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#162

October

2021

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THE
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mortarboard

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Deer Park High School Graduate Ray Hunt & Spokane's Walkathons of 1931.

by

Wally Lee Parker

(Part One)

... William Maylon's idea ...

In large block letters, the last page of the *Spokesman-Review's* January 1st 1931 issue proclaimed, "*We Believe Prosperity Will Definitely Increase in 1931.*" In smaller letters it continued, "*The signers of this document believe the depression has spent itself — that good times are already on the way — and that 1931 will see a marked recovery in practically all lines of business.*"

The signatures of forty-nine executives from an assortment of national corporations marched across this page, followed by the names of twenty-five Spokane companies apparently signing in affirmation of the advertisement's prediction. If any of the signatories genuinely believed this full-page forecast, the reality of an economy wading ever deeper into

distress would soon prove them wrong.

For young people trying to gain a foothold in the world, a worsening depression was not the best of times to dip their toes into the workforce. Jobs were scarce and money hard to come by — which made an article found on page three of the January 31st edition of 1931's *Spokane Chronicle* particularly noteworthy.

Headlined "*Offers Champ Pedestrians Chance at Golden Harvest,*" the text that followed began "*Walkathon right over this way you pedestrians and listen to Bill Maylon's idea of the way to find employment.*"

"*Bill's going to put on a 'walkathon' in Spokane, starting within 10 days or two weeks. He's hanging up a purse of \$1,000 prize money for the persons who can remain perpendicular 45 minutes out of every hour for*

the greatest length of time.” The article added, *“Cots will be provided so that during the 15-minute rest period ... the contestants may sleep. They will take their food on the hoof.”*

What wasn't mentioned early on was that the contest had to last at least five weeks — 840 hours — before the \$1,000 prize would be paid to the last couple standing.

The contest — still looking for a venue to play in as of the posting of the above article — would be limited to *“about”* 50 couples.

Coined around 1930 to suggest a long-distance walking race, the term walkathon, as Will Maylon* (see note below) envisioned it, was essentially an extension of the 1920s dance marathon craze. The problem was, religious organizations still tended to voice vigorous moral objections to social dancing, especially if unmarried couples were involved. Will's choice of terms may have been an attempt to defuse such objections. Mr. Maylon suggested as much in this quote from the above article, *“They can walk or dance or go around on roller skates or skis for all I care.”* That said, the subsequent furor arising around Maylon's event suggested local religious leaders weren't about to let things slide based on some newly minted terminology.

The *Spokesman-Review's* February 2nd, 1931 edition stated downtown Spokane's vintage Auditorium Theater would host the event — which seemed appropriate since the theater and the walkathon's promoter, William 'Bill' Maylon, were already well acquainted.

... the Auditorium Theater ...

On March 27th, 1889, ground was broken for Spokane's Auditorium Theater. With the site excavated and otherwise prepared, the first bricks were laid 93 days later. The original intent was to have the structure finished by the beginning of December. But on August 4th, that plan went up in smoke, as

**Outside of quotes, William Maylon will be referred to by his alternate nickname, “Will.”*

did most wooden structures in Spokane's core. After 1889's *“Great Fire,”* the town's struggle to rebuild itself pushed the Auditorium Block's completion back a full year, though the theater portion of the project officially opened several months prior to that with the performance of a comic opera in three acts titled *“Nanon”* — that in September of 1890.

The December 31st, 1890 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle* described the structure this way. *“The Auditorium building is the largest single structure in the state of Washington. The main edifice covers a space 90x180 feet, with the wing in which the theater is located occupying an area of 66x180 feet. The main building is five stories in height, a circular tower on the southeast corner running up two stories further.”*

As for its location, the article states *“The building fronts upon Post Street, its southern (side faces) Main Street, and its western is Lincoln Street.”*

Regarding the theater proper — that being the above noted 66 feet wide by 180 feet deep wing of the Auditorium (essentially a connecting structure), the above article states the theater could seat 1,500 patrons, then adds, *“The stage is a marvel of completeness. It was constructed under the direction of an eminent expert in scenic machinery and stage engineering. It is sixty feet wide, sixty-eight feet high and forty-five feet deep.”*

What was being described in these vintage newspapers was a serious attempt to create a world class theater, as world class was understood at the time. From the reports contemporary to the theater's completion, it appears that goal was accomplished, the results being — the era's taste in such things considered — on par with what can currently be seen in Spokane's restored Clemmer (Bing Crosby) Theater — first opened in 1915, and the Fox (Martin Woldson) Theater — first opened in 1931. The accuracy of this is suggested by the few photos of the theater's interior so far located, and the following several lines extracted from the *Chronicle's* December, 1890 article.

“The proscenium arch (the part of a

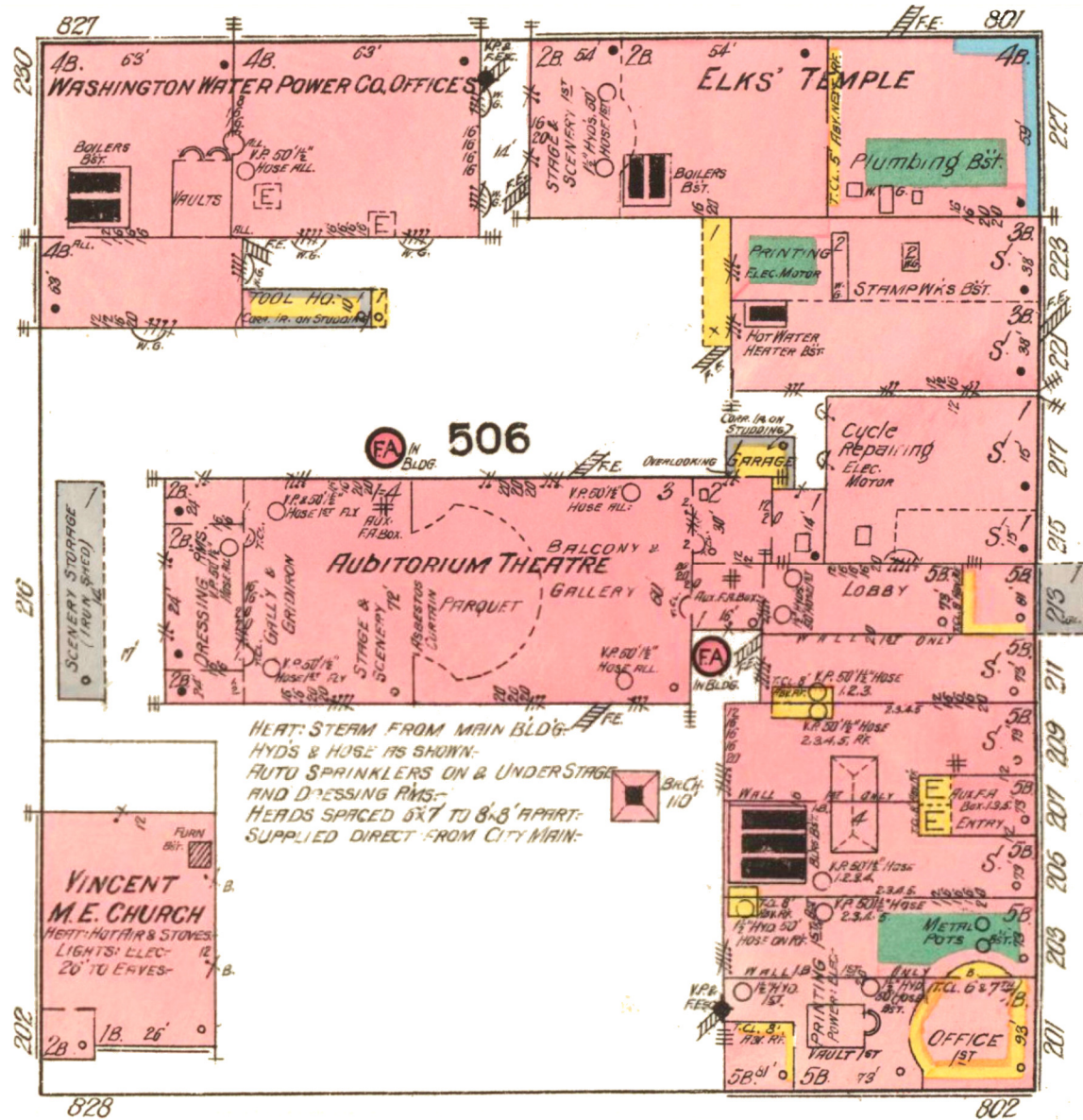
Two Vintage Postcard Images of the Auditorium Block, Downtown Spokane, Circa 1905.

