

18

Fischer Meats and Lewis Hardware
75 Front Street and 95 Front Street

These two businesses were founded during Issaquah's initial coal-mining boom. Lewis Hardware was established circa 1903 by J.J.Lewis; the original store was on a Front Street lot near present-day Dogwood. In 1921 the store moved to its present location. For nearly a century, shoppers have relied on Lewis for a wide variety of services. Fischer Brothers Meats, although currently housed in a 1956 building, traces its history back to the 1910s. John Fischer was born in Germany and came to Issaquah by way of Argentina and Maple Valley. He worked for Finney's Meats in Issaquah before opening his own butcher shop.

19

Bicycle Shop/Bank of Issaquah (1910)
111 Front Street N

Wilbur W. Sylvester was Issaquah's station agent from 1895 to 1899. When he resigned to found the Bank of Issaquah, Sylvester stated, "I am going to try and increase the business by building up the town." His venture proved successful, and ten years later this building replaced the bank's original wooden structure. Sylvester insisted on an 11-foot wide sidewalk, which meant the building sat back from Front Street three more feet than other businesses. Sylvester later talked neighboring businesses into constructing their buildings back three feet as well, resulting in wider sidewalks on one side of Front Street. The original building featured ornate detailing on both the outside and the inside.



20

First Stage/Issaquah Theatre (1913)
120 Front Street N

Rufus H. Glenn came to Issaquah in 1912 and opened the first theater in town. This building became its permanent home. A fine example of early pioneer wood construction, the building has housed silent films, basketball games, school dances, and graduations. During the late 1960s the theater was remodeled and the Issaquah Theater Group began using it. The theater reopened under the name Village Theatre in 1979. This building is now used for the Village Theatre's First Stage performances, while Mainstage shows have moved across the street to the Francis J. Gaudette Theatre, 303 Front Street N.

About the Issaquah History Museums

The Issaquah History Museums, founded as the Issaquah Historical Society in 1972, works to discover, preserve and share the history of Issaquah and its environs. For more information about Issaquah's history, including other historic buildings, visit our web site at www.issaquahhistory.org.

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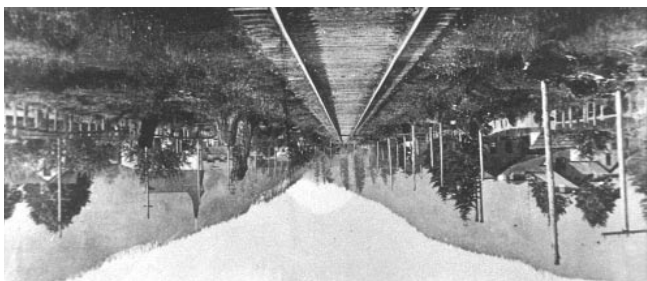


