A Growing Archive.

As assured in our mission statement, the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society is “dedicated to the preservation of the history of our community,” and specifically “to the art of making this common heritage accessible to the public.” Our publications, both print and online, are currently the primary manifestation of that part of our mission. All prior editions of our newsletter — the Mortarboard — are available online without charge. All prior editions of the Mortarboard are also available as bound editions in a print-on-demand format for a small donation — said donation intended to cover our print cost. We also have four volumes of earlier archival material in a print-only set titled “The Reports.” For further information on our print titles, contact anyone in the “Society Contacts” box found on the last numbered page of this issue.

——— the Editor

“Clayton Burns!”
The Clayton Fires of 1897, 1908, & 1957.
by Wally Lee Parker

The beginning of what would become the Washington Brick & Lime Company — and eventually the town of Clayton — can be traced back to the November 15th, 1879, arrival in Spokane Falls of Mr. J. T. Davie, a Scottish immigrant and skilled brickmaker who had previously been working in California. Mr. Davie managed to establish a brick plant near Latah Creek — the exact date of that founding currently undiscovered. However, Mr. Davie is quoted, as saying, “In 1882 I made 400,000 brick,” assumedly at said factory.

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The history of Washington Brick & Lime’s growth to dominance began in earnest in the fall of 1893. On that date the construction of a new brick plant was begun just north of the soon to be founded company town of Clayton. By the next year this factory, located in southeastern Stevens County, was in full operation — as described in the following article ascribed to the first year of the factory’s operation. Under the title “Home Product Made By the Washington Brick, Lime and Manufacturing Company,” the article states, “Many who have admired the handsome brick now being used in the erection of the Spokane County Courthouse in this city are not aware that it is a home production, many thinking it of eastern manufacture.”

It’s probable that Washington Brick & Lime Company was founded in 1888. But it was definitely in operation by 1889, that year’s Spokane City Directory listing Henry Brook as “president, Washington Brick & Lime,” and Joseph Spear as “secretary treasurer, Washington Brick & Lime.”

The confusion is the company’s actual name. The issue arises from the fact that the corporation was reformed at least three times. It was first incorporated in 1888 or ’89 as “Washington Brick & Lime Company.” Very late in 1891 — or very early in 1892 — it was reincorporated as “Washington Brick, Lime & Manufacturing Company.” In 1910, to emphasize what had become a major part of its production, it was renamed the “Washington Brick, Lime & Sewer Pipe Company.” After its financial reorganization in 1939, it returned to its original name, “Washington Brick & Lime Company.”

“The fire was discovered by the night watchman at 3:30. It originated near one of the chimneys, but the origin is unknown. When the watchman made the discovery, he tried to enter the burning building and to get at the fire hose and water tank, but the smoke drove him back. He then blew the whistle and called out the employees, but the flames were under such headway that nothing could be done to save the building. A messenger was sent to Deer Park to telegraph to Mr. Spear, who went up on the morning train over the Spokane Falls & Northern road.”

September 16, 1894

The Washington Brick, Lime and Manufacturing Company at once commenced the erection of their new plant at Clayton, Wash., a few miles north of the city of Spokane Falls & Northern railroad. Breaking ground on the first day of November, 1893, they put a large force of men at work and by early spring were manufacturing the handsome brick now to be seen in the courthouse building.

“A powerful engine gives motive power to the works. In the clay room thousands of tons of clay are stored. This, when properly prepared, is passed through a powerful pan crusher, from which it is elevated to the top company building, from where, after passing through screens, it reaches the several modern dry pressed brick machines, where it receives a pressure of about eighty tons, and is discharged in the shape of brick ready for burning.”

“At the time the plans were adopted for the courthouse the specifications called for the exterior to be built of dry pressed brick, but as the manufacture of that kind of brick had never been attempted in this locality, most of those interested supposed that it would be necessary to ship the brick from the east in order to get a satisfactory quality, but Spokane’s enterprise, the Washington Brick & Lime Manufacturing Company, had been quietly making experiments, and submitted samples that were superior to anything offered by eastern manufacturers, and were accepted, and at prices that were lower than the eastern market, and agreed to put in a plant not only for the manufacture of the pressed brick, both square and ornamental, but also for the hollow building tile, floor arches, etc. The proposition of this firm was cheerfully accepted by D. R. Fotheringham, the successful bidder, who is now erecting the courthouse.”

