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Illustration from "The Telephone Review" magazine, September 14, 1914.

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#155

March

2021

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## THE CLAYTON ♦ DEER PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY Mortarboard

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### Deer Park's Hospital

by

Peter Coffin

Health care for most minor medical problems in the early years of Deer Park's existence was performed by those doctors who lived in the area and operated out of their house or had an office in a downtown building. For serious health problems the suffering individual was moved to one of the hospitals in Spokane or the one in Chewelah. During the flu epidemic of 1918-1919, the Deer Park high school, the Open Door Congregational Church, the Arcadia Orchards packing house,

and Olson's Hall on Main Street were all used as temporary hospitals (*see note #1*).

In 1935 there must have been some public interest from business leaders, physicians and union members in establishing a hospital in Deer Park. A Deer Park Union newspaper article reported that M. F. Mendenhall, who had been the manager of the Mount Spokane Power Company, proposed that his house on the east side of town could be converted into a hospital (*see note #2*). He was

#### Notes:

- #1: *Ninetieth Year History (1891 - 1981), Open Door Congregational Church.*
- #2: *Deer Park Union, September 5, 1935. "Deer Park May Secure Hospital."*

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planning to renovate the house and utilize equipment he had obtained from the former Valley, Washington, hospital. This proposal must not have been well received in that there was no print discussion of his idea in subsequent issues of the *Deer Park Union*. It might have been that the depressed economy could not justify the expense of establishing and maintaining a hospital at that time.

The next newspaper article describing a Deer Park hospital was in the spring of 1947 when Bill Reice described the benefits to the community that a hospital could bring (*see note #3*). His proposal described the financial benefit of keeping the money in the community rather than being sent to out-of-town hospitals, having hospital staff and their families live here, and the salaries of the workers involved in the construction of a proposed \$100,000 health center and hospital. The proposal included preventative medical care paid for by a monthly payment entitling a family to annual checkups and use of the clinic and hospital facilities when needed.

This proposal resulted in the formation of the Tri-County Community Hospital Board which planned a “*Community Hospital Day*” on May 31, 1947 (*see note #4*). A “*Committee of One Hundred*” was established with citizen representatives from every community and organization within 50 miles of Deer Park. During this “*Community Hospital Day*” an architect presented plans for a 23-bed hospital — estimated to cost \$80,000 for the building and equipment. As part of this effort to obtain a hospital for Deer Park the Tri-County Hospital Association took out a full-page newspaper advertisement describing the

plans for a proposed 29 bed hospital and a medical-surgical and hospital service plan to make it happen. Part of the page showed Architect George A. Pehrson’s visualization of how the building would look and indicated that Mr. & Mrs. Earl P. Jones had donated a five-acre hospital site northwest of Deer Park where the highway makes the big curve toward Clayton (*see note #5*).

Apparently, the hospital association had some second thoughts about the donated site on the far northwest side of Deer Park. In a fall 1947 “*Friendly Ramblings*” newspaper column, George McCourt reported that five acres of land near the steel water tower in southeast Deer Park had been purchased as the new hospital site (*see note #6*). He described benefits of the new site as including a savings of \$5,000 that would be required to drill a new water well on the Jones site. In addition, sewerage disposal would be less expensive, and insurance rates would be lower at the new site. It is interesting that this important decision was not reported until late December when the cost of \$530 for the new site was reported (*see note #7*).

In the early summer of 1948, the new hospital building site was being cleared of trees and brush and leveled. Foundation work began with a cornerstone laying celebration (*see note #8*). After this flurry of activity, the building effort slowed down with the partially built hospital being worked on periodically subject to the results of many fund and bond drives that continued for the next four and one-half years. George McCourt’s “*Friendly Ramblings*” column in Deer Park’s *Union* became a source of hospital membership addi-

**Notes:**

- #3: *Deer Park Union*, March 20, 1947. “*Kiwanians Hear Hospital Plans.*”
- #4: *Deer Park Union*, April 10, 1947. “*Plans for a Hospital Day.*”
- #5: *Deer Park Union*, May 22, 1947. Full page advertisement on page 3.
- #6: *Deer Park Union*, November 27, 1947. “*Friendly Ramblings.*”
- #7: *Deer Park Union*, December 25, 1947. “*Hospital Board Buys a Building Site.*”
- #8: *Deer Park Union*, June 17, 1948. “*Friendly Ramblings.*”

tions and building progress reports for several years — until Mr. McCourt moved from Deer Park. Awarding a contract for plastering the interior walls to Carl M. Horseth for \$17,510 in February 1954 is an indication of the slow construction progress (*see note #9*). At this same time a \$3,500 contract was awarded the Monk and Evers Company for the installation of a ventilating system.

It would take another three years for the hospital to be completed. In January of 1957 a hospital administrator was hired to begin assembling staff and completing final details for the opening of the hospital. In May of 1957 Tri-County Community Hospital officials announced that there would be a grand opening on June 2, 1957 with full operations to start June 3, 1957 (*see note #10*). The board of directors accepted the application of D. Clarence Jones, a general practitioner from Noxon, Montana, as the first hospital doctor.

The hospital served Deer Park and the surrounding area for the next eight years. During this time the front pages of the *Tri-County Tribune* newspaper had a column titled “*Hospital News*” which listed the names of those admitted to the hospital, discharged from the hospital, the number of clinic visits as well as announcing births and other news of interest.

