

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.

The Early Settlement of Loon Lake

by

Peter Coffin

... *First Settlers* ...

Loon Lake had been an Indian gathering place for many years, and when the first Caucasians passed through, several thousand Indians were camping along its shores. Fur traders associated with David Thompson's explorations in the early 1800s and Jacko Finley's Spokane House probably visited Loon Lake. In the late 1820s David Douglas traveled from the Colville Valley south of Chewelah to Tum Tum. He must have seen Loon Lake, although Jack Nisbet in his book, "*The Collector*," does not mention Douglas having seen it.

The first settler at Loon Lake was Charles H. Arnold who built a cabin northwest of the lake along the lake's drainage way into Sheep Creek — that possibly in 1883(?) (*see map on page 1183*). This location is in the

northwest quarter of Section 33-Township 30 North-Range 41 East WM and is shown on the United States Government's cadastral surveys of 1886.

Mr. Arnold had led an interesting life prior to settling in Loon Lake. According to an oral history narrated by Kay Agar, Arnold was originally from Augusta, Maine, and had ridden as a Pony Express rider in Wyoming. Unfortunately, I could not find his name on the rolls of Pony Express riders. Ms. Agar says that he later became a Commissary Superintendent for the building of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

He homesteaded the northwest quarter of section 34-Township 30 North-Range 41 East WM on the north side of the lake and in what is now part of the town of Loon Lake just west of the intersection of US Highway 395 and Washington State Highway 292. He

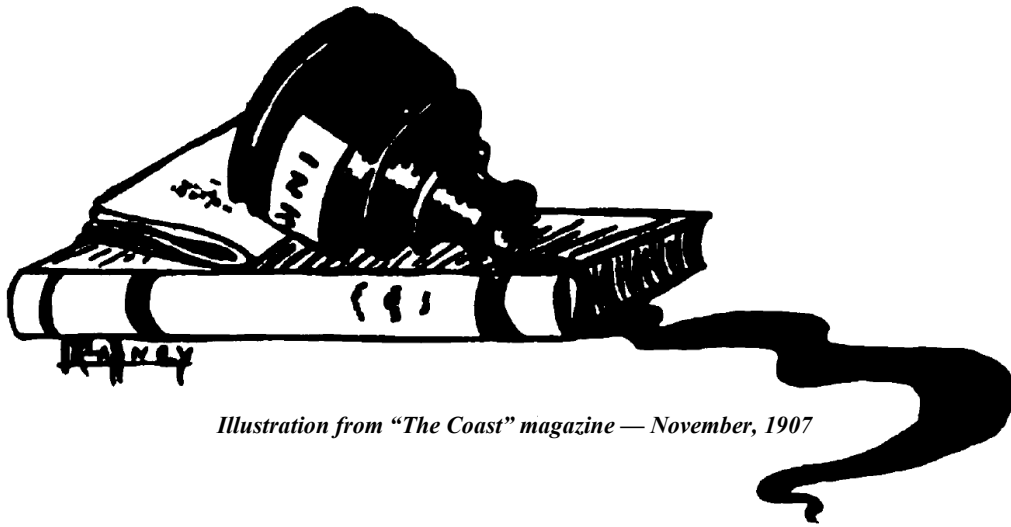


Illustration from "The Coast" magazine — November, 1907

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.

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————— *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>

received title to this tract on April 14, 1891, which infers that Arnold's homestead application had been submitted four or five years earlier — possibly in 1896.

... Roadbuilding and Town Platting ...

The first road to pass near Loon Lake was the Cottonwood Road, built in 1867 by Colville River Valley farmers to allow them to transport and sell their farm products to miners going into the north Idaho mining district. The road followed an Indian trail south from Cottonwood Creek to the northeast corner of the lake, and then eastward towards the present Garden Spot Grange.

The construction of the Spokane Falls & Northern Railroad in 1889 really opened up the Loon Lake area for settlement and the development of resort areas. Early maps of Loon Lake Park (present day Loon Lake) show a railroad turning wye just northwest of the Loon Lake depot. The west end of this wye is shown on some maps to extend to near the north side of the lake. The town of Lakeside was platted in 1890, and the town of Loon Lake Park was platted in 1891 — before either Deer Park or Clayton were established.

... Recreational Facilities ...

Daniel Corbin, builder of the Spokane Falls & Northern Railroad, developed Loon Lake Park as a resort destination. As noted in the roadbuilding section above, a turning wye was built so excursion trains from Spokane could have their locomotives turned for the return trip, and a spur was built west to the lake so that passengers could leave the railroad cars right at the lake edge resort. In 1894 Evan and Johannah Morgan bought Corbin's interest in Loon Lake Park and continued expansion of the area as a resort destination on the north shore of Loon Lake. This expansion included construction of a Ferris wheel, building bath houses, cabins, a dance floor and boat rides and rentals. This resort became Morgan Park in the 1960s.

... Industrial Development ...

Several sawmills were located on the south end of Lakeside. The lake provided a mill pond to store and easily move logs to the mills. Dart, Curtiss & Potts as well as Holland and Horr had sawmills there over a thirty year period. On the northwest side of Lakeside was the Gherke sawmill. With all of these sawmills, Lakeside became informally known as "Slabtown" for the piles of log slabs and lumber edgings.

