



The Sharpshooter



SGT. ROBERT FINCH
1st MICH SS

The Official Newsletter of
Robert Finch Camp No. 14 – Traverse City
Est. 1914 – The Oldest Active Camp in the Department of Michigan
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Matthew Van Acker Awarded the Sgt. Robert Finch Award

It is the pleasure of Commander John E. Lantzer to announce that Matthew Van Acker, Director of Save the Flags in Lansing is the third recipient of the Sgt. Robert Finch Award.

The Sgt. Robert Finch Award is the most prestigious award given by the Camp, with its origins beginning in 2014 during the Camp's centennial celebration. The inaugural award was given to PCC Neal Breaguh for his many years of service and extraordinary efforts in bolstering the Camp. The second award was given in 2016 to Sister Mary Rose, PAP of the Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 for her long standing support and work on behalf of Union Veterans and the Brothers of the Camp.

The award can be bestowed upon a member of the Allied Orders, or a non-member of the Allied Orders for extraordinary and meritorious service on behalf of the Order – requiring an extremely high level of merit.

Mr. Van Acker for many years has provided extraordinary service to the memory of Michigan's heroes and martyrs that preserved the Union via sustained exceptional efforts. His diligence to preserve the war history of this state's Soldiers and Comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic is second to none, and aligns with the initiatives and goals of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. He is of the highest caliber of crusaders for the historical preservation of Michigan's Civil War history. His dedicated quest not only protects the battle flags, the honored and beloved symbols of Michigan's heroes, but more importantly keeps the histories of those brave and noble men alive.

Mr. Van Acker also received the Abraham Lincoln Certificate of Appreciation Award at the 2020 Michigan Department Encampment for his significant contribution to the memory and goals of the Comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Abraham Lincoln Award is the highest award issued by the Department of Michigan.



Above: Matt Van Acker discussing the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics Battle Flag in Lansing.

Camp 14 Brothers Elected to Department Offices & The Sharpshooter Wins PDC J. Richard Greene Award at the 136th Annual Michigan Department Encampment

With unusual times, came an unusual Department Encampment for 2020. This year's Department Encampment was held virtually on Zoom with 9 Brothers from Robert Finch Camp No. 14 in attendance for a total of 20% of the 44 Delegates across the Department of Michigan present. Those Brothers in attendance included: SVC Ramsey, PDC Smith, PDC Aurand, PDC Davis, PCC Mattis, GRO Sawyer, ESCC & RO Conger, Asst. Sec. Welliver, and Brother Jones.

The Sharpshooter won the PDC J. Richard Greene Award for the best newsletter in the Department of Michigan. This is the third award that the newsletter has received adding to the two Marshall Hope Awards given as the best Camp newsletter in the National Organization.

Elections saw Camp 14's own SVC David Ramsey elected to the office of Junior Vice Department Commander after serving for a year in the Department Council. PDC David Smith also was elected to the Department Council with the vacancy created by SVC Ramsey running for Junior Vice Department Commander.



Commander's Message



...“If other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remains in us”.

“Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of spring time; let us raise above them the dear Old Flag they saved from dishonor, let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the Nation's gratitude, - the soldiers sailor's, widows and orphans” ...

Quote from: General John A. Logan's General Orders #11

Headquarters, Grand Army of the Republic, Washington D.C., May 5th 1868

Maybe you are like me, I do things from time to time over and over. Sometimes I really cannot remember why I do it, I just do it, my wife tells me “it's a habit”, the act becomes repeatable and a pattern is established. But that is one of the great things about the written word. You can always go back and re-read the original words and remember just why you are doing the act.

There are two directives in General Orders #11 for us to contemplate. To spend some time in the local cemeteries “and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of spring time”. I do hope the lilacs in the front yard will be in bloom. The second I would ask for you to join me in renewing a pledge to aid and assist those that have served our country in her time of need.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

John E. Lantzer
Camp Commander
Robert Finch Camp No. 14

Camp 14 in the Media for Oakwood Cemetery GAR Plot 241 Project and Last Veteran Buried in Grand Traverse County with TAHS

The Oakwood Cemetery GAR Plot 241 project and the Last Veteran Buried in Grand Traverse County was highlighted in the local news by TV 7&4 the NBC affiliate in Traverse City, as well as the The Ticker. The project was highlighted along with the financial contribution made by the Traverse Area Historical Society to the project. The Ticker article can be found here:

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/commemorating-traverse-citys-civil-war-vets/>

No link was recorded for the TV 7&4 feature, but the station is interested in the upcoming ceremonies to honor the Noble Dead buried in Plot 241.

