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THE CLAYTON/DEER PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The C/DPHS is an association of individuals dedicated to the preservation of the history of our community. To the preservation of the region’s oral history, literary history, social history, graphic and pictorial history, and our history as represented by the region’s artifacts and structures. To the preservation of this history for future generations. To the art of making this common heritage accessible to the public. And to the act of collaborating with other individuals and organizations sharing similar goals.

The Deer Park Motors Company
by Peter Coffin

Ad from the Deer Park Union, July 20, 1922.
Reduced Freight Rates Lower Prices on Chevrolets
To the Following Prices FOB Deer Park

- "400" Touring: $583.00
- "400" Roadster: $538.00
- "400" Utility Coupe: $563.00
- "400" Four-Passenger Coupe: $1097.00
- "480" Sedan: $1053.00
- "480" Delivery: $943.00
- "400" Chassis, Martin-Parry: $989.00
- Truck Chassis: $662.00
- Truck, Express Body: $982.00

DEER PARK MOTOR CO.
FULL LINE OF CHEVROLET AND FORD PARTS

Visit our website at http://www.cdphs.org

Free — Take One

Visit our website at http://www.cdphs.org
The first decade of the 1900s saw the arrival of four or five automobiles in the Deer Park area. Enough of them had arrived in the second decade to justify the establishment of several shops in Deer Park to repair them. One of the men repairing automobiles was O. M. Kimmel who had been working beside his father as a repairman in 1911 in a shop located on east Crawford Street. In 1916 Kimmel had established himself as a reputable mechanic and decided to build an impressive repair and sales facility on the northeast corner of Main Avenue and A-Street. Kimmel’s garage was to be constructed of the “air spaced” concrete blocks cast by the Deer Park Artificial Stone Company. The one-story building was to be fifty feet wide, eighty feet in length and cost $3500 to build.

By the late summer of 1917 O. M. Kimmel and J. B. Sharkey had filed for incorporation of the new firm of Kimmel-Sharkey Motors Company to operate the garage with capital stock of $10,000. Sharkey, from Gary, Indiana, an expert electrician, had been connected to several large firms in the eastern United States. At this time it was reported that an additional $3500 had been invested in power machinery, auto supplies and parts for the operation of the garage.

By 1922 the Kimmel-Sharkey Motors Company had been re-named the Deer Park Motors Company and had acquired a Chevrolet dealership license. Interestingly, a company advertisement for Chevrolet said that both Chevrolet and Ford parts were stocked. Another advertisement reported that the company was planning a demonstration of a Twin City Sampson tractor on the Hazard farm on Wild Rose Prairie.

In July, 1922, Kimmel left the operation to supervise the repair department of Deer Park’s Peters Brothers Garage, while O. A. Peters ran the automobile sales department. A. F. Anderson was hired by the Deer Park Motors Company, apparently to replace Kimmel.

Newspaper advertisements in the late 1920s and 1930s continued to list Chevrolets for sale at Deer Park Motors. Unfortunately, they do not indicate who owned the business during this time until a Simonton was reported as the owner of the garage.

The Deer Park Motors Company was destroyed by fire about midnight on November 29, 1938. Monetary damages were estimated to be about $6000, only half of which was covered by insurance. The fire’s cause was never determined.

From her bed next door, Mrs. Olivia Ricca was the first to notice the fire. It was difficult to put out due to the hose, couplings, and nozzles freezing. Every few minutes exploding cans of oil spread sheets of fuel across the floor. Seven automobiles were destroyed, including a 1933 V-8 Tudor, a 1936 Ford one and one half ton truck, a 1929 Durant, and a 1923 Packard wrecker — all belonging to the garage. Other automobiles destroyed were a 1929 Chevrolet Tudor, a 1923 Chevrolet mail truck, and a 1933 V-8 coupe. Curiously, no new display Chevrolets were mentioned as being destroyed. It is possible the company was no longer selling Chevrolets by this time. Garage rebuilding did not start until April, 1940, after the Havre, Montana, company of H. Earl Clack purchased the property.

Footnotes:
(2) Deer Park Union, September 29, 1917.
(3) Deer Park Union, July 20, 1922 (also “Figure 1” on page 1453).

