

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.

After 92 Years

Deer Park's Community Hall Is No More

— *Looking Back To The Beginning* —

by

Wally Lee Parker

Deer Park's Crawford Street Civic Center — better known to many of us old-timers as the former high school gymnasium — was smashed to the ground by repeated blows from the heavy bucket of an oversized backhoe during the first Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of this last November. Officially opened on January 11th, 1924, those not paying attention to local discussions were doubtless surprised to see the building leveled. In practically everyone's memory, it had always been there. And, as most things people become habituated to, it was seen but not really seen until it wasn't there anymore.

The building's thread of ownership can be traced back to the last day of October, 1923. On that day a "stock company of citizens" was proposed for the purpose of creating a "community hall and gymnasium" — with the specific intent of transferring ownership of the proposed structure to the local school district after completion. The subsequent title remained with the school district until August

Cut from the gymnasium's floor and about to be removed for safe keeping, the section of the about-to-be demolished basketball court painted with Deer Park High School's iconic stag head.

(Photo by Mike Reiter.)



Question for the New Year. How Much of Its Past Can a Community Afford To Lose?

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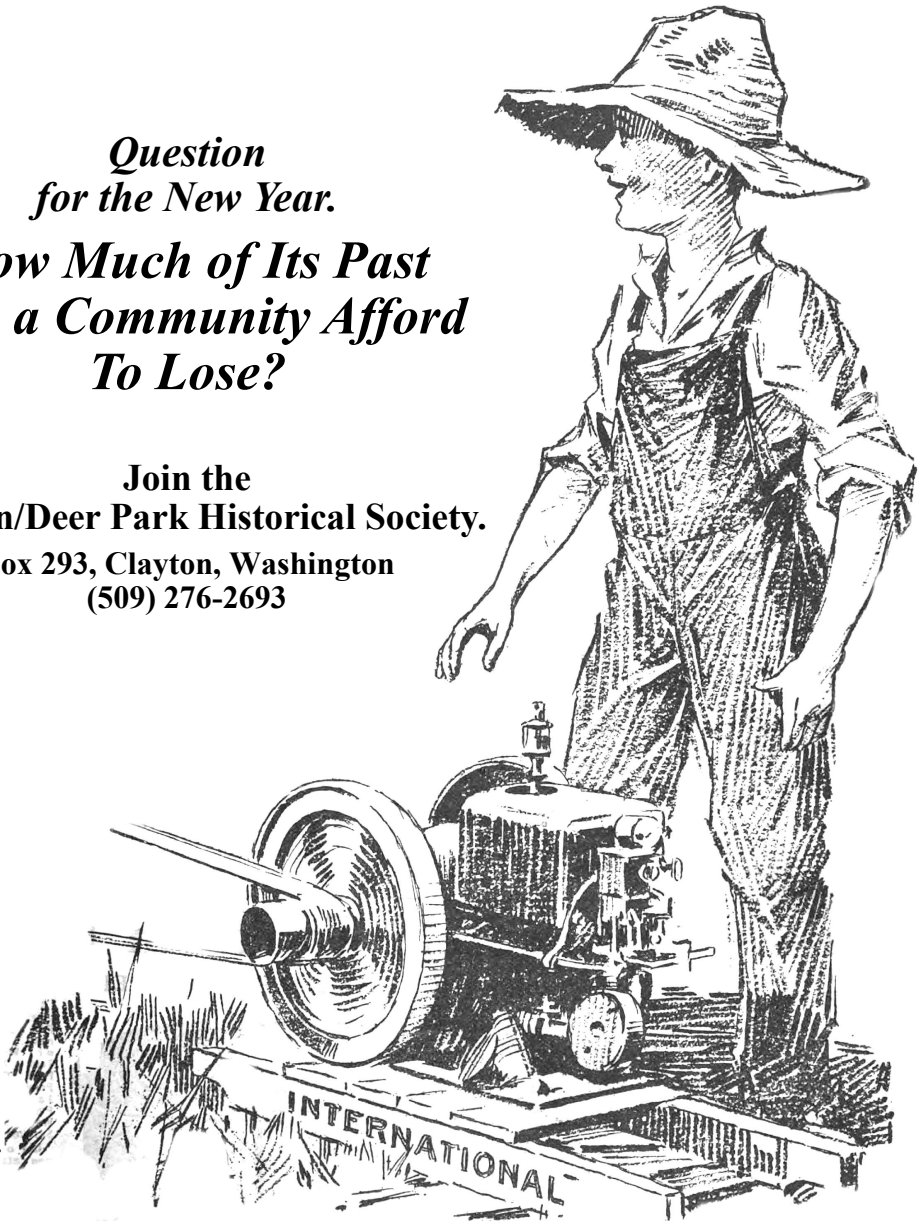


Illustration from "Farm Machinery — Farm Power" magazine, May 15, 1922.

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9th, 1977. On that date a warranty deed transferred ownership of the aging building to the City of Deer Park — said transfer becoming effective on January 1st, 1980.

Considering the tired building's historical value, the decision to level the frame structure was not an easy one for the city. But the reality was that restoring this particular bit of the past to some semblance of usefulness would have been prohibitively expensive; while letting it stand unrestored would have been a growing and equally expensive liability. Between a rock and a hard place, it made sense to transfer ownership of the property to the local fire district as the future site of their new firehouse. That decided, the classic structure's fate was set.

Those are the facts.

It's also fact that the old gym represented a unique moment in Deer Park's past; a moment from the early 1920s when the young town's exuberance spilled over into a community project most everyone in the area not only agreed was necessary, but many of those believing in the project literally took hammers in hand to see it through.

If there was a singular event that melded the town's desire for a sizeable community gathering place into action, likely it was an editorial that appeared in the October 4th, 1923, edition of the town's newspaper, the *Deer Park Union*. Assumed to be the author of the piece, the Congregational Church's reverend, Guy Herbert Rice, was barely a year into his second job, that of the *Union's* editor, when, under the heading "Why Not Make This Our Task," he wrote, "During the past week a representative of one of the Chautauqua bureaus has been in town working to sell a series of attractions to the Woman's Club. While the matter is yet pending, the question of an adequate auditorium for the gatherings became the big puzzle to the ladies that it has been so often during the past years. The Olson hall was reported not to be available, and the Congregational Church was not large enough to hold the audiences they would need to make the venture pay. All this means that if Deer

Park is to have better attractions, the much discussed community hall project must be put through. The building is needed for high school athletics as well as larger gatherings. The boys are doing well at football, but as soon as the bad weather comes, they are practically deprived of athletic activities until spring and the baseball season, while in nearly all other towns of this district basketball is keeping them busy. The girls have little or no chance at athletics because of this condition. Deer Park needs this building badly, and it would be a splendid task to set as a mark for another year."

