# A Legacy of Vigilance, Bravery, and Pride

## The Green Bay Fire Department

IAFF LOCAL 141

# A Legacy Of
# Vigilance, Bravery, And Pride
# The Green Bay Fire Department

# GBFD Book Committee

This book is made possible by the exhaustive efforts of the Green Bay Fire Department Book Committee. The committee consists of (RIGHT) Writers Karl Hinrichs and Leonard Orlando; (BELOW) Chairman Mike Lison, Writer Tony Lison, Editor Jeff Stauber, and Co-Chairman Randy Rybicki.

Special thanks to Harmann Studios, The Brown County Library, John Roemer, and The Neville Public Museum.

Copyright 1991 by The Green Bay Fire Department Book Committee; Green Bay, Wisconsin. All Rights Reserved

Printed in the U.S.A. by Taylor Publishing Company; Dallas, Texas.
Publishing Consultant, Ed Wanless.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 91-71945

# Table Of Contents


Introduction, The Early Years . . . . . 5

Mechanization and Modernization . . . . . 15

Post War . . . . . 21

The Super 70's . . . . . 25

1980 to Present . . . . . 31

Emergency Medical Services . . . . . 43

Local 141: A Brief History . . . . . 45

Green Bay Fire Stations . . . . . 50

Personnel . . . . . 64

Major Fires . . . . . 98

Apparatus . . . . . 118

# Preface

Let us, the Firefighters of Local 141 of the Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin and the International Association of Firefighters, welcome you to visit our lives, our world and our history. We hope this book can help illustrate to you, the reader, who we are, what we do and what makes us aspire to lives of firefighting and the rescue service.

This book commemorates our 100th year of service as a paid full-time department, but to understand us better, we must go back many years past to give you a picture of our evolution. We have gone to great pains to research our formative years as accurately as possible. What you will read is to the best of our knowledge correct. We faced some real obstacles in the formation of our proud past. Many early records are missing, conflicting in viewpoint, and the earliest references we had to draw from have been distilled from hand written, cursive journals sometimes recorded in the German language.

The embryo of today's Green Bay Fire Department was known as the Germania Fire Company and was little more than a handful of citizens given a belt and a helmet, with a single piece of apparatus. They began firefighting as much for a pastime as for a vocation to fill a very real need to protect the community from immolation. Records of the Germania Company are scant and not entirely enlightening, but they do illustrate the initial seed of what was to become the Green Bay Fire Department.

To say that by reading this book you will then completely know the minds and the driving forces behind a firefighter would be inaccurate and grandiose on our part. Our goal is to give the outsider an understanding in part, a brief look at what our unique profession is about, what addicts us to it, and what instinctively drives us to return to the gates of Hell that fire, disaster and injury visit upon those who serve so proudly. To totally know this would be to be one of us. We are not a closed career by desire as much as we are by necessity. We come from all walks of life, are of many nationalities, religions, political persuasions and of both genders. By personality, recreational preference and personal opinion, we are as varied as our number. But once any two or more of us face the melding forces of flame and disaster together, we become one in a very special and unexplainable manner. This bath of fire brands us indelibly. In our next lives, we'll be back as firefighters.

Our job does not stop or end at the doorway of the firehouse. It only accommodates our outside lifestyles. In some respects, we know each other better than we know our families or ourselves. We share each other's joys, aspirations, and hardships. We treasure competition, integrity, excellence, independence, and tradition. We are caring and dedicated to the unified cause. We are proud, stubborn, and solitary. We strive to save our citizenry from the pain of flames and destruction, both material and personal, but should we not be present to challenge the problem, we envy those who were. We offer you our bodies as a shield against all the insults a cruel and unpredictable world might hurl at you, but you cannot touch our souls.

Please travel with us from our birth as the Germania Company, through our growth, mechanization, and modernization. Witness our unification as we become the Green Bay Fire Department. Feel our pride of becoming a charter member of the International Association of Firefighters (I.A.F.F.) and in forming Local 141 of the Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin (P.F.F.W.). Don some gear, jump on the rig and ride with us as we lead you through our lives as firefighters and professional rescue personnel. And mostly, let us thank you for supporting us and having an interest in what we do and why we do it. We are on the job 24 hours a day, every day of the year, but if it weren't for you, the citizens we serve, we would be devoid of our purpose. We hope that 100 years from now, our descendants will be publishing another piece of history, and we will look down upon them from that firehouse above and know that all is well.

