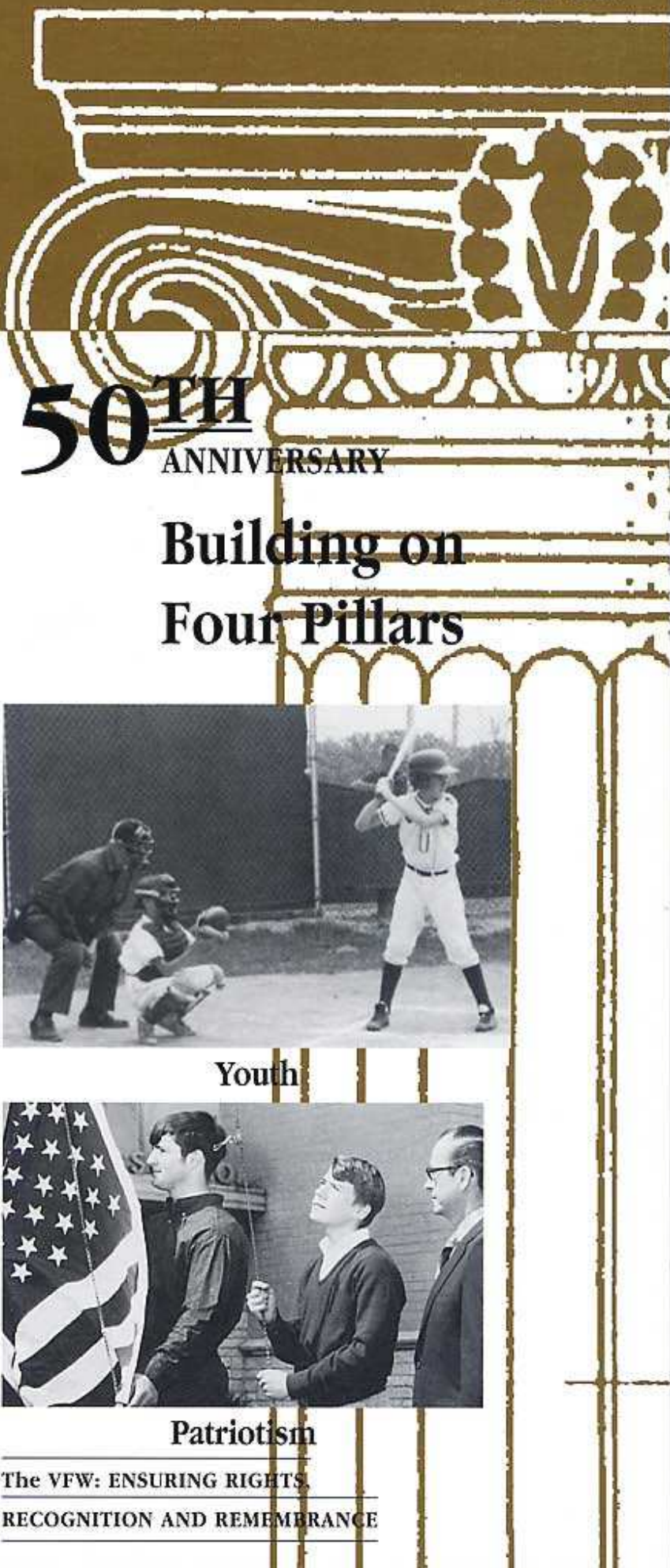


vfw news



50TH ANNIVERSARY

Building on Four Pillars



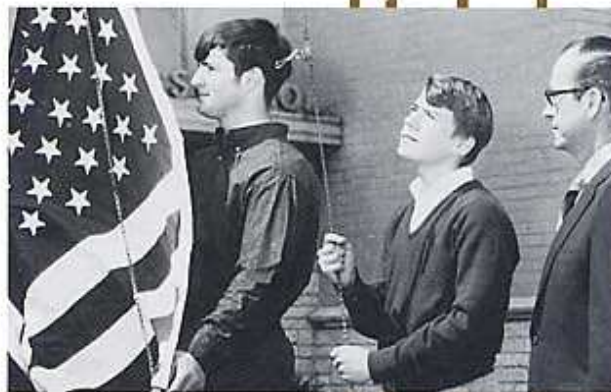
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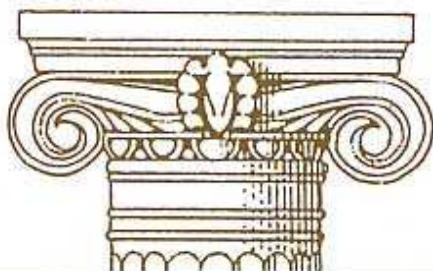
Youth



Community



Patriotism



**The VFW: ENSURING RIGHTS,
RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE**



HISTORIC MOMENT!

May 1968 as Past Commanders receive Life Memberships. This boosted the total to 25, assuring Post 5040 of a Perpetual Charter. Front: Don Wilkerson, Frank Cacci, Bill Thomson, Bill Mansfield, Joe Thiede, Earl Holm, Roy Stackhouse. Back: Arnold Romo, Kenneth Kerns, Dean Mishler, Ervin Burg, Arthur Schuld Jr., LaVern Emricson, Kenneth Korst and Howard Wolff.

FOURTH OF JULY FESTIVAL!

For many years, this was a VFW sponsored and staffed community-wide celebration "to keep family off the roads" and provide wholesome local entertainment. This is a 1954 view of City Park where the swimming pool is now located.



ON THE COVER—Photos depict the four pillars, the foundation for VFW Post 5040. **VETERANS**—Monthly trips to visit hospitalized veterans at North Chicago: Gertrude Korst, Mary Wille, Betty Mishler, Loretta Heidtke and Elna Schmidt. **COMMUNITY**—One community service example, V-J Day and Pageant of Drums, 20 years, headed by Maynard Wilkerson. **PATRIOTISM**—Flags to schools is an example. This photo shows a flag raising at St. Mary School: Terry Menzel, Lee Murphy and VFW Commander Howard Wolff. **YOUTH**—Little League, Teener League, Christmas parties. This photo shows Little League action at Sullivan Field (Don Peasley Historic Gallery Photos)

Woodstock VFW NEWS 50th Anniversary Issue.

June 1996. Volume 41, Number 12. Don Peasley, Editor.

Special assistance with this issue by Leslie McLeer and Denise Graff Ponstein. Also Joe and Marge Thiede, Henry Nulle, Sarah Peasley, Cheryl Wormley, and Barney DeWane. Graphics and layout by Denise Graff Ponstein at INDEpth Graphics and Printing. All photos by Don and Mark Peasley unless otherwise indicated. *Woodstock VFW NEWS* is winner of 11 national VFW awards and over 25 state VFW awards in "best Post publication" competition. Special acknowledgment to Maynard Wilkerson and Dwayne Raney as business managers in the first few years of this publication, and thanks to the only four printers during the 50 years: Betty Lindvall and Helen Jenner at Allied Printing; Herbert and Joyce Miller and Fred Noer at the Walworth Times; Ken Kerns; and for the past 15 years, Dale Brown and Mike Hitzeman at Schmidt Printing. Copyright 1996 by Don Peasley, Woodstock, Illinois 60098. June 1, 1996.

★★★ On 4 Pillars, the VFW Builds

By DON PEASLEY
Woodstock VFW NEWS Editor

Throughout 50 years, members of the Woodstock VFW and Auxiliary have strived to build on three pillars:

1. **Service to Veterans.**
2. **Service to Youths and Families.**
3. **Service to our Community.**

This issue of the *Woodstock VFW NEWS* reflects on the five decades since World War II veterans in late 1945 began work leading to VFW Post 5040. The charter came through on March 4, 1946, our Post's official birthday!

Producing this monthly publication for the VFW and Auxiliary since the first issue July 1955 is a labor of love for this editor—of pride in being so intimately associated over an extended period with men and women dedicated to serving others.

In a special way we salute the hundreds of volunteers who place Service First.

Your dedication, in an unassuming, often-untold manner, helps shape the VFW into a formidable community servant as well as a dependable helping hand for veterans. Helping veterans of course remains the No. 1 responsibility for VFW and Auxiliary members.

In this 50th anniversary issue, I add a Fourth Pillar:

4. **Patriotism.**

Members' devotion to country is deep and true. Through the VFW and Auxiliary, you show it in many ways: Flying the American flag daily; donating flags to schools, civic groups, and local organizations; sponsoring the Voice of Democracy essay contest; conducting programs at schools to focus attention on what patriotism means and how good citizens respect their country's heritage; taking part in career days at schools; supporting the National Guard; opening each meeting with a prayer and Pledge of Allegiance; and conducting Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances each year.

This anniversary *Woodstock VFW NEWS* includes "Down Memory Lane" vignettes from members and community leaders. I appreciate this response with personal memories.

Photos help remind us of activities and people involved in Post 5040—not by any means do we show all who have been a part of the VFW but I hope readers will consider



RAY SODEN, Past VFW National Commander (left), presents Commander Ed Wille with the Perpetual Charter. Art Muller, National Council member, is with Soden and Wille. March 29, 1969.



SUPPORT OF POPPY DAYS is a 50-year commitment, often with colorful displays and always with many members on the streets. Money collected is used for VFW Relief Fund. Betty Stackhouse and Ruth Wilkerson directed this display on the Square. Lorraine Holm is at left. 1956.

my photos through the years a salute to all who have made Post 5040 one of Woodstock's truly outstanding community organizations.

While Service to Veterans is paramount, another characteristic of the VFW and Auxiliary has been the readiness to help a good cause...to raise money, provide volunteers, and support a community enterprise.

Another characteristic during these 50 years has been the willingness to tackle big projects—big in work, in scope, in financial risk. The Fourth of July Festival was an early commitment. The V-J Day celebration and Pageant of Drums (1955-1974) was another gigantic undertaking.

This year, as our 50th anniversary presentation to our community, the VFW pre-



V-J DAY COLOR GUARD, all Vietnam War veterans: Bob Bishop, Gene Church, Chuck Gehrke and Fred Douglass. 1970.

sented a Memorial in the picturesque city square. It was dedicated during Memorial Day ceremonies and reads:

**Dedicated to all Veterans of
U. S. Armed Forces
Past, Present and the Future**

From 1950 until the early 1960s, the VFW handled concessions and carnival at the McHenry County Fair. The VFW helped organize the Little League in 1954 and has been a constant financial supporter since. The 13-15-year-old Teener League was a National VFW program for many years.

In those first years of the VFW, a housing shortage was a serious problem. Don Wilkerson led the VFW's involvement in generating action. Wilkerson recalled another

Continued on Page 4

Down Memory Lane

(Editor's Note: VFW and Auxiliary members re-live their VFW years through Down Memory Lane throughout this anniversary issue.)



Jim and I were introduced to the VFW Post 5040 when we lived in Cary, Ill. When we moved to Woodstock in 1981 we took advantage of the very good fellowship and camaraderie we found there. Everyone always made time to welcome us and visit even though we did not join right away. I cannot recall when Jim did join as a Lifetime member, but we have enjoyed everything immensely.

Joe and Marge, all the bartenders, waitpersons—EVERYONE always makes us feel like they are so glad we came when we are able to get back to visit.

Jim misses his three o'clock fun time there VERY much. He so enjoyed the fellowship and card games. He loved to "chew the fat" with all the guys when he retired. We are in Iowa so we can travel a lot. There are many things we miss, of course.

We really enjoy our Woodstock VFW NEWS and are very glad the Post has it as it keeps us in touch. We feel—UNITED WE STAND—APART WE FALL. Unity is wonderful and perhaps best for all veteran groups.

*Yours in Comradeship,
Jim and Bette Stone
Mapleton, Iowa*



I remember all the years a group of us decorated the reviewing stand for the V-J Day parades and the good times we had at the carnivals at city park. Once during a violent thunderstorm most of the booths blew down.

I helped with the Bingo games at the old building. We had so many Bingo players they had to sit on the steps to play.

We had good times working on many dinners and VFW picnics at city park. My good friend Ray Gaylord and I would stop at the club every day for years to sign up for the drawing which I never won.

I drove the tractor pulling the float in the VFW parade. I remember the funny car—



VFW MEMBERS PURCHASED this home from the Austin family, 240 Throop Street, for \$12,000 and started building an addition in 1952. Joe Thiede was installed as Commander at the first major ceremony in our second floor meeting hall in 1954.

the old Model T Ford—with some big heavy guys riding in the rear so it would rear up when it started. So many of those good friends have passed away.

*Glen Fringer
Woodstock*



One of my earliest memories is working with Post 5040 after the purchase of the old house that became our Post "home." We were dismantling the old brick posts off the front porch and planning to take them to the city dump. I told the fellows it was closer to my lot than the dump so the bricks were hauled to my place. The chimney on my house was built with those bricks. And, those bricks are harder than concrete! I wonder if the bricks aren't close to 100 years old now.

Another vivid memory is helping Gordon Wallis and others cooling pop in horse tanks at festivals held in city park.

I recall in 1943 my squadron was sent to the extreme northern tip of of Australia on the York peninsula in preparation for the Coral Sea battle. A heavy bombardment group of B-24s came to join us on the York peninsula. Later, about 1947-1948, I was "shooting the breeze" with one of our Post 5040 members, Richard (Doc) May. I discovered he was a member of that same B-24 Group!

I am a member of the firing squad and

have kept a shell from each event for the past two or three years. I inscribed the event on each shell I fired and now have 40 shells in my collection.

In 1992 John Sorensen and I were the only two active Father and Son teams in the Post. My son Richard is currently an active member of his Post on the Hawaiian island of Kauai.

*Harold R. Irwin
Woodstock*



I joined the VFW in 1968 and became more actively involved in the early 1970s. I moved up through the chairs and served as Commander 1977-78 and 1978-79. I believe I was on the board of directors for nine years. I have served as adjutant nine out of the last 10 years.

I have enjoyed working on different functions and enjoy the number of friends I have made belonging to the VFW. The past 18 years I have been calling for Bingo and I have marched in Memorial Day parades. My wife and I go to the North Chicago Veterans Hospital and enjoy spending time with the vets playing Bingo with them.

What I really have seen is the growth in attendance at our Post meetings and the number of Commanders who have come up through the chairs the last 15 years.

*Jim Gehrke
Woodstock*

★ ★ ★ It's A Year to Celebrate

As the Woodstock VFW's 50th anniversary celebration nears, reminiscing stirs up many recollections. Down Memory Lane in this issue reflects the respect and admiration the men and women of Post 5040 have for their organization and their accomplishments by working together for common interest.

The formal anniversary has been set for Saturday, June 8, delaying a couple of months from the March 4, 1996 half century charter date so veterans in the sunny South in March could be back to enjoy this reunion.

And what a reunion it will be! Members living in Michigan, Florida, California, and New York will be at the VFW Saturday, June 8. Our Post is being honored with the participation of Ray Soden in our celebration. Ray is a Past Illinois VFW Commander (1964-65) and National VFW Commander-in-Chief (1973-74) who has been at our Post many times. He participated in our V-J Day celebration in 1964, and he presented Post 5040 with its Perpetual Charter on March 29, 1969.

Ray, recognized for his aggressive lobbying for fair treatment of veterans by Congress and the President, installed our VFW officers in May 1986, our 40th year.

Plan to come early on June 8. Make your reservations-- a few places are still available at \$10 each--for a joyous reunion. On display will be scrapbooks, photos and other memorabilia provided by members. The reception begins at 4 p.m., three hours to visit with friends, see many people back especially for this celebration and enjoy the success of the VFW in serving as a pillar of strength for veterans throughout the half century.

The dinner, served by Club Manager Rose Kunavich, will start at 7 p.m. The program will feature remembrances of the Auxiliary by Pat Gaylord, a talk by Ray Soden, remembered for his forceful efforts to obtain adequate funding of the Veterans Administration's hospitals in the early 1970s, and reflections by charter members.

Ray, 72, enlisted in the Navy soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He served aboard the USS Claxton. His ship was involved in convoy duty for the invasion of North Africa. Then the squadron joined the war in the Pacific for the invasions of Okinawa, Leyte Gulf, Guam, Saipan, Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima. He earned seven battle stars and two Presidential Unit Citations.

Charter members of the Post will recall



RAY SODEN, Past National VFW Commander, is our 50th anniversary speaker. He honored our Post with his participation in our 1964 V-J Day Dinner when he was Illinois VFW Commander. With him is LaVern Emricson, 1964 Woodstock VFW Commander.



1996-97 5040 ASSOCIATION board of directors. Front: Henry Nulle, Dean Mishler, John Curran, Vice President; Joe Thiede. Back: Carl Glawe, Richard Huebsch, Donald Sword, President; and Raymond Hills, Secretary. Absent: Fred Reese.



1956-57 5040 ASSOCIATION board of directors. Front: Bob Heidtke, Bill Mansfield, Bud Behler, President; Gene Philipp and Gordon Wallis. Back: Maynard Wilkerson, Del Lee, Dean Mishler and Joe Thiede.



AUXILIARY UNVEILS banner showing its charter date: Jan. 29, 1947. From left: Joan Mansfield, Ruby Wilkerson and Arlene Cacci.



1996-97 OFFICERS. Henry Nulle, Commander; Robert Watts, Senior Vice Commander; William Lyford, Junior Vice Commander. Back: James Gehrke, Adjutant; and Walter Kuck, Judge Advocate.

the start of Post 5040 and how it has grown to its present position as one of Woodstock's most outstanding community organizations in addition to its commitment to veterans.

