

## West Queen Anne

Name: **Queen Anne School**  
 Location: Between Gaylor (Galer) Street & Lee, White Street (6th Avenue W) & Anna Street (5th Avenue W)  
 Building: 1-room board-and-batten  
 Architect: Charles W. Saunders  
 Site: 1.47 acres

1890: Opened on January 20 as annex to Mercer  
 1895: Closed in June



Queen Anne, ca. 1890 SPSA 280-20

Much of Queen Anne Hill was annexed into the City of Seattle in 1883 when the city limits were extended out to McGraw Street. During the 1888–89 school year, parents on Queen Anne Hill were not happy sending their children all the way to Denny School in Bell Town. Finally, in August 1889, the school board agreed to buy a site for a school on top of the hill. Rather than providing a permanent school, however, the board asked the architect “to draw [an] elevation plan to confirm in architecture with Queen Ann[e] Town Buildings.” The following month a modest, temporary building was constructed at only one-twentieth the price of the lot.

With the opening of Queen Anne School, the youngest pupils could attend school close to home. On opening day, there were 20 pupils in the 1st and 2nd grades. A few days later, enrollment more than doubled and a partition was used to divide the building into two rooms, so a third grade class could be added.

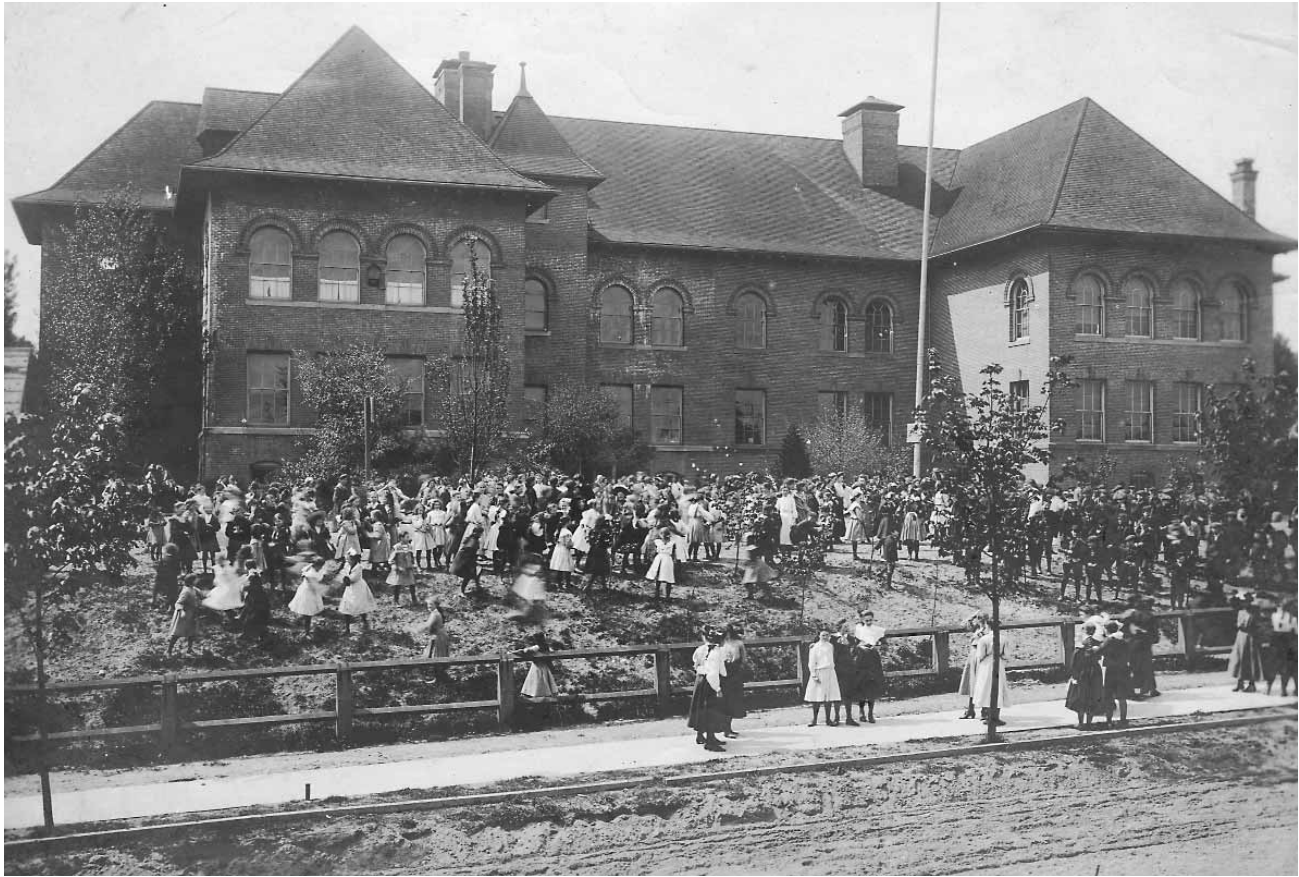
In May 1890, Mercer School opened at the southern base of Queen Anne Hill, allowing the older children to transfer there from Denny. This permanent school, designed in part by the same architect as the Queen Anne School, cost more than 86 times as much. In contrast, the austerity of the early Queen Anne school was reflected in this 1893–94 list of maintenance supplies: five drinking glasses, six shades, one wash basin, one mop, and one bucket. It took residents on Queen Anne Hill five years to get their own permanent structure.