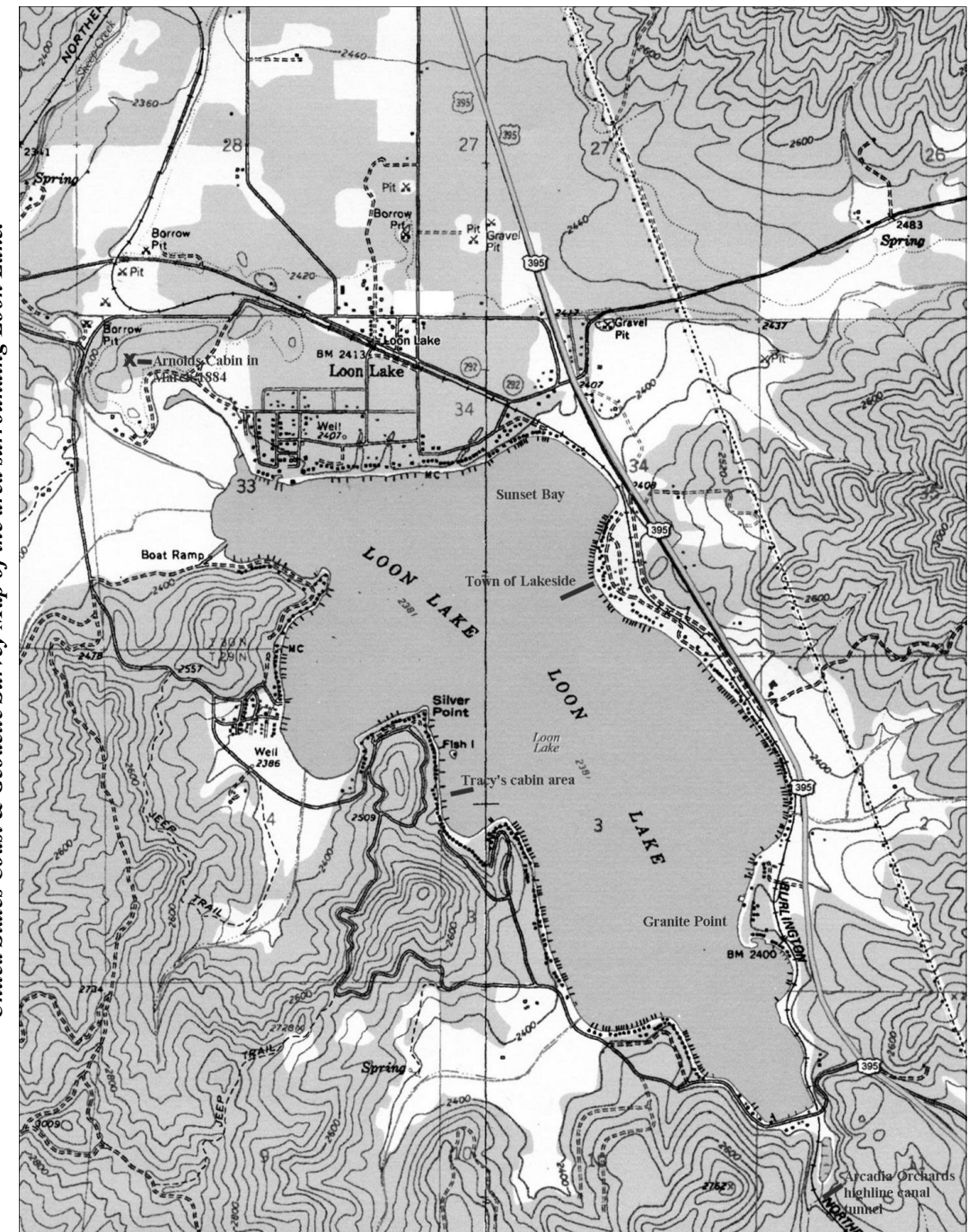
Fire was a constant danger in these steam powered sawmills. The 1890 Dart mill burned in 1896 and was replaced by the Potts-Curtiss mill in 1900. In late 1900 Holland and Horr acquired the Potts-Curtiss mill and operated it until it too burned in 1911. The site remained idle until 1913 when Spokane Sash and Door moved their operation to Loon Lake and rebuilt the operation. By 1926 this mill had ceased operating. The Gherke mill operated from 1890 to 1916 north of the Holland-Horr mill. It may have built fruit boxes for the Arcadia Orchards Company. This mill was moved to Entiat, Washington, in 1926.

Ice production was another industry on the shores of Loon Lake. Due to the high quality of the lake water many ice houses were built around the lake. The Great Northern Railroad operated an ice harvesting and block storage facility on the eastern shore between 1903 and 1916. Smaller firms continued ice production until electric refrigeration became widespread in the 1950's. Sawdust from the mills was used to insulate the ice during storage and shipping.

... Lake Water Levels ...

Since the arrival of settlers, the level of Loon Lake has varied considerably, due to both man's activities and weather variations. In 1889 Charles Arnold deepened the northwest drainage channel to expose more farm land on his homestead tract. This action lowered the lake level about three feet. Because

United States Coast & Geodetic Survey Map of the area surrounding Loon Lake.



of his actions the original elevation of the lake level is uncertain. In 1893 he again wanted to lower the lake level but David Corbin and the Spokane Falls & Northern Railroad obtained an injunction against lowering the lake in order to expose more farmland.

In 1911 the Arcadia Orchard Company cut a canal from the southeast end of the lake to a tunnel leading to their Highline Canal to use lake water to irrigate their apple orchards. Prior to this construction the average lake surface elevation was reported to be about 2380 feet above mean sea level. Drainage of lake water for irrigation lowered the level of the lake substantially and caused legal chal-

lenges. The case went to the Washington State Supreme Court and the taking of water for "provident" purposes was allowed to continue. Arcadia bought easements from lake shore lot owners to compensate them for the lowering of the lake level. Arcadia also struck a deal with the Loon Lake Park Company that the lake level would be maintained at 2383 feet above mean sea level or about three feet lower than before they began taking lake water for irrigation. After this time Arcadia brought water in from Deer Lake and Grouse Creek north of Deer Lake to maintain a reasonable water level in Loon Lake. Depending on rainfall and snowfall amounts the lake level

Early Settlers and Homesteaders.

The information listing names of the early settlers of Loon Lake comes from several sources. The most time-accurate source of names of settlers comes from the United States Government Land Office homestead listings. A less time-accurate account is found in the Chapin-Dunning collection of Stevens County oral histories. Charles Arnold was discussed above and some others and their land locations or professions are listed below and on the facing page.

