

THE
CLAYTON/DEER PARK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Mortarboard

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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.

**Six Letters:
Translating
the Luigi & Caterina Prestini Letters of 1919**

Part One of Two.

*A Group Project
by
Wally Lee Parker,
Paul Erickson, John & Angela Barbieri, and Christina Percoco*

For some time the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society has had in its possession six letters exchanged between Clayton's Caterina and Luigi Prestini shortly before Luigi's death in early 1919. Following is the story of the letters' donation to our group, of their translation from cursive Italian into English, and what they have to tell us about the parents of Battista and Leno Prestini.

... the family ...

On the 19th of May, 1906, Luigi Prestini, formerly of the town of Besano in the extreme north of Italy, arrived in New York aboard the steamship La Savoie — homeport, Havre, France. He'd left his wife, Caterina, and two young sons, Battista, not yet two, and Lino (Leno), age three months, back in Italy.

It's believed he came at the behest of friends and family, one of whom, his brother Ferdinando, had been living in Spokane since 1899 — as indicated by the 1900 Federal Census. Luigi's intended destination was entered in the La Savoie's "ships list" as the town of Barre — located in an area of the State of Vermont renowned for the quality of its architectural granite. His contact at Barre



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was identified as Andreo Celti, a brother-in-law. And it's believed that soon after settling in, he began working in the local stonecutting industry.

Born in Besano on September 17th, 1880, Luigi was just 26 years old when he landed in America. Reportedly over half the men immigrating from Italy in those years intended to eventually return to the old country. Their reason for coming to the United States was economic — to earn money for the families still in Italy, or to save enough to start a business or buy land after returning home. If that were ever Luigi's plan, it appears to have changed by the 2nd of May, 1908. On that date the S. S. La Provence arrived in New York's harbor with Caterina and the two boys on board.

A memoir written in later life by Luigi's son, Battista, states that the family left Barre in 1911, and, crossing the United States by train, relocated to a rural settlement of largely Italian families just west of the town of Buckeye in the northern part of Washington State's Spokane County — where Luigi's brother, Ferdinando, had a small farm.

Luigi purchased 10 acres of land from his brother — reportedly with the intent of clearing it for farming. But within a year or two Luigi obtained work at the Washington, Brick, Lime & Sewer Pipe Company's terracotta plant at Clayton. He then loaded whatever the family owned onto a wagon, and drove the team north to the — at that time — growing town.

At first they lived in company housing. Then purchased an old house on the town's east side. And that's where they were living when, very early in 1919, Luigi became critically ill.

... the illness ...

According to Battista's memoir — the original of which can be found in the Stevens County Historical Society's archive at Colville — his father was suffering from “a displaced stomach, so doctors tried a rest

home cure. But result no good.”

Battista's rough notes then add, “So doctor decided on a operation. Operation success, but father placed in ward with patients with broken legs and arms and nine days later died of pneumonia.”

The term “displaced stomach” identifies a very real and often critical condition known in the literature as gastropoptosis.

One of the simpler explanations of this condition comes from the August, 1919, issue of *The Workmen's Compensation Law Journal*, where, recorded as part of a “petition to reopen” a previously closed case, a gentleman identified as Doctor Witherell testified that upon examining the claimant in question he discovered the “condition of gastropoptosis, or an enlargement and downward displacement of the stomach.”

The details suggesting such a diagnosis were explained by Doctor A. M. Calloway in an article appearing in the January 15, 1910, issue of *The Therapeutic Gazette*. The doctor stated, in regards to an external examination of a patient with gastropoptosis, “Inspection will reveal a more or less diffused bulging; the thinner the individual, the more marked the bulging. In marked gastropoptosis a groove may be seen extending from the navel to the ribs, which represents the lower curvature.”

Regarding tests to confirm the diagnosis, Doctor Calloway continued, “The most valuable of all methods in determining the position of the stomach is by the use of the x-rays. Having had the patient swallow a pint of milk containing an ounce of bismuth subcarbonate (a radiopaque contrast medium) he is subjected to an examination with the fluoroscope or a radiograph is made.”

It was noted in most of the early literature that thinner people — in 1919 that group being composed primarily of women — were more likely to show the harsher symptoms of the disorder. It was stated that in severe cases the displacement often arose from an injury to the visceral elements that provided suspension to the stomach. As for what might cause such injury, pregnancy was often cited, and, for



Caterina (Andreoletti) Prestini
February 21, 1884 — Besano, Italy.
September 10, 1961 — Spokane, Washington.



Luigi Prestini
September 17, 1880 — Besano Italy.
March 19, 1919 — Spokane, Washington.

Dates as found in Battista Prestini's memoirs. Photos from the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society's Prestini collection.

both men and women, heavy lifting was mentioned.

Italian men of that period were often both smaller in stature and thinner in mass than the average. And Luigi's work in the stone quarries of Vermont, as well as Clayton's terracotta works, would have clearly involved quite a bit of heavy lifting.

The January 26, 1901, edition of the *Philadelphia Medical Journal* states that "pain, indigestion and vomiting, with chlorosis (also known as "green sickness" — chlorosis being an obsolete term currently identified with hypochromic anemia), headache, palpitation, nervousness, etc., form the common group of symptoms."

As for treatment, the *Philadelphia Medical Journal* states "rest in bed, with massage and proper diet, will relieve many of these patients of their distressing symptoms. If the dilation is great, lavage (stomach pumping) and even reefing may be required." The noted "reefing" is a surgical procedure which reduces the size of the stomach.

