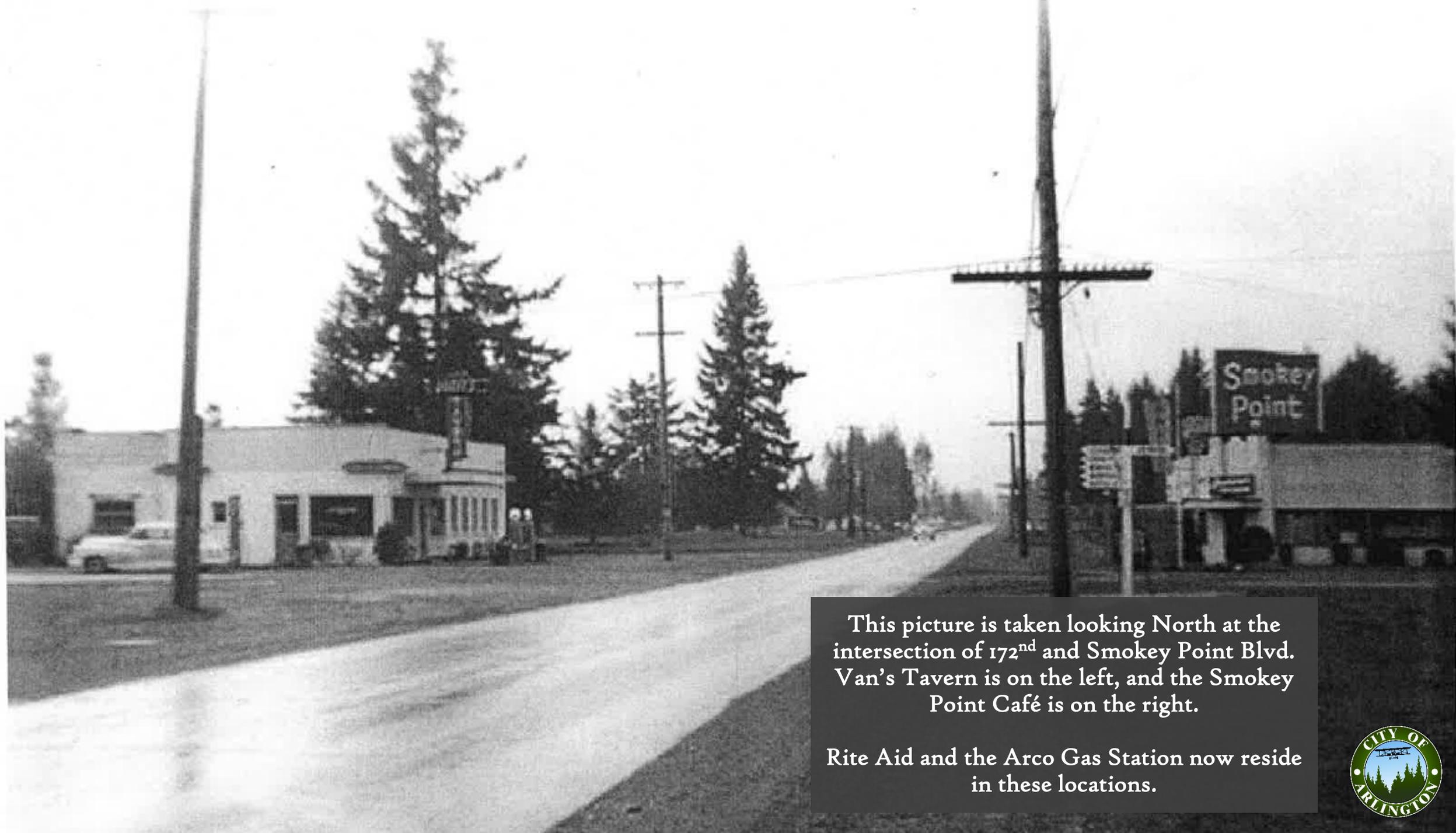


Historical Highlights of Smokey Point



Rex's Corner & The Smokey Point Café





This picture is taken looking North at the intersection of 172nd and Smokey Point Blvd. Van's Tavern is on the left, and the Smokey Point Café is on the right.

Rite Aid and the Arco Gas Station now reside in these locations.



Smokey Point

FORMERLY REX'S CORNER
7 Miles North Marysville on 99

OPEN UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Smoked Turkey
Barbecued Ribs, Ham and Beef
Chicken and Steaks

Smoked Finnan Haddie

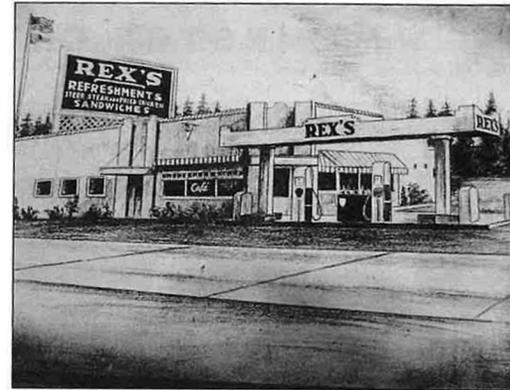
Private Dining Rooms for Parties and Banquets
Open 12 Noon to 1 a.m. Weekdays
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- The One and Only Place of Its Kind on the Coast
ERICK SHURSTAD - EINAR MOEN, Proprietors

Rex's Corner

Rex's Corner was named after Rex Zeek who operated a Shell gas station and café. He purchased the café in October 1934. It was located at the northeast corner of Highway 99 (today Smokey Point Boulevard) and Edgecomb West Road (now 172nd Street NE), Arlington. (Source: Sno. Co. Auditor, Deeds, Vol. 271, pp. 1 & 2, Real Estate Contract & Assignment, A. M. Orser, et ux to J. D. Damascus, assigned to Rex L. Zeek, Oct. 18, 1934)



Rex's Cafe. Photo courtesy of Wayne Vroman.

In May 1946, Rex Zeek closed the café. On August 31, 1946, Einar Moen and Erik Shurstad purchased the café, including all the furniture, fixtures, and equipment from "Rex's Place" for \$12,500 and the café for \$20,000. On Halloween, it re-opened as "Smoky Point Café" and quickly became famous for its savory aroma and chunks of delicious barbecued beef. (Sources: Sno. Co. Auditor: Misc., Vol. 46, p. 362, Carl E. & Hilda Edlund to Einar Moen & Erik Shurstad, Aug. 31, 1946; Deeds, Vol. 382, p. 2, WD, Carl E. & Hilda Edlund to Einar Moen & Erik & Pearl Shurstad, Aug. 31, 1946 & *The Arlington Times*: "Opens New Inn," p. 1, April 4, 1946 & "Smoky Point' New Name for Rex's Corner," p. 3, Oct. 31, 1946)

Erik Shurstad was known all over the Northwest for his famous barbeque ribs. He expanded the menu to include steamed finnan haddie (a cold-smoked haddock fish) and lutefisk (a dried whitefish, gelatinous in texture when cooked). The dense plumes of smoke could be seen from miles away - hence the name Smokey Point. (In later years, an "e" was added to "Smoky Point.) Shurstad was a good Norwegian. He took his children to Norway to have their tonsils removed. Norway had socialized medicine, and the operation could be done for free. It is not certain, but Shurstad may have had dual citizenship.

