

Rainier Valley HERITAGE NEWS

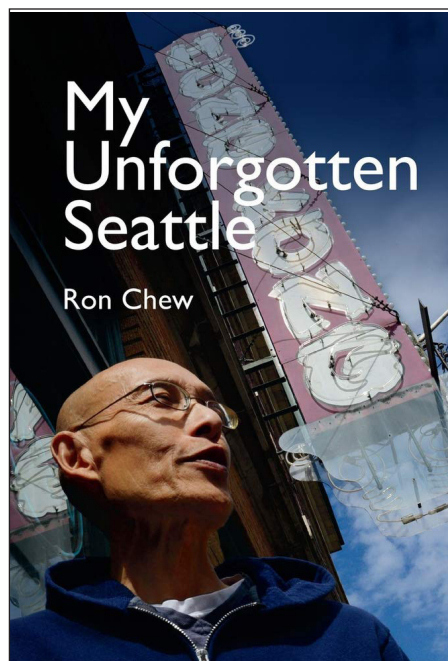
Spring, 2021

Volume 30, Issue 1

Rainier Valley Historical Society 130th Annual Meeting on Zoom!

Saturday, May 22, 10 am

Celebrating Guest Author Ron Chew, *My Unforgotten Seattle*



Please join us!
May 22nd



10:00 am - RVHS 130th Annual Meeting
10:30 am - Guest speaker Ron Chew

Third-generation Seattleite, historian, journalist, museum visionary, Beacon Hill resident and Franklin High School graduate Ron Chew speaks on his newly released personal memoir, *My Unforgotten Seattle*.

Please RSVP at: 206 723-1663 or
Email: office@rainiervalleyhistory.org
We will send you the Zoom link to view the meeting online or the Zoom phone number to listen to the event on your phone.



2021 Events Calendar

Picnic Series: Join us for a history picnic in the park!

Columbia Park
May 15, 2021
12:00-1:00 PM

Brighton Playfield
July 17, 2021
12:00-1:00 PM

BeatWalk- TBA
Farmers Market- TBA
Othello Park International Festival
TBA
Mount Baker Park Day- TBA

RVHS Founder's History Maker
Award
October 24, 2021
Zoom

Comet Lodge Cemetery Tour
October 30, 2021
12:00- 1:00

RVHS Open House/ Book Sale
December 4, 2021
12:00 - 3:00

Office Hours @ 3710 S Ferdinand St
Mondays 9:30 am - 4:00 pm
Tuesdays 9:30 am - 4:00 pm
Wednesdays 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Saturdays 9 am - 3 pm
& by appointment

E-News: Opt-in to our monthly E-News, send an email to office@rainiervalleyhistory.org

RVHS Office: 3710 S. Ferdinand St.
phone: 206.723.1663
email: office@rainiervalleyhistory.org
website: rainiervalleyhistory.org

*Thank you to King County 4Culture
for supporting our work!*



NEW AUDIO VIDEOS
EVERY MONTH

ORAL HISTORY
SERIES

FIND THEM AT
RVHS VIDEO ON
YOUTUBE

Please check out RVHS Oral History Collection available to hear online on our YouTube Channel, RVHS VIDEO. Every month we add 1-2 oral histories so that you can enjoy stories about Rainier Valley's past. This month listen to long-time Rainier Valley business owner Remo Borracchini describe growing up during World War II, attending the Italian School, and helping out in his family's bakery before becoming the owner of Borracchini's Bakery. (Recording dated 2002)

As a side note, we are sorry to hear Borracchini's Bakery and Mediterranean Market has permanently closed. This iconic Italian bakery has been a mainstay for family celebrations for almost 100 years. Thank you to the Borracchini family for supporting our RVHS Founder's dinner.

