

*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  
CLAYTON ♦ DEER PARK  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Mortarboard

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Tom Carson  
by  
Thomas Costigan

The film opens with a starry-eyed farm girls in the early 1920s telling her family of her dream of going to Hollywood and becoming a star. The scene, the beginning of the 1937 classic “A Star is Born,” takes place in North Dakota, but it could easily have been set nearly 1,000 miles further west in Clayton. The film, successfully remade three times since its original 85 years ago, was co-written by Robert Carson, who spent his early childhood in Clayton. Born on Oct. 6, 1909, in the Stevens County community, there is no mention of who were his parents. Robert Carson’s upbringing is equally mysterious in the three decades prior to his arrival in Tinseltown. Armed with a sharp wit and a love of writing, Carson came to Hollywood in the late 1930s. One of his first job was to create a screenplay for “A Star is Born” from a story created by himself and a man who would later direct the film, William “Wild Bill” Wellman. The story details the efforts of that North Dakota farm girl, Esther Blodgett, to make it in Hollywood. She eventually falls in love with Norman Maine, a once famous actor whose career is on a fast-tracked downward spiral after he steadily relies on alcohol to conquer his growing inner demons. Maine eventually takes his own life leaving a broken hearted and now famous in her own right Blodgett (now named Vicky Lester to continue her acting career on her own. Famed producer David O. Selznick, who



*The Spokesman-Review*

*Spokane, Washington · Tuesday, January 11, 1949*

for their original story in a March 10, 1938, ceremony at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. It would be Carson's only Oscar win during his time in Hollywood. Carson and Selznick's screenplay writing team also earned Academy Award consideration (one of seven Oscar nominations the film garnered) but lost out to "The Life of Emile Zola" for the top prize in that category. The movie's only other Academy Award went to cinematographer W. Howard Greene for his work

would later create the film version of "Gone With the Wind," compiled a team of Dorothy Parker and Alan Campbell along with six uncredited writers to help Carson and Wellman create a screenplay from their story. The film, starring Janet Gaynor and Fredric March (two of the biggest box office draws in Hollywood at the time, opened on April 20, 1937, and was met with highly favorable reviews. "Few pictures have touched the tear ducts so easily and unaffectedly as this one," according to an April 20, 1937, review in Variety magazine. "There are laughs too and some sparkling dialog." "You can chalk this up to a production that will have the town talking and a natural word-of-mouth advertising," added the review in The Film Daily a few days later. The public agree with those sentiments. The film, which cost \$1.17 million to make, took an impressive \$2.37 million at the box office (\$48.7 million in today's dollars). Carson and Wellman received an Academy Award

with color film. *A Star is Born* was the first technicolor film to earn a best picture nomination. It turned out that Carson and Wellman's story had a timeless quality to it. The film was remade in 1954 (starring Judy Garland), in 1976 (starring Barbra Streisand) and in 2018 (starring Lady Gaga) along with being the basis of a couple of radio theater productions in the 1940s. Carson and Wellman's original story has received on-screen credit in those subsequent remakes. Carson continued to stay busy following his initial Hollywood success. He had nearly 100 short stories and serials published in various magazines nationwide over the next decade. Among those efforts was a *Saturday Evening Post* story "Aloha Means Goodbye" which was turned into a 1942 Humphrey Bogart film "Across the Pacific." A spy thriller, the film (Carson did not write the screenplay) is set aboard a ship headed to Panama at the outbreak of World War II. During the war years, Carson served with the Army Air Force Picture Unit, a group of Hollywood professionals charged with making military safety and recruitment short films. Among Carson's underlings was a young Ronald Reagan, who starred in many of those films. After mustering out of the military, Carson found time to author three books, including "The Magic Lantern," a 1952 fictionalized account of Hollywood and "The Quality of Mercy" (1955), a fictionalized story about two private detectives working in Hollywood. Carson eventually returned to screenwriting. He worked on various television anthology series in the 1950s and later teamed up with Felix Jackson, Norman Krazna and Arthur Sheekman to write "A Bundle of Joy," a 1956 musical romantic comedy starring Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher. His last screen credit came a year later for "Action of the Tiger," an action-adventure film starring Van Johnson and featuring newcomer Sean Connery. The film was panned by most critics and audiences. As for his personal life, Carson married actress Mary Jane Irving, who started her showbiz career in silent films as a child. Irving's filmography included screen credits in more than four dozen movies including an uncredited part in the 1937 *A Star is Born*. Wellman's ex-wife, Helene Chadwick, another former silent film actress also had a small role in *A Star is Born*. Carson died on Jan. 19, 1983, at the UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles after a brief illness. His wife died a few months later an apparent suicide. The couple had no children.

