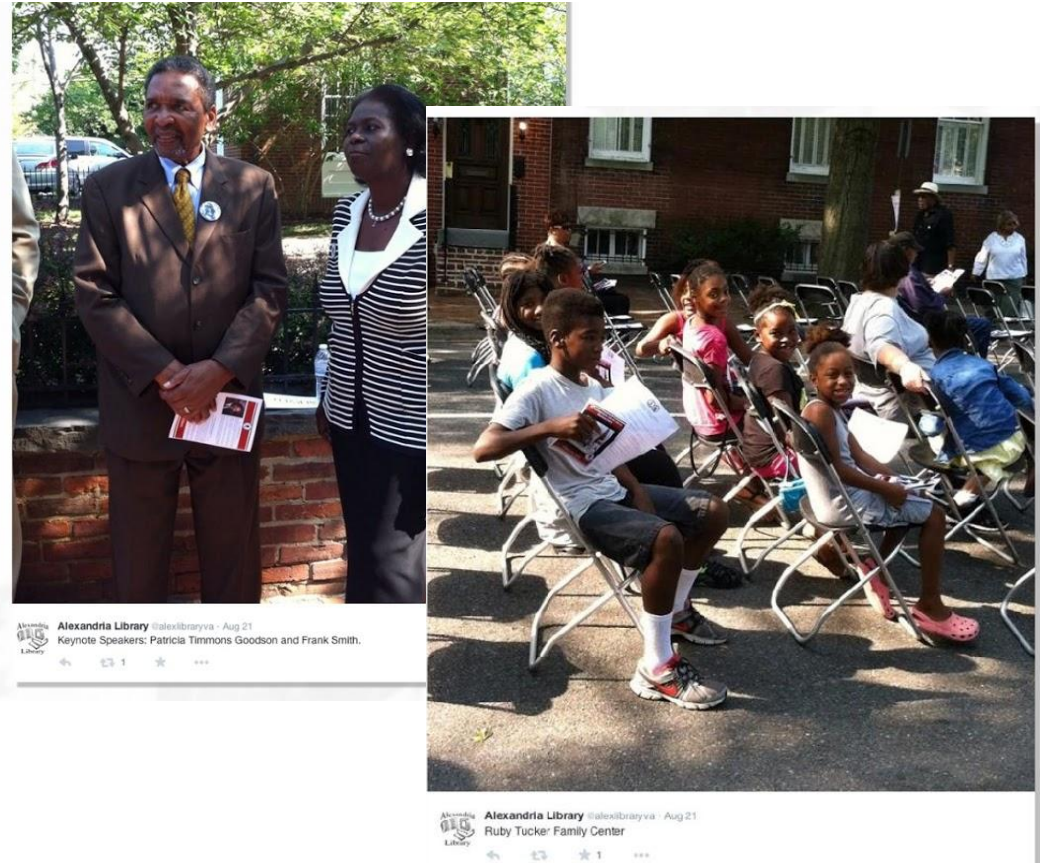
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75th Evaluation: Social Media



Library Facebook Page



Library Twitter Page

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80th Planning and Assessment: Committee Creation

- **Internal members:** Representatives from all branches and departments
- **Honorary Chairs**
 - Former Board Member
 - Library Company Member

