

Col. Carle Abrams Describes Birth of Vets Organization

Col. Carle Abrams of Salem, now with the Abrams & Skinner Insurance firm, is a charter member of the American Legion. He was a member of the first servicemen's caucus which met in Paris on March 21-22, 1919, for the purpose of forming a veterans' organization.

Gen. Pershing was largely responsible for the holding of that caucus, Abrams said. The general cooperated to the full extent in seeing that delegates to the caucus were sent from every service group then stationed in Europe.

"There were about 700 in that original meeting," Abrams recalls. "We met in the old Circle Theatre in Paris."

Abrams remembers vividly the ordeal of choosing a name for the veterans organization they were about to form. A committee on names was appointed, and after several hours deliberation presented several suggested names to the general assembly.

"None of them seemed to click," said Abrams, "so several of the boys began suggesting names from the floor."

About 15 or 20 names had been suggested, with nothing but frowns as response.

Finally, Abrams recalls, a young fellow stood up and said, "Why not call it the American Legion?"

A hush fell about the auditorium. Suddenly the whole place broke out into applause. The applause rose from hand-clapping to roars of approval, and when the whole delegation stood on their feet, there was no doubt in anyone's mind—"American Legion" was it.

A temporary constitution and by-laws were set up, and the first national convention of the American Legion scheduled for St. Louis in September, 1919.

At that convention, the name was affirmed and the permanent constitution set up. Since then, there has been no amendments whatsoever to that original constitution, except for the clause which allowed World War II veterans to become members of the Legion. That amendment was drawn up in Capital Post No. 9 in Salem.

Local posts immediately sprang up throughout the nation. Capital post was one of the first.

Col. Abrams, incidentally, is still an active Legionnaire.

Here Is Procedure In Legion Legislation

The department of Oregon, American Legion, follows this procedure in considering resolutions at a state convention:

First, resolutions are brought in from various posts throughout the state. They are submitted to the department's resolutions committee, which sorts out and combines the ones it considers most feasible, and in turn submits them to the general assembly.

Legion members vote on whether to pass or kill a bill at the general assembly.

If the bill is passed, and if it is of national significance to the American Legion, it is taken to the National convention, where it starts over in a resolutions committee again.

Anyone Can Register

The host commission of the 31st annual American Legion convention reminds all citizens of Salem and vicinity that they are eligible to register for the Legion convention and attend nearly all of the events and sessions. Registration booth is at convention headquarters, located in a tent on the courthouse lawn.

Perry Brown is current national commander of the American Legion.



Col. Carle Abrams

Discussion Due On Disable Aid

Among the most important items of business to come before the 31st annual convention of the Oregon department of the American Legion will be the matter involving financial aid for disabled persons.

Aiding the disabled is nothing new for Legionnaires; the Legion has been giving a helping hand for years.

So far, the project has been financed through bank interest gained on a fund deposited for that purpose. But with interest rates dropping and the list of disabled persons growing, the Legion must find new means of financing the program if it is to continue.

Seventeen posts in Oregon have considered this problem in their local meetings serious enough to bring with them resolutions regarding it to the state convention this week.

The matter will be thrashed over in the resolutions committee meetings, and then in a general meeting. If a decision as to how to raise the money is reached, and if a bill calling for an act to raise the funds is passed, that bill will then go to the national convention for consideration there.

The most popular suggestion is to increase each Legion member's dues by 25c, and earmark that additional amount for rehabilitation only.

Steve Chadwick of Seattle, former national commander, and an ardent booster of the plan, will be here for the state convention to explain the workings of the proposed bill.



Convention Vice-Chairman
—One of the many work-horses who toiled to make this week's state American Legion convention the sensational affair it is is Carl D. Gabrielson, vice-chairman of the local convention committee.

Post Nine First With Amendment

The constitutional amendment which provides that World War II veterans are eligible to become members of the American Legion got its start in Salem, at Capital Post No. 9.

Rex Kimmel, who has been a leading figure in local Legion circles for years, was appointed post chairman of a resolutions committee to draw up such a bill.

The bill drew an "okeh" in the local post, and was sent to the state convention in Portland in 1945. The department of Oregon also passed the amendment, and in turn it was referred to the national meeting for consideration.

There were other states submitting such an amendment, but since the department of Oregon convention was the first state convention held in 1945, it was actually the Oregon resolution that was adopted.

The national group approved the amendment, and from there it was turned over to the congress of the United States for final consideration and voting.

The American Legion is chartered by congress.

Only 3 Oregon Cities Have Over One Post

Salem, with three American Legion posts, is one of three cities in Oregon having more than a single post. The three posts in Salem are Capital Post No. 9; Salem Post 136, comprised of World War II vets only; and Pioneer Post No. 149, an all-women's group.

Of the 170 Legion posts in Oregon, 26 are located in Portland, one of them an all-woman's post.

The only other city outside Salem and Portland with more than one post is Eugene. Both a men's and a women's post are located there.



Local 40 et 8 Boss—Brazier Small, Salem attorney, who is chef de gare of Salem voiture 153 of the 40 et 8, honor and fun-making division of the American Legion.

Women Only In Post No. 149

Salem's newest American Legion post, No. 149, has been in existence only since March, 1946. But the work behind its formation began several months prior to that.

Velma McNamara and Mrs. Harriett Belcher started the movement when they applied for membership in Capital Post No. 9. At that time, they learned that only 15 persons were needed to organize a new post.

So the two ladies thought of the possibilities of forming a post solely for women, and the more they deliberated on the idea, the more determined they were to go ahead with it.

Selective service headquarters in Salem was contacted, and a list of names of women veterans in this area was obtained.

Through the writing of letters, phone calls and much personal contact, these women were gradually rounded up and joined together in a temporary organization.

They then applied for a charter, and their post was duly organized with 44 members, all women.

Officers in the post are Mrs. Belcher, commander; Susan Farchy, first vice-commander; Mrs. Sylvia Kraps, second vice-commander; Mrs. Elizabeth Skinner, adjutant; Alberta Shoemaker, chaplain; Evelyn Schrader, finance officer; Mrs. Elen Sprentzel, historian.

Portlander Holds National Presidency

An Oregonian is serving as national president of the Legion auxiliary. She is Mrs. Hubert A. (Laura) Goode of Portland.

Mrs. Goode began her climb up the Legion ladder when she was elected department vice-president at the state convention in Salem in 1939.

She will be in Salem again this week for the 31st annual state Legion convention.

Welcome Legionnaires

While you are in Salem drop in to the Douglas McKay Chevrolet Co. and see the most modern equipped shop in the Pacific Northwest.

Douglas McKay Chevrolet Co.
510 North Commercial Phone 3-3175

Ways to Enjoy Life...

A cool breeze on the lake... solitude... the rippling sound of waves... then homeward bound at twilight to a cool, refreshing glass of light Olympia. These are among the good things of life.

Enjoy
OLYMPIA
"It's the Water"

Beer, the Light Refreshment Beverage of Millions of Temperate People
OLYMPIA BREWING COMPANY, OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, U. S. A.