

**A History**  
**White Lake Post 3256**  
**And Auxiliary**  
**By Bethel Eddy**

## The Beginning...

The White Lake Veterans of Foreign Wars Post was instituted in April 1935 through the efforts of William Wentworth, Marcus Dahl, and Wilfred Thoma who was a member of the William Beal VFW Post 446 of Muskegon. He later transferred here and was active for many years. These three men gave many hours to this project. Each World War I man approached had to be convinced that a post was needed in this area. With perseverance and determination twenty-five men had signed the membership cards. The meeting was held in the Odd Fellows Hall in Montague. The Department of Michigan VFW Chief of Staff, Mr. Anton Koblbeck of Muskegon was the installing and instating officer with the aid of the degree team of Post 446 and several guests from that post, as well as from Whitehall, Montague, Hart, Kalamazoo and Ludington. After the instituting ceremonies were held and the new officers elected, they were installed into office.

The first officers were: Commander William Wentworth, Senior Vice Commander Raymond Mac Rae, Junior Vice Commander Francis Mason, Quartermaster Marcus Dahl, Adjutant Carroll Noble, and Chaplain Louis Eilers.

The National VFW Commander in Chief gave then the name and number of White Lake Post 3256 Montague, Michigan, 7<sup>th</sup> District, Department of Michigan. In 1950 the State Department remapped all of the state and the district was changed to the 12<sup>th</sup> District. This was due to the membership growth.

In a few short weeks the Post decided there was a need for an Auxiliary and by the vote of the members they asked the Department of Michigan, Ladies Auxiliary President Mrs. Pearl Muser of Kalamazoo to institute this Auxiliary, which she did with the assistance of Mrs. Anton Koblbeck of Muskegon and the degree team of 446 Post. On June 10, 1935 in the Odd Fellows Hall in Montague, the ceremonies took place with a nice crowd attending from Montague, Whitehall, Muskegon, Kalamazoo, Ludington, Hart and Fremont. There were fourteen ladies signed for membership. Later two more joined to make sixteen names on the Charter. The new and first officers were: President Elizabeth Eilers, Senior Vice President Mabel Wentworth, Junior Vice President Violet Nichols, Treasurer Henrietta Dahl, Secretary Penelope Mae Rae, and Chaplain Christine Alison.

### Post Charter members – April 1935

Herman Noordhoff  
Carroll A. Noble  
Wm A.C. Wilkinson  
Wm Wentworth  
Raymond Mac Rae  
Louis Eilers  
Ernest Weisse  
Francis Matson  
Henry Sikkenga  
George Fehrenback  
Arthur Degen  
Louis Troughton  
Richard H. Van Pless.

Ralph G. Alison  
Ray E. Huston  
Marvin Beeman  
Henry Schneider  
Charles Eilers  
Marcus Dahl  
Otto Ocks  
Walter Nichols  
Erma D. Todd  
Edward Butzer  
Arthur Heitman  
Francis Eilers

### Ladies Auxiliary Charter Members June 1935

Edity Beaman	Henrietta Dahl
Elizabeth B. Eilers	Ethel E. Eilers
Mabel Fehrenback	Verna M. Huston
Penelope M. Mac Rae	Violet Nichols
Alice M. Noble	Lillie A. Noble
Adaida Noordhoff	Kirstine Alison
Gladys Schneider	Mildred Troughton
Mabel Wentworth	Maude Von Pless

#### The first years...

The first years were sort of easy going, as the Department and National programs were not so many nor so competitive as they became in later years. Membership increases were necessary to survive and give more workers. The yearly dues was \$2.00. Many paid in installments of \$0.10 and \$0.25 at a time, as money was not plentiful. Nevertheless there were very pleasant time enjoyed by the parent post and its auxiliary.

The Auxiliary put on a pot luck supper to celebrate the post first anniversary in the Odd Fellows Hall, with cards and dancing for the enjoyment of everyone present. Then it was the Post's turn to be host for the Auxiliaries first anniversary which was held at Greys Landing with a pot luck and a good time for all.

#### The first Buddy Poppy sale...

During this first year it was time for the Buddy Poppy sale. This was almost unheard of here and the sale had to be explained many times over. The purpose of the sale, how the poppies were made, by whom the poppies were made and what the proceeds were to be used.

By hard work the salesmen approached each merchant, manufacturer and house. Also poppies were sold on the streets. The total for that first year was \$9.75. (Today the profits are \$1,000.00 or more.)

World War II made a big difference in how Buddy Poppies are perceived. Media attention helped to inform the public that each poppy is hand made in a Veterans Hospital and that the funds are used only for the relief of the veteran and his family.

