



MARCH 2009

**THE RAINIER CLUB OF SEATTLE CAMPAIGN  
FOR FUNDS FOR HISTORICAL RENOVATION**

**Goal:**

- The historic Rainier Club in Seattle, Washington, is seeking a \$250,000 matching authorization from the Save America's Treasures Account in the FY 2010 budget.
- The \$250,000 would fund the remainder of the \$500,000 project estimate to complete a renovation of the historic windows and replacement of the stone sills.
- The work will meet the parameters of the Department of Interior's historic building guidelines to support the preservation of the historic structure and prevent further moisture deterioration and the potential of a long-term, structural failure.
- The Club has raised full \$250,000 in matching funds.

**Projected Cost:**

- The project estimate of \$500,000 produced by Pioneer Masonry and Cherry Creek Windows is sufficient for budgeting purposes and the Club will be able to meet any cost overruns as a result of executing the project.

**Background:**

- The Club twice applied through the Save America's Treasures grant program and was twice denied.
- It was only after the second denial in 2007 that the Club was able to learn though the Department of Interior that it does not qualify for a grant under their normal grant provisions.
- The Rainier Club has National Historic Status of State Significance and not of National Significance. In concert with the Washington State Office of Historic Preservation and Washington Trust, the Rainier Club is seeking Congressional assistance to secure an authorization to complete the project.

**Funding of Capital Projects and Historic Status:**

- In 1976, the Rainier Club building was listed as an historic building on the National Register by the Department of Parks and as a landmark building by the City of Seattle in 1987.
- Each year, the Club spends \$300,000 to \$450,000 for scheduled capital maintenance projects to assure preservation of the building's historic appearance and maintain the integrity of the structure. The membership is strained to finance extraordinary repairs of the type described and for the window repair, the membership has already raised \$190,000 toward the \$250,000 matching fund goal for this project.
- Preservation of the historic façade is an important benefit to both members and the public. Preservation groups in Seattle and the State of Washington refer to the Kirtland Cutter designed building as a gem among historic buildings and we seek Congressional support to preserve this important part of the historic building.

**Contribution to the Community:**

- The need for infrastructure projects is great due to the contraction of construction development and rehabilitation in the region. The project is shovel ready and will infuse \$500,000 into the city, county and state economy supporting over a dozen highly paid and skilled craftsmen currently facing under or unemployment.
- The project will preserve an important part of the historic Rainier Club building in the City of Seattle and the State of Washington.
- The historically designated building is one of the few historic treasures in the downtown core of Seattle and is regarded nationally for its historic presence among office towers and its architectural impact on the City.
- The repair of the sills and the historic windows will be a private/public partnership that demonstrates the value of historic preservation in the City of Seattle and the State of Washington.

### **Value of Club's Rich History to Seattle, the Northwest and the United States:**

The Rainier Club was founded as a social club in 1888 one year before Washington State attained statehood. In 1903, the Club purchased current property at Fourth and Columbia Avenues in downtown Seattle and moved into the Kirtland Cutter designed clubhouse in 1904. It is one of the oldest standing buildings in the downtown core of the City today.

One hundred twenty years later, the historic building's facilities are actively used by the Club's 1,300 members. Since 1888, our private membership club has been a constant presence in the economic, social and cultural development of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. Business and civic leaders of the Seattle continue to meet at the Club year after year to discuss informally, as well as formally, the important initiatives which would shape the direction the City, the state and the nation, both economically and politically. The Club served as an interim Seattle City Hall following the fire of 1889 that destroyed most of the City. This was the first event that brought the leaders of Seattle into the Club.

The Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition of 1909, which put the City of Seattle on the map internationally, was planned by several members of The Rainier Club on these historic premises. Club President I.A. Nadeau (1901-04) was a major organizer and financier of the exposition. John C. Olmsted of the Olmsted Brothers landscaping firm was instrumental in the design of Seattle's parks and boulevards. Olmsted stayed at The Rainier Club for months at a time during his survey of Seattle and design of the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition gardens. The Arts Committee for the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition included many members of The Rainier Club: Col. C.B. Blethen, J.W. Clise, and Edward S. Curtis.

