

# Rainier Valley HERITAGE NEWS

Spring, 2014

## 2014 Annual Meeting, May 3rd “Remembering the ‘70s” with Special Guest: Denis Law, Mayor of Renton

by Karen O'Brien

Rainier Valley Historical Society is excited to announce Denis Law as guest speaker for the opening of the Denis Law Photograph Exhibit. “Remembering the ‘70s” features newsworthy Law images that were published in the South District Journal, a former Rainier Valley weekly newspaper. We selected photographs that depict a range of happenings in the valley and matched some photos to their corresponding South District Journal articles for the display. Come see the exhibit and hear Denis Law’s perspective on his images that chronicle ‘70s life in the valley.

Denis Law photographed the news for the Rainier District and Beacon Hill residents from the late 1960s to late 1980s including being at the scene of crimes, car accidents and fires. Law credits the trust he built with SPD officers and Seattle firefighters that granted him access to an incident. “You know, normally, when you have something that is highly tense and actively going on . . . police get very concerned about who’s around,” Law said. “It was just developing a relationship with officers and they felt comfortable with me.” (*Compton, Renton Reporter, 6/19/2013*). Prior to being mayor of Renton, he co-owned seven community newspapers. During his publishing career, Denis earned more

than 250 state and national journalism awards in photography, editing, advertising and newspaper design. He served on the boards of six chambers in Seattle and the Eastside; was appointed to the Seattle Mayor’s Small Business Task Force; served



*Concert in Seward Park, 1974, Denis Law Collection, #2011.009.152.011*

as president of the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association that represented 110 weekly newspapers and small daily

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*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 Annual Meeting

May 3rd, 2014, 10:00am  
(doors open at 9:00am for coffee and socializing)  
Southeast Seattle Senior Center  
4655 S Holly St., Seattle

#### Reinforcement Crew at RVHS

May 17th, 2014

#### Office Hours:

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

#### E-News:

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CULTURE

Thank you to 4Culture  
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## “Reinforcement Crew” coming to volunteer with the collection during the AAM Annual Meeting in Seattle

Last year RVHS was selected as one of the beneficiaries of a program that happens each year in tandem with the Annual Meeting of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). The meeting takes place in a different city each year, and the program seeks out small to medium organizations local to the host city that have a project suitable for a small team of outside volunteers to work on.



### American Alliance of Museums

The Reinforcement Crew is a team of registrars, collections managers, curators, and other professionals who volunteer their time working on a project at the beneficiary organization's facilities.

For this project we chose the Seth Jackson Collection of print and other materials

which were used in political activism around I-90 construction in the '70s. The collection is recently acquired and a manageable size for this type of focused one-day work. It will also allow the visiting museum professionals some insight into an interesting piece of Seattle history.

In addition to providing experience and labor, the Reinforcement Crew has purchased nearly \$700 in archival materials to be used in housing the materials they will be working with.

The Reinforcement Crew work takes place in the days prior to the AAM meeting itself. The team will be at RVHS all day on the 17th of May.

## Collections Update

### Recent additions:

A long-format, framed photograph of members of the Indian Motorcycle Club of Seattle taken around 1920. Donated by Rickie Friedli.

The original film negatives from the Double Exposures exhibit of before and after photographs by Kerry Zimmerman. Donated by Kerry Zimmerman.

Keefe's Hardware 1911 calendar commemorative plate, donated by Mary O'Brien.

A group of scrapbooks and other materials featuring Rainier Beach, donated by Erlyn Jensen.

We also completed housing and categorizing the 10k+ images in the Denis Law Collection and scanned in over 250 of the negatives, fulfilling the remaining work in the 2013 Collections Care grant from 4Culture.

## My Time in the Valley, by Denis Law

I was raised on Beacon Hill near the Jefferson Park Golf Course and graduated from Cleveland High School. I developed an interest in news photography while attending Seattle Community College and began freelancing for the Seattle Times. In those days, the newspapers were primarily interested in “spot news” photos, which led me to aggressively covering police and fire incidents.

I had police radios in my car and at home and raced to calls at all hours for many years. I developed a pretty good knack of covering these incidents that resulted in a lot of sales to the Seattle Times, Associated Press, Seattle PI and other publications. (I have attached a couple so you can get a sense of the types of incidents I covered over the years).

What helped me to get close to the action was by building strong relationships with police officers and fire fighters. I was one of few journalists that earned their trust and was allowed virtually unlimited access.

I landed a job with the Beacon Hill News

and South District Journal, where I learned everything there was about publishing newspapers, from the editorial to the business and production functions. Despite an offer to work for the Seattle Times as a photographer, I opted to join Jim and John Flaherty as a partner and we expanded our publishing efforts throughout the city. In 1990, John and I sold the company and I stayed on with the new owners for four years as the publisher. During that time, the company expanded to the eastside and I became the publisher of the community newspapers in Redmond and Kirkland, and my wife and I moved to Redmond.

I left the company in 1994 and started a new publishing company in Renton. I founded the Renton Reporter, followed by the Kent and Auburn Reporters, and in 2000, sold the company to the King County Journal Newspapers, which published daily newspapers in Bellevue and south King County. They also had weekly newspapers including the Mercer Island Reporter and one in Bothell. I worked with the company for two years running their non-daily

division and started publications in Redmond, Bellevue and Kenmore. During that time, my wife, Patty, and I moved to the Kennydale community in Renton on Lake Washington and have lived here for the past 15 years.

I was elected to the Renton City Council in 2003 and started another publishing company, comprising of magazine in Renton and Kent and a monthly business newspaper covering south King County. I sold that company in 2007 when I was elected mayor of Renton.