In the spring of 1965, the Hospital Board of Directors announced plans for a \$100,000+ expansion program to build an outpatient clinic and laboratory (*see note #11*). A fund-raising drive to pay for this construction was organized with Virgil Grafmiller as the General Chairman of the public subscription effort. The health clinic was completed

and dedicated on October 26, 1968. The new building included space for four doctor offices, eight examining rooms, a utility room, an employee lounge, and doctor quarters.

By 1973 the “*Hospital News*” column had disappeared from the *Tri-County Tribune*, and as early as 1976 hospital financial problems due to decreased patronage began to be noted. On April 1, 1979, a previous financial arrangement with the Inland Health Association and unfavorable Washington State Insurance Commission rulings coupled with empty beds led the Tri-County Hospital to declare bankruptcy with accounts collectible of \$45,000 and current liabilities totaling \$166,000 (*see note #12*).

During the discussions preceding the bankruptcy declaration the history of the hospital’s financial operations was described as lurching from crisis to crisis with each remedy just meeting the need with no provisions being made for the future. After the bankruptcy, the clinic was rented to Dr. Nate Stime.

In late 1979 a group of investors headed by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Brown of St. Helens, Oregon, and Mr. Mrs. Ron Robertson negotiated to buy the hospital property for \$283,000 (*see notes #13 and #14*). Brown was an experienced hospital administrator and outlined a plan to re-open the hospital and build a nursing home adjacent to the hospital. As part of this plan a 210-page application to re-open the hospital was written for presentation to the Eastern Washington Health Systems Agency. The first application was rejected but after several public hearings a hospital re-opening was conditionally approved, only to be denied again. After some political string pulling in

**Notes:**

- #9: *Deer Park Union*, February 5, 1954. “*Contract Let on Hospital Work.*”
- #10: *Tri-County Tribune*, May 23, 1957. “*Hospital to Open June 2.*”
- #11: *Tri-County Tribune*, January 21, 1965. “*Hospital Expansion Planned During Coming Year.*”
- #12: *Tri-County Tribune*, June 20, 1979. “*Bankrupt Tri-County Hospital Closes.*”
- #13: *Tri-County Tribune*, October 10, 1979. “*Hospital Could Reopen January 1.*”
- #14: *Tri-County Tribune*, December 5, 1979. “*Hospital Hearing Last Thursday.*”



Governor Ray's office, an application to re-open the hospital was approved by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services on February 1, 1980 (see note #15).

After the state approval to reopen the hospital was received, volunteers began renovation by repairing damaged sheetrock walls, upgrading the electrical and the plumbing systems as well as painting the interior walls. The hospital re-opened on July 1, 1980 after financial arrangements were finalized with a loan commitment by the Old National Bank guaranteed by the Small Business Administration (see note #16).

Operation of the hospital continued into 1995 when Robert Brown sold the Deer Park Hospital to the Dominican Network (see note #17). In the summer of 1998, the Deer

Park Hospital became part of the newly created Providence Services Eastern Washington. By this time, a "massive" remodeling project was expected to be completed in August.

By late 2007 the Providence Board of Directors decided to close the Deer Park Hospital (see note #18). The reasons they cited for this decision included a drop in acute care patients to less than one a day with a small number of daily hospitalized patients and the availability of more advanced care offered in hospitals in Spokane. The hospital was closed, and the abandoned building was to be demolished (see note #19). Today all that remains of the Deer Park Hospital building is a weed covered lot.

— end —

**Notes:-**

- #15: Tri-County Tribune, February 13, 1980. "Hospital Rated Okay."
- #16: Tri-County Tribune, June 11, 1980. "Deer Park Hospital to Re-Open July 1."
- #17: Deer Park Tribune, September 4, 1996. "Simchuk Assumes Hospital Reins."
- #18: Deer Park Tribune, November 7, 2007. "Community Group Fights to Save Deer Park Hospital."
- #19: Deer Park Tribune, June 15, 2016, "End of the Line (picture)."