As for what to do if none of the above works, the medical journal suggested gastropexy, which it defines as a surgical procedure that involves "the fixation of a displaced stomach in its normal position. This is usually accomplished by the coaptation (fitting together) and fixation of a considerable area of the stomach wall to the anterior parietes (indicating the walls of a cavity or hollow organ). In some cases it may be possible to reef (fold over and suture to reduce the size) the lesser omentum (the membrane covering the abdominal organs). It is usually necessary to fix the colon and other displaced organs at the same time."

Sanatorium, Sanitarium, or Sanitorium?

At the time of Luigi's death, the preferred term for a private facility intended for the treatment of and recovery from accident or disease was sanatorium — with sanitarium primarily used to indicate what would now be termed a health resort. Occasionally a third term, sanitorium, was used — but not favored. Nowadays, the word sanitarium is in general used for all. In this article, all quotes use whatever term was originally used in the source material. Otherwise we'll use the word sanitarium, but in the modern sense.

Lewis & Clark Sanitorium

Ella B. Meyerhoff, Matron.
Chronic and Convalescent Cases.
Correction of Stomach and Intestinal Disorders by Massage, Exercises and Diet.
Phone Main 4179. W2404 Second Ave.
Spokane

An ad (note spelling of sanitarium) found in
The Genesee News (Genesee, Idaho),
January 23, 1920.

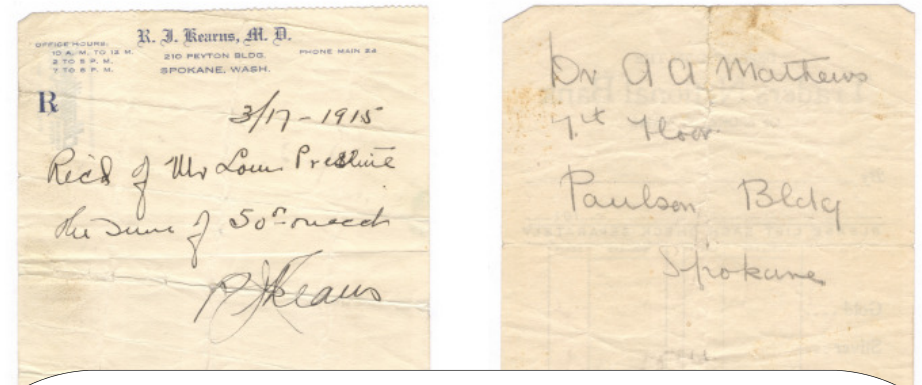
The above seems to suggest that this, with its vast array of potential complications, would not be an easy surgery even by today's standards. And that's likely why the doctors began with the least invasive treatments — among them the "rest home cure" noted in Battista's memoir.

... the sanitarium's matron ...

This "rest home cure" also explains why four of the six Prestini letters — those posted by Caterina — were addressed to the Lewis & Clark Sanitorium, W. 2404 2nd Avenue, Spokane.

An article in the October 13th, 1920, edition of the *Spokane Chronicle* described the institution as a place that is "devoted to mild medical cases, special diets, and specializes in rest cure and convalescent cases" — which appeared to be just what the doctor ordered.

As for the institution's matron, Ella B. Meyerhoff, her history is very incomplete. We believe she was born in Nevada around



In Search of Luigi Prestini's Surgeon.

Besides her letter, the envelope posted by Caterina on February 21st, 1919, also contained the two scraps of paper reproduced above. There's no evidence that these scraps were otherwise related to this particular letter, or were even original to this envelope. One of these scraps is a 4x4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch prescription form apparently signed by the physician listed at the top of the form — R. J. Kearns. Printing on the back of the form indicates that the prescription form itself originated at "Murgittroyd's, Riverside Ave. and Post St., Spokane." A drug store with that name existed at 731 West Riverside from 1905 until 1925. The other note was scribbled on the back of the upper part of a check deposit slip from Spokane's Traders National Bank. Organized in 1885, this bank merged with the Spokane & Eastern Trust Company in 1914, assuming the latter's name. The slip is 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches wide, and the length remaining after the bottom was torn away is just over 4 inches.

Regarding the prescription form — translated from the cursive, it appears to read "3/17 — 1915, Rec'd from Mr. Louis (Luigi) Prestini the sum of \$50.00 on acct." The assumed writer, Doctor Robert J. Kearns, arrived in Spokane in 1904. A 1903 graduate of the Northwestern University Medical School of Chicago, Doctor Kearns appears to have spent his entire career in Spokane, passing in 1949.

Regarding the note written by an unknown hand, it states "Dr. A. A. Matthews (spelling corrected), 7th floor, Paulson Bldg., Spokane." The named doctor appears to be A. Aldridge Matthews, a graduate of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Baltimore. He arrived in Spokane in 1903 to intern at St. Luke's Hospital, and remained for the rest of his career. The doctor published a number of medical papers, including at least several detailing surgeries of the stomach and abdomen. He died in 1940.

While it appears that Luigi may have been under Dr. Kearns' care in the years prior to his surgery, we can't state for certain whether Dr. Kearns — or Dr. Matthews for that matter — did in fact perform Luigi's surgery. All the above remains coincidental and only speculative as regards the events of 1919.



Photo by Bowen Lee Parker.

*The former Lewis & Clark Sanatorium,
West 2404 2nd Avenue, Spokane.
Now an apartment building, this site is part of Spokane's "Historic Browne's Addition."*

1882. The first note of her so far located was the following from the October 21st, 1916, issue of the *Colville Examiner*.

"Miss Ella Meyerhoff, former matron of the Colville Sanitarium, is building a hospital at Kellogg, Idaho, where she had been a nurse for a number of years. The hospital is to be modern in every way, with Turkish baths and all equipment found in up-to-date hospitals."