RVHS Remembers Sam Simone

Long-time Rainier Beach resident Sam Simone passed away in February at the age of 85. A Lifetime Member, Sam joined the RVHS board in 2009 and served until 2013. His knowledge and love of history was invaluable! Sam was always willing to lend a hand no matter the task – whether serving on the collections committee, helping with events (and offering his home for small get-togethers), stuffing envelopes, or moving heavy boxes and artifacts with his hand truck. As his official obituary below describes, he was an inveterate collector; his basement was a veritable museum in itself.

Sam Simone, 85, passed away peacefully at his home on Feb. 18 due to complications from T-cell lymphoma. Born and raised in Tacoma, WA, he graduated from historic Lincoln High School in 1953 and shortly after, proudly enlisted and served in the United States Air Force. It was at the tail end of his stint that he met and married the best thing that ever happened to him, Josephine (Rotondo). They had 4 wonderful children and were blessed with 7 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

In 1965, he graduated from



*Sam Simone, past RVHS Board of Directors and Lifetime Member
MAY 13, 1935 – FEBRUARY 18, 2021*

Seattle University and although his employment career was varied, he spent his most productive years as a government employee. In 1994 at 59 years of age, Sam was offered early retirement and never looked back.

A proudly nostalgic man, Sam was a passionate collector of ephemera and memorabilia. His love for collecting started as a youth, tagging along with his mother as she shopped thrift stores for bargains. Running the spectrum from old-time radio premiums and political buttons, to vintage watches and military paraphernalia, there wasn't a garage, estate, or rummage sale that escaped his eye. Unfortunately, he leaves a real fine mess for his children to sort out!

A long time member of St. Paul Catholic Church, Sam was also a dedicated and active member in several local and national organizations,

including NARFE (The National Active and Retired Federal Employees), APIC (American Political Items Collectors), REPS (Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound), Rainier Valley Historical Society, Southeast Seattle Senior Center, and the Rainier Beach Community Club. He took his local responsibilities seriously and would always push for the proactive bettering of his community.

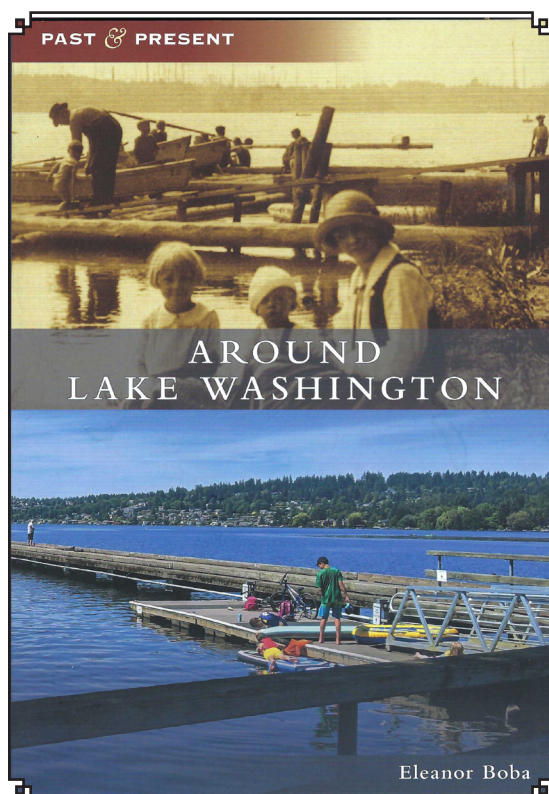
Described by anyone who knew him as funny, kind, and generous, Sam could reliably be counted on to lend a hand to friend and neighbor. He held himself up to the true ideals of selflessness and did so without obligation.

He also took great pride in his home – particularly his lawn and garden. And as his illness gradually prevented him from maintaining its upkeep, he would supervise the family from the back deck.

Sam was a true gentleman who “checked all the boxes” and he will forever be held in our hearts as a wonderfully caring husband, father, and grandfather. As the end drew near, Sam wanted us all to know that he was just “off on a new adventure.”

