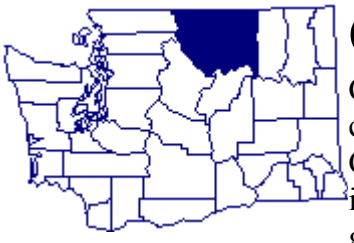

Okanogan County was created in 1888 from Stevens County, and is an Indian word for "rendezvous. It is situated in the north central part of the state west of the Cascaded and bounded on the north by Canada. The first American post in the state was Fort Okanogan established in 1811 by Astor's Pacific Fur Company. In 1859 the county experienced a gold rush when placer gold was discovered on the Similkameen River. Steamboats reached the town of Okanogan two months of the year in the 1880s, but it was not until 1915 that the county had regular transportation service when the Great Northern Railroad ran a branch line from Wenatchee to Okanogan. Today, mining is an important part of the county's economy along with timber products and agriculture.

Bounded by: British Columbia, Canada (N), Ferry County (E), Lincoln, Grant and Douglas counties (S), and Chelan, Skagit, and Whatcom counties (W).

Genealogical Society:

Bordertown Genealogical Society, Oroville, WA.

Okanogan County Genealogical Society, P. O. Box 95, Malott, WA 98829-0095. okanogangenes@gmail.com *Membership available. Currently updating "Okanogan County Washington Cemetery Records" . Library is housed in the Wilson Research Center.*

Tonasket Genealogical Society, Attn: Nadine Kirchner, PO Box 84, Tonasket, WA 98855

County Seat:

Ruby (1888), Conconully (1888-1914), Okanogan (1914-present)

Courthouse: 149 Third N, Okanogan, WA 98840. Courthouse hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm.

Assessor: PO Box 152. Phone 509-422-7190. Fax 509-422-7195. *All of our records are available to the public and we have people in our office that can show you where the records are kept and get you started on your research.*

***Auditor**:* PO Box 1010. Phone 509-422-7240. Fax 509-422-7163.

Clerk: PO Box 72. Phone 509-422-7275. Fax 509-826-7295.

Treasurer: PO Box 111. Phone 509-422-7180. Fax 509-422-7181.

Health Department / District:

Okanogan County Health District, 1234 S Second, Public Services Bldg, PO Box 231, Okanogan, WA 98840. Phone 509-422-7140. Fax 509-422-7142.

Historical Society:

Okanogan County Historical Society, 1410 2nd N, PO Box 1129, Okanogan, WA 98840. *Membership available. Sponsors the Okanogan Historical Museum, The Shafer Museum, Okanogan Highland Museum and Old Molson. Library is housed in the Wilson Research Center.*

Omak Pioneer Club, c/o Betty Jeglum. Phone 509-826-1872

Riverside Historical Society, c/o Maggie Sasse. Phone 509- 826-0831

Libraries - Academic:

Libraries - Public:

City of Brewster Library, 17 S Third, PO Box 340, Brewster, WA 98812-0340. Phone 509-689-3464. Fax 509-689-3705.

North Central Regional Library, 238 Olds Station Rd, Wenatchee, WA 98801-8103. Phone 509-663-1117. Fax 509-662-8060. *The following are libraries in this system:*

Okanogan Community Library, 228 Pine, Box 489, Okanogan, WA 98840-0489. Phone 509-422-2609. Fax 509-422-2609.

Omak Community Library, 30 S Ash, Box J, Omak, WA 98841-0969. Phone 509-826-1820. Fax 509-826-1820. *Has a special collection of county history books.*

Oroville Community Library, 1276 Main, Box 550, Oroville, WA 98844-0550. Phone 509-476-2662. Fax 509-476-2662.

Pateros Community Library, 174 Pateros Mall, Box 306, Pateros, WA 98846-0306. Phone 509-923-2298. Fax 509-923-2298.

Tonasket Community Library, 209 S Whitcomb, Box 629, Tonasket, WA 98855-0629. Phone 509-486-2366. Fax 509-486-2366.

