



SKYWAY BUSINESS DISTRICT - EARLY 1962

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T

In most compositions, the procedure is to give those who participate in gathering the material and pictures a pat on the back for their assistance in the work of putting the book together.

In this journal that would be impossible. All the people who have done their part are included in the lines of this home-grown journal, except Barb Shurin, whose editing and typing speak for themselves.

Harold "Jiggs" Hoyt

FOREWORD

This journal started out as an eight-page record of the Renton Avenue Commercial Club's activities, starting from almost the first days of the community. Pioneers still living in the surrounding area have too many good memories, however, and came in with lore that is practically unknown to many, even the old Skywayites. The tales of the pre-Skyway area could not be ignored, and the people in the community that have been wandering around this hill for quite some time wanted to tell their part of its early growing period.

When the gathering of the later information started to come in, the people who could not remember what had happened from 1941 on had their memories refreshed. They also started to recall happy incidents, including some that would be unheard-of today.

The days of Skyway's beginning, in about 1941, were reminiscent of a wild West town. The boys who had been traveling around the world on an expense-paid tour were young and, some say, a bit wild when Uncle Sam no longer had need for their skills. Things *were wild!* All that is needed to get the facts stretched is to have a few of the now-retired "kids" who were young in those formative years get together and listen to the tales of the then goings-on. But you don't have to believe *all* of it; *some* may be true!

Time has seen the surrounding communities of Renton and Tukwila expand from small towns and cow pastures to first-class cities, Bryn Mawr to a large bedroom community, and even Seattle has done some growing up.

Skyway's boundaries are just about the same as after the first builders started to turn the dirt to establish a bedroom community on top of the hill. Most of the empty lots have been built on, leaving very little area in which to expand. So here we sit enjoying ourselves!

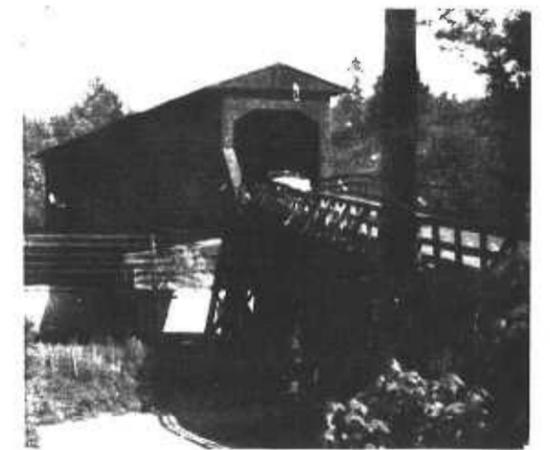
THE HISTORY OF SKYWAY: 1870 - 1983

The history of Skyway itself does not go back far beyond 1940, but the surrounding area was stirring quite a while before the first ground-breaking for the first modern homes on top of the hill.

On May 2nd, 1870, a Mr. B.L. Jones received a patent claim from the government for a quarter of a quarter section of land (10 acres) that is now in the vicinity of South 129th and 64th Avenue South. The property was subdivided and became, among other things, the Old Campbell Hill School. Dorothy Henderson, the daughter-in-law of Mr. Henderson, one of the earlier purchasers of land from Mr. Campbell, still lives on Langston Road near South 129th.

Not too many years later, in about 1880, John Monster obtained a donation claim in the area that now includes the Spider Staging Company factory. He proceeded to whittle out a farm of about 160 acres and settled down to make a living. A son, Charles, was born on the property, and Charles helped on the farm, eventually operating it himself. In due time, a son, John, was born to Charles' wife, Louisa, and was raised on the farm along with his brother, Frank.

This family had two ways in and out of the area: one by the railroad that soon passed next to their farm and the other by way of the Steel Hill Road. The road started at Renton Junction (which is now the intersection of Highway 405 and the West Valley Highway) and went north on what is now called Monster Road, until it met what is now the Beacon Coal Mine Road. It continued until it came to the road that went over the Steel Hill Bridge (a covered bridge built in 1910) into Allentown, and followed the river along what is now 42nd Avenue, north to Seattle. The Monster Road of today was put in

