

CLUBS - ORGANIZATIONS

Many organizations have come and gone since Wheaton was established one hundred years ago, and records and details are no longer available for many of them.

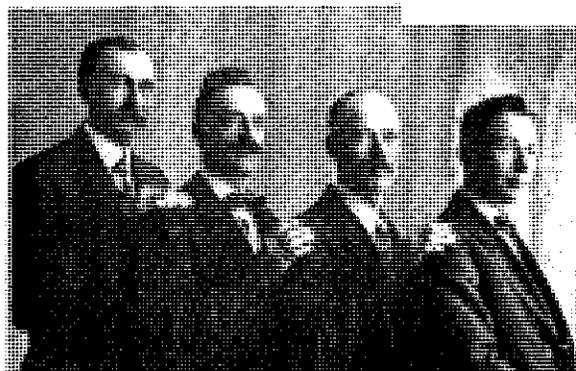
Of interest was the original secretary's book of Wheaton Lodge No. 96, Knights of Pythias of Minnesota, which was organized January 15, 1892, in Castle Hall. This fraternal organization was part of a Supreme Lodge founded by Justus Henry Rathbone in 1864 in Washington, D.C. The society carried on charitable work and placed great emphasis on his moral standards. At the second meeting a janitor, William Moody, was elected at a salary of \$2.00 per month. He was instructed to purchase a lamp for the center of the hall, one smaller lamp for a table, and the necessary wood for heating and oil for lighting the hall. Meetings were held every Wednesday evening. An article in the *Gazette* indicated that the organization was still active in December, 1923.

At one time Wheaton had a very active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) but since no records are available, it is assumed they perished in the high school fire of April 1, 1972. According to an April, 1973, issue of the *Gazette*, the PTA Executive Board decided to abolish the organization.

Some of the other early organizations about which there is very little information available except the year organized are listed below:

- 1886 - Debating Society
- 1891 - American Good Templars Lodge

- 1896 - Children's Home Society, Mrs. E. Sorenson, president
- 1898 - Women's Christian Temperance Union
- 1898 - Ladies' Reading Club
- 1902 - Wheaton Bachelors Club
- 1905 - Alumni Association, F. F. Stoebe, president
- 1909 - Civic League of Wheaton
- 1912 - West Central Minnesota Development Association, F. W. Murphy, president
- 1917 - "America First" Association
- 1920 - League of Women Voters
- 1947 - Girls Civic Club
- 1951 - Traverse County Chapter of National Foundation of Infantile Paralysis



The Knights of Pithias Quartet became a popular group of entertainers in Wheaton during the early years of the community. Making up the male quartet were, left to right: Ernie Sorenson, H. G. Marshall, Ed Joubert and Paul Lamprecht.

Community Organizations

AGASSIZ ART CLUB

In 1963 Mrs. George Schmidtke started giving art lessons to a few women who were very interested in oil painting and wanted a painting class started. During the first year young people from the community also took art lessons. Nydia Nielson, Eva Monson, Ebba Odenborg, Alice Winter, Janet Gauger, Lucille Frisch and Ann Heidelberger were the first group in the class. Later more ladies joined.

The club met once a week to paint pictures, and a public art show was held once a year. The ladies decided the group needed a name, and Ebba Odenborg came up with the name "Agassiz", representing the region in which we live. The name was adopted and the organization became known as the "Agassiz Art Club of Wheaton". One of their community projects was the painting of the big mallard along Highway 75.

The Agassiz Art Club met for many years; and although it is now inactive, several of its former members still pursue their artistic talents individually.

BOY SCOUTS

The Boy Scouts movement spread from Great Britain to the United States in 1910, and in May of 1911 the Boy Scouts were organized in Wheaton with three troops. A council of twenty-one was selected to direct the work with Edward Rustad as president and E. F. Joubert as vice president of the Council.

Reuben Heggen, who joined the Scouts in 1911 or 1912, recalls that they always looked forward to the annual campout trip. In the summer they packed all their gear and traveled by horse-drawn wagons to the southern end of Lake Traverse where they pitched their tents and spent a week on scouting activities.

In 1944 when the Boy Scout Troop was reorganized under the leadership of Roy Cole and Edmund Lundquist, Cub Packs and Air Scout Patrol were included.

February 4, 1984, is a date never to be forgotten by a group of Scouts and their leaders who participated in the annual

Glenwood Fishing Derby. Caught in a life-threatening snow storm enroute home, they were stranded an entire night in two vans. The Scouts put into practice the survival skills they had learned. Both the Scouts and their advisors were given special awards by the National Boy Scouts for their heroic efforts and conduct during this experience.

Under the dedicated leadership of many adults throughout the years, the boys of this community have learned to become good citizens by taking part in a broad program of work and play. Twenty-two Wheaton boys have attained the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Scouting.

GIRL SCOUTS

Girl Scouting has been part of the Wheaton community since first organized in June, 1943. This area is now part of the Land of Lakes Girl Scout Council, established in 1965. Today the national organization exceeds three million members. Each girl is also a member of WAAG (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts), the largest organization of women and girls in the free world.

The American Legion Auxiliary and the Wheaton Commercial Club - Chamber of Commerce have sponsored the local Girl Scout program since the 1940's.

Wheaton Girl Scouts have taken part in an annual day camp held in our community, in troop camping, in established week-long resident camping, and in inter-troop and council events. They have also taken trips to the Minnesota Zoo, Valley Fair, Alexandria, Fargo, Fergus Falls, New York City, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia.

Girl Scout program activities are designed to appeal to girls' interests and respond to their needs at different ages. Girls can enter and progress in Girl Scouting at any one of five age levels: Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette, and Senior Girl Scouts. Men and women volunteers share their time and skills to benefit the lives of girls and to help make communities healthier through Girl Scouting.

MINNESOTA REAL ESTATE TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

The Minnesota Real Estate Taxpayers Association was founded July 10, 1970, at Wheaton. A non-profit, nonpartisan organization, it was legally incorporated in the State of Minnesota. By the spring of 1971, M.R.E.T.A. had organized chapters in all 87 counties in Minnesota and had retained a legal staff and a lobbyist. Membership ran into the tens of thousands.

