Is a picture really worth a thousand words?

If a clear, unambiguous understanding is the objective, quite simply no!

So join the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society.

And help us blend both words and pictures into stories worth keeping.

There’s very little documentation regarding Robert Willis Grove’s early days in the military. According to one sentence announcement appearing in the October 16th, 1941 issue of the Deer Park Union, Willis had left for his first military posting near Wichita Falls, Texas, on the prior Saturday — that would be October 11th. At that time the Army Air Corps Sheppard Field installation was just activating a basic-training center a few miles north of Wichita Falls — with the first rotation of 400 new inductees due to begin on Tuesday, October 14th.

Along with basic training, Sheppard was also designed to serve as a major school for aviation mechanics. It appears that Willis stayed on after basic to complete the mechanics course — that inferred from the following article as printed in the April 16th, 1942 edition of the Deer Park Union. This article also indicates Willis’s intention of engaging in especially hazardous duty by getting into the
shooting part of the war. “Willis Grove, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Grove, may soon be a bombardier in the United States Army. A bombardier is the man who pulls the lever that releases the bombs. He also mans a machinegun on certain occasions. “Word was received by his parents that Grove had graduated from the world’s largest technical school at Sheppard Field, Texas, where he has been training for an aviation mechanic for several months. According to the July 12th, 1944 edition of a War Department technical manual titled Military Occupational Classification of Enlisted Personnel, the following is the job description for “Bomberdier (509)” — the three numbers being the MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) code for an “enlisted bombardier.” The manual reads, “Release bombs on enemy targets from a bombardment airplane. “Adjusts bomb sight for such specific conditions as ground speed, elevation and drift. Identifies target and sights it through optical system of bomb sight when pilot begins the run, releasing bombs when target is seen in correct relation to appropriate markings on bomb sight. Corrects bomb sight adjustments when course is altered. Reports effect of bomb hits to airplane commander. Inspects and makes flight adjustments to bomb sight and bomb release mechanisms. Fires aerial machineguns. Reads maps to identify and locate ground targets. “Must be physically qualified for high altitude flight.” The MOS number 509 is sprinkled throughout the few surviving documents Willis Grove’s family has that cover his term of service. It is clear that enlisted bombardiers were trained to the same level of knowledge and competence as commissioned bombardiers.

... with the 92nd Bombardment Group ... 

Willis deployed into the European theater as part of the 92nd Bombardment Group. That group was organized on March 1st, 1942, at Barksdale Field, Louisiana. It consisted of four B-17 squadrons — the 325th, 326th, 327th and 407th — though the 407th may have been something of a late arrival. On March 26th, several weeks after the initial assembly, the 92nd was transferred to MacDill Army Airfield in Florida. And then, on May 18th, 1942, the group was once again transferred, this time a few miles south to Florida’s Sarasota Army Airfield.

The only direct evidence we have of Willis’s time in Florida is a certificate indicating that “Private Robert W. Grove, 19060476, 92nd Bombardment Group (H), AAF,” had been promoted to “Corporal, 40th Bombardment Squadron (H), AAF.” The document was dated, “the first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and forty-two.” According to the July 12th, 1944, edition of a War Department technical manual titled Military Occupational Classification of Enlisted Personnel, the following is the job description for “Bomberdier (509)” — the three numbers being the MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) code for an “enlisted bombardier.” The manual reads, “Release bombs on enemy targets from a bombardment airplane. “Adjusts bomb sight for such specific conditions as ground speed, elevation and drift. Identifies target and sights it through optical system of bomb sight when pilot begins the run, releasing bombs when target is seen in correct relation to appropriate markings on bomb sight. Corrects bomb sight adjustments when course is altered. Reports effect of bomb hits to airplane commander. Inspects and makes flight adjustments to bomb sight and bomb release mechanisms. Fires aerial machineguns. Reads maps to identify and locate ground targets. “Must be physically qualified for high altitude flight.” The MOS number 509 is sprinkled throughout the few surviving documents Willis Grove’s family has that cover his term of service. It is clear that enlisted bombardiers were trained to the same level of knowledge and competence as commissioned bombardiers.