“The Washington Brick, Lime and Manufacturing Company at once commenced the erection of their new plant at Clayton, Wash., a few miles north of the city. The large plant of the Washington Brick, Lime & Manufacturing Company at Clayton, 33 miles north of Spokane, was destroyed by fire at daylight yesterday morning. The plant was erected in 1893-4 at a cost of about $50,000, and manufactured pressed fire, paving and common brick, fire-proofing, and pottery, General Manager Joseph H. Spear said last night that it was last night at this time to determine the exact loss, but he thought there would be considerable salvage. The company carried $23,000 insurance, divided among a number of companies.”

“The fire was discovered by the night watchman at 3:30. It originated near one of the chimneys, but the origin is unknown. When the watchman made the discovery, smoke was rolling from the windows in a dense cloud. He tried to enter the burning building and to get at the fire hose and water tank, but the smoke drove him back. He then blew the whistle and called out the employees, but the flames were under such headway that nothing could be done to save the building. A messenger was sent to Deer Park to telegraph to Mr. Spear, who went up on the morning train over the Spokane Falls & Northern road.”

Though Henry Brook was and would continue to be listed as president of the company, Mr. Spear, who returned last evening, said Mr. Spear, who returned last evening, “the debris was so hot that it was impossible to get at the machinery and materials. We shall rebuild the plant as quickly as possible. We have an extra engine and boiler which will be set up at once for the manufacture of common and paving brick. I think we can resume that part of the industry inside of 30 days. The rest of the buildings, which were described in the article above as the Washington Brick, Lime & Manufacturing Company, is under one large roof and at least three stories in height. At the time the plans were adopted for the building tile, floor arches, etc. In another part of their works is the Washington Brick, Lime & Manufacturing Company, which was described in the article above as the Washington Brick & Lime Company.”

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“All the work was not destroyed, however. The Washington Brick, Lime & Manufacturing Company at Clayton, 33 miles north of Spokane, was destroyed by fire at daylight yesterday morning. The plant was erected in 1893-4 at a cost of about $50,000, and manufactured pressed fire, paving and common brick, fire-proofing, and pottery. General Manager Joseph H. Spear said last night that it was last night at this time to determine the exact loss, but he thought there would be considerable salvage. The company carried $23,000 insurance, divided among a number of companies.”

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Though Henry Brook was and would continue to be listed as president of the company until shortly before his death in 1908, it’s likely that the “Washington” name reflects an early error, as several factual controls had already been assumed by the company’s secretary/treasurer, Joseph Spear.

The article, quoting the secretary/treasurer, Joseph Spear, “We have been burning a small kiln of paving brick, and it was not damaged, being away from the building. These brick will be out as soon as they can cool.” The reporter composing the article continued, “The works were under one large building of frame (read wooden), 130 x 200 feet.” That fact would tend to lessen our surprise at the Spokesman-Review’s July 22nd, 1897, front-page headline, “BURNED AT DAWN!”

The following headline states, “The Washington Brick, Lime & Manufacturing Company at Clayton, 33 miles north of Spokane, was destroyed by fire at daylight yesterday morning.” The plant was erected in 1893-4 at a cost of about $50,000, and manufactured pressed fire, paving and common brick, fire-proofing, and pottery.

When asked if the factory’s destruction would interfere with the company’s contract to supply paving brick to the City of Spokane early spring, Mr. Spear replied, “Not in the slightest. We have been burning a small kiln of paving brick, and it was not damaged, being away from the building. These brick will be out as soon as they can cool.”

The reporter composing the article continued, “The works were under one large building of frame, 130x200 feet. This made a hot fire, and the flames leaped upward to a great height.”