## In Search of Summit

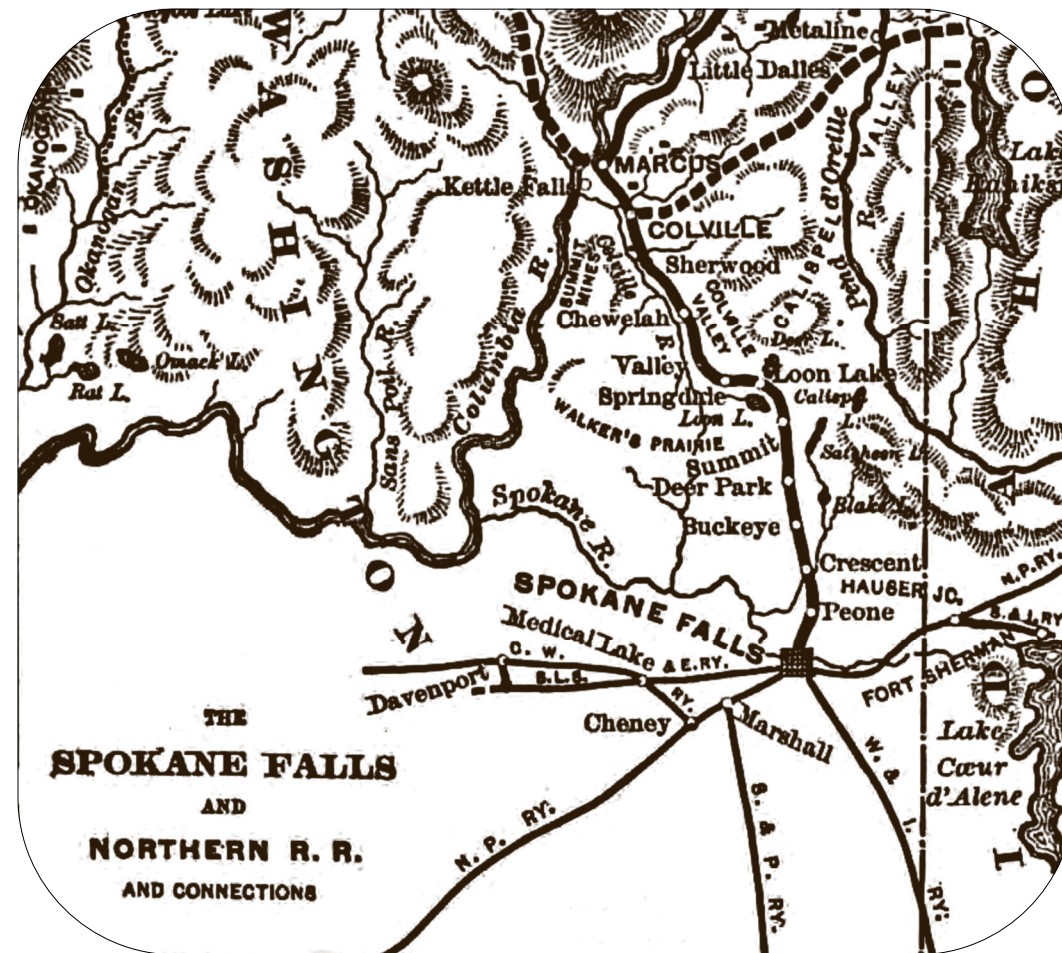
by

Wally Lee Parker

It's been a puzzle. We know that as the tracks of the Spokane Falls & Northern Railroad were first being pushed toward Colville — beginning in the summer of 1889 — one of the company's numerous sidings would be given the name Deer Park. The next siding north from Deer Park, at least early on, was given the name Summit — assumedly because it rested somewhere in the mountainous

breach between the Little Spokane River's drainage basin and the then pristine waters of Stevens County's Loon Lake. Also, early on the name Summit seems to have disappeared, leaving the impression that either the siding's name had been changed, or suggesting a piece of our local history has been misplaced.

It's now possible a few more pieces of this puzzle have risen to the surface.



**The Indicated Location of Summit.**

The May, 1890 issue of Smalley's "Northwest Magazine" carried this map showing the route of the Spokane Falls & Northern Railway. Sidings for Deer Park and Loon Lake, and their approximate locations along the line, are clearly marked. Between them is another small, clear circle indicating a siding or station — to the left of that is the name "Summit."

The existence of Clayton is partially responsible for this naming muddle. The railroad's Clayton station, located some 5.2 track-miles north of Deer Park, began its life under the name Allen's Siding. It appears that the spur for Allen's Siding was a little late in being laid — meaning the name wasn't included

in the first railroad timetables — those published in the late summer of 1889. When the name did appear in the May 1890 timetables, current research suggests it was just two days after the name Summit had disappeared. That seemed to open the very unlikely possibility that the name Summit was changed to Allen's

Siding — a possibility since thoroughly discounted.

Regarding the history of Allen's Siding, we now have a reasonably good idea who this siding's namesake was — that being mentioned in an article found in the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1891 issue of the *Spokane Falls Review*. The article described an occurrence at the above "Allen's Siding." A line within that description read, "Mr. J. C. Allen, the owner of the brickyard at that place." Another line explained "that place" was "a small station on

**Below: S. F. & N. Ry. Timetable.**

Clipped from the September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1889, issue of the *Spokane Falls Review*, this table shows the then operational sidings and stations along the lower portion of the still under construction S. F. & N. Ry.

Note the wayside named Summit, located along the tracks between Deer Park and Loon Lake.

**SPOKANE FALLS & NORTHERN R'Y.**

DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS

A. M.		P. M.
8:40 Lv	Spokane Falls	Ar 8:15
9:25	Peone	3:30
10:20	Crescent	2:15
10:50	Buckeye	2:05
11:15	Deer Park	1:40
11:58	Summit	12:51
12:30	Loon Lake	12:30
1:45	Meals—Springdale—Meals	11:19
2:35	Valley	10:40
3:15	Chewelah	9:40
4:10	Homer	8:45
4:55 Ar	Colville	Lv 8:00

**S. F. & N. Ry. Timetables.**

Above: From the May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1890 issue of the *Spokane Falls Review*, this timetable is the last published showing a stop at Summit.

Below: First published on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1890, the name of the stop between Deer Park and Loon Lake has been changed to Allen's Siding. What is not clear is whether this name change still represents the same location.

**SPOKANE FALLS & NORTHERN**



**TIME TABLE.**

To Take Effect Monday, Sept. 2, '89

Leaves	Arrives	
A. M.	P. M.	
7:05	Spokane Falls	5:50
7:50	Peone	5:05
8:15	Crescent	4:15
9:05	Buckeye	3:50
9:25	Deer Park	3:30
10:00	Summit	2:55
10:25	Loon Lake	2:30
11:35	Springdale	1:55

**SPOKANE FALLS & NORTHERN R'Y.**

DAILY, EXCEPT SUNDAYS.