The above states that Miss Meyerhoff was a nurse, as well as a sanitarium "Matron." While we might assume this meant she was a well trained, credentialed professional in the medical arts, we can't state such with certainty since the standards of the time weren't necessarily what we're accustomed to.

Sources state that the Colville sanitarium was founded in 1905 by Doctor Lee B. Harvey. The facility was not an insignificant

addition to the city, as Dr. Harvey's obituary — copied from the January, 1917, issue of *Northwest Medicine: Journal of the State Medical Associations of Oregon, Washing, Idaho, and Utah* — suggests.

"Dr. L. B. Harvey, of Colville, Wash., died December 17, 1916, from acute nephritis. This was said to have been induced by exposure to cold weather in visiting a patient in an inaccessible part of the country. He was born in Montgomery Ala., in 1868. He graduated from Marion Simms Medical College, St. Louis, in 1890, and immediately began practice at Colville. Ten years ago he built the Colville Sanatorium, the first hospital north of Spokane. In years of practice he was the oldest physician in that part of the country."

We do know that the Colville sanitarium continued on for at least a year after both Doctor Harvey and Miss Meyerhoff were

What's in a Name?



The Prestini family was part of America's third great wave of European immigration. Beginning in 1890, this influx primarily consisted of newcomers from eastern and southern Europe. As in prior influxes, certain members of this wave were met with varying degrees of ethnic resentment by those who had come before.

One of the things that made Italians particularly vulnerable to such was that so many had come here primarily to earn money that they could then send to their impoverished families back in Italy. Though that wasn't in itself particularly unusual, many of those doing so didn't intend to stay in America. Since they didn't intend to stay, they had little reason to learn English or otherwise attempt to integrate into American life. And this tended to make things more difficult for those hoping to melt in the new country. In fact, it's estimated that between 30 to 50 percent of all Italians immigrating during this period eventually returned to Italy.

Apparently as part of their Americanization, Luigi Prestini became known as Louis/Lewis to his American acquaintances (the spelling varying from source to source; for example, the yearly Clayton grade school census forms show both spellings depending on year). And likewise, Luigi's brother, Ferdinando, became Fred.

That said, it should be noted that the Prestini family maintained close written contact with friends and family left behind both in Italy and Barre, Vermont. And that, as borne out by the letters and postcards they received in reply, those responding continued to use the Italian versions of the family's given names.

It should also be noted that Luigi's last known signature — that at the end of his March 9, 1919, letter to Caterina — was in fact "Luigi."

Learning to read, write, and speak a new language is far more complex than simple word substitution. On the envelopes above, Caterina appears to be trying to spell "Louis," but not quite managing. Then you realize that just below her attempts at "Louis" is the same sounding "Lewis," correctly spelled. This suggests she may have been copying the sanitarium's address from some other source — that source correctly spelled ("sanatorium" being an acceptable variant). But then, not being accustomed to spelling either version of her husband's "new" name, she may have been attempting to spell such phonetically.

gone. As for whether Miss Meyerhoff was successful in establishing a sanitarium at Kellogg, Idaho, we've no evidence. However, we do have evidence that Spokane's Lewis & Clark Sanatorium was in operation at least as early as April of 1918. And we have reason to believe that Miss Meyerhoff did have an "interest" in that institution at that time — meaning that she was functioning as the manager. And we believe she continued in that role till the end of 1921 — at which time the long term lease the sanitarium held on its Browne's Addition location expired, and the institution, at least under the Lewis & Clark name, appears to have dissolved.

By that time Ella B. Meyerhoff had a new name, Mrs. James O'Brien. We believe she and her family stayed in Eastern Washington thereafter, with both her and her husband being buried at Spokane's Holy Cross Cemetery — he having passed in 1944, she in 1966.

... in Browne's Addition ...

The building the sanitarium occupied — which still stands as an attractive part of Spokane's historic Browne's Addition — has its own history. It was built for Annie and Reuben Weil, owners and managers of Spokane's Palace Department Store. Sources indicate construction on the family residence was completed in 1905, the same year Reuben passed away. In 1910 Annie married Adolph Weil, brother of her first husband. The family apparently suffered a financial setback, so in 1912 the department store was sold, and around the same time (certainly before the spring of 1913) the Weil's home was converted into the Palace Hotel. Annie operated the hotel until she and her family moved to California in February or March of 1917. After that — but prior to April, 1918 (as noted in the following paragraph) — the hotel became the Lewis & Clark Sanatorium.

An article in the April 28th, 1918, edition of the *Spokesman-Review* says the building was sold as an investment to mining engineer Arthur Booth for \$25,000. The arti-

cle noted that "*the house is built of sandstone and brick, contains 18 rooms and is one of the most elaborately built in Browne's Addition.*" It also noted that the building was being "*used by the Lewis & Clark sanatorium under a long lease.*"

A clue to the building's capacity as a sanitarium appears in an article in the October 13th, 1920, issue of the *Spokane Chronicle* where Mrs. (Ella B. Meyerhoff) O'Brien is quoted as saying, "*We have 26 beds, but in an emergency can take care of more than 30 patients.*"

... finding the Prestini letters ...

