

BY PAUL DORPAT



COURTESY OF LAWTON GOWEY

Above - Broadway High School on Capitol Hill's main street was the first structure built in Seattle for exclusively secondary classes.

Right - Except for the auditorium shown here, the old Broadway High School was razed in 1974 for the expansion of Seattle Community College, its tenant since 1966.



PAUL DORPAT

On Old Broadway

ONLY SEVEN YEARS AFTER IT opened in 1902, Seattle High School, the city's first structure dedicated exclusively to secondary classes, was renamed Broadway High for the busy street that passed its front door. It was also in 1909 that Asahel Curtis took this view of Broadway High from the rear of the Oddfellows Hall on Pine Street.

At first, students came from everywhere - from Bothell to Broadway - and the mix of races and classes received not only a progressive education but a fund of loving memories to cherish as alumni.

It was a remarkably busy place. The addition of night classes in 1907 swelled enrollment by nearly a thousand. During the 1930s the school became a self-help center for learning skills to negotiate the depression. During World War II, Broadway High and its neighbor, Edison Technical School, instituted classes to help run the home front.

In the fall of 1946 students were directed to other secondary schools and

Broadway High was rededicated to completing the education of returning veterans. In the Broadway-Edison Evening School anyone - in 1945 the oldest student was 66 - could follow a hobby, take a class in making clothes, painting or cooking, or complete high-school credits. Adult education enrollment in 1949 was 9,645.

Seattle Community College acquired the plant in 1966 for its central branch and in the summer of 1974 wreckers razed most of Broadway High School. The school's auditorium was saved and given a new facade made from large stones salvaged from the school's front entrance.

Now the school's large and energetic alumni association is anticipating the 1996 golden anniversary of Broadway High's closure. Alumni can contact the association's secretary Joy Lucas at 5411 S. Angeline, Seattle 98118. 

Paul Dorpat's two-hour videotape on Seattle's early history, "Seattle Chronicle," is \$29.95 from Tartu Publications, P.O. Box 85208, Seattle, WA 98145.