



FALL CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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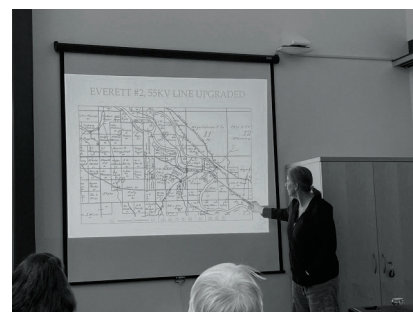
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Let There Be Lights!



A group of more than 45 people filled the Fall City library classroom on February 25th to hear Elizabeth Dubreil, PSE Cultural Resources Supervisor, tell the history of electrifying the Snoqualmie Valley. In the beginning, there was only DC power produced by generators at each site. Many of these were installed by mills to run the big equipment needed to process the lumber. DC Current was limited to a distance of about a mile which precipitated the interest in AC power that could travel great distances. When this technology became available, small generating plants sprang up everywhere in the valley creating a hodgepodge of electric companies offering power at varying quality and cost. Eventually, the company that is now Puget Sound Energy bought up the myriad of small companies and standardized the equipment and service.



The hydroelectric power plant at Snoqualmie Falls was put into service in 1898, but most of the power was sent on lines to Seattle and Tacoma. In 1910, crews braved the rough terrain and strung lines to North Bend. It wasn't till 1921 that we see evidence of commercial electricity in Fall City. The brick school which had been using a generator in the basement was fully electrified in 1921. Jesse Kelley set up a plumbing and electric store in 1924 supplying parts for the big two - indoor plumbing and electric lights. People were thrilled to put away the kerosene lamps and shut the outhouse door. Often businesses and barns received power before homes. One farmer electrified his barn then set up a radio playing calming music so his cows would give more milk. Edith Emanuelson Sillery and Janet Moore Ewing remember their homes getting electricity about 1929.

The Snoqualmie Falls Hydroelectric Museum is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day on Sundays from 10-5. The Fall City Historical Society is planning a tour this summer. Watch for further information!

Pop in to the Pop Up Museum at the Library !

There's still time to see the display. It will be open till April 4th from noon-till library closing the days the library is open. Learn about hops, an old time office, and spinning and weaving. Enter the poetry contest!



Support for our work from King County Heritage 4Culture is gratefully acknowledged.

