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## ABSTRACT

# THE INDUSTRIAL MUTUAL ASSOCIATION: CONTRIBUTOR TO THE EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL AND CHARITABLE BETTERMENT OF FLINT, MICHIGAN

by

Duane Russell Brown

The Industrial Mutual Association (IMA) of Flint, Michigan, is a mutual-benefit association that has contributed to the betterment of a highly industrialized urban center in the areas of educational, recreational, and social services. From its inception, the IMA has grown into a prosperous multi-faceted institution that is unique in that it provides its members, all employees of companies associated with the Manufacturers' Association of Flint, a variety of services through the activities and facilities it maintains. These benefits depend on four factors:

1. The granting by the Manufacturers' Association of the in-plant stores, vending and food-service concessions to the IMA.
2. The patronage of these concessions by the employees of the member companies, all of whom are IMA members.

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3. The guidance of the IMA by its Board of Trustees to assure that the Association meets its corporate purpose of providing benefits to its members.
4. The acceptance by governmental units of the IMA's non-profit, tax exempt status which allows the Association money to fulfill its purpose.

The study, while providing an historical record of the IMA, seeks to find how the Association has remained a viable and significant community force. Through a review of selected literature, a theoretical framework was developed which incorporates aspects of Robert Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" and Lon Fuller's "eight laws" of human associations, and the concept that organizations remain viable by acting upon and reacting to crucial issues that confront them.

Crucial issues are defined as those issues that cause a serious interruption in the normal way of life of an organization, resulting from the occurrence of an unexpected situation for which the organization is not prepared and which raises problems for which customary responses are not adequate. Six such issues are identified in the study.

Data were gathered from the official records of the IMA and the Manufacturers' Association of Flint. These consist of such primary sources as official minutes, letters, memoranda, special reports, photographs, and personal observations and participation.



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The major findings revealed that the IMA is an involuntary association that has always operated as an oligarchy. This oligarchy is allowed to exist because it effectively provides the activities, services, and facilities that meet the wants of its members. This is demonstrated by the fact that the IMA has established a domain of considerable magnitude and prestige in the Flint Community.

The study also shows that the IMA has always been dominated by legal principle rather than the principle of shared commitment which has been more tacitly operative than explicit. This domination gave the IMA more security and stability as it has been confronted by crucial issues throughout its history.

Thus, the IMA is representative of a class of voluntary associations--which have unique promise and special problems--consisting of community service organizations each of which exists within a specific city, addresses the unique problems of that city, develops with that city, relies upon local resources and is locally controlled. This and other implications for future research are discussed.

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THE INDUSTRIAL MUTUAL ASSOCIATION: CONTRIBUTOR TO THE  
EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL AND CHARITABLE BETTERMENT OF  
FLINT, MICHIGAN

by

Duane Russell Brown

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Administration and Higher Education  
College of Education

1973

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Duane Russell Brown  
1973

## DEDICATION

In memory of my Mother and Father, Adah A.  
and Raymond A. Brown, who instilled in me the intrinsic  
value of education; and in appreciation of my sister,  
Maxine, who made extreme personal sacrifices that  
allowed me to continue my education.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The American dream of providing educational opportunity to all people so that they can lead a productive, meaningful life is responsible for this thesis being written. The many educators of the Beecher School District of Flint, who despite their working for many years under conditions much less than ideal, helped transform this dream into reality for many students such as myself. My thanks to them for encouraging me and giving me the confidence to seek a better way of life through the educational process.

I am appreciative of the assistance received from the following persons who made the necessary data available to me: Clarence H. Young, writer, historian and Assistant Director of the Manufacturers' Association of Flint; Robert B. Stone, AC Spark Plug Division Executive, and President of the IMA; William C. Crick, Managing Director of the IMA; Richard N. Powers, Director of Member Services of the IMA; Shirley I. Albrecht, Secretary to Mr. Crick and gracious hostess and friend to me during my period of research in the offices of the IMA.

I am grateful to the members of my guidance committee for their assistance: Professor Russell J. Kleis, Dr. Melvin C. Buschman,



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Dr. Duane L. Gibson, and Dr. Clyde M. Campbell. However, I owe a special note of gratitude to my committee chairman and advisor, Professor Russell J. Kleis. Professor Kleis brings a quality of excellence to the University and his students that is much needed today. As the result of his standards, it was not uncommon to feel frustrated as I, a harried Ph.D. candidate, sought program completion. In retrospect I am confident his demands, along with the friendship and respect that developed, will remain the major satisfaction of this accomplishment.

I am deeply appreciative to my typist and friend, Mrs. Ethel McNew. Her technical knowledge along with her pleasant and cooperating manner will always be remembered.

A special thanks is in order to a special family friend and critic, Professor Virginia A. Cooper of Eastern Michigan University. She not only contributed time and energy to the structuring and editing of this study, but gave me much needed encouragement along the way.

Special love and thanks must go to my wife, Marilyn, who assisted me in so many ways while making those sacrifices necessary when a task like this is undertaken. Thanks also go to my loving daughters, Vicki, Joellen, Lisa and Tracy, who never let me forget that they came first, but who have given evidence of pride in my accomplishment. Perhaps it will serve as a beacon to them!

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## Chapter I

### THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

The Industrial Mutual Association (IMA) is a unique employee-benefit organization which has provided the Greater Flint Area with many services and facilities since 1901. Its efforts have focused on educational, social and charitable ventures. From its inception it has grown into a prosperous many-faceted institution that is a credit to the community. Its uniqueness centers around its ability<sup>1</sup>--

to provide its membership--all the employees of the approximately twenty companies that belong to the Manufacturers' Association of Flint--a wide variety of benefits, along with community-wide contributions and services, which depend primarily on four factors:

1. Granting of in-plant stores, vending and food-service concessions by the member companies of the Manufacturers' Association of Flint (as they have done since 1917)
2. Patronage of such concessions by the membership of the Industrial Mutual Association, the employees of the member companies

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<sup>1</sup>"A Look at the Industrial Mutual Association," July, 1969 (Flint: unpublished, 1969), p. 1. Cited hereafter as IMA.

3. Guidance of the Industrial Mutual Association by its unpaid Board of Trustees, by which the corporate purposes of this employee benefit organization are channeled in the most effective ways to produce charitable, educational, and recreational benefits to the membership--often through contributions and services to the community which is made up in large part of that membership and their families
4. Acceptance, by governmental units, of the non-profit employee association, charitable, educational, and recreational nature of the IMA--and its related income sources--as exempt both from federal income tax and most local property tax.

During the time from 1901 until the present, the IMA and its predecessors have cooperated with other agencies in the city such as governmental units, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the College and Cultural Committee of Sponsors, and the General Motors Institute, to make what could otherwise be a drab industrial city a dynamic and interesting place to live.

The IMA played an important early role in contributing social services to the Flint Community and is still contributing, but in a different and less visible manner. Its involvements in providing recreational facilities and activities are legion. Just as important, but less well known, is its impact in the area of continuing education.

As a formally organized mutual-benefit association, the IMA has been able to adapt to the changing social milieu in such a way as to remain viable through the years and worthy of a study to record its history and to analyze how it has been able to change with the times. The community background against which the IMA emerged and developed

involved interesting and unusual attributes of exceptional relevance to the evolutionary process of this Association.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

Voluntary associations in the United States contribute greatly to the life-style of its citizens. Often, when taken individually, these associations seem almost insignificant in relationship to the immensity of our society as a whole. However, when one considers that in the United States there are thousands of voluntary associations, their combined impact represents an extremely strong force acting upon our pluralistically devised form of government that allows and encourages diverse thought. A segment of this impact is the result of the continuing education movement which has helped to shape the destiny of the United States. Thus it is that this strong and rather incohesive force, pluralism, constitutes this country's most powerful ally in maintaining a democratic, constitutional form of government.

With the continuing financial and social plight of our cities, and the growing appeal for governmental programs and revenue sharing, it behooves us as citizens to see what contributions organizations can make when local monies, that are properly secured and directed, are allowed to remain local. Furthermore with the myriad of voluntary associations in this country, it would seem that they conceivably could have monumental impact and give tremendous impetus toward a revival-

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ization of our urban centers by providing not only needed facilities, but more importantly, life-long educational opportunities for all people.

Perhaps the plight of our cities partly reflects a loss of verve in the many voluntary associations which historically have contributed to the greatness of America in contrast with other nations. Thus, this rather uncommon bond--voluntary associations--found running throughout the history of the United States, must be kept meaningful. To remain of consequence associations must be able to act positively in the throes of adversity whether the adversity comes at them from external or internal sources, or both. If they can adapt to such pressures and maintain their raison d'etre, they usually will continue as a viable community force.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to understand how one such organization, the Industrial Mutual Association, of Flint, Michigan, has been able to act and react to crucial issues through the years, in such a way as to remain viable, by adapting itself to the social milieu so as to continue as a major force in contributing to the well-being and ordering of community life by providing educational, recreational and other social services to its members. Simultaneously this study will serve as a basis for additional research concerning associations and provide an accurate public record.

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### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research should result in a better understanding of how one formally-organized, mutual-benefit association evolved into a many-faceted institution that contributes to the well-being of the highly industrialized city of Flint, Michigan, by providing educational, recreational, and social services to its members, ultimately bettering the community-at-large. Such basic understanding and insights should promote the following: (1) enable organizations to perceive how they can remain viable by facing up to, adjusting to, and acting upon crucial issues with which they are confronted; (2) enable the public to have an accurate historical record of the Industrial Mutual Association (IMA); (3) provide others with sound base data for research on formal organizations; (4) provide others with sound base data for further research on the Industrial Mutual Association and/or its related impact on Flint, Michigan; (5) provide further material to the growing literature concerning organizations involving workers.

### PROCEDURE

To determine how the IMA has been able to adapt to the changing times and also to provide an accurate historical record of the Association, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What factors led to the formation of the IMA?
2. What are the basic tenets of the IMA's philosophy?



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3. What factors determine the educational, recreational, and social services that the IMA sponsors?
4. What are the crucial issues that have confronted the IMA during its evolutionary process?
5. What did the IMA do about issues?
6. What effect has confronting these issues had on the viability of the IMA?

Data to answer these questions and prepare the dissertation were garnered basically from the official records of the IMA which are housed in the offices of the IMA and/or the Manufacturers' Association of Flint. These consist of such primary sources of information as official minutes, letters, memoranda, special reports, photographs, personal observation and participation.

The validity of secondary sources such as house organs (IMA Factory Magazines and Newsletters), books, scrapbooks, newspaper accounts and personal interviews has been checked against the primary sources. Historical accuracy was validated further by the unofficial but generally recognized historian of Flint and Genesee County, Clarence H. Young.

Disappointingly, it should be noted that there was an interruption in the primary source of data for the Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association (FVFMBA) from December 6, 1910, until the time of amalgamation in 1922. The official minutes seem to be lost. Otherwise

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primary and secondary data were available from the year 1901 until 1972. In instances where both types of data were at hand, they were cross-checked to determine whether they were in agreement with each other. If so, the primary source was designated as the official reference piece.

The study is designed to reveal the evolution of an organization.

### OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

In Chapter I the problem under study is presented along with statements concerning the need, purpose and significance of the research.

In Chapter II the literature relative to voluntary associations and formal organizations is reviewed.

In Chapter III the Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association (FVFMBA) from 1901 to 1922 is described.

In Chapter IV the Industrial Fellowship League (IFL) from 1915 to 1922 is recorded.

In Chapter V the formation and early years of the Industrial Mutual Association (IMA) from 1922 to 1932 are recorded.

In Chapter VI the Industrial Mutual Association (IMA) during the depression years and the early union years from 1932 to 1942 is reviewed.

In Chapter VII the Industrial Mutual Association (IMA) during the war years and the placid aftermath from 1942 to 1960 is reviewed.

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In Chapter VIII the Industrial Mutual Association (IMA) during the stormy but exciting years from 1960 to 1972 is described.

In Chapter IX the findings, conclusions and implications for future research are described.

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## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

This chapter represents a composite of thoughts gleaned from a selected review of literature which primarily focused on organizational structure. In this perusal of literature most of the ideas are taken from materials on voluntary associations and formal organizations. However, these ideas have led to other areas of explorations in the fields of political parties, social structures, leadership strategies, and unionism.

This chapter is arranged in two main sections: 1) Formal Organizations; 2) Voluntary Associations. By using such a selective procedure of reviewing the literature, it was possible to gain a clearer insight into what the IMA represents in terms of its structure and its membership.

#### FORMAL ORGANIZATIONS

An organization is a system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons explicitly created to achieve





specific ends.<sup>1</sup> Generally it represents an arrangement of parts into a whole in such a way that the parts work together to accomplish the established purposes.<sup>2</sup> Formal organizations exist as one of the systems of legitimate social control, and as such have been studied extensively by many social scientists. Implicit in such a structure is a division of labor which, as it grows in complexity, needs more and more coordination, and tends to result in the development of more expertise on the professional or managerial level.

Organizations can be classified in many ways. Commonly they are classified according to size, purpose, membership, production, service or whether private or public associations. However, Blau and Scott devised another method of classifying formal organizations by basing the classification upon who benefits, or "cui bono."<sup>3</sup> Using this method, these authors identified four categories of persons in relation to any formal organization: (1) the members; (2) the owners or managers; (3) the clients; (4) the public-at-large. From these categories it must be decided who is the prime beneficiary of the organization. Using the "cui bono" criterion, four kinds of organizations can be identified: (1) mutual-benefit associations, the membership being the prime

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<sup>1</sup>Peter M. Blau and W. Richard Scott, Formal Organizations (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1962), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), p. 24.

<sup>3</sup>Blau and Scott, op. cit., p. 43.

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beneficiary; (2) business concerns, the owners being the prime beneficiary; (3) service organizations, the client group being the prime beneficiary; (4) commonweal organizations, the public-at-large primarily benefiting.

The crucial problem in a voluntary association is not in identifying it as to the type of formal organization that it represents, but in maintaining the internal democratic process and control by its members. In most formal organizations apathy and oligarchy tend to take over. As the organization matures and as purposes and structures stabilize, members become apathetic and the organization moves away from the ideal which existed at the time of origin, for as the early organizational struggle for existence goes on, the zealous members bring in new members who have less zeal. As this process evolves, the members tend to leave the operation of the organization in the hands of a few persons and/or a hired staff. Barber indicates two reasons for apathy within an organization:<sup>1</sup>

1. In our society, a strong cultural value defines these [voluntary] associations as being of less importance than family and job obligations.
2. The existence of formal structures makes it possible for a minority to achieve goals of the association with the majority of the members participating little or not at all.

In essence such studies of participation and apathy in formal

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<sup>1</sup>Bernard Barber, Studies in Leadership (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950), pp. 486-487.

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associations show that the internal democratic process is often sacrificed in the interest of promoting more efficient and effective accomplishment of an organization's goals while it is moving increasingly toward centralization and hierarchical development. This is what Michels terms the "iron law of oligarchy."<sup>1</sup> This tendency is reinforced further by what Michels observes as the desire of ambitious leaders to retain and expand their power.

Gouldner, however, counters the dangers implied by Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" with the idea "that no superordinate group can long flaunt the will of those it would control."<sup>2</sup> This helps to explain why the egalitarian ideology is often sacrificed for a more pragmatic and efficient means of achieving the goals of the membership. Thus members often abdicate to a small group or board and usually a paid staff, for the sake of expediency, their voice in the immediate control of the organization. Such a staff develops the expertise essential to the attainment of the established goals, which results in both the perpetuation of the staff, itself, and in a more effective organization.

This type of reasoning is reenforced by those experts who say that organizations are formed in part because they are more capable of making rational decisions than are individuals. With their divisions of labor and accompanying expertise, organizations can make objective,

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Michels, Political Parties (New York: The Free Press, 1962), p. 342.

<sup>2</sup>Blau and Scott, op. cit., p. 46.

impersonal decisions based on objective facts rather than on subjective value premises.<sup>1</sup>

Formation of an organization is one thing; its survival, another. A study, conducted by Levine and White in 1961, substantiates the fact that any organization must establish a domain. Such domains consist of "claims" which an organization stakes out for itself. However, the establishment of domain cannot be done arbitrarily or unilaterally, for if the domain is to be operational, it must be recognized by those who provide the necessary support of the organization.<sup>2</sup> If the support exists it indicates that a positive relationship exists between the organization and what Dill described as the "task environment"--those parts of the environment which are relevant to goal-setting and goal-attainment.<sup>3</sup> In essence this means that the relationship between an organization and its "task environment" is essentially one of exchange, and unless the organization is judged by those in contact with it as offering something desirable, it will not receive the tolerance or inputs essential for survival.

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<sup>1</sup>Max Weber, Essays in Sociology, trans. and ed. by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 196-204.

<sup>2</sup>Wm. R. Dill, "Environment as an Influence on Managerial Autonomy," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. II, March, 1958, pp. 409-443, as quoted by James D. Thompson, Organizations in Action (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

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Thus it is that parameters for an organization are established which define a set of expectations both for members and for others who interact with it. In turn this "organizational-set" produces the image of the organization's role, not only to members, but to the larger society with which it is related.

However, domains are never static, for the attainment of a viable domain is political and by so being is never completely stable.<sup>1</sup> It is not uncommon for an organization to enter into the world beyond its present "task environment" when a situation so dictates. Sometimes this change is the result of such factors as these:<sup>2</sup>

- 1) Organizations faced with too many constraints and unable to gain enough power in their current "task environment" to achieve their goals will seek to enlarge their task environments.
- 2) Organizations with capacity in excess of what the "task environment" supports seek to enlarge their domains.
- 3) Organizations with excess capacity often redesign themselves through diversification which expands their products or services and enlarges their domains.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

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- 4) Organizations that have successfully and conclusively accomplished their original purposes of being, often diversify later in order to stay in existence.

In observing how an organization gains support for itself, Thompson identifies a factor that is sometimes overlooked and probably often underrated--prestige.<sup>1</sup> It is his belief that an organization competing for support in a community should capitalize on prestige, for it represents the "cheapest" way of acquiring power. To the extent that an "environmental element" gains prestige by interacting with an organization, that organization has gained not only support, but a measure of power over that element without making any commitments or yielding any power. And to the extent that an organization and its products are well-regarded, it may more easily attract personnel, influence legislation, wield informal power in the community and ensure an adequate number of clients, customers, donors, or investors.

For purposes of studying organizations, Gouldner described two models: rational and natural.<sup>2</sup> To these Thompson added the idea of "closed-system strategy" in observing the rational model and the idea of "open-system strategy" in looking at the natural-systems model.

In the "closed-system strategy" of the rational model, the existing state of the organization must be known and the variables

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

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acting upon that organization must be completely understood so that they can be controlled. This type of system represents closure--that is the outside forces (variables) acting upon the organization are predictable and function to the extent that they exert a positive influence on the organization and help it function optimally.

However nice closure would be, it seldom exists. Organizations abound in the uncertainty of the open-system with its many incomprehensible variables which it can neither control nor predict effectively. Thus the open-system model treats the complex organization as a formal organization represented by an arrangement of interdependent parts which together make up a whole with each part contributing and receiving something from the whole, which in turn is interdependent with some larger environment.<sup>1</sup> This relationship among parts becomes spontaneous, and helps to keep the organization viable despite the many uncertainties it faces.<sup>2</sup>

A more recent school of thought focuses on organizational methods of working with the environment by developing means for "searching, learning, and deciding" which of the many known alternative solutions to a problem should be pursued. Of course all possibilities cannot be explored, but many choices will be made available as the result of the expertise found within most established formal organiza-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-7.

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tions. Through this process which devises alternatives, the organization can establish limits of what is referred to as "bounded rationality." In this way the tenets of the "open-system strategy" and the "closed-system strategy" are both respected as much as possible while a pragmatic approach is developed or as Thompson concluded<sup>1</sup>--

We will conceive of the complex organization as open systems, hence indeterminate and faced with uncertainties, but at the same time as subject to criteria of rationality and hence needing determinates and certainty.

To see Thompson's models in an operative sense, one must identify the three hierarchical levels which exist within a formal organization:<sup>2</sup> 1) technical, 2) managerial, 3) institutional. Inasmuch as there is a clear-cut differentiation in the hierarchy among the three levels, the phenomena discussed under the open and closed systems can be observed.

At the technical level the performance is the thing; thus rationality through closure is logical. On the other hand at the institutional level where goals are established, organizations are subject to unpredictable environmental influences; thus the open-system becomes the most appropriate. This leaves the managerial level to mediate between the technical and institutional phases of the organization, for

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>2</sup>Talcott Parsons, Structure & Process in Modern Societies (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 16-96.

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the purpose of integrating the two systems as effectively as possible in order to attain maximum results.

With this general background concerning the nature of formal organizations, emphasis will now be given to that form of organization more closely aligned with the organization under study--the IMA. This phase of the literature review will focus on voluntary associations.

### VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

A voluntary association is a specialized, formally organized group in which membership is based on a deliberate choice and from which its members may resign.<sup>1</sup> It is generally agreed that most associations originate to maintain established attitudes and social values which are often threatened as the result of some disturbance of the equilibrium of the life with which the group has been formally associated. These sources of disturbance are identified as (1) natural causes, (2) intervention of other social authority, or (3) a combination of the two.<sup>2</sup> Harris states:

It is in and through free association for the pursuit of truth that the common good of society is both made known and secured. These privately organized societies are essential agencies of the general will.

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<sup>1</sup>George A. Theodorson and Achilles G. Theodorson, A Modern Dictionary of Sociology (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969), p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>H. S. Harris, "Voluntary Association as a Rational Ideal," Voluntary Associations Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 46.

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Bosanquet explained general will in this manner:<sup>1</sup>

To say that certain persons have common interests means that in this or that respect their minds are similarly or correlatively organized, that they will react in the same or correlative ways upon given presentations. It is this identity of mental organizations which is the psychological justification for the doctrine of general will.

Rousseau felt that voluntary associations helped individuals to live in accordance with nature, that is, to help fulfill basic human needs as contrasted to mere wants.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore he felt they were desirable if they made good citizens and prepared man to live under the authority of the "social contract and general will." He also recommended formation of associations for the amusement and recreation of their patrons.

St. Augustine, in defining a political organization, put forth a workable definition of a voluntary association. He saw the organization as "a group of rational beings, associated on the basis of a common tie in respect to those things which they love."<sup>3</sup>

Thus, it is not surprising to see Chapman refer to voluntary associations as the "hallmark of Western Civilization," for as newer

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<sup>1</sup>Bernard Bosanquet, Psychology of the Moral Self (London: Macmillan, 1897), p. 43.

<sup>2</sup>Maure L. Goldschmidt, "Rousseau on Intermediate Associations," Voluntary Associations Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 123.

<sup>3</sup>John W. Chapman, "The Political Theory of Pluralism," Voluntary Associations Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 123.

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nations developed in the West, such freedom of choice, which is implicit in the name voluntary association, often became the major force behind the effort of settlement. Furthermore the United States became the best example of how the freedom of association can create a vast multitude of associations. Thus the integration of our society may be said to be largely by means of voluntary associations.<sup>1</sup>

Alexis de 'Tocqueville, one of the earliest and most distinguished chroniclers of democracy in America, made this observation:<sup>2</sup>

Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; and in this manner they found hospitals, prisons and schools. If it be proposed to inculcate some truth, or to foster some feeling by the encouragement of a great example, they form a society. Wherever at the head of some new undertaking, you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States, you will be sure to find an association. Governments, therefore, should not be the only active powers; associations ought, in democratic nations, to stand in lieu of those powerful private individuals whom the equality of conditions has swept away.

The reason for this concentration of voluntary associations in the United States and in western society in general is a belief that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 87

<sup>2</sup>Alexis de 'Tocqueville, quoted by Phillips Bradley (editor), Democracy in America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), Vol. II, p. 108.

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individuality does not constitute a threat, but provides a "resilient rationality" to the politics of a society that offers its members the satisfaction of both competitive and cooperative achievement and helps to stabilize their common conception of justice.<sup>1</sup> Thus associations aim to separate moral and economic progress from political instability.

The health of our society is maintained by a system of institutions which in effect give voice to the many viewpoints of their constituents. These viewpoints lead to a continual revision of social policy inasmuch as society is not static, but conceived dynamically as a form of "continual growth and extension of government by consent." In essence this describes the workings of a pluralistic society which is basic to democracy.

Therefore, it is not surprising in light of the many voluntary associations in existence in this country, that the United States has been credited with having one of the purest forms of pluralism in existence, for it operates under this conviction:<sup>2</sup>

Free individual action, or action controlled by inner authority, leads to a harmonious social and political world which forms an important condition of modern democracy.

This means that constitutionalism, the idea that all powers of compul-

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<sup>1</sup>John W. Chapman, "The Political Theory of Pluralism," Voluntary Associations Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 91.

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sion over men's wills and lives are created by social organizations, should be responsibly exercised. Furthermore judgment on the legitimacy of the means and ends in using such power should not rest solely with the immediate holders of the power.

Pluralism generally leads to a broad-based, decentralized democratic form of government which is the antithesis of totalitarianism. Therefore voluntary associations are often valued as a major barrier to totalitarianism. The reasoning supporting this belief centers on the difficulty encountered in overcoming such vast numbers of diverse interest groups. Furthermore, these groups are providing the qualities of life sought by man anyway. Inasmuch as these associations have contributed fellowship and meaning for both life and work, and have contributed to the ordering of community life in a country of vastness and diversity, this anti-totalitarian function may be truly so performed.

Observing how voluntary associations function is an interesting process. Fuller concludes there are two principles which precipitate human associations:<sup>1</sup> 1) shared commitment; 2) legalistic tenet.

Under the principle of shared commitment, associations are formed to achieve some pre-stated objective which gives their members a sense of belonging and a "quality of purposive energies." The legalistic principle on the other hand allows associations to function by formal rules and entitlements.

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<sup>1</sup>Lon L. Fuller, "Two Principles of Human Association," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 10.

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All forms of human associations involve , at least in part , both principles. Even though many human associations are founded on the basis of a shared commitment, they tend to evolve toward the legal principle , and as they do , the focus on the shared commitment begins to fade and any attempt to bring it back into focus tends to "stir anxieties and meet with strong resistance." Fuller posted "eight laws" governing the interrelations of the two principles of human association:<sup>1</sup>

1. In nearly all human associations both principles are in some degree present.
2. In a given case either principle may be tacitly operative or may emerge as an object of explicit and conscious concern.
3. In an association that is first brought into being , the principle of shared commitment will tend to be explicit and dominant even though the association from the outset adopts , or has , internal structure.
4. To the extent that an association is seen by its members as being held together by the principle of shared commitment , it will be hostile toward internal groups dominated by the same principle.
5. As an association moves increasingly toward a situation in which it is dominated by the legal

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. , pp. 12-14.

principle, it reaches a stage in which it not only can safely tolerate, but increasingly needs internal groupings that are themselves sustained by the principle of shared commitment.

6. In the normal course of its development an association tends to move toward dominance by the legal principle.
7. Once underway the development toward dominance by the legal principle feeds on itself and becomes accelerative.
8. The conditions of modern institutional life tend strongly to break down the distinction between the law of the political state and the internal law of associations.

Fuller also points out some other interesting aspects of associations. For instance it is not surprising or uncommon for an organization, which was formed explicitly to achieve one purpose, to find that purpose unattainable so that some other end, "not merely smaller in compass, but actually different in nature, must be substituted." Another aspect may be that the end desired is attainable, but would necessitate some "unwelcome reordering of the internal relations of the group seeking to achieve it." Last, the association, though formed to accomplish a certain purpose, may find its strength of shared commitment not in the end itself, but in a "belief of the efficacy

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of the means pursued."

Harris in discussing the importance of voluntary associations points out that any society has a "totally inclusive interest", such as maintaining itself, which every member of that society needs to share.<sup>1</sup> However no one needs to feel a part of any group unless he chooses membership. The group(s) a person chooses will often be determined by the certain primary and social affiliations into which he is born. However one reason why pluralism in the United States is so successful centers around the fact that it is "comparatively unalloyed by complications of class and inherited status, except those derived from racial differences."<sup>2</sup> Thus, with this advantage, voluntary associations came into existence as the result of individuals reacting to some disturbance in the established equilibrium of their society.

However, there is a tendency for such associations to want to "draw on the public purse" and come into working partnership with government; thus as they become successful in their effort to acquire funds and legislation on their behalf, they lose their private character and become public agencies. This is the process that Harris had in mind when he discussed how private associations, in seeking govern-

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<sup>1</sup>H. S. Harris, "Voluntary Association as a Rational Ideal," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>John W. Chapman, "The Political Theory of Pluralism," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 98.

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| Country       | % of respondents |
|---------------|------------------|
| Canada        | 85%              |
| United States | 75%              |
| Mexico        | 65%              |
| Brazil        | 55%              |
| Argentina     | 45%              |

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mental consent, come to be a part of public authority. This often continues until the public authority becomes so diffused that no sharp distinction between the government and the governed exists.<sup>1</sup>

Kariel in his discussion on voluntary associations argues against closed associations feeling there is nothing intrinsically good about commitment.<sup>2</sup> Therefore he reasons that an open heterogeneous organization is superior to the closed homogeneous association, that the multi-interest group is superior to the single-interest group, and ultimately the individual who has succeeded in integrating a variety of roles is superior over the one who has become the "final embodiment" of but one role. Kariel further suggests that more benefits would be derived from "a morally neutral multi-interest state composed of multi-interest groups which in turn are composed of multi-interest individuals". Thus, any commitment would not be for shared purposes, but for bringing conflicting purposes first into public view, and second into harmony. He concludes his rationale by stating that tension is preferable to the triumph of any competing good.

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<sup>1</sup>Willard Hurst, "Constitutional Ideals and Private Associations," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>Henry S. Kariel, "Transcending Privacy," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 39.



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Boonin in discussing voluntary associations took a different tack.<sup>1</sup> He asked the fundamental question: What is the nature of society and man's relation to it? He indicated that there are two fundamental models:

1. Atomistic which says society is a collection of individuals who have discrete and independent existences with intrinsic values of their own.
2. Organic-holistic which states that individuals are mere parts.

Under the first model, rights and duties arise only out of consent and are limited by rational self-interest, whereas the second position says Society is what is real, and its members are real only in relation to the whole.

Boonin in an attempt to integrate the two positions established a third model:<sup>2</sup>

3. Persons-in-Relation which postulates that neither society nor the individual is real except as individuals are in relation to each other.

The first model (atomistic) defines a voluntary association as one in which the participating members freely consent to the establishment and continuation of their relationship. The second model

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<sup>1</sup>Leonard G. Boonin, "Man and Society: An Examination of Three Models," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), pp. 70-75.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

**Abstract**

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1. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1996, 33, 1, 1-14.  
 2. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1996, 33, 2, 1-14.  
 3. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1996, 33, 3, 1-14.

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(organic) constructs a voluntary association which is determined by forces beyond the individuals who compose it.

However the "Persons-in-Relation" model conceptualizes the voluntary association differently. It measures voluntariness of an association in terms of self-imposed rules, not in terms of goals or ends which fulfill the nature of man, but in terms of the kind of feelings which promote and sustain its existence. This model sees a voluntary association based on "positive" feelings in which the members genuinely enjoy relating to each other, and derive satisfaction and pleasure from this relationship.

Chapman in his inspection of the relationship of associations to the democratic process finds that the major threat to democracy does not lie in the existence of the many true voluntary associations, but in the "compulsory-voluntary" ones which upon thorough inspection represent a conspiracy to abolish the right of association.<sup>1</sup> He further concludes that the "freedom of association must include the freedom not to associate."

In essence he is stating that totalitarians attempt to prohibit or falsify the meaning of voluntary associations. However with the great number of associations which provide so much fellowship and meaning to life and work while giving order to national unity, totalitarianism

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<sup>1</sup>John W. Chapman, "The Political Theory of Pluralism," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 101.



stands little chance of succeeding if the associations manage an "egalitarian redistribution" of wealth and power to presently disorganized or disadvantaged groups.

A negative aspect of voluntary associations is uncovered when one observes individuals who attempt to hide their personal actions under the guise of group action. It is relatively easy for a person to discount his individual accountability, but this attitude should not be tolerated, for each member must know, care about, and accept his responsibility for the action of his association. By accepting this responsibility as individuals, persons can come to realize<sup>1</sup>--

. . . their distinctly human potential for social action, for altering situations, and even creating new social phenomena and thus entering into an ethical relationship with all other humans whom their activities have affected.

As we move toward a mass society where the individual has lost much of his significance in relation to the society as a whole, most persons are forced to derive importance from being members of a group. Thus it is important that voluntary associations remain truly voluntary so as to "create and maintain a society in which individual autonomy and dignity are respected."<sup>2</sup> If this is not done we find individuals and/or small cliques imposing certain "limited, idiosyncratic, substan-

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<sup>1</sup>William Leon McBride, "An Ideal Model and the 'Democratic' Failure," Voluntary Association Yearbook, ed. by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 216.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 216.



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tive goals" on the organization and, in some cases, of the larger society as they manipulate the membership. Such tactics usually involve the establishment of goals that are labeled as extremely rational. Therefore any deviation can be looked upon as extremely stupid and wrong. Anyone not initially agreeing with the consensus goals is led to believe his choice is shameful and disloyal.

Such an organization is described as one of coercion, fiat, and psychological conditioning which sacrifices the ideal of moral responsibility and thus is not really a true voluntary association. However, such organizations, often in an attempt to deceive members and others, call themselves voluntary associations.

### SUMMARY

Formal organizations, of which voluntary associations are one form, exist in all segments of our society. It is obvious that they exist in many sizes and forms, and for a myriad of reasons. Even though they come into existence in one of several basic forms, they immediately begin a process of evolution which can be analyzed and fairly well predicted. Inasmuch as these formal organizations are a primary form of institution prevailing in our society today, understanding their dynamics is essential if one is to have understanding of our industrialized and complex world.

As the research is continued throughout this account, special attention is given to the identification of crucial issues which have



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confronted the IMA in order to see whether they have, indeed, been major contributors to the IMA's remaining a viable community force throughout the years. Of the various theories and ideas advanced in the review of the literature, the following will be explored:

1. Michels' "Iron Law of Oligarchy" which contends that power necessarily needs to rest in the hands of a few if organizations are to function effectively.
2. Gouldner's contention that no superordinate group can long flaunt the will of those whom it controls.
3. Fuller's "eight laws" governing the interrelations of the two principles of human association--shared commitment and legal principle.

Thus data are gathered which support or deny these concepts. Conclusions will be derived from these data and will be stated in the final chapter.

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## Chapter III

### THE FLINT VEHICLE FACTORY MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

#### Introduction

This section treats the formation and development of the Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association. It deals with the city, its commerce and its people for the purpose of depicting the setting from which the Industrial Mutual Association eventually emerged.

The Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association was the embodiment of a concept and spirit which existed between employees and employers in Flint at the turn of the century. Despite many struggles, setbacks and near disasters, the core of this concept and spirit have been retained.

#### AN ASSOCIATION IS FORMED

##### Workers Gather

The Flint Vehicle Factory Benefit Association (FVFMBA) was formed as a mutual benefit association sponsored by employers, but primarily financed through employee contributions. The association came into existence following the suggestion of J. Dallas Dort, that a group of workers meet in Stone's Hall in September, 1901, to organize

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an insurance association among the employees of the Flint factories.

Working and living conditions in the city were far from ideal. Hours were long and compensation, though relatively high when compared to the rest of the nation at the time, was still meager. Health and safety regulations were minimal. In cases of sickness, injury or death of workers, families received no benefits. Fellow employees would often take up a collection, but this system had a taint of charity which did not sit well with many of the rugged individualists involved; but more importantly, consistent amounts of money could not be counted upon each time misfortune struck.

Consequently the meeting resulted in an organization called the Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association. A constitution was written and by-laws were adopted which called for election by the employees of a board of trustees who in turn appointed officers to conduct the affairs of the association.<sup>1</sup>

The sponsor of the new association was the Associated Factories of Flint, an organization formed by Dort in 1901 for the purpose of backing the new organization and also to represent the interests of the major manufacturing companies in the city:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association, Minutes of Meeting of September 24, 1901 (in the files of Manufacturers Association of Flint, Michigan), p. 8. Cited hereafter as FVFMBA Minutes.

<sup>2</sup>"The Origin, Development, and Accomplishments of the Industrial Mutual Association: the image of industry in Flint to its employees and the public," (Flint: unpublished, in files of Industrial Mutual Association of Flint, Michigan), pp. 2-3.



Diamond Buggy Company  
Durant-Dort Axle Works  
Durant-Dort Carriage Company  
Flint Wagon Works  
Supreme Wheel Company  
Victoria Vehicle Company  
W. A. Paterson Company  
W. F. Stewart Company  
Webster Vehicle Company  
Imperial Wheel Company

The owners' interest in the well-being of their employees, for whatever reasons shown, has been of great significance to the IMA as it has evolved through the years. It is generally recognized that Dort was the dominant figure in the community and industrial life of Flint at this time. Thus, Dort's empathy for workers led other industrialists to follow suit and agree to the Associated Factories sponsorship of the FVFMBA.

#### Membership Soars

The idea of having such a benefit program was the prime topic of discussion in Flint during these pre-radio days. The workers reacted quickly and within two months' time many workers had joined this new voluntary protection plan. December, 1901, found the FVFMBA with 1,161 members or approximately ninety percent of the employees working in the associated plants. The primary function of the FVFMBA was to provide protection for the workers by collecting dues through payroll deductions, and making payments for sickness and accident claims in line with the rules and amounts established by the compensation board.



Originally the membership was divided into two categories, but was soon revised to three:<sup>1</sup>

| <u>Class</u> | <u>Requirements</u>                 | <u>Weekly Dues</u> | <u>Weekly Benefits</u> | <u>Funeral</u> |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| AA           | Average Weekly Wage \$12.00 or more | 15¢                | \$9.00                 | \$75.00        |
| A            | " " " \$ 7.00 " "                   | 10¢                | \$6.00                 | \$50.00        |
| B            | " " " less than \$7.00              | 5¢                 | \$3.00                 | \$25.00        |

Benefit payments were set up for a maximum of thirteen weeks and the elected trustees made final determination as to the eligibility of an employee to receive them.

Physicians and nurses were employed to check, treat and take care of the sick and injured. Dr. B. E. Burnell, appointed as the first physician for the Association, was compensated at the rate of forty cents for each examination or visit. The minutes of December 10, 1901, show that Dr. Burnell was paid eighteen dollars for forty-five visits made from November 19th through December 5th.

#### Rules of the Day

To prevent fraudulent claims and also to check on the care patients were receiving, the secretary of the Association made weekly visits to the homes, and was paid twelve dollars per week plus a dollar and a half for the use of his horse and buggy to facilitate the performance of his duties. If a case was doubtful, the secretary would

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4.

refer it to the regular compensation committee or, if necessary, would employ the physician to examine the claimant. If the person refused examination, his claim against the Association was declared void.

Furthermore anyone declared disabled had to be home by 8:00 p.m. in the winter and 9:00 p.m. in the summer, and also had to stay close enough to home so as to be found by the visitation committee or the secretary at any time. Leaving the city without permission jeopardized not only one's benefits, but also his membership.<sup>1</sup>

Limitations of payments in 1907 read:

No benefits shall be paid for any sickness or injury resulting from hernia, lumbago or lame back, straining of the lumbar muscles, sciatic rheumatism, neuritis, venereal diseases, intoxication or violating the law, fighting, scuffling, wrestling or racing.

### RECREATION INITIATED

#### Scope Expanded

The FVFMBA followed the pattern of many associations which are formed for one purpose, but soon consider changing or expanding their functions. In this case the Association decided to expand its function by forming a social club which influenced greatly the impact the FVFMBA had on Flint factory workers in later days.

In 1903, it sponsored the first of a series of baseball games between the W. F. Stewart Body Company and the Dort Carriage

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, FVFMBA, December 10, 1901, p. 16.

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Company. Grounds were rented for three dollars per game. Each winning team won a box of "Blue Line" cigars with the final game winner being rewarded with a box of "Judge Durand" cigars. These games represented the organization's first recreational activity and served as a harbinger of a myriad of others. Later that same summer, the membership voted to take a railroad excursion to Detroit. For many years these excursions became annual affairs of such magnitude that the plants shut down and merchants closed their businesses for the occasion.

Formal action concerning the expansion of the functions of the FVFMBA did not take place until after its March 31, 1904, meeting.<sup>1</sup> At that time the proposition of starting a club and formalizing it into a separate division was discussed:

. . . and after listening to talks by all of the trustees present, it was agreed that the scheme would be a good thing for the Association as well as its members, particularly in respect to having a place for employees to meet and become acquainted with each other, to have a social time, and that it would also be educational and elevating to the members.

Fred Weiss, President of the FVFMBA, was to meet with J. Dallas Dort concerning this idea and report back at the next regular meeting. If favorable results were obtained, a special meeting of the entire membership of the Association would be held.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, FVFMBA, March 31, 1904, p. 82.

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The minutes of the next meeting state:<sup>1</sup>

President Weiss reported he had seen Mr. Dort and there would be a meeting of the manufacturers . . . to complete plans and arrange for starting the club rooms, also that Mr. Paterson had consented to build an addition . . . and rent the rooms for seven hundred dollars per year heated . . .

### FINANCES

#### Early Financial Support

So it was that a social club was formed, also under the sponsorship of the Associated Factories, who gave a stock of tobacco and cigars to the club in the hope that the profits would make it self-supporting.<sup>2</sup> The new group became known as the Vehicle Workers' Club. There were two separate sets of dues, one for the Club and one for the Benefit Association; however, a person was required to belong to the latter organization to be eligible to join the Club. Dues for the Club were ten cents a week and could be paid through payroll deductions along with the dues of five, ten or fifteen cents per week, depending on wage category, going to the Benefit Department.

The president and the secretary were instructed to confer with Mr. Dort on the matter of members unilaterally constructing the Club's by-laws. Mr. Dort made it most emphatically clear that the by-laws were "a purely business proposition that ought to be left to the Trustees

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, FVFMBA, May 31, 1904, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, FVFMBA, October 24, 1904, p. 96.

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and that they certainly should make their own laws." This was done and the by-laws of the Club were read and adopted on October 28, 1904.<sup>1</sup>

To cite a typical early year's activity the financial reports of 1906 are presented.<sup>2</sup>

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|---|----------------|
| Cash on hand, June, 1906                                  | \$1925.36      |
| Receipts for past year                                    | <u>6120.33</u> |
| total   | \$8045.69      |
| Disbursements   |                |
| sickness  | \$2652.30      |
| accident  | 733.60         |
| funeral and flowers                                       | 178.75         |
| salary  | 957.06         |
| printing  | 85.00          |
| office supplies   | 114.18         |
| sundries  | <u>97.70</u>   |
|   | \$4818.59      |
| balance   | \$3227.10      |
| Disbursements since organization<br>on September 24, 1901 | \$28,572.77    |
| Average age for sick and accident claim 34 years.         |                |

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Figure 1.

Benefit Association Financial Report

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, FVFMBA, October 5, 1904, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, FVFMBA, January 20, 1907, p. 43.



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|                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Cash on hand, June, 1906    | \$ 86.82      |
| Receipts from dues          | 2331.68       |
| Receipts from cigar stand   | 354.94        |
| Receipts from other sources | <u>806.70</u> |
| total                       | \$ 3580.14    |
| Disbursements               |               |
| Salary                      | \$ 1134.51    |
| Club expense                | 1894.11       |
| Cigars                      | <u>304.18</u> |
| total                       | \$ 3332.80    |
| balance                     | \$ 247.34     |

Figure 2.  
Vehicle Workers' Club Financial Report

### Additional Involvement

A new, but significant, activity for the Association was that of raising money for the new Hurley Hospital, to furnish two rooms and purchase surgical instruments. The Club also sponsored baseball games, an excursion to Detroit via Port Huron, and such Club activities as billiards, bowling, and cards. It is interesting to note that in 1907 the YMCA of Flint sought a merger with the Club, but was refused because by this time, the Club was flourishing in its own right. Despite the fact that it would not consolidate, the Vehicle Club did say it would cooperate in helping "to build that type of institution (YMCA) in Flint."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, FVFMBA, December 3, 1907, p. 76.

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By 1908 the Associated Factories organization was known as the Manufacturers' Association of Flint. It met to seek a way to increase the membership in the FVFMBA inasmuch as the factory owners wanted their employees to carry the insurance for the employees' own good. This type of thinking was still foreign to many of the workers, so that often they left themselves and their families without protection against the unforeseen.

One method employed to cut down on the number of uninsured workers was to have notices of the Benefit Association and the Vehicle Club printed and available for the time-keepers to give to each man as he was hired. The trustees also voted to pay members ten cents for each new member they enrolled. With such techniques FVFMBA membership increased to 3,221 by 1910, and of this number 1,297 also belonged to the Vehicle Workers' Club.<sup>1</sup>

### City Booms

By 1910 Flint could be described as a boom town, mainly as the result of Buick's success. In 1908 W. C. Durant had formed the General Motors Company which consisted of these companies which were located throughout Michigan:<sup>2</sup> Buick, Cadillac, Olds Motor Works, Oakland Motor Car, Northway Motor, Jackson-Church-Wilcox, Weston-Mott,

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Clarence H. Young, Assistant Director, Manufacturers' Association of Flint, March 3, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Edwin O. Wood, History of Genesee County, Michigan; Her People, Industries, and Institutions, Vol. I (Indianapolis: Federal Publishing Co., 1916, p. 776.

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and General Motors Truck. General Motors sold \$34,000,000 worth of products in its first year. With the addition of Chevrolet, organized by Durant in 1912 and built in "the pinery" on the west side of the city, General Motors was doing a \$200,000,000 business yearly by 1917. The Dort Motor Car Company, itself, was selling approximately 9,000 "Dorts" a year, and was still selling 15,000 carriages yearly as late as 1915 even though the automobile was obviously here to stay.<sup>1</sup>

With General Motors' strong influence in Flint and its continued expansion there, the population jumped to 88,000. The city could not keep pace with the influx of people, which resulted in insufficient services and housing. Boarding houses and hotels were built but people were still turned away. Over a thousand lived in tents along the river and near the factories. Perhaps the scene can be further portrayed by visualizing hundreds of people lining up at the Post Office's general delivery window to receive much-awaited news from home.

### THE CLUB

#### Facility Expansion

As the membership soared, the FVFMBA voted to lease the three-story Sullivan Building at the corner of East Kearsley and Harrison Streets for its new clubhouse at a price of \$3,000 per year for the next ten years. This facility was complete with gymnasium, bowling alleys,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 777.

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pool room, reading room and lounges, but the most popular feature was its twenty-nine showers. People would line up on Friday and Saturday evenings for the luxury of a shower, for at this time Flint's population was soaring and many people were living in shacks and tents, sadly lacking in niceties such as bathrooms.

### THE VEHICLE WORKER

#### Newspaper Unites

Feeling a need to establish a method of communication with its members, the FVFMBA established a ten-page tabloid. Its purpose was stated in the first issue as follows.<sup>1</sup>

The Vehicle Worker will be devoted to the interests, general health and good fellowship of the workers of the Associated Factories of Flint. It will also promote the idea of cooperation and harmony among factory workers.

Some of the features of the Vehicle Worker will be Health Hints, Safety First Items, The Question Box, List of Beneficiaries, War Activities, Club Notes, Just For Fun, etc.

Under Health Hints will appear practical suggestions on Health, Hygiene, Dietetics, and Sanitation by recognized authorities.

Safety First Items will contain recommendations as to the use of safety devices on machinery and safety practices for workmen.

