



President's Message

A big "Thank You" goes to Barb Johnson for handling our society's portion of a "Celtic Genealogy Info Workshop" in conjunction with the Celtic Arts Foundation on September 16. The educational presentation was made by Barbara to a full house at the Littlefield Celtic Center in Mount Vernon. A job well done. Thank you, Barb!

At our annual meeting on November 11 our society will be electing a vice president, treasurer and a secretary (1 year). The vice president position needs a nominee while our current treasurer, Candice Soine, has volunteered to be our nominee for another two year term. We will also be electing a secretary for the remaining one year in this term. The board recently appointed Nancy Bonafede to be our temporary secretary and she will be our nominee.

No ballot will be needed as we have no proposed bylaw revisions to consider. At this point only one person has been nominated for the two offices, treasurer and secretary. The position of vice president will be open for nominees. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Our November meeting will have V.P. Margie Wilson leading the education program titled "Veterans' Day Tribute to our Ancestors in the Military Service" with some of our members speaking. The afternoon will include a "Used Book Bonanza". Be sure to check out all of the books that Margie has made available to us. A donation will let you walk away with an arm load or two. Come and enjoy the afternoon with us.

Volume 31 Number 5
President: John Hayes
Newsletter: Dottie Chandler
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There is no meeting in December so you will have more time with your families over the holidays. Have fun!

John Hayes
President
rosie@valleyint.com
360-424-4608

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Just a friendly reminder that dues are now due for the Skagit Valley Genealogical Society. In the event you may have already paid, it is possible that they were sent in and just haven't reached me yet. Our year goes from Jan. 1st through Dec. 31st. Dues this year have raised to \$15.00 for single membership and \$20.00 for family membership.

Membership Chairperson



President: John Hayes
360-424-4608 rosie@valleyint.com

Vice President: Margie Wilson
360-798-1681 wilsongm@frontier.com

Secretary: Nancy Bonafede
360-856-2581 njbonafede@gmail.com

Treasurer: Candice Soine
360-755-9071 rainshadowdals@gmail.com

Past President: George Ridgeway
360-424-4427 4george30@comcast.net

Archival Historian: Dan Royal
360-826-6141 dmoroyal@earthlink.net

Education: Barbara Johnson

Genealogist: Diane Partington
360-336-5832 nonie.dl@comcast.net

Librarian: Margie Wilson
360-798-1681 wilsongm@frontier.com

Membership: Candice Soine

SVGS Members,

We have a new BLOG on our website. If you are interested in participating in our blog go to skagit-valleygenealogy. Org/BLOG to see how you can register and log in.
Thank you.

Newsletter:
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4george30@comcast.net

Projects : Dan Royal/Dottie Chandler

Publicity: Margie Wilson

Special Committees

Communications: Barbara Johnson

Sunshine: Carol Nersten
360-770-5542

Nominating: **OPEN**

Audit/Budget: Candice Soine
360-755-9071 rainshadowdals@gmail.com

Bylaws/Standing Rules: Hazel Rasar
hrasar@gmail.com

Refreshments: Rotating with volunteers

Raffles/Door Prizes: Carol Nersten

Seminar: Board Members

SOCIETY EMAIL: genealogy0715@gmail.com

Check out our redesigned web page at
skagitvalleygenealogy.org

The Skagit Valley Genealogical Society Newsletter accepts business card size advertisement. The cost will be \$10.00 per issue and the editor can help put one together for you if you don't have something ready.

If anyone would like queries or surnames to be posted in the newsletter, please send to... *Ye Editor*

Christmas Letters Tell Family Stories

The first Christmas card was printed in 1843. Since then, many people send Christmas cards to their [family members](#) and friends every year. Some people take the time to sit down and write out a Christmas letter. Those letters tell family stories that might otherwise be forgotten.

