

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 1 of 9

Statement of Significance:

The Normandy Cove Recreation Building (Cove Building) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion "A", as a property that promotes the history of this site as a community gathering place for NW Indians and early local settlers in the 19th century. The Cove Building is also eligible under criterion "C" at the local level, as a property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the post-war modernism movement adapted to the Northwest during the 1950's and 1960's. The design of the Cove Building melds with the site, blending Northwest landscape with expansive windows and a hovering, protective roofline opening up views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains. The Cove Building integrates with the topography and history of the site and supports the social and recreational welfare of the community of Normandy Park. The property's period of significance begins and ends with the date of the building construction, 1959.

Today the Normandy Park Recreation Building is called the Cove Building. The building is located on community property legally known as Lot A but commonly referred to as Normandy Cove or the Cove. Lot A includes 17 acres of woods and wetlands, 700 feet of waterfront, a salmon rearing pond and two salmon spawning creeks, Miller and Walker, that empty into Puget Sound. In 1958 the Lot A property owners authorized the Normandy Park Community Club (NPCC) to manage Lot A and the new Cove Building. NPCC's mission was to manage and maintain the building and grounds for the social and recreational welfare of the community. NPCC continues today to manage Normandy Cove.

Early History of Normandy Park

The following early history information was taken from Wonderful World of Woods and Water, A History of Normandy Park, by The Normandy Park Historical Committee, Helen Kludt, Betty LePenske, Bette Loomis, and Kristy Webster.

Normandy Cove has always been a special place. According to T. T. Waterman's book, Puget Sound Geography, the NW Indians called the curving bay along Miller Creek, "SLGWA-LIT-TCU", which in the Salish language means "a large open space". The Normandy Cove was a favorite camping site where the Indians stopped to clam and catch some of the thousands of salmon in Miller Creek. Clamshell middens (large piles of discarded clamshells) have been found in several places on the Cove property.

Normandy Cove has been a recreational area throughout its history. In addition to the Indians, it was a gathering place for community picnics and recreational camping for the local residents from the 1880's into the 1920's. After William Miller moved to the original Brown homestead in the late 1880's, the creek and beach were referred to as Miller Creek and Miller Beach.

The Homestead Act of 1862 allowed a number of tracts of land along Puget Sound, within the area that is now known as Normandy Park, to be acquired by various individuals, but only a few were occupied and settled. In the 1880's the Schwabacher family began buying property from homesteaders and early pioneers in the Normandy Park area. The three brothers, Abraham, Louis

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 2 of 9

and Sigmund formed Schwabacher Brothers and Company with their central offices in San Francisco. Bailey Gatzert came to Seattle as the manager of the Schwabacher Company and made his permanent home there. Bailey was married to Babette Schwabacher, sister of the three brothers. Another family company was formed, the Gatzert-Schwabacher Land Company. By 1890 they owned 1,700 acres in Normandy Park.

In 1926 Alvon Alvenslaben and Russell Phinney formed the Seattle-Tacoma Land Company and purchased the entire Schwabacher tract of 1700 acres. When they started to develop Normandy Park, they dedicated a 17-acre tract that included Miller and Walker Creeks and 700 feet of Miller Beach. The Dedication Section of that Plat specifies "a Lot A of approximately 17 acres, within the boundaries of the Normandy Park Riviera Plat as a community property that is to belong to property owners within specified areas as Undivided Interest". Through this dedication, Lot A (Normandy Cove) would continue its long history as a community gathering place forever.

In the December 1928 issue of the Normandy Park "Town Crier", there is a lengthy article expounding the attributes of the wonderful new residential area called Normandy Park. "It is by a fortunate circumstance that Normandy Park is possible, even for Seattle. For half a century the land it comprises has been owned by a single pioneer family, the Schwabachers. By good fortune it was a wealthy family, whose members were engaged in various lines of prosperous activities. Subdividing this huge block of raw land did not interest them nor did they care to sell it. They could afford to hold it until there should be some good reason for yielding it to other hands."