# Introduction

The purpose of this book is primarily to commemorate the Centennial of the Green Bay Fire Department as a full-time paid service. As is true with the birth of anyone or anything, the history is enhanced if one can look to the events preceding and leading to that time. This is no less true with the Green Bay Fire Department as it has come to be today.

To do this, let's time travel as best we can to the year 1854. As your author and therefore your driver, if you will, for this initial stretch of our journey back to today, I must apologize for the fact that I can only offer you a few choice bones in the skeletal make-up of our formative history. First and foremost, I give most of the credit for all information in this chapter to the efforts and foresight of the late Mr. Jack Rudolph of the Green Bay Press-Gazette staff. In 1960, he had the insight and interest into our department to research and report a series of articles crucial to this chapter. All information in this chapter is available only because of his interest, and I am honored to be able to offer it to you. He is the navigator, and without his guidance, we would be lost from the start. I thank him for our entire membership.

Firefighters and horses, stand ready at Station 3 at 120 South Pearl Street.

# Early Years

## 1854 – The Seed Is Planted

The Green Bay Fire Department is as old as the city itself and is the oldest public facility in Green Bay. It began in 1854 when a handful of German immigrants, who recognized the result of being inadequately protected against the ravages of fire in a small and flimsily built community, organized it's first voluntary fire company, on the west side of the Fox River. They called themselves the Germania "Rough and Ready" Fire Company. Initially it was formed as a drilled bucket brigade, and as such, it was as much a social organization as it was a serious service to the community.

Members were hand picked. The company elected it's officers, and while they attacked their duties conscientiously, they did not neglect the fun that went with them. From early on, "Firemen's Balls," were frequent and leading social events.

Many of Germania's charter members were or became prominent social leaders. Some of them were Charles Berner, Albert Weise, F.A.Lathrop, C. Hoffman and Anton Burkhard. Since the members were primarily German, records were kept in that language, a practice that was followed until the company went out of existence nearly forty years later. The books still exist in beautifully written cursive German, and were meticulous in their detail to any recorded incident relative to the company.

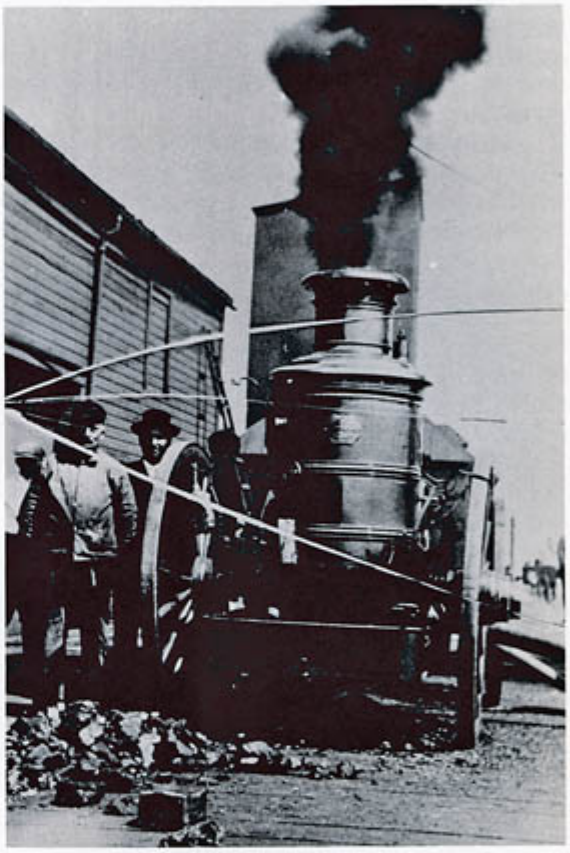
## 1856 - The Seed Has Sprouted

Two years later, in 1856, a second company was formed, this time on the east side of the Fox River. It was called the Guardian "Wide Awake" Company. The company had thirty eight charter members, with Louis J. Day as foreman, B.C. Garner and P. Dakin as assistant foreman, C.E. Case as secretary and Charles L. Wheelock as treasurer. Initial charter members included A.G.E. Holmes, William E. Peak, C.H. White, Phillip I. Earle, Linus M. Marshall, Dr. C.E. Crane, Fred S. Ellis, and J.J. St. Louis. Both Dr. Crane and Fred Ellis later served as mayors of the Community.