Music for the evening will be provided by Mario with dancing to begin at 9:15 p.m.

Members of the 50th anniversary committee are Henry Nulle, chairman; Ray and Viola Brown, Pat Gaylord, Joe Thiede, Walter Kuck, Bob Watts, William Lyford, Dean Mishler and Don Peasley.



AUXILIARY PRESIDENTS at the 35th anniversary. Front: Barbara Gehrke, Glenna Cross, Sue Kyle, Chris Gehrke, Zelma Schulz and Vera Erb. Back: Marian Long, Helen Kyle, Grace Hoey, Naomi Olcott, Eleanor Kesseling, Joan Mansfield, Ruby Wilkerson, Pat Gaylord and Irene Bischoff. 1981



TENTH ANNIVERSARY May 5, 1956: Neil Cooney (left), 1946-47 Commander, and Ray Lechner, State Commander. Helen Corey made the beautiful cake, designed to represent an open book.



BILL MANSFIELD ACCEPTS congratulations from Bill Thomson, 1951 Commander. Mansfield was 1952 Commander. From left: Bud Behler, Maynard Wilkerson, Bill Mansfield, Bob Reynolds and Bill Thomson. 1952.

4 Pillars - Continued from Page 1

VFW commitment in the first years: The VFW conducted many military funerals as bodies were returned from overseas.

"The precise action and sincere devotion of the VFW in this sad task brought community commendation and credit to the Post," he recalled.

Bill Thomson, a World War I veteran, was a Woodstock Typewriter employee. In a 1956 interview he told me how the VFW was started in Woodstock.

"I had a relative in the VFW in California, and I liked the program he talked about," said Thomson. "I joined the Crystal Lake Post in 1942, and when veterans started coming back, I began thinking about our own Post.

"I talked to Neil Cooney. He contacted others who actually founded our VFW."

A *Woodstock Sentinel* clipping dated Nov 15, 1945 tells about an organization meeting of the VFW at the courthouse. Neil Cooney was elected first Commander at that

meeting. The members met March 4, 1946 after receiving the charter to elect new officers. Meetings were held at the courthouse, Odd Fellows Hall, and in the room above the drug store at Benton and Cass.

On Dec. 16, 1946, members purchased the Austin property for \$12,000. This served as headquarters until 1953 when the present structure to the rear of that house was completed by members. Until the old house was torn down, the VFW donated its use to civic groups such as the Adult and Child Rehabilitation Center.

Two major decisions in 1947: Help sponsor Memorial Day and make monthly trips to the Veteran's Hospital at North Chicago.

In 1955 two enduring developments: In July members approved a monthly publication as a way to communicate with members regularly. In early 1955 members supported Maynard Wilkerson's proposal for a V-J Day Parade and Pageant of Drums, as a patriotic adventure and community celebration. This 20-year activity brought national recognition to the our Post.

Two other ongoing commitments deserve recognition. One is the support of the National Home at Eaton Rapids, Mich. for widows and children of veterans. The other is the annual Buddy Poppy Days, with the money going to the hospitalized veterans who made them and to the Post for its relief fund—money used strictly for veterans and their families who need help.

JOETHIEDE is a charter member who has served with distinction as board member, Commander, Quartermaster for the past 16 years and club manager for over 25 years. He retired late last year as manager—but he's still most comfortable in the kitchen where he's served our members and guests in a grand style.



VOLUNTEERS. WHO BETTER to typify volunteerism than Pat Gaylord whose energy and determination make "Soup to Nuts" a grand fundraiser! She also knows how to relax, enjoying the chairs for sale with Sally Shoemaker.



VOLUNTEERS. YOU ARE A big part of why Post 5040 is successful. This special *VFW NEWS* edition is dedicated to you, and representative of how you help is Clifton Murphy, relaxing between sales at a "Soup to Nuts" sale.



MARCH 29, 1969, an historic date in Post 5040 history as it receives the Perpetual Charter. These are Life Members at this presentation. Front: Commander Ed Wille. Seated: Don Wilkerson, Frank Cacci, Bill Thomson, Bill Mansfield, Earl Holm, Arnold Romo and Dean Mishler. Back: Frank Loss, Gordon Wallis, Jim Rousey, Dwayne Raney, Howard Wolff, Ken Korst, Art Schuld, Jim Cooney, Ed Maxwell, Ervin Burg and LaVern Emricson.



THE VFW ENTERED this float in Woodstock's Centennial Parade in 1952. The VFW is big on parades, sponsoring the memorable V-J Day Parades and Pageants of Drums from 1955 through 1974 and now taking part in the Dick Tracy Days parades as honor guard with the colors to lead the parade. This year's Dick Tracy Days Parade: Sunday, June 23.

★★★ For 50 Years . . . We Remember

From the first years, the first Thursday of the month had special significance for VFW and Auxiliary members.

That date is the time for the trip to the Veterans Hospital at North Chicago. This commitment began in early 1947, and the promise to remember hospitalized members has been kept each month since that—a remarkable commitment!

So many deserve plaudits for this dedication. In the early years, the Esquires Orchestra led by Jim Bates participated in entertaining hospitalized veterans. Frank and Gloria Holy, Larry and Helen Kyle, and Marge Henry are representative of those who helped 5040 fulfill the promise in the past.

Since 1970 Barbara Gehrke has been a faithful visitor. Her husband Jim is also a committed devotee of remembering hospitalized veterans, and today this VFW couple provides the leadership and enthusiasm to keep Post 5040's commitment alive.

A typical trip now finds volunteers leaving the VFW about 5:30 p.m. They go to the VA North Chicago mental health center and check in with the recreation chairman.

"We'll play Bingo and serve pizza and pop," says Barbara. "We sometimes bring toilet articles, T-shirts, clothes, puzzles, books and magazines donated by our members."



From Woodstock VFW NEWS MARCH 1966 Downey Trips Are Bright Stars For All

Offering understanding is one of the key ways Auxiliary members help the men and women they visit at Downey Hospital each month.

Because of their experience in working with veterans at the big veteran's hospital, visitors from Post 5040 have been asked to work with patients in the psychiatric wing of Downey Hospital.

Mrs. Yvonne Wolff, chairman of these trips, says the contact with these people over a period of time has helped acquaint volunteers with the true meaning of mental illness.

Patients who attend the VFW Auxiliary party are chosen carefully. They are fully capable of this "outside" contact. The visits are uplifting, both to the patients and to the VFW men and women.

Continued on Page 7



EARLY IN THE VFW'S HISTORY, VFW and Auxiliary members made twice-a-month trips to Downey Hospital to visit hospitalized veterans. For 50 years this continues to be an ongoing monthly commitment, 1956.



WOODSTOCK VFW organized a collection for the Great Lakes Naval Hospital Christmas program, December 9, 1969. Peggy Collins, Miss VFW, visited the hospital to help distribute gifts and brighten the day for those she visited. From left: Don Librande, Vietnam chairman for Carpentersville, and Woodstock VFW Commander Art Schulz.



FULFILLING THE COMMITMENT to remember hospitalized veterans, these Auxiliary members are ready for the monthly trip to Downey Hospital. They're loaded with cupcakes and magazines for this February 1966 journey. From left: Yvonne Wolff, Helen Kyle, Auxiliary President; and Marge Thiede.



DO YOU OLD-TIMERS recognize this room? It's in the Austin home, our first building, 1954 or 1955, with these Past Commanders: Bob Conway, Maynard Wilkerson, Joe Thiede, Bill Mansfield and Bill Thomson.

★★★ 61 Charter Members (Of 224) Are Members Today

Of the original 224 charter members, Quartermaster Joe Thiede reports 61 are members today. There are a few charter members belonging to other Posts or not members of any VFW Post, but just how many Joe is unable to determine. Yet, it is impressive to have so many charter members still an integral part of Post 5040, and to all them we extend a special HAPPY ANNIVERSARY and CONGRATULATIONS on helping establish the VFW in Woodstock. Bob Conway and Carl McBroom were instrumental in obtaining 240 Throop Street as the Post home, our location today. Conway and McBroom obtained the Austin property for \$12,000. McBroom sold many \$25 shares. On Dec. 17, 1951, the mortgage was paid off and burned. Soon members added to that original building and later purchased the adjacent parking lot. Since that time, the VFW and the city merged the adjacent parking areas into a larger parking location. Lester "Doc" Edinger, World War I veteran and active in the American Legion and VFW, served as Memorial Day parade marshal for many years. Who can forget the statuesque figure of Doc, wearing his World War I uniform!, astride a prancing steed heading west on Jackson Street to lead the parade to the cemeteries?



Downey Trips— Continued from Page 6

More participants are needed, and many non-Auxiliary members go on these trips. They leave from the VFW Post home on the second Monday of each month. Call Mrs. Wolff and learn more about how you can have a rewarding evening—and help some nearly forgotten people, our hospitalized veterans.

Robert Johnson
Wilbur Kiefer
Earl Holm
George Burke
Ed Steinwehe
Kenneth Noble
Elmer Clausen
Robert Joorfetz
Lester Sohst
John Kennedy
Richard Howell
Glenn Gibson
James Robertson
Joseph Thiede
Maynard Wilkerson
Robert Clark

Jack Meyers
Bernard Neuchiller
Robert Reynolds
Vernon Kopsell
Dominic Amico
Robert McCoy
Ray Heniken
Don Perkins
Ray Brown
Dean Mishler
Elwood Sherwin
LeRoy Corey
Elmer Musser
Erwin Bauman
Walter Silliman
Harold Knutson

Robert Behler
Fred Reese
James Farrell
Harold Irwin
Ray Murphy
Richard May
Orville Disbrow
Walter Manske
Harry O'Brien
Richard Rabbitt
Ken Hunt
Bill Hinner
Victor Hermanson
James Phelps
Sam Dykstra
Francis Dittberner

Donald Blodgett
Matt Tanzer
Robert Korslin
Gordon Walker
Art Tilstra
Lorson Pulver
James Rousey
Del Lee
Gerald Palmquist
Alfred Messman
Jack Wendt
Carl Henning
Clifton Murphy



Auxiliary Charters with 33 Members

The Auxiliary was instituted January 29, 1947, with 26 members and held open for three months, until April 29, 1947. On that date membership totaled 33.

Martha Bennett
Loretta Brown
Mary Harriet Buckley
Gen Conway Steagall
Grace Conway
Katherine Cooney
Lill Eckert
Patricia Kennedy Gaylord
Darlene Howell
Elsie Jacobs
Margaret Johnson

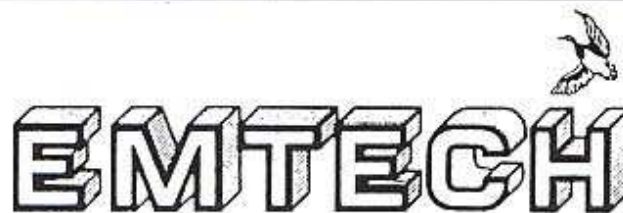
Elizabeth Joorfetz
Leonie Kennedy
Robin Kennedy
Agnes Liddell
Betty Mishler
Edna Thomson
Clara Mishler
Arline Moricoli Karlson
Phyllis Palmquist
Leila Pratt
Edna Rainsford

Mamie Robertson
Genevieve Roper
Grace Sohst
Margaret Stamets
Anna Purvey
Karlen Cooney
Eleanor Kesselring
Doris Neuchiller
Catherine Mishler Gregory
Catherine Cooney
Mary Cooney

HONOR AMERICA

"In the future, we look forward to a world founded on four essential freedoms: Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of every person to worship God in his own way, freedom from want, freedom from fear. That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, soon after the start of World War II.



Machining & Grinding Inc.

This special charter member page is sponsored by EMTECH and its owner LaVern Ermicson. LaVern, still active with drum and bugle corps appearances in Woodstock, was Woodstock VFW Commander in 1964.



OUR HONOR GUARD TODAY, from left, front: Charles Brown, Charles Mathey, Richard Glawe, Elmer Clausen, Commander; Henry Nulle, Charles Gehrke, Joe Thiede, Jack Fish, Elmer Musser and William Lyford. Back: George Piklor, Jack Meyers, Ron Nehls, Floyd Wilcox, John Weller, Robert Molthen, Robert Watts, Harold Irwin, Larry Dhom, Ben Parker, Ray Hills and Bruce Shisler. Absent: James Gehrke, David Grote, Fred Reese, Art Schuld and Donald Sword. (Don Peasley Photo). 1996

★ Honor Guard Members and Years They Joined ★

Charles Brown	1990	David Grote	1995	Elmer Musser	1991	Bruce Shisler	1992
Elmer Clausen	1946	Ray Hills	1985	Ron Nehls	1995	Don Sword	1990
Larry Dhom	1994	Harold Irwin	1990	Hank Nulle	1988	Joe Thiede	1946
Jack Fish	1946	William Lyford	1990	Ben Parker	1975	Robert Watts	1989
Chuck Gehrke	1969	Charles Mathey	1953	George Piklor	1988	John Weller	1992
Jim Gehrke	1969	Jack Meyers	1946	Fred Reese	1988	Floyd Wilcox	1982
Richard Glawe	1995	Robert Molthen	1983	Art Schuld	1959		



ORIGINAL EIGHT MEMBERS OF WOODSTOCK'S VFW Honor Squad. From left: Elmer Clausen, Commander of the Honor Guard; Robert Church, Francis Dillbener, George Wilson, William Mansfield, Roy Stackhouse, Frank Cacci and Joe Thiede. (Medlar Studio). 1947

Down Memory Lane ... Photo-Reminiscing



Front: SAD SACKS—Clarence Westphal, Bill Padolski, Dick Dana, Arnie Romo. Bud Behler was absent. **Back: YARD BIRDS**—Everett Anderson, Vern Heidenreich, Roy Smith, Spike Messman and Bud Turnow. 1957



Front: STINKERS—Ed Stanger, Bud Gehrke, Lyle Bungard and Bill McCannon. **Back: TRAILERS**—Chester Dietz, Teener Philipp, Irv Berg, Orville Disbrow and Dwayne Raney.



Front: SHARPSHOOTERS—Ray Stanger, Don Perkins, George Johnson, Bud Sauer and Roy Stackhouse. **Back: SPLIT SHOTS**—Lou Gehrke, Robert Shook, Norman Stanger, Fritz Grasser and Howard Dermont.



WHO CAN FORGET the Auxiliarettes, a dancing group of Auxiliary members who entertained and had plenty of fun? Who can forget the February 1956 cover photo of this dancing lineup? From left: Ruby Wilkerson, Jan Riggle, Pauline O'Brien, Betty Stackhouse, Lorraine Holm, Helen Lee, Betty Mishler and Loretta Heidtke.



VFW MEMBERS DO appreciate the work of the Auxiliary. At a banquet prepared and served by VFW members in early 1956, men served flaming bake Alaskas. **Front:** Del Lee, Roy Stackhouse, Elmer Clausen, Maynard Wilkerson and Bill Mansfield.



APRIL 7, 1962. MILITARY BALL was a surprise of the social season. Prize winners (from the left) Arnie Romo, Bob Schoenbeck, Ron Kramer, Irv Aavang, Les Liddell and Al Mansfield.



★★★ The Start of Post 5040



FROM APRIL 1956 VFW NEWS
10th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
In the Beginning

Frankly, there is some dispute concerning just who broached the subject of starting a VFW in Woodstock.

That's our conclusion, and many members may disagree if they felt they were closely involved in its beginnings.

The important thing to us, however, is that veterans were interested in founding a VFW in Woodstock. When we chatted with Bill Thomson about the member feature (January issue), he told us about getting the idea for a Post while visiting in California with friends.

A few men like Neil Cooney, Bob Johnson, Frank Kennedy, Julius Wien, Elmer Clausen, John Rainsford and Bill Thomson were involved

At any rate, members met on November 15, 1945, in the Knights of Columbus hall (according to newspaper accounts, in the court house according to a charter member) to organize and elect officers.

Temporary officers were chosen pending official approval. Neil Cooney, Commander; Robert Johnson, Senior Vice Commander; Dave Riley, Junior Vice Commander; Dick Howell, Quartermaster; and Julius Wien, Bill Thomson, and John Rainsford, Trustees.

The VFW officially got its start with receipt of its charter on March 4, 1946. Meeting in the Odd Fellows hall, they elected Frank Kennedy, World War II air force pilot, as the first Commander.

Frank was called back to active duty in August, 1951 and chose to make the service his career. He's now in Japan with his family. His wife, Robin, was an Auxiliary president.

From the beginning Post 5040 was started with 224 charter members. A total of 108 men have been members every one of the 10 years—a remarkable record of interest.



COMMUNITY SERVICE is one of the VFW's pillars. These VFW members receive recognition at a July 1971 ceremony presided over by Frank Loss, Senior Vice Commander. From left: Loraine Loss, cited for her Voice of Democracy chairmanship; and De De Schuld, Alice Foote and Zelma Schulz, cited for leadership in the VFW Buddy Poppy campaign.



TWO VFW MEMBERS, Dwayne Raney and Cas Polizzi, have formed an umpiring team in Little League for over 20 years. The VFW has been a strong supporter of Woodstock Little League since its founding in 1954. Raney was a manager the first seven years, then president four years and a board member almost every year. Cas served as co-umpire-in-chief in the 1960s.

