

**Planning
for a
Permanent Memorial
by
LaMoille Alumni**

THE WAY IT BEGAN

by Jim Benson

The memorial service board was erected in the early 1940's by the women of the LaMoille Amvets Auxiliary to honor veterans of World War I and II. Later, it was updated to add Korean and Vietnam service people also from the LaMoille community.

Over time, the sign deteriorated and was in need of repairs. The original sign, made of wood and fiberboard, had been restored several times by community persons Al Burgess, Betty Cooper, and Marge Leeper. Weather took its toll. It was finally taken down, but repaired and set up for the 100-year celebration of the LaMoille Church in 1987. The billboard was retired in 2000.

The Alumni indicated an interest in doing something to preserve the service board. At the 1999 Alumni meeting, the group voted to pursue the project of a more permanent structure to honor the community people.

A committee was formed of interested and recent Alumni chairpersons: Max Landon, James Benson, Don Wills, Lyman Rule, Barbara Baltisberger, Hazel Hickman and Barbara Scafferi. Jim Benson spearheaded the committee.

After checking with sign companies and gathering information about different materials, wood, glass and plastic were eliminated as not being permanent. We wanted something that would require little or no maintenance and last forever.

We didn't have any idea how much money we would need. Wood, plastic and glass would run from \$1,500 to \$3,000. These materials would have to be repaired again in 10 years or less, so we discarded this line of thinking. We went to Nevada Monument Company who had erected and designed several service monuments.

Selected was a George Gray granite: 5½ feet long, 8 feet wide and 4 feet tall with service names lettered on the front (similar to the original wooden sign), and a cement footing seemed to fit our requirements.

Letters were sent to Alumni. With a faith that our community (and former residents) would pull together and make this happen, we started a fund campaign. The first goal was \$10,000 to pay for the agreed upon monument plus labor. As the money began to come in—and more follow-up letters plus one-on-one asking by committee members saw the generosity of spirit—we decided we could add a bevel front base with the six service emblems.

As the community responded we added lettering and drawing of the school and church and a brief history of the wars on the back of the stone. A cement platform was also added. All of this cost \$12,952.11. We still have some left to finish the memorial book listing contributors, pictures, history of school and church. It will be placed in libraries and historical museums in the county and state.

Three years of committed work by our committee resulted in the dedication of the new marker on June 3, 2000.

Thanks to all friends, relatives, teachers and the LaMoille community for a job well done.



Contributed photo

Emmett Wickersham, center, talks about his World War I days. The LaMoille Honor Roll board is designed to honor veterans like Wickersham.

June 99

Service board will be permanent memorial

Emmett Wickersham turned 100 years of age in April, but he vividly remembers that day in January of 1918 when — at the age of 18 — he volunteered for the Army.

He took basic training in San Antonio, Texas, at Fort Sam Houston. "I decided to volunteer since fellows were beginning to be drafted," he said.

Wickersham's name is one of several listed under World War I on the LaMoille Honor Roll board. Due to deterioration of the board over the years, the LaMoille Alumni has taken on the project of replacing the board with a permanent granite memorial.