Sam is survived by his loving wife Josephine of 63 years, their children Judy, Stephen/Susie, Jim, and Jennifer/Ron Fugleberg), 7 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren.

- Obituary and photograph “From the Family,” Butterworth Funeral Home’s website



New Book Features RVHS photos

Arcadia Publishing has just released Eleanor Boba's new book *Around Lake Washington*. The book is a gallery of photos in the “past and present” format and features a number of images from the RVHS archives, as well as personal photos from the family of John L. O'Brien.

Around Lake Washington documents the changes in the topography of the lake shore and the communities that surround it. Rainier Valley, of course, parallels the lake shore and has been closely affected by the lake lowering of 1916, the parks and boulevard planning of the Olmsted Brothers, and both the commercial and recreational opportunities afforded by the lake.

Eleanor Boba is a former RVHS Executive Director; in 2012 she spearheaded the production of our publication *Images of America: Rainier Valley*.

*Now available on our website and in the office for \$22.99
rainiervalleyhistory.org or 3710 S Ferdinand Street*

Honor Roll

Many thanks to our members and supporters who make our work possible! Below are those whose gifts we received between November 15, 2020 and April 15, 2021. Contact us with any corrections at: 206-723-1663 or office@rainiervalleyhistory.org.

New Lifetime Membership

Peter Nikaitani in memory of
Kenjiro & Kimiko Nikaitani
Kim Oberto
Stephen Oberto
Marty & Robin Oppenheimer
Stephanie Ragland
Yousef Shulman

History Maker Membership

Dorothy Driver

Patron Memberships

John Bennett
Pamela Charles
Grover & Wanda Haynes
Susan Parker
Tricia Pearson & Declan O'Neill
Cherie Priest

Sponsor Memberships

Eleanor Boba and Alan Humphrey
Nancy & Tony Chiodo

Individual/Family Memberships

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John Bodoia
Karen Bulthuis
Ken Cederstrand
Patricia Chemnick
Annabelle Fitts
Robert Glenn
Richard Karat
Deborah & Reiley Kidd
Susan Kocik
Nathan Lichti
Marie Martell
Judy McGough
Robert Morton
Anneka Olson
Stephen Peringer
Kiri Schultz
Lorrie Sivich in honor of Tommy Sivich

Herb Tsuchiya
Cathy Wickwire
Mikala Woodward

Senior/Student Memberships

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Martin & Dorothy Byrne
David Chesnutt
Judith Clarridge
Becky Corpuz
Beverly Denton
Kirk Duncan
Randy Everett & Gary Fuller
Carolyn Gould
Karen Kinney
Theodosia Nassar
Donovan & Carol O'Brien
Diane Ramusson
Sharon Richards-Chriest in
memory of the Richards &
Woodin Family of Rainier Valley
Ric Rivera
Russell Roberts
Jay Schupack & Lynette Benaltabe
Don Shaffer
Evelyn Shasteen
Lisa Ursino Pavitt
Laura Weese
Margaret Yellowwolf

Gifts to Endowment

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Karen O'Brien

Gifts to Operating Fund

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Beverly Almoslino
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Anderson
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Diane Rasmusson in memory of T.J.
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George & Ellen Razwick and
Buzz & Joanne Anderson
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honor of Brigid & Emily Wills
Cheryl Watson Steele
Michael Stewart
Marilyn & Dick Tilbury in memory
of Mark Hannum
Sal Vacca
June Vynne

Laura Weese
Cathy Wickwire
Mikala Woodward

In-Kind

Donations
Burdick's Security
Eleanor Boba

Treasurer's Annual Report 2020 Summary

INCOME:

Membership	\$ 5,410
Earned Income	\$ 661
Interest/Dividends	\$ 5,169
Donations	\$15,354
Grants	\$18,400
Outreach & Fundraising ..	\$13,601
INCOME TOTAL:	\$58,595

EXPENSES:

Facilities	\$10,123
Administration	\$ 1,551
Personnel	\$29,173
Communications	\$ 1,778
Collections	\$10,052
Outreach & Fundraising	\$ 786
EXPENSE TOTAL:	\$53,463

ENDOWMENT VALUE:

as of 12/31/20: **\$333,346**

LIFETIME MEMBERS

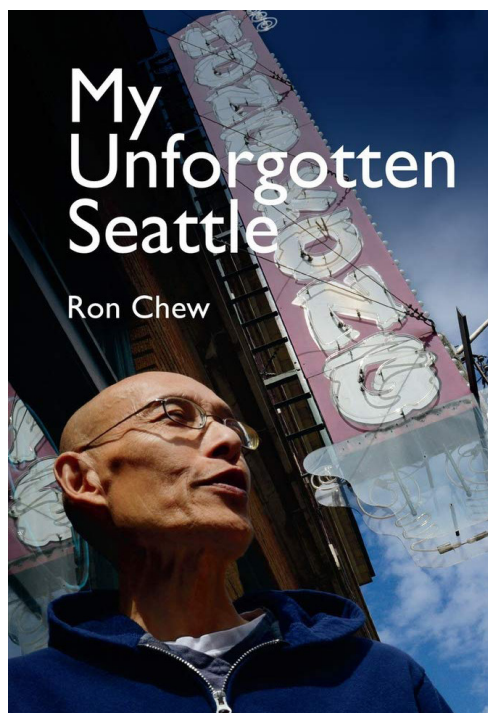
James Adderson
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Joanne Anderson
Mary Ellen Anderson
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Rachel Bianchi
Kalman Brauner
Bill Bruning and Terri Small
Tim Burdick
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Jeannie O'Brien
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Martin Patricelli
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Stephanie Ragland
Gerald Razwick
Bonnie Riach
Robert and Ruth Ridder
Lorraine Ring
Chelsea Rodriguez
Resha Sabre
Lorraine Saxen
Mary Ann Schleer
Harold Scoones
Yousef Shulman
Pete and Helen Sikov

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Andrea Watson
Stuart Weiss
Jay White
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Wyman Youth Trust
Judith Yarrow
Jody and Ed Zumwalt



An Abbreviated Introduction by Ron Chew

In early fall of 2016, I left my house on Beacon Hill to start my 5 a.m. run. I donned my usual attire: a long-sleeved T-shirt, a neon-yellow windbreaker, gloves, sweatpants and a bright headlamp. My two sons slept.

The streets looked abandoned. A brisk wind whipped past me, scattering dry leaves along the sidewalk. I reached the southeast corner of Spokane Street and Beacon Avenue South. I ran on a dirt and gravel trail along the edge of the Jefferson Golf Course, surrounded by bushes and shrubs and a lane of trees. I felt like I was entering a secluded forest. This pleasant illusion evaporated when

the first early morning golfers arrived, wheeling bags behind them. For now, it was wonderfully peaceful.

My mind drifted back in time. I remembered when there were few cars, no traffic jams. I knew all my neighbors. Friends sent handwritten letters. Cell phones, the internet, personal computers and social media didn't exist. The downtown skyline was dominated by the Smith Tower. I didn't feel uneasy about going anywhere late at night. The only major league sport in town was Big Time Wrestling, staged for naïfs like me.

On my return jog, cars and buses began to fill the streets. Car horns, exhaust fumes and pedestrians hurrying toward bus stops broke my reverie.

I thought about the murder of Donnie Chin, founder and director of the International District Emergency Center. He had been a friend most of my life. It had been a year since his death. He was a native son of Seattle like me, immersed in Chinatown activities and shaped by the civil rights movement. He was 59, a few years younger than me. I still hadn't accepted that he was gone.

Donnie worked as a self-taught street medic in Canton Alley. On July 23, 2015, he was killed in the crossfire between rival gangs. Responding to reports of trouble at

a nearby hookah lounge just before 3 a.m., he drove his car along Eighth Avenue South, where he was struck by a sudden hail of bullets.

