

WELCOME TO SUMNER

A community founded at the confluence of the Stuck (White) and Puyallup Rivers in 1891, Sumner is known as the original home to Whitworth College and the birthplace of the Daffodil Festival. Sumner has maintained its small town heritage with an active downtown reflective of the 1920s.

The Historic Sumner Walking Tour was supported in part by a grant from the Washington Commission for the Humanities, a State affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Tour was made possible through the local cooperation and contributions of the Sumner Historical Society and the City of Sumner.

The contents of the brochure do not necessarily represent the views of either the Washington Commission for the Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.



From Seattle:

Follow 1-5 South to 1-405, North to SR-167, South to SR-410 East. Follow Sumner exit signs.

From Tacoma:

Follow River Road East to SR-161, North (Meridian St. N.) to SR-167, North to SR-410 East. Follow Sumner exit signs.

From Olympia:

Follow 1-5 North to SR-512, East to SR-167, North to SR-410 East. Follow Sumner exit signs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Ryan House Museum
(253)863-8936

City of Sumner (253)
863-8300

www.sumnerwa.gov



A SELF - GUIDED TOUR THROUGH *the* HISTORICAL LANDMARKS

OF SUMNER WASHINGTON



SUMNER

In Sumner, sunny Sumner
As I walked along the street
This morn, I see the houses
Marshaled in rows so neat.

Some are large and spacious
Some are very small
But almost every one of them
Is'nt bad at all.

Some are painted tastefully
In colors gay and trim
Indicating that the owners
Are just "chuck full" of vim.

Some are grays and soft dull
browns with shrubbery set about
I know what people live within
These homes ere they came out.

For, as the earthly body
Is an index of the Soul
To know a man we only need
To gaze upon the whole.

Ensamble, home, shrubbery
Yard and street
To get an indication,
Of the kind, before we meet.

So, in Sumner, sunny Sumner
The homes are fair to see
If you have not observed this,
Just you trail around with me.

Most any of these mornin's
When the dawn's
Still in the sky, and
A little bit of heaven
Will see it, You and I.

-Edward Cecil,
Sumner Standard,
Sept. 7, 1928

THANKS

The preparers of this tour thank the many individuals who contributed to its production. Every effort has been made to verify facts and we regret any inaccuracies. While we have listed many buildings and sites, this is only a sampling of the rich history of Sumner and its architecture. You are invited to continue to walk and see our treasures.

HISTORY OF SUMNER

FIRST SETTLERS

Sumner was settled in 1853 by members of a wagon train which crossed over the mountains through the Naches Pass. In some places, it was necessary to lower the wagons over a cliff. Isaac Lemon and Addison Perham signed for donation land claims on September 20, 1853, followed by Charles Bitting, George D. Heyward, Abial Morrison, William M. Kincaid, Robert S. More, Jonathan W. McCarty, Thomas Owens and Abram Woolery. Other future residents of Sumner on that first wagon train were Isaac and James Woolery, John Van Ogle and Albert Lane. William Kincaid and his wife's family, the Woolerys, settled adjoining donation land claims (DLCs). In 1883, the town was platted on the 160 acre Kincaid DLC by John and Nancy Kincaid and Lucy and George Ryan. In 1873 George Ryan came west from Baraboo, Wisconsin. He purchased 40 acres in Sumner from Main Street to Park Street from Laura Kincaid Seaman and then married his childhood sweetheart, Lucy V. Wood, in 1875 in San Francisco. Ryan farmed the 40 acres; raised fruit, vegetables and hops; owned a sawmill; built a big section of the business district; helped establish a railroad depot and was elected Sumner's first mayor in 1891.