At the southeast corner of Rex's Corner were several large parcels owned by the Hild family. Back in 1910, Conrad Hild owned 240 acres that was known as Hild Ranch and had since divided the land amongst himself and his four adult children. The Hild's had one of the only water towers in the area. Conrad Hild's son, Francis L. "Frank" Hild and his family had a farm with many beehives and sold honey at a nearby roadside stand. Soon after Rex's Café opened, the southeast corner of Rex's Corner was about to change.

Special Mother's Day DINNERS

at **SMOKEY POINT**

FORMERLY REX'S CORNER
7 Miles North Marysville

CRAB COCKTAIL or TOMATO JUICE
CHICKEN CONSOMME PRINCESSE
FRIGIDAIRE FRUIT SALAD

ENTREES

SMOKED ROAST TURKEY 1.75
ONE HALF FRIED SPRING CHICKEN 1.75
BAR-B-Q BONELESS HAM 1.75
BAR-B-Q SPARE RIBS 1.50
BAR-B-Q BEEF 1.50
SMOKED FINAN HADDIE 1.50
FRIED OYSTERS 1.50

HOMEMADE ANGEL PIE or RASPBERRY SHERBET
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Sundays 12 Noon to 10 p.m.
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SMOKEY POINT BARBECUE

And take pleasure in announcing a
new feature! - - -

DANCING

No Admission Charge
EVERY SATURDAY
Night - 9:30 till 1:30 a.m.

• 3-PIECE BAND •

Come out and Dance on the floor that is built on COIL
SPRINGS... It's wonderful!!

Yes, it's **SMOKEY POINT** for your evening's enjoyment—Excellent foods prepared to your taste!

• Make Reservations NOW for New Year's Eve!



Washington Co-Operative Chick Association

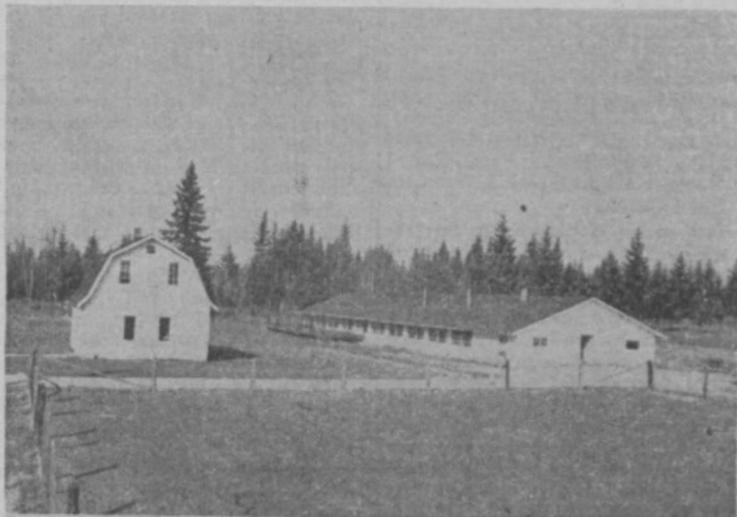
The following excerpts are from:
100 Years of Arlington WA Vol 4
By Shirley Prouty



CHAPTER 38

WASHINGTON CHICK CO-OP

CHICK ASSOCIATION HAS PROSPEROUS YEAR



Showing Two of Several Buildings at Rex Corner Plant

Completing its 17th year, the Washington Co-Operative Chick Association reveals the best yearly record in its history. During these years the Association, specializing in improving chicken and poultry strains, has hatched over 18,000,000 chicks and nearly 750,000 turkey poults.

Sound financial management is indicated by a 4 per cent dividend just declared. This, amounting to \$5,148.60, will go to 3,300 stockholders. In addition over \$1-100 was placed in the general reserve fund.

To Clear 25 Acres.

At the Master Breeding Farm, Rex's corner, the improved area is being enlarged to the extent of 25 acres. This has been slashed and burned, and will be cleared by use of the concern's own bulldozer.

Also a new 236x24-foot breeder house is to be completed by August 15th, same to house 1400 additional Hampshire Red breeders.

The annual meeting of the Association will be held at Bellingham Thursday, August 21st.



A Leghorn rooster strutting with hens in his farm yard.

Once, several thriving poultry farms operated at Rex's Corner, now known as Smokey Point in north Snohomish County. Two of the farms were master poultry breeding farms that were managed by the Washington Co-Operative Chick Association.

The master farms were responsible for scientific poultry research. They bred and raised parent birds to maximize meat and egg production. At first, the superior birds were sold throughout Washington State to cooperative hatcheries and Co-Op members statewide. Later, high-quality birds were sold to poultry farmers throughout the world.

"The Washington Co-Operative Chick Association ... is primarily a service organization to supply poultrymen with chicks and pullets (A pullet is a young hen less than a year old)." (Source: "Co-Op Hatcheries in Combination," *The Arlington Times*, p. 1, June 21, 1945)



NEW STOREHOUSE AT TURKEY FARM

A new storehouse and barn has recently been erected at the Turkey Breeding Farm No. 2 of the Washington Co-Operative Chick Association, same being 52x 76 feet in size.

There are now 6,000 turkeys at the farm, located at Rex's corner. These are being vaccinated against fowl pox.



Washington Co-Op Chick Association raised:

- Chickens on Master Breeding Farm No. 2 near State Highway 99 (now Smokey Point Boulevard)
- Turkeys on Master Breeding Farm No. 3 (near today's Shoultes Road – 1 mile east of Rex's Corner). Rex's Corner was at the intersection of State Highway 99 (Smokey Point Boulevard) and Edgcomb West Rd (172nd St. NE). The 1952 map shows the Co-op's ownership after the initial 200 acres expanded to approximately 300 acres and before Interstate 5 was built. Map courtesy of LOSCHO Historic Mapping Program, Metsker Map, 1952.

Master Breeding Farms No. 2 and No. 3

In May 1937, approximately 200 acres of prime, level farmland was purchased near the southeast corner of Rex's Corner as an assemblage purchased from members of the Hild Family. It was developed into Master Breeding Farms No. 2 and No. 3. All of this was under the guidance of Dr. Sterling S. Munro. He was an internationally famous geneticist and former Chief Geneticist for the Canadian government. Dr. Munro was in full charge of Master Breeding Farm No. 1 in Bellingham and both Master Breeding Farms near Arlington at Smokey Point.

Farm No. 2 was located along Highway 99 and raised heavy breed chickens. Here was where Dr. Munro developed the Washington White Hybrid, which became the Northwest's Number One fryer chicken. Harold Vroman was chosen as manager of Farm No. 2, which initially consisted of 110 acres. Farm No. 3 was located further east on Shoultes Road and specialized in raising turkeys, the Broad Breasted Bronze Turkey and Beltsville Small White Turkey.