The Question Box will undertake to answer the questions of Factory Workers regarding the Benefit Association, Liberty Bonds, and other features of general interest to the factory employee.

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<sup>1</sup>"Foreword," The Vehicle Worker, Vol. I, No. I, (September, 1918), p. 2.



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The List of Beneficiaries will contain the names of all factory workers who have been paid benefits during the preceding month, for sickness, accident and death, by the Flint Vehicle Factories' Mutual Benefit Association. The names will be printed by factories.

Under War Activities will be presented the method of handling the Liberty Bond business of the factory subscriptions. Concrete illustrations will be given showing bonds sold, bonds paid in full, etc.

The Club Notes will deal with the various activities of the Vehicle Workers' Club.

Just For Fun will be edited by "Hank" Henry G. Trembley. He will endeavor to diffuse the rays of sunshine and provoke smiles, mirth and laughter.

"A little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men," especially factory men. This also includes the girls.

Suggestions, recommendations and criticisms will be cheerfully received by the editor at all times. Anything that will improve the Vehicle Worker should be the aim of every factory man as the Vehicle Worker is dedicated to all the employees of Flint factories.

The tabloid became a major function of the FVFMBA and was extremely popular among the workers.

To help emphasize the national diversity of people living in Flint and the need for an organization to pull people together, it is informative to notice the March, 1919, issue of The Vehicle Worker had an interesting section listing "The Book of Rules Of The Flint Vehicle Factories Mutual Benefit Association" which in essence was the list of rules given to each employee at the time of employment. It illustrated the diversity of the workers, for it was printed in eight different

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languages: English, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Rumanian, Croatian, and Syrian.

Much of the tabloid was also dedicated to the subjects of health and safety. Articles, focused on such topics as how to lift, how to climb, and how to prevent disease, are typified by the following poem which appeared on the cover of the March, 1920, issue.

'Twas a dangerous cliff, as they freely confessed,  
 Though to walk near its crest was so pleasant;  
 But over its terrible edge there had slipped  
 A duke, and full many a peasant;  
 So the people said something would have to be done  
 But their projects did not at all tally.  
 Some said "Put a fence 'round the edge of the cliff;"  
 Some, "An ambulance down in the valley."

But the cry for the ambulance carried the day,  
 For it spread through the neighboring city;  
 A fence may be useful or not, it is true,  
 But each heart became brim full of pity  
 For those who slipped over the dangerous cliff;  
 And the dwellers in highway and alley  
 Gave pounds or gave pence, not to put a fence,  
 But an ambulance down in the valley.

"For the cliff is all right, if you're careful," they said  
 "And if folks ever slip and are dropping,  
 It isn't the slipping that hurts them so much  
 As the shock down below--when they're stopping."  
 So day after day, as these mishaps occurred,  
 Quick forth would these rescuers sally,  
 To pick up the victims who fell off the cliff,  
 With their ambulance down in the valley.

"Oh, he's a fanatic," the other rejoined;  
 "Dispense with the ambulance? Never!  
 He'd dispense with all charities, too, if he could;  
 No, No, we'll support them forever!  
 Aren't we picking folks up just as fast as they fall?  
 And shall this man dictate to us? Shall he?  
 Why should people of sense stop to put up a fence  
 While their ambulance works in the valley?"

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During World War I much emphasis was put on patriotism and Americanization. Local sporting events sponsored by the factories or the Club were promoted and well-covered. Frugality and personal financial planning were popular topics, and led to the development of a department which would get the subject out of the talking stage and into reality.

### BANKING

#### Expands Into Banking

During this time the Benefit Association continued to grow, with 1,922 members registered. As it prospered, it branched out into another area--that of banking. On January 5, 1920, it formed the Workingman's Mutual Bank on the premise that this would stimulate thrift among the factory workers.<sup>1</sup> The bank was housed in the Vehicle Club and operated originally in the Liberty Bond Department, which found itself with a great reduction in work following World War I, but with the personnel available to take on the new venture of promoting savings among the workers. The bank provided small personal loans to employees who often had difficulty securing money from existing institutions. From the new bank workers could get money for "some useful purpose" such as to take advantage of buying for cash by getting a co-signer and by showing their earning power. Also workers could receive five percent on their

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<sup>1</sup>"Employees' Bank Formed," The Vehicle Worker, Vol. XVII, No. I (January, 1920), p. 4.

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savings. The entire bank stock was owned by the FVFMBA and was capitalized at \$50,000.<sup>1</sup>

### AMALGAMATION

#### Forces at Work

Despite the success and popularity, forces were at work within the city that would bring a sudden end to the FVFMBA as an organization, but not to the functions to which it was dedicated. The records available show that a committee from the FVFMBA met with a committee from the Industrial Fellowship League and representatives from the Manufacturers' Association as early as January, 1920,<sup>2</sup> to discuss amalgamation. The FVFMBA Board agreed by resolution to merge on whatever terms were set by the Manufacturers' Association; however, it will be shown in the next chapter that the move did not come about easily.

Thus it was that the first large group of workers were organized in Flint for their own mutual benefit. The result of this gathering together would enhance the well-being of the residents of the city of Flint for many years.

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<sup>1</sup>"Foreword," The Vehicle Worker, Vol. I, No. I (September, 1918), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>"Chronology, Industrial Mutual Association and Parent Organizations: Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association--Industrial Fellowship League," (Flint: unpublished), p. 3.



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SUMMARY

The FVFMBA served the Flint factory worker well by helping to provide for his financial and social well-being. It also contributed to the establishment of a pattern of cooperation between management and labor that was enduring enough to survive the stormy union movement of the thirties.

The Association assisted in pulling a diverse people together, through an extremely informal type of adult education, into a strong sense of community. The essence of that original organization exists today in the City of Flint in the life and program of the Industrial Mutual Association.

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## Chapter IV

### THE INDUSTRIAL FELLOWSHIP LEAGUE

#### Introduction

The Industrial Fellowship League (IFL) was formed as an adjunct of the YMCA to assist many of the people who came to Flint to find a place in the fledgling automobile industry. This account shows the impact this organization had upon some of those people.

Social gains were made through educational opportunities that became available as the result of the joint efforts of employees and management. The impact of the IFL is noteworthy inasmuch as its social and educational accomplishments were not lost with the demise of the organization, but survived to become the major strength of the foundation of its successor--the Industrial Mutual Association.

#### A LEAGUE IS FORMED

#### Industry and Immigrants

The industrial activity of Flint since the turn of the century had been phenomenal. This brought national acclaim resulting in the city's

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setting a record in the United States for its rate of growth.<sup>1</sup> It increased in size from 13,000 people in 1900 to 85,000 in 1916 as workers seeking employment and a standard of living greater than they had ever thought possible, converged upon Flint from the four corners of the world. They brought with them many diverse social patterns and in Flint had earnings great enough to allow them to indulge these differences to the point that they retained their own customs and areas of residency; thus the only commonality among them was their place of work.

Despite this, a spirit of "teamwork" permeated the city. Flint's motto became "Each for All and All for Each." This climate not only promoted the movement of industries to Flint, but also gave the city an inner strength, a vitality that has helped to keep it moving dynamically forward through the years.

#### YMCA and Industry Team

This spirit is exemplified by the efforts of its leading industrialists who, in December of 1915, formed an Industrial Committee of the YMCA to discuss ways of providing extension work for the vast number of factory workers who had migrated to Flint to take their places in the young but flourishing automobile industry. Charles Stewart Mott, President of the new YMCA, was only one of several future industrial

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<sup>1</sup>Edwin O. Wood, History of Genesee County, Michigan; Her People, Industries, and Institutions, Vol. I (Indianapolis: Federal Publishing Co.), 1916, p. 771.

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giants on the committee.<sup>1</sup> Others included Walter P. Chrysler, A. B. C. Hardy, Charles W. Nash and J. Dallas Dort, each of whom was to manufacture automobiles bearing his own name. Also in the group were W. W. Mountain, H. H. Bassett, F. F. Badger, M. C. Day, R. F. Monroe, W. T. Walker, C. R. Towson, L. E. Buell, and O. R. Largent, the first secretary of the Flint YMCA.

At the first meeting it was unanimously agreed that any extension work should be launched under the direction of an expert in the field and \$3,000 was established as the amount that the Industrial Committee would provide to finance an extension secretary for the initial year's effort.<sup>2</sup> This money was donated by the industrialists and was to be kept entirely separate from the regular funds of the YMCA.

### ROBERT J. WISE

#### A Mission and a Man

On April 14, 1916, Chairman Chrysler convened a meeting of the Industrial Committee to meet with a candidate for the Extension Secretarial position, Robert J. Wise, a social worker from the Upper Peninsula, who had been recommended by Largent. After hearing Wise

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<sup>1</sup>Industrial Fellowship League and YMCA, Industrial Division, Minutes of Meetings, Meeting of December 1, 1915, p. 8. (in the files of Manufacturers' Association of Flint, Michigan) Cited hereafter as Minutes IFL.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, February 2, 1916, p. 3.



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discuss his experiences and philosophy, Mr. Bassett made the motion that Wise be employed at a salary of \$2,200 per year. The following Monday a wire was received from Wise, "I accept with pleasure the Extension Secretaryship. Will be with you soon as possible."<sup>1</sup>

Apparently a YMCA conference attended by Wise at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, in the summer of 1916, focusing on "New Ideals in Industrial Betterment" played a major role in giving this new movement in Flint positive direction.<sup>2</sup> In reporting on the meetings Wise emphasized that the key word of the conference was "friendliness":

. . . the cultivation of a spirit of friendliness and cooperation between the employer and the employee in developing new ideals in industrial betterment. The old regime when men were governed by an iron-clad system of rules and regulations from which there was no recourse [sic] was passing . . .

The new method seemed to stress the use of social clubs and conferences. Participation by the workers was being valued not only to increase production efficiency and contentment among workers, but also to combat the need for labor to organize. The idea of carrying "men on your hearts as well as your payroll" seemed to summarize the theme of the conference.

Wise wasted little time in transforming the rhetoric of his philosophy to reality. He sought immediate ways of bringing employees and employers nearer to each other for their mutual benefit. He gained

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, April 17, 1916, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, July 20, 1916, pp. 6-10.

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immediate support for an inter-factory Labor Day celebration at Potter's Lake. This was to be financed by assessing each factory on the basis of its current number of employees--a method of assessment which was used by the committee to arrive at fair shares to be paid by each factory for future joint ventures. It is interesting to note that this celebration never took place because of the extremely high incidence of infantile paralysis in the Flint area at the time.

Another promotional scheme was to have factory workers participate in baseball against teams of factory managers, for this had crowd-appeal at that particular time. Wise further suggested that each factory set aside an adjacent small plot of ground for athletic purposes.

He also began scheduling visits to each factory for the purpose of seeing its internal organization and of talking with the men in order to gain insight into how true representation could be garnered from each plant. This would assist in helping to promote meaningful activities and participation based on what the member workers wanted and not on what someone wanted for the workers.

During these early visits to the plants, Wise noted that extensive welfare services were being rendered by the employers and he praised this altruistic effort. This effort had been provided by the Compensation Department of the Manufacturers' Association. The Department had been established in 1912 for the purpose of supplementing payments to employees who could not live on their benefits from the FVFMBA, either because of major illness or hardship, or the

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exhaustion of their benefit funds before they were able to return to work. This effort continued as a function of the Manufacturers' Association until August, 1930.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wise was most impressed with this benevolence and thought his energies in relation to these services could best be utilized by his coordinating the entire effort in order to systematize it further.<sup>2</sup> However, he accomplished much more than this.

Wise, given the title of "Industrial Secretary", went about the factories seeking men to become involved in activities and services in behalf of their fellow workers. He told the men in the shops about the Industrial Committee, which was composed of managers and owners who were sincerely ". . . interested in seeing the YMCA inaugurate a work that will benefit the men in the factories . . ." Wise thought that explaining the Committee's willingness to cooperate with the YMCA would help to take away any charges of paternalism which might be leveled against the owners and/or Manufacturers' Association. By September, 1916, Wise had conducted approximately 150 interviews with superintendents, foremen, and workmen. This resulted in his getting twenty-seven men to form the Central Factory Committee and many others to serve as shop committee chairmen.

The initial meeting of the Central Committee was conducted

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Clarence H. Young, Assistant Director, Manufacturers' Association of Flint, Michigan, July 24, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, (Letter from R. J. Wise, Industrial Secretary to Industrial Committee, YMCA), June 23, 1916.

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at the YMCA on September 19, 1916, with twenty-two members present to discuss four major items:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) the welfare of the factory employees
- (2) the inauguration of a system for the betterment of conditions
- (3) the appointment of a sub-committee to devise a constitution and by-laws
- (4) the selection of a "Press Committee" to consider the feasibility of publishing a paper to keep the men in the factories in touch with the work of the organization

It was further agreed in this meeting that the purpose of the organization would be "to promote a spirit of friendliness and helpfulness among all the men in all the factories of Flint."

The October third meeting of the Central Factory Committee was most significant inasmuch as it was voted to adopt the name "Industrial Fellowship League" (IFL), and the new constitution was read and accepted. The first slate of officers elected was:<sup>2</sup>

George H. Maurer, President  
 Z. A. McDonald, First Vice President  
 G. G. Trembley, Second Vice President  
 Wm. M. Barth, Treasurer  
 C. E. Gilbert, Assistant Secretary

Wise's initiative and industriousness are illustrated by a letter he sent to the Board of Directors of the YMCA following the October meeting. It not only told them of the new name of the organization, but also pointed out the degree of human involvement already in

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, September 19, 1916, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, October 3, 1916, p. 26.



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motion:<sup>1</sup> 104 chairmen of various committees had met and their efforts were illustrated in reports that 24 athletic teams and 14 bowling teams had been formed, a male chorus was being organized, classes were planned to help train men for greater efficiency in their work, arrangements were being made for noon meetings centering on educational and religious talks, and a paper named the Flint Factory News was being published monthly.

Wise had high ideals and truly believed in involving the working man and not just programming for him. He stressed that, if their educational efforts were to be successful, the program must have the backing of company officials, but not their interference. Training must be by experts using sophisticated equipment, and classroom instruction must be supplemented by laboratory methods. Men, he thought, should be selected and placed, not with immediate production in mind, but eventual attainment of their highest potential through training and proper job placement.

This idea may not have been originally his, for it parallels that of J. W. Dietz, Manager of the Education Department of the Western Electric Company, who had addressed the YMCA leadership conference that Wise had attended at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Nevertheless the right idea had been transferred to the right man. It is interesting and rather coincidental that this same Mr. Dietz would

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, October 3, 1916, p. 26.

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speaking in 1944 at the 25th anniversary observance of General Motors Institute, a spinoff institution of the IFL.<sup>1</sup>

## EDUCATION

### School Plans

Further evidence of Wise's insight and thinking is provided by the following statement:

A program for conducting a night school for men in the factories to which 80 men are already committed as committee men and which is backed by the company, would be more likely to succeed than a course of study offered by either the YMCA or the company.

Wise strongly and persistently pointed out to the Industrial Committee of the YMCA that he wanted to organize and involve Flint's 12,000-15,000 workers in deciding on activities to be provided. However, he clearly understood the need for close cooperation with supervisors so that courses planned would be related to work available in the shops.

By October, 1916, plans had been made and instructors hired to open "The League Evening School." The term would begin November 20 and end April 1. Wise felt that this school could be most valuable to the men involved and to the factories, for the factories could have a force of men in training to meet the industrial needs for

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<sup>1</sup>Young and Tuttle; The Years 1919-1969....A History of GMI, pp. 69-70.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, September 26, 1916, p. 25.

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both skilled and executive positions. It was felt that the Industrial Committee's work should now be publicized.

So it was that a small and relatively insignificant program, which ultimately culminated in a great institution of higher learning, got under way. Even though this date, November 20, 1916, is not the formally recognized date for the founding of General Motors Institute, in reality, it is.

The December 8, 1916, report shows the IFL's evening school had 114 students enrolled in four classes:<sup>1</sup>

24----Mechanical Drawing  
10----Mathematics  
70----Auto Construction  
10----Penmanship, English, and Arithmetic

### RECREATION

#### Recreational Expansion

However the school was not the League's only other major interest, for in 1917 it began seeking a recreational resort area for the purpose of providing a recreation center for the working man and his family. It started taking options on the land around Potter's Lake which was twelve and a half muddy miles from Flint, but located on the Grand Trunk Railroad Line.<sup>2</sup> The railroad assured the IFL that with a reasonable amount of business, a stop could be arranged a mere two hundred

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, December 8, 1916, pp. 42-46.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

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yards from the resort entrance. This was important because otherwise patronage would have been greatly curtailed because of poor roads.

The property under consideration contained 78 acres of land and water, 5 cottages, 18 rowboats, 1 launch and sundry sheds. The cost was \$8,500. The Central Factory Committee recommended that the purchasing of the resort property be financed through selling non-dividend-paying stock at one dollar per share. These shares were to be purchased in the factories through the aid and approval of each company. The goal was \$25,000 so that enough money would be realized to make essential improvements on the land and erect the necessary facilities.

It was further proposed that the title be vested in a Board of Trustees made up of three or more men from the Industrial Committee of the YMCA and the Central Factory Committee. The rationale for the investment was summarized in six statements:<sup>1</sup>

1. The employees of the factories would have a convenient place, which they would feel belongs to them, inasmuch as the money would be paid by them and its administration would be in their hands; where they could go away from the noise of the city for rest and recreation at a low cost.
2. Picnics and Athletic meets would be held on the grounds at any time without any additional cost for use of privileges inasmuch as the ground will belong to the factory men. Baseball diamonds, tennis courts, croquet, swings for children, wading beach, bathing, boating, etc., all available for use of the factory men and their families whenever they desire to visit the grounds, at a very low cost.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, December 8, 1916, pp. 42-43.



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3. The cottages at present on the site, and others which can be built with the funds raised, can be rented to factory men and their families at a low cost for a week or few days for camping purposes.
4. A space can be reserved for setting up the tents for those who wish to live in tents.
5. Any factory men in ill health or any member of their families can be given an outing at the resort through the welfare department of the factory or by the League, if necessary, according to the circumstances of the case.
6. The lake is at present stocked with fish. This can be done yearly through the state hatcheries. A caretaker can be employed and the property carefully supervised so that the moral influence of the resort can be controlled and kept at a high standard.

Arthur H. Sarvis of the Flint Varnish Works was appointed General Chairman of the fund-raising committee. Despite having the fund drive delayed by a wartime Red Cross drive, and eventually cancelled, option on 100 acres had been procured by January 24, 1917. The Central Factory Committee of the IFL recommended that the IFL be incorporated so its Board of Trustees could hold title to the property.

#### End of Busy Year

The end-of-the-year report given in December, 1916, a mere seven months after Wise's appointment, is in itself a tribute to the man.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the night school the League was sponsoring activities in a variety of fields. Wise's report showed that the Flint Automotive Technical Society had been formed to be

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, December 8, 1916, p. 44.

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the center of a new field of engineering activity in Flint . . . to promote the art, science, crafts and methods pertaining to the manufacture of automobiles and to bring the automobile engineers of Flint closer together.

The report shows that the number of athletic teams outstripped the available facilities. Bowling, basketball, and baseball were becoming extremely popular. Shop meetings were being held at noon hour in many plants and were well received. Workers would sing, play instruments, and listen to short talks on such topics as mechanics, health and safety, patriotism, religion and personal economics. Continuing his summary, Wise told of the Social Committee's providing Thanksgiving dinner for 102 "men away from home" and promoting a plan of "Christ-giving" at Christmas time with the proceeds and commodities going to such agencies as the King's Daughters and the Salvation Army. The report also spoke of the efforts of the League in obtaining a recreational resort, providing assistance to strangers in finding work and living accommodations, and publishing the Flint Factory News which was proving popular with the workers.

In addition to the activities under way, Wise expounded on those things that needed to be done, but that he could not get to because of human limitations. He wanted to meet more with shop foremen on such ideas as how to handle men. He wanted to work more with Alvin Cody, Superintendent of the Flint Public Schools, in providing Americanization programs for the foreigner. Wise's final plea in the report was for more assistance so that the League could not only main-

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tain current programs and keep the "organization running smoothly," but also be creative and expand its scope of operation. This plea did not go unheeded. In May of 1917 Wise was rewarded with a substantial salary increase, and also with a full-time educational director.<sup>1</sup>

J. E. White of Buick 16, then chairman of the Educational Committee, was employed to supervise educational clubs and societies, noon lectures in shops, classes for the foreign-speaking, and evening school for apprentices.<sup>2</sup> By 1917 the Automotive Society had 250 members and had engaged in such activities as visiting the Dodge, Ford, and Packard plants in Detroit, and had attended lectures on such topics as "Metals and Metal Combinations Used on the Various Parts of the Automobile," "Internal Combustion Motor Development," "Automobile Gears: Design, Theory and Practice," "Standardized Motor Parts," and "Factory Efficiency."

In January, 1917, it was voted to change the name of the Central Factory Committee to the Executive Board--a name still in use.<sup>3</sup> It was also agreed that members of this Board should be elected by the men in the factories with each plant selecting its own representative.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, May 18, 1917, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IFL, May 18, 1917, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IFL, January 24, 1917, p. 50.

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## WORLD WAR I YEARS

### World Crisis

During the period under discussion, World War I had been raging in Europe. The German war machine had been on the rampage on the ground, in the air and on the seas since June 28, 1914. Despite Germany's premeditated assault and devastation of Belgium, and ensuing thrust into France, the United States had attempted to remain neutral. However, as events unfolded and Germany began unrestricted submarine warfare on all ships, the situation deteriorated to the point where the United States had to take a stand. On April 6, 1917, war was officially declared by Congress.

For the next twenty months the home front was drastically changed as the country was totally committed to the war effort. Flint became completely engrossed. Patriotism reigned. Moreover, the city prospered as the factories ground out the machinery of war. Perhaps as important as the financial boom was the sense of community that developed as the result of working for a cause of such magnitude and grave importance to all the people.

### Support for the Mission

As with most factories, the Flint plants had concession stands set up strategically throughout to provide workers with the customary items of food and drink. Although the stands existed for the employees,



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in most factories the profits from such sales were returned to the owners of the factories .

A decision of major consequence for the financial support of the IFL came in June of 1917 when "all stands for the sale of candies , tobacco, etc., throughout the local factories" were offered to the IFL with "the proceeds to be used for the benefit of the Fellowship League activities." Prior to this time, the IFL's budget was dependent completely on acceptance by the Manufacturers' Association; therefore this unique and generous offer was readily and unanimously accepted in the hope that eventually the League would be self-sustaining.<sup>1</sup> The IFL now had a financial basis from which to work and plan. Its future was now its own.

In July, H. F. Unley was engaged as "Superintendent of Factory Candy and Tobacco Stores."<sup>2</sup> He began by invoicing the stock at each factory stand and arranging to put a man in charge of each. A hint as to how the Stores would operate under Wise and Unley is alluded to in the statement:<sup>3</sup> "We are planning, as soon as we get under way, to add to this department of our work so that the Stores will be of great benefit to the men."

By November, stands were being operated in twenty spots in the plants with six more in the planning stage. In addition, eight cars of

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, June 1, 1917, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IFL, July 6, 1917, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

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peaches, several cars of apples, and truckloads of potatoes to be sold at reduced prices were proving very popular with the workers and gave them "an added appreciation of the IFL." Despite acceptance by the workers, this practice proved nearly disastrous to the League and established some public relations problems with local merchants.

### Effort Continues

The IFL School continued to prosper. The number of courses increased from four in 1916 to twelve by 1917. Enrollment climbed from 114 to 175 in that year, with the result that overcrowded classrooms at the YMCA became a critical problem. Despite the overcrowding, another inducement for enrollment was offered through the issuance of social memberships in the YMCA to all night school students.

At this time, only one of the "young ladies" employed in the plants was attending the night school. However, in light of the shortage of skilled labor because of the war, officials were expecting a greater influx of women into the plants--and thus into the school.

Another activity first sponsored by the League in 1917 was the Redpath Chautauqua. This form of entertainment and information proved so popular that the Chautauqua became a highly enjoyed annual event for several years.

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## INCORPORATION

### IFL Incorporated

Another of the more significant events in the history of this organization transpired also in 1917. On September 17, the Articles of Incorporation of the IFL were filed with the Secretary of State in Lansing.<sup>1</sup> These Articles stated the purpose of the League:

" . . . promotion of the general welfare by bringing together the employees of the factories of Flint for their mutual benefit, socially, physically, mentally, and morally; and to cooperate with all agencies interested in the improvement of conditions in our city."

All who worked in factories associated with the Manufacturers' Association of Flint were members by virtue of their employment.

The By-Laws of the IFL made provision for election of members to the Executive Board, election of officers, duties of officers, and the following standing committees:<sup>2</sup>

Recreation Grounds  
Factory Stores  
Auditing and Finance  
Central Educational and Shop  
Central Athletic  
Central Social

They also provided for the selection of trustees for the purposes of holding title to the real estate owned by the League with the Executive Board concerning financial transactions of the League.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, August 16, 1917, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IFL, November 6, 1917, p. 90.

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## DEPARTMENTS FUNCTION

### Stores' Struggle

In an attempt to provide better service to the workers and secure more money for its own operation, the IFL developed and established standardized factory stores in many plants. The total Stores' operation was realizing approximately \$1000 per month net profit. Despite this seeming success, certain problems were being encountered.<sup>1</sup> The rapid growth of these Stores plus provision for a sufficient stock of merchandise kept the League's capital tied up to the point that it had difficulty meeting all its regular obligations. Moreover, a serious national coal shortage was forcing some manufacturing plants to close so that the IFL's net profits from the Stores' sales were reduced proportionately. This lack of capital restricted the IFL's taking advantage of large scale buying power. Furthermore, there was "considerable stir among the men" as to how they were to "benefit by the profits from the factory stores."<sup>2</sup>

To help combat these problems, Wise sought additional capital. As usual, the Manufacturers' Association came to the League's assistance by contributing \$10,000. Even though this was not quite a sufficient amount to put the League on solid footing, it contributed greatly by allowing the IFL money to buy large quantities of certain

<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, January 22, 1918, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IFL, November 12, 1918, p. 201.



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necessities and staples for the benefit of the working man.<sup>1</sup> Wise felt that this was most important inasmuch as the IFL was "entering into this field and offering this as an inducement to the working men" in an effort to get their support for the Stores' operation by helping to reduce the "high cost of living." Further to quell uncertainty among the workers as to how the Stores' money was being spent, circulars were issued and factory representatives were advised to answer all questions as they arose.

On August 24, 1918, Unley resigned as Stores manager. Undoubtedly, his "philanthropic ideals" had been at odds with those who saw the stores as a business-for-profit venture.<sup>2</sup>

#### Education Concept Pushed

Wise continued in 1918 his push for the transformation of the IFL School to a first class automobile trade school. He persisted in selling this idea to such men as Walter P. Chrysler who was serving as chairman of the Industrial Committee. Wise wrote, "We should plan to put our educational work on a more dignified basis at the earliest possible time." He felt strongly that Flint was ripe for an automotive trade school of first magnitude, and if one were established it could "advertise and attract ambitious men from out of town to learn the business of automobile construction, which would provide a supply of

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, November 12, 1918, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 1, 1918, p. 106.

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skilled and trained men for service in Flint factories." More than that, Flint seemed the logical place to train persons in the proper servicing of automobiles, for there they could experiment using Flint cars and equipment. The newly formed and popular Automobile Technical Society, the Educational Committee, and the Executive Board of the IFL all wanted to see such a school develop. The time for serious consideration of such a school had arrived.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the existing school's less than ideal status it was drawing nationwide attention, for the need of experts in this field far outreached the supply. And even though the enrollment was dropping because of men leaving for the military service, Wise's vision never dimmed.

In April of 1918 the Educational Director, J. E. White, resigned from the IFL to accept a position with the government. No replacement was approved; however, to help ease the burden until a replacement was found, R. J. "Mike" Townsend was hired as a recreation director and to assist Wise in some of his duties.<sup>2</sup>

### The Major Arrives

The July, 1918, minutes of the IFL show the search for White's replacement took them to a physics instructor at the Michigan College of Mines. The man was Albert Sobey, who was destined to be a leader in

<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 1, 1918, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, May 21, 1918, p. 136.

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the City of Flint; but not until some quirks of fate had been resolved did he appear. Just when the IFL thought Sobey was set to come to Flint, they received word he had been commissioned a Captain in the Intelligence Division of the U. S. Army.

Thus the search went on until R. C. Faubell, Principal of Lane Technical School in Chicago, was recommended to the Executive Board. However, no action was taken because Faubell wanted \$1,000 more than the \$2,500 annual salary offered. The position remained open.

This twist of fate proved to be Flint's good fortune. Major Sobey, anxious to get started, arrived on the scene in uniform following his termination of military service on October 11, 1919.<sup>1</sup> His civilian clothing had not caught up with him. This zest to get moving led him and the school to great heights. It also tagged Sobey with a nickname for his lifetime--The Major!

Wise, realizing the urgency of gaining immediate space for the overcrowded IFL School, recommended in November of 1918 that the old Copeman Building on the southeast corner of Saginaw Street and Second Avenue be rented.<sup>2</sup> Although not in the best of condition, it was rented on a short-term lease for \$150 per month beginning in the fall of 1919, and became known as the School of Automotive Trades. Wise was elated for now there was space for the night school, social clubs, and storage for merchandise. Furthermore, Sobey was on the scene.

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<sup>1</sup>Young and Tuttle, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 14, 1919, p. 219.

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In a dual attempt to provide activities for the workers and to raise money, a successful minstrel show was conducted in February of 1919 with part of the proceeds going for minor improvements to the Copeman Building. In attendance at the show were 4,875 persons, with a resulting net profit of \$1,800.

### Philosophies in Conflict

The factory Stores in early 1919 were showing an income of over \$100,000 per year.<sup>1</sup> A central warehouse had been opened at North and Witherbee Streets. An accountant had been hired and the Stores were procuring merchandise on a 30-day cash basis. Monthly meetings of Store managers were being held, resulting in "a spirit of fellowship" which was "being spread through the shops by them in their stands in the dining rooms." Wise's thinking and feelings are certainly represented by these remarks. The Stores continued to handle a wide variety of items including "overalls, jackets, and government surplus such as foodstuffs, blankets, and raincoats."<sup>2</sup>

Despite the \$100,000 per year income, the League found itself in financial difficulty as the result of its philosophy of "operating for the worker," its total overhead, and the post-war economic decline which was in evidence by October of 1919. As a result of this difficulty, David M. Averill, President of the Manufacturers' Association, was

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, February, 1919, p. 226.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, February, 1919, p. 226.



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called upon to advise the League concerning its financial problems. At the same meeting the Chairman of the Industrial Committee, Chrysler, President of Buick, appointed a committee to investigate the entire Store situation and all the other activities of the League. The committee was charged with the responsibility of presenting a recommendation on how the factory Stores should be financed. They also voted to ask the Manufacturers' to take over the outstanding notes being held on the Potter's Lake property.<sup>1</sup>

Certain things did not jibe. Problems did exist. Perhaps many were philosophical, but they were getting in the way of good financing. Witness Wise's report of September 16, 1919:

I wish to call your attention to the fact that there is an insistent demand continually from the men for some kind of co-operative store so that the high cost of living may be reduced. The local labor unions are going into this, I understand, and planning to operate such a store if they can arrange for the capital. It seems to me that instead of a co-operative store, a better plan would be to use the buying power of the League and give the men direct benefit of the reduced prices rather than the co-operative store plan of declaring dividends, the goods to be advertised through our present system of factory stores and delivered from the central warehouse where the men can come and call for the goods. This would mean a larger building than we now have and as it is very likely we will not be able to hold our present location after next April, this is a matter which requires immediate thought and attention.

Wise's empathy for the worker and his well-being was ever evident.

The Stores continued to operate under the philosophy advocated

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 14, 1919, p. 221.

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by Wise until the severe post-war business downswing of 1920 hit the United States. In Flint automobile prices not only dropped, but many cars were left unshipped. W. C. Durant lost control of General Motors for the second and final time. This business slump helped shape the destiny of the IFL.

Chamberlain, then Stores manager, reported that Store sales had doubled in six months and profits had been reduced by one-half -- "thus showing the Stores were supplying valuable service by merchandising a larger volume of goods at reduced prices, thus saving the consumer a considerable amount of money." This type of rationalizing did not receive the support of the manufacturers. Wise was put in charge of the stores' operation and given the responsibility of liquidating the merchandise on hand as well as taking care of all current bills.<sup>1</sup> The lunchrooms which had been developed in the Buick plants were not making money so the IFL sold them to Buick.

The basic question on Stores was again presented: Should Stores be run to make a profit or "merely to accommodate the men and develop good faith?" It was decided that they should be run for profit and that it was up to the League to sell this concept to the men of the plants--that greater good would come to the workers. This was not very easy to do because many workers wanted visible signs of what the League was doing with their money, and underselling local merchants was most tangible evidence.

<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 29, 1921, p. 330.

Director

The year 1921 saw some significant changes in the IFL. The Stores' operation became an independent department under the direction of a new manager, O. S. Farrar. The recreation director, who was now Will Power, resigned. But more importantly the man who had given so much to the League from its inception, Mr. R. J. Wise, tendered his resignation as the result of some of the difficulties the factory Stores had run into. Clarence Young in his book on the history of General Motors Institute states:<sup>1</sup>

Looking back over 47 years, it seems a little sad that R. J. Wise, who contributed so much to the early concepts of the IFL and its school, should have fallen by the wayside because the incidental stores operation got into trouble in the postwar depression. Wise was not primarily a business man but a social worker of remarkable vision and energy, and the ideas which he advanced in developing the IFL gave it truly a democratic base that was made for genuine acceptance by the factory men of Flint. In the annals of the Industrial Mutual Association and General Motors Institute, R. J. Wise should not be forgotten; he was a great pioneer whose genuine concern for people contributed much to the validity of all that has grown from the ground he broke in Flint from 1916 to 1921.

Despite this loss, life and activities in the IFL continued. Albert Sobey was left in charge of the League's activities until a new director could be appointed.

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Young and Tuttle, op. cit., p. 20.



MERGER PLANNEDEnd of Affiliation

Even though the IFL had incorporated in 1917, it continued its affiliation with the YMCA. However, as the League expanded its scope of operation to include many programs and activities, to conduct business (stores operation), and hold property in sizeable amounts, this relationship became more and more cumbersome and complex. Furthermore, the activities of the IFL broadened to the point that the League was thought of as purely an industrial league, separate and distinct from any organization.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, formal action was taken by the Manufacturers' Association in July, 1919, to "divorce" the IFL from the YMCA. Certainly the YMCA had given the IFL a good moral and institutional base from which to grow.

Even before the divorce from the YMCA, there was a proposal of marriage to the FVFMBA which appeared in the League's minutes in March of 1919.<sup>2</sup> It was in the form of a letter read by IMA President L. E. Larson coming from Charles Hendricks of Buick Number 35 suggesting closer affiliation with the Vehicle Workers Club so as to supply an up-to-date recreational building suitable for all needs. The letter apparently caused considerable discussion.

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<sup>1</sup>Young and Tuttle, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, March 11, 1919, p. 231.



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Wise reacted by saying that the IFL was established to reach those unreached by the Vehicle Club or the YMCA. No more was mentioned of the two organizations until Wise spoke of a banquet to be held for the two groups later in the fall.<sup>1</sup>

However, in January of 1920 Wise referred to "coordinated efforts" being made between the IFL and FVFMBA.<sup>2</sup> He more than hinted that something was in the wind and as a result "it might take some time to finish the details of organization and revision of by-laws of IFL owing to this matter being considered." A special meeting was called to appoint a committee to act with the Vehicle Club and the Manufacturers' Association to develop plans for amalgamation.<sup>3</sup> Appointed to the committee were G. P. Toomy, Dort Motor Car Company; R. L. Pitcher, Chevrolet #4; L. E. Roberts, Flint Varnish Works; Merliss Brown, Buick #11; and Frank Bingham, Buick #6 and #7.

In the meantime Sobey had come to Flint and in November of 1919 made his first report to the executive board of the IFL concerning the School of Automotive Trades. He reported that 449 students were enrolled in classes and twenty-four teachers were engaged to handle the various courses.<sup>4</sup> Potter's Lake was beginning to attract larger crowds.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, October 14, 1919, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 13, 1920, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, IFL, January 23, 1920, p. 295.

<sup>4</sup>Minutes, IFL, November 18, 1919, p. 287.

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Picnics, boating, swimming, and dancing were popular activities. The cottages remained rented all summer and workers were seeking the right to build their own cabins near the lake. An option was taken on the 50-acre Haynes Farm. The price was \$16,200.

Again in 1920, as the result of the business slump, the Manufacturers' Association appropriated operational funds for the League.<sup>1</sup>

\$2,500 -- Improvements at Potter's Lake  
 \$1,000 -- Cottage upkeep  
 \$1,000 -- Seats, swings, etc.  
 \$1,500 -- Baseball equipment  
 \$1,500 -- Publicity  
 \$2,500 -- Stenographic and office expenses

This period of financial trouble stimulated much talk of consolidation.

Merger plans continued and a special meeting of the amalgamation committee made up of representatives from the FVFMBA, the Manufacturers' Association, and the IFL was conducted on March 10, 1921. J. Dallas Dort stated that he "heartily favored the amalgamation and wished to see it consummated." A motion was made that each committee should recommend to its respective body ratification of the consolidation. A vote was taken on what the name of the new association should be; it was agreed to call it the Industrial Benefit Association.

However, the IFL apparently was not in agreement, for C. M. Bullard, in the April 12 Executive Board meeting, made a motion that was carried to the effect that the IFL did not "desire to amalgamate with the FVFMBA at this time." The Manufacturers' Association continued sup-

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IFL, June 8, 1920, p. 311.

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porting the League and approved an allocation of \$7,200 for the next year. When doing so, they verbalized their praise of the IFL and its Work.

By 1922, it was obvious that pressure was being applied to force the merger. The economy was still weakened, and the Manufacturers had two organizations, each having a similar raison d'etre, under their wing and both of which were in financial difficulty. Robert Longway read a letter from the Manufacturers' to the IFL reflecting the amount of credit already extended. The letter proceeded to inform the League that it was to liquidate the \$25,000 account it had with the Manufacturers' at the rate of at least \$1,500 per month with interest.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this pressure and the FVFMBA's apparent willingness to merge, the IFL voted not to amalgamate. They discharged their study committee and directed the secretary to draft a communication to the FVFMBA explaining their negative posture on the matter.

Part of this decision was based on the fact that the factory stores were beginning again to make more profit. Much of this increase can be attributed to the close scrutiny given to the entire operation by Bullard, Chairman of the Stores Committee, as well as to the work of O. S. Farrar who was the new Stores manager, plus the new profit-making philosophy of operation and of course a general upswing in the economy.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, April 11, 1922, p. 378.

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Longway reported on April 11, 1922, that the League's profits for the year should approximate \$30,000.<sup>1</sup> Even after paying \$18,000 to the Manufacturers' and the interest on some other debts, it was projected that the League could deposit \$500 each month into a "sinking fund" which would still leave ample funds to carry on any activities not taken care of in the budget presented to the Manufacturers' Association.

In spite of the IFL's apparent wish to remain intact, more powerful forces were determining otherwise. On September 29, 1922, members of the Board of Trustees of the FVFMBA presented to the Executive Board of the IFL the resolution that the FVFMBA had adopted which in effect agreed "to amalgamate on whatever terms the Manufacturers' Association had worked out."<sup>2</sup>

A copy of that resolution follows:<sup>3</sup>

WHEREAS, It appears that at the present time there are two separate organizations, the Industrial Fellowship League and the Flint Vehicle Factories Mutual Benefit Association, both carrying on activities for the benefit of the workers in the Associated Factories of Flint, and

WHEREAS, The consolidation and amalgamation of the activities of the two organizations will make for greater business efficiency, expanded and developed service, and bring about provision for better housing facilities, therefore,

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes IFL, April 11, 1922, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IFL, September 29, 1922, p. 416.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, IFL, "Resolution of Amalgamation," September 29, 1922, p. 420.



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BE IT RESOLVED, That the Flint Vehicle Factories Mutual Benefit Association, by vote of its members, in special meeting assembled, according to Section 4, Article II of the By-Laws, hereby approve of the consolidation of the Flint Vehicle Factories Mutual Benefit Association with the Industrial Fellowship League, under one incorporate association, including amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws in conformity with said consolidation.

FLINT VEHICLE FACTORIES MUTUAL  
BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

(Signed) by Wm. F. MacLean  
Vice President

B. L. Odle  
Managing Secretary

SUMMARY

The IFL did much to instill a philosophy of concern for others among people in Flint. Through the medium of extension work, the Industrial Committee of the YMCA conceived means of enfranchising those newcomers and foreigners who hovered in the "North End."

While attending to its initial reason for existing, the IFL managed to expand its area of concern to include social and recreational programs. Through the granting of concession rights by the Manufacturers' Association, a durable financial base was established for the IFL.

With its incorporation as a legal body in the State of Michigan in 1917, and its formal separation from the YMCA in 1919, the groundwork was established for its eventual merger with the FVFMBA. However this did not take place until a solid financial and philosophical base of operation was established, and problems of the day forced the issue.

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## Chapter V

### THE FIRST DECADE OF THE IMA -- 1922 to 1932

#### Introduction

The initial ten years of the Industrial Mutual Association's development helped to set the tone and pace of the organization for the years to come. With the 1922 amalgamation official, the IMA set out to accomplish its corporate purpose of providing educational, recreational and charitable services for the mutual welfare of its members.

Before this period of time had ended, the IMA had survived a recession and depression, the demise of two of its original functions (banking and benefits), a world war, a threatened boycott of its revenue source, tax battles, and loss of its major educational endeavor--the automotive trade school.

As the result of these experiences, it is possible to study the IMA's struggle to establish for itself a viable domain in the Flint Community. Furthermore, it is possible to reconstruct the IMA's evolution into a formidable organization with great resiliency as it battled those forces which could have destroyed it.

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## FORMATION OF IMA

### Consolidation Efforts Increase

The IMA was formed at the insistence of the Manufacturers' Association of Flint which was serving as the parent body to both the IFL and the FVFMBA. As the parent or sponsoring body, the Manufacturers' Association officially acted in an advisory capacity, but with the ultimate power of assuring that certain things transpired.

At the crux of the amalgamation problem were several factors. First, the purposes of the two existing organizations were closely allied inasmuch as they provided services to the workers of Flint. Their basic approaches differed but their goals were the same. Second, the membership in both cases consisted of workers from the associated factories of Flint. Therefore, the two organizations were in competition for the same people. Third, the Manufacturers' Association had to counsel and advise with two organizations instead of one. Fourth, both organizations frequently needed the financial assistance of the parent body to remain operational.

In light of these considerations and the postwar downswing that Flint and the nation experienced at this time, it is very logical that the Manufacturers' forced a merger to take place in an attempt to consolidate efforts and resources and to provide one strong organization to service one membership. The September 29, 1922, minutes of the IFL show a copy of the official resolution which was sent to them

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by the FVFMBA:<sup>1</sup>

WHEREAS, It appears that at the present time there are two separate organizations . . . both carrying on activities for the benefit of workers . . .

WHEREAS, The consolidation and amalgamation of the two organizations will make the greater efficiency . . .

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Flint Vehicle Factories Mutual Benefit Association, by vote of its members, in special meeting assembled, according to Section 4, Article II of the By-Laws, hereby approve of the consolidation of the Flint Vehicle Factories Mutual Benefit Association with the Industrial Fellowship League, under one incorporate association, including amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws in conformity with said consolidation.

#### An Association Emerges

This resolution received the approval of the IFL. The first regular meeting of the IMA was held Tuesday evening, October 10, 1922, in the Second Avenue headquarters of the Association.<sup>2</sup> Dinner was served.

The agenda that evening concerned itself with financial reports of both organizations, the new Constitution and By-Laws were read and corrected, a nomination committee was appointed, trustees were appointed to act as tellers for the bank, which was continued from the FVFMBA, and a discussion of voting eligibility was held.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IFL, "Resolution of Amalgamation," September 29, 1922, p. 420.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Meeting," October 10, 1922.



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The nomination committee presented its slate that evening. R.T. Longway became the first president of the IMA; J. H. French was elected vice-president; J. W. Collins, secretary; and C. J. Hatfield, treasurer. It was further decided that the Board of Directors of the Workingman's Bank should be re-elected.

The Executive Committee also decided to appoint a committee to explore the possibility of renting space in the new Industrial Savings Bank Building, for while the amalgamation battle had been going on, plans were being drawn for a new Industrial Savings Bank for the city. Someone had the idea that if enough floors were added and they were properly designed, an excellent center for the IMA could be included. The architects were consulted and appropriate plans designed.

William E. Fellows, vice president of the Industrial Savings Bank, attended the initial meeting to give a resumé of the major details involving the rental of the top five floors. They could be rented at \$36,000 per year which figures out to 82¢ a square foot, as compared to the going rate in Flint of \$2.00 to \$2.50. These floors would provide approximately 50,000 square feet. The Industrial Savings Bank would furnish partitions and showers, but the IMA would have to provide the furnishings. The term of the lease was to be fifteen years, with provision for possible adjustments every five years. However, in a subsequent meeting it was agreed to lease the area for \$38,000 per year for the fifteen years with no five-year intervals to be considered.

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The official lease agreement between the Industrial Savings Bank and the IMA was entered into on October 16, 1923.

#### A Name Derived

The name Industrial Mutual Association was the result of a compromise between the two predecessor organizations. Originally the name was going to be the Industrial Benefit Association, but that resembled the name of the IFL too much. Furthermore, that name implied a rather narrow scope of concern. After considering many possibilities, the name IMA, which was more comprehensive and reflected favorably on both organizations, was selected.

At this point the IMA was established with ten factories represented. As with its predecessors, the IMA was conceived to accomplish two overriding tasks: 1) to provide humanistic services to its members; 2) to devise means of raising revenue to support these services. Formally stated, its official purpose reads:<sup>1</sup>

. . . to promote, foster and stimulate the mutual welfare of the employees of the Associated Factories of Flint, Michigan, socially, physically, mentally, and morally and to extend mutual relief to the members in cases arising from accident, sickness and death and to develop such enterprises as may be deemed necessary, the income from which shall be used to finance the aforesaid mutual welfare, recreational and educational service and the net earnings of which shall be devoted exclusively to charitable, educational or recreational purposes and no part of any such income received is to inure to the private benefit of any member or individual.

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<sup>1</sup> Articles of Incorporation of IMA, Article II, Section I, Public Acts of 1921.

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### Staff Procured

To accomplish these tasks a professional staff was necessary. However, the exact making of the administrative staff of the IMA in its early years is clouded. Sobey had been left in charge of the IFL when Wise resigned. It appears that no one was appointed managing secretary, but that Carl Hatfield, who had been elected treasurer, began to assume those responsibilities. In 1924 Hatfield was officially designated as the man in charge.<sup>1</sup>

The records make only minimal reference to the paid staff in these early years. It appears that much of the administration was accomplished through committees. Thus, it seems that the IMA evolved like most voluntary associations from a posture of shared commitment and involvement of its members to that of diminishing involvement and the eventual hiring of a professional staff.

With the retirement of Hatfield and the hiring of Ormund E. Rewey as managing secretary in 1926, the power and scope of the professional staff became more evident. Rewey became an integral part of the IMA for the next 34 years.