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Last Veteran of the County Donations

If you would like to donate to the Last Veteran of the County project, or to sponsor a particular county, you can send a donation to the Camp Treasurer, Dale Aurand, PDC. Please send a check or money order made out to “Robert Finch Camp 14” to the Camp Treasurer along with a note indicating what county or counties you would like to sponsor if that is an interest. The Camp Treasurer's address is:

Dale Aurand, PDC
321 W. 9th St.
Traverse City, MI 49684

2020 National Encampment

The 2020 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War National Encampment will be held on 13 August – 16 August in Atlanta, Georgia at the Atlanta Marriott Buckhead Hotel and Convention Center. The National Encampment is being hosted by the Department of Georgia and South Carolina. This is a good opportunity to visit Civil War sites and see how the business of the Order is done on the National level. Information regarding the 2020 National Encampment can be found at:

http://www.suvcw.org/?page_id=2791

Northern Michigan Military Installations – Past & Present



Above: Insignia of the 126th Cavalry Regiment – previously Infantry Regiment (courtesy of wikipedia.org)

Manistee Armory

United States Army National Guard
Manistee, Manistee County, Michigan
Constructed: 1955-1956
Closed: 2015-2016

For around 60 years, the Black Knights of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 126th Cavalry Regiment served the Manistee area proudly operating out of the Manistee Armory, which was built in the 1955 and 1956 timeframe. In 2015, B Troop was moved to the Grand Rapids area after calling Manistee home since 1950. In 1950, the unit was activated in Manistee with 5 Officers and 18 Enlisted.

Some of the interesting highlights of B Troop's history include the following:

- The original unit was housed in an old bowling alley along the riverfront (the building was torn down)
- The Manistee Armory was constructed with Government financial support and local fund-raising efforts.

- Funding for the Armory consisted of: \$350,000 from the US Government, \$25,000 from the state government, and \$50,000 from the local community (obtained in a very short period of time)
- The Armory was host to Manistee High School basketball games, as well as dances, concerts, wedding receptions, etc.
- Various Manistee Guardsmen have worked as security forces at Manistee County Blacker Airport, as well as US Air Force Bases in defense against terrorism
- 38 Manistee Guardsmen temporarily were stationed at Fort Dix, NJ, then Kuwait for training before their stint in Iraq
- B Troop Soldiers served multiple tours in Iraq
- After 11 September 2001, the Armory locked its doors and was guarded with Manistee Guardsmen placed on alert
- Armor (tank) training was conducted in the wooded dune area around the Armory – this was training was transferred to Camp Grayling as new homes and condos have claimed the surrounding site



Above: Manistee Armory in 1957
(picture source from: <http://genealogytrails.com/mich/manistee/citymanistee.html>)

Information for this feature were sourced from:

<https://www.manisteenews.com/local-news/article/Tanks-removed-from-Manistee-National-Guard-armory-14253184.php>
https://www.shorelinemedia.net/ludington_daily_news/archives/bravo-company-the-history-of-the-manistee-armory/article_48f74682-9a66-522a-9581-41683d969310.html



Above: Deployed National Guardsmen from Manistee
(picture source from: shorelinemedia.net)

Decoration Day – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Sleep, comrades, sleep and rest
On this Field of the Grounded Arms,
Where foes no more molest,
Nor sentry's shot alarms!

Ye have slept on the ground before,
And started to your feet
At the cannon's sudden roar,
Or the drum's redoubling beat.

But in this camp of Death
No sound your slumber breaks;
Here is no fevered breath,
No wound that bleeds and aches.

All is repose and peace,
Untrampled lies the sod;
The shouts of battle cease,
It is the Truce of God!

Rest, comrades, rest and sleep!
The thoughts of men shall be
As sentinels to keep
Your rest from danger free.

Your silent tents of green
We deck with fragrant flowers;
Yours has the suffering been,
The memory shall be ours.