When organized, the expressed purpose of the organization was to seek relief on property taxes. Membership is comprised of taxpayers seeking realistic taxation and sensible spending at all levels of government within the state of Minnesota. The association is vitally concerned with all taxes in general, with special emphasis on real estate taxes.

On the date of incorporation, E. H. Antrim, Erick Cordes, and Jerry M. Deal, all of Wheaton, were listed as directors. Jerry Deal was elected president and executive officer at the first convention held in 1971 and served seven consecutive years in that capacity.

In 1971 the Association started a newspaper, **The Minnesota Taxpayer**, which was printed by the Gazette Publishing Company of Wheaton and had a maximum circulation of 35,000 distributed throughout the state.

M.R.E.T.A. greatly influenced actions of the Minnesota state legislature of 1971-72 and brought about what was referred to as the "Minnesota Miracle," which in effect greatly reduced the reliance upon real estate taxes to support public schools at the primary and secondary levels and totally eliminated the cost of welfare from the real estate tax. This in turn reduced real estate taxes on houses, commercial property, and farm land in the state of Minnesota.

SUNSET SADDLE CLUB

The Sunset Saddle Club was organized in the late 1940's with Art Spainhower as its first president. In 1959 it was reorganized with Freddie Schmidtke elected president.

The club is not active at the present time, but many families were included in the membership throughout the years. Only the

officers and directors of the club were required to own a horse. Anyone interested in horses could be a member. Activities of the organization included trail rides, horse shows, drill teams, parades, and social gatherings.

WARRIORS FLYING CLUB

The Warriors Flying Club was incorporated October 5, 1976, with seventeen pilots and flying students involved. These people formed the club to have airplanes available for personal flying at a moderate cost. The first officers were: Orville Thiel, president; Dennis Keller, vice-president; Kermit Al-saker, secretary; and Harley Kennedy, board member.

The first airplanes acquired by the club were a Cessna Skyhawk and a Piper Colt. The Skyhawk carried four people, the Colt two. Later a Cessna Cardinal was purchased to replace the Piper Colt. This was a four-passenger plane, a little larger than the Skyhawk. The Skyhawk was later replaced by a two-passenger Cessna 150. The club presently has one plane, a late model Cessna Skyhawk.

Members of the club were instrumental in getting an administration building constructed at the airport and a non-directional beacon installed. The latter is a radio navigation aid that provides guidance for instrument approaches. The Wheaton High School industrial arts students constructed the small building housing the beacon.

Warriors Flying Club members and other interested people in the community conducted three successful "fly-ins" at the Wheaton Municipal Airport. At present there are nine active members in the club.

WHEATON BLACK SHEEP R.C. AIRPLANE CLUB

The Wheaton Black Sheep Radio Control Airplane Club was organized in 1976. The name of the club originated from the TV series "Baa Baa Black Sheep". The club is a charter member of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Its first officers were Frank Beal, Don Whaley and Leonard Rusch.

Each R.C. flyer must be a member of the Academy to participate in a flying event.

During the summer, the modelers get together to show their skills and to share their hobby. In the winter months when flying is over, they build planes to display and compete with at shows in the area. Throughout the years the club has participated in many town celebrations by performing with their model planes. The club has grown with enthusiasm and now has members from the tri-state area.

A forerunner of this group was a model airplane club called the Prop Spinners, organized in 1960 with an initial membership of twenty.

WHEATON CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Wildwood Cemetery was started October 1, 1897, by Charles L. Harris, when he platted two and one-half acres for a cemetery one mile north of Wheaton on land which he owned. Before it was platted a number of burials had already been made on the grounds, with the earliest burial shown on a monument to be 1884.

Shortly after 1900, Harris sold or gave the cemetery to W. H. Smith and E. H. Boley, who were in the furniture and mortuary business in Wheaton, and a few years later Boley became sole owner when he bought out Smith's business interests. By 1915 Boley realized that there was no profit in the cemetery business and offered to give the cemetery to the lot owners.

On May 1, 1916, the Wheaton Cemetery Association was incorporated as a nonprofit corporation and took over the management of the cemetery. The first officers were H. B. Cory, president; Victor E. Anderson, vice-president; E. H. Boley, secretary; and Carl O. Saterbak, treasurer.

Over the years a number of additions have been made to the cemetery, which now has twenty acres. In 1919 improvements costing \$1,000 included a circular driveway with flower bed in the center, shrubs, flowers, ornamental woven wire fence, and arches at the driveways. In 1971 a burial vault for winter use was built.

Present officers are Ingemar Jacobson,

president; Bruce Eyster, vice-president; and W. A. Swanke, secretary-treasurer.

WHEATON HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

In July, 1975, the first all-class alumni reunion attracted over 2,000 visitors with classes dating back to 1904 represented. The first general committee consisted of Oscar Spafford, A. W. Vye, Lois Klugman and Joyce Cole. Tours were held in the new high school, historical films were shown, a banquet was served, a program was presented and a street dance culminated the event.

Two more successful all-class reunions have been held, one in 1980 and one in 1985. This is to be an on-going event to be held every five years for Wheaton High School graduates.

WHEATON LIBRARY CLUB

The club was organized July 31, 1925, at the home of Fannie Neuman. It was federated October, 1925, and named The Wheaton Women's Club, but in October, 1930, the name was changed to The Wheaton Library Club.

Charter members were Fannie Neuman, president; Minnie Hammond, vice-president; Rose Knudsen, secretary-treasurer; Effie Daman, Frances Lewis, Jennie Nelson, Iva Schneider, and Estella Nordrum.

The purpose of the club was for educational study, socializing, and participation in many activities that benefited the community of Wheaton. During time of war, members helped sew for the Red Cross, making garments that were needed. They gave baskets of food to the needy for Christmas, donated to CARE, and bought books for the library. They helped to beautify Wheaton by making mini-parks in several places along Broadway.

