

By Kathleen Kiefer

kindly to claims that a product heals any kind of health condition, and if someone therapists. The earliest writthe 1980's.

behemoth noted above, ing from World War I. known as the FDA, was ever an apple in an over stuffed the turn of the last century, digenous people of the Cosettlers were aware that nawater and mud as treatment

spa or sanitarium with min- health condition. eral springs. By 1907, Soap The US Food and Drug Lake had several sanitari-Administration doesn't take ums staffed with medical the Veterans Administradoctors, nurses, massage tion (VA) allocated \$15,000 practitioners, and hydro claims that about a mineral ten testimonials of patients lake in the middle of East- receiving treatment at Soap ern Washington's food belt, Lake are from 1913. People ment for Thromboangiitis look out, their representa- were visiting the lake and tives will be knocking at finding relief from rheumayour door. That is what hap- tism, neuralgia, stomach pened to Roxie Thorson in problems, psoriasis and other skin disorders and, around 1919 from the ravages of Burgers Disease, a The story starts long circulatory disorder that afago, before the regulatory fected many soldiers return-

government's eye. Before was advertising itself as a, 'mecca where thousands of Soap Lake, a mineral lake people afflicted with rheulocated in eastern Wash- matism, kidney trouble, ington was a well-known stomach, skin and blood spot frequented by the in- diseases could find relief.' These claims can be validatlumbia Plateau. Though no ed in testimonials kept by definite source for the sto- Roxie Thorson and now on ries can be identified, early file with a private collector. Roxie owned and operated tive people used Soap Lake Soap Lake Products Company, the longest operating for snake bite, rashes, skin salt extraction company in disorders and just about the town. The demand for anything that ailed them. salt products from custom-It didn't take the settlers ers throughout the country long to figure out there was kept Roxie in business until something to these stories her death in 1984. She saved and by the early 1900's they years worth of notes and lethad figured out a way to ex- ters from people that testitract minerals from the wa- fied to the effectiveness of ter to make salts that were the products she sold which sold at the local Soap Lake included salts in 1 and 5 mercantile store. By 1910, pound boxes, concentrated the salts and numerous water, shampoo and bars child whose family busiother products were being of soap. It was Roxie who ness was on the Main street shipped all over the country. received several visits in of town, she recalled seeing the 1980's from representa- men scooting about town Prior to and well into tives of the FDA, advising with their legless torso's on the 1900's medical doctors her to cease making any top of a rolling board which often recommended their claims about the efficacy of they pushed along with patients seek treatment at a her products in treating any gloved hands.

In the early 1930's for Dr. E.M. Bogard from the VA hospital in Walla Walla to conduct studies of Soap Lake water as treat-Obliterans (Buergers Disease). No records have been found about the results of Washington state legislature authorized the Commissioner of Public Lands to buy land in Soap Lake for the purpose of establishing a hospital for the treatment of the disease. The state By 1915 Soap Lake of Washington funded the building of the facility. On November 11, 1938 the Governor of the state of Washington dedicated the new McKay Memorial Research Hospital with 500 people in attendance at the ceremony. Resident war veterans, their wives or widows who were legal residents of the state of Washington were admitted to the hospital at no cost. All patients admitted had to furnish proof that they were afflicted with Buergers Disease.

> In 1940 one in eighteen people living in Soap Lake had Buergers Disease. The population, according to the census at that time was 619. April Notaras grew up in Soap Lake and as a

medical doctor in charge of research at McKay. In 1941 he published a report in The American Heart Journal of his findings on the spa treatment of Buergers Disease. His conclusions were unremarkable, but he did note:The explanation for the popularity of Soap Lake as a spa for the treatment of Thromboangiitis Obliterthese studies. In 1937 the ans undoubtedly lies in the considerable percentage (66 percent in the cases included in this study) of gangrenous and ulcerative lesions which heal while the patients are treating themselves at Soap

> Now, in 2015, on any weekend day in the summer riasis Foundation notes you will find dozens of bath- on their website that Soap ers along the shores of the Lake's mineral-rich water lake behind the two hotels and mud are thought to be

T.J Fatherree was the on Main Street and on both public East and West Beach locations. Some of them will be slathered in mud while others will be sitting in the shallow water along the shore. Most of them will tell you, if you ask, why they visit Soap Lake. Many of these visitors are of Eastern European decent. There are numerous mineral water spas, and salt bath locations in Europe.. These are popular locations where people go for relaxation and health care. The reason most of these European natives come to Soap Lake is for treatment of a particular health condition.

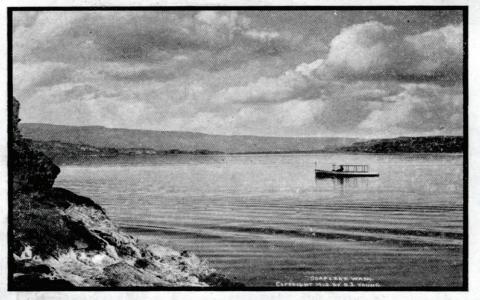
The American Pso-

curative for a number of skin diseases. While not going so far as to endorse Soap Lake for the treatment of psoriasis, they note that studies need to be conducted to better determine a precise treatment. There are numerous anecdotal stories about people who come back year-after-year for treatment in the lake for psoriasis, eczema and shingles.

Analysis of the content of Soap Lake water has been done for decades. with one of the first tests conducted in the early 1900's by the State College of Washington. Part 2 of this story will cover the contents of the water and reveal more about the oil, which is at the heart of it's

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SOAP LAKE SALTS AND OIL FOR SALE

Rooms and Tents for rent. Will ship Soap Lake Mineral Water or the Deep Sea Water to any point, on order.