



## “Renton’s Hilltop Community” Mapping and Property Records Activity

**General Information:** This activity is a companion piece to our “Renton’s Hilltop Community” newsletter study guide, which you can find on our [Curricula page](#).

This activity is designed for students in 7th grade and above. Questions can be used for discussion or as writing prompts. [The original article from June 2007 can be found online at the Museum’s Newsletter Page.](#)

**Map Activity and Discussion Questions:** This activity involves two historic maps of Renton, both of which can be found alongside these instructions on [our Curricula Page](#). Maps can be viewed on individual computers or on a smartboard. The first map is from 1936, and the second one is from 1956. You can find the Renton Hilltop towards the top of both maps—the areas north, east, and northeast of Greenwood Cemetery are part of the Hilltop community. The two maps are designed very differently from one another. What does each map tell us about the neighborhood and the surrounding areas? What data can you find on them that relates back to the article about the Hilltop community?

After you have looked at the historic maps, find today’s Heritage Park on Google Maps. This is the same place you saw on the historic maps. Explore the surrounding area by zooming and moving the map around, and then discuss the following: What changes do you observe in the area? What can you find in the community today? Do you recognize any landmarks? What do you think caused changes to occur in the area?

### Google Maps:

([Use this link](#) or go to Google Maps and type in “Heritage Park, Renton, WA”)

**Property Record Card Activity Instructions and Discussion Questions:** On the next page, you will find copies of property record cards from the Hilltop neighborhood. These records were created between 1936 and 1940 as part of the Land Use Survey Project, an agreement between the King County Assessor’s office and the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA). The records were used to determine the value of property taxes. At the time, the survey was considered a model of modern record keeping.

These property record cards show the homes owned by James Smith, Clyde Barfield, and Evelena Buckner. With a group or individually, choose a property record card to investigate. What can you learn about the past by looking at the property record card? Compare and contrast your property record card with one a classmate has chosen. Do they convey exactly the same information? How do you think property record cards like these were helpful to Museum staff when they were researching and writing about the Hilltop Community? Describe how the article, the maps linked above, and the property record cards are connected. Why is it important to use different kinds of sources when investigating the past?

1. DISTRICT  
 2. SECTION 16 TWP 23 N. RANGE 5 TAX LOT NO. TAX LOTS  
 DESCRIPTION Tax lot 20 *Legal on back*  
 1/2 of W 1/2 of S 1/2 of NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 less co. rd.

LIMITS  
 CO.  
 CODE NO.  
 PERMIT NO.  
 DATE

3. ADDRESS OF PROPERTY *Jas Smith (P)* CONTRACT PURCHASER  
 4. FEE OWNER  
 5. ARCHITECT CONTRACTOR  
 6. ORIG. BUILDING COST \$ OCCUPIED BY OWNER RENTAL PER MONTH \$ ESTIMATED RENTAL PER MONTH \$ 15.00  
 7. CONDITION OF EXTERIOR DOOR INTERIOR POOR FOUNDATION poor FLOOR PLAN accept.

8. BUILDING  
 1-family dwell  
 1-story-attic  
 5-rooms  
 3-1st floor  
 2-attic  
 INTERIOR WALLS  
 5-ceiled  
 shiplap  
 5 Papered  
 FLOORS  
 5-fir  
 FIRE PLACE  
 1-brick always  
 INTERIOR TRIM  
 5-fir  
 PLUMBING  
 5R-fixtures  
 1-tub-leg  
 1-basin  
 cheap  
 1 Toilet  
 1 sink  
 1 hotwater tank

TILE WORK none  
 PORCHES none  
 EXTRA FEATURES none  
 BUILT-INS none  
 CONSTRUCTION single-cheap  
 CEILING HEIGHT  
 basmt. 7'  
 1st fl. 8'  
 attic 7'  
 BASEMENT 60%  
 frame 7'  
 dirt floor  
 drain  
 unfinished  
 FOUNDATION R&B  
 ROOF composition  
 shingle  
 EXTERIOR WALLS rustic

9. CORNER JOINTS mitered DOWN SPOUTS SEWER CONNECTED none  
 10. FIRST FLOOR JOIST SIZE 2 x 6 AND 24 INCH CENTERS BRIDGED no  
 11. FIRST FLOOR JOIST SUPPORT COLUMN OR POST SIZE cedar 8" x  
 12. CLASS OR GRADE NO. B- SHAPE NO.  
 13. BUILDING FINISHED OR UNFINISHED finished  
 14. DEPRECIATION: CONDITION 67 % OBSOLETE % ECON. SUIT. % TOTAL  
 YEAR BUILT 1918 REMODELED 1933 EFFECTIVE AGE 20 YRS. FUTURE LIFE 10 YRS.  
 LAND INFORMATION  
 1. SIZE 2. ROAD yes - gravel  
 3. SEWAGE o.h. DRAINAGE Fair WATER D. PUMP  
 4. TREND static 5. DISTRICT medium-eld 6. USE residential  
 LAND USE SOIL TYPE CROPS-TIMBER STAND NO. ACRES VALUE/ACRE VALUE  
 residence E F improved 2 \$ 25 \$ 50.  
 small improved 3 \$ 20 \$ 60.  
 stumps  
 LAND SIZE x TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES 5 VALUE \$ 110.  
 ASSESSED VALUE \$  
 REMARKS