Swan Williams: *Came to Loon Lake in 1888 and homesteaded the SW/4-Section 4-Township 29 North-Range 41 East WM.*

Kendrick S. Waterman: *He opened a store and served on the school board and homesteaded the NW/4 of Section 4-Township 29 North-Range 41 East WM.*

Joseph W. Dunlap: *Mr. Dunlap came to Loon Lake in 1891, opened a large general store and operated a logging business.*

Al W. Kemp: *Mr. Kemp came through the Loon Lake area in 1891 and discovered the indications of copper mineralization at the future site of the Loon Lake Copper Mine. He opened a blacksmith shop and was involved in the Blue Grouse tungsten mine in later years.*

Evan Morgan: *Mr. Morgan purchased the Spokane Falls & Northern resort area on the north side of the lake. He was also involved in the development and sale of Loon Lake Orchards to the Arcadia Orchards Company as well as in most of the mines in the area.*

Archie Swope: *Mr. Swope moved to the Loon Lake area with his family in the 1890's. He became Loon Lake Postmaster in 1916 and was a source of Loon Lake historical information for many years.*

varies about three feet.

... Harry Tracy — Desperado ...

Loon Lake became the temporary home of Harry Tracy in the late summer or early fall of 1896 when he was 21. In the years before he had worked in the Wisconsin woods as a logger and easily gained employment as a lumberjack for local businessman J. W. Dunlap. He lived on the west side of the lake near the water's edge in a small cabin near Big Island in Corbin Bay.

His early history is not well known and the many sensational pulp novels written about him only made for more uncertainty and confusion. Much of what is known of Tracy's time at Loon Lake comes from a 1960s *Spokesman-Review* article — that drawn from a recorded interview with Archie Swope, a 76 year old retired Loon Lake postmaster. From that interview it seems that during the period of time in 1896 and 1897 that Tracy spent in Loon Lake he was not in trouble.

According to the most well researched study of Tracy, he left Loon Lake in

Homesteaders Surrounding the Lake.

Section 2 Township 29 North-Range 41 East

Peter Soot 7/31/1896 (SE/4 NW/4, Tracts 2 & 3)

Peter Soot 5/1/1906 (SE/4 NE/4, Tract 1)

Cathinko Evenson 7/31/1896 (SE/4)

Olaf Nelson 11/9/1896 (E/2 SW/4, Tracts 6 & 7)

Section 4 Township 29 North-Range 41 East

Kendrick S. Waterman 11/26/1895 (SW NW, NW SW, Tracts 4 & 5)

John Andersson 7/14/1893 (NE SW, NW SE, Tracts 2 & 3)

Edward Anderson 4/4/1910 (S/2 SW)

J. Willman Heirs 3/23/1897 (S/2 SE, NE SE, Tract 1)

Section 10 Township 29 North-Range 41 East

Charles J. Anderson 7/31/1896 (E2 SE, Tract 1)

Swan Alfred Carlson 7/2/1904 (E/2 SW, W/2 SE)

Nels Petter Pearson 3/5/1891 (W/2 NW, SE NW Tract 3)

Lewis Willman 6/16/1904 (W/2 SW)

Washington State 3/2/1853 (Tract 2)

Section 34 Township 30 North-Range 41 East

Charles Carlson 3/5/1891 (N/2 NE, SE NE, Tract 1)

Charles H. Arnold 4/14/1891 (N/2 NW, Tracts 2 & 3)

Cyrus F. Mathers 10/12/1891 (NE SE, Tracts 4 & 5)

Section 3 in Township 29 North and sections 33 and 34 in Township 30 North that about the lake were Northern Pacific Railroad land grant sections and not eligible for homesteading. The railroad took possession of them on May 27, 1895.

References.

1. *Dullenty, Jim, 1996, Harry Tracy, the Last Desperado: Dubuque, IA, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. (This book is perhaps the definitive work on Harry Tracy. The book is exhaustively researched and was recommended to me by Mr. Jim Kershner of the Spokesman-Review.*
2. *Dunning, Minnie Chapin, 19??, Manuscript 68, Eastern Washington Historical Society Misc. 154: Museum of Arts and Culture files. (Mrs. Dunning made a study of Stevens County including Indian artifact collection. In her study she collected about 100 oral histories. The primary oral histories for this work were given by a Kay Agar. I have been unable to accurately identify who "Kay" Agar was in that the US Census listings in the Stevens County area do not list a person with that name. Possibly she's Catherine Agar, who is listed, and her nickname may have been "Kay." The Agar oral history sheets are typed out as short paragraphs and single sentences and sometimes they contain dates that conflict with other sources and names of people that are difficult to connect with specific places. However, this source of history is a very valuable resource.)*
3. *Jones, Dale, 2010, Great Northern Railway Kettle Falls Branch History and Operations Spokane to Chewelah: Syracuse, NY, Dale Jones, 191 p. (This book includes a section on Loon Lake and the Spokane Falls and Northern Railroad. He has drafted maps and modified aerial photographs to show where the ice spurs and railroad spurs were located. This paper places the Loon Lake Lumber mill on the site of the ice spur into what became Granite Point Park.)*
4. *McGinnis, R., and Fernandez, S., 2008, Sediment investigation sampling and analysis plan, Loon Lake, Loon Lake, Washington: Hart Crower Report 17453-00. (This report was prepared for the Washington Department of Natural Resources and is the source of much information about industry along the lake as well as a discussion of lake levels.)*
5. *Nisbet, Jack, 2009, The Collector: David Douglas and the natural history of the Northwest: Seattle, WA., Sasquatch Books, 290 p.*

a hurry. He was supposed to have been having an affair with a married woman whose brothers were determined to break up the affair. One winter night the brothers, armed with shotguns, caught the pair in Tracy's cabin. Tracy ran out of the cabin ahead of shotgun blasts and escaped across the frozen lake in his underwear, never to return. After this he became the murderer known in the press. On August 5, 1902, he killed himself on a farm near Creston, Washington, during a shootout with a sheriff's posse after robbing stores and committing several murders in Oregon and western Washington.