General Orders No. 11

Headquarters, Grand Army of the Republic
Washington, D.C., 05 May 1868

I. The 30th day of May, 1868 is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form or ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose, among other things, "of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion." What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes? Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains and their deaths the tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten, as a people, the cost of a free and undivided republic.

If other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remains in us.

Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the nation's gratitude—the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan.

II. It is the purpose of the commander in chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope that it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. He earnestly desires the public press to call attention to this order, and lend its friendly aid in bringing it to the notice of comrades in all parts of the country in time for simultaneous compliance therewith.

III. Department commanders will use every effort to make this order effective.

By Command of -
John A. Logan,
Commander in Chief

N.P. Chipman, Adjutant General

Elks Lodge #323, Thank You & 'Til We Meet Again

Robert Finch Camp No. 14 Moves Into the Unknown

2020 has seen many changes in the way Robert Finch Camp No. 14 conducts business and the activities in support of the Good of the Order. Another challenge presented itself when the Camp 14 Brothers that are also members of Elks Lodge #323 were notified that the Lodge will no longer host community organizations as they will be ending breakfast and lunch service, opening at 3PM (1500) from now on.

With this new challenge, the Camp needs to locate a new meeting location in the immediate Traverse City area. Per the C&R, the Camp Council is responsible to secure a location, and is in the process of completing that task. More information will be distributed in the near future.

Camp 14 thanks the Elks for their long-standing support of our efforts, and being most gracious hosts for many years. We hope this is not a long goodbye, but a "see you soon" on other shared projects.



Above: A past Flag Day at Elks Lodge #323 with Camp 14 in attendance (picture source from: elkstc.com)

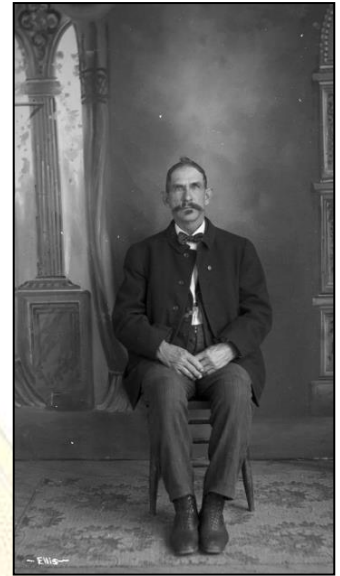
Porter R. Sherman, Last Veteran Buried in Kalkaska County Honored

Brothers of Robert Finch Camp No. 14 gathered in June at the South Boardman Cemetery to honor Porter R. Sherman, Company I, 45th Pennsylvania Infantry, and the Last Veteran Buried in Kalkaska County. A brief ceremony was conducted per the specified SUVCW ceremony for the Last Veteran, and was a closed event.

CC Lantzer led the event with PCC Mattis serving as Chaplain, and GRO Sawyer serving as the Memorial Officer for the ceremony.

Porter R. Sherman was born in Shippen Township, Tioga County, Pennsylvania on Independence Day, 1841. He passed away at the age of 99 at his home in South Boardman following a short illness of pneumonia on 27 July 1940. Mr. Sherman took part in the siege of Vicksburg, was wounded in the Battle of the Wilderness, and was a prisoner of war being captured by the Confederates 9 months before the end of the war. He was lodged in the infamous Libby Prison. He saw service in 23 battles throughout the war.

Porter Sherman spent the final 56 years of his life in Kalkaska County, and was well loved by neighbors and the community as he had a “wonderful personality and kindly disposition of love toward all”. He was survived by a second wife, a son, 9 grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren, while being preceded in death by his first wife and 3 daughters. The American Legion conducted the funeral services at the Methodist Church in South Boardman.



Porter R. Sherman
 Co. I, 45th PA Infantry

Sources:
 Detroit Free Press, 29 July 1940
 The Kalkaskian, 01 August 1940



Above: Gravesite of Porter Sherman with new Last Veteran Buried in the County Marker (photo courtesy of Br. Kenny Jones)



Above (L-R): JVDC & SVC Ramsey, GRO Sawyer, PDC Smith, CC Lantzer, Br. Schafer, JVC Ribby, PDC Aurand, Asst. Sec. Welliver, Br. Jones, RO & ESCC Conger, and PCC Mattis (photo courtesy of RO & ESCC Joseph Conger)