A. M.		P. M.
7:00 Lv	Spokane Falls	Ar 5:51
7:22	Mad	5:28
7:29	Peone Brick Yard	5:21
7:14	Little Spokane	5:08
7:49	Dragoon	5:01
8:03	Buckeye	4:47
8:11	Deer Park	4:38
8:27	Allen's Siding	4:09
8:48	Loon Lake	3:49
9:08	Springdale	3:27
9:48	Valley	3:02
11:03	Chewelah	2:42
11:48	Sherwood	2:04
11:16	Colville	1:34
11:37	Mission	1:13
11:50 Ar	Marcus	Lv 1:00

the *Spokane Falls & Northern Railroad*."

Anyone interested in the history of Clayton probably perked up a bit at mention of Mr. Allen having a brick plant "at that place" as of 1891 — and quite possibly an unknown amount of time earlier than 1891. The reason for this interest — with the establishment of Washington Brick & Lime's factory complex at Allen's Siding a few years later, the siding's name was changed to Clayton. And up until the uncovering of this *Spokane Falls Review* article, we've always assumed Washington Brick & Lime's brick kilns were the first at that location.

As for Summit, the first known mention of it in Spokane's newspapers was in a timetable printed in the September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1889 issue of the *Spokane Falls Review* (see that timetable depicted in the left column of facing page). Serviceable stops for passengers and freight had only been completed as far north as Springdale by that date, so the list of waysides ends there.

Though the list of stops mentioned in the newspaper's timetable expanded as the S. F. & N. Ry. continued to push its new construction north, Summit held its place as the singular named stop between Deer Park and Loon Lake. That continued until the timetable printed in the May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1890 issue of the *Spokane Falls Review* (see timetable lower right column facing page). On that date Summit disappeared, and the above-mentioned Allen's Siding appeared.

So, what happened to Summit? And what and where was Summit? Was it still there, just under a different name? Was it just a siding, or was it a regular station for freight and passengers? All good questions.

As for where Summit was, we now have a much better idea of its approximate

location — that due to a devilishly complex and very long-term project carried out by Jim Fergusson, a gentleman who appears to be residing somewhere in the United Kingdom. Essentially he's trying to list the location of every historic railroad station in the world. As luck would have it, he has already compiled a comprehensive list of the stations and at least some of the sidings that once existed along the Spokane Falls & Northern Railway — and the milepost of each along the track.

Using — I'm assuming — Spokane's historic Great Northern station as mile zero (The Great Northern Railroad having absorbed the Spokane Falls & Northern fairly early on), Denison is at milepost 22.8, Deer Park, 26.4, Clayton (formerly Allen's Siding), 31.6, Summit, 34.0, and Loon Lake is at mile 38.4. If we subtract Clayton's mileage from Summit's, we come up with 2.4 miles. The problem is, how do we measure said distance along the tracks as they twist their way toward the highpoint between Clayton and Loon Lake?

The answer is, we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That means, using my computer's internet connection and Google maps, I can see a reasonably detailed satellite image of most anyplace on earth. Zeroing in on Clayton, I can actually see the railroad tracks skirting railroad avenue, then follow them all the way to Loon Lake. The thing is, Google maps has a function called "Measure Distance." You place a visible dot on the map, then another, and the map will calculate the distance between those two points in miles, feet, and decimals of a foot. The beauty of the system is you can continue placing dots, and the system will accumulate those distances. So, I can follow the curves in the track from Clayton north with multiple dots until I've accumulated 2.4 miles, and that should roughly be the

**Link:**

Jim Fergusson's Railway and Tramway Station Lists.  
From the homepage, open "USA Railroad Station Lists,"  
and then, "Washington State Railroads." After that, use the document's search function.  
<http://www.railwaystationlists.co.uk/>



once-upon-a-time location of Summit.

This method suggests historic Summit was just 2.15 as-the-crow-flies miles northwest of Clayton, and about a quarter mile east of where the present day railroad crosses over Highway 395.

There's a lot of iffy things about this. Doubtless the railroad's route has been changed somewhat over the last 132 or so years. And, the measuring system, using multiple dots to measure around curves, is hardly precise. So the question comes up, is there any way other than finding some firm documentation to check this estimate.

Society member Mike Reiter suggested, since we know the location of Evan Morgan's historic resort on the north shore of Loon Lake, and we know that Loon Lake's historic railroad station was in that vicinity, why not use the same method to measure between the supposed site of Summit and Morgan's Park. If it comes out reasonably close, that would suggest the Summit measurement is also reasonably close.

Clicking off another 4.4 miles of today's railroad tracks brings us around the north end of Loon Lake and to a spot just two

tenths of a mile beyond where Morgan Road crosses over those tracks on its way to the lake.

