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Illustration from "The Telephone Review" magazine, May, 1914.

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July

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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
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mortarboard

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The Standard Lumber Company's Steam Powered Traction Engine

— The Holt Company's Roadable Locomotive —

by

Wally Lee Parker

... two intriguing photos ...

The two known photos said to be of the Standard Lumber Company's massive three-wheeled traction engine — one image from the society's Lawrence Zimmerer collection, the other from the archive of Deer Park's historic Congregational Church — have always drawn attention. It's reported, but not yet verified, that the engine pictured was nicknamed "Old Buck." As for why, it might have something to do with one of the classic definitions of "buck" found in the online version of the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* — specifically, "to move or load, especially with mechanical equipment." And moving extremely heavy things was exactly what the lumber company's steam powered and fully roadable

traction engine was designed to do.

Of course, the above hypothesis regarding the engine's nickname is pure speculation. What's not speculation is the following snippet from page five of the *Spokesman-Review's* August 17th, 1903 edition.

Headlined "Proposes New Factory Here," the article begins with an update regarding the Holt Manufacturing Company's intention to expand its manufacturing operations — then located in Stockton, California — with a second agricultural machinery factory, this somewhere in the Pacific Northwest. While Walla Walla, The Dalles, and Everett were said to be actively bidding for the proposed factory, Spokane's business community had yet to openly express any interest. As it turned out, Walla Walla won the competition.

All Past Issues of the Mortarboard Can Be Viewed on Our Website:
<http://www.cdphs.org/mortarboard-newsletters.html>

Also in the article was this quote, attributed to Ben C. Holt, the nephew of Holt Manufacturing's principal owner, Benjamin Leroy Holt. "We are now selling traction engines to timber companies in this section. ... Yesterday I closed two deals, one at Spring-

dale and the other at Deer Park, with logging outfits for our new large traction engines. The price of the outfits run from \$5,000 to \$12,000. This industry has just opened up. Nearly all logging outfits use horses and wagons to haul logs from the timber land to the

Deer Park's Traction Engine.

This ad appeared in the October 28th, 1904 edition of the Spokesman-Review.



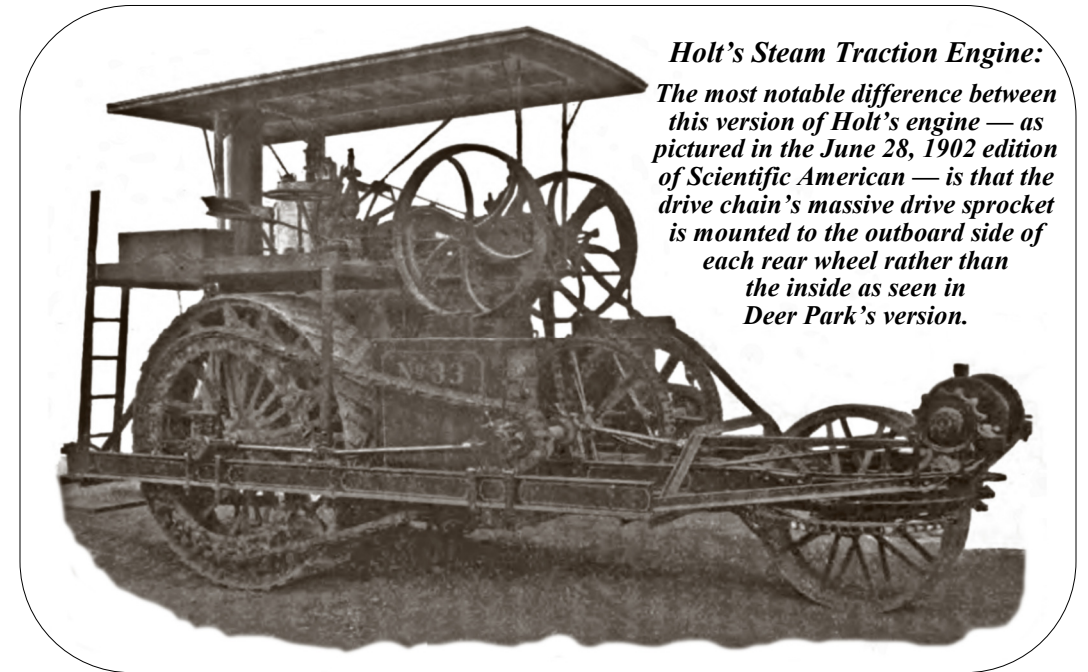
Steam Freighting Outfit Hauling Logs at Deer Park, Wash.

The above is an exact reproduction of a recent picture of the Standard Lumber Co.'s steam logging train hauling six trucks of 24,000 feet of logs from the woods to the mill.

Sixty horse power engine and especially constructed trucks do this immense work at a very small expense. J. E. Craney, Springdale, Wash., Appel Bros. and Berneck, Newport, Wash., as well as a great many more, are operating our outfits successfully.

Write for Bulletins I. E., No. 2 and 6, also L. T. No. 9.

The Holt Manufacturing Company
Stockton, California. Walla Walla, Wash.



Holt's Steam Traction Engine:

The most notable difference between this version of Holt's engine — as pictured in the June 28, 1902 edition of *Scientific American* — is that the drive chain's massive drive sprocket is mounted to the outboard side of each rear wheel rather than the inside as seen in Deer Park's version.

mill, but with a traction engine a large saving is made. One engine can do as much work as a large number of horses, and it doesn't get tired."

According to my eleven-pound *Random House Dictionary*, the term "traction engine" began to appear in the English language between 1855 and 1860. I found a close confirmation of that timeline in volume three of 1867's *Dictionary of Science, Literature, and Art*. Published in London, England, the dictionary's definition was, "A species of steam wagon, called a traction engine, has latterly (lately) been introduced for drawing heavy loads upon common roads at a low rate of speed, and such steam wagons are also used for steam cultivation and for all the purposes of threshing, sawing, and pumping in which the common agricultural engine is applied."

Our tendency would be to call this type of machine a tractor. But it seems the common preference for that term developed much later. For example, *The Farmer's Dictionary*, published in New York in 1854, only

has one definition anywhere near the modern use of tractor — that for a "stump machine or extractor."

Published in Boston in 1860, the "Dictionary of the English Language" has a single entry for the term "Tractor" — that being "Metallic tractors; small metallic bars or rods ... supposed to possess magnetic power and to cure diseases by being drawn or rubbed over the part affected." The fact that the described device sounds suspiciously similar to certain heavily advertised curative instruments being sold today is duly noted.

... Holt's Traction Engine ...