14 ACRES CLEARED AT CO-OP HATCHERY

The premises of the Washington Co-Operative Chick Association at Rex's corner are being largely improved. During recent months 14 acres have been cleared, plowed and nicely leveled. The fencerow has also been cleared to a width of about 10 feet around the margin of the large area, and neat fencing is being erected.

5,500 Poults

The farm will hatch this spring 5,500 turkey poults, 3,000 having been hatched up to the present date; also 8,000 chicks.

David O'Conner is manager of the farm, which specializes in producing high-grade turkey breeding stock.





The two-year old daughter of Thomas Rhodda, fleet attendant of the Washington Co-operative Egg & Poultry Association, stands on the gasoline tank of one of the organization's trucks.



The Original Hild Ranch and Water Tower. The family home was on the left where the young Vroman family lived after it became Master Breeding Farm No. 2.

Harold Vroman had worked at the Bellingham plant researching for Dr. Munro. In 1937, Harold and his wife Kathleen moved from Ferndale, Washington, to Arlington to live and work at the master breeding farms at Smokey Point. They were newlyweds, having just married on February 24, 1937. In time, the Vroman's would have five children born in Everett: Allan, Arlene, Arlys, Wayne and Arnold. The children were raised on the poultry farm. Wayne Vroman remembers his father telling him that he earned \$5 a day when he first started working at the farm.

Early Poultry Production - Economy Mattered

On September 4, 1924, 40 poultry farmers formed an organization known as Whatcom County Co-Operative Hatcheries. In 1927, the organization's scope expanded statewide, and it was renamed Washington Cooperative (later Co-Operative) Chick Association.

The first Master Breeding Farm was started in Whatcom County (north Bellingham) in 1928 to do poultry research and develop high-quality chicks. Even for a breeding program, such investment in a poultry farm was impractical for any one individual. These poultry farmers were practical and worked together for their mutual benefit. Each Co-Op farmer was assessed a few dollars. The association was able to buy or build hatcheries throughout the state, working together with the collected funds and the farmer members' expertise.

In addition to the master breeding farms that did poultry research, the Cooperative had poultry hatcheries in Bellingham, Lynden, Blaine, Mount Vernon, Yakima, Centralia, Poulsbo, Vancouver, Spokane, Kent, Walla Walla, Warm Beach and Puyallup. By 1949, the Cooperative had grown to 8,000 members. Between 1925 and 1949, 3,620,000 chicks and 399,000 turkeys had been produced. (Source: "Twenty-Five Years of Progress," *Co-Op Chick News*, p. 3, Aug. 1949)

Giving a boost to research was an extension poultry specialist from Washington State College, Fred W. Frasier, who introduced the first poultry schools run by the extension service in Whatcom County from 1932 through 1941. In 1947 he received recognition from the National Poultry Science Association for his outstanding contributions in extension work.

Frasier's most significant contributions impacting the poultry industry were his leadership helping to organize various groups; Washington Turkey Improvement Association, Washington Turkey Federation, Washington Turkey and Poultry Industry Disease Control Committee and Washington Junior Poultry Exposition for 4-H youth. (Source: "Poultry Industry Loses Devoted Builder," *Co-Op Chick News*, p. 2, Jan. 1949)

Major Construction Projects - 1938

In less than a year, the breeding farms at Smokey Point were already partially in operation. Workers made swift progress clearing land for building sites, building interior roads and drainage ditches, drilling water wells and constructing several buildings. For the chicken farm, a 24x200-foot trap-nesting house was made that became home to 800 pullets (young hens). Other new construction included a 24x236-foot brooder house and other smaller buildings.

With the turkey farm under Bob Mitchell's supervision, a 24x32-foot incubator house with an office was built. The land was cleared for a 40x160-foot brooder house. Twenty wire-enclosed pens were made, each contained ten turkey hens and one tom. As of January 1938, the new turkey farm had 230 hens and 24 toms. About 30 portable colony houses were planned in anticipation of raising 4,000 turkey pullets on the farm. (Source: "Poultry Breeding Farm in Partial Operation," *The Arlington Times*, p. 1, Jan. 27, 1938)

A Boost in Production During World War II

During World War II, local farmers were encouraged to expand production to feed the world. It was considered a form of patriotism. In 1941, W. D. Buchanan, the extension poultryman at the State College of Washington said, "Washington poultrymen who plan now to fill laying houses to capacity this fall and to feed present flocks to maintain production at the highest possible level throughout the summer will not only be doing their country a service but will be benefitting themselves.

"The need for ample food supplies at the time of the present world crisis has caused the U.S. Department of Agriculture to launch a nationwide drive to boost egg production at least six percent in the next 15 months, about 10 million cases of 30 dozen eggs each." (Source: "Egg Production Boost Advised," *The Arlington Times*, p. 3, May 1, 1941)

More Real Estate Acquisitions

In September 1942, the house and 5-acre estate of Conrad Hild was purchased by the Co-Op. It was at the southeast corner of Rex's Corner (Smokey Point Boulevard and 172nd Street NE). The home was renovated, and Harold Vroman and his family moved in. As a youngster, Wayne Vroman grew up in it and remembered it as a "mansion" of a house built in 1919 with three stories and a basement. (Source: "Lakewood," *The Arlington Times*, p. 6, Oct. 8, 1942)

Another large land purchase was made in October 1946 when the Co-Op purchased approximately 40 acres along Shoultes Road from Andrew Hovik.

Baby Chicks in the Mail

The war years intervened, and quotas were set in place by President Roosevelt. The Co-op system was highly compatible with government requirements. During World War II, poultry farmers were allotted extra gas ration coupons to transport their products to market.

Increased farm production was necessary to feed and clothe the army of fighting and working men and women, not only at home but also abroad. "Between 1939 and 1944, farm production increased twice as much as it had during the twenty peacetime years from 1919 to 1939." (Source: "Co-ops are Major Part of American Farms," *Co-op Chick News*, pp. 10 & 11, Jan. 1947)

During February, March and April, it was common to place mail orders for chicks. They were delivered through the U.S. Postal Service. The post office often had stacks of boxes, 50 chicks to each box, for rural delivery.



A shipping box for baby chicks held by author Shirley Prouty and poultry farmer Wayne Vroman, 2013.

Co-op Membership



WA Co-op Chick Association Logo, *Co-op Chick News*, p. 16, Jan. 1949.