THE FIRST YEARS

March 18, 1946—Voted to pay dues for Spanish-American war veterans of Canute Lee Camp No. 99, and the 12 were accepted as charter members. On same date, voted to sponsor V-E dance—our first money-making project! The tradition of a "name band" attraction was born.

April 17—Membership, 147; June 6—200 reached. October 6—Looked into buying Townsend property. Also approved \$150 for athletic fund. Thus early in the Post's history sports began playing an important role,



FOR MANY YEARS, the VFW presented trophies to the most valuable football players at the two high schools. 1955: Commander Earl Holm presents the trophy to Terry Britz at the St. Mary's banquet. Seated at the table is Father Joseph Egan.

and sporting events and sponsorship of athletic teams have always been a key phase of this VFW.

November 18—Voted to organize an Auxiliary after discussing it at the meeting two weeks earlier.

December 16—After Carl McBroom, committee chairman, reported on the Austin property on Throop Street, members voted to purchase it for \$12,000 and to sell shares of \$25 each to members.

January 3, 1947—Sponsored benefit

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Start of Post 5040

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basketball game between VFW team and the New York Renaissance.

("We carried bleachers from the basement of St. Mary's Church through the snow, set them up in the gym. After the game, we tore them down and carried them back," mused one member.)

January 29—Auxiliary receives charter, Mrs. Genevieve Conway installed as first president.

April 17—Voted to join American Legion in Memorial Day observance after receiving invitation. May 19—First meeting in Austin home.

August 4—229 members. Les Liddell named to form firing squad to honor war dead.

October 4—Voted to go to Downey Hospital twice monthly, a project VFW and Auxiliary still carry out.

October 18—Planned first turkey raffle, cleared \$180 on it at Thanksgiving time. December 1—265 members.

MILITARY FUNERALS

1948—The first two years under Kennedy and Bob Conway were behind us. Members had obtained a home and were doing the work of fixing it up themselves. With the return of war dead, it was fitting that a firing squad, color guard, and honor guard were organized, trained and equipped.

From July 1948 through March 1949 Commander Don Wilkerson recalls at least 11 military funerals were conducted. Recalls Don, "Their precise training and sincere devotion in this sad task brought the commen-



GORDON WALLIS, Quartermaster, 1966 to June 1975.



ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING VFW/Auxiliary annual programs since 1957 honors all Woodstock area teachers. Verda Dierzen is the 1972 Teacher of the Year in this photo. A total of 204 years of teaching know-how is represented in the retiring teachers from District 200. From left: Dorothy Luedtke, 37 years; Ruth Wilson, 45 years; Verda Dierzen, 35 years; Rose Barrett, 19 years. Back: Commander Fred Douglass, Toney Roskie, 43 years; Jackie Beam, Miss VFW; and Marian Long, Auxiliary President.

dation of the community and reflected credit upon the Post."

More renovation of the building and grounds took place during 1948, all the work being done by members. Our Fourth of July Festival was conceived at this time, and the first family picnic was held during this year, too.

April 5—Voted to send flowers to all churches Memorial Day in memory of all who lost their lives in service.

April 19—Voted yearly good citizenship award to boy and girl at the two local high schools. May—269 members; Softball team won third place in state softball meet. Also, bowling team of Don Torgeson, Fred Reese, Bob Reese, Del Lee, and Leon Dodge won state handicap bowling title.

June—Voted to donate remaining Homecoming money to Hospital fund. Nothing has been done on this, however. September 9—With *Woodstock Journal* co-sponsored All-Star softball game for Crime Stoppers projector fund. During this year, idea for the Fourth of July Festival was born, and Bob Conway and Bud Behler were co-chairmen.

In summer and fall of 1948 and into the spring of 1949 there was considerable attention given in the local papers to the need for veterans' housing.

Woodstock VFW took an aggressive stand in attempting to make known the housing needs of the area and enlisted the aid of

responsible people throughout the county. Don Wilkerson took the leadership in forming a Veteran's Housing Council and was its first chairman.

The *Journal* gave activities of this Council important publicity, causing action in behalf of the Council. Commented Wilkerson recently, "The housing situation was one of the biggest problems of the period, and the VFW played a major role in making the community desire to do something about it. Three people in particular worked hard on it—R.O. Andrew, Chamber of Commerce president; Attorney Bill Gleason, Harvard; and Bill Carroll, Jr., officials of the County Housing Authority.

"Though no mass housing program resulted, it did point up the need and encouraged independent contractors to build low-cost housing. Woodstock has had about 400 new homes within its city limits since 1948."

1949—July 4—First Fourth of July Festival. "The VFW deserves a large bouquet of roses for sponsoring this fine civic event," reported the *Woodstock Journal*.

THE BUILDING SITUATION

As we grew, the need for more space became more obvious, and in the next three years, this was a lively topic of discussion as various plans were offered. Not until May 19, 1952 did a vote to build at our present

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Start of Post 5040

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site stick. And this came after earlier decisions not to build on Throop Street but to go elsewhere. Here is how that interesting phase of our history materialized:

July 18—Suggestion to consider Oakmoor came up, rejected on August 1. August 15—Committee reported estimate of \$6,500 for 42-foot by 22-foot addition on rear of Throop Street home. Also considered two-story addition.

October 3—60-foot addition okayed, and through February 20, 1950 committee waited architect's plans.

Early in Maynard Wilkerson's term, the loan was not approved and new sources were sought. Since we didn't have enough funds on hand, a loan big enough to erect the structure desired was unavailable.

December 18, 1950—Voted to erect flag pole at Clay Street school. Others since have been erected at all schools by the VFW and at the Children's Home.

April 1, 1951—286 members as Bill Thomson assumes command.

May 7—Housing again, and purchase of Andy's Restaurant defeated. July 16—Made plans to handle carnival and concessions at county fair. August 20—Noted that Frank Kennedy, first Commander, called to active duty.

November 5—Launched program to determine building problem with letter to all



MEMORIAL SALUTE at the Woodstock cemeteries, a photo from the 1950s and a tradition that continues today.

members. November 19—Voted not to build at Throop Street site, named committee to seek land.

December 17, 1951—Burned mortgage on old building.

February 14, 1952—Voted to buy six acres on Route 47 inside city limits, subject to rezoning. March 3—Voted to buy only one lot for \$3,000 or less. Deal failed to materialize.

Following participation in a community blood donor project, housing came up again, this time under the new Commander, Bill Mansfield. In May, 1952 decisive action was taken and the \$50,000 building we now enjoy is the result.

May 5—Voted to look into buying other property, but after looking around—

May 19—Voted to do any building on the present property. Committee of Gene Mishler, Jack Fish, Matt Hoesley, Bob Conway, Walt Schmidt, Bob Heidtke, LeRoy Corey, Arnold Lemke, Dean Mishler, and Harold Irwin were responsible for planning and execution of the members' desires on building.

June 1952—Participated in Woodstock Centennial. July 21—316 members, all-time high. Already new building program was showing increased attention. August 10—Sponsored benefit softball game for Memorial Hospital Woman's Auxiliary, turning proceeds from one game which our league team played in to this cause.

October 6—Members told building addition construction to start "next week." It did. November 17—Community service committee activated, speeding up community service projects.

December 1—Bill Thomson, who spearheaded greater community service participation, suggested trophy to outstanding football players at local schools. This is now a yearly presentation. April 6—316 members.



MISS VFW SPONSORSHIP was a Post highlight for years. The Kristensen sisters, Mary and Jeanne, were Miss VFW in 1966 and 1971, respectively.

★★★ Patriotism...One of Our Pillars



MEMORIAL DAY wreaths at Civil War statue, Esther Ballard, American Legion, and Pennie Nolan, VFW, Auxiliary representatives. 1992.



A FLAG FOR DORR township's building. From left: Trustees Ken Saladin and Don Cooney, VFW Commander Mike Vukovich and Supervisor (and Past VFW Commander) Ed Buckley. 1991.



VETERANS DAY 1992 at the VFW. Marvin Bohnhoff, VFW Chaplain, conducts the tribute with participation of other veterans' organizations. John Sorensen is VFW Commander, his second term in the high office.



THROUGHOUT THE 50 years, the VFW and Auxiliary has donated flags to many schools, institutions, businesses, and civic groups. Example: Commander Fred Douglass presents a flag to Clay Street students. 1971-72.



VETERANS DAY 1976. Bugler Bob Schroeder and Honor Guard Commander Doc Edinger, in the square.



MEMORIAL DAY 1992. Elmer Clausen, Honor Guard Commander.



MEMORIAL DAY HAS been enhanced with veterans' displays around the square, presenting memorabilia, photos, and military remembrances John Sorensen has been the catalyst in revitalizing Memorial Days observance, starting in 1986.



We Remember . . . Memorial Day, Veterans Day

The picturesque Woodstock City Square is colorful in the spring. The flowering crab trees are at their best. Flower beds are approaching their most attractive season. Residents relax on benches, enjoying the sun's warmth. Each May the VFW joins other veterans' organizations to salute veterans of all wars, living and dead, and to reaffirm the solemn pledge to *Honor the Dead by Helping the Living*. This year was a special Memorial Day in the square. The VFW unveiled its memorial plaque to salute veterans, **Past, Present and the Future**.

As the weather turns fallish, thoughts turn to November 11 as residents remember the men and women who have served—especially those who died in combat. The November 11 ceremony at the VFW's front entrance is crisp—a prayer, three volleys, and the mournful sound of *Taps*. The VFW continues the tradition established long ago by the American Legion—the annual Veteran's Day turkey dinner. All residents of the community join in this festive feast!



Gold Star Tribute

A memorable program sponsored by the VFW and Auxillary occurred Nov. 11, 1957 at Woodstock High School when Gold Star mothers and their veteran sons and daughters were honored.

U. S. Senator Everett Dirksen headlined the salute to the dead of all wars and mothers who lost a son or daughter in service.

"We need the capacity of faith to remember those who died that we might enjoy the priceless heritage of a free country," intoned Illinois' Dirksen, one of this nation's all-time great orators.

Don Wilkerson as Post Chaplain climaxed the tribute: ". . . let us live that when our summons comes we may depart with a good conscience, in the comfort of a sincere religion, belief in God, and perfect charity toward all mankind."



MEMORIAL DAY 1972 in the old bandstand. Judge Jim Cooney is at the podium. Paul Smith, Spanish-American War veteran (holding cane), is seated next to Commander Fred Douglass.



VETERANS DAY 1992 at the VFW at 11 a.m. before the traditional turkey dinner!



MEMORABLE SIGHT: Doc Edinger in his World War I uniform, leading the city's Memorial Day parade. Note the stop-and-go light at West Jackson and Throop in this 1971 view!



MEMORIAL DAY 1985 as *Taps* echoes throughout the square. Vietnam, VFW and American Legion members pay tribute to the dead of all wars.

Down Memory Lane



AL MANSFIELD REMEMBERS this V-J Day parade "funny car." George "Toad" Mansfield (right in back seat) helped raise the car for entertaining maneuvers.

Here are some of my memories:

When the VFW had a drill team we marched in the Harvard Milk Day parade. My wife, Eugenia, and our girls would go with me to the parade and we would spend a nice afternoon in Harvard. After the parade the drill team had a few beers. One beer led to another and some of us would end up in Chemung at 3 a.m. Someone drove the old Model T home. I think it was Jack Fish. What I remember most was Eugenia saying, "Didn't anyone say 'halt'?"

One firing squad salute to a veteran at the cemetery resulted in George Wilson getting his tie caught in the butt of his rifle during the second volley. This incident is still a memorable one.

The Halloween parties were a lot of fun. One year our gang, including my brothers Bill and Harry and their wives, and Bob and Carole Courier went as a hillbilly funeral. Carole was the corpse in the casket with a bottle of moonshine. Esther Mansfield was the Deacon. I still don't know how Carole could stay in that coffin for so long!

Years ago Eugenia enjoyed going to Downey Hospital with the Auxiliary until one night while dancing with a patient he asked her how long she had been in the hospital. The Auxiliary did a lot for these patients. The women donated their time working at fish fries and dinners.

When the carnivals were held on the square, we had games the VFW and Auxiliary took care of. My brothers and I had the turtle races using live turtles. People were sold paddles with numbers on them. The turtles were put in the center of the table on a piece of tin that had a light bulb under it. The heat from the bulb would make the turtles move. There were nails four inches

apart around in a circle with numbers between the nails. The turtles would pass through one of the slots with a number and a winner would be declared. One time, we were short turtles so I got two turtles from the Nippersink Creek in Greenwood. One was a little too big so I had to grind the edges of the shell down a little so he could fit. Worked just fine!

*Al Mansfield
Woodstock*



JOAN MANSFIELD, 1953 President, Woodstock City Council member and winner of the 1996 "Woman of the Year."

On a beautiful July 4th afternoon in the early 1950s Post and Auxiliary members arrived at the carnival grounds on top of the hill in City Park (later the site of the City swimming pool). Grills were heated up, stock tanks full of ice and pop were made ready, fireworks were mounted in place for setting off that night, game hustlers and ride ticket sellers gathered their change boxes and carpenters' aprons and everybody settled in for the arrival of the crowds.

Sudden giant gusts of wind ushered in a summer rain squall. Everyone scurried to rescue flapping tents. I was one of the people who hung from the cook tent flaps to help hold it down. I had the added advantage of the weight of an unborn son to help me. The merry-go-round ticket booth collapsed with Eleanor Torgeson inside but she was unharmed.

The wind was followed by a downpour of rain. The summer kind; near dusk but with

the sun still shining in the west. The good part was yet to come. The fireworks people determined that the best way of preventing a disposal problem for wet but unfired rockets and set pieces was to set them off. The rain poured down, all the set pieces were lit and the rockets were fired. It was the most beautiful fireworks display I have ever seen!

Needless to say the carnival grounds ended up a sea of mud and we had no fireworks to shoot off. If I recall correctly this might be the year that it rained much of the evening and the carnival was extended two extra days with a small fireworks display the last day. We probably didn't make much money that year.

The principle behind providing the fireworks display was to make it possible for families to have a safe Fourth of July in their own hometown. The VFW usually raised enough money to pay for the fireworks with the carnival and raffling of an automobile. It also provided a fun time for local residents. Beer was not sold in the early years and the carnival was a true adventure for local children and big "date nights" for young couples.

Those carnivals all happened back in the "dark ages": no Great America, no Six Flags, no Disney Land, no Disney World (just Riverview). Originally, carnivals sponsored by the American Legion were held on the west side of the Square with the streets closed off for four or five days but no fireworks displays.

Was life simpler then? Was life more fun? Or were we all young and, after the devastating events of the war, ready to face a brave new world and make it a better place to live? What a grand time we had!

*Joan Mansfield
Woodstock
1953-54 VFW Auxiliary President*



A little reminiscing. . .
. . .What great things the Woodstock VFW has done over the years, not only for returning veterans but for the Woodstock community.

. . .I remember the fellowship with other veterans when I was released from the Army in early spring of 1946. . .the meetings of the vets in its early organization. . .later buying the house on Throop Street. . .later the financing and building the hall.

We still enjoy meeting old friends at the fish fries and other activities.

*Bob McCoy
Woodstock*

Down Memory Lane

In the early 1950s we went to Downey Veterans Hospital to entertain patients. We brought magazines and treats. The men would play games and cards and the women danced with patients. Groups came from Waukegan also. One time one of the women asked Maynard Wilkerson to dance thinking he was a patient.

In the early '50s we ran a carnival at Emricson Park where the pool is now. We always raffled off a new car on the last night of the carnival. One year it rained every night for five days and we couldn't have a fireworks display. Instead, we had the carnival open every night with three Merry-Go-Rounds.

The fireworks were held in the Dream Field area.

Hundreds of people sat on hills. At 9:30 p.m. we asked everyone to light a match. It was a beautiful sight to see the arena lit up at one time!

From 1941 to 1945 (where our VFW home is now) was a large, old wooden building. Jean (now Kiefer) and Ed Faehndrick lived there with their mother who operated a rooming house for men only. It was later sold to Mrs. Siebel who ran a rooming house for women only. My wife, Dolores, was one of the residents.

After the VFW bought the home, Gene and Fran Kuhn lived in the home and managed the bar. We would play Bingo every Saturday night in the former living room. The dining room was the bar and upstairs the officer's women brought and served sandwiches on Bingo night as refreshments.

We had Christmas parties for children 1-10 years old. Each child received a nicely wrapped gift and a stocking filled with candy and fruit. I was master of ceremonies for a few of them. Each age group would come up on the stage and try to win a soda pop prize.

Games were played such as Button, Button; Simon Sez; and trying to whistle after eating three crackers. Gert Korst won the grandmother's "eat the crackers and whistle" contest. We sang Christmas songs, then Santa handed out the gifts.

I got out of the Navy in 1946 but did not join the VFW until 1948. My brother Nick was a charter member and attended the first meeting in the Odd Fellows Hall (above the old post office on East Jackson Street).

*Casimer "Cas" Polizzi
Woodstock*



FOR MANY YEARS the VFW and American Legion conducted Memorial services at Greenwood Cemetery as well as the Woodstock cemeteries. This is Greenwood, 1954.



The VFW Past Commanders and Auxiliary Past Presidents know the hardships of a VFW function and the satisfaction of success.

The success of VFW activities that I and many other people have enjoyed must include the hard-working efforts of VFW and Auxiliary members.

