

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER JULY 2013

Greetings, summer is upon us and the cherry trees are bursting with a bounty of fruit! I love the fact that there are so many trees to enjoy around the village. Not to mention that cherry pie is one of my favorite desserts.

I want to give a HUGE thanks to Beverly (Oberg) Scholz for the many years of time and talent put into ensuring that members received a newsletter. I'm going to attempt to lend a hand it getting them out in future. I'd love any additional notes, stories, or thoughts on anything you read within that might be added to the society's store of all things Cherry Valley.

The following have passed away since our last newsletter:

Michael Newman 73 July 6th

Ruth Elaine Klontz (Mrs. David) 90 July 20th

In May a kind note was received that we thought might be nice to pass along....

Although I did not grow up in Cherry Valley, I certainly share childhood memories of growing up on a farm and a small town in Illinois, though in Vermilion County. Lots of the joys and problems are similar, starting before rural electrification. We were "little" and only had fun playing in the barn and the meadows and watching our parents and grandparents labor from dawn (or earlier) to dusk, exhausting themselves in the struggle to get through hundreds of chores just to survive. All the stories you have collected and organized have interesting components, and I appreciate receiving them.

Sincerely, Suzanne K Kee

The American Legion Hall

The American Legion Hall was known as Oberg's Hall for many years. It was built by Charles (Charlie) Swatek and Leonard (Len) Johnson in the early 1900's, and used for many events. Dances, plays, even basketball games and parties were enjoyed there. One year (I think it was 1938) Grand Ole Opry held talent tryouts there. Also in the worst part of the depression the American Legion held a Christmas party for the kids in town. One thing I remember from that was two Legionnaires carrying a basket of apples around the room, letting each kid select an apple.

About the time World War Two was winding down, some of the Legion members decided that they needed a place for the returning veterans to meet. They each put up a hundred dollars and persuaded some of the local businesses to invest another one hundred each to purchase the building. One of them made the comment that they never expected to see their money again.

There was a lead lined movie projection booth over the stairway, with a ladder built in to gain access. The early film reels were very flammable and it was a safety

requirement. They started bingo games and were the only ones in the area to have them. They knocked together some tables and borrowed chairs from the Methodist Church. Corn was used as markers for the games. It was a big hit, and the games were so crowded that people had to stand up, playing their cards on the window sills. The legionnaires paid back everyone and owned the building free and clear in a short time.

My second date with my future wife took place at the legion hall. I took her there for bingo. She won a hundred dollars and couldn't wait to go home and tell her folks. She used the money to put towards the car loan her parents had made to help her purchase a car. At that time she was making twenty two dollars a week.

Before we had the sewer system, the old ice house was used as the town privy. It was located just in back of the building. The privy was long gone before my time. Later the village filled in the pit, and the former ice house was used as a boy scout meeting place and to store some of their equipment.

In the early 50's the members put in bathrooms and a ceiling to cover up the roof beams. The Legion Ladies Auxiliary put in a full kitchen and equipment to serve 200 people. The ladies were very active and there were times we borrowed money from them to pay the bills!

We (The American Legion) always had a ham dinner after Easter and a turkey dinner on Armistices day. It was so popular that our tickets were sold out two weeks in advance. Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts meetings were held in the legion hall. They held fundraising pancake breakfasts and dinners in the hall. The explorer scouts held meetings in a room at the fire station. In the 60's there were square dance lessons for the younger crowd called by Mr. and Mrs. Manson. And they had local bands play.

Bob Murphy and I called the last bingo game. That night there was a fire that ruined the whole upstairs. Bob Wilt fell partially thru the roof while fighting the fire. The tavern (the original Baseball Tap) had a lot of water damage and had to throw out all kinds of stuff. As a result of having good insurance, it was repaired better than ever. There was even a face lift to the front of the building.

When the legion sold the building to the Village of Cherry Valley.....the tavern on the first floor had to move out because it was not legal for the Village to own a building that was selling alcohol. It was disheartening to go up there, years later and see how the kitchen was destroyed and all those dishes and cooking equipment either taken or trashed. We had locks on the cabinet doors, but the renters smashed them and helped themselves. This happened after we gave the building to the Village. By then we were down to three or four active members, and just barely enough income to pay the insurance and taxes. The village was too busy, or not that interested in checking on the users. When the legionnaires had it, the building was checked before and after every event. It was all volunteers doing it on their own time. When the city took over, they had to pay employees to check on things, and as a result, very little was done.

The village was supposed to put "American Legion" on the building, but never did. There is a plaque on the wall inside with the names of those charter members who dedicated themselves to the Legion Hall for so many years.

I am the last surviving active Legionnaire.
Written by Lyle Wilt



Application for Post of The American Legion

Provisions of The American Legion National Constitution

ARTICLE IV. Eligibility

Section 1. Any person shall be eligible for membership in The American Legion who was regularly enlisted, drafted, inducted, or assigned to active duty in the Army, Navy or Marine Corps of the United States at some time during the period between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918, both dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States, at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the Naval, Military or Air forces of any of the Governments associated with the United States during the Great War, provided, that no person shall be entitled to membership (a) who, being in the Army, Navy or Marine Corps of the United States during said period, refused on conscientious, political, or other grounds, to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified service, or (b) who, being in such service, was separated therefrom under circumstances amounting to dishonorable discharge and has not subsequently been officially restored to an honorable status.

Section 2. There shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership, and dues shall be paid annually or for life.