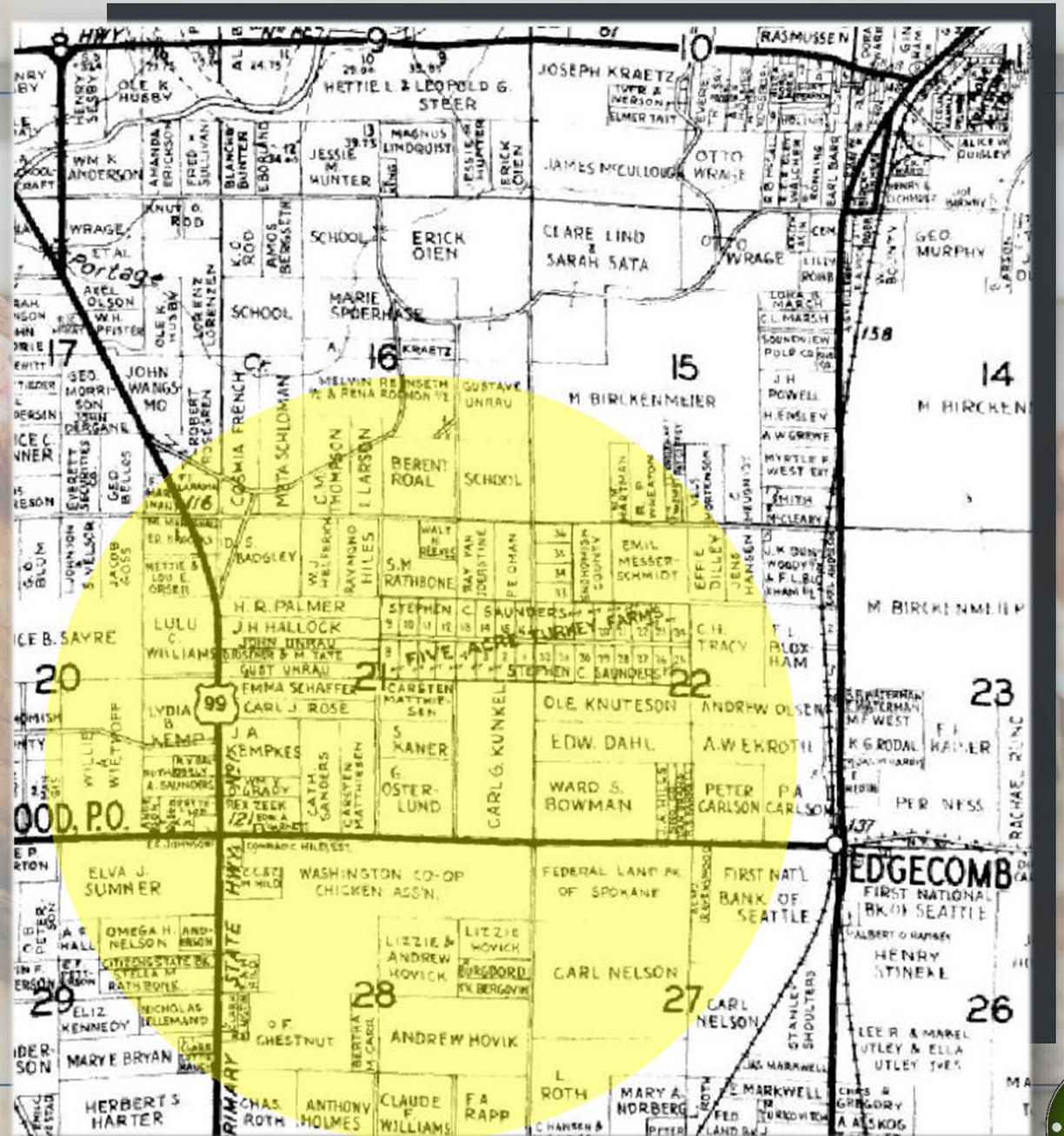
To become a Washington Co-Operative Chick Association member, the farmer only had to hold one stock share. After one trial of brooding “Co-Op” chicks or pullets, there was no obligation to continue and no binding contract. Each member received a patronage refund in the form of stock at the end of the year based on the number of chicks or pullets purchased.

Members were given tried-and-true knowledge on the style of poultry buildings, proper ventilation, and how to cull and sex birds. Because of the continual research and testing done at the Master Breeding Farms, the Co-Op sold high-quality chicks. Every two weeks throughout the year, a steady supply of chicks was available for purchase at discounted prices. (Sources: *Co-Op Chick News*: “Did You Ever Stop to Consider,” p. 16, Jan. 1947 & “A Plan That’s Not for ‘In-and-Outers,’” p. 9, May 1948)

“Profit is Bred into Our Chickens”

The master breeding farms contributed to the agricultural economy by providing scientific research. Analysis of feeds and flock management improved, yielding higher egg production and non-broodiness. Faster feathering reduced feed cost per egg produced and lowered feed costs per pound of grain. Improved nutrition resulted in better flocks with lower mortality rates. As performance improved, quality standards were raised, further enhancing the bloodlines. Blood testing was a standard procedure. For many years, as a result of the research done on the master breeding farms, the association was able to live up to its motto: “Profit is bred into Co-Op Chicks.” (Source: “Where Profit is Bred into Co-Op Chicks,” *Co-Op Chick News*, p. 3, Dec. 1943)

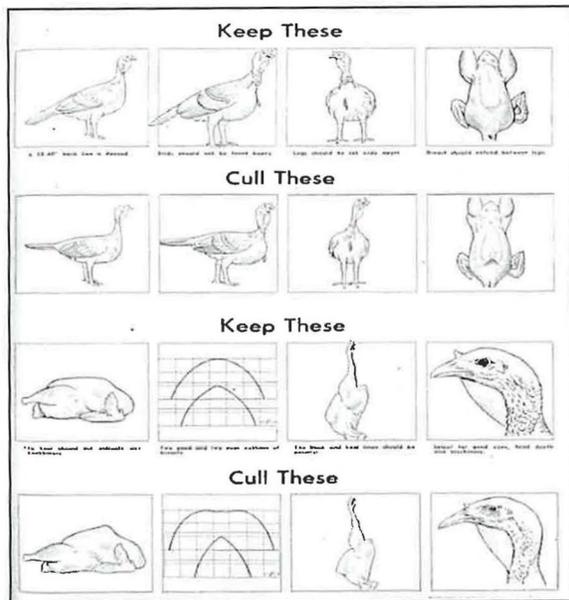
During this time, the wide-breasted bird was being perfected. A recent discovery was that adding lights to a chicken’s day prolonged its laying period considerably and improved fertility. The master breeding farms were well equipped with automatic poultry feeders, electric lighting systems on specially set timers, colony houses for “open range” birds, and the latest modern technology.



Great emphasis was placed on a bird's *family* performance rather than individual performance. The rationale was, if the desired characteristics were well stamped into the family, the family would have the ability to pass the good quality along to offspring, resulting in more valuable Co-op birds. The hazards of in-breeding were carefully managed.

Meticulous records of egg sizes and other scientific data were gathered. Each bird was uniquely identified with a leg band, numbered, and color-coded with one of five colors. Although it was very time-consuming, veterinarian and geneticist Dr. Munro carefully followed each bird's records. If a chicken's history showed that it was productive, the bird was spared from being culled.

The research done at the master breeding farms was of utmost importance to Co-op members as their chicks and pullets were in good demand. Master Breeding Farm No. 1 in Bellingham specialized in raising laying hens.



A Culling Chart from Co-op Chick News, a trade magazine, provided essential information to farmers.

In February 1948, phenomenal results were reported: 110 hens had each laid an average of 311 eggs in 365 days. In 1951, the average egg production per layer was 220, and some flocks averaged over 240 eggs per layer.