Footnotes:
(4) Deer Park Union, September 14, 1922.
(5) Deer Park Union, July 13, 1922.
(6) Deer Park Union, December 1, 1938.
(7) Deer Park Union, April 4, 1940.
Northern Railroad. The rebuilding plans included a steel truss roof covering a single room. This would allow the repair of large trucks inside the building. In addition to repairing the garage the Clack Company planned to build a bulk plant for wholesale distribution of their petroleum products. Frank Hurlbert’s repair business leased the newly rebuilt garage. He had been the proprietor of Deer Park’s Central Garage north on Main Avenue.

The Hurlbert operation must not have lasted very long since E. H. Larson was reported as selling the business to Fred Reynolds and associates; Bernard (Neb) Olson and Rex Watkins by 1944. The Deer Park Motors Company was renamed the Deer Park Auto Freight Garage at this time, with an office, repair facility, and storage area for the freight line portion of the business. Watkins would repair cars, trucks and tractors. The Auto Freight business was divided into two parts. Fred Reynolds operated a milk collection business transporting ten gallon cans of raw milk from farms to a dairy for processing, while Neb Olson ran the conventional freight business.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s my father, Elden “Jack” Coffin, had his automobile repaired at the Reynolds garage. During the summer, I would watch them work and hang around the garage. If no one caught me, I would climb up on them to pretend I was driving a tractor. The several large tanks of the Clack bulk petroleum plant were located south across A-Street. “Icky” Calkins used a medium sized truck with large tanks on the bed to deliver gasoline and other petroleum products to the local farmers. Vern Robertson had been hired as a mechanic. He was a good mechanic and my father routinely used him to repair his 1950 Plymouth and his Case VAC tractor.

In June of 1956 Faye Reilly purchased the conventional freight business from the Reynolds operation. Fred Reynolds retired and sold the garage business to Vernon Robertson in 1965. Robertson died in 1976 and Carl Justice bought the land as well as the business. By 2004 the garage building was being used as a pawn shop.

In 2010 the present owner, the Scully family, purchased CC’s Pawn Shop and moved their auto repair business from the southeast corner of Fir Avenue and Crawford Street into the old Deer Park Motors building.

--- end ---
The first of these letters, dated June 3, 1909, is a two page missive handwritten in cursive on unillustrated Spokane Pottery Company stationary. The missive, addressed to “Mr. Louis Olson, Deer Park,” was signed, “E. K. Erwin,” then secretary of the above mentioned pottery company. As Pete notes, “They (the pottery company) were very slow to pay, and the material indicates they went into receivership.” The below text of the aforementioned missive hints that the company’s financial problems were well advanced by the letter’s date.

“Friend Olson,

“The First State Bank sent the note for $1129 to the Traders Bank for collection and wrote me that unless it was paid at once you would place the same in the hands of your attorney for foreclosure. “I intended to stop off yesterday at Deer Park to see you and fix the matter up, but I had to go on to Clayton and could not do so. “Now, Louis, you know if you have been to Clayton within the last two or three weeks that we are putting in a lot more machinery and improvements up there, and I want you to know that every part of the new work is paid for now, which makes your loan just so much more secure and valuable from a loaning standpoint. Our machinery ... now installing ... has cost us ... between $4500 and $5000 cash.

“But if you still insist upon the immediate payment of the same, I will be up there next Wednesday or Thursday and pay it. “It would, however, be an accommodation and favor to me to let the same run a short time longer or until we fully complete our improvement. I paid out yesterday in cash to the men for labor and wood about $2500, and if you have any of the time checks of our company send me a list of the same and the accounts and I will send you the money for them.

“Awaiting your early reply, I beg to remain as always,

“Your Friend,

“E. K. Erwin.”

As often, translating out of cursive requires an occasional application of guesswork. In the above, the phrase “Traders Bank” is believed to refer to Spokane’s then active Traders National Bank. I placed a question mark beside the word “Traders” since I’m not absolutely sure my reading of that handwritten word is correct.

Nearing the end of the letter, a second question mark has been added next to the word “time” in what appears to be the phrase “time checks.” This question mark relates to the unusualness of the term, assuming the first word of the handwritten phrase is in fact “time.”

