Are You Embarking on an Historical Adventure This Summer?

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society wishes you the best of times.

An Interview With Harold Klawunder

conducted and transcribed by Wally Lee Parker

Klawunder is a German name. My dad was in the military over there. He had to stay and finish his term even after the rest of his family had left for America. All the Klawunders came over in eighteen something—I don’t know exactly when. But my mother came from Virginia, so German wasn't spoken in our house.

When the family came to Washington, they settled into the Reardon area. Then two of them — my dad and his brother — came up to Stevens County. In 1908, I was born in a house out on what they used to call Big Foot Valley Road — just off the Williams Valley Road. That house is still standing. Then my dad and uncle bought parcels of land about a mile and a half down the road from each other and built homes. The houses were built alike. Neither of them is standing now. The one my folks built burnt down. My uncle’s house was torn down.

I started school at Clayton. Grade one was in the old school house — the wood- en one. The next year we moved into the new brick school. The old wood school is still there. This guy — I can’t remember his name — he bought the building, moved it to a different lot, and made it into a restaurant. It seems like he called it Papa Joe’s or something. Later it became the Ramble Inn. Nowadays it’s called the Brick Yard Tavern.

Back then the Clayton school went from first grade all the way through high school. Of course, I didn’t get that far. I quit out of the seventh grade. I made it into the eighth grade, but me and the teacher couldn’t get along, so she put me back into the seventh. And I got mad and quit. I never went to school again. About all I can remember about going to school was that we were always get-
The Open Door Congregational Church Building

by

Peter Coffin

The Open Door Congregational Church is the oldest wooden structure still standing in Deer Park, Washington. In the fall of 1890 the William H. Short family, along with other members of Deer Park’s small community, organized a Congregational Church and held meetings in a building west of the Spokane Falls and Northern Railroad tracks. By 1895 the congregation was formulating plans for a church building. The Washington Mill Company’s president, William Short, donated a two-acre tract of land for the building.

The finished church was dedicated on March 29, 1896, with approximately 200 people present. At that time the front of the building faced west towards present day Railroad Avenue. The cost of the building, complete with “furnace, seats, lamps, etc.” was $1432.73.

The church’s foundation was built of rock quarried from the area southwest of Wild Rose Prairie where granitic rocks are exposed on the north side of the Spokane River. The cornerstone was quarried in Corkscrew Canyon (south of Ford, west of Tum Tum). The effort to quarry the rock, move it by horse drawn wagons to Deer Park, place it in the foundation, and cement them into a solid foundation must have required much hard labor.

It is thought that the cornerstone for the building is a large rock block on the north-

so I started farming here and there. I did that for about twenty years. Then I sort of retired. Clayton use to be a real town. At one time there was a hundred guys working at the brick plant, and another hundred down at the terra cotta. Most of the Italians work in the terra cotta. I think the Italians all made their own wine. And they’d smoke those Italian cigarettes. They’d smoke ’em till they got down about an inch long, then they’d pop the butts in their mouths and chew them like chewing tobacco.

Where the Moose Hall is now, when the brickyard still had horses, that use to be the old livery barn. We’d sit there during breaks. Back then they used horses to pull the brick trolleys around the yard. This one old horse they called Mac — she’d been doing it for so long — when the afternoon whistle blew, she’d just quit. It didn’t matter where along the track she was, when that whistle blew she was done for the day. No more pulling. The only place she’d go from there was back to the barn.

About the only night life in Clayton was the taverns — that was until the Moose Hall got built. Then they had dances on Saturday nights. And they use to skate in there with them old steel rollers.

The Moose members built that hall. Leno Prestini and his uncle laid most of the brick. Sometimes, after quitting time, I’d go help with the construction.

Yeaah. Clayton use to be a real town.

End
“There’s a family story about why, after we came to Deer Park, the folks chose the Congregational Church. It’s said the family visited a number of Protestant churches, but Dad liked the Congregational best because there were cushions on the seats — so he could sleep better.”
— Cecil Boyd
(Mortarboard #8, December, 2008 — page 89.)