*Minutes of the*  
***Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical***  
**July 9, 2022**

In attendance: Judy Reiter Whitt, Kirk Carlson, Bill Sebright, Dick Purdy, Larry Bowen, Rory Vinson, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Tracy Strong, Bill Phipps, Chuck Lyons, Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Mike Wolfe, Lorraine Nord, Mary Jo Reiter, Rachelle Fletcher, Roxanne Camp, Virginia Odynski, John Odynski, Gayle Dwyer, Deborah Cummins, Christina Burris, Don Ball, Elaine Ball and Judy Gross.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He reported that he: 1) Bob Reilly called to say that Marilyn Reilly passed away Saturday, June 23. We will certainly miss her. She was a faithful member. She always shared history with us very willingly, both oral and with artifacts. 2) Rory Vinson forwarded an email from Laura Chamberlain wanting information on Marilyn Reilly to put in her time capsule. Bill sent DPHS annual information that Ed Kingrey sent. He also told her where she could find more information. 3) Kevin Williams called and said he has moved the old log cabin from Joe Lyon property by Colville and Sixth in Deer Park to his property near Dalton and Montgomery. He moved several other sheds. He has a “Deer Park” brick that he found under the cabin. 4) Gayle Dwyer sent some information about a Robert Carlson from Clayton. Pete talks more about it in his report. 5) Maureen Dobson emailed wondering if we would be interested in a dress worn by Freda Mattison, the 1990 Settlers Queen. She wore it on the 1976 Civic Club float for the bicentennial celebration. She brought the dress this morning. 6) Dwayne Strong brought papers to Bill’s house to sign for moving the Eagle to the Clayton Fairgrounds.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: 1) The main checking account ended the month at 18,351.01. Total deposits were \$1385. 2) The web hosting account ended the month at \$28.88. Withdrawals for web hosting were \$47.48. I will transfer \$1000 out of the main account and put it in the hosting account. The Brickyard Day account is at \$918.61. The Eagle fund account, \$7499.65.

Society Vice President- No one has stepped forward to become Vice President.

Rachelle Fletcher will get a Mortarboard distributed when she can get together with Wally and her printing business slows down.

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Webmaster Damon Smathers reported: 1) We added a photo and write-up on the website of the Eagle being moved from the Clayton Drive-In to the Clayton fairgrounds. 2) We also updated our print publications section on the website to let viewers know that we are in the processing of transitioning editors. As of right now we believe we can get Newsletters out on a quarterly basis until our new editor is fully up and running. In the meantime we will still be getting our meeting minutes & agenda items out on a monthly basis. 3) Also be on the lookout for a new section on the website dedicated to Chuck Lyons tractor collection. Chuck approved of the Society adding photos and a write-up to the website. The new section will be called “Challenge Hill Tractor Museum”. Thank you to Pete Coffin for providing photos of the museum, and thank you to Chuck Lyons for sharing his collection with us.

Historian Pete Coffin reported that he: 1) Digitized the Owens Museum’s material on June 21 at Sue Mauro’s house on Pleasant Prairie. Many of these photographs were of Owens family members. I will give President Sebright and Wally Parker a CD containing this latest digitized Owens material. 2) Provided President Sebright data about the famous movie script writer Robert Carson who was born in Clayton on October 6, 1909. His father was a potter who moved the family to California before the 1910 US Census was taken. Mr. Carson spent less than 6 months in Clayton. 3) Attended the Chuck Lyons tractor display and took over 125 photographs. Provided both President Sebright and Webmaster Smathers a CD with these photographs.

The Exec. Board decided by email and phone calls not to participate in the time capsule project. The decision had to be made before today’s meeting.

The Brickyard Day planning committee met Wednesday. The flyer is coming together. T-shirts are causing a problem. We can’t use the same company we have in the past. We are working on getting another printer.

Mike Reiter reported: 1) I haven’t heard from Doug Knight, so I checked in with the rental folks about a forklift for the eagle. It would be about \$400 if we lifted it down on to the trailer and then used it to get it unloaded at the Fairgrounds. They have to charge for delivery. He kind of hinted that they might load it onto our trailer for free and then we would be on our own to get it off. Taking it out of the dump trailer and setting it on the pad should be the easy part. (Hopefully) 2) I have a crew, a torch to cut the hold down tabs with, and a trailer to haul it. If I can line up something with enough oomph to pick it up out of the trailer and onto the slab we could save the money for the cover. 2) Pete moved and Bill Phipps seconded that Mike be authorized to spend what is necessary to move the Eagle up to \$7800. Motion passed.