### Revenue Source Organized

The basic strength of the IMA is implanted deeply within its major source of revenue procurement -- concession rights in the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Clarence H. Young, Assistant Director, Manufacturers' Association of Flint, March 3, 1972.

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factories. The right to these concessions was granted to the IFL by the Manufacturers' Association in 1917, and carried over to the IMA through the amalgamation of 1922.

The granting of concession rights in the plants by the Manufacturers' Association in 1917 did not mean automatic success. Before the Stores worked on a profitable basis, there were many difficulties confronting the operation that had to be overcome. However, the potential for success was there.

One difficulty was the installation of the IMA Store. Who would give permission for the Store? Where would it be located? Who would run it? Who would audit it? What would it sell? Before these questions were answered, many inconsistencies occurred. Each plant trustee was originally responsible for inventorying the Stores, but often through sheer neglect irregularities appeared. Who was responsible for these shortages?

In addition to some of these comparatively mundane problems, it should be remembered that the IMA was born in the midst of the post-war depression which began in 1920 and forced General Motors to borrow 80-million dollars to stay afloat. It was not until February, 1923, that the gross sales (\$42,412) in the Stores for the month began to climb. This represented the best month's income in two years. With the economy on an apparent upswing and better accounting procedures being used, the monthly gross revenue from the Stores increased to \$61,624 by October, 1923. However, by 1924 the Stores' inventory was being reduced because



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of the "industrial depression" Flint was again experiencing. Although sales improved again, this business decline served as a harbinger of 1929.

One of the IMA's best hedges against losses in revenue was its ability to organize. A paper titled "General Procedure in Obtaining and Operating IMA Factory Stores" was produced. Buick set the pace for the other plants by allowing an "IMA man" to work full time in its larger Stores.

A major change in Store operations was begun in 1928 when the supply committee inspected "a machine capable of handling seven different kinds of bar candies, gum, etc." It was thought at the time that these might go well in plants too small to support full-fledged Stores. By 1930 the IMA was beginning to purchase "Hershey Bar and Peanut Vending" machines.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of 1929, with the real financial squeeze on, sales fell from \$46,556 in October to \$19,594 in November. Expenditures were curtailed, personnel was reduced, overtime was discontinued and the Stores' inventories were cut.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Stores Committee Report," February 11, 1930.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," November 12, 1929.

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## FORCES INTERVENE

### Difficulties Develop

To add to the financial woes in 1930, some local businessmen tried to stir up dissatisfaction through various store owners affiliated with the Home Defense League which had been organized statewide to combat chain stores. They wanted to boycott all the factories that permitted IMA Stores within their properties. The Stores were accused of selling "coal, made-to-measure clothing, washing machines, etc."<sup>1</sup>

This move must have been somewhat successful, for the IMA developed a list of authorized merchandise. The remaining stock was liquidated to keep from competing with local merchants. Despite this policy change, another group of businessmen along Industrial Avenue who called themselves the "north-end merchants" circulated petitions to close Buick's stores and cafeterias.

A full-blown public hearing, which is discussed later, was conducted by the Board of Review on Tax Assessment. The majority of merchants felt that the IMA was responsible for their present economic plight. They contended that main gates were kept closed so that the workers could no longer patronize their businesses, and that after work women picked the men up in cars and took them directly home.

By the end of 1930, there were 48 Stores in operation:

Buick, 35; Armstrong, 1; Dupont, 1; Marvel, 1; AC Spark Plug, 2 and

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Supply Committee Report," September 9, 1930.

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Chevrolet, 8. The total sales for the year were approximately a quarter of a million dollars.

In 1932, the number of Stores operating dropped from 48 to 42. The Stores Department assumed the responsibility of operating the commissary for the Welfare Department. It was decided that by July 1, 1932, each factory would operate its own Stores along with its welfare and insurance programs. This recommendation came from the Manufacturers' Association in an attempt to reduce the IMA's overhead during the crisis of the depression. Thus the IMA was to cut its activities accordingly and reduce its personnel.

By July, 1932, Store sales had dropped to \$7,870.13 per month, and the Stores' net profit was only 50% of that of the previous year. This, of course, reflected the unemployment of the time.

### IRS Intervenes

When the IFL came into existence in 1915, it immediately became plagued with income tax problems. These problems were partially the result of the many unknowns that existed at that time in relation to the recently created tax law itself. For it had been signed into law for the first time on October 3, 1913, by President Woodrow Wilson.<sup>1</sup> Another reason for the tax difficulty was the unique structure of the IFL itself which the IRS never quite saw as a true non-profit organization.

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<sup>1</sup>Charles J. Gaa, "Income Tax," The World Book Encyclopedia, 1967 ed., Vol. X, p. 88.

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Thus, the IMA had not been in operation very long before it found itself being confronted by the IRS. The January 9, 1923, minutes of the IMA show that James Farber, Executive Secretary of the Manufacturers' Association, and an attorney were in Washington, D. C. before the Court of Appeals seeking an income tax exemption in order to avoid a tax payment of \$30,000 which had been accumulating since 1919 when the IRS assumed the posture that the IFL, and later the IMA, were subject to income tax.

Despite Farber's appeal, the following year, 1924, another tax bill was received. On advice from their attorney, the IMA decided not to make payment until seizure of their property was threatened, for this seemed to be the only recourse that would constitute a legal protest. However, the work of Farber and the Manufacturers' Association was not in vain for in 1924, Article VIII, Section 231 of the Mellon Tax Law was amended so that the IMA was exempted as one of the following:<sup>1</sup>

. . . local associations of employees, the membership of which is limited to the employees of a designated person or persons in a particular municipality, and the net earnings of which are devoted exclusively to charitable, educational and recreational purposes . . .

Following this amendment, Farber warned the Trustees not to do anything that would violate the language of the law and thus

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special By-Laws Committee Report," February 6, 1925.



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jeopardize the IMA's exemption claim. They were further reminded that:<sup>1</sup>

. . . this particular article was drafted at our request and after unlimited work had been done by this organization and its friends in Congress with the assistance of various organizations, it was incorporated in the 1924 Income Tax Law which was finally passed by both Houses and signed by the President. If you will remember, this particular section was once thrown out by the Senate Committee and later reinstated at the eleventh hour and made part of the bill.

Prior to the Federal tax amendment, the Association had been forced to pay the IRS some \$10,000, and even after the new amendment was in effect the Tax Commissioner held the IMA liable for a payment of \$5,964. The battle continued with the IMA seeking a full refund by filing its constitution and by-laws with the United States Treasury Department along with affidavits based on the by-laws and the 1924 Tax Act. The IMA also let it be known that if refunds were not granted within six months, court suits would be initiated in an effort to recover their monies.

In 1925 the IRS attempted to settle, but the IMA refused because they would not relinquish the right "to take the entire case into court at some later date." This initial battle was concluded in 1928 when the IMA received a check from the IRS for \$5,964 illegally collected income tax for the years 1918-1921.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., February 6, 1925.

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This was only one of two types of tax battles with which the IMA was confronted during this decade and which continued to harass it through the years. The second battle centered on property tax.

#### Local Board Intervenes

During the depression the IMA was forced into a public hearing before the City's Board of Review concerning their property tax assessment. The issue was instigated by a previously mentioned small group of businessmen on Industrial Avenue across from the Buick plants who felt that the IMA Stores, not the general depression, were responsible for their present plight. Therefore they were protesting the rent-free status and the lack of property tax assessment on the in-plant stores.<sup>1</sup>

At the hearing Rewey, the Managing Secretary, assured everyone that the IMA Stores would not undersell the stores in the city, nor would they compete by selling items other than those of "immediate use and necessity to men while working."

Present at the Board of Review hearing were all of the IMA Trustees. Flint's controversial mayor, William McKeighan, presided. The result was a precedent-setting victory for the Association, for McKeighan lavishly praised the efforts of the IMA. He verbalized the great advantages which the City of Flint and its citizens had as the result of the great work of the Association. He expounded on the theme

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," May 9, 1931.

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that the city had reaped greater profits than it ever could deliver if the IMA were forced into paying taxes. McKeighan considered only whether or not the IMA should pay taxes and did not rule on whether it was unfairly competing with the local merchants.

The outcome of the hearing was summarized by this statement:<sup>1</sup>

We find the IMA is an organization of the finest purpose in the City of Flint; that it affects over 33,000 citizens of the city; that they have supplied the necessities of life to the poor in times of distress; that their activity in the field of charity, recreation, education, etc., by far surpasses that of any charitable organization in Flint; that the organization suffered financial loss last year in its operation . . . that personal property tax imposed on them would be of less significance and importance than the benefits derived at this time from the IMA.

Another critical battle was won and the IMA had established itself more firmly, but the tax war continued through the years.

### ORGANIZATION DELINEATED

#### Functions Defined

The amalgamation process was never intended to discredit the work and efforts of the FVFMBA and the IFL, but to consolidate their strengths into a more effective unit. Therefore the IMA continued to sponsor and promote many of the same activities as before. It was basically organized with two divisions:

1. The Benefit Department from the FVFMBA which specialized in insurance, benefits and banking.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," May 11, 1931.

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2. The recreational, educational and merchandising section which was largely from the IFL.

Thus, one division continued to process claims involving insurance benefits and to administer the Workmen's Mutual Bank, while the other part continued to promote recreation, education and the factory Stores.

### BENEFIT DEPARTMENT

#### Program Continues

The original purpose of the FVFMBA when it was founded in 1901 was that of providing benefit programs for the workers in the Associated Factories of Flint. This move in Flint preceded the first workman's compensation policy (1910) by nine years, and the first employees' group life insurance plan (1911) by ten years.<sup>1</sup> When the amalgamation took place in 1922, the Benefit Department formed the major component transferred from the FVFMBA, and services went on as usual.

For tax purposes, one of the first changes in the By-Laws was replacing the word insurance with benefit. The purpose of this was to make it perfectly clear to the IRS that the IMA was not in the high profit insurance business, but was strictly a non-profit benefit association. The non-profit aspect became perfectly clear very soon, for

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<sup>1</sup>Irving Pfeffer, "Insurance," The World Book Encyclopedia, 1967 ed., Vol. X, p. 242.



the incidence of illness soon forced a deficit in the Benefit Department. For instance, in the month of January, 1923, \$22,308 was paid out in benefits. This amounted to a deficit of \$2,808. By June of that year, the deficit had grown to \$43,477.

### Dort Returns

Dort came to one of the early Executive Board meetings to reminisce about the early days of the FVFMBA and also to suggest why the present Association might be experiencing losses. He put forth the thought that the organization perhaps was not adjusting enough to compensate for the advancing average age of its members, for up to this time the only notable adjustments were these:<sup>1</sup>

1. Increase in waiting period from five (5) to seven (7) days.
2. "Female members shall only receive benefits for disability common to both sexes."
3. Benefits would be paid for only thirteen (13) weeks in any twelve (12) - month period.
4. If a worker were laid off, he could continue payments into the Benefit Association for three (3) months so that he could have extended protection while seeking re-employment.

Dort suggested that an expert be called in to study the situation.

Acting favorably on Dort's advice, the IMA called in J. H. Woodward, a consulting actuary from New York, to see why there was an excess outgo of 30% over the dues paid. He found these major

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Benefit Department Report," July 16, 1923.

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factors: advancing age of employees, epidemics, changing of jobs and loosening up in claims administration.

His recommendations to put the Benefit Department back on its feet were: (1) an increase in dues; (2) payment only for the difference between workman's compensation and the benefits due; (3) payment of only those claims for which the department is liable.

To help facilitate these recommendations a visiting nurse, Miss Leinbach, was hired to assist in investigating claims. She joined the social worker, John Ehl, and the Association's doctor in this capacity. An indication of their service is shown by the number of home calls made from November 7 to November 30, 1923. John Ehl made 262 calls and Miss Leinbach, 319. The year 1923 ended with a 100% increase over the previous year's claims--7525 compared to 3751.<sup>1</sup>

### Prevention Introduced

Another tack considered by the Association to reduce claims and render a valuable service to its members was a preventive medicine program. Much of this work was done through lectures in the shops and through the IMA News, the magazine for the factory worker. The manager of the Benefit Department made personal calls on factory authorities to review health and accident reports in hopes of bettering health conditions in the factories. These meetings revealed that many of the

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Benefit Department Report," November 13, 1923.

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factories did not require a pre-employment physical examination and that because of the large turnover of workers, follow-up physicals in the plants were nearly impossible. However, this new procedure, drawing health concerns to the attention of the factory managers, caused more and more attention to be focused on "health conservation" within the plant.

This more conscientious approach brought about quite a change in the Benefit Department. Instead of another deficit, the January, 1936, report showed \$307,224 collected and \$183,774 paid in benefits, with 26,829 enrolled in the program. The factory workers of Flint had been recipients of \$1,923,867 from the date of the inception of the benefit program in 1901.

In continued effort to honor only justifiable claims, it was advertised in the IMA News that those claims signed by chiropractors and Christian Science practitioners would not be allowed. Members found to have made fraudulent claims were denied future membership.

#### Group Insurance Initiated

The Benefit Department continued to prosper and provide valuable services to its members for several years, but in 1928 its gradual demise began, for General Motors instituted a group insurance plan. General Motors began by paying the IMA 10¢ per month per person to administer the plan. The GM Insurance, through Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, offered \$2,000 of life insurance with a

health and accident benefit of \$15 per week at a cost to the worker of \$1.50 per month. J. H. French, President of IMA, investigated to see whether this insurance plan could be extended to factories outside of General Motors if they were IMA affiliates. He found it was necessary for the IMA to continue the existing benefit plan for those not employed by General Motors.

During the first ten months of the new GM Insurance Plan, \$301,674 was paid for health and accident claims. Unfortunately, in 1930 Dupont decided to handle its own benefit deductions. With the depression on, any reduction in revenue was strongly felt. The status of the IMA Benefit Department is summarized as follows: Overall, \$1,703.85 was lost in 1930; there were seven factories with 1,627 employees, of whom 1,172, or 72%, made up the membership, from whom \$972.65 had been received in dues in March, with \$1,005.34 paid out. However, a 1931 report shows that \$350,449.43 was left in the Benefit Reserve Fund which had been built up through the years. Now with only 697 persons left in the plan as various factories gradually added their own departments, all but \$8,328.40 of this money was transferred to the General Reserve Account.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1932 saw the closing of the IMA Benefit Department. This happened as the result of GM's transferring its insurance administration entirely to its Personnel Departments. The Audit Department of the IMA now handled any benefit claims which arose. Thus, a valuable

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," March 11, 1931.

and innovative service which had assisted thousands of Flint factory workers ended, but not before it had evolved and resulted in a better way for the people of Flint.

### BANKING

#### An Unsuccessful Venture

The IMA inherited, as part of the merger, the Workingman's Mutual Bank. It had been capitalized at \$50,000, with its stock owned by the FVFMBA itself. The bank's primary reasons for being were to encourage workers to save by paying interest on savings, and make small loans to persons who could not get conventional loans because of their lack of collateral.

Once the IMA came upon the scene, the banking venture became turbulent and short-lived. Perhaps this difficulty was partially the result of the By-Laws which had established the Workingman's Mutual Bank as a separate organization quite independent in its operation and relationship to the IMA. The bank functioned by its own rules!

Although it had been established primarily to serve factory workers in Flint, it did carry some accounts with persons outside the plants. In one instance a commercial loan was made to a company with a resultant loss of money and bank manager! The bank was ordered to discontinue having any "outside paper", for it might lead to difficulties with the IRS.

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To counteract these deficiencies, the bank directors ordered a study of the Morris Plan which had been instituted around the country as a way of lending money to people who owned no property but needed financial assistance and at the same time protection from "loan sharks."<sup>1</sup> Despite these efforts, the bank operation came under pressure from some of the IMA Trustees. Bank President, Fred Weiss admitted that the bank had lost money, but he countered by citing the great amount of good it had accomplished among the needy factory workers. Weiss then challenged the critical trustees to make the motion that the bank be discontinued. When no such motion was forthcoming, he made it himself. In the discussion before the question was called for, Weiss again expounded on the reason why the bank had been established and on the good that it had done. He pointed out that 75% of the loans made were for first payments on homes. Trustee Henry Trembly asserted that the bank was acting more like a welfare service than a bank, but he also pointed out how this bank was in better shape than many similar institutions. Weiss and the bank received nearly unanimous support.

Despite this vote of approval, a special committee on banking was formed for the purpose of making the bank function like the other departments of the IMA. All benefit funds of the Benefit Association were ordered withdrawn from the bank, and a Savings and Loan Department was established.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Bank Directors Report," May 3, 1923.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Benefit Department Report," January 2, 1924.

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### Philosophies Clash

The difficulty here closely paralleled that experienced by the Stores' Department in the days before the merger. Those administering the bank had not seen themselves there to make money, but to serve for the good that they could provide people! This same beautiful philosophy carried over to the newly formed Savings and Loan Department. The result was the same. Inasmuch as its funds were frequently tied up in delinquent notes, additional funds were requested from the Association.

As the consequence of this type of operation, the Chairman of the Savings and Loan Department was ordered to prepare a plan to dispose of the Department to an outside interest. On May 1, 1924, the Savings and Loan Department was discontinued and its assets liquidated.<sup>1</sup>

### WELFARE

#### A Need is Met

The third major function of the Benefit Department came into existence as General Motors began to feel the crunch of the "great depression" in 1929. As has been noted, the IMA decided to get into the welfare business for the benefit of its members who had great needs at this particular point in time -- 1930.

As unemployment increased, it became apparent that welfare

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, Board of Trustees Report, "April 8, 1924.

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services in excess of those being provided at the County level were needed. Many persons, including employers, were concerned about the inadequate care that factory workers often received during such periods of misfortune. Therefore, the decision was made, in keeping with the purpose of the By-Laws, for the IMA "to administer actual welfare to employees in time of need."<sup>1</sup> The suggested plan was really an expansion of the welfare program being conducted at the Chevrolet Plants. The program required each participant to contribute a small amount weekly, with the employer contributing a like sum.

On September 24, 1930, with John Collins serving as Welfare Director of the IMA, a welfare plan was adopted. It required each factory to maintain its own welfare section and to control its own policies. The factory Welfare Committee determined the eligibility of one of its workers, compiled some basic background data and then referred such a person to the IMA's newly created Welfare Department for closer scrutiny and recommended action. This function was relatively easy for the IMA inasmuch as it already had social workers on its staff and also had certain facilities such as a warehouse which helped expedite the operation. Thus it was that each factory controlled its own welfare fund, but the IMA dispensed commodities through its own supply department.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Welfare Committee," September 18, 1930.

MEMBERSHIP MANDATEDMemberships Combined

In the planning of this welfare operation, a major point of controversy within the IMA centered on whether employees should be able to have a welfare membership separately or must have it in combination with the Club membership. With approximately 35% of all factory workers living outside the City of Flint, and in light of the extreme shortage of funds, it was felt that many workers might opt to neglect to pay for the Club membership. Therefore, the recommendation was made by the IMA's Executive Committee that approval of a combined membership be sought for these reasons:<sup>1</sup>

1. The IMA was financially hurt by the adoption of the General Motors Group Insurance Plans.
2. The depression was greatly reducing the factory store sales and attendance at revenue-producing activities, while at the same time the IMA had expanded its free and nearly-free events because 'the trustees and staff feel that during a period of this sort the IMA should be doing its greatest service in trying to keep up the spirit of the workers.
3. The new auditorium and the IMA News were also creating weekly expenses.

The recommendation further stated that twice the present membership could be provided with recreation if such a method of financing were approved, so that the welfare program rather than further impairing the function of the IMA, actually strengthened it. This

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<sup>1</sup> "The IMA News," Auditorium Souvenir Number, September 12, 1929, p. 7.



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allowed the IMA to continue advancing the "all-around" welfare of all factory workers and their families .

The financing finally agreed upon required a payroll deduction of 15 cents a week. Five cents of this went to the welfare fund; however, by October, 1930, the cost of active membership in the IMA, which was mandatory for welfare assistance, was increased to \$7.50 per year of which \$2.50 went to the welfare fund and the remainder to the Club to support the other activities and services. Meanwhile, the Manufacturers' Association sometimes contributed matching funds to the welfare fund as needed.

For the first and only time in the IMA's history, membership became mandatory. At this point in the IMA's development, membership for all practical purposes became a condition of employment. This requirement was mandated so that money could be accumulated to support the much-needed welfare program. A worker could disassociate himself from membership only by getting the signature of his particular IMA Trustee on an official withdrawal form. This issue of membership had implications for both the union and taxation problems which were still to confront the IMA.

#### Assistance Given

Monetary assistance was not given to needy persons except in unusual instances, with efforts centering around the giving of fuel, clothing, foodstuffs and counseling services. The program functioned



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in close cooperation with city and county agencies which were being overwhelmed by the number of requests for services.

One of the first functions of the Welfare Department was to fill the urgent need for children's clothing so that they could return to school as soon as possible. The decision to stock and dispense food in the IMA warehouse proved wise, for the dollars went farther and there was a minimum of criticism from local merchants.<sup>1</sup> This lack of criticism was also the result of the IMA's allowing local merchants to dispense coal, clothing, meats and medicine.

After servicing the initial rush, the welfare staff attempted to help families help themselves in as many cases as possible in order to reduce the total case load. A major function of the IMA News during this period was to assist with this educational effort by featuring tips on frugality.

By January, 1931, nine staff members plus part-time help were providing services to 1,150 families. The rate of increase at this point approximated twenty new cases a day. About 200 orders per day were being filled.<sup>2</sup> Another and unique service offered at no cost to the worker was legal service offered by Lyle S. Church, a Flint attorney.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Welfare Report," January 8, 1931.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Welfare Report," January 8, 1931.

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The 1931 annual report shows that 2,822 home calls were made during the year and 1,300 families were serviced.<sup>2</sup> Groceries cost about 75¢ per person per week; 1,100 children received clothing and footwear. 2,000 tons of coal were delivered. The financial records of the IMA Welfare Department appear as follows:<sup>3</sup>

Welfare Fund

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Balance in Fund 1 January, 1931        | \$ 1,951.58      |
| Received from welfare dues             | 74,072.77        |
| Received from employers' contributions | <u>19,017.53</u> |
|  | \$ 91,138.72     |

Disbursements

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| Food          | \$ 55,506.45     |
| Fuel          | 10,719.67        |
| Clothing      | 2,681.71         |
| Cash          | 1,514.68         |
| Miscellaneous | <u>11,375.38</u> |
|               | \$ 81,797.89     |

Balance \$ 9,340.83

The Welfare Department's annual report covering 1931 shows a considerable increase in the number of families cared for--3,285.<sup>2</sup> The cost for administering and operating this department for that year was \$6,428, but none of this came from the fund itself. From its inception, all operating expenses were paid for by the Manufacturers' Association so that the entire welfare fund was freed for welfare work.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Benefit and Welfare Department Report," January 11, 1932.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Benefit and Welfare Department Report," January 11, 1932.

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In 1932, the IMA distributed vegetable seeds and gave cash prizes for the best gardens. This proved popular and there were many seekers. Approximately 800 families were being served.<sup>1</sup> The November, 1932, report of the Benefit and Welfare Committee shows that 2,700 bushels of potatoes, 4 tons of oleo, 818 tons of coal and many other items were dispensed in October.

### Controls Imposed

A major change transpired in May, 1932, when, as the result of severe financial problems, the Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association directed that many departments and activities of the IMA be eliminated. Furthermore, the IMA was advised to administer only those functions that could not be transferred elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

Due to these changes, the Committee recommends that your association adjust its affairs accordingly. It is understood that this will necessitate the reduction of your personnel and some of your activities.

The IMA was further informed that all welfare activities would become the sole responsibility of each factory with the IMA serving only as a commissary. As Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal" came into effect and federal assistance became available to factory workers, the IMA got out of the welfare field. The year was 1934.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Benefit and Welfare Department Report," April 12, 1932.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Letter from Manufacturers' Association," May 19, 1932.

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## THE CLUB

### Facilities Described

Meanwhile another aspect of the IMA was thriving. The perpetuation of "The Club" received a high priority. With the procurement of the new bank facility in hand, the Club's development became the focal point of the Association, and did much to help the IMA establish a permanent domain in the community.

For all practical purposes, the Club encompassed the top six floors of the new building plus the rooftop. This represented a big step forward for the IMA as now there was adequate space to program activities fully for members and their families. This Club was not only expansive, but was plush in the sense that it was both well-planned and lavishly furnished. Certainly it must have been impressive to the average factory worker whose standard of living at that time did not allow for the well-decorated, well-furnished homes of many today. The impact of these facilities and their long-term effect on the viability of the IMA were important enough to warrant a brief description of the new facility.

The seventh floor consisted of classrooms for the growing School of Automotive Trades. It also had several parlors where people could comfortably entertain themselves and their guests. Eight bowling alleys helped keep this floor near capacity much of the time. There



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were also a gymnasium, social hall, dining room with an electric grill, shower and dressing rooms, and a checkroom.

The eighth floor contained eight more bowling alleys, a popular billiard room and a small auditorium used for dances and various social functions.

The ninth floor housed the IMA's general offices opening off a large lobby. With a marble counter and bronze grillwork, it had a bank-like appearance. Eight more bowling alleys were on this level, along with a refreshment stand and another parlor and checkroom. There were windows behind which an information clerk, a Club clerk, the Benefit Department, and private offices operated.

The tenth floor was very popular inasmuch as it housed a ring for boxers and wrestlers, and a cigar and refreshment stand.

The eleventh floor was a prized possession of the Association. It contained a large and lavishly furnished lounge. It had reading rooms for both men and women. But the most popular facility was the 60' x 90' fully-equipped gymnasium encircled by a balcony containing a cork floor running track which doubled as seating space for spectators.

The twelfth floor boasted a well-equipped kitchen and a large dining room which was open to serve the members.

The roof was even utilized in an aesthetically spectacular way. Its tile promenade, with a large parapet wall around the front

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and sides, protected the people enjoying the atmosphere. To complete the metropolitan roof-garden effect, it was embellished with porch boxes, hanging baskets and palms.

### Activities Thrive

An anonymous writer in an unpublished report praised the management of this facility for being diplomatic, prudent and efficient in its operation:<sup>1</sup>

It (the management) exercised wise discretion in arranging and furnishing the club and in selecting activities that appealed to the largest possible number of people. It also was a place of considerable dignity, especially when the background of the average member is considered, and was never a rough house or place of immoral conduct.

This same source told of the Club serving everyone from the highest to the lowest class in a true "melting pot" atmosphere where cliques did not form, but true fraternization took place. Nor were the Club facilities and activities monopolized by any one group.

The income to support this excellent establishment came from membership dues of \$5.00 per year. Admission was charged only for special events. There were charges for bowling and billiards. Some money was brought in from the refreshment stands, but because of the low prices, profits were minimal.

During the three-day Open House held in September of 1923, 36,000 attended. Saturday night attendance at the Club from then on

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished Report (on file in office of IMA), Flint, Michigan.

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averaged 3,000 to 5,000 persons.<sup>1</sup> It was truly the social center for Flint area employees and their families. The Club slogan -- SOME-PLACE TO GO IN FLINT -- was not an empty phrase!<sup>2</sup>

### THE AUDITORIUM

#### Demand Dictates Expansion

By the mid-1920's the IMA found itself in the position that James Thompson, in his book Organizations in Action, described as an association with "excess capacity." In such cases these organizations often diversify so that in actuality they expand their facilities or services. The result is an enlarged domain.<sup>3</sup>

In the IMA's case this domain enlargement was the result of the popularity of the activities being offered by the Association. However, the resultant overflow crowds threatened by sheer numbers to affect the quality of activities. This in turn threatened the IMA with the need to expand despite its "excess capacity."

With crowds being turned away because of inadequate space, the IMA faced the alternative of failing to service large masses of people and dealing with their dissatisfactions or getting into the auditorium business, for Flint, a city of 156,000 people was without a civic auditorium.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," October 9, 1923.

<sup>2</sup> Jack Petrill, After the Whistle Blows, (New York: The Williams-Frederick Press, 1949), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> James D. Thompson, Organizations in Action, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 37.

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In September, 1927, the Board of Trustees chose the latter course and took an option on the 210,000 square foot Randall Lumber Company grounds for a price of \$200,000.<sup>1</sup>

#### Plans Underway

Early in 1928, a special Auditorium Building Committee was formed for the purpose of planning, contracting, and seeing the construction of the Auditorium through to the finish. This committee became very active, first undertaking visitations to cities such as Cleveland and Minneapolis to view and learn about their auditoriums. It is interesting to note, in light of later events, the fact that the committee decided very early that this structure would not contain ice skating facilities. One of its early basic decisions was to construct a 1,000-seat facility with a floor surface of 90 feet by 150 feet to be bordered on one end by a 50 by 90 foot stage.<sup>2</sup> Six leading architects and engineers from throughout the nation were granted thirty-minute audiences with the committee to detail their concepts of the facility and also the cost factor.

In April of 1928, the architectural contract for the Auditorium was let to Smith, Hinchman and Grylls. By June, they presented their tentative plans calling for an Italian Romanesque styled exterior of

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," September 19, 1927.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Auditorium Committee Report," March 6, 1928.



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brick and precast stone. The lower levels were to have lounges, concession stands, alcoves, checkrooms, and offices.

The wings on each side of the stage would have three levels. The first floor would contain a medical examination room, training room, steam room, receiving area, ushers' lounge, and a maintenance office. Locker and shower rooms were to be on the next floor with the third floor housing dressing rooms for theater groups.

If constructed, this fine auditorium, with a planned seating capacity of 6,266, would be the second largest structure of its kind in Michigan. The balcony was to contain permanent upholstered opera seats whereas the main floor was to have portable upholstered seats that could be moved for certain events. The building was to be acoustically treated and nearly fireproof. It was to have an excellent ventilation system, and be well equipped.<sup>1</sup>

### Construction Begun

These plans were approved and by September of 1928, the Randall Lumber Company buildings were being razed or moved for future IMA use. Sollit and Sons of South Bend, Indiana, was awarded the general contract with the agreement that they would use local labor and operate under closed shop rules. J. H. French, President of the IMA, broke the ground for the new building on a rainy Sunday morning

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<sup>1</sup>The IMA News, Auditorium Souvenir Number, September 12, 1929, p. 5.

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in October. The completion date was set for July 1, 1929. Mr. Hotel-ling of Buick was to serve one to two hours each day, at no cost to the IMA, as the IMA's inspector of the new building.<sup>1</sup>

### Auditorium Opens

The cornerstone of the Auditorium was laid on July 15, 1929. Thirty separate items were enclosed in a copper box in the cornerstone. A partial listing shows such sundry articles as these:<sup>2</sup>

- Photos of Messrs. Dort and Bassett
- Copies of Auditorium Committee Meetings
- Small Bible
- United States Flag
- Photo of Randall Lumber Company site
- Photos of Auditorium construction progress
- Copies of IMA News
- Names and addresses of IMA Trustees
- Descriptive booklet on IMA
- IMA By-Laws
- An insurance policy of FVFMBA issued to Arthur Lolle, 1908
- Membership report
- Report on store sales -- 1929
- Names of past presidents of IMA
- Complete financial statement as of June 30, 1929

During the ceremony, Ray Brownell, Mayor of Flint and former President of the FVFMBA, and Forrest Boswell, Director of Personnel at Buick, spoke on the "Past, Present and Future of the IMA." The Buick Experimental Band performed for the momentous occasion.

The Auditorium was an immediate success. Managing Secretary, Ormund Rewey, was given the authority to use his judge-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Auditorium Committee Report," July 20, 1929.

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ment in booking attractions and renting the facility. Rates were to be attractive so as to "build good clientele" and attract the masses to the Auditorium; thus the IMA was further contributing to the cultural, recreational and social well-being of the Flint community. So, most events were scheduled at a "popular price" on the theory that it is better to serve more people such as 6,000 at \$1.00 each than 2,000 or 3,000 at \$2.00 each. As the result of such thinking and excellent programming, the IMA Auditorium became and remains a landmark in Flint and Genesee County.

The total cost of the Auditorium was \$1,196,751 and was financed through accumulated funds, a 6 percent \$600,000 ten-year bond issue, plus a \$90,000 loan from the Union Industrial Savings Bank.<sup>1</sup> The IMA voted to put \$5,000 per month in a sinking fund toward bond retirement. Little did anyone realize what the next decade would bring! However, certain precautions had been taken.

#### Unusual Controls Established

With the great depression about to descend on Flint and the nation, a curious happenstance took place in view of the large debt incurred by the IMA in building this grand edifice. The Advisory Committee to the IMA from the Manufacturers' Association directed the IMA to appoint a committee to act as trustees for the time it would take to liquidate the indebtedness. These trustees would act only in

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," July 11, 1929.

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the event of financial difficulty during which time they were to be in control of the entire Board of Trustees. The rationale of this was that it would serve as protection to the IMA in the event of any new Boards being selected which did not have the same knowledge and understanding of the problem as the current one had.<sup>1</sup>

This arrangement presented an ideal study of hierarchy and oligarchy at work. The motivation for this action appeared to be that of seeking as much closure as possible in the organization. All this happened without the knowledge of the membership at large which, for the most part, seemed contented with the overall operation.

### RECREATION

#### Programs Boom

Recreation was a natural contribution for the IMA to make, for its predecessors had placed much emphasis on its importance. Thus recreation immediately became a vital part of the new Association. This is demonstrated by the enlisting of 7,751 persons in the 1923 recreational membership that was promoted to "stress friendliness among members."

As the working day shortened, the IMA girded itself for the increased need for leisure-time activity among its workers. The major thrust, of course, was the acquisition of ideal club facilities in the

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," July 11, 1929.



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new Industrial Savings Bank Building, the continuing development of the rural Potter's Lake resort facility, the building of the large Auditorium, and the acquisition of Athletic Park located immediately behind the Auditorium. With these facilities in operation, the IMA entered into a unique type of industrial recreation inasmuch as it not only conducted a program for all its members, but was also responsible for in-plant recreation as determined by the various plants.

Immediately after the new Club facilities were occupied, the crowds arrived to make use of the gymnasiums, bowling alleys and club rooms, with the many activities programmed in them. The Recreation Director at this time was Bill Power. Monday night saw the gymnasium scheduled for the girls, and Wednesday, for the men. Tuesdays and Thursdays were reserved for formal classes and inter-factory basketball. Shop parties and entertainment were booked on Fridays, with special features such as boxing and wrestling being lined up for Saturdays. Sunday found the gyms open all day. Likewise, the bowling alleys remained filled, and by 1926, there was discussion of renting the seventh floor to install more alleys.<sup>1</sup>

The Minutes of January 4, 1923, show that the IMA was seeking ten men with bowling ability and "natural disposition" to make them "harmonize" into a team to represent the IMA in the American Bowling Congress Tournament.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," May 10, 1926.

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Another popular recreational activity during the early days of the IMA was Sunday shows presented by the Redpath Lyceum Bureau. For instance, in 1927 the Recreation Committee contracted for fourteen programs for a price of \$1,725.

Also about this time, the IMA decided to get a license to promote its own boxing shows. During the next few years, this along with wrestling proved to be a major attraction.

In 1926, Managing Secretary Hatfield was directed to organize a first-class basketball team to represent the IMA.<sup>1</sup> However, by 1928, this promotion left the Association faced with an \$11,000 deficit, so it was decided to discontinue professional basketball in favor of concentrating on inter-factory games instead. This is interesting in light of another professional promotion attempted by the new Recreation Director, Oscar G. Hendrian, who got into difficulty as the result of forming "Flint's Own Football Team".<sup>2</sup> The IMA refused to accept any responsibility for deficits incurred and Hendrian himself was instructed to play no more professional football. This led to his dismissal in the same year, with the position being held open until further notice.

### Petrill Arrives

These examples are significant, inasmuch as they not only

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," October 11, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," November 24, 1926.

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set the stage for the IMA's future philosophy in promoting athletics, but resulted in the June, 1928, hiring of a young man, Jack Petrill, as the new Recreational Director. Petrill, a native of New York, came to Flint from community center work in Detroit. He had an excellent background in recreational work and made a great contribution to the IMA and its members.

Petrill earnestly began promoting recreational activities geared to the worker. Crowds were so large that a starter had to be hired to help move crowds up and down in the elevators. Petrill further showed the IMA's new outlook on professionalism by disapproving the importation of baseball players "who are carried on the payroll just for ball with no intention of working alongside others." A motion was passed that a player must be an IMA member at least 90 days prior to playing baseball.

One of Petrill's loves was the training of young men in boxing. They formed the IMA team and traveled to such places as Grand Rapids and Gary, Indiana, putting on their excellent shows.

Petrill's report of November 12, 1929, gives one some idea as to the scope of the recreation program. There were co-recreational activities in modern dancing, clogging and tap, art instruction, dramatics, archery and others. Women's activities centered on gym programs, reducing, natural dancing, basketry and reed work, gift-making and sewing, glee club and artcraft. Children's offerings included dancing, clogging, craft and dramatics.

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Petrill also established recreational programs for persons who chose not to partake in the more athletic types of activities---a series of lectures on "The History of Civilization," a Literary Club, a Coin and Stamp Club, a Checkers and Chess Club, and an Applied Psychology Discussion Club. The enrollment in these activities was over 300.

#### Mass Activities in Auditorium

With the completion of the IMA Auditorium in 1929, the Recreational Department was able to schedule major indoor events for the first time. Thus, by 1931 the Club membership was 32,704 as people massed to the Auditorium for such productions as "The Rocket," a stage play put on by the IMA's hundred-member drama class.<sup>1</sup> The Auditorium became "Flint's dance center." It continued as such for many years. Sunday vaudeville averaged 12,000 persons per performance. 4,000 children attended the Christmas party.

In view of what took place approximately 35 years later in relation to ice hockey, it is interesting to recall that in 1929 the IMA received a letter from the Toronto Maple Leaf Hockey Club proposing that the Association sponsor professional hockey in Flint. Another overture was made by the American Basketball Association which offered the IMA a franchise for their beautiful new Auditorium which was formally opened in September of 1929. Both offers were rejected.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," March 5, 1931.



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### Athletic Park Acquired

In June of 1928, the City of Flint received \$100,000 from the IMA for the purchase of Athletic Park, a four-acre site immediately behind where the new Auditorium was being constructed. This became a major acquisition for the Association and provided its membership with--<sup>1</sup>

. . . as good a baseball diamond as can be found in the state outside of Detroit. Three thousand spectators can find places in the grandstand and several thousand more can be cared for on temporary bleachers. Ample space is available for football and soccer fields with adequate seating space left over. Plans are now underway for the laying of a quarter-mile track, so the factory track meets which have become so popular during the last two years may be conducted . . . Commodious dressing rooms, lockers, and showers are conveniently located under the grandstand. At the present time baseball, boxing and wrestling in the summer, football and soccer in the fall, and skating in the winter are enjoyed.

This was a major move inasmuch as 1930 saw interest in baseball waning in favor of a game called softball which was cheaper to conduct and was "stirring up considerable enthusiasm." Athletic Park provided an ideal setting.

### Lake Remains Popular

Potter's Lake, which had come to the IMA from the IFL, continued to be popular with the workers and was one of the new IMA's major assets. The Memorial Day record of the 1923 annual picnic

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<sup>1</sup> The IMA News, Auditorium Souvenir Number, September 12, 1929.

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read as follows:<sup>1</sup>

. . . The morning of May 30th dawned bright and clear, and soon all roads to Potter's Lake were lined with truckloads of happy families bound for a real day's pleasure.

The trucks were borrowed from the plants, but many of the 8,000 persons traveled by private car as was indicated by one account:

"There is one thing certain--there never were as many cars at Potter's Lake in a single day before".

The Memorial Day Picnic in 1924 was highlighted by a wedding ceremony. The Managing Secretary, Carl J. Hatfield, and the Recreation Director, Will Powers, selected the couple and procured a minister. Other features of the day included free ice cream, coffee, dancing, a performance by the Salvation Army Band, a track meet, and a harmonica contest.

During 1924, it was voted to rename Potter's Lake "The IMA Park" and all signs henceforth so read. It is interesting to note that through the years, both names have been used interchangeably with the Potter's Lake designation probably more prevalent.

Approximately 12,000 workers attended the 1926 annual picnic. The new pavilion was finished and a "good" bathing beach available. The IMA conducted a beauty contest to select "Miss Flint". Administratively, 1926 saw the IMA Park consolidated into the Association's Recreational Department.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Real Estate and Building Committee Report," May 31, 1923.

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Although the IMA did not get into the golfing business for many years, interest in acquiring a golf course is mentioned rather frequently in the official records. In 1927 an 18-hole layout was planned for the Park. The course would have cost \$40,000 to build and would have demanded another \$10,000 yearly to maintain. The plan went through the various committees, but was tabled because of the major undertaking of building the large civic-type auditorium. This proposal remained tabled indefinitely, inasmuch as the building program was followed by the depression and shortly thereafter by World War II.

Good news for the resort was received in 1927, however. The miserable, barely negotiable, muddy road from Flint was to be paved all the way to Lapeer and be designated as M-21.

In 1928 the caretaker built five more rental cottages. Outboard motor boat races were the big events of the summer. The Buick Band was contracted to play three concerts at Potter's Lake.

More improvements were made the next year. Ten more cottages were built along with a 1,000-seat baseball grandstand as part of a \$20,000 improvement program.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the continuing depression, 1930 was a good year for the Park. Over 100,000 persons enjoyed the facility which featured

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," September 9, 1929.

such events as a motorboat regatta , Michigan AAU diving and Swimming Championships , family days , band concerts , all-sports day , fireworks , picnics , baseball , and dances .

The next year saw a "modern lighting system" for the Park designed by Consumers Power Company and a gasoline filling station erected by the IMA at the Park's entrance. This season was culminated by a two-day circus which was climaxed by the giving away of a used Chevrolet automobile.

#### Activities Expanded

In addition to all of this , a Rod and Gun Club with a membership of 1,131 was formed , and golf driving equipment was installed in the Boutell Garage on Chippewa Street. Furthermore in 1931 the IMA was renting gymnasium space from the Flint Public Schools which later gained fame from their community school concept; the Association was attempting to get the Board of Education to change their policy of not allowing fans into the schools to see any of the games.

In May of 1931 , the records show that some workers wanted an outdoor golf driving range established , but the Central Recreational Committee voted the idea down. However , the workers , now beginning to sense their power , passed around a petition and gathered 200 signatures . This expression led to a field adjacent to the Mott Golf Course , along Sunset Drive , being set up as a driving range.

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its members. It was also gaining prestige in the field of industrial recreation, but troubled times were upon them!

## EDUCATION

### School Continues

The IFL had been founded in 1915 for the direct purpose of offering "extension" educational opportunities to the workers. Even though the IFL had spin-off programs of significant scope and size, education remained one of the primary functions of the IMA following the merger of 1922.

With the arrival of Major Albert Sobey in 1919 and the ensuing formation of the IMA in 1922, a new era for the Flint School of Automotive Trades had begun. With the new organization came exciting plans to devote an entire floor of the new Industrial Savings Bank Building for its use. Enrollment reached 468 students by November of 1922.<sup>1</sup>

Despite these positive signs, some severe financial problems had to be solved before the school could further forge ahead, for in the previous year, the Educational Department had encountered a \$10,000 deficit. Consequently, it was forced to request the Manufacturers' Association to bear part of the educational budget for the following year. Only after careful examination of the proposed floor plan for the

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<sup>1</sup>Clarence H. Young, and Robert E. Tuttle, The Years 1919-1969....A History of General Motors Institute, (Flint: General Motors Institute, 1969), p. 21.

new facility, which would cost an additional \$20,000, and scrutiny of the budget, did the Manufacturers' Association vote to support the school and provide necessary funds. They also donated to the IMA the school equipment which the Manufacturers' Association owned.

#### Automotive Service Program Begun

An important new program, introduced in 1922, was for training mechanics in the expert servicing of Buicks throughout the country. This Buick Authorized Service Program was vigorously backed by Edward Strong, the General Sales Manager, and Harry H. Bassett, the General Manager of Buick.<sup>1</sup> As will be detailed later, Bassett greatly influenced the future of the school by promoting it among the top executives of General Motors. The course represented the first full-time course of instruction of this type ever offered.

Another program which had begun in 1922 and was proving popular was the School of Management Engineering which had been established to train foremen and men for executive positions. Those who availed themselves of these opportunities were often rewarded by promotions and transfers. This tangible evidence of the advantage that additional education offered further stimulated interest in and growth of the school. Along with these programs, individual courses continued to be added.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

Name is Changed

In June of 1923, it was voted to change the name of the educational enterprise from the School of Automotive Trades to that of Flint Institute of Technology.<sup>1</sup> It was thought that the new name more accurately correlated with what the school was actually doing. Interestingly, before the name change vote was finalized, the issue of whether the name IMA was submerged too much for people to know who was behind the school was thoroughly discussed.

By this time, the school was operating out of the eighth floor of the bank building and had 25 machines "with a splendid assortment of small tools, making it one of the best equipped shops for student work in this section of the country". Sobey was authorized to add three more teachers: one chemist at a maximum of \$250 per month and two auto mechanics at \$150 per month. 731 students were now enrolled in the 68 evening courses and 12 day courses. Interest was being stimulated through frequent articles in the "Industrial Mutual News" which was now being published for the factory worker.

The total enrollment from October, 1919, to March, 1924, was 5,454 -- a tribute to a young organization and its predecessors and a real service to the Flint community and its workers. To emphasize the importance of continuing education, Sobey had placed in gold leaf on the eighth floor bulletin board -- "THE TRAINED MAN WINS."

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," June 12, 1971.

### Direction Changed

Significant courses were added in 1924: courses that identified and guided the young school as it evolved into a large college. These courses were Cooperative Auto Mechanics, Cooperative Trade, and Cooperative Engineering. The principle of cooperative education revolved around a student's attending school full-time for a short period of time and then being assigned to a factory job for a short period of time in some sponsoring plant. This approach gave the student a feeling of relevancy about his class work while also offering an opportunity to earn his own way. An excellent description of the beginning of this program is offered by Clarence Young in the book titled, The Years 1919-1969 . . . A History of General Motors Institute. In this account, Young quotes Sobey himself:<sup>1</sup>

As applied in our planning, it (the cooperative training program) placed emphasis upon coordinating the concepts of apprenticeship and a college engineering curriculum into a dual program in which the plant phases would be as important and as carefully organized and directed as the college phase.

On my recommendation, a special committee of the Industrial Mutual Association was appointed to work with me on the development of the Cooperative Trade Program, and a joint committee of the two associations was appointed to direct the development of the Cooperative Engineering Program.

After considerable discussion, it was decided that both cooperative programs would be conducted by the Flint Institute of Technology, and after consideration by

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<sup>1</sup>Young and Tuttle, op. cit., pp. 25-28.

the Board of Directors of the Industrial Mutual Association, both programs were approved for initiation in the fall of 1924. The students were to spend alternate periods of four weeks each in the plants and at the Institute.

The Cooperative Trades Course was carried forward with rather indifferent success for several years, but in time it became evident that apprenticeship was essentially a local plant function, and the course discontinued.

The Cooperative Engineering Program, however, very quickly began to demonstrate its possibilities. Consideration was given at first to calling the program Management Engineering. This was not done, however, for fear of implying a promise of something which could be achieved only by the individual himself after graduation. The program was therefore called simply the Cooperative Engineering Program.

A general outline was prepared for the entire four years, but only the first year was detailed in definite form at the beginning, thus making it possible to modify the details of the following years, year by year, in the light of experience. The announced aim of the program was to give the student a thorough training in the theory and practice of engineering and its application to modern industry, particularly the automobile industry, with a view to developing technical work in Flint plants. In other words, the aim of the course was to develop the executive type of engineer rather than the analytical or research type . . .

