

# Rainier Valley HERITAGE NEWS

Spring, 2018

## History of the Mount Baker Neighborhood



Florence Keefe & Phil Roppo, outside John Keefe's family home, 2707 Mt. St. Helens Place, c. 1942. John Keefe owned Keefe's Hardware Store at the corner of Rainier & Findlay in Hillman City.

*Prepared by Katie Pratt and Spencer Howard of Northwest Vernacular, Inc. on behalf of the Friends of Mount Baker Town Center with funding provided by 4Culture.*

*The content of this article is from the nomination application for National Park Service historic national registry.*

The Mount Baker Park Historic District is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of significance of community planning and development. The neighborhood is an early example of a planned neighborhood within the city of Seattle and continues to reflect the developers' careful design and layout of the addition. The district is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of significance of architecture and landscape architecture as

an early planned neighborhood in the City of Seattle. The neighborhood features a significant concentration of intact, well-designed and constructed early 20th century residences, parks, and boulevards. These single-family houses reflect a variety of period revival, eclectic, and Northwest-based architectural styles, many of which were designed by influential local architects. The parks and boulevards reflect the influence of the City Beautiful movement.

### PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance begins with the date of construction of the oldest house (3156 35th Avenue S) constructed within the neighborhood (1900) that is still extant and ends with the formation of the Committee to Revitalize Mount Baker in 1968. By 1968, the neighborhood was fully constructed and little

*The Rainier Valley Historical Society's mission is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret the history and heritage of the Rainier Valley and its people, and to promote public involvement in and appreciation of its history and culture.*

*Our geographic boundaries are from Dearborn Street on the north to the city limits on the south, and from the I-5 freeway to Lake Washington.*



## News & Notes

### RVHS 127th Annual Meeting

May 5th, 2018  
10:00am  
(doors open at 9:30am for coffee)  
Lions Club Meeting Hall

### 6th Annual Founder's Dinner

October 20th, 2018  
6:00pm  
Our Lady of Mt. Virgin Parish Hall

### Dismantling Racism: A Forum for Southeast Seattle

2nd Tuesday of the month  
7:30pm - 9:30pm  
Rainier Arts Center

### Office Hours:

Tuesday 1:00pm - 4:00pm  
Friday 10:00am - 1:00pm  
Sunday 10:00am - 1:00pm  
& by appointment

### E-News:

Opt-in to our monthly E-News, "Past is Present."  
Send an email to [news@rainiervalleyhistory.org](mailto:news@rainiervalleyhistory.org) and we'll add you to the list.

### Connect with us online:



[facebook.com/rainiervalleyhistorical](https://facebook.com/rainiervalleyhistorical)  
[twitter.com/RVhistory](https://twitter.com/RVhistory)



CULTURE

Thank you to 4Culture  
for supporting our work!

new construction has happened since that date. This period of significance contains the bulk of the development that has occurred within the neighborhood, including the few buildings constructed prior to the 1907 plat of the Mount Baker Park Addition.

### MOUNT BAKER PARK ADDITION

The Hunter Tract Improvement Company platted the Mount Baker Park Addition in 1907 to establish an elite, upper-class, single-family neighborhood with well-designed houses, graciously landscaped boulevards, waterfront access, and a system of parks to provide natural respite for residents. Developers also created deed restrictions to ensure the quality of the new neighborhood. The Mount Baker Park Addition was one of the largest planned communities in Seattle at the time. Despite its early exclusivity, the neighborhood was not immune to social, economic, and racial strife. Over the course of its history, the Mount Baker Park Improvement Club, the neighborhood's social club, fought particularly hard to maintain the neighborhood's exclusivity through their Restrictions Committee. Integration in the post-World War II period challenged its early exclusivity and a new and more diverse resident base took root in Mount Baker. The club's name change to Mount Baker Community Club and its formation of the Committee to Revitalize Mount Baker mark this clear shift in the neighborhood.

### Early Contact and Settlement

The area which now comprises the Mount Baker Park Addition was originally home to the Xacua'bs (hah-chu- AHBSH) or "lake people" – a branch of the Duwamish tribe, a Southern Puget Sound Coast Salish people. Duwamish is an Anglicization of Dkh[W]DuwAbsh, which means "The People of the Inside" in the Salish Lushootseed language. The inside refers to Elliott Bay, the Duwamish River, and connecting waterways. Lake Washington, which defines the current neighborhood's eastern boundary, was a significant place in the lifeways of the Xacua'bs, who sited villages along the shores of Lake Washington and fished its abundant waters. The arrival of white settlers in the region disrupted the lives of the Duwamish people and neighboring tribes. Treaties between the U.S. Government and area tribes, orchestrated by territorial governor Isaac S. Stevens, further complicated already tenuous relationships.

Early white settlers to live or claim property in the area known today as Mount Baker Park were David "Doc" Maynard (1808-1873) and David Denny (1832-1903). Maynard arrived in the 1850s, staking a claim in the present-day Mount Baker and Rainier Valley area, and Denny purchased land which was later sold to the Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad, who in turn sold the land to Daniel Jones of the Hunter Improvement Company. Areas which include the current Mount Baker Park Addition were annexed by the City of Seattle in 1883 and 1907.

The 1883 annexation included the area between S Hanford Street and S Atlantic Street, the northern portion of the Mount Baker Park Addition. The 1907 annexation was part of

the town of Southeast Seattle, which appears to have incorporated specifically to petition Seattle for annexation. Southeast Seattle incorporated on July 2, 1906 and included several neighborhoods, roughly bounded by 24th Avenue S on the west, S Hanford Street on the north, Lake Washington on the east, and S Kenyon Street on the south.

