



PUB

Pub sits on a spot that seems to turn its back on the hectic, crowded intersection and embrace a pace more conducive to joking with friends and story telling. And if it could, this spot would tell you a grand story about what was here before, and how the window-filled pub materialized here. It's a story that necessarily stretches back before this interesting structure was conceived of, way back, even before this notorious intersection began to take shape.

William Baxter was the first non-native to settle this spot. A little-known but interesting pioneer, he arrived in Oregon City from Jennings County, Indiana in 1851 and the next year settled a land claim several miles east of the then small town of Portland.

Baxter, a doctor, was a friend of the prominent Denny and Hicklin families who also migrated from Jennings County, Indiana. Interestingly, in the late 1830s, Jennings County had formed the first anti-slavery society in Indiana and was known for its active, tight-knit abolitionist community. Baxter was part of that community and within a short time of arriving in Washington County he became very active in starting an abolitionist movement here. Along with Thomas Denny, Augustus Fanno, the Hicklins and Wilson Tigar he pressed for the admission of free slaves into the Oregon territory, and to end slavery outright, here and throughout the country. In July of 1855 Baxter attended the first Free Soil Convention held in the Oregon Territory as Washington County's only delegate, thereby publicly identifying himself with the earliest antislavery organization in Oregon. A couple of

McMenamins
Raleigh Hills

years later he mounted a failed attempt to run for the county coroners office as an independent anti-slavery candidate.

That same year Baxter sold a portion of his land claim—including the spot where the Raleigh Hills Pub now stands—to John Patton and his wife Margaret. The property changed owners three times after that, until, in 1896, Andrew and Henry Fuhrer acquired the land. The two Fuhrer brothers, like many other families who came to this area around the turn of the 19th century, were immigrants from Switzerland. They established a farm on their 17 acres and devoted their lives to cultivating it. The Fuhrer family lived and worked this farm in Raleigh Hills until Dora Fuhrer, Andrew's wife, died in 1956.

Of the nine Fuhrer kids that grew up here, one is particularly significant in local lore. John Henry Fuhrer left his family's farm as a young man to start a career as a dairyman. He worked as chief herdsman at the well-known Alpenrose Dairy for 18 years, known affectionately as "Henry the Herdsman" by generations of youngsters in the

Portland area.

The two left their beer behind, flew out the door and out into the parking lot. A few moments later they had drawn guns and were shouting down another man.

Virtually all of the students in the Portland area visited the dairy at some time or another in the 1930s and '40s and learned about the art of cow-milking from Henry. In addition to the dairy lessons, he liked to entertain the visiting children with impromptu concerts using his Swiss cowbells. He delighted thousands more youngsters in numerous area parades with his performances aboard the Alpenrose Dairy floats. He was proud of his Swiss heritage and owned one of the largest collections of Swiss cowbells in the Northwest.

When Henry's mother Dora passed away in 1956, the seventeen-acre Fuhrer family farm was divided and sold to commercial interests. At the time the closest resident to this

spot was Dr. Roy Swank. Swank, who lived just east of here, was head of the OHSU neurology department from 1954-1976, and is a world-renowned Multiple Sclerosis researcher. In the late 1940s Swank was traveling the world, closely studying M.S. in industrialized nations, when he became convinced that there was a link between food and the disease. By 1950 he had developed a breakthrough low-fat diet to treat M.S. At the time, no one had considered such a diet, especially as a response to illness. Dr. Swank still lives in the area, and while he no longer actively sees patients (he is in his 90s) his work and the Roy Swank Foundation continue to help countless M.S. sufferers globally.



After changing hands several times the pub site remained undeveloped until the summer of 1965 when the Charles T. Parker Construction Co. built a unique pyramid-like building. Shortly after construction was completed, the Raleigh Hills Market &

Delicatessen, owned and operated by James and Dorothy Digregorio, moved in.

By all accounts the Market gained a deserved reputation for being a friendly and popular neighborhood stop, catering to the fast-growing area. It also amassed a somewhat undeserved reputation for selling beer to minors out of the back door.

After twelve years in the community the Digregorios' decided it was time to pass along the family business, and here's where the story takes an interesting turn. They put the business up for sale and in 1977 Mike McMenamin purchased the place. Mike ran the quickie mart as the West Hills Market for six years, offering

a great selection of beer and wine along with the most opinionated cashier these parts have ever known. Elaine Harper, a hold over from Digregorio's tenure, was notorious for barking orders and glaring looks. She didn't take kindly to making change either. "You'll have to do better than that or get out," she would snap.

The Market was fairly successful and Mike enjoyed the community, but he had dreams of something different. In 1983 he sold the joint to Mark Gossage, who quickly converted the space to Rubin's Gulch, a café, wine and beer-by-the-bottle shop. It was the first major makeover the building had seen since it was built, and it heralded things to come. When Rubin's Gulch went up for sale in 1986, Mike McMenamin didn't hesitate to buy the great building in Raleigh Hills back. This time though, things were a bit different. Renamed the Raleigh Hills Pub, the twin pyramid building became the ninth McMenamins brewpub. A modest remodel opened the place up a bit and a fine food selection and festive celebrations like the Oktoberfest (featuring a magician, fire eater and an oom-pah band!) began to attract new folks from around the area.

While people from the community are always discovering this great space, the place has very loyal regulars, some from the days of Rubin's Gulch. And it's the regulars that give this place its stories. On one occasion, years ago, a pair of well dressed regulars who always sat by the windows saw something down the street they didn't like. The two left their beer behind, flew out the door and out into the parking lot. A few moments later they drew guns and were shouting down another man. Upon their return, the pair formerly know as the "IPA guys" had suddenly been revealed as the "FBI guys." Their cover was blown.

These days, you probably won't encounter a Swiss bell-ringer or cantankerous register clerk, but the Raleigh Hills Pub is still flush with great personalities. From Jennings County, Indiana, right to you, the stories resident at this humming intersection are dense, on-going and splendidly full of life.