Over the years the club was active, there were 172 women who belonged. The largest enrollment at one time was 45. The Wheaton Library Club disbanded in 1974, dividing the funds remaining in their treasury between the Wheaton Community Library and the Traverse County Historical Society.

WOMAN'S STUDY CLUB

A club for study and mutual improvement was organized in 1916. The constitution and bylaws of the Woman's Study Club limited membership to twelve. Charter members were Flora Terpena, president; Nellie Petterson, vice-president; Marguerite Eyster, secretary; Thora Saterbak, treasurer; and members Alma Chesley, Edith Ewing, Blanche Kuhn, Jesse Kiger, Grace Corwin, Ruth Rydell, Lucy Kinsley, and Allene Bayrell.

In 1917 the club requested to be federated with the state and national organizations, and in the spring of 1924 a county organization was formed at the invitation of the Interlachen Club of Browns Valley.

When the club movement originated, higher education was not available to many women, and yesterday's club was truly a "study" club. The tremendous field of service as we know it today did not exist for women except in the church and in the home. Today's club interests and activities touch every facet of American life.

The Woman's Study Club of Wheaton sponsored a Girls Study Club, which was a junior department of the Federated Club Unit since 1927. Membership ranged from ten to twenty girls. The club had a scholarship loan fund to help girls in need of small loans for school expenses. An article in the April 30, 1948, *Gazette* stated that as of that date over 200 girls had been members of this organization.

The Woman's Study Club is still an active organization with about thirty members. Programs and concerns center around education, conservation, home life, fine arts, public affairs, and international affairs. Its aim is to promote constructive projects and legislation on a local, state and national level. For several years its principal on-going project locally has been establishment and support of the Wheaton Community Library.

WHEATON TOASTMASTERS CLUB

The Wheaton Toastmasters Club was started October 12, 1965, at the Wheaton High School. At the first meeting the following temporary officers were elected: Walter

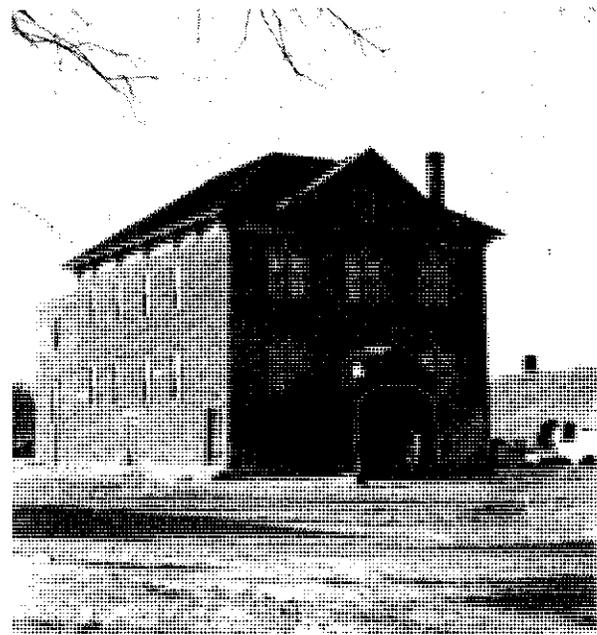
Nosek, chairman; Arnold Lind, secretary-treasurer; and Vern Fleischer, sergeant-at-arms. The club met frequently after that and held its charter meeting April 8, 1967.

The club was started by persons who felt that communications skills are important personal assets to develop. At each meeting different members were designated to deliver talks on different subjects, with other members designated to evaluate the talks. Evaluators and grammarians made positive constructive criticisms and suggestions on each talk; a timer kept the talks within the proper time frame. A good spirit of fellowship existed and the members gained confidence in the ability to speak and express themselves in public.

The club started its meetings each year in October and ended them in April, with a banquet held at the last meeting of the year, which included wives as guests.

The Wheaton Toastmasters Club worked with the Wheaton Jaycees at different times in their "speak up" programs. They participated in joint meetings with other toastmasters clubs, including those in Ortonville, Fergus Falls and Alexandria.

The final meeting of the club was held January 7, 1972, at which time the few members present decided to terminate the club.



The original Masonic Hall in Wheaton, located on the corner on downtown Broadway that today serves as the Red Owl parking lot.

Service Clubs

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

The American Cancer Society was started nationally in 1913, and the Traverse County Unit of the Minnesota Division began on March 30, 1945, with Mrs. A. R. (Mabel) Johanson as its commander. Later this title was changed to president.

The first fund drive was conducted by the churches and other organizations in the county and \$747.00 was collected. Now solicitation of funds is made through volunteers in each township and block workers in towns. This unit has received an award almost every year since about 1987 for exceeding fund drive goals.

The unit meets quarterly with bylaws and a charter which must be followed. Various workshops are held during the year.

In addition to fund raising, the American Cancer Society maintains a service and loan department to provide transportation funds and equipment such as commodes, hospital beds, and dressings to cancer patients. Educational programs are conducted and films are available for use by any organization or group. There is a memorial program

for memorializing deceased friends and relatives. An "I Can Cope" program is sponsored and provided by nurses in the community, and a colorectal program of information is underway. In a "Reach to Recovery" program, a local nurse who has had cancer visits with cancer victims to give help and moral support.

Prevention studies were conducted in the county for a period of six years. In 1982 a confidential questionnaire was sent out and answered by over 100 residents which related to diet. It was found that some specific foods tend to increase the risk of cancer and some tend to decrease it.

Recently, Traverse County's unit was helpful in the successful lawsuits against the State of Minnesota by two local women whose husbands had died of cancer following contamination by certain chemicals used on the highways where they worked.

AMERICAN LEGION

Merton-Dale Post No. 80 of the American Legion was organized in June, 1919, and received a temporary charter on August 16,



In 1963 the American Legion Post in Wheaton honored its members who had been enrolled in the Legion for 45 years. Included in the group were, left to right: Dr. H. N. Weickert, Lloyd Zimbrick, Fred Moore, Edmund Zetterstein, Walter W. Johnson, Ben Fortune, Ed Osterman, Reuben Solberg, Edwin Mielke, Reuben Heggen, Ben Stoick, Walter Hartwig, J. Abel Nelson, and Clarence Johanson.