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The field trip to Challengehill tractor museum was a huge success! Thirty some people showed up. Even Melissa Silvio, President of the Valley Historical Society and her family were there. Chuck has an amazing number and variety of tractors!

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 13, 2022, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00.

Minutes submitted by Tracy Strong Society Secretary.

*Minutes of the*  
***Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical***  
**August 14, 2022**

In attendance: Judy Reiter Whitt, Bill Sebright, Dick Purdy, Larry Bowen, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Tracy Strong, Bill Phipps, Shauneen Flugal, Chuck Lyons, Mike Reiter, Mary Jo Reiter, Marie Morrell, Christina Burris and Tom Costigan.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He reported that he: 1) Another great loss for the Society and the community was the death of Don Ball. He and Lorraine were responsible for starting the Society. We met for many years at their Clayton Drive-In. 2) The package from Lorna Bershears came. It contained many pictures, annuals, and DPHS publications. It was passed around. 3) Marny Burdega texted saying that she had 3 DPHS annuals. We have the '50, '51 and '52 annuals that she has. She will look out for the annuals we don't have.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: 1) The main checking account ended the month at 16,238.17. Checks written: \$444.14 for Brickyard Day insurance, \$300.35 for forklift rental, \$997.35 BYD shirt printing, \$40 welding supplies and \$320 for Eagle fencing. 2) \$1000 was transferred to the web hosting account. The web hosting account ended the month at \$1010.96 with a withdrawal of \$12.95 for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at \$1001.48. The Eagle fund account, \$7189.65.

Society Vice President- No one has stepped forward to become Vice President.



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Rachelle Fletcher Mortarboard. No Mortarboard.

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported: 1) The July issue of the Mortarboard has been uploaded to the website. 2) We also had 5 inquires over the last few weeks on the website. We were able to find the photos and information they requested in our mortarboards and on the website itself. One request was related to the Irish family in Williams Valley that dated back to the early 1900's. We found photos and records of them from the old minutes at the Williams Valley Grange.

Historian Pete Coffin reported that he: 1) There was a question about the location of Lincoln, California in the last Society meeting after I mentioned it was a place that Prestini and Satre had visited. Lincoln is a part of the Sacramento metropolitan area. It was founded as a railroad town but in the late 1870s rich clay deposits of the Ione Formation were discovered. This led to the establishment of Gladding, McBean and Company who later purchased Washington Brick and Lime. Pottery made in Lincoln is famous. 2) President Sebright reported that a brick marked "Deer Park" was to be donated to the Society. The exact source of this brick is uncertain. In 1922 and 1925 there were several newspaper articles about the Neafus Ranch clay deposits (Mortarboard Issue 23, March 2010). In 1924 M. G. Swanson a Deer Park Ceramic Art Tile and Fire Brick Company was formed ("New Industry ships First Product", November 5, 1925. Front page Deer Park Union newspaper) and operated between 1925 and late 1926. This business may have been the source of the brick. Another company, the Deer Park Concrete and Construction Company (January 2022, Mortarboard) had ceased operation sometime before 1918. It was located on south Main Street on what became the Deer Park Fairgrounds. The location of the Deer Park Ceramic Art Tile and Fire Brick Company's location is uncertain. Newspaper articles locate it between the "Athletic Facility" and the railroad-right-of-way. 3) President Sebright gave my name to Erika Deasy who is compiling a book on early Spokane School houses. I will be sending her pictures and material from the DPHS and the Owens Museum files for her to use. 4) Joe Powlowski, who owns the old Al Bishop house at 207 East Second Street asked for information about the house's history. President Sebright asked me for some data and I found that the house was built in 1915 by Mike Binzin. Binzin was part owner of the Deer Park Concrete Construction Company (Mortarboard Issue 165, January 2022). 4) Digitized more of the Lawrence Owen Photograph Collection on August 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Most of the material was of Owens family members. Much of the collection has been of the many sawmills in northern Spokane County. 5) Provided President Sebright with material on early citizens and old buildings for inclusion in the time capsule. 5) I sent Florene Moore information from Lillian Woodward about an Indian scare on Wild Rose in 1881.

