

of the 1982 *History of Klickitat County* (the Red Book) to them. O.J. attended school for 8 years in Gilmer Valley and graduated from Columbia High School as valedictorian in 1946. She followed her Aunt Meta Lauterbach and received her nursing degree from Good Samaritan Hospital in 1949. O.J. married Mitchi Hecomovich who was a teacher/coach in White Salmon. She nursed the Hood River and White Salmon until her retirement. She is Klickitat County Historical Society's best dispenser of history. Mary Childs

The Presby Museum opens for the 2025 season on Thursday May 1,
2025
10:00 AM to 4 PM Wednesday thru Sunday
Adult admission \$6

"See you at the Presby!"

Presby Museum
127 West Broadway
P.O. Box 86
Goldendale, WA 98620
509.773.4303

KLICKITAT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DEC. 2024

KCHS NEWS NOTES

Honoring the Timber Industry of Klickitat
County; J. Neils Lumber Company



New Display in Carriage House
Cross-cut log slice from the J. Neils Lumber co. was given to
the museum in 2023 by Lupine Columbia Holdings LLC.

The J. Neils Lumber Co. at Klickitat was first incorporated in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota in 1895 by Julius Neils and Thomas Shelvin. In 1919 the company purchased the Libby Lumber Co. in Libby Lake, Montana. Once the Minnesota timber supply had been exhausted, Walter Neils heard about the financial difficulties of the Western Pine Lumber Co. in Klickitat, WA. After a careful survey of the Klickitat drainage area, J. Neils took possession on June 1, 1922.

The Western Pine Lumber Company acquisition included the railroad and its equipment, sawmill, planing mill, title to the mill property (including Klickitat townsite), logs in the woods and at the mill, and the storage yard, timberland, title to W.R. Hervey contract. A new company was incorporated and named the Klickitat Log and Lumber Co. The large volume of timber available and the absence of other operators in Klickitat drainage area gave rise to the thought of permanency for the plant. After inspection, selective logging was concluded to be the best method for achieving permanency. On January 1, 1957 the J. Neils Lumber Company merged with the St. Regis Paper Co.

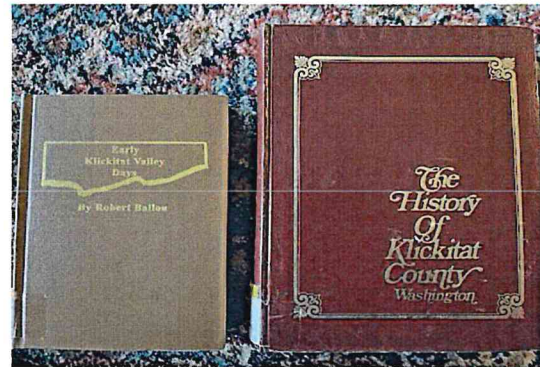
The log slice is 300 + years old and as a tree sprouted in 1658. It was felled about 1958 and is 170 feet high which is about 5000 board feet. The tree rings were counted and important dates labeled such as the date 1776. James Radcliffe



2024 Klickitat County Fair Booth

The theme this year was “Holy Cow, We’re 80 Now”. What were we going to do about that? Well, Jon Dove, a member of the Board of Directors, had wonderful ideas about what to put in the booth. He searched the entire museum and came up with many items that would represent “cows” and what had happened 80 years ago. The following items were combined to make an interesting booth: a 1919 quilt made from Fair premium ribbons by the William Olson family of Husum, Commander Harold Hill’s WWII uniform, an old wooden Historical Society sign, a cream separator, a butter churn with butter molds, cow pictures, a milk pail, rodeo buckles by Norman Goree, Fair trophies, cow bells and many more things. There was a cow skull to show what an 80 year-old cow would look like. Jon corralled all these treasures and with the help of Sandra Crosland, Mary Evans Childs and Judi Childs, the award winning booth was created. Thanks Jon.

Book



Reviews

.Early Klickitat Valley Days. It’s my goal this winter to read it, so my review is based on others. I’ve been told it contains a lot of early valuable historical information, but jumps around a bit. Written in the 1930’s its’ stories are from the mouths of the folks who lived it.

The History of Klickitat County What we at the Presby call “The Red Book”. Published in 1982, this tome was an ambitious and costly undertaking by the Klickitat County Historical Society to include as many family histories told in their own words as possible. An excellent county history book that provides a very personal feeling. Jon Dove

Olga Jane Hecomovich

Perhaps you know O.J.Hecomovich. She grew up in western Klickitat County on the Wykre ranch in Gilmer Valley. Her entire name is Olga Jane Kreps Hecomovich and she was named for her grandmother Olga Lauterbach Wyers and her Aunt Jayne (Jane) Kreps. O.J. is a great historian in her own right and is proud of the history of her family and Klickitat County. She has made sure that family and friends know the history of the County and has purchased and dispersed over 40

