History

Do you know that the Department of Minnesota held the first American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention on November 18-19, 1920? Miss Pauline Cranston Curnick, was the Secretary of our National Organization and she was our guest. At our first meeting, the Auxiliary members made a pledge to take care of the sick and disabled soldier and his family. This mantra has stayed with us ever since and the history facts would have been lost without someone recording them.

In the early years Minnesota has had some wonderful strong leaders, they set the bar high for all other State Departments to follow.

1st to construct programs in hospital workers, rehabilitation
1st Department to organize a poppy industry.
1st Department to have an auxiliary worker attached to the Veterans Bureau.
1st to ask that Armistice Day be made a National Holiday.
1st Department to elects a Publicity Director
1st to have a President Secretary
1st to have a Department secretary in the United states Mrs. A.V. Denman, Mankato

This information was provided by Kati Tyler for the National Cavalcade of Memories.

With the celebration of our 100th year anniversary fast approaching it is time to start gathering your Legion Family display items for your community. These can be displayed at your Post Home, Library, City Hall, or Historical Society. Maybe start planning an open house. The ideas are endless on ways to proceed but don’t wait till the last minute to plan. Be sure to ask you members for memorabilia, historical photos and documents to showcase. Districts should be doing the same thing to have their display at Mid-Winter Conference or District Conventions.

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota has agreed to allow us to solicit money to help restore our historical photos and documents. We also need to purchase archival quality storage boxes to help prevent further damage of our photos. The money will also provide display cases and picture frames to be built by veterans at the Hasting VA Home. These photographs that capture our history give us a visual of a life style that has long ago changed. We found that our earliest photos from the 1920’s are in poor condition and will take professional help to restore them. We as an organization need to act now or we will lose these precious memories of the past. Kim Carlander, Historian from the Third District will have a display table at Fall Conference where you can make a financial contribution and see some of our beautiful panoramic photos that have already been restored. If you cannot attend Fall Conference but would still like to help our Minnesota Historical Preservation and Storage. Please mail your donation to the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. State Veterans Service Building, 20 West 12th Street Room 314, St. Paul MN 55155 Thank you!

Karla Otterness
Historian 2017/2018
“The key to our history is remembering our past, while documenting our present and creating a future.”