

“The new McMenamins Brewpub at Murray and Allen boulevards neatly embodies the founder’s philosophy of what a tavern should be,” wrote *The Oregonian* back in April of 1990. The inviting, airy layout offers an openness that defies

ones traditional sense of a tavern; nowhere is the dark, smoky, windowless den that some associate with the word pub. Beaverton’s first brewpub does have a tavern quality about it, but there is no mistaking that this is a family friendly, local neighborhood pub for people to come together and celebrate their friendship.

Today this favorite gathering space sits close to one of the busiest intersections around, but take a moment to imagine that up until fairly recently this was a sleepy, relatively remote location. The land where the Murray Pub now lies first belonged to the Spencers, an Oregon pioneer family whose story is particularly tragic. Peter and Mary Ann Spencer, along with their four children, left the east coast of the United States on a clipper ship headed for Oregon in February 1851. By way of Cape Horn they arrived in Portland six months later, but only after considerable grief and hardship. During their voyage the family endured days of pursuit by pirates, a number of storms that pushed them off course into the intensely cold Antarctic region, and as many as 30 days of dead calm that left them adrift and pushed them to the end of their senses. By the time the ship reached Portland two of the Spencer children had died.

Later that year, after staking their land claim on what would eventually become part of Beaverton, the Spencers began to construct their rustic farm and dwellings. Less than two



years after starting this endeavor, with his home still unfinished and Mary Ann late in a pregnancy, Peter Spencer died at age 33. Shortly after, his widow and family moved to a house east of here that belonged to the Stott family.

For years following Peter Spencer’s death, this spot, where Allen Road came to an end at Murray, was very rural, and the surrounding area blanketed by farmland. Fred Harvey tended the fields here through the 1910s and ‘20s. By the mid ‘30s it belonged to S. Anderson who lived here for a time. In 1939, George Butcher took up residence on this spot. When Butcher retired sometime in the 1970s he had worked for Windolph Brothers Motors for 33 years as a parts man. George was the last person to call this spot ‘home’, and he resided

here until his death in 1984. At the time of his death he worked for Earl Enger Construction Co. and owned and operated his own small engine repair shop from home. He was 87.

The property next went to commercial developers, and in late 1986 ground was broken for a new 42,000-square foot shopping complex. Several area businesses lined up to lease space in the new Murray complex, including notable local entrepreneur Howard Lee Williams. Williams already owned a grocery store called Howard’s on Scholls that, coincidentally, shared space in the Greenway Town Center with McMenamins’ Greenway Pub. Howard’s was known at the time for its smoked meats, parking-lot barbecues and customer service. Now Williams was looking to expand and build “concept” groceries, declaring then that his new stores would be “super, super upscale—stores of the ‘90s.”

...the family endured days of pursuit by pirates, a number of storms...and as many as 30 days of dead calm.

Howard's N.W. Deli opened in the space on Murray Road in August of 1987, before construction on the rest of the complex was completed.



Murray's bar.

Opening to much fan fare, the deli offered gourmet entrees, sandwiches, soup, salads and a rotating menu of fresh produce and fish of the day. And, perhaps as a hint to this spot's future incarnation, Howard's carried only Northwest wines and import beers, along with a few Portland-area microbrews. Perhaps also a nod to things to come was the deli's unique atmosphere; red, white and black décor mixed with over a thousand feet of neon to set it apart from your average deli.

It turns out that Howard's red, white and black concept deli was a short-lived venture, and by 1989 this building was vacant. But the plumbing, wiring and kitchen equipment from the deli remained, and the space seemed ideally suited to a new life as a public house. In April of 1990 McMenamins moved into half of the old deli and breathed new life into the space with the Murray brewpub.

When it opened, the Murray Pub had the distinction of being Beaverton's first brewpub, and its significance didn't go unnoticed by the community. With the capability to produce over 50 varieties of beer based on fresh, northwest hops, grains, fruits and yeast the place quickly became a favorite neighborhood gathering spot and was busier than expected right from the get-go.

The new 2,200-square-foot place offered a warm and friendly décor with lots of lighting and plants. Situated on the corner of the bustling suburban mall, two of the interior walls are floor-to-ceiling windows, and lots of paneling covers the

rest. Around the interior are large black-and-white photos of the Blitz Wienhard brewery. The photos, taken in the 1920s, offer a great distraction from the thoroughly modern scenes just out the windows. The care-free atmosphere inside is further highlighted by the prominent smiling sun of artist Lyle Hehn. The large, backlit conversation piece is framed by the ceiling and smiles down on all who enter as if to raise a glass and say,

"Salud!"

Just as the community welcomed its first brewpub, so too did the Pub welcome its community. In 1993 when the Beaverton centennial planners invited the pub to make a special brew for the city's 100th, The Murray brewery responded enthusiastically with Centennial Ale, a light, slightly bitter summer ale to celebrate Beaverton's milestone birthday. A product of Brewer Duncan Saffir's imagination, the special ale was sold at all the Beaverton, Hillsboro and Oak Hills McMenamins pubs. To open up the kitchen and keep up with food demand the brewery was removed from the Murray Pub in 2000. Nevertheless, people still ask for the popular Centennial Ale that was once created here.

Back in 1990 when this place opened, the *Tigard Times* asked Mike McMenamin about Hehn's joyful sun. With the playful art and his philosophy of what a tavern should be in mind, he responded, "Life may not be as serious as we all make it to be."



The Murray Pub's many windows.