Under the assumption that the phrase “time checks” is something possibly unique to the era, I went in search of other sources in which the term appears — and so far have found only one. On page 40 of a weighty journal titled Proceedings of the First Annual Convention of the California Bankers Association

held at San Francisco, October 14th, 15th, and 16th, 1891, under the subheading “Suggestion Number Four,” the following appears. “Time checks might be found useful and easy to handle. People could be encouraged to issue time checks — or notes that could be collected at a bank on a definite day for a definite sum — free of any interest-bearing phrases.” I believe what’s being suggested is a bit of creative financing in which profit producing loans can be made without all the associated paperwork. I hand you cash, and you hand me a promissory note — a time check — cashable by me after a specific date, and written out for an amount that includes the original amount of the loan, plus any agreed upon upcharge in lieu of traditional interest.

That at least would be my guess. On July 10th, E. K. Erwin again wrote Deer Park’s First State Bank, this note, written on a form of company stationary that included the illustrated letterhead reproduced below, reads as follows.

“Gentlemen,

“Enclosed find check for $500.00 for partial payment on note in compliance with your letter of the 8th last().

“We thank you for the favors and courtesy shown us and assuring you that you will have no trouble in the future with the Spokane Pottery Co., or that you will lose check() in doing business with us.

“We beg to remain, yours truly,

“Mr. E. K. Erwin, Secretary.”
Once again several question marks have been added to suggest instances of creative interpretation.

As for the promises regarding the continued solvency of the Spokane Pottery Company, an article appearing in the December 23rd, 1909, edition of the Spokane Chronicle, states, “Judge Hinkle issued an order yesterday setting January 15 (1910) as the date of sale of all the property of the Spokane Pottery Company which lately went into a receiver’s hands.” It also appears he was killed in the infamous February 20th, 1916, train wreck at Cheney. Other than that, we currently have little data on him.

We do have a little more background on E. K. Erwin, the writer of the above letters. A report on the 1902 Spokane County Republican convention appeared on the front page of the August 1st, 1902, edition of The Seattle Republican. Said report contained the following biography of Mr. Erwin.

“E. K. Erwin, nominee for (Spokane) county clerk, was born in Freeport, Ill., in 1860. In early boyhood his parents moved to Tomah, Wix., where he followed the occupation of bookkeeper and accountant, also serving as city clerk in 1887. In 1892 he came to Spokane and engaged in abstracting and accounting work until the opening of the war with Spain. For many years, Mr. Erwin had been identified with the National Guard of Washington and was sworn into the United States service as a first lieutenant and assigned to Company A, First Washington Volunteers when that organization went into the field in the Philippines. After the war he acted as bookkeeper for the Hill Shoe Company, giving up that position to become county clerk two years ago.”

His subsequent political career appears to have ended when Erwin didn’t stand for reelection in late 1908 as Spokane County Treasurer, instead choosing to run for the office of Washington State Treasurer. He lost that bid.

In the spring of 1909 rumors were about that Mr. Erwin might be appointed to an impending vacancy in the state’s insurance office. Regarding such, the May 7th, 1909, edition of The Seattle Republican stated, “It is expected that in the very near future a vacancy will occur in the insurance office and it is hinted that E. K. Erwin has been slated for that place. For four years last past Capt. Erwin was treasurer of Spokane County, and for four years prior to that he was county clerk of Spokane, and in both places he made a splendid record and today stands ace high before the voters of that county.” Nothing has been found as of yet to suggest that such appointment was ever made.

We know that Mr. Erwin was associated with the Spokane Pottery Company from its 1905 founding until it entered receivership. As for Mr. Erwin’s activities later on, I believe he was acting as clerk for a Spokane judge as of 1919, and simultaneously continuing his position as secretary and bookkeeper for various speculative mining companies and the like.

We’ll be looking forward to more enlightening bits of historic bric-a-brac as Pete Coffin delves further into last summer’s truck load of priceless documents.

For regarding Spokane Pottery’s trademark …

In the society’s January minutes — as printed in the February Mortarboard (#106) — society president Bill Sebright stated that he had “received a phone call and email from Buzz Hildebrand. Buzz sent a picture of a 3 gallon crock made by the Spokane Pottery Company of Clayton.” Buzz’s photos are reproduced on page 1435 of that issue.

