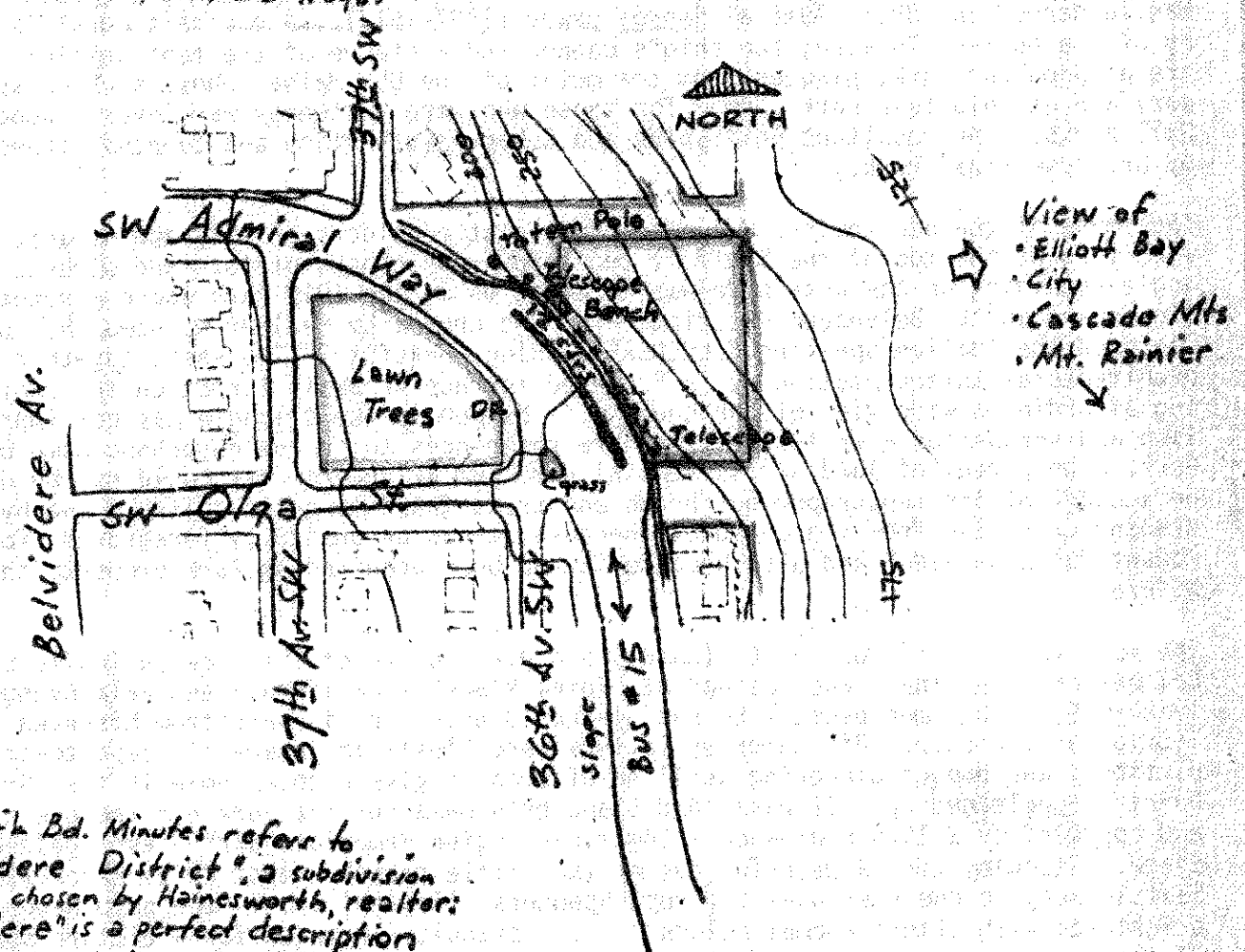


Totem pole: the original one (1939-1966) was presented by J.E. ("Daddy") Standley: nearby resident ("Totem Place" @ California + Palm Ave. 1918-194?) a long-time booster of the viewpoint, from his collection of poles as owner of the "Olde Curiosity Shop" at the foot of Columbia St. The pole became famous thru picture post cards and use on covers of Seattle Telephone Directories. Beyond repair in 1966, it was replaced with a copy made with a cedar log cut from Schmitz Park, carved by Robert Fleischman and Michael Morgan, Boeing Co. engineers who donated some 300 hours for the work. The 25 ft. pole was originally carved by Bella-Belle Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands: Dr. Viola Garfield describes it as "a commercial pole having no meaning except to the carver. It depicts stylized animal forms: beaver, fish and frogs."



