

Halloween at the Ryan House Museum



In the afternoon our docents decorated the house and lawn in a vintage Halloween fashion. The green and red "M & M's" (the Stroeves) had a grand time working the early evening event. Lots of happy treaters! Each treat bag had a sticker with the museum's holiday greeting.



October 31st brought over 1300 people to our museum's front lawn.

Christmas at the Ryan House Museum



On November 23rd, we carried on the tradition started by Lewis Ryan in 1926 when he decorated the holly tree on the museum's front lawn and named it *Sumner's Tree of Light*. This year we had a splendid turnout. We had over 50 members of the Sumner High School Choirs singing in front of the Tree of Light. The crowd was provided a commemorative songbook for singing along with the choir.

The event was a partnership with the Sumner Downtown Promotional Association, Calvary Community Church, GFWC Valley Volunteers, the Sumner Choral Association and the City of Sumner. Calvary Church provided fresh cedar garland for the porch and brought a popcorn machine to serve popcorn. The church also installed snow machines on the porch roof that turned the front lawn into a winter play land for the kids and many of the adults.

The Society and Valley Volunteers provided hot cider and over 30 dozen cookies

Sumner Mayor Bill Pugh and Deputy Mayor Kathy Haden were there to lead the festivities.

This years decorating featured seasonal collections that historical society members shared with us. The Stroeve's Santa collection and Marcha Lindberg's angel collection plus a miniature Gnome Village from the Loseths. Decorators were the Stroeves, the Connors, The Loseths, Pam Prasch, Sara Lucas, Amie Rang and Marcha Lindberg.



more pictures
on page two!



More Tree Lighting pictures



Newspapers in Sumner

A Digital Window to Sumner's History

The Sumner Historical Society is in the process of digitizing the Society's collection of Sumner newspapers.

Sumner's last local weekly newspaper ceased publication in 1990. Before that, for over 100 years the weekly paper was the most informed, enjoyed and anticipated source of local news and events.

Most of the collection is available as paper issues and on microfilm. The most critical portion to digitize is The Sumner News Review from the years 1979 to 1990. These exist only as bound paper volumes. They were never microfilmed.

What would happen if these were lost or destroyed? Eleven years of sumner's history would be gone.

Each paper is a historical vault filled with sports activity, school news and functions, business news, construction and demolition, church and civic groups happenings, farm and local agriculture, news about notable people and people that did notable things, city government changes and accomplishments, police, fire and medical news.

It is likely that those eleven years blended with your personal history or that of a relative. That history would be gone.

Continued on page 5



12 to 16 pages per week of our small town's history, four years worth now on the web



The Ryan House Museum, Keeping the history of our valley

Every day Mt. Ranier looks down at the glacial valleys it layered with mudflows eons ago. On a particular day in 1873 it would have seen a man making his way from the Tacoma waterfront towards an area in the juncture of three of those river valleys. One ran northeast from Commencement Bay, another ran north to Auburn and Seattle, the third ran southeast back to the mountain that had formed it. In the area where the valleys met were the territorial settlements of Puyallup and what would one day be Sumner. The area was rich with timber and good soil.

The man's name was George Ryan. Originally from New York State, he was working at the Pope & Talbot sawmill in Port Gamble and was looking for a place to establish himself and raise a family.

Ryan visited with Ezra Meeker, the Hops King of Puyallup. Ezra helped him find a piece of property with a one room cedar cabin and 40 acres. It had been part of the 160 acre homestead grant of William Kincaid, one of the first settlers in what would later be named Sumner.

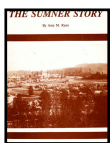
George purchased the cabin and acreage for \$1000. (\$19,000 in today's money). He sourced cedar from the property and a mill and hired two men, John Avery and a Mr. Hall, to expand the one room cabin. George then returned to work at Port Gamble and made plans for his fiancée, Lucy Wood, to travel out from Wisconsin.

In 1875 they married in San Francisco, traveled by ship to Tacoma and then by boat and wagon to their new home. From that point on their lives were woven into the history of Sumner.

