IN OAKLAND

GOP Roots Deep

The independent spirit of the frontier found expression in the Republican movement which ap-
propriately was born in Michigan, a part of the Northwest Territory, whose famous ordinance of 1787
formed the legal basis of protest against the extension of slavery.

As early as April 15, 1854, Z. B. Knight edited the new party's first newspaper, the "State Gazette," for
independent individual nominations in Michigan without any bias or pressure placed on the
people. "This is the true Republican way of doing business." At the time of the recall election in
Michigan in July, 1854.

ONE OF the principal speakers at the convention was the Rev. Mr.
Cook of Oakland. Appointed to the first nominating committee among others were Moses Warner, Nathan
Peake and Edward Simmons. The Oakhawkw Decorations Com-
mittee members were Z. B. Knight and Charles Dyer.

In the fall of 1854, Republicans lost ground in the county in spite of
d Mail Organization the election of governor, Governor Warner
in 1860, Governor Winfield in
addressed the Republican County Convention in Pontiac.

This convention adopted 17 reso-
lutions against slavery and the Democratic Party's platform, as well as against President Bu-
chanan's administration.

AT THIS time a Republican
Club was organized in the town
of Pontiac to enhance the active party move-
ment in Oakland. The Republican 45th Birthday Celeb-
rination was held on June 8, 1860, in

Flint and elected Rowland E. Tow-
bridge of Oakland unanimously as a
candidate for representative in Congress.

On July 22, 1860, in Birmingham,

Between 200 and 300 Republicans
met at their Wigwam and listened to a warmly received speech from the Hon. Dewitt C. Leach, the mem-
ber of Congress from that district. Oakland was represented at the National Convention of 1860 in
Chicago by one Jacob E. Pontiac.

REPUBLICANS won majorities in the November election and de-
mapp Pontiac's remaining Demo-
cratic rest of the state ticket was elected by the largest majority ever given in Michigan to that
time.

The County Republican Convention in
Pontiac had its first organizing meeting on Feb. 11, 1868, in the Oddfellows Hall, Pontiac, and was known as the
"Michigan Club." One year later this was changed to the present
name, and the club installed as its
first president Charles F. Kimball.

SEVERAL prominent Republicans from Oakland attended the fiftieth
anniversary of the party, including Fred W. Warner of Farm-
ington, then Michigan secretary of state and later to become the
first Republican governor of Michigan to
from Oakland.

Campaigning and fund-raising was done on an individual basis and enthusiasts for any one can-
didate were more or less spontaneous. Around 1920, the Republican Party
in Pontiac was a small operation centered around the courthouse in Pontiac.

In 1923 women in the county began to have a say in the county government. The first Republican Woman's Club in the county was organized by Mrs.

implies the ending of something old, and the transition between the two is usually dictated by need. In the case of the Republican Party of Oakland County, the need was clearly revealed in the decline of population during the 1970s, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Vital Statistics.

Historically a "safe" Republican county of tree-shaded suburban homes and unvaried farmland, Oakland County, about 1860, began to experience economic and sociological changes. An expanding met-
tropolis population struggled restlessly and pushed inexorably into Oak-
land.

New cities sprang up, while old
ones doubled and tripled their pop-
ulations. Commercial and indus-
trial development soared; Farms-
land disappeared before new rows of
split-levels and ranch houses.

PROGRESS, of course, is not without its price. And politically the cost was dear. A new popula-
tion brought with it new social pat-
terns, new political identifications, Republican dominance of the county
began to wane.

While in 1940 the GOP was still taking a comfortable 56.2% of the total county vote, by 1960 the margin had slipped to 52.6%, by 1970 it was down to 50.8%.

Demands of change railed into existence a Republican organ-
ization, the Oakland County Republicans, vying for young recruits.

As the center of population shifted southward, the first per-
manent headquarters, then located in the Pontiac State Bank, Designing
Building, was opened in Birmingham in September, 1967.

The county GOP set out to organize the country-to find and identify all the
GOP voters, get them regis-
tered and get them to vote.

In 1964, the county party, under the leadership of Arthur G. El
Hott, Jr. (now chairman of the Re-

publican State Central Committee), undertaken to recruit and train some 5,000 precinct workers. To augment this work force, the formation of more Republican
Women's Clubs, more mixed groups, more Young Republican groups of people, and more informal cam-
paigning became the order of the day. Grass roots political action were encouraged.

The Federation of Women's Clubs was reorganized under Mrs.
George S. Holmes and became known as the Oakland County Council of Republican Women's Clubs. They had provided thou-
sands of volunteer hours in fund-
raising, the staffing of the Republic-

ian headquarters, boosting "can-

didate coffers" and other activities.

THE CURRENT president is Mrs. Joseph C. Haith of Birming-
ham. Over 100 women from throughout the county attended a tea given by Mrs. Richard Nixon at Oak-\nwood High School in Royal Oak in
April, 1969. In April, 1969, the headquarters was moved to its present location, 744 S. Adams, Birmingham, and the responsibility for bolstering the organizational structure passed to the present county chairperson, Charles L. E. Y. of Birmingham.

In 1962 the organization of Repub-
plican votes climbed to 60.1 per
cent and Oakland County had its third Republican governor in the

American Legion Dates Back to WWI

"For God and Country" sums up the life-long dedication of 44 years by the Charles Edwards Post of the
Birmingham-Troy American Legion.

The local post was chartered on July 5, 1919, taking its name from Charles Edwards, the first
Birminghamman killed in World
War I. The charter, which now
stands at number 300, began with 21 charter members.

Activities in the 1920's centered on helping former servicemen get jobs and heal the wounds of war. The 1930's saw the post become involved in光荣功勋, providing breakfasts and lunches, active in raising funds for veterans and their families.

THE THIRTIES began with a membership of 210. Activities were curtailed due to the depression, the lack of money, and the destruction of homes in the area. The post's membership was reduced to 75, and the post was struggling to stay afloat.

In 1940, with the outbreak of World War II, the post began to flourish again. The post's membership increased to 300, and the post was able to provide a variety of services to veterans, including meals, social events, and other forms of support.

By the end of the war, the post's membership had grown to 500, and the post was able to provide a variety of services to veterans, including meals, social events, and other forms of support.

THE CURRENT POST is under the direction of Commander Wil-
liam L. Kargman, Senior Vice Com-
mander Edward Glink, Junior Vice
Commander Albert Jones and Adjut-
ant Jon Capron.

Some of the long-time members of the post include Dr. Peter Aris-
tis, Dr. George Reynolds, Earl Ely,
and his wife, Ruth, Reuben Fisher and
Helmie Lead. An annual fund-raising event, which has become a tradition of the legionnaires in Birmingham and throughout the United States, is their popsicle sale in May, which is a great hit with the veterans and their families.

FIRST FORMAL meeting of the American Legion Ladies' Auxiliary was called by Major H. A. O'Brien, post commander, on Feb. 28, 1922. Charter members numbered 28.

Charter members also included mothers, wives, daughters and sisters of deceased veterans or members of the American Legion as well as women who have served in the armed services. The Auxiliary provides a variety of services to veterans, including meals, social events, and other forms of support.

Projects include the rehabilitation of disabled veterans and their families, providing assistance with medical and social services, and other forms of support.

The Auxiliary also provides educational opportunities for the children of veterans, including scholarships and other forms of support.