

2014-15 PROGRAM SEASON

All programs are held on the second Thursday of the months listed below at the Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room at 7:30 p.m. Free and open to all.

February 12, 2015: The Great Sedro-Woolley Bank Robbery of 1914 by Rustan Robertson

March 12, 2015: Ella Higginson, Bellingham Poet Laureate, by Laura Laffrado

April 9, 2015: The fascinating historic research behind the recent painting of Captain Vancouver's vessels the HMS *Discovery* and *Chatham*, by well-known local maritime artist Steve Mayo.

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HISTORY NEWS



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Whatcom County Historical Society

February 2015

“The Great Sedro-Woolley Bank Robbery of 1914”

Presented by Rustan Robertson

Thursday, February 12, 2015, 7:30 p.m.

Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room • 121 Prospect St. • Free

Rustan Robertson, who grew up in Sedro-Woolley, began researching the 1914 robbery for a high school project and recently authored “The Wages of Sin: The True Story & Photos of the Great Sedro-Woolley Bank Robbery of 1914,” published by the Sedro-Woolley Museum.

One of the highlights of the book are the almost 100 photographs of the crime and chase scenes, the officers and citizens involved, and two of the robbers in an undertaker's parlor in Bellingham. These were copied from glass plate slides donated to the S-W Museum.

The crime occurred Oct. 17, 1914, in Skagit County, but the deadly chase reached into Whatcom County and lower British Columbia.

The bandits' identities were never confirmed, but it's believed they were part of a gang that committed multiple robberies in Washington and Canada. They spoke a foreign language, possibly Russian.

Several sightings of the bandits were made in Ferndale and Blaine before the fiery ending of the story. About half of the \$11,649 stolen was never recovered. The coins would be worth about \$400,000 today, said Robertson.

Robertson now lives in Anacortes. The book will be available for sale at the program, as well as at: www.1914bankrobbery.com.



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