



Christ Dunberger Post 537

American Legion

History Volume 2

2000 to 2003

In the continuing history of Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion, I will attempt to record the many important, unusual, funny and interesting incidents that happen at our Post. To put a face on our Post, so to speak. It will be very difficult and most likely boring to detail everything that happens, for example the Color Guard/Rifle Squad was active on more than 40 days during one calendar year. Flag raisings, parades, veterans events and burials are the reason for most of these activities. Burials of prominent members and those with a distinguished military career will appear with the information that is available.

I salute our Post Adjutants Gary Arquette, Dan Anderson and Jim Ernsthansen for their record keeping of the many executive, regular and special meetings. Again to Dan Anderson for the monthly news article in the American Legion Post about all the many activities going on and his personal views on military history.

I COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS BY MYSELF. The awards go to my wife Jayne and to Mrs. Gail Ritchie for their help in getting our Post history printed in the manner herein.



Bob Bassitt  
Historian  
January 1, 2003  
Christ Dunberger Post 537  
American Legion

<b>Year: 2000</b>	<b>Membership: 332</b>
Commander	Ed Placko
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander	Jack McQueary
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander	Doug Kiser
Adjutant	Gary Arquette
Finance Officer	Rex Turner
Asst. Finance Officer	Thelma Nowak
Chaplain	Leonard Wasserman
Sergeant at Arms	Charles O. Meyer

<b>Year: 2001</b>	<b>Membership: 336</b>
Commander	Ed Placko
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander	Jack McQueary
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander	Gary Arquette
Adjutant	Dan Anderson
Finance Officer	Doug Kiger
Asst. Finance Officer	Thelma Nowak
Chaplain	Leonard Wasserman
Sergeant at Arms	Chris Grevis

<b>Year: 2002</b>	<b>Membership: 342</b>
Commander	Ed Placko
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander	Andy Horvath
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander	Bob Bassitt
Adjutant	Jim Ernsthausen
Finance Officer	Doug Kiger
Asst. Finance Officer	Thelma Nowak
Chaplain	Leonard Wasserman
Sergeant at Arms	Steve Grevis

## The 21<sup>st</sup> Century

With the stroke of the Commander's gavel, Jack McQueary opened the first meeting of the new century on January 23, 2000. Records show that 34 Post members were present. The Post Charter was draped in honor of deceased comrade Henry Coin.

At the April 27, 2000 meeting the Post membership was reported at 332 members.

The customary \$350 donation was made to the Gifts To The Yanks Who Gave Program. The money is for our veterans who live in veterans homes in the State of Ohio.

It was noted that the Post history, 1932 to 2000, is on record at the Oregon, Jerusalem Historical Society.

At the May 25, 2000 Post meeting, the Lucas County Degree Team initiated the officers for Dunberger Post for the term of 2000-2001 and new Commander Placko deferred to Past Commander McQueary, allowing him to close out his office.

The following members were elected to office by unanimous vote of the membership:

Commander .....	Ed Placko
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander.....	Jack McQueary
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander.....	Doug Kiger
Adjutant.....	Gary Arquette
Finance Officer .....	Rex Turner
Asst. Finance Officer.....	Thelma Nowak
Chaplain.....	Leonard Wasserman
Sergeant at Arms .....	Charles O. Meyer

For Post Delegates: Ed Placko, Bob Vincent, Thelma Nowak, Dan Anderson, Bob Helle and alternates are Jack McQueary and Frank Grosjean.

Trustees: Bob Vincent and Gene Schacht.

Memorial Day is a very busy day for all American Legion Posts. Christ Dunberger 537 is no different. Flags were placed on veterans graves at Willow Cemetery, St. Johns Lutheran Church, North Oregon, St. Ignatius Catholic Church and Oakwood Cemetery. A memorial service was conducted at Post headquarters.

In a Toledo Blade photo, Bob Quigg, former Post Chaplain, is shown collecting flags at Willow Cemetery. The flags were placed on veterans graves for Memorial Day. The flags were cleaned and distributed at the Music Under the Stars concert at the Toledo Zoo August 27<sup>th</sup>.

Full military burial services were provided by the Post Color Guard/Rifle Squad on June 3<sup>rd</sup> for longtime member Don Sayen.

Charles C. Meyer passed away May 19, 2000. The ever congenial former Finance Officer, hall rental chairman and Color Guard/Rifle Squad member succumbed to a heart attack on his way to participate in another man's burial. He was 83 years old.

We were waiting on Charlie at the Post hall when an Oregon Police Officer drove up. We suspected the news would be bad. Charlie was found in his car at the corner of Coy and Navarre Avenue in uniform with the engine shut off. A true legionnaire to the end.



Americanism officer Gene Shurtz reported the following boys will attend Buckeye Boys State at Bowling Green University: Christopher A. Lofquist, Kyle W. Murphey and Evan A. Shurtz of Clay High School and Paul A. Lewandowski of Cardinal Stritch.

The following information was published in the June 9, 2000 American Legion Press:

### **Governor Taft To Speak at Boys State in June**

Governor Bob Taft will speak at the American Legion Boys State evening assembly program on Wednesday, June 14. The American Legion Buckeye Boys State program will commence Saturday, June 10, on the campus of Bowling Green State University. More than 1,500 delegates and staff will be involved in this largest Boys State program in the United States. Buckeye Boys State is a nine-day "hands-on" experience in the operation of the democratic form of government, the organization of political parties, and the relationship of one to the other in shaping Ohio government. Qualified individuals are recommended by their school, and after an interviewing process, delegates are selected and sponsored by American Legion Posts. All delegates have just completed their junior year in high school. Evening assembly programs are open to the public and are held in Anderson Arena at 8 p.m. Speakers include: State Representative Randy Gardner, American Legion National Commander Alan Lance, Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Moyer, George Taoka, an American of Japanese descent who was interred in the U.S. during WWII, Aaron Weiskol, a Holocaust victim at age 14, Milton Lobstein, National Vice Commander of the American Legion and U.S. Congressman Michael Oxley.