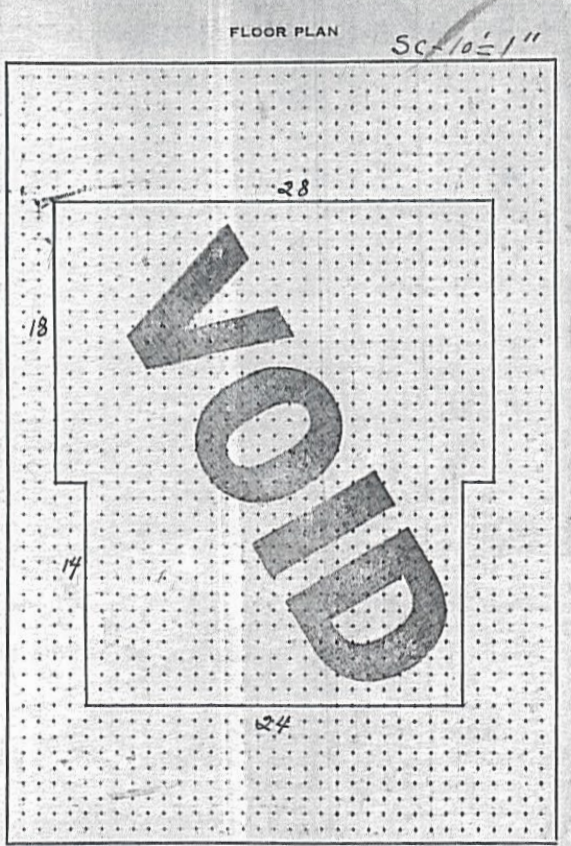


MAIN BUILDING	
DIMENSION	SQ. FT. AREA
14 x 24	336
18 x 28	504- 840
PCH. X	
PCH. X	
IMPROVEMENT VALUE	
MAIN BUILDING	\$ 200.
OTHER BUILDINGS	\$ 40.
TOTAL	\$ 240. 500
ASSESSED VALUE 50%	\$ 120. 250
DATE	1-1-39

OTHER BUILDINGS	CONSTRUCTION	FLOOR	ROOF	STY.	DIMENSION	AREA	VALUE
GARAGE	single	T&G	shgl.	1	12 x 12	144	44.
brooder house	single S.L.	S.L.	t.p.	1	11 x 12	132	28.
smoke house	single S.L.	S.L.	t.p.		5 x 6	no av.	72.

OWNER OR CONTRACT PURCHASER	DATE	FILE NO	PRICE	MTGE.	STAMP
W.D. Albert Balch	8-7-51	E11867	500		
J.C. Bertha S. Smith	4-18-57	E258201	-		
City of Denton	5-2-66	E634207	\$14000		

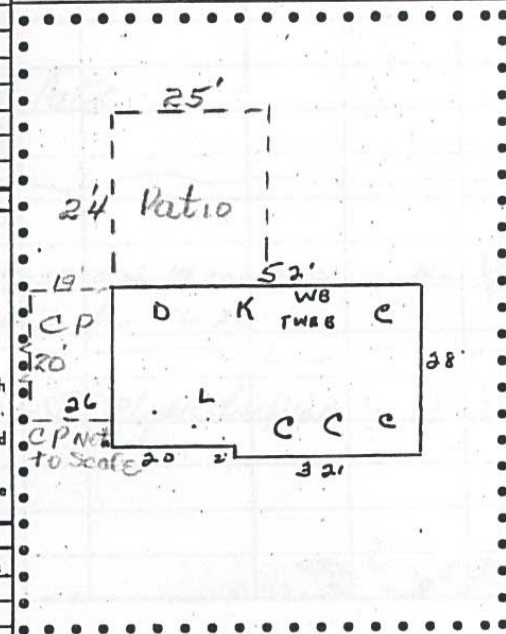
REMARKS supplemental A - \$10.00



FOLIO 22858 ADDITION TAX LOT 30 77-99  
 PERMIT NO. 203736 SECTION 16 Twp. 23 Range 5 Ewm. Block 30 Lot or Tract 30  
 DATE 12-11-64 233 UNION AVE Description legal on back

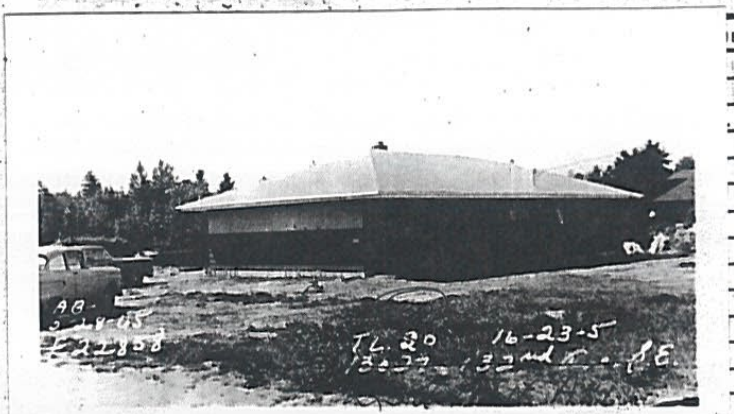
3 Address of Property 13027-132nd AVE SE Cont. Purchaser  
 4 Fee Owner CLYDE C. BARFIELD Architect Contractor  
 6 Original Building Cost \$ Owner-Tenant Occupied Rental per Month \$ Estimated per Month Rental \$  
 7 Condition of Exterior G Interior G Foundation C Floor Plan: Good Fair ✓ Poor

BUILDING	BASEMENT	CONSTRUCTION	CLASS	GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1 One Family Dwelling	Full Part	Single	R1-7	1416 Sq. Ft. SCALE = Ft.
2 Two Family Dwelling	Part % Sq. Ft.	X Double		
1 No. of Stories	Conc. Frame	Solid		
7 No. of Rooms	Cement Blocks	Very Cheap		
Basement	_____ Floor	Cheap		
7 1st Floor	Recreation Room	X Medium		
2nd Floor	Living Room	Good		
Attic	Service Rooms	Special		
INTERIOR WALLS	FOUNDATION	EXTERIOR WALLS		
7 Plaster	X Concrete 6" Thick	Boards & Batten		
Plaster Board	Cement Blocks	Shiplap		
Plywood	Stone or Brick	Rustic		
Celled	Wood Post-Conc. Blk	Cedar Siding		
Open Studs		Shingles		
7 Painted		Shakes		
Papered		Stucco on Lath		
Celling		Brick Veneer		
Unfinished		Kind		
FLOORS	FLOOR CONSTRUCTION	CABINETS & CLOSETS		
5 Hardwood	1st Floor Joists 2" X 10"	Composition		
2 Fir + VYNL-T.	16" Bridged X O.C.	Stone Type		
Concrete	Post & Beam 4" X 6"	Blocks		
Linoleum	Stud Bearing X			
	T & G X	CEILING HEIGHT		
		Basement X		
		1st Floor 7' X 6"		
		2nd Floor X		
		3rd Floor X		
		Attic Low High		



