

Memories of Our Post in the Eighties

By Harold Rodenberger

When I joined this post in the early eighties the post home was less than half as old as it is now.

From the front of the building to the back of the small meeting room and the bathroom hallway the building was the same except where the office is now, were the old men's and women's rooms and a small kitchen. Those small restrooms and kitchen were unused but left over from the original 1953 building before the 1963 addition added the section including the kitchen, new restrooms and the small meeting hall (see sketch #1 for a view of the VFW property as it was in 1985).

The office was located in the last room on the left as you go down the bathroom hallway. Since the office was back there, the front door was kept locked and there was a doorbell that alerted the quartermaster if he had a visitor.

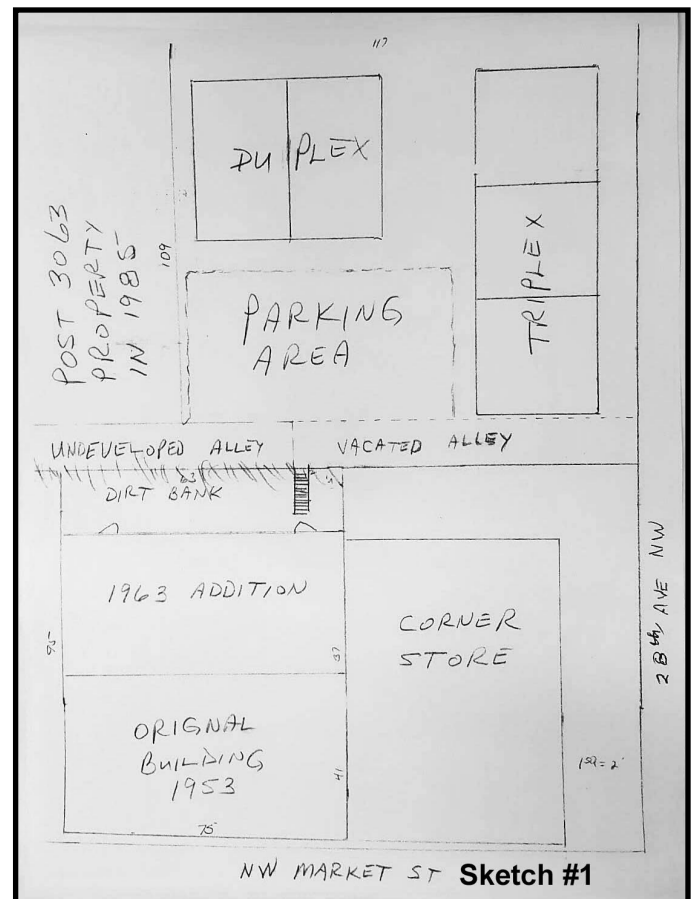
Going out the back doors led to a dirt bank. From the meeting room exit the dirt bank had a rickety wooden stairway leading up to the parking area, the other door led out to a buried oil tank which supplied the old oil furnace.

On the north side of the parking area was a duplex and on the east was a triplex. Some of our earlier members had the foresight to buy those buildings so both properties belonged to the post and were rented out to our members or dependents of deceased members at below market prices.

The buildings were built just after the war and were a continual headache to maintain but even though the apartments were small and the buildings old, the folks who rented them were grateful for a low-cost rental.

I sometimes did maintenance on those apartments. There was a small door leading to the crawlspace under each building. I got so used to going into those spaces my head had calluses where I bumped it on the beams while dealing with electrical, plumbing and other issues.

Because the post didn't make much money on the apartments we rented out our hall to the public. Those rentals were often troublesome with noise complaints and even a gunshot one night. On more than one occasion I came into the hall after a rental and found the floor wet with beer and there were broken bottles and garbage scattered throughout.





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Post business meetings: First Thursday of each month at 1900. Social evenings with a catered dinner: Third Thursday each month at 1830. Doors open 1730 for both events. Post Officers are listed on our Web site (<http://vfwseattle.org>)

Birthday Greetings and a free dinner in your birthday month. Ferguell, Bob F.

The lending-library of VFW Post 3063 in Ballard is very popular with military veterans and members; however, the post would like to have more books. The post welcomes the donation of any hard or soft-bound books that you, or perhaps your friends and neighbors have, books that are military-related no matter what historical era. Books can be dropped off at the post on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays from 1:00 to 5:00PM. or during the post's regularly scheduled business meeting or social evening. [Bill Hoeller]

Commander's Letter



By the time you read this, it is likely that Post 3063 has already hosted the District 2 fundraiser on May 1st. Hopefully you were able to navigate through the inevitable swarms of May Day Seattle anarchists and professional protesters and enjoy the event. The newly commissioned Post Honor Guard will make its debut at the dinner and hopefully we represented the post well.