... with the 92nd Bombardment Group ...
personnel during Willis's time in Europe numbered approximately 290 officers and 1,500 enlisted men. Since each B-17 — beginning with the 'E' series — required a crew of ten when fully outfitted for combat, this gives some idea of the number of ground personnel — office staff, mechanics, supply personnel and so forth — needed to keep the four squadrons airborne. Later in the war the number of planes and aircrew in each squadron was increased, doubtless with an in-kind increase in the ground complement.

According to Lieutenant McLaughlin (eventually to become Brigadier General McLaughlin), the first aircraft assigned the 407th Bombardment Squadron was an allowance of four very well used B-17Es. With that, training began. While the training was ongoing, a portion of the shooting war was being played out just off Florida’s shore. The first attack by a German U-boat along America’s Atlantic coast occurred on January 13th, 1942. After that, shipping all along the coast, including within the Gulf of Mexico, was menaced, and actually suffered quite heavy losses — over three hundred commercial vessels sunk by the end of that first summer. Though the public knew the attacks were taking place, the actual numbers never seem to have been secret.

It’s generally agreed that one of the main reasons for the U-boats’ growing tally was the complicity of America’s politicians — those in Florida fearing the adoption of effective countermeasures might disrupt the upcoming tourist season. Equally destructive were the maneuverings of a still bureaucratically mired military, in majority more concerned with the potential of a Japanese invasion of the western states than the almost daily casualties accumulating along the eastern seaboard. The most notable evidence of this was the fact that it was well into the summer of 1942 before general coastal blackouts were ordered — though it was clear early on that ships silhouetted by lights from coastal cities were easy targets for the U-boats during the night attacks their captains by large planes. In his book, Lieutenant McLaughlin indicated B-17s from MacDill and other airfields routinely went on antiship patrols — but with no success. By the time the bombardment group was ordered to the European theater, sufficient countermeasures had been implemented against German submarines in coastal waters that most were moved into the more productive North Atlantic convoy lanes.

With that the war in North America’s coastal waters was largely over. But for the young airmen of the 407th Squadron, the real thing was about to begin.

... the airman’s battlefield ...

Military organizations such as the 8th Air Force were, in their entirety, weapons. As a weapon, the 8th was designed to accomplish a singular goal — to rain destruction downward on the enemy. The principle means of accomplishing such was by ordinance loosed from heavy bombers — in the European theater, said bombers were the B-24s and B-17s. The degree of daily jeopardy any individual serving with the 8th faced was largely determined by his job. After basic training, Willis Grove was first schooled as an aircraft mechanic. Being part of a ground crew offered little assurance of safety. More than likely he’d be on an airfield within range of enemy attack. And the job itself could easily be described as a myriad of accidents waiting to happen. Such considered, it appears Willis — for reasons of his own — actively pursued the 8th Air Force’s most hazardous duty, that of crewman on a bombardment aircraft.

The idea behind the B-17 was straightforward. Create a strategic bomber that would fly so high it would be beyond the effective range of ground-based artillery. At the same time, that altitude would tax the ability of any interceptors to bring the bomber down. What seemed to make this proposal workable were bombsight advancements that promised pinpoint accuracy from extreme altitudes. With that in mind, in the mid-1930s an early version of what would eventually become World War II’s most iconic bomber emerged from Seattle’s Boeing Aircraft Company.