Camp No. 14 2020 Meeting Schedule

Per the order of Camp Commander John E. Lantzer, Robert Finch Camp No. 14’s meeting schedule for 2020 is as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 11 January 2020 | Elks Lodge #323, Traverse City |
| 14 March 2020 | Elks Lodge #323, Traverse City |
| 02 May 2020 | ROBERT & FRANCES FINCH BANQUET Elks Lodge #323, Traverse City |
| 13 June 2020 | South Boardman, Kalkaska Co. |
| 11 July 2020 | TBD |
| 12 September 2020 | TBD |
| 14 November 2020 | TBD |

All meetings begin at 11:30AM (1130)



Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9

Frances Finch Aux. No. 9 Latest News

The Sisters of Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 congratulate the Brothers of Robert Finch Camp No. 14 for their successful Department Encampment, with the election of SVC Dave Ramsey as Junior Vice Department Commander, PDC Dave Smith to the Department Council, and The Sharpshooter winning the J. Richard Greene Award! While the pandemic has delayed or ended certain events, the Sisters of Frances Finch No. 9 are preparing for the eventual ceremony in Oakwood Cemetery to honor the 4 ladies that received new headstones in the GAR Plot 241, the 2 Veterans with new headstones, and the Last Veteran Buried in Grand Traverse County. Until then, stay safe and be well!

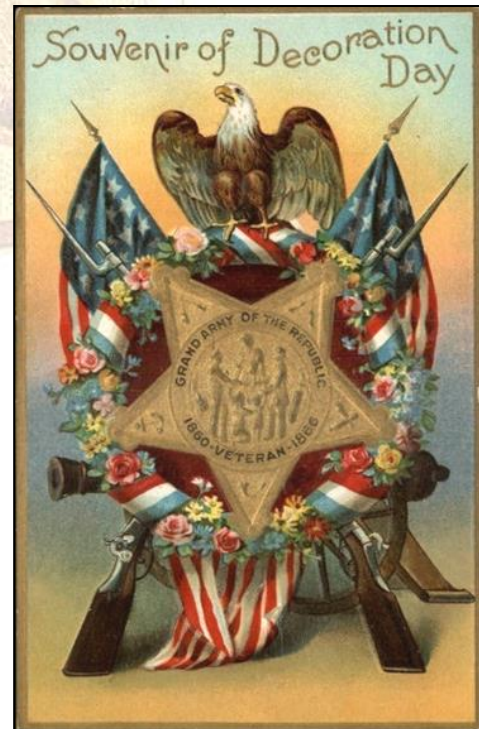


2019-2020 Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 Officers

- President: Dorothy Rongey, PAP
- Vice President: Mary Rose, PAP
- Secretary: Lisa Smith, PAP
- Treasurer: Lisa Smith, PAP
- Pat. Instructor: Debra Downey
- Council #1: Karen Goodrich, PAP
- Council #2: Debra Downey
- Council #3: Lorraine Jones
- Chaplain: Mary Rose, PAP
- Historian: All Sisters of Aux. No. 9
- Press Corrs.: Mary Rose, PAP & Lisa Smith, PAP
- Girl Scout Comm.: Lorraine Jones, Chair
- Girl Scout Comm.: Emily Breaugh, PAP
- Counselor: Mary Rose, PAP