On August 17th, 2011, an article appeared in the *Deer Park Tribune* announcing that the local historical society, the C/DPHS, had acquired a significant cache of Prestini family artifacts. As society president Bill Sebright related, "*at Mix Park during (the recent) Settlers Day, John and Pat Colliver told us they had purchased a trunk at the (Battista) Prestini estate sale in the 1980s. They wanted to donate the contents to the society.*" Among the items "*were pictures of Leno, his brother, Battista, and parents — Caterina and Luigi.*" In addition, "*There were many postcards and letters written in Italian.*"

The letters translated in this article were contained in six stamped envelopes — though only one of the envelopes carries a legible timestamp, and one other's stamp doesn't appear to have been canceled. Three of the envelopes were addressed to "*Luois*" (as spelled) Prestini — with a fourth spelling the first name "*Luis*" — and all four continuing with the Lewis & Clark Sanatorium address. Two others were addressed to Mrs. Caterina Prestini, Box 154, Clayton, Washington. All the letters inside the envelopes, with one exception, were dated; those dates beginning on February 21st, 1919, and ending on March 9th, 1919 — the last date being ten days before Luigi's death. The one exception, enclosed with one of Caterina's letters, but written by neither Caterina or Luigi, will be explained

later.

As for the contents of the letters, all were written in Italian.

After several initial attempts at finding a translator, attempts that included posting images of the handwritten letters online, our hope of finding out what was being said languished.

... translators found ...

Renewing our attempt, the society printed a scan of one of Caterina Prestini's letters in the April, 2016, *Mortarboard* — along with a continuation of our ongoing plea for a translator. When prepping each issue of the *Mortarboard* for publication, it's standard procedure for the editor to send a proofing copy to the members of an editorial advisory group for corrections. In this case the proofing copy, sent in mid-March, was only gone a day before the following came back from editorial group member Paul Erickson.

"*I know a couple in New York who may be able to help translate the letters. Angela Barbieri has been in the United States for 40 plus years, but speaks with such a heavy Italian accent you'd swear she just got off the boat. Her husband, John, speaks Italian as well — his parents grew up in Italy. John and Angela still travel to Italy with some frequency.*"

High-definition scans of the entire set of letters were forwarded to Paul. A few days later he wrote back, "*I've learned from my New York/Italian friends, John and Angela, that John's family is from northern Italy and Angela is from southern Italy. The Prestini dialect in the letters is from northern Italy,*

and John seems to easily read and understand the writing. I think they are having a good time with the project.

"*Nothing too earth shattering from the two letters translated so far, but John does say that Leno's artistic skills make sense, since northern Italy is known as a granite cutting area, etc. And that the blank scraps of paper (Caterina appears to have) inserted (into the envelopes) may have been sent so Luigi had something to write a reply on.*"

The last comment above was in response to that fact that every bit of the Prestini letters — the envelopes and every scrap of paper inside, written on or not — had been scanned and made available to the volunteer translators.

Paul wrote, "*John, a pharmacist, noted that Luigi had stomach surgery. He said that there were no antibiotics back then, so people could often die from something as simple as a follow-up infection or pneumonia. He also noted that Caterina was very supportive in her writing, and that her words and punctuation show she has above average skills or education.*"

Paul's letter added, "*The Barbieris also have an Italian niece (Christina Percoco) in Philadelphia with a PhD in Languages, and they will let her look at their translations when they finish.*"

On the first of April, John Barbieri forwarded translations of the first two letters. He began this missive with his initial feelings about the full set of Prestini letters.

Regarding the first four, those penned by Caterina and posted to Luigi in the Lewis & Clark Sanatorium, Mr. Barbieri wrote, "*Mrs. Prestini's letters have good punctuation*

Further Reading Regarding the Prestini Family.

Coming to America:

The Prestini Family & The Immigrant Experience.

Mortarboard #17, September, 2009, page 213 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 5.

http://www.cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_17_downsizedsinglepageweb.pdf

and vocabulary. She writes 'classic Italian' — not a dialect — which suggests more education than the typical individual born in the mid-1880s in northern Italy. We believe that the typical person in northern Italy at that time had about a third grade education, and these four letters seem to be written by someone with more formal education (then that).

"Her letters — encouraging her hus-

band to stay positive and be strong — do not seem to be written by a depressed individual.

"Mr. Prestini's letters, while using classic Italian words, are not well written — poor punctuation and misspellings."

The translations of the Prestini letters will appear in the *Mortarboard's* next issue.

———— to be continued ————

Mystery of the Class of 1919

by
Mike Reiter

When Alexander Pope called and asked if I could send him a copy of the Deer Park High School class of 1919 photo — that being his mother's — Lucy Hopkins — class, I told him "sure". Lucy was the daughter of Brayton Hopkins, developer of the Hopkins addition on the north end of Deer Park in the early 1900s. Working for the city of Deer Park, I had easy access to the class photos from 1913 to 1958 that are on display in city hall. But after a quick check the next day, I found the 1919 class photo to be missing. I checked with Jack Lewis, who was responsible for saving all the class photos and getting them displayed, and he could not tell me why that photo was missing.

I did, however, find in the 2011 *Set-*

tlers Edition from the *Tri-County Tribune* a listing of the Deer Park grads from that era (*see figure #1 below*), which I sent to Mr. Pope. He immediately called after receiving the list and asked if I had noticed that several members of the class of 1919 were also in the Class of 1920. Lucy Hopkins, who was listed in the class of 1919, was not. Off to the archives of the 1919 *Deer Park Union* I went.

Perusing the scans of the old *Unions* is tedious, not only because of the conditions of the papers when scanned, but also because they contained local, national, and world news, mixed in with local goings on about folks going to have dinner with their neighbors, runaway horses, someone buying a new car, the winding down of World War I, and

Figure 1.

1919

Dorothy Black, Floy Cowan, Lucille Dexter, Carrie Dunham, Mary Enoch, Carl Fornfeist, Lucy Hopkins, Elsie Hutchins, Margaret Klein, Lena Olsen, Helen Pember, Robert Pember, Emily Reed, Ralph Reed, Gertrude Short, Clara Stricker, Mabel Turbin,

1920

Dorothy Black, Floyd Cowan, Lexie Enman, Marjorie Enman, Mary Enoch, Margaret Kline, Helen Pember, Emily Reed, Ralph Reed, Gertrude Short, Grace Stevens, Leslie Taylor, Mary Warner,.

