

## **HISTORY OF POST 312 MAPLE PARK, ILLINOIS**

*Author Unknown*

On February 25, 1926, veterans of World War 1 met at Woodman Hall, Maple Park, IL, for the purpose of organizing a post of the American Legion.

Fifteen veterans had been previously contacted by Wm. C. Mundt, state organization officer of the American Legion, and had signed an application for a charter. These 15 had to be new members and transfers from other posts could not be counted. Those present were: Dr. R. B. Main, Vincent Guerin, Harry L. Parson, Paul O'Brien, Michael Moore, Fred Needham, Wilfred Kelly, Earl Sullivan, Walter Butler, Rose Clyne, Roy Smith and James C. Moore.

The meeting was called to order by temporary chairman Earl Sullivan, and Harry L. Parson was named temporary secretary. Comrade Sullivan then called for nominations for officers and the following were duly elected:

Commander: James C. Moore

Vice Commander: Earl Sullivan

Finance Officer: Dr. R. B. Main

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Adjutant: Harry L. Parson

Chaplain: Wilfred Kelly

Sgt. at Arms: Walter Butler

Service Officer: Fred Needham

Historian: Roy Smith

Judge Advocate: Michael Moore

Graves Registration: Vincent Guerin

Americanism Officer: Paul O'Brien

The new officers then took their chairs and thus Maple Park Post No, 312 The American Legion, Department of Illinois was born.

The first money raising activity was a dance at the Town Hall on April 9, 1926. Enough money was realized from this project to buy 12 Army rifles and 250 Poppies to be sold on Memorial Day.

On Memorial Day 1926, the newly formed post had charge of a very fitting Memorial service at the Town Hall. All of the school children participated and Rev. F. S. Porcella was the principal speaker. After the services at the Town Hall the firing squad visited five local cemeteries and fired a salute at each, while the school children placed flowers on the graves of veterans.

Upon returning to the Town Hall a very sumptuous banquet was served to all the veterans and their families under the direction of Mrs. R. S. Harter.

The first of the six famous Annual Legion Minstrel shows was given at the Town Hall in February 1927 and it was such a howling success that the members of the post felt that they could now purchase a permanent home.

In July 1927 the old Baptist Church building was purchased from the trustees of the Baptist Church. Much time and labor was expended during the next months, cleaning and remodeling the "New Legion Hall." All of this labor was donated and by the winter of 1928 the hall was in such condition that moving pictures were shown every week.

In August 1928 the first American Legion Homecoming was held. William Sanders was named chairman, and it was through his ability and hard work that this Homecoming was a very great success.

With the proceeds from this first Homecoming a new roof was put on the Legion building and the entire interior was redecorated. All of this work was donated with Levi Hanson in charge, and was completed in the spring of 1929. During the next two years the hall was improved with a kitchen and a new player piano. These were financed by the annual Minstrel show which had

become so famous , by now that it was given in several of the nearby towns.

During the next few years our post began to decline. Death took several of our best members and many more moved away.

The large hall was becoming too much of a burden for the few remaining members to handle and the minor repairs we were able to make on it were not enough to keep it from falling into ruin. In May 1935 at a regular meeting the building was sold to James C. 'Moore, he being the highest bidder. From that time on the members met in the Town Hall. There was very little activity, but the charter was always kept in good standing with 15 members each year.

During the years of World War II, much was done for the local boys in the service and the post was kept alive for their benefit.

On February 4, 1946, several members of the old Legion met with the new veterans of World War II, and a new slate of officers, all World War II veterans, was elected.

From that time on, the Post has waxed strong and prospered at times with an annual membership of 125 or more each year. with an all time high of 137.

In 1956 a battle streamer of pride was added to the Post Colors when Past Commander Robert Berkes was elected Commander of the Kane County Council of the American Legion. Over the years our organization has contributed substantially to community projects.

November 1964, the Post contracted to construct an addition to the existing building. Upon completion, the cost reached approximately \$30,000 including some furnishings. Shortly thereafter, the Post found itself in financial difficulties. Only thru the extreme efforts of members and friends have we been able to continue the Post activities.

In 1966 an organization was formed to be known as Wives of the American Legion. Only thru their labors and donations to the Post have we been able to meet our financial commitments the past two years.

So, on this 50th Anniversary of the American Legion, four wars, 43 Past Commanders, the Caisons of Post 312 roll on.

PAST COMMANDERS

MAPLE PARK AMERICAN LEGION POST 312

James C. Moore	1926
Wilfred Kelley	1927
Paul O'Brien	1928
Earl J. Sullivan	1929
Dr. R. B. Main	1930
M. J. Moore	1931
Alfred Coffey	1932
Levi Hansen	1933
William Sanders	1934
F. M. Beverly	1935
Walter Butler	1936
Roy Smith	1937
Harry Parson	1938
Amel Ahlin	1939
William Berens	1940
William Sanders	1941
Rose Clyne	1942
Art Bell	1943
Fred Needham	1944
James Powers	1946
Edward Koenig	1947
Charles Sauber	1948
Lloyd Lawson	1949
Burrdette Campbell	1950
William Powers	1951
Robert Berkes	1952
Edward Neisendorf	1953
Edwin F. Turk	1954 - 1955
Peter N. Turk	1955 - 1956
James O. Stover	1956 - 1957
Fred Berkes	1957 - 1958
Gaylord Tate	1958 - 1959

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William Busby	1959 - 1960
Vernow H. Butler	1960 - 1961
Robert N. Geisen	1961 - 1962
Glen R. Kahl	1962 - 1963
Ed. F. Strobel	1963 - 1964
Francis L. Reynolds	1964 - 1965
Thomas E. Strobel	1965 - 1966
Dale A. Sarver	1966 - 1967
Robert R. Johnson	1967 - 1968
Elmer B. Peterson	1968 - 1969

See the 1926 Original Charter in pdf..... [here](#)