The image to the right views the southeast corner of the Auditorium Block's “main edifice,” that being at the intersection of Post and Main.

Entrance to the Auditorium Theater's lobby appears to be from the Post Street side, at the northeast corner of the “main edifice.”

The righthand corner of the image below shows the Auditorium Block's “main edifice” as viewed from behind and looking northeast, toward Mount Spokane — then known as Mount Carleton. The theater proper is the multilevel, red roofed structure seen extending from the northwest corner of the “main edifice.”





Public domain image courtesy of the Geography & Map Division, Library of Congress.

1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of the Auditorium Theater.

Bordered by Front Street to the north (top of page), Main to the south, Lincoln on the west, and Post on the east, this was downtown Spokane's Auditorium Block as seen in the photos on the prior page of this issue.

theater's stage in front of the main or most-forward curtain) in ivory and gold, the three tiers of double boxes of unique design, the frescoed balconies, the pillars, the gorgeous dome, the tints of all as delicate as the most cunningly executed watercolors, excites one's admiration for the artistic achievements of our time."

When, some 40 years later, the theater was reduced to hosting walkathons and boxing matches, it can be assumed a good portion of that original grandeur had been tarnished. The theater's last theatrical performance, an apparently dismal one at that, occurred in December of 1933. By the following spring, the Auditorium Theater had been demolished.

... William 'Bill' Maylon's story ...

The first mention of Will Maylon so far found in the Spokane's newspapers is from the *Spokane Chronicle's* August 9th, 1924 issue. The paper says, "Mystery and comedy are subtly combined in the melodrama 'Three Wild Nights,' to be presented Sunday evening at the Auditorium Theater by the Maylon Players, a new stock company which will make its debut. ... Will Maylon, the versatile actor who won a host of admirers in coast cities, will take the lead. ... For the past four years Maylon has headed his own company. Prior to that time, he was with the Fulton Theater at Oakland (California), the home of some of the finest stock productions of the Pacific Coast."

According to his death certificate, Mr. Maylon was born in New Jersey on the 10th of February, 1890 — meaning he would have been 34 years old when his group debuted at the Auditorium.

As for the above term "stock company," that can be defined as a group or 'stable' of actors presenting a repeating set of plays — therefore repertory — said group often, though not always, associated with a specific theater.

Several other early articles also mention that Maylon was a formidable athlete. As the January 2nd, 1926 issue of the *Chronicle*

notes, "The handsome young actor who heads his own company at the Auditorium Theater ... has a background that most actors lack — he has done his bit in most branches of athletics. So, when Bill Maylon, the hero on the stage, grabs the black mustached villain by the collar and trouser seat and heaves him from the presence of the clinging heroine, one knows that black-hearted villain is in for a cleaning."

An understanding of the spectacle aspect of athletics led Maylon to a growing career as a promoter of various types of sporting events — especially boxing. This served him well since the introduction of sound to motion pictures was eroding live theater's historic role as the dominant form of theatrical entertainment.

The January 31st, 1930 issue of the *Chronicle* noted, "Will Maylon and his dramatic stock company at the Auditorium Theater will conclude their sixth season in Spokane with the performance tomorrow evening." After this performance, Maylon appears to have concentrated on his activities as an event organizer and promoter, his theater company apparently dissolved. Then, in late July of 1932, the *Chronicle* announced the reformation of the Maylon Players, and a new season to begin in late August. Said article indicated Mr. Maylon himself would not appear on stage — remaining behind the scenes as manager of the company. As for the company of actors needed, the *Chronicle* explained that "a personal friend of Mr. Maylon is negotiating for players known in the talking pictures to form the nucleus of the company."

The company's new home was the Maylon Theater, located at Post and Front Street — Front Street since renamed Riverside Avenue. That theater, with a seating capacity of around 1,700, was built during the summer and fall of 1909, and began its theatrical life under the name American Playhouse. In January of 1930, the venue's name was changed to the Post Street Theater. Then, in 1932, it was renamed the Maylon Theater. But by mid-December of that same year, the Maylon Players were once again forced to dissolve.



**Raymond Hunt as a contestant at
Will Maylon's Walkathon.**

**One thousand and thirty-four hours
into the contest.
(Photographer unknown.)**

As noted in the *Spokesman-Review's* Christmas issue, “*They gambled on public support, but their potential patrons were hardest hit by the emergency* (presumably meaning the Great Depression). *The business was not there for them.*”

In 1934, William ‘Bill’ Maylon and a local girl he’d married in 1930 — 28-year-old dental hygienist Esther Conlon — left Spokane for the coast, where William continued to act as an event promoter, but also busied himself with commercial real-estate. He remained in the Tacoma area until his death, that in early February of 1952. His passing was noted in Spokane’s papers — with fond recollections of his contributions to the local community’s leisure-time life.