1919. The first commander was Ben Cunningham and the first adjutant was E. J. Zetterstein, Sr.

The Post was named in memory of Merton Kay and Dale Fish. One was from the Navy and one from the Army, one from the town and one from the country. They were the first to give their lives from each branch of service in World War I.

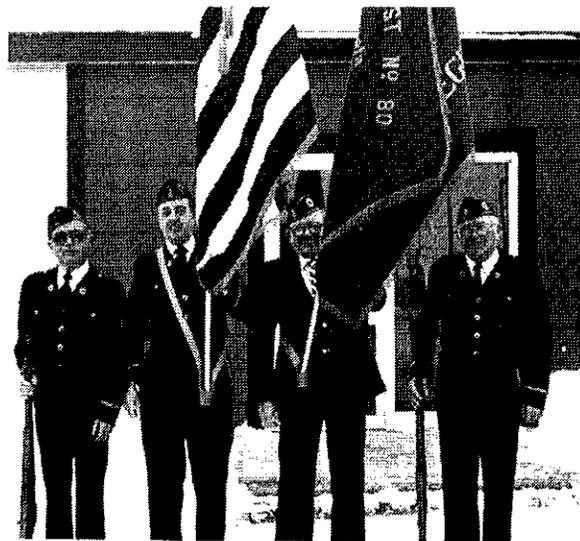
The first year's membership totaled 101, and this grew in number to a peak of 108 in 1928. Then as the depression hit, membership dropped to 47 members in 1935. The dues were only 50 cents when the post first started. The district dues were \$5.00 from the post for the year, but that was a great amount in those days.

The first monthly meetings were started in February, 1923. Post meetings were held in a variety of places, including the rear of the A. Wells Company building, the county agent's office, Oddfellows Hall, fire hall, and the billiard room of the Masonic Hall.

From the beginning the main concern was centered around comforting the comrades in hospitals, child welfare, aid in getting work, help for needy veterans, programs for Memorial and Armistice Day, and placing grave markers for all ex-servicemen. In addition, the post sponsored the school patrol, Junior Legion baseball, scouting, Boys and Girls State, oratorical contests, Americanism essays, and a drum and bugle corps. In 1939 the Sons of the American Legion organization was started and was active until March, 1943, when most of the



Among the many community projects sponsored by the Merton Dale American Legion Post in Wheaton is the Pearson school patrol. The Legion provides equipment for the patrol and annually sends selected patrol members off to a week-long summer camp at Legionville.



Members of the American Legion Honor Guard, pictured in front of the new Legion Club, left to right: Cliff Barina, Bob Wheeler, Gene Ross and Vern Radel.

members were then in the armed service.

Funds for these programs were raised by a number of projects, including carnivals, plays, banquets, Christmas tree sales, dances and athletic shows.

Membership rose to an all-time high of 301 in 1947, following the end of World War II. In 1948 the post voted to purchase the Murphy residence on Broadway to be used for clubrooms. This building was sold in 1964 with plans underway to erect a new building. In the meantime, the VFW hall on Broadway was rented for monthly meetings. Plans to build a new post home east of Highway 75 in 1969 failed to materialize and instead the former Oscarson Hatchery building was bought and renovated. The first meeting in the new facility was held in January, 1971. By April the club had a complete bar, lounge, auditorium, and a modern kitchen, with members doing most of the work on a voluntary basis. A memorial wall listing deceased veterans is the focal point of the clubrooms.

This post has produced three district commanders, Lyle Baxter, Glenn Nielson and Alton Lundquist, along with their adjutants, Gordon Kristensen, Wes Norton and Leo Terhaar. In addition, Larry Mathiason and William Kremer both served on the board of publications of the **Minnesota Legionnaire** for a number of years. Glenn Nielson became Department Commander and also was a member of the National Rehabilitation Board.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The Auxiliary received its charter on June 30, 1922. Of the original charter members, only one survives, Mrs. Robert Wheeler, Sr., of Wheaton.

Throughout the years the Auxiliary has carried out related veterans programs as well as programs which aid the local community. The 1985 membership totals 123, of which 117 are senior members and six are junior members.

BIG BROTHERS

In November, 1983, a Big Brothers - Big Sisters organization, part of a nationally known program designed for single parented children from ages five thru sixteen, was implemented. The Big Brothers - Big Sisters had to be over eighteen years of age, young, old, single or married. An advisory committee was formed to implement the program. The service is essentially the matching up of children with an adult friend.

CIVIL AIR PATROL

A Civil Air Patrol was organized in December, 1948, with Vernon "Ike" Haugland named the commanding officer of the unit. The main purpose of the organization was to perform flying service in emergencies with planes and aviators available on a volunteer basis. The services of this group were put to good use in the airlift of 1951 (see "Calamities").

DUCKS UNLIMITED DUCKETTES

Wheaton's newest service organization, the Ducks Unlimited Duckettes, organized in the summer of 1986 co-chaired by Tami Escher and Lucille Bruns. The principal goal of the organization is to raise money to help preserve wetlands for waterfowl, including wetlands in the immediate area.



One of the most active organizations in carrying out community goodwill projects in Wheaton over the years has been the Wheaton Jaycees. This photo taken in 1964 shows some members of the organization working on toys which would be distributed to children in needy families at Christmas. Pictured left to right are Jaycees Marv Nicolai, Wes Sunvold, and Fred Kranstover, with help from Ann Mathlason.

JAYCEES

The Wheaton Jaycees organized in April, 1954, with the following officers: Gus Roehlke, president; Peter Muellenbach, secretary; Cal Denton, treasurer; and Keith Davison and Arllis Schmitz, vice-presidents.

In 1956 the Jaycees were awarded the regional "Standout Chapter" trophy for the second year in a row, and Willie Leininger was named regional vice-president.

The Wheaton chapter is still active.

MRS. JAYCEES

The Mrs. Jaycees of Wheaton was formed in 1954 with membership limited to women who had husbands who were Jaycees. The first officers were Mrs. Arllis Schmitz, president; Mrs. Cal Denton, vice-president; Mrs. C. Smith, treasurer; Mrs. Wm. Ringdahl, recording secretary; Mrs. W. P. Leininger, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Alton Birch and Mrs. Chuck Scheel, advisors.