The Brickyard Day went well in most respects. One concern was that people didn't stay to enjoy the band as long as at the Clayton School. We have a meeting on August 17 to discuss the positives and negatives.

Mike Reiter reported: We got our site approval from Steven's County for the Eagle, which is good because we already have it set. They said we didn't need a building permit because our gazebo cover is under 200 square feet. I left a text with Matt from Dynamic Decks, but have not heard back. He may be on vacation.

Larry Bowen asked about a time capsule that was put in the Clayton Moose Hall in 1926. Bill is the only one who has heard about it. But no one has ever been able to tell about it, know where it was, or if it was ever opened. If anyone knows anything about it contact Bill.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, September 10, 2022, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50.

Minutes submitted by Tracy Strong Society Secretary.

*Minutes of the*  
***Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical***  
**September 10, 2022**

In attendance: Judy Whitt, Bill Sebright, Dick Purdy, Larry Bowen, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Tracy Strong, Bill Phipps, Shauneen Flugal, Hazel Flugal, Bill Phipps, Winnie Moore, Scott Moore, Rory Vinson, Christina Burris and Tom Costigan.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He reported that: 1) The Eagle was really noticed by people at the Clayton Fair. Many came to our booth and commented on our Eagle displays. 2) We received a letter from James Elliott, a British Columbia author. His book is Chasing Stolen Gold. He had asked permission to use a map from our Website that Jackie Franks gave us. He also sent membership dues. He is sending a book to CDPHS in October. 3) Rory Vinson is donating the Arcadia picker's token he found to the time capsule project. It will be enclosed in an archivally sound container. 4) There has been



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no new information about the time capsule from the Clayton Moose Hall (Grange). 5) Patty Shives Wainwright has given names to everyone in the pictures we received from Minnie Westby Hayworth. (See attached.) The couple are Patty's great grandparents on her dad's side, Alonzo (Lon) and Dora Billings. The group, standing- Fanny Forgey, mother of Dora Forgey Billings and Dora Forgey Billings. Seated- Mary Lusk, mother of Fanny Forgey; Gladys Billings Shives holding her son George. George is Patty's uncle, older brother of her dad Harry (Pat) Shives.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: The main checking account ended the month at \$15,480.17. Total deposits were \$772. Checks written: \$576.76 for Brickyard Day flyer printing, \$100 to Stevens County Planning, \$500 for BYD band and \$43.24 for BYD parade ribbons. The web hosting account ended the month at \$993.04 with a withdrawal of \$12.95 for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at \$2,076.11. The Eagle fund account, \$7,199.65 (\$10 was donated at the Fair.)

Society Vice President- No one has stepped forward to become Vice President.

Rachelle Fletcher had no report.

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported by email. 1) They are having water pump problems at home. 2) We are still getting 1-2 inquiries on the website per week.

Historian Pete Coffin reported: 1) Tom Costigan brought in a copy of the Deer Park High School 1939 "Buckskin" and I digitized it. It may have been the yearbook of a senior project. Previous yearbooks and subsequent yearbooks were named "Stag". 2) Spent Tuesday August 23rd and 30th digitizing Owens material at Sue Mauro's. Most of this material was clippings of biographical data from the History of Spokane County. Included were two interesting sets of early Spokane biographical data for Coeur d'Alene Hotel builder Dutch Jake Goetz and bar owner Jimmie Durkin. This biographical data was marked from the collection of B.E. Pendleton's "Old Spokane" collection. 3) Sue Mauro has received a large pile of correspondence from a Warren D. LaVille containing the correspondence of the Pend Oreille County engineer. When digitized it resulted in over 700 individual images. 4) Have been in contact with a Don Kessler who indicates he has a collection of material about the Wild Rose Orchard Company (The Wild Rose Orchard Company, Mortarboard #117, January 2018) in which his grandfather was involved. He wants to have it donated to a reputable historical organization for public access after our Society digitizes it.

The Brickyard Day planning committee decided to try having more vendors by the Grange in hopes of keeping more people after the parade to enjoy the band.

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Mike and Roberta Reiter are in Europe and didn't have a report on the building of a pavilion for the Eagle. We hope to hear more soon.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, October 8, 2022, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 10:52.

Minutes submitted by Tracy Strong, Society Secretary.

