

American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Idaho  
Historian, 2016-2017

The heart of any organization is in its records – items that officers, members, directors, staff, and volunteers have produced and compiled over the years. They provide unique testimony to the achievements of an organization. (National Plan of Action 2016-2017)

Our focus this year:

Unit History – compile your Unit history. Write a brief summary each month of your Unit's achievements. What were your best moments? What were your opportunities? What impact did you have on our Veterans, their families, and our communities?

Junior involvement – this year, the National Junior Activities committee has developed a History patch for our High School (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) Junior members. This is a great opportunity for our Senior members to work with and mentor our Junior members. Make sure the Juniors understand that they too are a part of our history, as they are a part of our future. Involve them every step of the way!

Unit Artifacts – formerly Cavalcade of Memories – Unit historical items are a big focus this year! Junior and Senior members, work together to establish a collection of memorabilia from your Unit. See if you have a space available to display these items at your meeting location; if not, check with your local library, historical society, or university, as these items are part of the living history of your community – one of these organizations should be happy to preserve, display, and store them for you. If you have a display already, then work together to establish an online presence to display your historical items, too!

What can we do?

1. Establish a place for your Historical items. This can also be an online collection, with photos, stories, and video clips. Hold an Open House for your Unit, and invite your local community to come and view your physical history – this is also a wonderful opportunity to reach out and find potential members of the Legion Family!
2. Create a “Members Remember” project! This involves an oral history of your Unit. Talk with your long-term members, involve your Junior members, and make this a Legion Family event! Make this part of your online display, too!
3. Work with your Junior members on the History patch!
4. Celebrate Women's History Month and International Women's Day! Work with your Juniors and research your Unit. Write a short essay on where your Unit has been, where it is now, and where you are headed in the future. Add this to your Historical items display, and publish a short version in your local paper to reach out to potential members in your community!
5. Scrapbook – if you like, put together a scrapbook from your Unit's year of activities! Bring them with you to the 2017 Convention in Pocatello. Everyone will have a chance to vote on their favorites!

Let's build each other up, and create a strong future together!