

October 21, 1976

Teaneck VFW celebrate Golden Anniversary

Teaneck - Veterans of Foreign Wars



CAPT. S. T. SCHOONMAKER

by Laurette Kitchen

TEANECK — The Capt. S.T. Schoonmaker VFW Post 1429 will celebrate its 50th Anniversary at a gala dinner dance to be held Saturday at the new post home on Palisades Avenue.

William E. Guthrie, who served as its first commander and is now a resident of Rochelle Park, will be guest of honor. Mr. Guthrie served with the New Jersey Infantry and saw action on the Mexican Border in 1916 and in France during World War I.

The post was formed in December, 1925, and chartered in January, 1926. First installation of officers was held in February. Mr. Guthrie was officially named post commander, Walter J. Baldwin senior vice commander, Frank Schultz junior vice commander, John F. Mackel quartermaster, and Edwin Plettner adjutant. Membership totalled 35.

The post was dedicated to the memory of Capt. Stephen T. Schoonmaker, a Teaneck youth who was killed in action on Oct. 24, 1918, while leading a battalion of the 101st Infantry in the Verdun offensive in France. Schoonmaker, born in San Francisco on July 8, 1894, had moved to Teaneck with his family when he was four years old.

He enlisted at the age of 17

chaplain.

One of the new post's first community projects was to urge the township council to approve the appointment of a Patriotic Advisory Board which is still in existence. The Post also requested the council to name streets in the town in memory of Teaneck men who had died in World War I.

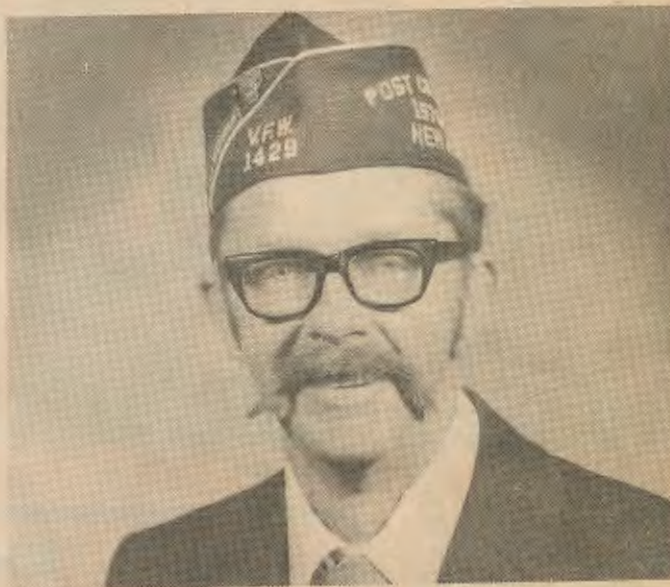
Throughout the years, the VFW Post has taken active part in community affairs. The post sponsored Little League teams, conducted the annual Voice of Democracy contest at Teaneck High School, donated flag and flag poles to schools, scout groups, churches, police and fire departments and other charitable organizations.

Several of the post members served in elected offices. Henry Deissler and August Hannibal, Jr., both became mayors. Jack Walsh was on the council, and George Greco was chairman of the Board of Adjustment.

The Teaneck post also participated in county and state VFW programs, and a number of former township officers were elected to county and state office. In 1931, Frank Fay was named state commander and Settone Bower as state quartermaster. William Enright was county commander in 1940; Francis Kelly was county commander in 1946, and August Hannibal state commander in 1950. Jack La Mont, who is still



WILLIAM GUTHRIE, 1ST CMDR.



ROBERT BLANCHARD, '76 CMDR.

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and joined the New Jersey National Guard. He was active in his regiment and when they went to the Mexican Border in 1916, Schoonmaker was promoted to sergeant. Shortly afterwards, the United States entered World War I. Sgt. Schoonmaker was sent to Officers Training School at Fort Meyer, Va., where he received his commission. Two weeks later, he sailed for Europe and the following spring, in May 1918, he was killed while participating in a raid into enemy's lines in France.

The first Teaneck VFW Post met in the old Town Hall which also served as a schoolhouse and a jail. In 1929, this mansard roofed frame building was bought for \$1 and moved to Bedford Avenue where it stood and was used until 1959 when the new post home was built on Palisade Avenue.

In May, 1926, wives and mothers of the VFW members formed an auxiliary, and Rose Fay was elected as first president. She also served as state president. Gertrude Guthrie, wife of the Post Commander, was named senior vice president; Fannie Schultz, junior vice president; Marion Plettner, secretary; Florence Stander, treasurer; and Lita Bower,

active with the post, served as county commander in 1963 and as commander of District 2 in 1964.

Charles Moore, also a former Teaneck commander, was all-county and state post commander during 1963-64. He became District Commander in 1968. Pat Zinzi, who served as post commander from 1964 to 1966, was elected county commander in 1972. Albert Pasquale was all county and state past commander in 1967; William Di Curscia was all-county and state post commander from 1969 to 1970.

Other past commanders include Paul Van Natten, 1967-68; Eugene Sullivan, 1968-69; Ulrich Ansley, 1970-71; Anthony Scolpino, 1971-72; Barry Dyke, 1972-73; Ulrich Ansley, elected 1974, died in office and was succeeded by Walter Rudolph; Eugene Sullivan, 1974-74. Current commander is Robert Blanchard.

Commander Blanchard, who is supervising the Golden Anniversary celebration dinner, said that friends and relatives are invited to attend and tickets can be reserved by calling the post. A special attraction will feature the Down Home Quartet and Johnny Michaels and his band will provide dancing music.

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