... Ray Hunt and family ...

Raymond Richard Hunt was born in Deer Park, Washington, on the 19th of June, 1909. He appears listed, along with his parents and sister Mabel, in 1910’s federal census for “Deer Park Township.”

Ray’s father, Richard Alson Hunt, was born in Missouri on June 18th, 1872. On June 9th, 1946, he passed away at his home in Deer Park. His death certificate indicates he’d lived in the community for 44 years. If correct, that would suggest the family had arrived in Deer Park around 1902.

1910’s census lists Richard’s profession as “*engineer*,” and the nature of his occupation, “*traction*.” This could indicate he maintained and/or operated one or more of the massive land-crawling steam-powered traction engines — such being used by both the Arcadia Orchards Company and the Standard Lumber Company at the time of the census. This is just speculation, of course.

Richard’s death certificate notes he was retired from the Deer Park Lumber Company, where he was last employed as a fireman — likely indicating he was tending the boilers supplying steam to the factory. Regarding his passing, the *Deer Park Union's* June 13th, 1946 *Shavings from the Mill* column

Image from the Suttle Mae (Huffman) Fischbach collection.

reported that Mr. Hunt, “*an old-time employee of the company ... resigned about five years ago because of ill health ...*”

Ray’s mother, Matie Ann (Chase), was born in Nebraska on the 29th of January, 1878. She passed away on September 19th, 1959. Both she and Richard are interred in Deer Park’s Woodland Cemetery.

Raymond’s sister was born in Nebraska on June 21st, 1898 — making Mabel (sometimes spelled Mable in documents) just two days shy of being eleven years older than her little brother. On April 10th, 1918, Mabel married Louis J. Miller, reportedly a resident of Deer Park since about 1911. September 15th, 1883, was Mr. Miller’s birthday, making him almost fifteen years Mabel’s senior.

Louis Miller, at the time a resident of Spokane, passed away on May 27th, 1948. His obituary noted he was survived by his wife and one daughter — elsewhere noted as Elizabeth — and four grandchildren.

On August 30th, 1941, the above noted 22-year-old Elizabeth Jane Miller married 27-year-old Kenneth Wittstock. At their passing — he in 1977, she in 1980 — they were survived by six sons and five daughters.

After Louis Miller’s death, Mabel married a gentleman by the name of Bertram Olson. Then, on September 9th, 1972, she too passed. Mabel was interred beside her first husband, Louis, at Spokane’s Holy Cross Cemetery.

Regarding Mabel’s brother, the May 2nd, 1929 edition of the *Deer Park Union* lists “*Ray R. Hunt*” among that year’s high school graduates. That issue also posts the playbill for the senior class play. Among the cast members of “*The Creaking Chair — A Farical Mystery*,” Ray Hunt is listed as playing the part of “*Edwin Latter, an archaeologist*.”

I was unable to find a copy of the play, but did find a review of it published in the March 1st, 1926 edition of the *Columbia Spectator*, a newspaper produced by the students at New York’s Columbia University. The review was for a presentation at New York City’s Lyceum — one of Broadway’s

landmark theaters. Regarding the part played by Ray in Deer Park’s version of the play, the *Spectator* states, “*... the Egyptologist ... though crippled, disappears from his creaking wheelchair. No one in the cast is free from suspicion of murder.*” Assuming the above noted Egyptologist and Raymond’s archaeologist are one and the same character, it’s likely Ray disappeared from the stage somewhere in the first act — his empty wheelchair a stand-in for the rest of his performance.

The local review, as printed in the *Deer Park Union's* May 9th, 1920 edition, said “*It was a three-act play, carrying a strong story, with plenty of comedy to balance the tenseness of the situations, and the mystery was only solved as the final curtain was ready to fall.*”

The *Union's* reviewer added, “*As a means to the success of the production, much excellent work was done by the production staff, which gathered the material for the settings, drawing on Deer Park stores and homes, and the Maylon Players* (of Spokane) *... Draping and other stage necessities, amounting to \$125.00, were purchased outright by the class, which will be its gift to the school, and which have been badly needed since the gymnasium has been used for stage purposes.*”

The above appears to reference the still relatively new Crawford Street gymnasium, as well as Spokane’s Maylon theatrical group. Little else has been uncovered of Ray Hunt’s life until early 1931, when he became something of a regional celebrity.

... “a thousand dollar prize ...

Will Maylon’s plan for an upcoming walkathon was first announced on the last day of January, 1931. The February 2nd issue of the *Spokane Chronicle* added a few more details. It stated the contest would begin on February 14th, about fifty couples would be involved, the prize would be \$1,000 dollars shared between the winning couple, and to enhance the aging theater’s ability to handle

such a novel event, *“The Auditorium stage will be built out over several rows of seats.”* There’s even a suggestion that elevated bleacher might have been added at the rear of the stage for extra ringside seating.

Running just below the above article, as well as in several subsequent issues of both the *Chronicle* and *Spokesman-Review*, was an ad for *“The first Inland Empire Walkathon.”* The ad described the event as an *“endurance marathon,”* followed by a specific request that *“Registered Nurses, Experienced Trainers, Masters of Ceremony, Floor Judges and (a) Graduate Dietitian”* apply. Said prospects were to report to the *“Walkathon Contest Manager”* at Spokane’s Ridpath Hotel.

But it seems Bill Maylon had some competition. From February 8th through the 11th the following ad ran in both the *Review* and *Chronicle’s* classifieds. *“Men and women; register for walkathon contest at the Washington Hall before Thursday at midnight.”*

Thirty-eight years later an article in the May 18th, 1969 issue of the *Spokesman Review* detailed the impending remodeling of a downtown Spokane building constructed in 1908 for the Kemp & Herbert Department Store. One line from said article stated that *“The top floor of the building, now vacant, was known as the Washington Dance Hall in the early 1930s.”* Kemp & Herbert’s was on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Washington. According to 1910’s Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the store fronted Main for 66 feet — and a bit more on the Washington side. This suggests that due to available space on the second floor, this rival walkathon was likely to produce far less general admissions revenue.

The building is now home to Spokane’s widely known Auntie’s Bookstore.

The day before the Valentine’s Day opening of Maylon’s walkathon, both the *Chronicle* and *Spokesman-Review* began printing ads giving the Auditorium’s admissions rates. *“From 5 A. M. till 5 P. M., 25¢. From 5 P. M. till 5 A. M., 50¢.”* Almost as an after-

thought, the notices indicated patrons could *“Come any time, stay as long as you like”* — the last bit an interesting though not always adhered to offer.