In the same issue the above appeared, it was announced that editor Rice was also the *Union's* new owner.

Reverend Rice appears to have had a long history of community activism. He was born in Wisconsin in 1870 and ordained into the ministry in Colorado in 1896. He married Cora Alene Johnson in Springfield, Minnesota, in 1899. We're currently uncertain when he brought his growing family to Washington, but we did find a short item in the March 28th, 1904, edition of the *Omaha World Herald* suggesting it was very likely that year, or not long after. The article simply said, "Reverend G. H. Rice, pastor of the Congregational Church, has resigned and will move with his family from Arlington." Arlington, Nebraska, is roughly 25 miles northwest of Omaha.

The Reverend's obituary, as it appeared in the August 24th, 1950, edition of the *Deer Park Union* states, "After Mr. and Mrs. Rice came to Washington, he held pastorates at Orchard Prairie, Newport, Spokane, Colville, Rosalia, Malden, and finally, in January, 1922, the family came to the Open Door Church in Deer Park."

That first mentioned Washington ministry, the above noted Orchard Prairie, is a small, out of the way community centered about three miles south by southeast of Mead.

According to the obituary, the next move for the Rice family was Newport, Washington. We believe they arrived in that town in 1908. As for leaving, we do have this from

the April 28th, 1910, edition of the *Newport Miner*. "Rev. G. H. Rice, pastor of Hope Congregational Church of this city for the past two years, has been extended a call by Corbin Park Church, of Spokane, which he has accepted. ... At the service in Newport Sunday evening, Reverend Rice handed in his resignation to the local church, to take effect June 1."

We currently don't know when Reverend Rice and family left Spokane's Corbin Park Church, but we've found several traces of the family in Colville as of 1914 — those from the *Colville Examiner* — and then in Rosalia as of 1916. We currently don't know when he moved his family to Malden, a small community about 30 miles south of Spokane, but we do have this enigmatic clipping from the November, 1921, issue of *The Washington Newspaper* — a monthly periodical then produced by "the University of Washington school of journalism and edited by the faculty."

"G. H. Rice, formerly editor of *The Malden Register*, who went to Idaho to publish *The Troy News*, has returned to Malden as minister."

The above leaves the suspicion that Reverend Rice's experience in both publishing and editing goes still deeper than the University of Washington's periodical outlined. It also suggests that "as minister" he was only in Malden a short time before a new, and, as it turned out, enduring opportunity opened.

Under the headline "Pastor Resigns," the November 3rd, 1921, issue of the *Deer Park Union* stated, "At the evening service Sunday, the resignation of Rev. C. Judy as pastor of the Open Door Congregational Church was read."

A notice regarding the Congregational Church's itinerary in the December 29th, 1921, issue of the *Union* simply said, "Rev. G. H. Rice will be here Sunday to begin his work as pastor with the new year."

The 1920 United States census placed the population of Deer Park at 1,103. At the beginning of 1922, the *Deer Park Union* reported "A hundred and thirteen members are on the (Congregational) church roster." That

number would suggest the Congregational Church's pulpit was a very influential position within the community. But, at the end the new reverend's first year, an additional and even more influential position offered itself.

It began with this notice, written by the then editor, W. Walter Gillies, and posted in the November 30th, 1922, edition of the *Union* under the headline "Mr. Rice Takes Charge,"

"Sunday night the editor and wife (Estella V. Gillies) expect to leave for Los Angeles, where the editor's mother is critically ill in a hospital. Practically blind in addition to suffering from a chronic disorder, the writer is hopeful that he may do something in the way of making permanent arrangements for her care. Mrs. Gillies, also not in the best of health, is counting on the change to bring some relief.

"During our enforced absence from Deer Park, G. H. Rice, pastor of the Congregational Church, a trained newspaper man, will have charge of the *Union*, and we trust our advertisers, our readers, and general patrons will accord him the measure of support that long has been ours here."

Just under a year later, the newspaper changed hands — as was announced with this editorial in the October 4th, 1923 edition.

"The *Union* comes to its readers this week with a new name at the head of the columns, and it is with considerable fear and trembling that we take up the work. The former publisher has been relentless in his efforts to give Deer Park folks the best kind of local paper, and our fear is that we may fall behind the standard heretofore maintained. We can only promise to put our very best into the work, and ask our friends to be patient with us until we get into the swing of the job."

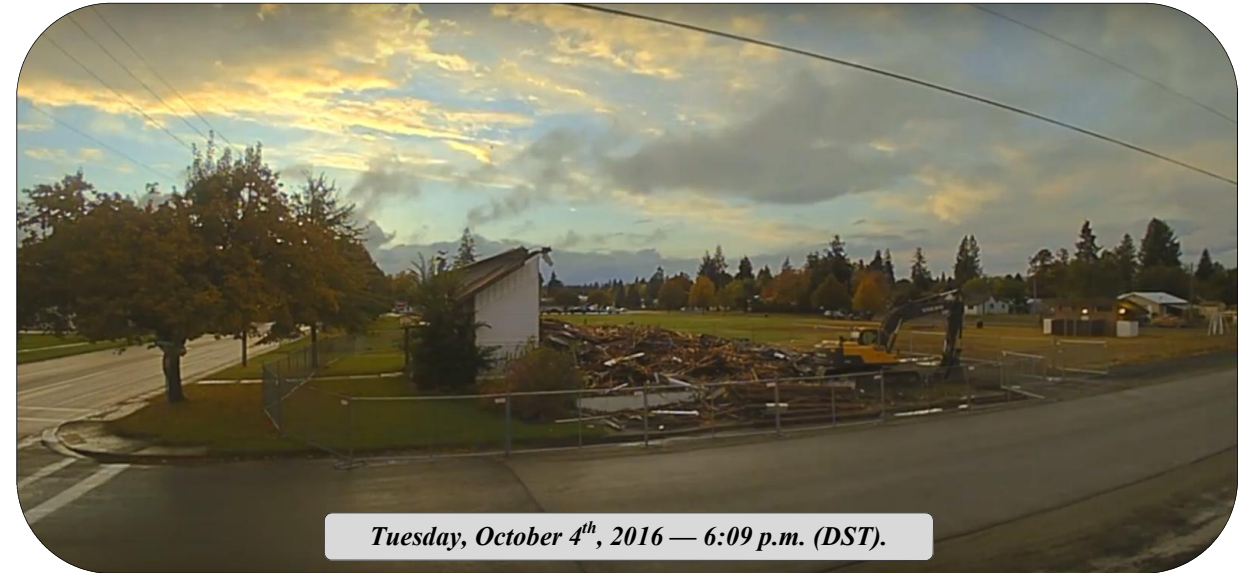
It was in this same issue that the paper's new publisher printed the call for action regarding the young town's often discussed need for a large, multipurpose community hall — the need for which was clear to the rever-

————— Text continued on page 1390 —————

Photos on this and facing page courtesy of Deer Park High School Media Productions.



