



*Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
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Preserving Your Post History and Investing in a Post Historian

While the National Museum of American Jewish Military History is an excellent resource for overall Jewish American military history, it is not the source of JWV history. That history is made, shaped and recorded on the local level.

As Posts transform into larger, consolidated blocs, perhaps meeting in less permanent spaces, the role of Post Historian becomes ever more crucial. The accomplishments, activities and membership should be celebrated and preserved for the organization, but more importantly, for the legacy of Jewish American servicepeople.

The Post Historian, in coordination with a History Committee and/or Post Executive Board, must develop a plan for what and how the history will be preserved. Use this guide to inform your process, but create a plan tailored to your Post's needs.

Post History Considerations

Consider these ideas and questions before developing your Post history plan.

1. The mission, purpose and history of JWV
 - a. Why does JWV exist?
 - b. Why does a JWV Post exist in your community?
 - c. How has the mission of JWV been fulfilled in your community?
 - d. What is the vision going forward?
 - e. As a Veteran Service Organization, what is accomplished on behalf of veterans in your community and across the country?
2. The goals of your Post
 - a. What does the Post wish to do? What has it done?
 - b. How have veteran, Jewish and/or community issues of different time periods informed the goals of your Post?
3. The Post members and their families
 - a. In which wars did your members serve and how has that affected them?
 - b. What roles have they played in the community since exiting the service?
 - c. How have member families been involved with the Post?
 - d. Are/were any members notable community leaders, local heroes or well-regarded citizens?
 - e. Are/were there any ancestral legacies?
4. Post relationships with other entities such as:
 - a. Local government
 - b. Local VA Hospitals and clinics

- c. Nearby military installations
 - d. Patriotic and Service organizations (e.g. Boy Scouts of America, Lion's Club, or Junior League)
 - e. Other VSOs
 - f. Local synagogues or churches
5. Post Location
- a. Where is your Post? How has that affected its development?
 - b. How has your town/city changed over time?
 - c. What is your town/city's history? How does it fit into the overall American story?
6. Your audience: Who are you sharing your story with?
- a. Post members – current and future
 - b. Post leadership – The Post history is vital to informing leadership decisions and Post direction
 - c. Family of Post members – Grandchildren, long-lost cousins, widows, etc.
 - d. Local community – You are part of the town's history
 - e. Local schools – How will you teach younger generations about the Jewish American military legacy?
 - f. Other veterans – How is your Post and Post members' experience unique in the veteran community?
7. Storage and Display
- a. Artifacts and scrapbooks should be stored in waterproof containers in a cool, dry place. Where will you store them?
 - b. Will you limit the number of containers?
 - c. Will you have an online archive?
 - d. Is there a local library, community center, museum or historical society that will maintain and/or display your artifacts?

Develop Your Post History Plan

After careful consideration, the Post must decide what it will curate. Develop a system of measures to inform the decision process and create a "user guide" for future Post Historians.

1. Knowing your Post goals, vision, activities, and membership, decide what your Post values.
2. Create a system of measures aligned with those values. For example, if your Post values volunteering at VA Hospitals, you'll want to keep a record of VAVS Volunteer Achievement Awards given to Post members. You won't, however, want to keep a list of bowling team members from a recreational league that Post members participate in.
3. Develop a cataloguing system. For example, what format do you want all photo captions to follow?
4. Establish a retention and assessment schedule. Decide how often you should reassess what you are archiving. Will some items need to be periodically condensed

and/or purged? Should you review storage options or online hosting companies every year to ensure a fair price?

5. How will you transition from one Post Historian to the next?

Record Your Post History

According to pp. 35 of *The Manual of Ceremonies*, the Historian officer position compiles a history of the echelon, committing it to a bound product. To include:

- Echelon Charter
- Echelon official publications
- General and Special orders from the Commander
- Copy of the Executive Committee/Board's meeting minutes
- Photos with captions (include date, location, event and names of those pictured)
- Newspaper clippings

It is the duty of the Historian to pass the bound record to the next Historian.

Expounding beyond *The Manual*, your Post should also consider recording:

- July Alpha Rosters
- History of Post Commanders
- History of Award Recipients
- History of Community Partnerships
- History of Post Programs: Outlines, Goals, Outcomes
- History of the Post location: physical building and the community
- War Biographies of Post Members
 - Use NMAJMH's biography questionnaire
 - Use the Library of Congress' Veteran History Project materials
 - Work with local university and library groups that may already do oral history projects