The term tractor was clearly evolving toward our modern understanding as the June 28th 1902 edition of *Scientific American* appeared on the stands with a description of the Holt Company's traction engine — though the specific model pictured in the magazine (see above) seems in slight variation to the engine Deer Park purchased. Under the title "The

Tractor in Lumbering Operations,” the article in part states, “The success which has attended the use of steam power in farming operations on the Pacific coast has resulted in the use of the traction engine in lumbering and other industries where extensive horse power (meaning actual horses) is required. The roads in the hill country of California, Oregon and Washington, where the principal lumber camps are located, are in a very crude condi-

tion ... which in wet weather is turned into liquid mud, through which an ordinary wagon can scarcely be forced, although three or four horses or mules may be attached to it. ... Where animal power is used, double and treble the ordinary number of teams are required to ‘freight’ lumber or other material from the woods to the mills or the railroad stations.

“For the purpose of substituting steam power for animals, the Holt Brothers of

Stockton ... have designed a very powerful engine which accomplishes remarkable results where it has been placed in service. The sizes range from 40 to 60 horsepower. ... Lumbermen who have tested (said engines) for freighting purposes estimate that the cost is about one-third of the sum expended when teams are employed.”

The May 15th, 1901 issue of The Horseless Age describes Holt’s traction engine

this way. “The frame is built up of steel ‘I’ beams and channels braced to the boiler. The tractor is a three-wheeler with one steering wheel in front and two driving wheels in the rear. The wheels are provided with grousers to prevent slipping.”

Finding an applicable definition of “grouser” proved a problem — which was finally solved when I ran across the following in an article from the July 29th, 1916 edition of



***The Standard Lumber Company's
Holt Traction Engine with Train.***

This machine was purchased in 1903 and possibly used until replaced by the creation of the lumber company's short line railroad — the Deer Park Central. We'd enjoy hearing from anyone who knows the actual fate of this amazing traction engine.

Scientific American titled “Efficiency in Farm Tractors.” To quote, “... since most tractors are designed to pull by virtue of the grip of grouzers or mud lugs on the ground ...”

My assumption from this is that during a period in which virtually all tractor wheels were made of steel, the meaning of “grouzers or mud lugs” was essentially devices intended to act as a form of tread that were bolted in segments to the otherwise smooth ground-contacting surfaces of the wheels.

The previously quoted *Horseless Age* article’s description of Holt’s steam machine continued with, “The boiler is a horizontal return firebox type, said to be specially adapted to traction engine work ... the engine, a single cylinder balanced valve type ... the transmission is entirely by chains ... each rear wheel is driven independently ... the capacity of the water tanks on the engine is between 400 and 500 gallons ... water consumption per day is 2,500 to 3000 gallons ... as fuel, either wood, coal, or crude oil may be used ... it is stated that about a cord and a half of good hardwood, a ton of good steam coal, or about 200 gallons of crude oil is the average consumption per day.”

The August 1902 edition of *Overland Monthly* magazine includes an article on Holt’s massive tractors which, under the title “The Greatest Motor Machine,” offers the following claims regarding the traction engine’s maneuverability. “This motor vehicle is steered by a guide wheel in advance of the two main drive wheels by the simple pressure of the hand upon a lever. ... Nearly all of the weight (is) being carried on two main wheels (that are) so readily placed as to be easily handled within a circle to twenty-five feet. ... A train of cars will turn in a space of less than fifty feet, hauling, according to the grades to be overcome, from 40,000 to 60,000 feet of lumber — or say forty to sixty tons weight — up grades not exceeding ten percent.”

While some of these claims may lead one to justifiably suspect that the writer is acting as an agent of Holt’s company, the phrase “a train of cars” should draw our attention to the two photos of the Standard Lumber Company’s traction engine and the wagons the engine is seen pulling. Those wagons, also produced by the Holt company, have three wheels as well — one leading and two following. Would it be possible for a train consisting

The Standard Lumber Company’s Holt Traction Engine.

This image of the engine and train is from the Lawrence Zimmerer collection.



of this massive tractor and five following trailers to turn 180 degrees “in a space of less than fifty feet?” Everything considered, that does appear to be the case.

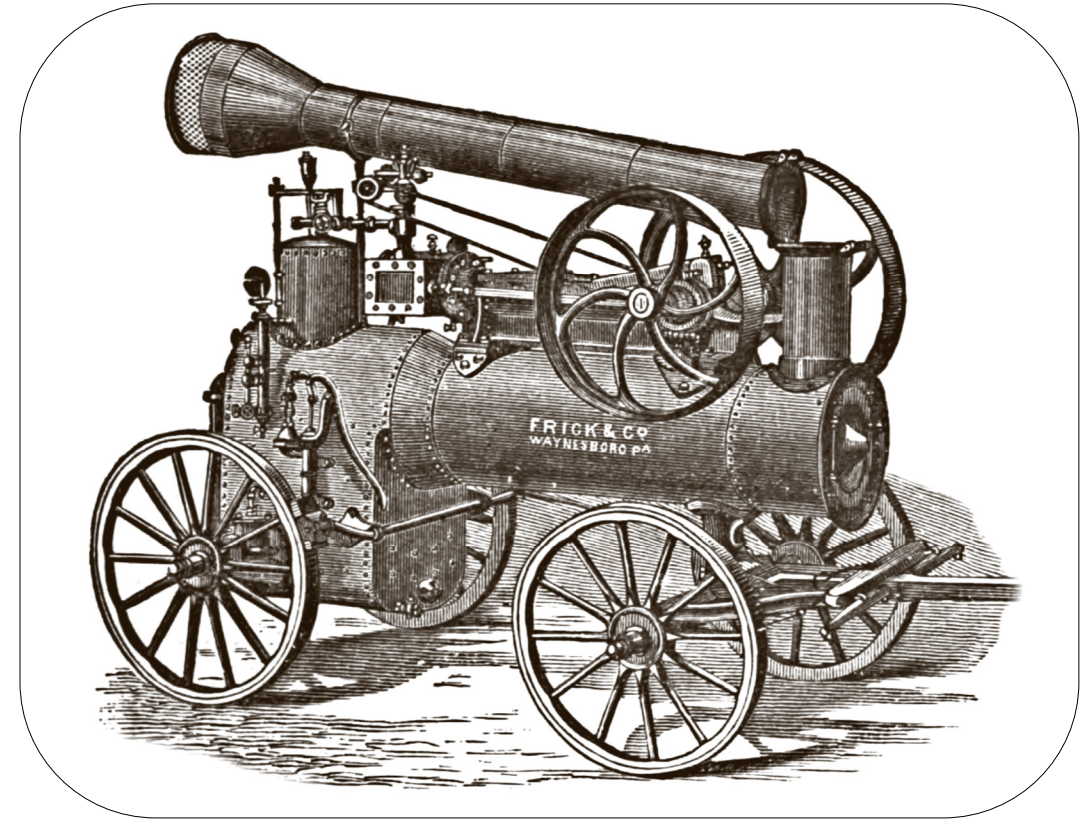
While I didn’t find any specific mention of the weight of Holt’s larger machines, an approximate of 20 tons for the machines of the type was offered by the aforementioned June 28th 1902 edition of *Scientific American*.