From the beginning virtually every important visitor to Seattle has been entertained at The Rainier Club. Among dozens of names on the Club's guest register are signatures from: S.L. Clemens (Mark Twain), John Phillips Sousa, Buffalo Bill Cody, William Howard Taft, Lt. General Arthur MacArthur, General Douglas MacArthur, Babe Ruth and Rear Admiral Robert E. Perry. These important visitors were invited to The Rainier Club because of its significance in the local community.

From 1893 to 1911 The Rainier Club recorded guests from a number of various Japanese trade delegations, marking the earliest contact with one of the most important trade partners to the United States in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1899, one of the most significant scientific expeditions of its time began and ended in Seattle at The Rainier Club. E.A. Harriman, John Burroughs, John Muir, Edward Curtis and Henry Gannet were part of a larger expedition in the spring that went to the Seal and other islands of the Bering Sea, and to the coast of Siberia and Bering Strait. The research expedition, which provided a wealth of knowledge and information for scientists to study and articulate, returned to Seattle in late July where a celebration of the event was held at The Rainier Club. The signatures of all the guests and those above are recorded in the Club's guest register.

Gifford Pinchot, known as "the father" of the U.S. Forest Service, was a guest at The Rainier Club on August 7, 1897. It was this trip that led to the creation of the Forest Service and the establishment of Mount Rainier National Park in 1899. Prior to his appointment in 1905 by United States President Theodore Roosevelt as the first chief of the Department, Pinchot traveled the west to identify forest area for forest reserve. Nearly all the meetings related to the formation of the national park were held at The Rainier Club.

Edward Curtis was a member of the Club from 1903 to 1920 while he undertook the overwhelming task of photographing Native Americans throughout the United States and Canada. Curtis chronicled the life of the Native American Indian; an important collection for our nation and a significant piece of our national history. Curtis was hired as the photographer for President Roosevelt's tour of the new Mount Rainier National Park. This led to an association with the President, which led to J.P. Morgan's financing of the important project. The original glass photograph negatives are permanently stored at The Smithsonian. The Rainier Club has more than 35 photogravures and 27 of the original signed platinum and silver prints throughout the Clubhouse. Curtis is an important part of the historic fabric of The Rainier Club.

In 1957, many years after Seattle had last hosted a world exposition, members of The Rainier Club and other civic leaders conceived and planned the 1962 Century 21 World's Fair. The Century 21 Exhibition was extremely successful and was one of the first in decades to prosper due to the planning efforts of Club member Eddie Carlson, President of Western International Hotels (most of the organizing meetings were held at 7:00 AM at The Rainier Club).

In 1993, United States President William Clinton held two Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation ministerial meetings with Japan and China at The Rainier Club. This was the first time that APEC had met in the United States and was the first meeting with China since Tiananmen Square. Club officials were informed that it was important that this meeting be held in a private club.

Since its construction in 1904, the Rainier Club building has been featured in virtually every pictorial guide published about Seattle. It continues to be depicted in guides and architectural surveys and has come to be treasured by the general public as one of the visual delights of Seattle, constantly pointed out on sight-seeing tours, both commercial and private. It is a favorite of individuals because of its personal scale and its accessibility.

### **Technical Background:**

#### **Sandstone Sills**

Damage via erosion to the original exterior limestone window sills requires their replacement due to a century of water and pollution damage. This replacement will prevent further water from penetrating into the fabric of the masonry wall. Continued seepage of water will cause deterioration of interior mortar and dry rot of the historic windows as well impact the wood structure of the historic building. The mortar used in 1904 is not of the same quality as modern mortar so water poses a serious threat. Water now penetrates the stone through cracks and also from sloping back toward the wood sill due to erosion of the limestone sill.

#### **Window Glazing**

Window repair is necessary for the windows receiving new limestone sills. The architectural engineer's report outlined the condition of these windows and others on the west elevation following the Nisqually earthquake in 2001. The architect's report identifies the conditions of the 89 windows on the north and west elevations of the historic building. The condition of each window varies. Repair needs of the windows vary as to their condition. Some windows may require outright replacement to Department of Interior (DoI) historic standards while other windows may just need caulking. The work is necessary to eliminate the rot that has occurred due to the deteriorating limestone sills that allowed water to slope toward the wood sill and begin rotting the wood sash. The architect's report follows the guidelines established in the National Park Service preservation brief for repair of historic wooden windows.