Regarding any legal considerations the city might have, the day the Washington Hall walkathon was to begin, the *Chronicle* posted the following quote from Spokane’s Commissioner of Safety, Leroy Lambert.

“There is no ordinance covering a walkathon. ... In the case of the one at Washington Hall, it probably will be run under the dance license. The one in the Auditorium will be under the theater license.”

“In the case of Washington Hall, I informed the management that they would run on their own responsibility, as there was no license specified for a walkathon. The dance hall ordinance requires closing at 12 midnight on Saturday, but special permission can be given.”

“These affairs are being conducted in Seattle, Tacoma and other coast cities. I’m not going to kill them here, when there is no good reason for doing so. There’s no use making Spokane a one-horse town. These walkathons also will employ 50 or 60 persons each.”

With the Great Depression just beginning to set its hooks into everyone’s wallet, of all possible arguments in favor of a walkathon, it was quite possibly the economic one that kept the idea afloat — at least for a time.

As for how long the employment generated by such an event might last, the February 12th *Spokesman-Review* quoted Will Maylon as saying, *“More than 40 couples have entered in the walkathon starting at the Auditorium Theater ... and the last couple still staggering sometime next April or May will be awarded with the \$1,000 prize.”*

... naming the Auditorium’s contestants ...

The February 13th *Spokane Chronicle* reported *“One Spokane walkathon is 15 hours on its way at 12:15 o’clock this noon in the Washington Hall.”*

The primary difference between the

two events was size. The Washington Hall event began with only six couples — all still in the running at the above noted fifteen-hour mark. The paper then reported that Bill Maylon *“expects to have 40 couples going”* when his event begins *“tomorrow night at the Auditorium Theater.”* This disparity in size resulted in the much larger Auditorium gaining significantly more of the walkathon related column-inches being printed.

The *Chronicle* went on the report, *“Mr. Maylon engaged nearly 70 people, nurses, trainers, dietitians, floor judges, ticket sellers and other attendants.”*

The article then noted Maylon had drawn applicants from Spokane, Wenatchee, Yakama, and Deer Park, as well as Coeur d’Alene, Rathdrum, and Post Falls, Idaho, plus Whitefish, Montana. Then the *Chronicle’s* February 13th article printed the names of fifty participants, arranged as 25 couples.

The Auditorium’s walkathon was set to begin on Saturday, February 14th — Valentine’s Day. That morning’s issue of the *Spokesman-Review* printed the same fifty names. Ray Hunt’s name was absent from both newspapers.

The column heading in the *Spokesman-Review’s* February 15th issue proclaimed, *“21 Couples Go On Walkathon.”* That would imply a few couples from the previously published lists had thought better of it. And reports subsequent to the above headline clarified that the actual number of couples starting that Saturday was 20. All that said, a three-line blip in the following Thursday’s *Deer Park Union* made it clear that *“Ray Hunt of Deer Park is one of the contestants in Will Maylon’s walkathon.”*

... the trek begins ...

The February 15th *Spokesman-Review* reported that Maylon’s walkathon had begun an hour later than scheduled — the delay explained in a later article. Among the additional details published on the 15th, *“A six-piece orchestra and a radio provide music and en-*

tertainment for the contestants ... meals are served on a shelf around the railing of the special floor, and are taken on the move ... three regular meals and four lunches are served during the 24 hours, a regular kitchen in operation ... four masters of ceremonies are on hand to liven up things, and several of the contestants appear before the microphone with vocal numbers ... the house is equipped with loud speakers and three times a day progress of the event will be broadcast over KFPY ... most of the women contestants are dressed in pajamas, but the men are in more conventional dress ... a good crowd was on hand to see the opening night ...”

The following Monday’s *Review* began by noting that no one had dropped out yet. That said, it captioned, *“Up to midnight Sunday they had been on the go 32 hours; but that is not even a starter as these things go.”*

Regarding the delayed start, the paper explaining that it was held for the arrival of several *“veteran marathoners.”* To quote, *“The opening of the contest was delayed an hour Saturday until a couple from the coast, Jack Hathaway and Regena Crossman, could get here by plane.”*

February 17th’s *Spokesman-Review* reported that as of 11 p.m. the prior night the walkathon *“had been under way for 55 hours with 18½ couples still on their feet.”* One couple had dropped out, and the distaff half of another couple had to leave due to an illness at home. According to the rules, when only one member of a couple drops out, the remaining partner can walk solo until a suitable partner is freed due to the breakup of another couple. The catch, there was a one week time limit on uncoupled contestants walking solo.

The following segment from the above article explains just how physically and mentally exhausting walkathons became as the hours wore on.

“Somnambulism (sleepwalking) is an art they rapidly acquire, and last night several of them were sound asleep locked in their partner’s arms. They take turns sleeping, the man supporting the woman while she grabs a

little shuteye, and the next period she will rock him to sleep in her arms.”

The morning writeup in the *Review*’s February 18th edition, while noting that the 80th hour had passed the prior midnight, reduced the number of competing couples to 17½. With 45-minutes of walking and 15 minute breaks for things like sleeping, some harsh techniques were used to rouse napping contestants back to the floor. The alarm sounding in the sleeping areas was described as a “rending scream” emitted by “a siren whistle.” If that didn’t work, “Mrs. Justice, head nurse in the women’s quarters, and ‘Teabone’ Maruca in the men’s quarters” tried “yanking them to their feet.” If even that failed, they’d “dash cold water in their faces or beat a tattoo on their feet.”

As to the level of commitment among the contestants, the article reported “*The walkathon may seem like a lot of foolishness to some people, but it is mighty serious to those taking part. As evidence there is Miss Jerry Mills, (couple) No. 10, who dislocated her hip yesterday. But nurses threw it back in place, and she is still continuing, although limping painfully.*”

Finding a rational explanation for enduring something akin to torture, one married couple said they’d started building a new home, and then the husband lost his job — one would assume due to the deteriorating economy. They were in pursuit of the thousand dollars so they could finish their house and otherwise stay economically afloat.

Adding a little more hour-by-hour motivation, it was reported that some of the contestants received gifts from their fans — for example, money thrown on the stage if they sang or otherwise entertained.

Within the stream of tidbits about various contestants, the *Chronicle*’s February 19th issue noted “*The 116-hour mark was passed at noon today.*”

The next afternoon’s *Chronicle* updated that with “*the Auditorium Theater walkathon broke into its 140th hour at noon today. During the last 50 hours not one com-*

petitor has dropped out.”

