

Slipper's Soliloquies

By Fred Slipper

6-83

How many of you have driven by the large log slab by Herb's Chevron Station and just glanced at it, not realizing just what it represents? I did many times, until one day I stopped and really examined it.



Courier-Times Photo

As shown on the picture, there are five markers on it. The one on the left, the large one, says:

Douglas Fir

This tree was cut 1946

Germination date 1102 A. D.

Age 846 years

This tree grew in Skagit County

Section 26, Township 33 North,

Range 7 East

Greatest diameter 10'6" inside bark

Circumference 42' 1"

The small marker in the center says "First Crusade, 1060". Altho the tree started growing 42 years later, this must have been the first significant date the historians could find around that time.

The other three markers, left to right, say "Columbus, 1492", "Revolutionary

War, 1775" and "First settlers came to Sedro, 1878".

So this mighty tree was already 432 years old before Columbus even thought of asking Queen Isabella to finance his three ships for a venture to see what might be over the western horizon.

And it kept right on growing while the Pilgrms settled on the Atlantic coast and had their own problems, one of which was trying to decide when Thanksgiving Day should be. When they finally decided they had enough of the English rule, and started the Revolutionary War, the tree had added 283 more years since Columbus set foot on America.

After the war settlers gradually came west, but it was over a hundred years (103 to be exact) before they reached Sedro.

The tree apparently withstood the inroads of civilization for 68 more years before someone decided it was time to cut it down and turn it into lumber for houses. Guess they call this progress, but I wonder...

Now let's see how many of you have done your arithmetic. After typing the above, I checked my figures, and the year it was cut, 1946, minus the germination date shown on the large marker, 1102, equals 844 years. So someone apparently added 2 years to the age of the tree, but then what is 2 years compared to a life span of 844 years?

I know of some ladies (and men) who will fib about their age and subtract 10 to 15 years, when they're only around 60...

So the next time you pass by our old friend, stop and take a closer look. It really makes one feel insignificant to stand next to such an old timer and realize what transpired during its life time.