... Conclusion ...

Loon Lake has become a summer lake destination with practically all the lake shore built up with vacation homes as well as some areas having houses built several lots away from the lake. Only the steep cliffs on the southeast side and marshy northwest corner of the lake have not been intensely developed as seen in the map on page 1183.

— end —

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

Bits of Chatter, Trivia & Notices All Strung Together

... Clayton's Fair; a recent history ...

October's *Mortarboard* included a photo essay about this last summer's traditional local events — Settlers' Day, Brickyard Day, and the Clayton Community Fair. As the editorial group was deciding on the wording for the caption appearing on page 1158 of that issue — a caption titled "*A Very Short History of the Fair*" — we realized just how little we actually know about this traditional event.

Among the more puzzling pieces of this history is the fact that the Clayton Community Fair is sponsored by the Deer Park Fair Association. Understanding the fair's recent history should resolve any bewilderment regarding this apparent conflict in names.

As close as can currently be documented, the first spark of a local community fair was held in Deer Park around 1910. The printed evidence for such is found in several issues of 1911's *Deer Park Union*. Articles and ads in the few copies remaining for that year describe the fair held on the 26th and 27th of August, 1911, as Deer Park's "*second annual fair*" — thereby implying that the first occurred in 1910. We say "*implying*" since no 1910 or earlier editions of the hometown newspaper are on file — our assumption being that most, if not all, no longer exist.

The weekly issues of the *Union* for the next several years — 1912 and '13 — are in majority missing, and nothing definitive about the fair has so far been discovered in what remains. A search of 1914's much more complete collection suggests that no fair was held in Deer Park that year. However, the

existence of several extended articles touting Spokane's Interstate Fair implies that the interest and energy Deer Park's Commercial Club — primary sponsor of the prior local fairs — as well as the interest of the community in general, had migrated to Spokane's much larger venue.

It's likely to take some in-depth research to map out the fits and starts that appear to have characterized the various attempts at reestablishing Deer Park's fair over the following years. Some of that uncertainty seemed to end in 1931 when Spokane's International Fair sputtered to a halt — apparently a victim of mismanagement and the global depression. One would assume that the vacuum created was a perfect opportunity for locals to reboot Deer Park's fair — which, largely through the efforts of the Commercial Club and the local 4-H, Deer Park did that very same year.

Further research should clarify how consistently the fairs were held in the years following — though our suspicion is that the chain has been unbroken since a single cancellation in 1942 — that apparently due to wartime concerns that merit a story of their own.

As regards the change of venue from Deer Park to Clayton, we contacted Janice Purdy — long time insider with the Deer Park Fair Association — for an explanation.

In reference to the Association's loss of its traditional fairgrounds in 2005, Janice wrote, "*The Deer Park Fair Association was informed that the City of Deer Park had sold the property.*" She also noted, "*We had signed a new lease with the city earlier that year.*"

The agreement stated that if the property were to be sold, the Association would receive up to 50% of the selling price, but no more than \$250,000” — that being exactly the amount the Association received.

Despite the impending change of ownership, the 2005 fair was allowed to go forward at the Deer Park site.

Janice reported that C/DPHS member Don Ball alerted the Association to a possible location for a new fairgrounds just south of Clayton on Wallbridge Road. And then added, “There were several hurdles we needed to clear before we could actually buy the property. Stevens County’s Planning Department required we fill out pages of paperwork. The Department of Ecology needed to give their approval. And we needed approval from the Stevens County Public Utility District to hook up to the public water and sewer lines. Neighbors adjoining the location also needed to give their approval — which 100% did.”

The 2006 fair was to be held on the 4th weekend in August, but early spring found not a single structure standing on the new property. It was suggested that the Association simply cancel that year’s event. However, as Janice relates, the president of the Washington State Fair Association, Nancy Ruark, informed those that were suggesting such as a practical matter, “You don’t know those folks at Clayton. They will have a fair!”

In glowing terms Janice outlined the outpouring of volunteer support that materialized to, in a matter of months, create a fairgrounds from an empty field. “We were able to construct two barns in time for the fair. We didn’t have lights. But we did have water and sewer.”

Since there wasn’t time to complete the facilities needed to hold that year’s rodeo — another classic event sponsored by the Deer Park Fair Association — it was cancelled. However, it did return in the summer of 2007.

The *Mortarboard* would like to thank Janice Purdy for the above information. In her letter she did take care to note that the Deer Park Fair Association is an all-volunteer, non-

profit organization. It survives on hard work, fundraising, and donations. Our tentative search of the archives of the *Deer Park Union* suggests that the group has a very rich history, and in the coming years we hope to retell a good portion of that history.

... another footnote for “Tuffy’s War” ...

Beginning with the January, 2009, issue of the *Mortarboard*, and continuing for the next five consecutive issues, the society ran an article titled “Tuffy’s War.” Written by your current editor, this work recounted highlights from the life of former Clayton area resident Alvin “Tuffy” Luhr — including his time with Patton’s Third Army during World War II. Also included in Tuffy’s story were details regarding the death of one of his younger brothers, 2nd Lt. Orland Luhr. Orland, then stationed at Luke Field, Arizona, died in an aerial collision that occurred while he was flying solo in the front seat of his tandem-seat trainer. The flight, involving a large number of aircraft, was being filmed by Warner Brothers Studio. The results of the filming was a fairly typical wartime drama titled “*God is My Co-Pilot*” — and the tragic loss of four young airmen.

