

THE
CLAYTON/DEER PARK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Mortarboard

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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.

A Ride-Along With Leno
by
Edward Kingrey

It was around 1948 and I was “*living the life*” on my Grandpa and Grandma Walter’s and Clara King’s Dairy Farm. One day I happened to be riding my horse up the road in front of the Clarence Nord Farm — that being just across Beaver Creek from the King Farm. I saw Leno Prestini on his horse coming down the road past Clayton’s Grade School. We met up shortly and he stopped to talk to me. He said, “*Let’s go for a little ride.*” I was thrilled and felt honored that he would ask me.

Off we went, turning west toward Bigfoot Valley. We crossed Williams Valley Road and soon we reached the foothills, headed into the woods and up a mountainside. Eventually we came to a barb-wire fence, and I thought, “*We’ll probably be heading back soon.*” Much to my surprise, Leno got off his horse, fished in a saddle bag, and came out with a pair of wire cutters. Leno cut a pathway through the fence, got back on his horse, and we continued up the mountain.

After a long and sometimes treacherous climb up the mountain, we reached the crest and stopped. As we looked back over the



Edward “Pudge” Kingrey
on “Old Jeff.”
(Photo from the Ed Kingrey collection.)



Illustration from “The Telephone Review,” February, 1914.

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

Free — Take One
The C/DPHS meets at 9 a.m. every second Saturday of the month. Join us at the Clayton Drive-In, Clayton, Washington.
Visit our website at <http://www.cdphs.org>

fascinating landscape below, Leno suddenly took off his Stetson, waved it in the air, and let out a blood curdling “Yahoooooo!” I thought I was really back in the Old West.

It took the better part of the day, as we wandered through the west hills toward Loon Lake. Soon the lake came into view. We ended up riding clear around the north end of the lake and followed Highway 395 back to Clayton.

I arrived back home around milking time and received a good scolding from Grandpa King, who had been wondering where I was all day. But it was worth it. I would have this memory of a ride-along with an icon of Clayton, Leno Prestini, for the rest of my life.



*Leno Prestini — circa 1950s.
(Photo from the C/DPHS collection.)*

— end —

Mica Brick Plant Field Trip

by
Peter Coffin

On September 13, 2013, Bill and John Sebright, Larry Bowen and I drove to Mica, Washington, to tour the Mutual Materials brick making facility there. Prior to his retirement Larry had been employed in the plant and graciously offered to lead a tour of the operation for historical society members.

The site contains both a modern brick manufacturing plant and relics of past brick making operations. At the start of our tour, we visited some of the remaining beehive brick baking kilns (*figures 1 & 2*), along with some smoke stacks. Still around the bases of these kilns were the natural gas lines that delivered the gas to bake the bricks.

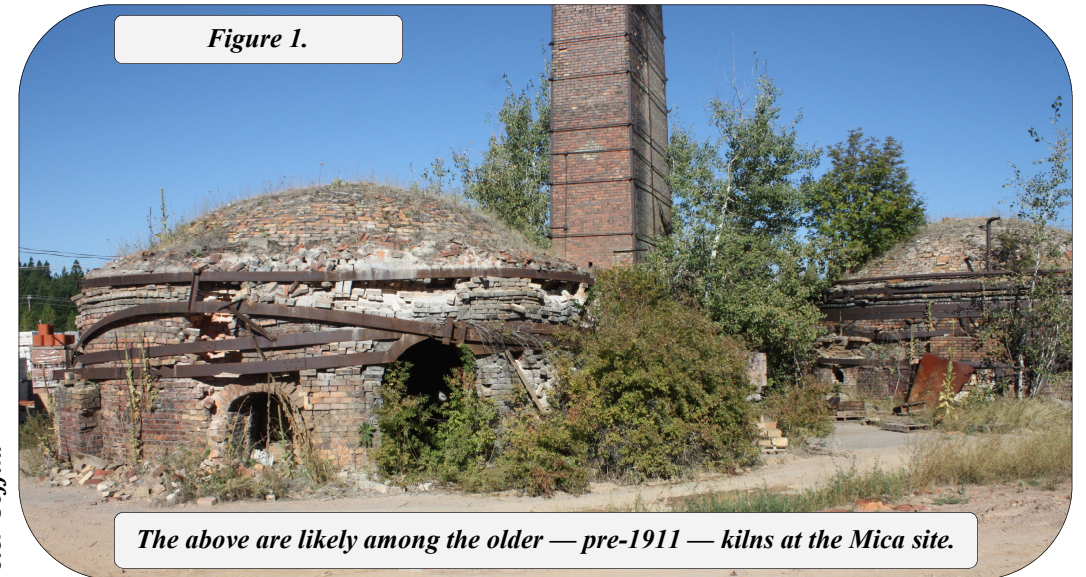
The raw material for brick manufacture at Mica is dug north of the plant site in a field just south of a large hill that used to be the site of a sanitary landfill. Rather than load

the raw clay material into a dump truck, an earth mover is used to scoop up the clay and transport it to storage bins in a building on the east side of the plant (*figures 3 & 4*).