In his email Buzz asked about the difference between the circular Spokane Pottery Company trademark as seen on the society’s website, and the triangular one stamped for ...
on his crock. A photo of both styles of trade- mark can be found in the above mentioned February Mortarboard.

The truth of the matter is that until receiving Buzz’s email and photo, we were unaware that anything other than the circular trademark had been used by Spokane Pottery — simply because the few examples of Spokane Pottery trademarks we have in the socie- ty’s collection are all circular in nature.

At least that’s what we thought, until Bill — while rummaging through his own photo albums for a picture he’d taken at the Stevens County Historical Society’s museum when attending a Heritage Network meeting held there in May of 2008. The nearly year old photo shows a two gallon stoneware vessel bearing Spokane Pottery’s triangular trademark.

A subsequent online search revealed that at least two more examples of trian- gular logos stamped on Spokane Pottery Compa- ny artifacts are being traded in the internet’s antique stoneware marketplace.

We can draw several conclusions from all this trademark confusion. First, histo- ry is complicated. Teasing out the truth is an ongoing and augmentative process. Secondly, we’re only at the very beginning of under- standing this community’s extensive and very rich history.

... the schoolboard and 1918’s pandemic ...

This last summer society president Bill Sebright sent the following email to sever- al members of the society. “Attached is a pho- to of a page from the Deer Park school board minutes where it talks about closing schools in response to the ongoing flu epidemic. The referenced pandemic arrived in the United States just as the First World War was draw- 
ing to a close (late 1918), and extended well into the next year. With its unusual proclivity for striking younger adults — 20 to 40 years of age — extra hard, the fatalities it produced tended to leave noticeable gaps in the region’s social and business community. The refer- enced “page from the Deer Park school board minutes” is found among the vintage minutes held in storage by Deer Park’s school district.

Simply put, everyone was scared — which seems reasonable considering this flu killed by slow suffocation due to secondary pneumonias against which the medical arts of the time had little in the way of defense.

There were two pandemic related schoolboard notes on the above mentioned page. The first, identified as being from a "Special Meeting" of "Deer Park School Dist. #102, Spokane, Co.," was dated February 14th. The "Directors present" were identified as "Worthington, Follevaag, & Grove. The inclusion stated, "Mr. Evans, Health Officer, met with the board and by his order the schools were closed 2/14/19 at noon, remain- 
ing closed until the following Monday. Both buildings to be fumigated." The notation was signed, "Roy R. Grove, clerk."

Another "Special Meeting" was held on February 17th. The note for that session stated, "The board meeting and passed that two people be employed to look after the influenza situation in the schools and the necessary ap- 
pliances purchased for their use."

The schoolboard was clearly taking no chances.

... Worthington of the schoolboard ...

It’s believed that the “Worthington” identified as one of the “Directors” in the above schoolboard notes was in fact the Rev- erend William Worthington, at the time pastor of Deer Park’s Open Door Congregational Church. As of now the only documentation regarding this membership comes from an article appearing in the “Twice-Told Tales” segment of the April 1st, 1920, issue of the Deer Park Union, which states, “At a meeting Monday night, the school board as at present constituted organized for the ensuing year, with Rev. Wm. Worthington, chairman, and O. G. Follevaag as clerk. Mrs. E. E. Wood is the third member.” While we currently don’t know when Mr. Worthington was elected to the schoolboard, we do know he resigned his position within weeks of the above Union arti- 
cle.

The society has pieced together some background for the pastor, beginning with a reference in the book titled "A preliminary attempt to register the rural leadership in the United States and Canada." Each alphabet- ized edition was essentially a Who’s Who among rural organizers such as horticulturists, agricultural researchers, authors on rural sub- jects, activist ministers within rural communi- ties, and so forth. The 1918 volume listed close to 3,000 alphabetized individuals, among them “Worthington, William, minister, Deer Park, Washington.”