Despite being annexed, the area remained fairly removed from downtown Seattle until J.K. Edmiston financed construction of the Rainier Avenue Electric Railway, which opened in 1890 and provided transit between downtown Seattle and towns to the south. This streetcar line ran along present-day Rainier Avenue S, just a few blocks to the west of the western edge of the soon-to-be-developed Mount Baker Park Addition. Another streetcar was established by 1896 and extended east from downtown Seattle along S Jackson Street, turning north on 30th Avenue S to connect with E Yesler Way and continued briefly east to the end of the line and the power house.

By 1915 only a spur remained at the former north turn on 30th Avenue S, and instead the line continued east to 31st Avenue S which it then followed south to S McClellan Street where it turned east and wrapped around to Mount Rainier Drive S and ended at Hunter Boulevard S into the heart of the Mount Baker Park Addition. This line remained active through 1933. By 1963 this same route was used for the trolley bus line, ending at S Hanford Street and was known as the Mount Baker Route. Easier access to downtown prompted development along the line. New additions were platted, such as George and Martha Taggart's York Addition (1903) and the Dose Addition (1906) platted by father and son Charles P. and Charles C. Dose.

### Platting and Construction in the Mount Baker Park Addition

As development moved forward on the York and Dose additions to the north, developer J.C. Hunter established the Hunter Tract Improvement Company in 1905 to develop an upper-class, single-family neighborhood. Other officers of the company included Daniel Jones, F.I. Fehren, and C.E. Farnsworth. Jones and Fehren worked as the sales agents for the company out of an office at 117 Cherry Street with an office and on-site manager, Mitchell Phillips, at 34th Avenue S and S McClellan Street (at the site of 3405 S McClellan Street). The company purchased 130 acres of land under Jones, land formerly owned by David Denny. Jones and Charles Dose petitioned to extend the Rainier Avenue Electric Railway, also

known as the Rainier Heights streetcar line, to S McClellan Street to connect their new additions to downtown. This extension, constructed between 1911, became known as the Mount Baker Route or line.

The Hunter Tract Improvement Company hired George Cotterill of the engineering firm Cotterill and Whitworth to lay out the addition. Cotterill hired landscape architect Edward O Schwagerl to create the landscape design. Their designs for the new addition incorporated recommendations from the Olmsted Brothers' 1903 plan for Seattle's parks and boulevards, establishing Mount Baker Park and Lake Washington Boulevard S along Lake Washington and connecting boulevards. In fact, in 1906 John Charles Olmsted of the Olmsted Brothers reviewed the addition's design at the request of Daniel Jones and recommended deed restrictions to ensure its quality and exclusivity.

## Here Are Some Features You Will Find in No Other Addition

**MOUNT BAKER CLUB**—To be composed of all owners of lots and residences in the addition, who will have the privilege of the following—

The Club House—Of complete architecture and ample proportions, will be built on one of the prominent lots in Mount Baker Park. It will be surrounded by extensive lawns and will be connected to the addition by a wide view of the Olympics and Cascade from Mount Baker to Mount Rainier, over the hills of Lake Washington as a landscape. Here every convenience and comfort of club life and recreation will be provided for the entire membership.

**GYMNASIUM**—In the basement of the club house

will be a gymnasium, gym floor, tread and arranged for the installation of modern conveniences and appliances, athletic apparatus, shower baths, lockers, etc., etc.

**Boating Africa**—Alongside the gymnasium will be a space of sufficient size for three hundred slips of the lake drops and construction.

**Assembly Hall**—On the main floor of the building will be an assembly hall, surrounded by lawns, parks, the length and breadth of the grounds, reading room, indoor room, dining room, kitchen and the usual conveniences of a comfortable club house.

**Ball Room**—The entire second floor of the club

house will be given over to the ball and billiard rooms. In addition to these, there will be many features possibly designed to make this club house a most attractive resort for the members and their wives, and to make them feel that it is a resort home whenever they enter its hospitable doors.

**Boat House**—There will be constructed on the beach a large boat house to hold a large number of their boats in this addition. In connection with this depth of water, with spacious accommodations for the

boats and launches of the residents, with lockers and the most appropriate.

**BATH HOUSE**—In another convenient situation will be a complete bath house, with numerous rooms, showers, spring baths, baths, etc.

**TENNIS, CROQUET, ETC.**—Large tennis and other outdoor sports will have ample space and suitable for their enjoyment for a great location of the tract.

**GARAGE AND STABLES**—A space for garage and stables, to be maintained by the residents, using the same, will be reserved at an accessible point where its presence will not be objectionable.

# Mount Baker Park

AN ADDITION WITH CHARACTER

These improvements and conveniences, with the land, according to our standards, will be given absolutely free by the Hunter Tract Improvement Company to the purchasers of lots in Mount Baker Park Addition making it more than ever "An Addition With Character."

**ADVERTISERS**—Think of having a home,

level boardwalk from the door of your house clear into town, using a driving roadway that connects directly with the best driving routes of the surrounding country.

This is one of the things that alone should make you anxious to live in Mount Baker Park Addition.

**WANT OWNERS**—Think of living on the shores of the most beautiful part of Lake Washington, with

your own free gravel beach to sit on and fish, with the privilege of using the swimming pool and house boat dock and dockage for yachts and launches, and many other advantages for the love of boating and fishing.

**ALL OTHERS**—Think of living in the most exclusive and desirable residence section of the city, with easy and quick access of down town, where everything

possible has been and is being done to make life comfortable and enjoyable for those of refined taste.

The many and varied merits of this addition appeal to the most critical, and as a result every owner has been and will be made to have to agree to in building up and maintaining it as an exclusive residential district where life may be enjoyed to the utmost.

