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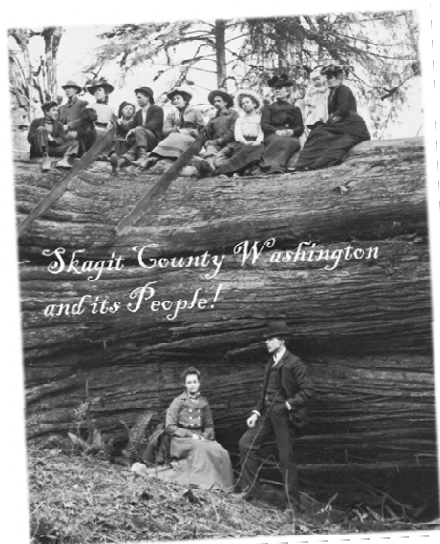
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Summer Journal 2014

President: George Ridgeway

Summer Journal Editor Dan Royal

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From the time of Skagit Valley Genealogical Societies formation in 1987, a group of volunteers in the Publication Committee through the years has worked very hard to leave a wonderful library of work to benefit those with ancestry in Skagit County Washington. Spearheaded early on by John and Shirlee Fisher, Sharon Johnson, Hazel Rasar and countless others; the list of works in the Publications Form you have just received (*found at the last two pages*) should be a huge benefit to you and your family of genealogists and historians. Especially to those of you who now have many generations of family in the valley.

Of the societies many publications, the Cemetery books alone account for a listing of approximately 38,000 people who inhabited the county from its inception, folks who contributed to its formation and growth. Early Census reports of pioneers and early settlers. An Every Name Index of the 1906 for the out-of-print book called **“An Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties, Washington”**, a publication with those same pioneer individuals and families found in census and cemetery readings. (*see page 5 for an overview of the 1906 History book*)

The recently released **“Skagit County Washington and Its People!”** a legacy book from the society and successor to the above 1906 histories are both invaluable to finding more information about family members you have been in search of. Between the pages of both sets of books, they hold actual biographies submitted by the participants or descendants themselves plus photographs you may have never seen before. An All Name Index is also included in the two volume set of **“Skagit County Washington and Its People!”**.

Oh yes! This particular volume of the irregular Summer Journal from SVGS is a shameless plug to get anyone reading these words to buy the societies wonderful publications. WHY? Besides what I have shared above, the monies received from these publications really do help this wonderful non-profit organization and the most amazing people, who donate their time and energies—keep the group solvent and in the black.

AGAIN WHY? Its been my personal belief even before I joined SVGS in 2002, that knowing where you come from by way of a family tree and lineage is one of the most wonderful ways to keep yourself and your family rooted firmly to the ground as we live, walk, work, and play during our time on this planet we call Earth. Maybe a bit sentimental, but I am very proud of the works SVGS has done through the years to benefit the community of Skagit County as a whole. This goes beyond the publications, they house an archives of obituaries and funeral home records. They also work hard at education for genealogy, such as our recent Summer Seminar, “Genealogy for Everyone”; a very well maintained genealogical library held at the Burlington Public Library and the recent R.O.O.T.S Project held in conjunction with the Burlington Public Library. The volunteers make these things happen time and again to benefit you.

Ahead in these pages, I have shared the front pages from **“Skagit County Washington and Its People!”** I want to again acknowledge and say **“Thank-you”** one last time to everyone who made up the initial committee in 2003 for the ‘Special History Project’ and the Publication Committee, to those individuals and organizations who contributed with advice and suggestions—to the folks who took the time to submit their family biographies. To those who helped edit and proof read, to the gentlemen who worked very hard on the layout of the book. Most of all, to my partner in crime—our Editor-in-Chief in cracking the whip to push this book forward—my mentor, my friend, Hazel (Walters) Rasar.

Dan Royal, Publication Chair

Skagit County Washington and its People!**FOREWORD****HISTORY OF SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON & ITS PEOPLE**

Ten years in the production! The book "Skagit County Washington and Its People" is finally ready to be published in the Fall of 2013. Many have looked forward to this day.

Skagit Valley Genealogical Society and Stillaguamish Genealogical Society had jointly reprinted the book "Illustrated History of Snohomish and Skagit Counties" in the year 2000. Originally published in 1906 by the Interstate Publishing Company of Chicago, Illinois. The two societies worked hard to include an every name index. All copies were sold, and is no longer available from either society. A separate "Every Name Index" for the 1906 History book is available from the genealogical society. There have been many requests to again republish this book, however, the decision was made not to do so as the book, without the index, is now available on the Internet.

During the summer of 2003 there was a conversation between Hazel Rasar, then chair of the Publication Committee, and society member Dan Royal about the reprint of the famous 1906 History Book as Dan was looking to purchase a copy from the society. At his request the Publication Committee considered beginning another project using a special project committee based on the concept of that book. The decision was made to organize a Special History Project Committee with the goal of publishing historical events and biographies of Skagit County Pioneers from the past to the present. Hazel and Dan became co-chairs for this project. As a sub-committee of the Publication Committee, a new 'Special History Project' was born. This book project was to be a legacy book for the society based on the "1906 Illustrated History Of Snohomish and Skagit and Counties".

A significant difference between the two history projects was that in the 1906 book, teams of young editors were sent out to interview local pioneers and gather material to begin a county history, gleaning as much of the areas local interest and political endeavors as possible, from the local newspapers. Pioneer families were asked to pay, if they could afford the fee, to have their stories included. This

fee plus the sales of the books themselves helped pay the editors and the publishing company's time and efforts in publishing the book.