ARTICLE IX. Post Organization

Section 1. Those who desire to form a Post shall make application for a charter to the Commander of the Department in which they reside. The charter shall be issued by the National Commander and National Adjutant upon receipt of the application properly executed by the charter members of the projected post, but only when such application is approved by the Commander of the Department, or by the Department Executive Committee. Post charters shall be countersigned by the Commander and the Adjutant of the Department.

Section 2. The minimum membership of a post shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Department in whose area it lies.

Section 3. Each Department may prescribe the Constitution of its posts. Post charters may be revoked by the Department Executive Committee with the approval of the National Executive Committee. Post charters may be suspended or cancelled as provided in the By-Laws.

Section 4. No post shall be named after any living person.

INSTRUCTIONS (Read Carefully)—Each local group will designate a representative to sign the certificate at the foot of this application and to receive the charter when issued. Applications should be properly executed by number of persons designated by Department Executive Committee as a minimum. Applications must be made in triplicate, one original bearing the signatures of applicants eligible for membership and two copies bearing the same names typewritten. All three will be forwarded to the Department Commander. The original application will be returned by endorsement to the Local Post with the charter. One copy of application will be retained by Department Headquarters, and the other by National Headquarters.

To The American Legion, Department of Illinois

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have served in the military or naval forces of the United States, between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918, and are entitled to membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION under Article IV of the Constitution, as above quoted. We hereby request the issuance of a temporary charter for the formation of a Post at

Cherry Valley Illinois

to be known as ARTHUR BUCK Post,

No. 783 Department of _____

On issuance of a charter we hereby agree to organize and maintain a Post under the above name with the minimum membership designated by Department Executive Committee. We hereby further agree to uphold the principles of THE AMERICAN LEGION and to comply with all rules and regulations prescribed by the Department and National Organization of the Legion.

NAMES	ADDRESSES
Delbert W. Buok	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Harry Lenhart Saylor	R.R.#1 Cherry Valley, ILL.
Lester Leroy Ulrich	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Clarence Peterson	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Albert Diebold	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Laurie Larson	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Edward Taylor	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Robert Youngdahl	R.R.#1 Cherry Valley, Ill.
Fred L. Peterson	Cherry Valley, Ill.
David J. Carrell	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Lester L. Knighton	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Roy Wilson	Cherry Valley, Ill.
William C. Oberg	Cherry Valley, Ill.
C. E. Wilt	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Horace H. Houlton	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Ralph Parker	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Fred A Davis	Cherry Valley, Ill.
John Healey	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Daniel I. Snyder	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Earl Buck	Cherry Valley, Ill.
Cherry Valley, Illinois	May 20

I HEREBY CERTIFY to the accuracy and good faith of the above application. The charter when issued is to be mailed to me at the address below:

Harry L. Saylor R.R.#1 Cherry Valley, Ill.

DEPARTMENT RECORD



Because of the difficulty photographing the metal surface, I've typed the names of the 20 veterans who founded the American Legion Post in Cherry Valley.



- Delbert W Buck
- Harry Lenhart Saylor
- Lester Leroy Ulrich
- Clarence Peterson
- Albert Diebold
- Laurie Larson
- Edward Taylor
- Robert Youngdahl
- Fred L. Peterson
- David J. Carrell
- Lester L. Knighton
- Roy Wilson
- William C. Oberg
- C. E. Wilt
- Horace H. Houlton
- Ralph Parker
- Fred A Davis
- John Healey
- Daniel I Snyder
- Earl Buck

Memorial Day Poem

Memorial or Decoration Day as we used to say comes around every year at the end of May. The flowers are in bloom and the smell of spring is in the air, but the thousands of dead Veterans lying under those white crosses, it doesn't matter to them, only if we care!

It began many years ago by decorating the graves of the fallen soldiers during the Civil War, the practice will continue probably forever more.

Since that time we've had W.W.I, W.W. II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Afghanistan, and Iraq, it seems like man never learns about the perils of war, the bodies just keep getting shipped back. Sometimes it's not always our fault, like W.W. II when we were attacked, we ended up with our backs to the wall, but to win the victory so many young men and women had to fall. Who knows how many doctors, lawyers, teachers, scientists, postal workers, construction workers, and every day walk of life workers are under those rows of white crosses on sovereign or foreign land, sometimes life never works out as good as we plan, most of us don't comprehend or understand what it's like to fight, or sometimes die in a foreign land.

So every spring at the end of May, we gather to honor these fallen veterans and nurses and to pray the prayer that they have not fallen in vain, that we will not ever again have to endure this suffering and pain.

As we stand and look out over this field of white crosses, I hope we understand what these veterans and nurses have done for me and for you.

Ever since I was a young boy I've always been in awe, of Veterans marching, the flag in parades, patriotic songs and all I have seen.

But the one thing that stands out foremost in most of our minds, is the "Taps" being blown, the sound of it sends a chill up our spines that penetrates to the marrow of our bones.

But they are not alone, they are surrounded by their comrades and friends, this hallowed ground will forever thru eternity be their home.

So we the living, must honor these precious few who sacrificed so much, this Memorial Day is celebrated for them, me and for you.

By Pee Wee Hollembeak
for Memorial Day 2009

H h h h h h

Editor.... Pam Jeske (golfnsew@aol.com)

Please feel free to drop a line, add some content, share some stories either to my e-mail, the Historical Society's e-mail (cv.historical186@frontier.com)

Or stop by, leave a note ...have a chat with a member!