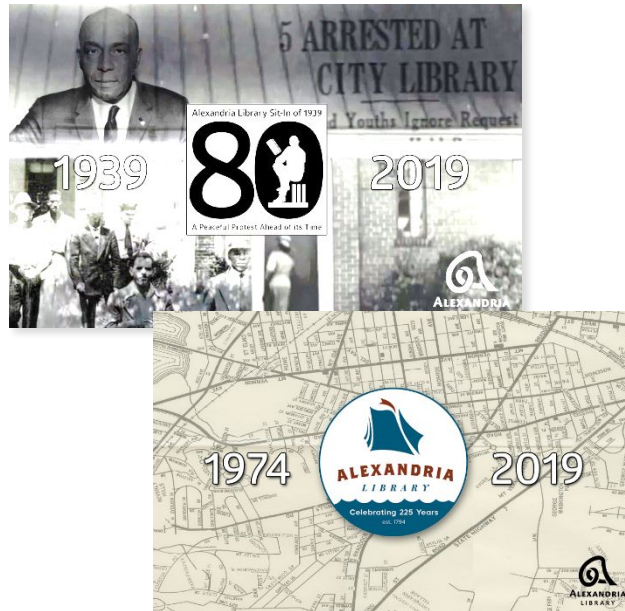


80th Planning and Assessment: Brainstorming

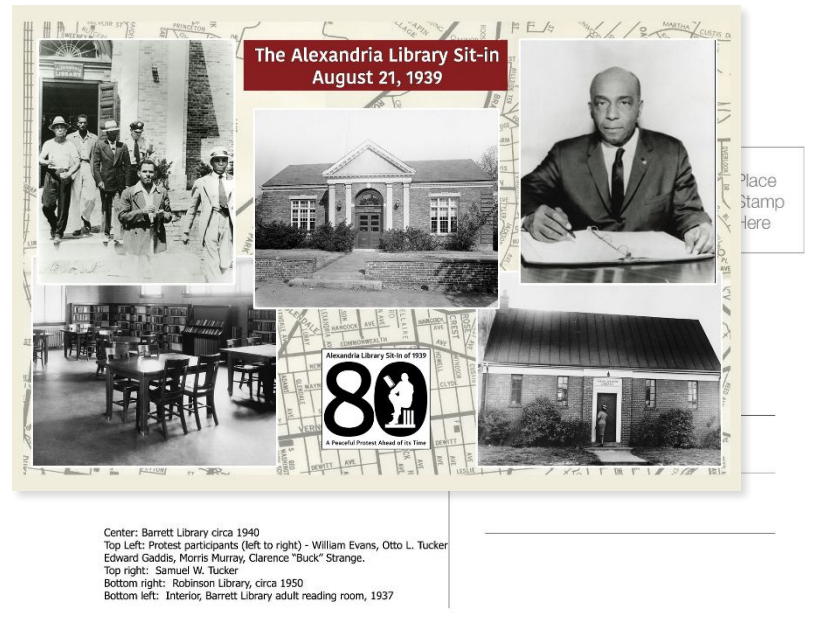
- ENGAGE DESCENDANTS AND THE COMMUNITY
- YEARLONG CELEBRATION
- Logo/Tagline
- Event Publicity
- Press Releases
- Proclamation
- Signature Sit-In Event
- Website
- Domain Name (librarysitin.org)
- Postcard



80th Implementation



Library Cards



Direct Mailer Postcard

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80th Implementation (Programs)

2019 FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY SIT-IN

Our line-up of feature films and documentaries chronicles the stories of ordinary men and women who did extraordinary things. From the grassroots to the Supreme Court, people armed with courage and commitment continue the fight to make the world a better place for everybody. The battle for justice is fought on the playing field, in the workplace, and in our neighborhoods. Let's celebrate the victories, heal from the setbacks, and keep it moving.

HIDDEN FIGURES Wed, 3/6 6:30 PM Beasley Central	OUT OF OBSCURITY Fri, 3/15 4 PM Barks Branch	ANSWERING THE CALL Mon, 4/29 6:30 PM Duncan Branch	MARSHALL Fri, 4/18 3:30 PM Barks Branch	OUT OF OBSCURITY Wed, 5/22 6:30 PM Beasley Central	BROTHER OUTSIDER Wed, 5/12 6:30 PM Duncan Branch	MISSISSIPPI BURNING Fri, 7/26 1:30 PM Barks Branch	OUT OF OBSCURITY Mon, 8/19 6:30 PM Barrett Branch
KING: A FILMED RECORD PART 1 Wed, 8/28 6:30 PM Beasley Central	LOVING Mon, 9/16 6:30 PM Duncan Branch	REMEMBER THE TITANS Sun, 10/20 2 PM Beasley Central	WHEN JUSTICE ISN'T JUST Fri, 10/16 4 PM Barks Branch	OUT OF OBSCURITY Sat, 10/16 3 PM Duncan Branch	I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO Wed, 12/4 6:30 PM Beasley Central		

80 ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY



80th Anniversary Film Festival

Le Tour d'Alexandria Bike Tour

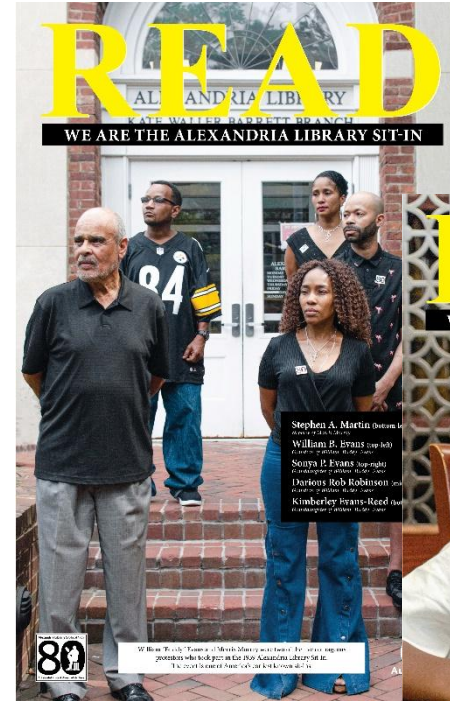
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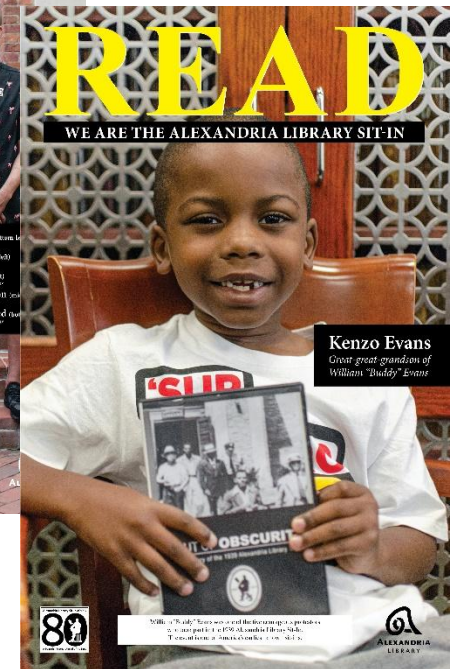
80th Implementation: (Programs)



