

Rainier Valley HERITAGE NEWS

Fall 2013

Join the RVHS 1960s Collection Challenge!

Did you grow up in the Rainier Valley during the 1960s? We're asking you to dust off those memory boxes, pull out the Polaroids and join the RVHS '60s collection challenge.

We are looking for photos, documents and artifacts that represent life in the Rainier Valley during the '60s. What were you wearing?

Where were the Rainier Valley hip places and hot spots? What were you driving? Who were the community leaders and what were they passionate about? What did you love about the valley then? Or what wasn't going so well for you?

We want to hear all about it and add your memories to our archives

George Fleming at a rally, accession #09.007.07



Nancy Ramey senior picture, RBHS 1964, accession #09.002.001

so that we can collect and share the history of Rainier Valley during this exciting time with current generations, and the generations that will follow us.

Show us your school spirit and let us know which Rainier Valley school you attended. The school whose alumni submit the most material to us will have all their contributors entered in a drawing for a fun collection of books about Rainier Valley.

Email director@rainiervalleyhistory.org for instructions on how to get materials to us.



News & Notes

RVHS Italian Benefit Dinner
October 19th, 2013, 5:30pm
Mount Virgin Parish Hall
2800 S Massachusetts St., Seattle

RVHS Open House
Saturday, December 7th, 2013
4:00pm - 6:00pm

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 and we'll add you to the list.

Follow the latest news, announcements, and photos on our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/rainiervalleyhistorical>

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<http://www.twitter.com/RVhistory>



CULTURE

Thank you to 4Culture for supporting our work!

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A Lot of Pie at Seattle Summer Streets and Rainier Valley Heritage Parade

Inspired by the Pie-Eating contests that were a popular feature at the Rainier District Pow Wow, which ran from 1934 until 1992, the RVHS partnered with the Lakewood Seward Park Community Club to revive this fun tradition as part of the annual Heritage Parade/Seattle Summer Streets Festival. We easily filled the two



Representatives of Lakewood Seward Park Community Club and Rainier Valley Historical Society, at the sign-up table. Note the historical photos on the table.

long tables with contestants, and watched as the contestants dove enthusiastically into pies generously donated by Borracchini's Bakery. We're aiming to make this an annual tradition!



Jim Pugel, Interim Chief of Police of the Seattle Police Department judging pie eaters.



RVHS at the First Annual San Gennaro Festival

In September RVHS had a booth at the first annual San Gennaro Festival in Georgetown. Our display boards of materials documenting the history of Garlic Gulch were of great interest to the many attendees at the bustling festival and we had a great time meeting all of the people who came by to talk to us.



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.

4Culture Equipment Grant

"The annual Arts and Heritage Equipment program supports purchase of fixed assets by organizations or local government cultural agencies."

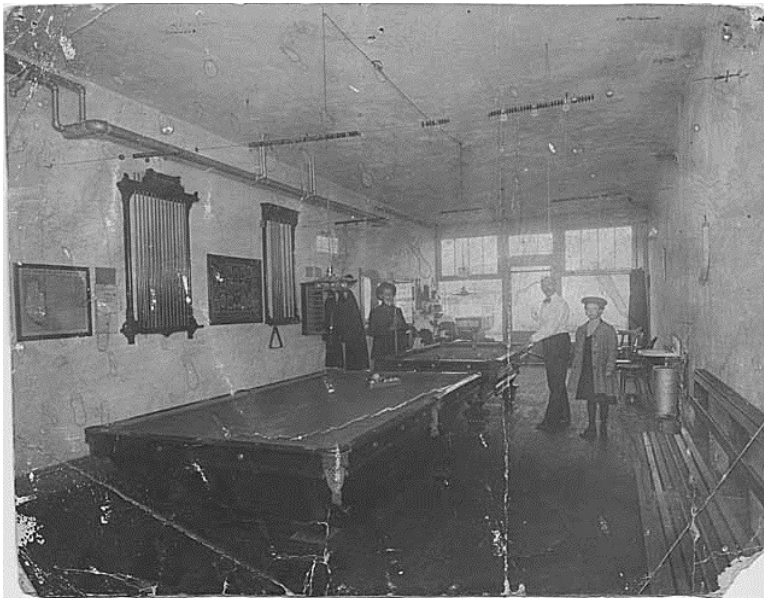
RVHS was awarded a grant for \$850.00 from 4Culture as part of its 2013-14 Arts and Heritage Equipment Grant. We will be using this money to purchase new server hardware and software for the office, to aid us in organizing and managing the growing amount of digital information we need to keep track of.

History of the Building That Housed Angie's Tavern

Editor's note: The building that housed Angie's Tavern, just a couple of blocks south of the RVHS office was torn down in August. The following is an article about the building.

By Buzz Anderson, 10/9/02, article revised 10/24/10.