The Post Color Guard/Rifle Squad leaders Dan Anderson and Bob Vincent spoke of their appreciation to Rex Turner and Frank Grosjean for overseeing and conducting the Winter-Spring euchre games at the Post hall. The fellowship and fun was enjoyed by many. Funds collected were donated to the squad to buy much needed equipment.

Commander Ed Placko had the honor of giving a 55 year continuous service award to Charles Dippman at the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Charlie's father Clarence was a Commander at the Post in 1942. Also at the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, Second Vice Commander Doug Kiger reported that the year's second chicken barbecue earned about \$1,900. The low turnout of workers was disappointing. Post Service Officer Gary Arquette reported on the various needs for veterans records and there is not cost for those who may wish to order the documents through the County Veterans Service office.

Operation Clean Sweep patches given as a community service recognition award were ordered. Three hundred patches were ordered and will be presented to those who participate in the semi-annual litter pickups at Pearson Metropark. Clean Sweep IV is scheduled for October 21, 2000.

Post Commander Ed Placko read the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Declaration of Commitment from the Department of Ohio.

Christ Dunberger Post 537 did not sponsor a baseball team in the year 2000. Managerial problems were noted for not fielding a team. In the hopes of sponsoring a team in the near future, a fundraising spaghetti supper was held in late June. Without family and friends showing support for a team, this supper was not well attended as others in the past.



SAL group photo (left to right): Bill Rost, Jim Helle, Jim Schimmel, Don Satkowski, Jr., Bob Marica, Willie Kowalka, Don Satkowski, Sr., Dave Satkowski and Denny Satkowski.

When it comes to community spirit, friends helping friends, it doesn't get much better than this. Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, cloudy and overcast skies, armed with hammers and saws, members of The Sons of the Legion (SAL), Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion turned out to help a friend in need.

Fred Kowalka, Jr., past Post Commander (1975-76 and 82), a fifteen-year advisor for the SAL, needed a helping hand. On July 17<sup>th</sup>, Fred's left leg was amputated above the knee due to infection and diabetes. A wooden wheelchair ramp would be constructed by the SAL to help their friend.

SAL Commander and carpenter by trade, Bill Rost, was the architect and team leader for this 24-foot wheelchair ramp. Built in compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, the U-shaped ramp will provide easier access to and from Fred's home.

As members of the elite Christ Dunberger Post 537 Color Guard/Rifle Squad, we are called upon very often. You might say we've seen it all, almost. Take the burial services for Cyril E. "Barney" Dusseau for instance. A non-post member, Barney was friends with many Dunberger Post members. He was a lifelong farmer who also worked for the former Gulf Oil Company. Imagine our surprise as 13 antique farm tractors led the funeral procession at the Limestone Cemetery near Graytown, Ohio on July 6, 2000.



In the Trustee's report at the July 27<sup>th</sup> Post meeting, Walt Rettenberger told that more than 600 American flags were cleaned and will be given away at the John Phillip Sousa night at The Toledo Zoo in August.

It was also mentioned that new stainless steel cooking surfaces for the barbecue grills have been donated with the installation done by Walt Rettenberger.



Throughout the summer of 2000, an ongoing effort was made to improve on the stone monument flagpole at the Post-owned cemetery plots at Willow Cemetery. The 30 caliber water-cooled World War I machine gun that stood as a sentry at the burial plot for 61 years was stolen in 1998. To beautify the plot and monument, the concrete pad on which the weapon rested was removed. A low growing evergreen was added surrounded by red geraniums. The bronze plaque in the stone monument was refurbished and the flagpole given another fresh coat of white paint.

Our annual steak roast on August 6<sup>th</sup> was well attended. A warm pleasant evening when friends gather around the grill for good food and conversation. The party ended on a very sad note. Michael Raczkowski, 16, of Oregon, was riding his bicycle north on S. Wynn Road. He was struck by a motorist at Pickle Road. People standing outside heard the crash. Witnesses in other vehicles told police the boy failed to stop at the stop sign. Commander Ed Placko and Past Commander Jack McQueary were first on the scene placing a blanket over the victim, putting him on a stretcher and placing him inside the rescue vehicle. The Lifelight helicopter was called upon but was unneeded as the boy was pronounced dead at the scene.



Following the steak roast, an Emergency Executive Board meeting was called by Commander Ed Placko to inform the Board of problems with Post keys. As many keys have been duplicated and were in too many hands, the Post building security was questionable. A motion was made and seconded to accept an estimate to replace all door locks. New keys will be handed out to a limited few. The keys are non-duplicating and a special letter signed by the Commander is needed for more keys to be made.

At the Post Executive Board meeting August 22, 2000, plans were approved to purchase a cordless microphone system to use at all Post functions.

At the Post meeting August 24<sup>th</sup>, Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion history books recording the Post history 1932 to 2000 were made available for sale to members. The price is \$5.00 per copy and covers the basic cost.

It was also noted that this was the 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Korean War.

After several attempts by our Post leaders to contact the former baseball coach for the return of equipment, litigation seemed to be the only answer. A court appearance was scheduled in Oregon Municipal Court for August 7, 2000. The only records available show past Commanders Jack McQueary and Bob Helle representing the Post and that some of the uniforms were returned.