“At the time of the fire the company was employing about 25 men, and had a number of large orders ahead. In one of the kilns were the brick for the new residence which D. C. Corbin is erecting in the city. The brick for..."
Spokane County's new courthouse, which burned in 1897, was enlarged in 1898. That expansion was described by Solon Shedd in his book, "The Clays of Washington: Their Geology, Mineralogy, and Technology." This book was published in 1910, two years after the Smelter Fire of 1898, which destroyed much of the city. Shedd mentioned in his book that the brick and terra cotta works of the Washington Brick, Lime and Manufacturing Company had been very much enlarged and improved. The implication to this, though Shedd was careful not to use the word fire, was that the indicated enlargement and improvement occurred during the factory's rebuilding subsequent to the disaster of 1908.

The professor's book described a much-enlarged factory over the one that burned in 1897. He also noted that "the brick machinery and the terra cotta works have all been in one large building," implying that the kilns, since they're not mentioned as being inside, had been removed from the interior of the main factory during the rebuilding of 1897. While this did seem to eliminate a severe fire hazard inside the factory itself, the next great fire approached the factory complex from an apparently unanticipated direction.

With temperatures reaching the mid-90s in Spokane, the first week of August, 1908, was sweltering by any standard. News reports state the terracotta building was not touched by the fire. In fact, two of the 1908 photos seen in this article appear to have been taken from the terracotta's upper windows or roof.
Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society Newsletter
Issue #111 — July — 2017

“The dispatcher’s office on the S. F. & N. division (Spokane Falls & Northern) of the Great Northern received a report this afternoon that the business portion of the town was completely destroyed, including the big plant of the Washington Brick & Lime Company, the Great Northern depot, and four freight cars.

“All wire communications with Clayton is cut off and the report received by the dispatcher’s office came through Deer Park, word having been brought to that place by a train conductor.

“At noon today J. H. Spear, president of the Washington Brick & Lime Company, received notice that the company’s plant at Clayton was on fire. Being unable to get anything definite he left by automobile at 1 o’clock for the scene of the disaster.

“The town of Clayton is stated to be widely scattered, but in the midst of brush and timber. Timber fires may have been the cause of the conflagration.

“Clayton has 400 or 500 inhabitants. Its chief industries are the manufacture of brick and lumber.

“The telephone operator at Deer Park states that the fire started from some unknown cause in the rear of Olson’s mercantile store, which is located on Main Street, in the center of the business district. The flames spread to other buildings and at 2 o’clock all of the business district of the town was in flames and would be practically destroyed.

“The residence district, which is more scattered, may be saved. Assistance has been sent from Deer Park. At the latest report no loss of life had occurred. The Washington Brick & Lime Company’s plant is said to be a total loss.”

The next evening, August 5th, the Chronicle carried an extensive quote by Joseph Spear, president of the company — having assumed the role of Washington Brick & Lime’s president after the death the prior winter of the company’s former president, Henry Brook.

Mr. Spear stated, “The Washington Brick & Lime Company will rebuild its plant at Clayton as quickly as possible. ... The new plant will be the same capacity as the old and will be different in the respect that it will be fireproof. Machinery is being ordered now and we expect to have the new plant in operation within 60 days. The terracotta works was not destroyed, but is shut down for lack of power, the power plant being damaged in yesterday’s fire. However, we expect to be making terracotta in a few days. We expect to be able to fill most of our contracts, but a few may be delayed for 30 days.

On Thursday, August 6th, the Newport Miner took time from its extensive report on the fires in that town’s vicinity to note, “Another Stevens County town has been practically wiped out by fire. Clayton, on the S. F. & N., was visited by a destructive fire on Tuesday afternoon, and practically all of its business section wiped out, including the plant of the Washington Brick & Lime Co. The total loss will be fully $100,000.”

Perhaps the most informative description of the fire was printed the following Saturday of the Colville Examiners. On page 4, under the headline “Clayton Burns,” the newspaper reported, “The business portion of the town of Clayton is in ruins as the result of a fire which broke out there at 5:30 Tuesday morning. The loss is estimated at $100,000, and there is not a store standing in the city. Details are few, as the telephone exchange was burned out and the town cut off from communications with the outside.