The collision occurred when the single engine AT-6 “Texan” Orland was piloting collided with one of the B-25 bombers acting as the opposing force. Orland and the three airmen in the bomber — 1st Lt. George Hunter, 2nd Lt. Patrick Holland, and Sgt. James Ramey — were killed either at the moment of impact, or when the two broken craft finished their drop to the desert some nine thousand feet below.

When first putting the story together, the hometowns of the four airmen was only unclear in the case of Lieutenant Holland. The data only stated that “Mrs. June E. Holland was notified of the situation in a personal visit by the Commanding Officer of Mather Field, California.” That unclear situation was altered — with a surprising twist — when, via email, I received the following facts from Paul

Roales of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Mr. Roales explained that he had recently obtained a copy of the souvenir-of-service book presented to Basic Flight Class 44-A upon their graduation from the Pecos Army Flying School, Pecos, Texas. In the book each graduate was represented by a photograph. Sixty-seven of those photos had been personalized with signatures — and, sometimes, call signs (Lieutenant Holland’s call sign being “Cold Potato”). As part of the ongoing effort among historians — both amateur and professional — to draw attention to the sacrifices made by our military, Paul Roales set himself the task of finding out how many of the above noted sixty-seven young men had survived the war. That research eventually led Paul to an online version of *Tuffy’s War*. And from there to the *Mortarboard*’s editor.

In one of his emails, Mr. Roales suggested we trade information — among such trades my copy of Orland’s accident report for Paul’s photo of Patrick Holland. The most interesting bit of data Paul had to share was found in the caption for that photo, where it lists Lieutenant Holland’s hometown as “Spokane, Washington.”

That quickly led to an online search, and that brought up a couple of additional facts.

The first was a “Spokane Public Schools” webpage showing a bronze plaque mounted in the main entrance vestibule of the city’s Lewis & Clark High School. The plaque states, “These Lewis and Clark High School students had a rendezvous with destiny from 1941-1945. During World War II they gave their lives to make the world safe for democracy. We honor their sacrifice.” Patrick D. Holland, class of 1943, is among the 161 names listed.

The second was an article appearing under the headline “Warner Bros. To Pay Army Widow” in the April 17, 1945, issue of the *Spokesman-Review*. The article stated, “The family of Lt. Patrick D. Holland, army flyer killed in a plane crash August 19, 1944, will fare better financially than the widows and



2nd Lt. Patrick D. Holland
December 15, 1919 — August 19, 1944

children of most pilots killed in the war, it was revealed before Superior Judge Louis Bunge yesterday, where his widow, Mrs. June E. Holland, 24, was named executor of his estate.

“Lt. Holland was killed while flying in formation for a scene for a Warner Brothers picture and Warner Brothers agreed to pay \$10,000 damages for his death. At the time of the tragedy the flyers were under army orders. The flight was part of their routine training, the picture company being given permission to photograph it.

“In addition, Mrs. Holland receives a pension of more than \$60 monthly for herself and infant child as well as \$10,000 in government insurance her husband carried.”

The tenor suggestive of unequal treatment in the above article comes largely from

Scan of 2nd Lt. Patrick D. Holland’s photo courtesy of Paul Roales, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

the failure to fully disclose the circumstances of Holland's death. The assertion that "*the flight was part of their routine training*" is clearly misleading. While it's possible that classifying the day's activities as "*routine training*" was a means of operationally sanctioning the use of military assets as props in a Hollywood production — in exchange for whatever propaganda value the military might gain — there was nothing routine about the maneuvers those assets were actually carrying out. As stated in the Army Air Force's accident report, during the several intensive briefings given aircrews on the day of filming it was emphasized to aircrew again and again just how hazardous having such a mass of aircraft maneuvering in such close proximity was. The number of craft involved was likely in excess of 25. Eighteen of the planes were Luke Field's AT-6 trainers — camouflaged by Warner Brothers to resemble Japanese Zeros. They, flying in tight formation, were to simulate a head-on attack against the approaching bomber formation. Though not clearly stated, it's assumed that formation consisted of at least six B-25s. And flying above it all was at least one, and probably more, aircraft acting as camera platforms.

The interaction was considered so hazardous that no student pilots were allowed to participate. The AT-6 pilots were all instructors. The B-25 pilots are assumed to have been equally qualified — the pilot of the bomber Orland Luhr struck certainly was.

All this suggests that June Holland was awarded an extra \$10,000 dollars because she found herself solely responsible for a dependent child as the result a line-of-duty incident that was not part of her husband's normal duties, but was in fact clearly the result of Warner Brothers presences at Luke Field on the day of Patrick Holland's death.

Regarding Warner Brothers presence during the incident, one of the questions that naturally arises for anyone studying the details of the Army's investigation is whether the collision was caught on film. While one of the cameramen reported observing the collision at

the edge of his viewfinder, that doesn't mean it was necessarily in frame. It certainly isn't evident when viewing the finished movie.

As a future project we'll be adding this new material to the large format version of *Tuffy's War* currently available through the society. This is a print-on-demand volume — so, as soon as the revision is completed, any new copies requested will reflect the changes.

In addition, we want to thank Paul Roales for bringing this new information to our attention. And we will be sharing further data regarding Patrick Holland with him if and when such becomes available.

... three stories from Pete Coffin ...

Society vice-president Pete Coffin forwarded three short stories to the *Mortarboard*. The first one ...

"Sometimes an interesting story from the past is told in unusual places. One Sunday (January 11, 2015) I was talking to Ina (McGowan) Daubel, Earnest Daubel's widow just before services began in the Deer Park Congregational Church. Ina said that her father, George McGowan, liked to walk in the woods on his farm near Chattaroy in the late 1930's and 1940's after coming home from work. While walking he liked to kick over old rotten stumps from long past logging and scatter the pieces.

