

Lincoln

Name: **Lincoln**
Address: 4400 Interlake Avenue N
Current Use: Interim site



Lincoln, 1911 MOHAI 83.10.6655.1

Early in spring 1906, a group of Seattle School Board members crossed Lake Union and headed north to the small neighborhood of Wallingford in search of a site for a new high school in the north end of the city. Seattle's first high school had exceeded its capacity after only four years (see Broadway), and a second school was clearly needed.

Residents of both Fremont and Green Lake wanted the school in their neighborhoods, but a site on Interlake Avenue was chosen because of its central location and proximity to streetcar lines. At the time of its selection, the site was covered with brush and stumps left by logging operations and sawmills still operating nearby. Some citizens requested the school be named Interlake High School to conform with the new grade school, but the board agreed wholeheartedly on the name, which honors Abraham Lincoln, the nation's sixteenth president.

Construction began immediately on a 30-room brick building with Jacobean architectural styling. In addition to classrooms, the building housed a study hall and a single gymnasium used alternately by boys and girls. Lincoln High School opened in September 1907 with 900

Name: **Lincoln High School**
Location: 4400 Interlake Avenue N
Building: 30-room concrete
and masonry
Architect: James Stephen
Site: 3.51 acres

1907: Opened in September
1914: Addition (Edgar Blair)
1920: Wooden annex opened
on site
1930: Addition (Floyd A.
Naramore)
1957: Site expanded to 6.72 acres
1959: Addition (Naramore, Bain,
Brady & Johanson)
1981: Closed in June
1981–97: Portions of building leased
1997–: Interim site

students who lived in the fast-growing University, Latona, Ravenna, Green Lake, Fremont, and Queen Anne districts.

By its second year of operation, Lincoln's enrollment had nearly doubled and every available space had been turned into classrooms. Five rooms in nearby Interlake School were also used by high school students until Lincoln's enrollment dropped with the opening of Queen Anne High School in 1909.

Activities and school spirit got off to a slow start since the student body was composed of freshmen or transfers from Broadway High School. Gradually over the first few years, however, many clubs and activities developed and grew to become part of a long-lasting Lincoln tradition. A Girls' Club formed in 1909 and set about organizing social activities. A Boys' Club, responsible for traffic and safety patrols as well as awarding athletic letters, started in 1911. The Lincoln Cadets Corps also began at this time as a reserve group trained on campus in case of a state or national emergency.

In the second semester of 1907–08, students at Lincoln decided they must begin publishing their own school paper. They collected funds among the classes and started a monthly called the *Totem*. The name carried over to the school's annual at the end of the year. The paper was popular, and became a weekly in October 1918. Around this time, the school colors of crimson and black were chosen.

By 1913, the number of students had again increased to the point that additional space was needed. The district superintendent reported that over 1,068 students attended Lincoln and 200 more were expected to enter at mid-year. Several portable buildings were used until a major construction project was completed in 1914. The center section of the building was remodeled into 14 classrooms, two locker rooms, a book room, and stock room. A north wing was added containing an auditorium, library, and boys' and girls' gymnasiums. The expanded building proved adequate for only a few years, however. In 1920, a 10-room wooden annex had to be built.

When Roosevelt High School opened in 1922, Lincoln's attendance area was cut in half. Enrollment remained at a reasonable size for a few years. Then, as the north end continued to grow, the old annex and portables came into use again. Finally, in 1930, a south wing was added, containing classrooms and a study hall designed to accommodate 250 students. At the same time, the rest of the building was modernized. Dedication ceremonies took place on February 12, Lincoln's birthday.

Several new clubs and student organizations appeared during the 1920s, including the Honor Society (formed in 1921) and the Triple L (originally Loyal Lincoln Ladies and later changed to Loyal Lincoln Lynx), which performed services for the school. The Lynx Club promoted school spirit and the boys' and girls' Big L clubs encouraged athletics. The music department grew under the directorship of Carl Pitzer, who served from 1924 to 1956. Students participated in a talent show called *Lincolnial* as well as Tradition Day, held annually on Lincoln's birthday. At some point, the nickname "The Little Red Schoolhouse" came into use in reference to the school's origins.

During the Depression years, a favorite hangout was the Beanery, where students gathered during lunch periods and after school. Hot dogs and hamburgers cost five cents each. Lucky students who worked there received free meals and treats.

