

Special Walk 5: June 7, 2025

Threatened Gems & Aeroplane Bungalows!

Presented by the Friends of Ravenna-Cowen



 NR-ZONED LOTS PROPOSED FOR LR3 UPZONE

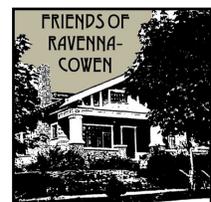
 CONTRIBUTING HISTORIC RESOURCES NOTED IN THIS WALK

Focus of walk.

Celebrate some exceptional historic homes and special trees in a portion of the Ravenna-Cowen North National Historic District (RCN NHD) that the city is proposing to rezone. Learn about these interesting homes—their styles and their stories—and trees. Learn what areas of the RCN NHD are proposed for rezoning to LR3 (5-story apartment). Learn about “Aeroplane Bungalows and see at least five examples of these cool homes. Enjoy interesting stories and details about the homes and trees we’ll see on this walk. Eugenia Woo, Preservation Advocate at Historic Seattle, may join us as well.

Details.

Easy walk, likely under one hour. Numbers below refer to stops shown on tour map. Start at 1:00 PM at Circle Park, located at 17th Avenue where it intersects with NE 63rd Street and NE Naomi Place. End mid-block at parking strip area in front of 6310 22nd Avenue NE. Light refreshments will be available at end of walking tour.



1 “Circle Park.” This traffic circle has been transformed by neighborhood volunteers into an informal neighborhood gathering spot delightfully landscaped with many native plants. It is also near the center of the Ravenna-Cowen National Historic District, which extends between 12th Ave NE to the west and ravine edge east of 23rd Ave NE. The District was officially listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places on September 13, 2018, where it joins other districts that contribute to the rich cultural heritage of Washington State and our nation. It took a lot of research and a couple thousand hours of work by neighborhood volunteers to achieve this historic designation. Also, note that tour map shows the areas proposed for LR3 up-zoning, and that we will be focusing on exceptional properties within a portion of this area.

Walk east on NE 63rd Street, noting the NHD character and some fine historic homes. Note the large native Western Red cedar located mid-block, east side on the segment of 18th Avenue NE. Across the street are two Freeman’s maple street trees, a hybrid of red and silver maples.

Puget Sound Regional Archives

2 Lulu Berg House.

6303 19th Avenue NE. Note the “cockpit” that distinguishes Aeroplane bungalows, although this 1924 home also has an unusual mix of Colonial Revival and Prairie Style details. Special characteristics of Aeroplane bungalows are a single room on the second floor, surrounded by windows, said to resemble the cockpit of an airplane, and designed as a sleeping room in the summer with all-around access to breezes. The new owner is a fine steward for this remarkable home.



6303 19th Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

3 Smith/Ernst House and Tudor Revival House.

6323 19th Avenue NE is a front-gable Craftsman bungalow was built in 1912 by original owner Herbert Smith. The home was featured in Jud Yoho’s Craftsman Magazine in June 1913 as an “Attractive and Comfortable Home of Moderate Cost.” The magazine quoted the cost as \$2,350, which wouldn’t pay for the entrance door today. A compatible DADU was recently built in the backyard of the home.

Seattle Public Library



6323 19th Avenue NE, 1913.

Puget Sound Regional Archives



6327 19th Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

6327 19th Avenue NE is a good example of a well-preserved modest Tudor Revival home. It was built in 1926 when this style became more fashionable.

There is exceptional deodar cedar in the back of 6327. Deodar cedars are native to the Himalayan mountains and have been a popular landscape tree in the PNW. Mature trees often flatten out at the top, as this tree shows.

Walk north to NE 65th, turn east and continue one block to 20th Ave NE. Turn south on 20th Avenue NE.

Puget Sound Regional Archives

4 Allen House.

6326 20th Avenue NE is a well-hidden Craftsman Aeroplane bungalow that was built in 1919 for a dentist. It features the same “Aeroplane” concept, but in Craftsman style. Note the stepped windows on the cockpit.

Walk down 20th Ave NE. Note that rezone area east of 20th goes all the way south to NE 63rd Street.

Note: The areas west of 20th were platted in 1906, while those to the east were later.



6326 20th Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

Puget Sound Regional Archives



6310 20th Avenue NE, 1957.

5 Potts House and Restored Craftsman

6310 20th Avenue NE is a remarkably modest Tudor Revival home that was built in 1928, shortly before the Great Depression. The home also conveys interesting history of its long-time occupant Ralph Potts.

Note: NHD's not only provide historical information about architecture and landscape, but also convey the history and stories of notable people and events.