SUMNER'S NAME

The village was first called Stuck Junction and later Franklin. A local resident, J.P. Stewart, was instrumental in establishing a post office serving the area now governed by Puyallup and Sumner, and he named the area Franklin after his hometown in New York State. When the nearby post office relocated, another one was needed in Sumner. The U.S. Postal Department requested a new name for the post office since there were so many places named Franklin and delivering mail became confusing. Three townsmen, John F. Kincaid, L.F. Thompson and George Ryan, could not agree on a name, so each placed a name on a slip of paper and put it into a hat. A boy was called into the store to pick one of the slips, and it came out "Sumner." Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts and a popular statesman of the 19th century, was known for his efforts toward the abolition of slavery among other issues. The name of Sumner went on the railroad depot after the town incorporated in 1891.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Lying in a fertile river valley, Sumner became an agricultural community at the junction of the Puyallup River and Stuck Creek (now known as the White River). Prior to the turn of the 20th century, the City prospered from the growth of hops on surrounding farms. This flirting with prosperity brought wealth to people, who built notable homes. The establishment of the Northern Pacific line through the Sumner area and the erection of a depot influenced the development of the community with the downtown and core residential area developing within a 15-minute walk from the station. With 127 registered voters and a majority vote, the town of Sumner incorporated in 1891. Reporting a population of 538 in 1900, Sumner has grown to a population of approximately 10,000 in 2019.

A DRIVE THROUGH SUMNER

A guide to areas more accessible by car.

1. Seibenthaler Park

To serve the north side of town, Seibenthaler Park was established around 1945 at a cost of \$6,000. It is named for a local Boy Scout leader.

2. Herbert Williams House

Private Residence, 1711 Elm Street. This house was built in 1890 by Herbert Williams for his wife Lola. It exhibits design elements of both the Italianate and Queen Anne styles of architecture and was lavishly detailed using a fortune obtained from the booming hops production. This building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

3. Sidney Williams House

Private Residence, 15003 Elm Street E. Constructed in the late 1890s by Sidney Williams, the home is large, simply detailed and exhibits elements of both Italianate and Queen Anne styles of construction. This house and that of brother Herbert Williams are the last reminders of the successful era of hops production. This building appears on the National Register of Historic Places.

4. Charles W. Orton House

Private Residence, 7473 Riverside Road E. Built in 1914, the Charles W. Orton residence is near the north bank of the Puyallup River. The bungalow house and remaining grounds are basically unaltered since Mr. Orton had it carefully expanded in 1923, shortly after his marriage. Emphasizing production methods and marketing potential, Orton conducted several agricultural operations on his property including dairying and the production of hops, asparagus, rhubarb and, most notably, narcissus bulbs. Some attribute the beginnings of the annual spring Daffodil Festival to Orton in 1926. This building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

5. Puget Sound Bulb Exchange

7905 Riverside Road E. Twelve bulb growers, mostly from the Puyallup Valley area, met at the Woodland Park Floral Greenhouses in Sumner in January 1926 and decided to form the Puget Sound Bulb Exchange. The first president and sales manager was Frank Chervenka. From 1926 to 1990, a total of at least 83 bulb growers were members at one time or another. Its main purposes were the selling, packing and shipping of members' bulbs. It became one of the most successful cooperatives organized in Washington. From 1926 to 1965, the Exchange operated out of leased

Burlington Northern sheds adjacent to the railroad tracks in Sumner. Then, in 1966 the Exchange built the building at Riverside Road E.

6. Stuck River Bridge (removed in 2019)

The steel span provided access to northwest Sumner across the White (Stuck) River. It was built in 1927 to replace the aging West Main Bridge (lying to the south). The first bridge across the White (Stuck) River was completed in 1863 at a cost of \$495. In 1906 debris and sediment generated by high flow on the White River north of Sumner dammed its channel and caused the river to flow south into the Stuck Creek near present day Auburn. Once into the creek, the water from the White River could flow into the Puyallup River. The construction of a diversion dam at Auburn shortly afterward fixed the White River in its new channel, making it a permanent tributary to the Puyallup River, and Stuck Creek became known as White River.

7. Old Warehouses

13608-A Valley Avenue E. (Old Pacific Highway). This large warehouse, predating 1922, once housed the H.A. Baker Inc. cannery. It now contains a large furniture retailer.

8. Sumner Cemetery

Valley Avenue East. In 1864 the Pioneer Cemetery began on two acres of land donated by Isaac Woolery. In 1902 the "town" section of the cemetery was added. Bill Woolery, the son of Isaac Woolery, acted as sexton for the pioneer part until the two sections were united and the City of Sumner took over its management.