Various locations in the “pit” are mined for clay of different colors. The clay mined in the Mica area is not the same as that once mined in the pits in the Clayton, Washington, area. The Clayton clays are smooth textured, very fine-grained clays which had fossil leaves deposited in them. The Clayton clays were deposited on the quiet bottom of a lake. Mica’s clays are quite coarse with much sand sized grains of quartz and feldspars weathered in them as a result of intense weathering of a granitic source rock. When picked up the material seems to be an unlikely brick

— *Text continued on page 1364* —

Figure 1.



The above are likely among the older — pre-1911 — kilns at the Mica site.

All photos in this article are by Peter Coffin.

The Historic Kilns:

In 1982 the Mica brickworks — located about 15 miles southeast of Spokane — was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Describing the areas of historic interest located within Mica’s still working factory complex, the Register’s nomination form states, “Many of the original buildings and structures remain on the site.” These retired structures included five beehive kilns and accompanying stacks — all built before 1911. Another kiln constructed in 1925. Two more that were built around 1953 or ‘54 as replacements for “earlier kilns” are apparently still in occasional use. The report went on to note that the above listed kilns were the “primary” artifacts being nominated for historic status, though a number of the site’s other classic structures were also being suggested.

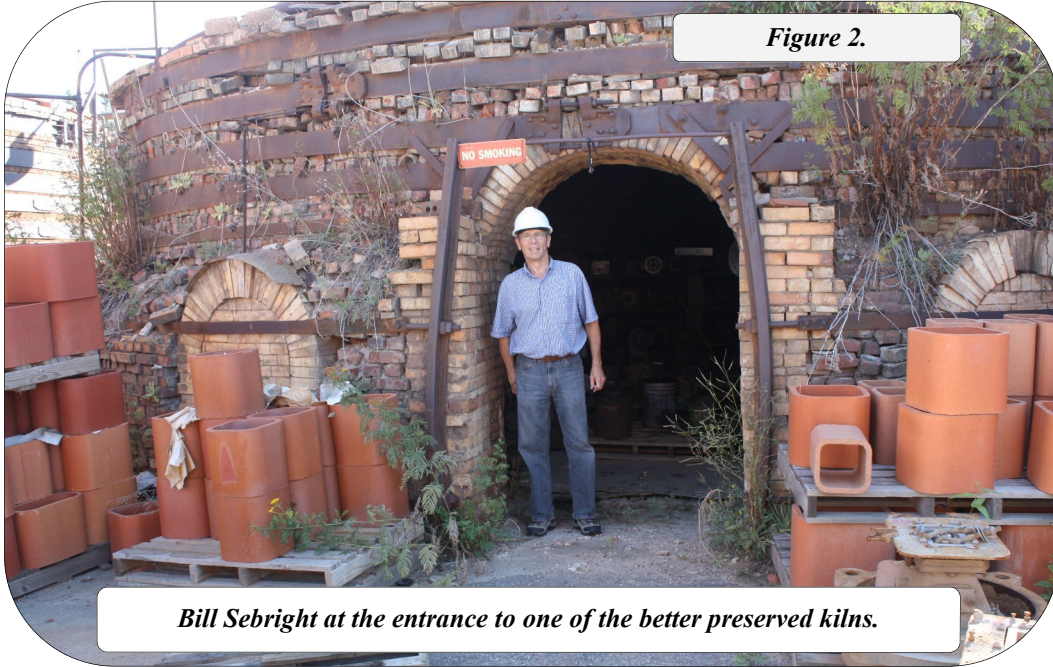
— *the Editorial Group* —

The Corporate Linage:

The brick plant at Mica has operated under a series of names since its construction in 1902. First incorporated as the American Fire Brick Company, the operation was sold to the Gladding McBean Company in 1929. Gladding McBean went on to purchase the Washington Brick & Lime Company in mid-1957 — shutting down the Clayton brick plant shortly after, and, in time, dissolving the rest of WB&L’s factories. Pursuant to a merger, in 1962 Gladding McBean’s Mica factory was absorbed into a new company, the International Pipe and Ceramics Corporation. IP&CC’s name was later changed to Interpace, and, in 1990, Interpace sold the Mica plant to Mutual Materials, the current owner.

— *the Editorial Group* —

Figure 2.