Twisp Community Library, 201 N Methow Valley Hwy, Box 237, Twisp, WA 98856-0237. Phone 509- 997-4681 or Fax 509-997-4681.

Winthrop Community Library, 509 State Rt 20, Box 519, Winthrop, WA 98862-0519. Phone 509-996-2685. Fax 509-996-2685.

Libraries - Special:

Colville Confederated Tribe Library, PO Box 140, Nespelem, WA 99155. Phone 509-634-4711, ext. 650 & 857. Fax 509-634-8799. *Collection emphasizes Native American materials, local and regional history. No genealogy.*

Family History Center Omak, Engh Rd, Omak, WA 98841. Phone 509-826-4802

Wilson Research Center, 1410 2nd N, PO Box 1129, Okanogan, WA 98840. *Joint library of the Genealogical and Historical societies. Includes genealogical reference materials, collection of obituaries, newspaper clipping file, items relating to Okanogan County history, audio and video pioneer interviews, photography collections, Okanogan County newspapers on microfilm, and clipping files. In progress project: computerized database of places, names, authors.*

Okanogan County Law Library, 149 3rd N, Okanogan, WA 98840. Phone 509-422-7130.

Museums and Historical Sites:

Colville Tribal Museum, Coulee Dam, WA. Phone 509-633-0751.

Chief Joseph Gravesite, Colville Indian Reservation, Nespelem, WA

Fort Okanogan Interpretative Center, c/o Alta Lake State Park, Star Route Box 40, Pateros, WA 98846. Phone 509-689-2798 or 509-923-2473. *Collection includes Indian and fur trapping artifacts and local photography collection, dating from mid 1880's to about 1924.*

Old Molson Ghost Town & Museum, Molson Route, Box 128, Oroville, WA 98844. Phone 509-826-0843. *Membership available. Old Molson is a reassembled pioneer town. Museum includes artifacts of local history and Old Molson school attendance records.*

Okanogan County Historical Museum, 1410 2nd N, Okanogan, WA 98840. Phone 826-0853. *Membership available. Historical artifacts and recreated pioneer town portrays the history of Okanogan County.*

Old Depot, Oroville, WA. Phone 509-476-3693. *Restored railroad depot.*

Shafer Museum, 285 Castle Ave , PO Box 46, Winthrop, WA 98862. Phone 509-996-2452. *Membership available. Housed in historic log cabin of Guy Waring. The museum details all phases of early life and peoples of the Winthrop area.*

St. Mary's Mission, Omak Lake Rd, Omak, WA 98841. *Site of former Jesuit Indian boarding school. School is now operated as the Paschal Sherman Indian School by the Colville Indian Tribe. The mission church is open to the public.*

State Archive Branch:

Central Region (Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan and Yakima counties. Bledsoe-Washington Archives Building, Central Washington University, MS 7547, Ellensburg, WA 98926-7547. Phone: 509-963-2136. Fax 509-963-1753. E-mail: archives@cwu.edu. Research Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Chambers of Commerce:

Brewster Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 1087, Brewster, WA 98812. Phone 509-689-3589, 509-689-3379. Fax 509-689-3705.

Conconully Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 231, Conconully, WA 98819. Phone 509-826-0813.

Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce, Box 760, Grand Coulee, WA 99133. Phone 509-633-3074. Fax 509-633-1370.

Okanogan Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 1125, Okanogan, WA 98840. Phone 509-422-9882.

Omak Chamber of Commerce, 401 Omak Ave, Rt 2 Box 5200, Omak, WA 98841. Phone 509-826-1880.

Oroville Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 536, Oroville, WA 98844. Phone 509-476-2739.

Pateros Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 613, Pateros, WA 98846. Phone 509-923-2809, 509-923-2772.

Tonasket Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 523, Tonasket, WA 98855-0523. Phone 509-486-4429.

Twisp Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 686, Twisp, WA 98856. Phone 509-997-2926. Fax 509-997-5859.