Decoration Day Cards

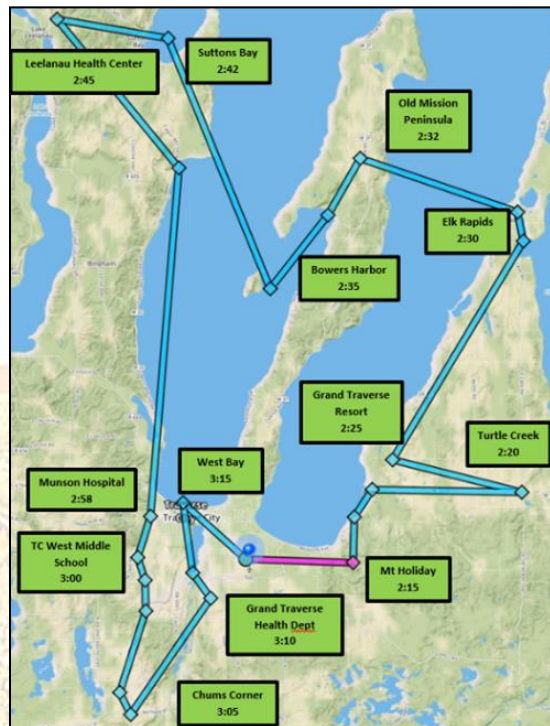


CGAS Traverse City Honors Local Healthcare Workers

On 15 May 2020, CGAS Traverse City launched their three MH-60T helicopters for a planned formation training flight around the greater Grand Traverse area. As part of this effort the Air Station honored local healthcare workers with flyovers of various medical facilities in the area. Traverse City is celebrating 10 years as a “Coast Guard City”, and the Air Station is celebrating its 75th Anniversary in Traverse City!



Above (Top & Bottom): In Flight Images on 15 May 2020 (Source: CGAS Traverse City Facebook page video – still captures)



Above: Flight path of 15 May 2020 (Source: CGAS Traverse City Facebook page)

Michigan Strong Flyover Comes to Traverse City

The Red Devils of the 107th Fighter Squadron, 127th Wing, Michigan Air National Guard based at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Mt. Clemens performed a flyover of Munson Medical Center in Traverse City with 4 A-10 Thunderbolt IIs (also known as the “Warthog”) on 12 May 2020 as part of a salute to healthcare workers across the state.



Above Left: A-10C of the 107FS (Source: DVIDShub.net)
 Above Right: 107th Fighter Squadron “Mors Hostibus” – “Death to the Enemy”



Above: 3 CGAS Traverse City MH-60T Helicopters in Formation (Source: CGAS Traverse City Facebook page & Aviation Photojournal)

Rememberance Symbol: the Poppy

Per the American Legion's website regarding National Poppy Day®: "The red poppy is a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice worn by Americans since World War I to honor those who served and died for our country in all wars. It reminds Americans of the sacrifices made by our Veterans while protecting our freedoms. Wear a poppy to honor those who have worn our nation's uniform."

Further from the American Legion website: "After World War I, the poppy flourished in Europe. Scientists attributed the growth to soils in France and Belgium becoming enriched with lime from the rubble left by the war. From the dirt and mud grew a beautiful red poppy. The red poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following the publication of the wartime poem "In Flanders Fields." The poem was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. while serving on the front lines.

On September 27, 1920, the poppy became the official flower of The American Legion family to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during the war. In 1924, the distribution of poppies became a national program of The American Legion.

Led by the American Legion Auxiliary, each year members of The American Legion Family distribute poppies with a request that the person receiving the flower make a donation to support the future of veterans, active-duty military personnel and their families with medical and financial needs.

Poppy Day is celebrated in countries around the world. The American Legion brought National Poppy Day® to the United States by asking Congress to designate the Friday before Memorial Day, as National Poppy Day."

Source: <https://www.legion.org/poppyday>

The Poppy's history in American symbolism explored further...

During the warm early spring of 1915, the war torn fields of northern France and Flanders (northern Belgium) became colored red from the growth of a beautiful and vibrant weed...the red poppy (Papaver rhoeas).

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian brigade surgeon spotted a cluster of the red poppies that spring shortly after the Second Battle of Ypres. Dr. McCrae was exposed to the horrific carnage that the battle caused to humans and land alike. 87,000 Allied soldiers were killed, wounded, or were missing-in-action with 37,000 casualties for the German forces. Among these casualties, Lieutenant Colonel McCrae's good friend, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer was killed here.

Upon seeing the vibrant red poppies coming up from such broken ground, McCrae wrote the famous "In Flanders Field" channeling the soldiers buried underneath the those red naturally decorated grounds.

Two days before the Armistice, Moina Michael a University of Georgia professor, read "In Flanders Field" in the Ladies' Home Journal. She was inspired by the poem's verses, which led her do write her own poem titled "We Shall Keep Faith". As a symbol of this faith and remembrance of those that sacrificed it all at Flanders Field, Professor Michael vowed to always wear a fabric red poppy. After the war, she came up with the idea to make and sell red silk poppies in a fundraising effort to support Veterans returning from the war.



