POST # 3 HISTORY - FROM 30 JULY 1919 TO 30 JUNE 1997

COMPILED BY E. ROY STONE, JR.

Greenville Post # 3, The American Legion was granted a temporary Charter on 30 July 1919 with 15 charter members, prominent veteran of World War II. A permanent charter was granted on 1 October 1920. The 15 members were:

Rudolph Anderson	**Walter M. Goldsmith**	**Fred W. Graham**
Guy A. Gullick	**Augustus G. Hart**	**J. G. Leatherwood**
J.J. Mc Swain	**George R. Morgan**	**Wallace B. Stone**
Charles H. Newton, Jr .	**W. R. Watkins**	**William E. White**
C. Douglas Wilson	**W. W. Wingo**	**W. D.Workman**

The first Post Commander was William Douglas Workman. G. Heyward Mahon was the second Post Commander. Major Mahon, in 1920, was elected as the second Department Commander for the State. It is interesting to note that there were over 4600 members in the State at that time. And, there were no veteran service officers at that time. Major Workman would help his old comrades by filling out forms on claims for the old Veteran Bureau. He would hold a number of *these* files, catch a train to Washington, and. personally represent the client. In1929 the Veterans Bureau was taken over by the Veterans Administration.

Another great work done by the Post during the early twenties was the hospital, which was in Greenville. Camp Sevier Hospital was converted to take in veterans who were wounded in WWI. Fred Graham, who was adjutant for Post # 3, spent many hours of service there and helped veterans with their claims.

Another man who should be mentioned was Joe Sparks, a Post # 3 member who served on the National Rehabilitation Committee and did a great deal in getting the Committee off the ground.

Yet another activity began in 1925 when Dixon F, Pearce was Post Commander —the Goodfellows Club. It was organized to help the needy in the Greenville Community have a good Christmas dinner. In those days, solicitation was over the radio, which was in its infancy. The radio stations cooperated. And so did the members of the Post who, in their cars scattered throughout the city, and when a person called the radio station, one of the cars would go by and pickup the donation. In the beginning only about 50 to 60 baskets of food was packed and delivered. These were packed and delivered from the old Textile hall which has since been torn down (Note by transcriber – as of 2016, over 1000 boxes of food are distributed each Christmas season.

Another program developed by the Post was the Greenville County Fair. Mr. Ed Smith was the ramrod that headed up the committee. In 1949, a few members contributed $100 each and land was rented from Walter Goldsmith. A fair was started under a tent on White Horse Road.

Later, W. W. Wilkins, the Post Commander, developed a charter for the purpose that funds made at the fair would go to support education, charity and child welfare. The Post, then by an arrangement with the Greenville County legislature, borrowed an amount of money and bought the acreage on White Horse Road. No interest was charged, and the note was paid off $1000 a year from the profits made at the fair.

The fair board had nine members on it. Every three years, members were elected. In 1995, an agreement was drawn up, and the fair board became a committee. The same election process of members continued. Surplus funds were dispensed according to the original plan. On 5 February 1990, the fair grounds were sold to Paul Baker.

In the thirties, the Greenville Lions Club passed a resolution and called the attention of the community to the great need for an auditorium. In 1946, the legislature set up an auditorium board, composed of nine members representing the Greenville and Parker districts. Mr. Ed B. Smith was elected chairman. Again, he became the ramrod to get the job done. Since WWII was over, one of the things that the board decided was that the auditorium was to be a memorial to veterans who served in all wars for our liberty and freedom. And that it would be a multipurpose auditorium. After several votes by the auditorium district and several court cases, everything was cleared to build the auditorium at the corner of Church and North streets.

In May of 1959, ground was broken and the building started. The first event in the building was a basketball game by Furman University. The building was dedicated to veterans and Senator Strom Thurmond was the principal speaker at the dedication. Four members of the board were legionnaires of Post 3: Ed Smith, C. Douglas Wilson, E. Roy Stone, Jr., and Mell Glenn. This building served the Greenville community for 37 years.

Post 3 has and continues to carry out the Legion programs to this day (a number of these programs are described on our website).

“When one examines the services that Post # 3 has tried and attempts to do, we can truthfully say that Post # 3 is A BEACON OF LIGHT FOR VETERANS AND FOR THE GREENVILLE COMMUNITY”.

E. Roy Stone, Jr.