9. Rainier View Park

Parker Road and Meade-McCumber. This park was opened in 2005, displaying many works of art done by local school children, highlighting fun and whimsy.

10. Dieringer School

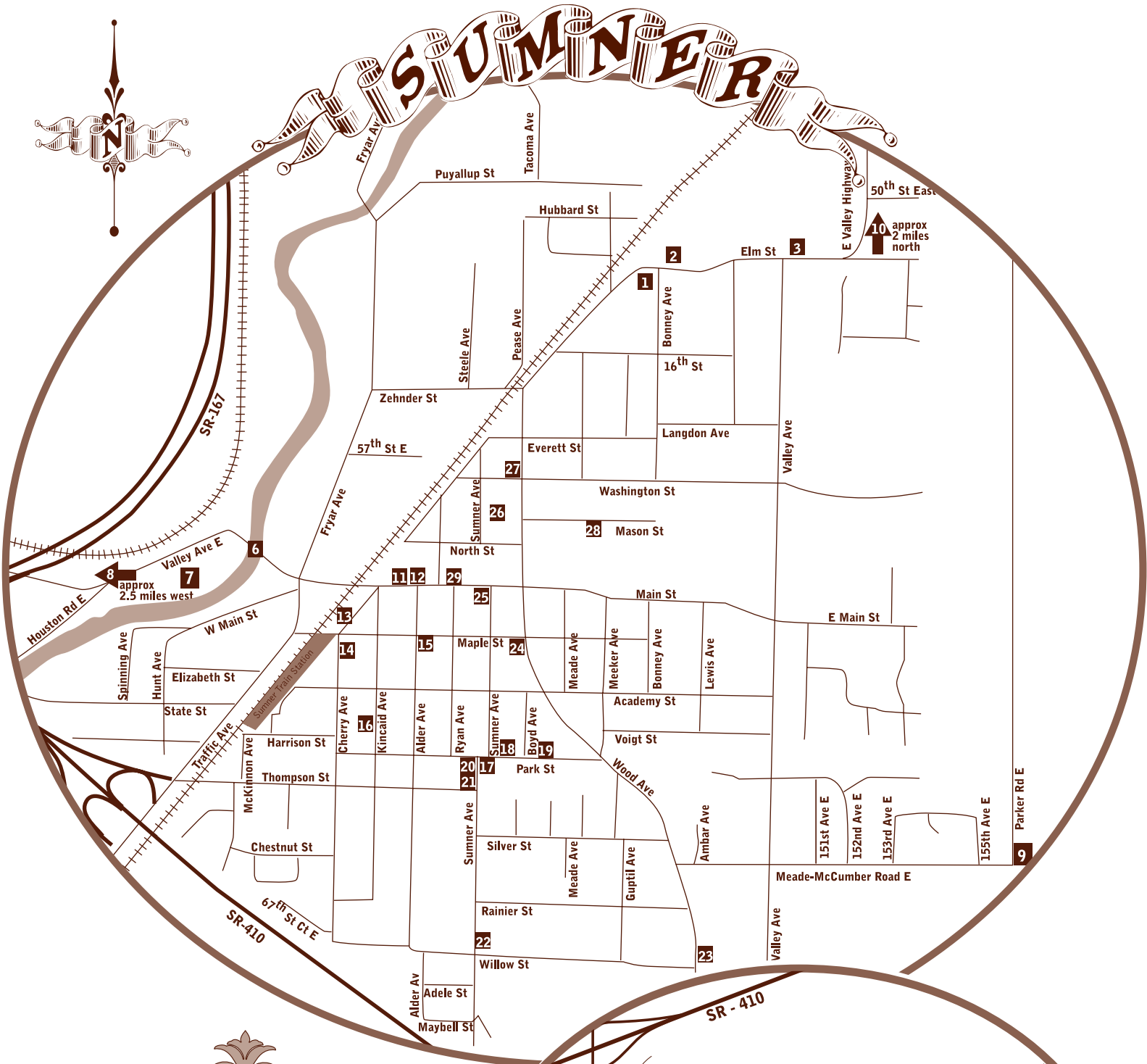
2008 East Valley Highway. On the National Register of Historic Places, the school was constructed from 1921 to 1928. It was designed by Mr. Bresemann in the Georgian Revival Style and is an excellent example of early 20th century rural public schools. The school complex functioned in the early days as a community center, hosting "gym nights" with movies and night classes for area residents. The school closed in 1992 and was restored as a corporate office over the subsequent five years.