Wickersham can still wear his

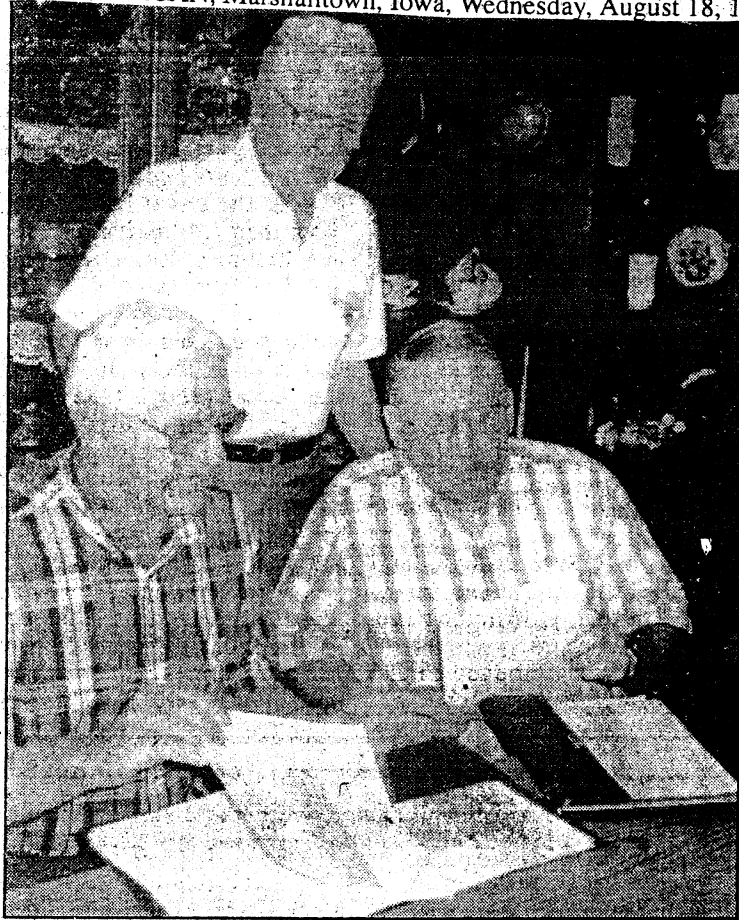
World War I uniform and wore it for the State Center Rose Festival parade several years ago.

Currently residing at Grandview Heights, he clearly remembers going with his parents to Dillon, Mont., at the age of 7 to consider cattle ranching. "We went out by train and came back by covered wagon through Yellowstone Park. I remember the bears there."

The public is invited to participate in the LaMoille service board project as the names of those who served deserve a permanent memorial.

Checks should be made out to the LaMoille Alumni and sent to Hazel Hickman, 1214 W. Anson St.

TIMES-REPUBLICAN, Marshalltown, Iowa, Wednesday, August 18, 1999



Contributed photo

LaMoille Alumni Committee members Jim Benson, Max Landon and Don Wills are shown finalizing plans for a bingo benefit for the alumni project replacing the LaMoille Service Board with a permanent monument. The bingo benefit will be held at the Marshalltown American Legion hall, upstairs, at 7 p.m. on Aug. 20.

LaMoille Alumni Project Committee collecting funds for service monument

The LaMoille Alumni Project Committee met recently at the home of Barbara Baltisberger. Funds are still being collected for the permanent service board monument. The committee is working on the history of the LaMoille Amvets Auxiliary who originally placed the wooden military service board. Information on the auxiliary and wars listed on the marker will be used both on the marker and in the memorial book. The project committee is composed of Baltisberger, Jim Benson, Hazel Hickman, Max Landon, Lyman Rule, Barbara Scafferi and Don Wills. The permanent marker will be dedicated June 3. A program is being planned.

Donations may be sent to Hazel Hickman, 1214 W. Anson St.



Letters

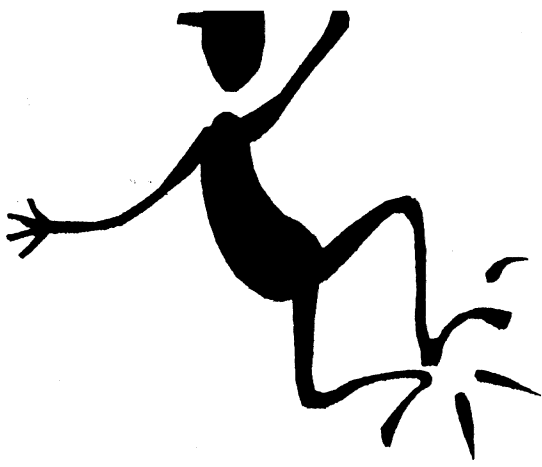
Pledges are sought for LaMoille memorial

Editor, Times-Republican:

The committee working on the LaMoille alumni memorial service board project is working on the final phase of the fund raising. People who made pledges are urged to send them to the treasurer: Hazel Hickman, 1214 W. Anson St. Jim Benson suggested donating to the project in lieu of giving a gift this Christmas.