A Christmas letter, as you may well know if you have ever received one, is much more detailed than a typical Christmas card. Some people will write Christmas letters that go on for several pages, while others manage to fit everything they wanted to say onto just one page. There are people who write their Christmas letters by hand, the “old fashioned” way. Others compose their Christmas letters on their computers and print out as many copies as they need to send to their loved ones.

The important thing about Christmas letters isn't the length, or the style. It is the stories that the letters contain. The end of the year Christmas letter often becomes a collection of the most significant moments that happened to a family since last Christmas.

In general, people share family stories that are amusing, or poignant, or unexpected. They talk about awards won, goals met, and happy blessings. Some people will also choose to talk about their health (including the surgery they had that year). That may be an uncomfortable thing to read about, but is, undoubtedly, the biggest thing on your relative's mind in the past year.

Yes, it can be annoying to read about every single award, soccer game, band recital, and precocious thing that your relative's children did in the past 12 months. Keep the Christmas letter anyway. Years from now, when those children are all grown up, they might find the old Christmas letters that their mother wrote to be absolutely fascinating!

A collection of Christmas letters, carefully stored away, can together tell quite the story about the people who were mentioned in the letter. Babies grow to be toddlers (who get into mischief). Little kids state exactly what they want to be when they grow up – only to change their minds several times before they get there. Petulant teenagers become thoughtful politically active college students.

A Christmas letter might be the only written source of short stories about a relative when he or she was young. Those stories, all pieced together, paint a picture of the relative's personality.

Take the time to enjoy the Christmas letters your family sends you. Scan them so you can have a digital copy that will not fade, tear, or be [damaged](#) from improper storage. Give [digital copies](#) to the genealogist in your [family tree](#).

This was taken from FamilyTree.com

SUNSHINE

If any members know of a fellow member that could use a card. Please let Carol Nersten or one of the other board members know so we can have one sent to them. Carol's number is 360-770-5542

Our general meeting will be at 2-4 p.m. This Saturday Nov 11th.

This is so everyone can enjoy the Veteran celebrations that go on earlier in the day.

The Legend of the Candy Cane

Many years ago, a candy maker wanted to make a candy at Christmas time that would serve as a witness to his Christian faith.

He wanted to incorporate several symbols for the birth, ministry and death of Jesus. He began with a stick of pure white hard candy; white to symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus; hard to symbolize the solid rock, the foundation of the Church; firmness to represent the promise of God.

The candymaker made the candy in the form of a "J" to represent the name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Savior. He thought it could also represent the staff of the Good Shepherd, with which he reached down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep, have gone astray.

Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candymaker stained it with red stripes. He used three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received, by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the blood shed by Christ on the cross so that we could have the promise of eternal life. Unfortunately, the candy became known as a candy cane - a meaningless decoration seen at Christmas time.

But the true meaning is still there for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.



The Story of Veterans Day

November 11 is Veterans Day. A veteran is a soldier who has served his/her country.

Thirty-five countries fought in World War I. They fought for five years, from 1914 to 1918. The United States fought in the war from 1917 to 1918.

Finally the countries stopped fighting. The leaders signed an armistice. They signed the armistice on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The armistice meant that the war was over.

Americans were very happy to hear about the armistice. No more soldiers would die in the war. The soldiers could come home.

People went out into the streets and laughed and danced. They blew horns and whistles and rang bells. They sang songs. They thought that there would never be another war.

President Wilson made November 11 a holiday to remember the end of the war. The holiday was called Armistice Day.

At eleven o'clock in the morning, everyone stopped doing whatever they were doing. People were completely silent for one minute. This minute was to remember all the soldiers who have died in wars.

The body of an unknown soldier was brought to America from the cemetery in France. His body was buried in a tomb at Arlington National Cemetery. It was called the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The US was in three more wars: World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The name of the holiday was changed to Veterans Day.

The bodies of three more unknown soldiers were brought to the cemetery. On Veterans Day, there are special services at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Americans remember and honor all the veterans.

