

Rainier Valley's First History Maker Award

Rainier Valley Historical Society presented its first *Rainier Valley History Maker* award to Chuck Kusak, third generation owner of Kusak Cut Glass Works. Chuck received his award on October 20th at our 6th annual Founder's Dinner. Chuck has admirably carried on the family traditions of philanthropy, business excellence, and community service his grandfather Anton Kusak started 104 years ago.



John Charles, Chuck Kusak and Donny Jones, RVHS Founder's Dinner October 20, 2018

The Kusak glass legacy began with Chuck's grandfather Anton Charles Kusak, who emigrated from a Moravia village in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Born March 21, 1890, Anton left home at the age of 13 to learn the glass engraving trade from the leading European glass designer. Anton quickly moved through the apprenticeship program and by the age of 19, Anton was the youngest journeymen in Europe. Anton wished for a new life outside the poor conditions of Moravia and set his ambitions toward France where he perfected his technique in engraving fine crystal. Eventually Anton joined one of his brothers in America, stopping in Boonton, New Jersey. He learned the largest producer of handmade glass was in Moundsville, West Virginia, where he landed his first glass-engraving job on US soil. Anton met

his wife Marie in the large Moravian community in Moundsville. They came out west to Seattle seeking better environment conditions and to be closer to her family members. Anton and Marie sold their first piece of Kusak engraved crystal stemware on June 14, 1914; the rest is history.

Anton Kusak officially turned over the company leadership to his son and "pal" Tony in 1956. Chuck joined his father in business after college and when Tony retired in 1986, Chuck took over as third generation owner. Chuck successfully transformed the Kusak Cut Glass Works with modern technology and custom engraving; the fact that Kusak employees' longevity averages 37 years, speaks highly of the Kusak family.

Kusak Cut Glass Works has withstood many challenges of the past 104 years and their presence in Rainier Valley will be dearly missed. Kusak's retail store will be closing at the end of this year. It is their hope to retain the custom engraving division of the business.



Moravian-born Anton Kusak, Kusak Cut Glass Works founder, 1918, photo courtesy of Chuck Kusak



3710 S Ferdinand Street,
Seattle, WA 98118

206.723.1663 | rainiervalleyhistory.org

Open Hours:
Tuesdays and Fridays from 10AM-4PM
and by appointment

E-News:

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

RVHS Office Assistant:
Carol O'Brien
office@rainiervalleyhistory.org



4CULTURE

Thank you to 4Culture
for supporting our work!

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.*

Wetmore Community Farm Fall Fest!

By Nancy Dulaney

Rainier Valley's Wetmore Community Farm coordinator, Kyla Rudnick of Alleycat Acres, had reason to celebrate this past October, and all the arrangements were made – pumpkins, chickens, mushrooms, herb bouquets. Friends, volunteers, and supporters came from far and wide. As a member of a local urban farm collective, Kyla has been working since 2015 to transform the previously undeveloped Wetmore Street Right of Way owned by Seattle Department of Transportation into a productive gardening and cultural space. She has overseen and managed the clearing of knotweed and trash as well as earth moving to create the Spokane Street entrance to the farm and garden beds, with some help from partner Stone Soup Gardens.

The development of this ¼ acre farm intends to provide community access to urban land use and food production as opposed to overgrown blackberries and bad behavior. Setting a good example is the adjacent Estelle Street P-Patch where immigrant Laotians have been gardening since the late 1980s. Here, in season, you will find edibles - think bitter melons, gourds, tomatillos, chayotes, taro leaf, and mustard greens (did you know there are eight kinds?) Tall and vibrant magenta-colored amaranth and golden yellow sunflowers abound late summer. On any random day, you may find Estelle Street P-Patch regulars Paivan, Mansak, Plekeao, and Kahn, tending their patch.