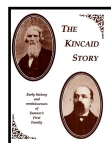
The home they built was also ingrained in Sumner's historical timeline. The Ryan's were not the only significant early settler families in Sumner, nor is the house the only survivor from the early years. The house's significance stems from the Ryan's generous community involvement and their home was the location for many notable events. Because of that its boards and structure are now the storyteller of much of the area's history.

The Sumner Historical Society is the caretaker of the Ryan House Museum. The Society's mission is to use the house to tell the story of Sumner and the surrounding valleys. Information on open days and events can be found on the Society's website.

The Sumner Historical Society also has two books about early Sumner and the valleys. Another book that covers early and following years is available at Heritage Quest research library and A Good Book, both on Sumner's Main Street.



The Sumner Story
The History of Sumner by
Amy M. Ryan



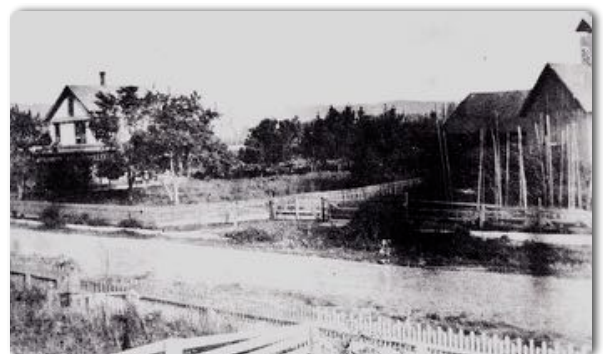
The Kincaid Story
Early history and
reminiscences of
Sumner's First Family



The Three River Valleys & Sumner



Ryan House & Family 1888



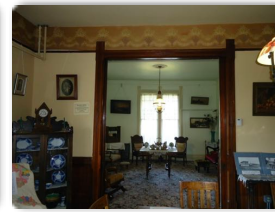
Ryan House and Hop House with
attached Store, 1890s



In 2019 a study was conducted by the **Architectural Resources Group (ARG)** to review the feasibility for potentially renovating the Ryan House. The vision is to continue to house the Sumner Historical Society but also find other uses that open up the space for more consistent public use and enjoyment in keeping with the original deed from the Ryans to the City.
Find the study on our website



Ryan House Museum 2019
(ARG Feasibility Study)



The Ryan House Museum was built in three phases.

~The 1860s cabin enlarged in the 1870s, ~ a victorian farmhouse addition in 1885,

~the hop house and store that later became the kitchen

Historical Connections, 1860 to 1926

The one room cedar pioneer cabin was built in the 1860s, possibly the oldest structure in Sumner.

The house was an early location for a small Post Office, Lucy Ryan was Postmaster.

The first Platt of Sumner was drawn on the Ryan House dining table. The city was incorporated in 1891. You can see the Platt in the cabin area of the museum.

George participated in the naming of Sumner in the late 1880s.

George Ryan was the first mayor of Sumner.

A butternut tree, from Wisconsin was planted in front of the house by Lucy. Later, when Main Street was widened, the street was built around it. It was taken down in 1963. *See pictures and story on our website.*

Much of the lumber in the Victorian farmhouse came from George Ryan's sawmill. The Sumner Lumber Co. *See pictures, story and a layout on our website.*

One of the first stores in Sumner was attached to the Ryan hophouse, which later became the home's kitchen..

George helped establish the Sumner Light and Water Company. His mill made water pipes out of logs for the water system. Examples have survived and can be seen at the museum

There was no alcohol in the house. Lucy was a charter member of the WTCU. It's likely that some temperance meetings were at the Ryan House. The base of a water fountain donated to the house by the WTCU can be seen at the museum.

The first telephone in Sumner ran from Ryan's Mill to the house.

George built Sumner's Railway Depot as an incentive to have the trains stop at the town.

George Ryan built many of the earlier homes in downtown Sumner.

Ryan farm grew hops, berries, cherries and raised poultry. In 1876 George brought holly trees, snowballs and cherry trees from Olympia. One holly tree became Sumner's **Tree of Light**, decorated every holiday season.

