



100th Anniversary
American Legion Auxiliary Unit Information

Unit Name: ___Saunemin Verdun_____

Unit Number: _531_____

Division: ___4_____ District: ___17_____

Do you know from where your Post/Unit received their name?

Willis Heylin from Saunemin was found alive among the many dead at Verdun France.

He was one of the first locals to return home injured and the local legion post was named Verdun in his honor.

When was your Unit Chartered? Attach a picture of your Charter:

10/6/1920

Submit a list of your Unit Presidents:

1920 Bernice Lannon, 1920-23 Jessie Sheppard, 1924-25 Mayme Greenough, 1926-29 Mabel Heylin, 1929-31 Kathryn Patten, 1932-33 Ida K Lannon, 1933-37 Frances Greenough, 1937-39

Ruth Morehart, 1939-41 Ruth Isenburg, 1941-46 Frances Greenough, 1946-48 Frances Cottrell, 1948-50 Beatrice Sargeant, 1950-52 Elsie Todd, 1952-54 Laura Mae Haag, 1954-56 Louise Fraher, 1956-57 Hazel Perrine, 1957-59 Vera Hill, 1959-61 Donna George, 1961-63 Jackie Ellinger, 1963-65 Bernice Ehrhardt, 1965-67 Mary Barb Wynistorf, 1967-69 Jean Thomas, 1969-71 Caro Cantrall, 1971-74 Jean Demopolous, 1974-76 Helen McDowell, 1976-77 Margaret Ena Green, 1977-79 Mary Barb Wynistorf, 1979-81 Jean Demopolous, 1981-83 Ora Jean Hahn, 1983-86 Debbie (Haag) McKinney, 1986-88 Carol Cantrall, 1988-90 Mary Barb Wynistorf, 1990-92 Donna George, 1992-94 Debbie McKinney, 1994-96

Helen Wynistorf, 1996-98 Carol Cantrall, 1998-2000 Jean Thomas, 2000-2002
Donna George, 2002-2004 Maria Seibert, 2004-2006 Debbie McKinney,
2006-2008 Terry Lighty & Carol Cantrall, 2008-2010 Cindy Brackney, 2010-2012
Debbie McKinney, 2013-15 Carol Cantrall, 2015 to Present- Debbie McKinney.

Does your Unit have, or have had, any Gold Star members? If so, please list their names, their lost hero's name, date of death, and branch of service.

Francis Drach 1944-45 - Rose Eggenberger 1945-46

Please list the names of the District, Division, Department and National Presidents from your Unit and their years of service:

Not known

Any interesting facts about what your Unit has done throughout the 100 years for Americanism, Poppy, Children & Youth, National Security, or VAR:

You may submit this information online, or you may email it to Co-Chairman Jill Layton at Jill.LaytonCSR@gmail.com or mail to: Jill Layton, 1207 County Road 1100 E, Lerna, Illinois 62440.

Auxiliary charter member Helen Quigley honored

Other than dues, little has changed the past 75 years since the chartering of the Saunemin American Legion Auxiliary as the group helps the children and veterans.

Helen Quigley, 97, rural Saunemin, attests to that as she reflected on her 75th-year as a charter member of the Saunemin organization.

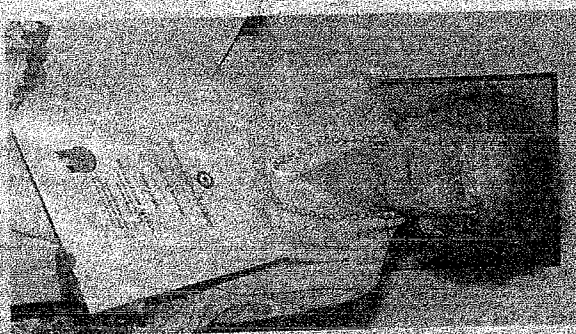
She was recently presented with a certificate from the national Auxiliary president in recognition of her years of service.

The Saunemin Legion Auxiliary was organized on Oct. 6, 1920, and was opened to veterans' wives, sisters or daughters.

Formation of the Auxiliary began when the mothers, wives and daughters of Legion members became interested in helping the veterans.

Charter members in Saunemin were as follows:

Beatrice Heylin, Mabel Heylin, Ida K. Lannon, Ida M. Lannon, Bernice Lannon, Mrs. P.H. Lannon, Alice Phillips, Lottia Byrne, Edith Bennett, Jessie Shepherd, Ruth Morehart, Nancy Morehart, Mabel Erwin, Gertrude Greenough, Pearl Greenough, Gora Greenough, Mayme Greenough, Elizabeth Hess, Mrs. Eddie Quigley, Helen Quigley,



Frances Quigley, Viola Rich, Mary M. Scott, Mrs. John Johnson, Mrs. Patsy Cleary, Ella Gramise, Mrs. John Jensen, Ruby Jensen, Iona Jensen, Mrs. Augusta Brooks, Julia Brooks, Julia Boldt and Marietta Barker, according to the original minutes.

