



TOWN OF YARROW POINT

Friends & Neighbors

Anniversary Newsletter



A PLACE FOR ART & CREATIVITY

Ray Jensen

You probably have seen Ray Jensen around town, but you may also have seen Ray's sculptures all around the Seattle area without realizing they originated in Yarrow Point. For Ray, the Point has been a place where he has created his art and raised a family.

Ray and his wife Glorea, a former teacher in Bellevue and Kirkland, moved here in August of 1959. They bought the house because it had a garage, known to Ray as a studio, and they were attracted by the peaceful setting near urban centers Yarrow Point provides. Here Ray could make his sculptures.

At an early age, Ray started sculpting small figures out of modeling clay. His first was a small Indian with a cinnamon bark loin cloth. With time, Ray's sculptures would become larger and larger in size.

"I found that the perception of scale for me really related to my age and experience and my size," Ray says.

The closest of his public sculptures is "The Graduates" located at Bellevue High School. It is made of sheet bronze. One of his pieces is located at the U.S. World War II Memorial in the Philippines. It is a bronze plaque with an abstract of people carrying flags with the names of the countries that were U.S. allies in the Pacific listed at the bottom.

Other works include a group of dancing figures at the Seattle Opera House now known as McCall Hall, a life-sized one-room schoolhouse piece at North Seatac Park and a giant wall piece at the Suzzallo Library at the University of Washington. A large number of other pieces are located throughout the Seattle area. Some are installed at private residences.

Ray's art has partially supported him and his family, but like many artists, he has had to work at other jobs to make a living. While not on his curriculum vitae, Ray was at one time a Clyde Hill Police officer.

"I was a cop for a few months," Ray says. "It was either go to Boeing or get some other kind of job.....It was not an entirely comfortable fit."

When a night class he was teaching at Bellevue Community College double enrolled, he decided to concentrate more on teaching. He enjoyed working with young people, he says. He also taught part-time in the Bellevue and Seattle school districts, at the University of Washington, Cornish and Helen Bush.

Another accomplishment attributed to Ray that is minor yet enduring is giving Sally's Alley its namesake. The area near where he lives is named after his former goat.

"We had let Sally roam within our fenced yard until we found out she ate things we didn't want her to. One time she escaped and we found her over at the Tremper's who lived on 37th, eating their geraniums on their front porch. So I would tether Sally out in the area that has become known as Sally's Alley," Ray says.

Like Erik Lund, Ray says Yarrow Point has been an excellent place to raise children. He has two daughters, Ann and Greta, and a son, Kurt. A fond memory involves visiting with neighbors at the annual Fourth of July Celebration, and being at the front of the tug-of-war line one year when Yarrow Point won.

One year he was the entertainment chairman on the Fourth of July committee. While Ray has not served the Town in any official capacity, he says he often attends meetings to voice his opinion. Recently he volunteered to serve on a new committee charged with taking the necessary steps to become a Tree City.

"I am big on trees. I just love our yard. We have all these trees in front and trees in back. We have a half acre. A lot of sunlight back there, room for kids to play and dogs to run," Ray says.

A retrospective of Ray's work will be shown in February of 2010 at the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle. The exact date is unknown at this time.