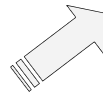
Monday, October 3rd, 2016 — 10:25 a.m. (DST).



Tuesday, October 4th, 2016 — 6:09 p.m. (DST).

The Old Gym Falls:

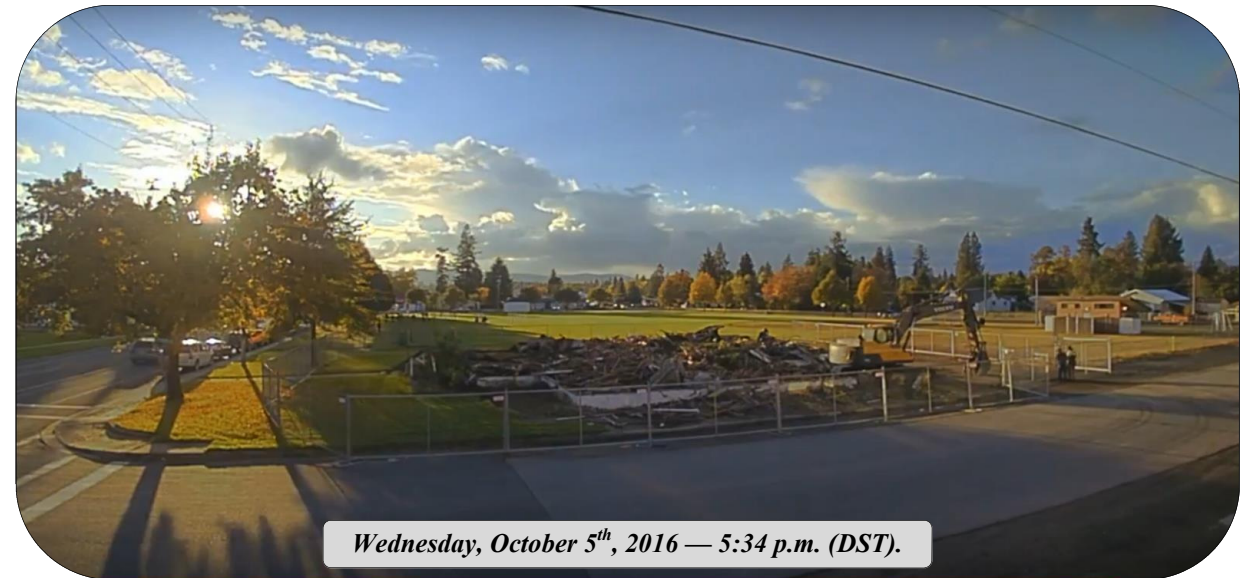
Located on the eastern edge of Perrins' Field, fronting Crawford at its intersection with Stevens Street, the property on which the gymnasium/community center once stood was sold to the local fire district in anticipation of the construction of a new facility. Spokane's Lawson Demolition was contracted to knock down the old structure and remove the rubble.



A few days prior to the start of demolition, Dan Huffman, Director of Broadcast Production, Deer Park High School, mounted a digital camera on the building across the street just to the east of the old gymnasium. The camera, set to snap a still picture every ten seconds, was used to create a time-lapse video of the demolition. The four frames on this and the facing page have been extracted from that video.



Monday, October 3rd, 2016 — 6:36 p.m. (DST).



Wednesday, October 5th, 2016 — 5:34 p.m. (DST).

— Text continued from page 1387 —

end since his own Congregational Church was often called upon to stand in as one of the town's public venues.

And it didn't take long. Four weeks later — November 1st, 1923 — under the banner "Deer Park Will Build New Gymnasium," the following appeared on the *Union's* front page.

"Deer Park will have a community hall and gymnasium within the next sixty days as the results of an enthusiastic meeting of citizens held yesterday at the office of O. C. Follevaag. The plan grew out of a conference in which the details were worked out; and when Superintendent McMahan met the citizens he had a complete explanation, and those who listened immediately declared it could be put through."

The above Leonard C. McMahan was superintendent of Deer Park's public schools from the fall of 1919 through the spring of 1926, after which he appears to have taken either a teaching and/or administrative position at the Washington State Reformatory near the town of Monroe — located on the western side of the state.

The article continues, "Briefly the plan is this: A stock company of citizens is to be formed and shares of ten dollars are to be issued. These shares will be retired by the company as rapidly as the building earns the money, so that ultimately each stock holder will have his money returned to him and surrender the stock. The full amount to be raised will be \$5,000, and each purchaser can buy as many shares of stock as he wishes. But with the price fixed this low, everyone who has any interest in the improvement can at least buy one share."

"The school board promises to rent the building from the company for a stated sum that will retire all of the bonds in ten years at the most, and all dividends will be paid prorata on all bonds. Besides this there will be other rentals, and these will scale down the time the bonds will run."

"The building proposed is to be approximately 46 x 90 feet, with a floor 70 feet long and a stage of about 18 feet. The floor to be of hardwood for basketball use and other purposes. The site proposed, which the company will lease from the school district, is on the east side of the campus, with the entrance fronting toward the high school building. The heating from the high school furnace will be piped to the building for such heat as is needed, thus doing away with a separate heating plant. These plans are being made with the understanding that when the stock company has filled its purpose, the building will become the property of the school district."

"It is proposed by the committee which consists of Supt. McMahan, O. G. Follevaag, O. R. Holloway, R. A. Miller, and O. E. McCutchan, that enough of the work will be donated so that practically all of the money raised will be available for material."

"Thirty of the high school boys who are studying manual training agreed heartily to give their time for about two hours daily to working on the building under instruction from carpenters, for which they will get credit in that branch. These boys will supply the equivalent of eight men for eight hours daily during the entire time of building."

