



# Pages in Time



Individual Supporters:  
Lyn & Joe Rowden, Fairfield

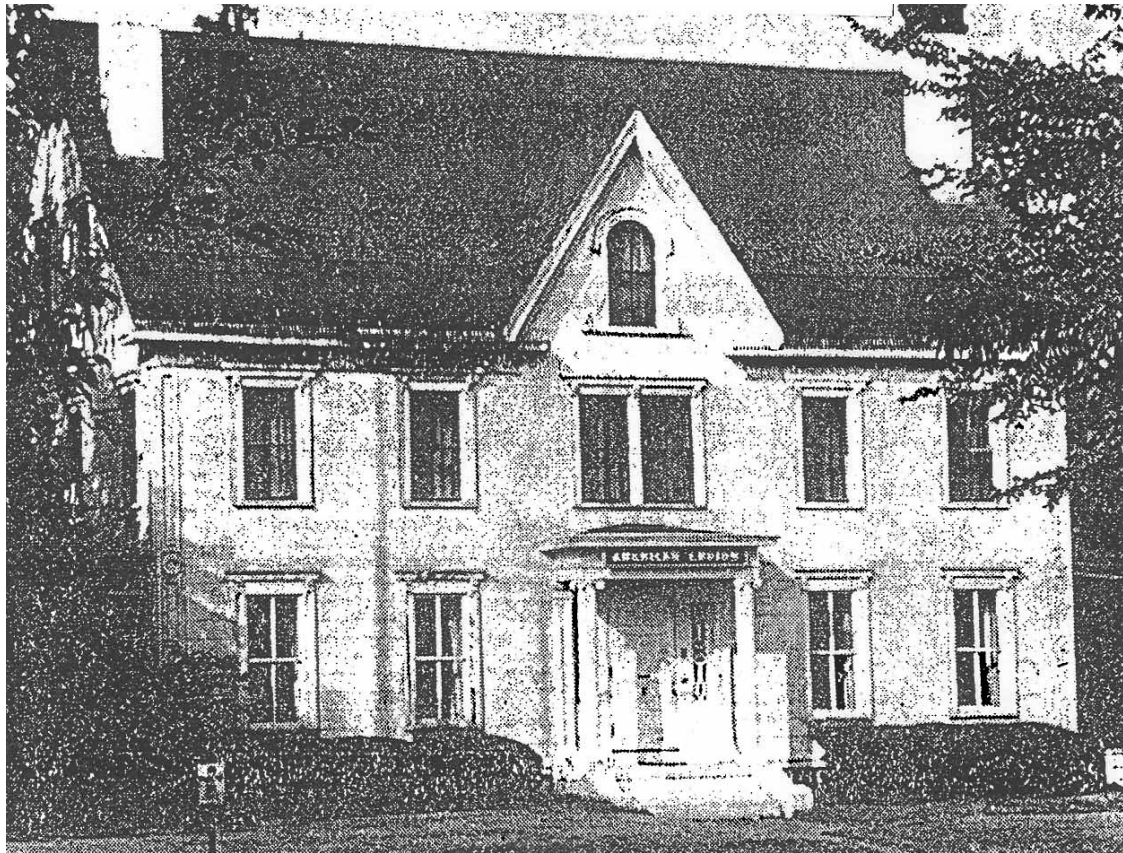
## The American Legion I remember

by Milton Huntington

It seems like only yesterday that the old American Legion Fitzgerald-Cummings Post # 2 sat imposingly beside Augusta's West Side Memorial Park. It's all gone now, replaced by the modern District Court building at its old location, and relocated at a new site near Grey Birch Nursing Home.

When I came home from the Korean War, I proudly joined the Legion for a membership fee of \$5.00. This entitled me to all the privileges of the magnificent old building—the pool table on the first floor next to the bar and the ping pong table down below. Most important of all was the opportunity offered by the Legion for my wife and I and a lot of our friends to partake of a weekly dinner on the third floor. Are you ready for this? The price tag was a measly buck. That's right. It was \$1.00 for a perfectly wonderful home-cooked meal. They don't make 'em like that anymore.