#### Early meeting places...

In these first years meeting places were not ideal. The Odd Fellows Hall, for example, was on the second story with a long, narrow and treacherous stairway. Fuel, supplies and equipment had to be carried up those stairs.

Other upstairs buildings were used, but the stairs became a big problem for everyone involved. Along with these bad features were the stifling heat of summer and the penetrating cold of winter. With stoves for heat that had to be hand fired with wood and coal things were a bit primitive in the beginning. At times the stoves refused to cooperate in spite of coaxing and threats. Sometimes the members had to leave the hall and go to one of their homes to hold the meeting.

Also, meetings were held in the social rooms of the old City Hall or in part of the Fire Barn or in doctors' offices or in the Wonders building or in the St James Church and its social rooms. Rent for meeting space was \$1.00 per month.

Later meetings were also held in Royal Neighbors, Whitehall American Legion Hall, members homes, The Old Dutch Reformed Church (Old North Church), The Sportsman's Club (a log cabin type building on the causeway which was to be used for a few years and eventually the new permanent post home on Walsh Road in Montague.

#### Comradeship...

During these early years almost everyone knew everyone else. Many families had ties with other families and some had grown up together. Many had met before in school and in churches and by being neighbors. There was much loyalty and deep friendship as the social contacts continued. In addition to dances and card parties there were sleigh rides through heaps of snow. There were bad storms and blizzards which isolated families for three or four weeks. A thaw was the best cure.

Friends were brought closer in 1937 when a scarlet fever epidemic hit almost every family. But those who were well helped those who were sick until finally the epidemic ran its course. The post and Auxiliary helped a family which had a sick husband and father over a period of several weeks with food, money, fuel and clothing. Baby layettes were given several families in need of infants clothing.

The members helped the ill and the elderly not only by care and getting them food and fuel, but by repairing porches and roofs and painting homes, building fences. Fences were made and mended and gardens were planted, trees felled, and other things were done that they couldn't do for themselves.

In these first years, wages were low, work was scarce and in general times were bad. Although prices were low it was difficult to raise even the amount for everyday needs. A pound of good coffee was \$0.23, three loaves of bread for a quarter. Gasoline was \$0.10 per gallon. Once the Auxiliary purchased a ton of coal for \$9.00 and sold raffle tickets on it for \$0.10 a ticket or three for \$0.25. To date no one can remember who won the coal. The Rituals were \$0.15 each. A life membership to the VFW National Home was \$10.00, and the outgoing presidents pin was \$8.00. (Now it's \$25.00).

#### The Money Raisers...

Where there is activity there is always a need for money. So, many activities were used in hopes of raising those needed funds.

Starting back in 1935, this organization sponsored a musical comedy called "Listen to Me." Of course many of the local people took over the acting rolls; in this one Lyle Lipka was in the singing chorus, Phyllis Funnell (who later became Phyllis Ohrenberger) was in the dance chorus.

In 1937 another show was sponsored based on the then popular radio show from WLS in Chicago. The program was called the WLS Prairie Farmer Program and the local people took over for Uncle Ezra, Skyland Scottie, Patsy Montana, and Lulu Belle.

In 1938 came – "Down Memory Lane," followed by the last of the show business ventures, "Chief Pontiac and His Varieties." The proceeds from these ventures were donated to the VFW National Home at Eaton Rapids and to three Veterans Hospitals.

There were also two or three circuses that came to town sponsored by the Post. By reports, not too much money was raised, but everyone involved had a good time.

Raffles always seemed to bring out the gambler in many; so, tickets were sold on boats, motors, trailers, radios, TV's, fishing gear, electric washing machines, guns and hunting equipment.

The Auxiliary sold dish cloths, kitchen cutlery, spices, shampoo, candy, fruit cakes, Christmas tree ornaments, bumper stickers, date books, cook books and flags. Bake sales were held, fashion shows, card parties, dances, and raffles of afghans, and jewelry boxes. The funds were used for helping the community wherever there was a need. Also, many things were bought or donated such as: \$50.00 each year for three years to the Handicapped Children's Society (later lowered to \$20.00), many dollars sent each year to the Jerry Lewis Telethon.

The post presented history books to the Montague City Library and school libraries. The Auxiliary gave money each year to the City Library to build up their book supply. One book in particular was given entitled "Masters of Deceit" which told of the German buildup.

The Post gave out 3 medals to high school band members who played "Taps" for veterans funerals. Later on cash was given.

Each year funds were given to the local Boy Scouts and for three or four years money was donated for the Scouts to attend The National Boy Scouts Jamboree in Colorado. Money was also given to the Little League and Junior League. A Boxing group was sponsored by the Post in cooperation with other community organizations.