"When the roof is ready for shingling, and the siding ready to place, a shingling and siding bee will be pulled off, with the Woman's Club as sponsors for a big pitch-in dinner."

"Besides these plans, the committee has reasons to expect that the Deer Park Lumber Company will give the plan its hearty cooperation."

"During the meeting it was stated that the members of the 4L organization (the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen — known euphemistically as a company sponsored union) were desirous of helping in the project."

"One of the big motives back of this effort is the desire to care for outside students (students from school districts without a high school) in the best way as they come here for

their last years of high school work. The number is increasing each year, and the board is anxious to be able to give them every advantage offered by other schools. With this building completed, the Deer Park High School will be on a par with any of the schools in the smaller cities of the Inland Empire."

"Work will begin at an early date on the structure, the foundation work possibly being started Monday morning. It is proposed to have the building ready for use by December 15."

All the above said, the plans didn't go exactly as expected. The following week the *Union* — under the heading "New Site Chosen for Gymnasium" — listed a number of changes to the previously reported plans.

"The committee selected to push the work on the new gymnasium proposed by the citizens meeting last week met with an obstruction when they planned to lease ground from the school board on which to build. Legal technicalities under the state law made it impossible and this week a new site was obtained directly across the street north of the high school. The land belonged to W. W. Wedge, and was obtained on very favorable terms. Yesterday (Wednesday, November 7th) the ground was broken for the new structure, and it is expected to have it ready for use by December 15."

"The building planned will be approximately 48 x 90 feet of frame construction, with an 18 foot stage in one end for platform use in public meeting and entertainments, with a gallery (a balcony) planned for spectators when athletic events are on, and a hardwood floor that will be suitable for all athletic and dancing purposes."

"It is the expectation of the stockholders that the building shall be available for all legitimate public purposes and it is expected that a considerable portion of the cost of building will be returned in such use for which charge will be made. The promoters of the plan are depending strongly on the sense of need of such a building and the enthusiasm of the people of Deer Park to put the enterprise

over, and thus far they have received nothing but encouragement."

"The manual training classes are standing ready to put labor in to the building, and will constitute a large part of the building force when the work is swinging."

"Work on the securing of funds is to begin at once, and several substantial pledges have already been made. The plan now being worked out is to issue bonds in \$25, \$100, and \$250 denominations. These will bear 5 percent interest and 100 of the \$25 denomination, 50 of the \$100, and 10 of the \$250, will be offered for sale. These bonds will be taken up by the company as rapidly as the money is available, and every purchaser has the assurance of getting back the sum put into the enterprise with the interest shown on the face of the bond. This plan practically insures the completion of the structure and the community will have a much needed community hall when the work is done."

On Thursday, November 15th, the newspaper's gymnasium article's headline read, "GYMNASIUM PLANS NOW COMPLETE, Committee Makes Drive for Bond Buyers — Sells Total of \$7,500." The article that followed began with an apology for prior errors.

"It is a mighty good horse that does not get away in one or two false starts in a race, and the Union made a couple of premature starts likewise in its gymnasium stories. But this week the assurance is given that the enterprise will go through and work will begin at an early date. Some heroic hustling has been done thus far in placing the bonds by which it is proposed to finance the undertaking, and on Tuesday enough had been sold to assure the success hoped for. Close figuring on the bill for material and work has shown that \$6,500 will be enough to put it over, and the bond sellers are speedily working to that mark. Several who have been approached have regarded the bonds as a good investment and have bought for that reason as well as because of loyalty to the undertaking."

The original plan to use largely vol-

unteer labor was altered with the following, "The committee has closed with a contractor for the work and it will be done by that kind of labor instead of day work. However, it is expected that those who have volunteered to work will have some kind of chance, and it is now hoped that the building will be available for gymnasium work after the holiday vacation."

The article went on to note, "The building will not be extravagant in design, but will be attractive and so planned that it will accommodate and take care of the various needs of the school...."

The article finished by noting, "Wm. Bugenhagen has been engaged to take charge of the construction."

We know there was a William Bugenhagen living in the Deer Park area when the gym was under construction. A German immigrant, he settled in the community around 1911. According to his 1947 *Union* obituary, he worked as a "farmer" until his retirement in 1946. Our assumption is this same William Bugenhagen was the gymnasium's contractor.

Two weeks later, an article in the November 29th edition of the *Union* predicted, "WORK ON GYM MOVING RAPIDLY ... Will Finish by Christmas."

"Work on the new gymnasium is showing up strong this week and the crew of men at work looks somewhat like a beehive. The concrete forms were finished last week and they have been placed the entire length of the building except in the northwest corner where the basement for the furnace room has been walled up in concrete. This is to give absolute solidity to the floors, which will stand up under any amount of work or crowds with

which they will be taxed. The floor rafters are all set and yesterday the work of raising the walls began. The wall rafters are heavy timbers, 18 feet in length, which will give the height of the building to the eaves. The roof will have approximately a third pitch, and when finished the entire height of the building will be 32 feet from the ground.

"This gives height enough to make it an imposing structure. The plans are for the entire length of 96 feet to have a frontage on Crawford Street, and it will be 46 feet deep. Entrance will be on Crawford Street, additional room for this purpose being planned beside the main floor space.

"As soon as the roof is ready for shingling, Superintendent McMahan will issue a call for a shingling bee and every person who can lay shingles or drive nails will be ready to put the roof on in a hurry. It is hoped to get enough help to do this in one day.

"A balcony eight feet deep will be built on the north south and east sides of the floor, which will give ample room for spectators at games and other events where the floor is to be used by those participating, and entrance to this is planned from the main entrance to the building.

"The building is to be equipped with a separate heating plant as it was not found feasible to pipe the heat across the street and intervening space from the high school. The plan followed in the building is one used by the school board in Nez Perce, Idaho, while Superintendent McMahan was in charge of the schools there, and it was offered to him for building purposes here."

We've found traces indicating that Leonard McMahan was employed as the prin-

The Pantages Circuit mentioned in the advertisement reproduced on the facing page refers to a number of theaters, movie houses, ballrooms and the like throughout the western states owned or managed during the second and third decades of the 20th century by impresario Alexander Pantages. As for Chuck Whitehead, he played jazz and other contemporary music at venues throughout the region, including his own dancehall, Whitehead's Dancing Palace, established in Spokane in 1919. His relationship to the advertised "Mrs. Chuck Whitehead's Own Orchestra," if any, is currently unknown.

GRAND OPENING

Deer Park Gymnasium

and

Community Hall

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 1924 7.30 P.M.

