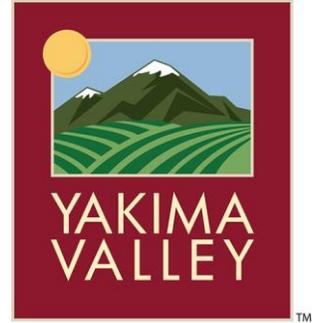

Yakima Valley History



The City That Moved

History records note the first white men to view the Yakima Valley were members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1805. During that period, this vast area lying at the foot of towering Mt. Rainier and its neighbors in the Cascade Range, served as hunting, fishing and agricultural land for the Yakama Indian Tribe.

By 1880, nearly 3,000 people were reported in the county. With agriculture becoming firmly established, the railroads naturally followed. In 1884, Northern Pacific extended its iron horse service to the valley. Some of the townspeople of the growing community of Yakima City refused to make certain concessions asked by the railroad. Northern Pacific then routed its track 4 miles north of the original Yakima City and named its terminal point, North Yakima. The railroad then offered to move any of the Yakima City buildings to its newly established community. This began an unusual piece of Yakima's history: the actual movement of approximately 60 buildings from "Old Yakima" to "North Yakima" to surround the railroad terminal. The courthouse, banks, general store, blacksmith shops, saloons and some homes were moved on log rollers over the 4-mile trail. It was reported that business never ceased as the buildings were strung out along the route.

One January 27, 1886 North Yakima was incorporated and was named the county seat. It was not until 1918 that the prefix "north" was dropped from the name. At that time, the original Yakima City, four miles to the south, and commonly referred to then as "Old Town" by some and "Union Gap" by others, officially adopted the latter as its name.

Union Gap

Neighboring Yakima to the south is Union Gap, named for the gap between the hills created by the Yakima River. The Native Americans called it "Pahoticute" – the place where two mountain heads come together. White settlers called it "Two Buttes." A federal government survey party named it "Union Gap" after the Civil War.

Yakama Nation – Heritage & Legacy

The land of the Yakama Nation stretches from the Yakima River into a wide fertile valley that is surrounded by foothills covered in wild flowers and sagebrush progressing to the pine trees and towering volcanic peak of Mount Adams. Designed to tell the story of the Plateau people and their lands, the Yakama Nation Museum is recognized as one of the finest Native American Museums in the United States.

The Yakama Nation Treaty was signed on June 9, 1855 in Walla Walla, Washington. The treaty included hunting and fishing rights for our tribal members on the Yakama Reservation and surrounding ancient ancestral land and 2005 marked the 150-year anniversary of the treaty signing. With 1.3 million acres and 10,000 enrolled members, the Yakama nation is recognized as one of the largest and most progressive tribes in the Pacific Northwest.