Scholarships have been given to deserving seniors in the high school to further their education.

The West Shore Community Hospital needed funds for expansion, so a dance was held and the profits of \$531.65 was given to them.

The Auxiliary over several years has given large sums of money to the White Lake Ambulance Service. Money used for beepers, instruction for the medics, new equipment, and towards a new ambulance. Several hundreds of dollars have been given as gifts to local people injured in all kinds of accidents.

A public address system was purchased and given to the Montague School to be used on the athletic fields and wherever else needed.

Money was sent to the Alaskan Earthquake fund.

The Montague High School Bowling Team was sponsored during the season in addition to money for the play-offs.

### VFW Programs...

#### Membership

To organization to continue on the local, department (state), or national level must continue the drive for eligible men and women to become members. Without members there would be no VFW and every eligible person is invited to join. The organization needs you, and you need the organization. The pensions, compensations, medical aid

hospitalization and education, has been fought for, by our VFW men in Washington D.C. and it has been in most cases a hard fought battle – you can enjoy what they declared you have earned serving your country.

#### Hospital.

The Veterans hospitals are supported by the U.S. Government. Michigan has several, in Ann Arbor VA, Battle Creek VA, Allen Park VA, Saginaw VA in the Lower Peninsula. Marquette and Iron Mountain VA is in the upper peninsula – and the State maintained Grand Rapids Veterans Facility – there are hospital quotas the Auxiliary pays to help make out hospitalized veteran more comfortable and a little happier away from family and home – And money & workers giving of their time and efforts free to help in any way – Reading, writing letters – giving out comfort items – and here we have free to the people in this community, hospital beds, wheel chairs – crutches and sick room equipment.

#### Cancer.

The Auxiliary for several years has carried a cancer insurance, to help pay hospital bills, and a Cancer Grant to help pay for cancer treatments. This also covers Polio, scarlet fever, smallpox, diphtheria, spinal meningitis, encephalitis, rabies, tetanus fularemia and typhoid – The Auxiliary pays the premiums from the dues, and moneys are sent to help in aid and research – and donations are made to the Pow Wow and Department Convention Cancer Sales, the money is given by the Department into National, to be used to pay the cancer expenses to its ill members, and to further research for a cure.

#### National Home.

The National Home is a former farm homestead known as the Grand River Stock Farm by Jackson millionaire Corey Spencer and opened to the first family March 2, 1925. It accepts widows and orphans of veterans, giving them love, care and education. This is completely supported by the VFW and its Auxiliaries. The original size was 472 acres, but more has been added – there are now 34 homes, built by 24 states. Community Center. Guest Lodge and Chapel, Housemother's Cottage, Woodside Center and Administration building, fire department and garages. The children and widows and housed, clothed and fed. Medical care, dental and go to the church of their families. There are quotas on this also to support the needs.

#### Buddy Poppy –

The Poppies that grew on Flanders Fields are the known flower, and symbol of the blood shed. The poppies are hand made by hospitalized veterans the Department purchases them, the Post & Auxiliaries purchase them from Department and sold every May to re-fund the relief fund. That can be used only for the relief of the Veteran and his family.

#### Rehabilitation.

This Chairmanship is also for aid and help to the ill, and those in need. Senior Citizens and the Veterans that needs transportation for necessary needs. Food funds for the needy. Funeral dinners and flowers and food to the families, card and visits to the shut ins. Also to assist in finding jobs for the unemployed.

### Community Service.

Is to help our community in any way we can to make it a better place to live.

### Youth Activities.

Is to help the scouts, camp fire, church groups, sports for the youth and sponsoring the annual voice of Democracy essay and speech contest on a patriotic subject with very good awards to the winners.

### Americanism.

Flags, flag etiquette books, pledge of allegiance pencils are given to schools, civic, public buildings, youth groups and churches, to teach patriotism in the schools, to the young – and to our citizens.

### Junior Girls.

This is sponsored by the Auxiliary for girls of the age of 6 thru 16 when they can join the Auxiliary.

### The Service work.

This supplied aid to the veteran to apply for pensions, compensations, medical and hospital admittance, education funds, aid to the family at the death of a veteran. Such as funds from the State, County and U.S. Government lot allowance and the Veterans grave marker which is furnished free by the government.

In 1977 the Post wrote a letter of protest to President Jimmy Carter against his granting pardons to draft dodgers during the Viet Name conflict. The post lost their protest.

### Working for ourselves.

The war years changed our routines, from the easy going pace to one with a purpose. Many of the families faced their young sons and daughters changing from the young to adults, as they enlisted, or were drafted, and they entered all lines of service.