“A load of hay, which had been unloaded in a barn near the store of the Clayton Mercantile Company, either caught fire or was set by an incendiary, the barn caught, the town of Clayton is in ruins as the result of a fire which broke out there at 5:30 Tuesday morning. The loss is estimated at $100,000, and there is not a store standing in the city. Details are few, as the telephone exchange was burned out and the town cut off from communications with the outside.

“A load of hay, which had been unloaded in a barn near the store of the Clayton Mercantile Company, either caught fire or was set by an incendiary, the barn caught, the flames spread to the mercantile company’s building and in a few moments the town was in flames. No one was hurt.

“The heaviest loser is the Washington Brick & Lime Company, the main building of its plant and the bunkhouse being burned. In the plant was a large quantity of valuable ma-
Where Clayton’s Business District Once Stood.

In the foreground, this photo is believed to show the three muffle-kilns — terracotta burning kilns — mentioned in Solon Shedd’s pre-fire description of the factory complex as found in his book, “The Clays of the State of Washington.” The upper of the two lines of railroad track were likely those of the Great Northern Railroad (previously the Spokane Falls & Northern Railway). Across the track are the smoldering remains of Clayton’s business district. As for the poles seen rising amid the smoke parallel to the railroad tracks and road just beyond, doubtless some of these were related to telegraph and long-distance telephone services following the railroad right of way. While it’s possible some may have carried electrical lines, we’re currently uncertain as to whether or to what degree the brick plant’s generator supplied electricity to the business district. The one object seen rising beyond the line of poles may be an un-toppled chimney.

chimney and its loss has necessitated the closing down of the plant. Among the other losers were A. T. King, general merchandise, whose stock is estimated from $15,000 to $20,000; The Clayton Mercantile Company’s store and stock; Joel Huffman, general merchandise; Johnson’s restaurant; the Ratke Meat Market; Jelle’s Confectionery and Pool Room; the railroad depot; telephone offices; residences of A. T. King and Knute Jelle, and several smaller buildings.

“The town had no fire protection and it was only through a change in the wind that the entire town was not swept. The brick and lime company is the main industry of the town and its closing down will have a serious effect. The Great Northern depot was also burned, but the people seem to think that it is no great loss to the town, as the Great Northern will now build a good depot.

“Several hundred thousand feet of lumber were burned and the lumber sheds destroyed. The residence portion of the city was all saved.

“The business portion of Clayton was practically all burned, but the inhabitants are not suffering for supplies. The big boarding house of the Washington Brick & Lime Company was saved and was well stocked with supplies, which were put at the disposal of those who were destitute.”

The fact that the northeastern part of Washington and the Idaho Panhandle were being scorched by forest fires added to Clayton’s worry, as noted by the phrase “it was only through a change in the wind that the entire town was not swept” in the above article. It’s also likely that the multitude of regional fires diminished the column-inches the region’s newspapers devoted to Clayton’s plight — newspapers in which we’ve yet to find a single photo of the fire published.
Regarding those regional fires; the August, 1908, edition of the Department of Agriculture’s Monthly Weather Review — in its summation regarding the “Portland, Oregon, Forecast District,” which includes the eastern side of the fire the Clayton area residential Eddie Olson and Warren Nord, the eastern side of the building had once housed the firehouse. That gap is believed to have proved critical to the survival of the town.

According to Mr. Glasbrenner’s account, among the first to notice the fire was Clayton’s Postmaster, Arnold Leliefeld. He rode his horse to the fire station to find out if the horses were still there, and they were. Normally, they had to break their way in, the keys to the firehouse being absent.) Once the main doors were open, Jamme "cab of the fire truck" and drive it into the burning inferno, though it appears their main concern, considering the Mercantile was obviously going to be a complete loss, was keeping the flames from jumping the building. As for the rest of the town, it was reported that a brisk north-easterly wind was pushing the smoldering shavings from the Mill, "like a combination brick plant and lumber mill since the Clayton brick plant was closed with all the brick plant boys coming here to work. We have been Hugoton, Vern Jarrett, Jim Stolling, Harold Klawunder, Bob Fromme, of the Kaniksu National Forest, reports that the fires in the forest are now being kept in check, and heavy showers of the past week having proven very beneficial as aids to the fired communities." Again, the rains of late August — the ones that had swept through from its distant offices in Washington D.C., portrayed as "light but general" — became "heavy showers" to those on the fire lines. Proving once again, it’s all a matter of perspective.