City of Normandy Park History

The Seattle-Tacoma Land Company developed Normandy Park as an exclusive residential community designed in the style of the country estates in France. It was to be a community of distinctive architecture in the French Normand style on large lots with views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains. There was to be a yacht club, two community beaches and a golf course. The streets were to be thoughtfully laid out to prevent busy highway traffic from intruding into the calm of the residential area. Special sites were reserved for churches and schools. Business areas, where allowed, were strictly zoned and residential building restrictions were specified.

By 1929, the entire area had been platted. Good gravel roads were built and a water system installed that was fed from deep wells in the area. An elegant, French Nomand style clubhouse was built on community property (Normandy Cove). Sales brochures were printed that highlighted the major aspects of living on the shores of Puget Sound surrounded by stately firs and cedars in close proximity of Seattle. Normandy Park was advertised as "the south shore suburb destined to popularity away from the noise and commercialism of the city". Seattle was entering "the stage of greater suburban development" with improvements to the south outlets of the city. The sales

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 3 of 9

brochure further states, "people will seek the suburbs and Normandy Park will become exceedingly popular as the months roll by". A quote from Arthur Brisbane, a well known newspaper editor, makes a convincing argument why one should live in Normandy Park, "You can get in the country everything you can get in the city plus fresh air, sunlight, flowers, health, longer life, greater happiness".

Promotional efforts, such as free refreshments and band concerts, were offered to promote Normandy Park. Building started with a distinctive French Normand brick house on Lot 1, Block 20, built by C. S. Hughett. This house was considered to be the first built according to the plans of the developers. The house is located at 17999 Normandy Terrace SW. A few other houses in the French Normand style were built soon after. No information has been discovered about the architects of these early residences.

The Great Depression brought a halt to all development activities in Normandy Park and the Seattle-Tacoma Land Company abandoned the project. The clubhouse was sold to Ben Tipp, a Seattle jeweler, in 1934, and much of the property passed into private hands. During the 1930's a few homes were built, but the emphasis was on small and cozy, rather than large and elegant. For example, two "Prudence Penny Budget Homes" were built on Brittany Drive. A major concern that faced the property owners at that time was the lack of local civil government to handle such things as water, sewer, roads, fire protection, schools and the property restrictions that were specified in the original land dedication. In 1939 the Normandy Park Community Club was established to deal with some of these civic concerns.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Normandy Park was rediscovered and within a few years many fine homes were built. Normandy Park became a popular south shore suburb. Its close proximity to Sea-Tac Airport attracted many airline pilots. Many engineers and managers employed at the Boeing Company's south Seattle and Renton plants moved with their families into Normandy Park. Other residents came from south King County and Tacoma. All agreed with the 1929 sales pitch that "Normandy Park occupies the most attractive suburban site between the two major cities of the Sound". In a short time it became a vigorous community, so much so that the residents decided to incorporate the area into the City of Normandy Park in order to control their own destinies. As a result, the City of Normandy Park was incorporated on June 8, 1953.

Many of the new homes in the 1950's and 1960's were built in the post-war modernism style adapted to the Northwest. Some notable Seattle architects who designed homes in Normandy Park

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 4 of 9

included Ralph Anderson, Paul Kirk, Paul Thiry, Ralph Burkhard, A. O. Bumgardner and Robert Theriault. There was also a Frank Lloyd Wright house built on Edgecliff Drive. In 1963, the Seattle Art Museum chose Normandy Park for its 14th Annual Exhibit of Architecture Home Tour.

Normandy Park Community Club History

The genesis of the Normandy Park Community Club (NPCC) began in 1939 when a small group of property owners gathered together as described in the following minutes of the meeting:

On December 27, 1939 at 8:00 P.M., approximately thirty Normandy Park property owners met in Mr. Fred Huhn's Normandy Park office for the purpose of forming a Normandy Park Community Club.