My photography success clearly surrounded my efforts in covering hard news in Seattle. I later developed much more interest in feature and nature photography and this continues to be my hobby.

The longest part of my journalism career was focused in Rainier Valley. I will always have fond memories of the community and the wonderful people who were committed to this district for so many generations.

## “Remembering the ‘70s,”

*continued from page 1*

newspapers throughout the state (*City of Renton, Denis Law, Mayor biography*).

RVHS came in contact with Denis Law in 2011, when a search for one photograph led to acquiring thousands. Seward Park's centennial year sparked a researcher's interest to comb our newspaper collection for stories about Seward Park. A fabulous image of a crowded amphitheatre during a 1974 rock concert was of interest, with the photo credit, by Denis Law. We first contacted the South Seattle Beacon to inquire if the newspaper had an archive of the preceding newspapers. The editor said their newspaper photographs are property of the photographer. Our director knew that Denis Law was elected mayor of Renton. An email was sent and he replied - the rest is history. We not only received the Seward Park concert photo, but over 10,000 negatives from his photojournalist days with the Rainier District Times, South District Journal and Beacon Hill News.

We are truly grateful for this generous and valuable donation to our collection and honored to have him as our guest at the annual meeting.



*Protestor at the Lucile Street Bridge, Denis Law Collection, #2011.009.217.003*

**Do you have your own ‘70s photos? Bring them along! We will have a ‘70s table where you can share your photos for the day, or donate them to RVHS for our collection.**

**2014 Annual Membership Meeting  
“Remembering the ‘70s”  
guest speaker: Denis Law**

**May 3rd, 2014  
10 am - 12 pm  
doors open at 9 for social hour  
lunch provided**

**Southeast Seattle Senior Center  
4655 S. Holly Street, Seattle**

### **A Partial List of the Photographs in the Denis Law Photograph Exhibit/Presentation, which will be on display at the Annual Meeting:**

- Jimi Hendrix funeral, Dunlap Presbyterian Church, 1970
- Snow scenes, Graham Hill sledding, 1971
- Seafair hydroplane races, 1973
- Pow Wow, pie eating contest, Seward Park, 1973
- Brighton Elementary, Vaccination day, 1973
- Seward Park rock concert, 1974
- Seward Park neighborhood, mansion fire, Gamel home, 1974
- Native Americans fishing at Atlantic City boat ramp, 1974
- Borracchini's Bakery, Remo decorating a cake, 1975
- Matthiesen's Flower Shop, 1975
- Pow Wow Queen tours Rainier Chamber businesses, 1974
- Bicycle Sunday at Seward Park, 1976
- Lucile Street Bridge Protest, 1976
- Colonel Sanders, 1978
- Art Oberto, 1978
- Demolition of Sick's Stadium, 1979
- Grayson & Brown, 1979
- Martha Washington School, date unknown

## RVHS Board of Directors

Sheila Harvey, *President*  
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 Nancy Dulaney, *Treasurer*  
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 Joan Neville

## Board of Directors accepting applications

Are you interested in becoming more directly involved in the governance and support of RVHS? We are currently accepting applications for recently opened positions on our Board of Directors. Quarterly board meetings are held on Saturday mornings at Rainier House.

For more information on requirements and responsibilities, please contact Board President, Sheila Harvey: [president@rainiervalleyhistory.org](mailto:president@rainiervalleyhistory.org).

## Annual Campaign 2013/14

A sincere **THANK YOU** to all of you who have renewed memberships, to those of you who are new members, and those of you who have sent in donations. We could not do our important work preserving and sharing the history of Rainier Valley without you! See Honor Roll, page 5.



May 6th, 2014  
 Keep an eye  
 out for details.

## Treasurer's Annual Report 2013 Summary

### Operations Income

Member Dues.....	\$3,620
Sales & Fees .....	\$3,489
Endowment Interest.....	\$3,865
Annual Donations.....	\$22,080
King County 4Culture	
Sustained Support.....	\$0*

### Operations Income

**Total .....\$33,054**

### Operations Expense

Personnel.....	\$13,433
Programs .....	\$1,796
Marketing/Fundraising .....	\$5,583
Facility.....	\$8,201
Administration.....	\$2,904
Depreciation.....	\$1,217

### Operations Expense

**Total .....\$33,134**

Endowment Donations..... \$10,500

### Endowment Value

**12/31/13..... \$205,928**

\*NOTE: \$5,000 in Sustained Support for 2013, received in January, 2014, is not included in 2013 income.

## Report from the Audit Committee

In March we assembled a committee to perform a financial audit, in accordance with our bylaws. The team included volunteer members John Charles and Judy McGough, as well as board president Sheila Harvey. Information and access were provided by Treasurer Nancy Dulaney and Executive Director Virginia Wright.

The committee made a few recommendations, including a review of the insurance policy, more thorough documentation of policies and procedures, some simplification the chart of accounts (this is a legacy issue, not at all reflective

of current accounting practices), automated backups of the accounting data, and off-site archival of important financial records. Overall the findings were very positive, summed up in this section of the report:

“In summary, the reporting of the financial balances of banking and investment accounts for both internal and federal reporting purposes appeared to be accurate. The financial reports submitted to the Board were comprehensive and detailed especially for an organization the size of the RVHS. The treasurer is to be complimented for her diligence and detail in maintaining noticeably accurate and detailed reporting.”

## 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.

## Honor Roll

Many thanks to our members and supporters who make our work possible! Below are those whose gifts we received between September 24th, 2013 and March 31st 2014. Contact us with any corrections or omissions: 206-723-1663 or [director@rainiervalleyhistory.org](mailto:director@rainiervalleyhistory.org).

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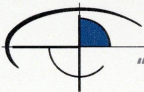
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