

Georgetown



Mueller Annex and Georgetown, ca. 1904 SPSA 228-72

Luther M. Collins and his family arrived in the Duwamish River Valley in 1850. Jacob and Samuel Mapel (or Maple) arrived a year later with Henry Van Asselt, and the two families settled nearby (see Mapel, Van Asselt, and Holgate). The town of Duwamish was established in early 1852.

On June 26, 1856, a brief battle called the Battle of Seattle occurred between European-American settlers and Native Americans. The battle was part of the multi-year Puget Sound War (1855-1858). The war started in response to a series of ambitious treaties that were signed in 1854 and 1855 and pressured Native Americans to cede 100,000 square miles of land. Prior to the battle, a blockhouse called Fort Duwamish was constructed on the Collins place to provide protection for the settlers from an anticipated attack. Shortly after the battle occurred in 1856, the first Duwamish School was established in the blockhouse. It had closed by 1862 when Van Asselt donated land for a new Duwamish School (see Van Asselt).

In 1890, newly arrived settler Julius Horton plotted two square miles of territory along the Duwamish River and named it after his son, George, who had completed medical school that year. George's brother Dexter became a noted Seattle banker. The community of Georgetown grew rapidly with its brickyards, breweries, and lumber mills. Three local breweries made Georgetown the sixth largest beer-manufacturing center in the world until Washington state outlawed alcohol before the nationwide Prohibition. On November 3, 1914, Washington voters passed a statewide ban on the manufacture and sale of liquor—with exceptions for local jurisdictions that approved it—and saloons closed on the last day of 1915. Georgetown's brewing history also made residents resistant to annexation into Seattle with the city's stricter saloon rules. Georgetown was the last large city annexed by Seattle, in 1910, three years after other nearby cities, including West Seattle, Ballard, South Park and Columbia City, were annexed by Seattle.

During Georgetown's first eight years as a city, neighborhood children had to travel south a mile or more to Van Asselt School. In 1898, Georgetown citizens voted overwhelmingly in favor of starting their own school. The first Georgetown School was taught by one teacher in an old store building owned by Mrs. Cross. The store was later demolished, and in 1947-48 was the site of the Riedel Brothers Union Oil Station, at 5526 Airport Way.

After classes were held at the store for a few months, growing enrollment forced relocation of the school to Higgins Hall, across the street and to the north, at what is now the west side of Airport Way at Corson. At Higgins Hall, space also soon became inadequate, and the school served only the first three grades. Older children attended Van Asselt or South Seattle. Higgins Hall was later demolished and in 1947-48, was home to the Airport Hardware Company, at 5515 Airport Way.

In 1900, two years after the first school opened in the Georgetown community, a new school was developed on the northeast section of the grounds facing Corson Avenue. The new schoolhouse, which was the third school in Georgetown, was twice the size of the older school, with four classrooms. After the expansion, it was renamed Mueller School for one of Georgetown's outstanding citizens and head of the local school board.

Enrollment continued to grow. In 1903, pupils in the first five grades were taught at Mueller, while the 6th through 8th grades were sent to Bertholdi School at 609-611 Rainier Avenue S (presently Airport Way near Lucille Street). Like Mueller, Bertholdi School had a principal teacher and three other teachers. Grades 6-7 were taught on the upper floor while the 8th grade was downstairs. After costs were considered, Bertholdi's Hall was closed and the children were sent to South Seattle School (see South Seattle). During the 1903-04 school year, classes for the Georgetown High School students were held in an old Presbyterian church, which operated as an annex to Mueller (see Cleveland).

Georgetown was incorporated as a city on January 18, 1904. With funds from a bond issue, a larger two-story building was constructed later that year on the same site as Mueller. It was named the Georgetown School. For a brief time, this building held all grades from first through high school under one roof. The high school was located on the top floor. The high school class of 1905, ultimately, was the only one to graduate from Georgetown. After 1905, there was room only for the elementary grades and high school students rode the streetcar to West Seattle High. Through the years, the 1900 building survived as the school's annex.

Around 1907, the railroad bought the school property and moved both buildings approximately one block to a 3.07-acre site. When Georgetown residents voted to become part of Seattle in April 1910, the school housed eight grades with 523 pupils. The Seattle School Board changed the name from Mueller to Georgetown due to its standing rule no school should bear the name of a living person.

The main school building held grades 1-8, while the annex housed two additional 1st grade classes. There was no auditorium, so assemblies were held in the lower hallway of the larger structure. The school also lacked a lunchroom. Students brought their lunches and ate in the basement or outside. Kindergarten was added to Georgetown in 1914. From 1912-17, in addition to housing two classrooms, the annex was divided into a boys' and a girls'

Details:

Name: **Georgetown School**

Location: Corson Avenue

Building: 2-room wood

Architect: n.a.