AN EVENING OF DELIGHT

An Excellent Program With Dedicatory Address by

President N. D. Showalter

Of the State Normal School at Cheney

Music By Local Orchestra of Six Pieces

BIG BASKET SOCIAL

Dancing on a Perfect Floor with Music By

Mrs. Chuck Whitehead's Own

ORCHESTRA

These boys are the same ones who toured the Pantages circuit

Entire Proceeds Used For Seats and Stage Equipment
Admission Free **Bring Cups For Free Coffee**

Clipped from the January 10th, 1924, edition of the Deer Park Union.



Photo from the CDPHS website.

South side of Deer Park's classic gymnasium — circa 1924.

A Speculation Regarding the Above Photo.

The April 24th, 1924, issue of the Deer Park Union, under the headline, "Campus Day is Planned for Friday," printed an article that in part stated, "Tomorrow has been planned as Campus Day for the high school and the students will don work clothes and get busy cleaning up the school grounds. The greater part of the work will be done on the grounds of the gymnasium property, the entire park surrounding the building will be cleaned, the grounds leveled and seeded to lawn grass, a gravel walk laid in the street from the front entrance of the building, and the exterior painted."

The article explained that a recent minstrel show had generated enough funds to buy paint and secure the service of a professional painter.

It continued, "...the students will turn in and spread the paint over the structure, and they claim they can do a good job. The color chosen is ivory, to be trimmed with brown. The boys will not undertake the trimming, leaving this for a professional..."

The photo above mirrors almost exactly the activities being described in the Union article, therefore the editor believes it reasonable to assume (with appropriate reservations) that the above photo was taken in the early afternoon of Friday, April 25th, 1924, during the above noted "Campus Day."



Photo from C/DPHS website.

South side of Deer Park's classic gymnasium — circa 2007.

ciple of Nezperce, Idaho's, high school as early as 1912. He was then listed in the 1917 edition of Patterson's *American Educational Directory* as Nezperce's "City Superintendent" — assumedly meaning superintendent of that town's public schools. It was two years later — the fall of 1919 — that he arrived in Deer Park.

The *Union* article continued with, "Contractor Bugenhagen says the building will be finished by Christmas if the weather holds reasonably open. This will mean that basketball practice can commence when school opens after the holiday vacation. High school boys are working in relays during the vacation this week, handling lumber and helping to lay the rough floor."

On December 13th — two weeks further into construction — the *Union* reported, "Approximately fifty men with hatches (bladed shingling hammers) and mouths full of nails swarmed over the roof of the new gymnasium Wednesday and, as a result, the building has its roof on. The work was begun on Tuesday and a good start was made away from the eaves in preparation for the big crowd (assumedly meaning the more hazardous work along the edge of the roof was completed before a clus-

ter of amateurs was allowed up). *Fathers and sons worked side by side, the boys hoisting shingles to the roof and laying them while the older and more experienced crowded them (hurried them) to top speed to keep out of the way of the nails and hatches.*

"The ladies' organizations of the various churches supplied a bountiful dinner at noon to the hungry workmen; the domestic science room of the high school being used for the purpose. Committees met Monday evening and planned the repast, the various materials necessary being apportioned among the various societies, and the expense borne by each.

"When the day was finished, there were some sore hands where hatches had missed nails, some who had not been used to that kind of work for years were sore and stiff this morning, but another example of community effort had been put over and everybody who had a part was happy.

"From now on siding of the building and the laying of floors will be pushed rapidly. It was hoped that the interior would be ready for the date of the Senior-Alumni Hijinks, before the holiday season, but the committee in charge of the building stated this week that the floors could not be laid in time. The present

outlook, however, is for the interior to be nearly enough complete that the building can be opened before the beginning of the school sessions after the holidays. In view of this fact, Coach Underwood is planning with the boys for basketball, and the necessary suits are being secured. The Deer Park Woman's Club is asking for the privilege of opening the building with an event, the receipts of which will be applied to the indebtedness or to buying of bonds."

The above noted coach, Wayne S. Underwood, was only at Deer Park High for one year. According to the May 14th, 1924, edition of the *Union*, after the high school year closed he intended to move to Columbus, Ohio, having "secured employ at a large firm of civil engineers."

The "Twice-Told Tales" segment of the December 13th, 1923 *Union* observed that Deer Park Lumber's "planing-mill shut down yesterday to give the men who wanted a chance to help shingle the gymnasium. A considerable number took advantage of the opportunity and gave a day's work to the big community enterprise."

The December 20th issue noted that the local "Schools Reopen January 2." It then went on to state, "With the new basketball floor in immediate prospect, the Deer Park high school is being listed in the winter conference games as one of the contestants. The county is divided into groups; the local team being named with Hillyard and Milan. ... The Deer Park players will enter the lists with something of a handicap because the other teams are already busy at practice and will be stronger at team work. The home boys are determined to overcome this and will make a strong showing in the games when they get into the swing of them."

A front page article in the *Union's* first edition for 1924 listed all those that had purchased the securities offered by the gymnasium committee. One hundred and six individuals bought one or more \$25 bonds. Two lodges are also represented among the purchasers. Of the three companies on the list,

the Deer Park Lumber Company led with \$1,500. The W. W. Wedge Company was second at \$1,300. And the smaller People's Supply Company followed at \$100.

On Friday, January 11th, 1924, at half past seven in the evening, Deer Park's new gymnasium was officially opened. The following Thursday's edition of Deer Park's weekly *Union* described the event as follows.

"With a crowd present that was approximated at 600 people, the new gymnasium and community building that Deer Park has been anticipating so long was formally opened and the announcement was made that it had been turned over to the school board for use.

"The crowd began gathering early and time was given for a thorough inspection of the building by all who wished; this drawing forth many expressions of admiration and approbation of the work done by contractor Bugenhagen and his workmen. The formal program of the evening was opened by a concert by the local orchestra, composed of E. E. Wood, pianist; Miss Ella Williams and Lon Miller, violins; O. R. Holloway and Dr. W. J. Kress, cornets; T. E. Olds, clarinet; Arthur Huggins, trombone; and E. F. Tenny, drums. This concert lasted thirty minutes and was much appreciated by the audience, after which Mrs. George H. Baker, as president of the Woman's Club, took charge and introduced Rev. C. W. Evans who gave the invocation. He was followed by Supt. McMahan, who in a brief speech expressed his gratitude for the backing that had made the undertaking possible, and he stated that the amount of \$7,500, the cost of the completed structure, had all been subscribed and paid, and the building had been turned over to the school board free of encumbrance.