To accomplish the above design parameters, the bomber had four powerful engines and an exceptionally large wing surface. However, as with many of the military’s projects, the concept proved much more formidable on paper than as a working model. As theory collided with engineering realities further augmented by bits of feedback from aircrews tasked with spending many hours aloft in the bombers, there were a number of both minor and major revisions. Large accumulations of design alterations were noted by tacking a descending letter to the craft’s alphanumeric designation. The first B-17 to see combat was the ‘C’ version — those on lend/lease to the Royal Air Force. Their immense baptism within Britain’s air war clearly demonstrated the wisdom of Boeing’s program of ongoing reevaluation and refinement. Early in 1941 the B-17E model began rolling off the assembly line. The most visible changes were toward the rear of the craft. The fuselage’s dorsal spine was significantly thinned to add the rigidity needed to incorporate a greatly enlarged tail assembly. Said assembly included a much larger horizontal stabilizer (essentially the rear wing of the aircraft) and a massive rudder hinged to a towering vertical stabilizer. A machinegun position had been added to the tail of the fuselage. And a new gun turret was fitted to the upper fuselage just behind the cockpit. This brought the total length of the aircraft to 74 feet, while maintaining the craft’s original wingspan of 103 feet, 10 inches.
With the addition of the tail gun, the full complement of aircrew was raised from nine to ten — the pilot, co-pilot, bombadier, and navigator (the latter two trained to fire the craft’s .50-caliber machine guns, radio operator, flight engineer (who also acted as top turret gunner), ball turret gunner on those planes so equipped, tail gunner, and the two waist gunners.

The usual weight of the ‘E’ series at takeoff was around 53,000 pounds — that with a typical 4,000-pound bombload. For the B-17E was 37,000 feet — about seven miles. Bombing runs were normally carried out at least several miles lower than that. In part this was due to the highly touted pinpoint bombing accuracy from extreme altitude never materialized. Better effect was achieved by saturation bombing from lower altitudes — sometimes much lower altitudes. The tradeoff being, the lower the altitude the more susceptible the bombers became to ground artillery and aerial interception.

Enemy action wasn’t the only hazard airmen faced. As the unpressurized B-17 gained altitude, the environment turned increasingly hostile to human life.

Following normal procedure, the captain would select the crew don oxygen masks when the craft reached 10,000 feet. At very high altitudes any interruption of the oxygen flow could result in unconsciousness in less than a minute, and death in as little as twenty — that according to the intense 1944 documentary, Memphis Belle: A Story of a Flying Fortress. Because of this, icing inside the oxygen supply lines or the possibility of damage to them during battle was a constant concern. Another issue was the electrically heated flying gear was available, though many stories suggest such often proved unreliable. Heavily insulated clothing was the norm, even though it added bulk that became very cumbersome as the craft’s heat inside the cramped fuselage. Due to their added heat, parachutes were seldom worn — rather a harness was fitted around the airmen that made clipping the chutes on a quick task.

The airmen’s lot was to fly into battle at extreme altitude while standing or sitting inside a thin aluminum cylinder. His jeopardy began as soon as his B-17 — some 16,000 bits of metal, Plexiglas and rubber cinched together by just over 300,000 rivets — started clawing skyward with up to four tons of high explosives on board. It increased as the aircraft entered enemy airspace. And it did not end till the aircraft rolled to a stop on English soil.

Sometimes the enemy would respond to a formation’s presence by filling the air with metal splinters — with bursting flak. At other time enemy interceptors would pepper individual aircraft with machinegun fire. With flak or fighters, the enemy’s objective was to puncture the thin shells of the Flying Fortress’s with as many bits of high-velocity ordnance as possible until something vital enough to bring the aircraft down was hit. It didn’t matter whether that vital part was something mechanical or something made of flesh. As long as it stopped working. Because of that, engines and the pilots were prime targets.

In reality the airmen had few defenses against these attacks. As bombers entered heavily protected areas, the skies would blossom with black smudges of flak thrown upward by artillery. Concoctions would rattle the airplane. Bits of shrapnel would pepper the fuselage. Helmets and flak jackets provided a degree of protection — the aluminum skin of the aircraft, next to none.

Certain portions of the bombers were fitted with armor plating, but that was reserved for very critical areas, and even then, to weight considerations, was very limited.

The bomber’s main defense against attacking fighters was to cluster into formations that supplied overlapping fields of machinegun fire. Fighters seldom followed bombers through heavy fields of flak, since the shrapnel produced was indiscriminate. But the bomber’s defense at 20,000 feet was greatly improved. Their attacks were usually at very high speeds. The range of their effective fire limited to several seconds at the most. This speed was necessary considering the number of guns a well-stacked formation of bombers could bring to bear.

