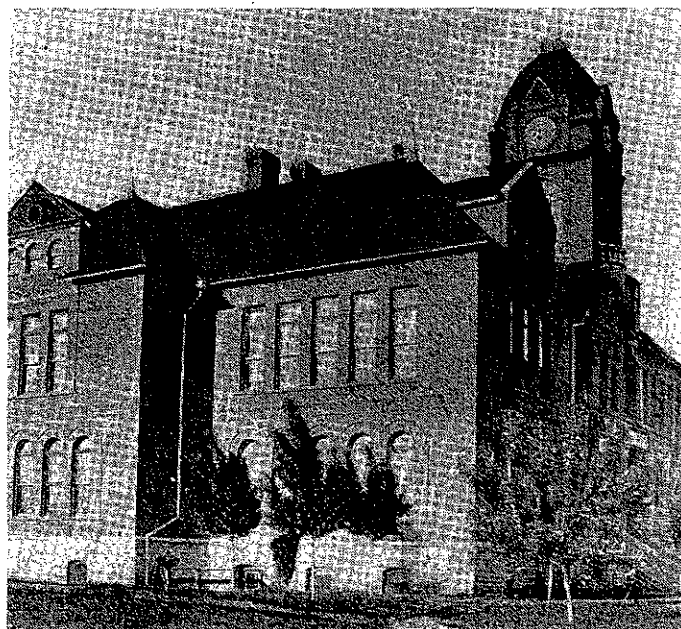


BRYANT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

N. 910 Ash Street
Spokane, WA 99201
Opened: 1891
Namesake:
William Cullen Bryant



In 1959 the old school was demolished and a new one was built north of the original site. The old site became a playground.

Photo courtesy of Northwest Room, Spokane Public Library.

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The first Bryant School was built in 1891 on the corner of Ash and Broadway. Its original size was ten rooms, although at that time there were only four teachers: Genevieve Bancroft, Carrie B. Weir, May Boydston, and Ellen A. Prentice.

No Principal

There was no principal. Even more unusual than a school without a principal, the entire district had to shorten the school term to 8-1/2 months in 1895-1896 because of lack of funds. In 1896 Bryant received a four-room addition, and by 1900-1901 it housed 19 teachers, 4 of them kindergarten. The kindergarten classrooms were discontinued districtwide in 1901-1902 because of crowded conditions in the schools.

Girls Are Included

Bryant expanded again in 1911-1912 when a four-room addition and gym were opened. That same school year was the beginning of the inclusion of girls in the industrial arts program. Also, school nurses replaced the use of five part-time physicians to cover health matters in the schools.

Then, as now, Bryant was a leader in experimental educational programs. The platoon plan of elementary school organization was piloted there in 1923-1924.

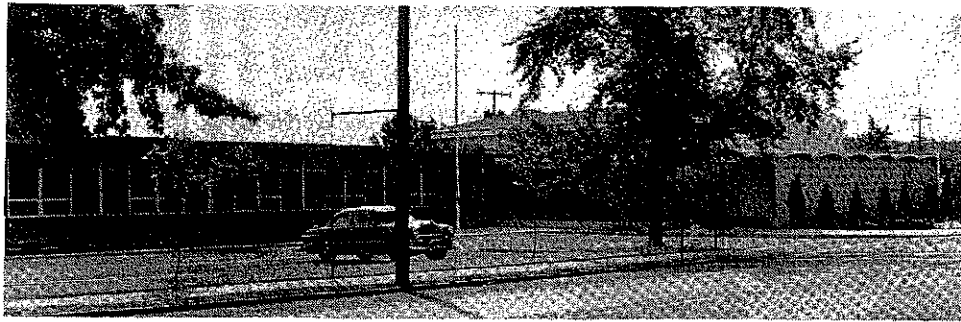
As population stabilized and then dropped in the Bryant neighborhood during the mid-50s and through the 60s, the school was not always utilized to its full capacity. Enrollments ranged from a high of 333 in 1952 to a low of 180 in 1963. In 1959 the old school was demolished, and a new one was built north of the original site. The old site became a playground. Also at this time the Maple Street Bridge, whose entrance skirts the east side of the school property, was completed.

