



The Stillaguamish Star

The Official Newsletter of The Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society

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Happy 4th of July



Remembering The Fallen of World War II

Edward Norman Durkee was born on December 24, 1907 to Edward "Edd" Durkee and Mable Brown in Arlington, Snohomish County, Washington. In 1926, Edward enlisted in the US Navy as an apprentice seaman. On April 10, 1931, he was received aboard the battleship *USS West Virginia* (BB-48) where he served for over ten years. On March 19, 1938, he reenlisted at Bremerton, Washington.

On September 15, 1939, he married Mary Prudence Dunklee Thomas Ryder in Seattle, Washington. In January 1941, they had twin boys Donald and David while Edward was deployed at sea. On February 18, 1941, Edward was promoted from machinist's mate 1c to chief machinist's mate serving on the *USS West Virginia*.

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On the morning of December 7, 1941, *West Virginia* and the rest of the fleet were moored at Battleship Row in Pearl Harbor. Japanese aircraft appeared over the harbor shortly before 08:00, beginning the surprise attack on the base. The *West Virginia* was struck by torpedoes a total of nine times. After burning for 30 hours, the *West Virginia* sank to the bottom, taking 66 sailors with her.

A total of 106 men were killed in the attack including **CMM Durkee**. His twins were ten months old when their father was killed at Pearl Harbor. He never had a chance to meet them. He was due to be home for Christmas for a long-awaited furlough with his growing family, and a visit with his family in Nebraska.

Thank you, **CMM Durkee**, for your service and sacrifice for our freedom! You can read a more detailed story of Chief Durkee here: <https://www.fold3.com/memorial/636582055/durkee-edward-norman-cmm/stories>



This story is part of the **Stories Behind the Stars** project (see www.storiesbehindthestars.org). This is a national effort of volunteers to write the stories of all US WWII fallen. In 2021 volunteers completed the stories of all the 2,502 Americans who died in Normandy on D-Day and the stories of all 2,341 Pearl Harbor fallen. Overall the project has completed more than 17,000 stories.

The goal is to have a story for ALL of the 421,000 US World War II fallen completed by September 2, 2025, the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Can you help write these stories? Help is needed to tell the stories for the other fallen from Snohomish County.

Stories Behind the Stars appreciates the assistance provided by Ancestry.com, MyHeritage.com, FamilySearch.org, Friends of the National World War II Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, The National D-Day Memorial, The Medal of Honor Historical Society of the United States, Wreaths Across America, Just-Serve.org, BillionGraves, and Together We Served.

Most of all, thanks is due to the hundreds of volunteers from all 50 states and more than a dozen other countries who are writing stories of the fallen. Many more volunteers are needed to help write the stories of the remaining 404,000 fallen.

Stories Behind the Stars provides free training material and it only takes on average 2-3 hours to write a story that will be permanently available at grave sites and memorials.

To find out more, visit www.storiesbehindthestars.org, email the Washington State Director, Kimberly Nichols at kimberly@storiesbehindthestars.org or email founder and director Don Milne at don@storiesbehindthtestars.org

The Search for Historic Graves: A New Role for K9 Noses

By June Mansfield

People may be familiar with the work of Human Remains Detection (Cadaver) dogs, but many have not heard about a new use for specially trained dogs to locate unmarked graves of people who died a long time ago.

In historical grave search, dogs are trained to locate the very faint odor of human remains of a person that may have died hundreds or even thousands of years ago. This new field of historic grave search is increasingly being used to locate remains at unmarked African American gravesites as well as at Native American Boarding Schools where it has recently been determined that many children were buried in unmarked graves. They have also been used to locate remains of US Soldiers in Europe and Vietnam as well as other areas of the world where conflict has resulted in casualties needing to be located. In addition, these dogs have been used to locate graves in old, family cemeteries where the location of many of the people buried there are unknown.

I am a member of [Cascadia Search Dogs](#) which is a local, non-profit that contributes to the development of high-quality detection and search dogs through training and education. While most of our members train the more traditional search dog, several have recently undertaken the training in this new field of K9 Historical Search.

One of the leaders in historical grave search is Paul S. Martin who has focused on this type of search since 2000. He has combined the refined nose of the dog with the technical side of using ground penetrating radar. Last year, we were able to bring him out for a 5-day training where 12 teams of dogs and handlers in Washington State were able to get intensive training in historical grave search including learning how the environment and vegetation may have changed over the years, how soil may have shifted or eroded and the effective use of ground penetrating radar. We are also working with the [Canine Forensics Foundation](#), an organization that has a long history of being involved in K9 Historic Search.



K9 Kili and handler Suzanne Elshult,
President of Cascadia Search Dogs

As part of this training, we need to find locations where there are graves over a hundred years old and primarily before embalming came into wide use. In addition to the resources provided on the Stillygen.org website, Find a Grave, Billion Graves and the Tombstone Project, we came across an interesting blog by two local sisters called [PNW Adventure Sisters](#). As part of their explorations across the Pacific Northwest, they have visited many local historic cemeteries. This information helped us locate several places where we could train the dogs with permission of the owners, including the Machias Community Cemetery and the Grand Army of the Republic Cemetery in Snohomish.