Historic DOWNTOWN Issaquah

Walking Tour



Grand Central Hotel

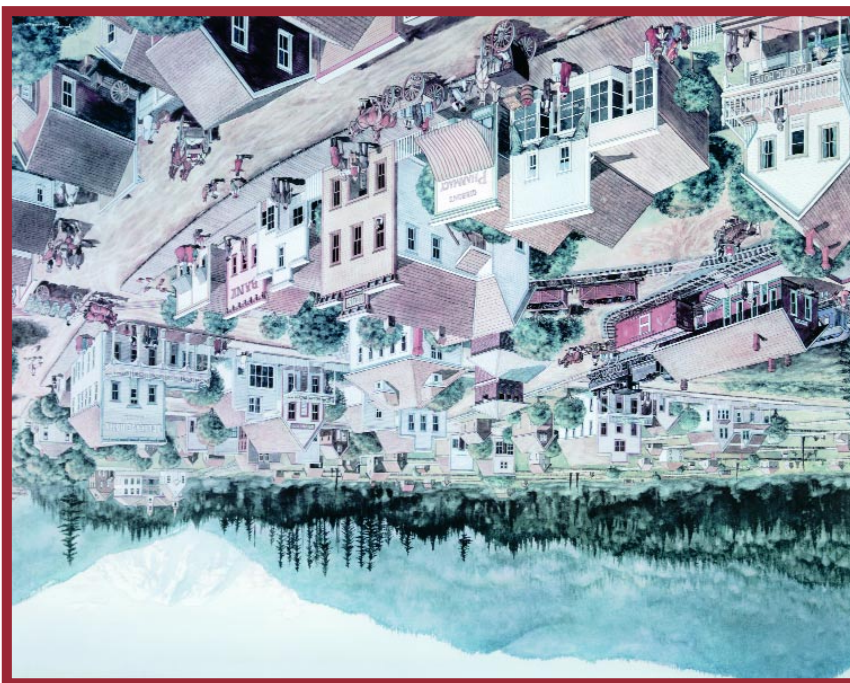


Today, Issaquah is a thriving city, yet it retains many elements of its historical beginnings. We invite you to take a stroll through our community and see some of the historical buildings and sites that have figured in Issaquah's past.

After World War II, the boom-and-bust cycle of the natural resource industry was replaced by slow community evolution. The town's population hovered around 1,000 until 1940, when the first floating bridge over Lake Washington was opened. The bridge brought Issaquah within easy driving distance of Seattle and the town's transformation from a rural community to a bedroom suburb began.

providing a fast way to transport coal to Seattle. As the mines flourished, saloons, hardware stores, boarding houses and other shops sprang up. Logging also brought workers into the town, as more immigrants arrived to fell trees and establish sawmills. The town grew quickly, as immigrant from many nations came into the area, along with newcomers from across the country. Trains carried passengers, mail, freight, food and livestock into Seattle. Passenger service through Issaquah was available until 1922. Nearly all freight service was discontinued after 1958, when Northern Pacific closed the Depot. Trains stopped coming to Issaquah in 1996 as the result of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe merger, which vacated the local branch line and service to Darigold.

brought the railroad to town. In 1899, residents petitioned to change the town's name to Issaquah, a closer approximation of the Native American place name. By 1889 the town had its own railroad depot. The railroad helped make coal mining a profitable operation.



The first residents of this area were the Sammamish, Native Americans of the Coast Salish culture group. They depended on the salmon and cedar which were plentiful in the Pacific Northwest. They called this place "ishquah," a word which meant "the sound of water birds." White settlers began arriving in the 1860s, drawn by the fertile farmland. They called the area Squak, a variation on the Native American place name. In 1892 the town was incorporated as Gilman, after Daniel Hunt Gilman, who

The Journey From Squak to Gilman to Issaquah

1 Visitor Center/Alexander House (1902)
155 NW Gilman Boulevard

The Alexander House was built in 1902 by Thomas and Caroline Alexander on land that was known for most of the Twentieth Century as Alexander's Resort. The couple first moved to the area when Thomas was employed by Seattle Lake Shore & Eastern Railway as the "walking boss," or traveling construction supervisor. When the future of this historic home became endangered by construction of a housing development in 1986, the Issaquah Historical Society worked to move it to its current location.

2 Darigold Creamery (1909)
611 Front Street N

Issaquah's dairy plant has operated continuously since 1909, when it opened as the Northwestern Milk Condensing Company. The company condensed milk, manufactured butter, made ice, and canned fruit and vegetables. A mural commemorating Issaquah's dairy industry prominently depicts the creamery as it originally appeared, the Pickering family's dairy barn and farm, and the Lake Sammamish scow that once transported milk.

3 Issaquah Creek

As you pass over the bridge next to the Creamery, you see the East Fork of the Issaquah Creek. The East Fork meets Issaquah Creek about 500 feet to your right (to the west of the bridge). Issaquah Creek proper is visible near the State Salmon Hatchery.

4 Grange Mercantile Building (1915)
485 Front Street N

The Grange Mercantile Association was organized in 1915. This building was constructed to fit between the railroad tracks and Front Street. The Mercantile Association served the food needs of the Issaquah community for 55 years before closing its doors in 1972. Many Issaquah families rented meat lockers here to store frozen meat.

5 Hailstone Feed Store (circa 1900)
232 Front Street N

This building originally served as the storage warehouse for Nicholas Burke's Feed Store. On the trackside is a recreation of the Owl Cigar ad originally painted there. The advertisement was placed to take advantage of rail passengers. In the 1940s, the Hailstone family operated a Schell gas station and feed store here. The building has been restored by the Downtown Issaquah Association to recreate that period.