… Clayton’s brick plant closes …

The summer of 1957 was a difficult one for the Clayton community. Although there may have been rumors concerning the fate of the community’s sole industry, the brick plant, it’s probable that any said apprehension skyrocketed when, on the 30th of May, the Spokesman-Review announced “Sale of Washington Brick & Lime Company plants at Dishman and Clayton, Wash., and clay properties, to Gladding McBean & Company has been approved by the directors of both firms, Neal R. Fosseen, president of WBL, said yesterday.” A hint at the possible outcome of what was announced as the article continued, “C W. Planje, president of the California firm, said operations would continue at the Dishman structural glazed tile unit, but plans were ‘not finalized’ for other products, including the Dishman plant and Clayton Harvey called me. I was looking at the purchase company, the newspaper said, “Gladding McBean is the West’s largest ceramics firm with seven plants in California, one at Mica and one at Renton, near Seattle.”

The C/DPHS has yet to discover when the decision to close Clayton’s brick plant was announced to the workers, or the date when said closing actually occurred. We expect the factory was well into shutdown by July, and that all activity had probably ceased by September. That estimate is based on several items appearing in Bill Roll’s weekly chat column, “Shavings from the Mill,” as it appeared in the August 15th, 1957, Tri-County Tribune. To quote Mr. Roll, “The plant here (the Deer Park plant) is beginning, and heavy, on a new product, like a combination brick plant and lumber mill since the Clayton brick plant was closed with all the brick plant boys coming here to work. We have been Hugoton, Vern Jarrett, Jim Stolling, Harold Klawunder, Bob Fromme, of the Kaniksu National Forest, reports that the fires in the forest are now being kept in check, and heavy showers of the past week having proven very beneficial as aids to the fires.”

A week ago Monday would have been August 5th, the last line adds a degree of significance to the following quote taken from an interview this writer conducted on behalf of the C/DPHS with Mr. Klawunder early in 2004. A condensation of that interview was first published in the August 4th, 2004, edition of the Deer Park Tribune, then archived in

Volume One of the Reports to the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society; that first printed in 2005.

As Harold related, “Emil Tobeck, Ben Renner, and me was loading out the last of the brick — loading it into freight cars. Ben was working his usual supervisor wage, but me and Emil were contracting. So there was a couple of days where we each made over hundred dollars. That’s what made it so hard when my youngest brother, Cliford, asked his boss, Harvey Cooe, about getting me a job at the Deer Park plant and Clayton Harvey called me. I was looking at the purchase company, the newspaper said, “Gladding McBean is the West’s largest ceramics firm with seven plants in California, one at Mica and one at Renton, near Seattle.”

The above suggests that by late July or early August, all manufacturing had ceased at Clayton, and only a few personnel remained onsite to ship what remained of the fired production away.

… the Clayton fire of 1957 …

On Thursday, July 11th, with the brick plant’s closing pending, and the major disruptions of personal lives it was sure to cause weighing heavily on the locals, another disaster hit Clayton’s business district. According to local newspaper correspondent Clarence Glasbrenner’s write-up in the following week’s issue of the Tri-County Tribune, smoke was first noticed “oozing” from the rear of the E & E Mercantile store’s roof at 7:30 a.m. E & E Mercantile, Clayton’s only grocery store was one of the last units of Clayton’s classic Railroad Avenue storefronts — a building assumedly dating back to the town’s reconstruction after the all-consuming fire of 1908.