According to the American Egg Board in 2020, a hen produces between 250 to 300 eggs a season. Extensive research at the Master Breeding Farms ushered the way to today's production levels. (Sources: "Not one, not ten, but 110 hens average 311 eggs in 365 days," *Co-op Chick News*, p. 1, Feb. 1948 & "Can Poultrymen Set Their Own Wage?" p. 8, Dec. 1952)

A Feed Crisis

In 1943, the *Co-Op Chick News*, a trade magazine, reported that some poultry feed was filled with worthless materials. It caused excessive broodiness, a chicken's undesirable and unproductive behavior to hatch and raise chicks. The feed problem had not been detected until a year later. In 1943, a farmer was considered "unpatriotic" to waste feed on unproductive poultry. In 1944, employee Bob Williams, a 17-year old Arlington High School student, remembered that poor quality poultry feed continued to be a problem throughout World War II.

By 1946, there was a shortage of poultry feed. Washington Cooperative Farmers Association who sold good quality feed without fillers, placed a notice [on the right] in the *Co-Op Chick News* to alert farmers of the crisis and encouraged the culling of unproductive stock. (Sources: *Co-Op Chick News*: "Brooding Chicks Now Presents New Problems," p. 4, Dec. 1943 & "No Feed for Feed Wasters," p. 5, June 1946)

The Co-Op provided members with practical tips on identifying and culling inferior poultry. A tell-tale sign of an unproductive Leghorn was a dried-up comb. It was more challenging to evaluate the broodiness of heavier breeds. Farmers were given instructions on how to examine a bird's abdomen and pelvic bones. Members were encouraged to ship unthrifty birds called "broodies" to market before the chickens lost their bodyweight. (Source: "Culling of Poultry may be an Art," *Co-Op Chick News*, pp. 10, 11 & 14, May 1948)

Dr. Munro made recommendations to farmers through *Co-op Chick News* and at various educational meetings. Recommendations for nutritional feed supplements included silage, skim milk, buttermilk and powdered milk. Despite the lean years, Harold Vroman did his best to supplement the chickens' and turkeys' diets on the breeding farms. His son Wayne remembered that his father would purchase 50-pound bricks of whey.

NO FEED

For

Feed Wasters

Today's precious feed isn't meant for non-productive feed wasters. Supplies of food are much too limited to be wasted on birds with low production records.

Available supplies of all feeds are disappearing rapidly—and are not being replaced. The situation is more critical than ever before.

What feed there is MUST be saved . . . stretched . . . guarded—made to last as long and go as far as it possibly can.

Feed wasters must be consistently culled so there will be enough feed for the productive members of your flock.

Every practical feed saving suggestion must be carefully followed in these days of feed shortages and constant culling of flocks is one of the most effective means of saving scarce feed.

"The Emblem Is Your Security"

WASHINGTON CO-OP
Washington Cooperative Farmers Association

Washington Co-op alerted farmers about a severe feed shortage in the June 1946 Co-op Chick News.

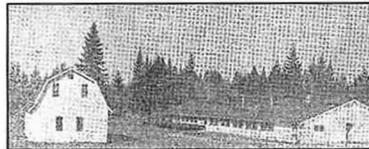


Creation of a Youth Show

On December 11, 1947, a resolution was passed at the annual meeting of industry poultry members to create the Junior Washington Poultry Exposition. It was intended to be a yearly event designed for youth. County extension agents from WSC (Washington State College, now Washington State University) developed judging contests and promoted different chicken breed studies. The exposition held in 1947 included over 1,000 4-H entries. For years, youth-oriented activities continued. (Source: "Over 1,000 Entries at Jr. Poultry Show," *The Arlington Times*, p. 6, Oct. 23, 1947)

A First-Class Turkey Operation

In 1947, Arlington's Commercial Club reported on Master Breeding Farm No. 3: "Turkeys: Five miles from Arlington on Highway 99 is a very important institution in the development of the poultry business in the Puget Sound region - the Master Breeding Farm of the Washington Co-Operative Chick Association. It hatches and sells high-grade chicks and pullets, also doing important research work. It comprises 261 acres of level, sandy land with 185 cleared, hatching and brooding houses, turkey breeding pens, a feed barn and five residences for employees, ranging from 15 to 40 men. It has an incubator capacity of 10,000 and can brood 30,000 chicks and 16,000 turkeys per year. 1946 production was 18,000 chicks and 8,000 poults; 4,500 turkeys were sold and 2,000 reserved for breeding purposes. Harold Vroman is manager and Dr. S. S. Munro (geneticist) is in charge of the breeding department." (Source: Arlington Commercial Club, "Arlington, Washington, Its Resources, Industries and Opportunities," pp. 10-11, 1947, held at Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum)



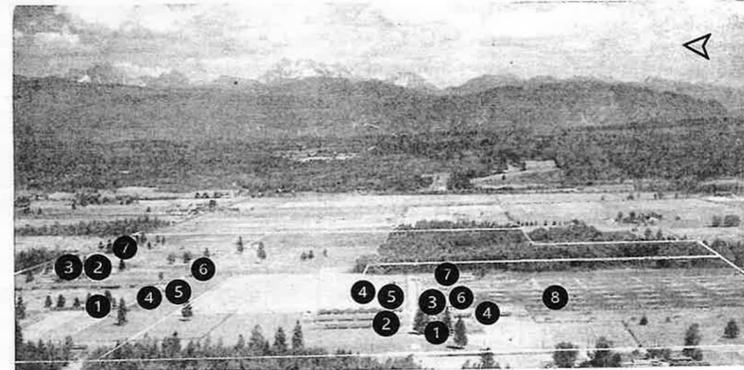
Farm No. 3, incubator and brood house for the Co-op's strain of Broad Breasted Bronze turkeys. Source: *Co-op Chick News*, p. 7, Dec. 1943.

houses, turkey breeding pens, a feed barn and five residences for employees, ranging from 15 to 40 men. It has an incubator capacity of 10,000 and can brood 30,000 chicks and 16,000 turkeys per year. 1946 production was 18,000 chicks and 8,000 poults; 4,500 turkeys were sold and 2,000 reserved for breeding purposes. Harold Vroman is manager and Dr. S. S. Munro (geneticist) is in charge of the breeding department." (Source: Arlington Commercial Club, "Arlington, Washington, Its Resources, Industries and Opportunities," pp. 10-11, 1947, held at Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum)

An Innovative Four-Story Poultry House

In July 1948, the Co-Op announced that a four-story poultry house for 3,000 birds was under construction. It was a 40x180-foot building that had a concrete foundation and wood-framed walls. The purpose of the structure was to increase chicken capacity and egg production on the farm. The modern building was designed with three floors for chicken laying and a fourth top floor for feed storage with access via a grain elevator. Feed was automatically delivered to chickens using a gravity-fed system. In just ten years, annual production was up to 16,000 chickens at Farm No. 2 and was between 8,000 to 10,000 turkey poults at Farm No. 3. By 1947, Harold Vroman, who had managed the chicken farm, was also the turkey farm manager. Both farms were producing prime birds for Co-op members and retail sales. (Source: "Co-Op Chicks Association to Erect Poultry House," *The Arlington Times*, p. 1, July 29, 1948)