Like all high schools, Lincoln boasted of several athletic highlights. The 1908 football team won the Northwest Championship, and the girls' basketball team followed with a trophy in 1909. In the 1913 football season, the Lynx scored 112 points while holding their opponents to only 21, then were narrowly defeated by Everett for the State Championship. The year 1919 was memorable because the crimson and black teams were number one in the city in football, baseball, and tennis. Coach William Nollan, a Lincoln graduate and former tennis star, began his tenure in 1930. Under his leadership, the Lynx won more than a dozen titles in basketball, track, and football.

Several changes took place during the 1940s, as many Lincoln graduates left to join the armed forces. An evening school was held in the building beginning in 1942. That same year, all students of Japanese ancestry were taken to internment camps, leaving Lincoln without its Lynx Club president, the head of the Triple L, and editor of the *Totem*.

During the postwar era, students from the growing Shoreline suburb attended Lincoln because that district as yet had no high school. A school-wide governing body known as the Student Council was formed in 1945. One of Lincoln's teachers, Jessie Orrell, became the first full-time counselor in the Seattle School District and served the school for a total of 40 years. In 1949, tuberculosis patients at Firland Sanatorium received their diplomas through Lincoln, having been instructed by teachers sent to the hospital.

The 1950s witnessed continued growth and vitality at Lincoln. In 1959–60, enrollment reached 2,800, making Lincoln Seattle's largest high school. Formerly a teacher and coach, Homer M. Davis was named principal in 1954. He was much respected and remained head of the school until 1969. Athletics flourished, with the Lynx winning city championships in both basketball and baseball. The first cheerleading



Lincoln, 1914 SPSA 015-2689

squad formed in 1950 replacing yell dukes and a yell king. A huge rock located near the corner of the school by the south doors became a popular target for student. Before crucial games, the rock was mysteriously painted in the colors of the rival school. This rock was buried in the 1960s at the request of the principal.

A large addition to the east side of the building was completed in 1959. It included a gymnasium, auditorium, instrumental and vocal music rooms, audiovisual classrooms, and two industrial arts shops. The former auditorium was converted into art rooms, a large study hall, and a library. The chemistry and physics laboratories were also modernized.

Ten years later, in 1969, major remodeling took place in parts of the aging structure. The north wing study hall was combined with the library to form a new learning resource center dedicated to Homer M. Davis.

In 1971, Lincoln became a four-year high school with an enrollment of 1,750. Since nearby Interlake had closed, the high school used several rooms in the former elementary school for its language arts department, social studies classes, and special education program. That same year Lincoln was integrated with the addition of about 50 African-American students. Roberta Barr, an African American, became the district's first female high school principal at Lincoln in 1973. In 1974, 350 more minority students were assigned to the school as a part of the district's desegregation program. A few years later there was an influx of students of Southeast Asian ancestry, and a Newcomer Center opened to assist them in adjusting to the school system.

A 1979 Seattle School District plan for future building use indicated that Lincoln would probably be closed because of the building's age, the small size of the site, and its declining enrollment. The final announcement came in February 1981, just prior to what became the school's last Tradition Day celebration.

During that final year at Lincoln, students and faculty maintained their pride and school spirit. Principal Barr noted how the multi-racial student body had emerged united. Other recent successes were the



Lincoln, 1960 SPSA 015-535

award-winning newspaper, rated All-American by the National Scholastic Press Association for seven semesters in a row, a popular arts magnet program, and the excellent special education program.

One of Lincoln's lasting monuments is the bronze bust of young Abe Lincoln, which stands on the east side of the school. It was created by sculptor Avard Fairbanks in 1964, in memory of his sister-in-law, Margaret Fairbanks Garred, founder of Tradition Day.

Following its closure, the 80-year-old building was used by a number of community and religious organizations, including the Wallingford Boys and Girls Club. In 1993, the district announced plans for a capital improvement program, which would provide funds to renovate the structure. At that time, Lincoln was considered the future home of Hamilton Middle School, with a section set aside for community services. Before that could happen, however, Ballard High School needed a temporary home during construction of its new building. In September 1997, the Ballard students moved to Lincoln, though it was still being renovated. Once again the building served as a high school until September 1999, when it opened its doors to younger students from Latona who will return to their renovated building in September 2000.

Bryant students will use the building until September 2001. Future tenants may include Roosevelt, Garfield, and Cleveland as each, in turn, must relocate during renovation of their buildings. With its long and varied history, Lincoln should continue to serve Seattle's student population for many years to come.