

History of Rickenbach Construction

John Rickenbach started Rickenbach Construction Company in Astoria in 1965. In 1989 Rickenbach Construction incorporated and has worked to become one of the Pacific North Coast's foremost commercial General Contractors.

1963

John and Dian Rickenbach moved to Astoria and the John Day Trailer Park was their first residence. John, at this time, was working for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as a construction manager. He was assigned to oversee the construction of a new Church located on Niagara in Astoria.



1963-64

John worked on the Astoria Megler Bridge construction. He worked mainly on the building of the causeway.

1964-65

John worked for Wright, Schushart and Harbor Construction building projects at the Wauna Paper Mill.

1965 (winter)

John and family traveled to Regina Saskatchewan, Canada to complete a new building project for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They were there for about 3 months.

1965-1975

John started Rickenbach Construction. His first substantial job was restoring the British Embassy Building into a residence for Bob & Margaret Chopping.

John built a residence for Dick & Shirley Stemper located on Kensington Avenue in Astoria.

John also did a small amount of railing and "gingerbread" repair work for Mary Flavel on the residence located at 14th and Grand. This involved repairing items on the widows walk at the top of the roof. Mary asked John to report all this work as wind damage for insurance purposes. John felt that it was not due to wind damage but typical rot and lack of maintenance and would not report it any different. Mary refused to pay the bill and Rickenbach Construction placed one of the first liens on this piece of property.

Company History

During these years John built a shop for the business and used it as a place to build cabinets for kitchens, and bathrooms. He was quite well known for his attention to detail and craftsmanship in working with wood. One of the houses he remembers building cabinets for was Jack Olsen, another contractor.

He also worked as a carpenter for Roy Duoos building George Fulton's residence. John and George's friendship continued until George passed away a few years ago.

During this time, John also met Homer Tunks, a Structural Engineer, who moved to Astoria and had a vision of building a round, domed concrete house. John and Homer worked together on the design and construction technique and it still stands today. Homer covered the outside concrete dome with oyster shells.

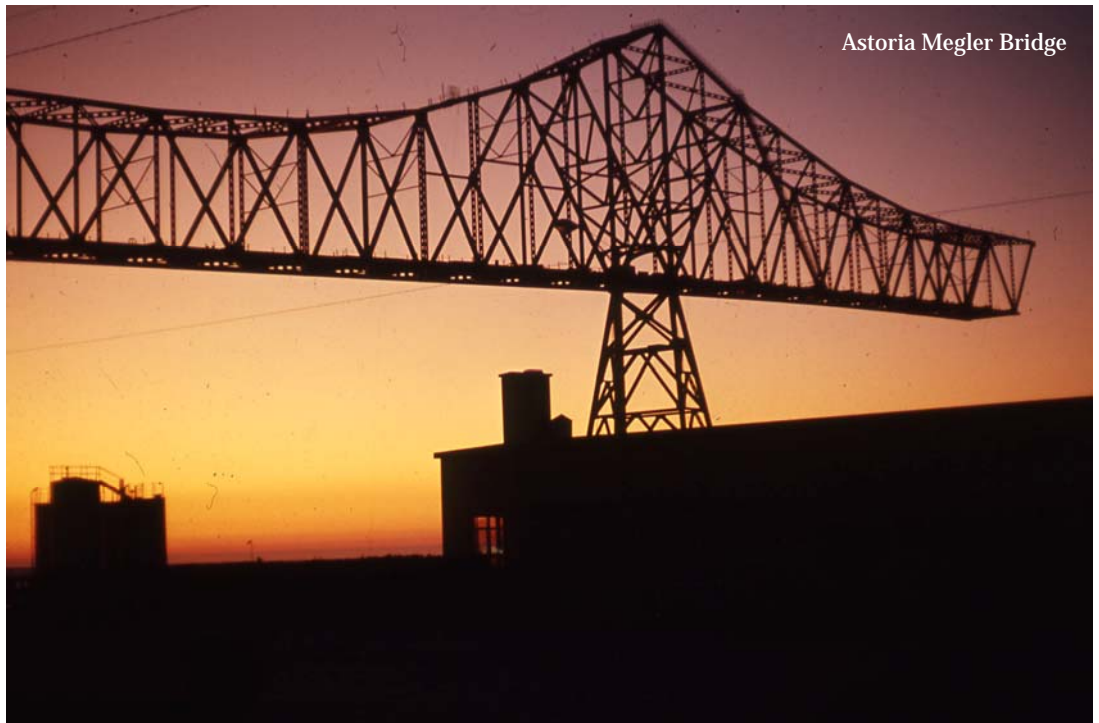
Around 1980, Homer came to John again with an idea to build a garage with a parabolic shaped roof. Para-

abolic curved shapes and straight lumber do not go together. He remembers waking up in the night with the idea of how this could be accomplished. Homer and John soon had the only parabolic roof structure at that time probably in Oregon.

1970 brought the recession. The construction work was spotty and often the bills were difficult to collect. John and Diane just barely made it through this time as did many of the other members within the community.

After the economy picked back up, Rickenbach Construction was invited by Bank of Astoria as a joint venture to purchase and build four homes on Cumberland Street as spec homes. This was a positive experience for Rickenbach Construction.