Site: n.a.

1900: Opened by Georgetown District No. 153

1902: Addition (n.a.)

1903: Renamed Mueller School

1904: Became Mueller Annex

1907: Building relocated (733 S Findlay Street)

1910: Annexed into Seattle School District on July 1; renamed Georgetown on July 27

1942-45: Used for a nursery school and industrial training

1947: Converted into gymnasiums

1970-71: Closed to school classes

1974: Leased to city, subleased as community center. Continued through June 1983

1984: Demolished

Details:

Name: **Georgetown School**
Location: Corson Avenue
Building: 13-room, 2-story wood
Architect: Olof Hanson
Site: n.a.

1904: Opened
1907: Building relocated (730 S Homer Street); site 2.3 acres
1910: Annexed into Seattle School District on July 1
1920: Site expanded to 3.08 acres
1970: Closed as elementary school on June 9
1970-81: Alternative school site
1981: Demolished
1984: 50-year land lease
2003: Sold to the Central Park Company for \$2.4 million in October

area. On the girls' side, domestic science courses, including cooking and sewing, were taught. These classes also served girls from South Park. The boys' side housed a manual training shop.

In June 1923, a report told of "a marked falling off in attendance at this school, due to the closing down of the largest plant, and also to the opening of a parochial school." On June 18, 1923, the school board adopted the recommendation to transfer 7th and 8th grade pupils from Maple and South Seattle schools to the Georgetown School in order to give these students the advantage of manual training and home economics work. Enrollment at Georgetown peaked in 1924-25 with 655 students. The same year Georgetown High School, with 82 students and three teachers, occupied part of the main building.

In 1927, Cleveland High opened and Georgetown became a six-grade elementary school, with enrollment dropping to 405. Vocational training courses were held in the Annex Building, while kindergarten classes were held in a separate portable. In 1937, a plan was considered to demolish Georgetown and replace it with a new brick building. By 1940, vocational classes were transferred to Day.

From 1941 to 1945, Georgetown School joined other schools in wartime activities, such as stamp and bond drives. Red Cross activities, ration book distribution, and nursery school projects were also common during the war years. The girls' side of the annex became a

nursery school for the children of working women. The boys' side housed industrial training classes.

After Holgate closed in June 1955, students were transferred to Georgetown, and two portables were brought from Colman and Coe.

In 1966-67, the school grounds were home to the main school, the annex (with a boys' gym and a girls' gym), and four portables. The neighborhood was industrializing steadily and the population was largely transient. The student body underwent a near 100-percent turnover each year, and there was no longer a PTA.

Georgetown closed as an elementary school in early 1971. The 180 students were transferred to the new Maple School, while the principal and all nine teachers went to the new Dearborn Park. The 1900 building (i.e., the annex) was leased to the City of Seattle and the main 1904 building served as a site for three alternative programs that had come to Georgetown in 1969 and 1970.

Project Interchange, a dropout prevention program, was housed at a commercial building, 3704 S Ferdinand, beginning in 1969-70 (see Martha Washington). In September 1972, the high school portion transferred to Georgetown, with the junior high segment coming the following year. When Georgetown finally closed in June 1981, Project Interchange moved to Sharples as part of the Seattle Alternative Secondary School.

Project Follow-Through, a federally funded project that was an offshoot of Head Start for disadvantaged children in K-3, started at Georgetown in 1970. In 1975, it moved to Interlake. American Indian Heritage School was also at Georgetown from 1970-74 before moving to portables at Rainier Beach.

In 1981, the district tore down the main 1904 Georgetown building. The Annex was still leased to the City of Seattle until June 1983, serving as the Georgetown Services Center. In 1984, the district entered into a 50-year ground lease with Central Park Company negotiated by Kidder, Mathews & Segner. The annex was demolished



Georgetown, 1960 SPSA 228-73

and two buildings consisting of 60,390 square feet of office and warehouse space were erected on the site, located on the north side of S Home Street, the south side of S Findlay Street, and east of 7th Avenue S.

On August 20, 2003, Interim Superintendent Raj Manhas recommended that the school board authorize a purchase and sale agreement to sell the Georgetown property to the Central Park Company for \$2.4 million. The company, which had the option to renew the 50-year lease, expressed a desire to buy the property that the district considered surplus. The sale was completed October 27, 2003. The property changed hands again in 2010.