The committee wishes to thank all of the people who have generously given and for honoring family members. Max Landon has put together a brief history of wars included for consideration in the historical notations.

**Barbara Scafferi
709 E. South St.**



BINGO BENEFIT

Come Join the Fun! Win cash prizes.

Friday, August 20, 1999, 7:00 pm

**Marshalltown American Legion Hall
1301 S. 6th Street**

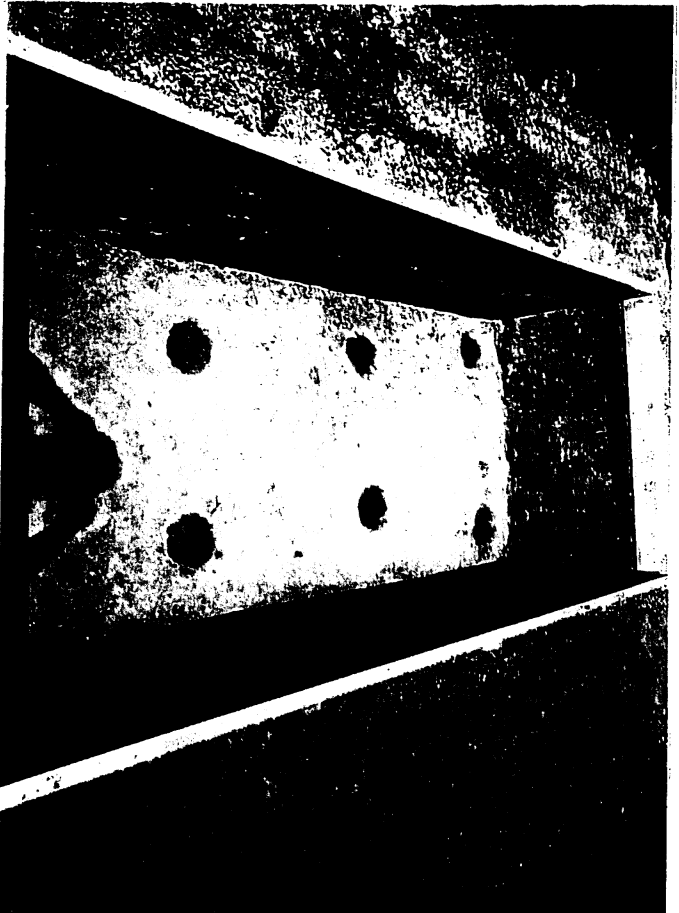
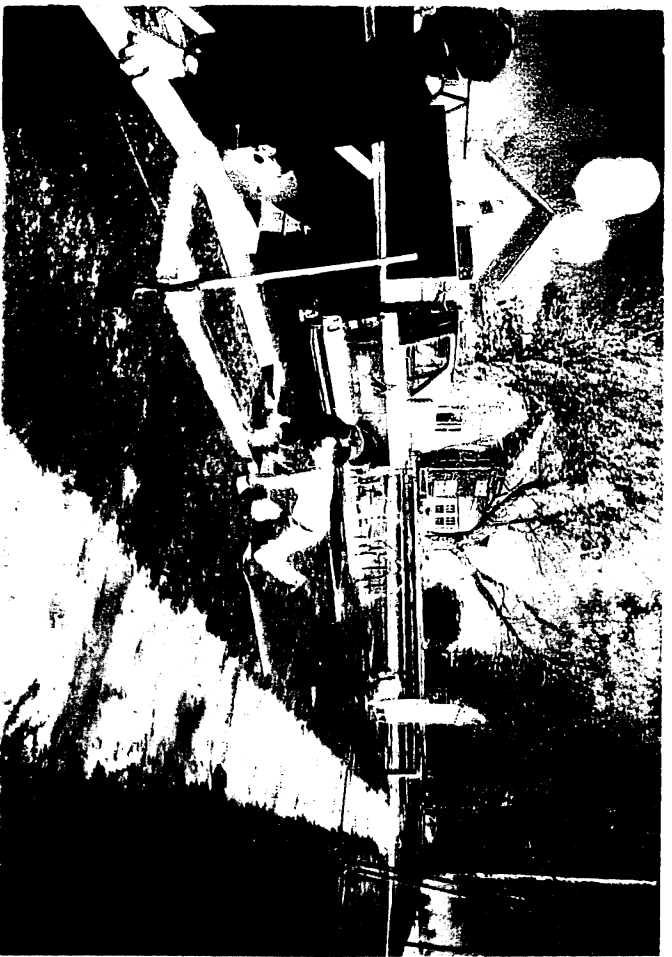
Proceeds will go to the LaMoille Veterans' Honor Marker Project