The plan of organization of the new cooperative program corresponded in general with that of other cooperative engineering schools with, however, a number of distinctive and significant factors which were summarized in the following forms:

1. The apprenticeship concepts
2. A dual system of selection of students
  - a. All applicants required to meet educational qualifications of the Institute
  - b. The cooperating plant to make its selection from qualified applicants and to hire them as employees in training for future responsibilities in its organization

3. Each plant to determine in advance the number of students to be entered each year in order to meet its future needs. The total admitted by the Institute is the sum of the quotas of all the cooperating plants.
4. Since the students are 'employees in training' of their cooperative plants, the plant phase of the program is the responsibility of the plant management. This introduces into this most difficult phase of any cooperative program the force of intelligent self-interest on the part of the management of the cooperative plants.
5. With these advantages, work experience training programs are organized for each student each year in advance with the cooperation and advice of the Institute.
6. A system of coordination reports serves to tie the plant and Institute phases into a well-coordinated program.

All of these educational programs were under the general supervision of the Educational Committee of the IMA. It recommended such programs as the above-mentioned to the Executive Board for approval. The Committee dealt with resolving problems such as budgetary concerns over the rising costs of expanding the school. Originally, prior to the formation of the IMA, the students were to pay two-thirds of the cost of the courses and the sponsoring factory the other one-third. At this particular time, 1924, it was decided not to raise tuition, but to see whether the Manufacturers' Association would again assume part of the expense inasmuch as they derived many benefits from well-trained graduates of the school. As usual, the Manufacturers' Association agreed to assume 50% of any deficit up to \$12,000.

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### Cooperative Program

In reporting on the Cooperative Programs, Sobey again pushed for improvement in the school. He stated that, as the school expanded, it was<sup>1</sup>

. . . increasingly difficult to maintain high standards of instruction that made the development (of the school) possible. Full-time men are needed in charge of the more important departments to stabilize and coordinate the instruction. It is also important that the education plant be used productively as many hours per week as possible.

The Cooperative Program met with difficulties in 1924 as the result of a severe business slump. Employment in Flint dipped from 33,092 in March, to a December low of 16,995 and resulted in cancellation of the 20 cooperative jobs arranged for forty boys on an alternating basis between job and school in the Flint area plants. Sobey managed to get 10 of the jobs rescheduled for 20 students.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the economic conditions, 1924 saw the school expanding its offerings, and through an extensive enrollment campaign, the school boasted 850 students in the fall of 1925. "Earn While You Learn" type slogans drew attention to the fledgling executives. The Authorized Buick Service Course was kept filled to capacity and it claimed students from countries as distant as Poland, Russia, and England. Much of Buick's success and the school's can be attributed

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Educational Committee Report," May 27, 1924.

<sup>2</sup>Young and Tuttle, op. cit., p. 28.



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to this course. Arthur H. Sarvis, Service Manager of Buick, summarized its importance:<sup>1</sup>

The automobile industry has now reached a stage where its production is limited by sales, and sales are very largely determined by service. Practically all the companies have developed their physical properties, their equipment and personnel to a point where increased production is easily possible. Sales are the limiting factor and without question the most important factor in sales is the goodwill of the customer which is developed and conserved by the service which is rendered to him.

### GM Takes Over

There are two versions as to how General Motors took over the "IMA School" which are related by Clarence Young in his section of the book on the history of General Motors. It seems, however, that Sobey saw the limited growth possibilities of the school's existing facilities, and that Harry Bassett of Buick, who had been supportive of the school from the beginning, saw its potential for General Motors. Through the joint effort of Bassett and Sobey, the President of GM, Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., and his board were sold on providing a new facility for the school. Bassett did not make his pitch to GM, however, until after meeting jointly with the IMA's Executive Committee and its Audit and Finance Committee. At this time Bassett agreed to go before the Executive Board of General Motors and ask them to construct a building for the school. First, however, the IMA had to agree to continue

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

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to take an active part in the school, and to put into a sinking fund an amount equivalent to 10% of their net earnings to meet any emergency the Education Department might face. It was further agreed that a committee comprised of IMA Trustees and Manufacturers' representatives were to be advisory to the school. In essence, General Motors owned the building and the IMA had rent-free use of the facility, but paid the operational costs.<sup>1</sup>

The probable reason for the IMA's going along with this approach was summarized by Robert Longway's report at this meeting that the school could break even, but needed approximately \$100,000 more in equipment if it were to be one of the best schools of this time. Additionally, the school was getting too large for the organizational make-up of the IMA.

Once this decision was made, General Motors met with the Trustees of the IMA and offered to buy the school and provide a new facility. This offer was accepted. By October, 1926, the new building was under construction on a nine-acre site at the corner of Third and Chevrolet Avenues. The name of the school was changed to the General Motors Institute of Technology in 1926, hereafter referred to as GMI, but it was still affiliated with the IMA.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Joint Executive Board and Finance and Audit Committee Report," June 10, 1926.

Sobey made plans to move into the basement of the new building by December 15. The school was to occupy all 65,000 square feet by February 15. During this year of 1926, the school prospered, showing 1,000 students enrolled in the winter term and a profit of \$1,400 for the year.

The transfer to the new building was completed on April 15, 1927, and the formal dedication was held on July 19, 1927. Among the more prominent persons present were Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., Charles, Fred and Lawrence Fisher, Charles F. Kettering, Charles E. Wilson, Pierre S. Dupont, William S. Knudsen, and Edward R. Stettinius.<sup>1</sup>

E. T. Strong, President of Buick Motor Company, acted as chairman of the event. Tributes were many, with Sobey and the IMA receiving their share. Sobey responded by giving a brief chronology of the Institute and pointing out that there was an anticipated enrollment of 2,026 students for fall. Later that evening, J. H. French, President of the IMA, told of the great Association that he headed which was comprised of 38,500 of the 43,000 men currently working in the factories of Flint.

The first Board of Regents was selected in 1927. It was made up of these persons from General Motors:

President and Chairman, Edward Strong of Buick  
Vice President, Charles F. Barth  
Secretary, T. S. Merrill

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<sup>1</sup>Young and Tuttle, op. cit., p. 41.

Treasurer, Meyer L. Prentis  
N. F. Dougherty  
J. Brook Jackson

and these from the IMA:

Clyde F. Waite  
Jay H. French  
Stephen J. Kaiser

During these early years, GMI became the "central training agency of General Motors." It continued to expand and, by 1928, had again reached its capacity. Sobey advanced plans for a \$200,000 expansion to house the students (11,477 total of all the programs) enrolled from around the world.<sup>1</sup>

A major step forward came when General Motors Institute of Technology was incorporated as a non-profit educational institution that was allowed to grant degrees. This helped give it proper status! The IMA Executive Board agreed that this new status would not affect the interest of the IMA, and the school would still be thought of and treated as "our Educational Department." A resolution to this effect was prepared and accepted.

### Cooperation Continued

In reality, however, the IMA's relationship with GMI became that of friend and supporter rather than of decision-maker. The IMA continued to publicize and promote the school through its house organ,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

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the IMA News, which went out to each of Flint's 40,000-plus GM workers. It not only reported on the school's instructional programs, but kept the workers informed about the extracurricular activities of the Institute. A financial report to the IMA's Board of Trustees showed that the IMA's investment in the school was approximately \$40,000.

October 1, 1928, represents a critical date for the IMA in relationship to GMI, for at this time GM purchased all of the IMA's machinery and equipment. It returned the Association's operating capital. In reality, it thus severed all of the IMA's formal relationship with the school and terminated its formal control. Again the IMA had fulfilled a community need. It had given birth and nurtured a well-organized, well-recognized college serving some 2,720 students:<sup>1</sup>

|       |                 |
|-------|-----------------|
| 2,000 | Night School    |
| 500   | Engineering     |
| 145   | Service Courses |
| 75    | Trades Courses  |

The IMA's venture in "providing extension work for the vast number of factory workers" had evolved into one of the finest engineering schools in the country. Furthermore, the school expanded over 43 acres and is represented by illustrious alumni in key positions throughout the world. It presented educational opportunities for some 3,000 students in 1970.

The IMA remained close to the school after the sale. Some of the IMA's officers remained as members of GMI's Board of Regents,

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," November 8, 1928.



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but for all practical purposes , the educational efforts of the Association had to seek new direction and goals.

### THE IMA NEWS

#### News Proves Popular

Another thrust of the IMA was in the area of communication with its members. As was previously noted, the IFL voted to discontinue the Factory News in 1920 and began putting out a bulletin instead. The major reason for discontinuing publication was that the Vehicle Club of the FVFMBA and several factories were printing papers , and the IFL had no desire to compete with these services nor duplicate them.

However, in 1923 , after the merger, the IMA decided that a house organ would be of value and continued with a format similar to the one previously used for the Vehicle Worker. It contained factory, personal, and sporting news and had an editorial section. In a contest conducted among its members to propose an appropriate name, first prize went to the person submitting the name IMA News. The paper was to be published monthly at a cost of \$325 for 4,200 copies.<sup>1</sup> The newspapers were distributed at the factory gates and other spots convenient to the workers.

In 1929 a special souvenir copy of the IMA News which featured the beautiful new IMA Auditorium was issued. Elroy Guckert

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes , IMA, "News Committee Report," March 6, 1924.

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was hired during this year to do some research and writing for the IMA. His initial analysis of the News indicated that the paper was greatly appreciated by the factory workers and should be continued, but on a weekly basis.<sup>1</sup> He recommended that the paper focus on current activities in order to help fill the 6,500 seats of the new auditorium. He further suggested that the IMA deviate from its 1924 decision against using outside advertising, for by so doing, the paper could sell space and pay its own way. He concluded that a more viable publication also should help increase the IMA's membership.

Lee Fuller was engaged in 1929 to devote full time as editor of the newspaper as it made the transition from a monthly to a weekly publication. Its circulation increased from 13,000 to 20,000 per week. However, by 1931, the depression forced the paper into a tabloid form in an attempt to save money. In this form, the paper became self-supporting even during this financially troubled period.

The tabloid's motto was changed slightly from "The Factory Workers' Own Paper" to "The Employees' Own Paper." It gave broad coverage of news, and each plant was given space to report on recreation, safety, education, policy, and personal opinions. More space was available for general IMA news such as sports, hygiene, thrift, and so on. There was even some room for a summarization of local, state and national news. It was definitely a non-partisan, non-controversial paper.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Publication Committee," July 30, 1929.

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### SUMMARY

The initial decade (1922-1932) of the IMA witnessed its emergence as a recognized institution of considerable consequence in the Flint community. It had been established and had lived up to its corporate purpose of providing for the mutual welfare of its members in recreational, educational and charitable undertakings.

Certainly the IMA had contributed to the well-being of the community by providing benefit-insurance plans, welfare services and educational opportunities to its members at a time when these services were not readily available elsewhere. Furthermore, the Association had the good sense and courage to disassociate itself from these programs when other agencies assumed these responsibilities.

This first ten-year segment in the life of the IMA has provided a source for studying the beginning of a voluntary association. Subsequently, the evolution of this organization has become apparent, as it has moved from program to program and year to year, to the point where it has been possible to observe the development of hierarchies, oligarchies, compulsory and non-compulsory membership, and expansion of its domain until it evolved into a viable community institution. Thus, it also has served as a model of a formal organization worthy of study.

As the IMA moved into the second ten years of its existence, its future looked bright. However, shadows were forming over General Motors and the United States in the form of financial disaster.

Perhaps the next decade provided the ultimate test!



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## Chapter VI

### A TIME OF STRIFE -- 1932 to 1942

#### Introduction

The second ten years of the IMA contained enough strife to render any organization lifeless. However, the Association met the challenges of this period with steadfastness and determination. It took advantage of all the strengths available to it, and subsequently made some "hard line" decisions that contributed to its survival.

In spite of the ominous threats that it faced--great depression, sitdown strike, membership loss, world war--the IMA continued to operate. It provided programs and facilities not available anywhere else in the Flint area. As conditions changed and the dust began to clear, the results of the IMA's efforts were evident--it was still in operation--its domain perhaps smaller, but its purpose yet intact.

#### DEPRESSION YEARS

##### Effects of Depression

In the early years of the depression (1929-1932) the IMA not only survived, but its programs and services thrived. Dedicated to the commitment of promoting even more activities to fill the educational,



social, and recreational needs of its members and their families during those trying times, many of the professional staff took on additional duties to help the cause.

However, the years '32, '33, and '34 saw the IMA under greater financial stress than in the earlier years of the depression. Exerting his leadership, Otto Ramlow, President of the Association during this difficult period, penned a letter to the Trustees stressing the importance of keeping the organization viable, meaningful and solvent.<sup>1</sup>

. . . The destiny of an organization that has just recently celebrated its thirtieth anniversary is in our hands. The duty of the trustees of this unique organization is to interpret the IMA to members they represent and in turn bring suggestions and criticisms. The purpose of diverse representation on the Board of Trustees is to keep the organization close to the men and women in factories. Further, since the IMA has assumed such an important place in the community, we must view the IMA in its relationship to the community as a whole.

. . . The present year will be difficult . . . obligated to operate the Association's business on the safest and soundest lines . . . innovations must be carefully scrutinized . . . can't afford costly ventures of experimental nature . . . each existing activity must be evaluated. We must seek less expensive ways . . . We do not want to decrease or even suggest no increase in activities, but give unstintingly of our time and thought to protect our interest.

So it was at this time that the belt was tightened and the IMA administered only those programs that could not be transferred elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from President Otto Ramlow to IMA Trustees (on file in IMA Office), February 16, 1932.

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The Manufacturers' Association was now approving the IMA budget for only six months at a time. Through these financially troubled times, many evidences of extreme frugality and good management could be seen. This good management permeated the entire organization with much direction coming from the top industrialists in the area.

The gloomy picture is clearly portrayed in the July, 1932, financial report. The profit before operating deductions, for programs and services, from the Stores and other departments was shown as \$15,719 for six months as opposed to \$38,166 for the same period in 1931. These figures are a reflection of the financial problems confronting Buick Motors which produced a mere 41,000 cars in 1932, compared to 266,758 units in 1926 and 119,000 in 1930.<sup>1</sup>

Because of low production and subsequent layoffs, it became necessary for the IMA to borrow \$25,000 from the Manufacturers' Association to keep the organization moving. More financial moves were made by further reducing salaries and granting leaves of absence to employees. Even Petrill, surely a key figure in the success of the IMA, went on leave, but it was made clear that the administration wanted him back full-time "even if the budget were exceeded." Records from a joint Administration and Finance Committee meeting indicate that salaries were reduced from a total of \$9,292 on July 1, 1931, to \$4,650 one year

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Clarence H. Young, Assistant Director, Manufacturers' Association of Flint, Michigan, September 12, 1972.

later.<sup>1</sup> Another area in which cuts were made centered on the IMA's declaring a moratorium on the payment of Auditorium bonds. Only the interest was paid, and authorization was given to extend maturity dates from 1938 to 1945. To complicate matters further, \$11,680 of the Association's money was impounded in Flint banks as the result of the bank closings of that year.<sup>2</sup>

### UNION MOVEMENT

#### Another Struggle

Money was not the only problem that the IMA faced, for as the nation continued its life-and-death battle with the depression, the IMA was confronted with an impending onslaught--unionism.

The first notation concerning unionism in the official Minutes of the IMA appears in the October 24, 1933, report of the Board of Trustees. It appears that representatives from the Chevrolet Work Council wanted to confer with the Trustees to gain "detailed" information on the operation of the IMA. It was agreed that Rewey could meet with any Work Council at any time and give them any information, for it was thought that "cooperation of this nature will do immeasurable good for the welfare of the Association."

One of the first requests of the union was for the IMA to lower its prices to the workers on items sold, by 25%. Rewey agreed to 10%,

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee," May 27, 1932.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee," March 16, 1933.

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but no more , for the IMA could not pay its own way at that rate.<sup>1</sup>

The next item of business was a request from the American Federation of Labor to use the Auditorium so that their President, the nationally prominent William Green, could make a presentation. Because of Green's stature in labor and government, it was agreed to allow the rental despite having adhered to non-political use of the Auditorium previously. However, it was agreed that no substitute speaker would be allowed.<sup>2</sup>

#### Membership Challenged

A more serious and far-reaching question of the Work Council focused on the recently adopted "compulsory membership" which had been established by the IMA in its attempt both to serve, by establishing a welfare program, and to survive. Sensing the displeasure of the worker and his fledgling organization, plant managers also began putting pressure on the IMA to discontinue mandatory payroll deductions. Succumbing to the pressure of the day, the IMA recommended that the issue be settled in this manner:<sup>3</sup>

Resolved, that in answer to numerous requests relative to IMA membership brought to our attention by the Works Council of the Associated Factories, the Executive Committee recommends to the management of the various

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," October 24, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Report," November 10, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," March 22, 1934.



plants that they advise their employees that IMA membership is purely voluntary at the option of the employee.

As of March 1, 1935, payroll deduction of IMA dues was halted.<sup>1</sup> Members were informed through the IMA News to pay their club dues at the ninth floor box office or at the factory stores:

|           |        |               |        |
|-----------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Monthly   | \$ .50 | Semi-annually | \$2.50 |
| Quarterly | \$1.25 | Yearly        | \$5.00 |

Employment offices continued soliciting IMA Club membership as new men were hired, and then turned the application forms in to the IMA for collection. With club membership again optional, withdrawal slips were given to members of the Work Council, superintendents, and trustees. Current membership cards were collected, and a stricter policy of restricting activities to dues-paying members was followed. During the darkest days of the depression, this policy had been relaxed to allow as many unemployed persons to engage in activities as possible.

With this concession made to the Work Council, the IMA re-evaluated its membership clauses and made these major changes in 1935:<sup>2</sup>

First, in order to utilize complete facilities of the IMA,  
 . . . we propose to make every white man or woman  
 employed in the Associated Factories an IMA Club member.

Second, membership was divided into two categories--Active and Associate. The Active members paid \$5.00 annual dues and were

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Executive Committee," February 22, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," June 13, 1935.



entitled to both Club and voting privileges, whereas Associate members were members on the basis of their employment in an associated factory of Flint. Such members paid no dues nor did they have a vote, and they paid a nominal fee for various Club privileges. Mass activities were planned for Associate members.<sup>1</sup>

### ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

#### The "New Deal"

Just prior to this, as the "New Deal" came into effect, the IMA agreed to comply with new government regulations as stipulated in the President's Re-employment Agreement. This required Rewey to employ sufficient additional employees to bring the working complement up to the agreed level, and also forced paying employees the wages heretofore paid, regardless of the reduction in hours of work.<sup>2</sup> Also, the IMA, striving hard to help the return to normalcy, cooperated with the American Federation of Labor by providing appropriate publicity to the National Recovery Act which was being introduced into the local factories.

The end-of-the-year financial report for 1933 showed a net profit that was 83% higher than the previous year's.<sup>3</sup> Of the total cash

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Joint Executive Committee and Advisory Committee of Manufacturers' Meeting," September 5, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," August 7, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," December 31, 1933.

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that had been impounded, only \$477 had not been recovered; thus the total loss due to the "bank holiday" ultimately was no more than \$238.

IMA President Fred Hillman set the tone for 1935, with inaugural remarks which in part said:<sup>1</sup>

With the same conservative operating policies continued this coming year and with general conditions improving the Association should find itself in a better position to render even a greater service to its membership.

Despite this optimism, another difficult year was in store for the IMA.

### More Financial Stress

The combination of events at work brought the IMA to its financial knees. Membership plummeted from 42,971 in February, 1934, to 3,916 in April, 1935.<sup>2</sup> Conditions remained severe enough so that the IMA had to go once again to the Manufacturers' Association to get funds to pay just the interest due on the Auditorium bonds.<sup>3</sup> Authorization also was granted to write to bondholders stating the IMA's inability to pay interest then inasmuch as they could not borrow enough at that particular time because of the financial plight of even the Manufacturers' Association.

Grasping for any money that they could get their hands on, the IMA even sought to terminate its lease on the seventh floor. The

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Letter to IMA Trustees from IMA President, Fred Hillman," January 22, 1935.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee," February 25, 1935.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee," April 17, 1935.

Industrial Savings Bank, in financial straits itself, refused to consent to such action. It even was voted not to renew the IMA's membership in the Flint Chamber of Commerce that year.

So desperate were the times that Trustee Joseph Anderson of the AC Spark Plug Division addressed the Board of Trustees regarding future activities. He called for the planning of expenditures to benefit the most people, of a meaningful membership program, and of a policy for 1938, when the current Industrial Savings Bank lease would expire.

In October of 1935, the IMA voted again to seek a \$25,000 loan from the Manufacturers' Association in order to prevent defaulting again on their bond payments.

By 1936 profits were on the upswing with the Store sales grossing well over a quarter of a million dollars.<sup>1</sup> Also by 1936 the federal relief programs were becoming effective enough to allow the IMA to get out of welfare activity and move fulltime back into the Stores' business. Therefore, the welfare inventory was liquidated to make space for more store merchandise.

### Always Taxes

The ever-present problem of tax status was relatively insignificant during this period of time. Following the court battles of 1931, the IMA was not burdened by any tax problems until 1935.<sup>2</sup> At that time, a

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Report," January 21, 1936.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee," August 17, 1935.

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tax bill for \$1,285 was received from the city. This personal property tax was paid under protest, and the question was referred to the Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association for their counsel. It was advised that the IMA should pay the tax. In 1936, the assessed valuation of the IMA's personal property was reduced from \$50,000 to \$25,000.

The federal government was again in contact with the IMA inasmuch as it came under the Social Security Act of 1936. Also, the Internal Revenue Service reaffirmed the tax exemption ruling of 1924 which had allowed it a tax-exempt status based upon its purpose and membership.<sup>1</sup>

#### News Problems

The IMA News tabloid which had been paying its own way at the beginning of the year was running into the "red" by July, at the rate of \$50 each month.<sup>2</sup> With pressure mounting from the Manufacturers' Association to eliminate all programs and services not paying their own way, Rewey sent a special letter to the Manufacturers' Association centering his plea for continuance around this reasoning:

We feel that the "News" has a definite place in this Association's picture and if it is discontinued

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Internal Revenue Service to IMA (on file in the office of IMA), April 2, 1937.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Ormund Rewey, Managing Secretary of IMA, to Farber, President of the Manufacturers' Association, (on file in the office of IMA), July 12, 1932.

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it will destroy all effort put into it thus far and will be very costly to build up later.

The News was allowed not only to continue, but in 1933 to expand to give the plants the additional space that they requested.

In 1935, concern over keeping the paper going arose again. The Executive Committee thought its continuance essential for the purpose of informing its members of activities and keeping factory policy before the workers. To emphasize even more the importance attached to the News, the editor, Lee Fuller, was publicly commended as one of the "most efficient newspaper men in the business today." This vote of confidence was backed by a \$10 per week raise--no small tribute in 1935.<sup>1</sup>

In 1936, a letter was received from Fuller, telling how the paper had withstood some tough times, but because of lower printing costs and more ads, it had again expanded to sixteen pages.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that no liquor advertisements were allowed.

### Auditorium Popular

Flint was now blessed with a beautiful civic-type auditorium thanks to the IMA. Having been erected just prior to the depression, the Auditorium proved to be both a blessing and a problem during the decade of 1932-1942. It was a great asset in terms of housing events that had

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee," March 21, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Letter from Editor Lee Fuller to the Executive Committee," (on file in the office of the IMA), January 28, 1936.



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appeal to people; thus, many persons' social and recreational needs were accommodated. This helped fulfill part of the purpose of the Association. On the other hand, meeting the payment of the bonds issued to construct the expensive building was a recurring dilemma.

The Auditorium was not to be used for religious or political programs but was available to groups for rental purposes:<sup>1</sup>

The Auditorium was the magnet for thousands of people, and every kind of amusement was offered them, consistent with good judgement, good-will and the promotion of the Auditorium as a place where all may go for the best of all kinds of entertainment.

As the result of this high-type promotion, the IMA Auditorium became a focal point in Flint and Genesee County.

It is not difficult to understand the popularity of the Auditorium when one considers the staff policy in effect under Auditorium Director V. C. Furtelle:<sup>2</sup>

1. Work for people--but policies should be diplomatically enforced
2. Auditorium not self-supporting--so must be efficiently operated
3. Stay alert for new ideas
4. Must punch the clock, but not work by it.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Auditorium Committee," January 7, 1931.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Auditorium Committee," September 2, 1931.

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The Auditorium Trusteeship Committee, which had been conceived in the financially brighter days of 1928, was now convened and had complete financial control over the IMA.<sup>1</sup> This committee made some difficult decisions concerning the Association's total operation. As far as the Auditorium itself was concerned, rental rates were reduced, staff was laid off, and the doors were even closed in August and September of 1932 because of lack of income.<sup>2</sup> As the result of this income problem, the Manufacturers' Association suggested that political and religious restrictions on rentals be dropped. It is interesting to note that the reduction of rates resulted in only three additional rentals. In reality, this reduction caused an actual dollar loss. This experience showed that the ". . . auditorium has finally developed a certain demand which remains quite constant." Throughout this period bond payments were met only through loans from the Manufacturers' Association.

Benefits Department Vestige

As was previously noted, the Benefit Department of the IMA was eliminated in May of 1932, with the Audit Department becoming responsible for any future benefit claims. As of January 23, 1934,

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," May 23, 1935.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Auditorium Committee," July 13, 1932.

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there were still 174 non-General Motors members enrolled in the IMA Benefit Plan.<sup>1</sup>

When the Flint Printing Company bought Metropolitan Group Insurance, only the W. F. Stewart Company and IMA employees were left in the Benefit Plan as of October, 1934. Word was received in November that the Stewart Company had "ceased manufacturing operations for an indefinite period." It never reopened.

Records of 1935 show \$1,659 in dues paid into the Benefit Plan and \$617 paid out in claims. Most of the insurance members by now were IMA workers. It was no longer a big operation, for in 1934 a hospital plan with a payroll deduction option for IMA employees was presented. Again, another pioneering effort was coming to a close.

#### Education Redirection

As with the newspaper and the benefit program, the IMA's educational efforts were at a crossroad. Once GMI became a General Motors' operation, the educational committee experienced a period of floundering while it sought new direction.

The IMA continued to identify very closely with GMI, taking much interest and pride in its continuing growth. Much of the IMA's educational efforts continued in the vein of publicizing and recruiting for GMI programs. As an example, when GMI's open house featured

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Finance Committee Report," January 23, 1933.

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"Adult Education" as its theme, the IMA worked diligently in encouraging its members to take advantage of these opportunities which were being designed to fit specific needs of enrollees.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the Education Committee's Reports during this period centered on what GMI was doing in developing new curricular opportunities and what the IMA could do to channel its members into the Institute. As the result of this combined effort by GMI and IMA, the night enrollment exceeded 400 in 1933 with over 500 independent classes available.<sup>2</sup> Another example of this combined effort is evidenced in the September 19, 1934, minutes where it was noted that special nights had been scheduled for workers of each plant to visit GMI. The employees were informed that the faculty at the Institute would be "very glad at any time to arrange for special instruction in almost any subject . . ."<sup>3</sup>

In the Education Committee's attempt to establish a new domain, some conflict arose between it and the Recreation Committee as to whether certain activities offered through the Club were recreational or educational in nature. This conflict was magnified by the Education Committee's no longer having direct control of any specific active programs, and resulted in a reorganization effort which saw the Education

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," June 14, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," November 14, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," September 19, 1934.



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Committee rededicate itself to re-defined purposes and charges:<sup>1</sup>

1. Seek space in the IMA Auditorium for educational activities when the bank building lease expires in 1938.
2. Continue promoting interest in spare-time courses at GMI.
3. Promote a series of technical lectures for members.
4. Promote educational classes now included in Recreation Department's program.
5. Promote additional classes as interest develops.

Thus the Education Committee of the IMA, which had a rather nebulous role after GMI came chiefly under General Motors' direction, was revitalized as the result of gaining new status and purpose.<sup>2</sup>

Its first endeavor resulted in its sponsoring the following classes most of which were already being conducted through the Recreational Committee:<sup>3</sup>

Adult Classes -- Art, Artcraft, Contract Bridge,  
Home Decorating, Sewing, Library and Reading Room

Adult Clubs -- Glee, Literary, Camera, AC Designers,  
Speaking, Research, Coin and Stamp

Children's Classes -- Art, Dramatics, Harmonica,  
Band, Rhythm Band, Model Airplanes

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Board Committee," August 22, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee," August 13, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee," September 10, 1935.

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New Classes -- Americanization, Dramatics,  
Current Events, Home Hobbies, Library and Book,  
Amateur Journalism, Red Cross First Aid, Garden

New Clubs -- Newcomers Social Club, Movie Club

The Education Committee also established a lending library, but its first efforts were poorly received and enrollment was low. However, the GM Chorus had 1,045 enrolled, and another 1,000 enrolled in the spare time classes at GMI. Joseph Anderson supported the IMA's promotion of a professional campaign within each factory to get more of the young men then on the payrolls to take advantage of the spare-time opportunities.

Thus, the IMA's educational efforts were once again under way. However, never again was their impact as great as it had been under Wise and Sobey.

### Recreation Abounds

As many of the IMA's functions lessened during the depression, its recreational efforts thrived. The Recreation Department abounded with activities as workers and their families flocked into the Club seeking satisfying outlets for their energies and frustrations. The IMA moved into 1932 with 21,110 Club members and 10,448 registered for organized activities.<sup>1</sup> Petrill's report for that year lists over 50 different activities being supported, with "the outstanding activity of the year being playground ball, better known as softball." There were sixteen leagues with

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Annual Report of Recreation Committee," January 12, 1932.

117 teams and 1,404 players who participated in 696 games. Bowling remained popular with 214 teams competing. Persons using the Club's shower facilities numbered 38,700. Club rooms were used for 483 parties involving 14,799 persons. Approximately 2,000 children were taking dance classes. Five acts of free vaudeville each Sunday and the "talkies" were drawing 20,000 persons weekly.

Despite the popularity of its activities, the Recreation Department was threatened by the depression. Club dues were reduced to five cents a week. Indoor golf and rifle ranges were eliminated as were bowling sanction fees and prizes. All factory entertainment was dropped and no more rental of swimming pools or gymnasiums was allowed. At Potter's Lake the only expenditures made were those needed to "protect our investments." Efforts were being made to cancel the 140-acre Potter Farm contract even though \$17,000 of the \$32,000 had been paid. The immediate problem was the \$15,000 due in 1932.<sup>1</sup>

Several circumstances helped the Recreation Department survive these dark days. First, as previously noted, membership in the IMA was mandatory under the new ruling made in 1930, and five of the seven and a half dollars yearly dues went for the maintenance of the Club. Second, under the Federal Emergency Recovery Act, teachers and assistants became available to work in recreation classes. Third, Petrill was proving to be a promotional genius. He would book the

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from IMA President to the Manufacturers' Association, (on file in office of IMA), May 19, 1932.

popular events of the day: Jim Londes, world champion wrestler; Midwest Walkathon Company, staging a marathon walk that lasted seventy-one days and netted \$8,000; Tommy Armour, golf exhibitionist and lecturer.

The 1935 annual report from IMA President Fred Hillman showed Club membership at an all-time high of 33,898. This resulted in the need for even greater expansion of the already huge recreational program for quality was in jeopardy. Some typical attendance figures are cited:<sup>1</sup>

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Adult Education Classes  | 6,000   |
| Children's Classes       | 4,350   |
| 950 Parties              | 46,000  |
| Potter's Lake Facilities | 250,000 |

Athletic Park was serving as one safety valve for the Association. With the popularity of softball at a high point, lights received from the city were installed for night activities, and to cap its pull on members a beer license was obtained.

Another source of relief for the crowded Club facility was the Auditorium. Many events were scheduled there but one of its major attractions was its being labeled as one of the Midwest's top ballrooms. Featured were such events as a "Battle of Music" among four local bands --Billy Mills, Jack Bohenan, Ozz Kelly and Frank Zeiter. Billy Mills

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Letter to Trustees from IMA President Fred Hillman," January 22, 1935.

went on to national prominence in the music field and Osmund Kelly became Flint's Mayor, Postmaster, and in 1956, the Executive Director of the Manufacturers' Association of Flint. Kelly remains in the latter position at the present time. A further indication of the popularity of the dances is the fact that radio station WFDF broadcast the dances live from the Auditorium at no expense to the IMA.

Potter's Lake remained as the other major source of relief of overcrowding at the Club. The Lake was still proving popular. About 12,000 persons attended a circus held over the Memorial Day weekend in 1932. Each year people got away from the city by driving to Potter's Lake to enjoy picnics and to witness and take part in such special events as these: the giving away of a 1936 Buick Model 48; the performance of the International Nautical Stunt Team; the spectacle of fireworks; the relaxation of a band concert; and free dancing. Potter's Lake also received a license to operate a beer garden.

## MEMBERSHIP

### Membership Declines

However, things were changing rapidly in the IMA and despite the high membership previously noted in Hillman's Report, 1935 brought drastic changes. With the advent of the new optional membership plan, there was a severe drop in Club membership. Whereas 33,898 were

signed up for Club privileges in 1934, only 3, 916 enrolled in 1935.<sup>1</sup>

This drastic drop along with other financial difficulties of the day resulted in the Recreation Committee's planning for future operations with several cutbacks. Many activities that brought in no income would have to be curtailed. Fees were established for each club activity, with showers costing five cents each, and basketball and boxing costing \$1.50 for three months. In spite of these realities, Petrill and his staff kept the purpose of the IMA in mind and exerted super-effort in attempts to make worthwhile activities available to all in these times of great need. To illustrate the point further, one such scheme is recorded here. It centered on an attractive plan which encouraged factory groups to make greater use of the fine Potter's Lake facility:

1. Payment of 25% of gross beer sales to the factory committee in charge of a picnic.
2. Free use of bath house and beach.
3. Free rides for children on the merry-go-round.
4. Furnishing orchestra for two hours of free dancing in the pavilion.
5. Assistance in programming for children and adult activities.

### Petrill Contributes

Petrill's energies, insights and expertise were vital to the IMA

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from President Fred Hillman to IMA Trustees (on file in office of IMA), January 22, 1935.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Annual Auditorium Report," June 26, 1935.



at this point. 'It was essential to have a hard-driving man with a sound philosophy about recreation and people at the helm of this major component of the IMA. Much like Robert Wise with the IFL earlier, too little credit and recognition were given to this man and his efforts in making Flint a better city in which to live, and the discouraging depression somewhat more bearable.

### THE STRIKE

#### Sitdown Occurs

A natural dividing point for the events that transpired during the 1932-1942 decade is the battle that management fought with the emerging union. As the first major union movement hit Flint, along with many organizers from the outside, emotions ran high, and there was no such thing as a person's having no feeling or a neutral feeling on the subject of unions. This emotion led to violence and the summoning of the National Guard, which ironically was housed in the Auditorium, to help maintain order.

Eventually, it took federal intervention from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to bring the strike to a close, but not before many scars, some of which remain today, were imposed. The union movement prevailed!

#### Flint the Target

The famous sitdown strike began in Flint on December 28, 1936,

and continued for forty-six days. Flint was the target of action for the United Automobile Workers (UAW), for not only were four out of five working persons employed by General Motors, but the very "heart-and-nerve center of the vast combine" was located there.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Flint was relatively close to Detroit where the core of the union leaders or agitators, depending on one's point of view, resided.

The position of the IMA before the strike had always been employee-employer oriented. There was no doubt as to who had the real power and control (management), but there was a sincere effort to provide educational, recreational and social programs which helped to upgrade the membership. Although the Association was paternalistic, paternalism did not have the negative connotation that it gained, and has maintained, following the advent of unions.

#### IMA's Position

During the strike, the IMA took a pro-management position. Why not? Management felt that it had always been more than fair with its workers. As for the IMA itself, this feeling was not without reason, for where else in the world had so many owners demonstrated so much concern for their workers and the city in which they both--workers and owners--had to reside? In an attempt to persuade the factory workers that they were better off to remain loyal to management, a decision was made to use the IMA News in a partisan way.

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Krous, The Many and The Few, (Los Angeles: The Plantin Press, 1947), p. 5.

Management sincerely felt that they could curtail the union movement, especially by taking an editorial position in the paper as being "opposed to the strike." During the strike, the IMA News was delivered door-to-door. Extra issues and extra copies were printed and distributed.

The real effect of this editorial effort was that the IMA alienated itself from the worker, and nearly forced the Association out of existence. The newspaper ended up symbolizing management to the average factory worker whose emotions, along with management's, were running rampant.

#### The Aftermath of Battle

For the IMA, 1937 was a dismal year. The strike, along with the new surge of unionism across Flint and the nation, left the Association staggering. It had received a label of "company union." Soon after the strike ended, it became factory policy not to allow the IMA News to be distributed on company property. Boys were hired to hand them to employees outside the gates.

As feeling continued to run high against the IMA, membership dropped from a high of 33,838 in 1931 to a low of 145 in 1939. Obviously the Association was in serious trouble.

#### The Long Road Back

The 46-day sitdown strike and its consequences had all but decimated the Association, and it was a long road back. As bad as 1937 was financially, 1938 was even worse. R. D. Kirk, who succeeded

O. S. Farrar as Stores' Manager, reduced the inventory from \$22,000 in 1937 to only \$6,919 in 1938.<sup>1</sup> The IMA Stores were completing nearly a decade of financial problems.

John F. Ross, the President of the IMA, gave his "State of the Association" address in which he indicated in part:<sup>2</sup>

The IMA . . . must be prepared during the early part of this year to solve problems involving not only the immediate operating policies but also those that will determine the direction in which the Association shall move in future years.

The immediate problems centered on continuing services and activities in the face of decreasing reserve funds while the IMA was making plans for what to do when the lease on the bank building space expired. The correspondence between the IMA and the Manufacturers' at this time is both interesting and significant to the future of the IMA. Note the letter of March 2, 1938:

"Mr. C. M. Bullard, Secretary  
"Manufacturers' Association  
"Flint, Michigan  
"Dear Sir:

"We are transmitting the following resolution adopted by a special committee of the Board of Trustees in a meeting today. The study of future plans for the I. M. A., which was a basis for the Committee's recommendations is enclosed with this letter of information.

"WHEREAS, We consider the I.M.A. has filled a very definite need in the social and recreational life of Flint factory employees and their families for a great many years, and

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Supply Committee Report," May 19, 1940.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Annual Report from John F. Ross, President of the IMA," January 19, 1938.

"WHEREAS, To eliminate or drastically curtail any of the present activities would necessitate some form of similar activity on the part of the individual factories, therefore,

"RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this meeting, after carefully considering the several proposals presented, that a recommendation should be made to continue the I.M.A. in its present scope by retaining club quarters on a year to year lease, at reduced rental, as indicated in forecast No. 2, request reinstatement of Fisher Body Corporation monthly stores assessment which formerly produced an annual revenue of approximately \$15,000.00, or permit I.M.A. to operate stores in their plants, and discontinue publication of the I.M.A. News.

"RESOLVED, That a committee of five be appointed by the chair to present these resolutions to the Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association and urge upon them prompt action in the matter.

"In addition to recommendations contained in the resolution certain action has already been taken which is not reflected in the forecast, viz., salaries of employes have been reduced 10%, effective March 1st, in addition to other expense eliminations, which will result in an annual reduction of \$10,000.00 or more. In the forecast as presented, rent has been set at \$30,000.00 per year. As indicated in the resolution, effort will be made to secure a further reduction in rental figure. The elimination of the I.M.A. News will result in a further saving of \$9,000.00 annually.

"The income from stores sales in the factories the first two months of this year, because of drastic curtailment in factory employment reflects 60% of average revenue as considered in forecasts, but it seems reasonable to assume that revenues for year will not be on basis of these two months.

"Inasmuch as figures submitted in various forecasts have been prepared on a basis of past five years average, it is the desire of the Board of Trustees to conduct its business in any year with thought of operating within the income so there would be little probability of calling upon the Manufacturers' Association for funds in addition to annual Auditorium bond retirement. It is also believed that in good years, at least part of the bond retirement fund can be paid from I.M.A. funds.

"So that we may know of your desires in this matter, your early consideration will be greatly appreciated.

"Very truly yours,

"John F. Ross,

"President"

AN ERA ENDSSome Decisions Made

The activity between the IMA and its Advisory Board continued at a rapid rate inasmuch as some extremely difficult and far-reaching decisions had to be made. The 15-year lease on the bank building had expired and the Managing Secretary was charged with negotiating a rent reduction with the Industrial Bank which now was in receivership. A one-year lease at \$20,000 for the seventh to twelfth floor space was agreed to by the Executive Committee.<sup>1</sup> This reduction was important for the cash on hand was now a mere \$6,483, and unpaid bills equaled \$11,309. Therefore, in June another loan request for \$10,000 was made to the Manufacturers' Association. This was followed by another request in September for \$17,937 to pay bonds and meet some basic expenses.<sup>2</sup> Obviously this was a bleak period!

Despite this bleakness, the IMA staff continued operating the best it could. The Education Committee's major event of 1939 was the sponsoring of a two-week radio and television show from the IMA Auditorium. Television was a new and magic experience that drew some 20,000 amazed viewers.

Recreation Falls Victim

The Recreation Department also fell victim to the austere times. The darker days appeared in 1937 as the sitdown strike began taking its

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Purchase & Properties Report," June 21, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," June 22, 1938.

toll. Various bowling teams and leagues began suspending their schedules. Several hundred active members became delinquent in their dues. The Recreation Committee voted to allow them to continue actively "until the present factory conditions cleared." There was little doubt that the Recreation Department, like the entire IMA, was in serious difficulty.

However, Petrill and his cut-back crew continued. The World's Tennis Champions were booked for the eleventh floor. Lou Ambers, World Lightweight Boxing Champion, was featured against Flint's own Roger Bernard. Another 60,000 attended twenty-four dances in the Auditorium with the Jimmy Dorsey aggregation grossing nearly \$1,000 profit for the IMA.

Dancing continued as a popular activity in 1938. The huge, 1,000-member IMA Chorus appeared before 50,000 persons in five performances in the Auditorium. Despite these successes and the success of the ongoing programs, this was a rather sad and tragic year for the IMA for Jack Petrill tendered his resignation.<sup>1</sup> It seems that he was involved in a court action and had to appear before the court in Detroit. Because of his position and the nature of the journalistic sensationalism that was a craze with such papers as the Detroit Times of the Hearst group, he was getting undue and unfair publicity. Therefore, in order to save the IMA any harm or embarrassment, he resigned. After considerable

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Executive Committee Meeting," July 26, 1938.

discussion his resignation was accepted, but not before he was voted three additional months' pay in view of his outstanding contributions to the IMA and the citizens of Genesee County. Thus ended a significant ten-year segment in the history of the IMA.

### Some Things Continued

Activities continued. The Executive Committee records of September show that they were contemplating acquiring a golf course named Brookwood located at the corner of Davison and Belsay Roads, but no action was taken. However, the seed may have been planted for the action taken thirty years later when Brookwood became a vital part of the IMA.

Despite all the difficulties 1939 saw dancing, professional and amateur boxing, the Flint Industrial Executive Club, the Industrial Business Girls Club, GM Chorus, Flint Symphony, factory parties, ice skating, softball, boating and swimming, and basketball, all successfully conducted in conjunction with the IMA. The great Joe Louis and his Brown Bombers' softball team played before sellout crowds at Athletic Park. Glenn Miller's Band established the season's individual attendance record as 63,000 persons attended thirty-two dances. Nelson Eddy highlighted the concert season.

### Auditorium Busy

In 1937, the Auditorium was used 156 days despite the cancellation of many events as a consequence of the sitdown strike. Only



after heated discussion, ironically the UAW rented it seven times that year.

By 1938, the IMA Auditorium was rated as having the top ballroom in the Midwest. Thirty-five dances drew 64,622 persons and brought the Association a much-needed profit of \$7,773. Benny Goodman played to 8,908 paying customers.<sup>1</sup> The Auditorium report noted that it was becoming more difficult to book bands for one-night stands. Guy Lombardo, for instance, had just signed a one-year contract with the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City. Furthermore, beer gardens were becoming more popular. This was resulting in a reduction in attendance in ballrooms.

#### The "News" Reorganizes

In 1937 IMA News suffered a dark year, as previously noted, when factory policy forbade the distribution of the paper on company property, soon after the end of the strike, so that the IMA hired boys to hand out copies outside the gates.

For a short time after the walkout, many merchants were afraid to place ads in the IMA News. They felt that they might be boycotted by the workers, so advertisements lessened. Economic conditions, necessitating further layoffs in 1938, further reduced the amount of advertising. This resulted in the paper's printing only eight pages and featuring fewer pictures and less factory news.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Auditorium Report," January 12, 1939.

In an attempt to stabilize the position of the paper, a special committee meeting was held to determine what could be done to improve the IMA News and also help promote the IMA activities in general.

The following recommendations and proposals were approved:<sup>1</sup>

1. Establish a definite editorial objective
2. Publish semi-monthly instead of weekly
3. Use a higher grade newsprint
4. Improve news content
5. Improve make-up
6. Increase circulation
7. Improve arrangements with factory correspondents
8. Establish better factory contacts with management
9. Maintain better contact with GM Public Relations Department
10. Establish contacts with local newspapers and radio station

The managing secretary was responsible for the paper and its contents; therefore, the managing editor and advertising manager were both made responsible to him. A five-year budget projection was made. A new editor, Jerry E. Moore, was hired at a salary of \$240 per month.<sup>2</sup>

By the end of 1938, the circulation of the IMA News was up from 14,000 to 30,000 issues bi-weekly. Despite this, nearly a \$12,500 loss occurred, and complete confidence of the workers had not been entirely established.

### Major Considerations

As April, 1939, approached, action on some major considerations under study began taking place. Because of the importance of the action

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Committee," April 7, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special IMA News Committee," November 1, 1938.



the original reports from the IMA and the Manufacturers' Association are here presented. The first is from the Managing Secretary, O. E. Rewey, to the Manufacturers' Association.<sup>1</sup>

"April 17, 1937

"Memo to Mr. Bullard:

"We are presenting several studies regarding proposed future operations of the I.M.A. along lines discussed at a recent meeting of the Advisory Committee.

- a. Carry on present operations as indicated in forecast for 1939, and presented to your Committee. This forecast shows a net cash loss for the year of \$11,970.90, which includes Auditorium Bond interest of \$10,187.50.
- b. By discontinuing the I.M.A. News a saving of \$12,783.76 for a year would be effected.
- c. Discontinue I.M.A. News and operate Club building by eliminating Girls Recreation Department, classes, clubs and social rooms. Operations would include lounges, showers, bowling and billiards only during regular season. A reduction in active membership dues of \$3,000.00 should be anticipated. This would effect a reduction in expenses of approximately \$28,000.00, or a net saving in cost of operation of \$25,000.00.
- d. Discontinue I.M.A. News. Eliminate all Club operations and vacate Club building. Carry on mass recreation for factory employes at the Auditorium during winter season and at Potters Lake during summer as is now being done. Operate under old I.F.L. plan, using profits from factory stores to carry on mass recreation program and to retire Auditorium bonds. This operation would eliminate entire Recreation Department expense except \$5,000.00 for staff and \$1,500.00 for promotion expense. This plan would mean a reduction in active membership dues of \$3,000.00,

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Ormund Rewey, Managing Secretary of IMA, to Mr. Bullard, Secretary of Manufacturers' Association, April 17, 1939. (on file in office of IMA).

and permit a total reduction in recreation cost of approximately \$34,000.00. Administrative expense would be reduced by approximately \$8,000.00 annually. Interdepartment revenue in the amount of \$4,600.00 now considered Recreation expense and reflected in Auditorium income is eliminated in this forecast. Net estimated savings under this plan of operation would be approximately \$15,000.00 more than under plan "C".