FIREPLACE No. NONE  
 Stems \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bsmt. 1st 2nd \_\_\_\_\_  
 Brick \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date First Occupied, Month 5-26 1965  
 Date Built, 1964 Unfinished  Moved, 19 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Finished, 1965 Rebuilt, 19 \_\_\_\_\_ Remodeled, 19 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dep. for Age \_\_\_\_\_ Future Life \_\_\_\_\_ Years  
 Dep. for Cond. \_\_\_\_\_ Dep. for Ob. \_\_\_\_\_ Dep. for Es. \_\_\_\_\_ Total 0

INTERIOR TRIM	ROOF
7 Hardwood	X Shingle
Fir	Composition
Painted	Shake
Natural	Tile or Slate
Unfinished	Tar & Gravel
	Built-Up
PLUMBING	HEATING
9 No. of Fixtures	Stove CENTURY
1 Tub - Leg or Pem.	X Floor Furnace
2 Toilets	X Cabinet Furnace
3 Basin - Pedestal	Pot Oil Burner
1 Sink	X Pressure Oil Burner
Shower Stall	Gas
1 Hot Water Tank	Stoker
1 Laundry Trays	Fan
None	Air Conditioning
Unfinished	Radiant
Expensive	Hot Water
Good	Electric
Average	Heat Pump
Cheap	



BUILT-INS	ATTIC	YEAR	ASSESSED VALUE
Range	Stairway	1966	2350 AB 65
Oven	Open _____ Closed	68	2700-Em 66
Refrigerator	Finished	70	2900-BA-68
Dishwasher	Unfinished Useful	71	5800
Inter-Com.	TILE		
Vacuum Cleaner	LINO		
Disposal	VYNL-T Floor-Wall Bath		
	Floor-Wall		
	VYNL-T Floor-Wall X		
	Vanity		
	F Klt. Drainboard		

YEAR	OTHER BLDGS.	CONSTRUCTION	FLOOR	ROOF	DIMENSIONS	S.F. AREA	FACTOR	VALUE	% DEPR.	A.V.
1968	C.P.	OPEN	CONC	FB	19 X 20	380				
1968	PATIO	-	CONC	-	24 X 25	600				

TRICT  
LIMITS  
CO.  
CODE NO.  
PERMIT NO.  
DATE

2. SECTION 16 TWP. 23 N. RANGE 5 TAX LOT NO. TAX LOTS  
DESCRIPTION  
Legal on track 10  
Tax Lot 50 55 30  
S 330 of N 1820' of E 660' of NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 less rd.  
S 1/2 of SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 Less Rd (Pt 30)  
See Legal on main card.

3. ADDRESS OF PROPERTY Route # 2 Renton 162305-030 STU 2447 2514  
800 3183-2120  
CONTRACT PURCHASER FIELDS TO SIMPSON  
4. FEE OWNER EVELINA BUCKNER <10-14-13> SEE ORD. 8428 - SEE CC. 1930  
5. ARCHITECT CONTRACTOR  
6. ORIG. BUILDING COST \$ OCCUPIED BY Owner RENTAL PER MONTH \$ ESTIMATED RENTAL PER MONTH \$ 10.00  
7. CONDITION OF EXTERIOR POOR INTERIOR POOR UNDAON POOR FLOOR PLAN Accept

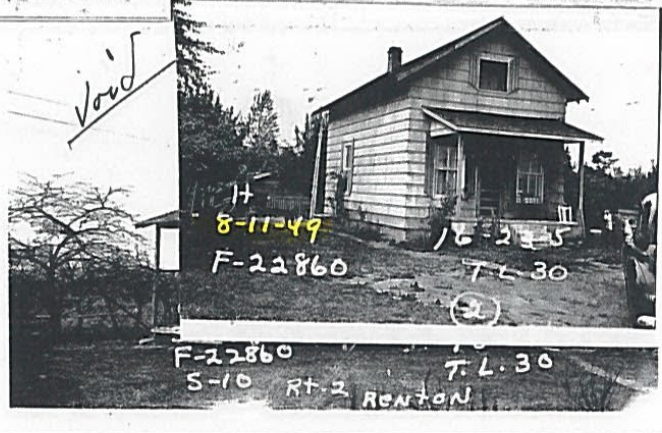
8. BUILDING  
1 Emly Dwlg  
1 1/2 Stories  
12 Rooms  
2 " 2nd Floor  
2 1st Floor  
INTERIOR WALLS  
3 1/2" Plaster  
1 Ceiled  
Shiplap  
3 Plywood  
3 Painted FLOORS  
7 1/2 Fir  
FIRE PLACE  
None  
INTERIOR TRIM  
7 1/2 Fir  
PLUMBING art's  
5 1/2 Tub  
None  
1 Sink  
1 Basin  
1 Sump  
1 Hot W Tank

TILE WORK  
None  
ATTIC  
None  
HEATING  
Stove  
FOUNDATION  
F&B  
2 Pchs P&B  
ROOF  
Shingle  
EXTERIOR WALLS  
B & B  
Cedar Shakes  
20x20 on roof.

PORCHES  
2 One Story  
2 Roofed  
1 Enclosed  
EXTRA FEATURES  
None  
BUILT-INS  
Cheap  
CONSTRUCTION (3)  
Single Cheap  
CEILING HEIGHT  
1st Floor 8'  
2nd Floor 7'

9. CORNER JOINTS Boxed  
10. FIRST FLOOR JOIST SIZE 6" AND 24" INCH CENTERS BRIDGED No  
11. FIRST FLOOR JOIST SUPPORT COLUMN OR POST SIZE 6" 6"  
12. CLASS OR GRADE NO. B SHAPE No  
13. BUILDING FINISHED OR UNFINISHED Finished  
14. DEPRECIATION: CONDITION 64 % OBSLSE. % ECON. 50% % TOTAL 42 %  
YEAR BUILT 1922 REMODELED 1938 EFFECTIVE AGE 16 YRS. FUTURE LIFE 9 YRS.