The Post and Auxiliary purchased U.S. Treasury “G” Bonds, at their 10 year maturity the interest and principal had built up and this was put into the building fund.

To those in service all over the world Christmas and Easter boxes were packed and sent to them, each one containing about \$6.00 worth of writing materials, toilet articles, socks, hankies, cigarettes and candy. A lot could be bought for \$6.00 at that time. But it was gratefully received whenever it caught up with them – it came from home. The boys took time to answer these gifts and the following is a list of names and the letters are saved from: Leslie Munson, Robert Buttleman (Navy), Richard Von Plees (Navy), Stuart Armstrong (Army), Albert Troughton (Air Force), R.W. Edwards (Marines), Robert Slate (Navy), Lyle Lipka (Navy), Harris Olson (Army), George Hunt (Paratroops), T.W. Hines (Navy), Harold Anderson (Navy), William Armstrong, Clyde Price, Robert Boyden, Edward Benovic (Army).

In 1946 citations were presented the next of kin that lost loved ones in the line of duty to their country. The Post needed rifles for funeral services of veterans, also for ceremonies and parades, in March 1946 – 10 rifles were ordered through the war department Washing D.C. as these were war surplus the only cost was \$10.00 for

shipping cost of 6 Eddystones and 4 Remingtons, 30 caliber, M1917. These were stolen and never recovered. In 1956 another order was made for 10 rifles. Again these were stolen but recovered – Due to the location of the building it was a vulnerable spot for breaking in – and there was several losses including theft of \$700.00 which was to be used to buy Christmas gifts for the children's Christmas party. Finally a robbery system was installed, this has stopped the thievery.

The war casualties started coming back to the states and the hospital in Battle Creek in the old sanitarium building was used for these young men – The Auxiliary women made trips there carrying cases of cigarettes and this Post sent one. Home made lap robes, bibs and scuffs, bandage materials, candy, gum and home made cakes to help ease the hospital chow.

The Korean and Viet Nam hospital work continued with those wars, but the VA hospitals had room for them – many are still in government hospitals and always will be.

#### War Memorials.

In 1944 an unusual call went out all over the U.S. to communities in various population numbers to compete against each other for the best war memorial, finished.

The City of Montague and the Chamber of Commerce accepted the challenge – But they needed much more help than they alone could do. So, the VFW voted to support this great idea, and to work with all the committees of the supporting organizations. The VFW committee was made up of Otto Ochs, Robert Kinney and Marcus Dahl, and Auxiliary members Mrs. Alvin Anderson, Mrs. William Wentworth and Mrs. Harry Block. The committee decided to purchase a new car and sell raffle tickets at \$1.00 each. 4,500 were sold. The city donated \$600.00, the board of education \$500.00, the combined funds totaled \$1,600.00 as the city gave another \$500. Land had to be purchased, which is the Montague Athletic field. The memorial cement work and stone work was done by John Leman, there are 3 bronze plaques bearing all the names of the Montague are men and women in the World War II. It is a very impressive memorial. The dedication ceremonies were held on September 19, 1947. The speaker was Bragadier General Joseph A. Cranston of the Michigan area. The color guard was, Leonard Hunt, Army; Roger Hanson, Navy; Arthur Dahl, Air Force; William Degen, Marines; Fern Christopherson Mason Waves; Lillian Parker, WACs; Mrs. Jean Meinert wife of the late Private Roger W. Meinert who died on Luzon July 3, 1945 unveiled the memorial plaque – All this work to raise funds, and build and set up a program such as this was worth it, as this outstanding project was chosen best in the nation in its category. An article with pictures about Montague and how this was accomplished appeared in the July 1947 issues of Holiday Magazine and is on file in the Montague Museum. The Memorial Day services have been held here every years since its dedication.

In 1946 this Post donated \$25.00 towards fireworks and participated in the VJ celebration in Muskegon.

In 1980, commander Larry Painter, a Viet Nam Veteran, talked about a Memorial for Viet Nam Veterans, this idea took some time to take root, it takes time for these things, the American Legion, the VFW and Howmet Corporation came up with a plan for this, and all joining forces it began to become a reality – The Howmet Corp furnished the metal material and made the cast of 5 stars depicting the 5 branches of service, U.S.

Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corp and U.S. coast Guard and a block with Korea in one and a block with Viet Nam in the other and the middle block reads – Dedicated to all from the White Lake Area who served our country. The field stone monument is a beautiful piece of work put up by a young man of the American Legion. This was dedicated in 1982 with Roger Schultz as Master of Ceremonies, and the VFW State Commander James Goldsmith the speaker. The combined school bands were an impressive part with many marching units from several posts, auxiliaries, and Junior Girls and Sons of the VFW present and many dignitaries.