My most memorable function was serving as chairman of the first OKTOBERFEST in October 1962. The VFW helped finance the Teener League through this event for many years. Teener League was a program for 13-15-year-olds, sponsored nationally by the VFW. The VFW has always been a leader in sponsoring and supporting community events.

The V-J Day Parade and Pageant of Drums is another memorable event. I remember all the good times associated with the VFW picnics and choosing our Little Miss VFW. Our club has done so many good things for our community that our members can be proud.

While celebrating our 50th anniversary, let us not forget our VFW comrades and Auxiliary members who have been laid to rest. They helped make these memories possible.

*LaVern Emricson
Commander, 1964-65*



GENEVIEVE Conway Steagall, first Auxiliary President.



The early years were memorable for me because it was my only volunteer interest.

The Fourth of July celebrations in particular that were held at city park—the food tent, beverage tents, manning ticket booths, the fireworks that ended the holiday—all sponsored and manned by the VFW.

We all had young families but found the time to give and it was great because of all the fine people involved.

The Red Cross got us started going to Downey Hospital to visit the patients. I understand they still do so to this day.

*Gen Steagall
Woodstock
1947-48 VFW Auxiliary President*



THE ESQUIRES, a favorite band with the hospitalized veterans at Downey Hospital for many years. The band also performed at many VFW social functions.

Down Memory Lane

I served in World War II from 1943 to 1946. I wanted to get the war over with and return to Woodstock. When I got off the ship, I kissed the ground and have always been thankful I came back alive.

When we first got the home on Throop Street I helped with sidewalks, painting, and snow plowed the VFW parking lot for 14 years without charging. That was how I contributed to the club. I would set tables, do dishes, clean floors and sell Buddy Poppies. My wife, Eleanore, volunteered at the weekly bingo games.

V-D Day was a big celebration. The VFW had a Model T they drove in parades with four men in the car. I took the car to my garage and decided to work on the car so it would draw more attention at the parades. I shortened the wheel base and put on a skid plate so when they pushed on the gas pedal the car would "rear up" and slide on the skid plate. We put Toad Mansfield in the back seat so his weight helped make the car jump when the front wheels came off the ground. Steam from the rod shot out the radiator cap in which I drilled a hole. We had more fun and everybody applauded during parades.

My Dad was a WW I veteran and was an American Legion member. I also got him to join the VFW. We were both grateful to each have survived a major war and come home alive.

*Jack Wendt
Woodstock*

I remember:

... The first meetings when we were getting our Charter. These were held in the Odd Fellows Hall which was the building taken down for the 1980 Don Still addition for The State Bank of Woodstock (now the Harris Bank).

... The fun of winning the VFW State Bowling Championship with Del Lee, Leon (Spook) Dodge, Bob Reese and Don Torgeson and then going to St. Paul to bowl in the VFW National tournament.

... Watching my wife Pearl practice and march with the VFW Auxiliary drill team under the command of Elmer Clausen.

... The night we stopped the Bingo game and turned on the TV to watch the Hebron High School Green Giants basketball team win the state championship in 1952.

*Fred and Pearl Reese
Woodstock*



One memory that stands out for me is when the officers of the club put on a dinner for the Auxiliary members. The high point of the dinner was serving the Baked Alaska. I was one of the servers. We lined up in the kitchen and marched to the dining room holding the flaming desserts high in the air on large platters.

*Gordon Wallis
Horseshoe Bend, AZ*



Jim Bates and The Esquires

Among many deserving tributes for their service to veterans by participating in the monthly trips to the Veteran's Hospital at North Chicago were Orchestra Leader Jim Bates and the Esquires.

In March 1957, the VFW presented its Citizenship Award to band members. Bates and Bernice Yessler had made the monthly trips to entertain hospitalized veterans for more than 10 years. Del Heidenreich served as driver for many years.

The Esquires? A popular local orchestra: "Bernice Yessler plays the piano, Bates plays the saxophone, Vern Jensen plays the drums, Bob Schroeder (our bugler for many years at Memorial Day and Veterans Day) plays the trumpet and Bob Knapp plays the bass fiddle."

Said Bates: "Hospital officials tell us that vets in Ward 66 respond to live music when they don't respond to records. They say our music is a kind of therapy, improving the patients' mental outlook and better able to care for themselves."



I remember all the good times we had at the club. I recall Woodstock's 100th anniversary celebration: we all had long skirts and wore "Sister of the Switch" badges. The men (Glen included) grew beards and had "Brother of the Brush" badges. At that time we made sandwiches at the club and sold them on the square during the parade. Maybe those were the days before the Board of Health.

I remember some very cold VFW picnics at city park. We would come home and get our winter jackets so we could stay to finish off the beer and help clean up.

I remember the big blocks of cheese and mounds of crackers when everyone would cut their own cheese off the block.

I was in the VFW Auxiliary drill team. We had so much fun. Elmer Clausen was our drill sergeant.

*Joyce Fringer
Woodstock*

Down Memory Lane . . . Photographically



Barney and Jim DeWane took photos of VFW members without charge, during his own 50th anniversary celebration of DeWane's Studio held on April 14, 1996. We thank them for this gift to our members.



Mary and Harvey Fedrowitz



Pennie and Roger Nolan



Dick Huebsch



William Lyford



Edna and Lee Hilgeman



Pearl and Fred Reese



Harold Irwin



Clifford Mackey



Helen and Del Lee



Jerry Beckus



LaVern Emricson



Roger King



Charlie Mathey



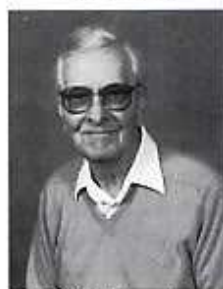
Marion and Harvey Lutz



Lillian Behrens



Karl Henning



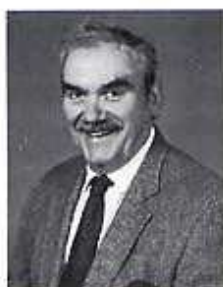
Bill Kriebusch



Marion Messman



Eugenia and Al Mansfield



Larry Dhom



John Hill



Robert Knoll



Elmer Musser

Continued on Page on 25

★★★ Joy's Book Honors All Veterans

A remarkable collection of stories by military veterans has been written and collected by Joy Aavang for a very special book.

Her book, *Fly the Flag for Me*, pays tribute to her husband Irvin, who inspired her to undertake this mission of love and patriotism in 1988.

The book is dedicated to Irv, who died Oct. 13, 1994, "a former U. S. Marine and a true patriot."

This book may be purchased at the Woodstock VFW, Books on the Square, Cath-Lyn's and by calling Joy Aavang at 338-1734. The price is \$20, and profits will go to the VFW for its community service fund.

For several months after Irv's death, she was unable to continue her goal of producing a book from the more than 60 stories she had prepared.

"In early 1995 Butch Borchhardt con-



JOY AAVANG, who wrote and compiled this book about 65 veterans is with Joe Comella, who helped with computer work and production. All profits go to the VFW's community service fund.



JOY DEDICATED the book to her husband, Irvin, shown raising the flag in the square on Memorial Day 1993.

tacted me and said he felt guilty because he had promised Irv he would tell me about his experiences in Vietnam, and he would like me to write it," recalls Joy.

Inspired by the remembrance of Irv's dedication to this project and by Butch's intimate story, Joy was revitalized. That was April 1995. That inspired story is in the collection. She also submitted Butch's story to the McHenry County Historical Society for the new county history book.

"I spent several months finding a printer. The stories were printed in the *Woodstock VFW NEWS* for several months. Cheryl Wormley offered to print the stories in *The Woodstock Independent*. *The Independent* gave me the halftones for my book. Joe Comella put the copy on a computer compatible with the printer's equipment," explains Joy.

Ron Schmitt, McHenry High School teacher, loaned her an IBM computer while Joe was on vacation. Joy added a few pictures to those obtained from *The Independent*.

Fly the Flag for Me has 65 stories by and about veterans. It also includes remembrance of two Woodstock men killed December 7, 1941 at Pearl Harbor (Tom Lounsbury and Joe Nelles), and a tribute to a Marine honored in 1991 after his heroism during the Vietnam war, William Hayes.

The book's title was inspired by Al Mansfield, Woodstock Marine. After giving Joy his military experiences he added, "Tell them to fly the flag for me and all veterans."

The book's red, white and blue cover features an Iwo Jima flag-raising illustration with lettering, "World War II, Korean, Vietnam and Desert Storm" veterans.

One remarkable aspect about this project is Joy's background. She's a native of England. She was born at Yorkshire in 1929 and lived with her grandparents in her youth. The family moved to Hayes in Middlesex, about 50 miles from London, where her grandfather worked in the Fairey Aviation company plant, manufacturing war planes.

"The Spitfire was manufactured near Hayes so this area was under constant V1 and V2 attack. My hearing was partially damaged by a V2 explosion in 1944.

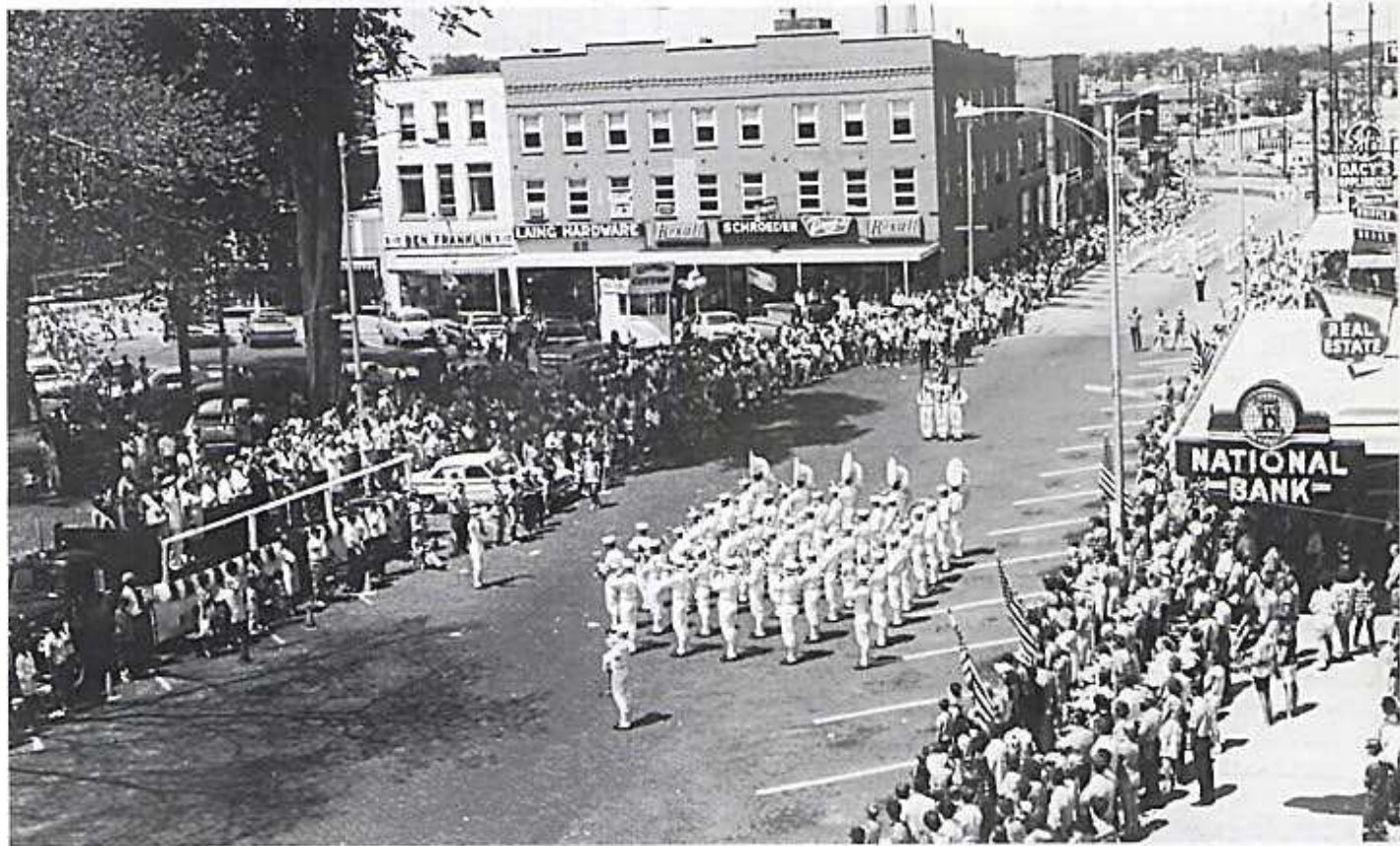
"We became so used to planes in the air, and I saw many dog fights in the sky.

"I came to Woodstock with my grandmother, Jane Hallam. My uncle, George Hallam, lived here, and I had planned to go see my Mother in Canada."

Joy came to Woodstock in April 1947 and began work in the office of the McHenry County Service Company. On a September evening, she recalls seeing Irv Aavang at Knuth's Ice Cream parlor on the square after a football game. The following Wednesday she was waiting for her cousin to give her a ride home from Hunter's Confectionery, and Irv offered her a ride.

"We began dating that week and were soon engaged. We were married June 27, 1948," Joy recalls fondly. "I didn't get to Canada to see my Mother."

V-J DAY—A Community Thrills



THE PARADE, NAVY drum and bugle corps in action at one of the early V-J Day parades... always a crowd-pleaser.

When Maynard Wilkerson became enthralled with drum and bugle corps competition at an Illinois VFW annual meeting in the early 1950s, he launched an event that has an impact on Woodstock's summertime entertainment today.

Maynard was excited with the beauty and music of the drum and bugle corps competition and was confident Woodstock would support a parade and an evening of drum and bugle corps entertainment.

The VFW agreed, and the V-J Day Parade and Pageant of Drums was started in 1955. The name, "V-J Day," came from the closeness of the end of World War II. The choice of that name was to serve as a reminder, a reminder still true today:

Our nation must never again become unprepared and unaware of the dangers that lurk around the world. Japan's sneak attack

was difficult to comprehend—that we would not have the military intelligence to prepare for such a contingency around Pearl Harbor—and so that terrible loss made a lasting impression.

For 20 years, the VFW guaranteed the financial stability of the colorful attraction, bringing the nation's top corps to Woodstock.

This year Dick Tracy Days will bring several fine corps to Woodstock, including a popular one from those V-J Days, the Rockford Phantom Regiment which was a star of the 1971 Pageant of Drums. Tom Menge has rounded up eight drum and bugle corps. Mark Sunday, June 23 on your calendar for a musical thrill.

Many helped with those 20 V-J Day years but among those closest to Maynard in the actual presentation were Roy Stackhouse, Bill Mansfield, LaVern Emricson, Ken Kerns, Bob Behler, and each

Commander during his year of leadership. Don Peasley provided publicity to the news media which helped the public appreciate the finer points of the competition and the top quality year after year.

For the first few years, Maynard explained the finer points of drum and bugle corps competition: military inspection, marching and maneuvering, bugling, drumming, general effect and timing. Those will be the criteria at the WHS field the night of June 23 as well.

Many VFW Posts around the state sponsored V-J Day parade participants. This helped visitors learn Woodstock is a good community with friendly people.

This huge event, along with such efforts as the Fourth of July Festival, Buddy Poppy days, and the Soup to Nuts sale brought members together—working together for a common goal.

With a VFW-Organized Musical Classic



GOVERNOR OTTO KERNER honored our community with his participation in the 10th anniversary Pageant of Drums. He's with Maynard Wilkerson, founder and chairman of all 20 parades and pageants under VFW leadership, augmented by wonderful community support. 1964.



THIS QUARTET was the guiding force behind 20 V-J Day productions: Roy Stackhouse, Maynard Wilkerson, Bob Behler and Ken Kerns.



TOP CORPS enjoyed coming to Woodstock. Skokie Indians were one of the nation's perennial champions.



IN THE FIRST V-J DAY PARADE the VFW float captured the spirit of the VFW: We will "Honor the Dead by Helping the Living." 1955.



AS MAYOR, Ray Heneiken signed proclamations! 1952.



RAY HENEIKEN, our Post's only surviving WWI member, lives in Hollywood, Florida. 1995.

Ray Heneiken, last World War I veteran who is a member of the Woodstock VFW, sends 50th anniversary greetings from his villa at a senior citizen's residence in Hollywood, Florida.

Ray came to Woodstock in 1921 after a restless search for something he wanted to do after World War I. He first

worked for Gerber Canning Co. in Fremont, Michigan. He was a Sergeant in Ray's company. Ray worked in a brickyard, a pottery and at Firestone Rubber, then trained as an apprentice toolmaker at Cleveland (he didn't like that type of work). He went to Chicago to enter a barber college.

A friend got him a job at Jack Rowe's barber shop across from the Miller Theatre. "I was only there a couple of years and bought a rundown barber shop on Benton Street. I moved on Benton to the building facing the railroad tracks and ran three chairs for 25 years," Ray recalls.

In 1946 he turned to real estate with Dan Quinlan, then started his own real estate office in 1948 and also sold insurance. After selling that business he worked with Jim Moricoli in the township assessor's office. When Jim was killed in an auto accident in 1964, Ray was appointed assessor and kept the job until retirement. He had purchased a condo in Florida in 1961 and moved south about 1967.

"I joined the Veterans of World War I and kept busy with veterans. I gave service to more than 100 of my Buddies through the Barracks, and now there's only two of us left,"



RAY HENEIKEN...