LAND INFORMATION  
1. SIZE 2. ROAD Yes-Gravel  
3. SEWAGE None DRAINAGE Good WATER D PUMP  
4. TREND Static 5. DISTRICT Medium Old 6. USE Residential  
LAND USE SOIL TYPE CROPS-TIMBER STAND NO. ACRES VALUE-ACRE VALUE  
Resident E-F \$ \$  
Cleared \$ \$  
25. \$ 50.  
20. \$ 60.  
VALUE \$ 110.  
ASSESSED VALUE \$  
REMARKS



MAIN BUILDING		SO. FT. AREA
DIMENSION	16 x 28	448
	+ 20 x 28	560
PCH.	6 x 14	84
PCH.	4 x 8	32
TOTAL 1092		

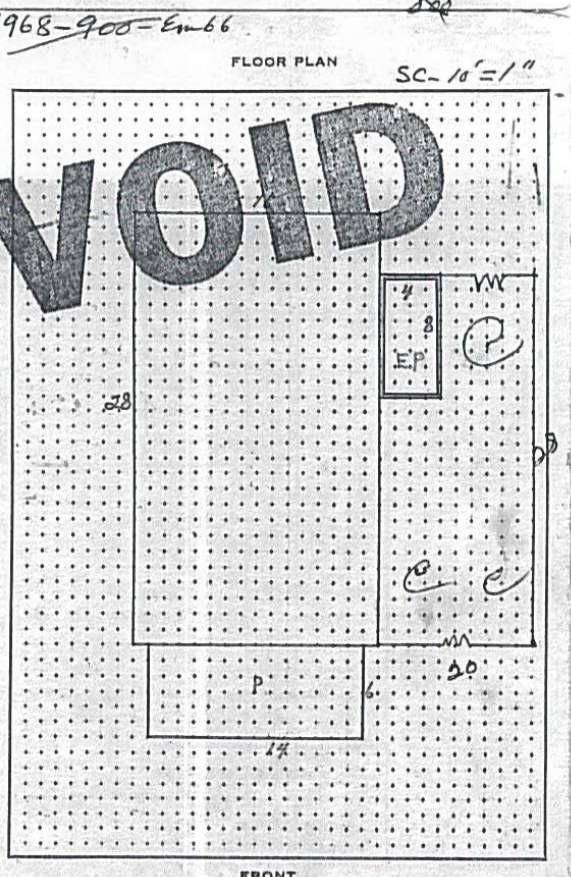
  

IMPROVEMENT VALUE	
MAIN BUILDING	110
OTHER BUILDINGS	10
TOTAL	120
ASSESSED VALUE 50%	60
DATE	1-1-59

OTHER BUILDINGS	CONSTRUCTION	FLOOR	ROOF	STY.	DIMENSION	AREA	VALUE
GARAGE Shed	Single P&B	Dir	Shake	1	8 x 22	176	\$ 11
Coop	" "	Shlap	T.P	1	6 x 18	108	8
					x	Total	19.
Coop	Logs	Con	Comp R		21 x 40	840	
Barn	Shl	Dir	T.P	1	16' x 30	480.	

OWNER OR CONTRACT PURCHASER	DATE	FILE NO.	PRICE	MTGE.	STAMP
G.W. Montague	4-2-49	2831-36			

REMARKS

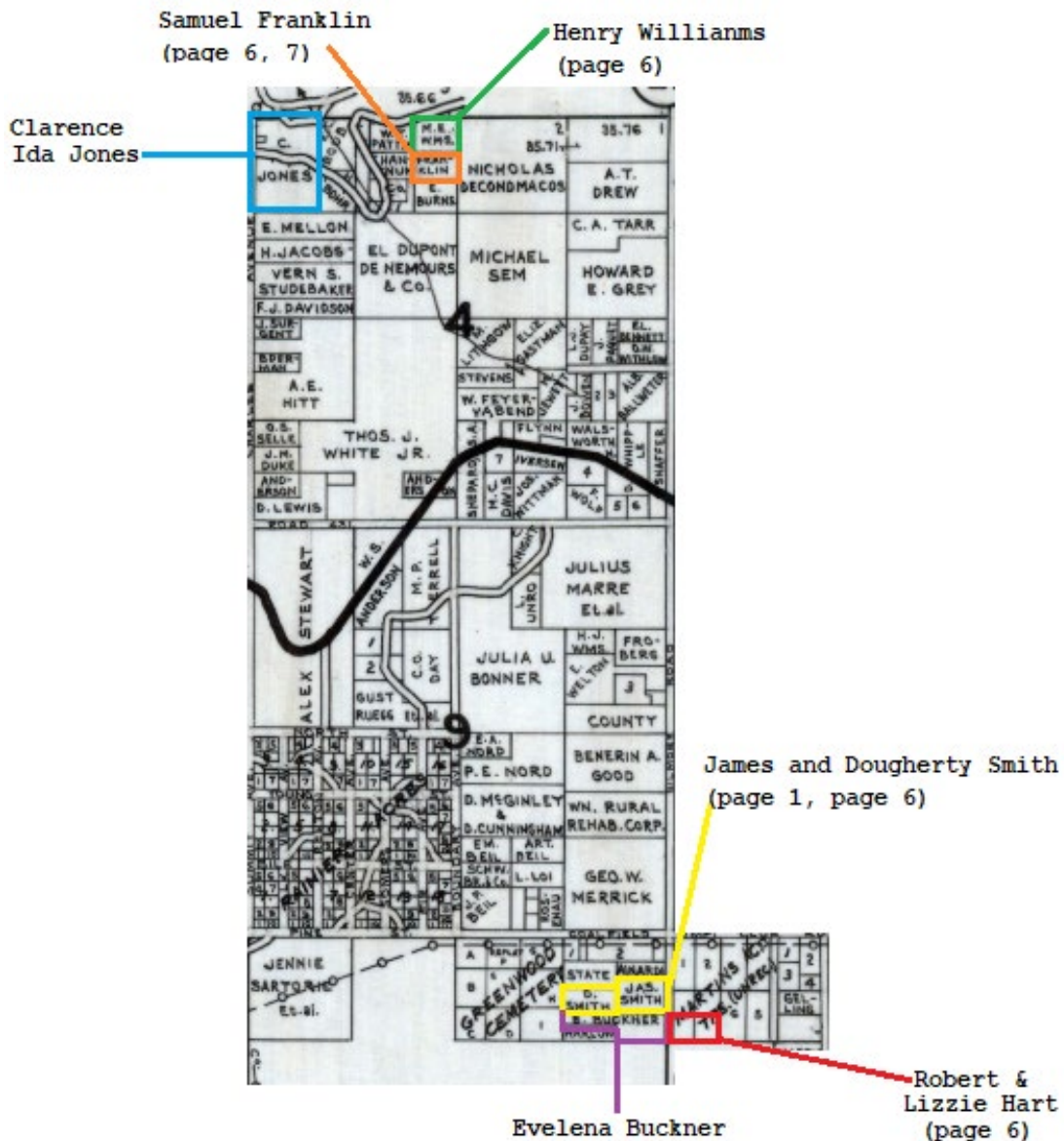


## Guide for Parents & Teachers

**Mapping Activity Discussion Guide Notes for Educators:** Follow instructions and links provided on Page 1 to access full-sized maps online to complete the activity with students. Below are some notes about each map with annotated screenshots to facilitate discussion and provide additional background.

