

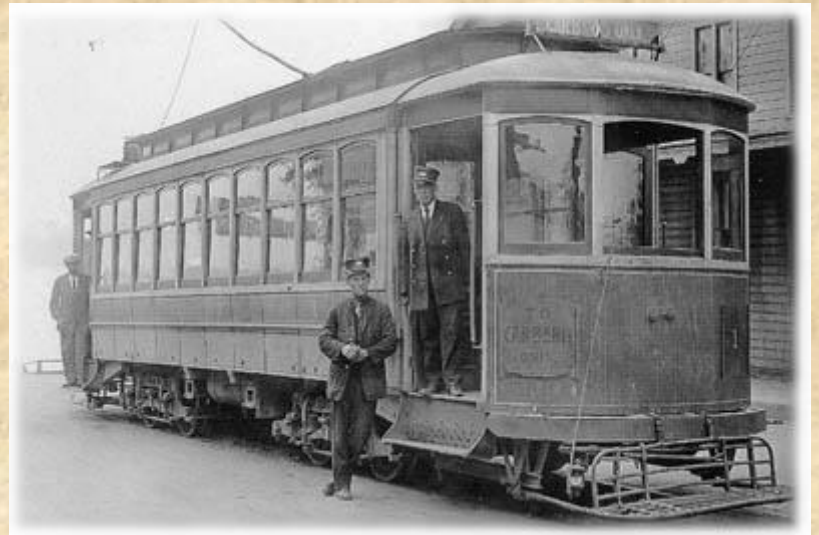
Rosemere History

Rosemere, one of the oldest neighborhoods in Vancouver, Washington, has enjoyed a rich and illustrious history. One interesting fact we know about our fine neighborhood of Rosemere — it wasn't always called Rosemere. It was once known as "Car Barns" because of the trolley station located on the corner of what is now St. Johns Blvd. and 33rd Street.



Fourth Plain Road near Vancouver, 1903

September 1, 1908, the line was completed through the city. The only delay at that time in the commencement of operation was the arrival of street cars. The cars were to be at least five feet longer than those used on the Portland-Vancouver run and would hold 60 people. Each car was powered with twin 50-horsepower motors to carry them over the tracts at a good rate of speed. The cars had "natural wood finished interiors with a ceiling of delicate tinted green." They arrived on September 23rd and the line went into operation three days later.



This photo was taken around 1910 near the foot of Washington Street. The ferry slip is in the background and a hotel is on the right.

Rosemere has a history that is tied to Officer's Row at Fort Vancouver. According to a Chicago Title Insurance Search, 607 of the homes currently in Rosemere are 75 years old or older, with many of the homes having been built in the first decade after the turn of the 20th century. Rosemere was home to the support staff of Fort Vancouver, and several of the army's building were actually picked up and moved from the Fort to the Rosemere Neighborhood where they now serve as homes. During World War II, the neighborhood was rapidly developed to serve as quarters for the thousands of Kaiser Shipyard Workers as well as workers for many other industrial facilities.



A huge crowd attended the christening of the Amazon Bay, aircraft carrier, by Eleanor Roosevelt at the Kaiser Shipyard.

What's in a name? The story of the Two Rosemeres:

According to a neighborhood analysis conducted by the City of Vancouver in August of 1967, Rosemere was formerly known as the Washington Neighborhood, or Washington City.



"1911, Washington School, Vancouver, Clark County, Washington"

The neighborhood school was the namesake of the neighborhood, Washington Elementary. Written by Dr. Mihail W. Dumbeliuk-Czernowicky of Eleusis Research, this neighborhood analysis was ordered by the City Planning Department and presented to City Council in order to help shape Rosemere's future.

To read more about the school and its origins in Rosemere, please see our article [Memories of Washington School](#).

Dr. Dumbeliuk-Czernowicky's report did not indicate the origin of the name "Rosemere." The Rosemere Neighborhood Association surveyed several seniors in the neighborhood, and some of them thought the

name meant "Rose Mother," or "Place filled with Roses," but no one was really sure. However, while conducting further historical research, the Rosemere Neighborhood Association found some wonderful clues. As it turns out, there is another Rosemere that has a connection to our lovely shire in Vancouver, Washington.



Mother Joseph

We have compiled an article about the life of Mother Joseph, one of the most famous figures in Vancouver's historic legacy. Please see the article "[Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, A Miraculous Vancouver Life.](#)"

Mother Joseph, along with four other nuns, was sent by a convent to Vancouver in 1856 with a mission to help the poor, the orphaned and the sick at the request of a local bishop.