The biggest difference from the original would be that this new book, "Skagit County Washington & Its People" published by the Skagit Valley Genealogical Society, would not ask folks to pay to tell their family history. Questionnaires were sent to many local families and this was expanded by these families to include others. Many stories were collected across the United States as well as Canada, France, Germany and Spain. Historical and biographical family information was collected, free of charge, with anticipation of pre-published sales to pay for the publishing of the 2013 book. Anyone whose family had been a part of Skagit County, past and present, were welcomed to submit their family memoirs, biographies and genealogical data. The book includes many, many family and historical photographs submitted by individuals or their descendants.

Submitters were asked to submit their information in story format and many did this. Many only submitted the questionnaire with family information. Stories were developed from this material with as much generational information included as possible, and expanded upon or proven by utilizing census records to locate them in the county. Dan Royal has also included some notes obtained from the website of Noel Bourasaw of "The Skagit River Journal" with many historical stories of pioneers in the upriver communities.

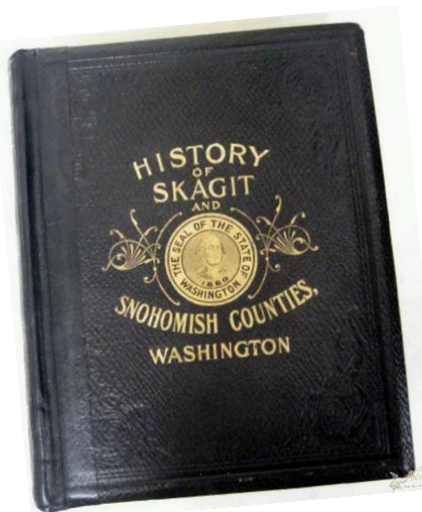
The project faced extensive editing of the submissions and every effort has been made to include an every name index. This has involved searching for maiden names of many of the women included in the stories.

Every effort has been made to present a professional publication. We sincerely hope that you enjoy reading about our pioneer ancestors and their descendants.

Hazel Rasar and Dan Royal, co-chairs of this publication, "Skagit County Washington and Its People".

An Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties

Their People, Their Commerce and Their Resources with an Outline of the Early History of the State of Washington — Endorsed as Authentic by local committees of pioneers), published by Interstate Publishing Company Copyright 1906, printed by the S.J. Clarke Co. of Chicago



The Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties (hereafter the 1906 History Book), published in 1906, is hands down the most important book on the shelf of anyone who writes about or reads about our Northwest history. We always offer a caveat, however, to the modern reader about the biography section of the book. The book was split into two parts, the first half compiled by professionals and well-read amateurs who had their fingers on the pulse of the area. They had what we now call "a sense of place."

The second half was a collection of biographies subscribed and paid for by families who could afford the fee. Some have said that the subscription was \$100 but that seems quite a dear sum for those times. Regardless, this second half has to be taken with a grain of salt, as the pioneers would have said, because several of the biographies have proven to be more works of fanciful fiction in parts or the total. The most famous is a biography of a scoundrel who flitted back and forth between both sides of the civil war, living on his wits and poker, and yet his biography paints him as possessing the epitome of integrity and patriotism. The vast

majority of the biographies are very helpful, anyway, especially if you look past the flowery language and the lack of any controversy.

As you will see below, some of the most revered pioneers endorsed the book and acted as a committee to oversee it. One of the most interesting names of the publication's professionals is Harrison B. Averill (1881-1960). A Michigan native, Averill began writing for his local newspaper in Saginaw, Michigan, when he was right out of high school. By 1902, he was 21 and had worked on west as a journalist, as was a common course back then and he was hired by Interstate Publishing of Chicago to research and write copy for books such as this one.

He and William S. Shiach formed a team and wrote much of the copy for An Illustrated History of North Idaho in 1903. They worked together on other books after that, including the 1906 Book. Their assignment was to interview pioneers and mine their memories, as well as reading the "morgues" or past volumes of newspapers in the area. That was a luxury; however, because many of the newspapers burned in various fires of the early years, so sometimes the pioneer memories were the only source of local events. Averill got to know the county well, traveling from farm to farm in a horse and buggy.

For overarching history of the Northwest that dated back to the English and Spanish exploration, Interstate contracted with William Dennison Lyman (1852-1920), the esteemed professor of history at Whitman College in Walla Walla. He was author of several prestigious histories, including The Columbia River: Its History, its Myths, its Scenery, its Commerce and a book on Mount Rainier and Indian legends of that area, in addition to Lyman's History of Old Walla Walla County. He was also an expert on the Whitman Massacre and he is perhaps most famous for his last book, History of the Yakima Valley, Washington: comprising Yakima, Kittitas, and Benton counties, published by S.J. Clarke in 1919, the year before his death.

Something about Skagit County must have stuck with Harry Averill. After his book assignments, he became the publisher of the Cle Elem Echo, and continued in that position through at least 1920, according to the Federal Census that year. But in 1926, he came to Mount Vernon and edited and soon published the Mount Vernon Herald. He set a record for publishing the paper for 28 years, during which time he transformed it from a weekly to a daily. One of his first historic series was a serialization of pioneer Otto Klement's memoirs. He retired in 1954 and turned the Herald over to M.D. Glover, who renamed it the Skagit Valley Herald. Sometime after that, he and his wife, Mollie, moved to Los Angeles, where Harry died on Dec. 29, 1960, at 79 years. They had a daughter, Elizabeth, who was grown by then, but we have never traced her. Historian John Conrad visited Averill in California and discovered that he didn't own a copy of the 1906 Book.

From Noel Bourasaw, Skagit River Journal

Skagit County Washington and its People!

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Skagit County Washington and its People!

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