### 1936 Map

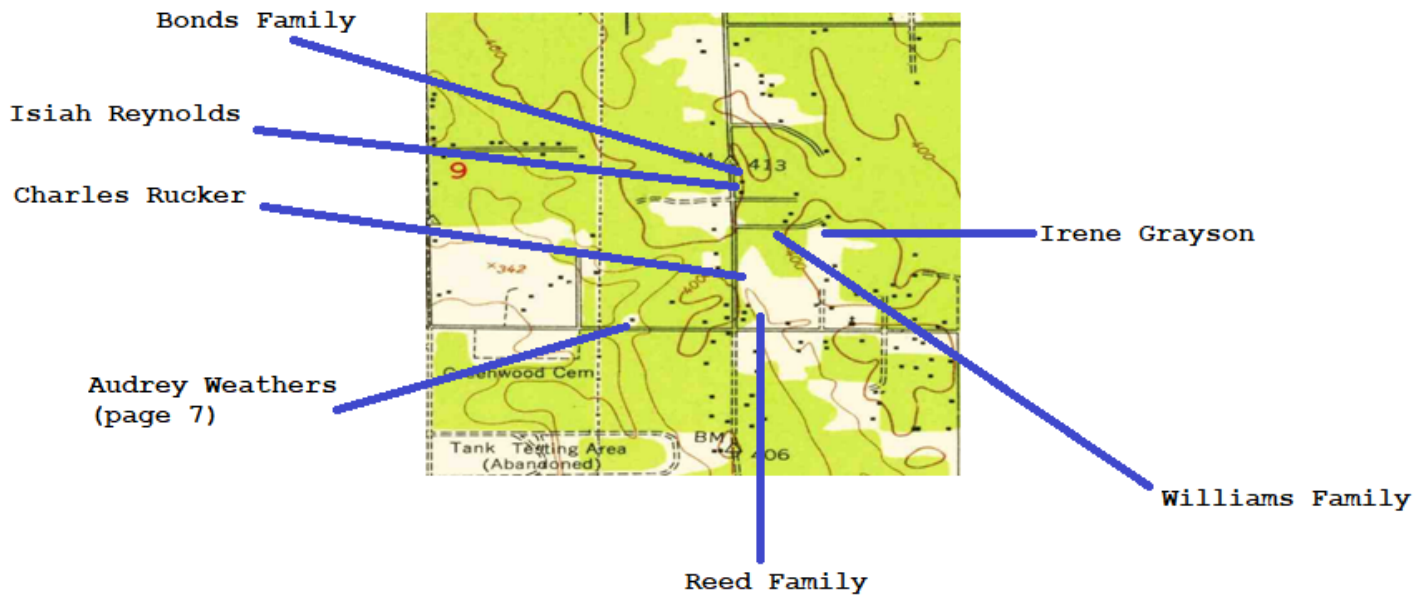
The full-sized map is an image file, which can be zoomed in on by clicking to magnify. You can move the map around using your browser's scroll bars. The map shows property ownership.



*A portion of the map labeled with names of early Black residents. Page numbers appear when the family is mentioned in the accompanying article, "Renton's Hilltop Community." Detailed biographies of residents can be found in Appendix A.*

**A note to educators:** If you have access to a U.S. map that you can mark with pins, stickers, magnets, dry erase marker, etc., you may want to ask students to mark the home states of each of these residents (found in Appendix A) as you discuss them. Where did they come from originally? What patterns do students notice, if any? Why do they think Black families came from so far away to reside in the Hilltop neighborhood? This can serve as a lead-in to a discussion about the [Great Migration](#); the migration of 6 million Black Americans from the rural South to cities in the North, West, and Midwest between 1916 and 1970.