"One evening he went walking. Shortly after he began his walk Ina saw him running back to the house faster than she had ever seen him move. After getting into the house and catching his breath he told of beginning his walk and having kicked what he thought was a stump. The stump was a curled up bear that raised its head to see who was kicking it. With that Mr. McGowan ran back to the farm house as fast as he ever had. Fortunately the bear didn't follow him."

Another story Pete gathered went ...

"After the January 2015 Clayton-Deer Park Historical Society meeting Lonnie Jenkins told me a story about Big Foot Valley that my father had told him. Jack Coffin and

Ira Davis took a horse drawn wagon to Deer Park to pick up some animal feed shortly after Prohibition had been repealed. As part of the visit to town the men decided to have a few beers as the wagon was being loaded. For good measure they took a supply of beer to ease the drive home. Ira got quite drunk and ,in the course of the drive home, fell off the wagon and broke his arm. Jack got him back on the wagon and delivered him to the Davis homestead — which wasn't a good idea. Ira's father was irate that he had gotten drunk and gave him a thrashing, broken arm and all. Big Foot Valley was a tough place in the 1930s."

And lastly this piece — the various players in which shall, for obvious reasons, remain anonymous.

"A Big Foot valley farmer always filled his tractor with gasoline at the end of a day's work. After that he and his family would, on a regular schedule, eat dinner and after a time turn off the house lights and retire for the night. The next day he would start his tractor and find that it was out of gasoline. This happened several times.

"In an attempt to find out who was stealing his gasoline, one evening he filled the tractor with gasoline and went through the routine of a normal evening until the family turned out the lights and retired. But instead of going to bed, the farmer loaded his shotgun with a rock salt shell and waited in the dark near the tractor. Soon a figure carrying a gasoline can and hose appeared. The farmer took aim and fired. The figure ran off into the darkness.

"A day or two later the farmer stopped to visit one of his neighbors. The neighbor's wife answered the door, and when the farmer asked where her husband was she said he was in bed and terribly sore. Coincidentally, gasoline stopped disappeared from the farmer's tractor."

Regarding any of the protected identities above, the editor has nothing to say other than, should anyone wish to pry further, Pete's contact information is available on the last

page of this issue.

... lutefisk, a holiday tradition ...

Late last month Print Publications received the following email from Ken Westby — Ken being a Deer Park expatriate and C/DPHS member currently living in Vancouver, Washington. The letter, recalling from childhood a few of his family's holiday traditions, uses several terms not all of our readers may recognize.

The first is lutefisk (lutefisk in Norwegian, lutefisk in Swedish), which is essentially a gelatinous form of whitefish such as cod, haddock and the like that has, as part of its preparation, been soaked for at least a few days in a lye solution. How radically this alters the flesh is suggested by the fact that too many days in the lye solution and this traditional Scandinavian foodstuff is likely to turn into soap.

The other term of note is lefse; which is described as a soft, Norwegian flatbread made with leftover potatoes, flour, butter, milk or cream and then cooked on a grill.

With that, here's what Ken had to say ...

"This last November our Sons of Norway lodge here in Vancouver hosted its annual lutefisk dinner. It's a major fundraiser for the lodge, served family style to a large crowd between 1:00 and 6:00 pm. The fish was exceptionally good this year, and I actually had a second helping of it. Having said that, it should be noted, however, that both my first and second helping were minuscule compared to that of the more serious lutefisk fans sitting at our table, and further that it was disguised with plenty of melted butter, and backed up by a generous helping of meatballs and potatoes, just in case — if you follow my drift.

"I'm not new to lutefisk, mind you. Just cautious. It was a family tradition each year at Christmas Eve in my Grandmother's house to have lutefisk. She was a marvelous cook and everything she prepared was always outstanding. She prepared the lutefisk the old-

fashioned way, which I understand involves boiling it until the fumes cause the wallpaper to peel off and fall to the kitchen floor. The lodge here does it using a modern method, which involves baking. That may account for why it tastes better now. No fumes. Anyway, as a youngster I was introduced to lutefisk. It was imperative that everyone should take at least a little of everything that had been prepared. And everyone was expected to eat everything that was on their plate. This included the lutefisk, and knowing this, I always took a tiny portion of it. I'd smother it in butter, just as nowadays, and that always seemed weird because it was like putting butter on Jell-O, I guess. But it did help.

"Lutefisk was never the issue as to finishing everything on my child-size plate with its child-size portions. It was the potatoes. I love potatoes now, but as a kid I just couldn't get them down in any form; baked, boiled, scalloped or mashed. Even with heaps of butter or gravy, they just wouldn't go down. So I'd do what any kid would do with something they didn't like. I'd sit there poking away at it, sliding it around the different quadrants of my plate previously occupied by beans, carrots, meat or lutefisk by now already eaten. Whenever an adult made mention of the fact there were still some potatoes remaining on my plate, I'd attempt to swallow a bit of it, judiciously incorporating a bit of drama to underscore the struggle taking place in my throat, a gesture that didn't seem to be fully appreciated by the grownups.

"Eventually someone would point out that potatoes remained on my plate well after everyone else had finished eating. A delicious dessert was waiting in the wings for all who had finished their dinner, and it was offered up as a tantalizing bribe to be enjoyed if only I would finish my potatoes. The bribe wouldn't work. Now, one exception to my aversion to potatoes was lefse. I could eat my weight in lefse, and my grandmother made the world's best lefse. Ultimately, it was lefse that saved my bacon at those Christmas Eve dinners, because some wise person realized that lefse

contained mostly potatoes, and that I did indeed enjoy lefse, especially when loaded with butter, sugar and cinnamon! Thus a compromise was finally reached in which I could achieve my potato quota by eating lefse, and in return I would stop disgusting everyone with my choking sounds. Problem solved.

"My granddaughter, Kelley, loves to hear me tell that story about potatoes. She must have inherited my potato gene because she totally relates to this dinnertime experience from her own childhood years."

... wax starlet plunges over Kettle Falls ...