*******Bring your own card marker*******

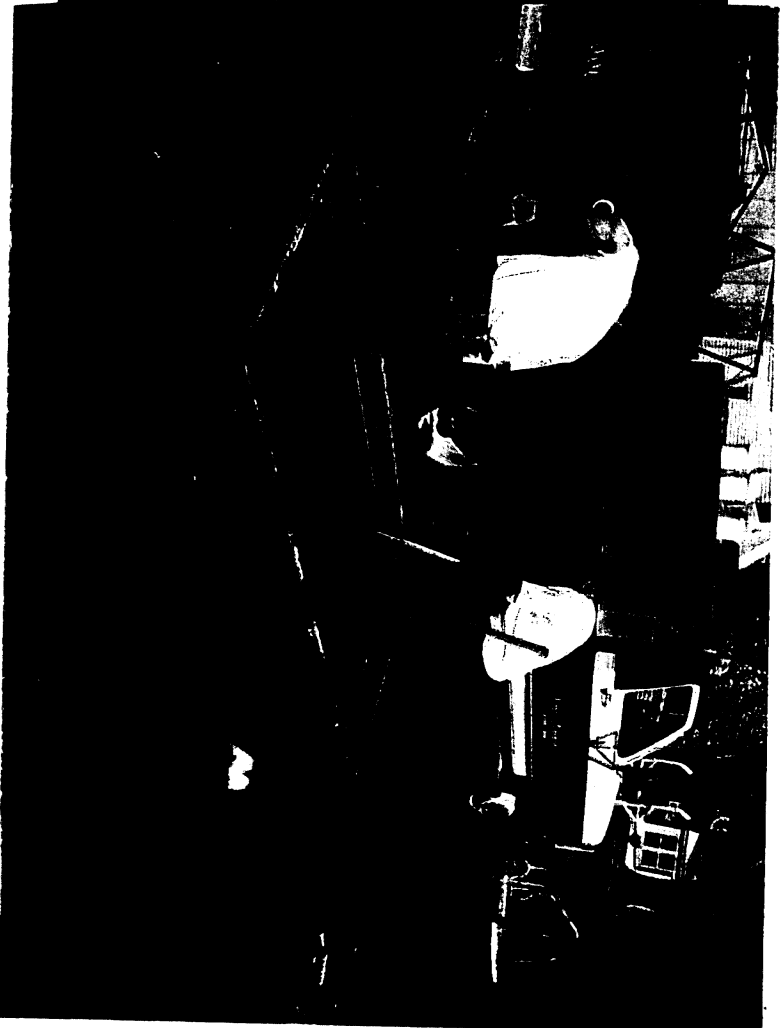
Sponsored by the LaMoille Alumni and the American Legion