Settlement for All Reservations of Lots Must Be Made Not Later Than Noon of Day Following

**DANIEL JONES and F. L. FEHREN, Agents**

117 CHERRY STREET

Take ANY Car and Transfer to Rainier Heights Line. Twenty Minutes from Pioneer Square

**MITCHELL PHILLIPS, Manager, at Office on Tract**

34th AVENUE and McCLELLAN STREET

MERELY FURTHER PROOF THAT THIS IS THE BEST, BIGGEST AND MOST BEAUTIFUL

John Charles Olmsted toured the development area with Cotterill, reviewed the plat layout, and provided a letter report. In 1910, John Charles Olmsted later provided comments on improvements to some of the smaller parks within the plat for the City parks department.

The Hunter Tract Improvement Company filed the plat for the Mount Baker Park Addition in June 1907. The plat consisted of 70 blocks over 200 acres.

The deeds of sale for parcels within the neighborhood, as was common for the time, did contain restrictive covenants, many of which were based on the suggestions of John Charles Olmsted. These covenants required single-family residences, 25-foot minimum front setback from the street, and minimum construction costs of \$2,000 to \$5,000 (depending on the lot). The exception to the single-family rule was for a sole commercial building at 35th Avenue S and S McClellan Street. This original commercial building, the Mount Baker Park Garage, featured a garage at grade and a clubhouse above; the Mount Baker Center building replaced it in 1930.

*continued on page 6*



## Honor Roll

Many thanks to our members and supporters who make our work possible! Below are those whose gifts we received between November 2nd, 2017 and April 1st 2018. Contact us with any corrections or omissions: 206-723-1663 or info@rainiervalleyhistory.org.

### Lifetime Memberships

William Swanson

### History Maker Memberships

Merlino Foods

*in honor of Gill Centoli*

### Patron Memberships

Eleanor Boba

Columbia Funeral Home

Stephen Kovnat

Vince & Carla Mottola

Joy Okazaki

Susan Parker

Kristin Waknitz

### Sponsor Memberships

Abe Angell

Peter Nikaitani

Jay White

Windermere Real Estate,

Mount Baker

### Individual/Family Memberships

Susan Boyle

Ken Cederstrand

Julia Cummings

Laura & Stephen Day

Frank & Margaret Fickeisen

Dorothy Taylor Fields

*in memory of Betty J. Taylor*

Patricia Killam

Mary Leyden & Nicky Ingrisano

Sylvia Loftus

Marie Martell

Judy McGough

Scott Ringgold

Kathleen Tracy

Allan Urlin

John & Marilyn Warner

Cathy & MaryLou Wickwire

Mikala Woodward

Bob Woolworth

### Senior/Student Memberships

Chuck & MaryLou Adams

Edward Almquist

David Chesnutt

Judith Clarridge

Beverly Denton

Annabelle Fitts

Rickie Friedli-Giono

Don & Lee Gill

Carolyn Gould

Carol Higgins

*in memory of Patrick Higgins*

Susan Jones

Susan Kocik

Suellen McHugh

*in memory of Fred & Ellen*

*Mondale, Rainier Jewelers.*

Theodosia Nassar

Diane Rasmusson

*in memory of The Womachs*

Russell Roberts

Donna Schubert

Don Shaffer

Evelyn Shasteen

Betty Smith

Herb Tsuchiya

Laura Weese

Margaret Yellowwolf

### Gifts to Endowment

Nancy Dulaney

Karen O'Brien

### Gifts to Collections

Gloria Cauble

*for Hitt's Fireworks Collection*

### Gifts to Operating Fund

Chuck & MaryLou Adams

Amazon Smile

Joanne Anderson

*in memory of Buzz Anderson*

Benevity Community Impact Fund

Susan Boyle

Paul Cabarga & Ann White

Barbara Chamberlain

James Creevey

*in memory of Bud & Louise*

*Creevey*

Laura & Stephen Day

David & Sharon Eskenazi

Sheila Harvey

Grover & Wanda Haynes

Nancy Hevly

*in memory of Jean Delzer Skaret*

Marjorie Hunt

Susan Jones

Sylvia Loftus

Marie Martell

Robert Mohn & Shelley Morrison

Stephanie Ragland

Diane Rasmusson

Gerald Razwick

*In honor of George and Ellen*

*Razwick and Buzz and Joanne*

*Anderson*

Donna Schubert

Mark Sherman

Herb Tsuchiya

Cathy & MaryLou Wickwire

Margaret Yellowwolf

### In-Kind Donations

Burdick's Security

## Treasurer's Annual Report 2017 Summary

### REVENUE:

Memberships.....	\$3,210
Earned Income.....	\$1,216
Interest/Dividends.....	\$4,001
Donations .....	\$12,430
Grants .....	\$9,418
Outreach & Fundraising .....	\$19,737
<b>REVENUE TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$50,012</b>

### EXPENSES:

Facilities .....	\$7,245
Administration.....	\$1,854
Personnel.....	\$22,779
Communications/Marketing .....	\$2,123
Collections .....	\$2,755
Merchandise .....	\$142
Outreach & Fundraising .....	\$5,357
Depreciation.....	\$1,157
<b>EXPENSE TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$43,412</b>

### LIABILITIES:

Sales Tax Payable .....	\$55
Payroll Taxes Payable.....	\$836
Consignment sales.....	\$15
<b>LIABILITIES TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$906</b>

### ENDOWMENT VALUE

12/31/17:..... \$264,665

## LIFETIME MEMBERS

James Adderson  
Kenneth and Marleen Alhadeff  
Beverly Almoslino  
Joanne Anderson  
Mary Ellen Anderson  
Teresa Anderson  
Katherine Bailey  
Mario Banchemo  
J. Barclay  
Rachel Bianchi  
Conrad Bosworth  
Kalman Brauner  
Tim Burdick  
Elsa Burr  
William and Bonnie Carrabba  
Gloria Cauble  
Barbara Chamberlain  
John and Mary Charles  
Fredric Cooper  
Connie Cox  
James Creevey  
Daphne Dejanikus  
John DeRocco and Eileen Ryan  
Mark DeRocco  
Duane Dolan  
Nancy Dulaney  
John and Doris Ellis