The following missive was found in the "Twice-Told Tales" segment of the *Deer Park Union's* September 7th, 1922, edition.

"The great film scene at Kettle Falls last week, when Blanche Sweet, movie actress, was scheduled to go over the falls, proved a disappointment to a great crowd of onlookers, as the raft which went over, or was supposed to go over, carried only wax figures, not the person of the actress in the flesh. In addition the raft, heavily supported by empty casks, went to pieces in jig time and did not go over the falls at all. A new one will have to be constructed, but while the actress will try it again (in wax) later on, in reality she will be in California, she having left for Hollywood last week."

To understand why Miss Sweet was at Kettle Falls in the late summer of 1922, we need to look back to 1900, the year author Charles Felton Pidgin published a novel titled *"Quincy Adams Sawyer and Mason's Corner Folks: A Picture of New England Home Life."* The book became a best seller. It sold so well that within several years the story was reworked into a stage play. And the stage drama in turn proved so popular that, as reported in the July 8th, 1922, edition of *Holly Leaves* — hometown, Hollywood — the possibly of turning the book/play into a movie drew a young starlet, Blanche Sweet, out of her — as explained below — much too early retirement.

As *Holly Leaves* stated, "Miss

Public domain photo — circa 1915 — from Wikipedia.

Sweet ... will enact the leading feminine role in 'Quincy Adams Sawyer,' which is to be filmed for Metro. ... The return of Miss Sweet is one that will be welcomed by all film fans as well as by her many friends in the motion picture industry. ... She retired several years ago on account of ill health, and it was not until recently ... that she again appeared in the public eye. ... She had no intentions of going back to the screen at this time, but was persuaded to do so by her husband and friends. ... She will have the part of Alice Pettingill, the blind girl, in this famous story of New England life."

The movie was to be filmed at Metro's Hollywood studios, with certain action scenes to be shot on location. As the following from the August 19th issue of the *Holly Leaves* explains, when the assistant director chose a relatively remote spot in northeastern Washington State as a stand-in for New England, setting up for filming said action scenes became a major undertaking.

"A special compartment car and a diner will furnish the living quarters for the members of the "Quincy Adams Sawyer" company during the coming two weeks ... the party ... will attempt the filming of the most thrilling water scenes ever flashed on the screen in the swirling waters of the Columbia River.

"Because of the remoteness of the location, it was necessary to arrange with the railway officials for the construction of a siding at the point where the roadbed approaches closest to the junction of the Columbia and Kettle rivers. ... Horses and buggies have been chartered to transport the players to and from the river, a distance of three miles ...

"Three baggage cars were required to carry the necessary electrical supplies, including a large generator and other equipment. Two horses and wagons also were included, as well as lumber for a boat, two dozen life belts, a surgical emergency kit and other articles."

As for the above noted life belts and surgical kit, the article explained that, "A large part of the most dangerous action was scheduled to fall upon Blanche Sweet, Barbra La



Blanche Sweet
June 18, 1896 — September 6, 1986

Marr and John Bowers."

On August 16th, 1922 — a few days earlier than the above quoted *Holly Leaves* article — the society editor for the *Spokesman-Review*, Hannah Hinsdale (the penname of Spokane's Helen (Lyon) Hawkins), filed this interview.

"In every well-bred motion picture interview the star is found in her garden, or in her kitchenette, or in her automobile. But last evening, pursuing a few kind words from Blanche Sweet in the stage parlance, she was discovered on a milk truck in the yards of the Great Northern station. Snooping about in the dark for the Metro private car which was supposed to contain her, we passed the milk truck and heard a voice saying, 'That street car looks as if it were rolling over nothing.'

"The street car was forming an arc in the darkness over the Washington Street viaduct, and as there was something delaying

about the still, small voice of the speaker, we turned and said, 'Are you Miss Blanche Sweet?' And she was.

"She wore a long cape of dark material and the fur collar was crossed over her white throat. Her little face was half hidden in a white-laced traveling hat jammed down eyebrows and in the half darkness her flashing teeth made the highlights of her portrait. She is beautiful."

Later on the interview, Blanche explained, "This is the first time I have been in the northwest since I was a child and we are wild over it. We will spend two weeks at Marcus."

Marcus, like the original town of Kettle Falls, was one of the villages lost in 1941 beneath the water rising behind the new Grand Coulee Dam. Marcus was relocated to a higher elevation prior to the flood, but, unlike the also relocated Kettle Falls, the new town hasn't yet regained its health. Then too, when the dam's reservoir, Lake Roosevelt, is at its highest, the series of cascades Blanche Sweet was supposed to plunge over lay becalmed in the dark water's 90 feet below the surface.

A summation of the movie crew's adventure can be found in the September 22nd issue of *Holly Leaves*. The article begins ...

"After spending a month at Kettle Falls, on the Columbia River a few miles from the Canadian border, director Clarence G. Badger and twenty-five members of the 'Quincy Adams Sawyer' crew have returned to the Metro studios in Hollywood.

"The entire company lived in a special car during their stay in the northern country and also had their special dining car where they took all their meals.

"Marcus, Washington, was the nearest village to the location, and all were unanimous in their praise of the people of the town who gave them parties at their homes and provided other entertainment during their four weeks stay. The entire population of Marcus turned out to bid them farewell on the morning of their departure.

"Despite the fact that they obtained

many remarkable scenes about Kettle Falls, not a single injury resulted during the trip. There were many thrills and narrow escapes, but aside from a few scratches and bruises suffered by John Bowers when the raft upon which Blanche Sweet and he were going down the river snapped its cable, there were no calls for doctors.

"The final scenes for 'Quincy Adams Sawyer' will be filmed at the Metro studios."

Local citizens had to wait over a year — until the 1st and 2nd of January, 1924 — to see the movie projected at Deer Park's Fensler Theatre. Advertised as "Quincy Adams Sawyer," and then in parenthesis, "the Kettle Falls movie," we've yet to find any local reviews as to how it may have been received — although the national reviews varied from lukewarm to less than kind.