Mr. Robert Moore presided and each person present introduced himself, after which a general discussion was held. By popular consent, Mr. C. N. Reitze, Mr. J. A. Clark and Mr. W. E. Klosterman were appointed as a Steering Committee to write a Constitution and By-laws and appoint committees so that immediate action could be taken toward fostering community interest in Normandy Park. Mr. Hilton Talbot was appointed temporary secretary. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P. M.

The second organizational meeting took place on March 15, 1940 in the Manhattan School. Approximately 80 property owners attended. The first order of business was the adoption of a set of bylaws. The second order of business was the election of the club officers that included:

President	C. N. Reitze
1 st Vice P	J. A. Clark
2 nd Vice P	W. E. Klosterman
Secretary	Hilton W. Talbot
Treasurer	Robert B. Moore

The major issues of the club were discussed in the April 22, 1940 Executive Board meeting. A separate committee was formed to address each of the following issues: police, school, roads, recreation, public improvement, fire department, water, membership, legislative and building restrictions.

The Restrictions Committee was concerned that the Restrictions Covenant be followed by all present and future property owners in the Riviera Section. The Riviera Section includes about 480 out of a total of 1800 properties in Normandy Park that have community (Lot A) rights. At the June 28, 1940 meeting, a motion was passed that NPCC would be given full power to enforce the building restrictions in the Riviera Section of Normandy Park.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 5 of 9

The meeting minutes of the NPCC for the next four years included various problems and actions that were required to advance the welfare of the community, such as sewer system, water sources, beach access, school bus stop shelters and a clubhouse.

At the March 1945 meeting it was suggested that the Community Club be incorporated with the name Normandy Park Riviera Section Community Club, Inc. (NPRSCC). Club membership was limited to property owners in the Riviera Section only. One of the main reasons for the change was concern about an influx of people into the community as a result of the end of WW II. At the August 1945 meeting the Articles of Incorporation (AOI) with a Seal of Inc. was presented as approved by the Secretary of State and filed with the Auditors Office of King County. The first five trustees named in the AOI were G. R. Hendrey, L. L. Lewis, Charles L. McAllister, Dorothy Becker, and Joseph H. Griffin. These trustees were to manage the affairs of the corporation for six months or until the trustees were elected by the members. The AOI stated that "the objects for which this corporation is formed are and shall be neighborly cooperation among the residents of the South District of Seattle, whether in the city or county, and particularly Normandy Park and the Riviera Section thereof, for the purpose of promoting industry and public improvements, and safeguarding the social, economic and political interests of the community."

A new set of bylaws for NPRSCC was unanimously approved. The first meeting of the Normandy Park Riviera Section Community Club, Inc. was held on October 5, 1945. Serge Becker was elected president.

Expansion of the Community Club

At the July 1947 NPRSCC meeting the subject of low club membership was thoroughly discussed with the main conclusion being that the membership restriction to only Riviera Section property owners was greatly limiting the membership. The minutes of that meeting noted the following:

A motion was made by Mr. Raymond that the president select a committee to draw up a resolution to change the name of our club to leave out Riviera Section so we can take in a larger district. Mr. Becker stated that we are going to need the support of our neighbors to the North and South in many things including roads. Mr. Becker suggested we ask Mr. Walker about the feelings of the residents of Shorebrook on this matter. Mr. Walker felt the people of that area would be pleased to come into the club. He is of the opinion it will be much better to have just one club and work together. The motion was passed that the President select a committee to write up a resolution changing the name of our organization from Normandy Park Riviera Section Community Club (NPRSCC) to Normandy Park Community Club (NPCC). Mr. Raymond stated that such action will not affect restrictions.

For the next three years various changes were made to the constitution and bylaws with minimum discussion in the meeting minutes. During the September 1951 meeting the new NPCC constitution was read and a motion was made and passed to accept it. The paid membership at this time was 94.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 6 of 9

In 1953 Normandy Park incorporated as a city. The NPCC members provided support for the incorporation efforts since the new city would take over a number of civic functions that the club had been performing over the past 13 years.