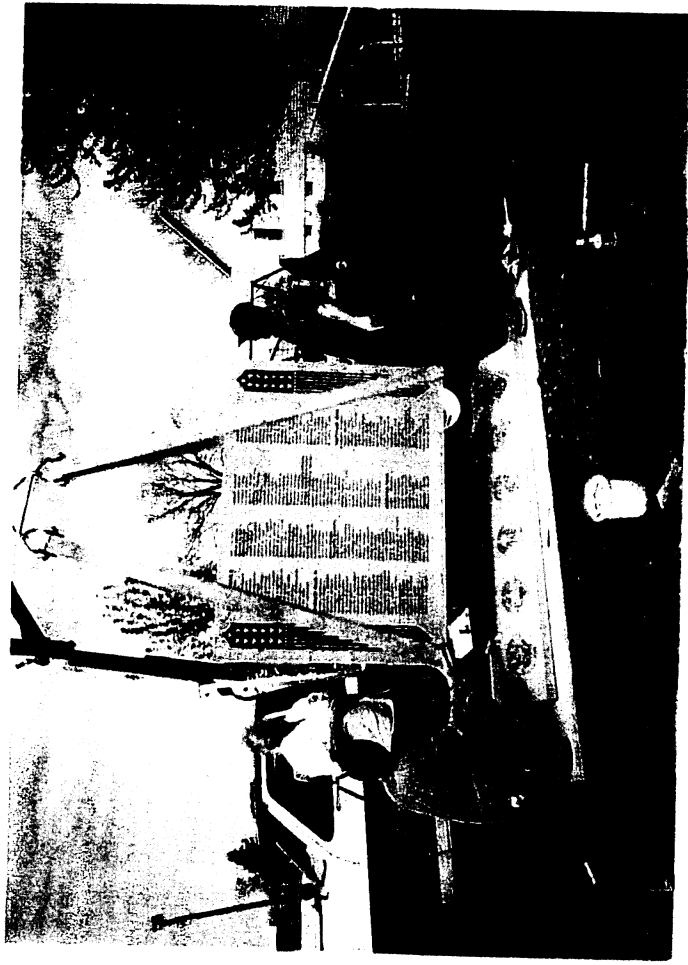
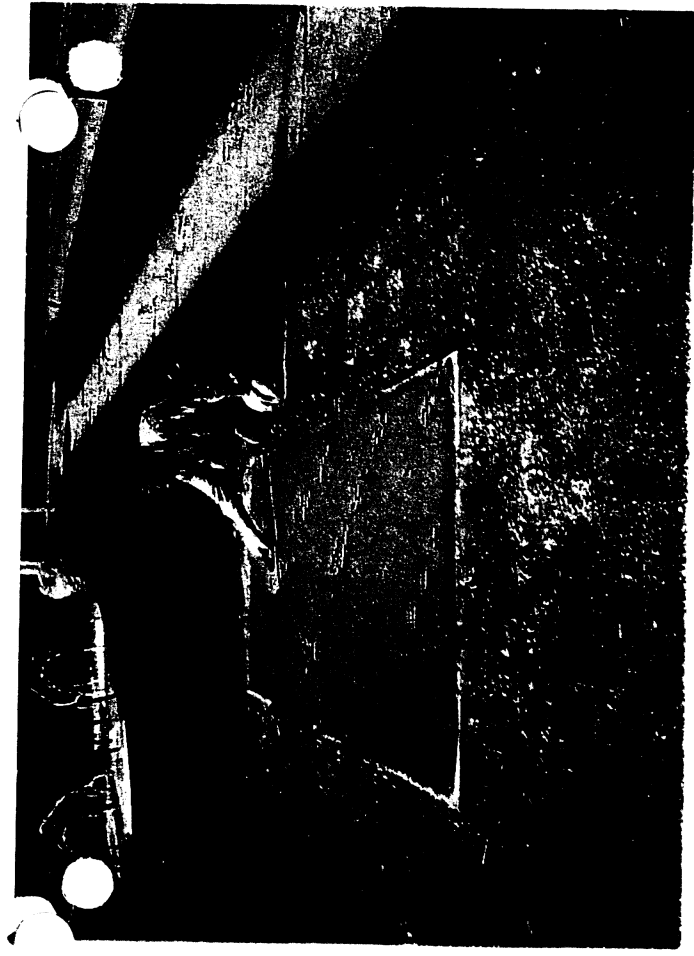


Jim Benson rolls up sleeves to begin work. The Nevada Monument Company of Nevada, Iowa, presented the best bid for the project. The following pictures show the construction process and completion pictures are on front of this book. The six branches of the military emblems are engraved on the gray granite stone. On the back is a tribute to the community, church and school.

