

Klickitat .

Latitude 45.817 and longitude -121.153

Elevation 479

Klickitat appears on the ***Klickitat*** U.S. Geological Survey Map.

Area Code: 509

Zip Code: 98628

Population: 417

A town at the base of the river canyon, lies 13 miles from the mouth of the Columbia.

Edgar C. Wright and N. J. Young settled Klickitat in 1890. The Western Pine Lumber Company built a mill and logging railroad at Klickitat in 1909. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1918 but was quickly rebuilt. In 1922, the J. Neils Lumber Company purchased the rebuilt mill and surrounding property, enlarging the Klickitat town site. There was another fire in 1927 and again a bigger and better mill replaced the burned out one. In 1957, the St. Regis Paper Company purchased mill operations; St. Regis Paper Company merged with Champion Lumber in 1984.

For many of the mill town years, Klickitat was comprised of dozens of look-alike bungalows and shanties that housed the mill workers. A few more expensive homes outside of the downtown were primarily inhabited by mill managers and their families. Multiple generations worked at the mill producing lumber from the abundant timber in the area. When the Champion Mill closed permanently in November 1994, there was a small exodus from the village as workers sought employment elsewhere.

Over time, the little shanties have been replaced or remodeled. Some, especially those on the riverfront, have been purchased as vacation homes by out of town buyers. The mill equipment has all been sold off and most of the buildings disassembled.

Despite better times for the mill, Huntington's Bar and Grill is the one town business that has withstood the test of time. Once a small town store and tavern, the establishment now boasts the best burgers in The Gorge. The place retains an old-time ambiance and gives diners a sense that they have a glimpse into the past. Because Huntington's is a bar and grill, patrons must be 21 years of age to enjoy the dining, but it's a great off-the-beaten-path find.

A couple miles north of town is a stucco building is not characteristic of the usual local wooden structures, so often inspires the question, "What is it?" It is the former Klickitat Mineral Springs plant site. There, the naturally carbonated water was flavored, sugared, and sold in the Northwest under various names such as, *Klickitat Mineral Water, Klickitat Pop, Merry Mix, Whistle,* and *Mineral Ale*. The Lyle-Goldendale railroad transported this *Klickitat pop* to market.

The building that intrigues so many today is part of an addition to the original plant. That business failed during the Great Depression, but later, a dry ice plant was situated in the complex. It closed in the 1950's.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife now owns the building which serves as a refuge for Vaux's Swifts; (the birds are often confused with swallows.)