*Minutes of the*  
***Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical***  
**October 8, 2022**

In attendance: Judy Whitt, Bill Sebright, Rachele Fletcher, Mary Jo Reiter, Tracy Strong, Bill Phipps, Marie Morrill, Roberta Reiter, Mike Reiter and Tom Costigan.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He reported that:

- 1) Judy Coffin called Thursday. She said Pete's cancer was back with a vengeance and that he was in Sacred Heart. Yesterday he was moved to Hospice. Our prayers are certainly with them. Their address is 14009 E. Sharp Ave., Spokane Valley, WA 99216.
- 2) He received a phone call from Mary Wadel. She has pictures from when her parents Robert and Betty Irwin lived on Wild Rose Prairie. She will send the pictures when she is done going through her parents' things.
- 3) Pete Whittekiend and some of the Clayton Homelink Staff would like to discuss some of their historic photos. Pete said, "We receive many compliments on this site and we would like to reach out and invite you in. We're hoping to increase knowledge and understanding about the history of the Clayton Schoolhouse."
- 4) The Stevens County Historical Society received a sketch by Leno Prestini (attached). It's a European street scene. It came from Patricia Haye. Leno spent many weekends and special holidays with Mary and Stan Haye Sr. Leno gave it to them at Christmas in 1956.
- 5) We received James Elliot's book in the mail, Chasing Stolen Gold. He used a map from our Website that was from Jackie Franks.
- 6) Fred Senn is remodeling one of the houses by the old Triple R Dinner. The 2 houses were made by putting cabins together that were south of the restaurant. We are trying to find the date when it burned down.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: The main checking account ended the month at \$17,634.80. Total deposits were \$1,840. One check written-\$50.37 for Brickyard

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Day Parade ribbons. The web hosting account ended the month at \$980.12 with a withdrawal of \$12.95 for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at \$2,076.11. The Eagle fund account, \$7,199.65.

Society Vice President- No one has stepped forward to become Vice President.

Rachelle Fletcher said her son is doing better and expects to have a Mortarboard out this month.

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported by email. 1) We were contacted by a manager of the Yokes grocery store. They requested photos of the original grocery store as they want to use them in some capacity during their remodel. So far we have yet to find any photos. If any CDPHS Society members have any photos of the original store (where NAPA is now), please send them to [damonsmathers@gmail.com](mailto:damonsmathers@gmail.com). 2) We were also contacted by Clayton Homelink. They were hoping we could attend a lunch/meeting and provide insight and information on a few historical photos they have. They also want to learn more about the history of the Clayton Schoolhouse. No date or meeting has been set up yet. 3 ) We also received another inquiry about any information we have on “the sunken boat in Moose Bay.” They were referring to the Gwen and I was able to send them the YouTube link to our dive, as well as 2 past Mortarboard publications.

Judy Whitt brought a picture of her as Miss Deer Park in the 1958 Lilac Parade. She also brought a book written by Don Mc Donald in 1958. It has stories of the Tum Tum Store, Newels, Molls and Rollo Fackenthal’s Mill.

Mike and Roberta Reiter are back from a great trip to Europe. Mike isn’t getting answers to his texts about a cover for the Eagle. He will call this week. Rachelle knows the Birkys and will talk to them about getting a quote on a pavilion.

Pete and Judy’s address is 14009 E. Sharp Ave., Spokane Valley, WA 99216

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, November 12, 2022, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 10:49.

Minutes submitted by Tracy Strong, Society Secretary.

*The Art of Foreseeing the Future  
is a Craft Perfected  
by Studying the Past.*

*Join the  
Clayton ♦ Deer Park  
Historical Society.*

*Open Meeting Second Saturday of Each Month — 10:00 AM.  
Deer Park City Hall Complex — 300 Block East 'A' Street — Look for the Sign.  
(website) [www.cdphs.org](http://www.cdphs.org)  
(mailing address) Box 293, Clayton, Washington 99110  
(telephone) 509-276-2693*

*Illustration from Collier's Magazine, October 21, 1905.*



### **Society Contacts**

*C/DPHS, Box 293, Clayton, WA 99110  
Bill Sebright, President — [sebrightba@gmail.com](mailto:sebrightba@gmail.com) — (509) 276-2693  
Rachelle -Editor in Training, [dpprint@rocketmail.com](mailto:dpprint@rocketmail.com)  
Damon Smathers, Webmaster — [damonsmathers@gmail.com](mailto:damonsmathers@gmail.com)  
Website — <http://www.cdphs.org>*

### **Comments Policy**

*We encourage anyone with observations, concerns, corrections, divergent opinions or additional materials relating to the contents of these newsletters to write the society or contact one or more of the individuals listed in the "Society Contacts" box found in each issue. Resultant conversations can remain confidential if so desired.*

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