



Sumner's Nine Newspapers 1889 ~ 1990

A Page to the Past

Over the span of 101 years, nine weekly newspapers served Sumner's citizens. A couple of the nine were just a change in name; the ownership stayed the same. Some papers had a very long life, some ran for only a few years. For 41 years Sumner enjoyed two local weekly papers at the same time.

From the turn of the century to the mid 1920's the local weekly was the freshest source of reading material in most households. This was an era when most farmers and many small town residents did not subscribe to daily papers from nearby large cities.

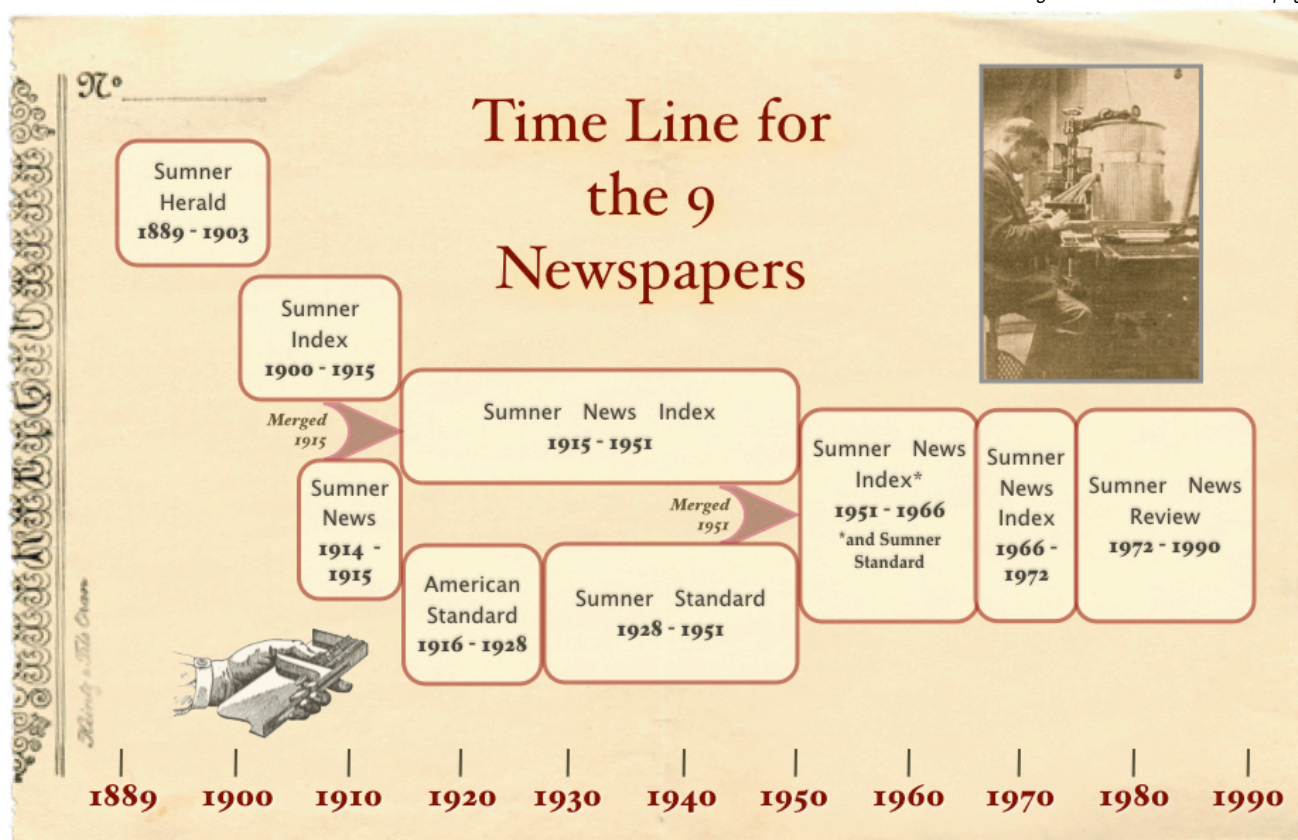
The earlier Sumner papers carried some world and national news but most of that coverage was short human interest stories from large services that provided the same pre-written, typeset, ready to print articles to local papers.

The local area news was gathered, written, typeset and printed by the editor, sometimes with the help of a partner, family or an employee. The workload limited the size of the paper from four to eight pages each week.

Over time, improved printing technology allowed Sumner's papers to grow larger but they still left national news to the local dailies and focused just on the Sumner and valley area.

The last wholly local newspaper was the Sumner News Review, it ended its run in 1990.

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A Page to the Past



1889 — 1903

Every Friday morning the Sumner Herald was delivered to porches, mail boxes and store counters in the Sumner area. The average issue was four pages.

Half of each page, including the front page, had ads stacked from the top to the bottom of the page. Ads were simple, most were a mix of large type faces surrounded by lots of white space. There were no photographs although line drawings were used. Most were stock illustrations from the ready print services.

Page one had news and human interest stories from the ready print services.

Page two featured Washington State and Puget Sound news.

Page three would be news of Sumner and the valley. Good sized articles reporting about people, social events, sports, schools, local businesses and city government. A section called "Items of Interest" or "Local Matters" was a large collection of short paragraphs, sometime only one or two sentences. Content was about towns people visiting other areas or visitors to Sumner and the valley. The writer also reported on new items and services in local stores and businesses. There were small bits of humor. It was the news we find most interesting, what's happening in our own backyard.

Page four was for church bulletins, club meetings, legal notices, train schedules and farm market reports.

The Herald served the Sumner area for fifteen years. They were very busy years for the town and the Herald performed admirably as "information central" for the area.

Quick Facts

- Published weekly on Friday.
- \$2.00 for a one year subscription.
- The first office was in the Central Hotel, the paper later moved over the Wells & Messick meat market on Main Street. Later they built their own building on the west side of the railroad tracks.
- The oldest issue in the Historical Society's collection is Volume II Issue 1, June 20, 1890, Volume I from 1889 has not been found.
- The last Herald was published in 1903, however Sumner still had a paper as the Sumner Index had been publishing since 1899.
- Herald Owners, Editors
 - 1890 - E. S. White
 - A. M. Rousseau
 - 1895 - R. Montgomery
 - H. J. Trubshaw
 - 1899 - 1903 - R. Montgomery, Sole Proprietor

A typical issue of the Sumner Herald