Excerpted from *ESL Teacher's Holiday Activities Kit*, by Elizabeth Claire.



Skagit Valley Genealogical Society

Monthly Meetings Program Calendar 2017 - 2018

Meetings: 2nd Saturdays, 1-3pm | Burlington Senior Center | 1011 Greenleaf St. | Burlington
 skagitvalleygenealogy.org | genealogy0715@gmail.com

Visitors are always welcome to attend SVGS monthly educational programs. Join us!

2017

Sat. Nov. 11 **Annual Meeting and Honoring Our Veteran Ancestors –**
 SVGS members are invited to give a 5 minute talk about a veteran ancestor in honor of
 Veteran's Day. Contact Margie Wilson 360-757-6224 if you wish to be part of the program.

2018

Sat., Jan. 13 **Tech Skills Genealogists Need to Succeed – George Ridgeway**
 SVGS webmaster, George Ridgeway will teach you how to navigate through those puzzling websites and software "brick walls" presented by our cyber world. This how-to session will help genealogists become more efficient navigators and more productive in their online research

Sat., Feb. 10 **Fir Island and Conway History -**
 The authors of this new local history book will discuss their research and the several Skagit pioneering families featured in this book. – SVGS member Patricia Pleas and her fellow authors will make up the discussion panel.

Sat., Mar. 10 **Detours Abound: Irish Roadblocks and Brick Walls - Steven Morrison**
 Learn how to avoid the many pitfalls of Irish research. This is an introductory program on Irish genealogy research and its unique challenges.

Sat., Apr. 14 **The Lost Communities of Whatcom County – Troy Luginbill**
 Discover the communities in Whatcom County that you may never have heard of due to their brief existence. A fascinating history told by the director of the Lynden Historical Museum. -- Troy Luginbill

---- Sat., May 12 & June 9 -- Programs to Be Announced ---- July-August – no meetings





Mary Tollefson was a teenager when the United States entered World War II and she was determined to be part of the war effort. However, her mother nixed the idea.

So, Mary did what she could on the home front and went to work for the phone company. There, she signed up for a new electronics course. She had only attended three sessions before getting hooked. She joined the service and became an electrician with the WAC, as well as a driver and mechanic. Mary learned computers and was eventually part of a team calculating trajectories.

What is the Tomb of the Unknowns?

The Tomb of the Unknowns is the tomb where unidentified soldiers who died in combat are laid to rest just outside of Washington, D.C. in the Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. The first unidentified soldier, who had been killed in France, was buried there on November 11, 1921 until the completed tomb was dedicated on November 11, 1932.

Two other unidentified soldiers, one who perished fighting in World War II and the other who passed away serving during the Korean War, were also buried in the tomb. A fourth unknown soldier from the Vietnam War was entombed in the site in 1984, but was later removed once [DNA tests](#) identified him as Michael Blassie. Michael Blassie was a 24-year-old Air Force pilot shot down in May 1972 and was later disinterred and reburied

Currently, the [Census Bureau](#) reports that more

than 21 million veterans currently reside in the U.S.

- California is home to the most veterans in the country with more than 2.1 million current and former service members in the population. Four other states — Florida, Texas, New York and Pennsylvania — also boast more than 1 million veterans each among their population.
- There were 1.6 million female veterans residing in the United States in 2012.
- There were 9.6 million veterans age 65 years and older and 1.8 million veterans age 35 years and younger living in the U.S. in 2012.

• *Originally published November 2013. Updated November 2016.*

This Newsletter is published by the Members of SKAGIT VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY and is distributed free of charge to members. A non-profit organization, membership is open to all persons interested in historical research, preservation and publications of genealogical interest.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - 2017

APPLICANTS NAME

ADDRESS STREET, CITY, STATE & 9 DIGIT ZIP CODE

AREA CODE ()

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

New Member _____

Renewal _____

Previous Member _____

FAMILY \$ 20 _____

INDIVIDUAL \$15 _____

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