After a year of waiting, Donnie's killers had still not been identified. As the days and months stretched on, I knew that justice might never come.

I sprinted past the Beacon Hill Library, its glass and slate-shingle facade glittering in the early morning sunshine. I made a last turn for home. I quickly showered and dressed. Dark thoughts dogged me for the rest of the day.

In the week immediately after this run, I decided to write this book. Donnie's passing reminded me of the fragility of life. His death awakened the memory of another friend, Gene Viernes. He and fellow activist Silme Domingo were gunned down on June 1, 1981, at the cannery union hall in Pioneer Square. Gene moved here from Wapato, a small town in central Washington, to work with Silme on union reform and to protest against repression in the Philippines. I thought I had come to terms with their deaths. Maybe I hadn't.

In the year-and-a-half following Donnie's passing, a raft of Donnie's activist peers died in swift succession. Tsuguro "Ike" Ikeda passed on December 2, 2015, Wilma Woo on January 26, 2016, Ruth Woo on July 13, 2016, Rachel



Hong Kong Restaurant postcard, photograph courtesy of Ron Chew

Hidaka on July 28, 2016, Bob Santos on August 27, 2016, Charles Z. Smith on August 28, 2016, Frank Fujii on October 3, 2016, and Al Sugiyama on January 2, 2017.

Ike, Auntie Wilma, Auntie Ruth, Rachel, Uncle Bob, Charles Z., Frank and Brother Al were community heroes who steered Seattle from its stolid neglect into a new era of racial inclusion and social consciousness. I feared they would be forgotten, like wax figures shunted to the darkened corner of a museum gallery.

Where were the people I grew up with? I didn't see them on the Hill. I didn't bump into them in Chinatown. They resettled in places we once considered a separate universe—North Seattle, Shoreline, Everett, Bellevue, Issaquah, Maple Valley, Kent, Skyway, Burien, Federal Way

and Tukwila. I reconnected with them on Facebook, not in person.

The “hood” was no longer my hood. I felt like a ghost transported to the future. I was lost. I woke to discover “Notice of Proposed Land Use Action” signs everywhere. Skinny new homes and tall apartment buildings—made with bland earth tone panels and flat windows—cast jarring shadows over the aging bungalows and ramblers.

My new neighbors, young professionals, arrived all at once. They snatched up older homes, replacing rusty wrought iron railings with wood balusters. They tore up front lawns to make space for ornamental potted plants, stone statuary and little garden benches. Along Beacon Avenue South, I saw roving bands of homeless people begin to camp under bus shelters.

The world I knew was nearly gone. I was witnessing a kind of climate change, certain and irreversible.

In early September 2016, I began writing this memoir to pay homage to the city I once knew and the people and places that defined its character for me and a generation of peers. I went to my basement to scour personal papers, documents, newspaper clippings and sepia-tinted newsletters.

On August 27, 2017, my cousin Ben and I drove to the University District to find the exact location of the old hand laundry that my father and his brother operated in the 1950s. The laundry—at 1316 N.E. 43rd Avenue—is now Samir's Mediterranean Grill. Ben and I chatted with the owner, Samir Alawar. He was an effervescent 61-year-old refugee from Lebanon who remodeled the space in the 1970s. Ben and I then went to look for the old house in which I spent my first year or two of life. Ben's family lived there, too. It was three blocks away. It had been demolished to make way for a five-story apartment building.

I was reminded that our history is built on the precarious foundation of what is remembered, acknowledged and disclosed. In the new Seattle, I still had much to discover of my own past.