PRIVACY

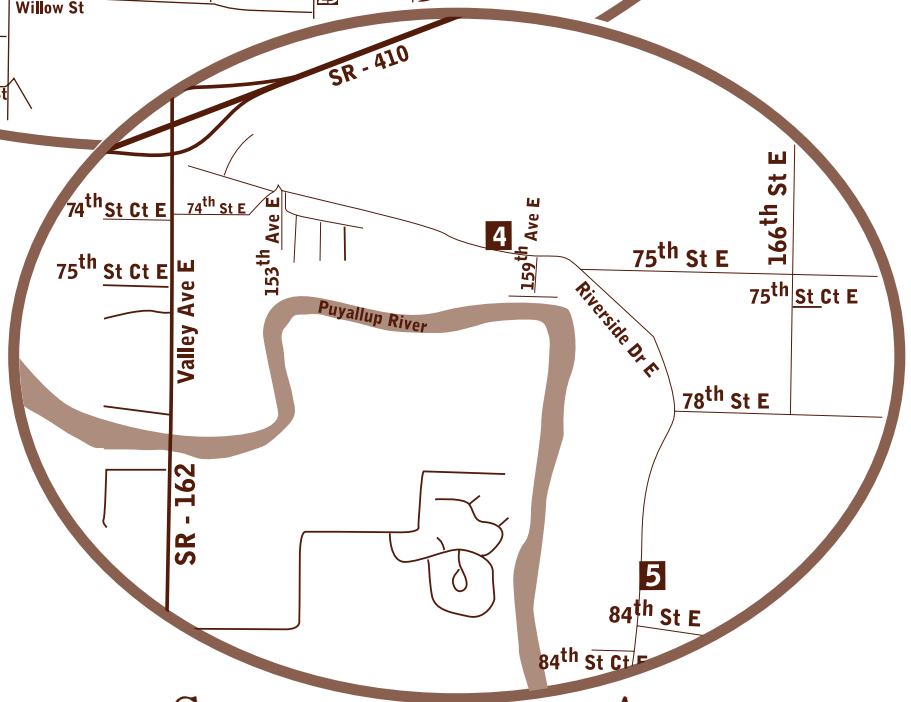


Please note that many of the sites and structures are still privately owned and every effort should be taken to protect the rights and privacy of the owners and occupants.



IN COMMEMORATION OF SUMNER'S CENTENNIAL

In 1991, four murals depicting scenes of bygone days were created in downtown Sumner. You can view them on the sides of buildings at
908 Alder Avenue 918 Cherry Street
1114 Main Street 1221 Main Street



SOUTHEAST SUMNER AREA

A WALK

THROUGH SUMNER

11. Phoenix (Masonic) Lodge, 1005 Main Street. This two-story brick building with a flat roof and decorated crenellation was designed in 1924 by William Aitken and constructed by William A. Blackadder to house the Spencer & Fryar Grocery Store and offices. One commercial front has been altered. The other commercial fronts remain with the original transoms and flat canopy roof. In 1952, the same architect designed a second story alteration to allow a lodge room and banquet room.

12. 1101 Main Street, In 1903 this building was constructed as a bank. The vault remains inside today. The structure is a two-story brick utilitarian building with a flat roof and a floral pattern on the cornice. The first floor front has been altered.

13. 918 Cherry Avenue, This two story building is constructed of brick and stucco with a gable roof and side parapets. There is a row of wrought-iron brackets below the second-story windows. The commercial front has been altered where the segmental arched window area has been partially covered with newer brick. The second story was originally built as a private residence.