David and Sharon Eskenazi  
Brian and Evelyn Fairchild  
John and Linda Flaherty  
Rebecca Frestedt  
Betty Fuson  
Betty Goetting  
Clarajane and Robert Goux  
James and Christine Graham  
Carole Grayson  
Gerald Gribble  
Mark Hannum  
Raymond and Claire Harper  
Sheila Harvey  
Gwen Heuer  
Nancy Hevly  
Jim Hilton  
Suzanne Hittman  
Marlene Houtchens  
Henry Howard  
Beverly Huntington  
Faith Ireland  
Ron Jacobson  
Bobbie James  
Virginia Johnson  
Charles Kapner  
Patricia Knutson  
Dorothy Kribs

Daniel Lane  
Florence Larson  
Robert and Anne Latz  
Denis and Patti Law  
Catherine Le Viseur and Zan  
Scommodau  
Nancy Leimbacher  
Paul Lewis  
Sylvia Loftus  
Jeanne Louvier  
Amy Mcquade  
Robert Mohn and Shelley  
Morrison  
Darla Morton  
Linda Myers  
Kristi Nelson  
Joan Neville  
Inez Nichols  
Bailey Nieder  
Edward and Barbara Nilson  
Kenneth and Mildred Nornholm  
Jeannie O'Brien  
Karen O'Brien  
Mary O'Brien  
John and Ann O'Neil  
Susan O'Neill  
Grace Orchard-Levesque

Priscilla Paoletta  
Martin Patricelli  
Shirley Peringer  
Barbara Potter  
Nancy Prescott  
Frank Pritchard  
Rainier Avenue Free  
Methodist Church  
Franklin Raines  
James and Sherry Raisbeck  
Gerald Razwick  
Julie and Ellen Razwick  
Bonnie Riach  
Robert and Ruth Ridder  
Lorraine Ring  
Chelsea Rodriguez  
Resha Sabre  
Barbara Sand  
Lorraine Saxen  
Donna Schaller  
Mary Ann Schleer  
Harold and Bernice Scoones  
Elizabeth Sedenquist  
Pete and Helen Sikov  
Jo and Sam Simone  
Jean Sisson

Ervin and Florita Skov  
SouthEast Effective  
Development  
Allan Smith  
Norma Smoczyk  
Joe and Sandy Suchoski  
John and Azile Swafford  
William Swanson  
K. W. Taggart  
Paul Talbert and Lizabeth Collier  
Dick and Marilyn Tilbury  
Bill Tremblay  
Sylvia Tulip  
B.K. and Shirley Uptagrafft  
Sal Vacca  
Gary Vandersanden  
Jean Veldwyk  
Warren Walters  
Andrea Watson  
Stuart Weiss  
Dona and Henry White  
Keith and Ann Wiltse  
Vinnie Worrell  
Deehan Wyman  
Judith Yarrow  
Jody and Ed Zumwalt



## LIONS CLUB MEETING HALL

**3714 S Ferdinand St, Seattle 98118**

2 hour street parking, pay lot within easy walking distance at S Ferdinand and 39th

### 9:30 am Doors Open:

- coffee & socializing.
- Mount Baker historic displays

### 10:00 am Business Meeting:

- Finance Report
- Collections Update
- Election of board members/officers

### 10:30 am Program:

- Guest speaker, Spencer Howard, on the social history, plat planning, and landscape design of Mt. Baker Park Addition

noon Lunch

## 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

### *Celebrating the History of Mount Baker Park Addition*

**Saturday, May 5th, 2018, 10:00am**



*Mount Baker Boathouse, c. 1920, accession #2018.003.0002*

## Collections Update

**RVHS thanks the following donors of items recently added to our collections:**

**Jim Denison:** "Wingold Flour" personal diary of George William Fitzpatrick, c. 1915. Found in attic of house at 3245 S Ferdinand St. 2018.001.0001

**Stephanie Ragland:** Franklin High School tassel; Franklin High School dance card from Nile Country Club, June 13th, 1946; High School YMCA Patch; Ice Penguin Club patch; Franklin High School Class of 46 patch; Franklin High School Letter with "3"; Franklin High School Letters (3 identical patches). 2017.016.0001-2017.016.0007

**Patty Picardo Logan:** Digital scans of DeMarco Family Portrait circa 1910, Three Picardo Brothers late 1940s, Three DiBiasi Sisters and Picardo Children at South Park farm 2017.014.0001-0004.

**Teresa A. Anderson:** Photo of Herbert Anderson and friends at Seward Park bathing beach with canoe paddles as musical instruments; Mt. Baker Beach postcard, showing Mt. Baker Beach Lake Washington shoreline boathouse pump house boats. 2018.003.0001, 2018.003.0002.



*Mt Baker Park Lake Wash Blvd 1927,  
accession number 2018.003.0004*



## Alan Bestor Phillips (1919 – 2018)

*Written by Nancy Dulaney, based on several conversations with Al Phillips.*

RVHS sends our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Al Phillips, Rainier Valley native. Al was the last survivor of the six Phillips siblings, having passed away on February 4, 2018. He was preceded in death by his wife, Ilmi, whom he had first met on a double date while still in high school. From 1945-1950, the Al Phillips family, including two daughters Jeanne and Susan, lived in Holly Park before their ultimate family home was purchased near Burien, where Al lived for the remainder of his life.