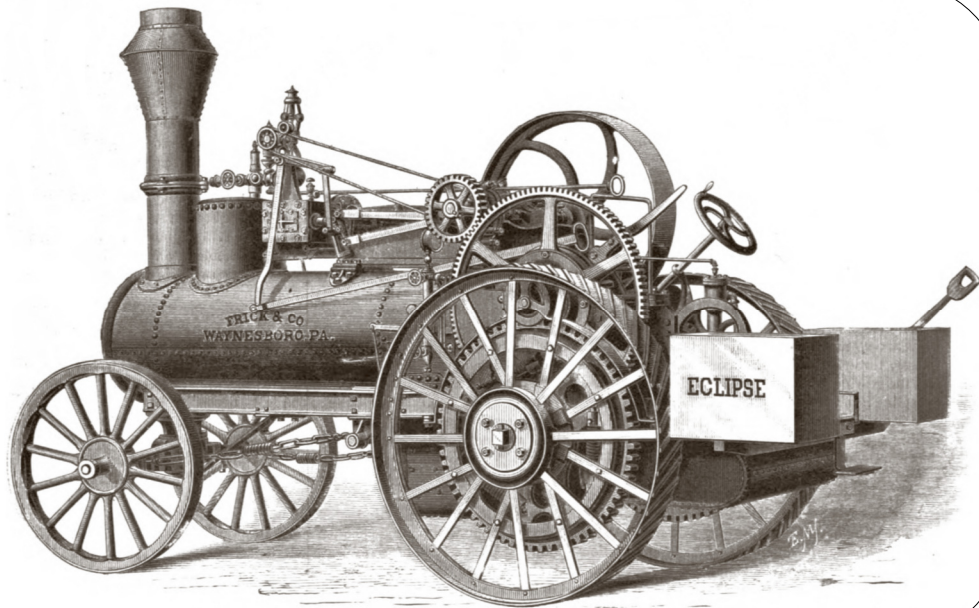
... an era of mobile steam ...

While the Holt company’s three-wheel monsters were not the only such produced, in many ways steam driven traction engines as a species of mobile power have a history stretching back to the middle of the nineteenth century. One confirmation that

A Portable Farm Engine.

A 1882 book by Emory Edwards titled “The Practical Steam Engineer’s Guide,” contains this image of a portable agricultural steam engine manufactured by the Frick Company of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. The company was founded in 1853 and still exists today — though it reportedly ended its production of steam powered devices of any type by the mid twentieth century and is now known for its line of industrial refrigeration machinery, the first of which the company produced in 1882.





The Frick Company's Steam Powered Traction Engine.

Looking very much like the modern concept of a farm tractor — which it essentially was — this image of a traction engine manufactured by the Frick Company of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, was clipped from the December 24th 1881 issue of the American Machinist magazine.

steam power was being used in many agricultural applications early on is found in an advertisement appearing in the January-February issue of 1862's *De Bow's Review* — that being a magazine that had been serving the agricultural interest of the southern states since 1846. Said issue carried an ad for the Eagle Machine Works of Richmond, Virginia. The ad noted that despite the commencement of hostilities between the United States and the Confederacy, the Virginia based company “continues to manufacture plantation machinery of the most substantial and workmanlike character.” Listed among those machines were “stationary and portable steam engines,” as well as the type of machinery those engines were intended to drive — examples being,

“circular saw mills, corn and flouring mills, shafting, pulleys and belts for gin houses, shingle machines, circular saws, etc.”

Since most steam engines were heavy, portability was usually added by mounting them on wheels so they could be drawn around by horses.

The history of steam engines and experimental efforts to make them self-mobile — able to be moved about under their own power — began surprisingly early, such efforts reportedly having begun as early as the late 1600s. But it wasn't until the early 1800s that steam power had advanced to a point where auto-mobility became a practical possibility.

Traction engines, as we understand

them, came into use around 1860. And within a few years, some of these devices began to look very much like classic farm tractors.

... within the area's forest and mines ...

Under the leader “Has Bought a New Engine: Buckeye Lumber Company Will Need Fewer Horses Now,” an article appeared in the February 22nd, 1905 issue of the *Spokane Chronicle* in which the manager of the company, J. F. Herrick, is quoted as saying, “We have just closed a contract with the Holt Manufacturing Company of Walla Walla for a 70-horsepower traction engine for use in the woods at Buckeye. ... The engine is of the largest size, and will do the work of 70 horses, so it will affect quite a savings in the cost of the transportation of our logs. ... We expect to have the engine on the ground by March 15.”

Presumably written by one of the *Chronicle's* staff writers, the article finishes with the following paragraphs.

“The new engine for the Buckeye company is built at Stockton, California, where the plant of the Holt company is situated. The cost of the outfit is understood to be \$11,000 to \$12,000. The growth of the company has been phenomenal during the past few years, and several of these large traction engines have been disposed of in the northwest.

“Formerly lumber was handled in this section mainly in the winter, but the use of these engines has made it possible to transport it with ease during the summer months, and with the use of the engines more lumber may be cut each year.

“Contractors also use the outfits for transporting freight from one point to another where railroad facilities are not available. In the logging and lumber districts the outfits are said to be in commission night and day, and never idle during the summer season.”

A few months later, this appeared in the April 25th edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*. “J. Grier Long, president of the Copper King Mining Company, came up from Spokane Tuesday, accompanied by P. E. Weston, trav-

eling engineer for the Holt Manufacturing Company of Stockton, California, says the *Chewelah Independent*. While here the route was decided upon for a new 75 horsepower traction engine and cars for hauling ore to the railroad. The new engine will be put on about June 1, or sooner if the company can deliver the outfit. Mr. Long informed us that the new outfit will be able to deliver about 150 tons of ore per day, which requires a force of from 30 to 40 men in the mine. Superintendent J. D. Blevins has been instructed to begin work at once on the new ore bins, in addition to those already built.”

Several years later, the August 25th 1907 issue of the *Spokesman-Review*, in a snippet datelined “Chewelah, Wash.,” reported that “The Copper King Mining Company yesterday evening loaded its traction engine and train of five cars to be shipped to Spokane” — the objective of the move being so the machine could begin “conveying material to the Nine Mile Bridge for the construction of the dam at that point.”