The training of the dogs in historic search requires many hours of work in locations of historic cemeteries. We are always looking for connections to get permission to train at these sites and would welcome any information emailed to info@csdk9.org

The Arlington Times

By Sue Walde, Publications Chair

On a cold Sunday afternoon in January 2020, I listened to Fred Cruger talk about digitizing historical newspapers at a League of Snohomish County Historical Organizations (LOSCHO) meeting. It was a marvelous idea! But, paying for it was a significant obstacle. Fred explained that nonprofits could apply for a Snohomish County Historic Preservation Commission grant. But, another obstacle - the deadline for the grant application was the next day at 5:00 p.m.



I could hear two ladies behind me whisper how they'd love to digitize their town's newspapers. But they could never write a grant in less than 24 hours. After all, there were bids to gather and an entire grant to write.

Although Stillaguamish Valley Pioneer Museum had already digitized the more recent editions of *The Arlington Times*, the earliest editions had not been done. The following morning after a little begging, SmallTownPapers quickly prepared a bid to digitize the 1895 to 1924 editions from our microfilm.

Next, our SVGS team kicked into action. President Ruth Caesar gave her blessing for the project and asked Treasurer Karen Looney to join me at the library to prepare the grant. While Karen added finishing touches to the application, I researched expensive library archival supplies and equipment to add to our wish list. Finally, Karen miraculously emailed the grant application 10 minutes before the deadline!

We signed a contract with the county six months later, undoubtedly delayed by the onset of COVID-19. SVGS was awarded the total requested amount of \$8,255. Pam Shoberg and I worked diligently on a contract with Small Town Papers. Dee Saunders helped organize microfilm.



Once the newspapers were digitized, the project's next step was to verify that all 7,770 pages were labeled with the correct date. Team members who joined me for this tedious task included Suzanne Brown, Ruth Caesar, Michele Heiderer, Karen Looney and Sue McNeil. Roughly 500 corrections were researched and reposted, mostly from typesetting errors made over 100 years ago.

In the meantime, Steve and Michele Heiderer built two much-needed bookcases.

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Flynn Kennedy Clarke joined the team to help select archival supplies to complete our wish list. Thanks to the grant, we were able to purchase a variety of archival supplies, including expensive acid-free storage boxes, a book repairing kit and a high-quality CZUR scanner. Our astute treasurer submitted the final invoice just 64 cents short of the full grant amount.



Because of COVID, our team never met in person. Regardless, the SVGS team got the job done! The newspapers are an essential source of the local history of Arlington and the surrounding Stillaguamish Valley benefiting genealogists, historians and local families for posterity. The earliest of the historic Arlington Times newspapers (1895-1924) are freely available at www.stillygen.org.

Our gratitude goes to the Snohomish County Historic Preservation Commission for the grant!

The Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society Annual Meeting Results Are In

Vice President Lisa Bartlow and Treasurer Karen Looney have been voted in to serve for the next two years.

Additionally, the proposed 2022-2023 Annual Budget has been approved by SVGS membership.

Andrew Patrick and The Assassination of President Lincoln

By Phil Bartlow

The Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, a pivotal point in American History. What would it have been like to talk to any of the famous or infamous people involved in that national tragedy? What would you have asked them?

We all know the story. President Lincoln was shot on April 14, 1865, in Ford's Theater in Washington D.C., while attending the play "Our American Cousin". He died the next morning from the injury.

A man-hunt ensued for John Wilkes Booth, the assassin. Booth, who had injured his leg while jumping from the Presidential Box at the theater, was headed South. Trying to reach the safety of the Confederacy. Along the way he stopped at the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd, for treatment on his leg.

Booth was eventually cornered in a barn and killed. Dr. Mudd and other conspirators were soon arrested and sent to trial. He was found guilty on June 29, 1865. He escaped the death penalty by one vote and was sentenced to life imprisonment at Fort Jefferson, a fortress located in the Dry Tortugas, in the Gulf of Mexico, 70 miles west of Key West, Florida.

Andrew Patrick, my great-great grandfather, enlisted in the Army, August 4, 1862 from Volney, New York. His regiment, the 110th Infantry, was sent to Baltimore, then to Fort Monroe in Virginia, then on to New Orleans and the battles in that area. In February 1864, they were sent to Fort Jefferson, to guard Federal prisoners. They eventually started their trip back to New York on August 16, 1865.

Dr. Samuel Mudd and Andrew Patrick at the same place, at the same time. Could they have met? Quite likely..... guard to prisoner. What might that conversation have been like?

We will never know!



Finding Proof a Family Story was True!

By Gerri Gardiner Gilpin

Recently, my cousin Paul mentioned his grandfather once worked for Thomas Edison.