To the Citizens of Deer Park

During these days of momentous happenings, I urge upon all not to forget their plain duty to our own people.

The influenza epidemic which has now made its appearance in and around Deer Park, calls for volunteer help from among our own people for the care of those afflicted. Outside help is not available.

Every unmarried woman, as well as married women without families, should at once place their services at the disposal of the Local Red Cross.

With proper care there need be no deaths from influenza.

Do not let a single person die for want of care you can give.

O. L. OLSEN, Mayor

Providing no further cases of influenza presents themselves in Deer Park, schools, churches, lodges and all public meeting places will be opened Monday, November 25.

However, this depends absolutely on conditions and it should be the aim of every individual to see that every available measure is used to prevent and control further outbreak.

H. H. EVANS,
City Health Officer.

Figure 2.

other fascinating looks into the times.

I started at the beginning of the school year in 1918 and found nothing out of the normal until I hit the October 11, 1918, edition with a front page article written by H. H. Evans, the City Health Officer. He started his article with this: "A good deal has been published with regard to this outbreak of 'Spanish Influenza' in our army camps and cities, especially in the eastern part of the United States. This disease is spreading very

rapidly. We are frequently asked, 'What is the probability of an outbreak of this disease in the State of Washington?' My answer is the disease is already here. It has not assumed epidemic form as yet. It can be prevented from assuming epidemic form only by the earnest, conscientious, and intelligent help of every citizen of the state. It is not deemed practical to establish quarantine for this disease."

Mr. Evans then goes on to speak about taking preventative measures and avoiding crowds to keep the disease under control. He also urges that "schools, churches, theatres, lodge rooms and places of public meetings must be closed until further notice."

In the *Union's* November 15, 1918, issue, an announcement (*see figure #2*) from the Mayor and a note from the Health Officer was on the front page. This seemed to say the flu was being managed and if no further cases developed that public meeting places could be reopened. In the same issue the Clayton correspondent wrote that the flu scare was over and that the quarantine was a needless measure in a place like Clayton, and had people realized the Spanish influenza was nothing but the gripe of 1889, not so many would have been scared to death.

In the November 22, 1918, issue (*see figure #3, page 1312*), an article claims the flu ban was raised at noon, Tuesday, and that Deer Parkers are again breathing normally. The situation here is well in hand owing to the vigilance of those in charge of the epidemic. The November 29th issue states school reopened Monday after being closed for six weeks, and any pupil showing signs of sickness should stay home.

The first issue of December, 1918, is not available, but things apparently got worse as the December 13th issue speaks of 104 new cases in a second outbreak, 25 cases entering the hospital (*school was closed and the Crawford High School was used as a hospital*), and commends the generous donations of food, bedding, and towels. It also reported that the death of Mr. Ray Neaville from the flu was a

Flu Ban Raised

The flu ban was raised at noon Tuesday, and Deer Parkers are again breathing normally. The situation here is well in hand owing to the vigilance of those who have had the care of the epidemic in charge. Mrs. Renshaw, president of the local Red Cross, informs us that all the cases here are improving, and she wishes to take this method of thanking those who have so generously given of their time in taking care of those afflicted. The ladies who have voluntarily given their time as nurses are: Miss Katherine Lewis, Mrs. Chas. Scheuffer, Mrs. Benson, Mrs. Potter, Miss Morris, Mrs. Craig, Mrs. A. Higgins, Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Pember.

In addition to this, The Union believes that every resident of Deer Park appreciates fully the work that has been done by these ladies, and that it is due to their efficient work that in a great measure accounts for the holding in check the dread disease.

Figure 3.

"tremendous shock" to the community "on account of his position and usefulness over such a long period."

Correspondence from Clayton in the December 20th *Union* stated "Clayton had no influenza until a month ago. Since that time from half to two thirds of the entire population of the school who have been afflicted with one or two exceptions, are able to be up and with proper care it is hoped there will be no further deaths or serious trouble. The doctor reports

GOING AT THE FLU IN EARNEST NOW

Over Two Hundred Cases in the City at the Present Time

A RIGID QUARANTINE MUST BE ENFORCED

Business Houses Locked Their Doors at Twelve o'Clock Thursday.

At a meeting of business men held Thursday morning, Mayor Olsen and Wm. Worthington of the hospital staff made reports which indicated that there was only one way in which the epidemic of influenza could be checked, and that was by a rigid quarantine.

Figure 4.

no knowledge of any more new cases." Things obviously worsened in Deer Park as the headline for the December 27th issue (see figure #4 above) shows.

Over 200 cases and 4 deaths were reported in the December 27th issue, with an order for a strict quarantine to be put in place. Things must have improved by the next issue — January 3rd, 1919 — as H. H. Evans raised the quarantine but urged the public to use good judgement in dealing with any symptoms. According to the paper, "The high school has been fumigated and is in fine condition." Then, in the January 10th issue, the *Union* reported "The school board, at a meeting this morning, decided that schools would open on the 20th of January." The Clayton correspondent reported in the January 24th issue that school had been reopened with over 50 percent present on opening day, and there had been a steady increase up to the present time. School cancelled, football season cancelled, pool halls and the movie theater closed, only one person at a time allowed in the post office, all forced by the quarantine.

Now I had an idea of what had hap-

Figure 5.