If a bomber fell out of formation for any reason, its chance of making it home dropped dramatically. The air war was a war of attrition. No matter how wounded your enemy, your duty was to drive him to ground in such a way he’d never rise.

The records are jumbled and sometimes contradictory, but it’s believed roughly 26,000 of the 8th Army Air Force’s young men were killed in the European war. Another 21,000 were injured. As for why more were killed than wounded, an aircraft being riddled with bullets and shrapnel assured that individual crewmembers would often be struck down while the machine stayed in the air. It didn’t matter if such injuries occurred before or after the bomber reached the target, the aircrew’s first duty was to complete their bomb run. When moving in after that, their best chance of survival was to keep their aircraft within the formation. Crewmembers did what they could for the fallen while airborne, but severe wounds at high altitude in temperatures so low blood would freeze almost instantly assured that the long trip home while standing watch over the dead and dying would give rise to a sense of helpless- lessness likely to resurface for years after as the worst of nightmares.

That was the air war in Europe. The 92nd Bombardment Group flew 308 missions during the course of the Europe- an war. Those missions cost the group 154 aircraft. Statistics detailing the number of casualties within the 92nd — its share of the 47,000 young men killed or wounded while serving with the 8th Army Air Force — have yet to be located.

… to be continued in next month’s issue ...

Motion Pictures in Deer Park
by Peter Coffin

Motion pictures came into being in the 1870s with the development of flexible celluloid film with sufficient sensitivity to capture motion as a series of still photos at a high shutter speed. When reels of this film were played back rapidly, the series of photos projected the original motion with reasonable accuracy on a large screen that could be viewed by a large audience. By 1905 commercial movie auditoriums were fairly wide- spread. The capability to show moving pictures in Deer Park must have developed in the first decade of the 1900s. In July of 1911 a free moving picture show was given, projecting the images from the Masonic Hall above the Temple Pharmacy (the Slater building now the present site of the Deer Park Lube business) across Main Avenue onto a screen hung on a furniture store wall.

**Note:**

(01) Deer Park Union, July 7, 1911, “Side Notes.”
large number of people were reported to have enjoyed the event. The Masonic Hall became the movie auditorium by September 1911 when a Deer Park Union newspaper advertisement reported re-opening a “Moving Picture show at Slater’s hall with movies to be shown at 8:00 PM every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday evening.” (Note 2) Where the first auditorium was located was not reported.

There was a showing of the Arcadia Orchard Company’s sales promotional movie in December of 1911 in Kelly Hall which was accompanied with 150 color slides taken of, “…local and Spokane views.” (Note 3) It is uncertain if the Kelly Hall was also a movie auditorium or whether this was set up specifically for showing the promotional movie. Parts of this film were shot prior to the 1909 to 1910 demolition of the steel Monroe Bridge in Spokane and the construction of the concrete replacement bridge. Other portions of the film were shot on September 7, 1911 when the Arcadia Orchards Company hired a passenger train and took a load of Spokane businessmen to the orchard and filmed the participants in celebration of the opening of water from Loon Lake into their High Line Canal leaving the train car in Deer Park to visit the orchards.

In early February of 1912 real estate businessman R. L. Turner sold his interests in Deer Park Movie House to A.F. Winkleman and a Mr. Shinault. (Note 4) Shinault was reported as having been involved in the motion picture business since 1908 while Winkleman was the Deer Park office managing the Arcadia Parlors and Moving Picture Theatre. It was completed by William A. Pease. In addition to the theater, a “sanitary” fountain area selling candy, fruit, nuts, and cigars was described in the newspaper article. This confectionary and theater were located in the northeast portion of the Olsen Hotel where it remained until moved to the now Mix building on east Crawford in the early 1950s. Both Wally Parker and Ken Westby have written interesting articles about the theater. (Notes #7 & #8)