That didn’t last long. In a short blip on page six of the same day’s “*Final Fireside Edition,*” the *Chronicle* reported, “*Albert E. Roll, of couple No. 10 ... was ordered out by Dr. T. D. Burger this afternoon because of swollen ankles. He went 142 hours and was paired with Miss Jerry Mills. Miss Mills*” — and her problematic hip — “*will continue with another partner.*”

On Saturday, the 21st, the *Spokesman-Review* informed its morning readers that on midnight last the contestants had been at it for 153 hours. But of the 20 couples that began, only 16½ remained. The above noted Miss Mills was continuing with another priorly loosed partner. As to the remaining one-half of a couple, the *Review* said, “*Dean Elbert, No. 9, is the only singleton left, and he’ll walk on out of there tonight unless some other man oversleeps*” — that referring to the time limit for contestants to remain unpartnered.

Paid attendance wasn’t a problem. As the *Review* explained earlier in the week, “*Crowds packed the theater Tuesday night to such an extent that Mr. Maylon had to ask those who had seen enough to give others a chance.*” Maylon understood that watching exhausted people walk in circles couldn’t be the only attraction. Much like a three-ring circus, he had a constant stream of other diversions and entertainments playing simultaneously. Singers, dancers, comedians, boxing matches, as well as other endurance contests — things like who could stand on one foot the longest or who could sit without sleeping the longest.

The audience seemed equal partners in all this. They were endurance watching while the contestants continue their trek — the fascination for the onlookers possibly being 1931’s precursor to the new millennium’s seduction by reality television.

As for Deer Park’s representative in this onstage mayhem, he was first mentioned by name in the Monday, February 23rd issue of the *Spokane Chronicle*. The article stated, “*At noon today the contest had been underway*

212 hours.” And then, “*Ray Hunt, of couple No. 8, slept six hours this morning, on his feet all during the active period. Once he fell flat on the floor, and another time almost knocked over the water container in one corner of the arena.*”

Reading that, one would assume the 21-year-old was on his last leg. He’d later say his reason for enduring this physical and men-

tal torture was to win enough money to attend college. Intentions aside, how much longer he could carry on before his body or mind or both broke, that was a question everyone listening to the radio or reading the newspapers back home would have to wait seven more weeks and a scattering of days to have answered.

————— to be continued —————

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

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

... Deer Park’s first store ...

Featured in the Mortarboard’s June issue (#158) was the story of Deer Park store owner John C. Hoefer’s murder trial. There was no doubt that on October 1st 1890 a murder did occur on a downtown Spokane street, and that Mr. Hoefer was the one that pulled the trigger. Circumstance considered, the jury found him not guilty — which didn’t mean he didn’t kill the fleeing miscreant with a well-placed shot to the back, it just suggests that justice back then was something more than a matter of cut and dried procedure.

The other thing we drew from our research into Mr. Hoefer’s life is that someone important seems to have been overlooked in Deer Park’s early history.

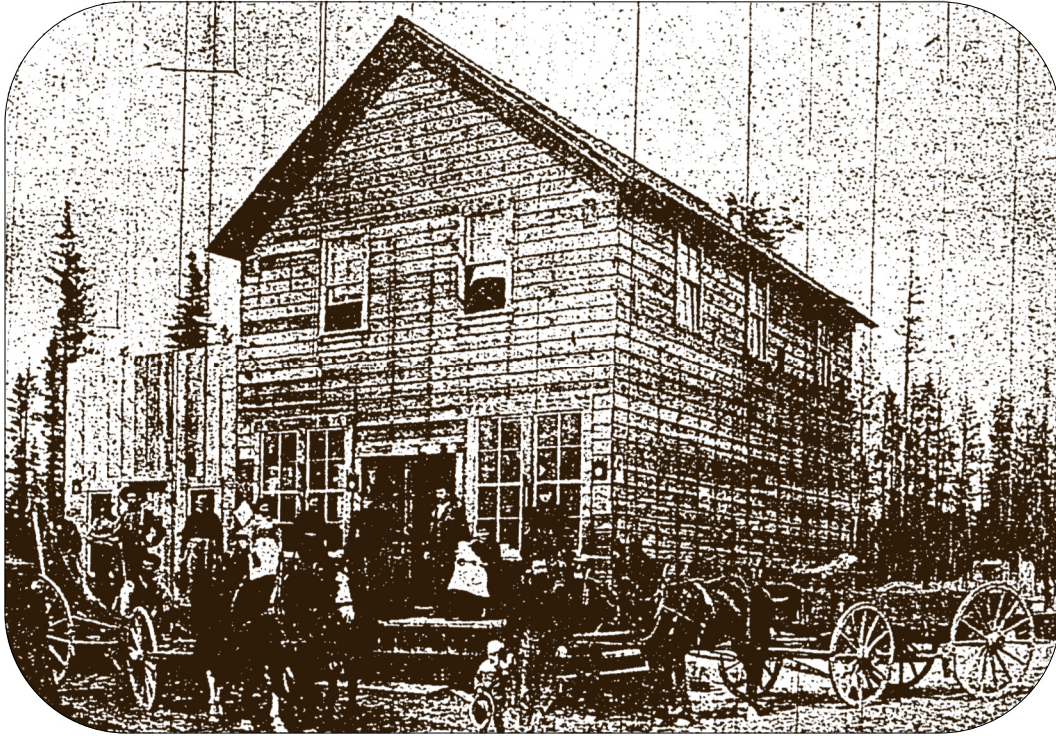
Regarding such, a few weeks back society historian Peter Coffin found a critical bit of data on the front page of the *Deer Park Union*’s September 20, 1934 edition. As said article explained, “*The old two-story building on Vernon Avenue, which has stood vacant for*

a long term of years, is being wrecked this week by William Critzer, who will use the lumber for building purposes on his Wild Rose Prairie farm. The building was erected by Mr. Hofer (as spelled), Deer Park’s first merchant, in 1888, and later became the property of the Kelly brothers, who bought out the Hofer store. P. J. Kelly occupied it with his store for some years after his brother, Tom, located in Newport, and later the store was moved into the one-story building now used for a tin shop by the Lundale Hardware. The building now being wrecked first stood near the northeast corner of Main and Crawford Avenue and was removed before the Kelly home was built.”

The facts seem to fit so tightly, we’ve little doubt the Mr. Hofer mentioned above, and the John C. Hoefer featured in June’s *Mortarboard*, are one and the same. However, Pete did point out that the *Union*’s 1934 article was published 43 years after our understanding of when Mr. Hoefer left the area. I believe Pete was suggesting that if the *Union*’s account was drawn from the community’s

Further Reading: John C. Hoefer.

“The 1891 Murder Trial of John C. Hoefer,” by Wally Lee Parker.
Mortarboard #158, June, 2021 — page 2309 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 47.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_158_web_.pdf



“P. J. Kelly’s Store — The Original Store in Deer Park.”
Front Page: Deer Park Union, Friday, December 22, 1911.