Master Breeding Farms No. 2 and 3



Farm No. 3

- 1—Turkey laying house—1,300 birds.
- 2—Office
- 3—Brooder House—5,000
- 4—Pedigree Houses
- 5—Feed House
- 6—Machine Shed
- 7—Dwelling
- Total Acreage 190

Farm No. 2

- 1—Dwelling
- 2—Laying House—900
- 3—Barn-Laying House—1,100
- 4—Laying House—1,200
- 5—Pedigree House—750
- 6—Laying House—3,000
- 7—Brooder House—8,000
- 8—Range
- Total Acreage 110

MASTER BREEDING FARM NO. 2

Master Breeding Farm No. 2 is devoted to the testing and producing of our heavy breed chicks. It is here that Dr. Munro developed the Washington White Hybrid which has become the Northwest's Number One fryer chicken. Here we are carrying on experiments on the Coop Strain New Hamps and have already made great steps toward producing New Hamps which combine very rapid growth with high egg production and practically eliminating the broody quality which has so long been common to the New Hamp breed. Here too are Broad Breasted White chickens and Broad Breasted red chicks in varying stages of development.

This farm produces New Hamp and Washington White Cockerels that go to our hatching egg producer farms.

MASTER BREEDING FARM NO. 3

This is the home of the Coop Broad Breasted Bronze Turkey and the Beltsville Small White. Here the Turkeys are carefully raised and selected for those qualities which make the turkey grower more profitable, fast growth rate and ruggedness.



Harold Vroman from Master Breeding Farms No. 2 & 3 is pictured above in 1949. The aerial photo was taken from Smokey Point and looks to the east, with the directional arrow pointing north. Source: *Co-op Chick News*, Silver Anniversary Edition, August 1949. Courtesy of Wayne Vroman.



A Sharp Decline in the Poultry Business

On April 26, 1951, the Commercial Club in Arlington sponsored a roundtable discussion about the poultry business's decline. County extension agent Arnold Smith shared disappointing statistics about the drop in business.

Year	WA State Sales of Baby Chicks	Snohomish County Poultry Sales
1948	866,000	\$4,000,000
1949	1,065,000	\$4,333,000
1950	731,000	\$3,750,000

The decline statewide from 1949 to 1950 in the number of baby chicks sold was 31%. The decrease in Snohomish County chicken sales for the same period was 13%. In Snohomish County, 1,637,000 turkeys were raised in 1945 compared to 687,000 turkeys raised in 1950: a decline of 58% fewer turkeys over five years.

At the meeting, Harold Vroman from Washington Cooperative Chicks Association announced that a strain of Beltsville White turkeys and 2,500 cockerel fryers (10 weeks old weighing 5 pounds) would be marketed through Washington Cooperative Farmers stores. Dr. Munro from Washington Cooperative Chicks spoke as the keynote speaker about scientific discoveries made by studying poultry. (Sources: *The Arlington Times*: "Dr. Munro to Address Poultry Meeting April 26," p. 1, April 19, 1951 & "Poultrymen Discuss Industry Problems," p. 1, May 3, 1951)

Trouble at the Master Breeding Farms

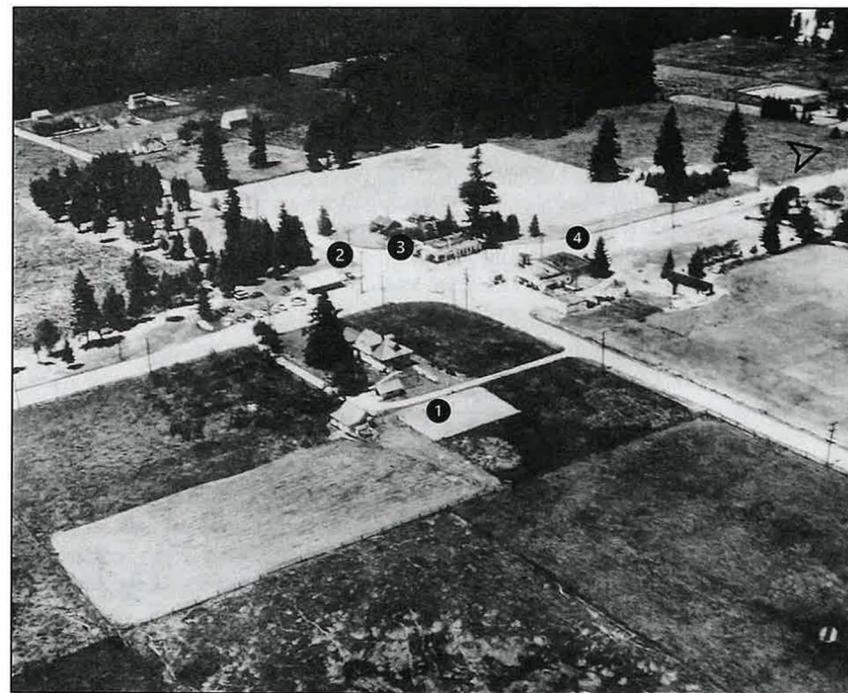


Logo, *Co-op Chick News*, p.16, Oct., Nov., Dec. 1952.

On August 27, 1951, Farms No. 2 and No. 3 changed from Washington Cooperative Chicks Association (principal place of business in Bellingham, Washington) to Western Cooperative Hatcheries (principal place of business in Bellevue, Washington). Harold Vroman continued to work for Western Co-op, but the research facility closed. The poultry industry was experiencing hardships; raising poultry birds for experimental research was too expensive.

In October 1951, on behalf of Western Coop Hatcheries, Harold Vroman led a discussion about laying hens at the Washington Co-op store in downtown Arlington. He announced that poultry stock would be marketed to the public through Washington Co-op stores. His son Wayne shared that Harold Vroman in 1952 developed health problems and that his father was unable to work for the next three years. (Source: Interview with Wayne Vroman, May 22, 2020)

To generate cash during the uncertain economic times, the Western Cooperative Hatcheries made the difficult decision to sell some real estate holdings. On August 13, 1953, Harold Vroman's brother Ray Vroman purchased the home and 5 acres where Harold was living. That way, Harold and his family could continue to live there and later start what would become Vroman Egg Ranch. On October 3, 1955, Western Cooperative Hatcheries sold Paul Due approximately 30 acres along Shoultes Road that had been part of Master Breeding Farm No. 3 - the turkey farm.



An aerial of Rex's Corner at Smokey Point looking northwest at the intersection of Edgcomb West Road (172nd Street NE) and Highway 99 (Smokey Point Boulevard):

- ① = Southeast corner: Farm No. 2, later the Vroman Egg Ranch,
- ② = Southwest corner: a popular fruit stand,
- ③ = Northwest corner: Van's Tavern,
- ④ = Northeast corner: Smokey Point Café. Smoke from the café's two outdoor ovens could be seen from miles away.