Senior Class Play

Thursday, May 15th, 1919

Music by Deer Park Band.....Directed by Mr. Towers

La Délivrance de Pierrot et René.....Directed by Mrs. Hansen

PierrotGertrude Short

RenéEmily Reed

Brothers Stolen by Witch

GiabelleDorothy Black

JeanneFloy Cowan

Their Sisters

Their Mother.....Mary Enoch

Métilot, The Fairy.....Margaret Klein

The Witch.....Lucy Hopkins

Biribou, Her Servant.....Helen Pember

Figure 6.

FAREWELL PARTY.

Fifty lady friends of Mrs. Brady Hopkins, all members of the Ladies' Aid of the Congregational church, tendered her a very agreeable surprise at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. Enoch Saturday night. The party was in the nature of a farewell to Mrs. Hopkins, who has removed to Spokane. The evening was spent singing old time songs. Mrs. Mary Enoch presiding at the piano, and general visiting. A watermelon supper was served and the party broke up at a late hour, all expressing regret at Mrs. Hopkins' departure, but with best wishes for her in the new home.

pened to the Class of 1919 as far as their school year, but I found nothing looking into future issues of the *Union* concerning graduation. Since the Class of 1920 had some of the same classmates as 1919, I would have to guess that in order to graduate they were required to go to school again in that year. I was able to find there was a Senior Class Play, presented on May 15, 1919, in which Lucy Hopkins played the part of "The Witch" (see figure #5). Later, in the August 22, 1919, issue (see figure #6), I found Brayton (Brady) Hopkins' widow, Mabel, had moved her family into Spokane soon after — and that would explain why Lucy Hopkins wasn't in the next graduating class. But for the rest, the mystery continues. Maybe if we could just find that first issue of the December, 1918, *Union*.

— end —

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

Bits of Chatter, Trivia, & Notices — all strung together.

... historical records acquisition ...

On April 19th last, the following missive regarding the donation of a large cache of important documents was forwarded to the *Mortarboard* by the historical society's vice-president, Pete Coffin.

Pete wrote, "During the 2015 Settlers Picnic celebration, Kim Hickethier came up to the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society's booth and asked me if the society would be interested in old business records. I said yes, we were, and she told me that she had quite a 'heavy' accumulation of such records and would bring a sample to the park. The records that she brought that day included daily sales lists for a store dated in the 1910s, and some of Deer Park attorney Olaf G. Follevaag's records. We agreed that we would meet at a later date and load my truck with the remaining records which were located in a downtown building's second floor.

"During the last Society meeting Marilyn Reilly told me that Kim had asked if I was still interested in picking up the records. That afternoon I contacted Kim and she asked if I could pick up the records that afternoon. I took my truck downtown, parked it on the street in front of Johnny Erickson's old reality business location, and with Marilyn Reilly and Kim's help began to pack up and carry the boxes and boxes of records down a very steep stair.

"After about an hour of heavy lifting and stair negotiation, all the dusty old business records were loaded in my truck.

"The loaded truck was then stored in my pole barn until I could clean out a place in my basement to store the records. When I was

able to unload the records I used my air compressor to try to blow off the dust of perhaps 100 years. The records included those of the *First State Bank* from about 1907 to 1922, and a large number of files from Johnny Erickson's real estate business in the period of time from 1970 or so to 2000. There were records

The stairs were really steep and the steps are narrow!



Photo by Pete Coffin.



Photos by Pete Coffin.

Above: Kim Hickethier and Marilyn Reilly in front of Peter Coffin's loaded truck, the records filled the box above the edge of the bed.

Below: The records piled in a corner of Peter Coffin's basement.



of daily sales of the O.F. Kelly store in the early 1900s, a book of legal records of the Arcadia Orchards Irrigation Association, and other smaller business records.

“These records perhaps will have things of much historical interest. Sorting through them will be quite a task and if someone is interested they could certainly go through them looking for a historical treasure.”

Which brings forward a growing problem for the historical society — the lack of a single location for storage of our growing collection of documents, artifacts, and artwork. These items are currently scattered in a number of members’ basements, backrooms, and storage sheds. In fact, we are currently turning items away because of a lack of space. If anyone has any practical (read affordable) suggestions or solutions regarding this, please forward them to the society.

... the temperamental artist ...

In the June *Mortarboard* we printed a remembrance penned by former area resident Edward Kingrey titled “*Frank Frey’s Breakfast*.” This month we’re including this from Ed’s recollections of Clayton’s Leno Prestini.

“Many have heard of artists being a bit short tempered when they are deeply involved in a new creation. Leno Prestini was no exception. My memories of Leno were mostly positive, except for one isolated incident.

“One summer day, Billy Jarret, my cousin John “Dickie” Bailey and I, “Pudgy” Kingrey, were wandering out and about from the King farm. We had been exploring (trespassing) through the old terracotta building at the Clayton brickyard. Although the brickyard was still in full production, by then the terracotta operation had been shut down and was vacant. Only a few remnants of terracotta laying around on tables and shelves. Very mysterious and interesting to three young boys.

“On our way back home, we wandered through the back yard of the Prestini

residence and happened by Leno’s art studio. We decided to knock on the door and see if Leno was about. Leno was there but, apparently deep in thought and his creative juices flowing. All we heard from within the studio was a very loud, ‘Get the hell out of here!’

“All three of us took off running, like a bear was on our tails, and we did not stop running until we got home. Next time we saw Leno, he was casual and friendly as he always was. However, we never wandered through that back yard or knocked on his studio door again. Lesson learned.”

Looking forward, we expect to see more of Ed’s stories in these pages.

... online tour, Luigi Prestini’s hometown ...

As noted in the lead article of this issue, the society received a number of postcards in the trove of Prestini artifacts donated by John and Pat Colliver. One of these postcards carries an image of the Prestini family’s hometown of Besano, Italy. Without stamp or postmark, the card likely dates somewhere around 1920 or somewhat thereafter — this assumed from the apparent vintage of the one automobile seen in the photo.