"Mr. McMahan was followed by President N. H. Showalter of the Cheney Normal School who gave the dedicatory address in which he stressed the accomplishment as the building of a monument which would be shown in the lives of the boys and girls who would come under the future influence of the school, rather than the building itself. The

address was an able presentation of the motives back of the accomplished fact, and the audience got the idea in a forceful manner. Fun for the evening was furnished by the members of the alumni association who again furnished the skit, 'Lady Masons,' recently put on in connection with the *Hijinks*, and a game of polo in which kiddie-cars functioned as per usual. Another account (in the same January 17th issue) gives this game more in detail.

"A battery of auctioneers kept the crowd busy buying the baskets prepared for sale, and luncheon was offered for who wished, but did not care to buy the more elaborate service. The proceeds of the sale and the dance following, amounting to \$330.00, are to be used to pay for the chairs now in use, and the stage equipment.

"Following the lunch hour, Mrs. Chuck Whitehead's orchestra, from Spokane, furnished music for dancing until 1 a.m."

Under the headline "Athletic Event of Season," the same January 17th edition of the *Union* described the above noted "polo game" this way.

"Although Deer Park has long been classed in the first rank among Spokane County towns for athletic prowess, the palm, glad hand, Croix de Guerre, and any other handy emblems of heroism and ability must be accorded to the ten valiant men who fared forth, mounted of fiery steeds of red, to the contest in a polo match on the new gymnasium floor before the audience that crowded the building at its opening Friday evening. Under the leadership of Captains McCutchan and Kimmel, they demonstrated a game that ought to take such precedence of football, basketball, or even the game of Lady Masons, that these will be placed permanently in the background, good as they are.

"Captain Kimmel's team consisted of Fred Kelly and Aubrey Staley as guards, Carl Farris and W. H. Allgeier runners-up, and Ophie himself (the above noted Olla M. Kimmel Sr.) as the sharp edge of the wedge that was to be driven to the opposing goal. And they drove it! Opposing them was Captain

McCutchan with Coach Underwood and O. G. Follevaag as guards, R. A. Miller and Supt. McMahan on the side lines 'raring to go.' But before they got their frenzied steeds subdued — you can't blame the horses for getting scared when they saw what they were up against. Their opponents had won the first goal.

"The fight was then fast and furious. Riders were unhorsed, bunking demonstrations were staged that showed that even skilled horsemen must take falls, and last but not least, the exhibition of Coach Underwood teaching his horse the art of steeple chasing, running at full speed with the animal tightly clutched between his knees and all four wheels off the floor, proving that one can do some funny things with a horse when enthused. Inasmuch as only one preliminary practice game was played, a good many errors were recorded, and some fouls were called by Referee Schirmer(?) but the players expect to be perfect in their game and tame their steeds before another game so that McMahan and Allgeier will not be bucked off more than three times in any one evening. And then look out!

"Judging from the speed shown by Capt. McCutchan, his opponents appear justified in their accusation that he spent some time in preliminary practice prior to the big event. It was the efforts of players McMahan and Allgeier to keep pace with him that resulted in their discomfiture. They got up the motion and instilled their enthusiasm into their beast, and then just couldn't keep up with them. No one seemed to know the score when time was called, but as nearly as the reporter could guess it was 1 to 0.

"Harry Evans was in charge of the training quarters and did valiant service in grooming both the weary riders and their steeds. It leaked out from the seclusion that Carl Farris and O. G. Follevaag became overheated and were taken outside and rolled in the snow to cool them off. This accounted for the cloud of steam that rushed in through the open door soon after the game had closed. Some claimed they were responsible in consid-



Photo from the Robert Willis Grove collection.

erable measure for the increased thickness of the fog outside. The unanimous verdict of the witnesses was that it was a great game. The kiddie-cars are being offered for sale as souvenirs by the Deer Park Hardware Company.”

The above event was not without injury. In fact, possibly the first “athletic” injury at the new gym was described in a short article headlined “Sandy Sawyer Injured.”

“While practicing for the polo game last Thursday evening, Sandy Sawyer was injured by a fall received on the gymnasium floor, and needed the attention of a physician before he was taken home. The injury consisted of a bruise near the base of the spine, he having been injured in the same way some years ago, and for a time it was thought he would be confined to his home for some time. He was able to be at this place of business on Saturday.”

On the last day of January, 1924, the Union announced that “Membership Cards for the Gym” were being made available. The article stated, “That the gymnasium is filling a long felt want in the community is evidenced by the fact that it is in use every night of the week, and nearly every afternoon from one till three o’clock by various organizations of this region. The American Legion has it on Monday nights; a group of alumni and former H. S. stars on Tuesday night; Wednesday night is set aside for Dubs and Duffers; Thursday night is reserved for the ladies, while Friday and Saturday are reserved for the various activities of the high school and community meetings. In addition to this, the Modern Woodmen are using the floor two afternoons in the week, and a group of ladies from (among) the younger have arranged to have the building to themselves as least two afternoons a week.

“Privileges of the gymnasium are extended to all alike for the modest sum of one dollar per month with all equipment furnished, and this very reasonable charge will be used to defray running expenses and rental charges. The equipment at present is comprised of basketballs, volleyball and a net, indoor base-

ball, punching bag and medicine ball. It is the intention to add to this equipment as fast as finances will allow.”

Other than dances and the like, it appears that the next large event to occur after the opening ceremony was outlined in the Union’s March 27th edition. As the newspaper explained, “The annual event of the Deer Park Athletic Association, the big Minstrel Show, is scheduled for Friday evening, and from the advanced sale of seats now shown, everybody will be there. Instead of crowding the hall as was done last year for two nights to give the people a chance to hear the home talent minstrels, the seating capacity of the new gymnasium, estimated at 800, will be used for a one night stand. Nearly all of the artists that appeared last season will be in the lineup of black faces, and some new and talented ones have been found and enlisted for the fun.”

The next week’s Union reported that the previous Friday’s show “was a tremendous success, both from the artistic and financial standpoint, and the members are scoring one more credit to their efforts to be a factor in the amusement of local people. Approximately 700 people who made up the audience spent their time dodging convulsions because of the laughter...” The description of the event ended with the note, “The proceeds of the evening were \$225.00.”

Two weeks later the senior class play, “A Full House,” was presented at the gym. The write-up appearing in the Union’s April 17th edition noted, “The senior class scored a splendid success in their annual dramatic effort, delighting the large audience that witnessed the work of the class.” No number was given for attendees, but notations regarding the play’s participants and detailed descriptions of the parts each played were recorded.