Further Reading.
A selection of prior articles containing noteworthy mention of the Congregational Church’s membership and history.


“Benjamin H. Lewis: Man of Faith, Music, and Numbers,” by Peter Coffin.

“Deer Park’s Community Hall Is No More,” by Wally Lee Parker.
The Washington Mill Company saw mill in the late 1890s, which cut the lumber to construct the Open Door Congregational Church, which is seen in the background to the right of the mill building. To the left of the mill is the Short boarding house.

The Open Door Congregational Church being remodeled in 1908. Note that the foundation had been extended to the east from the original church building, and that the old bell tower has been cut down considerably.

The newly remodeled church had a sanctuary that could seat 250 people, class rooms upstairs and downstairs with the west corner near the door to the Fellowship Hall, but no markings have been found to confirm this. The foundation rocks are relatively rough-cut and randomly fitted together.

Mr. Short carefully chose framing lumber for the construction from logs milled in the Washington Mill Company sawmill just west and across the Spokane Falls and Northern Railroad tracks from the church construction site.

By January 1907, eleven years after the original dedication, a committee composed of W. H. Short, F.E. DeVoe, and Dr. H. H. Slater was appointed to plan for a “bigger and better” building. The result of this planning was a remodel and significant expansion of the old building. This expansion was finished and dedicated on September 12, 1909. The entry and bell tower of the “new” church now faced Main Street, which had become the primary street through town. The bell in the tower is engraved “Buckeye Bell Foundry 1898” on the east side, and “The E. W. Duzen Co. Cincinnati” on the west.

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In Search of Deer Park’s Early Mayor — Lyman F. Miller

by Wally Lee Parker

Just west of Deer Park, within the shaded lawns of Woodland Cemetery, stands a battered white stone inscribed “Lyman F. Miller, Co. C, 106 Ill. Inf.” Nearby is a smaller granite marker apparently intended for the same person. As with all the graves at Woodland, these stones have little to say. If we want to know something more of the person beneath, we’ll have to do our research.

Regarding Mr. Miller, the following article — datelined “Deer Park, Wash., Jan. 7” — appeared in the January 9, 1911 edition of the Spokesman-Review.

“L. F. Miller, the 65-year-old mayor of Deer Park, who was elected on the reform ticket, has passed through a checkered career. He was born at Williston, Vt., and moved to Illinois with his parents. He later entered the army as a member of Company C. 106th Illinois volunteer infantry and served three years. “After the war he moved to Wisconsin where he was married, and later moved to Missouri, Iowa and Minnesota. He was mayor for seven years at Kimbrae, Minn., and moved to Newport, Wash., four years ago, and to Deer Park a year ago, where he was elected mayor last month. He is a prominent Odd Fellow.”

Although Deer Park’s first known newspaper, the Union, was founded by Frank T. Sheppard in the summer of 1906, most — if not all — of the paper’s first five years of print appear to have been lost. Meaning, though the above Spokesman-Review article, as it’s dateline suggests, may have been a reprint from the Deer Park Union, we’ve no way of verifying that. Currently the society has electronic images of the last six months of the paper’s 1911 print run, and then the first five months of 1912’s, but nothing before. That would suggest the early days of Miller’s time as Deer Park’s mayor will have to be pieced together from other sources, should any such exist.

After a six-month gap, the Union’s back issue archive picks up again in December, 1912, and continues forward with only an occasional missing issue.

As for Mr. Miller’s history prior to the former mayor’s arrival in the Inland Empire, such is somewhat illuminated by several passages from Nelson W. Durham’s History of the City of Spokane and Spokane County, Washington.

That volume, published in 1912, states, “Lyman (Lyman) was born September 1, 1844.” The smaller granite stone at Woodland Cemetery records his birth as having occurred in “1845.” At the most, that seems a minor discrepancy.