The organization's aim has been to serve Wheaton in community service projects. Among the projects sponsored have



Among the many community projects carried out by the Mrs. Jaycees over the years was the Welcome Wagon. Members of the organization would call on newcomers to the community and present them with a warm welcome and a basket of gift certificates from Wheaton merchants. In the photo, Mrs. Jaycee Lucy Anderson is pictured calling on Mrs. Otto Hamann after the Hamanns had moved to Wheaton from Fairmount in 1958.



One of the early Mrs. Jaycees groups in Wheaton was this 1957 contingent. Pictured seated, left to right: Lorna Bruns, Carol Kiland, Lorraine Gail; standing, left to right: Shirley Blank, Bernice Bartholome, Harriet Schmitz, Stacy Krauth, Alice Winge, and Lucy Anderson.

been style shows, Dairy Day Princess contests, hunters breakfasts, sock hops at school, working with retarded citizens, Welcome Wagon (initiated in 1958), purchase of a bed for sick children at school, purchase of a portable sewing machine for the nursing home, scholarship award, Civil Defense programs, eye and ear screening program, babysitting clinics, bloodmobile, German measles clinic, story hour at the library, and many other activities.

Wheaton members advanced to state offices. Val Sellden was state vice-president for the Wheaton region in 1970. Judie Larson became editor of the state newspaper for Mrs. Jaycees in 1975. In 1976 she was elected to serve as state secretary and was also honored as a "Key Woman" that year, as was Delores Schmitz in 1979.

Membership peaked in 1960 with 18 members. The next few years, the late 1970's and early 1980's, were trying times for this organization and membership dropped, until in 1982 a decision was made to disband.



The 1975 Wheaton Mrs. Jaycees included this group of active members. Pictured front row, left to right: Carol Marxen, Diane White, Delores Schmitz, Karen Begleau; second row, left to right: Marion Olander, Cindy Hiedeman, Kathie Larson, Bev Hoerneman, Mary Lou Rieber; back row, left to right: Tienne Ranney, Karen Nordmeyer, Laurel Long, Judie Larson, Ginny Muellenbach.

TRAVRSE-GRANT ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN

An informational meeting held in Wheaton on January 16, 1961, laid the foundation for establishment of the Traverse-Grant Association for Retarded Children by parents and friends of retarded children in the two-county area. The organizational meeting was held the following March 14. Officers were elected on June 13, 1961: Leo H. Bauman, president; Mrs. Joe Brink, vice-president; Mrs. Marvin Tritz, secretary; Mrs. Edwin Smith, treasurer; Mrs. Ben Vanzomeran, William Bertram, Jr., and Mrs. Gerald Thiel, board members.

Projects which have been initiated or pressed for include a day activity center at Hoffman, a day activity center at Wheaton, PKU testing, rubella clinics, special education classes, religion classes for retarded persons, camping programs, entertainment at Fergus Falls Regional Treatment Center, and publicity through fair booths and speakers. The organization has published regularly a newsletter which was begun in March, 1963.

Much has been accomplished for retarded persons in recent years, aided by organizations such as this, and a very rewarding positive relationship between the two counties has been established.

MOBILE MEALS

Mobile Meals is a program designed to help the home-bound, handicapped, or convalescent on a short term or long term basis. Many times this allows them to stay longer in their own homes. This non-profit organization was started in Wheaton in February, 1975, by a group of concerned Wheatonites.

A committee of approximately twelve women have volunteered their time setting up driver schedules, collecting from recipients, deciding who should receive this service, and keeping the organization solvent — no outside funding was ever used.

The Traverse County Nursing Home prepares the meals and volunteer drivers deliver them at noon five days a week. Over 100 residents of Wheaton and the surrounding community take their turns throughout the year delivering meals to those in need. From February, 1975, through December, 1984, 22,222 meals had been delivered.

RED CROSS

In May, 1917, the Red Cross Society organized a branch for Traverse County, and in less than two months there were 350 members, the largest chapter in West Central Minnesota. In 1918 there were 2,300 members. During World War I this was an extremely active organization. After several years of little activity, the chapter was revitalized in 1960 under the leadership of Dr. H. C. Winge.

Major aims have been the blood bank program, services to the armed forces, as well as home services, disaster relief, and first aid and water safety programs. Over the years there have been various programs sponsored and carried out by the Red Cross. In 1929 clothing donations were sought, and three loan chests were set up for local use. In 1947 the Red Cross chapter set up funds to inaugurate a swimming program; a bus took participants to the Wahpeton pool, making four trips each week.



Patriotism abounded in 1918 after the United States had entered the First World War. This parade passed through the streets of downtown Wheaton on May 18, 1918, with a group of color bearers proudly displaying a huge American flag.

The National Red Cross Blood Bank was organized in Traverse County in 1950 with D. L. Potter the chairman, and the blood-mobile unit made its first visit in October. The county was asked for 250 pints of whole blood for the first collection. The Fire Department and the American Legion assisted in getting volunteer pledge cards in advance and the State Bank made available special lunch tickets to donors for lunches at any Wheaton restaurant at a value not to exceed 25 cents. The blood bank continues as a major activity today.



Another view of the May 18 Red Cross parade in Wheaton shows a row of horsemen astride snow-white mounts, followed by a band, a contingent of servicemen, and a large delegation of white-clad Red Cross workers.

SINGLE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

The Single Parent Support Group began in November, 1983, under the direction of the Traverse County Social Service Department as a result of requests from single parents in the community. Goals of the group were to provide an opportunity for single parents to deal with the problems associated with single parenting as well as to provide an educational format on a variety of issues.

The group had twenty-five active members who met once a month. Opportunity for social activities involving the entire family became an important part of the group's function. Members included a cross-section of single parents of divorce, widows and widowers, and unmarried parents.

Declining attendance in the spring of 1985 caused members to reassess the need for the support group, and in May, 1985, the group discontinued their meetings.