In November of 1890, Byron Young and his wife Jane platted The Byron Addition. Jane was a young girl when she arrived in Seattle in October 1853 by wagon train with her parents, Seymour and Anna Wetmore, and her younger brother, Birdsey. By 1869 the Wetmores, now numbering ten, were raising hay, hops, potatoes and cattle on their 160-acre donation claim near Lake Washington. An apple orchard reportedly produced 500 bushels of fruit in 1879. A creek ran through, flowing south and then east towards the meadow of our Genesee Park & Playfield, an area once known as Wetmore Slough.

Rainier Avenue was illustrated on the plat map with rail tracks, and that is simply what it was in the beginning. Seymour first donated 10 acres to J.K. Edmiston who had received the franchise to build the Rainier Avenue Electric Railway in 1890. Then Seymour sold 60 acres for a tidy sum of money, \$12,000



Wetmore Community Farm Fall Fest, October 13, 2018 [photo by Teresa A. Anderson]

says the deed. A single streetcar track was built on a trestle through the swampy land, just south of today's Mount Baker Boulevard, along what is now Rainier Avenue South. Seymour's farming years were coming to a close. When the streetcar service began in the spring of 1891, the cars ran from Railroad

Avenue & Washington Street in downtown Seattle, south through "the wilderness" and out to the newly platted Columbia for the 4¢ ride. Here, real estate men were offering elegant lots, rich soil and free water.

Just where the Estelle Street P-Patch and Wetmore Community Farm paths meet sits a two-story, wood-framed house at 3402 Wetmore Avenue South, Block D, Lots 1-5, built circa 1901. The Seattle Post-Intelligencer of July 28, 1891, informs us that Edward Kellogg had just brought suit against three individuals he claimed were diverting a stream of water from its natural channel and thereby depriving him of the use of it. Kellogg states "that he is the owner of Block D of Byron's addition to Seattle, that he lives on Block D, and uses water from a spring branch for household purposes, for watering his cattle and for use of the engine of his sawmill....He claims



Excerpt from 1912 Baist map – the year Franklin High School opened.

(continued from page 2, Wetmore Community Farm Fall Fest!)

that they erected two dams on the stream above his place, thereby causing the water to run in an artificial channel dug by the Rainier Avenue Railway Company, and that all of it is now being used for irrigating purposes. He says defendants refused to remove the dams, and he has thereby been irreparably injured". Kellogg had moved his Dry Lumber Mill Company's sawmill to the new site along Rainier Avenue Railway just three months earlier per The Seattle Post-Intelligencer (April 7, 1891).

To commemorate his family's legacy in Rainier Valley, 92-year-old Hal Wetmore attended the Wetmore Community Farm celebration. The great-grandson of Seymour and Anna Wetmore, the grandson of Birdsey and Sarah Ellen Wetmore, and the son of Harry and Pauline Wetmore, Hal grew up in Hillman City at 39th & Mead Street and has fond memories of Keefe's Grocery and Brighton Playfield. Now living in Arlington, his wife Joanne and daughters Julie and Cindy joined him as he was introduced to today's Wetmore Street farmers and Estelle Street P-Patch gardeners. 150 years of farming and counting!



Hal Wetmore and Kyla Rudnick, at Wetmore Community Farm Fall Fest, October 13, 2018 [photo by Teresa A. Anderson]

RVHS Staff and Board Changes

We would like to thank Virginia Wright for her leadership in programming the Dismantling Racism Series and Habesha Women oral history project. Virginia has taken another executive director position in the arts community.

Carol O'Brien, a native to Rainier Valley and RVHS member is managing the office on Tuesdays and Fridays. We welcome Carol as she assists us in managing RVHS operations.

We are happy to have join the board of directors, Jody Anderson Zumwalt, Buzz Anderson's daughter. Jody was our newsletter editor for ten years, from 1998 to 2008.

The return of Joan Neville to the board, a Lakewood neighborhood resident, is also great news. Joan was one of the first RVHS board members when it organized in 1993, along with Mark Hannum.