Worthington’s short biography began by stating that the minister held the position of principal at the Puget Sound Academy during the 1905-6 school year. In confirmation, the 1909 edition of Patterson’s College & School Directory also noted Worthington’s posting at the school, and goes on to describe the academic facility, located in the town of Snohomish, Washington, as a “co- 
ed” “preparatory” school associated with the Congregational Church.

The 1918 edition of Bailey’s “Preparatory School Directory” next indicates Mr. Worthington taught economics at Walla Walla’s Whitman College in the “1907-10” school years. It also records he was born in Grove Lake, Minnesota, on the 13th of July, 1873. That he married Carrie Amelia Palmer on August 28th, 1901, and that they had two children, Leora and Helen. It goes on to note he had received a Bachelor of Arts from Whitman College (Walla Walla) in 1900, and a Bachelor of Divinity from the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1904.

The April 11th, 1919, edition of the Deer Park Union rounds out the picture with, “Rev. William Worthington, pastor of the Congregational Church and a graduate of the Lewis and Clark High School with the class of ’96, will be the speaker for the June graduat- ing class baccalaureate exercises at the Lewis and Clark High School.”

Perhaps the most intriguing element in Mr. Worthington’s history is a line in Bai- ley’s “Encyclopedia of Practical Horticulture, 1914.”

And sure enough, there was a four volume horticultural encyclopedia produced by the “Encyclopedia of Horticulture Corpora- 
tion, North Yakima, Washington,” in 1914. If anyone wants to take a look, facsimiles of all four volumes can be downloaded from Google or like services.

The title page of each volume lists Granville Lowther as "Editor-in-Chief," and William Worthington as “Associate Editor.” After that it adds, “Assisted by the best known scientists and horticulturists of the country, and particularly in the North- west.” It also explains that the set is “a reference system of commercial horticulture, cover- ing the practical and scientific phases of horti- culture, with special reference to fruits and vegetables.”

Also note, in the book’s list of assist- ing "scientific and practical horticulturists" is one "A. G. Craig, Horticulturist Washington State College; Superintendent Arcadia Or- 
chards Company.” More about this later.

Regarding William Worthington’s arrival in Deer Park, the January 12th, 1917, edition of the Deer Park Union records, “Rev. Worthington, of North Yakima, arrived here today (Friday). His family will come as soon as his household goods arrive. He will occupy the Congregational Church pulpit Sunday.
As for his leaving, the following appeared in the “Twice-Told Tales” segment of the May 6th, 1920 Union. “A farewell reception was tendered Rev. Wm. Worthington, retiring pastor of the Congregational church, last Thursday evening.”

The Union’s use of the term “retiring” may be misleading. In its June 24th, 1920 edition, the Congregationalist Church’s national newsletter, The Congregationalist and Advance, noted, “Rev. William Worthington has tendered his resignation to Corbin Park, Spokane, having just completed three splendid years with Deer Park.”

... the Arcadia’s horticulturist ...

The 1920 edition of Liberty Hyde Bailey’s Rural Uplook Service reports the following regarding the Arcadia Orchard Company’s Superintendent of Horticulture, A. G. Craig.

Albert G. Craig was born in Michigan on the 20th of April, 1877, and “reared on farm.” He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from the Michigan Agricultural College in 1902. That same year he married Clara L. Hoffner (possibly Haffner). He was an instructor in the Michigan Agricultural College for the 1904 and ’05 school years. He then moved to Washington to teach and do research in horticulture at Pullman’s Washington State College.

The Sixteenth Annual Report of the Director of the State Agricultural Experimental Station — Pullman, Washington records, in 1906, Mr. A. G. Craig was added as Assistant Horticulturist. The Nineteenth Annual Report specified “Mr. A. G. Craig resigned as Assistant Horticulturist February 1st, 1909, to enter commercial work.”

Among the papers Mr. Craig published during his time at Pullman was one titled Commercial Potato Culture in Washington. In 1909 this was presented as a thesis to obtain a Master of Horticulture degree from the Michigan Agricultural College — which, according to 1920’s edition of the Rural Uplook Service, Albert G. Craig did receive.

The “commercial service” Mr. Craig entered after leaving his ministry with Corbin Park, Spokane, having just completed three splendid years with Deer Park.”