### 1956 Map

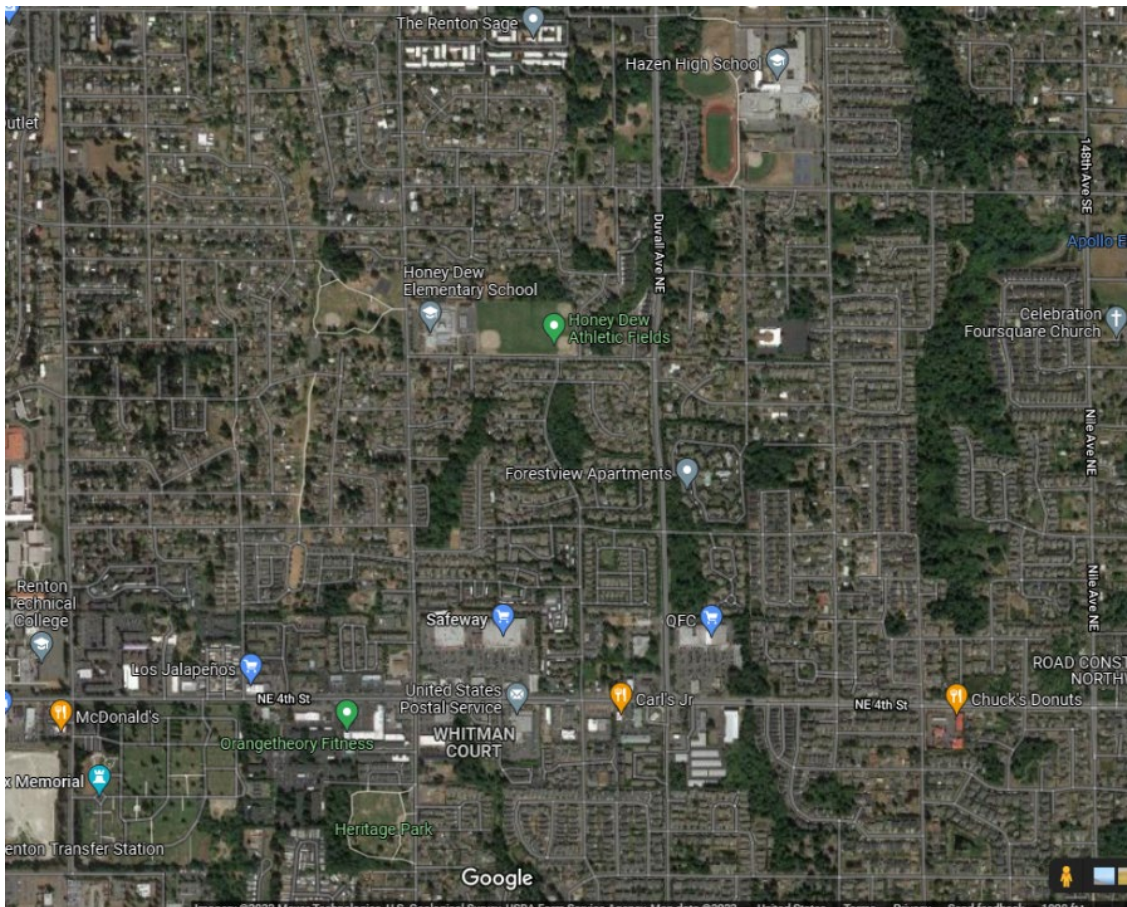


*A portion of the 1956 Map showing elevation, buildings, and major landmarks. The link to the full-sized map can be found on Page 1. Detailed biographies of the residents whose locations are shown on the map can be found in Appendix B.*

**More about the 1956 Map:** The full map is an image file, which can be zoomed in on by clicking to magnify. You can move the map around using your browser's scroll bars. This map does not have details about property boundaries and owners, but instead shows land elevation. Buildings such as houses are marked in black. Of note is the former tank testing area, mentioned by Audrey Weathers in the article. Invite students to compare and contrast the distribution of houses in the Hilltop area with that of the area to the northwest, which was developed to provide housing for workers during the war boom.

### Google Maps

This scale of this map can be changed using – and + in the lower righthand corner; zoom in enough and you will see an outline of where buildings stand today. The rectangular image on the lower left can be used to toggle on layers that add textures for elevation, satellite images, etc. offering much more information and flexibility than the maps of the past.



*A screenshot of Google Maps showing part of the Highlands in satellite view. Honey Dew School is near the center, and Greenwood Cemetery and Heritage Park towards the bottom left. The link to the interactive map can be found on Page 1.*

Today, the area known as the Hilltop has been drastically altered. Where there were once a handful of houses spread out from each other with room in between for growing food and raising animals, there are now densely built housing developments and numerous businesses. Changes occurred in the neighborhood for various reasons. The Houston family lost their land in the 1960s, for example, for the construction of a new school. The school was never built and many years later the School District sold that land to a developer.

Another notable change you may observe is how the space between the wartime housing created in the Highlands and the housing in the Hilltop was once large but has since been filled to connect the two communities; hence today we think of the Hilltop area as part of the Highlands. This was not so in the past, with the original Highlands development being sometimes referred to as “the projects” while the Hilltop area was referred to as “the country.” Some nearby landmarks remain; Maplewood Golf Course, Highlands School, and Greenwood Cemetery can still be found easily on the map today. Heritage Park was named to honor the heritage of the original Hilltop community. Interpretive panels in the park document the neighborhood’s history.



You may want to ask questions about how life in the area has changed based on what students have read in the article and what they can see on today's map: how did families in the neighborhood obtain food in the past, and where might they get it now? What local options were there for attending schools and religious services in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century versus today? How might recreation and transportation differ?





## ***Appendix***

**A special note to educators:** Renton's resourceful and enduring Black community grew throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a result of many individuals whose stories we are continually researching, stories we will never be finished telling. The appendices found on the following pages contain only a fraction of those stories, but it is our hope that by reading them, you will gain a deeper familiarity with some of the names and faces from Renton's past and feel motivated do some research of your own.

What we currently know as an organization about Renton's Black history comes to us through a variety of sources: public records, the U.S. Census, church bulletins, school yearbooks, newspaper articles, maps, photographs, and more. Of course, one of the best ways to learn about history is to have a conversation with someone who lived it. To that end, we are extremely grateful to the individuals from Renton's Black community who have come forward throughout the years to share their stories with us through oral history interviews: John Houston, Audrey Weathers, Leona Williams, Candis Shropshire Talley, and Lavelle Weathers Swanigan.

There is still so much work to be done; so many stories we have not yet heard. If you or someone you know has a connection to Renton and a story to tell, we hope you will contact us and support our efforts to preserve and present history in a way that better serves our diverse community.

In addition, we hope that this is only the beginning of your and your students' journey of discovery. If you'd like to know more about the people and places featured in our articles and classroom activities, we are here to support you by answering questions and providing resources. Please visit [rentonhistory.org](http://rentonhistory.org) for our contact information.

Thank you for bringing us into your classroom!

Sincerely,

*Stephanie Snyder*  
*Museum Office Aide*  
*February 11, 2022*

### ***Appendix A: Biographies of Black families and individuals marked on the 1936 map***

**Samuel Franklin** – A founder of the First Baptist Church of Kenydale and possibly its first pastor, Franklin was the minister who officiated at the weddings of several of his neighbors, including Henry and Mary Williams and Henry and Parthenia Dyer. He was born in Richmond, Virginia circa 1865 and attended a Baptist theological school in Kansas City, Mo.

Other jobs listed on U.S. censuses include coal mine engineer (1910); electrician, Newcastle mine (1919); coal mine engineer (1920); and watchman, Diamond Cement Co. (1930).

**Henry Williams** – Born in 1865 in Missouri, Henry married widow Mary E. Gibson in 1909. Although she passed away in 1923, Mary's initials still appear on the property on the 1936 map. The two were married by Reverend Samuel Franklin, with Henry and Parthenia Dyer as witnesses.