Original caption reads, “See if you can pick out P. J. Kelly, O. F. Kelly, T. J. Kelly. Mrs. P. J. Kelly holding H. L.; also Conrad Herman and other old timers. Situated on corner of Main and Crawford. Printed by permission of Mr. O. F. Kelly.”

Regarding the above-named people, P. J. would be Peter J. Kelly, born August, 1858, passed April 20, 1908; O. F. Kelly is a problem. In Thomas Kelly’s obit, O. F. and H. L. Kelly of Deer Park are listed as his nephews, but so far, we haven’t found clear guidance to O. F.’s full name or paternity; T. J. is Thomas J. Kelly, born March 15, 1863, passed, November 3, 1933; Mrs. P. J. Kelly, seen holding H. L. would be Peter’s wife, Eva Rosalie, 1864 to 1907, and Peter and Eva’s son, Harold Lee. Regarding Conrad Herman, he deserves a story of his own, and someday we hope to provide such.

(The Kelly brothers’ history in Deer Park will be detailed in a future issue.)

memory, rather than documents, it would widen the possibility of factual errors — one example being the spelling of Mr. Hoefer’s name.

In my reply to Pete, I noted that “The

article states Mr. Hoefer was Deer Park’s first merchant and places the date of this building’s construction as 1888 — a full year prior to the arrival of Daniel Corbin’s Spokane Falls & Northern Railway.” What troubled me was

how John Hoefer knew in 1888 to site his store within a hundred and some feet of the yet to be built railroad — or if that was just coincident. Pete replied as follows.

“I tend to think that the railroad right of way had to have been surveyed well before the track laying began. Unfortunately, to date I do not have any dated material to justify my opinion. Much dirt-work and bridge building done with horse and shovel would also have to be finished prior to track laying. In addition, the sidings would have to be planned for holding construction materials. There is no written material to indicate how Hoefer decided to build his store where he did, but it’s likely the construction of the railroad was underway in 1888.”

We searched for and did find some materials tending to verify Pete’s belief. An article in the January 12th, 1888 edition of the *Spokane Falls Review* notes that “A party of surveyors are laying out a line for a railroad from Colville to this city and are now working about twenty miles outside. Yesterday they moved their camp two and a half miles in this direction.” A caution here is that the group that would incorporate as the Spokane Falls & Northern Railway weren’t the only ones interested in connecting north through Colville by rail, and then on into British Columbia’s mining districts. And in the above snippet, which group was doing the survey mentioned isn’t clarified.

On April 18th, ninety-seven days after the above was published, an update in the *Review* specific to the Spokane Falls and Northern’s progress in finding a suitable route states, “Two routes have been surveyed; a selection from the two is all that remains to be done ...”

Just as a matter of speculation, one might wonder whether one of those routes rising north from Spokane Falls followed the old Cottonwood Road as it skirted just to the east of what would become Deer Park — and in the process passed close to the now gone wayside of Foreston, and with it the site of the first post office established in the far north of

Spokane County. While at this point that would be speculation, what we do know is that the route selected drifted to the northwest to cross the high ground between what would prove to be the future site of Clayton and the waters of Loon Lake.

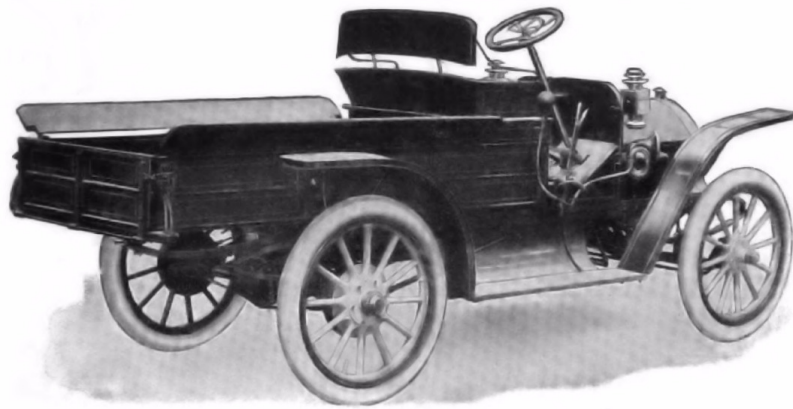
That aside, in an article explaining Daniel Corbin’s association with the construction of the railroad to Colville, the *Review*’s February 14th, 1889 edition said, “Mr. Corbin had carefully examined the route selected. He was prepared to push the road through to an early completion ...”

From all this it appears likely that, as Pete suggested, in 1888 Mr. Hoefer knew exactly where the railroad’s track and siding would be laid in coming days, and thereby exactly where to build his store. As Pete noted in one of his emails on this subject, because of Mr. Hoefer’s trial and the debts he incurred during such, he lost all his property in this community, and also it seems the historic credit due him for “being part of the founding of Deer Park.”

... R. R. Hazard buys a truck ...

Rowland Robinson Hazard Sr. was born at Newport, Rhode Island on July 25th, 1837. He and his wife, Rhoda M. Hazard, settled in Wild Rose Prairie in either 1883 or 1884, depending on the source. According to R. R.’s obituary in the October 13th, 1921 edition of the *Deer Park Union*, “He was one of the first settlers in this region, coming here with this wife, from whom he was afterward separated, she ... electing to live in the east with a daughter, Mrs. Lottie H. O’Brien, the son, R. R. Hazard, remaining here with his father.” As far as currently known, the only children surviving Rhoda and Rowland Sr. were the above Rowland Jr. and Carlotta — that being Mrs. O’Brien.

It seems nearly impossible to separate any discussion of the history of Wild Rose Prairie from at least a mention of R. R. Hazard Sr. — one of those larger-than-life figures possessing the fortitude necessary to settle in



THE CHAINLESS TRUCK!

**A SHAFT-DRIVE AND FULL FLOATING
REAR AXLE MAKE THE GLEASON SU-
PREME AMONG LIGHT DELIVERY CARS!**

¶ The Chain Drive is all O.K. on a 2 or 3-ton truck. But not so on a medium light-weight Commercial Car where both speed and efficiency are required. ¶ **GLEASON** Commercial Cars are made on one chassis only—a chassis that

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Is a stylish and a practical Commercial Car. It is furnished with either closed or open body. Carrying capacity, 1000 pounds. A sturdy car and a substantial car. Yet a model of simplicity in construction. Made with an eye single to its thoroughness — its completeness. Pneumatic or cushion tires, as desired.

¶ Sliding gear transmission, with three speeds forward; multiple disc clutch with cork inserts and full floating rear axle.

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¶ The **GLEASON** is famed for its economical upkeep. Its high-class construction leaves practically nothing to get out of order or go wrong. And its powerful engine enables it to go over any kind of road and in all kinds of weather.

