

# The Door Jazz Espresso Coffee House

1818 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
1958-1962

In 1958 while stationed at Fort Ord in California, I was fortunate to visit San Francisco on several of my weekend leaves. During this time, was the beginning of the Bohemian revolution which opened several new coffee houses in the Haight Ashbury district that attracted a variety of customers from businessmen, collage students, beatniks and Army personal on week-end leave from Fort Ord.

Arriving back in Seattle, I met with brother Ed and old friends Ron Gregory and Joe Racibaskis. We all worked together for several years in the display department at Fredrick & Nelson. During these meetings I explained about the popular fast growing smoke filled coffee houses in the Bay Area which were smoked filled, fun & funky, filled with antique tables and chairs, nick-nacks and memorabilia to serve a growing group of customers, while enjoying Turkish and espresso coffee, teas and pastries listing to folk singers, poetry and comedians. Immediately, they all wanted to help to get involved to develop and create a new coffee house for Seattle. In a week I found the ideal location one block from F&N, behind the Music Hall at 1818 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

To start, Ron and I made many visits to old junk shop and secondhand stores to find and identify anything that was funky and different antique and useful that would fit my limited budget. Our first store was Guy Rockwell Muldavin Antiques in North Seattle on Aurora that soon moved to Lake Union and he was later charged in the disappearance of his wife Manzanita. The majority of finds came from an old junk building on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, a jam packed, old and musty, dim-lit and dust covered junk in piles. I negotiate for chairs, tables and a 2 handled espresso coffee maker ( I hoped still worked ) 85 used silver plated F&N teapots, tall white lady statue, thousands of round cork floats on ropes with nets, back in a dark corner I found a small antique National cash register. Later I purchased from a city light crew who just completed a major installation on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, two empty large wooden cable spools, I converted into large tables surrounded by small barrels purchased from Sweeny's Cooperage on Lake Union, made into padded stools.

With the assistance from my brothers, Val assumed the responsibility to find quality artists to exhibit original pieces in our mini-gallery and advise on our limited menu from his pantry experience working at the Seattle Rainier Club. Jerry was responsible to work with Joe Racibaskas in the business remodel and installing the gated front door and hanging "The Door" sign, installation of the espresso machine with the professional plumbing assistance to install and hook up our antique espresso machine came by my classmate John Edwards. Brother Ed