Jobs listed for Henry on the census include: wood man (1909); coal miner (1910); coal mine laborer (1920); coal mine laborer (1930). Mary was listed as a dressmaker in 1909. In 1930, Henry was living on this property with his son Frank.

**James Smith and Dougherty Smith** – Brothers from Pensacola, Florida.

James moved to Newcastle in 1897. By 1930 he had moved to Renton. He, his wife Mamie, and his extended family started out in a one-story shingle house with an attic, but by 1939 he had added a garage, a brooder house for chickens, and a smoke house. The census lists his jobs as: general farmer (1910); fireman, stationary engine (1920); laborer, gas plant (1930); laborer, WPA road construction crew (1940); self-employed (1942). A photograph and additional information about his house appear in the property record card activity. In 1930, he lived there with his wife Mamie and his son Carl.

James's younger brother Dougherty moved to the Hilltop neighborhood shortly after James did. He also lived in Newcastle prior to moving to Renton. He later lived and worked in Seattle. Census records indicate that he was a coal mine foreman for Pacific Coast Coal in Newcastle (1918); a coal mine laborer (1920); an apartment manager in Seattle (1924); a club janitor (1930); and employed by Seattle General Depot (1942). He and his wife had a son, Tillman Smith, in 1928. James and Dougherty also had three siblings living in the area, as well as nieces and nephews.

**Robert and Lizzie Hart** - Robert was born in Parksville, Kentucky. Widowed in 1924, he was remarried to Lizzie Clay in 1926; he was listed as living with Lizzie and stepson Harold Gerald Clay in the 1930 census. Lizzie was originally from Texas. They moved to Renton not long after their wedding.

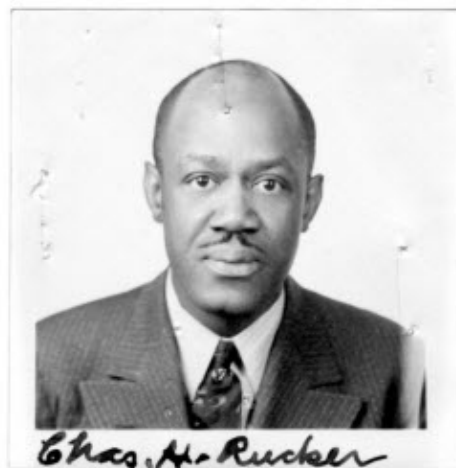
Robert's jobs included working as a fireman in a coal mine (1910, 1918); farm laborer (1920); coal mine laborer (1930); and coal miner (1940). He also worked for the South King County Road District for a short time before his retirement.

**Evelena Buckner** – Born in Tennessee in 1861, Evelena McNary Buckner was one of the Hilltop's first Black residents. She was living on her property near the Smiths by 1926. Evelena previously worked as a laundress for G. W. Jones (1907) and a private family cook (1910.)

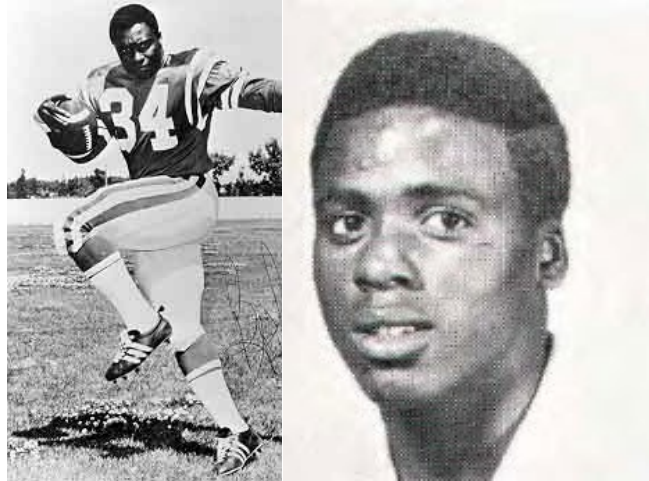
**Appendix B: families and individuals marked on the 1956 map**



**Irene Grayson** – Born in 1889 in the Muskogee (Creek) Nation, “Mother” Irene Grayson moved to Salt Lake City in 1912 to escape the violence of the segregated South. She wanted to buy train tickets to British Columbia for herself and her children but was denied because she was not accompanied by a man. Instead, they moved to Seattle, where her husband Albert later joined them. City life during the Great Depression was difficult and work was scarce. Irene moved to Renton’s Hilltop in 1931 and started breeding livestock, saving up enough to purchase 10 acres within four years. She and Albert built one of the first churches in the Highlands and served as pastors. Irene supported her church and the Black community until her death in 1995 at the age of 103. More information about Irene is available in [our March 2007 newsletter](#).



**Charles Rucker** –Born in Chattanooga, TN in 1894, Charles moved to Omaha, NE by 1930, where he owned and operated a barber shop. He also lived in Portland, OR, and Seattle. Charles was licensed to be a barber in the state of Washington in 1942 and is listed in both Seattle and Renton city directories throughout the 1940s and 1950s, during which time the census also lists him as a barber at various locations. By 1953 he was living on the Hilltop with his wife Hazel Rogers.



**Reed Family** – Pictured above are George Reed Jr. (left), born in 1939, and his younger brother Frank Reed, born in 1954. George was born in Mississippi. His parents, George Reed Sr. and Maggie Louise Jeffrey Reed, moved the family to the Northwest when George Jr. was three years old to escape the more violent forms of racial discrimination that Black families faced in the South.

George Jr. attended Highlands Elementary School and Renton High School (RHS), choosing to stay in Renton with family friends the Williamses when his parents moved to Seattle in 1955. A gifted athlete, he played basketball, baseball, and football, and chose to pursue a scholarship in the latter by the time he was in high school. He achieved his goal after graduating from RHS in 1958, playing for Washington State University and then going on to join the Canadian Football League, where he helped the Saskatchewan Roughriders win their first Grey Cup in 1966. After a record-breaking career, George was inducted into the Order of Canada and the Canadian Football Hall of Fame, among many other accolades. George also served as an advocate and ally for the Special Olympics, sponsoring disabled and disadvantaged athletes through the [George Reed Foundation](#).

