



HISTORY PROGRAM ACTION PLAN DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

The heart of every organization lies in its history. Our history is contained in artifacts, documents, newspaper articles, publications, meeting minutes, photos, newsletters, written histories, etc. We do this to honor those members who have made a differences in our organization at all levels. History allows us to build a stronger organization based upon those experiences.

The Unit Historians responsibility is to record accurate information about the unit. Historians will have an easier time when they write their reports, if they document all year on a timeline, notes or calendar. Historians should report special events in meetings, dinners, special guests, articles in the newspapers, declarations, media coverage, contests the unit holds. Don't forget members who go above and beyond volunteering.

The Program and why?

Items that officers, members, and volunteers have produced and compiled over the years provide a unique testimony to the achievements of an organization. Records contribute in many ways:

- Members will be able to look back and learn what efforts were successful and why.
- They will be able to see the missteps as well as the achievements which can assist in determining a future strategy.
- Exhibiting materials not only stimulates enthusiasm but also encourages members to maintain the organization's standards and promote its future.
- Pride in the organization has a direct correlation to motivate the current membership to bring in new members, achieve more goals, and create a sense of strength and conviction while developing leaders.
- Maintaining and preserving our records are invaluable to society and serves as informative and educational resource to a variety of potential users.

What can we do?

Check the following before writing your history:

- **Checkbook:** Checkbooks record money that is spent or taken in, but you can also find dates, places, names and what is done in the unit.
- **Minutes:** Ask the unit secretary for a copy of the minutes to find data.
- **Facebook:** Create a FB page so that units can post the happenings on the unit page.
- **Newspaper Clippings:** Collect newspaper articles on the unit's happenings and store them in one location.
- **Cell phone:** Take photos of documents, events and members at events.
- **E mails:** Star your emails that apply to history
- **District Newsletters:** Great resource to recall information.

The historian should develop a system to archive communications such as newsletters, fliers, hand books and program information.

- Include current events that impact the American Legion Auxiliary and its programs/projects in the written history of the year.
- Historians should promote the **Veterans History Project** through ALA Historian's Facebook group emails and during meetings. This would be a great project to partner with the Junior Activities chairman, helping them earn the History patch. Highlight details of the project on the national historian's web page.
- Highlight historical, important and interesting events in your unit.
- Use new technology to create and maintain digital images and records. Note: Make more than one digital copy and store them in different places.
- Create a FB page and a website. Members will put information on FB before they sit down and write the info with a pad and pencil.
- Be sure to send your information to the Department History FB page – FLALA History.
- Participate in the **Members Remember** project (see Resources). The History Patch is available to junior members in 9th – 12th grades. Work with junior activities chairman to promote the patch. Stress the importance of collecting the ALA's history and the ease of participating in the project through all communications.

Initiate a History project.

- Search throughout the post/unit home for items.
- Gather photos and document the event(s) at which they were taken as well as the people in the photos.
- Learn the history of your unit, department and national organization. If you do not have a written unit or department history, volunteer to help put one together.
- For documents and photos, digitize them, making sure to make more than one copy and the additional copies stored in different places.

What is expected?

- Collect information about famous Auxiliary Members. Include full names, years of Auxiliary membership, details of what they did, who they are and why they are famous. Remember to include where you found the information.
- This information should be sent to the Department Historian as it is collected throughout the year with a deadline of **May 1, 2022**.

All hardcopy information should be sent by mail to Department of Florida Historian

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An organization benefits itself and the public by preserving its records and making them available for use by everyone inside and outside the organization.