Winthrop Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 39, Winthrop, WA 98862. Phone 509-996-2125.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

ATLASES, GAZETTEERS, MAPS - Personal, governmental, or organization records

Central Branch Archives
Metsker atlas, 1934 (used with district boundary and formation records)
Plat maps, Central Washington

ATLASES, GAZETTEERS, MAPS - Published sources

Metsker's atlas of Okanogan Co., Washington. Metsker Maps. Metsker Maps,197-?.

Metsker's atlas of Okanogan county, Washington. Metsker, Charles Frederick, 1881- 1959.

Metsker's county atlas: Okanogan County, Washington. Metsker Map Co., 197?.

BIBLES - Personal, governmental, or organization records

BIBLES - Published sources

BIBLIOGRAPHIES - Personal, governmental, or organization records

Wenatchee Area Genealogical Society Library
Genealogical holdings of the Okanogan Genealogical Society, n.d.

BIBLOGRAPHIES - Published sources

Mitchell, Bruce. *Historical source materials of North Central Washington.* Chelan County Industrial Development Council, 1963-64.

BIOGRAPHIES / DIARIES - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Robert J. Murray (Judge). *Papers, 1961-1971*
Sherling Collection, manuscript. *Okanogan Highland Families, 1975* (printed by the Knob Hill, Havillah, Molson, and Nine Mile Creek areas)

Sherling Collection photographs, Molson, 1914-1924

Washington State University, Holland Library, Manuscripts, Archives & Special Collections
Avard, Stephen Thomas. *Papers of Stephen, Julia and Charles Avard, 1872-1956.*
Brown, William Compton. *Papers, 1897-1963*.
Gubser, David. *Papers, 1907-1914*
Hart, D. H. *Papers, 1902-1912*

BIOGRAPHIES / DIARIES - Published sources

Anderson, Eva Greenslit. *Pioneers of North Central Washington.* Wenatchee World, 1980.

Dennis, Sue Robinson. *Homestead girlhoods: growing up on the northwest frontier.* Smuggler's Cove Pub., 1991.

Fries, U. E. *From Copenhagen to Okanogan : the autobiography of a pioneer*. 3rd ed. Binford & Mort, 1984, 1972.

Glimpses of pioneer life. A series of biographies, experiences and events intimately concerned with the settlement of Okanogan County, Washington. [Separate articles published during 1923 and 1924 in the Okanogan Independent. Grouped in book form]. Okanogan Independent, 1924.

Helm, Elva. *Havillah & the Helm family : a touch of community and a family history by and for the Helm Family to be enjoyed by all*. Statesman-Examiner, 1991.

Henry, Will. *From where the sun now stands.* Gregg Press, 1978, 1959. **other editions available

Lilly, Dorothy Foster. *The Ray Foster family of Omak, Washington.* n.p., n.d.

Oaks, Hazel. *Back there : memories of a girlhood on the Okanogan frontier*. Omak Chronicle, 1989.

Picken, Nellie Buxton. *Fireweed, an american saga.* Melior Publications, 1989.

Roe, JoAnn. *Frank Matsura: Frontier Photographer*. Madrona Publishers, 1981.

Tracy, Katherin. *Harry, from a boy to a man*. K. Tracy, 1991.

Waring, Guy. *My pioneer past*. B. Humphries, 1936.

Wilson, Bruce A. *The story of Chief Joseph: from where the sun now stands.* Omak-Okanogan County Chronicle, 1985? **other editions available

BIRTH - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Birth returns, 1899-1911

Okanogan County Auditor's office
Birth records, 1891-1914

BIRTH - Published sources

BUSINESSES & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
East Okanogan Farmers Telephone Company. *Records, 1907-1954*
Grist and Flour Mill Ledger, 1936-1937
IOOF Lodge Number 198, Meyer's Creek. *Ledger, 1920-1930*
Londigans' Store Ledger, Chesaw, 1915-1917
Meyers Creek Mining District Ledger, 1896-1900
Scrapbooks, 1890-1925 (includes items for the Potter Merchandise Company and Chesaw and Molson banks)

Okanogan County Historical Museum Library
Hilderbrand Hotel Register (of Malott, Washington), 1910-1911

Washington State University, Holland Library, Manuscripts, Archives & Special Collections
Colville Indian Agency. *Letters and Papers.*
Malott Senior Sewing Club. *Minutes, 1936*

BUSINESSES & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS - Published sources

Commercial Bank, 1890-1920. Commercial Bank (Okanogan, Wash.), 192?.