The community’s involvement in the hall’s creation was again suggested in the Union’s May 1st, 1924, description of the high school’s prior week’s work or cleanup day — an event referred to as “campus day.”

“Campus Day for the high school, which was set for Friday, proved a working

**D. P. H. S. ALUMNI
 HOMECOMING
 Dance**

HONORING CLASS OF 1940
**Saturday
 May 11**
 High School Gym
 Couple 50c

**WILLIE GROVE'S
 ORCHESTRA
 Everybody Welcome**

Above:
 Photo taken at the Deer Park High School Alumni Dance, May 11th, 1940. The band is set up at the east end of the gymnasium. The windmill arching over the dance band is a decoration left from the prior week’s “Old Dutch Garden” themed junior prom. The leader of the pictured Willie Grove’s Orchestra was Deer Park’s Robert Willis Grove — seen seated at the piano. The wind section consisted of Ted Edgett, Jack Milan, and Ted Blevins. Red Owens was on drums. The same group also performed at the prior week’s junior prom.

Left:
 Ad from the May 2nd, 1940, edition of the Deer Park Union.

success, and a transformation on the grounds about the gymnasium was the result. The work was well organized, different tasks being assigned to different groups with a boss over them who was held responsible for the work. Teachers were drafted and for the one time the students had the joy of bossing their instructors, as none of them were allowed to superintend any task. The grounds near the gymnasium were plowed and leveled, three sides of the building were given a second body coat of ivory colored paint, trees in the park were trimmed, a gravel walk built, and the big sand pile was demolished and scattered where it would do the most good. The girls, clad in hiking costumes, did a considerable portion of the work, and at noon brought forward a real workingman's dinner for the hungry hustlers. From some of the stories of gorging told afterward, the boys must have worked under difficulties during the afternoon. Mr. McMahan and his faculty are proud of the work accomplished and citizens who have not seen it would take notice of the fact that not only has the town acquired a new public building, but also a park of no mean proportions and beauty in the lots purchased with the building enterprise."

Exactly what the "park of no mean proportions" consisted of is yet to be determined.

Next in the article was a description of that afternoon's baseball game against Spokane's Lewis & Clark High School — which the locals won.

The article concluded with, "In the evening the students closed their day with a pep rally around a bonfire on the campus grounds."

The May 15th edition of the *Union* reported the following. "The twelfth annual commencement week ... began Sunday (May 11th) when an audience that taxed the seating capacity of the gymnasium gathered for the baccalaureate service." The article went on to describe a week of events for which the new community hall served as venue.

The old gymnasium stood for ninety-

two years. And in that time it changed little — while the world around it moved inexorably on. When the building was first opened to the public, broadcast radio — still technically daunting to new users — was just catching on. Television was only known in the form of crude experiments, though a recognizable image of a moving human face was actually transmitted the year following the gym's opening. Traveling any distance outside the local area required preparation and effort — horses were time consuming and needed constant attention, automobiles were unreliable and likewise needed attention (though not nearly as constant), roads were often unpassable, and the comparative luxury of passenger trains was limited to prearranged timetables and the path taken by the tracks. The growing rural telephone systems were a highly valued blessing — how highly suggested by the effort locals put into creating and maintaining them. But communicating at a distance remained either slow, as in letters — most often scribbled in cursive — or very expensive, as in long-distance telephone calls or telegraph messages. Such limits on travel and communications made local communities turn inward. It was this world, this much slower world, this world of neighbors, this world of homegrown entertainments, this world in which the term community had a very different meaning — it was this world the Crawford Street gymnasium was meant to serve.

And serve it did. But in the years since it opened, more up to date venues have conspired with cultural changes brought about by advances in entertainment technology to push the classic building into obsolescence.

By the evening of October 5th, 2016, the last of the old gym's walls had fallen. With that, all the laughter and all the life that once permeated the very fabric of the antiquated structure passed into history. All that's left are a few physical artifacts, a scattered collection of photos, scraps of newsprint, and various bits of lingering recollections.

———— end ————

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

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

... moving the Perrins' Field plaque ...

In late September, 2016, society member Mike Reiter informed the society that the Sam Perrins commemorative plaque located near the Crawford Street gymnasium/community center had been moved due to the gym's impending demolition. The memorial's bronze plaque was originally installed in July, 1990, in recognition of Mr. Perrins' contribution to the local community as teacher and coach during his years at Deer Park High School — beginning in 1931, and ending with his retirement in 1965. (*According to the Tribune, Mr. Perrins retired from his coaching duties in 1943, but remained on staff as a math and social studies instructor.*)

Sam was born on November 6th, 1902, in Albion, Idaho — located near that state's southern border. He graduated from the University of Idaho in 1929. On the 19th of February, 1994, he passed away and was interred at Deer Park's Woodland Cemetery.

Mike included two photos (*see page 1402*); one showing the commemorative plaque — along with its brick and concrete base — in the process of being cleared of earth and then framed with protective wood prior to moving. The second photo shows the memorial being reinstalled at the southwest corner of the playing field — the wooden Perrins Field sign in the foreground later being removed.

Though the playing field was officially named the "M. S. (Sam) Perrins Field" in October, 1956, according to the dedication on the memorial plaque the coach's association with the open space goes back to when the playing field was first put into use. As the words cast into the plaque note, Mr. Perrins

"was the major influence in securing the land and having it cleared as a football field." Another source dates the ground's conversion as having occurred in 1934. For the next 20 some years it was referred to only as the "football" or "playing field."

The series of events leading to the field's current name began when Deer Park's application for membership in the Junior Chamber of Commerce was officially recognized on the 18th of September, 1954. Almost immediately the new group embarked on the task of extending the "football" field's hours of usefulness with a massive lighting project.

Public notice of the project was made in the October 8th issue of the *Tri-County Tribune*. The paper reported, "Ninety-one light fixtures have been obtained by the Jaycees from Albeni Falls (Bonner County, Idaho) for the purpose of lighting the local play field. Plans are now underway for the installation." These used lights were purchased from the Albeni Falls Dam construction site. (The dam was finished in 1955.)

The above noted "installation" took longer than planned. In the summer of 1955, Washington Water Power donated diagrams and the associated calculations related to the field's proposed lighting system to the project. Also to the front came the issue of purchasing the necessary 70 foot poles, circuitry, and related materials. Eventually the poles were obtained with the help of Deer Park Pine — possibly late in 1955; possibly the spring or summer of 1956. The records on hand aren't clear on that. What is clear is that the two-year project was hand to mouth, with the Jaycees occasionally taking on debt, then raising the funds after.