"O. E. Rewey"

The following letter was read at the April 20, 1939, meeting of the Executive Committee of the IMA:<sup>1</sup>

"Mr. Warren E. Milner, President  
The Industrial Mutual Association  
Industrial Bank Building  
Flint, Michigan

"Dear Mr. Milner:

"The Advisory Committee of the Industrial Mutual Association has given very careful consideration to the present operations and prospects of the I.M.A., and I have been instructed to submit to you the following as a statement and resolution expressing the views of the Advisory Committee.

"Consideration of I.M.A. operations for the past several years and prospects for the future, indicates the following:

1. That the I.M.A. is and will continue to be very largely, in fact almost entirely, dependent on income from stores for the support necessary in its recreational program.
2. That membership dues constitute a very small item of income, indicating an unwillingness or lack of desire in the membership to adequately support through dues even those activities which are carried on for small groups.
3. That certain activities serving small groups are quite costly in operation and produce directly or indirectly little income.
4. That the present club quarters are unavoidably expensive to operate.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Secretary Bullard of Manufacturers' Association to President Milner of IMA, April 20, 1939. (on file in office of IMA).

5. That equipment and furnishings in Clubrooms will soon require expensive replacement and while they have been almost fully depreciated, there has been no provision made for cash with which to purchase such replacements.

"In view of the above facts, and the loss which the I.M.A. will sustain, according to the forecast for 1939 as presented to the Executive Committee of the Manufacturers' Association,

"BE IT RESOLVED, By the Executive Committee of the Manufacturers' Association, acting in its capacity as Advisory Committee to the I.M.A., that we recommend to the Board of Trustees of the I.M.A., the following:

1. That the I.M.A. News be discontinued as of May 1st, 1939.
2. That the lease on present Club Rooms in the Industrial Bank Building be not renewed and the quarters in said building vacated on or before the expiration of the present lease.
3. The activities in present Club Rooms be discontinued as soon as possible, consistent with completing those things of seasonal character now in process.
4. That equipment now used in Club Rooms be disposed of through sale prior to expiration of present lease.
5. That necessary executive and recreational offices be established in the Auditorium or Warehouse for the conduct of I.M.A. business.
6. That the Recreational Department of the I.M.A. design its program to serve large numbers of members in mass activities in Athletic Park, at Potters Lake, and in the Auditorium.
7. That economy be practiced in effecting these changes and in cooperation thereafter, so that the purpose of these recommendations may be fully realized.

"Very truly yours,

"C. M. Bullard"



### Bank Lease Canceled

The Executive Committee of the IMA voted to concur with the proposals received from the Manufacturers' Association. After the vote, it was decided to notify the Union Industrial Trust and Savings Bank that the lease would be canceled as of October 1, 1939. With the loss of this facility came the close of an era of activity and vitality within the IMA. Memories of the "old bank building" remain bright in the minds of many of the older Flint residents.

### Where Do We Go From Here

Following the closing of the Club, the elimination of the IMA News, and the liquidation of all equipment, a special committee was formed to study and outline plans for the future. Joseph Anderson of AC Spark Plug chaired this important IMA Reorganization Committee. It was charged with the following responsibilities:<sup>1</sup> planning an organization "necessary" to run an IMA consisting of the Auditorium and Athletic Park, the factory stores, and Potter's Lake. In preparing this plan, Rewey had to enumerate and recommend all jobs and personnel essential to the activities proposed. He prepared the warehouse for moving the IMA General Offices into it. He compiled a complete list of equipment showing its status and sales value.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special IMA Reorganization Committee," May 1, 1939.



As the war in Europe increased in size and intensity, the United States began making some preparations. The Selective Training and Service Act of September, 1940, and the ensuing Louisiana maneuvers were a prelude to the ominous events which soon followed.

O. E. Rewey, himself, was caught up in the emergency situation, as he had to request a one-year leave of absence to fulfill his reserve commission. After he was commended on his fourteen years of outstanding service to the IMA, his leave was granted. Little did anyone know what was ahead for all.

### Things Looking Up

On the surface, things looked much brighter for the IMA. In a letter from H. N. Risberg, Auditor, to N. D. Zeller, President of IMA, he stated:<sup>1</sup>

The financial condition of the Association at the end of 1940 is the best it has been since 1929 and again shows a remarkable improvement over the preceding year . . .

The March 19, 1941, report of the Audit and Finance Committee helps support the accuracy of Risberg's projection. A record profit for one month, \$15,594, was reported. Furthermore, \$37,500 was expended to retire Auditorium bonds, and another \$3,937 was paid on bank interest.

In November of 1941, approximately one month before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, another request was received from

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Risberg, IMA Auditor, to Zeller, IMA President, January 22, 1941. (on file in office of IMA).

O. E. Rewey seeking either another year's extension of his leave or an extension until the current emergency was over. Perry Schad became acting Managing Secretary of the IMA for the duration of the war.

Before 1939 had ended, there had appeared a glimmer of hope for the recovery of the IMA. Part of this faint gleam was the result of the devotion and time expended by the various committee and board members in working with the IMA. Continually through its history, the highest leaders with great expertise in many areas combined their energies and talents to help promote the stated purposes of the IMA. To cite one example, here is the record of Allen J. McCandless, a representative of Buick Factory Number 78, who was retiring as Trustee:<sup>1</sup>

|  | <u>Attendance</u>   |                    |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|
|  | <u>Board</u>        | <u>Committee</u>   |
| 1929 - Served on Purchases and Properties Committee  | 100%                | 100%               |
| 1930 - Served on Recreation Committee  | 100%                | 100%               |
| 1931 - Served on Recreation Committee-P.L.   | 100%                | 100%               |
| 1932 - Served on Recreation Committee  | 100%                | 100%               |
| 1933 - Served on Recreation Committee  | 100%                | 100%               |
| 1934 - Chairman of Purchases and Properties Committee--4th Vice President, Executive Committee | 100%                | Absent one meeting |
| 1935 - 4th Vice President-Executive Committee Chairman of Purchases & Properties Committee     | 100%                | Absent one meeting |
| 1936 - Treasurer - Executive Committee   | 100%                | 100%               |
| 1937 - Treasurer - Executive Committee   | Absent two meetings | 100%               |
| 1938 - Treasurer - Executive Committee   | 100%                | 100%               |

Attendance record for ten years--absent two committee meetings and two Board of Trustee meetings.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee," January 19, 1939.

This type of service record was not uncommon, and is not at the present time.

Another positive sign was the increase in Stores profit and decrease in expenses, resulting in a cash profit of \$25,339 for 1939. In addition, \$10,000 was realized from the sale of IMA Club equipment and furniture.<sup>1</sup> They were even able to make a \$12,500 repayment to the Manufacturers' Association. It seemed that things were looking up for them, for a \$45,302 profit was shown for the first half of 1940. By January, 1941, there was a definite reason for optimism. Part of this upswing was the result of the vending machines which led to an 80% increase in the sales of pop and candy. The Buick request for twenty-five candy and twenty-three cold drink vending machines was evidence of their popularity and probable future demand.<sup>2</sup>

By the end of 1941, the United States had declared war on Germany and Japan. The factories were tooling up for the total effort of producing massive amounts of war machinery, and the automobile manufacturing process was coming to a halt. No civilian vehicles were built in Flint from 1943 to 1945. Employment rates skyrocketed as the factories began their twenty-four-hour-a-day routine. Women by the thousands replaced men in the plants. Flint manufactured such items as these: tanks, aircraft engines and parts, bombsights, army cars and trucks,

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Supply Committee Report," May 19, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Supply Committee Report," July 16, 1940.

ambulances, landing gears, and machine guns. As employment thrived, the Factory Stores did likewise.

Meanwhile, the IMA News had been ordered discontinued in spite of its effort to make a successful "comeback." This became fact on May 1, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

The Education Department closed this decade by sponsoring the Flint Hobby Exposition, which was enjoyed by 36,000 persons, and promoting the enrollment of 1,855 individuals in 905 spare-time courses at GMI.<sup>2</sup> This represented the largest enrollment in spare-time courses since 1929. GMI, by the end of 1941, had an enrollment of 3,651 students and had added a new \$250,000 building for student activities.<sup>3</sup> The machines and classrooms at GMI were in use day and night. The IMA proudly continued to identify closely with the Institute.

The Recreation Department was operating without the Club. It continued to operate Potter's Lake and Athletic Park, and to schedule events into the Auditorium.

The Auditorium itself was very significant during this period, for as the result of its construction, the entire top-level decision-making apparatus of the Association was modified for the duration of the financial and social crisis. This modification led to some difficult

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special IMA Reorganization Committee Report," April 20, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," October 8, 1940.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," December 10, 1941.

decisions being made on behalf of the IMA by some of the best men in Flint's industrial world. These decisions were probably more harsh and were made probably more objectively than similar decisions would have been made by persons with vested interest, namely their employment, in the Association.

Also, having the Auditorium helped to make the decision to drop the lease on the bank building less difficult to make inasmuch as mass activities could continue to be scheduled in the Auditorium. Through this decision, the Auditorium came to symbolize the IMA.

### SUMMARY

The depression years and the sitdown strike had a significant impact on the Flint Community. This impact led to making these experiences the basis or the frame of reference upon which many subsequent decisions were made by both individuals and organizations. The IMA was no exception.

As the result of its total experience, significant changes took place in the Association. The period (1932-1942) tested its durability. The moving from crisis to crisis caused a "toughness" to develop which has allowed the IMA to meet adversity with strength.

Basically, the IMA's philosophy remained intact while its modus operandi changed. Despite the changes, the IMA ended this decade in full knowledge that it had contributed greatly in making the tough depression years just a little more tolerable for people of all ages by living up to its slogan -- "SOMEPLACE TO GO IN FLINT!"

## Chapter VII

### AN INTERVAL OF MARKING TIME -- 1942 to 1960

#### Introduction

The 1942 to 1960 segment in the IMA's development is significant. In contrast to the 1932-1942 period, this era was relatively free of crucial issues. Its importance comes from the IMA's having an opportunity, of which it took advantage, to establish a firm financial base from which to operate. In doing this, however, it set the stage for some crucial issues which were to follow.

Meanwhile, the IMA fought World War II, like most organizations, on the home front. It invested in defense bonds, it attempted to keep morale high and it benefited from the hell of it all. Subsequently it bathed in the luxury of the postwar boom which even continued through the period of the Korean conflict, and did not slow down until the financial recession of 1957.

This period ended with the Association contemplating some reorganization and the selection of a successor to its Managing Secretary. This segment perhaps could be best described as a period of marking time in the IMA's development.

## THE WAR YEARS

### Factories Hum

In Flint, the factories were literally humming in 1942. "E" for effort and efficiency became the byword. The war had not yet swung in our favor, and we were barely holding on in the Pacific, in the Atlantic, and in North Africa. With war production the only priority of consequence in the Flint area at the time, employment soared. Whites and Blacks from the South streamed into the city to gain the employment available. As in earlier days, the Flint factories offered many persons working conditions and amounts of money never dreamed possible. Women began leaving their homes to join the available men in the defense plants. The twenty-four-hour-a-day operation meant business for IMA Stores. Financially, things began to come the IMA's way.

### Upswing in Profits

The cash profit of the IMA rose dramatically during the war years of 1942 through 1945<sup>1</sup> as contrasted with the post-depression era:<sup>2</sup>

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| 1939 - \$ 25,339 cash profit |
| 1940 - \$ 94,662 cash profit |
| 1941 - \$141,725 cash profit |
| 1942 - \$125,637 cash profit |
| 1943 - \$194,131 cash profit |
| 1944 - \$133,451 cash profit |
| 1945 - \$ 59,692 cash profit |

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," January 20, 1942; January 19, 1944.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," January 21, 1942.

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The IMA Stores' banner year was 1943. Sales of \$1,702,021 were double those of any previous year in the IMA's history. This was partially accounted for by an increase in the number of workers and the longer hours worked by each person. Sales would have been even higher if more merchandise had been available.

John Collins was dispatched to the East to see if he could get the amount of candy available to the IMA during this period of scarcity increased. He was somewhat successful inasmuch as the quota was enlarged, but the Association still did not get the quantity needed.

#### Priorities Established

Despite the shortages the 1942 annual report read:<sup>1</sup>

Thus the end of 1941, we believe, finds us in a financial position strong enough to weather the uncertainties that war has brought upon us for 1942.

With this forecast, Perry Schad, Acting Managing Secretary, and the Board of Trustees gave priority to paying off the Auditorium bonds, eliminating of all notes payable, and reducing accounts payable to a reasonable level. After the IMA had been in the throes of the depression and survived, this emphasis on establishing a firm financial footing is not surprising.

Another fundamental measure in this process was the administrative decision to buy large quantities of United States Defense Bonds.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," January 21, 1942.

This allowed the IMA to invest for the future while fulfilling its commitment to the war effort.

Traditionally, the IMA had been people- and program-oriented. With the closing of the Club in 1939, a new direction was taken. Emphasis was now on 1) providing large-scale group activities for the general IMA membership, and 2) making contributions to community groups.

Large-scale activities could be conducted with the IMA's existing facilities, minimal manpower--and thus minimal cost. With other agencies and resources (Social Security, Mott Program of the Flint Board of Education, unemployment compensation, wartime employment, etc.) filling many of the needs of the membership, the IMA began fulfilling its purpose by making large contributions. The rationale used was as follows: the IMA's membership makes up the larger proportion of the total population of the Flint Area; thus any contribution that improves the total community and its services improves the welfare of each member. Therefore, contributions were made to many worthy causes such as<sup>1</sup>--

|                                   |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Women's Hospital Building Fund    | \$25,000 |
| St. Joseph Hospital Building Fund | 22,500   |
| Flint Baseball Commission         | 9,500    |
| Flint College and Cultural Center | 25,000   |
| Hurley Hospital                   | 14,000   |
| Flint Osteopathic Hospital        | 20,000   |
| Flint College and Cultural Center | 25,000   |
| (second donation)                 |          |
| Y.M.C.A. Building Fund            | 27,000   |
| Boy Scout Camp                    | 5,000    |

Thus, as the city as a whole was benefited, so was each member.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "President's Annual Report," January 24, 1944.

### Major Focal Points

Effects of the war were evident throughout the city with many able-bodied men in the Armed Services, and many civilians working long shifts in the defense plants.

The large-scale programs that were conducted by the IMA during the years of World War II centered around three facilities: Athletic Park, the Auditorium, and Potter's Lake.

Athletic Park was used by ice skaters in the winter and softball players in the summer. As both the number and the quality of the teams competing in softball became greater, the Park became more popular. Factory games played in 1944 totaled 464 in number.<sup>1</sup> Sandwiched between these games were others played by the UAW-CIO and other groups along with some top-notch girls' teams. In 1945 Flint's M&S Orange Men's team, whose home was Athletic Park, advanced to the finals of the Men's Major Softball World's Championship before losing 2 to 1 to Fort Wayne Zollners at Cleveland, Ohio.

In spite of the heavy schedule at Athletic Park, wartime activities were booked from time to time. For instance, in April, 1942, a fire control and incendiary bomb demonstration was staged and an obstacle course was erected around the inside perimeter of the park.

The IMA Auditorium continued to be a focal point for community life in the Flint Area. With no other civic-type arena available, all the

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from the Manufacturers' Association to the IMA, (on file in the office of the IMA), July 17, 1957.

big events were booked into "the IMA". People in general would say, "Let's go to the IMA." During this time period, most people associated the name IMA with the Auditorium and gave less consideration to the other services that it performed. In 1941, 356,501 persons used the facility.<sup>1</sup> This equaled about two and a half times the total population of the city.

However, the Auditorium also had to do its part in the wartime effort. Troops were billeted in the Auditorium for a brief period and thus activities had to be curtailed. From May 18, 1942, to January, 1943, an Army Air Force Technical Training Detachment lived there while its members attended a Buick School for "Aviation Engine Maintenance."<sup>2</sup> The IMA contracted with the War Department for billeting at a rate of 57¢ per day per man. They made arrangements for a maximum of 550 and a minimum of 400 troops.

Potter's Lake was still the focal point for picnics, boating, swimming and fishing. On Memorial Day in 1944, for instance, approximately 4,000 persons attended the celebration.<sup>3</sup> Attendance might have been higher, but gasoline rationing allowed most people only a

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Report," January 19, 1942.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Annual Report," January 6, 1943.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," June 15, 1944.

few gallons each week with their "A" coupons. As a result of this hardship, shuttle buses were scheduled from Flint to the Lake. Round trip fare was 65¢.<sup>1</sup>

#### Educational Efforts Slight

The IMA's educational activities during the war years were mostly peripheral. The Association still helped promote spare-time classes for GMI and issued monthly reports to the Board of Trustees. For instance, a typical report during 1942 stated that GMI was offering defense classes and that men from the U. S. Army Base at Fort Knox were attending, specializing in the servicing of modernized equipment. Also, 2,307 employee members were enrolled in night school and spare-time courses.<sup>2</sup>

Another interesting tie-in with GMI was that the records of any GM plant employee completing a course at GMI were sent to that plant's personnel office and that the same information was forwarded to the person's immediate supervisor. This was a valuable service to the employee and often led to a promotion or the filling of a vital position on the basis of those data.

By late 1942, the Education Committee was seeking ways of keeping morale high in the Flint Community. Its initial event was a

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," September 16, 1943.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," February 10, 1942.

Christmas party conducted in the Auditorium for all servicemen in the Flint Area. More than \$1,500 was expended for gift boxes, an orchestra, and a show.

Reports also indicate that it was becoming more difficult to enroll students in classes for these reasons:<sup>1</sup>

1. Government Actions
  - drafting of men
  - rationing of tires and gasoline
2. Industrial Operations
  - longer working hours
  - swing shifts
  - training no longer necessary to gain employment
3. Training Agencies
  - increase in training sites--in-plant,  
Mott Foundation, N.Y.A., etc.

More than 400 students a month were leaving school for jobs, and the pace was accelerating.<sup>2</sup>

So it was during this time that GMI offered spare-time classes. General Motors offered in-plant training programs while other agencies offered extension programs. The IMA played a cooperative role. The Education Committee's Report of March 14, 1944, recognized that GMI was no longer alone in the continuing education field. The main new thrust was coming from Mott Foundation courses, Flint Technical High School, and miscellaneous subsidized government training programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," December 8, 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," February 8, 1943.

Thus, the IMA concluded that their role in specialized individual training was an unknown at this time.

However, the IMA persisted in its effort to promote the spare-time courses and pushed for more active participation by plant management in the advertising of such courses. One method, which proved helpful, was suggested by Albert Sobey: the IMA would provide a scholarship fund for GMI enrollees. These awards were made to those students with the highest achievement records in each of the Trades, Management, Business, and Technical areas.<sup>1</sup>

In 1945, H. O. Dexter was appointed Supervisor of Spare Time Programs at GMI. Dexter was an active member of the Education Committee and maintained a close relationship with the IMA until his retirement. At the time of his appointment, there were 512 students enrolled in seventy-five courses.<sup>2</sup>

In 1945, a series of illustrated lectures was begun. Most of these were travelogues shown free monthly to IMA members and other ticket holders. These lecture-film sessions proved very popular and have continued through the years.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," January 9, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," October 9, 1945.

VETERANS' SERVICE DEPARTMENTIMA Expands Domain

By 1943, the Allied Forces were beginning to turn back the enemy forces in Europe and in the Pacific, so it began to look as though victory would be ours in a matter of time. As the result of this, plans for the future were being made by the IMA. Some of these plans centered on new and improved physical facilities, but some focused on the human needs that would have to be met as the disengagement from World War II was begun.

One of these ideas concerned itself with the re-establishment of the returning servicemen "to the equal benefit of veteran and community." Donald A. Petry, who dedicated thirty-six years of service to the IMA, (1936-1972), made the motion that a department in the IMA be established, with the necessary staff and facilities, for assisting men and women discharged from the Armed Forces. He further moved that a committee be established to help plan and implement such a department, and that a person be selected to be directly in charge of the proposed department.<sup>1</sup> Approval was granted by the IMA Board of Trustees on December 28, 1943. A truly human service came into being.

Authorization to operate such a service was received from the United States Treasury Department in 1943, and this unique service was

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," October 20, 1943.



in operation by January 3, 1944.<sup>1</sup> Russel V. Somes, a combat veteran of World War I and a man experienced in community and veterans' affairs, was appointed director of the program.

Somes immediately publicized the availability of the service. The first case was received on January 7, 1944. It involved a young veteran unable to work because of war-related injuries. Each day brought an increase of cases. The department began getting both state and national recognition:<sup>2</sup>

It is of note that this office has been recognized by leading authorities throughout the State and invitations have been extended to attend conferences, many of which are exclusive and confidential and from which important information has been obtained.

At the time of this first report, Somes had already interviewed approximately seventy-five veterans. He also had concluded that this appeared to be a service to help both the veterans and the industry employing them.

Somes developed an employment and rehabilitation procedure that encompassed both large and small industries. In addition, he canvassed the area in his quest to find jobs for the returning veterans.

By July, 1944, the Veterans' Service Department of the IMA had been appointed the official Genesee County Veterans' Counseling Center under the authority of Public Act Number 26, 1944, of the State of

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "President's Annual Report," January 24, 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," February 21, 1944.

Michigan.<sup>1</sup> This Act proved to be most instrumental in the success of the program, for with this sanction an official relationship with all "State Veteran Programs, including . . . Vocational Education, Selective Service, Hospital Commission and other agencies" was established.

The dedication and spirit of this Department are evident throughout the official records of the IMA, as in such statements as "The returning veteran deserves our best," "Re-establishment of the veteran in his proper and rightful place in the community is as essential to the total health and welfare of the community as it is to the veteran himself," "The mutual obligations of veterans and community must meet each other and merge," "Each must readjust to fit the realities of the other," and "The return of the veteran must be a triumphant reunion with his community."<sup>2</sup>

Privately financed, the Veterans' Service Department of the IMA was the only private organization in the country offering such services without cost. This Department was an agency that gave direct aid to the veteran without becoming entangled by governmental red tape.

#### A Case in Point

In his monthly reports to the IMA governing board, Somes listed the number of cases to date and the specific action taken. It became his custom to dramatize their efforts by citing in detail one case history per month. Here is one such report:

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," September 29, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Annual Report," January 17, 1945.



"August 31, 1944

"Veterans Service Committee  
Industrial Mutual Association  
Flint, Michigan

"Gentlemen:

"As it is our policy to include an actual case record with our statistical report we will present one of the cases we are working with so that you may have some idea of the activities of the Veterans' Service Department.

"This is the case of a young man who enlisted in the U. S. Navy in May, 1942. He was 17 years old. His occupation was a student. He left school in the 10th grade. He was the eldest of five children. His father was a factory worker, employed in a local automobile plant.

"After receiving his boot training in Great Lakes Naval Training Station, he was assigned to sea duty on the Cruiser U.S.S. Savannah. He saw service in convoying troop and merchant ships and was in the invasion of Casa Blanca. It was during this period that the submarine menace was at its height. In February of 1943 while on duty in the North Atlantic, he was ordered to remove ice from the guns on one of the turrets and due to a lurch of the ship he fell to the deck, and fractured his back in two places. He was removed to the Naval Hospital at Casco Bay, Portland, Maine, and placed on a back board for two months, later to be transferred to barracks in a plaster cast. While under treatment he provoked an officer who, in turn, ordered the boy discharged as "undesirable and unfit", and used a dishonorable form #662. The boy never was tried before a Court Martial and he was recorded as A.W.O.L. as of one day while in service. He was discharged on May 23, 1943 and returned home.

"After his return he encountered much difficulty in finding employment and upon presenting the discharge to an employer he was in all cases denied work.

"In February of this year he and his mother called at this office. His attitude was belligerent, sullen and bitter. After counselling with both we found they were unaware of the type of discharge and could not understand why the boy was being treated as an outlaw. They had filed for pension with the Veterans Administration, but everything had been denied according to law.

"We believed the boy's mind had been affected by this treatment and had him examined by Dr. Gordon Brain, the local psychiatrist, through the State Board of Control.

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The doctor's diagnosis was "psychoneurosis" and that the boy had been discharged from the Navy Hospital while he was suffering a complete nervous breakdown.

"Our intent in this case was to call for a review of this discharge through the Bureau of Naval Personnel to correct the miscarriage of justice, thus restoring citizenship and other benefits such as hospitalization and schooling. We contacted the Veterans Administration and after a review of clinical records from the hospital and other facts on record, the officials believed we should continue every angle, politically or otherwise to make a correction.

"During the investigation the boy was working on a farm the father had purchased, and he seemed to brood over his trouble. Neighbors and relatives began spreading tales about his discharge and the boy became worse until his mother and father were alarmed at his queer actions and violence toward other members of the family and the animals on the farm. He was confined to bed several times with his back, and required doctor's treatment.

"We arranged, at the request of his parents, to have Dr. Rehn, Chief Psychiatrist at the Michigan State Training School, Lapeer, examine him. His diagnosis was "insanity" and recommended immediate hospitalization. He was examined by Dr. Brain, and he found him insane and ordered hospitalization. Dr. Berman at Otisville also examined him, and was in complete agreement with the other doctors.

"The boy's parents were directed to the Probate Court, and signed commitment papers and brought him to this office for transfer to Veterans Administration Hospital at Battle Creek.

"Arrangements were made by us with Colonel Hentz, Chief of the Hospital, for a bed. Upon arrival we found they had again checked the laws covering such cases and decided he was ineligible for treatment. After a conference with the Colonel and his legal advisor, they agreed that the Navy was in error on the type of discharge used. The boy was accepted for treatment and they are requesting the Navy to make a correction of the discharge which will in turn justify the action.

"We are hoping for an early return of this boy after proper treatment of his mind and his back injury. We feel sure the discharge will be corrected. This and the case can be closed.

"Respectfully,

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"Russel V. Somes - Supervisor

Work Load Increases

By the end of 1944, with the war still in progress, it became evident that more assistance was needed in the Veterans Department, for not only did the case load greatly increase, but new responsibilities were assumed. For example, it was mutually agreed that this department should coordinate employment-type activities for the entire city and county.<sup>1</sup>

To help ease the pressure, Harry S. Mients was hired as Assistant Supervisor of this important IMA service. He attended a Veterans' Administration School in Dearborn, Michigan, and a conference at Pine Lake. At these meetings it became obvious that the IMA's program was being scrutinized by government officials who were seeking ways of implementing programs in other cities.

The first annual report showed that 1,824 contacts had been made.<sup>2</sup> The department had transported over one hundred veterans to Fort Custer or the Dearborn Veterans Hospital. They also had helped to arrange for over 120 veterans to enter college or on-the-job training programs. Also, they were working increasingly with families of servicemen who had been killed overseas. The Service was available to anyone in need any hour of any day.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," September 6, 1944.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "First Annual Veterans' Service Department Report," January 17, 1945.

Word was received that the United States Veterans' Administration was going to open a Flint office and wanted Mients to be in charge. The IMA was taking under advisement the wisdom of releasing him from his current position where his services were so valuable, especially with the work load increasing to the point that another man, Martin Buckner, was employed.<sup>1</sup>

This contact center was opened by the government in 1945 on South Saginaw Street, but Mients did not leave the IMA. The IMA cooperated closely with the new agency, but felt little relief in its case load as the result of the government operation.

The IMA Veterans' Service Department was established on a strong philosophical base. Its central role was that of interpreting the veteran to the community as well as the community to the veteran. This two-way approach led to greater community awareness and involvement than if it were just a one-way approach. This, along with the total commitment of the Department's personnel, spelled success. No request was turned down without consideration. This resulted in a wide variety of activities:<sup>2</sup>

. . . a job, emergency medical attention or hospitalization for either physical or mental difficulties, vocational training or education, a pension or pension adjustment, help in securing American citizenship, legal assistance, review of

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," May 31, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Annual Report," January 14, 1945.



questionable military discharge, cooperation with law enforcement officials in problem cases that merit special consideration, insurance advice, help in securing guaranteed loans for either home or business and a multitude of special problems from help on income tax returns to help in securing entry into the United States for a wife married abroad.

As the result of this myriad of functions, the Department worked closely and cooperatively with many legally authorized service organizations.

### Optimism and Planning

As the war progressed and optimism grew with each Allied success, the IMA's Board of Trustees began looking ahead. With all but a quarter of a million dollars paid on the Auditorium, and profits remaining high, it was time to plan.

Extensive plans were made for postwar expansion of various kinds. Committees busily engaged in envisioning the building of a new facility, to cost up to a million dollars, to house both cultural and recreational types of programs. To coordinate the planning, a special postwar planning committee was appointed. It was to consider facilities for such activities as these:<sup>1</sup>

. . . bowling, small auditorium, kitchen, meeting rooms, gymnasium, warehouse, plus improvements for Athletic Park and Potter's Lake and possibly establishment of a camp for boys and girls.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Recreational Committee Report," October 12, 1943.

The interim report of the committee zeroed in on these items:<sup>1</sup>

1. Kitchen for the Auditorium
2. Multi-purpose building
3. Warehouse
4. Parking space
5. Indoor hockey rink and enclosed ice skating rink.

Later more facilities were added to the plan: class and social rooms, training rooms, swimming pool, bowling lanes with automatic pinsetters, billiards, museum for GM exhibits, and an aquarium. Also, the committee was considering the possible purchase of a golf course and sponsorship of playgrounds in vacant lots. The financial means were within reach, the war was changing in our favor, and the postwar hopes and dreams were escalating. The cash profit from the Stores' operation for 1943 was \$195,000, and more savings bonds were purchased.<sup>2</sup>

## WORLD WAR II ENDS

### Peace Arrives

Thus, as World War II ended in 1945, the IMA had established itself financially. It had also developed a pattern of operation that could best be described as routine. It was several years before that pattern was broken.

Flint and the United States entered in 1946 the first year of peace since 1940. Optimism and enthusiasm reigned throughout the

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Post-War Building Committee Report," October 12, 1943.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," January 19, 1944.

nation. The economy looked strong and appeared to be growing. New ways of doing things were developing. New manufacturing and construction techniques were employed to help bring on and to help supply the postwar boom. Even social amenities changed as the United States became more materialistic. It was in this setting that the IMA moved forward.

A letter was received from Ormund Rewey in late 1945, indicating that his discharge from the service was imminent. He was informed that his position was awaiting his return.<sup>1</sup> Thus, his one-year leave of absence actually terminated five years later following victory in World War II.

Financially, the World War II period was good to the IMA for now it was on a sound financial footing. Profits were up. The Auditorium bonds were redeemed and there was a total reserve of over \$1,000,000. The future looked good.<sup>2</sup>

### Changes Take Place

Perry Schad, who had been Acting Managing Secretary of the IMA in Rewey's absence, requested a leave of absence.<sup>3</sup> John Bullard was employed by the administration section of the IMA.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," November 27, 1945.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," January 16, 1946.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," February 21, 1946.

It is interesting to note that a revised group insurance policy with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, covering sickness and accidents of IMA employees, was contracted in 1948.<sup>1</sup> Thus, "by this action the old IMA Benefit Plan becomes inactive." So, some 47 years after the inception of the plan and some 20 years since General Motors switched to a Metropolitan Life coverage, the last \$12,515 was transferred from the Benefit Reserve account into the General Reserve. With this adjustment, the final pages were closed upon what had been a pioneering and humane effort of the Association. As in so many service areas, the IMA had met a need until other resources emerged to take its place.

Financial success continued into the 1950's. Sales for 1950 amounted to \$1,970,843, an all-time high, and even exceeded by a quarter of a million dollars, the previous high point of 1943. Investment to build reserves to weather lean years and provide facilities became a prime objective of the IMA, and as a result actively sponsored activities began to lessen in numbers and became routinized.

### Activities Continue

Following the War, the Auditorium continued housing many recreational activities. It was the center for high school basketball games and was the home court for both Flint Northern and Flint Central.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," August 18, 1948.



It featured the popular city-series battles between these two schools for many years .

Also, in an attempt to stimulate and promote factory basketball even more, the IMA was trying to lure a college or professional team into the Auditorium. In 1946, the Dow Chemical team of Midland, Michigan, agreed to play two games in the facility. Both they and the Detroit Gems were seeking it as their home court for the following year. In 1947, forty-six professional games were played. The Dow Athletic Club was offered the use of the Auditorium pending their acceptance in the National Basketball League.

Word was sent in 1948 that Dow had received a franchise and would play a twenty-game home schedule, under the banner of the Flint Dow Chemicals, in the IMA Auditorium.<sup>1</sup> However, after a slightly less than mediocre season, word was received that Dow would not sponsor a professional basketball team the next year. Another brief but interesting chapter had been written into the annals of Flint sports.

#### A Near Disaster

April of 1947 saw the City of Flint ravaged by one of the worst floods in its history.<sup>2</sup> A 16.3-inch March snowfall coupled with heavy rains caused an excessive accumulation of water. The normal water level at the city pumping station was thirty inches, but the rapid rise

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," January 15, 1948.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Russel Somes, Assistant Managing Secretary to Senter P. Deacy, President of IMA, (on file in office of IMA), April 17, 1947.

saw the water crest at 101.5 inches , bringing disastrous results . The IMA Auditorium is located in the valley of the Flint River , only about 150 feet from the river .

Despite the use of a small pump from Buick to supplement the one at the Auditorium , the water rose fast enough in an eight-hour period to cause the warehouse to be abandoned .

Somes , with a crew of twelve men , "including supervisors , warehouse and Auditorium employees" , caulked all the Auditorium doors on both the inside and outside by 11:30 p.m. on Saturday , April 5th . A rowboat and men with mops and buckets stood by in the emergency . By 4:00 a.m. , Sunday , April 6 , water had poured into the transformer room and shorted out all electrical power .

At this point , an emergency call was put in to Rewey , who called in all available employees to help combat the waters . Somes arranged for a large 800-gallon-per-minute pump and other pumping equipment which were placed in the basement of the Auditorium .

By 11:00 p.m. on Sunday , the flood water was within 21 inches of the main floor . Using all the pumps available , the crew was successful in lowering the level by three feet within an hour's time . A water level of five feet below the floor level was maintained all day Monday until the City crew pulled their big pump out for another emergency . The water then rapidly rose another 36 inches .

The Auditorium doors stood their test when seventeen inches of water climbed against the northeast doors . Around 7:00 p.m. Tuesday , April 8 , the water began receding and by 8:00 a.m. Wednesday , the emergency was over .

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Temporary power allowed maintenance crews to remove and inspect all electric motors and appliances. Full power was restored four days later on Saturday, April 12.

Rewey, in his report to the President of the IMA, Senter P. Deacy, cited the cooperation and loyalty of the employees and many other persons, businesses and agencies for their assistance in this time of need. He reported that Auditorium attractions were necessarily cancelled from April 5 through April 16. Service to the factory Stores continued, thanks to the temporary use of the Buick Retail Store at Third Avenue and Saginaw Street which served as a warehouse. General offices were transferred to the Durant Hotel. Rewey's detailed report also included a statement of losses to the Association--\$9,683 in value.

#### Auditorium Use

Even with the near disaster of the flood, 1947 witnessed the Auditorium in use 170 days with an attendance total of 401,500 persons or an average of 2,362 per day of occupancy.<sup>1</sup> Some of the highlights of the year included thirteen Northern and Central High School basketball games; fifteen more played by Flint Dow of the National Basketball League; eight professional boxing matches promoted by Flint's Tommy Cussans; Don McNeil of Breakfast Club fame; musical engagements by

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Auditorium Committee Report," January 7, 1948.

such persons as Sugar Child Robinson, Tex Beneke, Harmonicats, Spike Jones, and the Marine Band.

In 1948, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers requested that the IMA pay a license fee of \$720 for the privilege of performing copyrighted music in the Auditorium. It is interesting to see this request come at the time when the big ballroom attraction of the Auditorium was on the downswing. This resulted in the hiring of a fine local orchestra, Brahm Ward's, to play for a Saturday dance on the twentieth of November at a cost of \$150. Brahm Ward and his orchestra became a local institution by playing through the forties, fifties, sixties, and on into the seventies for gatherings both large and small.

By 1950, the average dance attendance had dipped to an all-time low of 459 persons.<sup>1</sup> In an attempt to revitalize dancing, several "old time" dances were held to see whether they would act as a stimulant. They did not, so the following report was filed: "The popularity of ballroom dancing has fallen off to a point where it is not profitable to continue this activity." After 1951, no more IMA-sponsored dances were conducted, although the Auditorium continued to be used for dances sponsored by groups other than the IMA.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," October 10, 1950.

Plans Implemented

Despite all the extensive plans of expansion made toward the end of World War II, and the authorization in 1949 to lay plans for an Auditorium annex, nothing conclusive was done until 1954. At that point these recommendations were approved:<sup>1</sup>

1. Remove grandstands from Athletic Park, build a storage building for Auditorium equipment and stage properties, and add a large parking lot.
2. Improve and modernize toilets.
3. Enlarge vestibule.
4. Improve air heating system.
5. Improve lighting system and controls.
6. Add electric drinking fountains.
7. Refurbish floor, draperies, and balcony seat covers.
8. Put up a new display sign.

These alterations represented \$374,012 worth of improvements on the initial 1929 investment of \$829,150, or a total capital investment of \$1,203,162 in the IMA Auditorium.<sup>2</sup> To allow implementation of these plans, the Auditorium was closed from April, 1955, to Labor Day, 1955.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Auditorium Study Committee Report," December 22, 1954.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Committee Report," November 16, 1955.

Annex Constructed

However, it was not until 1956 that a Special Building Committee was established to study further an Auditorium expansion. Special sketches of the proposed annex were accepted in 1957. The addition, not including the kitchen, was to cost approximately \$800,000. The design was planned for handling groups of 350 to 750 persons. On May 28, 1957, the Manufacturers' Advisory Committee to the IMA gave the go-ahead for detailed drawings to be done. Furthermore, arrangements were made through Citizens Bank for a loan of about \$400,000, if needed, to allow the annex to be constructed in one phase.<sup>1</sup>

Final approval for construction was granted in December, 1957.<sup>2</sup> The base bid was \$1,638,000. The general contract was let to the Sorenson-Gross Construction Company. One year later, December 1958, the first public event took place.

After much discussion as to the name to be given the new structure, the Special Building Committee recommended that it be known as the "Auditorium Annex." Some pressure was exerted to change the name, but with the IMA Auditorium serving as a major landmark in the area, it was thought that the recommended name was appropriate. In the community the structure is commonly referred to as the "IMA Annex." The Flint community was again the recipient of a much-needed facility.

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Manufacturers' Association to IMA, (on file in the office of the IMA), July 17, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Manufacturers' Association to IMA, (on file in the office of the IMA), December 17, 1957.

### Demise of Park

From the time of the IMA's purchase of the site from the city in 1928 for \$100,000, until the Park's demise in 1954, Athletic Park was a favorite spot for local sports buffs. Its softball teams were renowned throughout Michigan and the United States.

The IMA sponsored a girls' softball team beginning in 1946 in both the Michigan Girls' Major Softball League and the Michigan-Ontario League. In its first year, the team won the championship in the latter league.<sup>1</sup> In 1947, the girls won the State Major's Championship while trying for the League Championship in the Michigan-Ontario League. The IMA Girls continued to bring prominence to the IMA by going to the semi-finals of the 1948 Regionals in the National Softball Tournament before being eliminated 1 to 0 by Peoria, Illinois, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They had previously captured the State Major's title and first place in the Michigan-Ontario League. They again won the state title in 1950 and 1951 for the fifth and sixth times.

During 1947, the former great M & S Orange Men's team, with a few changes in personnel, became known as the Joe Louis Punchers. They gained a franchise in the National Fastpitch Softball League and called Athletic Park their home. Four hundred seats were added to handle the crowds.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreational Committee Report," October 12, 1944.

In the winter, Athletic Park was used by the city for ice skating. In 1945, ice skating had a banner year. A record of forty-three consecutive days of skating surpassed the previous mark of thirty-seven days registered in 1917.<sup>1</sup> A hockey rink was constructed in 1951 on the park's infield so that the grandstands could be used for spectators. Factory leagues were established. In 1952, Athletic Park supported a standard size hockey rink operated under the supervision of the Flint Winter Sports Association.<sup>2</sup> A local hockey team represented Flint in the Central Michigan Amateur Hockey League.

However, these activities were curtailed in 1954 when the venerable Athletic Park was demolished to make way for additions to the IMA Auditorium Complex on Second Avenue. To the sportsman, such change could not compensate for the many exciting memories of boxing, wrestling, baseball, softball, hockey, and other events including the deafening whistle and rumbling of the daily locomotives and the ensuing vibration of the grandstands as the 7:20 came by within a few feet of the old green structure. A sports era in Flint thus was concluded.

#### Potter's Lake Dilemma

The major improvement at Potter's Lake following World War II

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," February 15, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Annual Report," January 7, 1952.

was the construction of a rustic lodge in 1948.<sup>1</sup> The Advisory Committee approved \$18,000 for this venture. This facility proved popular until a tragedy occurred in 1953 at the lake. Fred J. Evans, the caretaker, was killed in a fire that destroyed the recreation lodge. Authorization was given to rebuild the lodge immediately. It was decided to make the new structure larger to accommodate more persons. Plans were made to spend up to \$35,000.<sup>2</sup>

In 1957, eighty acres of land on Jones Lake, which is located across the highway south of Potter's Lake, became available. The IMA was not interested. This disinterest no doubt reflected the attitude of the IMA's governing body and administration, for by 1958 a study was under way to see whether better use could be made of the property in view of the increasing costs and the reduced income. The discussion even reached the point where the IMA considered disposing of the entire complex.<sup>3</sup>

When the IMA consulted with the Michigan Conservation Department and the Highway Department to find out whether it would be possible to trade for a more desirable holding, neither department was

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," November 20, 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Committee Report," March 17, 1953.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," September 8, 1958.

interested.<sup>1</sup> The final decision was that Potter's Lake should be continued as a park facility.

In a later special meeting, it was revealed that the IMA was considering giving Potter's Lake to the Township, County, or State to save \$40,000 of operating expenses annually. Thought was also given to possibly leasing the site for \$1.00 per year to a private or public organization. However, no one seemed very enthusiastic about assuming the 440-acre package, so the IMA continued to operate the facility as in the past.

### Tragedy Strikes Flint

Mid-1953 saw a devastating tornado strike in the Beecher Metropolitan Area on the north city limits of Flint. This lower and lower-middle income area was populated primarily by factory workers. On the evening of June 8, cutting a swath twenty-eight miles long and several blocks wide, it destroyed everything in its path. A total of 118 persons were killed, 800 were injured and 600 families and businesses were affected.<sup>2</sup> The IMA swung into action that night by establishing the Auditorium as an emergency aid station prepared to take care of 150 stretcher cases. A few days later, an "Operation Tornado" rebuilding bee was organized for the Beecher Area. Some 7,800 volunteers swarmed

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>The Flint Journal, Special Edition, July 1, 1953, p. 2.



into the area and helped to rebuild 193 of the houses that were destroyed. A night was set aside in the Auditorium to honor the many volunteers who had registered to assist the victims in re-establishing their homes by donating approximately \$211,600 worth of labor. President Dwight D. Eisenhower circled the devastated area in the Presidential plane, the Columbine. In declaring the Beecher area a national disaster area, Eisenhower left this message of comfort for the victims:<sup>1</sup>

My sympathies and best wishes go to each of those families, together with the assurance that all appropriate agencies including the Federal Government, will cooperate to assist them in this time of trouble.

In recognition of the incredible community effort displayed, Flint was named an "All American City."

#### Educational Efforts Scattered

The IMA's educational efforts following the War were given a boost when the Education Committee began exploring the enlargement of the Association's program to include vocational guidance and aptitude testing services in order to assist veterans and employable young men in obtaining appropriate employment.<sup>2</sup> The fruits of these thoughts were not harvested for several years.

The records of the IMA for this period show relatively little activity. The Committee reports list such items as these receiving

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," April 8, 1947.

attention:<sup>1</sup> spare-time courses at GMI, IMA Scholarships, IMA Travel-Lecture Series, annual folk festival, Yard and Garden Club Show, and Flint Science Fair.

Following Russia's successful "Sputnik" venture in 1957, pressure was put on the public schools to do more in the area of science and mathematics, for the fear was that we were falling behind the Soviets. Thus, the Superintendent of the Flint Community Schools, Dr. Spencer Meyers, and Frank J. Manley, Director of the Mott Program, approached the IMA for assistance in "beefing up" the general educational program, but especially the science and mathematics fields.<sup>2</sup> The IMA cooperated by donating \$3,500. These monies were used primarily to provide seminars and scholarships to teachers so that they could in turn upgrade instruction.

### Major Events

During this period, two significant events were celebrated. In 1949, the IMA gave special recognition to the contributions of Major Albert Sobey to the City of Flint. Sobey was completing his thirtieth year as Director of GMI. A successful anniversary party was promoted at the recreation lodge at Potter's Lake.

The second event, in 1958, was the Golden Anniversary of General Motors. Flint celebrated throughout the year, with the climax

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," January 14, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

being the "Milestone Parade" featuring a cast of 2,500, highlighted by the leading entertainers of the day. Throngs of people lined Saginaw Street to view the passing pageant.

### G. I. s Return

Perhaps the most significant program instituted by the IMA during this period was the establishment of the Veterans' Service Department. Although conceived as a means of helping the servicemen returning from World War II, it has continued to the present time as an integral part of the Association and a boon to many a "G. I." and his family.

With the War ended in Europe by the German surrender on May 7, 1945, and in the Pacific by the formal Japanese surrender signed September 2, 1945, it became necessary for the department to hire another person, John Ananich. Thus, four men and two secretaries, housed in the old wooden Randall Building, prepared for the welcomed onslaught of returning heroes.

A survey taken by the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company indicated that the IMA Service was on a par with the recognized leader in the field--the government-sponsored center at Bridgeport, Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> The survey further indicated that Flint had the only center where an organization was sponsoring such a community program with private funds.

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Russel V. Somes to IMA Veterans' Service Committee, (on file in the office of the IMA), December 31, 1945.



As the result of this favorable commentary, Some was invited to appear before the Air Corps at Mitchell Field, New York, to explain the IMA's program inasmuch as the Air Corps wanted to spur on more such community-based efforts throughout the country. Flint was to serve as the model!

In December, 1945, Some visited the Bridgeport Center and also attended a conference in Washington, D. C. , on the invitation of Major General Erskine for the following purposes:<sup>1</sup>

1. To establish minimum standards of service which should be given veterans by the personnel of the centers ,
2. To list the problems confronting personnel working in the centers and to recommend solutions to these problems ,
3. To recommend ways and means of causing communities to realize their responsibility for the reintegration of the returning veterans.

In January of 1946, the Veterans' Service Department's quarters were enlarged from two to six private counseling rooms, an enlarged reception room and general offices. Edward McLogan was hired to help with the increased demand. In February 1,220 veterans came to them and contributed to the grand total of 13, 168 visits to the Center during the year.<sup>2</sup> Early 1946 was anticipated to be the busiest time of the year,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," January 22, 1947.

for there had been a major push to "Bring 'em home for Christmas."

In December alone, 3,000 Flint area men were discharged.