The drill team has appeared in many parades, and other events, the Memorial Day parades and services, Veterans Day and in parades in Muskegon, and the services at Hackley Park, Settlers Day over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Scottsville Harvest Festival and Pentwater Parades.

On October 2, 1944 the Post and Auxiliary participated in the dedication of the Memorial Shaft on the causeway in North Muskegon. This is now called Memorial Park and the most beautiful mile in Michigan, with the World War I Polar Bears Red Arrow Division, DAV. World War II, Korean and Viet Nam memorials. Many services have been held here with representatives of this Post participating or just being present.

There was representatives from the Post and Auxiliary and officers of the now defunct United War Veterans Association of Muskegon.

Bethel Eddy served 5 years as secretary of the Greater Muskegon County Memorial Day Committee. The object was to place an American flag on every veterans grave in Muskegon county, to have a Memorial Day Parade in Muskegon city and of the outlying towns and cemeteries, with a program, the membership consisting of the VFW, American Legion, DAV, Gold Star and Blue Star Mothers, American Red Cross, Coast Guard and Naval Reserve and National Guard.

The Building Committee was an appointed group of members at first, then it became elective – these were more interested in the future. Many men and women have served on this – it grew from a 5 person committee to twice that many – money responsibilities rested on them – uppermost, a place to have the meetings, then the finding of a permanent home – by their diligence and foresight we have the beautiful home we have today. They had rules they had to abide by, the same as the other members – In 1971 it ruled that a husband and wife could not be on the committee at the same time, except if they happened to be the Post Commander and Auxiliary President the same term. No equipment from the kitchen can be loaned out to outsiders of the organization.

The Post must have a 2/3 vote of its members present at a Post meeting to overrule the building committee on any matter. The building committee will host the steak fries the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month and the proceeds will be placed in the committee treasury. A member of the organization will have the privilege of renting the hall for half price. The Ladies Auxiliary have the chance to cater the meals ahead of other caterers.

Price changes will be voted upon by the committee as it sees fit.

The Building Committee now plans most of the social affairs and the hiring of bands an entertainment, as most of the actual building is complete, just the maintenance and upkeep now.

The new Post home.

Soon after the Post and Auxiliary was instituted, and they were having problems of finding a satisfactory place for the meetings, the idea of owning their own post home began to grow – as I mentioned so many of the place were not satisfactory at all – The Building Committee came to see that they had a job to do – over the several future years. There was many qualified and interested members, on this committee; they found the so called (North Church) Old Dutch Reformed Church was for sale, so plans were set in motion to purchase it; after conferences with the representative of the owners, an agreement was reached, a few hundred dollars was paid down on it, and several meetings were held there, and the usual repair and rebuilding started, it was found that, due to the abstract not of clear title, it would be held up in the courts for a long time, and one of the names on the abstract lived in a northwest state. Their money was refunded, and they looked elsewhere.

The Sportsman's Club, a log cabin type of building on the causeway could be rented, this was on City of Montague land, where the Montague City Library is today. The Committee met with members of the Sportsman's Club and after much discussions, and many meetings finally settled the VFW would pay them \$25.00 per year for its use. The building was in need of lots of repairs so the members did the work themselves of new plumbing, better electrical wiring, a new roof was put on – and insulation of the ceiling area – new floors, and some of the posts holding up the ceiling were removed and another method used to hold up the ceiling. New linoleum on the kitchen floor – this were all good and needed improvements, but the building proved to be too small in size for the various activities the post wished to have – and the building was expensive to heat. Then the legal part came into sight. The building committee leased the building, to find that the Sportsman's Club – by rules set down and signed by them with Montague City forbade them to sub-lease the building so their lease was broken by them, and the City took the club back. The VFW Committee of Jim Mason, Lyle Lipka, Roger Hanson and Ralph Dillabaugh drew up a new lease and submitted it to the City of Montague. After 2 years of court hearings etc the city accepted their lease and the Sportsman's Club was leased to them for \$1.00 per year for a period of 25 years. The VFW stayed there for 9 years and during these years use and improvements it cost them a total of \$14,993.43. The Post membership was enlarging and there was a need for a much larger building in the future, so again the committee began to look around for a different site, one where there was room to grow. During the 9 years, many dinner receptions, dances and money making projects had been adding money to the building fund, and there was the "G" bond maturity that helped also. It came about that the committee heard of a site of land owned by the Optimist Club on Walsh Road. Henry Eicke, Lyle Lipka, Jean Silvis and Phyllis Ohrenberger looked over the land and its possibilities and reported favorably. Theodore Peters and Frank Burt investigated the abstract and deed which proved to be clear, they also made a visit to the township board meeting, stating their intentions and inquired of them, if, after the building was build and in working order, if a liquor license would be granted by their approval. No record shows their answer, but it must have affirmed. John Eilers took on the job of the water situation, and the soil right