Normandy Cove Recreation Building History

On November 14, 1956 Bill Kaseburg, president of the Normandy Park Community Club, presided over a meeting of 34 members when a motion was made by Harry Braicks and unanimously passed to build a clubhouse at Normandy Cove (Lot A). Under Bill Kaseburg's direction, a clubhouse committee was established, with Bert Sanger as chairman, to explore the various issues that would allow such a project to move forward. This included building functional requirements, building site selection, approximate cost, financial plan and the involvement of Lot A owners with the project. Meetings were held during 1957 to work out the details of the proposed project with the assistance of many volunteers, such as Dick Johnson, Bob Rohrbach, Charles Armstrong and Stan Little. A pamphlet was distributed to the residents to explain the development plan for Normandy Cove. The comprehensive development plan included, "an attractive community center building, all-tide boat basin, tennis courts, busy ball diamonds and leisurely golfing facilities". For the building it stated, "the Community Center Building meets the present and future needs of the area as the following list of possible activities indicates:

Community Club dances and parties
Teen dances
Bridge club meetings
Art Show
Meetings of garden clubs, music and study groups
Committee meetings
Wedding receptions"

During 1957 NPCC completed and filed on August 20, the Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State for a new club named, Normandy Park Community Club, Inc. The first official meeting of the new Board of Trustees was held on November 26, 1957 with the bylaws of the new club being passed unanimously. The preamble to the bylaws for the new NPCC included the following:

to provide, promote and encourage recreational, social and such other activities in the community of Normandy Park as may tend to promote the physical, moral and educational welfare of the people of said community..to manage the community beach and Lot A, Plat of Riviera Section, located in Normandy Park for the use and enjoyment of the owners thereof and for members of this club having community rights in said Lot A.

At the January 8, 1958 Annual Meeting of the Normandy Park Community Club, the attendees discussed some serious business that would have long range affects for the Lot A property owners. A new board of nine trustees was elected that consisted of Bill Jones (President), George Harrison (1st VP), Stan Little and Jerry Peace (2nd VP's), Marge Roadel (Secretary), Larry Craig (Treasurer), Betty

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 7 of 9

Binz (Membership), Ted Hackett (Program) and Bert Sanger. Chairman Sanger of the Development Committee presented a report covering the planning efforts by the other committees. Sanger presented the financial plan for building a clubhouse that consisted of obtaining pledges of \$100 per family in the form of a non-interest loan.

A general information meeting was held on April 30, 1958 that was attended by over 400 residences and served as the kickoff meeting for the fund raising drive. Bert Sanger gave the opening introduction and was followed by Lloyd Berryman speaking on the legal aspects of the project. Bill Kaseburg presented the overall plan. Bill Jones discussed the community center. Fred Richardson presented the management plan. Dick Johnson presented the financial plan. The key feature of the plan was to obtain pledges for over \$50,000 in 60 days as a condition to establish the go-ahead for the clubhouse (Cove Building). After a question and answer period, 42 families signed pledges of participation that evening.

A very aggressive canvassing effort was conducted during the next two months. Fifty volunteers visited neighbors and obtained their signed pledges to support the development project with a one hundred dollars interest-free loan. The canvassers worked days, nights and weekends to meet their goal. To sustain enthusiasm for the clubhouse in the community, the canvassers stressed the following points:

“The community center building, situated in a natural beach front recreation area, will provide fun, recreation and many delightful social hours for generations of young and old.

Here is a place of your own, where you can be at home with neighbors and friends. Here is a place where your teenagers can gather close to home. Here is a place that will make your community a better place to live.”

They obtained 502 signed pledges by the end of June 1958.

As a result of the fantastic response from the community and the extremely hard work of the pledge canvassers, the Board engaged the architectural firm of **Steinhart, Theriault and Anderson** to provide the design, detailed drawings and cost estimates for the project. **Robert D. Theriault**, a Lot A owner and a partner in the firm, did the building design and construction management.