Datelined Deer Park, the *Spokane Chronicle's* June 3rd 1908 edition reported that the Arcadia Orchards Company's “steam stump puller has cleared a big field of stumps, which are being piled as much as possible and will be burned soon. Last Thursday the company received a big traction engine and a nine-gang plow, which will be operating with the traction engine to plow up this vast field.”

It's likely all these magnificent machines — including the Standard Lumber Company's giant traction engine — were broken up for scrap long ago. But still, wouldn't it be wonderful if somewhere, in some brush covered hollow or on some rarely traveled hillside, one of these devices escaped attention and has been slowly rusting back into the earth ever since? If someday stumbled upon, could it be brought out piece by piece and reassembled where everyone could marvel at its massive presence?

It's just a hope.

———— end ————

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

Bits of Chatter, Trivia, & Notices All Strung Together.

... protesting Wild Rose's first saloon ...

The following letter to the editor, penned by a clearly irate though anonymous "Reader," was printed in the *Spokane Falls Review's* November 20th, 1885 issue.

"Mr. Editor: — As I have failed to see this locality mentioned in the *Review* for some time, I concluded that you were not posted on the doings of this neighborhood.

"The country in and about Wild Rose Valley is filling up and growing rapidly. A large number of new houses are being built. We have an excellent school under the care of Miss Jennie Tarbert. Everybody seems to be preparing for the cold weather.

"Everything about here was in as nice a shape as a good, quiet lot of people could wish until a few weeks ago, when parties concluded that a saloon ought to be added to the locality, and so put one up on the road near Half Moon Prairie. Almost the first fruits of the new saloon was a row in which a man came near killing his brother. In a fit of drunken rage, the fellow stabbed his brother three times, one of the wounds in the scalp cutting to the bone. The wounded man threw the would-be murderer down and choked him into submission. The public objects to the manner in which the proprietors rush out and insist upon people passing coming in to drink. It may show enterprise, but it is not polite, and may result in a protest against the continuance of the place."

... looking toward another smokey August ...

I'm writing this in early June, just before the summer heat is due. And the

weatherman is already predicting an active wildfire season — possibly one for the record book. We'll just have to wait and see how said forecast turns out. But if accurate, we may be spending a good part of this summer indoors once again. And when we do occasionally venture outside, we'll be looking up to see the sun's reddish shadow rolling above an apparently endless shroud of dull, choking smoke the color of dilute tobacco juice.

The above alluded to record book states that 1910's fire season began early in the woods of the Pacific Northwest, with some wildfires erupting in the prematurely dry forests before the official beginning of summer. By mid-July Washington State's usually pristine air was tasting of woodsmoke. And it was due to get much, much worse — eventually turning into the worst fire season recorded up till then.

As reported in the July 18th 1910 edition of the *Spokesman-Review*, Washington's deputy fire warden, J. E. Bowers said, "The wood from Colbert to Camden along the Great Northern were one sheet of flames last week." And, with the railroads unambiguously in his sights, he continued, "I have notified the division superintendents of the Great Northern and Northern Pacific to fit all of their engines with proper spark arresters, and if this is not done, someone is going to be arrested."

The July 25th *Spokesman-Review* carried the following dispatch, datelined one day earlier from Deer Park. "Fire broke out this morning in the heart of the white pine belt six miles north of Deer Park in section 3, township 29 north, and threatens to destroy thousands of dollars' worth of timber unless checked at once.

"The Standard Lumber Company of this city has large holdings in that vicinity and today sent a crew to fight the fire.

"Because of the density of the timber, millmen say that the flames will be hard to combat. Homesteaders burning slashings started the forest fire."

Regarding the above noted homesteaders, this appeared in the July 30th *Spokane Chronicle*.

"On the charge of setting out a fire which got beyond his control, D. C. Naefus was fined \$99 and cost after a hearing before Justice Neaville of Deer Park. The defendant was arrested by J. E. Bowers, deputy state fire warden for Spokane County, and he conducted the prosecution.

"The fire was set on land adjoining timber owned by the Standard Lumber Company and destroyed about \$10,000 worth of timber and endangered several homes. ... Fifty men were engaged in fighting the fire for four days."

Several days later the *Spokesman-Review* carried this report, datelined "Deer Park, Wash., July 31. — Forest fires thought to be under control have broken out with renewed flurry in the township north of here and are causing thousands of dollars of damage in the cordwood and white pine. The Standard Lumber Company has three crews in as many places, the Arcadia people have sent word twice for additional help, and the Washington Mill Company also has a fight on its hands.

"Fire south of Wild Rose Prairie three days ago spread to the Jackson ranch yesterday afternoon and the general alarm was sounded over the 50 telephones of the Wild Rose Telephone Company.

"Today it reached the ranch of A. J. Johnson, and a general alarm was again turned in to save his grain fields and barn.

"The fire near O. T. Westby's ranch near Clayton is doing immense damage to the cordwood and cordwood timber."

A little further afield — but adding another element we're familiar with to 1910's woes — the August 3rd *Spokesman-Review*

carried this from Colville, "Complaints are coming in from millmen that a number of forest fires have been set in the state timber east of town and that the incendiarism invites investigation ..." Meanwhile, Springdale reported, "The forest fires in this vicinity have practically burned themselves out, although in the neighborhood of Camp 5 of the Phoenix Lumber Company on Lyons Hill, several serious fires have been started."

And then this, from the August 6th, 1910 issue of the *Spokesman-Review*. "After a thrilling escape from death in a forest fire that raged about their isolated home on a homestead four miles from Elk, Wash., and after aiding in the saving of the household effects of a neighbor from flames, Mrs. Annie Robson, womanlike, fell in a faint when the danger was over, and their property was saved. A Sister lives in this city who has gone to the home of the plucky little woman.

"Mrs. Robson, with her two children, went five miles through the danger zone of one of the fiercest forest fires that has swept the northwest in years to aid a neighbor. At midnight, the appeal for aid came from Mrs. Mary Thorne, and without hesitation preparations were made to help. The journey was made at great risk of life.

"At the home of Mrs. Thorne, fire raged on all four sides, flying embers spreading the danger. The cabin was situated in the center of a large clearing, and this saved the heroic woman and her little party from destruction. The house was saved, and the inhabitants escaped through a sparse growth of timber. Both the women are homesteaders."

The final sentence of this report as found in the *Review's* August 14th issue adds a weary though hopeful glimmer of final resolution to the prospect of endless fires. "Louis Olsen was notified at noon today of another fire in his cordwood one mile east of Clayton, and at once left with a force of men to fight the flames. On account of so many fires in that neighborhood, the fire will soon burn itself out for lack of material and the damage will be limited."