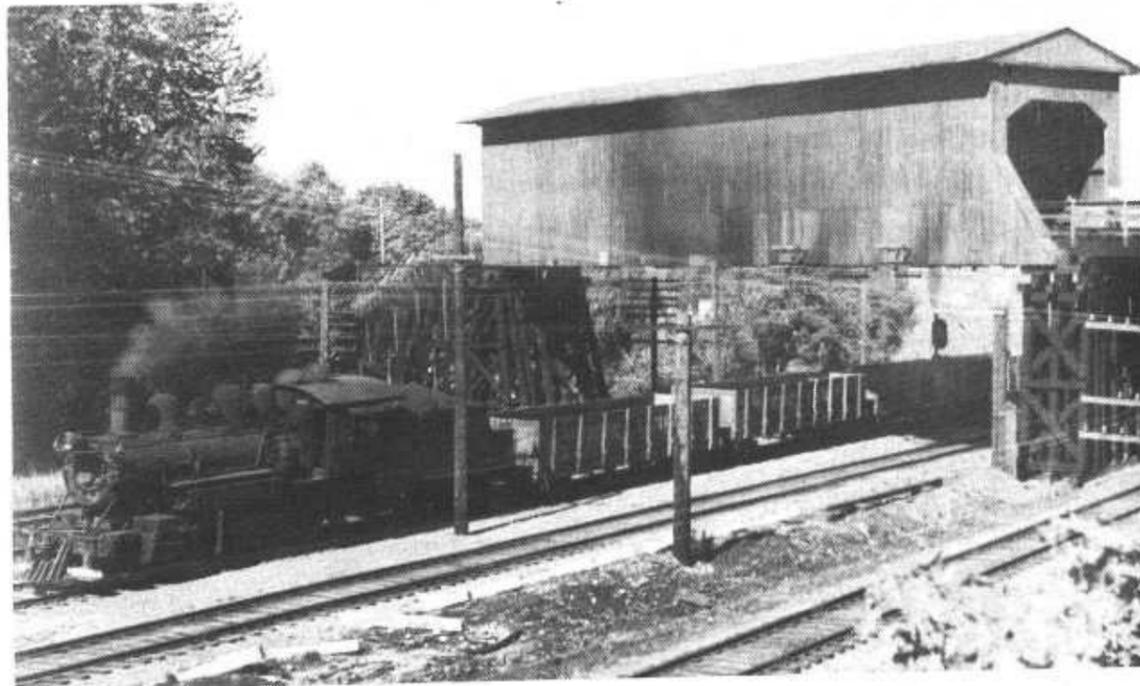


after the opening of Empire Way, in about 1936.

The Monsters had 50 head of dairy cows that were driven every day to pasture that was alongside where the Container Corporation is today. The cows were pastured also along the railroad tracks, next to the old Earlington Golf Course. They had to be driven over the railroad tracks on the way to pasture and home again for milking. Quite a job for John and his brother, Frank Jr. No cows were ever lost to any of the trains, however, which passed more frequently than today.

After years of teaming and digging basements and anything else that needed moving before the days of the bulldozer, John has semi-retired. He lives on Empire Way near (naturally) Monster Road.

The first railroad from Renton to Seattle was the Seattle Coal & Transportation Company, which began operating in 1878 when the moving of coal from New Castle became a big thing. This arrangement continued for some years until the Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad took over the operation which, in turn, became the Pacific Coast Railroad. The picture of the old covered bridge below was taken in 1951, just a few years before it burned in 1958. Pacific Coast was still hauling coal in 1951, over the same roadbed that was used in 1878, although the rails were traded for larger steel.

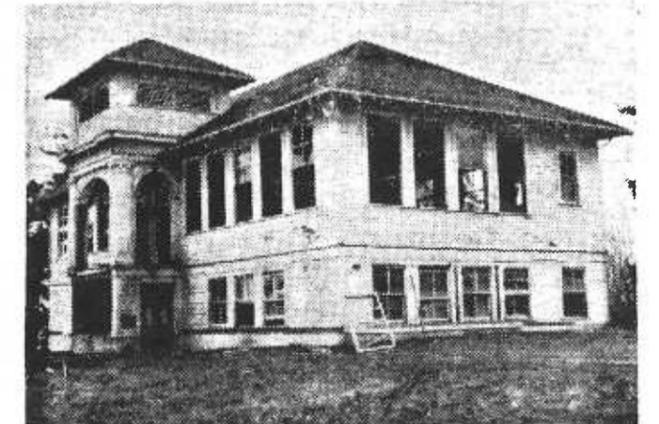


Another of the early happenings, in what is now the Skyway area, started in 1890, when Andrew J. Bossert purchased a piece of property from Pacific Coast Railroad. The property was a quarter of a section wide, between 64th South and 68th South; and a section long, between South 112th (Seattle limits) and South 128th. He started an apple orchard of many varieties to add to the family larder and the family purse. Part of the orchard is still producing on the property at 64th South and South 127th Place.

In about 1900, the City of Seattle Water Department was installing a wooden pipeline to the city from Cedar River. A young fellow, by the name of Duncan, had a job on the project that crossed the Bossert property, who courted and later married one of Mr. Bossert's daughters. In 1901, a daughter was born to this couple and was named Vesta, who still lives in the Skyway area. Both Mr. Duncan and his wife died shortly after and the young girl, Vesta, was raised by Mr. Bossert and his wife.

Vesta was raised on the old homestead property and attended the Old Campbell Hill School. It was housed in an old residence building that is still standing on the east side of the Seattle Water Department's line at South 131st. She attended the Old Campbell Hill School, which was built in 1914 and located on property donated by Mr. Campbell who worked for one of the local railroads. It was on top of the pipeline hill where the line crosses Langston Road (South 131st). The property is now occupied by Phil Raykovich.

This building was the typical 1914 schoolhouse; it had four rooms on two floors, with wide, outside stairs to the main floor. The school was operated by the King County School District and had a board of local citizens as members. Some of the board members were Messrs. Henderson, Bossert, Glen



Old Campbell Hill School being torn down in 1956