It was in the summer of 2014 that Al first came into our Ferdinand Street office, with a postcard featuring The Uplands, "Seattle's Most Beautiful Residence Park," postmarked May 28, 1930. Al would have been 11 years old at the time. His oldest sister Lois then worked as a receptionist at Dr. Duncan's office in the Stimson Building downtown, where the promotional postcard had arrived. The driving directions to the residential development noted "No bridges or railroad tracks to cross." Sounds like a breeze. RVHS had never seen such a postcard before.

Al was born in August of 1919 at Minor Hospital in the First Hill neighborhood of Seattle, after his parents, Charles and Clara, came to the Northwest from Minnesota. Al's five older sisters were born along the way. After his birth, the family lived at 5224 South Brandon Street, with the east end of the block opening to a view of Andrews Bay on Lake Washington. This is where Al lived until he was called up for military service in 1940, when "everybody started shooting at everybody" and he left for Fort Lewis. He served in the 41st Infantry Division during WWII and was discharged as Staff Sergeant in June of 1945.



*Al Phillips in 2014, photographed in his Burien home by Nancy Dulaney*

He was no stranger to Fort Lewis. In 1936 he had lied a bit about his age while still attending Franklin High School and joined the National Guard, the E Battery run by Clyde Wood. He earned \$1 for each Monday evening he drilled at the Old Armory on Western Avenue and \$1 each day of two-week summer training at Camp Murray. "That was a lot of money in those days."

His childhood home on Brandon Street was rumored to have been built of lumber salvaged from the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition of 1909. Al and his father lifted the house, dug out the basement, added the "boxcar bunker" in the back and enclosed the front porch.

Al's parents ran Phillips Grocery at 5100 South Brandon Street starting in the 1920s. Charles was the meatcutter and the store had a big walk-in ice box. Al's sister Mary drove the 1925 Model T Ford coupe on deliveries. The Phillips sold after customers got behind on their accounts during the depression years. Charles soon found work as bookkeeper/partsman with neighbor R.B. Wells, who began his typewriter platen repair business out of his Brandon Street garage.

In the early 1920s, Seattle's infamous prohibition era cop turned bootlegger Roy Olmstead and his first wife Viola lived nearby. Other Lakewood neighbors had recipes for handy home distillation, as Al told it, cooked up in the dark of night. The tell-tale smell of fermentation wafting in the air during the day was unmistakable, though, even to a child. Excitement ensued once when a still exploded and Hillman City Fire Station sent out their modern motorized engine to fight the blaze. Its tires got stuck in the local mud and the horse drawn equipment was quickly sent for. Al and his sisters watched it all from their front porch on South Brandon Street.



*A young Al Phillips with his five sisters -- Lois, Dorothy, Mary, Ruth and Joyce. accession #2014.004.0022*



*Clara & Charles Phillips relaxing in the backyard of their home on South Brandon Street with daughter Dorothy and friend John Bowser. accession #2014.004.0028*



*Al Phillips with his mother, in the 1940s. accession #2014.004.0043*

GIVE BIG *for* ALL



give  
BIG  
SEATTLE FOUNDATION

MAY 9  
#GIVEBIG

We invite you to support the work of Rainier Valley Historical Society during the Seattle Foundation's annual day of giving, GiveBIG.

Advertisements for the neighborhood emphasized not only the natural beauty of the developing neighborhood, but the envisioned exceptionality of both the neighborhood and its intended residents. One such advertisement in *The Seattle Times* stated,

*Your home and surroundings should be on a par with your own character. If your tastes incline toward select society, exclusive environment, lovely landscapes, artistic architecture, congenial companions, accessible location, and surrounding of natural beauties, combined with the best of man-made advantages, you will want to live in Mount Baker Park.*

The neighborhood began to take shape in its first few years, with over 100 residences constructed between 1907 and 1910. In addition to these early residences, key development during these first few years was the construction of Mount Baker Park, several pocket parks, and two boulevards: the 3-block long Hunter Boulevard and the curving Mount Baker Boulevard. Other improvements include macadamized roads and cement sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. The Mount Baker streetcar line was extended south to Hanford Street, providing residents greater access to downtown Seattle by 1911.

An important development in the neighborhood was the establishment of the Mount Baker Park Improvement Club in 1908 (the club still exists and is currently known as the Mount Baker Community Club). The club initially concerned itself with promoting neighborhood development, beautification, safety, and public benefits. When the club officially incorporated on January 12, 1910, each property owner within the neighborhood owned one share of stock in the club.

### 1910-1919

Development continued at a steady pace through the 1910s. Construction occurred throughout the addition during this period, with the largest concentration of residences built along Hunter Boulevard S and 37th Avenue S between S Hanford Street and S Court Street. During this period, 293 residences were constructed during this period. Construction during this decade was also concentrated along S Mount Baker Boulevard down to 30th Avenue S. Important infrastructure and public improvements occurred during this decade, which would establish the foundation for the neighborhood's increasing development. Constructed in 1912, the Edgar Blair-designed Franklin High School became a prominent anchor for the addition's western edge.

The Mount Baker Park Improvement Club continued their community involvement during this period, forming committees to promote education, entertainment, public safety, parks and playgrounds, and street and public improvements. Previously occupying the upstairs of the neighborhood's sole commercial building, the club constructed their own clubhouse next door. The club also

successfully lobbied for the construction of a fire station, better police protection, sewer installation, garbage removal, and street paving. As the club sought to protect the neighborhood from "undesirables" it actively campaigned to prevent non-whites and other minorities from purchasing property within the neighborhood, forming the "Restrictions Committee" by 1915. This committee even went as far to draft an agreement between 1919 and 1920 for property owners to sign guaranteeing they would only sell or lease their property to Caucasian; such a practice was common during the early to mid-20th century as racial segregation continued in full force. The club also sought to block non-single family use



and construction within the neighborhood. In addition to the restrictive covenants attached to the deeds, there was an assumption that the Hunter Tract Improvement Company would not approve sales to "undesirable" races.