¶ This car will stand the closest investigation—will make good under the severest test.

¶ May we supply you with full information? Will you kindly write or wire us to-day? We want red-blooded agents in all unoccupied territory.

From the November 1st, 1910 edition of the "Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal."

what was then an undeveloped territory. As the above noted obituary explains, "He ... fought in the Civil War, being given the rank of first Lieutenant." Among his accomplishment at Wild Rose, "for a time conducting a post office and general store at Hazard's Corner"

Regarding the post office, in the July 2012 edition of the *Mortarboard* (#51), under the title "Rural post offices in the Clayton-Deer Park area," society historian Pete Coffin wrote, "Rowland Hazard opened a store on his Wild Rose Prairie homestead at the corner of Spotted Road and Wild Rose Road in the SW/4 of Section 33-T28N-R42EWM in 1884. In 1885 (February 16th) a post office was opened in the store to deliver mail to local farmers. Mr. Hazard would drive to Spokane (obviously by horse drawn wagon) once a week on Friday to pick up store supplies and the mail." His post office remained open until October 31st, 1904, at which point the Deer Park Post Office began delivering to the area.

According in the *Spokane Chronicle* (see clipping, above right), in June of 1911 Mr. Hazard purchased a truck for the specific purpose of "hauling merchandise supplies from Spokane to Hazard."

A reasonably complete description of the truck was found in the June 1910 issue of *The Commercial Vehicle* magazine.

To quote, "The Gleason gas motor light delivery wagon, with shaft drive, has been put on the market by the Kansas City Vehicle Company, Kansas City, Missouri. The chassis includes a number of modern features of vehicle construction. In arrangement the machine follows conventional automobile practice with motor-in-front under a bonnet and driver's seat behind the dash, with inclined steering post. The frame is of pressed steel and carries a unit power plant in front which includes a double-opposed 20-horsepower four-cycle motor, multiple-disc clutch, and selective change-speed gearbox giving three speeds forward and reverse."

Regarding the above noted engine, this appears to be a novel but occasionally still

IN THE SALESROOM AND ON THE ROAD

The Inland garage has sold a Gleason truck to the Hazard Merchandise store at Hazard, Wash. The truck will be used in hauling merchandise supplies from Spokane to Hazard, a distance of 28 miles.

* * *

Buying a Gleason Truck.
*From the June 7th, 1911 edition of
the Spokane Chronicle.*

used design in which two pistons share a single, extra-long cylinder, and on the power and exhaust strokes each piston moves toward the other. Two crankshafts, one at each end of each single cylinder, are required, but several other components, such as cylinder heads, are eliminated. Best guess would be that the Gleason's engine has two cylinders and four pistons — that, of course, is yet to be confirmed.

The *Commercial Vehicle* magazine continued, "The wheels are 36 inches in diameter and are shod with Swinehart solid-rubber tires."

Its review concluded, "The Gleason vehicles are sold with full equipment of lamps, including oil front and tail lamps, and two gas lamps in front of the bonnet with a large gas generator suspended on the outside of the frame. A horn and kit of tools are also supplied."

The front and rear oil lamps were modifications of the common wick-fed kerosene lanterns. The above mentioned gas generator is a canister that drips water into a bed of rock-salt size calcium carbide bits — said bed supported on a wire mesh. The reaction of the water and carbide produces acetylene gas under low pressure. Tubing carries this



***The Gleason Truck at the North Spokane Farm Museum.
R. R. Hazard's Gleason truck one-hundred and ten years later.
(Photo by Bill Sebright)***

gas to the two front driving lamps, where, when lit, the vapor burns with an intense white flame. As the carbide degrades it forms a dust that falls through the screen into the bottom of the canister. While this worked fairly well, it was high maintenance, requiring cleaning and so forth on a regular basis. In the wintertime, it was recommended that 20% of the water be replaced with alcohol to reduce the chance of freezing.

Running across the *Chronicle* article mentioning Hazard Merchandise's 1911 purchase of a Gleason truck, we wondered if that particular truck was related to the one currently on display in the North Spokane Farm Museum's "Red Shed." We phoned Mr. Robert Greiff, president of said museum. Mr. Greiff confirmed that the light truck on display is the same one Mr. Rowland Hazard Sr. purchased brand new.

There obviously has to be more to this story. For one thing, how has this unique

relic managed to survive this long? Its working life consumed how much of its 110 years? Who's responsible for the restoration work, and how extensive was said work? I'm sure someone has the answers to these questions, and a lot more not yet articulated, all of which we'd be most interested in hearing.

... a history of our local taverns ...

In an email posted just after the society's September meeting, President Bill Sebright wrote, "*We had some good discussions today, especially about taverns and Deer Park's drive-in movie theater.*" He then requested that anyone having memories of any of these local institutions write them up and send such to him or the *Mortarboard's* editor.

The next Monday Bill received an email from Susan Simpson of Castle Rock, Colorado. Susan has done extensive research into her family's history in the Clayton area —



***Above: Alfred Harry 'Stump' Wind.
Stump at the entrance to
Clayton's Ramble Inn Tavern.***

***Right: Stump Wind and Pearl Major.
Stump and Pearl at the entrance to the
Ramble Inn Tavern.***

(Photos from the Susan Simpson Collection)



know the name of it) from August 1967. Bob and I had only been married a year (had our 1st anniversary at Loon Lake), and we drove with my parents and sister from California to Washington for vacation. Uncle Stump Wind and Emma and Bert Melander were living at the old Cowan ranch house at the time, and one hot day when we were there, Uncle Stump offered to take us into Clayton and buy us a beer. I don't remember exactly who went, but Bob and I did, and probably my dad too. At

the Wind and Cowan families — and she continues to follow and contribute to our historical society's efforts.

Susan wrote, "I scanned the meeting minutes briefly and it struck me that I had one great memory of a Clayton tavern (I don't

Further reading about the Wind and Cowan families at Clayton:

**"A Woman Worth Remembering," by Susan Simpson.
Mortarboard #91, November, 2015 — page 1165 — Collected Newsletters, Vol. 25.
http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_91_doublepage_web.pdf**

the tavern, we stood at the bar and Stump spoke to the woman behind the bar saying 'Pearl, these are my relatives,' and asked her to bring us a beer. I think it was 15 cents a glass. Stump paid. I assumed Pearl was the owner, but I don't know for sure. In any case, Stump was a regular there, obviously, and Bob took a great picture of him hugging her. Uncle Stump was a great hugger, and typical old bachelor. He died about six months later. That trip was such a great memory of him."