Mother Joseph, originally from a French-Canadian convent in Montréal, Quebec, kept her main residence in Vancouver until her death in 1902.

Having been buried in the historic St. James Cemetery in the Rosemere Neighborhood, Mother Joseph's ties to Canada may have been the source of the renaming of Washington City to the Rosemere Neighborhood. Mother Joseph's gravesite is lovingly maintained by volunteers, and is decorated with rosebushes to this day.



Map showing Rosemère, Québec, Canada

To learn more about our connection to the Rosemere in Québec, Canada, please see our article on [The Two Rosemeres.](#)



In 1934, Rosemere was the site of one of Vancouver's infamous crimes, the murder of a member of a well-known, successful Vancouver families. To learn more about this, please read our story about [The Gruesome Caples Murder of 1934](#).

Meteor

On October 9, 1946, a meteor hit Rosemere at 33rd and O Streets. Before impact, it was visible for 10 seconds from Eugene, Oregon to Seattle, Washington.

Excerpt from August, 2001 RNA Newsletter

Saint James Cemetery (located on E. 29th Street between M & O Streets) was established and consecrated on May 21, 1882 by his Lordship Aegidius Junger, D.D. Bishop of Nisqually. There are 162 Sisters of Providence buried in the cemetery, including Mother Joseph.

Mother Joseph was the famous pioneering nun who is represented in Washington D.C., as one of two Washingtonians honored in the Statuary Hall at the Capital Building. Mother Joseph died in 1909, but left a legacy of humanitarian service. In 1953, the American Institute of Architects declared Mother Joseph "The First Architect of the Pacific Northwest" The earliest recorded burial is 1861 and the earliest recorded burial for a nun is dated 1864.

Excerpt from December, 2001 RNA Newsletter

The first street lighting in Vancouver was used in 1875 during the Christmas season when merchants began hanging street oil lanterns in front of their stores. Electricity took the place of the oil lamps in 1888 and consisted of twenty lights supplied by a steam boiler. Electric lights were turned off during the summer months to save the cost of power.

All Rosemere Neighborhood newsletters are being sent to Dave Fenton at the Vancouver Historical Society to be included in Rosemere history archives.

Excerpt from February, 2002 RNA Newsletter

In 1932 the Washington School Parent-Teacher Association was the acting organization for the school. Devoted members sponsored activities that were many and varied: pre-school clinics, pre-school meetings, gymnasium for adults, Boy Scout and Cub Scout groups as well as Blue Birds and Camp Fire Girls. The PTA collected and made over clothes for underprivileged children. A sewing machine was purchased for \$1.50 on March 3, 1932. They met every week to sew and make quilts. They reported 180 garments given to needy children by October 6, 1932.

Excerpt from March, 2002 RNA Newsletter

The Washington Community Club established in 1921 organized and equipped the first elementary school

cafeteria. Many women in the community scheduled themselves as cooks. The price for lunch was rarely more than 10 cents, because neighborhood gardens and orchards furnished much of the food.

The Community Club met weekly. It was difficult to get downtown so they supplied their own varied entertainment - home talent shows, debates, folk dancing, kangaroo courts, etc. A Mr. Wooster of Vancouver High introduced club members to "radio."

History of the Interstate Bridge



Mammoth Bridge of Steel Across Columbia Breaks the Last Barrier in Pacific Highway - Thousands Witness Opening Ceremonies - Samuel Hill, Father of Pacific Highway, tells of Conception of Mammoth Bridge — Formal Cutting of Ropes and Unfurling of Flags Dedicate it to Traffic

Read Excerpts from The Vancouver Columbian, Feb. 14, 1917.

<http://www.rtc.wa.gov/media/bridge.html>

Some Vancouver Fireworks History

Probably one of the best known but also the most controversial special events is the Fourth of July celebration. The City of Vancouver first sponsored the event using Park Service and city land in 1963 when William R. Sampson was acting superintendent after Frank Hjort transferred. That first year, around 17,500 people enjoyed helicopter demonstrations, sky diving exhibitions, water fights between the fire departments, a presentation of highlights from the MUSIC MAN, tours of the fort site, and a spectacular fireworks display on the airport. For the first time in many years, groups were allowed free use of the fort site, and eight members of the Fort Vancouver Historical Society were stationed at key locations within the stockade walls to interpret the site and pass out information sheets prepared by us and printed by the City's committee in charge of arrangements. The site received five times more visitors than they had during the previous July, forcing them to use the parade ground as a parking lot.