Remaining World War I Member



RAY HENEIKEN (right) joins in a tribute to David Joslyn at an American Legion ceremony. That's Doc Edinger at left. May 1974.

says Ray. He was a major participant in Hollywood Veterans Day service last November 11.

When the Woodstock VFW was established in 1946, Ray helped the new veteran's organization serve returning World War II veterans.

During World War I, Ray served in the 32nd division. Ray remembers being in on at least five major offensives, including "the

big push" which started July 18, 1917. This included the Oise-Aisne offensive northwest of Soissons. At that time the 32nd was assigned to the French Tenth Army on August 28, 1918.

In a book, *History of the 126th Infantry in World War I*, the 32nd Division was called "one of America's shock divisions, designated as such ever since it became a combat division.

"Such assignment usually carried with it the most severe fighting which troops were called to do. Every time the Huns became obstinate and refused to budge from their stronghold, the shock troops were assigned to pry them loose from their positions and give them a fresh start toward the Rhine."

Ray was wounded August 29, 1918 during the drive on Juvigny. Ray was taken to the American Hospital at Paris and was in the hospital when the Armistice was declared Nov. 11, 1918. The book has a photo on page 83. Ray says, "That could be me with that gun," a French chau chat, or automatic rifle.

WORLD WAR I & COMPANY G



The Inside Story... Letter from France

By DON PEASLEY

With help from Frances "Mick" Murphy

"Our last trip in the line was a pretty rough one... On Saturday, Nov. 9 we received orders to move up... About 5:30 a.m. on Sunday we started to hop over. We advanced about 12 miles, Jerry surely had a bunch of machine guns in front of us, and he opened up with them all and then with his artillery. We opened up also and we sure had a d—n fine scrap..."

That's how Lester "Doc" Edinger, a Lieutenant in Company G, told Frank Green about the final hours of World War I in a letter from the front, a letter dated 30/Nov/18. This letter is remarkable for many reasons—

for the personal insights and report on Woodstock men in company G in France. This letter was made available by Frances "Mick" Murphy, daughter of Frank Green.

Frank was a farmer and banker as well as a community leader during World War I. He was the link with Company G, and Doc was his source of information.

Continuing Doc's letter written after Armistice, he said he found that the company which was supposed to be on the right flank during the Nov. 10 advance did not advance with Company G. "I decided that was no place for Company G to be alone so I gave order to fall back, which the whole company

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50-YEAR COMMITMENT

Elmer Clausen

Charter Member and Honor Guard Commander

Elmer Clausen, a charter member of the Woodstock VFW and a member of the Post's Honor Guard for 50 years, exemplifies the dedication shown by so many who serve today by helping veterans, conducting programs for youth, and participating in community activities.

Clausen, born Dec. 21, 1911, is typical of the World War II veterans who founded the Woodstock VFW in 1946. Back home from the war, veterans were concerned about housing, veteran's benefits promised by the government, and jobs. They also looked forward to the camaraderie available through associating with those who had been in battles and saw the horrors of war firsthand.

One of the first accomplishments of the VFW membership was to establish an Honor Guard. Clausen has served as Commander of that Honor Guard for 50 years. He remembers the names of the first eight Honor Guard members and speaks proudly of their devotion: Bill Mansfield, Frank Cacci, Joe Thiede, Francis Dittberner, Bob Church, George Wilson, Roy Stackhouse and Clausen.

"We provided a patriotic atmosphere to funerals and conducted a military ceremony. I remember how the firing squad and Honor Guard lined the sidewalk when the casket came out of the church," he recalls.

"Then they would hurry to the cemetery to provide a military setting and fire a salute to honor the departed comrade. I remember how Doc Edinger folded the flag and presented it to a member of the family with a military flair. Arnie Romo did the same later. Men took off from work to serve at funerals."

Elmer remembers he started a ladies drill team in the 1950s "and we marched at Harvard Milk Day," he adds.

When he was 12 years old, he began working at a couple of bakeries, Hoesley and Ludwig bakeries. He quit high school after his sophomore year and "In 1928 or 1929 I was hired by Alemite. I worked as an inspector in the first typewriter building, where Auto-Lite is now. It's a part of the big building."

On March 24, 1942, Elmer was drafted into the Army and was a member of the original 82nd division. After basic training in Loui-

siana, he took glider training at Alliance, Nebraska.

"More training at Camp McCall, N. C. followed. We went overseas in January 1945 to Camp Lucky Strike in Southern France. We were scheduled on five different missions but all were cancelled. We expected to be in on the first landing at Japan."

He stayed in Europe after the war ended and returned to the U.S. in August. He was a Staff Sergeant when he was discharged Dec. 21, 1945, his 34th birthday.

Elmer returned to Auto-Lite but soon quit in 1947 and worked for Conway Dairy, and as a county surveyor. In 1953, surgery sidelined him for three months, and in 1955 he started a 20-year career at Union Special where he laid out tools for drill presses in milling and grinding departments.

A big change in his life occurred when he met Mary Welke at the News Depot.

"Our first date was Jan. 2, 1959," remembers Clausen who was a bachelor. Mary's husband Ernest had died about five years earlier. She had two sons, Ernie Jr. and Ron. Elmer and Mary were married Jan. 2, 1960. "One of our first dates was to the VFW," says Mary, "my first time at the VFW."

Ron was 12 and Ernie Jr. was 6 when they married. Now Elmer and Mary also have three grandchildren: Ron, Lake Geneva; Krista, Lincoln Park; and Christopher, San Clemente, Calif.

Elmer fondly recalls those first years of the VFW. Hard work, he says, and plenty of struggles as the Post acquired the Austin home on Throop Street and worked to make it a good home. In the early 1950s, members voted to build an addition and make that the main home, the present building on the east side of the original house. The original house was torn down and the present addition constructed in the 1970s.

Besides the Honor Guard, Elmer expresses pride in the VFW's many achievements: "Little League, Teacher of the Year, Voice of Democracy program, the Fourth of July Festival in the early 1950s, and the trips to the Veteran's hospital at North Chicago," reminisces Elmer.



ELMER AND MARY CLAUSEN



Did You Know?

The VFW maintains a Veterans Service Office in or near every VA Medical Center to assist all veterans in getting the help they need.

The VFW is involved in Stand Down, a program providing support services and assistance to homeless veterans throughout the nation.

The VFW maintains a special Washington office in our nation's capital to keep national lawmakers aware of issues facing veterans. Our Post 5040 membership helps provide "membership numbers" for the National VFW to capture the attention of Congress and the President.

Over 17 1/2 million veterans served in World War II and Korea. Local VFW Posts help make sure these aging veterans receive the medical care they need.

Down Memory Lane



DWAYNE RANEY saluting during a Memorial Day ceremony. 1974.

My Dad, Knute, signed me up at Post 5040 in October 1953—three months before I was out of the Army. My wife, Geri, became an Auxiliary member. My mother, Florence, was already an Auxiliary member. My Dad and I attended two Post meetings a month for a long time.

I believe one of my first elected positions was Post Chaplain when Dean Mishler was Commander. I have served as assistant Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Jr. and Sr. Vice Commander, Adjutant for six different Post Commanders, trustees, etc.

I served as secretary, vice president and president. What really matters is I was glad to have served when and where I could.

I remember the Bob Freund orchestra playing upstairs and Jim Bates' Esquires downstairs for the V-J State Officers dinners, the Drum and Bugle Corps in the parades, and competing on the high school field the nights that followed.

I recall Post 5040 held a benefit to raise much needed money for the Chicago Cavaliers after a fire destroyed so much.

There were the infamous 5040 Players productions spearheaded by Roger "Ram-Jet" Nolan and others. My personal favorite was the Tricycle Basketball game between coach Bob Collier's men's team and coach Gert Korst's women's team.

I recall winning the VFW State Teener

League baseball title, losing to a team that eventually won the national title.

Presenting awards at both Marian Central and Woodstock high schools was a great thrill for me.

Writing the Commanders Corner in the *VFW NEWS* is a thrill, too. Oh, the memories are going in and out of my mind like a revolving door.

Our first year as Post Commander we dressed up as Santa Claus for a Christmas party at the North Chicago V.A. Hospital.

I served as president of the then VFW Teener baseball league. Later the league disbanded and became the current Senior division of Woodstock Little League. Post 5040 sponsored teams in both programs and was one of the major financial supporters of the Woodstock Midget League and later the local Little League program for a number of years.

One year Post 5040 had a booth at the county fair offering information on how to join the VFW and to sign up new members.

We had a "hard times" party early January one year. A door prize was a door, however, the recipient was awarded a different prize in a concealed envelope attached to the door.

Making lots of new friends all these years has fond memories and a special place in my heart.

We must never forget why our Post was founded. . .to serve our community, county, state and nation as well as the dependents of all veterans whether or not they are members of the VFW.

*Dwayne Raney
Woodstock*



...Working as a waitress at VFW. One of my treasured possessions is a sterling silver tray with "Our Most Sincere Thanks" engraved on it from the club managers, Dan Olcott, Irv Sheckles, Howie Wolff, Gordy Tharp, Terry Phinney and Joe Thiede.

One Halloween party Bob and I were sewn into a large potato sack. We could see out but no one could see in. It took us at least 20 minutes to walk from the corner where Noodles was to the Post home.

During a dinner dance with a hypnotist it was fun to watch people like Frank Holy and Elmer Clausen under the spell.

While preparing Chinese New Year's dinner, one of the recipes called for a cup of salt! Joe Thiede, Joan Mansfield and I looked

at each other, took a deep breath, and poured.

So many parties; Octoberfest with German food and dancers; the Hawaiian Luau when we ate at tables on the floor. The hula dancer taught some how to do the hula. Chinese New Year with a dragon we built to hang from the dining room ceiling was fun and I remember Carson City Nite with Lola Dee.

I think it was the first Poppy Days we had the five Kennedys and Ruby Reynolds selling poppies on the square. That was it. Also, Dick Babcock and Frank Kennedy selling poppies wearing signs, "Soft Money Only."

Inflation: In the 1950s the Auxiliary Christmas party had exchange gifts for 50 cents. Now it's \$5.

My year as Auxiliary President was the only time the Carnival was extended three more days due to bad weather. We had to work fast to order more food, supplies and help. Sometimes we couldn't keep up with the crowd. They drank warm pop and ate half frozen buns.

Soup to Nuts: The Ken Korsts and the Jim Shoemakers started it in 1976 in the VFW parking lot. Bob and I joined the Shoemakers in 1977 and auctioned large items off the tailgate of a truck. Carl Glawe brought grapes to sell—the grapes brought bees—and Mary Clausen got stung. People would buy things and in a year or two would bring them back for resale like the Bob Molthens and the Tom Shufflers.

The loyal volunteers, the donations and the people who purchased have made it such a success. That's VFW!!!

*Bob and Pat Gaylord
Woodstock*



Guenther Wenk



Ruth Gartner Wenk

Honor America

*"Let no ravages of time testify to coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free Republic."
General John A. Logan, May 1868, in the order establishing the first Memorial Day observance.*

DeWane's Studio Photos -

Continued from Page 18



Don Peasley



Cas Polizzi



James Pope



Henry Rasmussen



Art Stolzke



Donald Sword

Down Memory Lane



DEAN AND BETTY MISHLER

Although we are spending our winters in Florida and enjoying it very much, Betty and I are very interested in what is happening at the VFW Post home in Woodstock.

I have served on the board of directors longer than everyone except Joe Thiede. He has been our Quartermaster all these years and I commend him for that! I don't know of another person that has done so much from his heart.

I have great memories from this Post. Being a charter member and Past Commander, I do attend most meetings. Betty and I often talk about the many wonderful memories and times we have had at our Post. I am reminded of the dedicated, hard-working members of the Auxiliary that helped hold this Post together. My wife Betty is a charter member as well as my mother, Clara. Betty also fulfilled different offices and traveled to Downey Veterans Hospital for many years.

Betty was one of the Auxiliettes dance members. They performed for joint meetings and different functions in town. They had the distinction of dancing on the Opera House stage once!

The fire works, carnivals, V-J Days, picnics, Halloween parties and New Year's eve parties with breakfast early the next morning,

and bands on both floors of the VFW. There were the days we had slot machines and helped so many community donations with the money as a service to the community.

Ah, yes, the drill teams of which I was a member for many years and the Auxiliary drill team are fond memories.

I would miss so many if I mentioned names. . . you know who you are. . . and I'm sure you are as proud to be a member of this Post as I am. To all the dedicated workers, I say "thank you."

*Dean and Betty Mishler
Woodstock*



We used to March in the Harvard Milk Day parade. One time, after the parade, a few of us decided it was too early to go home and we went to Sorenson Tavern in Chemung. I can't remember if we marched there and back! We had a lot of energy then.

Anyway, it was in the wee hours of the morning when we got home. The next time I saw Eugenia Mansfield (her husband Al was with us at Chemung), she wanted to know if anyone knew how to give the order: "To the rear, March!"

When the drill teams formed at the VFW, I joined. Somewhere I acquired the tendency to be on time or a few minutes late. Roy Stackhouse came up with the phrase: "Never Fear, Musser Will Be Here." After all these years—and having the tendency of years ago, my favorite saying is "Never Fear, Musser Will Be Here."

*Elmer Musser
Woodstock*

The VFW works diligently to help servicemen and women find employment when they leave the service and enter the civilian job market.

The Inside Story . . .

Continued from Page 22

did in fine shape. We formed a new line just outside the woods and just as we got there we received orders to cease firing, that the war was over."

Wrote Doc: "Well, I'll tell you, Frank, that was the best news as we were in a darn bad place and never could have advanced through the woods as the Germans had it lined with machine guns. But we fought to the finish just the same. We had six men wounded but none killed. No one in the old Company G was hurt."

With the letter Doc included a complete list of the Company G men which left Woodstock and what happened to each. "Those marked Sick Hospital, most of them were gassed," he wrote. He wrote about individual casualty cases and concluded, "We have reports we are going to Luxemburg."

Mick Murphy has donated the letter and muster roll to the McHenry County Historical Society.

On Saturday, Feb. 24, 1962 the VFW honored the surviving members of Company G with a dinner at the VFW. George Sullivan, who was on the front line with Company G when the Armistice was signed, wrote about Company G. Company G went overseas in May 1918 aboard the USS Covington. The company suffered several casualties in the Battle of Argonne Forest, George recalled. "The company was on the firing line near Fremes, France when the Armistice was signed. The company occupied Luxemburg, returned home in May and were discharged at Camp Grant on June 6, 1919."

Woodstock gave the men a tremendous homecoming in a June 10, 1919 celebration. Lieutenants under Captain Owen H. Corr were Doc Edinger and Bill Thomson. Bill Thomson was the first World War I veteran to serve as our Post Commander (1951).

★★★ VFW, The Past 10 Years

March 17, 1986—Post invites Marengo Post 7566 members to join Woodstock VFW Post. Marengo has 137 members.

March 1986—VFW celebrates 40th anniversary. Judge Jim Cooney is master of ceremonies at the 40th anniversary dinner. Tom Morgan, Past Commander, was a special guest.

April 21, 1986—John Hanson elected Commander.

Jan. 19, 1987—Kathryn Balsman wins first in Fifth District Voice of Democracy contest.

April 20, 1987—Office elected with Milton Engebretson elected Commander.

March 20, 1988—Membership chairman John Sorensen reports Post at 100 percent as of this meeting. This means membership equaled the one-year-ago membership total.

April 18, 1988—Officers elected with John Sorensen as Commander.

Dec. 19, 1988—Post officially notified that Walter Kuck is named National Aide-de-Camp.

Jan. 16, 1989—Members expressed appreciation to Dick Huebsch and Ed McNett for erecting the Life Membership board showing 142 names on the list of life members.

Feb. 1989—Irvin and Joy Aavang were congratulated for their work in getting Post members to write their life stories reflecting their military service.

April 17, 1989—Officers elected as follows: Charles Brown, Commander; Jack Meyers, Sr. Vice Commander; Mike Vujovich, Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster; and Dominic Amico, Chaplain.

VFW NEWS wins first place in the Illinois Dept. of VFW competition.

April 16, 1990—Officers elected as follows: Jack Meyers, Commander; Mike Vujovich, Sr. Vice Commander; Jon Showers, Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster; Dominic Amico, Chaplain.

July 16, 1990—VFW NEWS receives second place award in National VFW Post Publication competition.

April 15, 1991—Officers elected as follows: Mike Vujovich, Commander; Jon Showers, Sr. Vice Commander; George Piklor, Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster.

June 17, 1991—VFW NEWS receives third place award from National VFW.

June 17, 1991—John Sorensen recognized at the Post meeting for his revitalizing



MEMORIAL DAY 1991. Presenting colors are George Piklor, Nyda Fogarty, Irv Aavang and Chuck Mathey



FEBRUARY 21, 1994. Commander George Piklor recognizes institutions and individuals who fly the flag properly. Jim Helwig accepts an award for St. John's Lutheran Church.

Memorial Day services and chairing the event for several years.

July 15, 1991—Commander Jack Meyers receives his All-State Commander cap and Joe Thiede receives his All-State Quartermaster pin.

Jan. 29, 1992—Association reports to membership: The mortgage on the building has been paid off. Members asked to sign letters sent to Congressmen in Washington, D.C. regarding veterans hospital rights.