After passage of a much needed bond issue, the board decided in early 1895 to proceed with a Queen Anne School project. An architectural firm was selected after roof plans were modified at the request of some Queen Anne residents. The architects designed an eight-room building, but because even the lowest construction bid exceeded available funds, they were forced to reduce the number of classrooms to six, lower the roof, substitute cedar shingles for slate, and minimize the amount of stonework. Nonetheless, the building represented an enormous improvement over the one-room school and provided solid proof that the neighborhood was on its way up. That September the students were sent to Mercer School, while the permanent, Romanesque-style building, was being erected on the old school’s site. The entrance of the new building faced south on Lee Street.

Two classrooms were added in 1899 and another four in 1902, in accordance with the original expandable design. While these constructions were underway, portables were brought in to the south side of the grounds. There were so many children that some classes had to be split into morning and afternoon sessions for several weeks until the new rooms were ready.

Between spring 1902 and spring 1905, enrollment jumped from 402 to 625. In September 1904, the East Queen Anne Annex opened as an annex to Mercer to house grades 1–2. The annex was used to relieve overcrowding prior to completion of the permanent Hay building in 1905. The Queen Anne Annex opened in 1906 as an annex to Queen Anne for grades 1–3; developing into Coe School in 1907.

In 1908, the name of Queen Anne School was changed to avoid confusion with Queen Anne High School, then being constructed. The



Queen Anne, 1905 SPSA 280-40

name West Queen Anne was taken from an undeveloped site the district purchased in 1902 at 7th Avenue W and Smith Street in the West Queen Anne Addition.

Enrollment increased back up to 558 in 1913–14 when the stair landings were put into use as study halls. Another addition was made in 1916, providing 10 more classrooms and an auditorium. At that time, the main entrance shifted to the north side on Galer Street. In 1918–19, enrollment hit an all-time high of 643.

Adelaide Lowry Pollock served as principal from 1901–18, when she resigned to serve overseas in the Red Cross. She started teaching in Seattle in 1889 and had previously taught at Madison Street School. An outdoor enthusiast and ornithologist, Ms. Pollock stressed nature studies as part of basic curriculum. For example, 3rd graders learned basket weaving, and 4th graders built birdhouses.

Kindergarten was added at West Queen Anne in 1931. In 1944, the school began an innovative program where subjects were integrated through daily workshops emphasizing the practical applications of learning. This program was an outgrowth of requests from boys who wanted to learn more about home economics because they had more responsibility at home since both parents were working. Regarding home economics, the principal commented: “In arithmetic class, mistakes can be erased. In this class they have to be eaten.”