OPERATION GROUNDSWELL

A movement to save family farms from dying out, Operation Groundswell, was organized in February, 1985. The main concern of the organization is the general plight of the family farm and rural people. Dr. James Poole was elected chairman of the group, with Tom Conroy serving as acting chairman.

TRAVERSE COUNTY SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

The Traverse County Sportsmen's Club is an organization which aims to protect and preserve the wildlife of this area. In 1924 the organization was known as the Traverse County Game & Fish Protective Association and Gust Evander was president. In 1965 Dr. David Naatz headed the newly reorganized Game & Fish Protective League.

Over the years the club has promoted restocking of fish and feeding of wildlife in times of winter stress and encouraged interest in wildlife in general. The group built the wildlife building at the fairgrounds in 1958, which they continue to use for exhibits at the county fair each fall.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Kath-Monson Post No. 5909, VFW, was organized on February 10, 1946, with the nine men present signing the original constitution. Emil Sorenson was elected the



The current VFW Drill Squad, pictured from left to right: Jack Rohison, Lloyd Jarrells, Bob Ertsgaard, Jim Lillehaug, and Alton Lundquist.



Each year for many years the Wheaton VFW Post has provided bike safety reflectors and has organized a safety check for bicycles for youngsters at Pearson Elementary School. In the photo Marvin "Smokey" Haggardt, standing, and Jim Lillehaug applied reflectors to bikes brought to school by students or handed out the safety decals to students to take home and apply to their bicycles.

first commander. To name the post, the names of all the deceased veterans were put in a hat and two names were drawn, Kath and Monson, hence the name.

The first meeting place was in the library of the old high school. Later a small wood frame building on Broadway was purchased and renovated. It served as a meeting place for both the Post and the Auxiliary for several years. The building was later sold to the First State Bank for their expansion. Since then meetings have been held at the American Legion building.

The Post now has about 100 members. Any veteran who has served his country outside the continental limits of the United States is eligible to join the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month for business and fellowship.

The big fund raiser for the year is the operation of the hamburger stand at the county fair each September. Many members and their wives participate to make it a big success. Other activities include a commu-

ity service program, helping the sick and needy, providing flags for many organizations, giving scholarships to graduating high school seniors, and working with the Auxiliary on other projects. The firing squad participates in military funerals and Memorial Day exercises.

VFW AUXILIARY

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary to Kath-Monson Post 5909 was instituted at Wheaton in 1947 with a charter membership of twenty-nine. By 1948 the membership had increased to eighty-three. Mrs. Elmer Worner was the first Auxiliary president.

This organization was started to help veterans and their families here and at veterans homes and hospitals. It also helps to support the National Home at Eaton Rapids, Michigan, a home for children who have lost a veteran parent. Funds for these projects are raised through the sale of Buddy Poppies and from the VFW hamburger stand at the county fair.

WHEATON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Wheaton Commercial Club, forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce, was organized in 1904 after seventy businessmen had signified their intention to join. The articles of association were approved, and C. H. Colyer was elected the first president.

That fall the club leased three rooms on the second floor of the Wheaton Farmers Co-operative Mercantile Co., where they could hold their meetings. Although involved in all aspects of interest in the village of Wheaton, it also became a social club with pool tables, reading material, smokers and banquets, and other social affairs. By January, 1910, membership was divided into general membership and special or social members. Farmers were also encouraged to join. By 1914 the membership was 153. During all this time each new member had to be approved by motion of the members and each withdrawal from membership was granted in the same manner. However, by December, 1917, membership had declined and the club gave up its lease.

Early projects of the Commercial Club were helping organize the county fair, seeking better service from the railroads, organizing Boy Scouts, making an effort to keep the flour mill operating, and following legislative matters.

In December, 1919, all physical property of the club was transferred to the Traverse Club, which assumed the debt of the Commercial Club in the amount of \$40.00.

No records of the Commercial Club are available for the period from 1919 through 1945. In the 1940's and 1950's the club was interested in updating Highway 75, snow removal, bus service and mail service. A committee was appointed in 1947 to study and recommend the renaming of the streets in Wheaton. The Community Chest was started in 1947. A retail trade committee was formed for Wheaton promotions. During the early 1950's the club organized Kids Day, Santa Claus Day, and was responsible for street decorations at Christmas. Other concerns were the franchising of Otter Tail Power Co., and a street lighting "White Way" project. Commercial Club annual banquets were a big social event.

In 1959 it was decided to change the name of the organization to the Chamber of Commerce, and on February 27 that year the bylaws were approved and on March 9 the first meeting as a Chamber of Commerce was held.

Another project in the 1950's was the planning and building of the Mallard on Highway 75. Bucky Hoffman was chairman of the "Mallard" committee. Over the years Hoffman has seen to it that the Mallard has been repainted as needed, and maybe this is why it is sometimes referred to as "Bucky's Duck."

Club activities in the 1960's included responsibility for erection of street signs and numbering of houses so that the post office could make mail deliveries, organization of the 75th anniversary celebration for the village of Wheaton, and support of the street improvement program in Wheaton.

The Wheaton Commercial Club - Chamber of Commerce has always been involved in promoting Wheaton, striving to get new business into the city to make Wheaton a better place to live by promoting improvements. This tradition is still continuing.

WHEATON COMMUNITY CHEST

In 1947 a committee was selected to organize the Wheaton Community Chest with F. W. "Tony" Johnson as the first chairman. Budget for the year was set at \$2,960.00. The purpose of the organization was to incorporate all charitable fund drives into one solicitation.

In 1985 the fund drive surpassed its goal of \$5,900.00. Money raised is given to twenty-six different organizations and charities.

WHEATON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

As early as 1957 an industrial development corporation was being discussed by members of the Wheaton Commercial Club. It was not until April, 1966, that Articles of Incorporation of the Wheaton Community Development Corporation were certified by the Secretary of State, with the first \$100 a

share stock certificate not sold until March, 1971. Incorporators were M. J. Fridgen, Ronald Jossart and Peter N. Muellenbach. The principal purpose of the organization was to encourage and promote development of industry, commerce and other types of business in Wheaton and the surrounding territory. The first meeting of the organization was held October 17, 1972, by-laws were adopted, and a decision was made to assist in funding the airport apron project.