Feb. 8, 1992—Memorial held at the Presbyterian Church, Woodstock, for Frank



1985 INSTALLATION, our leaders for our 40th anniversary. Barbara Gehrke and Ed Buckley, installed by Nyda Fogarty, Past District President, and Ray Soden, Past National Commander.

Kennedy, first Commander of the Post. Frank died Jan. 13, 1992.

April 20, 1992—Officers elected as follows: John Sorensen, Commander; George Piklor, Sr. Vice Commander; Jon Showers, Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster; and Marvin Bohnhoff, Chaplain.

Dec. 21, 1992—Charles Brown elected chairman of the VAC committee, John Weller reported at this meeting.

April 19, 1993—Officers elected as fol

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VFW, Past 10 Years

Continued from Page 26

lows: George Piklor, Commander; Jon Showers, Sr. Vice Commander; Gerald Beckus, Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster; and Marvin Bohnhoff, Chaplain.

April 18, 1994—Officers elected as follows: Jack Meyers, Commander; Gerald Beckus, Sr. Vice Commander; Bob Watts, Jr. Vice Commander; Henry Nulle, second two-year trustee to fill vacancy.

Aug. 15, 1994—Post votes to give \$1,000 to the McHenry County Veterans Assistance Commission. The money helped pay for a new bus to transport veterans to and from VA hospitals.

Oct. 17, 1994—Following resignation of Jack Meyers, Gerald Beckus becomes Commander.

Nov. 21, 1994—John Weller, elected Sr. Vice Commander.

Jan. 19, 1995—Walter Kuck elected Sr. Vice Commander. Jon Showers elected Judge Advocate filling vacancy caused by Walter Kuck's resignation to become Commander.

Jan. 23, 1995—The Woodstock City Council names the baseball diamond in Bates Park Toney Roskie Field. Toney Roskie, father of the Woodstock Little League and active in youth programs in Woodstock since 1929, died on Dec. 21, 1994.

April 17, 1995—Walter Kuck re-elected Commander; Henry Nulle, Sr. Vice Commander; Bob Watts Jr., Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster; Marvin Bohnhoff, Chaplain.

May 1, 1995—McHenry County Veterans Assistance Commission places 1995 Ford nine-passenger van in service.

May 1995—5th anniversary plans begin with Henry Nulle as chairman.

May 15, 1995—Post votes to send contributions to the Oklahoma City VFW following the April 19, 1995 Federal building bombing in Oklahoma City.

June 1, 1995—Joe Thiede retires as club manager with over 25 years in that position.

Aug. 19, 1995—Members honor Joe and Marge Thiede with a dinner.

Nov. 20, 1995—Discussions continue concerning United Veterans Association. Members Walter Kuck and George Piklor represent VFW on the UVA board.

February 1996—Members approve wording for Memorial in Square honoring veterans "Past, Present and Future."



THE VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL, standing on the grounds at the McHenry County Government Center is dedicated to the 35 men from McHenry County who lost their lives during Vietnam. Members of all veteran's organizations participated in the dedication of the memorial on a rainy Memorial Day, 1987.



1995-96 COMMANDER AND PRESIDENT - Walter Kuck, current VFW Commander, and Viola Brown, current VFW Auxiliary President.

February 1996—Rose Kunavich assumes management of food service and the bar.

April 1996—After discussion at a March 11 meeting and a follow-up meeting, members vote to reject proposed bylaws of the UVO.

April 15, 1996—Henry Nulle, elected Commander; Robert Watts, Sr. Vice Com-



VFW COMMANDER Walter Kuck recognizes Eagle Scout recipient Nathan Hodges for his outstanding leadership. Through 50 years, the VFW has recognized Eagle Scout recipients. 1996.

mander; Bill Lyford, Jr. Vice Commander; Joe Thiede, Quartermaster; Marvin Bohnhoff, Chaplain.

May 1, 1996—Reservations open for 50th anniversary dinner. Commander Wally Kuck announces Ray Soden, long-time friend of our Post and Past National Commander, will be the 50th anniversary speaker June 8.

★ WOODSTOCK VFW POST 5040 ★

OFFICERS AND AUXILIARY - 1986-1996

1986-87

Commander John Hanson
 Sr. Vice Commander Milt Engebretson
 Jr. Vice Commander John Sorensen
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Dominic Amico
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Cleo Engebretson
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Chris Gehrke

1991-92

Commander Mike Vuyovich
 Sr. Vice Commander Jon Showers
 Jr. Vice Commander George Piklor
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Dominic Amico
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Cleo Engebretson
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Pennie Nolan

1987-88

Commander Milt Engebretson
 Sr. Vice Commander John Sorensen
 Jr. Vice Commander Charlie Brown
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Dominic Amico
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Cleo Engebretson
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Chris Gehrke

1992-93

Commander John Sorensen
 Sr. Vice Commander George Piklor
 Jr. Vice Commander Jon Showers
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Marvin Bohnhoff
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Pennie Nolan
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Cathy Schmieding

1988-89

Commander John Sorensen
 Sr. Vice Commander Charlie Brown
 Jr. Vice Commander Jack Meyers
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Dominic Amico
 Adjutant Dwayne Raney
 Aux. President Chris Gehrke
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Marge Henry

1993-94

Commander George Piklor
 Sr. Vice Commander Jon Showers
 Jr. Vice Commander Gerald Beckus
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Marvin Bohnhoff
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Barbara Gehrke
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Cathy Schmieding

1989-90

Commander Charlie Brown
 Sr. Vice Commander Jack Meyers
 Jr. Vice Commander Mike Vuyovich
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Dominic Amico
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Barbara Gehrke
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Marge Henry

1994-95

Commander Gerald Beckus
 Sr. Vice Commander Walter Kuck
 Jr. Vice Commander Henry Nulle
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Marvin Bohnhoff
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Cathy Schmieding
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Viola Brown

1990-91

Commander Jack Meyers
 Sr. Vice Commander Mike Vuyovich
 Jr. Vice Commander Jon Showers
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Dominic Amico
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Barbara Gehrke
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Marge Henry

1995-96

Commander Walter Kuck
 Sr. Vice Commander Henry Nulle
 Jr. Vice Commander Robert Watts
 Quartermaster Joe Thiede
 Chaplain Marvin Bohnhoff
 Adjutant Jim Gehrke
 Aux. President Viola Brown
 Aux. Sr. Vice Pres. Bonnie Kagel



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 Over 47 Years Serving McHenry County



Down Memory Lane



PAST COMMANDERS at the 15th anniversary celebration. Front: Don Wilkerson, Frank Cacci, Bill Thomson, William Mansfield, Del Heidenreich. Back: Joe Thiede, Earl Holm, Robert Behler, Arnold Romo, Nick Stemper and Ken Kerns. 1961.

I don't recall exactly when I became a member of Post 5040, but it was shortly after the "Charter Members" had been established, but it has been a long and memorable relationship.

For 10 years I, along with some others drove Auxiliary members along with band members to Downey Veterans Hospital to entertain hospitalized veterans resulting from World War II. As a result the Auxiliary presented me with a VFW ring, which I cherish.

Many activities the Post was involved in during that period of time: A carnival each year at what is now Emricson Park which was highlighted each year with a parade on the square including Drum and Bugle Corps from far and wide who competed for awards at the park in the evening. Huge fireworks displays capped off the 4th of July events. Of course the carnival had all the rides and games attributed to carnivals and Bingo games played with kernels of corn. At one of these events we raffled off an Oldsmobile convertible. Funds raised from these events paid for the fireworks.

"Home" for the Post was an old house on Throop St. until 1953 when we contracted architect William Fyle to design a new building attached to the old house to become our new Post Home. I was elected Post Commander in 1953 and served through the spring of 1954.

Our Post was always active in the District meetings, and in that period we attended the State meeting in East St. Louis, Illinois, to be followed by the National Meeting at Milwaukee, Wisconsin at the very time when the Boston Braves became the Milwaukee Braves, and we used their baseball field for some of our activities. Also during the '53-'54 period we attended functions at the VFW National Home, Eaton Rapids, Michigan.

During the construction of the new home many of the Post members assisted. There were many talents among the members: carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc. Those talents were used constructing the interior of the building such as installing the restrooms, kitchen, all the ceilings, lights, etc. Basically the whole interior was accomplished by working nights, weekends, and Holidays. Bert Holmes, who lived next door, made arrangements to turn his property over to the Post providing much needed parking area after his house was disposed of.

The new Post Home immediately became a focal point for many activities which still persist today. I was the first Commander to be "de-throned" in the new home and turned over the gavel to the new Commander.

It was a learning experience for which I have no regrets!

Delmar Heidenreich
Woodstock

I was President of the Post 5040 Auxiliary from 1978-79. In the spring of 1979 the boundaries of the Fifth District changed to make two more Districts in Illinois which were the 18th and 19th Districts. Everyone wanted to be in the Fifth, known as the "Fired Up Fifth," "Fighting Fifth," or "Fabulous Fifth." A drawing was held and this area won and got to remain the Fifth District.

I was installed as Fifth District President for the 1981-82 term. (the first District leader from Woodstock Post 5040 at that time). Joe Fogarty, my husband, was installed as Commander that same year so together we traveled to Springfield and all department dinners and functions in the northern Illinois area that included the District. It was a great year that culminated with the Department convention held at the Hilton Hotel in Chicago. My District Commander, Ed Becker of Hampshire, led the Fifth District down Michigan Ave. on a very cold, rainy night in June.

In May 1986 I had the privilege of being installing officer with Ray Soden, Tioga Post, Bensenville, Past National Commander, for the installation of Ed Buckley and Barbara Gehrke for Woodstock Post and Auxiliary. Ray Soden was at his very best, as usual.

During my year as District President I started the practice of marching and carrying the District colors in the Fiesta Day Parade in McHenry during July. I have continued this practice but not always with the District flags. The Woodstock Auxiliary has new flags and we march in the Memorial Day parade, Dick Tracy Days parade and the city parade that opens the Christmas season each year.

As a 20-year member of the Post 5040 Auxiliary, I can say it has been the greatest experience I ever had to participate in the VFW programs, North Chicago Veterans Hospital visits, National and State conventions and the great honor of being a Parade Marshal for Memorial Day 1994.

Nyda Fogarty
Woodstock



Dick Howell, a charter member, writes he's not able to prepare his remembrances now—he's been recovering from an illness but wants to send his Best Wishes for a successful 50th anniversary at Post 5040.

Richard Howell
Rockford

★ ★ ★ Youth, One of Our Pillars



A POPULAR ATTRACTION at every Fourth of July Festival sponsored by the VFW in the 1940s and 1950s was a merry-go-round. Mary and Mark Peasley are on the carousel horses at the 1957 attraction at city park.



FOR NEARLY 50 YEARS, a Children's Christmas party, complete with Santa Claus and gifts, was a delight for children (and grandchildren) of VFW and Auxiliary members. 1955 gifts arranged by age group by Auxiliary members.



VFW WAS ONE OF THE founders of the Little League in 1954 (8-12-year-olds) and continues active interest and some financial support. Among those at one of the first meetings were Dwayne Raney, Chris Klambunde, Bob Collier, Jim Moricoli, Les Richards, Ben Davis, George Sullivan and Don Peasley.



THE VFW SPONSORED a Teener League program for players 13-15 years of age. In 1967 Woodstock won the state championship. It played West Allis, Wisconsin, defending National Champion. Woodstock lost the first game, won the second game and lost the third game. West Allis went on to win the National title again. Hitting and pitching mainstays of that 1967 championship team: Mark Peasley, Randy Beu, Steve Frame and Llew Wenck.

Service Officer, Key Post Responsibility

He pays the bill, intercedes for families of veterans, and knows who to work with to obtain needed help.

He's the VFW Service Officer, an office filled for 40 years by Earl Holm, a charter member and Commander in 1955.

The VFW's No. 1 responsibility is to help veterans and/or families of veterans who require assistance. Much of the work is accomplished behind-the-scenes. The VFW does not shout when it responds to a call for help or learns someone is in distress.

How is help given? By interceding with the phone or gas company and asking not to turn off the service because the VFW will pay the bill. By providing money for food or lining up a place to stay. By remembering fatherless or poor children of servicemen at Christmas time.

Earl explains one key way he helped when he was Service Officer was by knowing who to contact...what existing agency or public servant is the one to turn to for assistance. Earl served in this office for four decades for a simple reason: "Families of veterans are close to my heart. I help them fast when kids are involved," he says.

Ron Nehls today occupies this responsible office with distinction and skill.



LEST WE FORGET

It is fitting we observe Veterans Day lest we forget the bravery and sacrifice of both the dead and living veterans. The welfare and destiny of our nation will remain secure as long as our citizens are willing to come to its defense and to lay down their lives, if necessary.

Rev. Clarence Kerr
Nov. 11, 1965
Veteran's Day observance

HONOR AMERICA

"History will record that never have America's fighting men fought more bravely for more unselfish goals than our men in Vietnam."

President Richard M. Nixon,
May 14, 1969, in a nationwide televised talk about ending that war.



JOE FOGARTY AND LORAINE LOSS cut the VFW's 35th anniversary cake. March 1981.



WOODSTOCK VFW NEWS NOVEMBER 1962

The Cross of Malta, official emblem, is nearly 1,000 years old. It was the emblem of the Knights of St. John, the world's first great brotherhood of men who fought to free the oppressed and minister to the sick and needy.

Like the original Crusaders, VFW members have pledged themselves to defend human rights in peace and war.

When a new member joins the VFW and receives his Cross of Malta emblem, he is pledged to always crusade for the freedom of mankind. Also, he promises in the name of comradeship to administer to the sick and needy.

Only through honorable overseas military service can a man qualify to wear this emblem. You, who have received it, wear it proudly.

Those who join the VFW in the days and months and years ahead, will find the Cross of Malta represents truly the highest of ideals. These ideals are exemplified in thousands of ways every year in Woodstock by Post 5040's 611 zealous members.

Quartermaster, On The Front Line

LaVern Emricson, Past Commander, a strong supporter of the V-J Day pageantry and the present Dick Tracy Days Pageant of Drums, is a successful industrialist on the verge of an exciting industrial development on Route 14 and Rose Farm Road.

LaVern knows the VFW and made this comment before our 40th anniversary. "You can't say too much about how the Quartermaster helps anchor the VFW."

The Adjutant is also a vital officer, and I was fortunate to have two outstanding officers at my side.

"The Quartermaster, however, has a job that extends far beyond the meeting. He keeps a record of membership, accepts and accounts for the money, files many reports to the state VFW, mails dues notices and is the catalyst to seek new members or renew the membership of those who are delinquent."

Eugene "Teener" Philipp, Gordon Wallis and Bud and Bob Behler are among those who held this office. Since 1980 Joe Thiede has been Post Quartermaster in addition to serving as club manager.

As Quartermaster he is also a member of the 5040 Association board of directors.

In calling attention to the Quartermasters, we also honor all who have served in an office, on a committee, on a work party, at Bingo, serving a dinner—the list can go "on and on" but please be assured volunteerism is what makes the VFW successful, and many others know your contribution. This special VFW NEWS is a tribute to you.



HONOR AMERICA

"When an American says he loves his country, he means not only that he loves the New England hills, the great prairies glistening in the sun, the wide and rising plains, the great mountains, and the sea. He means that he loves an inner air, an inner light in which freedom lives and in which a man can draw the breath of self respect."

Adlai Stevenson,
1948 Illinois Governor and Presidential candidate, 1952 and 1956.

Down Memory Lane

Thank you for letting me share some of my favorite memories of the VFW.

First, I remember meeting with a handful of men to discuss and start the VFW. This was in the early months of 1946. Some other vets attending this event were Bob Johnson, Bob Conway and Neil Cooney.

I next recall being Firing Squad Sergeant all these years.

We had one of the best squads in Illinois. We were involved with many military funerals and Memorial Day parades. We tried to do everything in a true military fashion.

Being chosen Parade Marshal in 1995 was a real honor! I had my first ride in a horse and buggy.

...Oh, so many happy and sad memories.

Elmer Clausen
Woodstock



My career as a member of VFW Post 5040 Auxiliary has not been unlike many other members but it has been full.

My longest and largest contribution has been to the veterans at North Chicago V.A. Medical Center. My contribution has given me knowledge and appreciation for the men who fought for the freedom I presently enjoy.

I have served as President of the VFW #5040 Auxiliary four terms: 1981-1982; 1982-1983; 1986-1987; 1993-1994.

I have been a member of the Auxiliary since 1971 when De De Schuld was President of the Auxiliary.

Since 1971 I have been Poppy chairman, Hospital chairman, Teacher's Tea chairman, community activities, food stand chairman, bingo chairman, District historian, District Safety chairman, District Color Guard, District Banner Bearer and District Guard. I have also marched in several parades.

Barbara Gehrke
Woodstock

My first opportunity to participate with the VFW was when I lived in Santa Ana, California where I played with a drum and bugle corps as a tenor drummer. Each member was a veteran of World War II or the Korean War. We had a lot of good times trav-

eling throughout the state winning the state championship several times in the early 1950s.

My connection with the Woodstock VFW Post 5040 has been to serve as a trustee and Junior and Senior Vice Commanders. I suppose my greatest interest has been with the Honor Guard. Being able to honor a fallen comrade gives me a sense of doing something worthwhile. Participating in the Memorial Day and Veterans Day activities is a top priority with me while working with a great bunch of fellow veterans.