6 Issaquah Depot (1889)
50 Rainier Boulevard N

Issaquah's Depot was originally part of the Seattle Lake Shore & Eastern line, which ran from Seattle to North Bend. The building was completed in 1889; a few years later, Northern Pacific took over operation of the Depot and rail line. The Depot closed in 1958 when freight service to Issaquah ended. Today the Depot looks much as it did while in use, down to the distinctive red paint and green trim of the Northern Pacific Railway. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Depot houses a museum which is open to the public Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11-3.



7 Memorial Field

First cleared of brambles by the volunteer fire department in the early 1900s, Memorial Field has been the center of community celebrations for more than one hundred years. It has been the location of Issaquah's rodeo, Labor Day carnivals, and the current Salmon Days celebration.

8 Mill Street Logging Scene Mural (1998)
E Sunset Way

Sunset Way was first known as Mill Street because lumber mills were located at either end. This mural depicts Issaquah's logging industry circa 1900-1940, at time when old growth cedar and fir logs were being cut from the nearby hills and milled in Issaquah's many lumber mills.

9 Grand Central Hotel (1903)
58 E Sunset Way

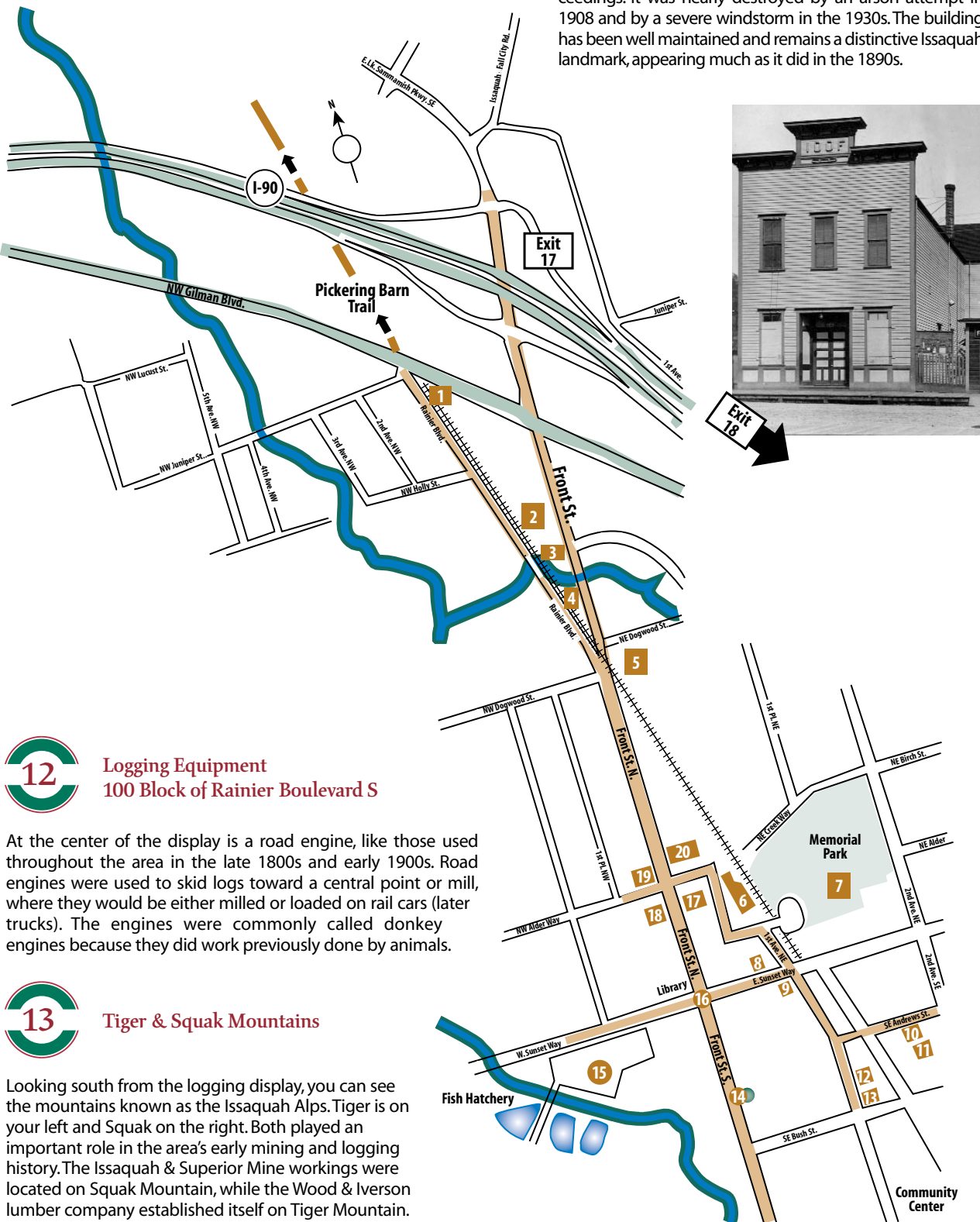
The last remaining historic hotel in Issaquah, the Grand Central was constructed when Issaquah was a stopover point for rail passengers traveling from Seattle to Snoqualmie. James Henry Croston, Sr., a carpenter for the coal mines, built and operated the boarding house. The Grand Central Hotel was a temporary lodging for many of Issaquah's future residents while they established their businesses and homes. In 2003, an enterprising resident of the building began restoring the Grand Central, bringing back its original grace and polish.

