

## LONGTIME ROSEWAY RESIDENTS

(Interview done on April 21, 2005 by Bonnie LaDoe)



As part of the Roseway Neighborhood History Project, I was pleased to interview long time Roseway residents Russ and Trudy Olson.

Russ and Trudy have lived in their home on NE 68<sup>th</sup> since their marriage in 1958. They chose Roseway because it was a “wonderful neighborhood and the school house was close by”. Although they feel that their block hasn’t changed much since they moved into their home 47 years ago, they remember being told that the whole area was a farm at one time, and that the farm maintenance man built their home.

Russ was told that a gentleman named Ray Smaling had to move his home on 67<sup>th</sup> and Prescott up to Mason Street across from Wellington Park when Harvey Scott School was built. Then the land was cleared of trees to make way for the school.

When asked about businesses along Sandy, they remembered the Safeway store where the Church of the Nazarene is now and the Fred Meyer store about where Safeway is now. And Trudy remembers the Piggly Wiggly (grocery store) on 57<sup>th</sup> and Cully too.

Since Trudy and her sister moved to Roseway from Illinois in November, 1945, right after WW II, Trudy can remember other businesses that are now gone. They lived in an apartment just off the golf course on 64<sup>th</sup>. She remembers a small meat market on 63<sup>rd</sup> and Sandy where she and her sis stopped every day for their meat “so they got to know us”. She also remembers a drug store on 57<sup>th</sup> and Sandy.

Although they mostly traveled by car, if they needed public transit there was always the Sandy bus. And Russ can also remember the streetcar that went over the Broadway Bridge up to the hospital on Interstate, and “now they’re doing the same thing over again”.

Russ moved to Portland in 1945 from Davenport, Iowa. Asked if he went to a “one room school” he said, “no, I’m not a farmer boy”. But he did have to ride his bike five miles each way to school and his graduating class was only 19.

Trudy, however, did go to a one-room school back in Rock Island, Illinois. One of 13 children, she was driven to school in a horse and buggy by her oldest brother. “It was lots of fun, especially when it snowed”. Once the brother fell out of the buggy and it ran over his head. But the snow was so deep he wasn’t hurt. And when they didn’t have the buggy, they would walk the railroad track to school. If they heard the train coming, they’d have to slide down an embankment or run for a sidecar.

When asked how discipline and attitude is different today, they both agreed it was more strict back then. Russ said he “got my butt blistered 5 times a day, especially on Saturdays”, and apparently had to spend a lot of time looking at the corner. They both felt that families’ valued education then and that “they believed in sending their kids to school”. However, a college education was financially out of reach for most. “You had to have money to go to college, and we didn’t” Russ said. “And there were no student loans or anything free”. And no second hand clothing stores for big families either. As Trudy says, “clothes were just handed down, down, down, and parents then really had it rough”.

Leisure time activities in the neighborhood included going to the Roseway and Hollywood Theatres. Russ especially liked musicals. And he loved to dance! Russ and Trudy met at the Palace Royale ballroom on about N. W. 23<sup>rd</sup> and Burnside. They also went to McElroys, but liked the Palace Royale best because “they didn’t have any drinking going on”.

Trudy worked at Lipman Wolfe in downtown Portland before getting a better job at Jantzen on 20<sup>th</sup> and Sandy Blvd, working there 5 years. Then she became a dental assistant in downtown Portland for 20 years. Russ worked for Precision Cast Parts, but also had 20 acres in Yacolts, WA where he raised bees. Many the in the neighborhood will remember Russ as the “honey man”.

When asked how the neighborhood has changed, they both felt that “it went through a slump”, but “now people are getting more active in their yards and taking care of things – no shabby looking homes around at all.”

So, thanks, Olsons, for becoming Roseway's first oral history subjects. And, if you've lived in Roseway for many years, and would like to be interviewed for our project, we'd love to hear from you

Note: Russ Olson passed away July 1, 2010. As of July 2012, Trudy Olson continues to live in the same home in Roseway.