One of the early pioneers, and an active member of the Pioneers of Columbia City during his lifetime, donated this photo from his private collection years ago. He was a donor of many of the photos we have and, as he was accustomed to doing, he stamped his name on the back of his photos with a rubber stamp. The reason was probably his concern about getting them returned to him after being on display at the Pioneer's annual April meetings. Fortunately he always added, on the back, the descriptive information and dates pertaining to the photos. The rubber stamp on the back of this photo read "Menzo C. LaPorte."



In 1907 the building was a Barber shop and pool room. accession #: 93.001.032

Menzo was born January 11th, 1891, just three months before the first lots were sold in Columbia. He spent his lifetime as Columbia City's favorite barber. One might say he actually grew up "with" Columbia City and that may explain his interest in Columbia's history and his active membership in the Pioneers of Columbia City, our predecessor organization. Everybody knew Menzo.

The location of this first pool hall and barber shop, depicted in the photo, was 4915 Rainier Ave. That site is on the west side of Rainier Avenue adjacent to the alley between Ferdinand and Hudson Streets.

Over the years the building has seen a variety of business tenants. In our book, "The Centennial History of Columbia City" written by our former historian, Carey Summers, and published in 1992, there is a listing of the early day tenants at each address in Columbia. It shows six businesses at this site. We also know that there were several that were not listed. For instance the "First Barbershop and Pool Hall" photo accompanying this article was one of those not listed. The businesses that were listed at 4915 Rainier Ave. were: Jack Monahan's "The Boar's Nest" North's Rainier Valley Transfer, Thurlow's Garage (1915), George Hurd's Barber Shop (1920s) and Universal High Power Telephone Co.

As a teenager Menzo had a reputation for being a pretty wild kid around the town of Columbia. The town Constable at that time was Fremont (Free) Parker. Free's son John and I have been good friends for many years and I have had several interviews with him about Columbia's early days. John has a fantastic memory and one incident he described to me

involved a situation between his dad, the constable, and Menzo.

"Free" had impounded a cow that had been allowed to roam the streets of Columbia and the cow belonged to a friend of Menzo's. Well, Menzo was handsome, big, a brawler and frequently drunk and on this occasion he accosted the constable in an effort to get the cow back. Parker was not a large man by any means, and Menzo demanded the cow be released. Menzo was drunk so Parker put him in a cell for which Menzo threatened to get even.

One night Parker fell asleep in his chair in front of the jailhouse stove. Menzo came in, handcuffed the sleeping constable and locked him in a cell for the night. The difference in their sizes was such that Parker avoided any



These bottles were found at the demolition site of Angie's Tavern and donated to RVHS

future contact with Menzo to the extent that he would cross the street or go around the block rather than pass him on the sidewalk.

Getting back to the photograph, I think we have good reason to assume the man standing next to the young girl was the barber in the pool-room, perhaps Lee Gardner, Menzo Laporte's partner. The barber chair can be seen in front of the left window.

Whenever I needed a haircut of course I went to Menzo's shop. He was then located at 4910 Rainier Ave., across the street from the "Barber Shop and Pool Room" shown in the photo. He was there from 1926 until he retired. He was a successful businessman in Columbia. He had another barber, Bob Murphy, in the shop with him and a shoe shine stand with a black attendant I think named Stark. He also added a beauty salon in the back room of his shop for the local ladies. The entry door for the ladies was in the alley.

Previous to that he had been at five different locations in Columbia City. His first shop was a partnership with Lee Gardner at 4866 Rainier Ave. and they moved to 4870 in 1917. Then he opened his own shop at 4906 in the early '20s, moved to 4904 in 1922 and then his final location at 4910 Rainier Ave., across the alley from the Columbia Cafe.

He gave haircuts to my great grandfather, D.C. Brown and my grandfather, "Will" Brown. My dad, Arthur Anderson went to him as I did and we have movies of Menzo giving my two boys their first hair cut. I'm sure this scenario was repeated with many of the local pioneer families.

I have a very vivid memory of one incident that I shall never forget. It occurred as I was sitting in Menzo's barber chair. He had the radio on as he usually did and a startling announcement came over the airwaves. President John Kennedy had been assassinated.

continued on page 4

Angie's Tavern, continued from page 3

Like everyone else on that infamous occasion, I was shocked at the news and all my life since then, every time I climb into a barber's chair I am reminded of that tragic day, the little shop next to the alley and my friend, Menzo Laporte. It isn't very often that I get a haircut anymore as I inherited the family baldness trait. I still think I should qualify for a discounted rate.

Most poolrooms existing today are in conjunction with a tavern and you can have a beer if you want to. It was not so in Columbia City in those days. It was dry town from the time they incorporated as a town of the fourth class in the state of Washington in 1893, until the area was annexed by the City of Seattle in 1907.

The founding fathers, in one of their first city ordinances, banned "saloons" in Columbia. It was in effect for fourteen years.