In 1952, 8th graders were transferred to Queen Anne Junior School at the Queen Anne High School building. In 1955, West Queen



West Queen Anne, ca. 1915 SPSA 280-21



West Queen Anne, ca. 1940 SPSA 280-23

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Name: **Queen Anne School**  
 Location: 515 W Galer Street  
 Building: 3-story, 6-room brick and concrete  
 Architect: Skillings & Corner  
 Site: 1.47 acres

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1896: Opened for fall term as independent school  
 1899: Addition (n.a.)  
 1902: Addition (James Stephen)  
 1903: Renamed *Marshall* on March 7; returned to *Queen Anne* on September 1  
 1908: Renamed *West Queen Anne*  
 1916: Site expanded to 1.76 acres; addition (Edgar Blair)  
 1975: Listed on National Register Historic Places on July 30  
 1977: Designated City of Seattle landmark on January 17  
 1981: Closed in June  
 1983: Leased in February  
 Present: West Queen Anne Condominiums (1401 5th Avenue W)

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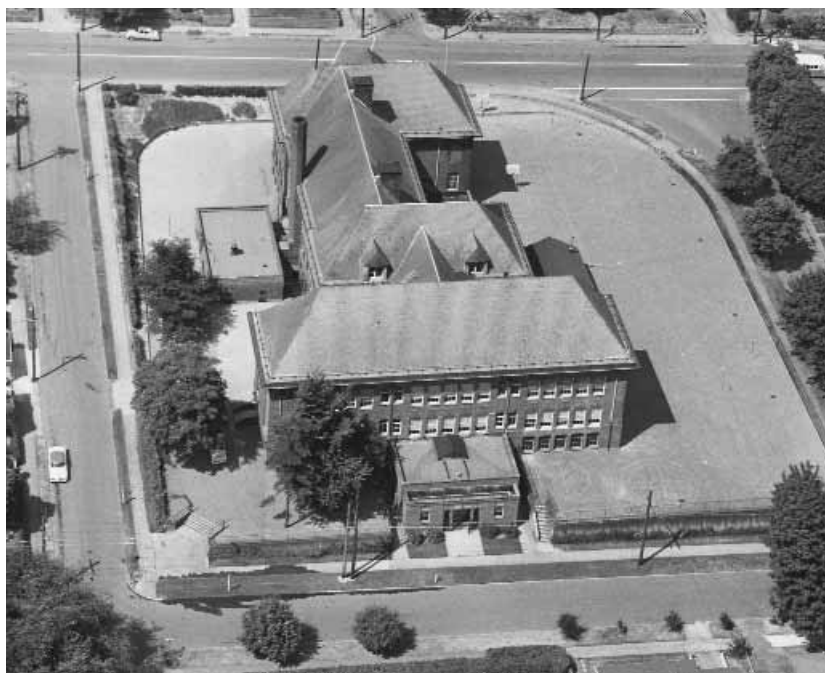
Anne became a K–6 school as the 7th graders made the same move. The closure of the Warren Avenue School in 1959 brought a flood of students into West Queen Anne from as far south as Stewart Street. By 1970, however, there were empty classrooms. With the falling enrollment, the school district's Basic Skills offices moved to West Queen Anne in 1973.

A 1974 report by district staff recommended the closure of the school. While it was given a reprieve, a group of parents, teachers, and local residents worked to keep it open. Part of that effort was nominating the building for historic status. In 1975, the structure became the first Seattle school placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Two years later it became a City of Seattle landmark.

In June 1978, the sextagonal chimney on the west side of the building was painstakingly reconstructed. To meet safety standards and yet abide by historical restrictions, it was taken down brick by brick, the core reinforced and then rebuilt.

Under the district's desegregation plan, in 1977, the school was left with only K–3, while grades 4–6 were bused out of the area to Brighton. That year the Follow Through Program, an extension of Head Start, moved to West Queen Anne from Interlake and began busing in about 140 Central District K–3 children for classes. When the school finally closed in spring 1981, 112 attended the regular program, and 125 were enrolled in the Follow Through Program.

Historic Seattle, a public development authority for historic preservation, was given a 99-year lease in 1983, with an option to renew for another 99 years. They turned the site over to investors who in 1983–84 converted the building into condominiums. The old sign “West Queen Anne Public School” still hangs over the north doorway, the former main entrance. A new main entrance now faces 5th Avenue W, with a circular drive and fountain above, and an underground parking garage below.



West Queen Anne, 1960 SPSA 280-6