Ralph Bushnell Potts (1897-1991) was orphaned at age five and raised by grandparents in Oregon, and went on to accomplish great things in his 93 years. He was a lawyer for 54 years, and founder at age 33 of the New Order of Cincinnatus, a “non-partisan” political group that nonetheless had a mission “to reduce government to the size of the taxpayer’s purse.” Potts and this group helped to shape local and state politics of the day. After retiring from practicing law, Potts turned his creative energy to writing. Among his many books and plays, he was best known for the book “Come Now the Lawyers,” a history of Washington state’s legal profession. He was a founder of Allied Arts of Seattle, the Northwest Writers Conference, and the Seattle Repertory Theater!

Note the Douglas fir in front of the Potts house, and Arborvitae tree near corner of 2002.

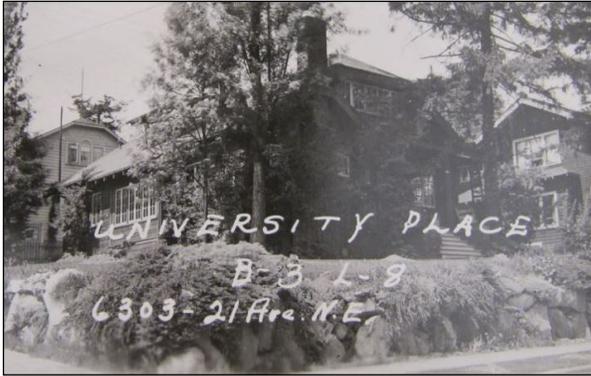
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2002 NE 63rd Street is a 1919 cross-gable Craftsman home that was restored after an extensive fire in the 1980s. The owners at that time had popular local restaurant. The house still conveys its original Craftsman architectural characteristics, including a surrounding porch and overhanging eaves with brackets.

Walk down NE 63rd Street stopping on the south side of Bretz house (Stop 6).



2002 NE 63rd Street, ca. 1937.



6303 21st Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

6 Bretz House.

6303 21st Avenue NE is a Rustic Craftsman bungalow, built in 1914. It is a very special house for several reasons and individually meets many criteria for City of Seattle Landmark Designation.

It was designed by a noted architect—Charles L. Haynes (1870-1947), who came to Seattle in 1907, after working in for San Francisco architect Alexander Cantin, and then opened his own architectural firm the next year.

Haynes designed buildings in a whole variety of eclectic styles, and several of his designs were published in *Bungalow Magazine*. The style of the Bretz home is reminiscent of some of noted Bernard Maybeck’s residential work in Berkeley, CA, and Haynes would have been aware of Maybeck’s work from his time in San Francisco.

It embodies the elements of its Rustic Craftsman architectural style, including overhanging eaves supported by brackets.

The house was also designed for a notable person—J. Harland Bretz, Ph.D. (1812-1981) was a Seattle high school science teacher who earned his Ph.D. in Geology at the University of Chicago in 1913. He became an assistant professor of geology at the University of Washington in 1914, and the following year accepted a faculty offer at the University of Chicago. Bretz became internationally famous for his theory of glacial flooding in Eastern Washington from prehistoric Lake Missoula.

Before you leave, be sure to step into the alley behind the Bretz house to see the large Sequoia tree and note the outline of Mt. Rainier in the shingles in the back of the house.

7 Pagoda Bungalow.

6303 22nd Avenue NE is another architectural gem and potentially eligible for individual City of Seattle Landmark Designation. The house is an exceptional Aeroplane bungalow that was built by Gardner J. Gwinn, who built many houses within the Ravenna-Cowen North NHD. Gwinn was an immigrant from Canada who started as a “painter and plumber” and became a well-known Builder and land developer.



6303 22nd Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

This striking one-and-a-half-story Craftsman bungalow exhibits Asian-influences in its styling, as well as good physical integrity. The house has an interesting form of intersecting projecting gables embellished by an upper raised crown detail and well-detailed bargeboards. It retains most of its original wood casement windows. The front porch columns were originally clad with stucco but were rebuilt around 20 years ago and clad in shingles. The upper floor is composed of an “Aeroplane” floor.

Please note the chestnut tree in front of the house, as well as the large Douglas firs up the street before continuing eastward on NE 63rd Street.

8 2206 NE 63rd Street and 2202 NE 63rd Street

2206 NE 63rd Street is another Aeroplane bungalow! This is a treat because this is not a common home style and we have a whole cluster of them within the Ravenna-Cowen North NHD – more than just the ones you will see on this tour. This one-and-a-half-story side gable Craftsman Aeroplane bungalow built in 1919, has a projecting gable roof entry porch on the northern side of the house that is supported on two massive square tapered wood-cased columns resting on brick

Puget Sound Regional Archives



2206 NE 63rd Street, ca. 1937.

masonry piers. The entry porch is partially recessed. The main floor has a central original tripartite wood-sash window flanked by two narrow wood-sash windows. The main roof has a gable roof vent located a little south of the entry porch roof, and a small front gable second level Aeroplane section located near the southern side of the house. The house is sheathed with cedar shingles and the eaves and bargeboards are supported by corbels. [Note that this house is similar to one coming up at 6311 22nd Ave NE.] Also, note the gardens here and at 2202 NE 63rd Street.