The development committee continued the planning activities for the next nine months under the direction of the Building Committee Chairman Charles Armstrong. On December 10, 1958 the contract for the Cove Building was awarded to the O&W Construction Company, who submitted the low bid of \$50,300. The construction schedule was initially impacted by the weather, but as the weather improved the construction proceeded at a rapid pace. Normandy Park resident Ruth Walck was asked to make a study on suitable themes for the Cove Building. She pointed out that a theme of local Indian lore would add interest and atmosphere to the building. Under Theriault's direction, residents carved a giant salmon head on the end of the ridge beam. The building was completed in June 1959 with the formal dedication on July 11, 1959 that included a week of events and activities at the Cove Building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 8 of 9

Many residents of the community participated in the construction phase with the same enthusiasm as they did during the planning and pledge phases. In addition to contributing their treasure of \$100 per family, Normandy Park residents contributed their time and talent to bring the dream of a clubhouse to reality. Residents decided that they could do much of the work themselves, such as clearing land, painting, sanding and finishing. As the work progressed, families began to visit the site to “take a look”. The community found itself being drawn together by mutual interest in the project. Normandy Park became known as the “do-it-yourself” community and the Cove Building as the “house that everyone built”.

On July 11, 2009 NPCC celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the construction of the Cove Building. Over 100 of the original founders that donated \$100 for the building’s construction were present and honored by the community. President Ken Friddell gave a presentation of the history of NPCC and the Cove Building recognizing individuals who were key in bringing the “dream of a community center to reality”. Friddell then reviewed how the Cove Building and Normandy Cove (Lot A) have been used for the past 50 years for the welfare of the community as follows:

Free children events including Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Party and Santa Party; annual 4th of July Parade and Ice Cream Social; dances and dinners, such as Valentine’s Day Sweetheart Dance, Halloween Dance and Saint Patrick’s Day Dinner/Dance; Holiday Bazaar, Rummage Sale, Community Safety Program, Meet the Candidates Night during election time; free use for local groups such as Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Potluck Group, Exercise group, Leisure group, Garden Club, Bonsai Group and Seattle Art Museum Guild; Cove Building rental for weddings, anniversary celebrations, birthday parties, memorials, holiday parties and business meetings. The Cove beach and grounds are used by Highline Elementary Schools for environmental and salmon educational programs and for the annual salmon fry release into Miller and Walker Creeks sponsored by the Des Moines Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Restoration Of Normandy Cove (Lot A)

Since 2004 there has been a 5-year community project, organized and lead by NPCC, to restore the salmon habitats in Miller and Walker Creeks at Normandy Cove. The scope of this project included restoring the remaining two acres of wetlands, dredging the original pond to remove an estimated 1,200 cubic yards of silt, improving the in-stream fish habitat with logs and rocks, removing noxious weeds, planting over 6,000 native plants and trees, restoring and landscaping Walker Creek in front of the Cove Building and repairing trails and bridges throughout the property.

NPCC partnered with the Des Moines Chapter of Trout Unlimited for in-stream technical support. NPCC received funding for this project from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Puget Sound Restoration Fund, King County and the Port of Seattle.

Many residents of the community participated in this project by contributing an estimated 7,000 volunteer hours with the same enthusiasm as those who build the Cove Building 50 years ago. Residents decided that they could do much of the work themselves, such as pulling weeds, planting

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

PROPERTY NAME
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 9 of 9

native plants and trees, installing logs in the creeks, repairing trails and bridges and installing interpretive signs. Some of the original founders, who were not able to contribute their labor any more, contributed their talent with NW Indian wood-carvings for the grounds and their treasure with generous donations to the project.

NPCC formed the Stewards of the Cove volunteer group to plan and conduct monthly volunteer work parties. The community found itself being drawn together once again by a mutual interest in Normandy Cove. The restoration work repaired some of the environmental damage done in the past. Today the residents of Normandy Park enjoy Normandy Cove as a wildlife habitat and a community-gathering place for fun and recreation. The objective stated 50 years ago for the Normandy Cove development still rings true today, "to develop Normandy Cove to its full potential... while promoting community spirit and unity".