Clearly undeterred by the continually arising obstacles, in July, 1956, the Jaycees set a deadline of September 1st for completion of the project. That deadline, like many previous projections, was optimistic.

Despite all, an article appearing in the August 23, 1956, edition of the *Tri-County Tribune* announced a “Name The Field Contest.” The article stated, “With the completion of the playfield lighting coming to a close, the Jaycees are going to sponsor a contest for the field name.”

A few weeks later, it was decided that the Student Council of Deer Park High School’s Associated Student Body would act as the contest judge — choosing the winning name from those submitted.

On September 13th, the *Tribune*’s front page announced, “Playfield Lights Are

Erected.” The article stated, “This week the Jaycee project of lighting the playfield comes very close to reaching the ultimate goal. Monday, with Washington Water Power manpower and equipment, and with the help of the local Jaycees, the poles and light units were positioned and erected. Setting the poles was done by Washington Water Power’s big boom truck, and the holes were dug by their hole-digging equipment.”

But the project wasn’t quite complete even then — as the October 11th *Tribune* noted. The project update appearing in that edition stated in part, “The Jaycees made a close race out of it in getting the lights ready to go for the first home football game. The tie-up in supplies which had been ordered held the group up for some weeks, but the supplies, or rather a substitution, arrived last Wednesday

Right: The memorial plaque and base being removed from its prior location near the about to be demolished gymnasium.

Left: The city crew reinstalling the plaque at the southwest corner of Perrins’ Field.



Photos by Mike Reiter.

morning. By having work done Thursday and Friday, the Jaycees were able to tie in the last pole needed for lighting the football field about 5:15 p.m. Friday.”

On the evening of October 19th, 1956, under the lights during the halftime of a night game between Deer Park and Cheney, it was announced that the field would henceforth be

known as “The M. S. (Sam) Perrins Field.” And then in late November, the Jaycees announced they had paid all remaining debt related to the lighting project.

The society would be most interested in hearing more stories about Mr. Perrins.

——— Wally Lee Parker ———

Minutes of the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society November 12, 2016

In attendance: Bill Sebright, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Marilyn Reilly, Lorraine Nord, Sue Rehms, Ella Jenkins, Roxanne Camp, Marie Morrill, Mark Wagner, Mary Jo Reiter, Mike Reiter, Sandy Davis, Steve Davis, Peter Coffin, Judy Coffin, and Tom Costigan.

Society President, Bill Sebright, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He reported that: 1) Marilyn Reilly called and said there were *Spokane Daily Chronicles* from the 1960s at Deer Park Vision Source. Bill went there and got one from 1967. He left his card, hoping for a phone call from Paul who brought them in. Nothing has happened yet. 2) Sharon Huffman Borgford emailed asking questions about clay deposits in the Clayton area. Bill had her look through the online *Mortarboards*. She found several articles which helped her with her research. George and Helen Huffman were Sharon’s parents. Her brother, Dan, is in his last year of teaching at Deer Park High School. Mike Reiter and he made the time lapse video of the Civic Center demolition. 3) Chris from New York emailed Bill asking for information on his great grandfather, Joseph Nadeau who was a logger at the Edwards & Bradford Lumber Company in Elk in the 1920s. He was killed in an accident on site. 4) Deer Park High School Stags won

their first playoff game in the 99 years of Stag football. They beat Naches Valley 21-0.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported the main checking account ended the month at \$7,181.65. There were deposits of \$40.00. The web hosting account ended the month at \$832.44 with a withdrawal of \$10.95 for web hosting.

Society Vice President Pete Coffin reported: 1) He sent Sandy and Steve Davis DVDs of all of Herbert Mason’s Memoranda and all the Arleta (Casberg) Rasmussen pictures he digitized several years ago.

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1) One hundred and ten copies of the November *Mortarboard* (#103) have been printed for distribution, and the online version submitted for posting. This 16 page issue features an article printed under the editor’s byline titled “Deer Park’s 1894 Halloween Murder Mystery,” and under Peter Coffin and Kenneth Westby’s byline an article titled “Andrew Norseth’s Arcadia Orchard.” The *Letters/Brickbats* segment includes a piece regarding Pioneer Waterproofing’s recommendation that Clayton’s terracotta eagle be washed annually, and also some recollections of former Williams Valley resident Fred Reynolds. 2) Paper supplies have been obtained by Print Publications and the bill submitted to the treasurer.

Under normal circumstances the paper ordered should take us through the majority of next year. 3) Just as a note regarding the recommended cleansing of Clayton's terracotta eagle; it might be wise to follow Pioneer Waterproofing's recommendations to the letter. The ability of the eagle's coating to prevent further deterioration of the terracotta in its body is likely dependent on the ability of water vapor to move through the semi-permeable membrane covering it. While it might be tempting to make the eagle shine even more brightly by applying a nice, thick coat of wax after washing, don't until that, or any other ideas outside the specific recommendations put forth by Pioneer Waterproofing have been put to the company.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported that she will get the new *Mortarboard* online as soon as Wally gets it to her. Marie brought a printout of website usage statistics. The statistics will be sent to the membership later in the month.

Welcome to the C/DPHS! Sandy and Steve Davis joined today.

Penny Hutten reported that the West-erners Spokane Corral's meeting will be No-

vember 17, 2016. Caitlin Shain will give a talk about the History of the Spokane Fire Department and some interesting fire stations. Talk to Penny or Bill if you are interested in going.

The Deer Park Rotary sent us a letter requesting that we donate \$25 to have our name on their Holiday Sign. There were no objections. Mark will drop off a check.

Mike Reiter reported that last Thursday they were doing core samples on Perrins Field by the civic center. Construction probably won't start until the spring.

After the meeting Mike Reiter, Wally Parker, and Bill Sebright were looking at the Eagle to figure out the best way to wash it. They found a couple of bubbles on the ochre colored base. Bill took a picture and will send it to Doug Flewelling at Pioneer Waterproofing.

Next meeting: Saturday, December 10, 2016, at 9 AM at the Clayton Drive-In.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM.

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

— end —

Volunteer proofreaders for this issue: Betty Deuber, Rick Hodges, Bill Sebright, Chuck Stewart, and Lina Swain.

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 —

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 1,404 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-Nine."*