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2202 NE 63rd Street represents a different style of bungalow—a hip-roof, Colonial Revival bungalow. The home was also built in 1919 (a big year for building homes in the University Place plat) and retains its architectural style very well, although it was remodeled around the 1950s and later restored by its owners. Yes—a house that has lost integrity can be restored. The photos from the Puget Sound Regional Archives are a good resource to use to get started.



2202 NE 63rd Street, ca. 1937.

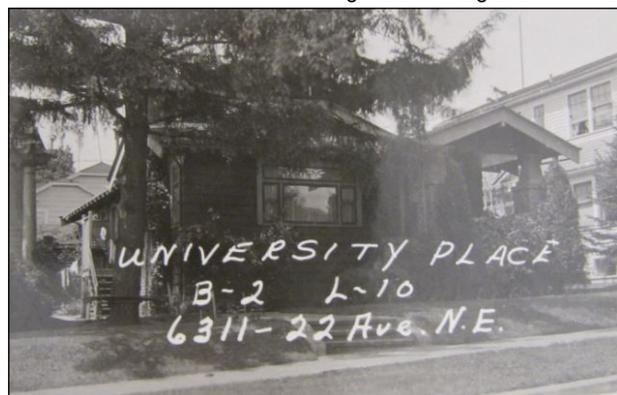
Turn north on 22nd Avenue NE and continue to a cluster of homes, stopping close to 6311 22nd Avenue NE.

9 LAST STOP! 6311 22nd Avenue NE, 6315 22nd Avenue NE, and 6310 22nd Avenue NE.

6311 22nd Avenue NE is also an Aeroplane bungalow the fifth one on this short tour. It was built in 1919 and is close to a twin of the one you just saw at 2206 NE 63rd Street. Builders often used the same plan with some modification in trim details, sometimes reversing the plan on a different lot, and similar variations.

Puget Sound Regional Archives

This one-and-a-half-story side-gable Craftsman Aeroplane bungalow has a projecting gable roof entry porch on the northern side of the house that is supported on two squat square tapered wood-cased columns resting on brick masonry piers. The entry porch is partially recessed.



6311 22nd Avenue NE, ca. 1937.



6315 22nd Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

appears to be a full-width shed dormer on each side. The second floor has a single centrally placed original wood-sash double-hung window flanked by two pairs of original wood-sash double-hung windows.

Joseph A. Van Ostran and his wife Carrie lived in this house for a short time in the 1930s. While the length of their tenure was brief, their story has much to tell about social constructs in Depression-era America. Joseph’s mother, Sarah Zinkon, died at the house in 1932; however, she is listed in the 1930 U.S. census as living as a “patient” in the household of a Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Hill, (he was a sheet metal worker), along with five other elderly “patients,” one nurse, a cook and various extended family. This arrangement no doubt benefited both families: one that was trying to make ends meet, and another that was struggling to take care of an elderly relative.

6315 22nd Avenue NE exhibits classic Dutch Colonial Revival architectural style—another popular residential style in the early 20th century. This two-story Dutch Colonial Revival home, built in 1919, has its main entry on southern side of the house. The street façade has a pair of wood-sash six-over one double-hung windows on the main floor, and another matching pair on the second floor. Note the large Western Red Cedar next to this home.

This form of Dutch Colonial Revival house has faux gambrel roofs on each side with what

6310 22nd Avenue NE is an exception for the University Place Plat. Most of the homes here were built in or near 1919, even though this six-block subdivision was platted in 1907. This home was built in 1908, and its architectural style would be described as Classical Revival. This unusual one-and-a-half-story Classical Revival bungalow has a recessed entry porch on its northern side with a square wood-cased column supporting a hip roof extension sheltering a portion of the entry porch and a sunroom. The sunroom was originally fully glazed with 10-light casement windows separated by three square wood-cased columns but has now been altered to have four double-hung windows within a framed wall. The gable end has an original wood-sash Palladian window. The upper gable has a small shed roof infill sheltering the Palladian window.



6310 22nd Avenue NE, ca. 1937.

The home’s current owner has done more detailed research on his home’s history and can tell some fascinating stories.

Note large Firs and maple on this delightful street segment.

Thank for joining us on this short walking tour. We hope to see you again soon.

FORC is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to “To preserve and protect the history and natural environment of the Ravenna-Cowen neighborhood as a shared community resource for all, and to support other like-minded neighborhood and not-for-profit groups.”