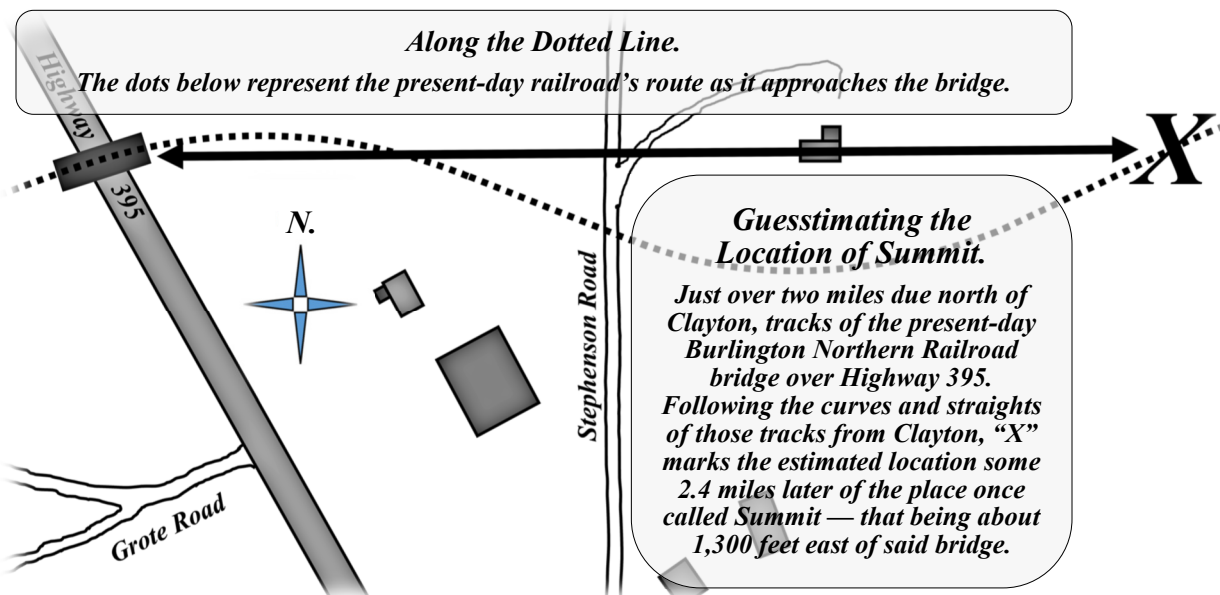
So, do we know where Summit was? No, but we do have an evidentiary hypothesis.

We're also getting a bit closer to understanding what Summit was. For that we get to thank society member and neighborhood resource for all questions related to math and engineering, Rick Hodges.

Using the kind of alchemic witchcraft most with a degree of scientific proficiency are blessed with, Rick managed to conjure up a bulletin titled "*Great Northern Railway Line — Spokane Falls & Northern Railway — Time Table No. 19.*" The document was dated, "*Sunday, September 10, 1905,*" and carried the warning, "*This time table is for use of Employees only. Destroy all previous time tables.*"

Having somehow escaped 1905's equivalent of the office paper-shredder, page five carried a priceless bit of data — priceless for anyone interested in the history of the S. F. & N. Ry., that is. Titled "*List of spurs that do not appear on [the] time table,*" it was exactly that.

The list was presented in four vertical



columns. From left, the columns were named "Name," "Between," "Car Capacity," and "Opens." Preceded by Buckeye, Darts, Olson's, and Christianson, the fifth name down in the first column is "Summit." The "Between" column indicates Summit is located between "Clayton and Loon Lake." The "Car Capacity" column notes that "7" railroad cars can be parked on the spur named "Summit." And the "Opens" column appears to instruct that the dead-ended spur was attached to the main tracks at its "South" end.

Regarding the last, I'm assuming spurs are most often attached to the main line on only one end. When attached at only one end, the "Opens" column indicates which end with either "North" or "South." If attached on both ends, the "Opens" column appears to list them with the word "Siding." All that would be useful data to the train crew since it would indicate which direction the train would have to be traveling to back into the spur when either picking up or dropping off trailing cars. That's a guess of course. We'd have to confer with a train historian to know exactly how such things work.

So, we know Summit was a real place. As for why it was called Summit, that's a bit of a mystery. We know the difference in altitude between the town of Clayton and the

town of Loon Lake is only about 160 feet — the higher being Loon Lake. The difference in elevation between Deer Park and Loon Lake is around 300 feet. The thing is, we don't know how high the trains had to climb when crossing the hills between Clayton and Loon Lake. And the tracks have doubtless been reconstructed more than once in the last hundred and thirty some years, so going by today's track elevations may not be that instructive.

All that said, the builders of the Spokane Falls & Northern Railway for whatever reason thought the designated spot deserved the name Summit, as was their prerogative. I suspect it was because it was the best location for a siding near the highest point the line had reached at least so far in its construction — and maybe the highest point it would reach. That, of course, is just another guess.

The only other caution I would add to all of this is to say history, like science, is an augmentative discipline. Just when you think you have everything figured out, someone uncovers some new data or reinterprets some old data, and the arguments begin again. That's what makes both science and history such collaborative adventures — and something to immerse oneself in.

— end —

## Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

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

... armed robbery at Fred Prestini's store ...

The following article was found in the February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1919 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*.

"Jim Miller, aged 25, an alleged I. W. W. [either member or associate], and said to have come to Spokane from Seattle a few days ago, is held by the police on a charge of hold-

ing up Fred Prestini in his grocery store at E316 Sprague Avenue at 7:20 o'clock last night. Miller is said to have been positively identified by Prestini's daughters, who witnessed the robbery in which only \$4 was secured."

The article went on to explain that four men were suspected of participating, two of whom waited outside "as sentinels." But

then it was also noted that, “Six men were arrested by the police last night and booked on the secret blotter at the police station for investigation in connection with the affair.”

The term “secret blotter” appears to suggest the details of the bookings would not be made public until a later date — implying no further details would be made available regarding the individuals arrested but not directly charged. As for why such secrecy, that might in some way be related to the one person “positively identified” as allegedly being a member of the I. W. W. — Industrial Workers of the World — a radical labor movement known to use terrorist tactics.