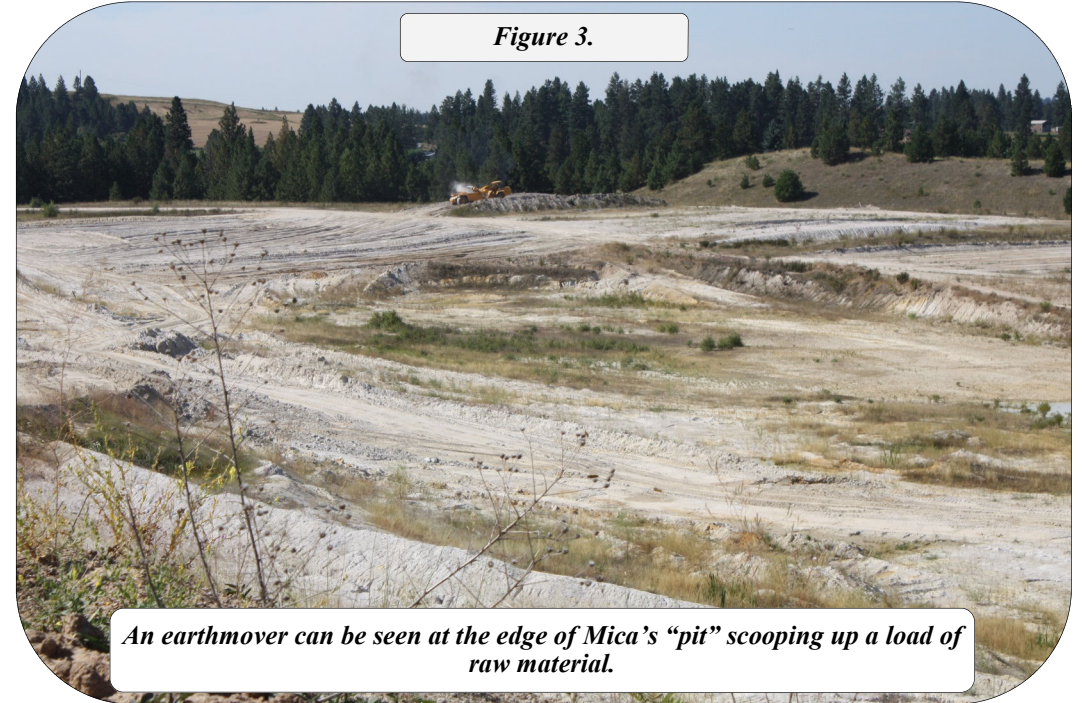
Bill Sebright at the entrance to one of the better preserved kilns.

The Design of Mica's "Beehive" Kilns:

As regards Mica's eight standing circular periodic downdraft kilns, the National Register's application states, "While no two kilns are exactly alike in their dimensions, their general construction is the same." The smaller kilns are described as "about 28 feet in diameter." The approximate size of the larger kilns isn't stated, though satellite views suggest it's unlikely any exceed the above noted diameter by a great degree. These "one story circular structures with domed roofs are constructed entirely of brick," the most visible exception being the metal expansion band intended to preserve the kiln's structural integrity as the kiln expands during "the firing process." The kiln walls stand approximately ten feet tall, with the interior dome height — measured from the center of the kilns — averaging about sixteen feet. The base of the kiln walls average three and a half feet thick, tapering to about two and a half feet at the top. The National Register's application indicates that the kiln domes are laid of "one course of brick." Of note is the fact that the outer surface of each dome was original sealed with a plaster made from "sand, cement, and lime" — this coating having largely eroded away on those kilns since abandoned. All the original kilns had from "eight to twelve" fireboxes spaced around the circumference, then extending through the base of the walls to allow the entrance of combustion gases. Originally stoked with wood or coal, when the kilns were converted to burn natural gas (the pipeline arriving in the area in 1956), the fireboxes were bricked shut — as seen in the photo above.

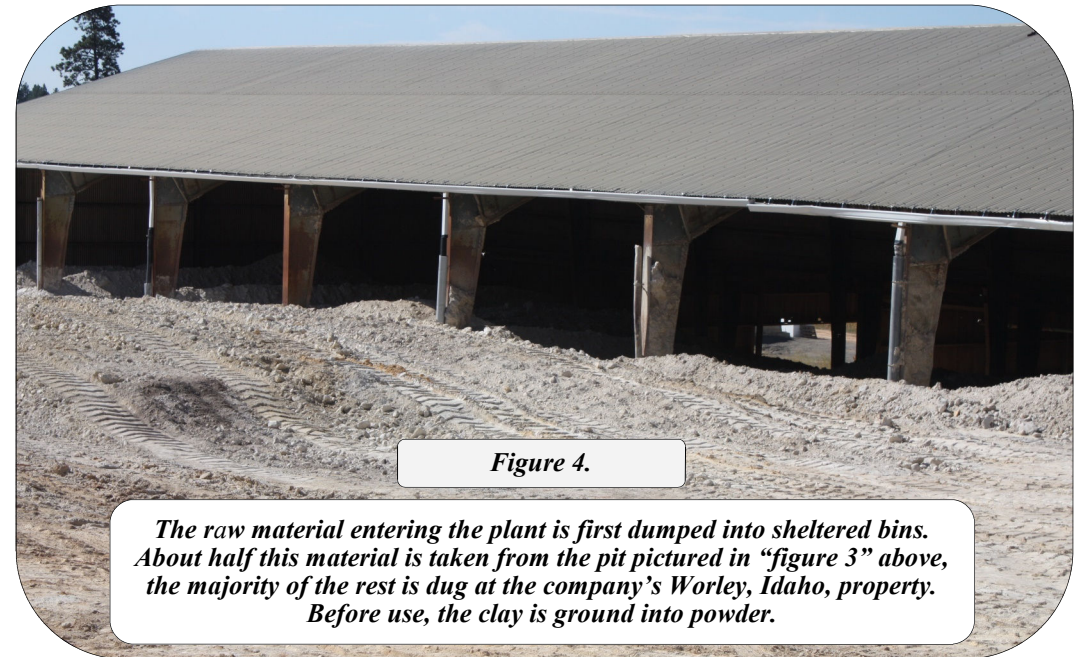
— the Editorial Group —

Figure 3.