However, during this decade, the neighborhood experienced the first cracks in its rigid stance on exclusivity. Two lawsuits were filed in 1910 which challenged these racist actions. First, the Hunter Tract Improvement Company filed a lawsuit against Samuel and Susie Stone and Marguerite Foy. In 1909, Foy, a white woman, had sold a parcel of land within the Mount Baker Park Addition to Samuel and Susie Stone, a black couple. The company sued after the Stones were mid-construction on their new house (3125 34th Avenue S), contesting that Foy and the Stones had intentionally concealed the Stones' race. Prominent black attorney Andrew Black defended the Stones and persuaded Judge John F. Main of the King County Superior Court to side with the Stones and Foy. The Hunter Tract Improvement Company appealed, but the Washington State Supreme Court upheld Main's decision. Andrew Black had represented a similar case the same year; David Cole, a black railroad porter for the Northern Pacific, sued the Hunter Tract

Improvement Company for withholding the deed to a lot in the Mount Baker Park Addition for which he had already paid. Like the Stone case, the court upheld Cole's right to purchase property in the neighborhood.

### 1920-1929

The neighborhood continued to infill through the 1920s, with increased development along S Mount Baker Boulevard, 30th Avenue S, and view lots along Cascade Avenue S, Lakewood Avenue S, Shoreland Drive S, Mount Baker Drive S, and Mount St Helens Place S. By the end of the 1920s, the neighborhood was largely completely built up; 85-percent of the current properties within the nominated historic district were constructed by the end of 1929.

In addition to the slew of residential development in the district, a non-residential building was constructed in the neighborhood during this period—the Mount Baker Park Presbyterian Church. The church began as York Methodist, with both Methodists and Presbyterians sharing a building at 34th Avenue S and S Horton Street constructed between 1902 and 1906, just west of the Mount Baker Park Addition. The church grew to have more Presbyterian members and changed its name to York Presbyterian in 1906 then Mount Baker Park Presbyterian in 1910. As the church grew and the Mount Baker Park neighborhood developed, the congregation began to consider constructing a new building and moving to a more central location within the neighborhood. The church first tried to construct a building at 34th Avenue S and S McClellan Street, but several neighbors sued the congregation in 1920 to prevent construction of the church building. The church purchased a different parcel, at the southwest corner of S Hanford Street and Hunter Boulevard S and proceeded with their plans to construct a new building.

Discrimination continued during this period and, despite losing lawsuits, the Mount Baker Improvement Club's Restrictions Committee remained active. The committee disseminated another agreement within the neighborhood for property owners to not rent, sell, or lease to blacks and "Mongolians." This exclusivity was not limited to the Mount Baker Park Addition; in fact, it was during this period that deeds began to include racial discrimination clauses. These restrictions were affirmed by a 1926 U.S. Supreme Court decision (*Corrigan v. Buckley*) and, according to the University of Washington's Seattle Civic Rights & Labor History Project, were "an enforceable contract and an owner who violated them risked forfeiting the property."

### 1930-1945

The neighborhood was mostly complete by 1930, with limited new construction following the Great Depression and into the 1940s. It was during this period that the neighborhood began to change from a predominately upper-class neighborhood to one with a variety of income levels. The effects of the Great Depression were felt within the district as unemployment rates climbed; the upper class were not immune to the economic distress in the city and nation.



# Happy 95th Birthday, Roger Ford!



Roger Ford celebrated his 95th birthday with family and friends on March 17, 2018 at his home in upper Rainier Beach. Roger is a life-long resident of south Seattle where he raised his family and a longtime supporter of Rainier Valley Historical Society. Roger served on the RVHS board of directors for two terms. Roger worked for Boeing as a commercial artist and Rowan Decorators as a designer for conventions, tradeshow, corporate functions and special events. He volunteered as designer for the Rainier District Chamber of Commerce floats for the seasonal summer parades. He designed the award winning "Glory of Egypt" 1978 King Tut float at Seafair's Torchlight Parade. Shown here with Mary O'Brien.



Roger Ford and Mary Schwarz O'Brien are no strangers; their friendship goes back 70 + years to local theater productions sponsored by the Chancellor Club, a Catholic organization for young adults in the Seattle area. When Roger returned from WWII after managing theater productions for U. S. soldiers in Salzburg, he joined the club. He was the art director for many productions as well as singing and acting in the shows. Roger and Mary are pictured here in "Gilbert and Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance," Mary is in the second row, second on the right and Roger is directly behind her. Roger played the role of Sergeant of Police and Mary sang in the chorus. Roger said, "a lot of good people" were in the Chancellor Club, and through a member, he was introduced to his wife Marian, of 53 years. (Marian passed away in 2007). Mary Schwarz O'Brien is a lifetime member of RVHS, and third generation Rainier Valley. Mary moved a couple miles from her childhood home in Hillman when she got married to John O'Brien in 1952. They raised six children in their Seward Park home, where Mary lives today.

The most significant construction in the neighborhood during this time was the completion of the Art Deco Mount Baker Center (1930). The new building replaced the addition's one commercial structure and was designed by premier Seattle architect John Graham, Sr. The building had retail on the ground floor; tenants over the years included Kefauver & White, grocers; Van de Kamp's bakers; Barney O'Connor Drugs; and Robert McNamara's "Bob McNamara Drugs" (beginning in 1939 until 1966). Apartment units were constructed on the upper floor in 1939. One other notable building project during this period was the construction in 1936 of a model house by department store Frederick & Nelson just south of the nominated historic district. The store had the house at 3846 Cascadia Avenue S to display furniture, one of four models scattered across the city. Construction of the house attests to the overall wealth and development in this neighborhood, even amidst the Great Depression, and anchored around the Mount Baker Park Addition.

