

# Capitol Hill Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2017

ISSUE NO. 7

## FEATURES MEETING SUMMARY P. 2-3

### Month of June

Updates on landmark plaques, outreach projects, and potential project proposals and volunteer opportunities, as well as upcoming CHHS Standards and Guidelines for Preservation and Development

## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY P. 4-5

### Freeway Construction

### Shutters Denny Way Access to Capitol Hill

A tale of terrible traffic: a World's Fair and construction on a brand-new I-5 highway, all in just one hot 1960's Seattle summer.

## UPDATES

### Next Meeting

Tuesday July, 18 at the Capitol Hill Library. Meet & Greet starts @ 5pm  
Official meeting starts @ 6pm.

## LANDMARKS PROFILE P. 6-8

### Pantages House

Rob Ketcherside's profile of a Capitol Hill landmark known for its mix of Beaux Arts, Queen Anne, and Craftsman styles.



Andy's Café, July 20, 1960. Image: Washington State Archives

# -June Meeting Summary-



Lincoln Reservoir as viewed from the since demolished Marianne Manor on Nagle Place. Circa late 1990s. Courtesy Clare Livingston.

Note well the geyser of water to the left of the pine tree. For those of you who moved to Seattle after 2005, this is a rare view of the open-air Lincoln Reservoir in its twilight years before it became Cal Anderson Park in 2005. One of our meeting attendees, Clare Livingston shot this photograph from Marianne Manor when she lived there in the 1990s. Marianne Manor was demolished in 2009 to make way for the light rail.

At the meeting proper, Rob recapped our progress on our landmarks project for the new attendees. While we covered most of this in our [May meeting summary](#), but Rob brought a few new items to light. A week after our May meeting, Rob noticed that the King County GOP made the following tweet for Throwback-Thursday.



Rob then replied with the following tweets:



Later that day, the KCGOP sent Rob an email to express their interest in the idea and to inquire about next steps. We have yet to hear back regarding their final decision, but we will give notice as soon as we do.

Aside from this, Rob showed us [pictures](#) from his tour of the Ballard Ave Historic District to give us all an idea of what he envisions for our landmark plaques.

Next Steps:

1. Continue research on the landmarks themselves
2. Contact vendors for price quotes on similarly styled plaques and installation
3. Rob will contact building owners after his term on the Landmarks Board ends



Photo of the June meeting taken by Catleah Cunanan



## OUTREACH UPDATES FROM ZACH

Bullet points should suffice here:

- The UW iSchool requested project proposals for potential iSchool student volunteers.
- A few local bars have expressed interest in hosting a Capitol Hill history trivia night.
- Zach has completed drafts of flyers with interesting facts on Capitol Hill history to hand out at events for outreach purposes.

Next steps:

- Complete project proposals. (see below)
- Brainstorm trivia questions. (volunteers needed)  
Find someone with graphic design experience to finish Zach's flyers. (volunteer needed)

## NEW PROJECT PROPOSALS

Speaking of project proposals for the iSchool, Tom presented two new potential projects.

### 1. King County Property Photo Digitization Project:

Briefly, the Puget Sound branch of the State Archives in Bellevue has historical photographs of every property in King County. We aim to digitize all photographs of all properties in Capitol Hill and make them accessible to the public. If you are interested in assisting us with this project and/or wish to know more contact us and read a more detailed description [here](#).

### 2. Newspaper research:

There are several newspapers in and around Seattle containing a plethora of stories about people and events in Capitol Hill. Some of these papers such as Seattle Times and a small portion of Seattle PI and Seattle Star are accessible online from home. Others, like Capitol Hill Times and the undigitized portions of the PI and the Star are accessible on microfilm at either the UW Library or Seattle Public Library. We aim locate and gather every Capitol Hill-related story in each of these newspapers.

If you are interested in browsing local newspapers for Capitol Hill-related stories, please contact us and read a more detailed description [here](#).

Interested in volunteering to research newspapers, but aren't sure where to start? A great starting point would be to seek out articles about our [landmarks](#).

Next Steps

- Obtain a scanner for photo digitization.
- Complete project proposals. (done!)
- Submit project proposals to iSchool.

## PREVIEW OF CHHS STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As a group, we spent a little time going over the draft of a document that Tom put together that will represent our official position on historic preservation and how new development fits into that. We mostly discussed one aspect of it: how to define the historic character of the neighborhood. Once Tom finishes integrating the various changes suggested by the group, we plan to submit a revised draft to the public for additional feedback.