Visible from this block, across the railroad tracks are the

Site of old BNRR Railroad Depot, In 1873 Northern Pacific announced that Tacoma would be the terminus of their rail line. Northern Pacific officials said they could not stop along the line until a depot was erected. George Ryan built a depot at his own expense and paid the salary of the agent for a year. He was reimbursed later, and Northern Pacific took over the station. The advent of the railroad did much to stimulate the town. After the railroad came through, the town was platted on the Kincaid Donation Land Claim. Industries such as food processing plants sought sites along the railroad. When fruit shipments would arrive at a cannery, the train whistle would call workers. Until 1962 the Sumner city limits could be reached within a fifteen-

minute walk from the terminal. The original depot has since been removed and replaced with the Sound Transit commuter rail station. Opened in 2001, the new station incorporates public art designed by T. Ellen Sollod



ORIGINAL BNRR RAILROAD DEPOT

and based on the community's history. The two metal trellis structures greet commuters entering the station. The roof of each pays homage to Sumner's past with the pattern of hops vines that cast shadows on the sidewalk below. Accompanying tree grates of a stylized hop blossom design are used throughout the station. The Station's buildings mimic the historic architecture of

the old hops barns and chimneys of the drying kilns.

800 Traffic Avenue, Located directly across from the historic location of the Sumner Depot, this building is a single-story wood-frame structure with a gable roof and large side wooden doors. It was constructed in the 1930s by the Burlington Northern Railroad for maintenance purposes. It now contains a feed and farm supply company.

14. Old Sumner Hotel, 817 Cherry Avenue. The Old Sumner Hotel was located close to the original Sumner Railroad Depot. The two-story wood-frame cottage was built around 1890 and originally stood at the triangle facing old Narrow Street. The old hotel now contains several apartments.

15. Sumner City Hall, 1104 Maple Street. This two-story brick building houses the City administration offices and police department. The City purchased the property from Laura Ranney in 1928, the same year that Sumner's status changed from a town to a city with a population of 1,426. The original building at the northwest corner was constructed in 1935, and the eastern addition was opened in 2001.

16. Whitworth College site,

A lot was deeded as a site for the Presbyterian Church by John Kincaid, and the Church was erected in 1877. Once a month, Dr. George H. Whitworth rode out from Seattle to preach. Whitworth College began in Sumner at the Presbyterian Church in 1883 (as an academy). Its focus was on liberal arts. In 1890, the College moved to the block bounded by Alder on the east, Cherry on the west, Academy on the north and College (now Park Street) on the south. The institution enrolled both men and women. In order to reach a larger number of students, the College moved to Tacoma in 1899 and then to Spokane in 1913, where it is presently located. When the College moved from Sumner, the building became a hotel. After a fire in 1918, the building was destroyed. The first edifice to be built on the grounds was St. Andrew's Catholic Church.

17. Loyalty Park, The property now known as Loyalty Park was once planted with hops as part of the 160 acres farmed by L.F. Thompson. The park was donated to the City shortly after the disaster of the hops industry, the aphid disease of 1892-1893, at which time the few wealthy growers lost everything including their homes. Until about 1913, the park property was covered with brush and weeds along with many maple trees. In about 1914-1915, the City installed sewers and paved the main streets around the park. The bandstand was moved from



HOP KILN

THE STATION'S BUILDINGS MIMIC THE HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE OF THE OLD HOPS BARNs AND CHIMNEYS OF THE DRYING KILNS.



WHITWORTH COLLEGE

“Hocking Square” to the park. In 1914 the Women’s Civic Club of Sumner was organized, activity plans were made and the park became a reality.

18. Saba Poolman House, Private Residence, 1309 Park Street. Around 1916, Saba Poolman, owner of Woodland Park Floral, worked with Allie N. Paulhamus to draw up plans for Loyalty Park which included walkways, plantings, and a bandstand as the center of attraction.

19. Pasquier House, Private Residence, 1401 Park Street. This is the family home of the Pasquiers, local business entrepreneurs, who opened the lumber operation, The Hewitt Lee Funk Company in 1914. This became the Pacific Lumber Company and Pasquier Panel Products, still in operation today.

20. Private Residence, 1132 Park Street. Exemplifying the pleasing architecture around Loyalty Park, this home is a two-story wood-frame bungalow with a cross gable and shed roof. There is a half-round window in the gable end with fanned mullions.