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
Jody Zumwalt

Leschi Market

103 Lakeside Avenue, Seattle, WA 98122
MAIN 206-322-0700 • FAX 206-325-4990

WWW.LESCHIMARKET.COM

Steve Shulman Owner

steve@leschimarket.com 🐾 main@leschimarket.com



Burdick's Security
"Peace Of Mind Since 1959"

Tim Burdick

P 206.725.6072 F 206.723.0773
tburdick@burdicksecurity.com

4700 Rainier Ave. S. • Seattle, WA 98118 • burdicksecurity.com

Honor Roll

Many thanks to our members and supporters who make our work possible! Below are those whose gifts we received between April 2, 2018 and October 27, 2018 Contact us with any corrections or omissions: **206-723-1663** or **info@rainiervalleyhistory.org**.

HistoryMaker Membership Wyman Youth Trust	Susan Parker James Mike Sweeney Steven Wasson Steven Wayne	Lorrie Sivich in honor of Tommy Sivich Paul Talbert Sara Thompson Steven Wayne Theresa Whitener Jody Zumwalt	Sheila Harvey John Hittman Suzanne Hittman Hunter Design Home Street Bank Pat Killam Chuck & Kris Kusak, Kusak Cut Glass Works La Medusa Lakewood Seward Neighborhood Association Gary Locke Lull Salon Jeannie O'Brien, Selander O'Brien Attorneys Karen O'Brien Mary O'Brien Pizzeria Pulcinella
Patron Membership June Farran Grover & Wanda Haynes	Founder's Dinner Donations Phil Adams Mary Ellen Anderson Gisella Baxter John Bennett Elaine Braun Gloria Cauble Dennis Clark Frank & Joan Conlon Janice Damato Mark DeRocco Suzanne Denure John Ellis Brian & Evelynnn Fairchild June Farran Dorothy Fields Annabelle Fitts Ole & Julie Godefroy Jan & Harm Kumasaka Gino Mancinelli Rob Mohn/Shelley Morrison Joan Neville Paul O'Brien Shirley Peringer Fred & Mariana Quarnstrom Lucy Salle Steven Shulman Sam Simone	Founder's Dinner Auction Donors All the Best Zed Aschenaki Teresa Anderson John Bennett Bob's Quality Meats Both Ways Café Tim Burdick, Burdick's Security Pamela Charles John & Mary Charles Douglas & Mary Chiechi Kelly Cochran Columbia City Alehouse Anna Colwell Becky Corpuz Connie Cox Laura & Stephen Day John DeFranco Nancy Dulaney Ebbets Field Flannels Dave Eskenazi Flying Squirrel Gather Geraldine's Jeff Hall, iClick Mark Hannum	In-Kind Donations Borracchini's Bakery Andrea Chiodo, Chiodo Brokerage Donny Jones Our Lady of Mt. Virgin Parish Sergeant Mike Pugel, Seattle Harbor Patrol PCC Rainier Lions Insight Center Renew Therapeutics Steve Ryals Steven Shulman, Leschi Market Via Tribunali Tutta Bella Urban Garden Jay White
Senior/Student Memberships Frank & Margaret Fickeisen Eva Long Thomas Riley			
Gifts to Operating Fund AmazonSmile Linda Brown Paul Cabarga Robert Connell Frank & Margaret Fickeisen Jennie Goode Sheila Harvey Beverly Huntington Anna Hurwitz Cindy Jones/Washington Federal David Keyes Karen O'Brien Ramona Okamoto			

Consider a Legacy Donation to RVHS in Your Estate Planning

A bequest is an easy, practical way to make a meaningful contribution to the Rainier Valley Historical Society without affecting your current finances. Through a bequest in your will or a provision in your living trust, you may name the Society as a beneficiary of a specific dollar amount or piece of property, a percentage of your estate, or part or all of what remains of the estate after other bequests are carried out.