Shortly after these were completed, Columbia Savings Bank and Rickenbach Construction formed a joint venture for two spec houses built on West Lexington.



Astoria Megler Bridge

Company History

In the later 1970's Columbia Savings Bank and Rickenbach Construction did a joint venture for three more houses located on Skyline Avenue. These sites were very steep and somewhat considered unbuildable. A piling system was engineered for the foundation system and the work went ahead. Michelle was in high school at this time, interested in architecture and was able to design and draw up the plans for these three houses. The piling was placed on all three of the sites but only two houses were built at this time. The last one someone bought and built a few years later. During the construction of these houses, Jared was about 7 years old. He was climbing on the scaffolding and fell off breaking his arm.

Diane had become involved in the business doing the paperwork, billings, bidding and some design. She would often take the kids out on the job sites as she took lunch to Dad or helped out with something. As soon as they could sweep with a broom or pick up boards they were helping on the job site. As they got older, they all became involved in construction and spent a good percent of their time in Junior High and High School, working on the jobs or in the shop finishing cabinets. Diane and Michelle learned how to paint, stain wood, install carpet, tile, insulate and lots more as the business became a family affair. Michelle remembers working nights in the shop staining and spraying the varnish on large quantities of cabinets Dad had built so they were ready to be installed in a client's home.

1980

In 1980, Rickenbach Construction designed and built a custom home for Bob Letsinger. Michelle designed it during the summer after graduating from Astoria High School. The home was built while Michelle attended her first year of college at Brigham Young University.

1981

In 1981, Bob Chopping, owner of KAST Radio Station, contacted Rickenbach Construction about a remodel and addition to the small radio station he owned across from Astoria High School. Michelle came home during the holiday season and designed the addition with a residence for Bob and Margaret on the second floor. The project was built shortly after by Rickenbach Construction.



Dr. Ellis Building

During the 1980's Rickenbach Construction was involved in some new residential construction and lots of smaller commercial remodels such as Maurices (downtown), Palo's Men Store, Coast to Coast, etc.

Company History

1985

In 1985 Rickenbach Construction tore down the well know and almost historic Dairy Queen and built a new one in its place for Dave and Jill Bodway. This was the first new commercial project for Rickenbach Construction. After the Dairy Queen was completed, Rickenbach Construction built a new Bank of Astoria branch in Seaside .

1986

In 1986, Rickenbach Construction joint ventured to build the new Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Seaside.

1988

In 1988, Rickenbach Construction bonded and built the large addition and remodel to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Astoria. This is the same church John Rickenbach moved to Astoria to build in 1963.



1992

In 1992, Jared graduated from Astoria High School. This same year Jared started a two year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Toronto Canada returning home in 1994.

Company History

1995

In fall of 1995, Jared attended the Oregon State University majoring in Construction Engineering. During the summers and on breaks from school Jared returned to Astoria to work for the family company as much as possible. He graduated from OSU in the spring of 1999. Jared and his wife, Jenna, moved to Astoria and Jared picked up where he had left off, working for and helping to manage Rickenbach Construction with his father, John.

1996

In 1996, Michelle (Rickenbach) & David Dieffenbach moved to Astoria. David & Michelle, both being licensed Architects and familiar with construction, went to work for Rickenbach Construction. David was a field supervisor for construction projects and she worked in the office. Michelle's first job was the design of the Clatsop County Animal Shelter. Rickenbach Construction had been awarded the project thru the bid process but the building was unable to be built on the current site. A different site was secured in Warrenton and a complete redesign of the building was required. Rickenbach Construction Inc. designed and built the facility as their first Design-Build project.



1997 to Present

Over the last 20 years, Rickenbach Construction has continued to design and build various projects throughout the Astoria area, Clatsop County and a little beyond. The projects have varied from small residential remodels, new homes, commercial remodels, new commercial buildings, medical remodels, new medical buildings and some institutional projects as well. Many of these projects have been buildings with historical significance and restoration. We continue to challenge ourselves by taking on the difficult projects and developing cost effective methods to accomplish the scope of work. We strive to work with the client

Company History**1997 to Present (cont.)**

and achieve the clients goals from the initial design and planning phase through the construction phase and into the warranty and occupancy phase. We have had many repeat clients both in residential and commercial projects. Much of our work uses a cost not to exceed contract process and all have been completed under budget and on time or ahead of schedule.

Our working capital can easily cover construction without requiring payment in advance on monthly construction costs. Our accounts payable are current and we pay off accounts early to receive discounts. We have a “no complaint” record with the Oregon and Washington Builders Boards since registration in 1968 as John Rickenbach Construction and then Rickenbach Construction Inc. Our safety compliance record with OSHA is good and we have a discounted SAIF insurance rate. We are members of Associated General Contractors and North Coast Home Builders and Industry Association. Rickenbach Construction is capable of bonding for \$8 million with an additional backlog of projects. We have enjoyed a long bonding history with AmTrust Surety and have excellent rates due to our exceptional construction record.

Rickenbach Construction Inc. has always enjoyed being involved in community service and charity work. The officers have been of service to the following groups: Astoria Children’s Museum, Rotary International, CMH Foundation, Cascade chapter of Boy Scouts of America, North Coast Home Builders Association, City of Astoria Design Review and Historic Landmarks Committees.