Dunlap's store, Messenger on the corner. Dunlap's Dept. Store, n.d.

CEMETERIES - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Okanogan County Historical Museum Library
Okanogan County, Washington cemetery records

CEMETERIES - Published sources

Chatters, James C. *The cemetery at Sntl'exwenewixwtn, Okanogan County, Washington.* Central Washington Archaeological Survey, Central Washington University, 1987.

CENSUS - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

CENSUS - Published sources

CHURCHES - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Oregon Province Archives, Gonzaga University
St. Mary's Mission:
Attendance records, 1919-1940
Census "St. Mary's Mission Omak Parish, 1948-1949"
Registration certificates, 1949

CHURCHES - Published sources

CITY / COUNTY DIRECTORIES

Okanogan Co., Wash. St. Washington Telephone, 1970.

Okanogan County, Washington directory, 1914-1915.

Okanogan telephone directory : Chelan & Douglas counties, September 1940. Pacific Telephone and Telegraph, 1940.

Polk's Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan Counties directory. R. L. Polk & Co.

Polk's Omak-Okanogan (Okanogan County, Wash.) directory. R.L. Polk & Co.

R.L. Polk & Co.'s Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan counties directory. R. L. Polk & Co.

CITY / COUNTY HISTORIES - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Sherling Collection. Molson photographs, 1914-1924

Gonzaga University, Special Collections
Burr, B. E. *Early day railroading in Okanogan county*.

Washington State University, Holland Library, Manuscripts, Archives & Special Collections
Brown, William Compton, 1869-1963. *Papers, 1897-1963.*

CITY / COUNTY HISTORIES - Published sources

Barlee, N. L. (Neville Langrell). *Gold creeks and ghost towns of northeastern Washington covering Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Chelan and Kittitas Counties*. Old Okanogan Pub., 1988. **other edition available

Beggs, Lora. *Nespelem Then and Now*. Lora Beggs, 1955

Briley, Ann. *The Great North Road and other stories.* A. Briley, 1995.

Brown, John A. *The Highland runners: a tale of the O'kanogan.* North Central Washington Museum, 1992.

Brown, William Compton. *Early Okanogan history.* Ye Galleon Press, 1968. **other editions available

_____. *Old Fort Okanogan of the Hudson's Bay Company*. n.p., 1951.

Cleveland, Carl M. *Scraps from a hellbox*. CMC Books, 1990.

Driving tour, Othello to Omak: Central Washington heritage corridor tour guide. Washington State Arts Commission, 1995.

Early Okanogan County history. Palmer Mountain Prospector, n.d.

Espy, Willard R. *Omak me yours tonight, or, Ilwaco million miles for one of your smiles : a Ballard of Washington State*. Seattle Book Co., 1993. **other edition available

Gardner, Grace Christianson. *Life among north central Washington first families - the red men.* Wenatchee Daily World, 1935.

Gillespie, Loris. *Kanagan : a story of the pioneers of Okanogan county and the lives, loves, investments, experiences and adventures of Loris Gillespie*. Scrivener, 1979.

_____. *Kanagan; the second white boy born at Brewster, Okanogan county, Washington.* Scrivener, 1979.

Helm, Elva. *All roads lead to Tonasket : a pictorial history of the town of Tonasket, and the surrounding area*. Statesman-Examiner, 1985?.

Hilderbrand, Sandra. *Treasure in the Okinagan*. S. Hilderbrand, 1991.

