

Leonard Vann - interviewed Jan. 16 2001

Vann's Restaurant

located in the Admiral District
across the street from Lafayette
Grode School

↳ the reason → close to the high school

↳ hang-out place for the high schoolers

↳ not a "restaurant" until his grandmother
started to cook

↳ it was mostly a hang-out where
you could buy cand, soda fountain

↳ his cousin who went to school at

Lafayette would bring his
grandmother's cooking (roasts, meat,
hams) up to the restaurant.

↳ they were sliced and served as
sandwiches

↳ back in 1922, a group of Puget Power
linemen showed-up to eat lunch
there.

↳ 1928 Vann Brothers moved to
Alaska Street

↳ the old building in Admiral (present
Safeway location) was saved and
moved to the North side of the
Admiral Bridge)

↳ in 1932 they moved again to 4542 California Ave
↳ which was previously a shoe store located between Woodward's and Kresser's Ten Cent Store

↳ 1934 - started as a family-style restaurant
↳ also started in sporting goods
- first franchise of Johnson

↳ Outboard Motors
↳ they sold guns, rented skis..

↳ they stopped carrying sporting goods went they could have hard liquor
(they could serve hard liquor)

• sporting goods would take too much inventory
- Vann's opened from 1922 to 1990

↳ 4 generations of Vann's worked there

Food: Breeded veal cutlets; people came from all over; also a neighborhood restaurant

- eventually Leonard with his son bought out his cousin and ran the restaurant
↳ Son was the Junction Merchant's Association

↳ sold the restaurant to a family by the name of Foley

↳ the Foley family sold it also to a person that ran it badly

↳ Leonard stepped in and bought it again

- Leonard resold it to a East-Indian couple
Maharaja Restaurant

- a reason in selling the restaurant was
in the span of a few years
there were 38 restaurants
in the West Seattle area

↳ some were non-union

↳ hard to compete

↳ family (dad + uncle) decided to buy
building that Maharaja
Restaurant sits in now

- Leonard part of
the West Seattle Trusteeds Properties
an organization that he joined
↳ ~~was~~ have enough parking
for customers

↳ no parking meters in the area at
the time

Fritz Lind (manager of People's Bank
corner of California & Alaska)
put together a group with Frank Holert
Leonard's father and uncle

↳ decided to incorporate
and buy a property and
convert it into parking
lots

↳ own 4 parking lots in the area

- talked a little about the 1949 earthquake
that knocked down Lafayette School
("the old castle")

- talks about the former owner of a bakery that
* (Blake's Bakery) now houses ~~the restaurant~~
Borrecchini's (2001)