Anxious to get back to the routine of civilian life, the returning G. I. in Flint was confronted by a strike in the automobile factories. Also, a critical housing shortage presented a major concern. The case load became so heavy in 1946 that additional counselors had to be trained and hired. As more benefits became available to the veteran through additions to the G. I. Bill, cases previously closed were reopened.

Just as the case load began to decline slightly to just over 1,000 contacts per month, the Michigan Veterans' Military Pay (Bonus) Legislation was passed. This resulted in a surge of veterans requesting bonus applications. To provide this service, local plants loaned typewriters and typists. In one week's time, 5,000 applications were completed and another 22,000 distributed. The operation was so successful that the IMA was cited by the Adjutant General's Office in Lansing for providing "the most complete service for filing applications known in Michigan."

The Veterans' Service Department embarked on a new program in September, 1947. It was referred to as the "Return of War Dead" for reburial. The Department was designated as the coordinating agency and was authorized to represent all area veterans' organizations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Somes to Veterans' Service Committee, (on file in the office of the IMA), December 31, 1947.

The purpose of the program was to assure every family who requested the return of their war dead a complete military funeral. The IMA organized a service whereby a representative buddy of World War II called upon the next of kin to extend sympathies and, more importantly, to offer the IMA's help in arranging a fitting memorial service. Of the 116 bodies returned from foreign cemeteries, the IMA furnished military reburial services for seventy-five.

The Department, as a result of this service, was commended by the American Legion Post Commanders Club.<sup>1</sup> The commendation reads in part as follows:

. . . We understand, and believe it safe to say, that yours is the only organization in the whole United States which is performing a service of such magnitude--a service for the next of kin, the many veterans' organizations and the community as a whole.

. . . It is gratifying to know that in each case of a returned deceased veteran a representative buddy of World War II immediately calls upon the family to extend not only his sympathies, but the services of your organization to help them in a trying experience to arrange a fitting memorial service. It is a splendid achievement that, behind the scenes, you have organized the aid of our industries, the aid of war buddies, the aid of many veterans' organizations in making certain that the services rendered will not be haphazard or below the dignity of the occasion . . .

Russel Somes was rewarded for his excellent work by being named Assistant Managing Secretary of the IMA in 1947. He continued as Supervisor of the 'Veterans' Department.

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from William Fagan, President of American Legion Post Commanders Club to the IMA, (on file in the office of the IMA), December 24, 1947.

By 1949, the IMA's records show that the Department had made 41,920 contacts with veterans:<sup>1</sup>

|      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| 1944 | - | 1,824  |
| 1945 | - | 7,255  |
| 1946 | - | 13,168 |
| 1947 | - | 14,909 |
| 1948 | - | 7,764  |

### Veterans Memorialized

In 1947, the IMA put up a large bronze honor roll in the Auditorium as a memorial to all Genesee County Veterans of World War II. This commemorative plaque containing the names of all Genesee County servicemen and women was installed at a cost of \$21,878.<sup>2</sup> Thus in 1947, the department was busy compiling names to be placed on the World War II Memorial Plaque. They also designed and printed a special memento program for the ceremony and sent out special invitations to the next of kin of deceased veterans and to the approximately 14,000 veterans of the area. General Omar Bradley was invited to speak at the occasion, but he sent General Jacob Devers, Chief of Staff of the Army Ground Forces, to take his place. Devers addressed a capacity crowd.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Committee Report," January, 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Committee Report," April 15, 1947.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Committee Report," January 14, 1949.



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As the result of its excellent service to veterans through the years, the IMA was awarded the National Certificate of Appreciation by the American Legion at their National Convention--a most appropriate gesture for a job well done!

### At War Again

Activity did not slow down for long, for by June of 1950, the United States was engaged in a "police action" in Korea which would result in the deaths of 54,246 Americans and 103,284 wounded U. S. soldiers, with the expenditure of \$18-billion by the United States.<sup>1</sup> The Veterans' Service Department was again there to serve the returning veterans. In 1950, 3,369 new contacts were made.<sup>2</sup>

A sad event transpired in 1951 when Russel Somes fell victim to a heart attack and was confined to Hurley Hospital. Apparently on the road to recovery, Somes died unexpectedly on September 29, 1952, after a year's illness. Another great contributor to the success of the IMA and to the people of the Flint area was gone.

Harry S. Mients moved into the role of Supervisor to fill the vacant position. Mients was in charge as the Korean War ended in July, 1953, and as the IMA ended its tenth year of service to the veteran.

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<sup>1</sup>"Korean War," World Book Encyclopedia, XI (1968), p. 303.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Committee Report," December 31, 1950.

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Board Report," October 23, 1952.

Many of its efforts were directed toward educational counseling, but an increasing number of World War I veterans and widows were seeking assistance with pensions and medical care. Mients' staff now consisted of two full-time persons. The total contacts made from 1944 through 1953 totaled 55,816.<sup>1</sup>

The middle fifties saw the Department continue its fine services. For instance, in 1955, a near peak year, 10,777 Korean veterans and others made contact. As the decade neared its end, the records for the first 15 years showed that a total of 88,097 contacts had been made by the Veterans' Service Department. Soon the Department would be called upon to meet another crisis--Vietnam.

#### Stores Expand

With the conclusion of World War II and Rewey's return as Managing Secretary, the administration of the IMA moved into a peacetime operation with nothing new and major on the horizon. However, industry continued to flourish in Flint and throughout the country. It was a period of optimism characterized by procurement of goods and services not previously available to the working man because of lack of income or the unavailability of the items themselves. It was a period of new items, previously not in existence, hitting the market places. Thus, the Factory Stores were prospering, and consequently the IMA prospered also.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Committee Report," January 21, 1954.

The decade from 1940 to 1950 could be characterized as the one in which the switch to vending machines was undertaken. This revolutionized the Stores operation and resulted in more purchasing by the employees of the member companies. By 1950, the Association had installed 44 candy and cigarette machines, 65 bottle and 11 cup beverage machines.<sup>1</sup> By the end of the decade, there were 997 outlets in the local factories selling some 6,769,922 candy bars; 2,278,381 packages of cigarettes; 10,220,928 cups of coffee, and 8,112,092 other cup beverages for a gross sales of \$3,440,333.<sup>2</sup> All machines were not owned by the IMA, for some (342 in 1956) were owned by others and placed in the plants on a percentage basis. For instance, the Prophet Company handled all the drink machines in the Buick Foundry.

The growth in the number of vending machines is further emphasized in a letter written to Rewey by Jack A. Falk, Stores Manager, in 1950 after he attended the National Automatic Merchandising Convention in Chicago. Falk learned that prior to World War II, there were only 5,000 cup vending machines nationally in operation, but by 1950 there were 30,000.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Report," January 15, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Report," January 19, 1960.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Jack A. Falk, Stores' Manager, to Ormund Rewey, Managing Secretary, (on file in office of IMA), November 20, 1950.

An interesting mid-decade breakdown report showed the following:<sup>1</sup>

| ACTIVITY             | Number of<br>Sales Outlets | Gross<br>Dollar Sales |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Factory Stores       | 34                         | \$1,457,036           |
| Coffee Vending       | 47                         | 190,418               |
| Cup Beverage Vending | 126                        | 412,247               |
| Ice Cream Vending    | 1                          | 408                   |
| Candy Vending        | 178                        | 417,751               |
| Cigarette Vending    | 122                        | 406,337               |
| Milk Vending         | 21                         | 8,607                 |
| 1¢ Gum Vending       | 1                          | 184                   |
| 5¢ Gum Vending       | 17                         | 1,589                 |

In 1954, 209 more vending machines were added, and 264 in 1955. Thus, 775 were put in operation and represented a capital investment of \$96,065.

When the new food building located behind the Auditorium was completed in 1956, the Percy Catering Company signed a lease to move in and operate it. This company prepared and delivered food. The total profit-making apparatus of the IMA was in full gear and ready to meet the demands.

#### IMA Remains Exempt

The problem of taxes did not plague the IMA during the period from 1942-1960 as it had previously and would again in the future. The Association's official records show nothing on the subject of taxes until

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Annual Report," January 18, 1955.

the end of 1955,<sup>1</sup> when a letter was received from the Michigan Department of Revenue stating that the IMA qualified under Section 501-C4 of the Internal Revenue Code as a non-profit institution. Therefore, the IMA was exempt from the Michigan Specific Tax on Business income.

In 1959, Rewey had a meeting with the Flint Tax Assessor to discuss the IMA's exemption status. After preparing and presenting a requested list of all personal property for scrutiny, the IMA was again declared exempt and was promised that it would be removed from the 1959 tax rolls.

#### Membership Status

Membership continued during this period of time as in the original "membership concept."<sup>2</sup> Article VI of the Articles of Association states the qualifications of officers and members:

All factory employees in the factories associated with the Manufacturers' Association of Flint may consider themselves members of this League by virtue of their employment.

As was noted in the previous chapter, this membership clause has been in effect throughout the history of the IMA, except for a 5-year period during the depression when membership was compulsory for all those employed. This was necessary to provide revenue for needed

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes IMA, "Executive Board Report," December, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Clarence Young, "Supplemental Memorandum Brief on Behalf of the Industrial Mutual Association of Flint," Special Report, August 2, 1965, pp. 1-15.

welfare services. However, from that time until the present, not many changes have been made.

One significant change in membership took place in 1947 when the IMA admitted persons other than white persons into the Association for the first time. Thus, the only restrictive wording pertaining to membership was eliminated.

### LEADERSHIP CHANGES

#### Change in Order

At this point in the IMA's evolutionary development, it appears that the Association had moved away from much of the shared commitment demonstrated earlier in its history. It had evolved to operating strictly on legal principle as determined by the hierarchy that had been developed. In effect a near perfect example of oligarchy was in evidence. However, change was in the offing.

In what proved to be a significant move, the IMA began interviewing applicants for the position of Assistant Managing Secretary.<sup>1</sup> William C. Crick, a buyer for the Smith-Bridgman Company in Flint, was engaged to take this position beginning April 1, 1958.

In 1958, a special survey committee was formed to examine the overall operations of the IMA. As the result of this study, considerable reorganization took place:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," February 25, 1958.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Louis J. Grimaldi, President of IMA, from Manufacturers' Association, (on file in office of IMA), October 12, 1959.

1. All Personnel Department functions became the responsibility of the Assistant Managing Secretary, Mr. Crick.
2. A Comptroller position was added to the organization. The title Auditor was changed to Accounting Supervisor.
3. A study was to be made of whether to relinquish the profitable non-stores vending and how to strengthen the Stores operation.
4. Inventory accounting forms were revised.
5. Inventory of stores was to continue to be on a "predetermined cycle control system." This entailed a "surprise count" basis of physical observation at least once per year, and determining month-end factory Store "account balances at retail, compiled with a complete correlation of the month's activities and the beginning account balances for each store."
6. Inventory records of the warehouse were kept on a perpetual inventory system backed by a monthly physical inventory.
7. A periodic method of internal audit of petty cash was devised.
8. All twelve printer number forms and documents were to be controlled by the Accounting Department.
9. A form was developed to be used in keeping track of personal travel and entertainment expenses.
10. The Accounting Department was to put in writing the procedures and internal controls necessary to guarantee an excellent system of financial internal control.
11. Detailed and accurate control methods for trucks and cars purchased by the Association were worked out by the Accounting Department.
12. A plan for a physical inventory of all theatrical stage equipment was worked out.
13. Further study of the overall functioning of the two auditoriums was undertaken.
14. A new cancellation machine was to be purchased to help avoid errors and allow for stronger internal control.
15. Personnel records and forms were revised.



16. A method of constant review of all contracts with all vendors and/or caterers was assured.
17. A scheduled review by the Board of Trustees of all the Association's activities must also be assured.

In August, 1959, an orderly procedure of turning over certain duties and responsibilities from Rewey to William Crick began. This procedure was to be completed by April 1, 1960.<sup>1</sup> By this method Crick would be completely in charge by July 1, and Rewey would remain as an adviser until his retirement in 1961.

Thus Rewey, who had been a strong guiding force of the IMA since 1926, was stepping down. He had guided the Association through many peaks and valleys. As a veteran of two World Wars, he had served his country and his city well.

So, the decade of the fifties ended. It seemed to be a period of marking time so far as direct services to members were concerned, but now with a new managing secretary, adequate financial backing and a number of external pressures, the IMA entered into an exciting new period -- 1960-1972 -- which added new dimensions to fifty years of remarkable service to its members and its community.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," August 20, 1959.

### SUMMARY

The period just concluded was one which saw the United States faced with a life-or-death battle to survive as a free nation. Flint, with the giant General Motors complex established there, geared itself to contribute to the fight. With one of the largest pools of skilled workers in the world located in its confines, it did not take Flint long to make the necessary transition from peacetime to wartime operations. As the factories moved into around-the-clock production, quite naturally the IMA Stores thrived. This resulted in a bonanza greater than ever dreamed.

The IMA's operation during this time was somewhat paradoxical. Despite the profits of war dropping into its coffers, the IMA's programs did not flourish. This may have been partly the result of wartime constraints, but perhaps more the result of the devastating, scar-producing depression from which it had just emerged.

Thus, this time could be described as a period of marking time, re-establishing of the IMA's financial base, and waiting for the catalyst which gave it new energy and purpose. Such a catalyst soon emerged.

## Chapter VIII

### A PERIOD OF PROGRESS -- 1960 to 1972

#### Introduction

The period of the sixties presented itself as one of the most critical times ever to confront the IMA. Basically there were two major threats to the organization--one internal and one external. The internal threat might never have been recognized if the external threat had not appeared.

Internally, the threat reared itself in an almost predictable manner, for as formal organizations are studied certain evolutionary processes generally are discovered. In this instance, the Association had moved away from Fuller's idea of shared commitment, previously described in Chapter II, and was moving increasingly toward Michels' idea of oligarchy, as described in the same chapter. With this movement came the normal apathy of the membership and the sacrifice of the democratic process for the sake of efficiently accomplishing the organization's goals.

The external force that helped to bring the Association back into the community's mainstream was the Internal Revenue Service

which threatened the IMA's very existence. Not fully equipped to combat the threat, the Association did some fast evaluating, lined up its troops, and took the offensive. Simultaneously, the IMA looked at the services that it was providing its members, made some necessary adjustments, and moved forward.

The result of this pressure proved to be a boon to the IMA. In confronting this external threat, it geared itself to meet the needs of its members and thus reduced the danger of the internal threat. The IMA became alive and well--thus it prevailed!

#### New Impetus

As the Association moved into the 1960's, William Crick was put fully in charge of the IMA, as he and Ormund Rewey exchanged offices.<sup>1</sup> In this transition, prior to retirement, Rewey became a consultant to the new managing secretary when the IMA attempted a resurgence into the limelight of the Flint community as evidenced in a memo received by the IMA from its Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association:<sup>2</sup>

. . . the IMA should play a more aggressive role in providing services to the associated industries in the Flint area . . . the IMA should aim to be more of an operator and less of a broker in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," June 23, 1962.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Memo from Advisory Committee of Manufacturers' Association to Managing Secretary of IMA," February 24, 1961.

The future of the IMA's principal financial resources--stores and vending--was further guaranteed through a statement of support received from Osmund Kelly who had been appointed to replace C. M. Bullard as Executive Director of the Manufacturers' Association in 1957.<sup>1</sup> On behalf of the Advisory Committee he issued the statement which assured the IMA that the vending in all plants was under its jurisdiction. With a new administration and these formal reassurances of its position in the industrial world of Flint, the IMA shifted gears and increasingly became a formidable organization in the community. As it did so, two forces at work helped to shape the IMA during this time: 1) Stores operation, 2) Internal Revenue Service.

### STORES OPERATION

#### Force Number One

The Stores' operation moved into the decade of the sixties, with a combined Stores and vending operation totaling 997 sales outlets in the local factories. This produced a gross sales figure of \$3,440,332 and resulted in a net income of \$503,085. A better indication of the scope of the sales is revealed by breaking down the quantities of the major items sold:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," February 14, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Purchase and Properties Committee Report," January 19, 1960.

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| <u>Items</u> | <u>Units</u>       |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Candy        | 6,769,922 bars     |
| Cigarettes   | 2,278,381 packages |
| Coffee       | 10,220,928 cups    |
| Beverages    | 8,112,092 cups     |

The IMA received in 1960 the following communication from its Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association:<sup>1</sup>

It is further resolved that the Advisory Committee is dedicated to support the IMA and that the IMA should maintain operation of its factory stores and retain the revenue from the vending machines in the plants. Further, the committee directed the IMA to resist any encroachment on its revenues by vending machine sub-contractors, with the understanding, further, that who operates, maintains and services the vending machines shall be solely determined by the IMA.

On the basis of the above backing by its Advisory Committee, the IMA disapproved the sale of the Select-A-Drink Company, which had vending privileges in the Flint plants, to the company of Interstate in Chicago. Inasmuch as Select-A-Drink wanted to sell, the IMA began considering the purchase of the company. After the purchase was approved, the official transaction took place in October of 1961, with the acquisition price \$343,613.<sup>2</sup> Another major move for the IMA was made in 1962 when it took over the total food service at the AC Spark Plug Division.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," January 22, 1960.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," October 4, 1961.

A great loss in profits from the Stores and food service divisions was witnessed in 1963 because of a 48-day work stoppage resulting from the IMA's failure to hire all the Gladieux Corporation's employees when the Association took over that company's operation. Profits dropped from \$84,000 in August to \$10,000 in September. When the labor dispute was once settled, however, the Stores and food service continued operating smoothly.

The "industrial feeding" operation was, from its start, a major concern of the IMA inasmuch as it was inherently full of problems. The food service at the AC Spark Plug Division was not only costing the Association money but was causing some public relations problems. This forced the IMA to return to some basic questions in relation to that operation:<sup>1</sup>

- 1) What is the IMA's long-range position in the area of industrial catering?
- 2) How would it be possible to break even in this type of operation?
- 3) How much loss is acceptable in this type of operation?

On March 18, 1970, the AC Spark Plug Division remodeled and installed all new food preparation equipment in part of the plant. It also moved to a short-order grill operation in one plant. In December, all the cafeterias began serving breakfast. This was offered without

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Operation and Finance Committee Report," May 22, 1968.



any increase in labor costs. Also the Food Service Division catered twenty-seven special events in an attempt to provide needed services and eliminate any operating deficits.<sup>1</sup>

During this decade the big shift was from the in-plant Stores to vending machines. As a result, the beginning of 1972 showed there were 1,293 vending machines in operation and only nineteen Stores. On top of this, an additional 173 machines were being operated by other vending sub-contractors.

The IMA Retail Divisions, under the direction of Fritz Olson, continued operating efficiently and undramatically behind the scenes. Under the leadership of Jack Sharpe, Stores Division Manager; Jack Falk, Cup Vending Division Manager; and Warren Jeffrey, Food Service Division Manager, the operation maintained its position of being the financial backbone of the IMA.

### INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

#### Force Number Two

As the result of the highly successful Stores operation, a Second force came into play--the Internal Revenue Service. Although it was no stranger to the Association, it had remained rather distant for quite some time. However, from 1960 to 1969 there was a running battle between these strong forces. This struggle resulted in the

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Operation and Finance Committee Annual Operation Report," January 22, 1971.

IMA's examining its position thoroughly for the first time since the critical days of the depression. Before the battle was over, the IMA had confronted and been confronted by every taxing body around.

Thus the 1960's were an extremely trying time for the Industrial Mutual Association in relation to the Internal Revenue Service, the Michigan State Tax Commission, and even the local City Assessor's Office. Even though Rewey had been assured by the Flint Tax Assessor's Office as late as 1959 that the IMA should remain tax-exempt and be taken off the books except for those activities that showed a profit, Crick was visited by Wilbur McNutt of the Assessor's Office on September 13, 1961.<sup>1</sup> McNutt delved into such items as the following:

1. The history of the IMA since 1935,
2. The 1959 tax-exempt ruling,
3. The Articles of Association, the federal tax exemption, the Michigan Business Activity Tax and the City Assessor's previous decision,
4. The purchase of Select-A-Drink Company,
5. Profits shown for the year, and
6. The IMA's lack of publicity compared to the Mott Foundation.

During November of 1961, City tax officials ruled that the IMA did not qualify for real and personal property exemptions and thus the

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<sup>1</sup> Memo from Wm. Crick, Managing Secretary IMA to Executive Committee, (on file in office of IMA), September 13, 1961.

organization was forced into payment. The seriousness of this decision went far beyond the local payment, for it had grave implications in terms of the Association's federal tax-exemption status. The IMA was forced to pay \$7,773 in personal property tax for its Flint holdings and \$3,581 for its facilities at Potter's Lake.<sup>1</sup>

At approximately the same time, the IMA again came under the scrutiny of the federal tax men. They came on the scene not to investigate the earnings of the organization, but to see whether it was conforming to the tax-exempt provisions of Section 501-C4 of the Internal Revenue Code.<sup>2</sup> The agents sought information about membership and one even suggested that the IMA was taxable because less than 50% of its income was given to charitable organizations.

Kelly and Crick began immediately taking appropriate action on behalf of the Board of Trustees to ensure the tax-exempt status of the Association at both the federal and local levels. They had compiled a carefully prepared study entitled, "Notes on the Tax Exemption Status of the IMA." From this study the officials of the IMA and its Board were able to discuss and become extremely knowledgeable on two most crucial items:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," January 22, 1963.

<sup>2</sup> Memo from Wm. Crick, Managing Secretary of IMA to Executive Committee, (on file in office of IMA), September 27, 1961.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Meeting Report," October 11, 1962.

1. Local real estate tax exemption as defined by Michigan Tax Law
2. Federal Tax exemption as declared under the Internal Revenue Code.

As the tax pressure again increased, Crick was authorized funds for additional legal counsel. Attorney Harry G. Gault served as the chief local legal counselor and was made well aware of the grave concern of the Association regarding the maintenance of its tax-exempt status.

#### Noteworthy Distinctions

It should be remembered that the federal level exemption is based on the local Association's being composed of employees and its net income's being dedicated exclusively to charitable, educational, or recreational purposes. On the other hand the local exemptions (state and city) are granted to<sup>1</sup>

. . . such real estate as shall be owned and occupied by library, benevolent, charitable, educational, or scientific institutions incorporated under the laws of this state with the buildings and other property thereon while occupied by them solely for the purposes for which they are incorporated.

In a special meeting held on December 26, 1962, it was agreed that charges for the use of the Auditorium and Annex, Potter's Lake and any other facility owned and operated by the Association should never exceed the amount needed to operate and maintain successfully the facility being used.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Meeting Report," November 15, 1962.

### The Local Scene

In March, 1963, Attorney Gault, Osmund Kelly, and William Crick met with the Board of Review to discuss the local property tax situation. They disclosed the loss sustained by the IMA in operating the Auditorium--some \$114,000 for the year. They further pointed out that in essence they were operating it in lieu of a city auditorium and were in fact saving taxpayers money. The representatives also emphasized the fact that the IMA does pay taxes on any profit-making facility that it operates and furthermore they pay all required licensing fees.

This effort was apparently successful, for they were assured that the Association would not be put on the tax rolls in 1963. However, as early as the next morning, word was received by Crick's office that the whole issue was to be debated again. That evening

The Flint Journal carried the following release:<sup>1</sup>

As was expected, the board (Board of Review) voted to exempt the Industrial Mutual Association's (IMA) land and buildings . . . from taxation. Involved is the IMA Auditorium, Annex and adjacent parking lots.

The valuation . . . is \$1,634,690 . . . Local taxes on that assessment would be \$75,000.

The City Assessor, as usual, put the IMA land and buildings on the new tax-assessment roll.

Obviously local politics were intervening.

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<sup>1</sup> "IMA Declared Exempt," The Flint Journal, March 21, 1963, p. 47.

On April 22, 1963, the records show that the State Tax Commission was asked to review the 1963 Genesee County Equalization roll as approved by the Genesee County Board of Supervisors. The issue was brought forth by William Tenny, Supervisor for Davison Township, who questioned the inconsistency of the IMA's being exempt in Flint while paying taxes on Potter's Lake in Davison Township.

#### The Federal Question

In April 1963, Messrs. Kelly, Gault, Crick and Howard S. Teitelbaum, Certified Public Accountant for the IMA, went to Washington, D. C. to confer with the Assistant Counselor of the National Association of Manufacturers, concerning the IMA's tax situation. After studying the Association's unique and thus vulnerable position, the attorney, Nedry, suggested that steps be taken to assure that the IMA would stay within the framework of Section 501-C4 of the Internal Revenue Code.

By August, 1963, the Internal Revenue Service was looking for differences in the way the IMA was functioning in comparison to 1937 when their tax exemption status was reaffirmed. As the result of this investigation they came to these conclusions:<sup>1</sup>

1. Few organizations function under the "peculiar" section (501-C4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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<sup>1</sup> Memo from Wm. Crick, Managing Secretary IMA to Executive Committee, (on file in office of IMA), August 2, 1963.

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2. All net earnings must be devoted exclusively to members in only the previously noted areas.
3. IRS would seek a definition of "exclusively", but thought the intent of the law was 100 percent.
4. IRS thought that too high a percentage of the last three years' earnings had been devoted to additional business acquisitions and not enough donated to maintain exempt status.

As the result of this disclosure by the IRS, a special meeting was held on August 6, 1963, to review<sup>1</sup> the above statements and make definite plans to submit to the IRS that were in keeping with the Articles of Incorporation. Some of the plans submitted included supporting a graduate library at the University of Michigan, Flint Branch; increasing the IMA's Scholarship Program; donating funds to the new Goodrich Hospital; redeveloping Potter's Lake; assisting Winchester Hospital; expanding efforts in "stimulating, initiating, planning, and effecting a program of Industrial Recreation for members and their families;" providing new facilities for both the Veterans' and Vocational Education Departments.

Meanwhile the Managing Director of the IMA received a letter from the Internal Revenue Service informing him that as the result of their investigations of 1960, '61 and '62, they were recommending that the tax-exempt status of the Association be revoked. Their opinion stated that:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from District Director, Internal Revenue Service to Managing Director IMA (on file in office of IMA), September 18, 1963.



. . . the Association has not devoted the net earnings to charitable, educational, and recreational purposes in that donations . . . were less than ten percent of net earnings before contributions; further the balance of the net earnings were devoted to purchase of fixed assets, investments or debt reduction.

The IRS felt that the IMA was primarily a business for profit and was thus taxable under Section 502 of the 1954 Revenue Code -- "Feeder Organizations."<sup>1</sup>

The IMA prepared for litigation by engaging George Webster, a top-notch attorney in the country specializing a trade associations and tax-exempt organizations. Webster's initial thought was that legislation was the ultimate answer to the dilemma. To emphasize further the uniqueness of the Association, this expert admitted not being familiar with any other organization operating under Section 501-C4 of the Code. On February 1, 1965, a 40-page brief was filed with the IRS.

Meanwhile IMA representatives met with the Chairman of the Michigan State Tax Commission and had a favorable meeting concerning the Flint-Davison situation.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the local Board of Review continued voting a tax exemption for the IMA so all efforts were now being exerted on the federal level.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Audit and Finance Report," September 18, 1963.

<sup>2</sup> Memo from Wm. Crick, Managing Director IMA, to Executive Committee, (on file in office of IMA), May 9, 1963.

At a special meeting conducted in August, 1965, the government's basic arguments were set forth:<sup>1</sup>

1. Association members are not bona fide; therefore the IMA is not a "local association of employees."
2. If Association members are bona fide, then seventy-five active members do not constitute the IMA a "local association of employees."
3. Net earnings were not devoted exclusively to charitable, educational and recreational purposes.

The IMA continued business as usual while it prepared to counter the IRS. In a joint meeting of the Advisory Board from the Manufacturers' Association and the IMA's Executive Committee, a position was determined to fight any adverse decisions coming from the IRS. However, they also decided to study the effects on their operation if the exemption was revoked.

As a result of a protest by the Masonic Temple of Flint, the IMA was again faced with a local tax problem from the offices of both the City Assessor and the State Tax Commission. They sought more information concerning the use of the Auditorium and Annex. They also questioned membership status inasmuch as there were only seventy-nine active members out of a membership of 75,000. Attorney Gault took the offensive and questioned the Tax Commission's role at this point. Crick again had to testify.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Meeting Report," August 11, 1965.

During December, 1966, a letter was received from the IRS which in part stated:<sup>1</sup>

After a careful review of all the available information, we have found that your organization is engaged substantially in the same activities which form the basis of the 1925 ruling and the 1937 affirmation. Therefore, since there has been no change in the applicable law, it is our conclusion that your organization's tax exempt status should not be revoked.

Thus, one major victory seemed won.

However, the Michigan State Tax Commission was proving not so agreeable:<sup>2</sup>

Wherefore, it is hereby ordered that the properties of the Industrial Mutual Association of Flint are subject to taxation. Further, it is ordered that an assessed valuation of \$1,625,650 be placed on the 1966 assessment roll of the City of Flint on the property described and an assessed valuation of \$9,040 on the parking lot property described.

The IMA Executive Committee voted to appeal the above decision and designated Russell E. Bower as the attorney to take the necessary legal action. The Committee agreed to pay under protest the 1966 taxes, but with the understanding that they would seek a refund. A hearing before the Michigan State Tax Commission was held in December, 1967.

The City Tax Assessor again placed the downtown properties on the tax rolls and the IMA filed a brief in protest. On March 19, 1968,

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Operation and Finance Committee Report," December 21, 1966.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

the Tax Board of Review granted the Association an exemption, but by March 21 had reconsidered and the IMA lost by a vote of ten to nine. However, the zig-zag battle continued and the IMA again received a favorable vote; but by this time the entire question was in the hands of the Michigan State Tax Commission and the outcome amounted to a "moral victory" only. The confusion continued to reign so the IMA filed in Circuit Court to prevent the county from putting its property up for sale because of back taxes.

In June, 1969, a communique was received from Attorney Webster stating that he thought it wise that some IMA officials go to Washington, D. C. to talk to Congressmen concerning the language of the new tax bill under consideration.<sup>1</sup>

Messrs. Kelly, Crick, O'Donnell, and Young made the trip and met before the Committee on Ways and Means which summarized the situation in this manner:<sup>2</sup>

The IMA is not a social club and members are not truly members, but more accurately a community activity rather than an employee activity. Therefore, why could not the City of Flint carry on this activity and thus avoid the tax problem?

The IMA countered this by stating that this probably was a social club, and its members were indeed members!<sup>3</sup> Furthermore they

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," June 13, 1969.

<sup>2</sup> Memo from William Crick to Robert Weiser, (on file in records of IMA), July 14, 1969.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



pointed out that the IMA was not a community project, but for associated factories only, and if the city ran it, politics would soon enter into it and eventually lead to its demise. Therefore the IMA was seeking phraseology in any new legislation stating that members who were members solely by virtue of their employment would be considered as bona fide members.

Success was attained, for in the Tax Reform Act (H.R. 13270) passed on August 7, 1969, there was included a section designed to protect the status of the IMA. This favorable legislation had received the assistance of Congressmen Charles E. Chamberlain and Donald W. Riegle, Jr. It simply states:

In the case of a local association of employees described in section 501-C4 that was organized before May 27, 1969, the selling of items normally sold through vending machines, food dispensing facilities, or snack bars, for the convenience of its members at their usual place of employment, is not an unrelated trade or business for the purposes of the unrelated business income tax. However, the selling of these items at other locations is an unrelated trade or business for these purposes.

Once again back at the city level Circuit Judge Stewart A. Newblatt ruled in favor of the IMA in the suit of IMA versus the City of Flint, and ordered the County Assessor together with the IMA to arrive at a pro rata basis of taxing the IMA office, warehouse, and any revenue-producing properties that are legally subject to tax.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," December 18, 1969.

This ended the prolonged tax struggle of the 1960's and relieved the IMA of the extremely heavy burden which had been theirs during the many legal frays. From this point to its current place in time the IMA has continued to be an important taxpayer in the City of Flint, but has not had further pressure concerning its tax status.

### INTERNAL CHANGES

#### Operations Modified

Simultaneously with this battle, the IMA modified its structure, its operation philosophy, and consequently its services. Its introspection continued.

For instance, during this period, the IMA continued making large donations to worthwhile community projects, but not until Crick established a "Development Policy" to help define how and why the IMA contributes to certain community developments. The policy statement indicated the following about the IMA:<sup>1</sup>

1. It works through existing agencies.
2. Its contributions are non-political and non-denominational.
3. Its contributions have been local and have "community-wide consequence."
4. Its contributions are made to the general public rather than any segment.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Memo from Wm. Crick, Managing Secretary to Executive Committee," May 8, 1962.

5. Its dollar amounts fluctuate with need, sales, and profits.
6. It has, with recent exceptions, received no publicity concerning its development donations.

Meanwhile the Advisory Board of the IMA, represented by Osmund Kelly and Clarence Young, was also spearheading a review of the IMA structure and procedures. The Association's by-laws and organizational flow charts were scrutinized. Kelly polled recent past presidents of the IMA, asking what, if any, the problems of guidance and administration of the IMA were which might to some degree be solved by changes in the organizational structure. The survey showed the following:<sup>1</sup>

1. Committees are often too large.
2. Committees duplicate activities because areas of authority and responsibility are not always sufficiently defined.
3. The Managing Secretary has insufficient authority for his responsibility.
4. Procedure through committees is too slow.
5. Recurring items must be redetermined by committees before action can be taken.

As the result of this, certain actions were taken. The by-laws were changed to give Crick increased authority which was more in keeping with the many responsibilities of his position. He was authorized to expend a greater amount of money without prior approval, and

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," November 24, 1964.



most importantly, Crick's title was changed from that of Managing Secretary to that of Managing Director of the IMA.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of 1965, the IMA had in its employ 209 full-time workers as compared to 170 in 1964. The expansion resulted in the creation of two new posts:<sup>2</sup>

1. Personnel Director
2. Manager of Member Services.

The first position was filled by Earl Knuth, a former IMA Trustee, in February, 1967. The second position was filled by Richard N. Powers who had come to the Vocational Education Department of the IMA in 1964 from the Michigan State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Knuth was responsible for all personnel functions, whereas Powers was charged with responsibility for programs rather than facilities.

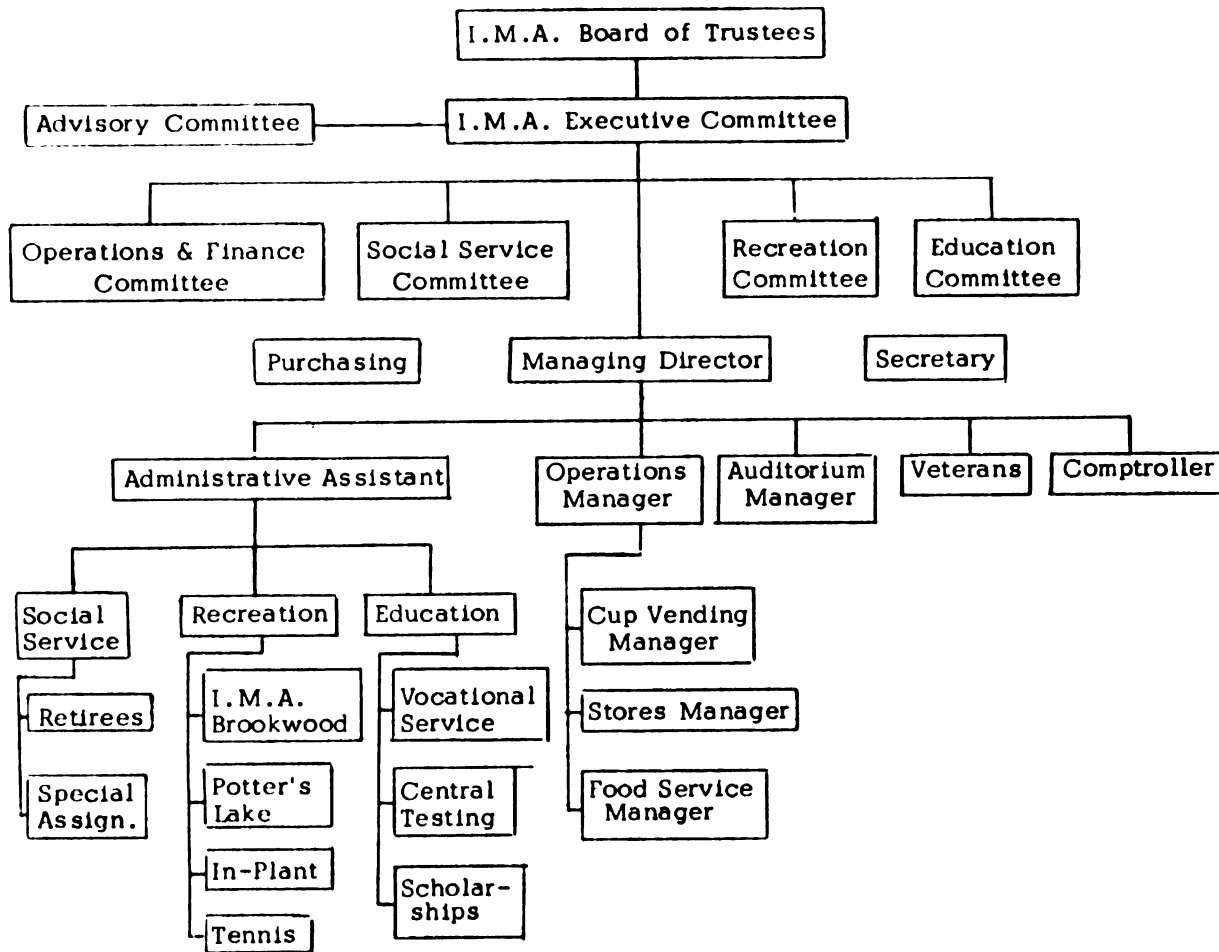
Concurrently, the Managing Secretary developed a new organizational chart for the administration of the total IMA organization.<sup>3</sup> When the new organization became operable it appeared as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," December 22, 1964.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Board Report," January 25, 1966.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Board Report," November 21, 1963.



Under the new structure "Fritz" K. Olson, who had come to the Association as comptroller in 1962, became the Operations Manager. This was a line position under Crick that was responsible for the Cup Vending, Stores, and Food Service operations.

Patrick O'Donnell was appointed Comptroller in 1964 and was responsible for "systems and procedures of accounting, internal auditing and safeguard handling of cash." He also was required to meet with the Operations and Finance committee to advise them on financial matters.

Meanwhile, Paul Rewey, who had been Auditorium Manager, exchanged positions with his assistant, Derwood D. Dowdy. This gave Dowdy a year at the helm before Rewey's retirement in 1964. From that point until the present, the IMA Auditorium and Annex have continued functioning as the central civic-type auditorium in the Flint area. However, with the opening of the Whiting Auditorium in 1967 under the managership of Thomas Sumner (succeeded after his death in 1966 by Roy Bowers, a former IMA Auditorium assistant), the IMA's facilities are no longer the sole meeting places for large groups. This has not lessened the importance of IMA's role, however.

As a part of its self-analysis, the Association created a special gifts and grants subcommittee that summarized to whom contributions had been made. They categorized the recipients on the basis of Clarence Young's suggestion:<sup>1</sup>

1. Either educational or charitable
2. Either reoccurring or non-reoccurring
3. Either capital or operational
4. Either for membership or community at large.

The purpose of this special committee was to determine what the IMA had been doing in the line of contributions, to evaluate its position in terms of present effectiveness and future direction, and to decide whether it was in keeping with the Association's reason for being.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Meeting on Gifts and Grants Report," May 23, 1963.

The January, 1965, end-of-the-year report to the Board of Trustees showed that over three-quarters of a million dollars had been spent in donations and other community ventures.<sup>1</sup> The contributions continued.

A report entitled "A Time for Decision" was presented to an Executive Committee meeting on August 22, 1963. This report listed several major projects which should be undertaken to get the IMA moving forward again in better fulfilling its corporate purpose. To effect additional change, ways were sought to "streamline the methods and means" of the Board of Trustees and its subcommittees in order to achieve objectives and goals of the Association more efficiently. The Executive Board endorsed the report and forwarded it to the Board of Trustees for further action.

Obviously the tax pressure coupled with a new administration was getting the IMA on the move again. With a new structure and additional manpower available, the IMA began consciously programming for its members again. In need of expending its profits into meaningful services to its members, the IMA reverted to providing educational, recreational, and social services.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," January 26, 1965.

## EDUCATION

### Direction Sought

Although the development of GMI through the IMA's early extension program remains the nadir of the IMA's educational endeavors, the educational efforts of the sixties were genuine and diverse. The Association still maintained a minor tie with General Motors Institute by promoting spare-time classes and awarding scholarships to deserving GMI students. The January, 1960, report showed 517 students participating in 791 classes. The IMA Scholarship plan was amended in 1962 for the purpose of encouraging residents to strive for individual improvement at either GMI or the Flint Community College in their apprentice-related programs. To be eligible for an award a student had to be pursuing an approved program and be in his final term of study.

The IMA continued to sponsor the popular free travel lectures. These lectures were conducted by the best available lecturers and the topics covered most sections of the world.

In 1961 the IMA contributed \$10,000 to the Flint Community Schools to aid in sponsoring seminars, conference attendance, scholarships, teaching aids, and books and materials for science and mathematics teachers.

The educational efforts of the Association also included a donation of \$5,000 to help sponsor "Operation Amigo", a student exchange project, in conjunction with the Flint Board of Education. It

co-sponsored the Industrial Mental Health Institute at GMI and also donated \$1,000 to the Science Fair winner.

Safetyville, U.S.A.

In 1963 James J. Cahoon, then Director of the Genesee County Traffic Safety Commission, met before officials of the IMA and proposed a program of "Pedestrian Education for Tots." In so doing he cited the statistics on pedestrian accidents and pointed out the many ways in which such a program would benefit the community. He further proposed that such a program should be a cooperative effort among the Flint Recreation and Park Board, the Mott Foundation Program of the Flint Board of Education, the Genesee County Traffic Safety Commission and the Industrial Mutual Association.

As the result of this promotion, IMA Safetyville, U.S.A., was established in Kearsley Park. Safetyville consists of a miniature village with scaled-down buildings, streets, signals, and small electric-driven automobiles. Young children, ages five through ten, go through an instruction period followed by a written examination, which if successfully completed allows one to gain a driver's license. Once this license is obtained, a young driver can return anytime and drive one of the well-designed cars. This is an exciting and motivating experience to the youngster; thus Safetyville has proven extremely popular.<sup>1</sup> Since its inception in 1963, some 160,000 youngsters have

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Educational Committee Report," September 10, 1963.

taken part and when in full operation the program requires seventeen employees.

In the summer of 1970 a "Pre-kindergarten Safety Training" program was conducted every Saturday morning for four-year-olds who were accompanied by both parents. These topics were covered:<sup>1</sup>

1. Determining safest route to and from home
2. Crossing at corners, stop signs and signal lights
3. Crossing with safety patrol and/or adult crossing guard
4. Walking where there is no sidewalk
5. Dangers of playing near or running out into street
6. Dangers of crossing between parked cars.

#### Vocational Thrust

Another important undertaking began in 1963 when IMA officials met with the Flint Area Apprentice Committee which was seeking the IMA's assistance in areas of retraining, guidance, and vocational counseling. It was decided that the IMA could assist best by establishing a vocational counseling service which would serve as liaison agent between school systems and the training directors of various plants.<sup>2</sup>

This was an important step because the Education Committee

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Memo from K. E. Gignac, Vocational Coordinator to Education Committee," (on file in office of IMA), January 7, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," March 9, 1963.

was feeling some urgency in regard to increasing the tempo of the educational endeavors of the Association. Therefore, it was proposed that a Vocational Service Department be created. Clifford Matz was appointed Director of the new Vocational Counseling Service on January 20, 1964.<sup>1</sup>

The Vocational Department worked closely with the Flint Community Junior College and the Michigan Employment Security Commission. By October it had made over 1,000 contacts with persons in need of such services.

The effectiveness of the Vocational Service Department is further affirmed by its being the first non-educational organization approved by the Michigan Employment Security Commission to use the General Aptitude Test Battery. The Department also developed a "Directory of Course Offerings" designed to show courses of interest to industry as offered by institutions. It also arranged with the Bureau of Industrial Relations of the University of Michigan for a series of lectures: The Industrial Relations Conference Series.

In cooperation with AC Spark Plug Division, Flint Board of Education, and Eastern Michigan University, the Vocational Service Department developed a program entitled "Experiential Workshop in the World of Work."<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the workshop was to better acquaint

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Committee Report," December 9, 1963.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," January 12, 1965.





teachers and counselors with the operations of industrial plants.

The Department published "The Genesee County Counselor's Association Newsletter." Meanwhile, it also became interested in helping to sponsor a Junior Achievement Program. A building at 409 Garland Street was remodeled to serve as headquarters for the Junior Achievers.

In 1965 when Matz resigned and went to the University of North Dakota, John Martin came in as his replacement. Martin worked with the IMA until 1967, when Keith E. Gignac was appointed. Gignac left the Association in 1971.

By 1966 the major thrusts of the Vocational Department could be categorized as follows:<sup>1</sup>

| <u>Service</u>        | <u>Contacts</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Apprentice Testing    | 1607            |
| Employee-in-Training  | 541             |
| Vocational Counseling | 528             |
| Aptitude Testing      | 143             |

This represented 2819 contacts for the year.

The Education Committee, also in 1966, established fifty scholarships to be awarded to students at the Flint Junior Community College. These scholarships were given to students who were dependents of IMA employees and who were also pursuing one- or two-year

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Vocational Service Report," February 8, 1966.

terminal programs. The awarding of the scholarships was climaxed by a special banquet for parents of the recipients of the awards.

Thus the IMA has contributed to the educational efforts in Genesee County by conducting some programs, but mainly by cooperating with existing agencies in various ways. From 1964 to 1970 the Association awarded scholarships numbering over 1,200 at the Flint Community Junior College, University of Michigan-Flint, and General Motors Institute.<sup>1</sup> This represents an outlay of well over \$200,000.

The money was earmarked for programs such as --

- 1) Vocational Services
- 2) Scholarships
- 3) Safetyville, U.S.A.
- 4) Special Programs--such as  
World Travel Series  
Junior Achievement.

Thus, the IMA is continuing to provide educational opportunities for its members. As it explores new avenues, it is just possible that one day it will again make a major contribution to the Flint Community as it did when it gave birth to the present GMI.

The IMA's thrust into the area of providing social services during this time period was made mainly with two departments. It continues its effort to assist veterans and it has moved into the world of the retiree.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Education Committee Report," October 21, 1971.



## VETERANS' SERVICE

### Vietnam Brings Need

The Veterans' Service Department continued to function through the sixties as an integral part of the IMA and was a frequently patronized community service. Aside from servicing veterans from previous wars, the department was now receiving persons returning from the conflict in Vietnam which had begun involving United States troops as advisers to the South Vietnam Army in 1962, but by 1965 had escalated into a full-scale conflict involving U. S. air, sea and land power. This war proved to be unpopular on the home front and the serviceman found himself not only returning home nearly unnoticed, but often an anti-hero. To complicate his return further, the veteran found unemployment rates running high. In light of these conditions, the Veterans' Department again found itself busy.

The 1971 Veterans' Service Department's Annual report showed that there had been a total of 14,472 contacts made for the year. This total was second only to the number made in 1947 when the State of Michigan granted a bonus to World War II veterans.<sup>1</sup> The types of services provided were varied:

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Education                    | 305 |
| Claims                       | 551 |
| Insurance                    | 23  |
| Government Burial Allowances | 38  |
| G. I. Loans                  | 66  |

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," January 21, 1971.