_____. *Treasure in the Okanogan. Oroville area history, volume one*. n.p., 1996?

History report. Molson Knob Hill Chesaw Community Study, n.d.

Holmes, Philip. *Early history of Northern Okanogan County*. n.p., 1954.

Holmes, Philip. *Whitestone.* Statesman-Examiner, 1989.

Hutchins, James C. *Social values and lifestyles in Okanogan County, Washington : a social network analysis*. J.C. Hutchins?, 1981.

Kanogan. Oroville High School, 1976.

Kerr, Harry J. *A history of Okanogan.* n.p., 1931.

Martin, Ken. *Gold mining in Washington state : yesterday and today : "pioneer stories", Hiram "Okanogan" Smith, the Ballard Brothers*. Golden Treasures Pub., 1995.

Matsura, Frank. *The real Old West : images of a frontier*. 1st ed. Douglas & McIntyre, 1981.

Mining in the Okanogan (available for purchase through the Okanogan County Historical Society).

Mooney, Howard L. *The first 20 years : turn of the century life like it was along the border : Old Fort Colville to the Cascades Osoyoos Lake to Fort Steele*. Mooney, 1976. **other edition available

Nelson, Edith. *Okanogan County's homegrown liar : a book of plausible impossibilities*. Medicine Wheel Press, 1990.

Oaks, Hazel. *Here and there.* n.p., n.d.

Okanogan Highland album : a pictorial history of the Okanogan Highlands and of the people who have lived here. Molson-Chesaw-Knob Hill Community Development Committee, 1987.

Okanogan Highland echoes. Molson-Chesaw-Knob Hill Community Development Committee, 1986. **other editions available

Okanogan Highland families. Molson, Chesaw, Knob Hill Community Development Committee, 197?.

Okanogan Independent. *Okanogan County history*. n.p., 1944.

Okanogan rendezvous, 1989. Okanogan Reunion Committee, 1989.

Portman, Sally. *The smiling country : a history of the Methow Valley*. Sun Mountain Resorts, 1993.

Ramsey, Guy Reed. *Postmarked Washington, Okanogan county*. Okanogan County Historical Society, 1977. **other editions available.

Ranching in the Okanogan. (Available for purchase: Okanogan County Historical Society)

Raufer, Maria Ilma. *Black robes and Indians on the last frontier : a story of heroism.* Bruce Pub., 1968, 1966. **other editions available

Roe, JoAnn. *The North Cascadians*. Madrona Publishers, 1980.

The Sinkaietk or Southern Okanogan of Washington. George Bantam Publishing Co., 1938. **other edition available

Steele, Richard F. *An illustrated history of Stevens, Ferry, Okanogan and Chelan counties, State of Washington*. Western Historical Pub. Co., 1904.

Steward, G. J. *Reminiscences of 25 years of merchandising in the Okanogan.* Okanogan Independent, 1926.

Trails & tales of the early-day settlers of north-eastern Okanogan County. Statesman-Examiner Inc., 1982.

Wilson, Bruce A. *Hudson's Bay brigade trail.* Okanogan Historical Society, 1966.

_____. *Late frontier : a history of Okanogan County, Washington, 1800-1941*. Okanogan County Historical Society, 1990.)

Yates, Herbert A. *A pioneer project, a story of courage; history of the Okanogan irrigation project, in Okanogan County, Washington*. Metropolitan Press, 1968.

The year of the coyote: centennial celebration, July 2, 1972. Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, 1972.

COURT DOCUMENTS - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Prosecuting attorney's files, 1949-1958
Superior Court civil case files, 1888-1974
Superior Court criminal case files, 1902-1924
Supreme Court case file briefs, central Washington, 1907-1913 (principally regarding water rights)

Washington State University, Holland Library, Manuscripts, Archives & Special Collections
Okanogan County (Wash.). Auditor's Office. *Records, 1888-1892.*

COURT DOCUMENTS - Published sources

DEATHS - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Okanogan County Auditor’s office
Death records, 1891-1908

DEATHS - Published sources

EARLY DESCRIPTIVE OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Brewster Flats, an irrigation and land settlement development by the Methow-Okanogan reclamation district, under the direction of the Washington state reclamation service. Washington (State). Bureau of Statistics and Immigration, 1920.