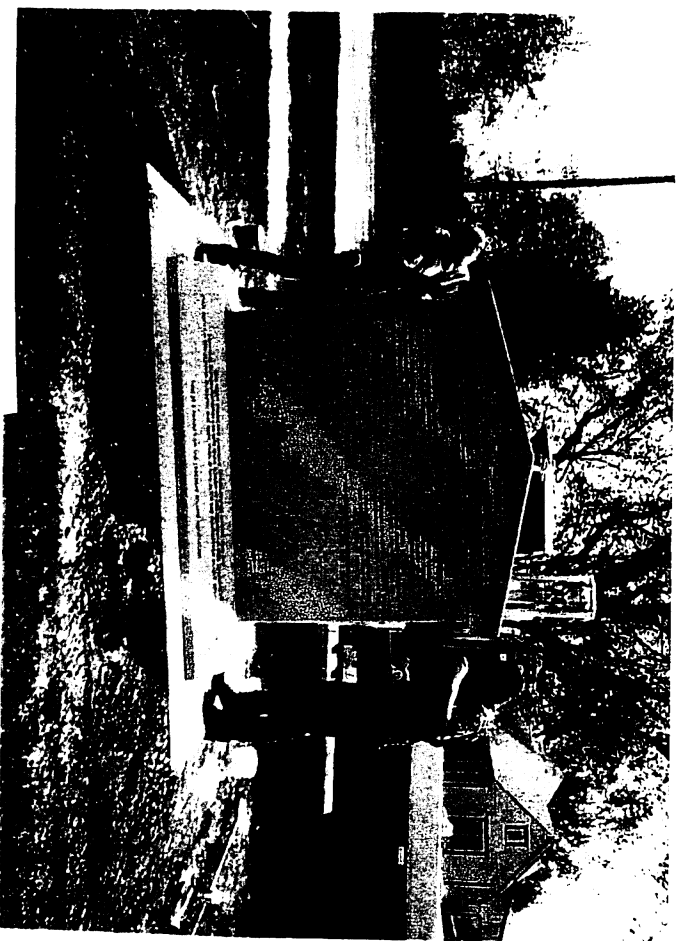
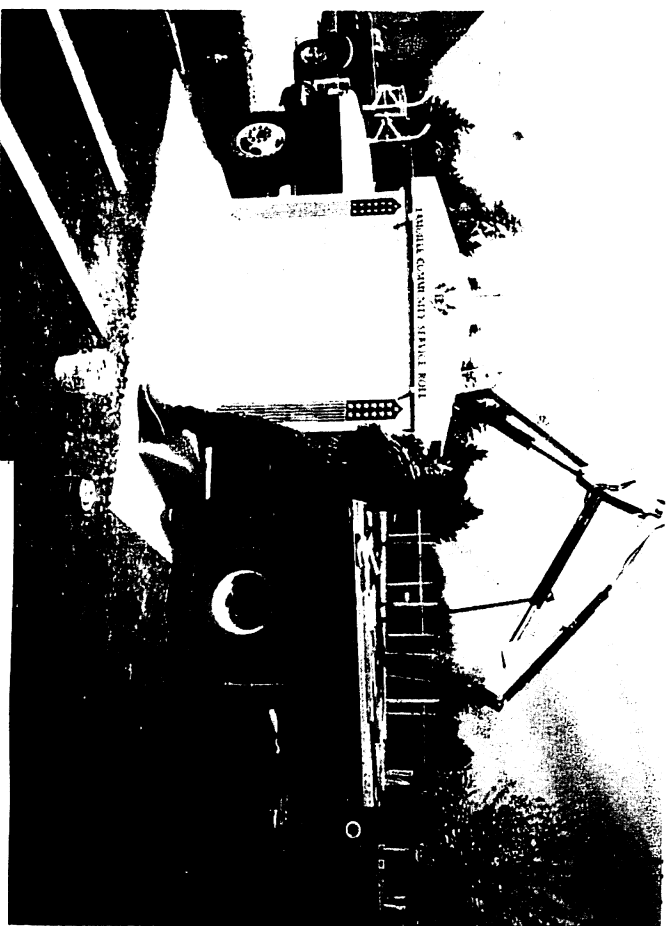