1912 Park Bd. Minutes refer to "Belvidere District", a subdivision name chosen by Hainesworth, realtor: "Belvedere" is a perfect description of the area and view: from two Italian words - "beautiful" "to see", and, in architecture, its lawn, trees and view match the description - "covered terrace", "small turret on the roof of a building affording a wide view of the country." Neighborhood name: "Tin Can Park". By petition of "certain residents" (1936) west portion was named "American Legion Memorial Park". District and Admiral Way named in honor of "the Admical" of Manila (1898) fame Adm. George Dewey. (d. 1917). (Two cannon from ship at Woodland Park, plaques from metal of U.S. Maine are at Volunteer, Woodland and City Hall Parks. Portrait Mural in Admiral Theatre.)

1.7 Acre
 Condemn. in 1912 (West of Adm. Wya.)
 and 1926 (East of Ad. Wya.)
 for Park Jurisd. + control

WE 5-2520

BELVEDERE VIEWPOINT

HISTORY: BELVEDERE VIEWPOINT 6/3/74

Although the Pioneer Party has disembarked from the little schooner EXACT on Nov. 13, 1851 at the nearby Alki Beach, they moved across Elliott Bay to build their new town. West Seattle was left to the loggers, fish canners and ship fitters. The only connection with Seattle was by boat, or across the wide tide flats of the Duwamish River (crossing on a railroad trestle) or by a long, rutted road to a bridge at South Park. Charles and Lee Terry of the Pioneer Party had named the beach "New York-Alki", Alki being an Indian word for "by and by". At the rate West Seattle was developing it looked to the West Seattle Improvement Co. as though "alki" would take forever. So they built Seattle's first ferry to cross the 2-mile wide Elliott Bay plus a "newfangled" cable car line up the steep side of Duwamish Head. People were slow in coming but enough came that West Seattle became a town government and with enough potential that they were annexed in 1907. The city ran a trolley car across the tide flats all the way from Pioneer Square; and developed Alki Beach and Playground and Schmitz Park. The trolley trestle may have been wide enough to accommodate wagons; at any rate, in 1917 a low level "swing" bridge (timber) was built across the Duwamish River - the tide flats had been filled and were growing a new crop of industrial plants to be serviced by ships using the newly dredged waterway. (The high level bridge was built from 1924-1930) The trolley car ran along a trestle around the base of Duwamish Head to Alki Beach p the bulkheading and fill that became Alki Avenue was not done until 1915. A route up the steep bluff of Duwamish Head from the new Spokane Street (trolley) trestle was needed, so the city in 1912 condemned a right of way to be named Admiral Way - because those who platted the area did not plan such an access route. (The Admiral District was named in honor of "The Admiral" who sank the Spanish fleet at Manila Harbor in 1898: Admiral George Dewey (1837-1917). A portrait mural is in the lobby of the Admiral Theatre; two ship's cannon and a statue of the foot soldier ("The Hiker") are at Woodland Park, plaques from the metal of the USS Maine (whose sinking sparked the war) are at Volunteer Park (named for those who were bitten by war fever), Woodland and City Hall Parks. The resultant Philippine and Cuban Insurrection and eventual freedom is honored by Dr. Jose Rizal Park.)

The route of the new Admiral Way cut across platted blocks of lots and streets. Making a wide turn at the top of the bluff it cut across two blocks of lots and streets. The triangle remaining on the west side was referred to in the 1912 Park Board minutes as a "public square in the Belvedere district" - a name chosen by realtor Hainsworth. Usage has restored the Italian spelling BELVEDERE meaning "beautiful" "to see", together with the architectural interpretation as a "covered terrace or small turret on the roof of a building affording a wide view of the country." Evidently the triangle was not improved with lawn and shrubs for a while for there are references to the neighborhood name of Tin Can Park. The parcel of land across Admiral Way from Belvedere Park could not be developed on account of its topography but brush and trees found it quite suitable and by 1929 was drawing criticism from the community because it was an unsightly foreground for the "beautiful wide view" and also because it had been acquired as Park property three years before.

The most vocal critic was J. E. (Daddy) Standley, owner of The Olde Curiosity Shop in the Colman Ferry Terminal, who resided at "Totem Place" - California and Palm Avenue (from 1918-1940) - so named because he had placed 13 poles in his yard from his even larger collection at the shop. His numerous letters were "lost" in inter-city department jurisdictional and budget bickering until he offered to give a totem pole IF the "Grant View Point" was cleaned up. It was! And Standley's name for the park nor the one petitioned and approved by a 1936 ordinance - "American Legion Memorial Park" - ever gained popular usage. Standley kept a watchful eye on the little parks" - that Prize Bench (that West Seattle won) no one ever uses it 'cept Spooners" (lovers) . . . "the pole needs to be brightened with bright enamel colors" . . . Standley arranged for a picture post card of the totem and view - but the totem was not repainted nor did it become a famous landmark until after his death in 1940; the totem was featured on the 1956 telephone directory. Weathered beyond repair, it was recarved in 1966.

The community gave two trees: 1929 and 1932. The viewpoint concourse was built by the Department in 1947.