On September 24, 2000 the Post and unit hosted a dinner for the Buckeye Boys and Girls Staters and their parents and family members, plus the school officials from Cardinal Stritch and Clay High Schools. The reports from the students were excellent and anyone who did not attend missed a lot. *These are our leaders of tomorrow and with students of this caliber, our country will be in good hands.* Representing Cardinal Stritch was Father John Stites, Principal, and Erin Saelzer and Lisa Marie Lento, and from Clay, Desiree Staipov and Shannon Bauerschmidt. Mr. Eric Gordon, Principal of Clay, represented Clay High School and the young men attending were Kyle Murphey, Evan Shurtz, Chris Lofquist and Paul Lewandowski. Father John, a Legionnaire from Jewel Post and Vietnam veteran gave the invocation and a short talk. Mr. Gordon said he is sorry that he could not take any credit for the excellent work of the Clay students as it is his first year at Clay and he will strive for the future, to have students for this program. A nice evening was had by all in attendance.

The following article was published in the November 10, 2000 American Legion Press:

**Raymond E. Orwig**  
**1919 - 2000**

Raymond E. Orwig, age 81, of Toledo, died on Monday, October 2, 2000. An 18-year Army veteran, he served in World War II and Korea. Interment was at Willow Cemetery with Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion Color Guard and Rifle Squad providing the military services.

What is unusual here is the Orwig family contacted the Lucas County Veterans Service Commission (LCVSC) seeking assistance. Veterans Service Officer/Dunberger Post Adjutant Gary Arquette became involved and suggested the possibility of the burial plots at Willow Cemetery. As in all cases where the LCVSC is asked for assistance, the body is cremated. Burial services were conducted October 21, 2000.



Dunberger Rifle Squad "cover" during a moment of prayer.

Post history states that Commander Earl Murphy first spoke of the "Recently allotted plot in Willow Cemetery" in 1936. "The plot was donated to provide burial places for members of the post or for any ex-servicemen of Oregon Township who may die without funds to provide a burial." A stone monument was built with a bronze plaque imbedded as a "Memorial of World War Veterans of Oregon Township and Dunberger Post."

A World War I 30-caliber water-cooled machine gun, donated by members of Argonne Post, was placed in front of the memorial. Formal dedication services were held on May 31, 1936, with approximately 300 people attending. Mr. Murphy proclaimed, "This is believed to be the first time any Post in Ohio has provided such a burial ground."

In 1998 tragedy struck. The machine gun that stood as a sentry for 61 years was stolen. During the past summer, the monument plaque was refurbished, the flagpole repainted and shrubbery and flowers were added to replace the missing machine gun.

The last burial at Willow Cemetery was June 10, 1972. Burial plots remain for indigent veterans families.

Bob Bassitt  
Historian  
Christ Dunberger Post 537

The threat of rain greeted volunteers that gathered for Operation Clean Sweep IV on October 21, 2000. On this day only 15 workers were on hand for this three-hour litter pickup at the 300 plus acre Pearson Metropark. Lunch was served at the Post following the cleanup. To date, 48 operation clean sweep patches have been issued to those helping in this semi-annual park cleanup.



A beautiful late October afternoon was the setting for the Post Color Guard and Rifle Squad's presence during an American flag presentation at Cardinal Stritch High School. Vietnam Veteran Father John Stites and the entire student body were on hand. Silence prevailed as the new flag was raised to full staff and then returned to half staff in honor of the 17 crew members of the U.S.S. Cole who lost their lives in the terrorist attack in Aden, Yemen on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Activities included a brief reading on flag etiquette by former Post Adjutant Gary Arquette. The national anthem played by the Cardinal Stritch band and a dramatic recitation of a poem about the American flag by Post Commander Dan Anderson. The traditional three rounds were fired by the rifle squad and taps were played to end a very moving ceremony. The spent ammunition casings were given to Father Stites at his request.



Reverend John Stites accepts a flag from the Christ Dunberger Post at a ceremony held at Cardinal Stritch High School. The flag was lowered at half mast to honor the sailors killed on the USS Cole. Members of the Post fired three shots in the air as a salute to the dead. (Press photo by Ken Grosjean.)

At the Post meeting on October 26, 2000, the resignation of Adjutant Gary Arquette was read and accepted. Dan Anderson accepted the nomination to fill the remaining term of office.

Veterans Day November 11, 2000. The Post Color Guard and Rifle Squad participated in the ceremonies at International Park along the Maumee River in East Toledo. Approximately 15 American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars chapters were in attendance. The Post Rifle Squad had the privilege of firing to end the program. The annual soup supper capped off the day's activities at Post headquarters.

During Veterans Day Observance Week, held at Oregon's five schools, Post veterans were invited to participate. Presenting our country's and Post colors to the Jerusalem Elementary School faculty and students were Commander Ed Placko, Bob Vincent, Don Vogelpohl, Walt Rettenberger, Gene Shurtz and Bob Bassitt.

A very moving afternoon where flags were presented and waved and vintage World War II songs were sung by one and all. Following the program, many students came backstage to express their sincere thanks.

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, Commander Ed Placko, Thelma Nowak, Dan Anderson and Don Vogelpohl were invited to Clay High School. Post members attended six different 11<sup>th</sup> grade history classes of teacher Mr. Klosterman. As Commander Ed Placko said, "It was a day we will remember as one that the students all appreciated us veterans being there."

During the question and answer period students asked, "What was it like to be in a war? What was the sanitation like in Korea up on the front lines?" and many other questions.

This may not be the case in all communities but Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion has an excellent working relationship with our community and school system.

Letter received by Post members from students are on record in the Post history files.

Made to order for your Thanksgiving Day dinner. Hams, steaks, prime rib and beef roast were among the items raffled at the annual Post feather party on November 18<sup>th</sup>. One hundred-fifty door prizes were given to the fortunate ones on this fun filled evening. Second Vice-Commander Doug Kiger had a lot of support as nearly 20 Post members turned out to help on this very busy evening. It was later reported that a total of more than \$2,800 was raised on raffles and bar sales.