21. Walter Heath House, Private Residence, 604 Sumner Avenue. This two-story wood-frame cottage was built by Walter H. Heath around 1900. Heath had an active role in the development of Sumner and was involved in the formation and early activities of the Rhubarb Growers Association. When the family moved to Montana in 1916, they rented the house to one of Sumner’s more colorful characters, State Senator Corydon “Nifty” Garette.

22. “The Elms,” Private Residence, 315 Sumner Avenue. This home was built and originally occupied by L.F. Thompson and is a fine example of the mansions of the late 1880s with period woodwork and frescoed ceilings. Levant Frederick Thompson was born in New York and eventually made his way to Washington Territory. He started and operated a mill near Fort Nisqually (Steilacoom) until 1855, served in the Army and then moved to Sumner. Some credit him as the original grower of hops in the area. Mr. Thompson was elected to serve Pierce County in the First Session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Washington. He was also one of the incorporators and directors of the Merchants’ National Bank of Tacoma, director of the Washington National Bank and president of the Farmers’ and Merchants’ National Bank of King County.

23. W.H. Paulhamus House, Private Residence, 313 Wood Avenue. This two-story wood-frame cottage was built in 1882 by Elijah C. Meade and later acquired by W.H. Paulhamus when Meade lost his investment in hops. Paulhamus organized the Puyallup and Sumner Fruit Growers Association. The farm, known as Maple Lawn, became a national testing ground for all agricultural products as an early research station. Paulhamus became Vice-President of the Puyallup Fair its first year in 1900 and served as president from 1906 to 1925.

24. Weaver Apartments, 1314 Maple Street. Originally owned by Ralph Weaver and constructed by William A. Blackadder in 1925, this was one of the first apartment buildings in Sumner. Ralph Weaver originally lived on the entire first floor with his family.

25. Ryan House, 1228 Main Street. George Ryan was instrumental in establishing the town of Sumner and became its first mayor in 1891. The east wing is the original 1860’s Kincaid/Seaman one-room cedar cabin; the property was sold to George Ryan in 1872 and enlarged in 1875. The Ryans added



RYAN HOUSE

Sumner Historical Society now occupies the City-owned Ryan House, and the grounds are part of the Sumner parks system.

26. The Wade Calavan building, formerly at 1202 Wood Avenue, was once an elementary school and later housed the Sumner School District Administration. The building was

constructed in the 1920s, replacing the original Sumner School building of 1891, a grand three-story building with a bell tower that housed all grades until a fire in 1924. A model of the old school can be seen at the Ryan House Museum. The new School District Administration building, built in 2004, repeats some of the design details of the original Sumner School, including the cupola, steep dormers, and location on the center of the site. Etchings of school scenes adorn the walkways off Wood Avenue.

27. Old Methodist Church, 1313 Washington.

Now a private residence, this former church, built prior to 1903, is a single-story structure with a clipped gable roof and front cross gable. Major windows are lancet arched two-or six-pane double hung. The steeple has a hip roof with finials with brackets in between rectangular vents. There are two raised gable roofed over-the-door entries with wood post supports and balustrades. The double doors have transoms. The parsonage house is attached to the main building and is part of the residence.

28. 1400 block of Mason Street, As a result of a prosperous agricultural economy in the valley, several homes were built on Mason Street in the 1890s. Fine examples include 1427 and 1428 Mason Street.

29. 1207 Main Street, This structure was originally built for Puget Power in the 1930s. It is an one-story cement-block utilitarian building with a flat roof and raised cornice. The center recessed entry has side quasi-art deco pilasters with a stepped gable peak and circle design. Above the door are three true arched recessed windows.



OLD SUMNER SCHOOL

NOTABLE STUDENTS OF SUMNER’S SCHOOLS INCLUDE

Clara McCarty, first graduate of the University of Washington in 1876. She received a Bachelor of Science degree. After post-graduate work at U.C. Berkeley, McCarty was elected as the first female Pierce County Superintendent in 1890, before women were even allowed to vote. **Brigadier General Chester Clifton**, military aide to President John F. Kennedy