The Rainier Valley interurban line was replaced in 1937 by buses, also called "trackless trolleys;" and the streetcar line directly to Mount Baker was also replaced by buses around the same time. A significant transportation project occurred north of the neighborhood during the late 1930s, a massive bridge to increase eastern access to Seattle. The floating bridge, designed by engineer Homer Hadley (1885-1967) was completed in 1940 for just under \$9 million. Upon completion, the Lake Washington Floating Bridge (renamed to honor Lacey V. Murrow Bridge in 1967) stretched 1.5-miles in length and earned acclaim as the largest floating structure in the world and the first constructed of reinforced concrete. The bridge carried I-90 traffic to and from Seattle via tunnels bored under the Mount Baker neighborhood (north of the Mount Baker Park Addition). Although construction did not occur within the boundaries of the Mount Baker Park Addition, it did affect the neighborhood. Many neighbors opposed the construction, seeking to keep their neighborhood quiet and exclusive as construction equipment used S Mount Baker Boulevard and Lake Park Drive S as an access route down to Lake Washington.

Discrimination and exclusivity continued in the neighborhood during the 1930s, with neighbors and the Mount Baker Park Improvement Club dissuading non-whites from buying property. The club even went as far to ask the Park Board to develop a segregation plan for Mount Baker Park to prevent use of the park by non-whites. The U.S. involvement in World War II after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, briefly shifted the focus of the club and they did not enforce housing restrictions during this time.

#### 1946-1968

Seattle grew considerably during World War II, thanks to the defense production at local shipyards and Boeing. This growth continued after the war, particularly with the return of young veterans ready to start families. With the

end of the war, the Mount Baker Improvement Club returned to their enforcement of housing restrictions, both against non-white residents and multi-family dwellings. The club even hired the Burns Detective Agency in 1946 to investigate and enforce violations of the neighborhood's housing restrictions.

One such fight came to a head during the late 1940s as the club filed a lawsuit against Margaret Connell of 2812 Mount St Helens Place S. Connell, a widow, had started renting out rooms in her large 27-room house to returning veterans and their families. A judge sided with the club in the lawsuit (Gholson v. Connell) and Connell had to return her home to single-family use.

Despite the efforts of the club, Mount Baker Park district became more diverse during the post-World War II period. True integration was slow; according to a May 1967 article in The Seattle Times,

*[T]he integration appears, in some respects, to be extended separation. It often is the block-by-block variety, with invisible lines drawn here and there, rather than every-other-house-in-the-neighborhood integration.*

As non-whites began to purchase more property within the neighborhood, "white flight" occurred as some white residents sold their own homes and moved. Reductions in the Boeing workforce in 1963 and 1969 also led some property owners to relocate. Long-time resident Gertrude Lewis shared with interviewer Marsha Malkin that, "Until the 1960's, only death and disaster would move people from these houses."

By the mid-1960s, housing prices dropped in the neighborhood and a younger and more diverse demographic began to emerge in the neighborhood. This included an influx of property owners of Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Korean descent. These new residents pushed for change in the neighborhood and the improvement club. Between 1967 and 1968, the club formed a Committee to Revitalize Mount Baker, tasked with developing new bylaws and eliminating racial discrimination. In 1968, the club changed its name to the Mount Baker Community Club to reflect open membership to all residents of Mount Baker. However, racial tension continued to occur in the neighborhood and throughout the city and nation and extended to the nearby schools, like Franklin High School. By 1967, black students comprised 19% of Franklin High School's enrollment. In late March 1968, an altercation broke out in the halls of the school between three students – one white and two black students. The school's principal, Loren Ralph, suspended the two black students, cousins Charles Oliver and Trolice Flavors. Flavors' attempts to negotiate his suspension were rebuffed so he contacted his mentor, Carl Miller, a member of the Blake Student Union (BSU) at the University of Washington. Miller, along with other members of the BSU,

Aaron Dixon and Larry Gossett, tried to meet with Ralph to negotiate peacefully. When those efforts were denied, the BSU students organized a gathering to peacefully protest. One hundred students, around 40 of which were non-Franklin students, marched into Ralph's office on campus demanding Oliver and Flavors be reinstated, that a black administrator be hired at the high school level in the Seattle Public School system, that an African American history class be taught at Franklin, and that black heroes be included in the American historical figures featured on the walls of the school. This sit-in at Franklin High School was the first high-school sit-in held in Seattle. Five of the organizers – Miller, Dixon, Gossett, Gossett's brother Richard Gossett, and Flavors – were charged with unlawful assembly.<sup>45</sup> The three UW and BSU students – Miller, Dixon, and Gossett – were tried and found guilty in July 1968. Their case was appealed before the Washington State in January 1971; a retrial was ordered by the court but the prosecutor declined to prosecute. The three were instrumental in forming the Seattle chapter of the Black Panthers with Aaron Dixon serving as the first captain of the chapter. In the aftermath of the sit-in, the Mount Baker Improvement Club's Franklin High School Committee pushed for a discrimination complaint to be brought against principal Loren Ralph. Significant staff turnover occurred in the fall of 1968 and a new principal and vice-principal were hired.

#### More Recent History

Significant improvement occurred in the neighborhood during the 1970s when the Mount Baker neighborhood was selected as the first action area for Seattle's Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Program. This program provided low interest home loans to help property owners repair their houses to meet current building code. Many property owners in the neighborhood took advantage of this program and the neighborhood's excellent condition and physical integrity is likely the result of such efforts.