The image, along with the message handwritten in cursive Italian on the reverse, will likely be reproduced in a future issue of the *Mortarboard*.

The photo side of the card shows a street scene — the street being identified as the Via Pietro Girola. The most notable landmark in the photo is an ornate combination bell and clock tower — which one could reasonably assume as being part of the historic center of the town.

Curious as to the identity of the tower, I began an online search. This brings us around to those mysterious cars usually bearing the Google trademark on the sides and a large domelike structure on the top that are occasionally seen running around the local neighborhood. What they’re doing is taking photos of the streets and buildings — photos that will then be accessible within Google’s



Photo courtesy of Edward Kingrey.

Edward “Pudgy” Kingrey (lower left)
“Dickie” Bailey (2nd row left), Billy Jarret
(back row extreme right).

online map application.

Well ... those cars are running around Italy too.

Once in the Google Maps application, I find an overview of Besano. Enlarge, enlarge, and I can maneuver right down on top of the aforementioned “Via P. Girola.” Enlarge, enlarge, enlarge, and I’m suddenly on the street itself — able to turn my view in a full circle, seeing all the photos taken by one of Google’s dome equipped cars on a previous cruise through the town’s streets.

This is so near magic.

I can move northeast along Via Giro-



Leno Prestini’s Clayton Studio.
(Photo from the C/DPHS collection.)

la, past the combination bell and clock tower that, it turns out, belongs to the Parish of Saint Martino. Approaching the next intersection, if I turn to the right I’ll pass the Parish schoolyard. If I turn left, I’ll start down a narrow, alley-like street bearing the name “Via Pietro Prestini.”

Hmm. Interesting.

Covering approximately one square mile, the modern town has around 2,300 residents. The worse thing about taking a street by street tour of this vintage village — which I did — is the voyeuristic desire to peek over fences and enter courtyards. To knock on this or that random door and ask to look around inside. To generally make a nuisance of myself. Perhaps it’s just as well that the technology hasn’t as yet advanced to that degree.

... remembering Eddie ...

Thinking back, trying to discern what it was that made the recently passed Eddie Olson so special to an entire community, the first thing that comes to mind is that he had an uncanny ability to notice everyone. Even if you were a three foot and some inch tall grade schooler, he would notice you. I guess you could say that he always seemed willing to be inclusive of everyone. If there was a secret to his likeability, it may have begun there.

My family settled in Williams Valley

late in 1947. The next year my dad began working at the Clayton brick plant. And that's how the family came to know Eddie. The first thing anyone meeting Eddie figured out was that he loved to tell stories. Once he got going, he could go on for hours.

Now my mom, being Okie, was a natural born storyteller herself. She could swap Eddie tale for tale. The last time those two got together was in the living room of Eddie's farmhouse on the outskirts of Clayton. It was just after the millennium's turn. Our intent was to gather recollections of my dad's time at the brick plant for the family history I was writing, and Eddie had agreed to tell us what he remembered. So there we were; fifty years plus since the family had first met Eddie,

and the stories were flying as thick as ever.

In the midst of all this, Eddie turned to me and said, "*You know, I really miss your dad.*"

And there it was. Listening to these eighty some year olds converse — meaning I was still very much the kid in the room, although grown a bit taller since grade school — and Eddie still took the time to notice.

And now the stories have stopped. If so inclined, we can light a candle and whisper questions, but neither Eddie nor my mother will answer. At least not in words. All we have of them and their many stories is what we can recall. And that will have to do.

———— *Wally Lee Parker* ————

Minutes of the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society ———— June 11, 2016 ————

In attendance: Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Tom Costigan, Bill Sebright, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Marilyn Reilly, Dianne Allert, Bob Gibson, Ella Jenkins, Pete Coffin, Lorraine Nord, Judy Coffin, Roxanne Camp, Jody Lentz, Bill Phipps, Sue Rehms, Don Ball, and Betty Deuber.

Society President Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He reported that: 1) The Society received a large box of artifacts from Barb Bogdan and Paul Erickson. There is a great picture of Neil Gabor and Chuck Yoke standing where the "new" Yoke's (now NAPA) would be. In the background is the Kelly (Follevaag) house up on blocks. Bob Herenden was getting ready to move it. There are 5¢, 10¢, 25¢, 50¢, and \$1 trade coins from O. F. Kelly's general merchandise store along with tax tokens. Two large Metsker's map books, one Stevens, one Spokane County, and one smaller Washington State Metsker's map were included. There is a

Class of '47 40th reunion picture. There is a large folder containing class and reunion information for classes from '39 to '45. It includes an amazing amount of data, as well as some reunion books. We now have a '39 DPHS Stag newspaper. There is a Hazelwood Co. group picture. It seems to be to P. J. Kelly. Has anyone heard of this company before? Two different people said there is (was?) a Hazelwood Dairy Company. Included were many newspaper "extras" and newspaper clippings. There were also zip-lock bags with buttons from Settlers and Brickyard Days. There were even business cards for Tuffy Luhr and Jim Swinyard. The treasure box was on display. This is all part of the John E. Erickson family collection. 2) The Settlers returned the check we gave them for our booth at Mix Park, July 23. They have never charged us and did mean to this year. A big thank you to the Settlers Association!

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner re-

ported by telephone: The main checking account ended the month (May 31) at \$7,225.49. Checks written were to Discount Sign Warehouse, \$604.93 for Brickyard Day T-shirts and to Buttons Alive, \$20.18. There were deposits of \$515. The web hosting account had a withdrawal of \$10.95 for web hosting, and ended the month at \$409.18. Mark is checking on the \$5 service fee. Our income tax report has been submitted and accepted for 2015. Mark will be in Lewiston during the meeting.