First Commander Jack McQueary reported 323 members have now paid their dues at the December 21, 2000 meeting. Ten more members are needed for an all-time high.

In a trustee's report, Bob Vincent stated that all windows in the Post headquarters have been caulked and covered with see-through plastic. With record low temperatures and strong winds, this project was completed just in time.

The second reading of changes in our constitution and bylaws was read at the December 21, 2000 meeting.

Just in time for the December 31, 2000 New Years Eve party, new vertical louvered insulated and fireproof drapes with valances were hung in the Post headquarters. The \$2,300 project undertaken by the Ladies Auxiliary was a major improvement to the Post



Pictured, auxiliary members Eunice Nissen and Gene Rettenberger stand by one of the newly hung vertical drapes.

The Post-sponsored Americanism & Government Test was given on November 12, 2000 at Jerusalem Elementary School.

In an early December American Legion Press issue, Post Scribe Danny Anderson wrote:

“December is a month that brings many thoughts to minds of most Veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Mostly it brings back deep thoughts about where we were on a certain Christmas day while we were in the service. Of course, December 7, 1941, will never be forgotten when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and World War II began.

How many of us remember the cold and snow of December 16, 1944, when the Germans began the Battle of the Bulge. I know several of our Post members were there and one remembers December 26, 1944, when the Siege of Bastogne was lifted by the tanks and infantry of General Patton’s troops. Another of our Post members flying a P47 fighter bomber made the fist staffing runs in over Bastogne. I’m sure those of our members, who served in Korea or Vietnam during Christmas, remember the deep ache in their hearts to be home with loved ones. Many of our buddies never saw another Christmas, let’s not let the world ever forget them.

So we begin December with sober thoughts, we also have to give thanks that those of us who did return to raise our families can now enjoy the blessings of our country.”

## 2001

Congratulations were offered to Bob & Joyce Quigg for the excellent New Years Eve dance held at our Post. As one member said, "How good the band was for dancing, the food was especially fine and the noisemakers the loudest ever."

At the January 23, 2001 meeting, a motion was made and passed for the Post to support another American Legion baseball team. Spaghetti suppers will be held twice annually to raise funds to support the team.

By the majority vote of the members, the Post headquarters is now a smoke free building.

At the request of Oregon Mayor Marge Brown, the Post Color Guard presented the colors at the January 31, 2001 meeting of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Government. Eighty-one groups of community leaders met for the 67<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual General Assembly at the Holiday Inn in Perrysburg, Ohio. Keynote speakers included Toledo Mayor Jack Ford, Mrs. Hope Taft, wife of Ohio Governor Bob Taft, and Mayor Brown.



Photo shows Mayor Brown flanked from left by Don Vogelpohl, Gary Arquette, Bob Bassitt, Commander Ed Placko and Bob Vincent.

Seventy-one members attended the April 22<sup>nd</sup> Past Commanders/Past Presidents Banquet.



Photo shows from left Alma Vincent, Auxiliary President, Ed Placko, Post Commander, Richard Zulch, Department First Vice Commander, Gwen Schroder (office held unknown) and Department Commander Bob Schmitt with wife Barbara Schmitt.

Elected officers for the year 2001/2002 include:

Commander .....	Ed Placko
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander.....	Jack McQueary
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander.....	Gary Arquette
Adjutant.....	Dan Anderson
Finance Officer .....	Doug Kiger
Asst. Finance Officer.....	Thelma Nowak
Chaplain.....	Leonard Wasserman
Sergeant at Arms .....	Chris Grevis

Trustees elected include Don Vogelpohl, Bob Quigg and Jerry Walls.

Total membership for the year 2000/2001 was 341 members.



# Poppy Days

Poppy Day is sponsored each year by the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary to remind Americans of the sacrifice of life and health made by the men and women of our Armed Forces.

The Flander's Poppy (*Papaver Rhoeas*) is a weed of the grain fields. The constant shelling of buildings caused the lime of the building cement to spread over the ground soil and the deep shelling of the terrain removed the surface top soil exposing the underground lime of the area providing a perfect setting for this weed.

This weed which we call a poppy is not a source of opium but instead it's seed (poppyseed) is used in cakes and pastry and is also a source of an excellent oil which is used as a substitute for olive oil.

The petals are a rich scarlet color and, like our hospitalized veterans, this plant cannot live alone but thrives in groups or clumps.

Many complacent *doughboy* with the numb feeling of battle vanished, looked with a shudder at the poppies growing thickly around the white crosses and over the mounds and remembered the rivers of blood which had been shed.

Cultivation and farming in France is again changing the soil content of the French countryside and the poppy is fast disappearing. Soon it will be, like our hospitalized veterans, *out of sight, out of mind.*

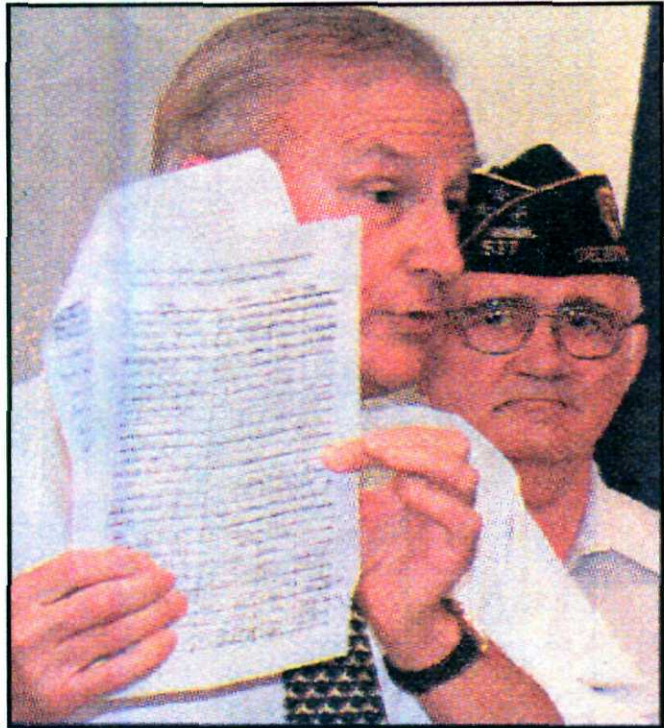
Your contributions are devoted entirely to rehabilitation and child welfare work for the veteran and his family conducted by THE AMERICAN LEGION AND THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY.