After little activity for several years, a reorganizational meeting was held in January, 1978, at which time David J. Ranney was elected president; Wm. Summers, vice-president; and Karen Doll, secretary-treasurer. Monthly meetings were held. Corporation funds were used to help pay expenses of the city planner, Brian Slama. A gas-a-hol plant project was studied but nothing developed.

Again there was no activity for several years until there was a reorganization in January, 1985. Elected president was Joe Kalla; vice-president, Nanno Itzen; secretary-treasurer, Clarence Juelich. Directors were Gene Ross, Nanno Itzen, Fred Varner, Bill Kremer, and Bill Harbeke. The city council gave approval for this group to hire Gene Wenstrom to work on getting business into Wheaton and secure a grant for industrial development. The city authorized sale of \$500,000 in industrial bonds for erection of a building to attract new business or industry to town, and the community development committee was successful in obtaining a \$205,000 industrial development grant which was approved for the City of Wheaton by the Minnesota Department of Energy and Economic Development.

The new business in town which was the recipient of financial aid through these funds is Reese Welding and Supply. It is expected that the Wheaton Community Development Corporation will continue its efforts to attract other businesses to town in the future.

WHEATON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

The Wheaton Community Hospital Auxiliary was organized in November, 1950, when the new Wheaton hospital was ready to

open. First president was Bonnie Wheeler, and the first project was open house at the hospital on December 10. Eleven women attended the first meeting. Membership has swelled to 150 since.

Meetings were held monthly until May, 1951, when bylaws were amended to adopt a quarterly meeting schedule. Meeting first at the American Legion, churches and the I.O.O.F. hall, now the Auxiliary meets at the hospital.

Among furnishings for the hospital from the Auxiliary are the following: awnings for east-facing rooms, draperies, lobby chairs, rocking chairs, recovery room carts, a TV for the lobby, vacuum cleaner, refrigerator for the nurses' station, microwave for the kitchen, fetal heart monitor, cassette projector for in-training, chair scale, tables and chairs for the dining room, and many smaller items.

The Auxiliary has also done volunteer work at the hospital and in the community. Members have sewn for the hospital, mending or making new items. From 1952 until about 1957 they served as receptionists during visiting hours. They have made Christmas treats for patients and staff, observed Hospital Day, sponsored Future Nurses Club, furnished gifts for pediatric patients, helped conduct Sabin oral polio vaccine clinics in 1962 and 1963, assisted with bloodmobile visits, donated to a doctor procurement fund in 1970, redecorated rooms, and offered scholarships for high school students planning nursing careers.

The principal fund raising activity has been an annual food and fancywork sale and lunch, starting in 1951. A tour of homes was held in December, 1985, which proved to be a financial success.

A gift shop in the lobby staffed by volunteers was opened in 1983. Twenty infant car seats purchased in 1984 are offered to parents of new babies on a rental basis. In 1985 the Auxiliary voted to sponsor Lifeline, an emergency responder system. With financial aid from the county's revenue sharing fund and the city of Wheaton, as well as church groups and local organizations and individuals, twelve units have been purchased and three more were ordered in February of 1986 due to the demand for this service.



Members of the Wheaton Lions Club annually launched a light bulb sale to raise funds for the goodwill projects which they sponsored. This photo taken in about 1960 shows Lions setting out to sell their light bulbs in a residential door to door campaign. Pictured from left to right: Keith Davison, Dr. H. N. Weickert, Len Gutwasser, Ev Moede and Fred Lichtsinn.

WHEATON LIONS CLUB

Lions International is the largest service organization in the world, made up of 1,325,000 men of good will in over 34,500 clubs in 152 nations. The local Lions Club was chartered in 1947 with thirty-five members. It is still very active today and has a membership of thirty-two.

Lions are recognized for their willingness to give generously of themselves in service to their community and to all people in need. The Wheaton Lions Club has donated to the Eye Bank, Children's Eye Clinic, Leader Dog School, Lions Club International Foundation (which helps people in need after a catastrophe), and Lions Multiple 5M Hearing Foundation, Inc. Local projects have included time and money given to the summer gym program, swimming pool, high school track meet, and many other projects. All expenses for running the club are paid for by the members' dues.

Present officers are David Naatz, president, Clifford Hoffman, first vice president; Bruce Thomas, second vice president; Allen

Johnson, secretary-treasurer; Neil Johnson, tail twister; George Sawyer, lion tamer; and Curt Johnson, LeRoy Aker and Neil Johnson, directors.

WHEATON WOMEN'S SOCIETY

When interest in the Mrs. Jaycees waned, the Wheaton Blue Jays organization was formed in 1983 with Janet Koch as president. Seven members attended the meeting. Their purpose was basically the same as that of the Mrs. Jaycees, to serve the community.

The name of the organization was changed to Wheaton Women's Society in 1984. Officers were Laurie Marchetti, president; Marcia Peterson, vice president; Ethel Schneider, secretary; and Nancy Lenczewski, treasurer. The women had an Easter egg hunt, a Halloween party for local children, and a kiddy parade. However, the life of the organization was short-lived and in 1985 the membership voted to dissolve completely for lack of members and interest.

Fraternal Organizations

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODDFELLOWS (I.O.O.F.) AND RELIANCE REBEKAHS

American Oddfellowship was founded April 26, 1819, by Thomas Wildley. The purpose of the lodges was to promote friendship, love and truth among fellowmen and to help and care for the needy. The Order of Oddfellows is found on all continents and on the islands of the sea.

Lake Valley Lodge No. 201 was instituted two years after Wheaton became an organized village. Lake Valley received its charter July 1, 1892. Reliance Rebekah No. 136, its sister organization, was organized and received its charter on February 13, 1896. At that time the membership was 152.

In 1964 Interstate Rebekah Lodge of Browns Valley, which was organized in 1895, was consolidated with Reliance Rebekah of Wheaton.