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## -This Month In History-

### Freeway Construction Shuttters Denny Way Access To Capitol Hill



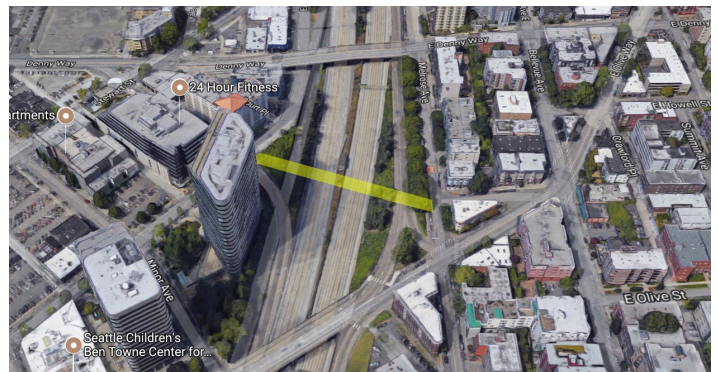
*Temporary wooden bridge extending from Olive Place to Yale Ave. Circa 1962, looking west Image: Washington State Archives*

#### Written By: Tom Heuser

For those of you, whether on foot or on wheels, gnashing your teeth over how frustrating it has been this summer to traverse the construction-ridden Denny way corridor as thousands more flood the area each month, here's a look back to a summer that was just as bad or worse. It was the summer of 1962 and Seattle was mid-way through its Century 21 World's Fair. Millions of visitors had passed through the city and millions more were yet to come and as if that didn't make getting around hard enough, I-5 construction was occurring simultaneously.

On July 3rd 1962 this construction required the shutdown of Denny Way between Eastlake Ave and Melrose Ave in order to build the Denny Way bridge over I-5. To supplement the loss of access, a temporary, two-lane, wooden bridge constructed one block south took its place.

The yellow line in the image below is where the wooden bridge connected Yale Ave on the left to Olive Place on the right. That triangle building on Olive Place is the home of Knee High Stocking Company.



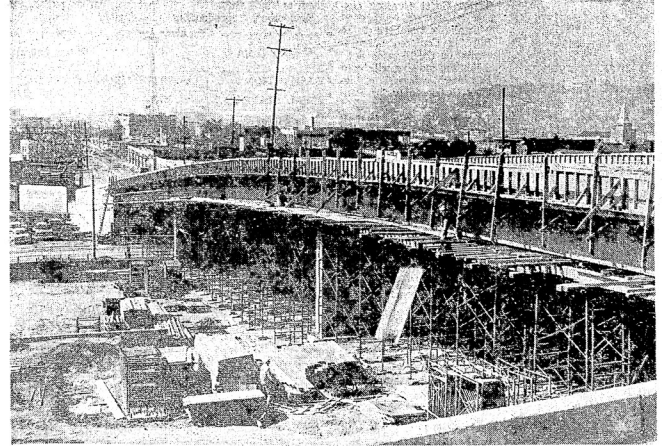
*Google Images*



According to the Capitol Hill Times, the roughly 10,000 drivers who took Denny Way each day would have to take this detour. Also, Capitol Hill businesses responded to the situation with a "shop-at-home" campaign with the assumption that it would simply be too challenging for residents to take the detour and shop elsewhere.

Fifteen months and \$36,000 later (\$286,000 today) Denny Way reopened as a widened 4-lane thoroughfare crossing over I-5 up to Bellevue Ave beyond which it narrows down again.

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*A nearly complete Denny Way bridge under construction circa September 1963. Image: Seattle Times.*



*Another view of the temporary wooden bridge extending from Olive Place to Yale Ave. Circa 1963, looking north. Image Frank Shaw (via Paul Dorpat)*



## -Landmark Profile-

### Pantages House



*Pantages house at the corner of Denny and Harvard Ave. Image: Rob Ketcherside*

#### Written By: Rob Ketcherside

In 2004 the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board voted to make the Pantages House a Seattle landmark. They had three reasons: its association with Alexander Pantages, its architectural style, and its prominent siting at the corner of Denny and Harvard.

The house was built in 1906 for Alexander Pantages by architects Knapp & West at the southeast corner of Denny Way and Harvard Avenue. It's a block from Dick's and the station.

#### CONSTRUCTION DATE

If you look around you'll find that everyone but us says it was built in 1907. That's the date given in the [city's report on landmark designation](#). Possibly that came from the 1936 King County Assessor property card, which is not to be trusted for early dates.