Either the movie business was very profitable and attractive to investors or a money losing situation as the Deer Park movie theater seemingly changed hands about every other year. In February 1916 W.A. Pease sold his interests in the Arcadia Theatre and candy shop to R.B. Smith of Bellingham, Washington. (Note #9) Smith indicated that he showed pictures of the Mutual Program. Within five months, in August 1916, E. L. Hauk and E.C. Lamp of Garfield, Washington purchased the business from Smith who then moved to his home on the west coast to take care of other business interests. (Note #10)

The Arcadia Orchestra, in its review was very favorable, stating that, “vividly brought back to the memory of those Reconstruction so ing that,” (Note 11) Deer Park’s history, “Birth of a Nation” which played on Saturday April 30, 1917. (Note #11) The Deer Park Union’s review was very favorable, stating that, “The period of ‘reconstruction’ so vividly brought back to the memory of those days.” (Note 11)

— Pete’s article jumps to page 1876 —
A Typical Night at Deer Park’s “Silent” Movies.

On March 10th, 1916, an ad appeared in the Deer Park Union (see facing page) noting that the fifteen-episode serial “The Girl and the Game” would begin showing at the Arcadia Theater the following Saturday. Each episode was about a quarter-hour in length, with the last being projected on June 16th. According to the era’s movie magazines, the film was wildly popular, mostly due to the daring-do of its star, Helen Holmes — who reportedly performed the majority of the film’s very hazardous stunts herself. In one scene Helen allowed herself to be strapped to the rod connecting a locomotive’s large drive wheels. As noted in the July 15th, 1917 issue of Locomotive Firemen & Engineermen’s Magazine, “If anybody believes that clinging to the driving rod of a locomotive traveling thirty miles an hour involves no danger of disaster to the clinger, Miss Holmes can quickly disillusionize them. She did this once in ‘The Girl and the Game,’ but it was the result of a misunderstanding and Helen will never do it again.”

The frames below and opposite are copied from an article found in the October, 1916 issue of the Baltimore & Ohio Employees Magazine. We don’t know if these are from “The Girl and the Game” — apparently among the movies now lost — but the images appear typical of the films produced by Helen’s studio, the Signal Film Corporation.

——— the editor.

The Pend Oreille County Museum is Open Weekends Throughout the Summer.
who may have lived through it and reproduced afresh for those newer generations who now view it. (... unparliamentary English …)

The farmers are almost shut out of Deer Park since the trucks have been hauling over the roads and cut them up so badly. Some places are impassable with a touring car.

The following week the correspondent from Williams Valley had this response. "...the deal ...

A small cadre of society members have been spiffing up the meeting hall — an example shown on the next page. The interi- or’s been cleaned and painted. New light fix-

utes installed. Tables and chairs gathered. Display cabinets donated and/or purchased. Storage shelves and the like set up. And on, and on, and on. Which is to say, the place is looking very nice.

As to the source of all this energy, it’s kind of like in the old days. The neighbor-

hood kids would find an old abandoned shack in the woods. Missing doors and windows, not a problem — some old gunnysacks tacked to the doors would stop the wind. If there wasn’t a ready-built shack, maybe the rusty hulk of a stripped-out car, along with a few moldy sheets of plywood and a few dozen straw boards, could make something grand, or at least something to keep the rain out. In oth-

er words, a hangout. Or even better, a club-

house patterned after the ones shown in those Little Rascals episodes littering afternoon tele-

vision when we were young.

Well, this isn’t the mid-1950s when there were lots of deserted buildings scattered in the woods. And our current clubhouse — never abandoned as far as I know — most certainly wasn’t forsaken when we found it. It’s the property of the City of Deer Park, and only on loan to this slightly older crop of neighbor-

hood kids — some of whom still enjoy watch-

ing an occasional episode of the Little Rascals,
Deer Park & Other Locations Currently Carrying Print Copies of the Mortarboard:
City Library, City Hall, Gardenspot Market, Standen Insurance, Odynski’s Accounting, the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce, the Deer Park Library, the Loon Lake Library.