Poppy Day sales are undertaken by the Ladies Auxiliary Unit each year during the month of May. Post members are asked to help. Two person teams of men, ladies and husbands and wives solicit funds from the public. It's a rare case indeed when at least a few coins are not donated. The small red flower is offered to one and all.

Funds collected on this day are donated entirely to the rehabilitation and child welfare work for the veteran and his family.

Our annual pilgrimage to area cemeteries for the Memorial Day services had an unexpected tragedy at Willow Cemetery. Post Color Guard/Rifle Squad members were information ready to advance to the flagpole when member Rex Turner collapsed and died of a heart attack. He was 87 years old. He was a very faithful legionnaire who served our Post in many ways. Rex will be missed.

Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, miffed that his "integrity" had been publicly challenged, said he did not save any of the many letters he says he received in support of naming the new I-280 bridge for American veterans. In a June 28<sup>th</sup> letter to U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur, Mr. Finkbeiner said: "I strongly urge we name the new bridge Veterans Memorial Bridge. I have received many letters similar to the attached." The \$220 million dollar bridge crossing the Maumee River near the present I-280 bridge is scheduled to open in 2004. The photo shows Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner with Post Commander Ed Placko at a news conference where he shows a letter with more than 500 signatures favoring a bridge named for veterans.



In the August 10, 2001 American Legion Press Post Scribe Dan Anderson wrote:

"I recently heard a slight criticism of my articles. It was said that I dealt too much with stories from the past. For Legionnaires, the past is who we are. For if we had not been called into the service of our country, we would not exist at all - there would be no veterans of all the young men and women who served in our Armed Services, many served in different branches and in different wars, the largest being World War II, where nearly 13 million were in uniform.

Of all those who served, many were asked to serve in different types of service such as training, supply, transportation, mechanics, offices and other trades needed. A lower percentage were assigned to actual combat against the enemy and faced death or mutilation while serving in the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard.

Some of the Marines still alive will remember August 7 as they landed on Guadalcanal in 1942. American troops entered Paris, France, on August 25, 1944. Three dates make August a very important month for World War II veterans. The first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6; then another bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9. Then the greatest news of all came on August 14, when the Emperor of Japan announced the Japanese had surrendered unconditionally.

The Post flag was lowered to half staff for thirty days following the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington D.C. and the plane crash in Western Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001. Another day that will live in infamy.

On a sad note, little information is available from the Post baseball team. A fund raising spaghetti supper was held June 26<sup>th</sup> and the team forfeited two games during the season because there were not enough players available.

Our very dedicated and hardworking Trustee's spend a nice summer day doing what they do best, cleaning, fixing and keeping the Post looking great. They power-washed, scraped, sanded and painted the 40mm Twin Turret M-42 tank that has been a focal point on our Post property since 1993.



Shown here from left is Bob Vincent, Jerry Walls, Walter Rettenberger and Don Vogelpohl. Bob Quigg has the top row seat.

A potluck dinner preceded the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting to recognize the boys and girls that attended the recent Buckeye Boys and Girls State program. The boys' names can be found on page 30.

Operation Clean Sweep VI took place on October 13 at Pearson Metropark. To date approximately 500 man hours have been contributed to this effort.

A well deserved thank you is extended to Lydia Poddany and husband Joe for their dedicated work in managing our kitchen. She prepared delicious chili to feed the Lucas County council who met at our hall on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Past Commander/Post Scribe Dan Anderson reported in the American Legion Press:

“Veterans Day, November 11, 2001 has come upon us with a new impact this year. Yes, once again our nation is at war and sad to say, “New veterans will be created.” Different from some our past “Veterans Day,” is the attention being paid to us “old Vets.” Our communities are covered with flags on houses, cars and trucks. T.V. commercials are set to patriotic themes. Schools are asking us to tell our stories from our nation’s past wars. We as veterans have long ago flown our flags and have constantly reminded our neighbors that “freedom isn’t free.” Let us pray our nation will not forget it so quickly this time.”

The Post Veterans Day program began with a great soup and dessert supper, followed by our formal service to honor veterans. Mayor-elect Marge Brown, a life Auxiliary Post 537 member, gave a short address. She told of the feeling of being able to stand near where her brother Jim was killed in action in Italy. She visited the military cemetery where Jim was buried for four years before her parents returned his body to St. Ignatius Church Cemetery. Her older brother Gene was critically wounded in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium.



Post Americanism officer Gene Shurtz left and others march in an East Toledo parade to honor our nations veterans.

Veterans week was closed by raising and rededicating the flagpole at Jerusalem Elementary School. Then a quick ride west to Eisenhower Middle school to present the colors and speak to the eighth grade students along with Americanism Chairman of Lucas County Ron Kachmarik and George Willets. Our squad members were Chuck Meyer, P/C Jack McQueary, Gary Arquette, Comdr. Ed Placko, P/C Bill Moritz, Steve Grevis, Frank Grosjean and P/Cs Bob Vincent and Danny Anderson.

The feather party held November 17<sup>th</sup> netted \$2,200 according to the report made by Second Vice Commander Gary Arquette.



Photo above shows Don Vogelpohl, Christmas gift coordinator Thelma Nowak, Mary Peterson and Bob Quigg wrapping gifts.