Albert George Craig, 48, widely known horticulturist and a resident of this region for the last 20 years, died yesterday afternoon (July 31) at the Deaconess Hospital following the results of an injury received April 23 in a dynamite explosion on his ranch at East Farms.

“Mr. Craig approached a stick of the explosive, thinking it had failed to become ignited. It exploded as he reached to pick it up. He was severely injured, and three weeks after the accident his right arm was amputated. A week later it was found necessary to remove his right leg, and subsequent operations were performed in an effort to save his life.

“Mr. Craig was born in Harbor Springs, Mich., and was a graduate of the Michigan State College of 1902, taking his master’s degree a year later. He taught at that institution for three years, then moved to Westport where he was an instructor in the horticultural department of the State College of Washington at Pullman for three years.

“For nine years Mr. Craig was horticulturist at Arcadia Orchards at Deer Park, and for six years was superintendent for the Spokane Valley Orchard & Land Company. He had been active in farm bureau work and in the state horticultural association.

“He leaves a widow, Mrs. Edna Evans Craig, at East Farms, Wash., and three

sisters and four brothers in the east.”

I’ve yet to find which “Spokane, Washington, newspaper” published the above, however, having found a somewhat different obituary on page 14 of the August 1st, 1925, edition of the Spokane Daily Chronicle, my suspicion falls on the Spokane-Review.

Also of note is the above article’s listing of Mr. Craig’s wife as Edna Evans Craig. According to a Spokane County marriage certificate, dated December 19, 1918, Edna was Albert’s second wife, he being divorced from his first wife at least a year prior to the marriage certificate as a teacher residing in Deer Park at the time of the union. Mr. Craig had already moved to East Farms, Washington, when the ceremony was held.

Also of note is the fact that Mr. Craig, like the Reverend Worthington, served on Deer Park’s schoolboard.

As for evidence, first we have this from the March 2nd, 1917, edition of the Deer Park Union. Under the headline “School Election Gets Interesting” the Union reports, “The interested parents and tax payers of School District No. 102 who are going to the Main Ave. school house tomorrow (Saturday) afternoon to vote for two school directors for the coming year, will find plenty of candidates to choose from. There are five in the race for the board.

“Both the old directors, Prof. A. G. Craig and Mrs. Matt Peterson, are up for re-election, and as they have served this district to the best of their ability during the past term, they feel that their record in handling the district’s affairs speaks for itself, and they are perfectly willing to let the voters decide whether they want them to return or not.

It appears “Professor Craig” was running for a three year term on the board, which he apparently won. The other candidate, Mrs. Peterson, was vying for a one year term.

Mr. Craig didn’t finish his term, as suggested when the February 8th, 1918, Union announced, “The coming spring election of school directors is due next month. Only one director is to be chosen this trip, unless Professor Craig decides to resign.” Nineteen eighteen was the year Craig left Deer Park’s Arcadia Orchard Company to manage the Spokane Valley Orchard & Land Company, so it appears a resignation was forthcoming.

... further schoolboard research ...

The complex history of Deer Park’s schoolboard is one of doubtless hundreds of areas of research the society needs to fully investigated in order to have a reasonably inclusive understanding of this community’s past. As per usual, there are any number of problems making the retrieval of these stories problematic. As regards those problems, access to the minutes of past schoolboard meetings — at least that portion of those meetings not dealing with confidential matters — currently appears not to be one.

With one photograph, Bill Sebright captured a significant bit of 98 year old data from the schoolboard’s records. That one photograph led to a significant portion of the threads of research presented in this month’s Letters/Brickbat column. One can only wonder how many more threads, covering a vast range of possible subjects, can be pulled from those vintage documents.

Top of the list for the greatest obstacle to making full use of those documents is finding individuals who have the time and necessary skills to access and photoduplicate this material — and by that I mean all the vintage material. We know the school district has preserved a significant amount of this data. It appears they’re willing to allow respectful access to all the problems we currently have in doing so seems a matter of volunteers willing to take on the task — and a large task it’s likely to be.

... museum musings ...