Miss Sweet, 26 years old when "Quincy Adams Sawyer" was filmed, began life in 1896 as Sarah Blanche Sweet. Born into a theatrical family, she first appeared on stage when a year and a half old, and then in the movies around age 14. Between 1909 and 1929 she appeared in over 150 silent films, often in a starring role, but was unable to make the jump into sound, appearing in only three talking pictures — the last of those in 1932. After that she worked on the stage and in radio until she quit show business altogether and got a job clerking in a department store. In her later years, she did return to do some acting for television, and did, before her death, receive some recognition for her early contributions to the film industry.

Unfortunately, *Quincy Adams Sawyer*, with part of its action having been shot at a place now submerged from view, is among the many silent films currently considered lost. When filmed, locals were hopeful the Kettle Falls sequence would act as an advertisement for the region — though it's likely few moviegoers were ever made aware that the rapids seen were located somewhere other than the novel's original New England setting.

———— Wally Lee Parker ————

Minutes of the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society ———— November 14, 2015 ————

In attendance: Don Ball, Bob Gibson, Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Betty Burdette, Bill Sebright, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Marilyn Reilly, Judy Coffin, Pete Coffin, Mark Wagner, Lynn Wells, Lorraine Nord, Sue Rehms, and Marie Morrill.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He reported: 1) Taffy Long delivered an Eagle contribution to Bill from Dick Price. Bill took a thank you note to Dick. The total of Eagle Restoration donations is now \$4620. The Memorial Fund was \$2365. 2) Bill met with Terry Peterson and Rolf Persson. They were looking for information on their grandparents, Eric and Hannah Peterson. Terry lives in Seattle, Rolf in Malmo, Sweden. They think Eric and Hannah are buried at Zion Hill, but couldn't find their headstones. Eric worked at the Brickyard. Pete has an update in his report. 3) Ernie Robeson called Bill to ask about the old Crawford Gym being torn down. 4) We received a thank you card from the Inland Northwest Camaro Club for a generous donation. I'm assuming that Pete Coffin made the donation. 5) Meg Decker (DPHS class 1972) called Bill to see what our Society is doing about archiving materials. She received a grant to do this for the Pend Oreille Historical Society. 6) The Heritage Network meeting will be at the Old School in Loon Lake, Monday, November 16th, 9:30 AM. This will be the last meeting until March.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported: The main checking account ended the month (Oct. 31st) at \$7,126.98. There were deposits of \$181.75. The web hosting account had a withdrawal of \$10.95 for web hosting

and ended the month at \$906.98.

Society Vice President Pete Coffin reported: 1) He finished finalizing the references portion of the telephones to Deer Park article and submitted it and a Ken Westby errata page to Editor Parker. With this the Deer Park telephone article should be ready for printing. 2) He found a pair of 1943 *Deer Park Union* articles that included an obituary indicating the cemetery in which an Eric Peterson was buried. Some of his family couldn't find his grave in the Clayton Zion Hill Cemetery and had appealed to the Historical Society for help. The clippings were ultimately emailed to family in Sweden. 3) He made a trip to Riverside Memorial Park. After helping them sort out some problems he found both Hannah and Eric's grave sites.

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1) Fifteen copies of *Collected Newsletters* volume 24 have been printed and bound. This volume archives *Mortarboards* #88, #89, and #90. 2) 125 copies of November's *Mortarboard* (#91) have been printed for distribution. The online version has been submitted for posting as well. This issue contains an article by Susan Simpson titled "A Woman Worth Remembering," and a piece by Ken Westby titled "Regarding Deer Park's Mix Theater." 3) Enough feature material is currently in development to carry Print Publications through the coming winter. But as always, new materials and new ideas are certainly welcome.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported by email: 1) I uploaded the November *Mortarboard* onto the site. 2) As of November 13th our average number of hits is 2,941 and aver-

age number of visits is 171. In the month of October we had 5,718 visits and 80,563 hits. 3) I received an email from Anne Aslin, who is trying to get a web page started for “*Millwood WA, History Enthusiasts,*” complimenting our web site and asking for advice. I gave her the ipage web address for our site and told her what little I know. I think her email is a great compliment to those who did the setting up of our web site.

Pete found more old pictures on the website of the Arcadia Orchard that Bob Clouse had uploaded. Archiving pictures was discussed. Wally noted that archiving and indexing is almost a full time job if we choose to pursue this.

Penny Hutten reported by email about the Westerners’ speaker. On November 19th, 2015, Anna Harbine will be speaking about “*The Japanese in Spokane during WWII.*” From their arrival with the railroad to their struggles in WWII, the city contains many remnants reminding us of our strong ties with the Japanese-American community. If you are interested, contact Penny or Bill. Penny and Lynn Wells are attending.

The Brickyard Day Committee is still

looking for a theme for next year’s Brickyard Day. This year it was the reunion of the Clayton School. We are trying to draw more people to the Clayton School on Brickyard Day.

Mike Reiter reported that it would be next spring before anything is done about the purchase of the old Crawford Gym (Civic Center). What we would like to have saved from the old building was discussed. Mike will be our representative to the city of Deer Park regarding the tearing down of this old building.

Betty Burdette said the next Settlers Day meeting is at 4:30 PM, November 16th at the ambulance office across from Perrins Field. The meeting are on the third Monday of the month.

The Settlers Picnic fund raiser will be at the Deer Park Eagles, March 5th. There will be a dinner, raffle and silent auction.

Next meeting: Saturday, December 12th, 2015, at 9 AM at the Clayton Drive-In.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.

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

———— end ————

Society Contacts

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

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———— C/DPHS ————

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

*Ask about
“Collected Newsletters: Volume Twenty-Five.”*

*Society contact information can be found
on page 1196 of this issue.*