Christmas gifts to 45 veterans in area rest homes were delivered on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

In the December American Legion Magazine, National Commander Ray G. Smith wrote "membership stands at 2,701,002, four departments reached all-time membership highs. Membership is up 104,000 from one year ago."

## 2002

A memorial tree planting criterion was accepted as a guide for people wanting to plant a tree on Post property for deceased loved ones.

A fundraising spaghetti supper netted proceeds of \$700 on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

Post service officer Gary Arquette reported State Representative Janine Perry said "A portion of I-280 will be named Vietnam Veterans Highway."

The Post dance floor was refinished. As one member said, "It looks great." Donations of \$350 from the Sons of the Legion and \$100 from the Oregon Democratic Club helped to offset the \$850 in expenses.



Gene Schacht and Bob Vincent are shown putting the finishing touches on the dance floor.

Donations of \$25 each were made for the Alcohol/Drug Free prom night at Clay, Cardinal Stritch and Northwood High Schools.

The following story was published in the February 22, 2002 American Legion Press.

# A time to bear arms?

By Bob Bassitt, Historian  
Christ Dunberger Post 537

A story and photo in the February 10, 2002, Toledo Blade caught my eye. Seems as though a vintage cannon from World War I in Ludington, Michigan, is "government property and may be seized and destroyed." Is the 40 mm twin turret M42 tank that is the focal point of the Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion Memorial Gardens next?

In 1942, Henry Marek "got the cannon from the Works Projects Administration with tons of scrap his business processed for the war effort." A Department of Defense agent gave the surprised owner the sad news.

On June 14, 1993, post members celebrated Flag Day with the unveiling of a memorial that included a Vietnam era tank and hoisted a flag dedicated to service men missing in action in IndoChina. A slab of black New Hampshire granite reads — "We remember with grateful hearts those who served, fought and died in all wars."

As past Post Commander Bob Helle said at the dedication, "most members here are the older bunch, and we wanted to do something before we all passed away." Past Post Commander Dan Anderson, headed a committee that designed the



Our American flag at half staff behind the Post Memorial site after the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon September 11, 2001.

memorial. The group legally purchased the tank from the Camp Perry National Guard training center after waiting 1 1/2 years for military authorities to decide what to do with it and other obsolete equipment.

In recent years the 1.8-acre property at the corner of Pickle Road and S. Wynn Road in Oregon, Ohio, has been landscaped and a sign

erected to formally announce this site as our Memorial Garden.

Should we, as veterans, feel threatened to lose the very instruments that were used to defend this country? Is it time to clean out the tanks twin turrets and prepare for battle? Is it time to remove the device necessary to fire blank ammunition from our M-1 rifles when

we pay our final respects to comrades at military burials?

Let's hope that our government will realize it has more important things to do, and Mr. Marek gets to keep his cannon. Memorabilia collected and cherished by each and every veteran should not be jeopardized. They have fought and died for our country.

It was later learned that the army did relinquish its claim to Mr. Marek's cannon. "I just can't believe the whole thing," he said.

Strong winds in early April 2002 knocked down the 40 foot flagpole. Insurance minus deductible covered the replacement cost.

Past Commander Dan Anderson runs up the flag on the newly installed spun aluminum flagpole.





The Past Commanders/Past President's banquet was held April 28, 2002.



Photo above shows Ladies Auxiliary Past President Alma Vincent and Post Chaplain Leonard Wasserman reading the roll call from "In Gods Garden."

Operation Clean Sweep was held May 4 at Pearson Metropark. Thirty-six volunteers collected 35 bags of trash. Lunch followed at the Post headquarters. Those helping were auxiliary members Jayne Bassitt, Mary Peterson and Alma Vincent. Post members were Leonard Wasserman, Joe Palmerton, Andy Horvath, Bob Vincent, Gary Arquette, Berni Cedoz, Charlie Meyer and Bob Bassitt.

On Tuesday, May 21, the Oregon-East Toledo Memorial Association that included many Post members placed flags and a new star identification marker on veterans graves at Willow and North Oregon cemeteries. The Star veterans grave marker is shown in the photo below.

## A Soldier's Reward

By Bob Bassitt, Historian, Christ Dunberger Post 537

There are countless grave stones in area cemeteries marking the final resting places of our loved ones. The sandstone, granite and marble stones are often broken, chipped and weathered making them unreadable.

Lawson Hart Hicks' grave stone at Willow Cemetery in Oregon, Ohio was no different. Bonnie Gilmore visited her seventh generation grandfather's grave site on Memorial Day of 2001 and felt saddened. She remembered reading an article in the Toledo Blade about veterans graves, their upkeep and their sad state of disrepair.

When doing her families genealogy she learned that Mr. Hicks was one of the founding fathers of our country. Born on February 10, 1794, he proudly served in the New York Militia during the War of 1812. In 1839 he moved to the Toledo area where he and his wife, Eleanor, raised 10 children on a farm where the great Eastern Shopping Center is now located. He passed away October 26, 1863.

A letter was written to Christ Dunberger Post 537, American Legion asking for help. Past Commander Bob Vincent took the initiative to correct the problem. A phone call was made to the Lucas County Veterans Service office where he spoke with Post member Gary Arquette.

After determining what channels the request for a new head stone should be made, the paperwork was forwarded to Ron Miller, crew leader for Oregon city owned cemeteries. The real work was just now beginning.

Mr. Miller and Oregon city employee Amy Collins started to work on what was needed to get a replacement grave stone for Mr. Hicks just prior to last Christmas. "After about two days Amy came to me and said she was having problems with the paperwork. The next day she was on the line to Washington D.C., and I was on another line to a different office in Washington. Between us we figured out what was needed," said a smiling Mr. Miller.