The original text message to the entire family started out by telling us that June 16 was the 100th Anniversary of his Dad, Paul Haug, Jr's birthday, and the 148th Anniversary of his Grandfather, Paul Haug, Sr's birthday. After a few back-and-forth messages from everyone, Paul mentioned the Thomas Edison factoid and I replied asking for proof. He mentioned his Dad had something at one point, and he would look to see if he had that scrap of paper. I mentioned a pay stub would be nice, or perhaps a picture of Paul Sr with the famous Edison would work too – especially if they were standing in front of the business!



It did not take long for Paul to reply, but not with either of the things I mentioned (I was hoping for the aforementioned picture). Instead, Paul logged into Ancestry and found his Grandfather's WWI Draft Registration Card, with his birthday in 1874, his wife, Agnes's name, and the fact that he was a laborer at Edison Phone Works in West Orange, New Jersey! I also noted he was 44 years old and hard of hearing, and the Card was dated Sept. 12, 1918.

A quick check online, revealed that Edison's laboratories were built about 1887 and closed in 1927. They also noted that he invented many things, listing phone and mass communications as some of his many areas of interests. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Edison_National_Historical_Park)

Since I am from New Jersey and also worked for Pacific Telephone and Telegraph, as well as Pacific Northwest Bell, but had never heard of Edison Phone Works or his work with phones or mass communications. I dove a little deeper into the historical information about Thomas Edison, and found that 'In 1886, Edison found a way to improve a [Bell Telephone](#) microphone, one that used loose-contact ground carbon, with his discovery that it worked far better if the carbon was [roasted](#). This type was put in use in 1890^[46] and was used in all telephones along with the Bell receiver until the 1980s.' [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Edison]

Finding proof that this little family story was in fact true, was a fun project for both myself and my cousin, Paul.

Be sure not to miss the SVGS BBQ Tuesday July 12th at Noon at the society library

Hamburgers and Hot Dogs will be
provided.

Please bring a side or desert to share. This
event is open to members and the public and is
a great time of fun and fellowship.



The Great Train (Agent) Robbery

By Sue McNeil

My husband's great-grandfather, Walter P. Parsons, moved his young family from Missouri to Washington State around 1890. In the 1892 Washington State Census they were living in Thurston County. Walter worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad as a Station Agent, but in 1901 he was appointed postmaster at Kanaskat. I can't help but wonder if the article I found in the Seattle Daily Times, 16 Feb 1897, may have prompted the career change.

Got \$2.15 in Cash.
MONTESANO, Feb. 6.—Special.—W. P. Parsons, the Northern Pacific agent at this place, was visited by a masked man on Thursday night. Parsons was alone and when the man presented a revolver to his head decided to let his visitor have his own way. The masked man secured \$2.15 and departed.

EVENTS

The Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society (SVGS) holds it's General Meeting at 1:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month which may include a presentation via Zoom. The Society is located at 6111 188th Place NE, Arlington, WA. Phone 360-435-4838. The library is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. You can also participate in our special interest group which meets on Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Zoom. This groups helps each other to solve research issues and share information. For more information: www.stillygen.org

SVGS "Annual" BBQ, July 12, 2022, **NOON** - Come join us for our annual July barbecue. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be supplied, please bring a side or desert to share. This event is open to members and the public and is a great time of fun and fellowship.

*SVGS General Meeting, August 9, 2022, 1:00 p.m. Speaker and SVGS member, Sue McNeil will present in-person on the topic: Deep Story; Give Your Ancestors A Voice.

*Please note: the presentation will NOT be available on Zoom; however, following the presentation the General Meeting and Board Meeting may be attended via Zoom at 2PM. A Zoom link will be emailed to all members and will be available at www.stillygen.org/events.

SCGS Jamboree and Genetic Genealogy Conference, August 19-27, 2022. Registration opens March 4th. For more information: <https://genealogyjamboree.com/speakers/>

The Whatcom Genealogical Society meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 2:00 p.m., except January, July and August at Pioneer Pavilion, 2007 Cherry ST , Ferndale, WA.

The Skagit Valley Genealogical Society meets 2nd Saturday of each month except July, August, and December at 12:45 p.m. at the Burlington Public Library, 820 E. Washington Avenue, Burlington. For more information: www.skagitvalleygenealogy.com

The Seattle Genealogical Society is located at the Good Shepherd Center in Suite 302 at 4649 Sunnyside Avenue N., Seattle, WA in the Wallingford area. Phone 206-522-8658. Their Society recently moved to this new location and is open on Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Sno-Isle Genealogical Society is open by appointment on Tuesday and from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Thursday and Saturday. They are located in the vintage Humble House at 19827 Poplar Way, Lynnwood, WA. Phone 425-775-6267.

For a list of genealogy events both live and virtual go to <https://conferencekeeper.org/> This free website provides a huge number of events all in one place.



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