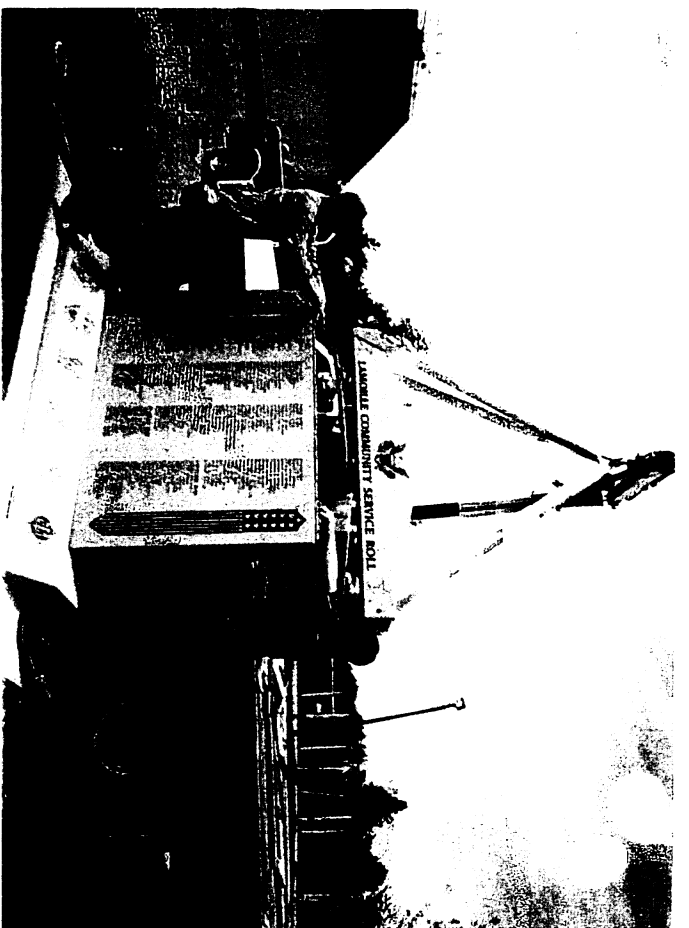
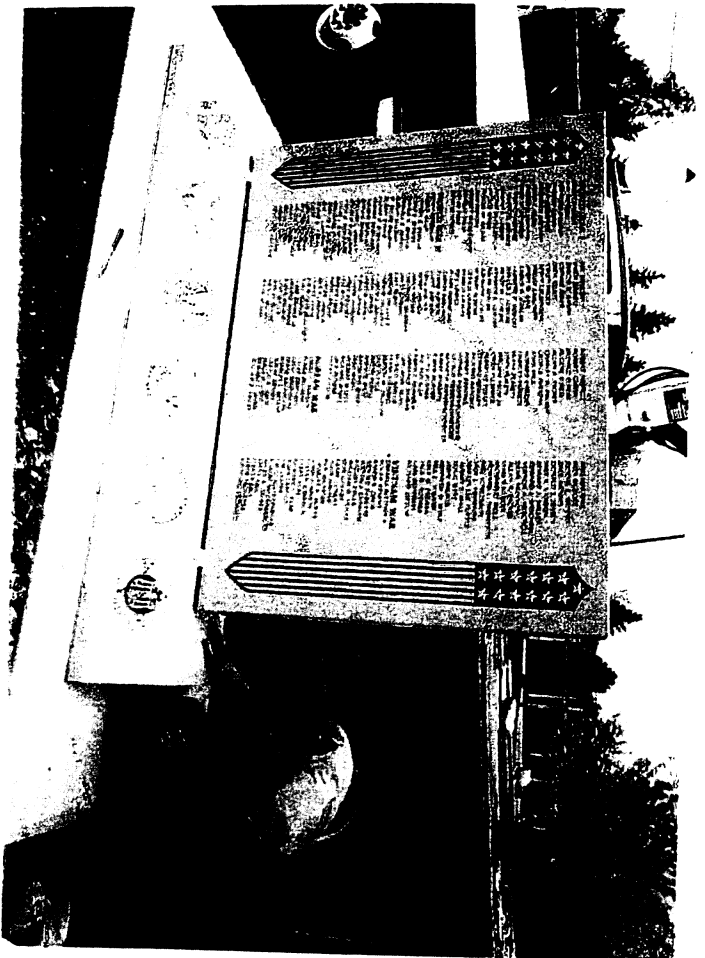


LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF THE MEMORIAL STONE





GETTING READY TO PLACE THE MEMORIAL STONE



PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE MEMORIAL STONE

A Goliath project is accomplished in tiny LaMoille

If you've driven by and hardly noticed the road sign bearing the small town's name — a tiny village located just north of Highway 30 between Marshalltown and State Center — you're probably not alone.

I'm sure a lot of people from around here have probably never been to LaMoille.

It's slightly off the beaten path — just far enough to escape the never-ending stream of heavy traffic from Iowa's second-busiest east-west highway.

I've lived in Marshalltown for 15 years, and, until last week, had never been there either.

But one of LaMoille's former residents, Don Wills, who had told me so much at our regular coffee get-together about a project he and several alumni from the now-defunct LaMoille School System had been working on for the last several months, I had to go for myself.

And after making the trip here, I was certainly glad I had gone.

Mike
Schlesinger
T-R Publisher

It Seems
To Me



Here's just an idea of the magnitude of their effort.

If Marshalltown were to attempt raising money for a community project and raise the same amount of dollars per person that LaMoille did, we'd be talking about a \$9 million undertaking here!

Staggering, isn't it?

The Goliath project this little burg took on is this — they raised the \$17,500 in funds necessary to build a monument to honor the veterans from WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

And, folks, this isn't just any monument.

The five foot high by six foot wide granite memorial lists each one of the names of



LaMoille monument to veterans

those from the LaMoille area or spouses from the LaMoille area who served their country during those periods of war.

At the same time, the alum-

ni group also decided to pay a special tribute to the teachers from the former LaMoille school district by having engraved a special message on the other side of the stone.

According to Wills, the idea for the monument started with Jim Benson.

Later, Bill and Barbara Baltisberger spent hours researching names to be included on the stone.

After the idea was presented to the alumni group, the money began pouring in.

What this community has done is truly remarkable.

The monument is impressive. But the work and dedication to pull off such an overwhelming project is nothing short of miraculous.

It'll be worth your trip to LaMoille to see what a true sense of community can accomplish.

We can all learn a lot from what this town has managed to achieve — a town many of us have, up until now, foolishly ignored.

On June 3 at 4:15 a special dedication of the monument will take place.

LaMoille monument dedication Saturday

By KEN BLACK
T-R Staff Writer

Alumni and friends of the LaMoille community will be dedicating a permanent monument at 4:15 p.m. on Saturday bearing the names of those LaMoille area residents who served this country during war time as well as peace time at the LaMoille Church grounds.

The 35-minute program will dedicate the monument which was made possible with the help of a seven-member committee from the LaMoille Alumni Association.

Jim Benson, Lyman rule, Barb Baltisberger, Barb Scaferi, Hazel Hickman, Don Wills, and Max Landon worked on the committee.

The memorial salutes the dedicated ladies of the LaMoille Am. Vets. Auxiliary, who erected the first memorial board on the site during WWII.

They posted the names of those from the community who served in both world wars. LaMoille suffered one casualty in WWII and one in Vietnam.

The auxiliary continued to post the names of those in the

Korean War and the Vietnam War. The original wooden board was rebuilt and repainted several times during its 50 year history.

Now the history of LaMoille's service people will be etched in stone.

The new monument also features the emblems of each

branch of the U.S. Military.

It also depicts pictures of the LaMoille school house which existed from 1914 to 1956.

The LaMoille Church, which was founded in 1887, is also carved into the stone.

A rain date of June 4 at 4:15 p.m. has also been set.