for sewage disposal – After all had made their reports, at the Post meeting of August 21, 1963, Clarence Streblov made the motion to purchase the Optimist Club acreage, seconded by Frank Burt, and the motion carried. The Ladies Auxiliary presented the Post with a check for \$3,000.00 for the land purchase.

The plans were drawn up, but of course there was the ever present problem of enough money. Some local people offered to lend them the money, as well as the bank, but the high interest rates held the committee back. Finally charter member George Fehrenbach on August 14, 1968 lent the Post \$10,000.00, the loan to be paid on a monthly basis and never paid off in a lump sum, which was followed by the Post until it was paid off in full.

Robert Rabe was Post commander. He, member of the Post and committee members attended the ground breaking ceremonies.

Activities really started. Bulldozers and equipment moved in to dig a good sized basement. Lyle Lipka arranged for most of this earth moving machinery. Work began in earnest. Robert Kroll and his crew did the masonry work, putting up basement walls, the men worked all the 4<sup>th</sup> of July putting in the heating pipes into the floor for the furnace, and the cement was to be poured July 5. The work had to be ready and it was. That July 4<sup>th</sup> was no celebration day. This was a time when electricians, plumbers, heating men put their know how to work. Masons and cement work – Carpenters didn't buy the ready made roof trusses but built their own, and they are set 2 feet apart, so the roof is solid against winds and snow. Every spare hour, holidays and week ends were used to build, the men worked and their wives brought food baskets and combined pot lucks were held to feed the workers – Their time away from home was a sacrifice to their home life and their children – so a thanks should go to them – These members combined their know how, time, and hard work for a project they all wanted. I don't know all that gave so much but I do know that Robert Kroll, Lyle Lipka, Earl Silvis, Scott Russell, James Mason, Chuck Ohrenberger, Jim Garwood, Fred Kortage and Ralph Dillabaugh, William Degen, Harold Anderson, Harvey Moore, Bill Thoma worked hard on this – no doubt there are others and all thanks goes to them also.

It takes team work to plan and build a beautiful Post home we are all enjoying today.

In 1974 another addition was added on the back for a back bar and store rooms – and a pole barn was built to house the fire truck and jeep and hospital equipment. Cost \$3,380.00. The Auxiliary purchased everything in the kitchen to the tune of several thousands of dollars, and a deep freeze in the basement. They also purchased the wall paneling in the large meeting room – the window drapes. Carpeting for the band stand, purchased 2 pianos and have the Post \$1,000.00 a year towards the blacktopping of the parking lots. The lawn was graded and seeded.

The bar room is a cheerful room and many happy hours are enjoyed there, just talking, playing pool or singing the old tunes, with Ruthie Lipka furnishing the piano music.

Every post member, and Auxiliary member, enjoys this beautiful post home and feels a deep pride for it.

The mortgage was burned in Larry Painters year as Commander, with Robert Rabe and June Russell doing the honors.

Smoke arresters, the back, bar, finished in paneling and a Bar-B-Que –set in a lovely brick frame with a fire proof hood and smoke vents – air conditioner at a cost of \$6,925.00, which is much appreciated by members and guests.

#### Branching Out.

Some of the members served well their offices elected and appointed and by their knowledge advanced into the District Offices. Norma Halwack, and Margaret Eike and Beatrice Brown became 12<sup>th</sup> District Presidents, and Roger Schultz became District Commander. He brought Department and national honors for his dedication and work by earning District Commander of the Year. While Roger was Post commander he was awarded the honor both years as Post commander of the Year.

James Kruzal and Kenneth Dahl followed in Rogers footsteps and became Post Commanders of the Year. These awards are given out annually at the Department convention, for their leadership, increase in membership, awards to chairmen for their years labors, participation with other organizations. The office is not one of glory alone, but by hard work and visible results.

During Roger's year as Post Commander, he started the Bingo games, held every Monday night, their good attendance has made it possible for the air conditioner, paving of the parking lot and drives, as well as other improvements and ability to pay the bills – Roger also started the giving out of Christmas food boxes. By purchasing and packing these and the Auxiliary paying half the expense a good dinner is provided. These were delivered to the ill and needy and to the Charter members – At the same time of delivery the Auxiliary gives a nice poinsettia plant to widows that are members and the President, secretary and Treasurer in gratitude of their years work.