My grandmother was an advocate of the dry town ordinance. I never discussed it with her but I have always wondered how my grandfather, "Will" Brown, ever convinced her to allow him to purchase a tavern, in particular the one at 4915 Rainier Ave. That's right, the building in the above photo. I am not sure when he bought it because the subject didn't come up very often. She gave him a strict mandate that no one was to know they owned such a place. When they died in their 90s, the building passed on to my parents and then on to my sister and myself. We had to spend about \$7000

to repair the rotting foundation when the tavern operator complained about the sloping pool tables. For the benefit of my departed grandmother I want to point out one thing, our family never operated the tavern, we just collected the rent when we could get it. The tavern now is called "Angie's."

If you lived in the "Valley" a few decades ago, you will undoubtedly remember the tavern when it was called the "Pink Poodle" with a big pink sign over the entrance. It is amazing to me the building is intact pretty much as it was almost a century ago. Thanks to Columbia City's Landmark status, that one piece of local history will be around for generations to come.

Annual Campaign



Keep an eye on your mailbox near the end of November for our annual membership drive and appeal letter. This year consider increasing your membership to the next level up. We can't do this important work without you!

Audit Committee

One of the articles of our Bylaws sets forth the requirement that our financial records be audited by a committee of members of RVHS each year. In the past the Finance Committee performed this task, but in the interest of engaging more membership involvement we are currently looking for members who are willing to serve on this committee to examine the 2013 books. Volunteers with experience in nonprofit or corporate finance would be particularly well-suited for serving on this committee.

Please call our office or send an email to director@rainiervalleyhistory.org, if you are willing to help us with this.

from the Bylaws:

Article III Section 5. The Treasurer's accounts shall be examined annually by an auditor or an auditing committee of not less than three (3) members, who are satisfied that the Treasurer's annual report is correct and who shall sign a statement that the report is correct.

Article V Section 1. The President shall appoint the chairperson of each committee and serve as ex officio member, except for the Nominating Committee. The Board of Directors shall approve the members of each committee that the report is correct.



RVHS Benefit Italian Dinner, October 19th

In October we will be hosting our first annual RVHS benefit dinner. We will remember RVHS founder **Marvin "Buzz" Anderson** at the event, which will be a traditional Italian pasta dinner in the parish hall of Our Lady of Mount Virgin Church, featuring the cooking skills of chefs Douglas Chiechi, Martin Patricelli, and Anthony Chiodo. We will have a live auction, and a raffle for great prizes.

Tickets for the dinner are \$50 per person. Make reservations through our website.

Rainier Valley Heritage News

Editor and Layout Virginia H. Wright

Rainier Valley Historical Society

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Friday & Sunday 10:00am - 1:00pm
RVHS Executive Director Virginia H. Wright

*The Rainier Valley Historical Society office is an accessible facility. Auxiliary aids and assistance are provided upon request to persons with disabilities.

Collections Update

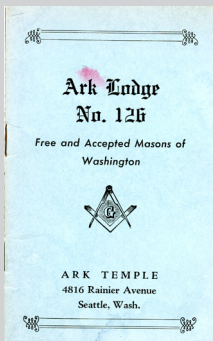
Recent additions to our Archives include:

A large collection of mostly printed materials and architectural drawings from the collection of **Seth Jackson**, a local architect and activist involved in advocacy around the construction of the second phase of the I-90 bridge.

Draft chapter of book manuscript, with the working title, "Historical Ecology of Seattle's Streams," given by the book's author, **Patrick Trotter**.

The final environmental impact statement for the proposed construction of a multi-family residential development in Kubota Gardens. Donated by **Joseph Marley**.

A collection of Franklin high School yearbooks, varsity letters and a 50th reunion booklet. A printed pamphlet of the by-laws for Ark Lodge No. 126, from 1956, when the building that currently houses Ark Lodge Cinema was still a Masonic lodge. Sent to us by **Sherman Richmond**.



A group of glass liquor bottles, unearthed during the demolition of the building that housed Angie's Tavern. Donated by **Ron Tabish**.

Recent donations to our Research Collection include:

The book, "Italians of the American Northwest," by Charley Vingo, an extensive history of early pioneer Italian immigrant families in the Pacific Northwest. Donated by the **Sons of Italy**.

Offsite Collection Moved to New Space

in the end of May, a team of board members, along with our Executive Director and a couple of tireless hired helpers moved all of the materials in the offsite collection from the space we had been leasing from Torah Day School (the old Columbia School building) into new storage facilities 2 blocks east. The new space we are sub-leasing from United Indians of All Tribes is conveniently located next door to the RVHS office. The materials are much more organized and accessible, on a new system of strong, movable shelving.



the new storage facility

Honor Roll

Many thanks to our members and supporters who make our work possible! Below are those whose gifts we received between March 1, 2013, and September, 23, 2013. Contact us with any corrections or omissions: 206-723-1663 or director@rainiervalleyhistory.org.

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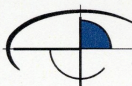
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All membership dues and donations are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

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

Rainier Valley Historical Society

P.O. Box 18143

Seattle, WA 98118

Books, memberships, and tickets for our fundraiser can also be purchased on our website: www.rainiervalleyhistory.org.

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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 \$ _____

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