Two items in this report piqued my interest. Fred Prestini was the name used by Leno Prestini’s uncle — Fred being an Anglicized version of Ferdinando. And the address of East 316 Sprague Avenue, that also was associated with Leno’s uncle.

On the same day as the *Chronicle*, the *Spokesman-Review* also carried the robbery story. Its version was a degree more generous with the facts — though the proofreading seemed a bit too casual — meaning it was even worse than mine.

Regarding said facts, the *Review* reported that of the two “unmasked” perpetrators that entered the store, “One stopped just inside the door, while the other walked to the coun-

ter.” At the counter, the robber reportedly “threw his gun in Prestini’s face, demanding his money. The loot was obtained from the cash register, which Prestini was forced to open.”

I would like to laud the writer’s use of the novel phrase “threw his gun” when describing the scene, rather than the more conventional “shoved his gun.” Writing instructors tend to encourage such novelistic experimentation — within reason. However, considering the dearth of either proofreading or typesetting skills seen in the rest of the article, and the slight lettering difference between “threw his gun” and “drew his gun,” I’m just not sure whether its praise or blame that’s due.

That said, the next paragraph reported, “An hour later Detectives Fordyce and Markwood, in a downtown poolhall, arrested Jim Miller, age 25, a native of Russia.” The reporter added that “another suspect” was apprehended there as well.

The following quote — specially the name of Fred Prestini’s two daughters — is the clue that verifies the store owner as Leno Prestini’s uncle. The *Review* stated, “Prestini, his two daughters, Rena, age 15, and Josephine, age 12, identified Miller as the man who stood inside the door and held a long, black gun on the owner.”

The article continued, “The elder

### Further Reading — History of the Prestini Family.

“Coming to America: The Prestini Family & the Immigrant Experience,”  
by Wally Lee Parker.

*Mortarboard* #17, September, 2009 — page 213 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 5.  
[http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter\\_17\\_downsinglespageweb.pdf](http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/newsletter_17_downsinglespageweb.pdf)

“Six Letters: Translating the Luigi & Caterina Prestini Letters of 1919,” Part One.  
by Wally Lee Parker, Paul Erickson, John & Angela Barbieri, and Christina Percoco.  
*Mortarboard* #99, July, 2016 — page 1301 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 27.  
[http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard\\_issue\\_99\\_doublepage\\_web.pdf](http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_99_doublepage_web.pdf)

“Six Letters: Translating the Luigi & Caterina Prestini Letters of 1919,” Part Two.  
by Wally Lee Parker, Paul Erickson, John & Angela Barbieri, and Christina Percoco.  
*Mortarboard* #100, August, 2016 — page 1321 — Collected Newsletters, Volume 28.  
[http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard\\_issue\\_100\\_doublepage\\_web.pdf](http://cdphs.org/uploads/3/4/2/0/34204235/mortarboard_issue_100_doublepage_web.pdf)

daughter watched the entire robbery from a peek hole through a partition. Seeing two men enter, she sent her sister to aid her father in waiting on the second customer.”

The *Review*’s February 4<sup>th</sup> article concluded by noting, “Detective Fordyce found on Miller a long-barreled Smith & Wesson .38 caliber revolver, a belt filled with cartridges, and a badge of a deputy sheriff of Benewah County, Idaho.”

Family documents suggest Fred Prestini and family — his wife, Giovanna and infant son Alberto, arrived from Italy late in 1899. The 1900 census has them living in Spokane. By time the 1910 census rolled around, a young gentleman named Emilio and the above noted girls, Rena and Josephine, had been added to the family.

Fred Prestini’s brother, Luigi, immigrated to the United States in 1906. His family, his wife Caterina with toddlers Battista and Leno, landed in New York in 1908, joining Luigi at the Italian colony in Barre, Vermont. In 1911, Luigi moved his family across country to the Spokane area, settling first on property owned by Fred Prestini near Buckeye, and then, within a year or two, moving on to Clayton where Luigi went to work at the Washington Brick, Lime, & Sewer Pipe Company’s terracotta factory.

Early in 1919, Luigi became very ill. In February he was taken to Spokane and confined at the Lewis & Clark Sanatorium in Brown’s Addition. Caterina came to visit when she could, staying at brother-in-law Fred’s place when in town. The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society has in its archive six letters exchanged between Caterina and Luigi during that time. It’s the return address on several of those letters that firmly ties the two families and the store and likely family residence at East 316 Sprague together.

In 2016, the *Mortarboard* published a two-part article under the title “Six Letters: Translating the Luigi & Caterina Prestini Letters of 1919.” Appearing in the August issue (#100), the second part of the article contained the following explanation.

“The six letters, both Caterina’s and Luigi’s, were all posted in duplicate envelopes — envelopes similar enough to suggest that all were from the same company, if not the same box [of envelopes]. Each is six inches wide by three and a half high. The shapes of the sealing flaps are all the same. All have a return address written on the back flap — those from Caterina to be returned to Box 154, Clayton, those from Luigi to be returned to what we believe to have been his brother Ferdinando’s address, East 316 Sprague, Spokane.”

As a footnote to this part of the story, on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1919, the following notice appeared in the *Spokane Chronicle*.

“Louis Prestini, a cement worker, died yesterday at the Sacred Heart Hospital at the age of 38 years. His home was at Clayton, where he had lived for seven years. His wife, two sons and a brother survive. The funeral will be held tomorrow at 2 p.m. at the Gonzaga Chapel. Interment will be at Fairmount.”