George built the first brick building on main street, *See pictures and story on our website.*

George Ryan helped develop a large section of the downtown business district.

1926 to 1978

The house was the city Library *See pictures and story on our website.*

Current From 1978 to present, home to the Sumner Historical Society.



The city library, 1926 to 1978
Tacoma Times or Seattle Times, 1949



Sumner Historical Society

Caretakers of the Ryan House Museum

Mission Statement: To collect, preserve and display books, letters, diaries, photos, clothing, and other artifacts of the history of Sumner and surrounding areas

Officers

President: Kris Arnold
Vice President: Linda Sader
Treasurer: Pam Prasch
Secretary: Dale Loseth
Curator: Vicki Conner

Board Members

Vicki & Mike Conner
Carolyn Stroeve
Roger Stroeve
Linda Sader
John Galle
Marcha Lindberg
Dale & Rita Loseth
Ed Hannus
Michelle Champlin
Leroy Goff
Kris Arnold
Patricia Tribby
Sara Lucas
Chris Loseth
Pam Prasch
Amie Rang

Mary Beth Ryan,
Director Emeritus



The Ryan House Museum is affiliated with the NEA as a Blue Star Museum offering free admission to the nation's active duty military and their families.

Interested in joining the Sumner Historical Society?

You can find a membership form on our website.



Visit our web site!

www.sumnerhistoricalsociety.com

Don't want to type all that into the browser?

Just Google for **Sumner Historical** or **Ryan House Museum**
You will get there!



You can link your Fred Meyer Rewards card to benefit the Sumner Historical Society. Go to their website
www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards

Follow the instructions to Find us by name or by our non-profit number: 88948

When you shop you still earn your points plus you help the historical society earn a donation!

Newspapers in Sumner

Continued from page 2

Here is some good news. The Historical Society has found the funds to have four of those eleven years digitized by a firm in Shelton Washington that specializes in that activity.

157 issues are now available on line. You can browse or do research with an easy to use search function. The available years are 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1985.

A link is available on the Historical Society's website.



Now on line, Four years of the Sumner News Review.

12 to 16 pages per week of our small town's history. Over 3000 pages!

The Society is currently exploring options for financing the digitation of the remaining seven volumes. It is expensive, roughly \$1,000 per volume. However the cost of ever losing those volumes is greater. A large gap in Sumner's history.

The Society does not want the last years of our local newspaper becoming the lost years of Sumner's history.

For more information on how you can help contact the Society Publicist.

drl@shspublicist.org

The on-line version of the newsletter is now available!

The Historical Society now offers a digital version of the newsletter for those who may want to receive and read it as a PDF document.

Get on the list for the on-line version, send your email address to:

drl@shspublicist.org

Ryan House Museum Spring Calendar

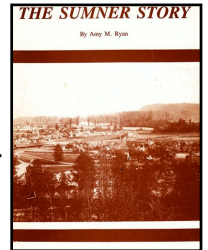
April 4 ~ Open for season,
every Saturday & Sunday, 1 – 4 pm,
~ Daffodil Parade

Exhibits and special events:

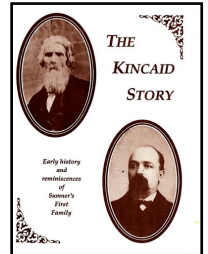
April 4 ~ Daffodil Festival Exhibit at the museum
April 12, ~ Closed for Easter
April 25 ~ General Meeting, 8:30 am
May 10 ~ Closed for Mother's Day
May 23, 24 ~ Closed for Memorial Day
May 25 -10 am Ceremony at Sumner Cemetery, noon lunch
at the VFW

Available at the Museum

The Sumner Story
The History of Sumner
by Amy M. Ryan



The Kincaid Story
Early history and
reminiscences of
Sumner's First Family



Visit our gift area for books, cards and items of local interest

Sumner Historical Society Ryan House Museum

1228 Main Street
Sumner Washington, 98390