An earthmover can be seen at the edge of Mica's "pit" scooping up a load of raw material.

Figure 4.



The raw material entering the plant is first dumped into sheltered bins. About half this material is taken from the pit pictured in "figure 3" above, the majority of the rest is dug at the company's Worley, Idaho, property. Before use, the clay is ground into powder.

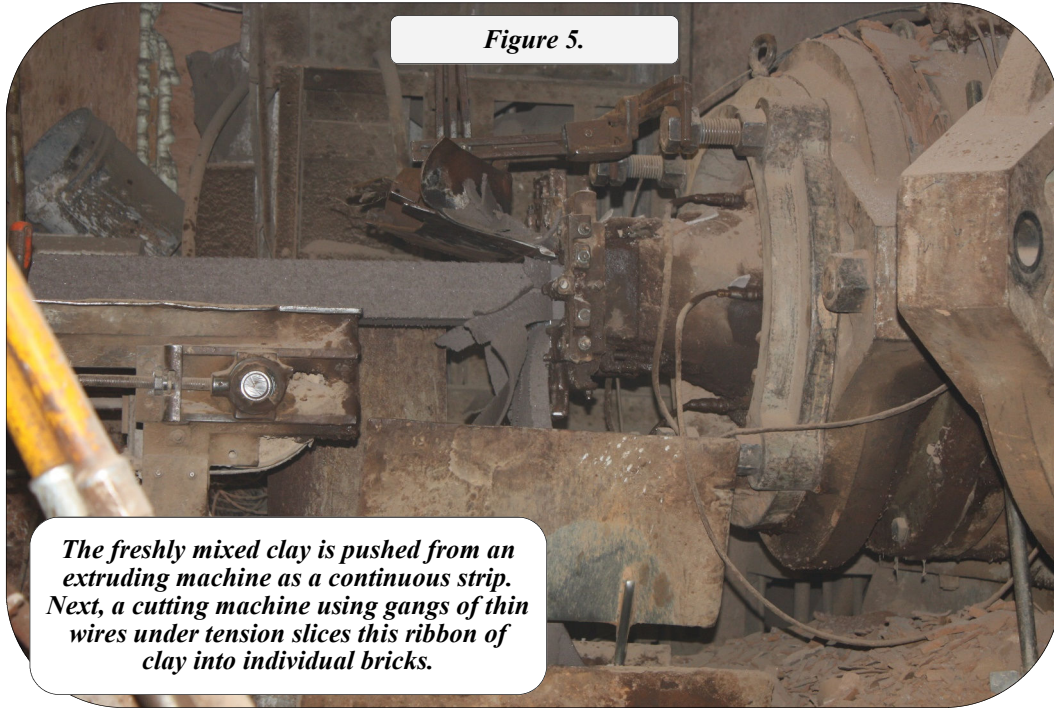


Figure 5.

The freshly mixed clay is pushed from an extruding machine as a continuous strip. Next, a cutting machine using gangs of thin wires under tension slices this ribbon of clay into individual bricks.