Society Vice President Pete Coffin reported: 1) Received a photo scrap book, a bible and book of soil mapping from the Deer Park Library librarian as possibly having historical value. Unfortunately the photo scrap book's photos did not have any names on them and none were of sites in the area. The Bible had a presentation name of Maxine C. Walden and a search of Ancestry.com showed her maiden name to be Grant and probably a citizen of Spokane. This is somewhat of a tragedy in that the photos might be of value to the family of which they were taken. Label your photographs! 2) President Sebright was asked by Susan Peterson for information about the history of the Olson building on the southwest corner of Main and First in Deer Park. She may be buying the building and placing it in the National Historic Registry. I provided her copies of *Deer Park Union/Tri-County Tribune* articles pertaining to the building of the building, its builder and subsequent businesses and owners along with a chronology outlining the history. 3) Tom Gardner asked me to do some research on Frank Fry, a modeler at Washington Brick and Lime's Clayton terra cotta plant. It is thought that Leno Prestini reportedly painted a small image of him as a weather beaten cowboy observing things on several of his paintings. A search revealed he was a Hungarian émigré, his name on the census lists was Frey, and he had a family. 4) Emailed Editor Parker a short biographical *Mortarboard* manuscript about Olaf L. Olson. Olson was one of Deer Park's most successful businessmen, was involved with the Arcadia Orchards Company, had been Deer Park's

mayor in the teens, and a Washington State Representative from our area. 5) Ken Westby and I have almost finished a *Mortarboard* article on the "*Electric Service Station*" (now the Erick's Realty office) on Main Avenue just south of the railroad tracks. Need some minor information I have emailed off for.

Print editor Wally Parker reported: 1) A total of 110 copies of the June *Mortarboard* (#99) have been printed for distribution, and the online version has been submitted for posting. This issue features an outline of former local resident Peter Michie's life, written by his grandson, Peter Coffin. Edward Kingrey has a piece about Frank Frey — a character from Clayton's past who is occasionally seen in Leno Prestini's art. Some new historical data regarding Washington Brick & Lime's Joseph H. Spear is offered in an essay by your editor. And Marilynn McLean's recent donation of a Spokane Pottery Company bowl is pictured in the *Letters/Brickbats* column, along with a recap of the stoneware company's history at Clayton. 2) A decision has been made to print 150 copies of the July *Mortarboard* (currently under construction) in anticipation of the upcoming Settlers and Brickyard Day events. Since Brickyard Day follows a week behind Settlers Day, if the bulk of the 40 extra copies are distributed by the end of Settlers Day, we should have time to print more before the Clayton event.

Webmaster Marie Morrill reported by email: *Mortarboard* 99 is on the Website. I received an email stating we are renewed for another year. I have been editing pages on the Website. I will not be attending the meeting this Saturday because I will be going to a funeral of an old friend.

Betty Deuber was our guest speaker today. She spoke on how she and her husband, Harry, researched and made the huge mural that was on the Fair Building. The 4 by 8 foot panels are now on the 3rd floor of the DP City Hall. Marie Martin got Betty started on the historical research. Marie was active in the Fair Association. Betty was able to get information and pictures from Etta Mae Ben-

nett, Nancy Fisher, and Mary and Lawrence Zimmerer. They couldn't find an artist to paint the murals, so she talked Harry into doing it. The Rotary Club was very helpful in the process. Beryl Baker donated all the plywood panels. Helen Engle was the main fund raiser. Marilyn and Fay Reilly were big contributors to the project. Betty started the project in late 1988. It was completed for the Centennial Celebration in 1989.

Wednesday, June 8, was the 5th Brickyard Day Committee planning meeting. The next Brickyard Day planning meeting will be July 13, 6 PM, at the Real Estate Marketplace. The flyer is taking shape. The T-shirts are printed and on sale at Yokes. Jody Lentz sold some shirts before the meeting. Don't forget Brickyard Day is July 30 this year.

Betty Burdette said: 1) This year is her DPHS Class of 1946's 70th reunion. Robert Olson and Edith Welch are also in her class. Call Betty at 276-6709 if you have questions. 2) The Settlers Day meeting is this Monday at the Ambulance Building at 4:30.

The Heritage network meeting is Monday, June 20, at Chewelah's City Hall.

Next meeting: Saturday, July 9, 2016,



This year's Brickyard Day button.

at 9 AM at the Clayton Drive-In.
Meeting adjourned at 9:56 AM.
The Society meeting minutes submitted by Bill Sebright, acting Secretary.

— end —

Volunteer proofreaders for this issue: Peter Coffin, Gary B. Ross, Chuck Stewart, Lina Swain, and Ken Westby.

Society Contacts

We encourage anyone with observations, concerns, corrections, or divergent opinions regarding the contents of these newsletters to write the society or contact one or more of the individuals listed below. Resultant conversations can remain confidential if so desired.

C/DPHS, Box 293, Clayton, WA 99110

Bill Sebright, President — sebrightba@gmail.com — (509) 276-2693

Peter Coffin, Vice-President — pcffn@q.com

Wally Lee Parker, Editor of Print Publications — bogwen100@msn.com — (509) 467-9433

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— C/DPHS —

Get the Latest Historical Gossip!



Illustration from "The Telephone Review," October, 1914.

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For those believing lives long gone are still important.
For those believing tradition still has a place in the modern world.
For those believing the richness of history can teach.
And for those that believe a community's heart
can be found in its history.*

C/DPHS, Box 293, Clayton, Washington
(509) 276-2693

(Yearly dues: Twenty dollars per household.)