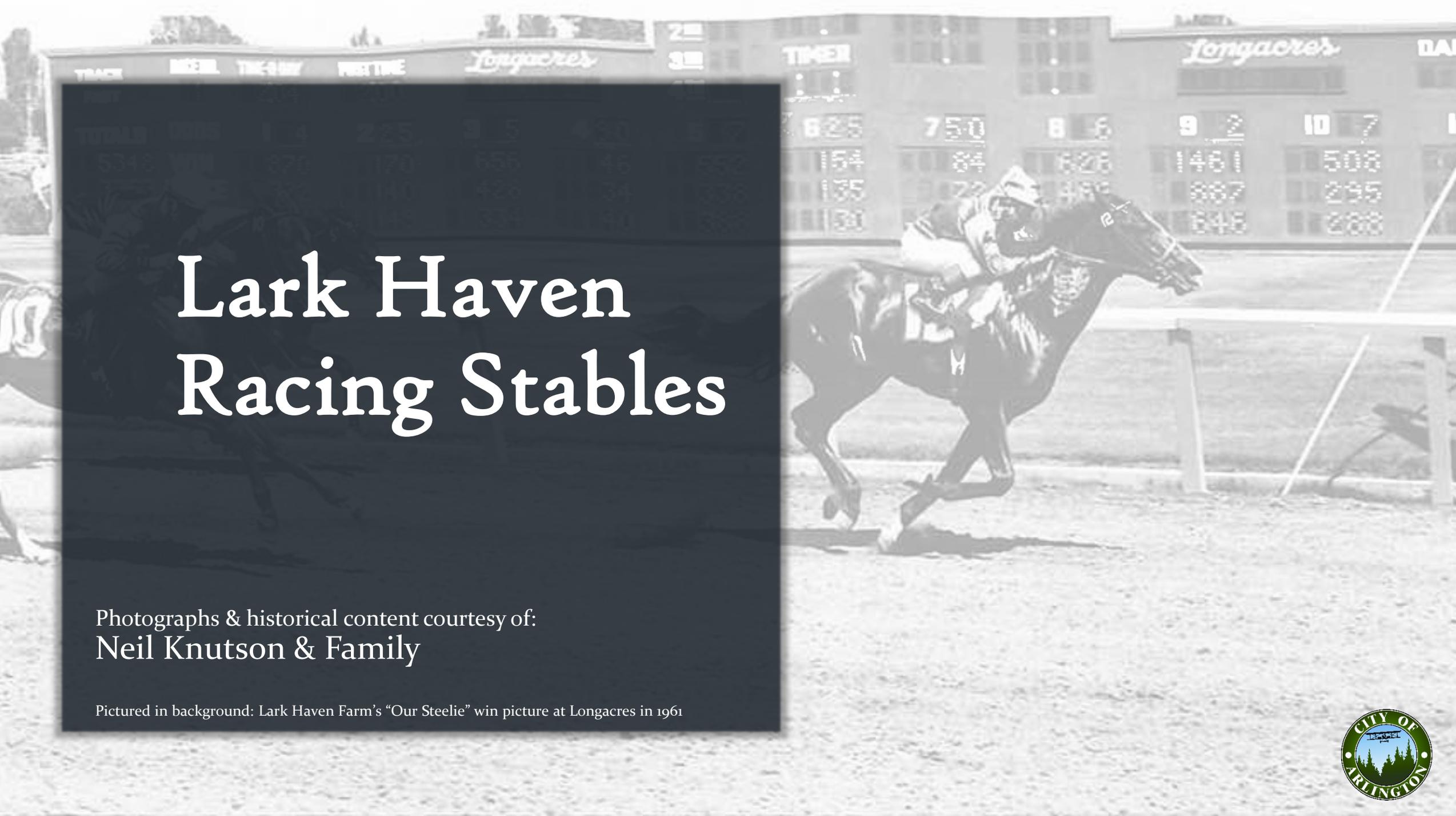
The directional arrow in the upper right points north. Circa, early 1950s. Photo courtesy of Peter Poeschel.



Lark Haven Racing Stables

Photographs & historical content courtesy of:
Neil Knutson & Family

Pictured in background: Lark Haven Farm's "Our Stealie" win picture at Longacres in 1961



2	3	4	5	6	7
8 25	7 50	8 56	9 2	10 7	
154	84	628	46	508	
135	72	489	667	295	
130			646	268	



Clarence & Mildred Swanson of Seattle embarked on a dream in 1950, acquiring 50 acres in the Smokey Point area to craft a weekend retreat and have a farm, thus beginning the story of Lark Haven Farm.

Around 1952, Mildred wanted to add horses and goats to the farm, so Clarence purchased a few thoroughbred racehorses for her, and by the late 1950's the horses were racing at Longacres... and winning.

The picture is taken facing West. Hwy 99 (Smokey Point Blvd.) is at the bottom of the picture. The 50-acre farm was located south of 180th St NE of what is now called Pony Estates.





Aerial view of Lark Haven Horse Farm

The picture is taken facing directly above the NW corner of the Airport. Lark Haven Farm is visible on the left side of the picture.



Clarence had out-buildings constructed and converted an existing old barn into two apartments to house Mildred's father (Nels Knutson) and the farm and horse caretakers, John and Edna Miller. A round barn was built to house the horses, and an oval racetrack was built.

A trainer was secured and the horses were running in races at Longacres Racetrack in Renton and Golden Gate Fields racetrack in California, to name a few.

Clarence became a member of the board of directors for Longacres in the 1960's. He generously donated thousands of dollars in racehorse winnings to the American Cancer Society.



FEB • 60 •



MAR • 60 •



Pictured Left: The Round Barn at Lark Haven
Pictured Right: The Round Barn, paddocks, and outbuildings
Circa 1960



MAR • 60 •



MAR • 60 •



Pictured Left: The racetrack at Lark Haven
Pictured Right: Paddocks and outbuildings inside the track
Circa 1960





430 Longacres 8/12/61
 STELLINA-2nd
 PORTOLA WAY-3rd

BLUE SERENADE
 5½ Fur. 1:05:2

Paul Frey-UP
 Harry Holt-Trainer
 Larkhaven Farm-Owner



097 Longacres 6/19/60
 BATATABATI-2nd
 SPARROW CASTLE-3rd

COMELY MISS
 FATHER'S DAY PURSE
 6¼ Fur. 1:16 NEW TRACK RECORD

Gordon Glisson-UP
 Harry Holt-Trainer
 Larkhaven Farm-Owner

Lark Haven Farm racehorse win pictures from Longacres





APPROXIMATE ODDS		WIN 12664 POOL		THESEY 2:10	POST TIME 7:04
1	1236	6	1132	RESULT	1200 TOTE TICKETS PAY
2	3926	7	320		
3	176	8	804		
4	1578	9	1385		
5	310	10	1820		



105 Longacres 6/28/57
COME ON BOY-2nd
ED'S FLEET-3rd

ENTRUSTED
Six Fur. 1:10.2

James Ruggeri-Up
Larkhaven Farm-Owner
Fred Veysey-Trainer



070 Longacres 6/12/60
MOSIER CANYON-2nd
B-AUTION-3rd

OUR STEELIE
5 Fur. :59

Gordon Glisson-Up
Harry Holt-Trainer
Larkhaven Farm-Owner

Lark Haven Farm racehorse win pictures from Longacres





Lark Haven Racing Stables Threatened By Spectacular Fire

A spectacular fire occurred last Thursday morning at 10:30 when flames broke out in the hay storage shed at the Larkhaven ranch on Highway 99 just north of Smokey Point. The ranch is owned by E. C. Swanson, building contractor, of Seattle who stables 15 race horses on the 40-acre ranch, which also has a half-mile track. Damage was confined to a small hay shed and 2½ tons of hay, with slight damage to adjoining buildings.

