

# Museum Expands into Historic Skykomish Depot

The 2005 “Visioning” process prior to the great oil clean-up recommended historic Skykomish Depot be used “as a Visitor Center, potentially housing a railroad museum, the town’s historical society, or an environmental education center.”

The agreement now being entered into between SHS and the town will complete much of that 2005 Vision, and the outcome for Sky is likely the best it could be.

Under this agreement SHS will lease and manage the newly refurbished west room for historic displays and community events; the town and Chamber of Commerce will operate a visitors center in the old depot operator’s office; and the popular ride-on Great Northern & Cascade Railway will continue to oc-

cupy the former waiting rooms at the east end of the building.

This three-group partnership will operate the building by combining efforts and the depot will be kept open more hours giving visitors additional opportunities to appreciate what Skykomish has to offer.

Per agreement SHS will keep the west room available for community events, so the only permanent displays are being planned for the walls. Other exhibits will be portable and able to be moved to accommodate meetings, receptions, art shows and other events.

The display plan for the room will include all elements of upper Skykomish Valley history. SHS will team with the GNCR to display railroad oriented topics mainly in the east area of the depot.

The SHS museum and offices will remain where they are at the Maloney’s Store location, but the new arrangement gives SHS the opportunity to display more of our collection and reach an audience that may not find time to visit the museum.

Last summer SHS was successful in applying for a grant for the town from King County 4Culture that produced \$50,000 to rehab the west room, and the town has used the funds to install utilities, modernize the space and bring it up to code, and prepare the space for SHS occupation.

The new displays will be done in phases, with every effort made to keep the room open for visitors as work progresses.



Spring 2016, [www.skyhistory.org](http://www.skyhistory.org).

## Hotel and Theatre are Being Saved

After a decade of being mostly eyesores, the final “fading” historic properties in Skykomish are making a comeback. Both Skykomish Theatre and Skykomish Hotel are in major recovery mode.

Built by town founder John Maloney Sr., the theatre building began life in 1908 as a warehouse and icehouse on a siding along the north side of the tracks but south of Railroad Avenue between Maloney’s store and the school. At some point in the late 1930s it was moved across RR Ave. to be remodeled into a theatre, where it operated well into the 1950s and intermittently thereafter. By the 1980s, however, it turned back into a private storehouse for a vast array of “stuff” while the exterior deteriorated. Despite efforts by the town and others, the owner had little interest in making any move, thus the building sat.

After ownership passed to the next generation, however, ardent skier and Microsoft exec Frank Martin was able to buy the building after a long negotiation. Martin has a

long history with historic buildings and has recently restored a 1903 home in Sky. He plans to renovate the theatre into a 5-room extended stay base camp for recreation and tourism in the area (see photo).

A year ago the town was able to purchase Skykomish Hotel in a sheriff’s sale for the value of judgements held against the owners, and immediately sought proposals from private entities interested to save, restore, and ultimately own the building. According to Mayor Tony Grider, three excellent proposals were received, and in the end the town council selected a group called “Restore Historic - Skykomish.”

This group immediately stabilized it structurally, put on a new roof, painted the outside, and began drying the interior. Once dry, plans are for the ground floor to be rehabbed for occupancy and rented to retail or other clients, then work will begin on restoration of the upper floors. The group hopes to employ local labor where possible.



An architect’s rendering of how the front of the theatre building will look when completed. This photo looks west toward the school from in front of Maloney’s Store.

**Museum Hours**  
Sat. & Sun.: 12 to 4 pm

# Sky Art Week 2016

Monday June 20 - Friday June 24  
9 to 3 daily at Masonic Lodge in Sky

**Mon: Digital photography**  
printing and making small books

**Tue: Drawing, Anita Lehmann**  
charcoal, ink, pencil

**Wed: Painting and food, Beanne Hull**  
watercolor and acrylic latex

**Thu: Sculpture, Kevin Pettelle**  
lessons in bronze and found materials

**Fri: Illuminating Art, Shelly Farnham**  
vinyl cutting, making magic with light

*plus . . . a Street Party!*

**5:30 - 7:00pm on Friday June 24th**

Celebrate Skykomish, creativity,  
and the start of summer with food and music  
**and a Street Party**

**Everyone is invited!**

In the Cascadia side yard.

In case of rain, start at Maloney's Store  
Bite of Skykomish FOOD and MUSIC  
Bring your friends and family

**Free!**

## Skykomish Calendar of Events

Art Week..... 20-24 June  
Old Timers' Picnic.....16 July  
Music in the Park.....20 Aug  
Great Northern Day.. .....1 Sep  
SHS General Meeting.....24 Sep  
SHS Planning Meeting....21 Nov  
Christmas Tree Lighting.....3 Dec

### Open Air Markets:

July 9  
August 13  
Sept 10

# General SHS Updates and News

The big news is on page one and elsewhere in this newsletter, but there are lots of other important activities and events going on with SHS.