The above was reflected in an article appearing in the August 24th *Spokesman-Review* under the dateline “Deer Park, Wash., August 23.” To quote, “Two fires are burning in the vicinity of Deer Park, although the town itself is safe, as all of the nearby timber was destroyed earlier in the season when the wind was low.”

The article went on to say, “A blaze on Bluegrass Mountain, 10 miles north of here, which yesterday drove several settlers from their homes and destroyed the buildings of the Tungsten King mine, today veered to the ranch of T. A. Stokoe, the Egan and Neves Ranch, and one other. The Stokoe family was eating breakfast, unsuspecting of danger, when the flames burst upon them from the forest, and they fled with a few possessions.”

In the same issue of the *Review*, under the headline “Thinks Clayton is Destroyed: Salesman Says Smoke from That Direction Was Suffocating,” was this quote attributed a printing machine salesman by the name of O. R. Nation. “I expect the town of Clayton was wiped off the face of the earth hours ago. When I got on board the southbound train at Deer Park, the smoke from a forest fire in the direction of Clayton had become almost unbearable. The trainmen and passengers told me that when the train passed Clayton, the fire was only a few hundred yards from the town, and that nothing could save it.”

The article went on the report that the owner of a summer home at Loon Lake had reported that “a fire at the north end of Loon Lake looked very dangerous to him in case of high wind.”

A last notation in the article explained that “Last night it was impossible to communicate with towns on the Spokane Falls & Northern, either by telephone or telegraph.”

But Clayton wasn’t in the process of

burning down, that according to a report in the next day’s edition of the *Review*. (*See link below for a history of Clayton’s fires.*) This correction was obtained from “M. E. Halley, personal representative of Judge Burke in Eastern Washington, who returned from Colville on yesterday’s forenoon train with Judge Burke and party.” According to Mr. Halley, “Somebody must have been giving that drummer an awful fill about the forest fires around Clayton. We could see no sign of any forest fire anywhere near the town, though right close to it a rancher had been burning a few acres of tules. The forest fire in the neighborhood of Loon Lake appeared to have burned itself out and was nowhere near Clayton.”

On the first day of September, both of Spokane’s major newspapers reported rain. One *Spokesman-Review* article, this carrying the dateline “Colville, Wash., Aug. 31,” announced that, “Rain has fallen here in intermittent showers for two days and forest fires are now under control in Stevens County.” A second *Review* article datelined “Walla Walla, Wash. Aug. 31,” stated, “Rain fell here today for the first time since June 16. A small precipitation occurred here this morning and a nice shower is falling tonight.”

Indicating that the above were more than local events, this notice, direct from the Weather Bureau in Washington, D.C., appeared in the September 1st *Chronicle*. “Chief W. L. Moore of the weather bureau today issued the following bulletin: Rains fell within the last 24 hours in the northwestern states, in connection with a disturbance now over the Rocky Mountains and moving eastward slowly.”

A day later this, datelined “Deer Park, Wash., Sept. 2,” appeared in the *Spokane Chronicle*. “The entertainment which was given here on Wednesday night by Miss

Further Reading: Clayton Burns.

“Clayton Burns! The Clayton Fires of 1891, 1908 & 1957,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #111, July, 2017 — page 1501 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 31.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_111__web_.pdf

Finch, the elocutionist, assisted by local talent, netted \$39.35 for the fire sufferers. Miss Finch donated her services for the evening. The sum was turned over to a committee of the Deer Park Commercial Club.

“This committee, composed of Messrs. Grove, Phillips and Turner, will receive further contributions of cash or supplies for the people who have lost their homes in forest fires. The supplies which are not needed by the local sufferers will be sent to the families in the Newport district.”

A bit flummoxed by the term “elocutionist,” I found the following definition in the 1896 edition of *The Encyclopædic Dictionary*. According to this vintage volume, it’s one who practices “the art of speaking in public, as to render the discourse most effective and impressive by the use of appropriate gestures, and modes of utterance and discourse.”

Anyway, after tracing the local fires through the dry months of 1910, it got me to wondering how many years afterward did the residents look skyward with a bit of dread every time a summer’s breeze was tinged with a whiff of woodsmoke?

Just thinking forward.

... the island in Loon Lake ...

In mid-May society president Bill Sebright received an email from Deer Park’s Jeff Clark asking if we had any history on the small island in Loon Lake. We have one article in which it’s prominently mentioned — that in the January 2017 edition of the *Mortarboard* (*see link below*) — though there’s no history as such within said article. So, we did a quick newspaper search and found the name given the island — at least from the 1930s forward — and something of the property’s change in monetary value over the years. But

that was about the extent of it.

The first bit of data found was one line in the July 17th 1933 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*. It simply says, “Mrs. Edith Fish displayed three macks (Mackinaw Trout) caught at Fish’s Island, Loon Lake.” It would be a taut stretch if the possessive “Fish’s Island” and the name “Edith Fish” were not in some way intertwined by ownership. But coincidences do occur.

The rest of what little we know of the island’s history is told in real estate ads — the earliest so far located dated July 9th, 1950. In this ad, posted in the *Spokesman-Review* by the Spokane firm of Antony, Baker & Burns, \$6,900 is the asking price for “an island of your own! You haven’t rowed around Loon Lake without gazing at Fish Island with its rambling granite cabin and fine beach. ... A huge stone fireplace in the lodge. ... A cute kitchenette. ... Close to shore, yet blissful seclusion.”

One month later an ad notes the price for this “historic and picturesque landmark” had been reduced to \$5,900.

In late April of 1951, a different company, General Realty, is offering the “secluded privacy” of Fish Island for only \$5,000.

If you wanted a “unique rustic cabin on your own private island” in 1975, you were urged to call McVey Realtors about the Fish Island property. For \$25,000, it could be yours.

In late March, 1980, \$53,950 would get you the island and the “three-bedroom rock cottage, out building, boat and motor” located thereupon.

An ad found in March 2004’s *Spokesman-Review* doesn’t mention Fish Island. Rather the place is advertised as Loon Lake Island. The price is up a bit at only \$415,900, though it does include a separate “buildable

Further Reading: Loon Lake Island.

“Living Deer Frozen to Loon Lake Ice — 1935,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #105, January, 2017 — page 1405 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 29.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_105__web_.pdf

lakefront lot.” Has the name Fish Island fallen out of use — like the former Moose Bay? Or is it that the old name doesn’t carry the sophistication suggested by the latest asking price?

