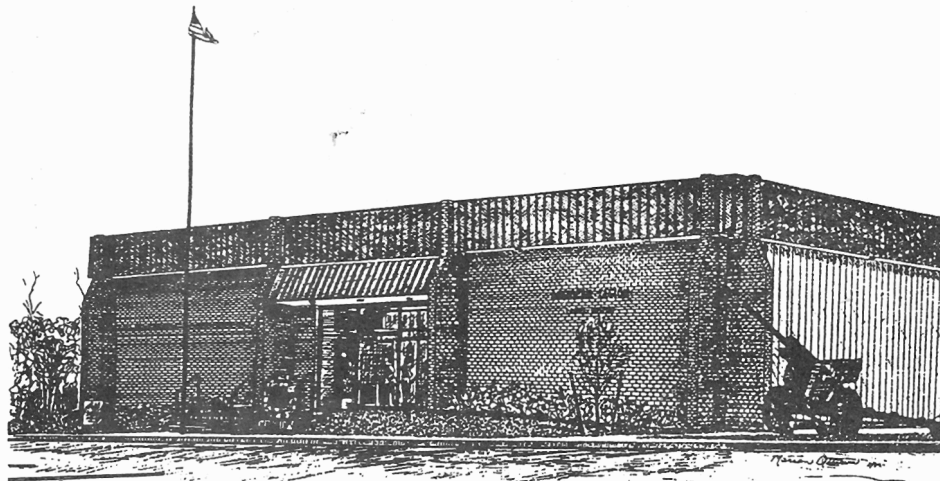




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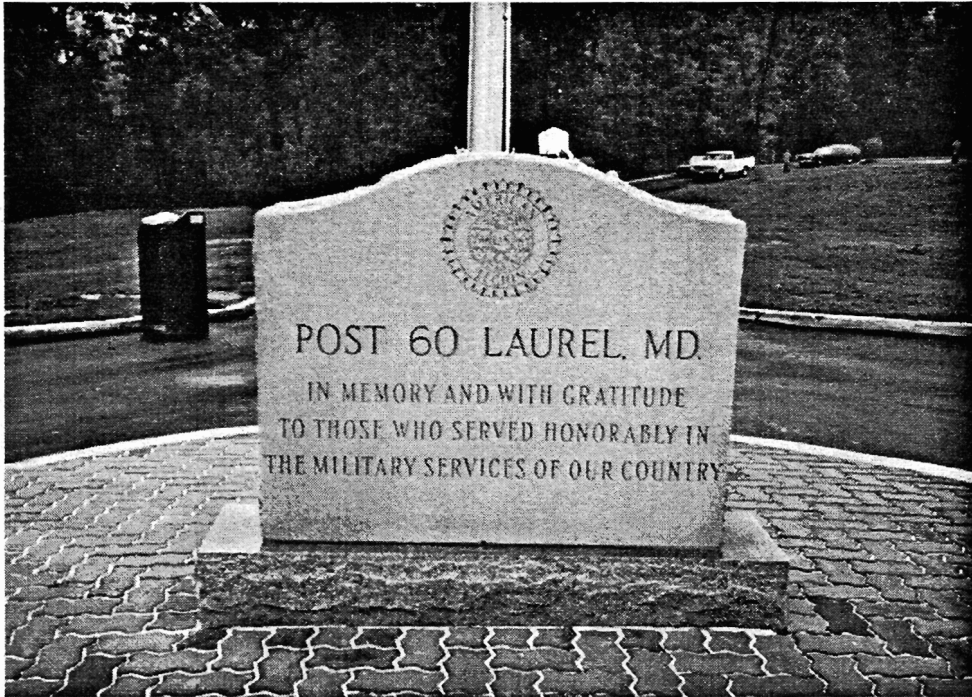
## LAUREL POST 60



# HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

BY  
RAY JACQUEZ, DEC

# DEDICATION



*Since its inception in 1921, Laurel Post 60 had comrades serving in the best interests of The Post with great effort and envious skills, with unselfish contributions of time and money, for the benefit of all, and for reasons unknown, their names are never mentioned. It is to these comrades that the History of Laurel Post 60 is respectfully dedicated.*

**SO THAT WE ARE NOT RETAINED  
ONLY IN THE MEMORY OF A FEW**

# FORWARD



The work of a historian is much harder than the reader may think. Before publication, people involved seldom take time to volunteer information, yet, delight in stating what was missed when the finished product appears. A strong effort has been made to produce an authentic compilation of the accomplishments of Laurel Post 60 for these past 77 years.

The "Early Years" is a result of several years of effort with Past Department Commander Harry Allen (now in Post Everlasting) which culminated with the manuscript which is quoted "en toto".

Past Post Commander Robert Maring (Post Everlasting) added a great deal of information covering the time up to the loss of the Post Home by fire (March 9, 1975).

The remainder of the information contained herein is the result of gleaning information from Post files, memories and recollections of several "old-timers" and incidents which the undersigned were privileged to be a party to . . .

# THE EARLY YEARS

## History Of Purchasing the Legion Home at 2 Main street, Laurel, Maryland

Many times in the past years I have heard members, even the old timers, who have told me that they actually had no idea how our little Post, with so few members at that time, could have attempted to buy and take over our Home.

The Post was originally a USO home built for the servicemen of Fort Meade. It stood idle for some time after the war. I was informed by Colonel Richard C. O'Connell that the building was for sale. Thanks to the efforts of Commander Bryan Hobbs we met with the Commission to discuss purchase. Commander Hobbs suggested we offer a token price of \$5 which was quickly rejected! We began to up the ante and after much dickering our offer of \$18,000 was accepted.