The brick walled, window fronted Mercantile anchored the west corner of what had long been Clayton’s primary business block. At some point the building appears to have been partitioned — that assumed since, according to recollections drawn from inter-views with longtime Clayton area residents Eddie Olson and Warren Nord, the eastern side of the building had once housed a barber shop, and later was converted to a garage for a neighborhood favorite, Harvey Cooe. That garage was exactly four foot wide alley separating the fire station side of the building from Matt’s Tavern to the east. That gap is believed to have proved critical to the survival of the town.

According to Mr. Glasbrenner’s account, among the first to notice the fire was Clayton’s Postmaster, Arnold Leliefeld. Another to the firehouse, went door-to- doorrousing townpeople.

Mr. Leliefeld’s first impulse was to rescue the town’s fire truck from the smoldering fire station. Another local, Bob Key, noticed the smoke and telephoned the grocery store’s leaseholder, Ed Jamme, who joined Kenney and Leliefeld in gaining access to the truck. An unverified anecdote occasionally heard after the fire suggested they had to break their way in, the keys to the firehouse being absent.) Once the main doors were open, Jamme “managed to leap into the smoke filled cab of the fire truck” and drive it into the street. While the fire team was gathering, smoke began pouring from the roof and windows of the building. Things were clearly out of control.

Clayton’s fire department had just swung into action when Deer Park’s fire truck was ‘screamed to the rescue.’ According to Mr. Glasbrenner’s account, it was shortly followed by units from “Country Homes, Wild Rose Prairie, Mead, Elk, Chattaroy and Chevelah.” The units began "burning inferno," though it appears their main concern, considering the Mercantile was obviously going to be a complete loss, was keeping the flames from jumping to any of the nearby buildings by dampening their roofs and walls — especially the roof of Matt’s Tavern, and the walls facing the gap between Matt’s and the burning building. As for the rest of the town, it was reported that a brisk north-easterly wind was pushing the smoldering
embers away from the residential district lay- ing to the south, much as it had 1908’s fire. Mr. Glasbrenner did note that the wind’s direction “threatened the Gladding McBean brick plant”—its wood-frame loading sheds paralleling the tracks on the north side of Rail- road Avenue. If the news of the factory’s closing at the hands of its new owners had been made public by that time, which it likely had, it’s problematic as to how much concern the community actually felt regarding the threat to the plant.

… Of what was happening in Clayton spread like a wildfire of its own. The Mortarboard’s editor, a resident of Williams Valley at the time, noted the thick column of black smoke rising west. It wasn’t long before a neighbor called to report “Clayton’s burning down.” Besides the visual clue, in the relative quiet of a clear early morn- ing the sound of sirens blaring as the bright red trucks rushed from the north, east, and south along various rural blacktops would have carried for miles. If any question re- mained as to where they were going, on the black column rising would have marked the center of the excitement, and lifting most any party line for a little discrete eavesdropping could have accessed the latest rumors regarding such.

Toward the east edge of Clayton’s business district, Carl and Don Lindh were playing water over the “12,000 gallon gaso- line tanks” near their service station “to keep the heat from exploding them.” Nearer the fire, Postmaster Leliefeld carried the mail and postal records out of the threatened post office just to the east of Matt’s Tavern. And owners of some of the as yet unburning business fur- ther along the street tried to save what they could as “firesmen shot a stream of water against the buildings.”

That concern seemed more than justified. The beginning to Clayton’s 1957 fire was almost a mirror image of the beginning of 1908’s. Likely the community’s old- timers often related tales about that infamous prior blaze. If any listeners doubted that a whiff of smoke could, within minutes, grow into something big enough to incinerate a town — as those who were there in 1908 doubtless remembered — any such skeptic- ism quickly dissipated on that July morning half a century later as the town fought for its surviv- al. But this time things were different.

In 1908, when most regional roads were little more than rutted pathways through the woods, and even then, rarely if ever navi- gated by something not horse drawn, the act of quickly concentrating firefighting assets from surrounding communities — assuming such equipment even existed — to a given point was unfeasible. Then too, though the technol- ogy was rapidly improving, firefighting equip- ment at that time was still fairly primitive.