At the society’s last meeting the subject of a publicly accessible place to store the group’s growing mass of archival materials once again came up. The society’s collection
In attendance: Bill Sebright, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Don Ball, Mark Wagner, Marie Morrill, Peter Coffin, Judy Coffin, Loraine Nord, Marilyn Reilly, Betty Budzette, Mary Jo Reiter, Mike Reiter, Bill Phipps

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He reported that: 1) Deer Park Elementary group pictures from Kim Lucas and Gloria Hartley were passed around for members to add or correct names. 2) The first Heritage Network meeting this year will be March 20, 9:30 AM at the Stevens County Museum in Colville. Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported the main checking account ended the month at $7,166.16. There were deposits of $140.00. One check was written to Mark Wagner for Incorporation filing of $345.00. The minimum balance on the main checking account ended the month at $766.65, with a withdrawal of $10.95 for web hosting. Society Vice President Pete Coffin reported: 1) Examining the truck load of old Deer Park business records has been interesting. The bulky ledgers of historic brick building, your main focus changes from whatever you were doing prior, to raising funds in order to keep your doors open. Maintaining such an essentially endless fundraising campaign is one small task. Even assuming a building were donated to the society without stipulation — a structure in prime shape and in need of no immediate input of cash to make it useable — the society would still likely need to raise something in the order of a thousand dollars a month just to take care of all the little inciden- cals such as electrical, heating, insurance, refuse collection, insurance and taxes. In other words, all the expenses, short of labor, encountered by a small business, but without said business’s potential to generate a self-sustaining income.

There isn’t a single member of the group who wouldn’t dearly love for the society to have, if not a full-fledged museum, then at least a dedicated clubhouse with attached storage. The fact that we don’t have apparently implied to some that we lack sufficient imagi- nation to envision the possibilities. And that’s untrue.

It reminds me of a talk I had with a member of the “Save the Old Clayton School” group back when the fate of that historic brick building was still in question. The group was composed of a mix of people, whose attitude toward the issue was positively described by its stalwart, Larry Reilly, as “hopeful but realistic.” I dream about winning the lottery bigtime. If I did that today, the issue of the old school would be totally settled by tomorrow.” I shared that sentiment at the time — and now, as it relates to the society, still do. As a sentiment it’s a pleasant diversion from the hard work. But a diversion it all is.

I recall a society meeting some ten years ago at which a cardboard dinner plate upon which someone had sketched a floorplan for a museum was passed around. Apparently, this drawing was offered as a serious proposal to our unimaginative group. Our answer then was the same as it is now. We have no way to pay for this — neither the initial construction, nor the upkeep. The reply to our concerns was straight out of the movie Field of Dreams. We

were told “Build it and they will come” — apparently suggesting that once built, one or more apparitions capable of solving all our pragmatic problems would stroll out of some nearby alfalfa field. Current publishing stories that reveal something of our local his- tory. What would be very helpful in both these endeavors would be a much larger mem- bership — not only to broaden our financial base, but more importantly to enrich the socie- ty with a wider spectrum of experience-honed skills that can then be applied when pursuing our various projects.

A lot of what we do is hard work. The reward for that hard work is the sense of self-worth derived from doing something clearly of value to the community — the commu- nity we now live in, or at one time lived in. Regardless of which, it’s still in some sense our home.

— Wally Lee Parker ——

Deer Park Locations Currently Carrying Print Copies of the Mortarboard:
City Library, City Hall, Goodpasture Market, Standen Insurance, & Odynski’s Accounting.

In the past we’ve given at least passing entertainment to any number of schemes for obtaining a museum — a museum actually being the most membership inclusive objective any historical society can work toward. By inclusive I mean that up until now the prin- ciple activities within our society have been research and publishing. The reason for that is again quite simple. Research and publishing are the least expensive endeavors we can en- gage in and still be considered a legitimate historical society. What research and publish- ing are not is membership inclusive. There are few pathways to full participation for those whom we consider to be outside those areas. For example, we have little to nothing to offer potential volunteers willing to engage in hands on activities such as restoring vintage antiquities. Other than the society’s booth at summer events, we have next to nothing to offer those who might be willing to — and actually good at — interfacing with the public. Having some kind of brick and mortar pres- ence in the community — even if not an actual museum — would open up opportunities for a much broader swath of potential and existing members, respectively. Opportunities such as those mentioned above.