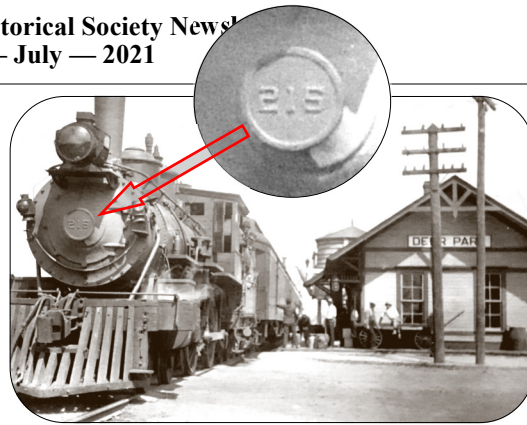
That aside, there’s doubtless a lot more history connected to this island. If anyone knows such, we’d be most interested in hearing.

... more on the Deer Park depot photo ...

In last month’s issue we printed a larger version of the image seen just to the right. This photograph, likely taken between 1910 and 1920, is part of the Owen Museum’s collection and was donated to the society’s digital archive by a member of the Owen family, Sue Mauro. Copied from a vintage postcard, it shows Deer Park’s Great Northern depot when such was located beside Railroad Avenue near the town’s classic heart — that being the intersection of Main and Crawford.

In late May we received an email from Sue wondering if the photo could be dated more accurately based on several hints she’d drawn from the image. The first hint was related to “two power poles close to each other” in the image. On the society’s website she had found an image of the Kelly building — that located on the northwest corner of Main and Crawford — with the train depot in the background. In that image there was only one utility pole near the depot. While another image of the depot posted on the website contained two utility poles, like the above photo. Sue wanted to know if there was any significance in that.

Society member, Deer Park High



***A Great Northern Locomotive
Stands Outside Deer Park’s
Railroad Avenue Depot.***

***Arrow shows the location of the engine’s
Great Northern Road-Number.***

***A larger version of this photo can be seen
in the Mortarboard’s June issue — #158.***

School graduate, and frequent contributor to the *Mortarboard*, Ken Westby, replied, “It’s hard to say for certain when the two railroad depot photos you mentioned were taken, but I would put them both in the 1910 to 1911 timeframe — perhaps a year apart. That was when electric power was first extended to Deer Park from a small hydro-electric plant at Milan (see the two links provided below). Photos taken during that era reveal that utility poles were frequently being erected and/or upgraded. Electric power poles typically had one crossarm at the top, whereas telephone poles had two or three crossarms owing to the need for more wires. Telephones and the telegraph came to Deer Park before electric power (see

Further Reading:

“Electric Power in Deer Park,” by Peter Coffin.

Mortarboard #63, July, 2013 — page 761 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 6.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_63_downsinglesinglepageweb.pdf

“Regarding Deer Park’s Early Issues With Electric Power,” by Ken Westby.
Mortarboard #97, May, 2016 — page 1269 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 27.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_97_doublepage_web.pdf

the two links below), but it all happened in rapid succession and photos like these usually show different pole configurations and additional poles occurring in rather short order. The utility pole with three crossarms near the depot (in the postcard photo) is likely for telephone service in the town. Keep in mind that the railroad typically placed its own utility poles along the rail route with wires that it used for Morse Code communications between stations.

“I wish we had more photos with dates marked on them, but we don’t. We’ve needed to date many of the early photos based on written accounts and newspaper reports that mention, usually by coincidence, items that sometimes appear as easily overlooked details seen in the photos.”

Sue Mauro had a second thought on how the postcard photo might be dated. She wrote, “I see the train is #215.” She contacted a railroad historian of her acquaintance who confirmed that a locomotive bearing that number was in the service of the Great Northern Railroad, and also supplied other bits of critical data that allowed us to draw up some basic information regarding this type of engine.

Sue’s source reported that engine #215 was a 4-4-0 American style steam locomotive built by the Rogers Locomotive Works in 1887. Each locomotive built has a unique serial number, or works number, assigned by the manufacturer. If we knew the works number of our engine we could determine the month the factory completed it. The road-number is assigned by the engine’s owner to keep track of the various elements of the company’s rolling stock. If the engine is sold to

another company, the road-number will likely be changed, while the serial number — the works number — will remain the same.

The numerical phrase 4-4-0 indicates the number of leading, driving, and trailing wheels. Our engine has four wheels on two axles at the front, four driving wheels on two axles in the middle, and lacks any wheels behind the drivers. The term used to describe this type of wheel arrangement is “American” — probably because this was the most common wheel arrangement during that era. Nineteen of these engines, carrying Great Northern road-numbers 207 to 225, were built. Some of these remained in service as late as 1954. As to when, or where for that matter, #215 was retired from service, we currently don’t know.

We do know something of its size. The drive wheels were 5 feet, three inches in diameter. The overall length of engine and tender combined was just shy of 47 feet. The engine alone weighed 94,100 pounds. The tender, loaded with fuel — assumedly coal — added another 68,000 pounds.

While this data doesn’t help us date the depot photograph, each little item seems to add more texture to the image.

... in search of Jennie (Ross) Lawson ...

In last month’s Letters/Brickbats column, I went in search of some biographical data on the people listed beneath another photo contributed by Sue Mauro from the Owen Museum’s collection, said image dated 1900 and identified as the Williams Valley School, its teacher, and its students. One of those students was identified as Jennie Ross — married

Further Reading:

“Telephone Service Comes to Deer Park (part 1),” by Ken Westby & Peter Coffin.
Mortarboard #94, February, 2016 — page 1217 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 26.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_94_doublepage_web.pdf

“Telephone Service Comes to Deer Park (part 2),” by Ken Westby & Peter Coffin.
Mortarboard #95, March, 2016 — page 1233 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 26.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_95_doublepage_web.pdf

name Lawson. In last month's column I wrote, "*Regarding Jennie ... I'm not finding anything, so would appreciate hearing from anyone who can tell us about this person.*"

After we'd gone to press, I discovered that Jennie Dove Ross was born to James Alexander Ross and Dollie (Walbridge) Ross on March 28th, 1893, at Deer Park. According to the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Census, she lived with her parents and two younger sisters, Ethel, and Hazel, at Williams Valley and Deer Park, respectively. She was married to Henry Carl Lawson on May 16, 1913 at Oakland, California. They had one child — Harold.

At this point society member Ken Westby once again came to the rescue with the following. "*I found Jennie died on June 24th, 1918 — the same day her son was born, so I assume she died from complications of childbirth* (which Ken later confirmed)."

Ken discovered that Jennie's father, J. A. Ross, had passed away at San Jose, California on the 20th of December, 1911. Ken wrote, "*That gives a timeline for the family's move from Washington. In 1911 Jennie was 18, Ethel was 14, and Hazel was 12.*"

Ken also learned, "*The baby boy, Harold, was adopted by his aunt, Hazel, and went by the name Harold Lawson Smith*" — the Smith being aunt Hazel's married name. Harold's biological father, having apparently given the boy up, was remarried four years later.