Hank Nulle
Woodstock



I joined the VFW in 1957 and have been a member since. My daughter, Patricia Hage Nelson, joined the Junior Unit when she was 15 years old, transferring to the Auxiliary when she was 18.

I served as Auxiliary President in 1962 for 14 months. Irv Aavang and I carried the American flag several years in the Harvard Milk Day parade, V-J Day parade and general convention parades.

I worked in the VFW kitchen a lot, serving many dinners and fish fry meals. I remember I served a wedding dinner and they wanted baked ham. I took some Mogen David wine from the bar, mixed brown sugar and dry mustard and stuck cloves in the ham. It had never been done before and we received quite a few compliments.

My daughter had her wedding reception at the VFW in June 1968.

In all it was a fun time—I enjoyed every minute. Now, I'm too old to attend events.

Evelyn Grace Hoey
Harvard



Roger and I have lived in this town longer than our hometown. In his "hey day" Roger created and performed many helpful acts for the VFW and other members of this town. Here are some highlights I remember:

...The basketball game on tricycles with Gert Korst leading the "Bloomer Girls" forth with a resounding "Knockers up" much to the embarrassment of yours truly.

...The infamous Radio Days with Art Schuld as the Lone Ranger and Roger as Tonto. "What do you mean 'we' white man?"

Most unforgettable to many of us was our Valentine's Day production of Hearts and Flowers. Some very loyal friends joined in

to present the "Mock Wedding." We handled everything—publicity, decorations, food preparation and service. We practiced and then dressed very strangely for the play. We would have had a better time if we hadn't been so tired. Perhaps that's why we never repeated a night like that.

...Christmas parties and Halloween parties... Roger winning first place as "Roger Ramjet." Some happy memories.

Roger and Pennie Nolan
Woodstock



As a child of a VFW member and an Auxiliary member, I think I can speak for all the VFW kids in saying you—our Post 5040 family—have made us very proud.

Through your actions we have learned the importance of military strength. Because of your courage we enjoy freedom. We have learned to respect the disabled through your example. I recall many trips to Downey Hospital and your bringing veterans to V-J Day.

My Dad (Maynard Wilkerson) is always quick to point out that V-J Day—"Best Show in the Midwest"—was so successful because of the whole-hearted community cooperation and participation. The VFW led the way, assuming financial and organizational responsibility and encouraging many children to participate in this wholesome activity.

Many children have enjoyed your Christmas parties, picnics and playground equipment your funds bought. Many have benefited from your helping organize and continually supporting the Woodstock Little League and countless other community programs and services.

Your hard work and dedication have taught me much and have brought deserved recognition to the VFW and the City of Woodstock.

Congratulations on a job well done—keep 'em flying.

By the way, as a child at the VFW I learned to peel potatoes, play the slot machines, and that martinis taste awful.

Diana Wilkerson
Woodstock



HONOR AMERICA

*"Ask not what your country can do for you,
ask what you can do for your country."*

President John F. Kennedy,
1960 Inaugural address.



BUDDY POPPIES!

Wear With Pride

From *Woodstock VFW NEWS*
MAY 1969

When we help sell VFW Buddy Poppies—and when we buy them—we are crystalizing our promise to help our disabled comrades and their dependents.

When we buy a VFW Buddy Poppy, we tell the world of our pride in these valiant men and women.

Every time you see a Buddy Poppy, pray earnestly that never again will this nation become involved in a war. Pray also that wars, somehow, will soon come to an end.

As you wear your bright red flower with a green center be thankful you are an American.

In a nutshell, that's why your cooperation on Buddy Poppy Days (each year) is so vital.

This sale—we (VFW and Auxiliary) sell them and the public buys them—is the best way we have to fulfill an important obligation:

- To help preserve and strengthen comradeship and to help those comrades who need help.
- All proceeds go for the welfare and comfort of disabled and needy veterans and their dependents.

Down Memory Lane

My congratulations to the Woodstock VFW on its 50th anniversary.

What distinguishes the Woodstock VFW, and perhaps what contributed to its longevity, is that the VFW, while it has a select membership, has opened its doors and its arms to the Woodstock community whenever it could be of aid. This I know from my years of community service, including my



RON NEHLS is representative of the hundreds who have sold Buddy Poppies these 50 years. Ron helped with the VFW's memorial in the square by donating the bronze plaque dedicated May 27, 1996.

• Support of the VFW National Home at Eaton Rapids, Mich., is one key way this money helps—orphans of veterans live in this wonderful place.

service as mayor of Woodstock.

Perhaps it is the unique charter of the VFW that has made for its success. While we all hope for peace, there is a bonding, a communality between those who serve their country, and especially those who served during foreign wars.

*H. Joseph Gitlin, Attorney
Woodstock*

Down Memory Lane

I worked as a tool and die maker at Auto Lite. I had a deferment because the plant had a government contract to make the Norden bombsight. In 1943, I asked for a non-deferment classification. My wife, Mary Frances Green, and I were married in 1941. I had attended St. Mary's Grade and High School and Illinois Institute of Technology, majoring in civil engineering.

Although I had a wife, a 1-year-old daughter and another child on the way, I volunteered for the Navy. After training at Great Lakes, I was stationed overseas at Momote Airstrip in the Admiralty Islands, then assigned to the USS Tangier, a seaplane tender, in Lingayen Gulf. I worked on instruments on PBMs and PBYS. The crew did search flights along the China Coast where we rescued downed air crews.

After a leave in July 1945 when I met my second daughter for the first time, I returned to my ship and we headed for Northern Japan with a squadron of PBMs. We took over the seaplane facility in Ominato Bay, Honshu to obtain air photos of the coast on Hokkaido.

I returned to Woodstock after my December 31, 1945 discharge and resumed working and raising my family. My wife and I farmed west of Woodstock and raised nine children. After retiring in 1988, Mary and I moved to North Turtle Lake, Wis.

The VFW has been a fine organization throughout its 50 years and a social center of activity and camaraderie for many families. The Murphy family includes many veterans—my father, Clarence, World War I veteran; my brothers, Clarence Jr. and Clifton, World War II veterans; as well as my two brothers-in-law, Joe Fogarty and Carl Wren. My son Mark was also in the Army.

Ray Murphy

North Turtle Lake, Wisconsin



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*Wishing Post 5040,
fifty more years
of success!*

Down Memory Lane

I had 33 years of duty of which 10 years were active duty.

I retired as Colonel in 1979. Unfortunately, I was never overseas. I was commissioned Second Lieutenant Horse Cavalry in August 1940 and was on active duty in Ordinance, having volunteered in August 1941; therefore was on active duty on Dec. 7, 1941.

Lorena and I came to Woodstock in 1946 and was well aware that Frank Kennedy and Don Wilkerson were among key organizers of VFW along with Maynard Wilkerson. I attended high school with all three. Don was my assistant when I recruited where I headed Industrial Relations at Woodstock Die Casting.

I have distinct memories of speaking at least twice at special meetings at the VFW. I recall these speeches were related to my chairmanship of building the municipal swimming pool in Woodstock, and the All-America City committee of which I was chairman.

John Strohm was our creative leader. As chairman, I tried to tie things together and frequently made speeches when John was out of town for All-America City.

I feel the VFW of Woodstock has been a dynamic influence in town, including the parades.

**Dan Andrew
Woodstock
Chairman, All-America City Committee**



It seems it was only a short time ago that Post 5040 was formed, not 50 years. I will run through my memory banks and see what events I can recall that had special effects on the Post.

I recall Neil Cooney as our first Post Commander. That first year was crucial to the survival of the Post, but fortunately we had a group of dedicated veterans who kept things going.

The opportunity came a few years later to purchase some property for a Post home. The Post had no assets to speak of at that time, but through the efforts of Bob Conway financing was arranged and the purchase was made.

During the first few years of the Post existence, the bodies of our deceased vet-

erans were being returned home for burial. It became apparent that no organization in Woodstock was prepared to offer burial services. At this point, Don Wilkerson organized and somehow equipped a firing squad and honor guard. Post 5040 then assumed the role of honoring the returning dead and giving them a military funeral.

Soon after the purchase of a Post home, the membership started growing, and with the Post growth came the many VFW sponsored events: Fourth of July celebration, Teener League, softball teams, bowling teams, golf tournaments, McHenry County Fair involvement, Salute to Gold Star Mothers, and the \$500 drawing.

It should be stated that another event happened early in the Post history which had a lasting affect on the Post—the formation of the Ladies Auxiliary.

It ranks at the top of the list with their dedication and contributions to our Poppy Days and other undertakings which were successful.

The V-J Day celebration was my favorite event. I recall when Maynard Wilkerson mentioned we should sponsor a parade and Pageant of Drums for V-J Day. Well, we did and you know the rest of the story. Several other people were instrumental in making this event a success; namely, Roy Stackhouse, Bill Mansfield, Ken Kerns, Erv Burg, LaVern Emricson and all the other Post members.

I remember Earl Holm mentioned we should have some way of keeping our members informed of Post events. The VFW NEWS was born, spearheaded by Earl and Don Peasley.

Of course no one will forget the Saturday night events at the Post when Danny Olcott was steward. Many times people could barely squeeze in the door, it was so crowded.

We must also remember Elmer Clausen and those V-J Day dances staged at the Woodstock Armory.

As for me, the highlight of my tenure at the Post was meeting and marrying my sidekick and partner, my lovely wife, Lory. We are presently residing in sunny Florida and enjoying our long awaited retirement.

**Bob Behler
Pinellas Park, Florida**



Down Memory Lane Vignettes

JAMES S. ROBERTSON, LONG BEACH, CALIF.—Poor health prevents Jim and his wife Mamie from coming to the June 8 celebration. "I would like to attend and meet and visit old friends. I am an insulin dependent diabetic. Mamie is an amputee, having lost her right leg nine months ago. With the aid of a walker and wheel chair (and prothesis), she is going pretty good. . . Congratulations and may the Post continue its good work for another 50 years."

ARLINE MORICOLI KARLSON, LADY LAKE, FLA—"How time flies. It seems just a little while ago that the Polizzi brothers along with a few others asked me to help plan the dinner and celebration in starting the Woodstock VFW. Fifty years later you all have the integrity and great will to keep the 'ball rolling' and to do all the great and good work."

Adds Arline: "It's a great honor to have been remembered as a part of your endeavor."

JAMES A. OGLE, JR., WOODSTOCK—"While I've been a rather passive member, I'm concerned about the future and proud of the VFW's past. Henry Nulle, the Senior Vice Commander, should be commended for his efforts in several areas, such as calling attention to the absence of observance of 'Remember Pearl Harbor Day' on December 7."

RUTH DOUGLASS, MESA, ARIZ.—Enclosed is a check toward the 50th anniversary celebration which I'm sending in memory of my brother F. Wayne Schuler. He always supported anything the VFW was involved in. Good luck with your anniversary."



HONOR AMERICA

"What constitutes the bulwark of liberty and independence? Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands everywhere."

**Abraham Lincoln
at Edwardsville, Illinois, Sept. 11, 1858.**



AN HISTORIC PHOTO! Past Commanders pose with John "Buck" Jenkins, first National VFW officer to visit our VFW, following a dinner for the distinguished visitor at the Woodstock Country Club. From left, front: Bill Mansfield, 1950-51; Bill Thomson, 1951-52; Jenkins, National VFW Senior Vice Commander-in-chief; Arthur Schuld, present Commander; Don Wilkerson, 1948-49; Frank Cacci, 1949-50. Back: Nick Stemper, 1959-60; LaVern Emricson, Commander-Elect for 1964-65; Joe Thiede, 1954-55; Ervin Burg, 1962-63; Arnold Romo, 1958-59; Earl Holm, 1955-56; Dean Mishler, 1961-62; and Kenneth Korst, Junior Vice Commander-Elect, 1964.



LOYALTY DAY, held on May 1st is a major patriotic program of the VFW Auxiliary. Toni Gagnac displays the poster. 1973.



DOMINIC AMICO, chaplain from 1979 through 1992, is pleased he could serve veterans in this vital office. "I was able to help and make a difference," he smiles.



NOVEMBER 4, 1968 STUDENTS of Northwood School had an opportunity to appreciate Veterans Day and its significance in an assembly. Men who have served in wars dating to 1898 participated. From left, front: Jim Shoemaker, Korean War; Marcellus Senne, World War II; Ray Bielski, Vietnam War; Lester Edinger, World War I; and Paul Smith, Spanish-American War 1898. Back: Tony Shoemaker, Northwood student, son of Jim Shoemaker; May Chesak, longtime teacher, and Barbara Bielski, Northwood student and daughter of Ray Bielski.

HONOR AMERICA

"We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage."

President John F. Kennedy, 1960 Inaugural address.

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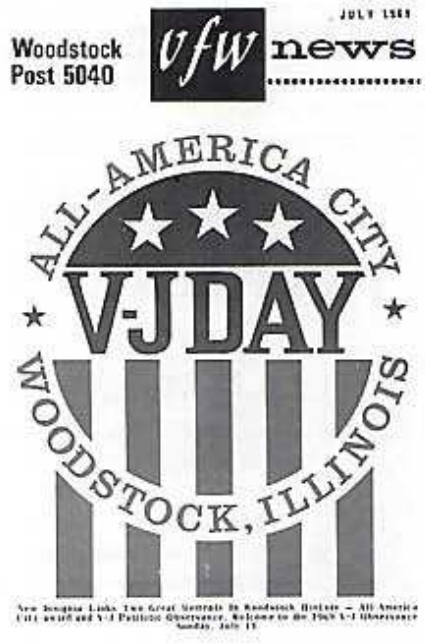
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Post 5040—
Congratulations on celebrating your
50th anniversary. You are a very
important asset in our community.



A LOOK TO THE PAST

A VIGNETTE OF PAST VFW NEWS COVERS

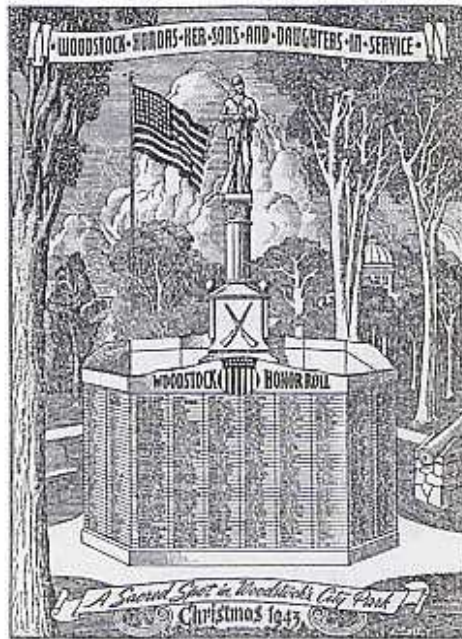




World War II Honor Roll

"The community Honor Roll in the city park shines like a beacon in the sky." Thus wrote the *Daily Sentinel* in 1943.

The emotions of the time may have added to this dramatic description but it is evident from other stories in the *Woodstock Daily Sentinel* during World War II that the list of 700 names on a specially constructed display surrounding the Civil War statue in the picturesque City Square was a moving tribute.



The Honor Roll was erected by the city council in cooperation with the *Daily Sentinel*. Mayor Raymond Johnson named Alderman Arthur Desmond to supervise construction. He solicited the help of city employees under the direction of Ray H. Corr. City electricians under the direction of John Seagrist lit the display for an impressive nighttime salute.

George Sullivan, World War I veteran who was editor of the *Sentinel*, supplied the



It was "the thing to do," say Alice Nulle. During World War II, girls had their photo taken by the Honor Roll to send to their serviceman/boyfriend. This is Shirley Green. 1944.

names which were hand-lettered on wood by O. C. Gustafson. Sullivan did a masterful job of writing about the activities of veterans during World War II, and his compilation of photos and stories is a valuable part of the VFW's archives. Those books and photos will be on view for several days before and after the VFW's 50th anniversary dinner. Many of the photos were collected and framed by Irvin Aavang to preserve them.

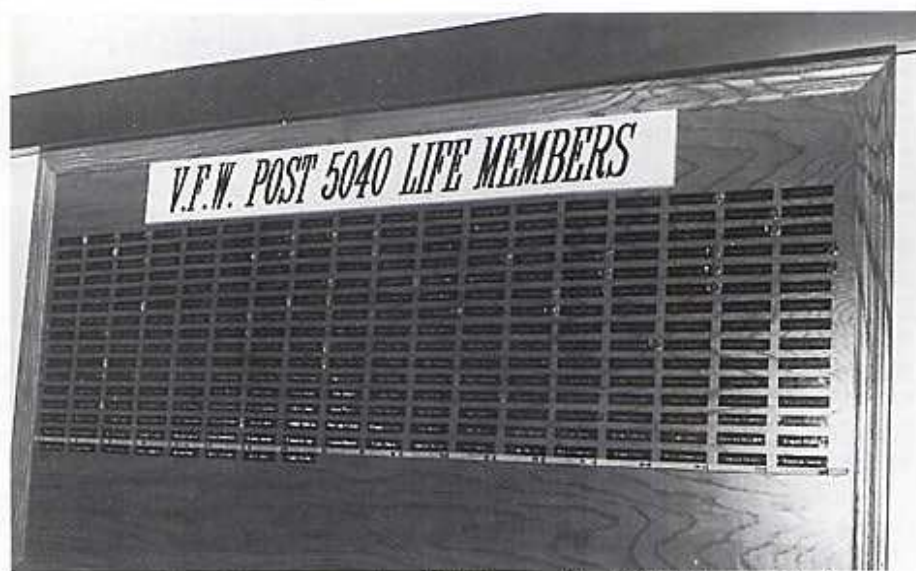
In this 1943 story and photo about the Honor Roll, Sullivan wrote that "probably no community in the United States the size of Woodstock has contributed as much manpower as Woodstock. Surely no other community has had as many young men in the main battles of the war as this community."