In January the paperwork along with a Polaroid photo to prove the authenticity of the request for a replacement stone was sent to the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington, D.C. Everyone with any knowledge of the project had their fingers crossed.

Mr. Miller said, "About the middle of April, I received a call that there was a semi at the cemetery. I did not remember ordering anything so why it was there was a mystery. When I pulled up to the truck and looked in the back I realized that it was the Hicks' stone."



On Saturday, May 25, 2002, a small ceremony was held at Willow Cemetery to unveil the new grave marker. The grey granite stone reads Lawson Hart Hicks, PVT, CO H, NY VOLS, WAR OF 1812, FEB. 10, 1794 - OCT. 26, 1863.

For Bonnie Gilmore, it brings closure to a five year project to have Mr. Hicks recognized. A happy ending on this Memorial Day when we pay our respects to all deceased military veterans.

Elected officers for the year 2002/2003 include:

Vice Commander ..... Andrew Horvath  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander ..... Robert Bassitt  
Adjutant..... James Ernsthausen  
Finance Officer ..... Douglas Kigar  
Asst. Finance Officer..... Thelma Nowak  
Chaplain.....Leonard Wasserman  
Sergeant at Arms ..... Steve Grevis

For Post Delegates: Thelma Nowak, Jack McQueary, Gary Arquette, Frank Grosjean, Robert Helle, Leonard Wasserman and Danny Anderson.

Trustees: Robert Vincent and Gene Schacht.

Memorial Day services were held at Pearson Metropark, Willow Cemetery, St. Johns Lutheran Cemetery, St. Ignatius Catholic Cemetery and Oakwood Cemetery in Jerusalem Township. The final stop for the day was at our Post where a memorial wreath was placed near the granite marker that reads, "We remember with grateful hearts those who served, fought and died in all wars."

First Vice Commander Jack McQueary reported the 2002/2003 membership was 342.

The Post Color Guard/Rifle Squad presented the colors at the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial Day program "Stand Tall, Stand Proud" at Morrison R. Waite High School on May 23, 2002.

The Toledo Blade shows Post Sergeant at Arms Steve Grevis during the disposable flags ceremony held June 13<sup>th</sup>.



## Program targets future kindergartners



During the dedication ceremonies of Safety Town at Starr Elementary School, the Post Color Guard/Rifle Squad salute Old Glory as Corey Pappas, a sixth-grade student, sings the National Anthem. Coordinator Deb Brown stands by. Safety Town deals with the kindergarten children in regard to busses, fires, bicycles, guns, railroads, health, electrical devices and the proper use of a telephone during an emergency.

The June 25<sup>th</sup> spaghetti supper was far more successful than the one held in January thanks to the baseball players and their families. A 50/50 raffle was also held with \$720 in prize money and seven additional prizes given away.

It was reported that the recent Poppy Day sales netted \$2,212 in proceeds. Thanks were extended by chairperson Theresa Meyer.

From the Maumee Bay State Park Nature Center volunteers newsletter Post member George Pollauf was credited for his work. The story read, "Boardwalk Patrol: George Pollauf, a volunteer, has done an outstanding job with the Phragmites growing along the boardwalk. Phragmites are the tall giant reeds with the feather tops. They are an invasive species and very difficult to control. George cuts them down periodically to weaken the plant and control the growth. . . Keeping the vegetation cut back from the boardwalk allows more enjoyment and less hazards for everyone using the walk."

Charles Dippman passed away July 31, 2002. He was a life member with more than fifty years of continuous service.

In late summer a 16 inch storm sewer was extended from Navarre Avenue South to the middle of the Post property along Wynn Road. The area south of the catch basin to Pickle Road has been graded to let surface water run to the catch basin and into the sewer line. The area was seeded. Rains have been scarce and there has been little opportunity to see if this system works.



Oregon City workers are shown placing the storm sewer catch basin in position.

Earl "Joe" Snyder, 81, passed away on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Joe was a Naval veteran of WWII and helped build the Burma RR and Bridge over the River Kwai as a POW. During the war he was listed as MIA for 3 ½ years and the Lutheran and Old Folks Home had a funeral in his memory before it was discovered he was a POW. He was a member of the Christ Dunberger American Legion Post, Disabled Vets, USS Houston Survivors of the Asiatic Fleet, American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor and the Millbury Volunteer Fire Department.

A beautiful eulogy written by Pastor Kenneth Heintzleman of St. Peter's United Church of Christ is on record in the Post history files.

Patriot Day Commemoration, September 11, 2002 as Post Scribe Dan Anderson wrote in the American Legion Press:

“On Wednesday, September 11, a Patriot Day service was held in the Clay High School Memorial Stadium. It was sponsored by our Legion Post #537 and the City of Oregon. High school students from Cardinal Stritch and Clay High attended with a large community support. Honored were veterans, local firefighters from Oregon, Jerusalem Township, Williston and Northwood, Oregon Police and EMTs. They are our hometown, everyday heroes. Our Post presented a Blue Star flag to be flown at City Hall in honor of all local families who have sons or daughters presently in our Armed Forces. Our Rifle Squad fired a three-shot volley and Taps were played for all those who have sacrificed their lives in the war against terrorism. The Clay High School band played the Star Spangled Banner.”



### **Communities remember**

A ceremony honoring victims of September 11 brought hundreds of people to Clay High School's stadium. Bottom photo: Thelma Nowak, a former World War II Army nurse, salutes those who have fallen. Top photo: Members of the Dunberger Post firing squad prepare for the salute to the dead. (Press photos by Ken Grosjean)



The September 15<sup>th</sup> chicken barbecue was the most successful to date. The Post, Ladies Auxiliary and Sons of the Legion combined efforts to sell 568 dinners. Total proceeds netted \$2,794. A complete account of this dinner is on record in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commanders files.