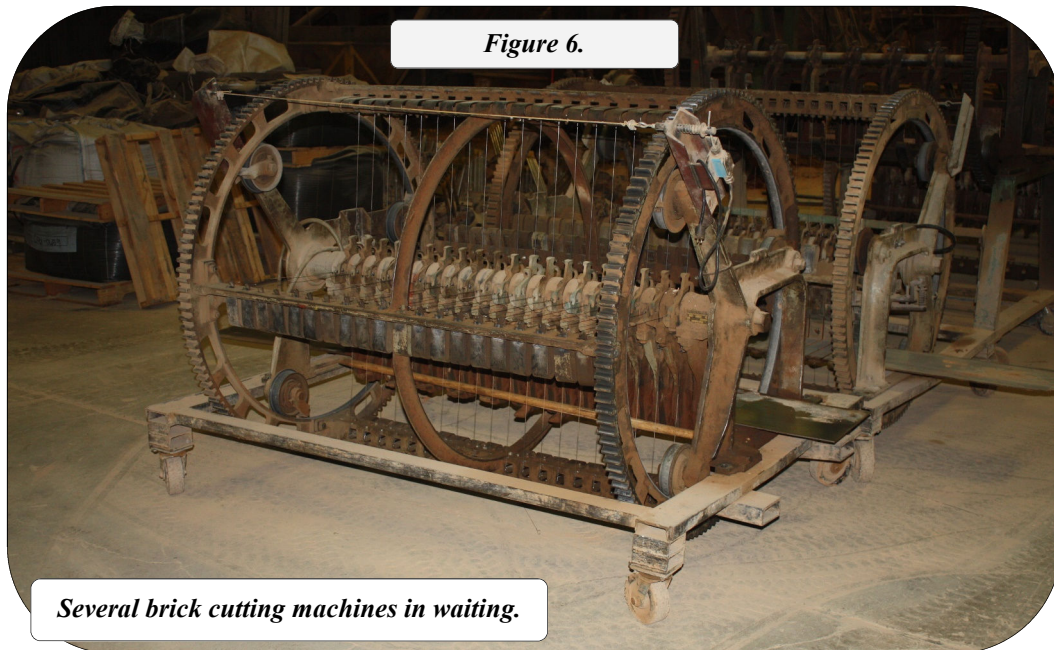


Figure 6.

Several brick cutting machines in waiting.

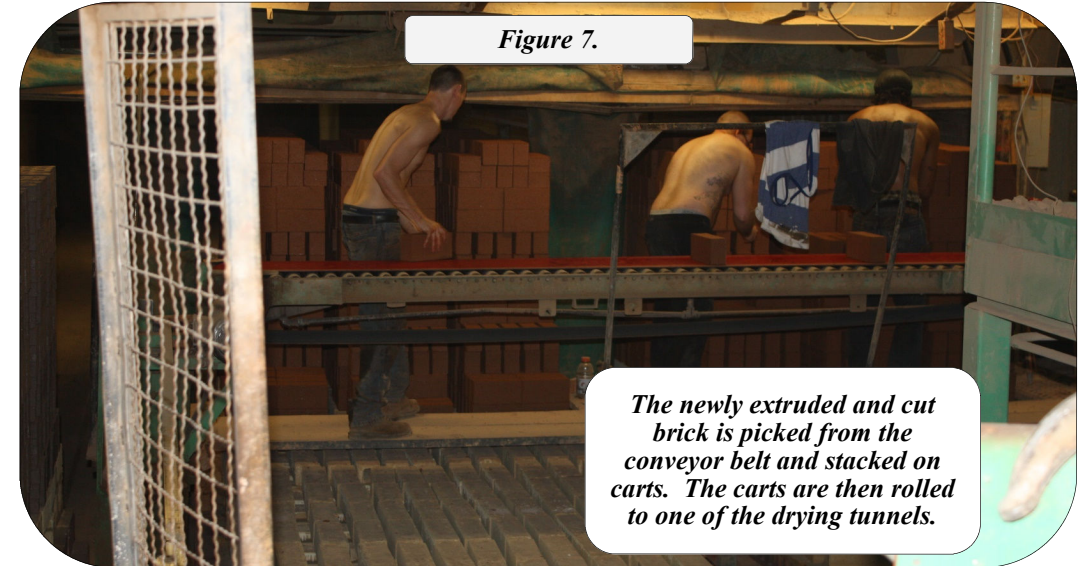


Figure 7.

The newly extruded and cut brick is picked from the conveyor belt and stacked on carts. The carts are then rolled to one of the drying tunnels.

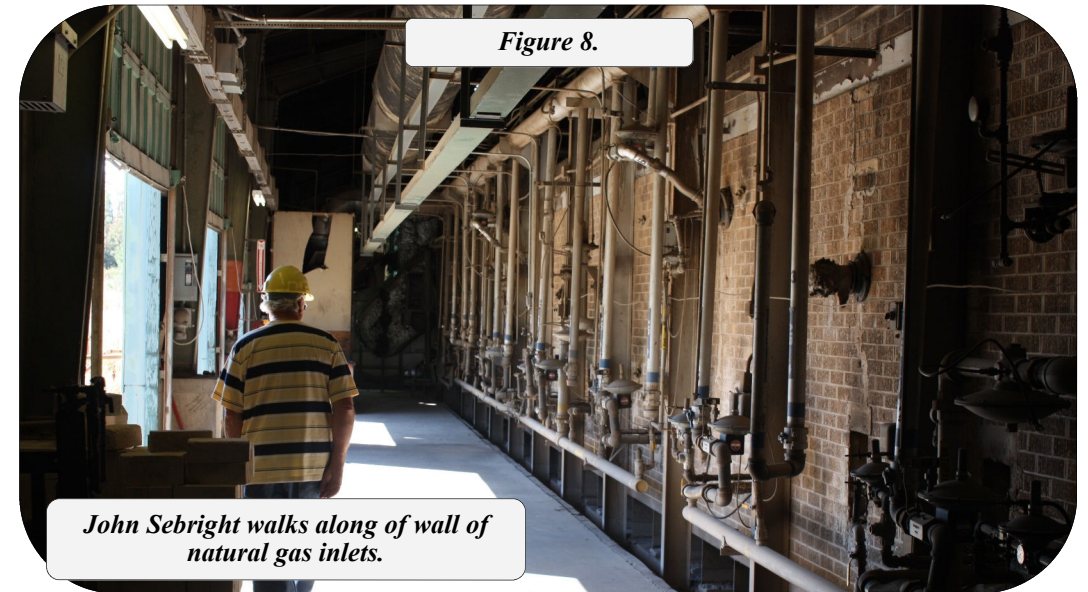


Figure 8.