Of George Reed Jr.'s 11 siblings, we know of two more who went on to become professional athletes. Smith Wayne Reed, born in 1942, played cornerback for the NY Giants between 1965 and 1966. Frank Reed attended McKnight Middle School, where he played basketball competitively. He graduated from Hazen High School in 1972 and played football for the University of Washington from 1972-1975. He was drafted into the NFL and played cornerback for the Atlanta Falcons from 1976-1980. He was traded to the Green Bay Packers in 1981.

For more information about the Reeds' role in local sports culture, please see our September 2020 [Newsletter](#).



**Isiah Reynolds** –Isiah was born in Baton Rouge, LA in 1932, the youngest of three children. His family moved between different locations in Louisiana and Washington during his youth. They came to Renton in 1948 when Isiah’s father, Clarence Benjamin Reynolds, got a job at Sherman Supply Company. During their first few years in Renton, the Reynolds family lived in the Highlands public housing development, which had originally been built to house wartime workers. The family then purchased a home on the Hilltop.

Isiah’s parents were involved in local civic life; his father was a member of the Masons, and his mother Mary Katherine joined the Order of the Eastern Star. They attended meetings of Seattle’s all-Black chapters of these organizations due to segregation. The family also attended Kenndale Pentecostal Church.

Isiah attended grades eight and up in Renton and was one of only three Black students enrolled at the time. During his high school years, Isiah had a car and enjoyed visiting his friends in Seattle as well as “cruising the loop,” a popular pastime for Renton’s baby boomers who wanted to show off their cars and socialize at the same time. He also participated in intramural boxing, using the skills he learned from his uncle in Louisiana. After high school, he joined the U.S. Air Force, four years on active duty and eight years in the reserves. He returned to Renton and worked for Boeing for three and a half years before starting a job with Bethlehem Steel in 1964. He worked there for 27 years before retiring.

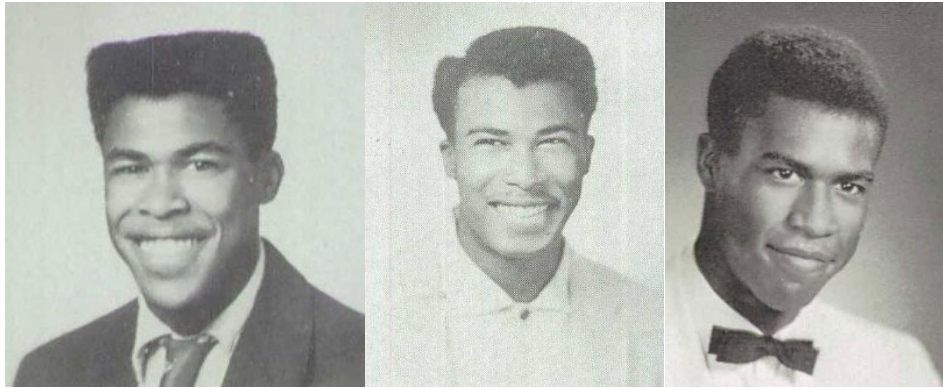


**Williams Family** –Clarence Williams Sr. (1919-2016) and his wife Leona (1923-2008) are pictured on the left alongside Mayor Don Custer. On the right is a football card of their son Clarence “Clancy” Williams (1942-1986). Clarence Sr. was born in Starks, Louisiana. He was married to Leona in 1939. After working as a sawmill laborer in Texas, Clarence moved with Leona and their young children to Bremerton, WA in 1944 to work in the shipyards during wartime. In 1947, the couple moved to the Hilltop so that they could raise their three children, Bonita, Clancy, and Craig, in a more rural environment. They were later joined by George Reed, who stayed with the Williamses to attend school in Renton when his parents moved to Seattle in 1955. Clarence Sr. worked at DariGold Dairy until his retirement, then ran his own hauling business. Leona worked at Boeing. The family attended Kennydale Pentecostal Church.

Clancy and his siblings attended school in Renton. Bonita ran track, and Clancy participated in track, basketball, and football. Through his outstanding efforts at RHS, Clancy earned a scholarship to Washington State University, where he played for the Huskies. He then went on to play for the Los Angeles Rams for eight seasons starting in 1965. In honor of Clancy’s achievements, March 27, 1965 was named “Clancy Williams Day” by the City of Renton, and there was a parade, luncheon, and gala dinner.



**Ware Family** – Edward Lynn Ware, Sr., born in Michigan, was an aircraft machinist in 1950 and an accounting clerk for Seattle City Light by the time of his death in 1973. He lived on the Hilltop by 1950 with his wife Emma of Ohio and son Edward Lynn Ware, Jr. (1946-2004, pictured above). Edward Jr. was born in Los Angeles and graduated from RHS in 1965. Edward Jr. earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in education from UW and taught English and Language Arts at Franklin High in Seattle starting in 1970. He attended Renton Congregation Kingdom Hall and played the flute, saxophone, and piano.



**Bonds Family** – William J. Bonds, Sr. (1916-1984) was born in New Orleans. He worked in construction, railroads, and transportation. By 1948 he was living with his wife Josephine in Washington. They had three sons, pictured above. From left to right: Napoleon Bonds (born 1938), William J. Bonds III (1939-2012), and Xavier Bonds (1943-2013). Napoleon and William III were both members of the Renton High School A Capella Choir. After graduating in 1956, William trained at the Washington National Guard School and the Petroleum Supply School at Amarillo Air Force Base, TX, and served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. Xavier became the first Black State Patrolman in Washington. He was honored with an Award of Merit by the State Police in 1970 for the record number of letters from motorists complimenting his work.



**Audrey Weathers** – Audrey Weathers (1935-2007) was born in Seattle, the daughter of Gertrude and Nathaniel Weathers. Audrey remembered that her father Nathaniel was born on a reservation in Kentucky, and, in Audrey's own words, he was "the best shoe dyer in Seattle." When the dye affected his lungs, however, he went to work in the shipyards and later became a sanitation worker until his retirement. Audrey's mother was a homemaker who had emigrated to the United States from British Columbia as a youth.

Audrey's parents bought five acres in the Renton Highlands and built a house where they raised Audrey and her siblings: Nathaniel Jr., Lavelle, Marilynn, and Ronald. Audrey attended the old Honey Dew School and graduated from RHS in 1953. She enjoyed being on a girls' baseball team during her high school years. As an adult, Audrey moved to many cities around the U.S. before coming back to Renton.