The telegraph and telephone lines running through Clayton were quickly downed in 1908, apparently without sending any de- tails about the fire out. Though the area’s res-idents doubtless knew something was happen- ing, since they would have seen a much, much larger plume of smoke than 1957’s rising, they had to wait for a railroad employee to carry the news downstream.

The volunteer (though experienced) firefighters rushing to Clayton’s defense in 1957 were alerted by a widespread web of telephones. They responded, and pumps powerful enough to throw streams of water where directed. When those tanks emptied, the trucks would be driven to nearby water sources — assuming such equipment even existed — to a given point was unfeasible. Then too, though the technol- ogy was rapidly improving, firefighting equip- ment at that time was still fairly primitive.

The earliest currently-known descrip- tion of Clayton’s brick plant, this dated Sep- tember 16, 1894, states “It’s another part of their works is being manufactured the fire proofing for the courthouse.” The mentioned courthouse is Spokane County’s courthouse, the castle-like structure on Spokane’s West Mallon Avenue, which was officially opened for business on November 20, 1895. But the term “fire proofing,” which returns again and again in early descriptions of the Clayton fac- tory’s output, has always seemed something of a puzzle. The puzzle began to dissolve with the uncovering of this article from the October 29, 1905, issue of the Spokesman-Review, which returns again in early descriptions of the Clayton fac- tory’s output, has always seemed something of a puzzle. The puzzle began to dissolve with the uncovering of this article from the October 29, 1905, issue of the Spokesman-Review, which returns again in early descriptions of the Clayton fac- tory’s output, has always seemed something of a puzzle.

The article, headlined “Make 135,000 Bricks Daily,” quoted Joseph Spear — described in the newspaper as the company’s “manager,” though he was in everything but name Wash- ington Brick & Lime’s owner — as saying the following. “Fire proofing, or what is known as hollow tile, is made by a secret process, and burned so loosely that nails can be driven into it without its breaking. There are spaces enough between the particles of brick, that when the nails are driven into it they force the particles of brick together without breaking the brick. This ware has hollow spaces in it. The government stipulates that it must be 40 percent void to make it light.”

A little investigation into J. H. Spear’s “Fire Proofing Catalogue of the National Fire Proofing Company” revealed a secret process brought us to a 1905 volume titled “Fire Proofing Catalogue of the National Fire Proofing Company.” A portion of the text states, “The porosity of terracotta is produced by mixing sawdust with the raw clay. During the burning process the sawdust disappears, leaving small cavities where it had been. Porous terracotta is a better fire and water resisting material than dense or semi- porous, but it has not a great strength, there- fore, dense of semi-porous material is used for arches; dense, semi-porous or porous for par-
In attendance: Bill Sebright, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Mark Wagner, Lorraine Nord, Marilyn Reilly, Sue Rehms, Chuck Lyons, Ella Jenkins, Mike Reiter, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Marie Morrill, Joel Reiter, Lynn Wells, Heather McGrath, Barry Pasicsznyk, Don Ball, and Roxanne Camp

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM. He reported that:
1) Jesse Klemish brought by more examples of American Fire Bricks. These are for the CDPHS to keep.
2) I have several old insulators that I would like to give away. I'm not sure they have any display value.
3) Heather McGrath sent some pages of an anecdot al deed for the Frank and Ruby Koehler farm in Williams Valley. They were passed around. Heather attended the meeting and brought not only the Koehler family anecdot al deed, but many wonderful family pictures. Pete Coffin took them all to scan.
4) Our thanks to Barry Pasicznyk for bringing in a brick from her son's chimney in Spokane. It has a very strange trademark.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported the main checking account ended the month at $6,846.94. There were deposits of $270.00. One check was written to Discount Sign Warehouse for $620.82 for printing and photograph the south portal of the Arcadia Orches highline canal south of Loon Lake. From locating the highline ditch south of the railroad tracks, I think it is covered by a pile of very large boulders probably placed by the BNSF Railroad as grade erosion protection.