Naturally, there was much concern among our Post members as to where the money was to come from as we had only \$1,400 in our treasury at that time. I personally offered to loan them the money until they could find other means. However, Captain Vincent Cockey, together with Attorney John Stanley suggested we issue 3% mortgage bonds to our members to finance the deal.

The bonds sold quickly and we were able to close the deal. At that time I think we were the envy of the entire State as there were not many such homes in the State at that time. Several other organizations tried to compete

with this sale, but we had made first contact and were given preference.

The fact that we still had only \$1,400 meant that we could not even afford to pay for insurance, but our good old friend, Post member J. Earl Brown offered to insure us and hold the bill until we were able to pay. I had retired from business and so I stayed on as the manager and chairman of the board to help run the club.

Our first move was to sell the soda fountain to Mr. Donaldson for \$1,000. He did all the work in disconnecting and removal. We purchased an old bar from an NCO building at Fort Meade for \$25 and installed it in the North room (named the George Somer room). Member Jim Turney did most of the work in getting this installed with the help of other members of course. It worked well and profitably until we were able to install the long bar which remained in use until the Post was consumed by fire.

At the beginning, we installed slot machines owned by an outside dealer with the stipulation that we would operate them on a commission basis until we were able to buy our own machines. Within a short period we were able to do this and were able to hold things together and make many improvements.

Among the things we could now afford to do were the installation of the new long bar, a

walk-in refrigeration unit and some kitchen equipment. The hardwood floor in the ballroom was black as tar, our members worked like Trojans, scrubbing, waxing and polishing. It was a wonderful feeling to know that it all belonged to us "lock, stock, and barrel"!

Many improvements were made in the next two years and our Committee was able to pay off all mortgage bonds, install new kitchen equipment and still have approximately \$25,000 in our treasury thanks to our members hard work.

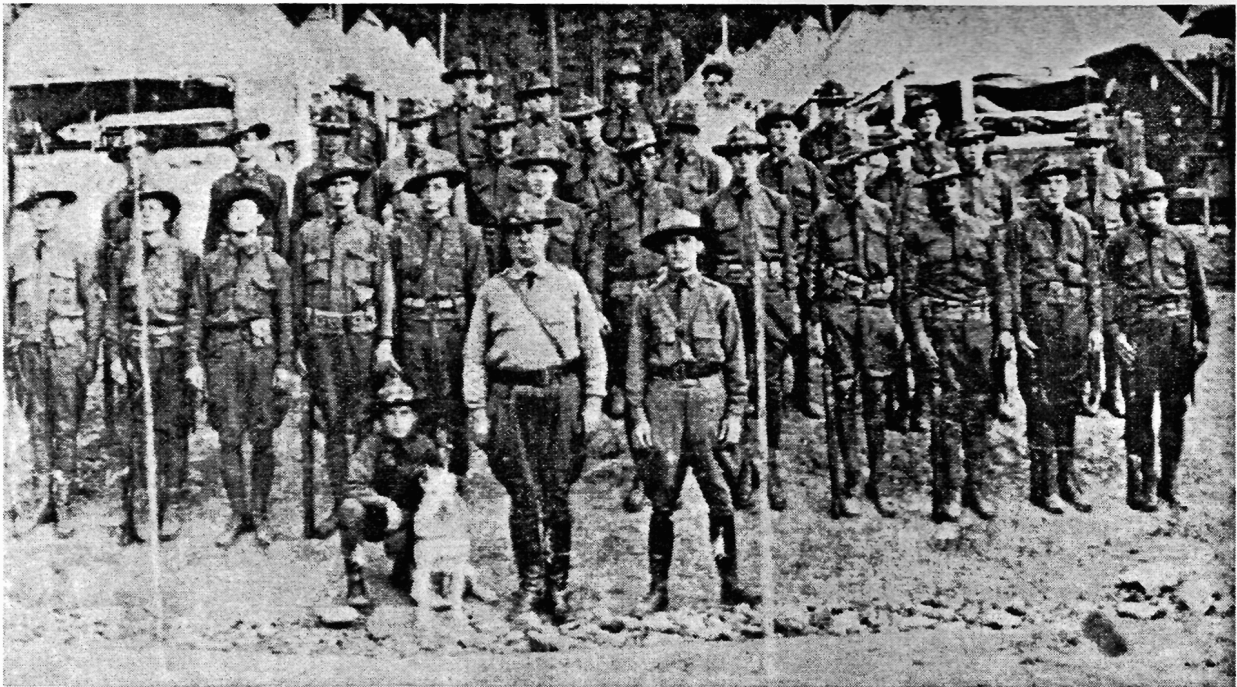
After acting as Board President and Manager for two years (without pay!) I had to leave because of my election as Department

Commander. At this time, Mr. Lonas, who lived in back of the home, offered to sell fifteen acres lying on two sides of the Post property. He priced it at \$2,200.00 which was bought. Today it is a valuable property.

This completes my knowledge in regards to the acquisition of our Post home. I hope it will be of some value in our History. Most of the facts should be in the minutes of the Board of Directors and the records of the Post. In any case this is the best I can do to record the facts as I have seen them so there will be no questions to be answered as to how we acquired our beautiful Legion Home.

**Harry Allen** , Chairman.

Members: H. Allen, C. Haslup, W.L. McCormick



*The 1930 Laurel Guard - - At Camp Ritchie*