Alfred 'Stump' Wind was born at Clayton on the 12th day of February, 1892. He passed away in Deer Park's hospital on February 22nd, 1968. A World War I veteran and lifelong resident of the Clayton area, he'd just turned 76 ten days prior to his death.

Pearl B. Major, along with her husband, Loran S. Major, owned the Ramble Inn at the time of Susan's visit. Born in Colville on the 5th of December, 1916, Pearl spent the last 42 years of her life in Clayton — her death occurring on May 12th, 2011. Loran had passed away seventeen and a half years earlier. Both are resting together at the Cedonia Community Cemetery, 30 miles west by northwest of Clayton, near the Columbia River.

The Ramble Inn Tavern appears to



Susan Simpson and Stump Wind.
Susan and Stump, Clayton, August, 1967.
(Photo from the Susan Simpson Collection)

have a reasonably long history. We know the celebrated rodeo performers Homer and Elmer Holcomb owned the tavern from January of 1948 through September of 1955. With the help of the community, we hope to learn more.

———— Wally Lee Parker ————

Minutes of the **Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical Society** ———— *September 11, 2021* ————

In attendance at the society's meeting hall, 300 Block 'A' Street, Deer Park: Marilyn Reilly, Bill Sebright, Mike Reiter, Bill Phipps, Mike Wolfe, Tom Costigan, Wally Parker, Dick Purdy, Larry Bowen, Judy Gross, Rick Brodrick, Tracy Strong, Christiana Burris, Mary Jo Reiter, Rachelle Fletcher, Winnie Moore, Marie Morrill, Don Ball, and Elaine Ball.

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

coming all, there was a moment of silence to remember and honor those who died on 9-11-2001. He reported that: 1) Jeff Clark dropped off the wonderful box of Wey Simpson's artifacts. There are many great pictures. Terry Berger, Brian Berger, Dan Huffman and Joe Longly are in one of the pictures. Lawrence Porter, Judy Porter, Dan Birdsell, Leo Feser and Ken Feser are in others. Of course, Wey and Donna Jean Simpson are in them. It also contained a Deer Park Township ledger book

dating back to 1909. 2) Attendance was down at the Clayton Fair. We still had a lot of good contacts. 3) Chuck Lyons put on a really good rope making demonstration at the Fair. 4) Also, at the Fair, Roberta Fuge brought seven pictures of the old Arcadia dam on Dragoon Creek that was once the mill pond. 5) Chuck Lyons dropped off a 'tub' of about 100 Deuber prints sets. 6) Jeff Clark emailed asking about the Deer Park Drive-in Theater. Terry Berger sent a Facebook link from Dona Mackey Morris 'showing and telling' about her folks' drive-in theater. 7) Carl Sharpe called asking if we had any information on his dad or grandfather who once owned a hotel in Loon Lake. Judy Gross said growing up she had heard about such a hotel. She will check with the Loon Lake Historical Society today. 8) Bob Renner dropped off two Deer Park High School letter sweaters from Dennis and Carmen (King) Hill that belonged to Marlene King Berry and Jim Berry.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported by text: 1) The main checking account ended the month at \$15,897. There were deposits of \$538. One check was written, \$30 for supplies. The web hosting account ended the month at \$709.87 with a withdrawal of \$12.92 for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at \$1,083.75. The Eagle fund account, \$7,450. 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) One-hundred and twenty copies of the September *Mortarboard* (#161) are ready for distribution, and PDFs for print reproduction of the same have been sent to the Loon Lake Library and The Heritage Network. The online version has been forwarded to the Society's webmaster for uploading. 2) The September issue features a reprint of Loretta E. Hall's "*Memoirs of Clara McDonald, 1882 – 1935.*" Drawn from Clara's handwritten journals, Loretta's transcription was first published in 2002 in Loretta's book, "*History of Wild Rose Prairie.*" The Society has Loretta's permis-

sion to reprint, and we are downright proud to publish a story of this quality. Furthermore, the September issue's Letters/Brickbats column includes a piece titled "*more on the Frank Bittrick family*" in which Ken Westby adds some useful data to that family's history. Then there's a character study of prior area resident Dan Jewell, who had an explosive means of deterring undue interest in his illegal still. There's a note that the North Spokane Farm Museum needs a vintage farm refrigerator for its classic farm kitchen display. And lastly there's a look at a tiny addition to the side of Doctor Slater's garage — something just big enough to fit his narrow, two-person car. 3) It seems we've lost a structure somewhere along Deer Park's Main Street. If you know the whereabouts of what was in 1946 and prior known as the Charles Farris Building, please let us know. In 1947, a tavern known as D. D's was moved from this building to a newly constructed Quonset hut at what was then Deer Park's south city limits. Many of us know this business by its later name, the Hut Tavern, and even later as the Salty Dog Eatery. 4) Just a reminder, the most effective means of submitting materials, making suggestions, or offering criticisms regarding the contents, attitudes, and/or viewpoints expressed in these newsletters is to mail or email your comments, opinions, and/or submissions directly to the editor. Look for the "*Society Contacts*" box usually located on the last page of each issue for email and snail-mail addresses.

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported via email: 1) The September issue of the *Mortarboard* has been uploaded to the website. An update to the *Mortarboard* index was also posted. The finishing touches are also being made to the new "*contact form*" where website visitors can request information. This information gets sent directly to the webmaster's email.

Pete Coffin reported by email: 1) He emailed Gail Fleming all of the ownership maps for ownership of 29 North Range 42 East. 2) He digitized the Farm Museum's book

“Families of Wild Rose Prairie” and the 2001 Deer Park High School Annual. 3) At the suggestion of President Sebright he prepared and presented a talk describing the activities of the Historical Society and a short review of the history of the Clayton-Deer Park area to the Deer Park Rotary Club. 4) He sent President Sebright a short story “Shooting Grasshoppers” describing a childhood event at the drive-in theater in which he participated. It was distributed to a large email list. Many people liked it. He has a reservoir of such stories. 5) He spent Saturday morning September 4th taking pictures of Deer Park’s business district for archival purposes.

Mike Reiter reported that: Someone at the Clayton Fair told him that there is a Fertile Valley Cemetery by his property north of

Miller’s One Stop and west of Highway 2. There are names of Deer Park people buried there. No one has contacted us with more information.

The Brickyard Day committee donated \$692 to Quaranteam from the sale of Brickyard Day t-shirts.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, October 9, 2021, at 10:00 AM at our building.

Meeting adjourned at 11:07.

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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Website — <http://www.cdphs.org>

Comments Policy

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

Editorial, Copyright, and Reprint Concerns

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Volunteer proofreaders for this issue: Rick Hodges, Bill Sebright, Chuck Stewart, Lina Swain, and Ken Westby.

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.