John Sebright walks along of wall of natural gas inlets.

A tremendous amount of natural gas is needed to fire the modern plant's five 200 foot long drying tunnels and single 400 foot long continuous kiln. Temperatures at the tunnel kiln's midpoint reach 2,100 degrees Fahrenheit, then slowly drop as the carts of brick move toward the exit.

— the editorial group —

— Text continued from page 1358 —

raw material with the sandy content, but our guide said that it is ideal for brickmaking because it does not require any addition of sand to make good bricks.

After the raw material arrives in the supply bins it is prepared for loading into large extrusion machines which forces the clay through a die with the dimensions of the type of brick to be cast (*figure 5*). Curing holes in the brick are formed by cone shaped rods installed in the extrusion machines. After the clay leaves the extrusion machine, a wire frame device (*figure 6*) is rotated through the

bar of clay to cut the brick to dimensions as the conveyor belt carrying the bar of extruded clay is momentarily stopped for the operation.

After extrusion and cutting, the bricks are piled onto carts both by hand (*figure 7*) and machine to be transported into the drying tunnels and then to the tunnel kiln for baking. All these are fired by natural gas (*figure 8*).

Longer times in the tunnel kiln, along with hotter baking temperatures, produce darker colored bricks.

After being baked the bricks are cooled and stacked on pallets for shipment.

— end —

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

Bits of Chatter, Trivia, & Notices — all strung together.

... more early telephone chatter ...

During the summer months more emails were exchanged regarding this last winter's two part telephone article. They began when society president Bill Sebright received a phone call from Daniel Benedict asking for more information regarding the Williams Valley Telephone Company.

Daniel wrote, "*The article was most helpful and answered my most pressing question, which was; what happened to the Williams Valley Telephone Company. One thing I don't know is how it became part of Pacific Telephone, i.e., was it a cash or stock transaction? And then how did AT&T acquire Pacific? This is what I'm now researching — chasing wild geese on the internet machine.*"

In response, Bill forwarded Ken Westby and Pete Coffin's email addresses to Dan, and Ken Westby replied ...

"*Regarding the history of the Williams Valley Telephone Company, we were frustrated in our efforts to find any details*

about its acquisition by Bell Telephone. Our best guess was that it may have taken place around the time that automatic "Dial" calling was established in the Deer Park/Clayton area in 1951. This is likely because the conversion to dial service would have necessitated the extensive and costly replacement and upgrade of the William Valley Telephone Company's wire infrastructure. Official records of such acquisitions, if they still exist, would probably be kept in the legal archives of the companies involved.

"We contacted an organization of retired Bell operating company employees known as the 'Telephone Pioneers' seeking answers to this and other questions that came up during our research. The Pioneers have preserved much in the way of northwest telephone history and paraphernalia, mostly with regards to areas of western Washington and Oregon. But unfortunately, they too had little specific information for us regarding telephone expansion in northeastern Washington.

"The Pacific Telephone Company,

like all other Bell operating companies, was traditionally owned by AT&T, though over the years it endured many name changes, including Pacific Bell Telephone, Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Co., and others."

... and even more early telephone chatter ...

I can just manage to recall the arrival of our family's first telephone. We moved onto our Williams Valley farm in December of 1947. The line didn't run by the house back then. So we waited, I believe, until the fall of 1951 for a half mile long line to be strung down the county road from the west. The line ended at our house — one of only two homes on that mile. The fact that the telephone exchange was in Deer Park, to the east, and our line came from the west, was always a bit of a puzzle. But having a phone was more important than understanding how it got there.

Anyway, it was amazing to come home from school and see that black, desk style telephone sitting on a stand near the window. I still remember our phone number. Broadway 6-6425. Back in those days most everyone used a name for the first two digits of their phone number — Broadway, Hudson, Temple. You'd take a name like Broadway and break it down using the first two letters. Broadway became BR — the BR then being dialed as the numbers 2 and 7.

I'm sure there's an explanation as to why things were done in such a roundabout way. And I suppose I could spend some time looking it up on the web. The thing is, there's just something more romantic about the number Broadway 6-6425 than there is about the digit string 2766425.

While I'm a bit nostalgic about the old telephone numbers, I'm not a fan of the old technology. For one thing, we were on a party line. And as a kid — applying that old adage that kids should be neither seen nor heard — whenever we were on the phone any older person picking up seemed to routinely pop the hook up and down as a means of demanding the line be cleared for more adult

things — the latest gossip for example. And until we had the option of a private line, that's just how it was.

