



# Alexandria Times

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## Out of the Attic

### The MLK – Moss Kendrix Connection

*Alexandria Times, January 13, 2022*

*Image: Martin Luther King Jr. in the Bahamas in February 1961. The Moss Kendrix Collection at the Alexandria Black History Museum.*

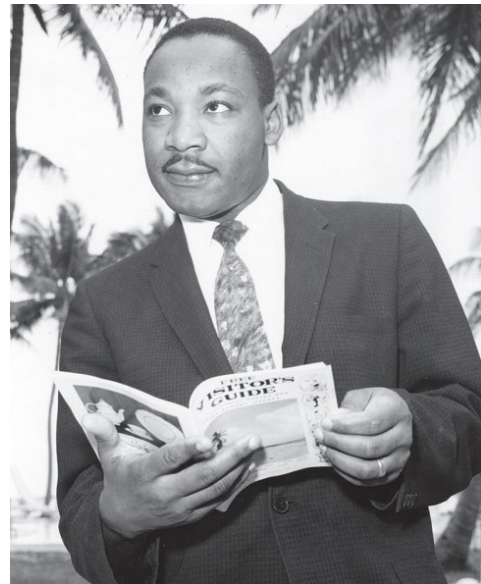
As we remember the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. this month, the Alexandria Black History Museum would like to share with readers an interesting connection between MLK and the Bahamas. Many people know that King worked on penning two famous speeches in Bimini – his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance in 1964 and “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” in 1968. Perhaps less known is that he frequently traveled to Nassau and that the ABHM’s Moss Kendrix Collection includes photographs, press releases and a memo from his 1961 visit.

In 1960, the Moss H. Kendrix Organization was appointed as public relations consultant to Hill and Knowlton, Inc., a New York firm that provided general public relations counselors to the Bahamas Development Board. Moss Kendrix’s job was to help the board attract African American visitors to Nassau. He publicized the presence and activities of various groups in the Bahamas, such as the AME Zion Church and the Virginia Teachers’ Association, as well as celebrities, such as Fats Domino, Joe Louis and King.

In February 1961, Barbara Carpenter of the Bahamas Development Board sent a memo to Kendrix with 12 photographs of King, with instructions from the reverend to distribute copies to the Pittsburgh Courier, Baltimore Afro-American and New York’s Amsterdam News.

One of the photographs shows King seated while holding a visitor’s guide. Carpenter’s press release explained that the religious leader and author was vacationing at the British Colonial Hotel in Nassau. King’s address was listed as 407 Auburn Ave., which is the location of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, where he was co-pastor with his father, Martin Luther King, Sr., from 1960 until MLK Jr.’s assassination in April 1968.

The Moss Kendrix Collection is being digitized at the Alexandria Black History Museum, partially funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and includes photographs, press releases, and newspaper clippings documenting Kendrix’s work with the Bahamas Development Board.



*“Out of the Attic” is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as “Marking Time” and explored Alexandria’s history through collection items, historical*



## **Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia**

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*images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.*

*These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by staff of the Office of Historic Alexandria and invited guests. This week's Attoc is by Deborah Coblentz, Alexandria Black History Museum.*