At the ‘A’ Street Building — April 23rd.
Mike Reiter reported, “Rick (Broadrick) and I went down to do a little trimming on the west side of the building.” Rick at work in the above photo.

though now on YouTube. And since this meeting hall was a perfectly serviceable building to start with, reflecting the wind and rain has never been an issue.

As for the terms under which we occupy this building, it’s with the expectation that we can use it to do something worthwhile for this community. In a nutshell, that’s the deal. If you believe preserving the history of this area is something worthwhile, this is the place to come. We’ve more than enough work to go around.

——— Wally Lee Parker ———

Minutes of the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society
May 11, 2019

Meeting held at 316 East Crawford on A Street, Deer Park (Margaret and East A Street). In attendance: Marilyn Reilly, Bill Sebright, Wally Parker, Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Mark Wagner, Bill Phipps, Marie Morrell, Rachelle Fletcher, Nancy Fisher, Mary Jo Reiter, Lorraine Nord, Dale Dyck, Kristy Dyck, Jean Dyck, Ron Endlich.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He reported: 1) Carolyn Williams dropped off pictures of Einer Berg. Bill has scanned them. 2) Dave Burdega talked to Bob Owens’ daughter. She said that the Owens family is ready to disperse everything that was in the Owens Museum. He said he would follow up and talk to her again to see what might come to the C/DPHS. 3) Lorraine Nord donated four Deer Park High School Antlers, 1943, 44, 45, and 46. We didn’t have a hard copy of the 1943 annual. 4) Amy Trueblood Lindh (Don’s daughter-in-law) sent Bill pictures of an old trade token a kindergarten student found on the Deer Park Elementary School playground this week. The school is located near the corner of Weber and D streets. The initials O. M. O. appear on the coin. We are trying to find out what they stand for. Someone suggested Olson Mercantile.

Another suggestion was that the initials stand for a president of the Deer Park Fair Association. Ron Endlich spoke of his research into the Clayton brick plant. His interests lie in the terra cotta and specialty tiles produced there. He wants to have an exhibit on the works of the plant. Ron has come across information on the Loon Lake Copper mine.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported the main checking account ended the month at $8,925.23. There were deposits of $60.00. The web hosting account ended the month at $186.38 with a withdrawal of $11.84 and $394.20 (I will check on this) for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at $1,432.06. Joe Ploowski has a display case to donate to the Society for our new building.

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

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1)

Deer Park Trade Coin Found.
On May 6th, Hudson Kariniemi, a kindergarten student at Deer Park Elementary School, found this assumedly vintage trade coin near the intersection of South Weber and East ‘D’ Street. It was sent to the historical society by Amy Trueblood Lindh, a teacher at the school. If anyone can determine the meaning of the initials O. M. O., please let us know.
One hundred and twenty copies of the May Mortarboard (#133) have been printed for distribution. PDF versions for the Society’s website and the Loon Lake Library have been sent. This 16-page edition contains part two of “Twenty-Six Missions: The Robert Willis Grove Story.” 2) Ten issues of Collected Newsletters #38 have been printed. This issue combines Mortarboards #131, #132, and #133.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported:
1) I have uploaded May’s Mortarboard.
2) Mike Reiter reported: 1) That Rick Broderick and he replaced the outside light on the north side of our new building. 2) The address of our new meeting building is East 316 Crawford on A street as per Rodger Krieger.

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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When requests to reprint C/DPHS materials are received, such will be granted in almost all instances — assuming of course that we have the right to extend such permission. In instances where we don’t have that right, we will attempt to place the requester in contact with the owner of the intellectual property in question. But, as a matter of both prudence and professionalism, in all instances a request to reprint must be made and must be made in writing (letter or email), before any C/DPHS materials are reprinted.

About our Group:
The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society was incorporated as a nonprofit association in the winter of 2002 under the title Clayton Historical Society. Our mission statement is found on the first page (upper left corner) of each issue of our newsletter, the Mortarboard.

Our yearly dues are $20 dollars per family/household. We are open to any and all that share an interest in the history of our region — said region, in both a geographic and historic sense, not limited to the communities in our group’s name. 