At the museum there is a new display about Palm Drug Store, including a book of "drug store memories," brief accounts from various people of what the store meant when growing up in Sky. There is also a booklet where visitors are encouraged to write their own memories to be transcribed and added to the book. Beanne Hull is completing a display of the Miller River railroad bridge wreck of 1921. Rose Marie has completed cataloging three large collections in the past year. Sharon Lochman is doing a box inventory of uncataloged materials to be prioritized for when more volunteers become available to catalog them. Cathy Bitner has just completed cataloging materials from the large Betty Maloney photo collection. In the past year SHS has added 298 photos to our cataloging system.

SHS has been awarded a 4Culture grant to cover most publishing costs of our latest "oral history" book. Nancy Cleveland continues transcribe interviews prepare the manuscript for her third book in the series.

## Kajdzik on Board

SHS is pleased to announce Bill Kajdzik has joined the Board of Directors as Board Chair. He replaces Bob Boggs who admirably completed his allowed two terms thus could no longer serve. SHS thanks Bob for his excellent work and greatly appreciates that he continues to stay very active with our programs.

Bill is an aeronautical engineer retired from Boeing and an avid railroad historian and collector and restorer of railroad artifacts. He also maintains the SHS Facebook page and web site, along with being a tireless railroad photographer.

We have received permission from 4Culture to delay purchases per our equipment grant of last year until our expansion into the depot is more fully planned out, since our equipment needs are changing..

SHS is talking with an intern from the Dept. of Museology at UW who wants to complete our "tablets" project as his masters degree thesis. When done, visitors around town will be able to search historical data about the region on iPad type tablets we will station in various businesses and the depot.

Eric Taylor, heritage lead at 4Culture and longtime friend and ally of SHS, has retired. We wish him all the very best. He has been replaced by Brian Carter, whose credentials for the post are far too long to list, but his recent gigs were Museum Director of the Oregon Historical Society followed by Director of Interpretation at UW's Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture. SHS welcomes Brian.



## Music in the Park

The 6th annual Music in the Park celebration of our community and town will be Sat. Aug 20th, at the Ballpark, hosted in conjunction with Sky Chamber of Commerce and the Town, and sponsored by local businesses, non-profits, and attendees.

The Music will begin at 3 with a children's music program sponsored by the King County Library System. Music from local Washington bands and musicians will continue until midnight. Bring a blanket and/or chairs, yard games or not, friends, family, neighbors, and a picnic or buy food at the PTSO cook shack.

The event is free and donations are encouraged, as they are what make future events possible.

Those planning to camp want to be sure to reserve a spot in advance through Skykomish Town Hall.



## Great Northern Day

**GN Day in Skykomish** is scheduled for September 10, 2016 at the Masonic Hall.

The event starts at 9:30 and is free and open to the public. An informal program will consist of short presentations, display tables for anyone interested to use, and there will be plenty of time to talk and meet others attending.

For lunch bring your own or we can place orders with the Deli for delivery at noon. There will be a long lunch period with plenty of time to visit the "Saturday Market" in Railroad park, ride the GN&C at the depot, and visit the museum in Maloney Store.

If there are any questions or more information is needed contact Bob Kelly at 425-4322-3884

## GNCR Rolls On

Over the past year Great Northern & Cascade Railway has received donations of a diesel cab locomotive and a trolley to run on their tracks.

Replication of the east portal of the tunnel to look like the original Cascade Tunnel at Wellington/Tye is nearing completion, and the finishing work is almost done on the engine shed.

An additional 200 ft. of track and three switches have been added, trains now run both ways. Soon an additional 1000 ft. will have trains running north of the depot, as well as south of the tunnel.

In June the Esprit de Corps 4-H Club of Snohomish will visit Sky to clean up the entire depot park over several weekends. They will camp at the Ballpark.

### Attendees at March SHS Meeting

from left to right: Neva Pavia, Sharon Lochman, Cindy Jackson, Maggie Wheatley, Shelly Farnham, Cathy Bittner, Joanie Keaunui, Mary Ritzman, Bonnie Hollingsworth, Cathie Edwards (hidden), Don Pavia, Skip Mynar, Tom Averill, Rose Marie Koch, Sandy Kajdzik, Linda Averill, Bob Kelly, Glen & Ginnie Eburn, Tim Raetzloff, Henry Sladek, Tony Grider & JoAnne Menard Boggs (both mostly hidden), Bob Boggs, Brenda Clement, Gary West, Pat Carlson, Warren Carlson. Not shown: Teddy Jo Ryder-Brown, Karen Molesky who sat near the doorway to greet museum visitors next door, and Bill Kajdzik who took the photo.