On that subject, I would strongly encourage more post members to consider participating in the Honor Guard. For most events, we would require a minimum of four, two riflemen escorting two color bearers hoisting an American and VFW flag. I would like to have at least one alternate for each member so we can field at least four for any given event without depending on the same four to five people to represent us at each function. We all have busy lives and the more participants we have, the more events we can attend without overburdening a small number of post members. Did I mention the gig will eventually include a possible love life enhancing sharp uniform?

I want to thank you all for the hard work promoting our St. Patrick's Day and May 1st fund raisers. The prior event was successful and I anticipate similar success on May 1. I hope to see you there and may the door prize gods smile upon you. [Aaron Stoltz]

Quartermaster's Update



I like to travel.

Travel has many rewards but it also has uncertainties. When I check into a new hotel or condo I look at the pillows and wonder, "Are they soft and cozy, firm and comfortable or just another place to rest my head?" Much like the rest of life I never know until I put my head on one and give it a try.

Some people would rather stay home and put their head on their favorite pillow every night but never see anything new or exciting. I'd rather take my chances with the pillows and see a different slice of the world.

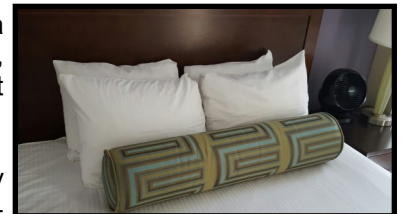
Our VFW world is a lot like those pillows. We have a new Color Guard that needs people to try it out. Maybe you would rather forget those long ago days of marching, but this program might be just the thing to perk up your life.

There are other programs available for the adventuresome member of our post. You could be part of the team that visits the VA Hospital bringing snacks and conversation to the patients. We also visit other hospitals, retirement and nursing homes.

The VFW has a wonderful program encouraging students from elementary through high school to write patriotic essays with amazing prizes for winners at all levels. We have opportunities for volunteers to visit and help the soldiers of our adopted Army National Guard unit.

Visiting with older members who are restricted to their homes, managing our meeting night food program or making calls or sending emails to delinquent or out-of-touch members; these are all ways to expand your comfort zone, see a different part of life and help your post.

Give it some thought, expand your life, call or email Commander Aaron or Quartermaster Harold to check out a new pillow. [Harold Rodenberger]





(Continued from page 1)

When the original building was put up in 1953 there were three windows across the Market Street side. Those windows were a problem due to the old steel frames and single pane glass construction. Outside they presented problems because of the kids or mental kids who occasionally threw rocks at them and inside they were cold and drafty.

The photo shows the plywood that we finally installed on the outside, covering all but the one operable unit of each window. When we installed the paneling in the main hall we insulated and covered the windows on the inside. Finally, in 2003 we hired a mason to take out the windows and fill the spaces with concrete blocks to match the existing. If you look closely when you visit the hall you can see the new blocks contrasting with the old.



In 1986 we dug out the dirt bank to the north of the building and added the retaining wall making the storeroom in the back and also built the upstairs addition. Jack Hulslander, a past Department Commander, was Quartermaster at the time. He wanted to move his office from the little room in the rear of the building to the upstairs addition. We still had alley access and parking

up there, and Jack posted a large sign on the front doors directing traffic to the parking area off 28th Avenue NW but even with that it didn't work out to have the office so far from the front door.

Not long after Jack died in 1992, Tom Brown was elected as Quartermaster and he, with help from Oscar Borchelt, removed some walls and toilets from the old restrooms so the office could be moved there from its remote location upstairs. That proved to be a wise move and the office is quite functional where it is now.

Parking was always a problem. We approached the owner of the parking lot on our west about buying. At the time the executives from Fentron parked there so no sale, but they did give us the right of first refusal. In 1993 the owner of the parking lot offered to sell. We debated long and hard about buying because of the outrageous price of \$75,000. Finally, in July we made the risky decision to buy the lot and took out a loan even though we didn't have much in the way of income. Despite the problems we increased our rentals to public groups and made small increases to the rent of the apartments so we could meet the bank payments for the parking lot.

Looking back that was a wise decision since parking has only gotten worse on this end of Market Street and today the value of that lot probably is close to a million dollars.

