

WEEKLY BRIEFING



PHOTO/OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

The ceremony commemorated Joseph McCoy, who was lynched in 1897, and Benjamin Thomas, who was lynched in 1899.

Soil Collection Ceremony honors victims

More than 350 people gathered in Market Square on Sept. 24 to honor the lives of two of Alexandria's lynching victims in a Soil Collection Ceremony.

Attendees included, but were not limited to, descendants of the victims, Alexandria Black History Executive Director Audrey Davis, City Councilors, Beth El Hebrew Congregation's Rabbi David Spinrad, Alexandria Poet Laureate Zeina Azzam and several Alexandria City High School students who will attend a pilgrimage to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala. next month.

The ceremony commemorated Joseph McCoy, a 19-year-old Black teenager who was lynched at the southeast corner of Cameron and Lee Streets on April 23,



PHOTO/OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

Community members scooped soil from wooden vessels into glass jars at the Soil Collection Ceremony last weekend.

1897, and Benjamin Thomas, a 16-year-old Black teenager who was dragged more than half-a-mile by a white mob and lynched at the corner of King and Fairfax Streets on Aug. 8, 1899.

Held by the Alexandria Community Remembrance

Project, the event involved attendees scooping soil from two wooden vessels into glass jars until they were full. The jars will be given to the Equal Justice Initiative during the pilgrimage, which is set for Oct. 6 to 10.

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