The lodges have helped sponsor the world eye bank, education foundation, the youth pilgrimage to the United Nations, children's camp, Oddfellow Nursing Home at Northfield, laying of the wreath on the Unknown Soldier's Tomb at Arlington National Cemetery, the gate at the International Peace Garden, the Rose Bowl float, and the Arthritis Foundation.

In Wheaton they have helped to promote good fellowship and assistance among the citizens, giving tables and benches to the park at the swimming pool, shrubs around the public library, money to senior citizens projects, a lamp to the nursing home, and card parties and dances for entertainment. The lodge hall on west Broadway has been available for many public affairs.

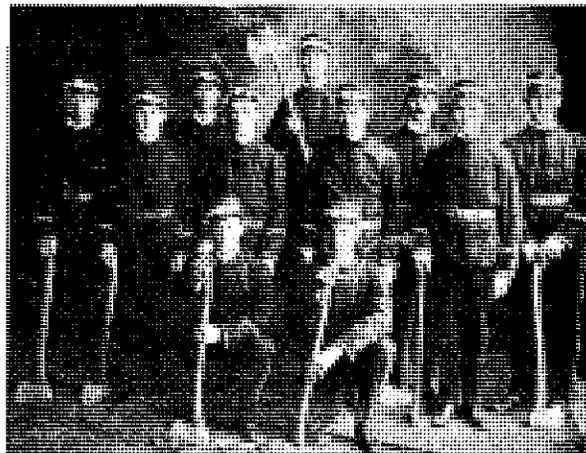
The local Lodge 201 is very inactive at this time, but still retains its charter. The Reliance Rebekahs, however, meet regularly despite declining activity. One of their members, Dorothy Boom, was elected president of the Minnesota Rebekah Assembly for the 1983-84 year.

MODERN WOODMEN

Modern Woodmen of America is a fraternal life insurance company founded at Lyons, Iowa, in 1883. Records indicate that there was a branch of the organization in Wheaton in the late 1890's, which continued for many years. As membership dwindled, the organization was dissolved and records were transferred to Alexandria, Minnesota.

The Masons and the Eastern Star together spend millions of dollars annually for hospitals, homes for widows, orphans and the aged, relief for people in distress, and scholarships for students. They do this through their membership dues.

The Wheaton O.E.S. was organized on May 10, 1917, with 44 members. The charter was granted June 14 and adopted in open chapter October 16, 1917. Tillie Bruns was first worthy matron and signed the bylaws. The committee drawing up the bylaws included R. H. Sigfried, Fannie M. Neuman, and Olga Kristensen. Carolyn (Quast) Moede joined with her parents in 1920 and had continuous membership in the Roseleaf Chapter until her death in 1986. Herman



Ten members of the Modern Woodmen of America made up this team of Foresters in 1900. Pictured front row from left: Tony Olson, Adolph Nordquist; standing, left to right: Vic Hammond, Guy Kuhn, A. Peterson, George Stewart, George Allanson, Roh Sutherland, Otto Dokken, Alfred Fitzgerald and Jake Johnson.

consolidated with Wheaton in 1984, bringing membership to 81.

Meetings were held in the Masonic Hall on Broadway for many years until the new Masonic Temple was built on Highway 75.

WHEATON P.E.O. CHAPTER W

P.E.O. Chapter W became a charter member of the Minnesota State Chapter on May 31, 1922, with twelve charter members. The P.E.O. Sisterhood originated at Iowa Wesleyan College, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, in 1869, started by seven young ladies who desired to contribute to philanthropic organizations through their sisterhood.

Chapter W initiated seventy-four women over the period of fifty-six years that it was an active chapter in Wheaton. They met in homes of members until disbanding in May, 1978.

The sisterhood contributed to the Wheaton Community Library, International Peace Scholarships and yearly assistance to their P.E.O. projects, especially to Cottey College at Nevada, Missouri, a P.E.O. two-year girls college.

ROYAL NEIGHBORS

The Royal Neighbors, which is a sister body of the Modern Woodmen of America, is a fraternal insurance organization. This group was organized in Wheaton in 1900, and membership numbered from sixty to seventy at various times. In 1981 the organization was discontinued, and all records and local memberships were transferred to the Beard-sley, Minnesota, chapter. There are many active members from Wheaton and Rosholt belonging to the White Rock chapter of the organization.

MASONIC LODGE

Masonry is a fraternal organization which aims to promote brotherhood and to foster morality among its members. Masonry dates back hundreds of years to the stoneworkers, and many of the ideas and rituals of Masonry stem from the period of

cathedral building from the 900's to the 1600's.

The Wheaton Lodge held its first meeting in February, 1890, and received its charter on January 15, 1891, with bylaws dated September 26, 1891. Original officers were S. W. Frasier, worshipful master; J. T. Cook, senior warden; C. H. Colyer, junior warden; and T. K. Mork, secretary.

In 1899 the old school building was sold to the Masonic Lodge for \$1,000.00 with the building to be moved to the corner of Broadway and Education Street and used for a lodge room and public hall. It was dedicated on December 5, 1900. This building was closed in 1958, and a new building was constructed on Highway 75 North. Meetings have been held there since 1960.

Because the Masons do little with public relations, people do not know what their work is all about. Some associate it with the colorful Shriners who constitute a highly visible branch of Masonry because of their annual circus and philanthropies, such as the Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children. Others may be aware of such charitable endeavors as the Minnesota Masonic Home and the Masonic Memorial Hospital at the University of Minnesota.

The Wheaton Masonic Lodge recently consolidated with the Herman lodge and now has a membership of seventy-four.

ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR, ROSELEAF 118

The Order of the Eastern Star is the largest fraternal organization in the world to which both men and women may belong. It is the only "family organization" in the related Masonic bodies. Membership requires Masonic affiliation and a minimum age of eighteen.

The teachings of the Order are based on the morality of brotherly love, relief, and truth. These principles are expressed through ceremonies portrayed through stories of several Biblical heroines. Business is never conducted without an open Bible on the altar and the presence of the flag of the country where the meeting is being held. The order is not set up as a religion in competition with established religions.