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Veterans Hospital          | 35   |
| New Discharge Certificates | 30   |
| Employment                 | 27   |
| Medical Treatment          | 47   |
| Dental Treatment           | 69   |
| Financial Aid              | 24   |
| Social Security            | 11   |
| Government Markers         | 30   |
| Change of Address          | 45   |
| County Burial Allowance    | 18   |
| Homestead Tax Exemption    | 131  |
| Photostats                 | 305  |
| Letters Written            | 1178 |
| Notarizations              | 25   |
| Forms Supplied             | 540  |

The 1971 report categorizes the persons being seen in this way:

|                               |      |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Spanish American War Veterans | 4    |
| World War I Veterans          | 701  |
| World War II Veterans         | 2421 |
| Korean Conflict Veterans      | 859  |
| Peacetime Servicemen Veterans | 1174 |
| Vietnam Veterans              | 6568 |
| Next of Kin                   | 2745 |

By the beginning of 1972 the Veterans' Service Department of the IMA had provided service to 193,925 persons.<sup>1</sup> Total contacts by year, from January 1, 1944, to January 1, 1972, are as follows:<sup>2</sup>

|      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| 1944 | - | 1,824  |
| 1945 | - | 7,255  |
| 1946 | - | 13,168 |
| 1947 | - | 14,909 |
| 1948 | - | 4,764  |
| 1949 | - | 3,059  |
| 1950 | - | 3,369  |
| 1951 | - | 2,972  |
| 1952 | - | 4,496  |

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Veterans' Service Department Report," January 11, 1972.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

|      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| 1953 | - | 3,905  |
| 1954 | - | 4,215  |
| 1955 | - | 10,077 |
| 1956 | - | 5,042  |
| 1957 | - | 4,349  |
| 1958 | - | 4,693  |
| 1959 | - | 3,575  |
| 1960 | - | 4,230  |
| 1961 | - | 4,470  |
| 1962 | - | 6,041  |
| 1963 | - | 6,483  |
| 1964 | - | 6,465  |
| 1965 | - | 6,185  |
| 1966 | - | 8,678  |
| 1967 | - | 8,221  |
| 1968 | - | 10,636 |
| 1969 | - | 12,262 |
| 1970 | - | 14,472 |
| 1971 | - | 14,110 |

Thus the unique personalized service, which was established by a group of far-sighted trustees in 1944 to assist the many weary veterans of World War II in adjusting as quickly as possible to civilian life, continues to be a prime function of the IMA nearly thirty years later.

Even with the ending of U. S. participation in the Vietnam War on January 23, 1973, and the end of the Selective Service draft on June 30, 1973, probably the Veterans' Service Department will continue to be busy assisting veterans of various wars and those who will participate in the armed services on a voluntary basis.

No matter what its future, this department has served the people of the Flint Community well. The IMA is justly proud!

NEW HORIZONSPrograms for the Aging

Even before one need wanes, another waxes. In surveying the needs of its members, the IMA in 1965 began considering the question of what its role should be in providing retirement activities for its members. Before they could move ahead with the idea, however, a special ruling from the Internal Revenue Service was needed to see whether this would fall within the framework of the IMA's purpose.<sup>1</sup> A favorable reply was received in answer to their inquiry in July, and \$110,000 was appropriated for the acquisition of property which had been under consideration for some time.

This property at 409 Garland Street was to provide a home base for the Junior Achievement Program, which the IMA wished to help promote, the Veterans' Counseling Program, and the retirees' program. Extensive remodeling in excess of \$60,000 was done, and the building was designated as the "IMA Service Building."<sup>2</sup>

By the end of 1966, Mrs. Roberta Hungerford had been employed and later became the Social Service Coordinator responsible for working with retirees in the new facility and providing a new service to IMA members. The Social Service Committee of the IMA designed a brochure

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Social Service Committee Report," July 7, 1965.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Operation and Finance Committee," February 22, 1967.



to advertise the new service and also appropriated funds to provide transportation for the program.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1967, \$20,000 was appropriated for a senior citizen "drop-in center," and on May 8, 1967, the "New Horizon Center" was formally opened.<sup>2</sup> Within the first ten days of its opening, 480 retirees had used the building.

Roberta Hungerford's annual report at the end of 1970 showed 737 persons registered, of whom 300 attended regularly. Her report gives insight into the New Horizon Center's purpose and activities for retirees such as<sup>3</sup>

. . . those who participate in several of our programs such as cards, bridge, bowling, pool, ice skating and our special events. There are about 200 who may join in one or two specific programs. Also there are those who attend just the specials--the concerts, hockey games, picnics, etc. We also have some who just like to drop in to talk or when they have a problem. [sic] We should not forget the people who may not attend the Center but contact us by phone, [sic] most of these persons could be listed under information and referral. We have hundreds of such calls. Added to these are calls from doctors, police, social workers, business people, families and others in the retiree field who are seeking information or aid for a retiree. Our idea in May, 1967, of servicing about 100 persons a week seems almost a joke but we are not alone, [sic] the same problems in retiree recreation are prevalent throughout the country. Retiree recreation is no longer

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," May 18, 1967.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Year End, 1970 Report, New Horizons Center," January 19, 1971.

a building, some tables, chairs and games, but a complex business, one that must expand with the earlier retirement and longevity of life. Although this past year has not been the best in the history of the IMA and we had to cut and hold back on our retiree program due to the GM strike, the feeling is apparent to the retirees who enter our doors that the IMA is concerned about their welfare. We make every attempt to let them know we are not able to grant them a Utopia but hope to make their lives a little more pleasurable. The comments received through this Center indicate that ninety percent (90%) of the members do appreciate the efforts the Industrial Mutual Association is making on the part of older citizens.

The attendance figures for the New Horizon Center since its inception show participation by 63,834 persons:<sup>1</sup>

1968 - 12,820

1969 - 14,859

1970 - 15,113

1971 - 14,923

Pre-retirement programs are becoming popular. This is partly due to the unions' drive for earlier retirement -- the "30 and out" idea. The topics of their programs are such as these:<sup>2</sup>

Social Security  
Medical Problems  
Recreation  
Housing  
Fraud  
Investments

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Social Service Committee Report," April 14, 1971.

The service being provided for the aging was obviously one of great need, and one that the IMA is emphasizing more and more. As longevity increases and retirement age decreases, the need for such services becomes quite evident. The IMA is helping to meet that need.

### RECREATION

#### Potter's Lake a Concern

From 1960 to 1972, the IMA continued playing a prominent role in the area of recreation by providing some of the finest programs and facilities available to the residents of Genesee County. The recreational efforts centered mainly on these: Potter's Lake, in-plant recreation, ice arena, golf course, baseball facilities, and tennis.

Potter's Lake remained a dilemma to the IMA for a number of years. The question of keeping it or disposing of it remained foremost in the minds of many persons. Even though the 1959 annual report of the Recreation Committee indicated that the lake was used by some 100,000 persons, the upkeep was proving costly.

Land investment at Potter's Lake had increased the IMA's holdings from the original 78 acres in 1916 to 440 acres.<sup>1</sup> The capital investment over the years totaled \$357,250 with a yearly operating cost of \$41,391. Its assessed valuation was \$56,850.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," February 8, 1960.

By 1960, the Potter's Lake park area contained:

- 20 cottages
- 50 boats
- 1 boathouse
- 1 concession stand
- 1 farm house (rented)
- 1 baseball diamond
- 1 recreation lodge
- 1 "Big Brother" lodge

Taxes on the property were going up, and there was no legal basis for tax exemption.

A special committee appointed to study possible uses of the land felt that it should be perpetuated as a park facility, but perhaps by some other agency. Therefore the Highway or Conservation Department was to be consulted to see if it might not be willing to trade some more desirable property to the IMA for the lake property. Also, the Elba Township Board was to be contacted about their possible interest in the land. Meanwhile, a study of possible uses of the site was authorized. The report showed that some felt it would make a good place for new homes or mobile trailer homes. Others thought it should be leased for \$100 per year to some private or public organization. Some of the committee would even have given the property away.

Perhaps it took a conference in Chicago, sponsored by the National Industrial Recreational Association, to change the direction of the Association's thinking as to the value of the Potter's Lake facility. Crick, who attended on behalf of the IMA, found not only that Potter's Lake represented one of the finest industrial recreation areas in the



country, but that other industries were seeking such recreational land. At this point, new interest in the site was aroused and a sense of trying to make it the finest such property in the country began to permeate the organization.<sup>1</sup>

The Michigan Department of Conservation sent a letter to the IMA in early 1962, stating they were not interested in any or all of the park as a gift because it did not meet park standards. This pretty well finalized any thinking about disposing of the property as the other train of thought began to prevail.

Recreational experts meeting to discuss the future of Potter's Lake agreed that if the site was to be used for anything other than recreation, it would be a great loss to the community. In the meeting were representatives of the Outdoor Education Department of Michigan State University, Mott Foundation Program of the Flint Board of Education, Flint Park and Recreation Board, Council of Social Agencies, and State of Michigan Inter-Agency Department for Recreation. With this type of consensus, Harrison and Associates, a site-planning consultant firm from Ames, Iowa, was contracted to study Potter's Lake to<sup>2</sup>

. . . determine the recreational potential, economic feasibility, and future land use of the park. This includes defining conditions both existing and potential, of a physical, political, geographical and environmental nature affecting the project.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Report by William Crick," June 30, 1961.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," July 22, 1963.

The report given by Harrison and Associates was not entirely satisfactory to the IMA officials for basically it was not specific enough; it stated that Potter's Lake was an asset, especially in view of the general lack of "environmental facilities" in the Flint area. The report also pointed out that the need for greater cooperation between the IMA and other agencies would be vital to any meaningful development. Last, it cited the need for a master plan of the area.

The Managing Secretary began arranging small exploratory meetings with other agencies. As a result, a letter was received from Joseph Ryder, Executive Director of the Flint Big Brother program which operated under the auspices of the Mott Foundation, outlining several ways in which the Lake area could be used in conjunction with the Big Brother Program. This resulted in the construction of a 40' by 28' rustic lodge deep in the hardwoods at the north end of the lake. This lodge cost the IMA \$13,922 and serves the fatherless boys well.<sup>1</sup> Each spring as the sap starts flowing in the abundant maples, it is caught in buckets, put to boil in large outdoor kettles, and made into delicious syrup. Appropriately, the camp is called "Sugarbush."

Meanwhile, Harrison and Associates prepared a master plan that called for an expenditure of \$1,402,800 if followed. It included:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," December 17, 1964.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Committee Report," September 24, 1964.

Outdoor Education and Day Use Area  
Picnic Area  
Trailer Camp  
Golf Course  
Boat Area  
Restaurant and Playhouse Complex  
Recreational Lodge  
General Beach Area

At about this time, a major decision was made to construct an elaborate indoor ice arena. As a result, the emphasis shifted again away from Potter's Lake to this new project.

However, \$5,000 was appropriated in 1965 to explore a method of water quality control, for the lake was becoming a "nutrient pool conducive to the growth of algae." The situation became so bad that the beach was closed as "unsafe" during 1965's season. An engineer's analysis of the pollution problem suggested that the IMA could divert the inflow around the lake and in turn drop one or two wells. It could also seek a sewage system for lake residents, and it could dredge the muck and peat at the cost of \$8 to \$10 a front foot.

In 1968 trees were planted at the lake and a children's farm was started. The purpose of the farm, which centered around a big old red barn, was to give youngsters from the city a real opportunity to see and handle animals first hand.

It is interesting to note that as the lake was again put into the background of IMA activities, someone suggested that it either "compete



or close!" Despite its lack of major emphasis or publicity, Potter's Lake did host 92,662 persons in 1970.<sup>1</sup>

By 1970, the Potter's Lake beach which had been closed to swimming was again opened. Many persons continued to use the recreation lodge, the picnic grounds and the lake itself. The 1971 statistics show that 194,000 persons used the facilities with the attendance highlights centering around these events:

|                                |   |        |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|
| Big Brothers' Motorcycle Races | - | 4,000  |
| Children's Farm                | - | 46,225 |
| Sugarbush Activities           | - | 16,999 |
| Snowmobiling                   | - | 3,000  |
| International Institute        | - | 5,000  |
| Fourth of July Fireworks       | - | 5,000  |

Despite these figures, no one in the IMA hierarchy is satisfied with the total usage of the lake. Its potential seems greater than the value received.

#### Ice Facility Planned

As the IMA needed to divest itself of its profits, the emphasis on building an ice facility intensified. From time to time throughout its history, officials of the IMA, which had for years operated Flint's number one natural ice facility at Athletic Park, discussed construction of an indoor ice arena. As a matter of fact, when the IMA Auditorium was constructed in the late twenties, such facilities were considered,

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Annual Report to Board of Trustees," January 27, 1970.

but were not approved. Even the National Hockey League had made an overture to establish a franchise when they heard of the new Auditorium. However, nothing had ever materialized from such discussions until in the sixties when the move to provide such a facility gained new impetus.

Cass Curran, an active coach and booster of the Flint Speed Skating Club, made a proposal to the Recreation Committee concerning the building of an indoor ice rink.<sup>1</sup> Persons like Scotty Bowman and Amos Childers added strength to the idea as did Pat O'Donnell who sold the Advisory Board on the financial feasibility of such a venture.

The Executive Committee's report of September 17, 1964, indicated that the City of Flint was in need of an ice skating facility, but that it should be built and operated in cooperation with other agencies. This belief, however, was not that of the entire group. Some thought that outright ownership was better in order to control the destiny of such a major investment and therefore was a sounder approach. By October, 1964, the Board of Trustees had voted in favor of the latter concept: the IMA, as a "sole agent" would build and operate the ice facility for its members, and would expend between \$300,000 and \$500,000.<sup>2</sup>

By November, 1964, the Advisory Board from the Manufacturers' Association had given the project its blessing, so that a new and exciting venture was under way in Flint. A special Ice Skating Committee was

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," June 8, 1964.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Board of Trustees Report," October 27, 1964.

appointed in December to select a site and begin the ice facility.

Argonaut Realty Division of General Motors was contracted to help advise the Association as to the site.<sup>1</sup>

By March, 1965, the Committee had established the criteria for constructing the new facility:<sup>2</sup>

- 1) 2 ice surfaces
- 2) 4 locker rooms
- 3) flexibility to allow minor league hockey
- 4) rental services
- 5) eating facility
- 6) checking facility
- 7) sound system
- 8) score boards
- 9) offices and rest rooms
- 10) Zamboni plus storage for it
- 11) equipment room
- 12) changing area
- 13) ticket offices
- 14) general storage
- 15) minimum seating of 2,000 adjustable up to 5,000 or 6,000
- 16) parking for a minimum of 500 cars

The site determination was not an easy task. Many sites were considered for many reasons, but ultimately it was decided to locate on the Lapeer Road-Center Road-Averill Street site which was being held by the Catsman Realty Company for a major development near the new Chevrolet Freeway. This site, relatively close to downtown, contained approximately thirty acres and sold for about \$435,000.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Ice Skating Committee," March 11, 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Ice Skating Committee," March 1, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, IMA, "Special Ice Skating Committee," September 16, 1965.

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The architectural firm of Ellis, Arndt, and Truesdell was appointed to design the facility, and the \$5,000,000 general contract was awarded to the Erickson and Lindstrom Construction Company. This action did not take place, however, until a thorough discussion on the value of the facility versus the cost of such a facility was conducted.

### Construction Underway

The completion date was set for July 24, 1968. As construction was started, the important job of organizing programs began. Howard Radford of Port Huron's McMorron Auditorium and Sports Arena was hired to be manager, but he resigned and went to Roanoke, Virginia, before the building was ever completed.

George Dellinger was hired as the ice arena manager. He brought many years of experience from the theater and sports arena businesses. In Muskegon he had managed the Walker Sports Arena since 1960.

Consideration was being given to promoting professional hockey. The arguments for allowing professional hockey and affiliating with the International Hockey League were thoroughly discussed and included such matters as these:<sup>1</sup>

- 1) entertaining spectators
- 2) developing young players
- 3) obtaining \$30,000-\$40,000 in rental fees
- 4) providing good free publicity
- 5) giving the community another industry

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Ice Skating Committee," March 16, 1968.

It was decided to give hockey a try, but with the understanding that the IMA could not afford to have it fail. The first professional hockey game pitted the Chicago Black Hawks of the National Hockey League against the Flint Generals.

Frank Gallagher, President of the International Hockey League and its commissioner for twelve years, was awarded the Flint franchise. While waiting for the completion of the ice facility, he served as Youth Director for the IMA. The team became known as the Flint Generals and played before sell-out crowds at nearly every home game. The franchise brought new excitement and identity to the City of Flint and the IMA.

The beautiful edifice was officially named the "IMA Sports Arena." This plant represented the largest capital building program in the Association's history: \$6,785,623. The arena officially opened on February 14, 1969, with 25,000 persons attending the elaborate open house.

#### Arena a Success

The first year of hockey witnessed 123,451 persons attending 36 games with receipts totaling \$352,478.<sup>1</sup> The IMA received \$47,598 in rental, \$9,547 from parking, and \$43,790 in concession fees.

Aside from professional hockey, the facility has been used day and night, year around, for general skating, figure skating, skating

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Finance Committee Report," March 24, 1970.

lessons, ice clinics, Flint Skating Club, broomball, ringette, amateur hockey, ice shows, boat and sport shows and the training site for the St. Louis Blues of the National Hockey League. The first commercial attraction at the arena--a five-day presentation of "Holiday on Ice"--attracted 33,095 persons.

Despite the extreme success and popularity of the new facility, the IMA's financial reserves were drained so that an austerity budget was adopted in order to recoup. The Arena itself was built on a calculated loss basis. The loss for 1970 was \$432,568 of which approximately one-half represents a direct cash loss. Similar figures are available for 1971 also. The bonded indebtedness for the facility was \$6,785,623.

#### IMA Invests in Golf

Golf, much like the ice facility, had been a topic of concern to the IMA officials periodically through the years, and at one time there had been talk of buying a course; at another time, it had been suggested that a course be constructed at Potter's Lake. Thus, it was not surprising when in the sixties, owning a golf course became a reality.

Brookwood Golf Course which had been in existence for many years at the corners of Belsay and Davison Roads was in danger of being sold to developers with other interest in the property rather than golf. Gordon Fleming, President of the Flint Recreation and Park Board, being desirous of Brookwood's remaining a golf facility, contacted the IMA

about their possible purchase of the property.<sup>1</sup> Fleming stated that such an acquisition would be "a great benefit to the citizens of Flint and Genesee County, and a special benefit to the employees of the associated factories."

As the result of this, a motion was made and supported to buy the Brookwood property, pending approval by the Advisory Committee. Approval was granted, and the deal was consummated on December 31 of 1963. The property was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Szylagyi for \$400,000.

It was soon decided that the course should be improved. The Association was considering watering the fairways and lighting the last three holes on each side to extend playing time. Steve Isakov, the professional at Brookwood, was charged with preparing a hole-by-hole improvement plan. However, by the end of 1966, it was decided to develop a master plan for Brookwood in order to realize the maximum potential of the facility in view of the anticipated heavy play the course would get. Meanwhile, the Michigan Open Tournament was successfully hosted by the IMA at Brookwood in 1965.

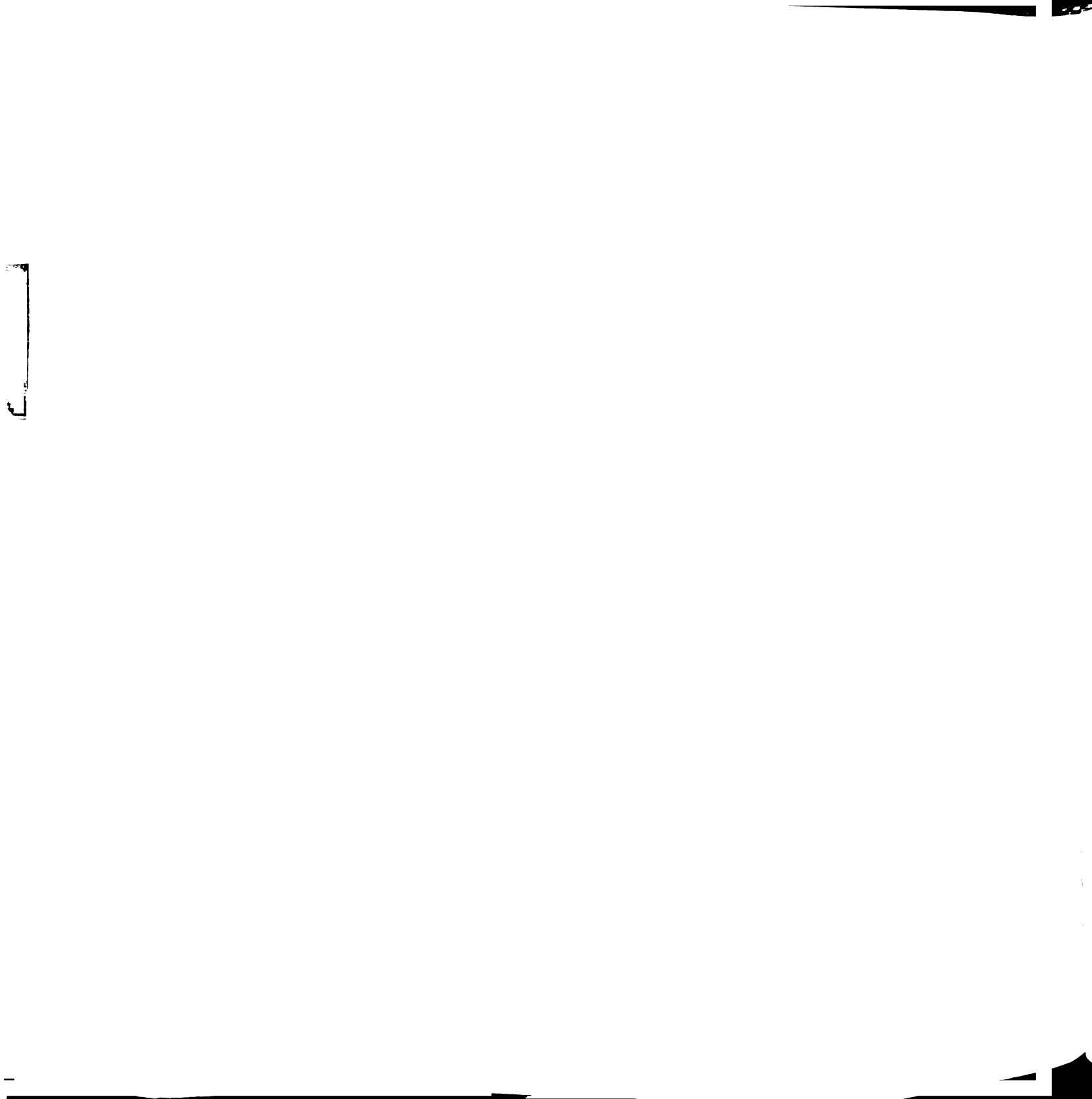
When a special committee was appointed to investigate the course, they found these problems:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," November 1, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Golf Committee Report," June 1, 1967.





natural flooding  
 poor surface drainage  
 poor use of topography  
 poor sequence of holes  
 too many water crossings on front side  
 too monotonous on back side  
 par uneven on back and front sides  
 tee boxes and greens too small  
 no practice area  
 clubhouse inadequate  
 garage poorly located

As the result of such considerations, the firm of Ellis, Arndt, and Truesdell was commissioned to draw a master plan for Brookwood.

In 1967, Richard Powers made a statistical study as to the usage of Brookwood and found that 5,178 different persons used the course.<sup>1</sup> Of these only 2,046 played five or more times. One purpose of the study was the result of Powers' desire not to over-emphasize golf nor give the false impression that this activity was meeting the need of most of the 75,000 members of the IMA.

On April 19, 1968, the Executive Committee of the IMA accepted the master plan which called for \$254,635 in improvements. This necessitated the closing of the club in order to do the renovation. Tons of earth were moved, holes were redesigned and relocated, trees were transplanted, a watering system was installed, and many new greens were constructed. Additional excavating, the moving of four bridges, the tiling of ten traps, and the building of a creek retaining wall ran the total cost to \$294,542 before the renovation was completed. Play was

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Richard Powers, IMA Director of Member Services, July 21, 1971.

stopped from August 1, 1969, until August 1, 1970, on the front nine and until April, 1971, on the back nine. A "Grand Opening" was held from June 2 to June 8, 1971, which included special dinners, tournaments, exhibitions and lessons.

Steve Isakov's contract was not renewed in the fall of 1971, and Clifford Cavitt, a former stores supervisor with good golf background, was hired. The Recreation Committee had decided that the traditional golf professional services were not needed at Brookwood as much as strong management with an inclination for serving its members.<sup>1</sup>

Currently, the IMA is operating an excellent golf course which offers its members championship conditions for extremely low rates-- \$3.50 for 18 holes on a weekend, with retirees being able to play for fifty cents during the week.

#### Partnerships in Tennis

In 1964 the IMA became a part of the Flint Recreation Commission which was an organization established to coordinate the recreational efforts of the several agencies that were making the major contributions to that area of service. The IMA joined representatives of the City Commission, the City Parks and Recreation Department, the Flint Board of Education and the Mott Foundation Program.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," November 9, 1971.

Just prior to its joining the Flint Recreation Commission, the Association began planning for a tennis center to be located on the school-park site known as the Potter-Longway Recreational Area. This would be a joint effort, but would be known as the "IMA Tennis Center." It would consist of eight all-weather, lighted courts which would be paid for in this manner:

|                                 |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| IMA                             | \$36,000 (75% of total) |
| Mott Foundation                 | 4,260                   |
| Flint Board of Education        | 2,000                   |
| Flint Parks and Recreation      | 2,000                   |
| Potter Community School Council | <u>2,000</u>            |
|                                 | \$46,260                |

These courts were completed in 1964 and have been well-programmed through the years. They have proven an asset and an integral part in the resurgence of tennis in the community. However, in recent years, the courts have come to need repair. With such a joint venture, a question arises concerning the responsibility for the courts' upkeep. With the IMA's name attached to the courts, it does the Association a disservice to see them in ill repair; thus a decision against putting their name on such ventures in the future was made.<sup>1</sup> It was voted to appropriate monies only to those facilities fully owned, operated, and controlled by the IMA.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Recreation Committee Report," September 15, 1971.

### Cooperates in Baseball

This decision was at least partially the result of a similar problem which had occurred at the IMA baseball facility that had been co-sponsored by them and the Flint Recreation and Parks Department at Lincoln Park. Not only did the Association lose its identity with the stadium, but it got adverse publicity in regards to the upkeep of the stadium grounds.

### In-Plant Recreation Revitalized

Even though industrial recreation of a competitive nature was one of the fortes of the IMA and its predecessors, the Association actually played a rather insignificant role in that respect following the sit-down strike of 1937 and Petrill's departure in 1938. During this slack period, the IMA's main support of in-plant recreation was, at the request of factory management, directed to the AC Leagues which it conducted in softball, basketball, and hockey. It not only conducted the leagues, but supplied the officials and most of the equipment as well.

As the result of the Advisory Board's directive in 1961, for the IMA to become again "more of an operator and less of a broker in the future," the Association began taking a look at expanding its role in this direction. Along with Powers, Walter Green was employed to assist in special programming. Under Green and Powers, a summer day camp was established along with high quality programs for both girls and boys in basketball, baton twirling and cheerleading. In addition, the IMA

cooperated with The Flint Journal and the Mott Program of the Flint Board of Education by providing transportation for Flint contestants in the annual CANUSA Games, an international, goodwill competition between athletes from Hamilton, Ontario, and Flint, Michigan. In 1969, some 6,147 persons rode the train to Canada.

After Green left the IMA in 1968, Marshall Burns was hired to promote in-plant recreation. By 1969, the Recreation Committee had been convinced that in-plant activities should be emphasized even above children's activities, for the IMA is first and foremost an employee organization.

A summary for 1970 showed the following inroads:<sup>1</sup>

|                                  |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Slo-Puck Hockey (Summer)         | 240 men |
| Slo-Puck Hockey (Winter)         | 296 men |
| Slo-Puck Hockey (Winter-Morning) | 73 men  |
| Senior Hockey                    | 90 men  |
| In-Plant Basketball              | 400 men |
| In-Plant Softball                | 264 men |

Other in-plant programs included a trap shooting team which competed nationally, a basketball referees' clinic, softball umpiring seminar, and bowling. This led Crick to comment that perhaps the IMA might be returning to its original position in employee recreation!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Special Report," March 27, 1969.

### A New Recreational Venture

In 1971, group travel became a component of the IMA's recreational program. Trips were made by associated factory members to England, Mexico and Hawaii--via Las Vegas and San Francisco. These trips are arranged through travel agencies with the IMA acting as the sponsor. Current trips, 1972-73, are planned for such places as the Bahamas, Las Vegas and Spain.

Thus, it is readily seen that the IMA is back in the recreation business with a full head of steam. Furthermore, the end is not in sight, for new programs and facilities are continuing to be planned.

## THE SEVENTIES

### Another Decade

The IMA moved into the nineteen seventies as a growing, viable force in the community. In the last year of the nineteen sixties, it had seen 378,400 persons use its Auditorium and Annex, and 92,662 use Potter's Lake; it had reached a total of 929,369 persons from the Greater Flint area. This figure was the equivalent of each person in Flint using the facilities and services 4.65 times per year. Furthermore, the Association ended the decade by donating \$1,093,359 for the period to various worthy causes in the community. The IMA at this point employed 228 full-time persons and had an annual payroll of \$2,110,651. Its fixed assets had risen from \$5,558,000 in 1962 to \$15,405,000 in 1969.

Despite its new-found success, the IMA took no chances on its membership's not knowing about the IMA and its many services. Powers took the message to the employees by making presentations on the "IMA Story". However, in light of his many other responsibilities Powers was unable to devote continuing efforts along these lines and the need for a solid public relations program continued. This led to the formation of a special Public Relations Committee headed by Trustee Robert Stone of the AC Spark Plug Division. Stone asked for the identification of the public relations problems. Committee members saw them in various ways:<sup>1</sup>

1. Not enough member-employees involved in programs and services,
2. Not enough realization by employees that they are IMA members,
3. Not enough identification by members with the IMA, so that they lack pride in it,
4. Not enough knowledge among people of what the IMA is, where it has been and where it is going,
5. Not enough understanding of the IMA's financial base even on the part of decision-making member companies,
6. Failure of Personnel Directors to look upon IMA in a similar way,
7. Failure to deploy and use the 100 active members to the fullest, let alone associate members.

This was the tone of the first special meeting.

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Public Relations Committee Meeting Report," May 7, 1971.



The next meeting saw some basic public relations decisions made by the committee.<sup>1</sup> It was decided to zero in on facilities, programs and services--rather than the financial base--available to the associated factory employees. The focus would be on today and tomorrow--not yesterday.

In answer to a question raised as to what the IMA is today, it was agreed that it is an employee benefit association that represents major Flint industries. The public relations plan called for a program to be taken into the plants on a sustained basis. Employees will be shown, through various means, the many dividends they reap through their support of and membership in the IMA.

As a result of the resurgence by the IMA, and more specifically, the construction cost and ensuing annual operating loss of the new ice facility, the Association's funds were drastically reduced. They were reduced to the point that by 1970 the IMA moved into an austerity program.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the funds available to the IMA were even further reduced in 1970 as the result of a strike against General Motors which began on September 15th and was not settled until November 23rd. Accompanying this were increased labor costs and a work slowdown at General Motors during model change-over periods which further reduced

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Public Relations Committee Meeting Report," May 25, 1971.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Executive Committee Report," April 27, 1970.

the income available. The net loss for 1970 was \$403,454 as compared to a net profit of \$421,879 for 1969.<sup>1</sup>

As working conditions returned to normalcy, the retail sales increased and continued high. Thus the income was again there and with continued good management a working reserve was soon accumulated again.

### Expanded Commitment

The years 1971 and 1972 saw the IMA continue to support those organizations which held hope for making the Flint community a better place for its members and their families to reside. Such support is evidenced by the Association's contribution to the Urban Coalition of Flint which represents a coming together of leadership among the Chicano, Black and White communities in an attempt to communicate the concerns of these groups about local conditions. Also the IMA became a member of the Human Services Planning Council of Genesee and Lapeer Counties. This organization serves as a coordinating council for the many social agencies functioning in the two-county area. The Association also supported the Flint Area Conference, Incorporated, which was a group of businessmen attempting to revitalize the urban center of Flint by the following means:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Operation and Finance Committee Report," January 22, 1971.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, IMA, "Social Service Committee," August 18, 1971.

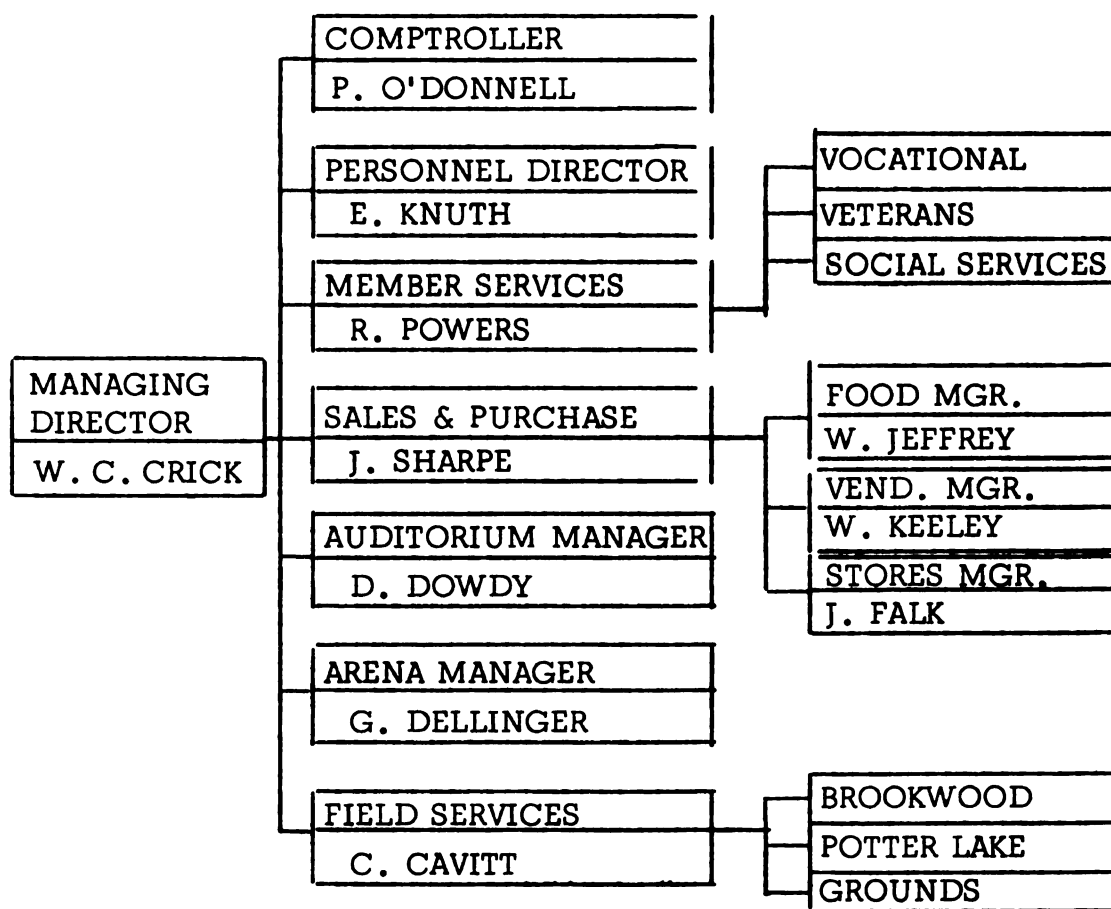
1. Attracting private capital to the center area of the city,
2. Making the center area both a cultural and business area,
3. Reviving spirit in the area,
4. Providing a forum for representatives of other organizations interested in community development.

Because of the IMA's huge investment in the downtown area, the IMA's Board of Trustees supported this organization.

#### Additional Restructuring

Some internal reorganization of the IMA took place in 1972.

The staff organization chart as of April 2, 1973, appeared as follows:<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Minutes, IMA, Memo from W. C. Crick, Managing Director, to all Employees, April 2, 1973.

Thus, as fifty years of service to its members concluded, the Association was still seeking more effective and efficient ways of operating programs.

### Challenge Met

Under the new structure Crick challenged his department heads to think five years in advance as to where their departments might be in terms of capital improvements. These proposals were sent to the Board of Trustees on August 20, 1971, in a memo entitled "Forecast of Uncommon Capital Outlays and Debt Reductions, 1971-1975."

As IMA officials looked ahead, they projected such plans as the complete debt retirement on the Sports Arena (\$2,056,000) by 1975, but also added such items as constructing a new parking area, completing the "President's Box" on the third floor, moving the press box, and adding enough compression to air condition both arenas for summer usage. Plans for the Auditorium and Annex included some remodeling plus providing additional parking. The Brookwood forecast called for the building of a new clubhouse complete with banquet facilities and perimeter fencing. Potter's Lake was to get a new picnic area, some lake dredging, a gate house and an office. However, the main thrust was in an IMA Service Center to be built on the land adjacent to the Sports Arena. This plan included housing for the Veterans' Service Department, a retirees' center, vocational education services, meeting

rooms, gymnasium, handball courts, sauna, and a reducing salon-- to be surrounded by Safetyville, lighted softball fields and tennis courts.

Obviously Crick's challenge to his staff to plan ahead was not taken lightly, for the initial dreams came in at a figure of about a half-million dollars a year for the first four years. However, the plans for 1975 include a projected outlay of \$3,741,000 for the construction of the service center. The five-year anticipated total is close to \$6,000,000. The IMA's future lies with the dreamer!

### SUMMARY

The IMA again expanded its domain and solidified its position in the Flint Community. It had fought a life-and-death battle and survived. Part of that survival was the result of its being able to scrutinize its total operation and restructure it as needed.

This period saw the Association making money to finance those activities and services that it was designed to provide. It found itself with the needed manpower and facilities to be a major factor in the ordering of Flint's community life.

## Chapter IX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Introduction

Based upon the theoretical proposition that voluntary associations are formed through broad involvement of members who share commitment to some cause, but that they tend to evolve into oligarchies based on legal principle, this study has sought to show how the IMA has developed and remained viable through the years. It has examined the Association with special attention to its ability and strategies for adapting to the social milieu as it has acted upon and reacted to crucial issues confronting it. It reveals how the IMA has been able to continue as a major force in Flint, Michigan, contributing to the well-being and ordering of community life by providing educational, recreational, and other social services to its members.

#### SUMMARY

##### The Association

The IMA is a unique employee-benefit association which has provided the Greater Flint Area with many services and facilities since 1901. Membership is by virtue of one's employment in a plant

affiliated with the parent body, the Manufacturers' Association of Flint, rather than by voluntary payment of dues. The IMA's financial base is derived from concession sales to workers in the Flint factories. The right to these concessions has been granted to the IMA by the Manufacturers' Association which also serves as the IMA's advisor on all matters of special significance. Thus the IMA is dependent on the continued granting of concession rights, members' patronage of these concessions and, most importantly, governmental acceptance of the Association as a non-profit, tax-exempt, mutual-benefit organization.

During the period from 1901 until the present, the IMA, in its present and earlier forms, has provided continuing education, recreation, and social welfare programs for its members. By its own programs and by cooperating with other agencies in the city, the IMA has helped to make what could be a drab industrial city a dynamic and interesting place to live.

As a formally organized mutual-benefit association the IMA has been able to adapt to an often dramatically changing social milieu and to remain viable.

### Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to understand how the IMA has been able to act and react in response to crucial issues through the years, to adapt itself to a changing social milieu, to provide major educational, recreational, and other social services to its members,

and thus continue as a major force in contributing to the well-being and ordering of life in a major industrial center. Such basic understanding and insights into the pattern of development of this formally organized mutual-benefit association should: 1) enable leaders in other organizations to perceive how their associations can remain viable by facing up to, adjusting to, and acting upon crucial issues with which they are confronted; 2) enable the public to have a historical record of the IMA; 3) provide others with sound base data for further research on the IMA and/or its related impact on Flint, Michigan; 4) provide others with sound base data for research on formal organizations; 5) contribute further to a growing body of literature concerning organizations of industrial workers.

#### Procedure

Data were gathered basically from the official records of the IMA which are housed in the offices of the IMA and/or the Manufacturers' Association of Flint. These consist of such primary sources as official minutes, letters, memoranda, special reports, photographs, and personal observation and participation. Secondary sources have included house organs, books, scrapbooks, newspaper accounts, and personal interviews.

The study has been organized around a conceptual framework which has three principal components: 1) the "iron law of oligarchy," 2) Fuller's eight "laws" of human associations, and 3) crucial issues.



The "iron law of oligarchy" as expounded by Robert Michels, centers on the premise that functionally it is necessary in any organization for power to come eventually into the hands of a small group of people. The danger of this lies in the possibility that this small group may not seek or know the wishes of the people who make up the membership and for whom the association exists. Thus, this superordinate group may use its power to provide for its own wants which may or may not be congruent with the wants of the larger group. Often this power is used in order that the group in control can perpetuate itself.

Alvin Gouldner, however, contends that no superordinate group can long flaunt the will of those whom it controls. Therefore, he sees little danger in an oligarchy, and to the contrary, finds that an oligarchy may be necessary to accomplish efficiently and effectively the goals and objectives of an organization.

Closely related and interwoven into these two ideas are "eight laws," postulated by Lon Fuller, which govern the interrelations of the two principles of human association--shared commitment and legal principle:

1. In nearly all human associations both principles are in some degree present.
2. In a given case either principle may be tacitly operative or may emerge as an object of explicit and conscious concern.

3. In an association that is first brought into being, the principle of shared commitment will tend to be explicit and dominant even though the association from the outset adopts, or has, internal structure.
4. To the extent that an association is seen by its members as being held together by the principle of shared commitment, it will be hostile toward internal groups dominated by the same principle.
5. As an association moves increasingly toward a situation in which it is dominated by the legal principle, it reaches a stage in which it not only can safely tolerate, but increasingly needs internal groupings that are themselves sustained by the principle of shared commitment.
6. In the normal course of its development an association tends to move toward the legal principle.
7. Once underway the development toward dominance by the legal principle feeds on itself and becomes accelerative.
8. The conditions of modern institutional life tend strongly to break down the distinction between the law of the political state and the internal law of associations.

These "laws" along with the views of Michels and Gouldner were explored to determine how they relate to the IMA as it has confronted a series of crucial issues through the years.

Crucial issues were defined as serious interruptions in the normal way of life of an organization, resulting from the occurrence of unexpected situations for which the organization is not prepared and which raise problems for which customary responses are not adequate.

### Analysis

#### CRUCIAL ISSUE I

SHOULD THE FLINT VEHICLE FACTORY MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION  
AND THE INDUSTRIAL FELLOWSHIP LEAGUE AMALGAMATE?

### Why Crucial

This was a crucial issue, for without such an act each organization would have continued operating in its own manner, serving its own purpose, but possessing little strength. Each group would have continued competing for the support of the same membership, continued duplicating services and continued seeking access to the "purse strings" of the sponsoring body. Gradually, one or both organizations would probably have lost favor with its membership and/or its sponsor, and probably would have gone out of existence.

### Action Taken

From the records it appears that the Flint Manufacturers'



Association sought to persuade the Flint Vehicle Factory Mutual Benefit Association (FVFMBA) and the Industrial Fellowship League (IFL) to amalgamate. They sought this action through the technique of democratic participation by the respective boards of trustees and their memberships. However, when both boards could not agree on the move, the Manufacturers' Association asserted itself so that the consolidation came about for all practical purposes by fiat.

#### Why Action Taken

This action was taken because there was a strong feeling that they--the Manufacturers'--could not, should not, and would not continue to back two financially troubled organizations which were in existence for many of the same reasons, were complementary to each other, and were serving basically the same clientele. Furthermore, allowing such inefficiency for the sake of a few individuals' prerogatives would have been a waste of money and effort, and unquestionably against the principles of good management--a body of principle in which the Manufacturers' group was steeped.

#### Result of Action Taken

The IMA was given life. It emerged as a viable new organization with firm roots from the past. The new organization offered its members the best from two worlds, so to speak, plus some things of its own innovation. In short, it took the strengths of its predecessors while discarding the weaknesses. The amalgamation resulted in an

organization that was not only dedicated to bettering the social conditions of the factory workers in Flint at a time that was opportune in terms of the many needs of the workers, but it had the prestige and strength to act upon that dedication. The merger also set a precedent that is with the organization yet today: decisions, no matter how difficult, are made for the good of the organization and the members being served, and not necessarily of those professionals employed to carry out the IMA's tasks. It also established the power of the Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association as it relates to the operation of the IMA.

## CRUCIAL ISSUE II

COULD THE IMA CONTINUE TO FULFILL ITS CORPORATE PURPOSE  
OF PROVIDING NEEDED SERVICES TO ITS MEMBERS DURING  
THE DEPRESSION YEARS FROM 1929 - 1936?

### Why Crucial

The depression years were crucial to the IMA inasmuch as membership in the Association began to drop drastically as automobile production declined and unemployment increased throughout Flint. Consequently both Store profits and Club membership began declining to the point that financially the IMA had difficulty in maintaining its purpose of providing for the needs of its members during this time of crisis.

### Action Taken

To help alleviate this situation of declining membership, inadequate financing and insufficient programs and services, the IMA adopted a policy of mandatory membership. In essence memberships and payment of dues became a condition of employment for all workers in the associated factories.

In action taken in 1935, the financial control of the IMA was put in the hands of a few men who acted as trustees and whose control was absolute. Even trustee elections were suspended during this time.

During this period all programs and budgets were scrutinized carefully. Some departments were ordered closed while other departments assumed the responsibilities of the defunct ones. Despite these curtailments, the IMA was still required to borrow money from the Manufacturers' Association.

### Why Action Taken

The mandatory membership action was taken because of the necessity of building a welfare fund to administer relief to members. Also a portion of the mandatory membership dues went to support the Club and its many activities.

Turning the complete control of the IMA over to a special group of trustees was the result of the foresight and conservative attitude of the Advisory Committee, who, when having the new Auditorium financed in 1929, thought that a means of fiscal control was

a wise precaution against unforeseen events. Thus, in case that misfortune should strike before the Auditorium debt was paid, the financial control of the IMA would be in experienced hands.

Close scrutiny of budgets and departmental cutbacks were undertaken so that the IMA could continue to serve its members with the aid of loans from the Manufacturers'.

### Result of Action Taken

The result of action taken during this critical period allowed the IMA not only to remain in existence, but to increase its services to members. By establishing a welfare section, the Association was able to provide relief to many of its members that would not have otherwise been available to them.

In addition to welfare, Club and family activities were expanded to give people social and recreational activities at little or cost. Thus the dues and membership requirements allowed the IMA to continue to serve people. This provided the workers of Flint a psychological lift of immeasurable value during that trying period of time.

The services provided during the depression years gave a new thrust to the IMA as members and their families literally swarmed to Potter's Lake, the IMA Auditorium and the Club for activities. Thus, credence was given to the motto -- "SOMEPLACE TO GO IN FLINT." Not only were the activities well-planned and well-conducted, but for many persons it was the nicest place they had to go--often appreciably nicer than their homes.





The Club and welfare services gave evidence of meeting the constitutional charge of providing for the mutual benefit (social, physical, mental and moral) of all its members. As a result, large numbers of Flint residents can recall many happy hours spent "at the IMA" during the less than happy years of the depression.