Society Vice President Pete Coffin reported that:
1) Finished writing a manuscript titled "Lewis Cass Gemmill, Early Wild Rose Settler" and submitted it to Editor Parker as a possible Mortarboard article.
2) With much help from Editor Parker, I have composed a manuscript titled "The Wild Rose Orchard Company." Material from the First State Bank of Deer Park’s 1909 correspondence files was combined with editor Wally Parker’s vintage literature search to finish the manu script. It has been submitted to Editor Parker as a co-authored paper for a possible Mortar board article.
3) Took a field trip to locate and photograph the south portal of the Arcadia Orchards highline canal south of Loon Lake.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported:
1) One hundred and ten copies of the June Mortarboard have been printed for distribution, and the online version has been submitted for posting. This sixteen-page issue begins with Peter Coffin’s discussion of early Deer Park settler Peter E. Meyers. We know it was used in a Brickyard Day. The web hosting account ended the month at $6,846.94. There were deposits of $270.00. One check was written to Discount Sign Warehouse for $620.82 for printing and photographing.
2) With much help from Editor Parker, I have composed a manuscript titled "The Wild Rose Orchard Company." Material from the First State Bank of Deer Park’s 1909 correspondence files was combined with editor Wally Parker’s vintage literature search to finish the manuscript. It has been submitted to Editor Parker as a co-authored paper for a possible Mortar board article.
The Letters/Brickbats segment includes evidence regarding the closure date for Clayton’s terracotta factory; a presentation of images and facts related to a 1913 postcard from the Weather Bureau to a Deer Park resident; plus details regarding a massive water-diversion project proposed but apparently not realized by the Arcadia Orchards Company. 2) At member Mike Reiter’s suggestion, experimentation has begun toward developing one or more tri-fold brochures advertising the historical society and its mission — the idea being to distribute these through various venues. The tri-fold, essentially a single letter-size piece of paper printed on both sides, is a common format for informative brochures and advertisements. By trial and error, it quickly becomes evident that the brochure’s apparent simplicity is deceptive. Presenting a comprehensive and complete idea or set of ideas in such a compact space is extremely difficult. A “draft” of the brochure was passed around for comment and suggestions. In accord with those suggestions, a modified “draft” will be undertaken.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported that the new Mortarboard has been uploaded. She also brought the statistics for web activity for the month for review.

Mike Reiter reported that he got the time-lapse camera going on the old Ag Building. Dan Huffman had me try uploading the video to the cloud, so he could get it but it takes around ten hours to upload a week’s worth of video and it hogs all the bandwidth in city hall so I’m just going to put it on a 64 gig SD card weekly. Seems pretty crazy they had to dig all that dirt out and then compact it back — guess someone is creating jobs!

The next Brickyard Day Committee meeting will be June 14, 6 PM at the Real Estate Marketplace. Ella Jenkins will be our Honored Citizen. We hope to have the t-shirts ready by the next CDPHS meeting.

Chuck Lyons suggested all members should go see the Leno Prestini paintings displayed at the Stevens County Historical Society in Colville.

Next meeting: Saturday, July 8, 2017, at 9 AM at the Clayton Drive-In. Meeting adjourned at 9:41 AM. The Society meeting minutes submitted by Mark Wagner, acting Secretary.

See Yourself in Print.

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society’s department of Print Publications is always looking for original writings, classic photos, properly aged documents and the like that may be of interest to our readers. These materials should be rooted within, though not limited to, northern Spokane County, southeastern Stevens County, and southern Pend Oreille County. As for types of materials, family or personal remembrances are always considered. Articles of general historical interest — including pieces on natural history, archeology, geology and such — are likely to prove useful. In other words, we are always searching for things that will increase our readers’ understanding and appreciation of this region’s past. As for historical perspective; to us history begins whenever the past is dusty enough to have become noteworthy — which is always open to interpretation. From there it extends back as deep as we can see, can research, or even speculate upon. Copyright considerations for any materials submitted are stated in the “Editorial and Copyright Policy” dialog box found on page 1,516 of this issue. For any clarifications regarding said policy, or any discussions of possible story ideas or the appropriateness of certain types of material and so on, please contact the editor via the email address supplied on the same page.

— the editor ——

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 can remain confidential if so desired.

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— C/DPHS ——

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