An example of some simple bequest language:

"I hereby bequeath [the sum of _____ dollars (\$) or ___ percent (%) of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate], to the Rainier Valley Historical Society, a non-profit corporation in Seattle, Washington, for its general purposes."

You may use this language if you intend to designate your bequest to the Society's general usage. A bequest of this kind offers the most flexibility and will allow us to use your gift where it is most needed. You may also choose to contribute to our endowment, or to support a particular program or activity.

If you would like to discuss a possible bequest of research or archival materials to the collections, we urge you to contact us to discuss how to transfer the materials into our care.

Collections Committee Update: RVHS thanks the following donors for items added to the archives

Ray Akers: Vicuna silk top hat, circa 1900, owned by his grandfather T. G. Hitt of Hitt Fireworks, perfume bottle, copper block print with Hitt Fireworks ad, Hitt Fireworks retail items, PSRA photograph of Esmay Garage.	juicer box from Chubby & Tubby, copy of Rainier Valley Citizen Annual 12.25.1915, Ambassador Gary Locke US Embassy Beijing polo shirt, 2 shopping bags US Embassy Beijing, Boy Scouts of America Handbook for Boys 1945 Edition, and bathing suit circa 1930s, dial telephone, vintage wash board, waffle iron and griddle all used by Elsie Charles, Columbia Pioneer.	Dorothy Taylor Fields: digital images of Taylor Mill family in Rainier Beach and Mt. Baker, and excerpts from "A Volume of Memoirs and Genealogy of Representatives and Citizens of The City of Seattle and County of King-Washington" of C.D. Hillman and John Sanford Taylor.
Teresa Anderson: aerial photograph of S. Oregon Street and 48th, family home of Herbert O. F. Anderson.		Marc Ellen Hamel: photographs and newspaper clippings of parents Glen and Sylvia Anderson Hamel of Lakewood neighborhood, and photograph Almquist Grocer at 50th and Alaska Street.
Rosemary Boyd: voltage testers, circa 1940s, owned by her father Marvin Diehl.	Nancy Dulaney: Black & Tan Hall t-shirt, "A Black & Tan Ball" CD recorded at Black & Tan Hall, Hillman City.	
John and Mary Charles: framed Franklin High School architectural drawing, "Oh Boy Oberto" plastic hydroplane, "Oh Boy Oberto" metal hydroplane, metal Blue Angels plane, "The Lake Washington Story" by Lucile McDonald, political brochures John L. O'Brien and Gene Lux, West Bend electric citrus	Lisa Embree: Rainier View Community Club Ladies Auxiliary and Rainier View Garden Club records.	Hal and Joanne Wetmore: Wetmore Family History in memory of Hal's parents Harry B. and Pauline A. (Hofmeister) Wetmore and nephew Jack E. Deryke, digital photos from family photo album, and several history books.

Thank you for Supporting the 6th Annual Founder's Dinner

Thanks to everyone who attended our 6th Annual Founder's Dinner, honoring Buzz Anderson's RVHS legacy. Dean Anderson gave a heart-filled toast to his dad to start the evening and we heard from Shirley Peringer, Buzz's sister, tell the story how she named her baby brother, "baby Buzzer."

The lively evening included strolling musicians The Tarantellas, raffle baskets, silent and live auction items, and an Italian dinner bar none. We had 140 people in attendance to enjoy Douglas Chiechi's Italian family style dinner, served by volunteers from Seattle Academy, Cleveland High School and Holy Names Academy. Our fundraising efforts raised a record high of over \$25,000, thanks to many individuals and businesses who donated generously to the event. The featured "ask" project raised enough funds to restore the Rainier Jeweler neon 1940s electric clock.



Shirley Peringer, sister of Buzz Anderson and RVHS President, Sheila Harvey

STEPHEN HULTBERG
FURNITURE MAKER, LLC
5800 Rainier Avenue South, Bldg B
Seattle, Washington 98118-2790
206 625-0231
www.hultbergfurniture.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.

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.