This was the largest attendance at an SHS meeting ever. A particular highlight was Mayor Tony Grider's Power Point presentation of just about everything of importance happening in Skykomish these days.

# Collections & Donations News

Over the past year SHS has received and cataloged several very significant collections. The Michael Hammersberg collection consists of approximately 75 photos taken at Alpine in the 1920s when the mill was in full operation and things were bustling. The donated photos were digital scans done by the donor and gifted to SHS complete with captions and people

identified when known, thus the family retains their originals while SHS has all the information in its collection.

**Who is Margaret Weldon? She is identified in many Hammersberg photos as a teenager in the 1920s, active in town plays, a dance band, and other Alpine school activities. Anyone with connections to or knowledge about her is encouraged to contact SHS.**

Paula Nelson Sonker has provided a collection of family photos of her father Jack Nelson and grandparents Will & Eleanor Nelson. SHS has scanned them and returned the originals to the family.

George Krausse donated a complete set (over 400) of Great Northern Historical Society Reference sheets for our library.

## 2015 Activities

**March:** *Bob Norton bottle collection* installed in museum.

**March 28:** SHS meeting at Maloney's Store, followed by "*Alpine Now and Then*" program attended by more than 60 people, featured author Mary Daheim & Tim Raetzloff.

**May 2:** Museum opened for season, along with Great Northern & Cascade Railway ride-on railroad & other town events.

**May:** Published spring newsletter.

**May:** Needs Assessment Survey completed with professional archivist sponsored by 4Culture Grant.

**May – Oct:** Presence at five Skykomish "*Open Air Markets.*"

**June 22-26:** "*Art Week in Skykomish*" at Masonic Hall, where photography, watercolor, drawing, sculpture, and electronic art were taught and learned.

**July 19:** SHS Booth at annual *Old Timers' Picnic.*

**Aug 15:** SHS presence at *Music in the Park* at the Ballpark.

**September 13:** *Great Northern Day* in Sky attended by 50+ rail fans.

**September 26:** *SHS Annual General Meeting* at museum.

**Nov 21:** *SHS Annual Planning Meeting* at the museum.

**Dec:** Published *2016 Calendar* on theme of Skykomish Hotel revival.

**On-going:** SHS articles on valley history published monthly in *Index Wall.*

## Capacity Building

The SHS board, officers, and key volunteers met at the Community Center June 8th for the first day of a two session capacity building workshop.

Topics covered were outreach, advocacy, and strategic planning, at both the micro and macro level: everything from a sign out on the highway to having people dress in period costume and hang out at the depot platform telling people about train travel in the early days of Sky, to creating Wikipedia pages, and revitalizing our website.

Anyone can create Wikipedia pages, so people who live far from Sky can add to our presence on the web by creating an entry about Sky history.

The workshop was led by professional archivist Elizabeth Knight who performed our Needs Assessment Survey two years ago, and thus is very familiar with our organization, and its needs and goals.

The workshop was supported by a capacity building grant from 4Culture as part of our StEPS (standards & excellence program) efforts.

## Membership News

Membership and membership renewals are at an all time high, and the January to January dues year is working well. Anyone in arrears on dues may send them at any time to treasurer Dorothy Beck, 18245 643rd. St., Gold Bar, WA 98251. Dues are \$20 (\$15 for seniors & students) or \$35 for a family.

Membership is easy and rewarding. You get newsletters, the historical calendar, and the satisfaction of supporting our valuable work preserving the history of the upper Skykomish Valley, and presenting it to the world.

**Skykomish Historical Society  
P.O. Box 247  
Skykomish, WA 98288  
Email: [shs@skyhistory.org](mailto:shs@skyhistory.org)**

## SEI Trail Open

Skykomish Environmental Institute re-opened Maloney Creek Trail 30 April. It had been closed by damage from the 17 Nov. storm that brought flooding, downed trees, and nearly wiped out the viewing platform at the end of the trail. Town workers and volunteers have cleared the trail, but the platform remains closed as much of the footing beneath it was washed away, leaving it largely unsupported.

Restoration of the platform will take place over the summer, once the geotechnical and engineering assessments of the stability of the stream bank have been made. In the meantime the trail will be open for a pleasant, disability accessible, .2 mile stroll in verdant PNW forest, where the wildflowers have been reported to be lovely this spring.

SEI and the town are continuing to design and install interpretive signage along the trail.