Roger has also been Department Chairmanship of Americanism, Community Service and Buddy Poppy this 1982-83 year. He lit the high sales of over 1 million poppies sold.

Several of the Auxiliary members have held chairmanships in the district, and Jean Slivis and Barbara Simila have been Department Color Bearers.

Floyd Eddy served as District Chaplain 2 or 3 years, also county council Chaplain – He was named Post Service Officer by Past commander Schultz and held the office 6 full years, and he was also Service Officer of the District and County Council – by his dedication to the needs of veterans, his many miles driven to their homes as they were unable to travel, his many hours used to fill out papers and driving time and the large number of veterans helped in one year. He was the recipient of the coveted La Van Trophy presented to the service officer doing the most work. Raymond O'Neill made the presentation at the Department Convention in Traverse City – Ben Cuperus submitted his name. This award is not presented every year, only to those that have earned it. It is now on display on the Post trophy shelves.

Bethel (Mc Dougall) Eddy transferred from the Eaton Rapids Auxiliary 1283 in 1969. She didn't come without having served in many offices over the years. She joined the Charlotte Auxiliary in 1943. She held several offices and became President, the

family moved to Eaton Rapids in 1950, where she again became active and the President; Then she became President of the 8<sup>th</sup> District, she was national home chairman 2 years, Department Membership 1 year, became Department Chaplain, Junior and Senior Vice-President and Department President 1962-63. In the 3256 Auxiliary she has been active in Chairmanships, Auxiliary President and Secretary. In the 12<sup>th</sup> District, she has been Chaplain and Patriotic Instructor and held Chairmanships.

The Post and Auxiliary have hosted many activities, the District 12, meetings with a nice noon dinner – Drug abuse and safety programs, service officer's school of instruction put on by the Department VFW office. Auxiliary schools of instruction, put on by the Ladies Auxiliary Department Officers – county council meetings.

One of the outstanding social gatherings was the building dedication on August 2, 1969 with a banquet dinner. Ralph and Bernice Dillabaugh was the Commander and President, John Eilers was the Master of Ceremonies with Department Jim Milliron Commander, and Janet Cuperus Auxiliary President, with their spouses. Rita and Ben and a good crowd of members – a few years later when Larry Painter was Commander and Mario Bruesch President the ceremony of the burning of the Mortgage was held, with another good turnout to see Robert Rabe and June Russell do the honors as they were Commander and President at the time of the borrowing of the money – Needless to say these were both festive occasions.

This and that.

Many things have transpired over the years and should not be left out-

Stanley Hall was the first returned World War II Veteran to become a member on December 1, 1943 and Fred Smith was the second one, on March 15, 1944.

In 1959 the Auxiliary put on a dinner-dance to celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

In 1978—18 Framed wards were presented by Commander Kruzel and Floyd Eddy to banks, factories, businesses, and individuals for lying the American flag day and night for at least a year. This was under the National Americanism program.

Each year there are several things that take place for the enjoyment of the members and their families – The Children's Annual Christmas Party, with singing, live entertainment, Santa and lovely gifts that are supplied by the Post and Auxiliary – and with home made cookies, ice cream and pop. The Pig Roast, with a pot-luck dinner. The picnic for everyone – The New Years Dance. For the adults is the annual Past Post commanders and Past Auxiliary Presidents Banquet, with a catered dinner, program, awards, and membership pins of the years of belonging – and usually an interesting speaker – and Department Representatives.

When Roger Shultz was District Commander we gave a banquet for him. Also we hosted the District Past Commanders and Presidents Banquet.

Marcus Dahl, Past Commander of 9 years, had the honor and pleasure of installing his son Kenneth Dahl as commander in May of 1981 and again in 1982. This does not happen often.

Each year names are submitted to the Post and Auxiliary of children that will be sponsored to attend Camp Trotter for a week. Usually 2 from each are sent, and the

reports back are they had a wonderful time and wish to go again. Camp Trotter is owned and operated by the VFW Department of Michigan at Bills Lake Newaygo.

In 1964 an old fire truck was purchased for \$100.00, after some engine and other minor repairs, a paint job and lettering, it was ready for many parades. A true show piece. Now a jeep has been added for the same uses.

The Post purchased new colors with carrying cases in 1978. The Auxiliary has done likewise so that our colors are clean and bright and carried with pride in parades. The Auxiliary also purchased their banner in 1957.