The closest we have to conclusive evidence is this photograph of the completed structure that ran in the January 14, 1906 Seattle Times. The caption indicated that there was still interior work to be done. Looks like it still needed landscaping, too. There's no way that took a year to complete. Construction finished in 1906.



*Jan 14, 1906 Image: Seattle Times*

## ALEXANDER PANTAGES



*Pantages circa 1910.  
Image: University of  
Washington*

Here's the text of the sidebar about Alexander Pantages from my book *Lost Seattle*:

Alexander Pantages was born in Greece as Pericles Pantages in 1896. He had grand ambition, and changed his name after hearing the story of Alexander the Great.

Pantages had a hard journey before he entered his calling in theater management. He left home at age 9 and took to the sea as a deckhand. He labored

on the Panama Canal, worked as a waiter and tried his hand at professional boxing in San Francisco.

Like every other restless man he heard his calling when gold was discovered in Alaska's Klondike in 1897. Unlike the others he quickly realized that more reliable money was to be made from the miners than in the mines. He returned to Dawson City and found work as a bartender and helped the saloon owner add a stage to draw more patrons with music.

After gold was discovered in Nome he moved there and tended bar for the first winter. But opportunity came knocking when the Klondyke Theater's owners failed to make ends meet. Pantages borrowed money from friends and opened his first theater, Pantages' Orpheum. Income and expenses were enormous. A violin string cost \$40, but the theater charged \$25 to see a show.

Pantages arrived in Seattle in 1902 from the Klondike and Nome gold rushes. In Alaska he learned the basics of running a vaudeville theater. In Seattle he opened the Crystal. It was small, simple, and profitable. He leveraged profits to build the Pantages Theater, named after himself. After he married singer Lois Menhendall he built another for her to perform in 1911, naming it the Lois Theater.

Alexander Pantages had no formal education and could not read or write. But he acquired a sailor and bartender's command of Greek, English, French, German, and Spanish. And he had an aptitude for mathematics which he used to control expenses and leverage investments to take new risk. Pantages was most often complimented for his unfailing memory and ability to find diamonds in the rough -- or gold in the dust.



*Pantages Theatre at 2nd & Seneca circa 1909.  
Image: Museum of History and Industry.*

## THE ARCHITECTS

The architecture firm Knapp & West designed the Pantages home. There isn't much written about this firm, but luckily the state Dept. of Archaeology & Historic Preservation has a good article about West to supplement the information in the designation report. Jacob A. Knapp and Thomas L. West formed their firm in 1904 and separated in 1909.

Thomas West was born in Idaho in 1879. He first appeared in Seattle in the 1898 city directory as a draftsman for Timotheus Josenhans. He worked for S. A. Jenning in 1900 and then joined a partnership with Charles N. Elliott in about 1901. His work continued as Elliott & West until 1904 when he joined Knapp.

Knapp previously worked for the Fred L. Fehren Company as an architect from 1903 to 1904. Knapp's career has not yet been researched but the designation report seems overly dismissive describing him as "only as a draftsman for the Fred L. Fehrens Company".

The extent of his work is unknown because Fehren Company did not credit staff architects. But as the DAHP article says,

"While Fred L. Fehren himself was not an architect or designer, his company made a profound impact on the built environment in the Seattle area during the early part of the 20th century. During his time in the city, Fehren spent 12 years conducting a variety of investment and real estate deals and is credited with forming at least eight subdivisions, as well as planned, built and/or financed over 600 buildings. As a real estate developer, he employed one or more architects and/or builders."

In addition to designing many homes built by Fehrens, Knapp many have contributed to a plan book put out just before he left the firm.

Knapp & West's first work mentioned in the Seattle Times was on January 14, 1905, plans for a home for Paul C. Murphy in the "Capitol Hill district". Murphy's home address continued to be listed as 1822 17th near Denny Way, so the home must not have ever been built. But within months the Seattle Times reported that Knapp & West had other projects out for bid and under construction.

The partnership completed many buildings and even more plans for our neighborhood in the run up to 1909 and the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition. After the fair concluded, Knapp moved to Vancouver, BC and formed a new partnership for a few years. Knapp's life after that is unknown. West practiced independently in Seattle for a couple of years and then moved to Medford, Oregon and on to many other cities through his life.

## ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The building is an eclectic mix of popular contemporary styles. As the designation report says, "The unusual combination of ornate and simple details reflect a transitional hybrid of the Queen Anne and Craftsman styles interspersed with Beaux Arts detailing."

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