When we purchased the parking lot the bank to the north was overgrown with blackberries and there was a large willow tree growing out from the center at the edge of the parking lot. We dug out the tree, took out many trailer loads of dirt, installed the block retaining wall and built steps up to the office.



Parking Lot (before)



Parking Lot (after)

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In 1994 VFW Post 1416 approached us about consolidating with our post. Their membership had been declining until they seldom had a quorum at their meetings. They sweetened the proposal by offering their savings of approximately \$80,000 on the condition that we would combine their name, honoring Lt. James Eagleson, with ours. Our membership approved the consolidation, and we were officially consolidated in the spring of 1994.

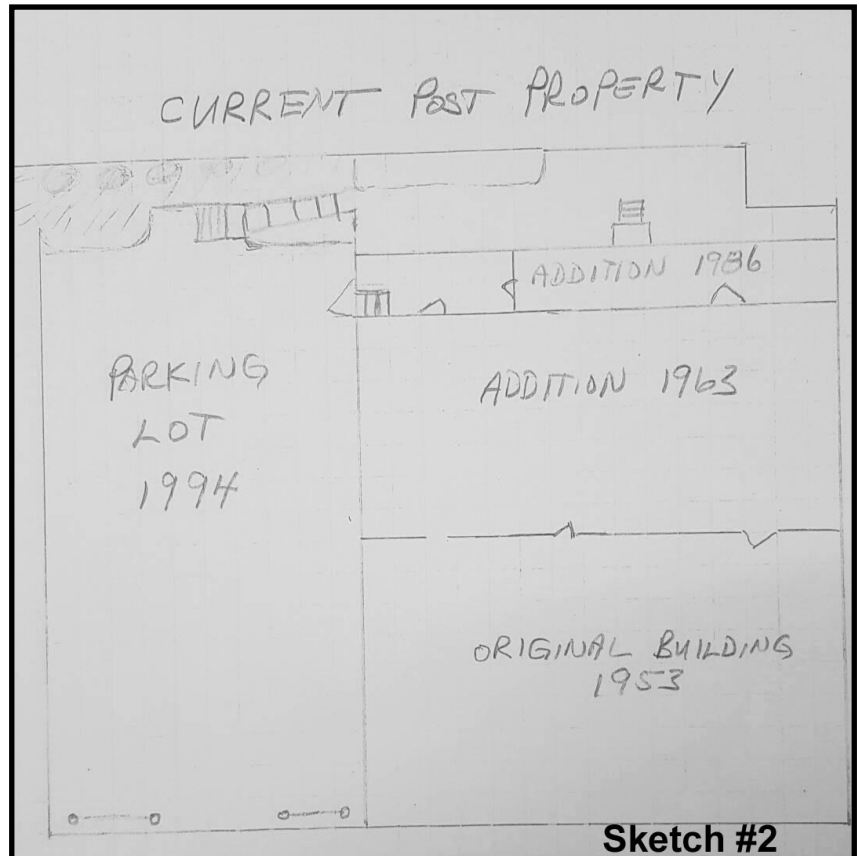
Finally, in 2005 we sold the apartments and invested the proceeds so we weren't forced to rent out the hall if we didn't want to. Unfortunately, with the sale of that property we lost access from NW 28th Avenue through the vacated alley so the renter of our upstairs space said goodbye and we've been dealing with that mostly empty space ever since.

When I was first Commander in 1985-86 the membership stood at 368. Even with that larger membership we only had 10-20 members in attendance at meetings due to the ever-increasing attraction of television and the decreasing interest in patriotic organizations such as the VFW. People found it easier to stay home, watch their favorite show and, even if they were members, more or less ignore the veterans of the VFW.

In the patriotic days after WWII our post met every Thursday evening. By the time I joined the meetings were reduced to twice per month. In January of 1989 we passed a motion to change the second business meeting of the month to a social get together. We tried pot luck dinners, dances, speakers and other ways to increase attendance but nothing seemed to offset the double whammy of television and the unpopularity of veterans' organizations.

Today, even though there has been a resurgence in popularity of veterans, the national veterans' organizations (along with fraternal organizations) all seem to be having trouble maintaining their membership. Fortunately, our post is bucking that national trend and even though our membership is about 140 the number of attendees at meetings and the social has gradually increased. Now is a respectable 20-30 at the meetings and anywhere from 25-40 at the socials.

Looking back over the past 34 years at Ballard Eagleson Post we have managed to sustain ourselves through occasional hard times and now are attracting younger veterans of more recent wars. The future health of our post looks good from the perspective of this old timer.