School Colors and Mascot

Some teachers and administrators who were on staff at Bryant at that time are still active in the district today. Del Steele was a principal at the new building followed by Dick Clauss who was principal from 1969 to 1971. Ray Clift (now retired) and Don Sesso both taught Bryant students. Under Dick Clauss' leadership, in a schoolwide election, the student body selected the school colors of blue and gold, the Bryant roadrunner as their school mascot, and designed the roadrunner emblem. Also during this time, Bryant was used as a community school with evening classes for parents. The classes included



A former Bryant student poses with her school transportation.



In 1985-1986 Bryant was classified as a secondary school. In 1988-89 the Tessera gifted program for elementary students moved to Bryant.

everything from elementary math so that they could help their children learn at home to arts and crafts activities.

Bryant Closes

In 1972-1973 Bryant was closed following a levy failure. It reopened in 1973-1974 when the Garland DI (developmentally impaired) program was moved there. The Garland principal, Bob Baggs, accompanied the program to its new site. It served children from ages kindergarten to 21 years. With the new program on-site, there was a lack of space, and in 1974-1975 portables were added. When district workers were digging to prepare the surface for concrete, they ran into asphalt from the old Mallon Road which had crossed the property prior to the installation of the Maple Street Bridge. In order to add the portables, two old houses which stood on the site had to be demolished. The occupant of one of the homes refused to move. Finally the city had to condemn the home so that the project could move forward. At this time, students from outlying districts also came to Bryant, bringing the population to 198.

Special Olympics

In 1981-1982 Joanie Suttle, a teacher at Bryant, began developing a Special Olympics team which has continued to be an exciting part of the Bryant program. Bryant's Special Olympics basketball team won the state championship in 1982 and 1983. In 1984-1985 the district began sponsoring Bryant's

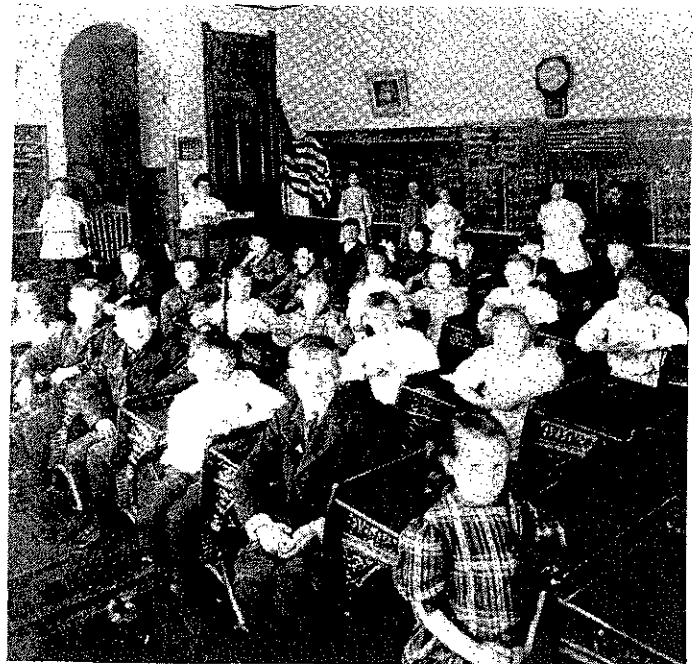
participation in Special Olympics.

In 1981-1982, students from five Bryant classrooms moved into the elementary schools so that these students could have more contact with children in their age group. Some cerebral palsy students from were Garland moved into the now vacant classrooms.

Work Skills Stressed

In 1983 a workshop was built in one of the portables, and Bill Fyfe organized and taught the program. The workshop provided the DI students with the opportunity to learn working skills and to earn money. The program has provided district personnel and the citizens of Spokane with a wonderful source of wooden gift items, such as the Canadian goose and seasonal planter-baskets, candleholders, and wooden spring flowers. These handmade craft items decorate many offices and homes in Spokane.

The next exit of students from Bryant occurred in 1985-1986 when the last elementary-age classes were moved to Cooper and Jefferson. At this time Bryant was reclassified as a secondary school. But the reader has probably noticed by now that things never stay the same at Bryant, so in 1988-1989 the Tessera gifted program for elementary students which had previously been located at two sites (Woodridge and Jefferson) was combined at Bryant. Both staff and students have enjoyed and profited from the association of these two programs in one school.



Classroom, 1908; Miss Rice, Teacher.

Photo courtesy of Northwest Room, Spokane Public Library.