In 1943 and possibly in later years, the *Sentinel* sent an artist's rendition of the Honor Roll to every man or woman from Woodstock in service. Copy on a 1944 card states, 1,200 names are on the Honor Roll, "of which 18 were designated with a Gold Star up to June 21, 1944."

Alice Nulle found the photos with this story and recalls the Honor Roll was up until the spring of 1947. The people in her photos are Shirley Green in the summer of 1944 and Joan Martin and Mary Johnson in the winter of 1945. Alice did some research at the McHenry County Museum and said the names may have included people from nearby villages such as Greenwood and Franklinville.

I would welcome any information about this Honor Roll readers can provide.

Don Peasley



LIFE MEMBERSHIP adds to the strength and effectiveness of the VFW. This board at the Post home, provides a permanent record of dedicated veterans.

★★★ For the Record

VFW Commanders

1945-46	Neil Cooney
1946	Frank Kennedy
1947	Bob Conway
1948	Don Wilkerson
1949	Frank Cacci
1950	Maynard Wilkerson
1951	Bill Thomson
1952	Bill Mansfield
1953	Del Heidenreich
1954	Joe Thiede
1955	Earl Holm
1956	Roy Stackhouse
1957	Robert Behler
1958	LeRoy Corey & Arnie Romo
1959	Nick Stemper
1960	Kenneth Kerns
1961	Dean Mishler
1962	Ervin Burg
1963	Arthur Schuld Jr.
1964	LaVern Emricson
1965	Kenneth Korst
1966	Howard Wolff
1967	Dwayne Raney
1968	Edwin Wille
1969	Art Schuld Jr.
1970	Robert Molthen
1971	Fred Douglass
1972	Edwin Wille
1973	Al Gignac
1974	Joe Thiede
1975	Charles Gehrke
1976	Dewayne Raney
1977	Jim Gehrke
1978	Jim Gehrke
1979	Charles Gehrke
1980	Fred Douglass
1981	Joe Fogarty
1982	Larry Kyle
1983	Walter Kuck
1984	Joe Bärter
1985	Ed Buckley
1986	John Hanson
1987	Milt Engebretson
1988	John Sorensen
1989	Charlie Brown
1990	Jack Meyers
1991	Mike Vuyovich
1992	John Sorensen
1993	George Piklor
1994	Gerald Beckus
1995	Walter Kuck
1996	Henry Nulle

Auxiliary President

1947	Genevieve Conway Steagall
1948	Alta Kirkman
1949	Irene Gorenflo
1950	Robin Kennedy
1951	Patricia Gaylord
1952	Ruby Wilkerson
1953	Joan Mansfield
1954	Eleanor Torgeson
1955	Leonie Kennedy
1956	Beulah Cristy
1957	Naomi Olcott
1958	Vera Erb
1959	Hazel Lappin
1960	Zelma Schulz
1961	Naomi Olcott
1962	Grace Holy
1963	Zelma Schulz
1964	Marguerite Lange
1965	Helen Kyle
1966	Glenna Cross
1967	Glenna Cross
1968	Yvonne Wolff
1969	Mary Wille
1970	Dee Dee Schuld
1971	Marian Long
1972	Marian Long
1973	Vera Erb
1974	Vera Erb
1975	Zelma Schulz
1976	Chris Gehrke
1977	Sue Kyle
1978	Nyda Fogarty
1979	Glenna Cross
1980	Barbara Gehrke
1981	Lorraine Loss
1982	Chris Gehrke
1983	Marian Long
1984	Chris Gehrke
1985	Barbara Gehrke
1986	Cleo Engebretson
1987	Cleo Engebretson
1988	Chris Gehrke
1989	Barbara Gehrke
1990	Barbara Gehrke
1991	Cleo Engebretson
1992	Pennie Nolan
1993	Barbara Gehrke
1994	Cathy Schmieding
1995	Viola Brown
1996	Viola Brown

Woodstock VFW

"Teacher of the Year"

Award Winners

1957	Mary Gannon
1958	Margaret Beatty
1959	Ethel Weinke
1960	Stasia Gannon
1961	Harold Ray
1962	Larry Dale
1963	Gladys Laughlin
1964	Marguerite Desmond and Vivian Witt
1965	Marian Krockow
1966	Jennette Burbank
1967	Gladys Perkins
1968	Ruth Wilson
1969	Jennette Burbank
1970	Ruth Krockow
1971	Dorothy Luedtke
1972	Verda Dierzen
1973	Nina Witherell
1974	Francis Hellstern
1975	Dorothea Himmler
1976	Jean Schmiedescamp
1977	Leona Clark
1978	Paul Schultz
1979	Anna Walkington and Bud Swartout
1980	Beulah Allayaud and Theresa Dirrenberger
1981	Thomas Parsley
1982	Mary Ellen Howard and Robert Schroeder
1983	Isabelle Wilson
1984	Sandy Monson
1985	C. David Pierce
1986	Darlene Gorski and Richard Peters
1987	None
1988	Jim Shipley
1989	Sister Mardelle
1990	Betty Sarbaugh and Marguerite Donahue
1991	None
1992	Margaret Bach and Eddie LeCrone
1993	Carl Kaufmann
1994	None
1995	None

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering our leaders who have died

PAST

COMMANDERS

Robert Conway	1965
Bill Thomson	1980
Neil Cooney	1981
Al Gignac	1981
Joe Barter	1987
Milt Engebretson	1989
Don Wilkerson	1989
Bill Mansfield	1990
Arnold Romo	1991
Frank Kennedy	1992
Joe Fogarty	1994
Ed Buckley	1994
Larry Kyle	1994

PAST PRESIDENTS

(May be Incomplete)

Alta Kirkman	1964
Leonie Kennedy	1970
Hazel Lappin Philipp	1979
Eleanor Torgeson	1981
Vera Erb	1986
Helen Kyle	1987
Ruby Wilkerson	1989
Naomi Olcott	1992

VFW

OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure national security through maximum military strength.
2. Speed rehabilitation of the nation's disabled and needy veterans.
3. Assist widows, orphans and dependents of disabled and needy veterans.
4. Promote Americanism through education in patriotism and constructive service in our own communities.



Photo Memories Continue...



JOHN SORENSEN, Commander, conducts ceremony honoring Marge and Joe Thiede. 1989



COMMANDERS Ed Wille (1972) and Al Gignac (1973)



BECAUSE OF THEIR extended involvement the Kennedys are remembered as "the first family" of VFW. From left: Leona Kennedy, 1955 Auxiliary President; Robin Kennedy (Frank's wife), 1950 Auxiliary President; Frank Kennedy, elected Commander in 1946; Patricia Kennedy Gaylord, 1951 President and active all through the years including chairman for many years of the highly successful "Soup to Nuts" sale; and Jane Kennedy Dahm. 1957.



FIRST INSTALLATION ceremony in our new building. Heading this group of officers is Joe Thiede, incoming Commander. May 1954.



CHARTER MEMBERS at the 35th anniversary, March 7, 1981, front: Jim Whiston, Dominic Amico, Jim Cooney, Dean Mishler, Jack Cooper, Al Mansfield, Pat Buckley, Joe Thiede. Second row: Bud Thompson, Don Wilkerson, Bill Mansfield, Bob Joorfetz, Bill Padofski, George Wilson, Harold Irwin, Elmer Musser, Fred Reese. Third row: Bob Reynolds, Chuck Mansfield, Ray Brown, Clayton Wallis, Jack Wendt, Elmer Clausen, Del Lee, Wilbur Kiefer, George Burke, Walter Bernhardt, Erwin Bauman. Back: Maynard Wilkerson, Bob Clark, Nick Polizzi, Gordon Wallis, Alfred Messman, Lester Sohst, Francis Dittberner, Dick Rabbitt, Ray Murphy, Harold Meyer and Gerald Palmquist.

★ ★ ★ From the Editor

The *Woodstock VFW NEWS* has been a distinctive feature of Post 5040 for four of its five decades—since July 1955. It has earned 11 national awards, more than 25 state awards and praise for its contribution to the Post's betterment.



When I approached Commander Earl Holm in May 1955 about a monthly Post publication, I explained the purpose would be to provide a regular communications tool with members. Even though members might not be able to attend all meetings, members would be informed of the Post's goals and willingly respond to calls for help.

When the National award named *Woodstock VFW NEWS* the No. 1 Post publication in the nation, National VFW Commander-in-Chief H. R. Rainwater observed: "The *Woodstock VFW NEWS* was in a class by itself and obviously represents many hours of hard work. The quality of photographs, the readability of the publication, and the overall excellence of makeup and content impressed all involved in judging."

This is cited to stress the importance of membership support for this publication. The National awards through the years bring credit to our Post.

This is a good time for me to

say "Thank You" to the hundreds who have helped through the years—from supplying information to arranging photos and putting up with stories I missed—and for your forgiveness when I overlooked an individual's achievement in behalf of the VFW and Auxiliary because of my oversight.

I would like to express my appreciation for the help in producing this monthly publication provided by Ken Kerns and Frank Loss. In the early 1970s, Frank helped out in production. Joe and Marge Thiede handled mailing for years, a big job. Now Bob Watts has the job, succeeding Jerry Becku's tenure in distribution.

A special "Thank You," also to the many who responded with vignettes for this special issue's **Down Memory Lane** feature. —Don Peasley

Woodstock VFW NEWS Founder and Editor, National VFW Awards for Post Publication: No. 1 in 1956, 1963, 1971 and 1985. Second in 1968, 1970, and 1990. Third in 1983, 1984, 1986 and 1991.



OUR WALL OF FAME. Numerous national awards for our *Woodstock VFW NEWS* publications are on display at the VFW.

Thank You

My thanks to the many individuals, businesses and organizations who supported this 50th anniversary *Woodstock VFW NEWS* with their financial contributions.

Don Peasley,
Woodstock VFW NEWS founder and editor

Fred Reese
Howard Knutson
Karlen Cooney
Glen Fringer
Jim Ogle
Ray Brown

Joe Thiede
Marge Thiede
Charles Mathey
American Legion
Dick Huebsch
Bill Kniebusch

Art Stolzke
Jimmy Shoemaker
Floyd Wilcox
Bob Gaylord
Pat Gaylord
Ray Sherry
Jeanette Hopper
Del Lee
Helen Lee
Bob Joorfetz
John Weller
John Hill
Elmer Musser
Marion Messman
Grace Messman
Harold Irwin
Ray Parisek
Arnold Wieberg

Ferd Raffel
Harris Wesson
Leonard Irlacker
Donald Sword
Gert Schmidt
Marion Thurrow
James Stone
Robert Shisler
Bob Molthen
Carl Glawe
Howard Walkington
Henry Nulle
Edward Henry
George Kiefer
Francis Dittberner
Emtech
Jay Steiler
Carole Courier
Clarence Pearson
George Johnson
Bill Cummins
Leonard Beetstra
Benoy Motors—Ray
Ron Nehls
Annamae Weber
Robert Hemmingsen
Maynard Wilkerson
Roy Stackhouse
Ruby Stanger
Marguerite Johnson
Marion Smith
Clifton Murphy
Russel Brown
Gerald Palmquist
Dean Kingston
Leon Rahn
Bill Ueber
Don Perkins
Arnold Polzin
Bob Collier
Gene Fuller
Carl Henning
Jon Showers
Ruth Douglass in memory
of Frank Schuler
Frank Nickels
Cas Polizzi
Joy Aavang
Robert Greenlee
Betty Thiede
Olis Setser
Arnold Hay
Earl Holm
Jack Meyers
Soup to Nuts
Bob Reynolds
Paul Murdock
Barbara Gehrke
Bernard Danielson
Martin Brugger
Ted Pierce
Leonard Hilgeman
Elmer Clausen
Bruce Shisler
Marge Harrington
Bob Karstensen
Lester Sohst
Jerry Wright
Dean Mishler
Jim Pope
Charlie Brown
Bill Stake
Al Mansfield

Art Schuld
Dave Moritz
Harry O'Brien
Winifred Conley in memory
of Bob Conley
Vlasta Jiracek
Bill Cooney in memory
of Neal Cooney
Nyda Fogarty
Robert Behler
Del Heidenreich
Glen Gibson
Donald Huff
Bob Watts
Bob McCoy
Vern Woehler
Gordon Wallis
Bill O'Neill
Phil Meier
Leon LaBaron
Andrew Nelson
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Harvey Lutz
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Lester Crossman
Ray Murphy
Marcelene Schuld
Gerald Donahue
Allan Brenner
Seymour Mann
Fred Frenk
Florence Socha
John Widmayer
Ronald Fleming
Jack Fish
Edward Lange
Jessie Berry
Robert Kramer
Ray Heniken
Alex Sharpe
Fran Amico
Robert Blatzheim
LeRoy Corey
David Sears
Mary Stompanato
AMCORE Bank
Harris Bank
Joan Jung, State Farm Ins.
John Kennedy
LeRoy Corey
Donald Smith
Dwayne Raney
Vernon Kopsell
Thomas Mobile
Ed Wilson
Mary Lou Mishler
Robin Kennedy
Cherry Kot
Bernard Danielson
Elwood Sherwin
Ruth Wenk
Jim Gehrke
James Robinson
Gustave Bloese
John Curran
Bob Bailey
Ken Korst
Ray Stanger
Lou Aiello

VFW MEMORIAL DEDICATION—May 27, 1996

VFW Commander Walter Kuck's address to dedicate the VFW's 50th anniversary gift to the city honor veterans:

"We are assembled here to pay tribute to the men and women of our community who have served in the Armed Forces—our neighbors who have fought in defense of this country and for the preservation of our way of life.

"On this Post's 50th anniversary, we dedicate a memorial in the Square to veterans of all wars—past, present and future.

"To you young people, I say: Never let there be any future veterans or wars. Don't ever forget the price paid for liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I urge you to carry on the tradition of honoring our veterans each Memorial Day.

"The VFW wishes to thank the Mayor and City Council for allowing us to place this monument in the park so we may show our appreciation for our comrades-in-arms.

"Our Post Chaplain, Marvin Bohnhoff, will now ask for Divine blessing."

VFW HONOR GUARD
at VFW's 50th anniversary
veteran's memorial gift to
Woodstock. From left,
front: George Piklor, Elmer
Musser, Charles Mathey,
Arthur Schuld Jr., Bob
Molthen, Ray Hills, Bill
Lyford, Fred Reese, Jack
Meyers and Henry Nulle,
Honor Guard Commander.
Back: Ed Henry, American
Legion Commander
holding the Stars and
Stripes.
May 27, 1996.



SEVEN CHARTER MEMBERS of Post 5040 participate in the dedication ceremony for this VFW memorial honoring veterans "past, present and future." Front: Ron Nehls, who donated the plaque; Harold Irwin, Joe Thiede, Elmer Musser, Dr. Bernard Neuchiller, Fred Reese, Jack Meyers and Ray Brown. Back: Henry Nulle, VFW Senior Vice Commander; Viola Brown, VFW Auxiliary President; and Walter Kuck, VFW Commander.
May 27, 1996.

Woodstock VFW NEWS

240 Throop Street
Woodstock, Illinois 60098

Address Correction Requested

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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



Comrades and Sisters
Woodstock Post 5040

On this special day when you celebrate the 50th anniversary of your Post...Woodstock Post...you honor the veterans from your community as well as the courage, bravery, dedication and sacrifice of all veterans who served our country so that we can live in freedom today.

The Post is the basic unit, the foundation of our organization. Everything we are and everything we ever will be starts right here at the VFW Post, for it is here that the members meet to discuss, to plan and to build a better organization and in turn a better future for America.

I thank you for allowing me to share this very special day with you. Believe me, if I could I would deliver these remarks in person. One of my goals this year as the VFW National Commander-in-Chief is to meet as many VFW and Ladies Auxiliary members as possible. You are the men and women who are serving our veterans everyday, and who are making this year a success, because you are answering the *CALL TO DUTY*.

Yours in comradeship,

Paul A. Spera
Commander-in-Chief



True to its past - Confident of its future

City of Woodstock - P.O. Box 190 • 121 W. Calhoun Street • Woodstock, Illinois 60098 • 815/338-4300

William A. Anderson
Mayor



June 8, 1996

Dear V.F.W. members,

It is with pleasure that I recall the relationship between the City of Woodstock and Woodstock VFW Post 5040. Over the years the VFW has been supportive of the city and cooperative in providing manpower and funding for many community events. Some examples of these contributions are:

- Participation and coordination of the Memorial Day ceremony and parade and the Veterans Day commemoration
- Financial contributions which have been made to the community
- Dinners which have been held as fund-raisers for a variety of charitable causes over the years
- Many individual members of the VFW contribute their time and talents to the city by belonging to City advisory boards and commissions

Without the help of organizations like the VFW, Woodstock would not be the "All American City" that it is.

Sincerely,

William A. "Bill" Anderson
Mayor, City of Woodstock