That said, there’s very steep down- side to all this. And there’s a swath of histori- cal societies acting as caretakers of museums who can confirm this. Once you’ve taken responsibility for a museum or historical building, your main focus changes from whatever you were doing prior, to raising funds in order to keep your doors open. Maintaining such an essentially endless fundraising campaign is one small task. Even assuming a building were donated to the society without stipulation — a structure in prime shape and in need of no immediate input of cash to make it useable — the society would still likely need to raise something in the order of a thousand dollars a month just to take care of all the little inciden- cals such as electrical, heating, insurance, refuse collection, insurance and taxes. In other words, all the expenses, short of labor, encountered by a small business, but without said business’s potential to generate a self-sustaining income.

There isn’t a single member of the group who wouldn’t dearly love for the society to have, if not a full-fledged museum, then at least a dedicated clubhouse with attached storage. The fact that we don’t have apparently implied to some that we lack sufficient imagi- nation to envision the possibilities. And that’s untrue.

It reminds me of a talk I had with a member of the “Save the Old Clayton School” group back when the fate of that historic brick building was still in question. The group was composed of a mix of people, whose attitude toward the issue was positively described by its stalwart, Larry Reilly, as “hopeful but realistic.” I dream about winning the lottery bigtime. If I did that today, the issue of the old school would be totally settled by tomorrow.”

I shared that sentiment at the time — and now, as it relates to the society, still do. As a sentiment it’s a pleasant diversion from the hard work. But a diversion it all is.

I recall a society meeting some ten years ago at which a cardboard dinner plate upon which someone had sketched a floorplan for a museum was passed around. Apparently, this drawing was offered as a serious proposal to our unimaginative group. Our answer then was the same as it is now. We have no way to pay for this — neither the initial construction, nor the upkeep. The reply to our concerns was straight out of the movie Field of Dreams. We
Print Editor Wally Parker reported:

1) One hundred and ten copies of the March Mortarboard (#107) have been printed for distribution, and the online version has been submitted for posting. This sixteen page issue leads with Rick Hodges’ story about the winter of 1968. Next is Chuck Stewart and Susan Rumble’s history of their grandfather, Clayton’s H. B. Stewart. And lastly, the Letters/Brickbats segment is a response to a question brought to the society’s attention regarding Doctor Glen Snyder’s former residence/clinic at 327 E. B Street in Deer Park. 2) The prior inkjet printer issue has been resolved, and ten issues of Collected Newsletters, Volume 29, have been printed. This volume combines Mortarboard #103, #104, and #105.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported that the March Mortarboard has been upload- ed to our Web Site. This time everything went smoothly.

Mike Reiter reported that they are building apartments on the old Deer Park Fair-ground area. They will be named the Fairgrounds Apartments. The last census showed that the current population of Deer Park is just over 4,000. The general recent growth of pop- ulation of the Deer Park area was discussed. Mike noted that the Community Center is still part of the new Fire Station.

Betty Burdette reported that the Settlers Day auction generated over $3,000, and 50-60 dinners were served. This is the 96th year for the Settlers. The buttons and shirts have a picture of the old sawmill.

The second Brickyard Day Committee meeting was March 8. The Terracotta Plant will be the theme of the 34th Brickyard Day Celebration. The parade staging area will still be at Mason and Railroad Road. The reviewing stand will be back in front of the Post Office. Elizabeth Gillum and Bucky Colvin will organize the Brickyard Fun Run. The band Spare Parts will be playing at the School grounds. The next meeting will be April 12, 6 PM at the Real Estate Market Place in Deer Park.

Next meeting: Saturday, April 8, 2017, at 9 AM at the Clayton Drive-In. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 AM. The Society meeting minutes submitted by Mark Wagner, acting Secretary.

——— end ———

Society Contacts
We encourage anyone with observations, concerns, corrections, or divergent opinions regarding the contents of these newsletters to write the society or contact one or more of the individuals listed below. Resultant conversations may remain confidential if so desired.

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C/DPHS

A print copy of this issue of the Mortarboard is or soon will be available in booklet format. Ask about “Collected Newsletters: Volume Thirty.”