The Legion holds a lot of marvelous memories, not the least of which were the dances in high school days. Kids came from Cony, Gardiner and other towns nearby to dance to recorded music on the upper floor. Some of us wore our Cony athletic sweaters to the dances. They were heavy, white, woolen garments sporting big red "C"s. It



Old American Legion Hall in Augusta. Contributed photo

was hotter than blazes during the warmer months, but we wore them anyway. The boys would often leave the dance floor to go two stories down to the ping pong room where we managed to find another way to sweat and sway. I

don't know why the girls danced with us when we were drenched with perspiration.

When I look back on those good-old-days, I remember we wore corduroy jackets, usually maroon, and always with grey or glen-plaid trousers rolled up at the cuffs. We also sported penny loafers or classy white bucks. And, (sigh), I remember with a heavy heart my snazzy crew cut of yesteryear. It's gone, all gone now.

I wonder whatever happened to the delightful attire of the teenage girls with the pony tails, up-dos, page boys or hair with bangs? They wore blue velvet, but mostly bobby socks, saddle shoes, sweaters and clinging skirts. Then, of course, they

appeared in ballerina shoes, white sneakers, Gibson Girl blouses and midskirts. Ah! I remember it well!

But I digress. The white Legion home had a nice long lawn beside it right next to State Street. The guys often gathered there for a game of tackle football. We were pretty tough. At least we always thought so until one day a Cony classmate was driving by and stopped and asked to play. I remember explaining we were playing tackle football, but she opted to play anyway. She was undoubtedly the best female athlete in Cony, and would one day be a Cony basketball coach. She ran through us like a hot knife through butter.

Although, in later years, we would frequent the bar on social occasions, I don't remember a single time when any of us sneaked a beer anywhere near the Legion when we were under age. In later years, some of my friends, who were not veterans of the Korean War, joined me as guests on many a Friday night to play a round of pool on that familiar old table. One night three of us were racking up balls for a little game when a stranger wandered into the room and asked to join us for a round. We gladly let him join in and partner with one of my friends. Every time my friend put a stick on a ball, he drove it as hard as he could, once even knocking a ball off the table onto the floor. Each time the stranger would complain to his partner, "Too darn hard!"

We kidded my friend about that a lot. When the time came to tear down the old Legion hall, my friend bought the old table for \$45.00. The slate and heavy legs weighed a ton, but we managed to move it to the basement of his home. We got it all set up, and as he picked up his pool cue, he remarked with a smile, "Now I can hit it as hard as I want!"

Sometimes I stop to admire or photograph the monuments in the little park on the west side traffic circle. The towering memorial in the center of the park was erected in 1881 and honors those from Augusta who died in the war for the Union. Others pay tribute to the war dead of the Vietnam War, the Korean War, WWI and WWII. While there in the park, I often allow my eyes to wander across the road where the old American Legion used to stand.

Although memories often fade as years go by, the good times at the Legion linger on.

If your American Legion, VFW or military organization would like to post its history and old photos on "Pages in Time" in May, please send information as soon as possible to [townline@fairpoint.net](mailto:townline@fairpoint.net).

### Seeking histories on American Legion and VFW posts

by Lyn Rowden

In our special feature, "Pages in Time," we focus each week on an aspect of local history. I am looking for brief histories of the various American and VFW Posts in our area, which I would like to feature in May.

A small piece of about 250 words would be wonderful. No worries about "perfect" writing and editing, we will take care of that for you. An old photo, if available may be sent in jpeg format or mailed or brought in to the paper for scanning. You will get your photo back as long as you include your address.

Please send me your information along with a reliable method of contacting you, by email to [townline@fairpoint.net](mailto:townline@fairpoint.net) or mail to P. O. Box 89 Jonesbrook Crossing, South China, ME 04358.

For more information please call me at 445-2234, Monday or Tuesday, between 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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