Officers installed were Lottia Byrne, president; Bernice Lannon, vice president; Jessie Shepherd, secretary; Ida M. Lannon, treasurer; and executive committee members Ida K. Lannon, Mabel Heylin and Mayme Greenough.

Other early members were Mrs. John Follmer, Stella Follmer, Maude Horbach,

Mary Sheppard, Clara Steen, Ruth Rich, Tillie Suisdorf, Cella Smith, Kathryn Hillit, Mrs. Lowell Morehart and Mary Frances Morehart.

Dues were 25 cents for the charter members, and are now \$10 annually.

The first meeting was held at the home of Mabel Heylin, sister-in-law to Helen Quigley, Mabel's husband, Willis, was the first of the locals to come home injured from World War I, and the local post was named in his honor.

Willis was wounded at Verdun, France, and was found among the dead. He returned to Saunemin after receiving treatment for a period of time in a Kansas hospital.

Willis arrived in Saunemin via train (yes, it stopped in Saunemin in those days) at about 10 p.m., his sister, Helen, recalled. "The schools and stores, of course, were closed. The train stopped in Saunemin for about three minutes and he got off before a big welcoming party. It was quite an event. There was a lot of hoopla. Everyone turned out. The Saunemin Legion post was named in his honor."

Early events held by the Auxiliary, according to the minutes, were a bake sale

which cleared a profit of \$69.75; cafeteria suppers which earned \$32 and \$49.75; a home talent play; band concert, and making poppies. Of course, the group also presented programs and took cakes and cookies to the Veterans Hospital in Dwight.

The function of the Auxiliary has remained the same for these many years. The organization looks after the interests of veterans and their children. "The Auxiliary is geared more toward children, with scholarships and other programs," explained Helen's daughter, Jean. Helen was asked what she enjoys most of being a longtime member of the Auxiliary.

"We have a child welfare program that is very helpful to a lot of people. You could borrow from the organization for college funds, as well. I met a lot of people at county meetings. We took care of the Memorial Day services when we would decorate the graves. In the good old days, the people would gather and march behind the Legion members from downtown to the cemetery to decorate the graves. We also, and this was years and years ago, would collect paper for recycling and earn money," Helen concluded.

SAUNEMIN LEGION AUXILIARY POST 531- VERDUN UNIT.....CHARTER 10/6/1920

THIS WILL BE A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ABOVE NAMED UNIT AND A LISTING OF THE PRESIDENTS FOR THE LAST 100 YEARS. THIS REPORT WAS FORMED FROM THE OLD BOOKS THAT ARE LOCKED IN A METAL CABINET IN THE SAUNEMIN BANK. IT WAS HARD TO READ SOME MINUTES AND SECRETARIES DID NOT ALL LIST THE PRESIDENT THAT OPENED THE MEETING IN SOME CASES. THUS SOME YEARS MAY HAVE RUN TOGETHER WITHOUT A SEPARATE LISTING OF OFFICERS. I REGRET IF THIS HAS CAUSED AN ERROR. IF SOMEONE HAS EXACT YEARS OF THOSE HOLDING THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT SOMEWHERE ELSE PLEASE UPDATE THIS LIST WITH THAT INFORMATION.

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THE LEGION STARTED IN 1920 ALSO BUT WAS ACTIVE A FEW MONTHS BEFORE THE AUXILIARY WAS STARTED. THEY HELD THEIR MEETINGS TOGETHER ON THE FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH, WHICH WAS CHANGED SEVERAL DIFFERENT TIMES BUT IN LATER YEARS THAT FIRST THURSDAY WAS A REGULAR MEETING DAY. THEY DIVIDED THE COST OF THE RENT ON THE IOOF'S HALL YEARLY AS THE MEETINGS WERE ALWAYS HELD THERE. THEY HELD POT-LUCKS TOGETHER AND TOOK TURNS BEING THE GROUP THAT PROVIDED LUNCH.....THEY HAD OYSTER SUPPERS TOGETHER. THE AUXILIARY CONSISTED OF WIVES, MOTHERS AND SISTERS OF THOSE IN THE LEGION. TOGETHER, THEY OBSERVED MEMORIAL DAY AND ARMISTICE DAY. A LARGE GROUP WOULD LEAVE FROM THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND MARCH TO THE SUNNYSLOPE CEMETARY. THEY WOULD DRIVE OUT TO THE 5-MILE CEMETARY EARLIER THAT MORNING TO HOLD A SERVICE AND DECORATE THE GRAVES OF THE VETERANS. USUALLY THE SCHOOLS SMALL BAND WOULD COME TO THE CEMETARIES TO PLAY THE MUSIC.. AFTER 5-MILE OBSERVANCE THEY WOULD THEN DO THE SERVICE AND DECORATE THE GRAVES OF THE VETERANS IN SUNNYSLOPE. ARMISTICE DAY WAS ALSO CELEBRATED BY BOTH CHAPTERS.