... and some much later telephone chatter ...

Last month an anniversary of some importance among the science fiction branch of pop culture came to pass — television's Star Trek turned 50 years old. I did see the September 8th, 1966, premiere. I was still living on the family's Williams Valley farm, having started work at Deer Park's sawmill just the month before. That first show, involving a standard cinematic monster, wasn't that impressive. But way back then having any science fiction on the TV — especially quality sci-fi — was a rarity. And lingering questions as to whether those original Star Trek episodes had any value should have been erased by the ensuing half century of continuing interest and commentary.

Beginning with that first episode, one of the most notable pieces of future technology seen was the communicator — essentially a flip phone (and to measure how far we've come, even that classic bit of sci-fi wizardry is now considered passé among technogeeks). As for why the communicator caused such a sensation, in 1966 almost all phones were fairly large rotary dial devices connected to a land-line — the exceptions being rarely seen radiotelephones affordable only by the well-to-do, and push-button dial-tone phones then available in just a few of the larger cities.

As for how much such things have changed over the last half century, in 2011 a sci-fi movie titled "*Super 8*" came out. The title alluded to another piece of classic technology — home movies shot on a wide-screen variant of 8 millimeter film. The motion picture was set in 1979. And when the modern teens starring in the feature were confronted on set with era-appropriate rotary phones, they didn't understand how to work the dial.

Just a few weeks ago, while cruising around the internet, I ran across a site selling working replicas of the original Star Trek

communicator. As near as I can tell — me being techno-impaired — the replica is actually a Bluetooth device that uses voice commands to tie into a high-tech cellphone.

The above working replica is only a toy. But it's a toy that suggests how far we've come from rotary phones and Star Trek's vision of the future, circa 1966. For example, in the prior paragraph I referenced things like the internet, cellphones, Bluetooth, and voice commands — and in today's world there's nothing unreal about any of these things.

So here's the deal. Sometime today I'll probably get in my car. When I do my car will speak to me, informing me that it has connected my cellphone to the car's computer. If

properly set up, I could talk back to my car, having it dial my phone for me. And all this could be done without me having to touch the phone. In other words, we've reached a point where Star Trek's original vision of the future, at least as far as its flip-top communicator is concerned, seems quaintly old fashion.

It reminds me of something science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke said. "*Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.*" The modern cellphone isn't magic. But it's definitely getting harder to discern the difference between magic and the technology inside the modern phone.

———— Wally Lee Parker ————

Minutes of the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society ———— September 10, 2016 ————

In attendance: Bill Sebright, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Marilyn Reilly, Lorraine Nord, Sue Rehms, Ella Jenkins, Peter Coffin, Judy Coffin, Don Ball, Betty Burdette, Marie Morrill, and Mark Wagner.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He reported that: 1) Jason West contacted Bill asking about the C/DPHS. Jason and Karen bought the Pruffer farm at 5175 Swenson Road two years ago. Pete talked to Jason at the Clayton Fair and sent him information on his farm. Jason and Karen have joined the C/DPHS. 2) Ron Butler from Galesburg, Illinois, contacted Bill asking about the Losh family. Bill directed Ron to *Mortarboard* #93's description of how the Settlers Picnic started out on the Losh farm. Pete sent Ron information on Robert Melton Losh and other family members. Ron sent Bill a rough draft of a possible *Mortarboard* article on R. M. Losh, which starts in Iowa and ends up in Deer Park. 3) Gary Coe

dropped off a large color picture of the Deer Park Pine Mill. It was taken before 1954, as Mark Wagner's house, built after that date, was not evident in the photo. 4) Bill has been in contact with Patty (*Shives*) Wainwright. Patty loaned pictures of the DPHS Class of 1964 at Clayton and Crawford Schools. She also came up with some amazing photos of the 1908 Clayton Fire. These three photos are the only ones we have of that event. One of these pictures shows her Great Grandfather Lon Billings and Sam Conner (though there's uncertainty as to which is which). Both started farms in the Gardenspot Area. Patty also loaned two pictures of the farm where she grew up on Spotted Road just north of Oregon Road. One was taken in 1908; the other after the present house was built. Also there were two pictures of the Lon Billings family — one taken about 1900, the other in 1908. Both show Lon and Dora with their three children, Gladys (Patty's grandmother), Annie, and

Charles. (Pictures were passed around.) 5) Spokane's South Hill home tour, Sunday 1 to 4, will include the Piollet house, which is faced with Clayton tiles. Bill and Wendy Budge have owned this house for 40 years. Wendy has contacted Wally and Bill several times over the years in regards to her home's Clayton connection. 6) We had a good time at the Clayton Fair. Thanks to all those who helped out at our booth.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported: The main checking account ended the month at \$7,712.79. Checks were written to Deer Park Printing for \$23.78 for signs, one for \$600.00 for Clayton Day band, one to the Deer Park Gazette for \$150.00 for ads, and one to the Tribune for \$67.50 for ads. There were deposits of \$1,968.50. The web hosting account had a withdrawal of \$10.95 for web hosting, and ended the month at \$854.34.