Remembering Shirley Peringer, RVHS Founder Buzz Anderson's Sister

- Written by Jody Anderson
Zumwalt, Shirley's niece and RVHS
Board Member



Shirley and Buzz Anderson

Shirley Leora Peringer was born January 4, 1924 in Seattle, Washington, the daughter of Arthur and Leora (Brown) Anderson, granddaughter of D.W. and Edith Leora Brown, great-granddaughter of D.C. and Mary Irene (Cook) Brown, all pioneers of Columbia City. Three years later, Shirley had a little brother, her only sibling, named Marvin Arthur Anderson, whom she called her "baby buzzer" (she apparently couldn't pronounce brother), thus creating the lifetime nickname of "Buzz".

Shirley attended Columbia grade school, and, in 1942, graduated from Franklin High School. She then went on to graduate from Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA, where she was in the Delta Delta Delta sorority. It was at Whitman that she met her husband, John Logan Peringer. John had a beautiful singing voice and music was always a big part of their lives together. Sadly, John passed away far too soon

in 1982, but Shirley was very close to her children and grandchildren and was always spending time with her family in her home and at the family cabin on Hood Canal. Annually on Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day holidays, her children and grandchildren would all gather with her at the cabin, some traveling from faraway states just to be together. The Peringer clan love spending time together, and Shirley always enjoyed having her family around her.

Shirley started taking piano lessons at a very young age and continued playing for the rest of her long life, teaching piano to family and hundreds of students over the years; and even had a few students while in her 90s. She also played the organ for Sunday services at the Columbia Congregational Church in Columbia City. During the holidays, she would have big parties for family and friends, serving traditional Swedish food and drinks; and led everyone in Christmas carol sing-a-



Joanne and Mary Ellen Anderson with Shirley Peringer at the RVHS Founder's Dinner, 2019

longs on the piano, encouraging others to play whatever instruments they knew, or perhaps wanted to try. Shirley was also an accomplished watercolor artist and traveled to Greece twice and also Costa Rica to take art classes and capture some of the incredible scenery in her paintings. In her early 90s she taught a few painting classes out of her home, and always encouraged people to draw or create something artistic every day. She was a very talented and inspiring woman.

Shirley passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her family on February 28th. She leaves behind four children, 11 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. She will be missed by all that knew her.



Andrews Bay, watercolor by Shirley Peringer, featured in *Wild Isle in the City: Tales from Seward Park's First 100 Years*

What's new in the Archives!

A big thank you goes to the Marvin "Buzz" Anderson family for donating over 160 artifacts, books, and historical documents from Buzz's personal collection. Thank you for sharing these local history treasures!

- A washing machine from 1915 which was on display in the Grayson & Brown store at 4860 Rainier Ave. S until the 1980s, then moved to the living room of Buzz and Jo after the store closure.
- Memorabilia from Grayson & Brown Furniture and Hardware Store including a receipt book from the 1920s, a yarn/sewing table purchased from Grayson & Brown, and an antique lightbulb that would have been on display in the 1900s.
- Snowshoes and ice ax originally owned by Hugh McKenzie but given to Buzz by Menzo La Porte. Buzz kept these hung on the walls of his home office.
- A 517 Fiver DeLuxe Compact Radio from 1937-1938 which still works!
- A Corona Typewriter Company No. 3 collapsible typewriter from the 1920s.
- A school desk from the Columbia School.
- 5 antique cameras that were on exhibit at our office from February to March. Buzz was quite a photographer, and enjoyed collecting antique cameras.
- 64 antique books including a collection that was purchased at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, as well as a complete collection of Charles Dickens books from 1889.



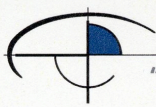
Paul and Jill Anderson deliver artifacts from the Anderson family; RVHS office, Columbia City



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New additions to the Buzz Anderson Family Collection: late 1800s snowshoes and portable Corona collapsible typewriter



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You can opt-in to receive the spring and fall Heritage News by email - please let us know at: office@rainiervalleyhistory.org

Support Rainier Valley History

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

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

Please clip and fill in this form and mail it to:

Rainier Valley Historical Society

PO Box 18143

Seattle, WA 98118

Donations, memberships and merchandise sales are also accepted on our website: www.rainiervalleyhistory.org.

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