Regarding the mayor’s military record, Durham’s history elaborates, “He enlisted in Company C. 106th Illinois Infantry, and served in the Civil War under General Sherman, under General Grant at Vicksburg, and under General Steele in Arkansas.”

Durham reiterates the various travels described in the January, 1911 Spokesman-Review’s story, adding that Lyman’s primary occupation during those earlier years was millwright, and then noting “He came to Washington and was for three years a resident of Newport, where he engaged as a millwright. “

The move from Newport to Deer Park, and the reason for the move, is chronicled in the August 5th, 1909 Newport Miner.

“L. F. Miller and daughter have gone to Deer Park where they will make their home for a time while Mr. Miller is employed on the construction of the new saw mill of the Standard Lumber Company. The company expects to start soon on the erection of a mill to cut 100,000 board feet daily.”

Apparentely elected mayor of Deer Park in December of 1910, the local newspaper’s chronicle of Lyman Miller’s first seven months in office are among its lost issues. Beginning with Union’s July 1911 issue, we find that other members of the city council are listed as acting in the mayor’s place for much of that year’s autumn months — with no explanation for the mayor’s absence. The December 8th edition of the Union notes Mayor...
Miller’s return to the council chair.

The January 19th, 1912 edition of the Union reports, “Mayo L. F. Miller, who has been under the weather for a few days, is re-

reports that Bill Sebright will have the January 25th copy of the Newport Miner was more direct when it stated, “L. F. Miller, mayor of Deer Park, and a former resident of Newport, suffered a light paralytic stroke last week, but is now regain-

mical strength.”

Occasional reports of his improving condition continued until the May 3rd edition of the Deer Park Union, which stated, “Last Saturday evening at the adjourned meeting of the town council, the resignation of the honorable L. F. Miller was read and accepted. The resignation was only handed in by Mr. Miller after a consultation with his physician and friends. In his present condition absolute rest and quiet is necessary if he is to recover, and as the city affairs are so pressing and numer-

As part of his recovery, he appears to

have been staying at the home of his son, E. L. Miller, then residing in Boise, Idaho. That at least is the implication of the following obitu-

ary notice from the July 4th, 1912 edition of the Newport Miner.

“At Boise, Idaho, on Wednesday, June 26th, occurred the death of Lyman F. Miller, former resident of Newport, and later Mayor of the town of Deer Park. Mr. Miller had been in poor health for several months, after having been stricken with paralysis.”

After a short outline of Mr. Miller’s history, the writer concludes, “Five children survive to mourn his loss: Edward Lyman Mil-

ler, Boise, Idaho; Mrs. Ida Drake, Chancellor, S. D.; Mrs. Nellie Moore, Seattle; and Mrs. H. A. Noyes and Miss Myrtle Miller of Deer Park.”

Hopefully future data will allow us to expand our knowledge of Mr. Lyman F. Mil-

ler, and more accurately position him within Deer Park’s procession of former mayors.

end
Don will talk about the development of Washington Territory from 1853-1861, and about U.S. Grant and Philip Sheridan during their time in Washington Territory before the Civil War. He will come as a Private in the 4th U.S. Infantry, and will focus on the regiment while it was in Washington Territory; he will also follow one company’s subsequent experience in the Civil War. Please join us at the Airport Holiday Inn, 1616 S Windsor Drive Spokane, Washington 99224. Contact Pat Holien by April 16th, for reservations. Pat’s email is patholien@comcast.net and phone number is 509-951-2090.

Mike Reiter reported by email that he had talked to Brian Ramsden, with the city Deer Park. Brian had been into the new fire station and said any critics of the destruction of the civic center will surely change their view when they see the new facility.

Betty announced that Settlers Days meetings are every third Monday at the City Hall, 7:00 PM. April 11 was the 3rd planning meeting for the 35th Brickyard Day. The flyer is shaping up. Ads are going well.

Next meeting: Saturday, May 12, 2017, at 9 AM at the Clayton Grange Hall. Meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

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

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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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