Society Vice President Pete Coffin reported by email: 1) I plan to give Editor Parker a possible *Mortarboard* article describing a field trip Society members took to Mutual Materials, Mica, Washington, brick making factory and clay mine. 2) Was busy at the Clayton Fair booth answering questions about the Spokane Falls and Northern Railroad history, the Mount Spokane Power Company's electric generation site on the Little Spokane River, and land ownership and water rights of the J. A. Pruffer quarter section (*SW/4 Section 30 T28N R42E*) in Williams Valley. 3) Sent Ron Butler photocopies of some pages containing Losh family information from the "*Families of Wild Rose Prairie*" by Loretta Greiff. 4) After Ken Westby sent the Society a 1917 picture of his Grandfather's house in the Arcadia Orchard, I spent an hour at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture looking up the location of Andrew Norseth's Arcadia Orchard tract (*S/2 NW NW SW Section 6 T28N R43E*), which is very near the SE corner of the intersection of Cedar Road and Deer Park-Milan Road. 5) I reviewed the online photograph collections of the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture's Research Library. In this review I found photographs of the Glen

Tana Dairy where Herbert Mason said he had worked in his "*Memoranda*". I had never heard of the place and the pictures showed a large dairy operation. *Spokesman Review* newspaper articles indicate it was located next to the Spokane Country Club along the Little Spokane River. 6) Herbert Mason also noted that the 1908 Clayton fire was quite a spectacle. He took his family by wagon to see the results of the fire.

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1) One hundred and ten copies of the September *Mortarboard* (#101) have been printed for distribution, and the online version has been submitted for posting. This 20 page issue features Pete Coffin and Ken Westby's workup on Deer Park's former "*Electric Service Station*," and Ed Kingrey's nostalgia piece on the old "*Beaverbrook Barn*." Also included is a "*Clayton Day Portfolio*" — this being a photo essay of this year's Brickyard Day event, utilizing images taken by J. L. Brian and captions constructed by the *Mortarboard's* editorial group. 2) Just a reminder to our readers that the *Mortarboard's* editorial group is a critical element in the overall publication process. The editorial decisions and monthly corrections made by these advisors have and continue to significantly raise the *Mortarboard's* overall literary and pictorial quality. In fact, these volunteer editors are essential in insuring that this newsletter is the best the society can produce. Membership in the editorial group is just a matter of allowing placement on our online mailing list (*membership in the society itself is not a requirement*). From that point on you will receive advanced proofing copies (*PDF as well as Word format*) of each month's *Mortarboard* to look over. You are free to add comments or corrections as you like. You'll also be privy to online updates and conversations regarding issues surrounding and projects relevant to the newsletter's future productions. Since the editorial group is a "*low pressure*" environment, you can participate in these conversations (*or not*) at your discretion. That said, with a long and likely dreary winter coming, participation seems a

stay-at-home pastime worth considering.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported that she has uploaded the September *Mortarboard*. She also did some editing on some of the website's pages.

Penny Hutten reported that the Westerners Spokane Corral's meeting will be September 15. Ned Fadelely, a fifth generation Spokaneite with homesteader roots in Otis Orchards, will be speaking about Prohibition in Spokane. Contact Penny, or Bill if you are interested in attending.

Wednesday, August 17, was the last Brickyard Day Committee meeting of the year. Our next meeting will be the 2nd Wednesday of February, 2017. For next year's parade, the reviewing stand will be moved back to the Post Office. The parade's start will still be at Mason and Railroad. Music by Spare Parts at the Clayton School's park was a big hit. We are planning to host the band again next year.

Betty Burdette said that on October

8th the Greenhouse is having a dinner and silent auction at the Deer Park Eagles to help with the expenses incurred in hooking the Green House up to city sewer. It was previously on a septic tank. It cost \$29,000 to hook up to the sewer system. A car will be one of the items offered as part of the silent auction.

Marilyn Reilly reported that she attended the last city council meeting. The mayor said that the Civic Center building will be torn down as soon as the asbestos is removed. He said that the Society can have one last tour before it is torn down.

The Heritage network meeting is Monday, September 19th, at the Stevens County Historical Society in Colville.

Next meeting: Saturday, October 8, 2016, at 9 AM at the Clayton Drive-In.

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 AM.

The Society meeting minutes were submitted by Mark Wagner, acting Secretary.

— end —

All Prior Editions of the *Mortarboard* Are Available Online:
Go to <http://www.cdphs.org/mortarboard-newsletters.html>.

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 —

Volunteer proofreaders for this issue: Pete Coffin, Betty Deuber, Bill Sebright, Lina Swain, and Ken Westby.

From “The Coast” magazine,
April, 1907



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 1,368 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 —

A print copy of this issue of the Mortarboard is or soon will be available in booklet format.

Ask about

“Collected Newsletters: Volume Twenty-Eight.”