Memorial Day Activities

By Harold Rodenberger

Every year our Post is involved in many activities that center around Memorial Day. If you are interested in attending or volunteering for one or more of these events please contact the Chair of that activity or the Quartermaster.

Memorial Day Poppy distribution is conducted Memorial Day weekend. Contact Chairperson Gail Engler for details, (206) 706-2703 or cody24gracie@hotmail.com

A visit to the VA Hospital to distribute snacks and talk with patients is scheduled for May 30, 2016. For details contact Chairperson Justin Mamallo, (206) 697-9650 or the_lesco@hotmail.com

Volunteers will place flags on the 5000 veterans' graves at Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery starting at 0700 on May 30, 2016. For details call Brenda, (206) 362-5200. They also have a program later in the day.

Other cemeteries, including the Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent, will be conducting ceremonies. For details check the website of the one you are interested in attending.

Our post will conduct an American Flag retirement ceremony in our parking lot beginning at 1000 hours, either Saturday, May 28 or Sunday, May 29, 2016, depending on the weather. For details contact Bill Hoeller, (206) 632-3173 or wwwhoeller@w-link.net

Every year there are requests from retirement homes and other local facilities for flag ceremonies. These requests usually come a week or two before Memorial Day. If you are interested in participating in this type activity, please check our website (vfwseattle.org) for late-breaking details.

Movin' and Groovin' or Renewing and Reconsidering a Motion

By Clark Silliman

Once a motion has been defeated, it may be renewed by the maker, **but only at a future meeting.**

If a motion has been defeated, but more discussion on the merits of the motion might be beneficial or desirable, a **MOTION TO RECONSIDER** the defeated motion can be made, **but only by a member who previously voted for the prevailing side** (that is, one who voted against the defeated motion). A **MOTION TO RECONSIDER** requires a second, can be debated, but may **NOT be amended**. If the **MOTION TO RECONSIDER** passes, the result is just as though the original vote had not been taken. In other words, the original motion that was defeated is up for vote again after any debate or discussion. **Example:** the original motion was to hold a fundraiser. That motion was defeated. A motion to reconsider that fundraiser motion is made and seconded. That second motion (to reconsider) passes. After discussion/debate, another vote is taken. This time, if a majority so votes, the fundraiser motion passes.

Seattle Audubon is starting a new program where they present a birdhouse to the families of their deceased members to honor their memory. They are asking for help from local veterans in a morning of bird house building on May 28 from 1000 to 1200. Location: 8050 35th Ave NE. RSVP to 206-523-8243 x12 or cassan-dras@seattleaudubon.org. For more details contact Clark Silliman, (206) 527-4464 or clark.silliman@gmail.com



As those of us who have heard him practicing before some business meetings know, our Commander, Aaron Stoltz, is a piper and a member of the Seattle Police Pipes & Drums (SPP&D). This group held their annual fund raiser, an “Emerald Evening,” on April 16 at the Seattle Police Athletic Association Pavilion. Several Post 3063 members were in attendance.

Aaron took up the pipes only a few years ago, starting from scratch and is now an accomplished piper in the band. We watched the group perform a number of traditional and patriotic songs during the course of the evening’s entertainment, while enjoying drinks, appetizers, a full course buffet dinner and an after-dinner program featuring presentations, door prize drawings and a really exciting and successful auction with impressive donated prizes. At one point, the band played the songs of the U.S. Military while members of the services were asked to stand and be recognized during the playing of their song—a very nice gesture.

The SPP&D Web site notes that “The Seattle Police Pipes & Drums was established in January of 2011 following the line-of-duty death of Seattle Police Officer Timothy Brenton, who was killed on October 31, 2009. The famous Seattle Firefighters Pipes & Drums performed during Officer Brenton’s funeral and did so with tremendous class and honor, which Tim and his family so deserved. From the tragic loss of Officer Brenton came the inspiration to establish our own police pipe band. Having our own police pipes and drums band allows us to honor our own officers the same way the firefighters have graciously done for so many years. The call for members went out and the response was overwhelming as over seventy Seattle Police Officers initially answered that call and joined the band.” [<http://seattlepolicepipesanddrums.com/>]

The band has played at Line of Duty funerals in locations in Washington State, Alaska and Idaho. The group performed in Washington, D.C. for Police Memorial Week, Boston, MA for the 9/11 Memorial and participates in parades, community events and marches including playing in Ireland on a tour. The association is a 501(c)(3) organization and well worth supporting. [Charles Anderson]