Sit-In Descendants Panel



READ Posters



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80th Evaluation: News Media

SEVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 22, 2019

Crowd gathers at the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial.

400 Years of Slavery

Gathering honors victims, addresses Alexandria's role in slavery.

By LISA BOWEN

In August 1619, a group of 20 African men arrived in Jamestown, Va., marking the beginning of slavery in America. On Aug. 21, 2019, a group of about 100 people gathered at the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial in Alexandria to mark the 400th anniversary of the first African slave brought to the Americas. The event was held at the site of the cemetery, which is the final resting place for about 2,000 enslaved men, women and children who were brought to Alexandria in the early 17th century.

Reverend Joseph Thompson addressed the crowd in front of the former Franklin & Annfield slave market, now Freedom House Museum.

Protesting 'Whites Only' Library

1939 Library Sit-In Ignited Civil Rights era.

By JESSICA THOMPSON

Katherine Evans held a sign and the crowd in front of the library was being cleared out of a building by a police officer. But her mother told her to stay, again and again. It was Aug. 21, 1939, and the Franklin Avenue library was the scene of a sit-in protest by African American women who walked through the doors of the "whites only" Alexandria Library in what many believe to be the earliest protest of the Civil Rights era.

Ray Dawson, executive director of the Alexandria Library, and City Councilwoman Amy Jackson hold a framed poster of the 1939 protest during the Aug. 19 ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of the sit-in.

Attorney and Civil Rights troubleshooter Samuel W. Tucker was the organizer of the 1939 sit-in at the Alexandria Library.

News

Family members of William "Buddy" Evans hold individual framed photos presented as a commemoration of the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In.

Evans was one of five men arrested during a peaceful protest after refused library cards.

'I Will Always Refuse'

Evans' mother called the Alexandria Library the "pro-segregationist library" and she built it in 1937 to serve the city's white residents. African American residents were denied access even though their own dollars paid for the library, forcing them to protest in order to be allowed to use the library.

Nancy Joyce Stoves holds a copy of her book "Samuel Wilbert Tucker: The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In."

Four generations of the William "Buddy" Evans family gather at the Bennett Branch Library on Aug. 19 to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In.

Alexandria Gazette – Cover Story and Inside Article

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80th Evaluation: Social Media



Library Facebook Page

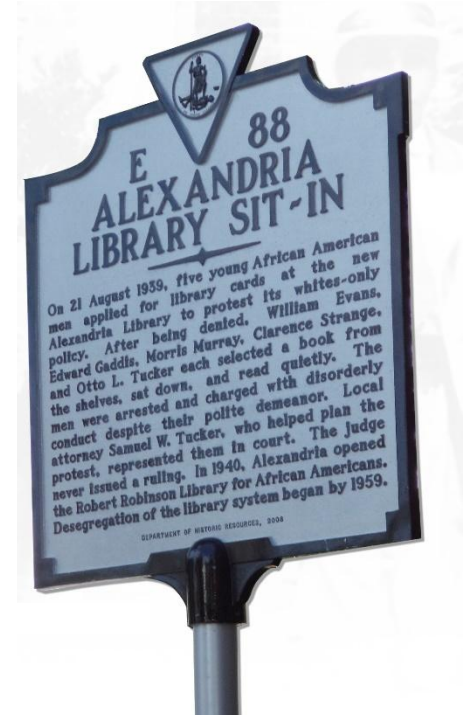
Standing the Test of Time: Leaving a Lasting Impression



Sit-in Descendants and Sit-in Exhibit



Oral History Series



Historic Marker

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In Summary

- Develop a robust communications plan
- Implement programs year-round encouraging systemwide participation
- Ensure citywide recognition

Contact Us

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