

teams that the Post had fielded for a number of years. He was also chairman of the Department Senior Athletic Committee when the Post's basketball team represented Maryland in the National tournament.

During this time, opposition to slot machines had grown to the point that they were outlawed by the State. This caused a serious hardship in Post finances which progressed to the point where the Board of directors had to go to a bank to borrow funds.

Thomas Murphy served from 1956-1957 and was succeeded by Roland Smallwood. Next in line was John W. O'Brien "Wes" who served two terms 1958-1959 and 1960-1961. Warren Rabbit served in the interim period, 1959-1960.

Wes was Provost Marshall at Fort Meade prior to his stints as Commander. He became

very active in Children & Youth programs, Department Child Welfare Foundation, National Committee for Children & Youth and was instrumental in the Post food collection program for Thanksgiving and Christmas. In addition to his work in the Easter Seals program he was involved in securing a treatment center in Prince George's county for polio victims. He also headed the Southern Maryland District project to purchase a van with chairlift to transport patients for treatment at local hospitals.

Wes was transferred to Post Everlasting on November 26, 1975. In his honor the Post raised funds to furnish a hospital room in his name at the Greater Laurel Beltsville Hospital which was under construction at that time.

Next in line was George W. Calhoun who served as commander for the period 1961-1962.



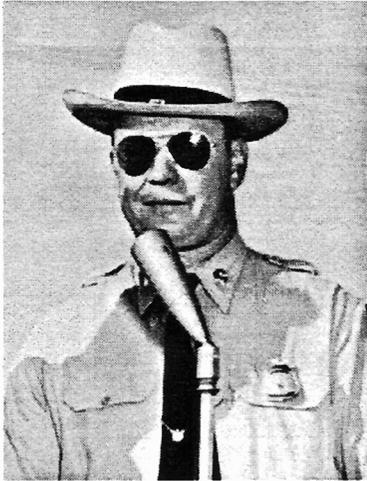
*CDR Charles Little  
1949-1950*



*CDR Maynard Nelson  
1950-1951*



*CDR Edwin Dove  
1951-1952*



*CDR Russell Walter  
1952-1953*



*CDR William Gray  
1953-1954*



*CDR John Anderson  
1954-1955*



*CDR Harry Lines  
1955-1956*



*CDR Thomas Murphy  
1956-1957*



*CDR Roland Smallwood  
1957-1958*



*CDR Warren Rabbitt  
1956-1960*



*CDR "Wes" O'Brien  
1958-1959, 1960-1961*



*CDR James Johnston  
1963-1964*

## LETTER FROM 1947

September 15, 1947

Fellow Legionaires:

Don't forget the regular meeting this Thursday, September 18, 1947 at 8:30PM. Refreshments will be served and in the way of added enjoyment we are having a few vaudeville acts for your enjoyment.

This coming Friday we are having the first big dance of the fall season. Tiny Meeker, one of the better bands of Washington will be on hand to furnish our music. The usual price of \$2.40 per couple and dancing from 9 - 1 AM. Lets have all you Legionaires present on Friday so that we can make our first big fall dance a success.

Don't forget Saturday night, September 20, 1947 we will have our regular Saturday night dance from 9 - 12 PM at our regular price of 50¢ per person. Bob Phumphery's orchestra will be back with us on this date to provide the music for our dancing and listening pleasure.

We are looking forward to seeing you.....

**EDITORS NOTE: HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED!!!!**

# 1961-1980

Charles Smith was the next Commander who would serve three terms. His first act after installation was to discharge the Manager. Post Officers attendance at the State Convention resulted in the following appointments: Wes O'Brien-Child Welfare, Commander Smith-Membership, J.T. Whittaker-Graves Registration, G. Bowie McCeney-Publicity, H. Ford-Agriculture, G.R. Walters-Highway Safety and L. Johnston-Commanders Banquet Committee. The Post attained 100% in membership, food for the needy at Thanksgiving and Christmas continued as prime projects along with Cub Scouts, graves decoration and use of the Post firing squad.

Jimmy Johnson became our next Commander, succeeded by Bill Byrne in 1964-1965. Again, the Post attained 100% in membership, our usual programs were successfully met. Due to a continued lack of funds members proposed selling off a portion of our land. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed



*Joint Flag Day Ceremony with Laurel Elks, 1977*

and we remained solvent although our Constitution and bylaws were amended to prevent future attempts of this kind. However, we still had to borrow some money from local banks.

Bob Maring succeeded Bill Byrne. In August 1965 a small circus offered their services to raise funds on a percentage basis. This was approved, the Laurel Race Course was the selected site. Unfortunately, it was scheduled on the first day of school! Needless to say, our profits were minimal!

At this time, bingo became a primary concern as profits were minuscule in proportion to the players (\$2,000 in an entire year). The Chairman resigned and the Auxiliary Unit offered to assist. However, this was short-lived and James "Bookie" Duvall was assigned to run the program; the profits showed a marked increase! The Post was placed on a more secure financial footing when the bylaws were amended to place final authority in finance and policy matters in the hands of the Executive Committee and leave the operation of the Post home and facilities in the hands of the Board of Trustees (formerly Board of Directors).

A mini-crisis developed when it was learned that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander, G. Peabody, had contracted to raffle off an automobile without authority. Ticket sales were minuscule and thanks to the concerted efforts of members Loveless, Duvall, Morgan, St. Aubin, Smith and Byrne the crisis was averted and we realized a profit of approximately \$200. Again,

procedures were amended to require any fund raising effort be directed through the Executive Committee. Attendance at monthly meetings was increased by the use of guest speakers including Lou Sabin (football coach, U of MD), and Leonard Benvenue (Chief of Security, National Security Agency). Procedures were placed in motion to purchase air conditioning equipment from Cheverly American Legion Post.

Pat Clouse served from 1966-1967 and with the assistance of Charlie Herbert had the units installed which greatly increased both comfort and participation in Post events.

James "Bookie" Duvall served as Commander during 1968-1969 and continued to oversee the Bingo program and continued successful completions of established Post programs.

Note: It was at this time that your writer joined the Post. My first official duties were: "paint all the window frames and sashes outside" and "clean the garage"; quite a "comedown" from my official duties as a Chief Warrant Officer, USA!!!

Next in line was Charles "Big Smitty" Smith who served a somewhat tumultuous two terms from 1968-69-70. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander had held several fund-raisers which produced little income with no accounting. He was notified to submit appropriate records; he resigned his office and the records were never received. Next the Club Manager noted no significant increase in bar sales although it was obvious that the bar was



*CDR Cobb, 1975-1976*

crowded. He failed to apply for renewal of the liquor license and the Post was closed. When order was finally restored, nonmembers did not come in for their "freebies" and it was business as usual.

Note was made that the Post did not have any emergency funds that would allow it to operate. Therefore, thanks to Commander Smith a fund (See Boosters Appendix) was established that would be added to by donations and used in cases of dire emergency. This proved to be quite prophetic in nature as the fund proved a godsend when the Post was later burned to the ground!

Despite no second Vice Commander, he held a successful oyster roast on Veterans Day (\$1,000) which was more than the Post had realized in years! A New Years Eve dance and other activities held during his tour of duty were successful as well. Further, he discharged the youths which had worked Bingo and