"In Flanders Fields" by John McCrae 08 December 1915

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



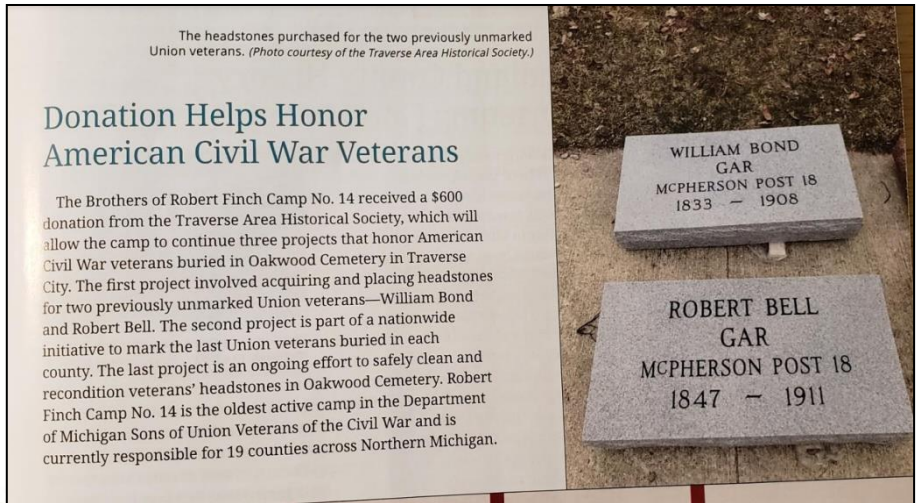
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Above: Canadian Victory Bonds Poster using In Flanders Fields & Poppies

Various Brothers of the Camp received a nice surprise when they received their latest issue of Michigan History magazine. Camp 14 and Traverse Area Historical Society were highlighted for the GAR Plot 241 project and the donation that greatly aided in its completion.

A ceremony for the project will be scheduled in the near future – stay tuned.

A picture of the highlighted section from the July/August 2020 edition of Michigan History magazine is provided at right. Picture courtesy of Brother Kenny Jones.



Remembrance Symbol: the Poppy cont'd

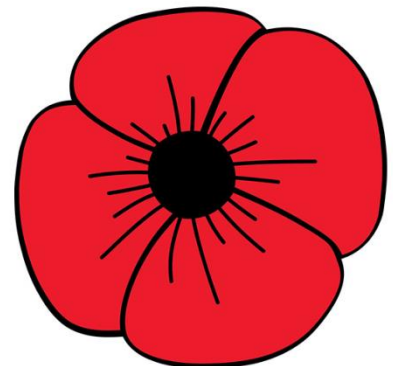
Professor Michael started a campaign to create a national symbol of remembrance, and it had a very slow beginning. The symbol consisted of a poppy in the colors of the Allied nations' flags entwined around a victory torch. However, during in 1920, Professor Michael was able to get the American Legion in Georgia to adopt the poppy without the torch as its symbol of remembrance. Not long after, the National Organization of the American Legion voted to use the poppy as the official national symbol of remembrance during their convention in Cleveland in September 1920.

In Europe, a French citizen named Anna Guerin had been a strong advocate in the remembrance symbolism of the red poppy early on. In 1920, she was invited to the American Legion's National Convention to speak about an "Inter-Allied Poppy Day". Anna Guerin was able to help convince the Legionnaires at the convention to adopt the poppy as their symbol of remembrance, and she requested that they join her in celebrating National Poppy Day in the United States the following May.

Eventually other nations adopted the poppy as their official symbol of remembrance. These nations include: the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Belgium, Australia, and New Zealand. On 11 November each year, known as Remembrance Day or Armistice Day, these countries' citizens proudly wear the red poppy to commemorate the anniversary of the 1918 armistice. In the United States, the tradition of wearing the red poppy has developed along a different path. The anniversary of the armistice is Veterans Day in the US, and celebrates this nation's living Veterans. The red poppy has been left to wear on Memorial Day in America to honor all of the Veterans that are no longer among the living that served to maintain Freedom and Liberty.



Above: Lt. Col. John McCrae, soldier, surgeon, poet, Canadian. (photo courtesy of en.wikipedia.org)



Source: <https://www.history.com/news/world-war-i-poppy-remembrance-symbol-veterans-day>



Robert Finch Camp No. 14 – Traverse City
Est. 1914 – The Oldest Active Camp in the Department of Michigan
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
www.robertfinch14.org



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