Little development occurred in the neighborhood, but commercial development expanded to the west of the neighborhood along Rainier Avenue S. A pedestrian overpass constructed in 1976 connected neighborhoods west of Rainier Avenue S with the Mount Baker Park Addition at Franklin High School. The school continued to increase in diversity; and by 1972, the school's student body was 30% black, 30% Asian American, and 40% white.<sup>50</sup> The school, which had deteriorated over time, was designated a city of Seattle landmark in 1986 and a 1990 renovation by Bassetti Morton Metler Rekevics Architects rejuvenated the school's visual presence.

By the late 1980s, the neighborhood had greater diversity in its residents, with neighbors of Chinese, Japanese, Laotian, and Ethiopian descent. Today it continues to have a diverse demographic, but housing prices have continued to climb.

**Editor's note: RVHS congratulates Mount Baker Park on its recent National Registry status.**

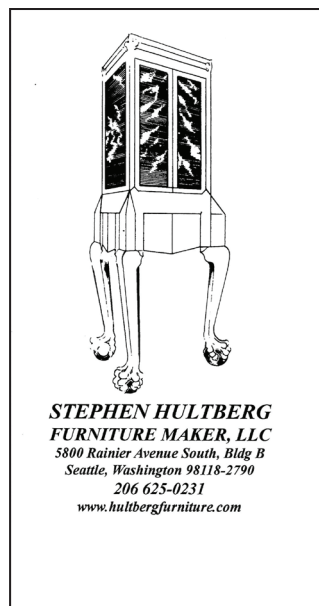


## 6th Annual Founder's Dinner

SAVE THE DATE! The 2018 Founder's Dinner will be October 20th, at Our Lady of Mount Virgin Church Parish Hall, starting at 6:00pm. Early Bird tickets are available now on our website.



Michael DiBiase and Mark Jensen ready for the feast!



## RVHS Board of Directors

Sheila Harvey,  
*President*  
Karen O'Brien,  
*Vice President*  
Mary Charles,  
*Secretary*  
Nancy Dulaney,  
*Treasurer*  
Teresa Anderson  
Tim Burdick  
John DeFranco  
David Eskenazi  
Mark Hannum  
Joan Neville

## Advertise with us!

We have opportunities for advertising in all of our publications for a full year, or a one-time ad in the program for the Founder's Dinner in October. For details and pricing, contact Executive Director Virginia Wright, [director@rainiervalleyhistory.org](mailto:director@rainiervalleyhistory.org).

### Our Policy is Service



Phone: (206) 723-1680  
Fax: (206) 725-3416

5215 Wilson Avenue S.  
Seattle, WA 98118



### Burdick's Security

"Peace Of Mind Since 1959"

Tim Burdick

P 206.725.6072 F 206.723.0773  
[tburdick@burdicksecurity.com](mailto:tburdick@burdicksecurity.com)

4700 Rainier Ave. S. • Seattle, WA 98118 • [burdicksecurity.com](http://burdicksecurity.com)

## Rainier Valley Heritage News

Editor and Layout ..... Virginia Wright

## Rainier Valley Historical Society

Office ..... 3710 S Ferdinand Street, Seattle, WA 98118

Mailing Address ..... PO Box 18143, Seattle, WA 98118

Phone & Fax ..... 206.723.1663

E-mail ..... [office@rainiervalleyhistory.org](mailto:office@rainiervalleyhistory.org)

Website ..... [www.rainiervalleyhistory.org](http://www.rainiervalleyhistory.org)

Office Hours ..... Tuesday 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Friday & Sunday 10:00am - 1:00pm

RVHS Executive Director ..... Virginia Wright

Auxiliary aids and assistance are provided upon request to persons with disabilities.

### [HomeStreet] Bank

MARK HANNUM

NMLS ID: 698258



Senior Loan Officer

[mark.hannum@homestreet.com](mailto:mark.hannum@homestreet.com)

office : 206 389 4409 SEATTLE LENDING CENTER  
toll free : 800 654 1075 601 Union Street  
cell : 206 229 1349 Suite 1800  
fax : 206 454 8123 Seattle, WA 98101

## Leschi Market

103 Lakeside Avenue, Seattle, WA 98122  
MAIN 206-322-0700 • FAX 206-325-4990  
[WWW.LESCHIMARKET.COM](http://WWW.LESCHIMARKET.COM)

Steve Shulman Owner

[steve@leschimarket.com](mailto:steve@leschimarket.com) [main@leschimarket.com](mailto:main@leschimarket.com)



PO BOX 18143  
SEATTLE, WA 98118

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
SEATTLE, WA  
PERMIT NO. 1491

## Support History

If you haven't joined the Rainier Valley Historical Society this year, we urge you to do so now.

RVHS is a 501(c)(3) organization. All membership dues and donations are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

Please fill in this form and mail it with a check to:

**Rainier Valley Historical Society**

**PO Box 18143**

**Seattle, WA 98118**

Books and memberships can also be purchased on our website: [www.rainiervalleyhistory.org](http://www.rainiervalleyhistory.org).

Name .....

Address .....

City/State/ZIP .....

Phone .....

Email .....

Please provide us with an email to receive our E-News, "Past is Present!"

### Book Order

Please send me *Images of America: Rainier Valley*.

Each book in-state is \$29.00 (includes King Co. sales tax/shipping).

Each additional book in-state is \$24.00 (includes King Co. tax/shipping).

Each book out-of-state is \$27.00 (includes shipping).

Number of copies: \_\_\_\_\_ Total book order \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Lifetime Member ..... \$500

☐ History Maker ..... \$350

☐ Patron ..... \$100

☐ Sponsor ..... \$60

☐ Individual/Family (per household) ..... \$30

☐ Senior/Student (per household) ..... \$20

☐ Additional donation to Operating Fund ..... (amount)

Donation in honor/memory of (please circle one):

Name .....

\*Address .....

City/State/Zip .....

\*If you provide us with an address, we will be happy to send an acknowledgement of your gift.