The few clues regarding the family in the Deer Park area include a snippet from the May 7th, 1909 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*, indicating a gentleman had purchased four lots in an industrial area east of Spokane from "*James A. Ross, a mail clerk at Deer Park, Washington.*" The consideration for such being \$1,500.

Another snippet, this published in the *Chronicle's* May 3rd, 1916 issue, and datelined "*Deer Park, Wash.,*" reported that "*J. A. Ross has sold 13 acres to Louis Olsen for \$3,500. The sale included all hay, farming utensils, potatoes, etc.*" Since Jennie's father had passed away in 1911, it appears this sale was

either managed by the estate, or this is a different J. A. Ross.

And lastly, this from the April 22nd, 1920 edition of the *Deer Park Union*. "*The following account of the wedding in San Jose, California, of Miss Ethel Ross, a former resident here, was received by the Union.*" The names mentioned in the article seem consistent with what has been outlined here.

The sad part of all this is learning that two of the girls seen in the Williams Valley School photo featured in last month's Letters/Brickbats column died as a result of birthing their first child — one of said children going on to live a long life, the other dying on the day of his birth. It would be interesting to see the maternal mortality rates in both Stevens and Spokane Counties in those early years, just so we could fully appreciate the hazard being undertaken when bringing life into the world.

... regarding Clayton's terracotta eagle ...

On May 25th last, the society received a letter from the new manager of the Pioneer Waterproofing Company — that being the company that performed the restoration and application of a protective coating to Clayton's terracotta eagle during the summer of 2015. This letter was in response to observations made by several society members that the protective coating had in the last several years begun showing accelerating signs of failing as ever more significant bits of the eagle's surface were spalling — meaning fracturing and lifting from the surface, then sluffing away. While the advertised life expectancy of the coating applied in 2015 was stated as ten to twenty years, the guarantee regarding the application itself was limited to only two years. Now, six years after the original work, this clearly places the burden of finding a solution to the current problem on the society.

As for the 2015 decision to try coating the statue with a semipermeable membrane, this is what I wrote in my description of the statue's restoration as published in the

Mortarboard's September 2015 issue ([link to this article is provided below](#)). "*With the eagle, the historical society faced a dilemma with no easy solution. The simple fact was, the statue needed to be shielded from water. Due to its advanced state of compromise, the only choices were to move it to an inside location, build some type of protective cover over it, or have a waterproof though 'breathable' membrane applied over the entire surface. Due to the emotional as well as financial investment the local community had already made, the last seemed most reasonable — even though it was understood that such would be an ongoing financial obligation, and that any future compromises to this H₂O wickable membrane would need to be dealt with immediately. This means detailed yearly inspections of the membrane shrouding the statue will be required. And eventually the entire protective process will need to be repeated. Hopefully that eventuality will be many years in the future.*"

Six years later and the statue is once again fully in crisis. Regarding that, the waterproofing company's latest evaluation, as expressed in the above noted May 25th letter, is that "*the best course of action would be to build a scaffold around the viewing stand and then tap test the entire surface (of the statue) to identify any remaining areas needing patching. We could then patch those and fix any cracks with epoxy injection to bond the pieces back together. We would also cut out any cracked joints between the terra cotta units and repoint them with new mortar. Finally, we would repaint the repair areas.*" For all this they would charge \$6,857 dollars — over half the cost of 2015's project.

Experience and common sense suggests applying the same solution tried previously without success to an ongoing problem would very likely place us in exactly the same

position a few years in the future — only magnified by even greater deterioration. Because of this, we've decided we need to adopt one of the more radical solutions originally rejected and attempt moving the statue to a protected location. The idea currently under investigation is to move it to the Clayton fairgrounds, then build a protective roof over it.

This entire project has been an expensive lesson, but if it has been learned, not a total loss. The evidence on hand suggests no service was paid toward what should have been the society's primary obligation when securing this remarkable artifact — that obligation first and foremost to preserve it for future generations, and secondly to display it as a means of connecting the viewer with this community's rich heritage.

If handled correctly — as demonstrated in the various methods by which accredited museums display their antiquities — it could have been a fascinating and fairly unique example of a massive, freestanding terracotta assemblage. As such it would have been best displayed not by repairs and restoration, but by removal of anything that was not part of the statue after it was first wired and mortared together atop the Spokane Armory in 1922. In that case subsequent damage and deterioration would be fully visible. But also clearly visible would be the craftsmanship involved in firing a multitude of individual pieces, then fitting them together into a powerful image. Of course, that approach would have precluded mounting the statue exposed to the elements, as was subsequently done.

That aside, so much has now been done in our attempts to preserve the artifact that trying to remove all those restorative elements and reacquire whatever remains of the original work of art would not be advisable.

The sad part in all this is that the de-

Further Reading: Clayton's Eagle.

"Regarding the Clayton Eagle Restoration," by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #89, September, 2015 — page 1136 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 24.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_89_doublepage_web.pdf

cision to mount the statue in the open air, and then, when an acceleration of deterioration was noted, shroud the artwork within a high-tech chemical membrane to shield it from the elements, was done with the best of intentions.

Intentions aside, as a historical society it's our job to make decisions regarding what to preserve and how to preserve such for tomorrow's people — for people we'll never know. Whether that responsibility is a privilege or burden is something to be debated. In truth, the reason for preserving a community's

history and related antiquities is best answered by a question a character in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* asked. When selecting what personal possessions — books, trinkets, family heirlooms and such — to take on the long journey to a hopefully better life, while at the same time choosing what parts of the former life had to be left behind due to a heartbreaking lack of space, said character asked, "*How will we know it's us without our past?*"

———— Wally Lee Parker ———

Mortarboard Volunteers Needed!

We're Looking for Two Writers,

Each Willing to Write and Otherwise Administer a Recurring Column.

One column will answer questions submitted by our readers.

The other column will be a series of biographic sketches, each featuring a current member of the society.

Both these projects will require intensive research, and may necessitate in-person interviews, telephone discussions, as well as email and/or letter communications.

Creative writing skills and a willingness to engage collaboratively would be helpful.

If interested, contact the Mortarboard's editor at bogwen100@msn.com for particulars.

Minutes of the Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical Society ———— June 12, 2021 ———

In attendance at the society's meeting hall, 300 Block 'A' Street, Deer Park: Marilyn Reilly, Bill Sebright, Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Rick Brodrick, Winnie Moore, Scott Moore, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Bill Phipps, Wally Parker, Tracy Strong, Lorraine Nord, Karol Saito, Pearl Bryan, Dee Kennedy and Marie Morrill.