John Miller is caretaker and lives at the ranch. He and Mrs. Miller were driving to Arlington when they met the fire truck. They were unaware that the fire was at the ranch.

A passing truck driver on Highway 99 noticed the fire and notified a neighbor, who went to the Norman Knutson place, which is across the road from the ranch, notifying them. As they are on the Marysville exchange they phoned the alarm to Marysville and long-distanced to Arlington. The Marysville department arrived on the scene first, followed closely by the Arlington rig, the latter being held up for a time by a passing freight train at Edgecomb.

One of the factors aiding in holding the damage down was a well just completed a few days ago, which held its level while two 1½-inch hose lines were in use, the Arlington truck drafting from the well.

In addition the Marysville department carried 800 gallons of water on one of their rigs, two of which responded.

Mr. Miller stated that the hay, about 2½ tons, was of high quality, purchased in Ellensburg, and was used only for race horses. He discounted the theory that the fire could have started from green hay as he said the hay was thoroughly cured.

In addition to the hay in the storage shed were two barrels of

molasses and some linseed oil. One of the molasses barrels exploded and caused a great cloud of black smoke, attracting many spectators, cars lining the highway on both sides as motorists pulled out to watch the fire.

The hay storage shed was situated between a 14-stall circular barn, the latter building of concrete blocks, with patent roofing, and a two-car garage also built of concrete blocks. The shed had a wood floor and canvas on the sides with wood roof, which joined both adjoining buildings. The roof of the circular barn was damaged at point of contact with the shed, and the garage roof was also damaged where it joined the shed.

The concrete block structures, plus the good water supply, were contributing factors in preventing heavy damage.

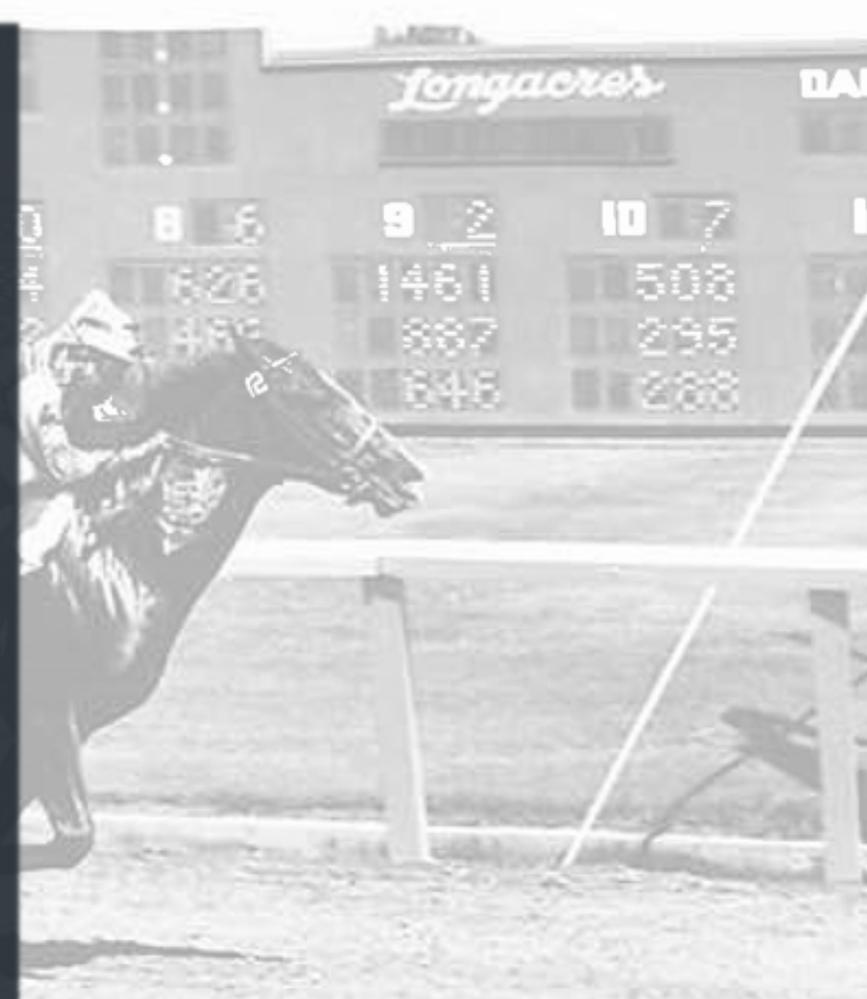
Mr. Miller stated that at the present time five of the stable's horses are at Longacres track, and no animals were in the barns.

Mr. Miller stated that the training of Lark Haven horses for the race tracks is done at the local track. He said that the diet of the valuable animals is closely supervised and that the hay that was destroyed is especially selected, also other ingredients such as the linseed oil and molasses as well as grains are used.

Some of the stock was purchased in Kentucky, two of the animals, it is understood, costing \$10,000 each.

The ranch is on level upland facing highway 99. It is cleared and fenced in the traditional horse ranch white fences. There is the ranch style home with patio on the west side, and also attractive quarters for caretaker.

With the development of a new well which proved its capacity during the fire, it will be possible to irrigate for production of greener pastures.



Wig Wam Restaurant

Wig Wam Restaurant
built by art Horey 1947
Kitty corner from Long-
horn Tavern.

INA - BUS 213

16





The Wig Wam Restaurant was built by Art Horey in 1947. It was a fountain restaurant serving burgers, soda, etc.

The picture is taken facing southeast at the intersection of Smokey Point Blvd. and 188th St. NE. The restaurant was located where the Arlington Massage Therapy and Wellness building is now located.



References

- Pictures and news articles: *Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Association and Pioneer Museum volunteers*
- WA Co-Operative Chick Association and Rex's Corner excerpts from: *100 Years of Arlington WA, Volume 4 by Shirley Prouty pgs. 30-45*
(*100 Years of Arlington WA, Volumes 1-4 generously donated by the Stillaguamish Pioneer Museum to the City of Arlington*)
- Newspaper articles: *Arlington Times Newspaper Archives*
- Lark Haven Racing Stables historical pictures and family information: *Neil Knutson and family*
- Washington Co-Operative Egg & Poultry Association truck picture: *Wisconsin Historical Society, www.wisconsinhistory.org*
- Historical maps: *Snohomish County First 100 Years Online Interactive Map (1927,1934,1940,1952)*
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=d88679dd9do441of806546bod7f776f2>



Thank You

City of Arlington
Community & Economic Development
Department

This slide show was created for the Smokey Point Community Park Grand Opening
Spring 2025