These efforts combined with tight-fisted objective management allowed the IMA, despite severe financial problems, to emerge from the depression with programs thriving. However, the organization was totally dedicated to the good management of its members' money in order that its financial dignity might be restored at the earliest possible time.

### CRUCIAL ISSUE III

#### COULD THE IMA MAINTAIN A NEUTRAL ROLE AND SURVIVE THE IMPACT OF THE SITDOWN STRIKE OF 1937?

##### Why Crucial

The Sitdown Strike was crucial to the IMA because it brought about an alienation of workers which reduced the membership to a mere 177 persons. This loss of members and the negative attitude that accompanied the loss forced a complete realignment in the Association's operating procedure.

##### Action Taken

The IMA was advised to support the management's point of

view during the work stoppage. Therefore the IMA News, the popular magazine for the factory worker, was used as a vehicle to transmit the non-union side of the issue.

#### Why Action Taken

Management felt that it had been fair to the workers, and that if the "true" picture were painted for them, they would rally around management. Had not the IMA, and its predecessor organizations, provided to its members many benefits not commonly found in other places? Furthermore, had not many of the managers shown a genuine concern for the plight of the worker, and indeed felt responsibility toward improving his situation? Thus, there prevailed a belief that the union movement could be curtailed and things returned to "normal."

#### Result of Action Taken

The unionists countered the action taken with accusations of the IMA being a company union and a paternalistic organization run for the benefit of the owners. A nearly complete alienation took place as the IMA came to symbolize management in the eyes of the common workingman.

Membership dropped to a low of 177 by 1939 and brought the Association to its knees. In order to survive the IMA had to change its modus operandi drastically. The following changes took place:

1. The lease on the bank building was allowed to expire;  
thus the Club was discontinued.

1

2. The IMA News was discontinued.
3. The salaries of all employees were reduced by 10 percent.
4. The IMA sought loans from the Manufacturers' Association just to meet its immediate financial obligations.
5. The executive and recreational offices were shifted to the Auditorium and/or the Warehouse.
6. The activities conducted by the IMA were designed to serve large numbers of people at Athletic Park, Potter's Lake, and the Auditorium.

#### CRUCIAL ISSUE IV

SHOULD THE IMA, IN THE ECONOMIC BOOM OF WORLD WAR II  
RESUME A MAJOR OPERATION OF PROGRAMS OR SEEK  
TO ESTABLISH A FIRM FINANCIAL BASE?

#### Why Crucial

This question was crucial because at this point in the IMA's development the future direction of the Association was uncertain. Its membership had dwindled. Its major activities had been curtailed. It now operated marginal programs and maintained its facilities--the Auditorium, Athletic Park, and Potter's Lake. A basic decision had to be made about what to do with its profits.

### Action Taken

Priority was given to the paying of outstanding Auditorium bonds, eliminating all notes payable, and reducing accounts payable to a reasonable level. It was decided further to buy large quantities of United States Defense Bonds.

As far as people were concerned, the IMA voted to concentrate on providing large-scale group activities for the general IMA membership and to contribute to community groups.

### Why Action Taken

The decision to make itself more solvent was the result of the financial stress it had been under during the depression and pressure of the ensuing strike. Plainly the decision to pay debts and invest was an attempt to re-establish a solid financial base for itself while the IMA was also fulfilling its commitment to the war effort.

By conducting large-scale activities within the IMA's existing facilities, the Association used minimal manpower--and thus kept to minimal cost. With the IMA's membership making up a high percentage of the total population of the Flint Area, it was decided that any contribution that improved the total community also improved the welfare of each member. Thus, contributions were made to many worthy causes.

Result of Action Taken

By paying its debts and investing in defense bonds, the IMA accumulated assets of considerable proportions. This allowed the Association to begin planning for post-war expansion.

As the result of its actually conducting very few activities, the IMA became more and more known to the man-on-the-street and men in the plant as an Auditorium. Other agencies began identifying it as a source of funds.

The result of the IMA's actions during this time was to give it enough financial depth to make it eventually a major social contributor again in the Flint Community. Its action also accentuated a problem with the IRS in the cumulative tax case which had been building against the IMA through the years.

## CRUCIAL ISSUE V

COULD THE IMA RETAIN ITS FEDERAL INCOME TAX EXEMPTION  
AND SURVIVE THE PERIODIC INTRUSION  
OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE?

Why Crucial

The financial basis for the IMA's operation, concessions in the plants, is predicated on the concept that the Association is a non-profit organization that plows its profits into activities, services, and facilities which benefit its membership. Thus, if the IMA should lose

a major share of its income through payment of income tax, the Association would become much less effective in the community, and of much less benefit to its membership.

#### Action Taken

When confronted by the IRS in 1923 for payment of taxes that had been accumulating since 1919 (charged to the IFL), the IMA refused to pay. Furthermore, the IMA and its parent body took the offensive. They used all their power and influence to have a section of the Mellon Tax Law amended so as to give exemption to the IMA.

In the 1960's it again became necessary for the IMA and the Manufacturers' Association of Flint to engage some of the best tax attorneys in the country and exert their full power and influence in order to retain the tax-exempt status which had been reaffirmed by the IRS as late as 1937.

Late in the 1960's the IMA in conjunction with the Manufacturers' Association again sent men to Washington to influence legislation. The Income Tax Law was being revised. Thus attorneys were hired and congressmen consulted on the matter.

Other action taken by the Association during this period of the '60's focused on the IMA reassessing its operational and organizational patterns to conform to reasonable IRS requirements.

#### Why Action Taken

Obviously in 1923 the IMA looked to Congress so that it, the



Association, could be classified as a tax-exempt, non-profit, organization. This classification would allow the IMA the opportunity to fulfill its corporate purpose of bringing together the employees of the Flint factories for their own mutual benefit.

To accomplish this it was necessary for the IMA to retain the best tax attorneys in the country, use its influence with local congressmen, and reassess its own situation to make sure its house was in order. In short, this action was taken to assure the very survival of the IMA.

#### Result of Action Taken

The Mellon Tax Law was specifically amended in 1924 so as to afford the IMA a tax exemption status. The amended section reads as follows:

Local associations of employees, the membership of which is limited to the employees of a designated person or persons in a particular municipality, and the net earnings of which are devoted exclusively to charitable, educational and recreational purposes . . .

As the aftermath of the strenuous and time-consuming battles, the IMA was allowed to retain its tax-exempt status that the IRS recommended be revoked after its investigations of 1960, '61 and '62. In response to the brief filed by the IMA in February, 1965, the IRS eventually agreed that the Association's tax-exempt status should not be revoked. Such word was received in December, 1966.

When the IMA again sent men to Washington in 1969 to influence the writing of the Tax Reform Act, it was again successful in gaining protection for itself.

Simultaneously with the tax battles and as the result of the reassessments of the organization, the IMA again became more people-oriented. Thus it began adding activities and staff members to its operation. In other words it was living up to the charge made to it by the Manufacturers' Association -- to become more of an operator and less of a broker.

#### CRUCIAL ISSUE VI

CAN THE IMA CONTINUE TO EXPEND ITS FUNDS AND ENERGIES,  
AS DEMANDED BY THE IRS, OR WILL IT REVERT TO A  
MODE OF OPERATION THAT IS QUESTIONABLE  
TO THE IRS?

#### Why Crucial

As the result of the IRS's constant vigil, the IMA must operate within its corporate purpose and within the established tax laws or risk losing its tax-exempt status. The cruciality of this task is that Flint, as a community, has several institutions working in it that make it increasingly difficult to find legitimate activities and facilities that serve its members' needs and its corporate purpose and which are not being provided already by these other institutions or a

coalition of them. Among these other institutions are the Mott Foundation, the Cultural Center, Mott Community College and the Flint Community Schools.

#### Action Taken

The IMA has established committees to investigate possible areas of expansion. The professional staff has been charged to work with these committees, and within their own respective departments, for the purpose of developing plans of expansion that keep within the corporate purpose of the IMA. A new program to develop member awareness of the Association has been undertaken.

#### Result of Action Taken

The effect of this action has been to come up with major plans for new activities and facilities, plus the hiring of additional staff to conduct the activities and staff the new facilities. A public relations program has been contracted for the purpose of keeping the IMA constantly before the public.

### CONCLUSIONS

- I. The IMA is a formally organized mutual-benefit association that promotes, fosters and stimulates the welfare of its members in areas of education, recreation, and social services:

The Association is duly constituted, and is recognized by the governments of the State of Michigan and the United States as a legitimate employees' organization.

The Association, in keeping within its corporate purpose is obligated to operate these kinds of programs.

The Association is under the vigilance of its professional staff, Board of Trustees, Advisory Committee, and several governmental units to ensure that it stays within and fulfills its corporate purposes.

The Association's existing programs, services, and facilities (along with those of the past) give witness to its performing legitimately.

- II. The IMA is in fact an involuntary association in the sense that members belong solely by virtue of their employment in a factory associated with the Manufacturers' Association of Flint:

The employee does not have the option of not belonging to the Association.

This condition of membership has been consistent through the years with the exception of the period of depression.

- III. The IMA always has operated as an oligarchy:

The Association has been from the outset under the ultimate control of the Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers' Association.

All major financial disbursements, policy changes, and such, must be approved by the Advisory Committee.

The Board of Trustees is selected from a restricted group of active members (as opposed to associate members in the Association).

The elected Board of Trustees of the Association and the professional staff determine the direction of the IMA's day-to-day operation.

- IV. The oligarchy is allowed to exist because it effectively provides the activities, services, and facilities that meet the wants of its members:

The Association provides a comprehensive program in the areas of educational, recreational and social services.

The Association owns and operates several excellent physical facilities in which it conducts programs that are well-attended by its members.

The Association has considered and acted upon members' concerns--prices charged in the Stores, need for welfare services, demonstrated anti-labor position, and mandatory dues-paying membership requirements.

- V. The IMA has established a domain of considerable magnitude and prestige in the Flint Community:

The Association performs major functions in the areas of education, recreation, and social services.

The Association has constructed edifices of prime importance to the lives of its members.

The Association has acquired significant amounts of property in order to serve the needs of its members.

The Association enjoys a positive relationship with the communication media in the Flint Area which adds to its visibility and prestige.

The Association is a major payer of local taxes in the Flint Community.

- VI. The IMA has demonstrated that it is capable of increasing or diminishing its domain as circumstances dictate:

The Association expanded its Club activities and moved into welfare programs during the depression but moved out of these as situations changed.

The Association operated its own school, bank, and insurance programs until other community units were ready to assume these responsibilities.

The Association moved from being an operator of programs to becoming a "broker" and back to

being an operator of programs , with significant success.

The Association is constantly evaluating its programs and services while seeking new directions.

VII. The IMA is an example of how an association made up of members representing both labor and management can provide for the good of both:

The Association is composed of members representing both labor and management.

The Association makes available its programs , services , and facilities to both groups on an equal and combined basis: separate activities for each group do not exist.

VIII. The IMA always has been dominated by the legal principle:

The Association has from the outset operated under formal rules and entitlements.

The corporate nature of the Association and its hierarchy has influenced and accelerated this domination.

The crucial issues which have confronted the Association have increased its dependence on the safety of operating under legal principles.

- IX. The principle of shared commitment in the IMA always has been more tacitly operative than explicit:

The Association's membership feels little sense of shared commitment.

The only shared commitment of consequence belongs to the oligarchy of the Association.

There is an effort underway, on the part of the oligarchy, to increase the feeling of pride and shared commitment within the membership.

- X. The IMA is an efficiently-run organization:

The Association is well-organized with functions clearly defined.

The Association's professional staff is relatively small and effective.

The Association's finances are thoroughly protected and accounted for at all times.

The Association's records are complete, well-organized, and well preserved.

### IMPLICATIONS

- I. The IMA demonstrates that labor and management groups can co-exist within a formal organization with benefits being derived by both groups and the community-at-large.



- II. A full analysis of the IMA shows the necessity of any organization's relying on resources external to itself.
- III. A full analysis of the IMA points out the administrative behavior necessary to conduct a mutual-benefit association successfully.
- IV. A full analysis of the IMA gives evidence of the influence that a powerful organization can have on legislation at the local, state and federal levels.
- V. The IMA has succeeded in handling crucial issues facing it because it was controlled by top-level decision makers representing management.
- VI. The IMA has been able to gain the prestige and means necessary to expand its domain further.
- VII. The IMA would be difficult to emulate under today's tax laws and governmental regulations.
- VIII. The development of organizations similar to the IMA may have implications for cities as they seek revenue-sharing types of programs.
- IX. This study may invoke an interest in learning how concession monies are spent in other industrial cities.

The IMA, although not a fully voluntary association, is a unique example of how this kind of member on a community-serving organization can help to order the life of a community in a positive way. The IMA's history will help determine its future by giving it a firm philosophical, financial, and community base from which to extend its domain. Hopefully, this account will contribute to that base and to its future development for the good of the Flint Community.

## APPENDIX

May 21, 1964

INDUSTRIAL MUTUAL ASSOCIATION OF FLINT

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

(Originally executed August 14, 1917, and recorded August 21, 1917, under the name: INDUSTRIAL FELLOWSHIP LEAGUE, and amended September 30, 1922; January 9, 1923; October 28, 1924; November 22, 1932; April 28, 1936, and December 26, 1962, as on file in the offices of the Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission. Each article is stated here in the last amended form as filed with the State.)

ARTICLE I (Amendment of 9/30/22)

NAME

Section 1.

This Association shall be known as the Industrial Mutual Association of Flint.

ARTICLE II (Amendment of 12/26/62)

The purpose or purposes of this corporation are as follows:

Section 1.

To promote, foster and stimulate the mutual welfare of the employees of the Associated Factories of Flint, Michigan, socially, physically, mentally and morally and to extend mutual relief to the members in cases arising from accident, sickness and death and to develop such enterprises as may be deemed necessary, the income from which shall be used to finance the aforesaid mutual welfare, recreational and educational service and the net earnings of which shall be devoted exclusively to charitable, educational or recreational purposes and no part of any such income received to inure to the private benefit of any member or individual. Associated Factories of Flint are those factories that are members of the Manufacturers Association of Flint, Michigan.

Section 2.

To own, occupy, use, operate and maintain in the City of Flint, Michigan, a public auditorium or auditoriums and related facilities, including a parking lot or parking lots to be used in connection therewith; to use said auditorium or auditoriums and related facilities for the purpose of conducting free public lectures, travelogues and other educational programs, to permit said auditorium or auditoriums and related facilities to be used by other organizations and individuals, and to make a charge for such use by other organizations and individuals provided, however, that the total charges collected for such use in any calendar year shall never exceed the amount required for the successful operation and maintenance of such auditorium or auditoriums and related facilities for such year.

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Articles of Association

ARTICLE II (Continued)

Section 3.

To own, occupy, use, operate and maintain parks and recreational facilities, to permit other organizations and individuals to use said parks and recreational facilities and to make a charge for such use provided, however, that the total charges collected for such use in any calendar year shall never exceed the amount required for the successful operation and maintenance of such parks and recreational facilities during such year.

ARTICLE III (Adopted 8/14/17)

PLACE OF BUSINESS

Section 1.

The principal office or place of business shall be at Flint, Michigan, in the County of Genesee.

ARTICLE IV

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 1. (Amendment of 4/28/36)

The Board of Trustees shall consist of twenty-four (24) representatives elected from the Associated Factories, - one from each Associated Factory employing less than one thousand, and the balance to be pro-rated in the Associated Factories employing over one thousand. In addition: (a) One representative selected by the Manufacturers Association of Flint; (b) The Director or Manager of the Personnel Department of each of the Associated Factories employing over one thousand. The basis of determining the number of representatives to be elected from each factory shall be taken from the records of the Manufacturers Association of Flint, using average employment for one year previous to election.

Section 2. (Amendment of 11/22/32)

The Executive Committee of the Manufacturers Association of Flint shall act in an advisory capacity and shall be known as the Advisory Committee.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. (Amendment of 10/28/24)

Any person of good character and sound mental and bodily health in the employ of any of the Associated Factories of Flint is eligible to membership.

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Articles of Association

ARTICLE V (Continued)

MEMBERSHIP

Section 2. (Amendment of 4/28/36)

Membership in the Association shall be divided into two classes - active and associate membership.

ARTICLE VI (Amendment of 11/22/32)

ANNUAL MEETING

Section 1.

The annual meeting of the Industrial Mutual Association of Flint shall be held on the fourth Tuesday in January of each year, at which time a financial statement shall be rendered and reports made of the various activities of the Association.

Section 2.

The fiscal year of the Industrial Mutual Association shall begin on January 1st and shall end with the close of business December 31st of each year.

ARTICLE VII (Amendment of 10/28/24)

AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

This Constitution may be added to or amended at any meeting of the Board of Trustees by two-thirds vote of the members of the Board of Trustees present and voting, provided that a copy of said proposed amendments or additions be sent to each member prior to such meeting.

ARTICLE VIII (Amendment of 12/26/62)

Section 1.

The term of the Corporation is 30 years from the date of the filing of this amendment in the office of the Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission. (Note: The referenced amendment was filed with the Commissioner of Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission on December 27, 1962.)

## INDUSTRIAL MUTUAL ASSOCIATION OF FLINT

## BY-LAWS

As Amended

March 25, 1969

ARTICLE IELECTION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 1. Each Trustee's term of service is two years, beginning January 1 following his election to the Board. Since the terms of approximately half of the elective Trusteeships expire each year, election to fill such currently expiring Trusteeship terms is held by the Active Members of each of the Associated Factories of Flint during the first week of December. The Plant Manager of each member plant in which one or more Trusteeship terms will be expiring shall appoint a Nominating and Election Committee who shall be responsible for making written nominations of Active member candidates, issuance of ballots, and for conducting the election among all Active Members of the Association employed at that plant.

No person shall be eligible who is not of legal age and an Active Member of the Association, and who has not paid membership dues for at least one year previous to election; however, the one year time requirement may be waived in order to comply with Article IV, Section 1 of the Articles of Incorporation.

An active member of the Association is a person employed in the Associated Factories of Flint and one who holds a membership card by reason of payment of regular dues into the Association.

The active members shall vote by mail or in person, by secret ballot in conformity with such additional rules and regulations as the Board of Trustees may adopt.

Only candidates who have been properly nominated and names placed on ballots will be considered in elections. In case only one man is nominated for each office the Election Committee may cast an unanimous vote for candidate and declare him elected to office unopposed.

Section 2. Immediately following the election at each of the Associated Factories, the Plant Manager of that plant shall forward Certificate of Election, signed by the Election Committee, for filing in the offices of the Association.

Section 3. In case of resignation or removal of any Trustee, the Plant Manager of that factory shall appoint a Trustee to fill vacancy for the unexpired term.

Section 4. In case any Trustee fails to attend three consecutive Trustee meetings, showing a disinclination to attend the regular duties of a Trustee, the Plant Manager will be notified by the President that a Trustee may be removed from office through non-attendance, and the President may request him to appoint a Trustee to fill the vacancy, as stated in Section 3 of this Article.

## ARTICLE II

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month for the transaction of business, at such time and place as it may determine. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the President at any time upon notice to the members thereof or by the Secretary upon written request signed by five members of the Board of Trustees. Notice of special meeting shall be given out at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of said special meeting and such notice shall state the purpose the meeting was called for. All meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be conducted according to the Roberts Rules of Order, in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the By-Laws of the Association.

Section 2. The Immediate Past President shall be Honorary Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

## ARTICLE III

### OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Industrial Mutual Association of Flint shall be: President, four Vice-Presidents (who shall serve as Chairmen of the four standing Committees), Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. All officers are elected annually. A President may not be nominated to succeed himself, but may be nominated again in any subsequent year. No Vice President shall serve more than two successive years as Chairman of the same Standing Committee. Any nominee for President must at some time have served as Vice President.



ARTICLE IV  
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. At the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees prior to the annual meeting, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of five members, with the Representative of the Manufacturers Association serving as Chairman to preserve liason with the Advisory Committee. This Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates for office; nomination of the four Vice Presidents shall include designation of the Standing Committee each shall serve as Chairman. This does not exclude any nominations which may be made from the floor by members of the Board of Trustees. The officers shall be elected by the majority vote of the Board of Trustees present and voting, a quorum being present. The election shall be by ballot, except where there is only one candidate for the office, in which case the President may direct the Secretary to cast a unanimous vote for the nominee. The officers shall hold office for a period of one year, or until their successors shall be elected and qualified.

Section 2. A vacancy in any office may be filled by the majority vote of the Board of Trustees present and voting at any meeting, a quorum being present. The successor so elected, shall hold office for the unexpired term or until the election of his successor.

ARTICLE V  
DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. PRESIDENT: It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee. In the absence of the President, the immediate Past President, in his capacity as Honorary Chairman of the Board of Trustees, shall preside at such meetings. He shall at his discretion appoint such committees as he may deem necessary for the efficient transaction of business. The retiring President will preside at the annual meeting until all officers are duly elected.

Section 2. VICE PRESIDENTS: It shall be the duty of each of the four Vice Presidents to serve as Chairman of the Standing Committee designated to him at the time he was nominated and elected, and he shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Board.

Section 3. SECRETARY: It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary to maintain minutes and a complete record of all business at the Board meetings. He may be paid a salary fixed by the Executive Committee for his services.

Section 4. TREASURER: The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds and securities which are to be deposited by the Managing Director in the name of the Industrial Mutual Association of Flint, in banks designated by the Executive Committee. He may be paid a salary fixed by the Executive Committee for his services.

Section 5. MANAGING DIRECTOR: The Managing Director shall have active direction and supervision of all departments of the Association, and shall be directly responsible to the Executive Committee. He shall keep books of account together with a list of real estate property, and fixtures owned and used in the operation of the Association. He shall perform duties prescribed by the Executive Committee. He shall be paid a salary fixed by the Executive Committee, approved by the Manufacturers Association Advisory Committee. He is empowered to make expenditures up to \$2500 for office, plant, operations, and services departments, which he shall report to the Executive Committee. He shall also have authority to make social service, recreational, or educational contributions up to \$2500 with the agreement of the appropriate service committee Chairman and concurrence of the President, and the Representative of the Manufacturers Association. He is responsible for preparation of an annual budget covering operations, plant, office and services--including contribution patterns and recurring expenses established and sanctioned by precedent. This annual budget will proceed through all Standing Committees for possible recommendations of change, and will be presented to the Board of Trustees by the Executive Committee with a copy to the Manufacturers Association of Flint. After approval by the Board of Trustees, this budget shall constitute authorization for operation and expenditures by the Managing Director as specified in said budget--subject to monthly report, review, and approval by the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. In addition, the Managing Director will present monthly progress reports and forecasts of income, expenditures, and activities for the balance of the year.

Section 6. Officers in charge and such other employees who have charge of funds shall furnish the Association bonds in such sums as the Executive Committee may prescribe, the expense thereof to be borne by the Association.

ARTICLE VI  
STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. The members of the following standing committees shall be appointed by the President, within one week after the election of officers, which standing committees shall serve for one year from date of appointment or until their successors have been appointed.

Operations & Finance Committee  
Social Service Committee  
Recreation Committee  
Education Committee

Section 2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: This Committee shall consist of the President, the four Vice Presidents, the Immediate Past President serving as Honorary Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Representative of the Manufacturers Association of Flint, and the Chairman of the Personnel Group. This committee shall transact all business which may arise between the intervals of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and they shall submit all business acted upon to the Board for its approval. This committee shall have power to employ and fix the compensation of the Managing Director, which action must be submitted to the Manufacturers Association of Flint for its approval. This committee shall have power to fix the compensation of such assistants as the Managing Director may require. They shall designate the banks in which the funds of the Association shall be deposited and shall have the entire jurisdiction of all funds.

Section 3. OPERATIONS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE: This committee shall consist of five or more members of the Board of Trustees, including the Treasurer. This committee shall have responsibility for establishing proper financial procedures and policies for finances and accounting of the Association and have access to the records and books at all times. This committee shall be informed of any projects, proposals, or changes in I.M.A. services activities recommended by committees to the Executive Committee, and shall be responsible for considering and reporting to the Executive Committee any factors relating to availability of funds, insurance factors, and tax law requirements such projects, proposals, or changes might involve. The committee shall be kept informed of the financial operations of the Association, and shall be available to act as advisors to the Managing Director in financial matters. It shall provide for an annual audit of all books and financial records of the Association, and shall work closely with the sales operations departments of the Association.

Section 4. SOCIAL SERVICE COMMITTEE: This committee shall consist of five or more members of the Board of Trustees, and shall have responsibility for study and recommendation on any proposal, project, or suggested change in existing I.M.A. charitable, welfare, or other social service activities. This committee shall be kept informed of all operations of the social service department of the I.M.A., and shall be available to act as advisors to the Managing Director on social service matters.

Section 5. RECREATION COMMITTEE: This committee shall consist of five or more members of the Board of Trustees, and shall have responsibility for study and recommendation on any proposal, project, or suggested change in existing I.M.A. activities in the field of recreation, shall be kept informed of the operations of the recreation department of the I.M.A., and shall be available to act as advisors to the Managing Director on recreational matters.

Section 6. EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE: The Education Committee shall consist of five or more members of the Board of Trustees, and shall have responsibility for study and recommendation on any proposal, project, or suggested change in existing I.M.A. activities in the field of education, shall be kept informed of the operations of the educational department of the I.M.A., and shall be available to act as advisors to the Managing Director on educational matters.

## ARTICLE VII

### FINANCES

Section 1. The funds of the Association shall be carried in a general account and all deposits made thereto.

Any extraordinary disbursements of funds shall not be made unless the Advisory Committee of the Manufacturers Association of Flint has been notified of the nature and purpose of the expenditure and their approval secured.

Section 2. All general checks shall be signed - "Industrial Mutual Association of Flint" - and will bear any two (2) signatures of the following five: Managing Director, Operations Manager, Comptroller, Treasurer, or Secretary, all of whom shall be bonded.

Signatures on fund accounts will be designated by the Managing Director and bank will be authorized by the Association's letter signed by the President.

ARTICLE VIII  
MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section 1. Membership in this Association shall be divided into two classes - active and associate membership.

Section 2. Any person becoming an active member of the Association shall pay his or her dues at the offices of the Association, at the rate of \$5.00 annually.

Section 3. Any person employed in the Associated Factories of Flint is entitled to an associate membership in the Association without payment of dues.

Section 4. Active members shall have exclusive voting power and shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of membership.

Section 5. Associate members shall be entitled to privileges as designated by the Board of Trustees. Under no circumstances will they be entitled to vote nor have or be deemed to have any interest of any kind in the operations or property of the Association.

Section 6. Any associate member may become an active member upon application therefor, election by the Board of Trustees, and payment of annual dues. Such election shall be by two-thirds vote of the members of the Board present and voting at any meeting, provided that the name of the applicant shall have been furnished to each active member of the Association at least ten (10) days prior to such meeting.

Section 7. Special meetings of the members may be held at any time designated by the President, Executive Committee or Board of Trustees subject to the provision that at least two days notice of such special meeting shall be given to the members entitled to vote at such special meeting. Such notice may be given by written notice delivered by mail or personally, by telegram, or by telephone or personal call and the notice shall state the general purpose for which such special meeting has been called.

Section 8. A majority of the members entitled to vote and present in person or represented thereat by proxy, or any combination thereof so present at the meeting, shall constitute a quorum at any annual or special meeting of the members. Voting members shall be entitled to be represented by written proxy at any and all annual and special meetings thereof.

ARTICLE IXAMENDMENTS

Section 1. These By-Laws may be added to or amended at any meeting of the Board of Trustees by two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided that a copy of said proposed amendments or additions be sent to each member of the Board of Trustees ten (10) days prior to such meeting.

ARTICLE XQUORUM

Section 1. A quorum for the purpose of transacting business shall consist of not less than twelve (12) members of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. At meetings of the Executive Committee, a quorum for the purpose of transacting business shall consist of not less than six (6) members of the Committee, including the presiding officer.

## MONDAY

|                 |   |                        |
|-----------------|---|------------------------|
| 8:30-11:30 a.m. | Chevrolet Nite Hawks Indoor<br>Baseball League              | 11th floor Gym         |
| 9:00-11:00 a.m. | F.E.R.A. Class Shop Arith-<br>metic (Men)                   | Room 801               |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m. | F.E.R.A. French Class                                       | Room 801               |
| 2:30- 3:30 p.m. | F.E.R.A. Gym Class, Women                                   | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:00- 4:45 p.m. | Boys; Intermediate Tumbling                                 | 7th floor Gym          |
| 4:45- 5:30 p.m. | Boys' Beginning Tumbling Class                              | 7th floor Gym          |
| 4:00- 5:00 p.m. | Children's Dramatics Class                                  | Room 801               |
| 4:00- 4:30 p.m. | Children's Intermediate Ballet<br>Dancing                   | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:30- 5:00 p.m. | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class                | 11th floor Gym         |
| 5:00- 5:30 p.m. | Children's Advanced Tap<br>Dancing Class                    | 11th floor Gym         |
| 5:30- 6:00 p.m. | Children's Advanced Tap<br>Dancing Class                    | 7th floor              |
| 6:00- 6:30 p.m. | Boys' Beginning Tap Dancing<br>Class                        | 7th floor              |
| 5:30-10:00 p.m. | Chevrolet Men's Bridge Club                                 | Room 1203              |
| 7:30-10:30 p.m. | Research Group of Literary<br>Club (Adults)                 | Room 802               |
| 7:00- 7:45 p.m. | Women's Advanced Musical<br>Comedy Dancing Class            | 7th floor Gym          |
| 7:45- 8:30 p.m. | Women's Beginning Musical<br>Comedy Dancing                 | 7th floor Gym          |
| 8:00- 9:30 p.m. | Girls' Glee Club  | Room 801               |
| 6:00- 8:00 p.m. | Buick Main Office Bowling<br>League--24 Teams--120          | 8th, 9th & 10th floor  |
| 6:45- 8:15 p.m. | Marvel Carburetor Bowling<br>League--6 Teams--30<br>Bowlers | 7th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | Buick "D" Bowling League--<br>8 Teams--40 Bowlers           | 8th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | Buick No. 3 Bowling League--<br>6 Teams--30 Bowlers         | 10th floor             |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | AC Spark Plug Special --<br>2 Team s--10 Bowlers            | 10th floor             |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | Buick No. 40 Bowling League--<br>5 Teams--40 Bowlers        | 9th floor              |
| 6:00- 7:00 p.m. | Chevrolet Nite Hawks Basketball<br>League                   | 11th floor Gym         |
| 7:00-10:00 p.m. | Men's Inter-Factory Basketball<br>League                    | 11th floor Gym         |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m. | Shower Room--28 Showers                                     | 11th floor Locker Room |
| 8:00-Midnight   | Checker & Chess Room Open                                   | 11th floor Lounge      |

## TUESDAY

|                  |  |                   |
|------------------|--|-------------------|
| 9:00-11:00 a.m.  | F.E.R.A. Class Shop Arithmetic (Men)                         | Room 801          |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m.  | F.E.R.A. Tennis Class for Women                              | 11th floor Gym    |
| 7:00-10:00 p.m.  | AC Designers Club (Men)                                      | Room 801          |
| 7:00- 9:00 p.m.  | Women's Beginning Sewing Class                               | Room 1201 & 1202  |
| 7:00- 8:45 p.m.  | Women's Artcraft Class                                       | Room 802          |
| 7:00- 7:30 p.m.  | Women's Advanced Tap Dancing Class                           | 7th floor Gym     |
| 7:30- 8:00 p.m.  | Women's Intermediate Tap Dancing Class                       | 7th floor Gym     |
| 8:00- 8:30 p.m.  | Women's Beginning Tap Dancing Class                          | 7th floor Gym     |
| 8:30-11:30 p.m.  | Chevrolet Nite Hawks Indoor Baseball League                  | 11th floor Gym    |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Fisher Body No. 2 Bowling League--16 Teams--80 Bowlers       | 9th & 10th floors |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Marvel Carburetor Girls Bowling League--6 Teams --30 Bowlers | 7th floor         |
| 10:00-12:00 noon | Buick Die Sinkers Bowling League--6 Teams--30 Bowlers        | 8th floor         |
| 4:00- 5:00 p.m.  | Boys' Model Airplane Club                                    | Room 1201 & 1202  |
| 4:00- 4:45 p.m.  | Girls' Beginning Tumbling Class                              | 7th floor Gym     |
| 4:45- 5:30 p.m.  | Girls' Beginning Tumbling Class                              | 7th floor Gym     |
| 4:00- 4:30 p.m.  | Children's Rhythm Band Class                                 | Room 801          |
| 4:00- 5:00 p.m.  | Children's Advanced and Intermediate Acrobatics              | 11th floor Gym    |
| 5:00- 5:30 p.m.  | Boys' Intermediate Tap Dancing Class                         | 11th floor Gym    |
| 5:30- 6:00 p.m.  | Girls' Beginning Tap Dancing Class                           | 11th floor Gym    |
| 6:00- 6:30 p.m.  | Children's Beginning Tap Dancing Class                       | 11th floor Gym    |
| 7:00-10:15 p.m.  | Girls' Basketball League--4 Games                            | 11th floor Gym    |
|                  | Shower Room--28 Showers                                      | 11th floor        |
|                  |  | Locker Room       |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m.  | Chess & Chess Room Open                                      |                   |
| 8:00-Midnite     | adjoining  | 11th floor Lounge |



## WEDNESDAY

|                  |   |                          |
|------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 8:30-11:30 a.m.  | Chevrolet Nite Hawks Indoor<br>Baseball League                    | 11th floor Gym           |
| 9:00-11:00 a.m.  | Men's Shop Arithmetic<br>F.E.R.A. Class                           | Room 801                 |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m.  | Swimming Class for Women  | Haskell Swimming<br>Pool |
| 10:00-10:45 a.m. | Women's Advanced Musical<br>Comedy Dancing                        | 7th floor Gym            |
| 10:45-11:30 a.m. | Women's Beginning Musical<br>Comedy Dancing                       | 7th floor Gym            |
| 11:30-12:00 noon | Men's Beginning Tap Dancing<br>Classes                            | 7th floor Gym            |
| 2:00- 3:45 p.m.  | Women's Artcraft Class  | Room 802                 |
| 7:00- 9:00 p.m.  | Adults Beginning Contract<br>Bridge Class                         | Room 801                 |
| 7:00- 9:00 p.m.  | Women's Advanced Sewing<br>Class                                  | Room 802                 |
| 9:00-11:00 a.m.  | Chevrolet Nite Hawks Bowling<br>League--24 Teams--<br>120 Bowlers | 8th, 9th & 10th floors   |
| 7:00-10:00 p.m.  | Chevrolet Main Office<br>Bowling League--16 Teams<br>--80 Bowlers | 9th & 10th floors        |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | AC Spark Plug Bowling League<br>--16 Teams--80 Bowlers            | 7th & 8th floors         |
| 5:30- 7:00 p.m.  | Chevrolet Nite Hawks<br>Basketball Games                          | 11th floor Gym           |
| 7:00-10:00 p.m.  | Inter-Factory Basketball<br>Games (Men)                           | 11th floor Gym           |
| 4:00- 5:00 p.m.  | Children's Intermediate<br>Harmonica Band Class                   | Room 801                 |
| 4:00- 4:30 p.m.  | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class                      | 11th floor Gym           |
| 4:30- 5:00 p.m.  | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class                      | 11th floor Gym           |
| 4:45- 5:30 p.m.  | Children's Acrobatic Dancing<br>Class                             | 11th floor Gym           |
| 5:00- 6:00 p.m.  | Children's Harmonica Band<br>Class                                | Room 801                 |
| 5:00- 5:30 p.m.  | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class                      | 11th floor Gym           |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m.  | Shower Room--28 Showers   | 11th floor Locker Room   |
| 8:00-Midnite     | Checker & Chess Room<br>Open adjoining                            | 11th floor Lounge        |

## THURSDAY

|                  |  |                        |
|------------------|--|------------------------|
| 9:00-11:00 a.m.  | Men's Shop Arithmetic Class<br>F.E.R.A.                                  | Room 801               |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m.  | Women's Tennis Class   | 11th floor Gym         |
| 7:00- 9:00 p.m.  | Women's Home Decorating<br>Class   | Room 1201 & 1202       |
| 7:00- 7:45 p.m.  | Gym & Weight Normalizing<br>Class for Women                              | 11th floor Gym         |
| 7:00- 7:30 p.m.  | Women's Advanced Tap<br>Dancing Class                                    | 7th floor Gym          |
| 7:00- 8:00 p.m.  | Women's Literary Club  | Room 801               |
| 8:00- 9:00 p.m.  | Men's Literary Club  | Room 802               |
| 7:00-10:00 p.m.  | Buick Main Office Bridge Club<br>(Men)                                   | Room 802               |
| 8:00- 8:30 p.m.  | Men's Beginning Tap Dancing  | 7th floor Gym          |
| 10:00-10:30 a.m. | Children's Intermediate Baby<br>Ballet Class                             | 11th floor Gym         |
| 11:00-11:30 a.m. | Children's Beginning Baby<br>Ballet Dancing Class                        | 11th floor Gym         |
| 11:30-12:00 noon | Children's Beginning Baby<br>Ballet Dancing Class                        | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:00- 5:00 p.m.  | Children's Dramatic Class  | Room 801               |
| 4:00- 5:00 p.m.  | Boys' Model Airplane Club  | Room 1201 & 1202       |
| 4:00- 4:45 p.m.  | Girls' Intermediate Tumbling   | 7th floor Gym          |
| 4:00- 4:30 p.m.  | Children's Advanced Ballet<br>Dancing Class                              | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:30- 5:00 p.m.  | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class                             | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:45- 5:30 p.m.  | Girls' Advanced Tumbling Class   | 7th floor Gym          |
| 5:00- 5:30 p.m.  | Children's Advanced Tap<br>Dancing Class                                 | 11th floor Gym         |
| 5:30- 6:00 p.m.  | Children's Advanced Tap<br>Dancing Class                                 | 11th floor Gym         |
| 6:00- 6:30 p.m.  | Children's Beginning Tap<br>Dancing Class                                | 11th floor Gym         |
| 6:00- 8:00 p.m.  | Fisher Body No. 1 Main Office<br>Bowling League--8 Teams<br>--40 Bowlers | 8th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Buick No. 21 Bowling League<br>--8 Teams--40 Bowlers                     | 8th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Buick No. 25 Bowling League<br>--8 Teams--40 Bowlers                     | 10th floor             |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Buick No. 11 Bowling League<br>--8 Teams--40 Bowlers                     | 9th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Buick No. 70 Bowling League<br>--8 Teams--40 Bowlers                     | 7th floor              |
| 8:30-10:30 p.m.  | Girls' Basketball League<br>2 Games                                      | 11th floor Gym         |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m.  | Spanish F.E.R.A. Class (Adults)  | Room 801               |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m.  | Shower Room--28 Showers  | 11th floor Locker Room |
| 8:00-Midnite     | Checker & Chess Room Open<br>adjoining                                   | 11th floor Lounge      |

## FRIDAY

|                 |  |                        |
|-----------------|--|------------------------|
| 9:00-11:00 a.m. | Men's Mechanical Drawing<br>Class--F.E.R.A.                | Room 801               |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m. | Swimming Class for Women<br>--F.E.R.A.                     | Haskell Swimming Pool  |
| 7:00- 9:00 p.m. | Adults Advanced Contract<br>Bridge Class                   | Room 1203              |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m. | Checker Club for Adults                                    | Room 802               |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | Men's German Glee Club                                     | Room 801               |
| 4:00- 4:45 p.m. | Boys' Beginning Tumbling Class                             | 7th floor Gym          |
| 4:00- 4:30 p.m. | Children's Intermediate Ballet<br>Dancing Class            | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:30- 5:00 p.m. | Children's Intermediate Ballet<br>Dancing Class            | 11th floor Gym         |
| 4:30- 5:30 p.m. | Children's Advanced<br>Harmonica Band Class                | Room 801               |
| 5:00- 5:30 p.m. | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class               | 11th floor Gym         |
| 5:30- 6:00 p.m. | Children's Beginning Tap<br>Dancing Class                  | 11th floor Gym         |
| 6:00- 6:30 p.m. | Boys' Beginning Tap Dancing<br>Class                       | 7th floor Gym          |
| 6:30- 7:00 p.m. | Children's Beginning Tap<br>Dancing Class                  | 7th floor Gym          |
| 8:30-11:30 a.m. | Chevrolet Nite Hawks Indoor<br>Baseball League             | 11th floor Gym         |
| 6:30- 8:00 p.m. | Buick No. 12 Bowling League<br>--12 Teams--60 Bowlers      | 9th & 10th floors      |
| 6:00- 8:00 p.m. | Chevrolet No. 4 Bowling<br>League--8 Teams--<br>40 Bowlers | 8th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | Fisher No. 2 Girls Bowling<br>League--2 Teams--10 Bowlers  | 7th floor              |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m. | Fisher No. 2 Bowling League<br>--8 Teams--40 Bowlers       | 8th floor              |
| 7:30- 8:30 p.m. | Fencing Class for Adults                                   | 7th floor Gym          |
| 2:00- 4:00 p.m. | F.E.R.A. French Class for<br>Adults                        | Room 801               |
| 8:00-11:00 p.m. | Chevrolet Nite Hawks<br>Basketball League                  | 11th floor Gym         |
| 7:00-10:00 p.m. | Men's Inter-Factory<br>Basketball League                   | 11th floor Gym         |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m. | Shower Room--28 Showers                                    | 11th floor Locker Room |
| 8:00-Midnite    | Checker & Chess Room Open<br>adjoining                     | 11th floor Lounge      |

## SATURDAY

|                  |  |                        |
|------------------|--|------------------------|
| 9:00- 9:30 a.m.  | Children's Beginning Tap<br>Dancing Class    | 11th floor Gym         |
| 9:30-10:00 a.m.  | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class | 11th floor Gym         |
| 10:00-10:30 a.m. | Children's Advanced Ballet<br>Dancing Class  | 11th floor Gym         |
| 9:30-10:00 a.m.  | Boys' Advanced Boxing Class                  | 7th floor Gym          |
| 10:00-10:30 a.m. | Boys' Beginning Boxing Class                 | 7th floor Gym          |
| 10:00-11:00 a.m. | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class | 11th floor Gym         |
| 11:00-11:30 a.m. | Children's Intermediate Tap<br>Dancing Class | 11th floor Gym         |
| 11:30-12:00 noon | Children's Beginning Ballet<br>Dancing Class | 11th floor Gym         |
| 11:45-12:45 p.m. | Children's Acrobatic Dancing<br>Class        | 7th floor Gym          |
| 12:00-12:30 p.m. | Children's Modern Dancing<br>Class           | 11th floor Gym         |
| 1:30- 2:00 p.m.  | Children's Beginning Toe<br>Dancing Class    | 7th floor Gym          |
| 2:00- 2:30 p.m.  | Children's Intermediate Toe<br>Dancing Class | 7th floor Gym          |
| 2:30- 3:00 p.m.  | Children's Advanced Toe<br>Dancing Class     | 7th floor Gym          |
| 3:00- 3:30 p.m.  | Children's Beginning Ballet<br>Class         | 7th floor Gym          |
| 3:30- 4:00 p.m.  | Children's Beginning Ballet<br>Class         | 7th floor Gym          |
| 4:00- 4:30 p.m.  | Children's Beginning Ballet<br>Class         | 7th floor Gym          |
| 7:00- 8:00 p.m.  | Adults Old Time Dancing Class                | 7th floor Gym          |
| 7:30- 9:30 p.m.  | Men's Glee Club                              | Room 801               |
| 1:30- 5:30 p.m.  | Chevrolet Men's Bridge League                | Room 1203              |
| 7:00- 7:45 p.m.  | Adult Advanced Modern<br>Dancing Class       | 11th floor Gym         |
| 7:45- 8:30 p.m.  | Adult Beginning Modern<br>Dancing Class      | 11th floor Gym         |
| 7:30- 9:00 p.m.  | Camera Club (Adults)                         | Dobbs-McKinney Studio  |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Coin & Stamp Club (Adults)                   | Room 1201 & 1202       |
| 8:00-10:00 p.m.  | Men's Glee Club                              | Room 801               |
| 8:00-10:30 p.m.  | Shower Room--28 Showers                      | 11th floor Locker Room |
| 8:00-Midnite     | Checker & Chess Room Open<br>adjoining       | 11th floor Lounge      |

Typical Enrollment Figures

| CHILDREN                  |      | MEN                            |      |
|---------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
| Tap dancing .....         | 1663 | Men's Glee Club .....          | 48   |
| Ballet dancing .....      | 794  | F.E.R.A. shop arithmetic ..... | 28   |
| Tumbling classes .....    | 558  | F.E.R.A. mechanical drawing .. | 14   |
| Social dancing .....      | 416  | Tennis .....                   | 250  |
| Acrobatic dancing .....   | 229  | Triple "A" basketball .....    | 40   |
| Harmonica band .....      | 258  | Class "A" basketball .....     | 100  |
| Dramatics .....           | 148  | Chevrolet Nite Hawks           |      |
| Toe dancing .....         | 89   | basketball .....               | 40   |
| Boxing .....              | 108  | Indoor baseball .....          | 810  |
| Rhythm band .....         | 32   | Hard ball (Fisher No. 2) ..... | 60   |
| Model Airplane Club ....  | 55   | Playground baseball .....      | 650  |
|                           |      | Bowling .....                  | 1326 |
| TOTAL .....               | 4350 | Rifle & Gun Club .....         | 60   |
|                           |      | Volleyball .....               | 264  |
|                           |      | Gym Class .....                | 225  |
|                           |      | Golf .....                     | 200  |
|                           |      | Burns Club .....               | 29   |
|                           |      | AC Designers Club .....        | 50   |
|                           |      | Chevrolet Men's Bridge Club .. | 80   |
|                           |      | Checker Club (advanced) .....  | 40   |
|                           |      | Checker Club (novice) .....    | 164  |
|                           |      | Coin & Stamp Club .....        | 50   |
|                           |      | Dairying Club .....            | 12   |
|                           |      | Dupont Engineers .....         | 35   |
|                           |      | German Glee Club .....         | 50   |
|                           |      | Literary Club .....            | 35   |
|                           |      | Literary Club                  |      |
|                           |      | (research group) .....         | 18   |
|                           |      | TOTAL .....                    | 4678 |
| WOMEN                     |      | SUMMARY                        |      |
| Artcraft Class .....      | 80   | Men .....                      | 4678 |
| Girls' basketball .....   | 101  | Children .....                 | 4350 |
| Girls' Bowling League ... | 48   | Women .....                    | 806  |
| Girls' Gym Class .....    | 288  | Men and women .....            | 458  |
| Girls' Glee Club .....    | 40   |                                |      |
| Home Decorating Class .   | 57   |                                |      |
| Musical comedy dancing.   | 59   |                                |      |
| Women's literary club ... | 13   |                                |      |
| Sewing .....              | 96   |                                |      |
| Tennis .....              | 24   |                                |      |
| TOTAL .....               | 806  |                                |      |
| MEN AND WOMEN             |      | GRAND TOTAL .....              |      |
| Art institute .....       | 12   | 10,292                         |      |
| Contract bridge .....     | 161  |                                |      |
| Camera Club .....         | 23   |                                |      |
| Fencing .....             | 24   |                                |      |
| Modern dancing .....      | 120  |                                |      |
| Old-time dancing .....    | 16   |                                |      |
| Tap dancing .....         | 102  |                                |      |
| TOTAL .....               | 458  |                                |      |

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