These two businesses were founded during Issaquah’s initial coal-mining boom. Lewis Hardware was established circa 1903 by J.J. Lewis; the original store was on a Front Street lot near present-day Dogwood. In 1921 the store moved to its present location. For nearly a century, shoppers have relied on Lewis for a wide variety of services. Fischer Brothers Meats, although currently housed in a 1956 building traces its history back to the 19th. John Fischer was born in Germany and came to Issaquah by way of Argentina and Maple Valley. He worked for Finney’s Meats in Issaquah before opening his own butcher shop.

Fischer Meats and Lewis Hardware

1899

Wilbur W. Sylvester was Issaquah’s station agent from 1895 to 1899. When he resigned to found the Bank of Issaquah, Sylvester stated, “I am going to try and increase business by building up the town.” His venture proved successful, and ten years later this building replaced the bank’s original wooden structure. Sylvester insisted on an 11-foot wide sidewalk, which meant the building sat back from Front Street three more feet than other businesses. Sylvester later talked neighboring businesses into constructing their buildings back three feet as well, resulting in wider sidewalks on one side of Front Street. The original building featured ornate detailing on both the outside and the inside.

First Stage/Issaquah Theatre (1913)

120 Front Street N

Rufus H. Glenn came to Issaquah in 1912 and opened the first theater in town. This building became its permanent home. A fine example of early pioneer wood construction, the building has housed silent films, basketball games, school dances, and graduations. During the late 1960s the theater was remodeled and the Issaquah Theater Group began using it. The theater reopened under the name Village Theatre in 1979. This building is now used for the Village Theatre’s First Stage performances, while Mainstage shows have moved across the street to the Francis J. Gaudette Theatre, 303 Front Street N.

Bicycle Shop/Bank of Issaquah (1910)

111 Front Street N

About the Issaquah History Museums

The Issaquah History Museums, founded as the Issaquah Historical Society in 1972, works to discover, preserve and share the history of Issaquah and its environs. For more information about Issaquah’s history, including other historic buildings, visit our web site at www.issaquahhistory.org.

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The Alexander House was built in 1902 by Thomas and Caroline Alexander on land that was known for most of the Twentieth Century as Alexander's Resort. The couple first moved to the area when Thomas was employed by Seattle Lake Shore & Eastern Railway as the "walking boss," or traveling construction supervisor. When the future of this historic home became endangered by construction of a housing development in 1986, the Issaquah Historical Society worked to move it to its current location.

Issaquah Creek

As you pass over the bridge next to the Creamery, you see the East Fork of the Issaquah Creek. The East Fork meets Issaquah Creek about 500 feet to your right (to the west of the bridge). Issaquah Creek proper is visible near the State Salmon Hatchery.

Grange Mercantile Building (1915)

485 Front Street N

The Grange Mercantile Association was organized in 1915. This building was constructed to fit between the railroad tracks and Front Street. The Mercantile Association served the food needs of the Issaquah community for 55 years before closing its doors in 1972. Many Issaquah families rented meat lockers here to store frozen meat.

Visit the Northwest Museum of Anthropology

In this exhibit you can view the rich history of the Pacific Northwest through artifacts, photographs, and videos. The museum is located downtown near Front Street and the Ginkgo Tree.

Issaquah Depot (1889)

50 Rainier Boulevard N

Issaquah's Depot was originally part of the Seattle Lake Shore & Eastern line, which ran from Seattle to North Bend. The building was completed in 1889 and served as a stopover for trains. In 1920, it was torn down. Fortunately, through the efforts of Issaquah High School students, a petition was drawn up and the tree was saved. Although Issaquah's ginkgo tree is a female, the cool climate prevents the tree from yielding large quantities of sticky, pungent fruit.

Grand Central Hotel (1903)

608 E Sunset Way

The last remaining historic hotel in Issaquah, the Grand Central was constructed when Issaquah was a stopover point for rail passengers traveling from Seattle to Snoqualmie. James Henry Croston, Sr., a carpenter for the coal mines, built and operated the boarding house. The Grand Central Hotel was a temporary lodging for many of Issaquah's future residents while they established their businesses and homes. In 2001, an enterprising resident of the building began restoring the Grand Central, bringing back its original grace and polish.

Tour the Logger's Museum

At the center of the display is a road engine, like those used throughout the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Road engines were used to skid logs toward a central point or mill. In the 1940s, the Hallstone family operated a Shell gas station and feed store here. The building has been restored by the Downtown Issaquah Association to recreate that period.

E. Sunset Way

Sunset Way was first known as Mill Street because lumber mills were located at either end. This mural depicts Issaquah's logging industry circa 1900-1940, at time when old-growth cedar and fir logs were being cut from the nearby hills and milled in Issaquah's many lumber mills.

Visit the Issaquah Historical Society Museum

This building originally served as the storage warehouse for Nicholas Burki's Feed Store. On the tracks is a recreation of the Owl Cigar ad originally painted there. The advertisement was placed to take advantage of rail passengers. In the 1940s, the Hallstone family operated a Shell gas station and feed store here. The building has been restored by the Downtown Issaquah Association to recreate that period.

Visit the Gilman Lodge Museum

In 1867 three Norwegian bachelors (Lars, Ingebright and Andrew) discovered coal in the nearby mountains. Later, Tiger & Squak Mountains

Looking south from the logging display you can see the mountains known as the Issaquah Alps. Tiger is on your left and Squak on the right. Both played an important role in the area's early mining and logging history. The Issaquah & Superior Mine workings were located on Squak Mountain while the Wood & Iverson lumber company established itself on Tiger Mountain.

Visit the IOOF Hall Museum

Gilman Lodge No. 89 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) constructed the building for use as a community hall. Lodge events and meetings were held in the upper story, and the bottom floor was rented out. The hall has been the site for dances, movies, a grocery story and even court proceedings. It was nearly destroyed by an arson attempt in 1968 and by a severe windstorm in the 1930s. The building has been well maintained and remains a distinctive Issaquah landmark, appearing much as it did in the 1950s.

Visit the Salmon Hatchery

The state of Washington constructed the State Salmon Hatchery. Issaquah Creek flows to Lake Sammamish and ultimately into Puget Sound.

Visit the Tiger Mountain Fire Lookout

On a clear day, you can see 360 degrees of the Northwest from this lookout. It is the highest point in the Issaquah Alps. The lookout is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Visit the Equestrian Center

The Equestrian Center is a state-of-the-art equestrian facility. There is a variety of trails and cross-country courses available for riders of all abilities.

Visit the Issaquah Hatchery

This site was once part of City Park, where many townspeople enjoyed holidays and picnics along the creek. During the Great Depression, the Works Project Administration constructed the State Salmon Hatchery. Every fall, 10,000-20,000 salmon return to this site to spawn. Issaquah Creek flows to Lake Sammamish and ultimately into Puget Sound.