Louis was Luigi’s Anglicized name. Louis is in fact interred at Spokane’s Holy Cross Cemetery, alongside his wife and youngest son, Leno. Since this north Spokane cemetery was founded in 1931, and Louis Prestini is not listed as being at Spokane’s Fairmount, my assumption would be he was later moved.

While we know Luigi was a patient at the Lewis & Clark Sanatorium prior to death, we can assume he was transferred to Sacred Heart when his condition became critical.

As for being a cement worker, as far as currently known, up until the time he was no longer able to work Luigi’s employment was at Clayton’s terracotta works.

Luigi and Caterina’s first son, Battista, returned to Clayton in later life. He’s now resting at the Saint Mary Cemetery in Deer Park.

Regarding the subsequent trial for the holdup at Fred’s store, the March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1919 issue of the *Spokesman-Review* had this to say. “Fred Prestini, a grocer at E316 Sprague Avenue who was held up in his store February 3,

was so busy watching the gun of the holdup that he had no time to notice the color of his hair, according to his testimony, which caused merriment in Judge Oswald's court yesterday, where James Miller is on trial."

It's interesting that the reporter, rather than using terms today's reader would be familiar with such as the "accused" or "defendant," referred to the still alleged perpetrator as "the holdup," and in this next paragraph, when it references both the men inside the store, used the plural "two holdups," said next paragraph reading, "Miller is charged with the robbery, in which two holdups obtained about \$5. Deputy Prosecutor Royce told the jury that he expected to prove that Miller and another man held up the grocer."

"When a hat was placed on Miller in court, Prestini declared Miller was the holdup. Josephine Prestini declared that she saw the holdups and that Miller was one of them."

The March 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Spokesman-Review* reported Miller was found guilty by the jury after 15 minutes' worth of deliberation. And then, the *Review's* May 2<sup>nd</sup> issue states Jim Miller, the only alleged robber taken to trial, was sentenced to five to ten years.

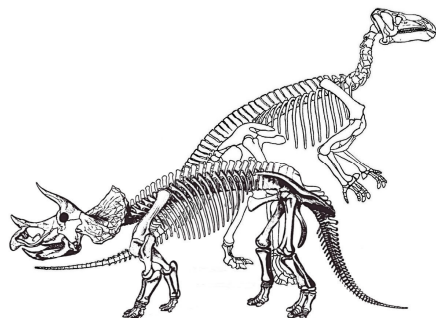
#### ... what's with the C♦DPHS posters ...

Most people are probably not aware that Print Publications has been working on a series of posters — like those often seen Scotch-taped against the inside of shop windows to advertise concerts, art exhibits and the like. In the summer of 2019, we began developing such as a potential promotional device for the society. At eleven inches wide by seventeen tall, these posters are printable at most any commercial printshop. Frames are also readily available at this size should mounting under glazing be desired.

We haven't actually printed out any of these posters at the formatted size, but we have been using them as first-page fillers in our online issues of the *Mortarboard* — that beginning with the August 2019 issue (#136).

The illustrations we use on our posters are taken from vintage books, magazine and newspapers published earlier than January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1926, and now clearly in the public domain. That said, the reuse of such artwork still needs to be approached with a reasonable amount of discretion.

After clipping, a certain amount of manipulation is required of most images. Sometimes that certain amount is quite extensive. For example, the two dinosaurs seen below were copied from separate plates in the 1898 edition of Othniel Charles March's classic *Dinosaurs of North America*. It was then a matter of spending a morning's worth of time in my photo manipulation program layering one image ovetop the other. As with most of these images, we try to find a humorous angle for the captions. The dinosaur poster reads, "Any family skeletons hidden in the closet? Maybe now's the time to coax them out and take them for a walk. They're probably not as scary as you thought."



Another example is the poster image on the facing page. It was taken from an advertisement in which everything other than that single figure has been erased.

These posters may never hang in a storefront, but they're still fun to put together. And hopefully fun to see.

#### ... heritage parks, the Canadian example ...

Canada is littered with heritage sites — acreage or structures of significant historical and/or cultural value that are preserved,

# What To Do Next?



**Why not finish that family history  
all the relatives seem  
so worried about?**

**Join the  
Clayton ♦ Deer Park  
Historical Society.**

**Open Meeting Second Saturday of Each Month — 10:00 AM.  
Deer Park City Hall Complex — 300 Block East 'A' Street — Look for the Sign.**

(website) [www.cdphs.org](http://www.cdphs.org)  
(mailing address) Box 293, Clayton, Washington 99110  
(telephone) 509-276-2693

*Illustration from "Collier's Magazine," June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1923.*



then opened to the public. And on occasion, when buildings of historical value are in danger of loss unless they can be moved, they're dismantled and gathered into heritage parks — places where they're restored, using traditional craftsmanship and tools, to what they once were. In season these places are often populated by volunteers who recreate by example the nature and nuance of daily life in bygone years.

Whenever I hear of a historically significant local building being lost due to necessity and/or progress — especially those that could be moved someplace else — I think of the various Canadian heritage parks we've visited over the years. I think of how much

history is being preserved by the expediency of gathering these buildings to a place they can be both cared for and enjoyed for as long as people care about such things.

One of the things that becomes crushingly clear as you walk within the dwellings in these parks is how much smaller on average people were in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The stairways, where your shoulders brush both walls while climbing, and your feet barely fit on the treads. Or adult sized beds where your ankles hang over the foot of the mattress. That's just one of the hands-on insights such places can provide.