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

ed that: 1) I received a call from Gale Fleming regarding a log house that is being torn down on Dahl Road. Gale and her husband Clarence Griffin purchased the property 7 years ago. There was a postcard written by Louis Olson Sr. in 1898 found in the house. Pete Coffin provided information on the property (in his report). 2) Amy Trueblood Lindh sent us a picture of the 5th and 6th grade class of Clayton School. Don Lindh was in the picture. Jay

and she have been going through Jay's Mom's things and will let us scan the pictures they find. 3) We received word that the Chamber of Commerce is already remodeling their Hot Spot. They are going to put offices where our historic curtain is hanging. If we have no better solution, Doug Knight said he would move it and store it at a Knight Construction location. 4) Since the last meeting we have 5 new members, Tracy Strong, Al Wilson, Kathy Fish McLaughlin, Ross McIvor and Sue Mauro. 5) Shirley Dudney emailed a picture of the Clayton Home Ec. Club taken in 1938. Her Mom and Grandma are in it along with Margaret and Lucille Tobeck. Edith Welch is holding her daughter Pearl.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: 1) The main checking account ended the month at \$9,919.27. There were deposits of \$260. The web hosting account ended the month at \$768.08 with a withdrawal of \$11.84 for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at \$1,945.33. 2) Mark took *Mortarboards* to Gardenspot Health Foods and Odynski's Accounting.

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

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1) The standard 120 print copies of the June 2021 *Mortarboard* (#158) have been delivered to the Society for distribution. The special PDF version has been submitted for uploading to the Society's website. A digital file has been forwarded to the Loon Lake Library for printing, and like files have been sent to The Heritage Network for network distribution. Any other thoughts about electronic distribution of this or past issues should be forwarded to the editor. 2) The June issue leads with a compilation of vintage articles telling the story of "*The 1891 Murder Trial of John C. Hoefer, Deer Park Rancher and Store Owner.*" This journalistic collage was pasted together by the *Mortarboard's* editor. Most of the June issue's remaining space was consumed by an extended Letters/Brickbats column. Among the items within said column is a review of the data available regarding the reported crash of

an unidentified flying object into Tum Tum's stretch of Long Lake on July 25th, 1948. Also included are some thoughts regarding the Clayton school's highly regarded primary teacher, Nellie Gardner — her September 1951 first grade class containing both the Society's current president, Bill Sebright, and the Society's current editor of print publications, yours truly. The article continues with data on and the presentation of several vintage images from the collection once held by the Chattaroy district's fondly remembered Owen Museum — said images donated by Sue Mauro of same said family. The column's compilation of items ends with some corrections to the spelling of family names put forward in the May *Mortarboard* (#157), and our request for help in getting those names right. Thanks to everyone replying.

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported: 1) The June issue of the *Mortarboard* has been uploaded to the website. 2) The front page now shows a "*Featured Article*" from past *Mortarboard* issues. This will be updated each month to draw more attention to the newsletter archives. 3) Our domain (cdphs.org) has been renewed for 2021. The payment should go through on 6/7.

Winnie Moore suggested that we have a place for people to ask and/or answer questions in the *Mortarboard* and on the Website.

Pete Coffin reported: 1) Researched information on the 1940's Dr. Ling, who died in 1941 for a Society Member. 2) Provided President Sebright with a short review including maps of the Clarence Griffin & Gale Fleming property that is part of the Louis Olsen, Sr. homestead. 3) In addition to the Griffin-Fleming property review, I looked up information about one of President Sebright's grade school classmates, Larry Boggs. His 7th grade report card was found in the house that the Griffin-Flemings are demolishing. 4) Will pass around two pictures of some past Historical Society meetings.

Mike Reiter reported that Doug Knight said he will move the Eagle. Mike and

Bill will go to the Clayton Fair meeting this month.

Marilyn Reilly and Pearl Welch are working on a Class of 1955 reunion. If you know anyone from that class let Marilyn (276-6798) know.

Pearl Welch Bryan and Karol Saito joined the Society today. Pearl lives on Enoch Road in the house where she was raised. Karol lives in Spokane but lived near Deer Lake and knew Leno Prestini.

There has been a big change with Brickyard Day! We are not postponing all events. We will be having a t-shirt and a parade. The Clayton Grange will have a break-fast and a lunch. The other events have been postponed for another year.

Mike Reiter asked if we want to do

something special for Settlers this year? Joanne Darassi from the Settlers Committee suggested looking at articles 100 years ago (a phone, typewriter, etc.) and how they look today. Could Rachelle make large prints of the 2 early gatherings pictures we have?

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, July 10, 2021, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15.

Minutes submitted by Bill Sebright acting as secretary.

Editor's Note — We'd be very appreciative of someone stepping forward to fill the very necessary position of secretary. The society's president should be concentrating on other things.

— end —

Society Contacts

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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.

Editorial, Copyright, and Reprint Concerns

Those contributing "original" materials to the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society normally retain copyright to said materials while granting the Mortarboard and the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society durable permission to use said materials in our electronic and print media — including permission to reprint said materials in future Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society publications. Under certain conditions proof of ownership of submitted materials and/or a signed release may be requested. No compensation for materials submitted is offered or implied. All materials submitted are subject to editorial revision. Any material published as an exception to these general understandings will be clearly marked. When requests to reprint materials are received, such will be granted in almost all instances in which the society has 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 work in question. But in all instances where a request to reprint is made, it should be made to both the society and the author of the piece, and it should be made in writing (letter or email). The society considers the application of common business conventions when dealing with intellectual properties a simple means of avoiding misunderstandings.

From "The Coast" magazine,
April, 1907



See Yourself in Print.

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society's department of Print Publications is always looking for original writings, classic photos, properly aged documents and the like that may be of interest to our readers. These materials should be rooted within, though not limited to, northern Spokane County, southeastern Stevens County, and southern Pend Oreille County. As for types of materials, family or personal remembrances are always considered. Articles of general historical interest — including pieces on natural history, archeology, geology and such — are likely to prove useful. In other words, we are always searching for things that will increase our readers' understanding and appreciation of this region's past. As for historical perspective; to us history begins whenever the past is dusty enough to have become noteworthy — which is always open to interpretation. From there it extends back as deep as we can see, can research, or even speculate upon.

Copyright considerations for any materials submitted are stated in the "Editorial, Copyright, and Reprint Concerns" dialog box found in this issue. For any clarifications regarding said policy, or any discussions of possible story ideas or the appropriateness of certain types of material and so on, please contact the editor via the email address supplied on the same page.

— the editor —

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.

Volunteer proofreaders for this issue: Rick Hodges, Bill Sebright, Lina Swain, & Ken Westly.