The hall is used for many purposes – our meetings – the Post the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays, and the Auxiliary the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays; the Monday night bingo and the Wednesday day bingo. The Junior Girls meeting once a month on a Sunday P.M>, likewise the Fleet Reserve meeting and the Red Cross Bloodmobile once every three months. The Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) sponsored by the Auxiliary and conducted by member Terry Smith once a month.

The hall is also rented out for many activities. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July (settlers day) dance is held here. The steak fries/dances, family reunions and class reunions.

In 1978-79 New glass display shelves were installed in the bar room to hold and show the many awards and trophies won by this Post and Auxiliary through the hard work of their various chairmen. It has meant a year of work finished by each winning chairman.

Eugene and Shirley Degen arranged to have all the Past Commanders, and Past Presidents to have their pictures taken, and these will line the walls of the meeting room. We received \$500 from the estate of George Fehrenbach and by vote decided to use the money for this project.

Shirley Degen also started the Ladies Wednesday Bingo with the receipts given to the building committee.

The Post and Auxiliary work together on almost every project, the many banquets and dinners, weddings and anniversaries, steak fries, snowfairs, dinners and dances. They both give a lovely Bible of the family's faith to the next of kin when we lose a veteran or auxiliary member. If the family requests we conduct our services and serve a lunch.

In 1985 this White Lake Post and its Auxiliary will be 50 years old. Many things have happened in these years – We have survived 3 wars. We have received our Perpetual Charter, we have built this Post Home – we have paid off our loan and burned our mortgage. We have honored our veterans and given aid to the people of this Community. We have sponsored our youth. We have offered the helping hand to all that needed it. We have stood firm on the doctrines and beliefs of our nation and answered the call of our nation in all her needs. We may have made a mistake now and then but there wasn't many and those were corrected. We won't quit yet, as long as there are veterans, widows and veterans orphans our work will continue.

Years	Post Commander	Auxiliary President
1935-36	William Wentworth	Elizabeth Eilers
1936-37	Raymond Mac Rae	Mildred Troughton
1937-38	Marcus Dahl	Mabel Wentworth
1938-39	Marcus Dahl	Mabel Wentworth
1939-40	Marcus Dahl	Mabel Wentworth
1940-41	Marcus Dahl	Ethel Eilers
1941-42	Marcus Dahl	Alice Noble
1942-43	Marcus Dahl	Mabel Wentworth
1943-44	Marcus Dahl	Emma Kinney
1944-45	Marcus Dahl	Leah Anderson
1945-46	Marcus Dahl	Mildred T. Houseman
1946-47	Wilfred Thoma	Mildred Houseman & Jean Meinert
1947-48	Ralph Dillabaugh	Sadie Spitz
1948-49	Stanley Hall	Sadie Spitz
1949-50	Earle Thompson	Esther Grieve
1950-51	James Mason	Winefred Carpenter
1951-52	Lyle Lipka	Edith Grow
1952-53	Lyle Lipka	Edith Grow
1953-54	Paul Baerman	Edith Grow
1954-55	Albert Wentworth	Virg Lipka
1955-56	Albert Wentworth	Sylvia Lundquist
1956-57	Leslie Baerman	Carmen O'Connell
1957-58	Keith Erdman	Bernice Dillabaugh
1958-59	Charles Ohrenberger	Phylis Ohrenberger
1959-60	Harvey Moore	Delores Gillan
1960-61	Lyle Lipka	Burth Burt
1961-62	Clarence Streblov	Margaret Eicke
1962-63	Clarence Streblov	Margaret Eicke
1963-64	Robert Rabe	Jean Silvis
1964-65	Robert Rabe	June Russell
1965-66	Robert Rabe	June Russell
1966-67	William Degen	June Russell
1967-68	John Graham	Mary Jane Streblov
1968-69	John Graham	June Russell
1969-70	Ralph Dillabaugh	Bernice Dillabaugh
1970-71	Ralph Dillabaugh	Bernice Dillabaugh
1971-72	John Eilers	Phylis Ohrenberger
1972-73	John Eilers	Byrnece Garwood
1973-74	William Degen	Byrnece Garwood
1974-75	Earl Silvis	Maxine Kroll
1975-76	Roger Schultz	Maxine Kroll
1976-77	Roger Schultz	Beatrice Brown
1977-78	James Kruzel	Beatrice Brown
1978-79	James Kruzel	Bethel Eddy
1979-80	Larry Painter	Marian Bruesch
1980-81	Kenneth Dahl	Henrietta Iverson
1981-82	Kenneth Dahl	Henrietta Iverson
1982-83	Eugene Degen	Shirley Degen
1983-84	James Eastman	Henrietta Iverson
1984-85	Ivan Houseman	Terry Smith