——— *Wally Lee Parker* ———

## *Minutes of the Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical Society ——— February 13, 2021 ———*

With no improvement in the COVID-19 pandemic, we are cancelling one more meeting. About 8 members have received their first COVID-19 shot. At least one has had both. We are planning to have a regular meeting next month with masks being worn and social distancing. The following were reports sent by email.

Society President Bill Sebright reported that: 1) Much discussion and research went on this month on the Forreston School and Post Office. The first Forreston School was located at the southeast corner of Montgomery and Spotted Roads. (Thanks, Carolyn Knapp Nelson!) The second Forreston School is now a house at the corner of Bridges and Spotted Road. The location of the Forreston Post Office is still a mystery. 2) Pete Coffin found that there are pieces of the terracotta Eagle at the Clayton Drive-In coming off again. We are going to have to figure out something. We will have to consider covering it or moving it inside some place, possibly the

Fair Grounds. 3) Melanie Simpson requested information on the house she and her husband bought at 406 N. Margaret. She said it was built in 1900. Pete couldn't find any additional information.

Society Treasurer Mark Wagner reported: The main checking account ended the month at \$9,522.80. There were deposits of \$725. Two checks were written, one to Heritage Network for \$20, one to Liberty Mutual for \$250. The web hosting account ended the month at \$815.44 with a withdrawal of \$11.84 for web hosting. The Brickyard Day account is at \$1,945.33. The State accepted our incorporation papers. Mark took *Mortarboards* to The Hotspot, 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 February 2021 *Mortarboard* (#154) have been printed for free distribution, and the online version

Photo from the Kristy Dyck collection.



### *The Westby Home.*

*Reportedly soon to be torn down, this photo — circa 1918 — shows the back of the historic Westby house. To the west, across Spotted Road, stands the equally historic Trysil Church — since moved to East Crawford Street in Deer Park.*

has been submitted to the webmaster for uploading. A printable PDF has been forwarded to the Loon Lake Library for reproduction on request, and The Heritage Network has received a PDF file of the same for distribution to its members. 2) The January issue leads with "A Home on Loon Lake." This recollection of his youth spent on the lake was penned by Society member Charles "Chuck" Stewart. Your editor added a piece titled "The Spokane Harvester Company: Research into the Company Shown in the Last Several minutes of the Arcadia Orchards Film." We've also made a request for information regarding a photograph printed under the headline "Who, What, When, Where, Why!"

Webmaster Damon Smathers reported: 1) The February issue of the *Mortarboard* has been uploaded. 2) Paul Erickson emailed requesting a way to be able to "search" the website. A new search section has been added to the front page. Visitors can now search for

historical content on the website by typing in a few keywords. The results are displayed in order of accuracy. We are also working on a way to be able to search all the *Mortarboard* articles. This is a bit more in depth, but should be added soon.

Pete Coffin reported: 1) I wrote a one-page biography of George Crawford (the namesake of Deer Park's Crawford Street) for Joanne Darassi of the Deer Park Gazette. I also sent her a picture of the Historical Society's North Spokane and South Stevens County Settler's Association poster board. 2) Jeremy Sculley of Sculley's Automotive asked me to provide a historical outline of the old Fish Chevrolet building at 33 W. Crawford. He plans on utilizing the building in an expansion of his operation. 3) I read the book "A Teepee in His Front Yard," a biography of H. T. Crowley. The last quarter of the book has a very informative first-hand description of very early Spokane (1870s & 1880s) and the condi-



tions and treatment of the Spokane Indians living there.

Mike Reiter reported: 1) One of my COVID-19 projects this winter was to finally organize the information and photos I've been gathering and put them together in print so the history of our farm wouldn't be lost. I used a computer app called Mimeo Photos to put it in book form. The book starts in 1864 when Congress granted land to finance the building of the railroads and traces subsequent owners until today. Doing the research I realized how much I don't know about family history and regret not asking more questions when I could. A good lesson to those of you who still have an opportunity to ask your relatives questions! 2) I spoke to Ron Messerschmidt who lives on the property of the old Westby house on Spot-

ted Road. He said the new owner of the property plans to tear down the house due to the dilapidated roof, collapsing ceiling, and extensive mold. A piece of history for sure (*see photo prior page*), but the new owner has no ties to it or motivation to spend the huge amount of money it would take to rebuild it.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 13, 2021, at 10:00 AM at our building with masking and social distancing strictly enforced.

Minutes submitted by society president 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

Those contributing "original" materials to the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society normally retain copyright to said materials while granting the Mortarboard and the Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society durable permission to use said materials in our electronic and print media — including permission to reprint said materials in future Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society publications. Under certain conditions proof of ownership of submitted materials and/or a signed release may be requested. No compensation for materials submitted is offered or implied. All materials submitted are subject to editorial revision. Any material published as an exception to these general understandings will be clearly marked. When requests to reprint materials are received, such will be granted in almost all instances in which the society has the right to extend such permission. In instances where we don't have that right, we will attempt to place the requester in contact with the owner of the work in question. But in all instances where a request to reprint is made, it should be made to both the society and the author of the piece, and it should be made in writing (letter or email). The society considers the application of common business conventions when dealing with intellectual properties a simple means of avoiding misunderstandings.

From "The Coast" magazine,  
April, 1907



### See Yourself in Print.

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

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

— the editor —

### About our Group:

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

Our yearly dues are \$20 dollars per family/household.

We are open to any and all that share an interest in the history of our region — said region, in both a geographic and historic sense, not limited to the communities in our group's name.