10 Gilman Town Hall Museum (1888)
165 SE Andrews Street

This building was originally constructed as a public hall, and was purchased by the Town of Gilman in 1898 for use as Town Hall. It was the Town Hall until 1930, and also served at varying times as courtroom, school house, church, library, polling place, fire hall – and the site of organized wrestling matches. Between 1930 and 1972 it was a private residence. Today visitors can learn about Issaquah's past and present through the exhibit In This Valley. Museum hours are 11-3, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

11 Issaquah's Second Jail (1914)
Behind the Town Hall Museum

Prior to 1914, the town marshal locked up miscreants in a wooden jail located near the site of the Masonic Hall. Legend has it that one night the jailer locked up several inebriated loggers and neglected to remove the men's hobnail boots. They were able to kick the wooden jail down. The town's second jail, a very solid two-cell cement structure built behind the Town Hall, proved far more durable. It was in use until 1930.



12 Logging Equipment
100 Block of Rainier Boulevard S

At the center of the display is a road engine, like those used throughout the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Road engines were used to skid logs toward a central point or mill, where they would be either milled or loaded on rail cars (later trucks). The engines were commonly called donkey engines because they did work previously done by animals.

13 Tiger & Squak Mountains

Looking south from the logging display, you can see the mountains known as the Issaquah Alps. Tiger is on your left and Squak on the right. Both played an important role in the area's early mining and logging history. The Issaquah & Superior Mine workings were located on Squak Mountain, while the Wood & Iverson lumber company established itself on Tiger Mountain.

14 Ginkgo Tree
90 Front Street S

Dr. William E. Gibson, early town physician and long-time mayor of Issaquah, planted this rare ginkgo tree around 1900. Gibson's house was also located on this site until it was torn down in 1970. Fortunately, through the efforts of Issaquah High School students, a petition was drawn up and the tree was saved. Although Issaquah's ginkgo tree is a female, the cool climate prevents the tree from yielding large quantities of sticky, pungent fruit.

15 Issaquah Hatchery (1936)
125 W Sunset Way

This site was once part of City Park, where many townspeople enjoyed holidays and picnics along the creek. During the Great Depression, the Works Project Administration constructed the State Salmon Hatchery. Every fall, 10,000-20,000 salmon return to this site to spawn. Issaquah Creek flows to Lake Sammamish and ultimately into Puget Sound.

16 Intersection of Sunset Way
(formerly Mill Street) and Front Street

This intersection marks the boundary where four early – and notable – Issaquah land claims met. In 1862 Lyman B. Andrews discovered coal in the nearby mountains. Shortly thereafter he filed a homestead claim at this site. In 1867 three Norwegian bachelors (Lars, Ingebright and Peter Wold) filed adjoining claims. Legend has it that the three men shared a house where their claims met. From 1910 to 1923, a rail spur from the Depot to the mines passed at an angle through this intersection, which explains the angular gap between the Wold Building and its neighbor.

17 IOOF Hall (1890)
58 Front Street N

Gilman Lodge #69 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) constructed this building for use as a community hall. Lodge events and meetings were held in the upper story, and the bottom floor was rented out. The hall has been the site for dances, movies, a grocery store and even court proceedings. It was nearly destroyed by an arson attempt in 1908 and by a severe windstorm in the 1930s. The building has been well maintained and remains a distinctive Issaquah landmark, appearing much as it did in the 1890s.