West Okanogan Valley irrigation district. Great Northern Railway Company (U.S.), 191?.

EDUCATION - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
8th grade graduations, 1917-1935
Board minutes, 1905-1933 (includes some 8th Grade exam records)
District employment record (personnel log), 1973-1974
Metsker atlas, 1934 (used with district boundary and formation records)
Record of 8th grade graduates, 1916-1959
School Board directors record, 1930-1960
School District boundary record, 1909-1978
Superintendent's annual reports, 1893-1979
Superintendent's record, 1894-1914
Teacher certification records, 1919-1983
Teacher contracts, 1909-1955
Term record and examinations, 1917-1934

Old Molson Ghost Town & Museum
Old Molson school attendance records, dates unknown

EDUCATION - Published sources

106 years of Okanogan school life. (Available for purchase through the Okanogan County Historical Society)

1911 school register for Malott, Washington, 1911, Maud McPherson, teacher. Washington School Register. n.d.

Lindeblad, David. *Early education in Washington's Okanogan County*. n.p., 1984.

Reflections : images of our past. Wenatchee Valley College Foundation, 1989.

The Way it was : a collection of early-day experiences by retired teachers of Okanogan County, published in honor of the Washington State centennial. The Teachers, 1989.

ELECTION / VOTER RECORDS

Okanogan County Auditor's office
Poll books and tally sheets, 1950-present
Voter registrations and oaths, 1910-present

GENEALOGICAL / HISTORICAL PERIODICALS

Cumulative index Okanogan County heritage. Okanogan County Historical Society, n.d.

Okanogan County Heritage. Okanogan County Historical Society. June 1963 - present.

The GOLD historian. [Grant, Okanogan, Lincoln, Douglas counties]. GOLD Historian, 1980- .

LAND / PROPERTY - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Chattel mortgages, 1921-1939

Mining claims, 1884-1899

Okanogan County Assessor's office
Aerial photographs of all taxable lands, 1954-present
Field sheets with brief title chain (includes volume & page number of where document is filed in Auditor's office)
Government Land Office surveys, 1898
Homestead surveys (some), dates unknown
Metsker Maps, 1930's & 1956
Paper maps of old parcels of land
Patented Mines, dates unknown
Plat maps with current changes

LAND / PROPERTY - Published sources

LICENSURE AND PROFESSIONAL RECORDS

Central Branch Archives
Bonds for office, 1926-1943

MARRIAGES - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Okanogan County Auditor's office
Marriage affidavits, 1909-present
Marriage certificates, 1888-present
Record of marriage licenses, 1888-1908
Register of marriages, 1891-present

MARRIAGES - Published sources

MILITARY - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Okanogan County Auditor's office
Index to military discharges, dates unknown
Miscellaneous record (includes some military discharges) 1888-1974
Record of military discharges 1919-1974

MILITARY - Published sources

NATURALIZATION - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Certificates of naturalization stubs, 1903-1923
Naturalization witness depositions, 1915-1922

Okanogan County Clerk's office
Declarations of intention, 1890-1968
Naturalization record, 1890-1906
Oath of allegiance applications, 1944-1953
Petition and record, 1906-1973

NATURALIZATION - Published sources

NEWSPAPER INDEXES / SPECIAL EDITIONS

OTHER - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Colville Confederated Tribes Tribal Headquarters, PO Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

Enrollment Department

OTHER - Published sources

PROBATE - Personal, governmental, or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Probate case files, 1888-1971

Colville Confederated Tribes Tribal Headquarters, PO Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155
Probate Department files

PROBATE - Published sources

TAXES - Governmental or organizational records

Central Branch Archives
Real Property Tax Rolls, 1923-1961

TAXES - Books, manuscripts, etc.