The steak roast held October 5<sup>th</sup> drew 75 diners to the Post. Net proceeds were \$355.82. A full account is also on record in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commanders file.



At the annual recognition supper for students that attended Buckeye Boys and Girls State the past summer. The photo shows from left, Americanism officer Gene Shurtz and Post sponsored boys James Wineland of Cardinal Stritch High School and Kenneth Quilter, Chris Bauerschmitz and Peter Brooks of Clay High School.

During the weekend of November 9 through 11, the Post Color Guard/Rifle Squad was very busy participating in Veterans Day services.

We were once again invited to fire the three shot volleys at the annual Lucas County-City of Toledo observance at International Park. Members also marched in the first in a decade Greater Toledo Veterans Day Parade in downtown Toledo. The rifle guard unit also fired the ceremonial three shot volleys at the closing of the Vietnam Peach Arch Memorial Plaza. An impressive and on schedule fly over was made by F-16 Falcon Fighter jets from the Ohio Air National Guard.

At Jerusalem Elementary school in Curtice, a flag raising ceremony was held and a memorial wreath was placed at the flag pole while "Taps" was blown.

The Veterans Day activities came to an end at the annual soup supper at the Post hall.

### BUCKEYE BOYS STATE

YEAR	NAME1	NAME2	NAME3	NAME4
2000	Christopher A. Lofquist Clay High School	Kyle W. Murphey Clay High School	Evan A. Shurtz Clay High School	Paul W. Lewandowski Cardinal Stritch
2001	Sean Swigart Clay High School	Allen Allred Clay High School	Pat Murnen Clay High School	Joe Pokrzywa Cardinal Stritch
2002	Chris Bauerschmidt Clay High School	Peter Brooks Clay High School	Kenneth Quilter Clay High School	James Wineland Cardinal Stritch



The annual feather party was held November 16<sup>th</sup>. Funds were earmarked to purchase Christmas gifts for 53 veterans living in area nursing homes. Net proceeds were \$2,122.41, down from the past two years. Thirty-one Post members helped to make this a profitable and fun evening. The generosity of Post members was evident as many made cash donations that were used as door prizes.

On a cold winter-like day, the Color Guard/Rifle Squad was called on for a burial detail on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Former Marine Sergeant, non-member Irene Viol Snay was laid to rest at St. Ignatius cemetery. She was 79 years of age.



Burial detail photo from left, first row: Bob Vincent, Joe Poddany and Frank Grosjean. Second row: Leonard Wasserman, Bob Lutz, Roy McLargin, Tito Martinez and Andy Horvath. Third row: Ed Placko, Bud Shank, Gary Arquette, Frank Cruthers, Don Vogelpohl, Jack McQueary and Elroy Buehler.

November 26<sup>th</sup>, the day before Thanksgiving, 26 euchre players were on hand for the weekly card games held at the Post hall. Life member Frank Grosjean is the leader of this group. He said, "all proceeds will once again be turned over to the Color Guard/Rifle Squad to purchase much needed equipment and supplies."



Frank Grosjean is seen at the right in the above photo.

At the final meeting of the year 2002, First Vice Commander Andy Horvath announced that Post membership was 345 — a new all time high. During the past year, nine members have passed away.

At a time when many Posts are having difficulty meeting quota, our membership has steadily increased. As Past Commander Earl Murphy said in 1936, “Membership, cooperation and comradeship are essential to a successful Legion Post and Dunberger Post has had all three. That, comrades, is why Dunberger is the most active little Post in the County, State and Nation.”



Past Commander/Past First Vice Commander Jack McQueary, left, congratulates First Vice Commander Andy Horvath on setting a new all-time high in Post membership.

Once again I say with regret that no records or information relating to the Post sponsored baseball team has been made available to me. Two incomplete seasons; expenditures of approximately \$5,000 and no historical records; sad.

Fifty-three Christmas gifts were delivered to veterans residing in area nursing homes prior to the Christmas holidays. Post member Thelma Nowak is the coordinator of this worthy program. She is aided by auxiliary member Mary Peterson in purchasing the gifts. Several Post members act as Santa's helpers in wrapping and delivering the gifts.

The names of veterans and the nursing homes where they reside are:

Arbors of Oregon

Jose Cicineros  
David Dusseau  
James Farell  
Paul King  
Elmer Knight  
Don Lallendorf  
Ray Materzinski  
Don Murraray  
John Palicki  
Don Riley  
Chris Schoenfeld  
David Wagonner  
Tony Westfall

Heartland of Oregon

John Giblin  
David Harpel  
Harold Homeyer  
Louis Kristofs  
Will Lee  
Robert Leiter  
Glen Metzger  
Daniel Pacer  
Clarence Risby  
Steve Sedczuk  
Carl Stein  
Carl Swartz  
William Swartz  
Henry Tober  
Ernestine White

\* Post Members

Lutheran Home

Paul Buehler  
Glen Champion  
Don Hallister  
Henry Halzhauer  
Erwin Jachimiak  
Ed Krzyminski  
Roy Ladd  
Clarence South\*  
James Stockmaster  
Jim Webb

Orchard Villa

Glenn Duval  
Howard Fouty  
Robert Hahn  
Paul Konesni  
Robert Materia  
Henry Pelligrin\*  
Ray Perrin  
Norman Schiffler  
Frank Tursic

Sacred Heart

Al Cartier  
Robert Fairbairn  
Larry Hartman  
Otto Hatfield\*  
Clemons Jankowick  
Harriet Lucas

The final activity of the year 2002 was the New Year's Eve dance. Bob and Joyce Quigg were the coordinators and Joe and Lydia Poddany catered the buffet dinner. A diamond "mom's" ring donated by Northwood Jewelers was raffled off and proceeds of \$175.00 were netted.