EACH SUMMER THEY HELD A COMMUNITY PICNIC FOR EVERYONE IN THE AREA. THEY HAD COMMUNITY PICNICS AND WERE VERY ACTIVE WITHIN THE SAUNEMIN COMMUNITY. SOMEONE ALWAYS ATTENDED THE LEGION AND AUXILIARY DISTRICT MEETINGS IN THE STATE EACH YEAR AND REPORT BACK TO THE UNIT.

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THE AUXILIARY STARTED OUT WITH 29 TO 32 CHARTER MEMBERS WITH 18 TO 30 ATTENDING THEIR MEETINGS. THEY WERE DEVOTED TO THE "BOYS" OF THE LEGION. THEY ADOPTED A CHILD EVERY SO MANY YEARS FROM THE NORMAL SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HOME TO PURCHASE CLOTHES AND ANYTHING ELSE NEEDED FOR THEM IN THEIR COTTAGES. THE VETERANS HOSPITAL IN DWIGHT WAS ALSO ONE OF THEIR BIGGEST GROUPS TO BE HELPED BY THEIR DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERING. THEY EVEN TOOK EGGS AS PAYMENT FOR DUES IN THE 30'S.....AS WRITTEN BY THEIR SECRETARY IN THE MINUTES. THEY WERE WELL ATTENDED IN MEETINGS AND RECEIVED RULES AND BY-LAWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT IN THE STATE. THE MEETINGS WERE RUN VERY WELL AND THEY HAD MANY COMMITTEES TO WORK ON SPECIAL ISSUES WITHIN THE LEGION. THERE ATTENDANCE WENT UP TO 65 OR MORE YEARLY. THE RECORDS, OVER ALL, WERE KEPT VERY WELL AT A MEETING. THEY KEPT CLEAR RECORDS OF THE ACTIVITIES AND MONEY GIVEN TO HELP THE VETERANS. A PRESIDENT AND OFFICERS WERE USUALLY ELECTED THE NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER BEFORE THE YEAR OF THEIR OFFICE...THEY WERE IN OFFICE APPROXIMATELY 2 YEARS AT LEAST.

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----NAMING OF POST!-----

BACK IN THESE EARLY YEARS THE NAMES OF THOSE LISTED WERE THE NAMES THAT WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THE EARLY YEARS OF THE VILLAGE OF SAUNEMIN....GREENOUGH- QUIGLEY- HEYLIN- LANNON- PHILLIPS- RICH- BENNET- BYRNE AND MANY MORE. THE FIRST MEETING WAS HELD AT THE HOME OF MABEL HEYLIN WHOSE HUSBAND, WILLIS, WAS ONE OF THE FIRST LOCAL BOYS TO COME HOME FROM WORLD WAR 1 WOUNDED. HE ENDED UP ON A FIELD OF BATTLE AMONG THE DEAD WHEN FOUND. HE WAS SENT TO A KANSAS HOSPITAL FOR A PERIOD OF TIME AND WAS RETURNED TO SAUNEMIN BY TRAIN AND ARRIVED ABOUT 10P.M. THE TRAIN STOPPED ABOUT 3 MINUTES TO LET THEIR PASSENGER OFF AND A LARGE WELCOMING PARTY WAS THERE TO MEET HIM! HIS SISTER, HELEN QUIQLEY, CALLED IT A BIG EVENT WITH A LOT OF HOOPLA! THEY NAMED THE POST IN HIS HONOR FOR THE TOWN IN FRANCE WHERE THE BATTLEFIELD WAS LOCATED. THE TOWN'S NAME WAS VERDUN, FRANCE.

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MANY OF US WHO JOINED THE AUXILIARY WERE AMAZED AT THE HARD WORK AND LOYALTY GIVEN TO THE VETERANS IN THE PAST YEARS. WE WERE PROUD TO BE A PART OF THIS WORK AND TO HELP THOSE WHO FOUGHT FOR OUR FREEDOM. PATRIOTISM SHOULD ALWAYS BE A HIGH PRIORITY AND WE MUST KEEP THE SOLDIERS, YOUNG AND OLD IN OUR HEARTS.