## 1858-1875 – The Growth Continues

In 1858 the city paid $250.00 for a surplus hand pump engine that had been in mothballs in the closed Fort Howard army post and issued it to the Germania Company. Soon after, another hand engine was acquired for the Guardian Company. At the time of Mr. Rudolph's research in 1960, one of these machines was still on display at the Neville Public Museum. There is to this day a lot of controversy as to whether this apparatus is Green Bay's original engine, "Old Crocodile", or the second pumper purchased.

The two hand pumpers were the basic equipment of the community until 1868 when the city council bought it's first horse drawn steam pumper, a "second class" Amoskeag engine, manufactured in Manchester, New Hampshire. It was assigned to the Germania Company, their's being the senior company. The original hand engine was given to the newly formed Astor Company, also on the east side of the river.



The Amoskeag steamer was used in Green Bay from 1885 to 1920. *(Neville Public Museum)*

The Amoskeag further clouded the problems of nomenclature for future researchers. In those days, fire engines, not unlike railroad locomotives, had distinctive names. Germania's machine was called 'Enterprise', and so sometimes this company was sometimes referred to as the "Enterprise Engine Company". Officially, however, it was always the Germania Company.

Five years later, in 1873, a second steamer, this one a "third class" Clapp and Jones model, was purchased for the Guardian Company. At the same time, a fourth unit, the "Franklin Company", was formed and was given the

Two volunteer companies ready for a parade. One with a horse-drawn hand pumper, the other with a hand-drawn hose cart. *(Neville Public Museum)*

Guardian hand pumper. This company was on the corner of 12th and Main streets, 12th is now being called Irwin Avenue.

Meanwhile, over in Fort Howard, on the west side of the Fox River, a volunteer company had been organized in 1858. Nobody seems to know exactly what it's equipment was, but in 1873 they acquired a Burton & Son steam pumper. The original officers of this unit were H.H. Hubbard, Chief Engineer (and therefore town Fire Chief for Fort Howard Settlement), William Repette as assistant engineer, James Beattie as foreman and assistant F. Jewell. This company was strictly a Fort Howard unit. It had no official connection with the Green Bay companies or department, although they all worked together when the need arose, as it all too often did.

In 1875, the Green Bay "Independent Fire Department" consisted of four companies. Two were equipped with horse drawn steamers, and two had hand engines. Fort Howard was a single steamer company. Germania had 25 volunteer members, Guardian 30, and Astor and Franklin each had 35. M.A. Hoffman was the foreman of Germania Company, C.W. Tracy was foreman of Guardian, J. Kelleher headed Astor, and John Nick led the Franklin Company. The town Fire Chief, or Chief Engineer as he was then called, was Louis Scheller, Charles D. Suydam was his assistant. The steam pumpers were kept gleaming and operative by the engineers, J.F. Bertles for Germania and Louis Denis for Guardian.

Fort Howard had been a single Fire Company, but it had a full sixty men. It was headed by James Beattie, head engineer, and his assistant, Neil Kelly. Al Gray was company foreman, assisted by William Marshall. Fred Peak was hose captain, A. Anderson served as assistant to him. D.C. Clinton was secretary, and James Tiernan served as treasurer.

Although the three steamer companies used different models of machines, they were otherwise similarly equipped. Each had two high wheeled hose carts, one being horse drawn and the other pulled by hand. The Green Bay units had one thousand three hundred and fifty feet of hose initially, and later in the year received another one thousand feet. The equipment was kept at the individual fire houses which were elaborately fitted with club rooms, a source of pride and competition among each other.

The city bought and owned the equipment which gave it some control over the department, but it really had little say of in it's operation. The companies were extremely jealous of their independence, and proud of their meticulously kept records. Every effort to alter the system was promptly shouted down by the men.

The Fire Chief was elected annually by the membership of the four companies and his nomination was subject to approval by the city council. This was nearly always automatic, as the aldermen, most of whom were volunteers themselves, went with the ratification.

In theory, anybody could be elected as Fire Chief, but the standard practice was to work up to it. Nominees always started as company foreman, then took a turn as an Assistant Chief before stepping into the top post. Suydam

One of the small hand pumpers used by Green Bay back in the early days. *(Neville Public Museum)*

replaced Scheller as Chief at the regular election in the fall of 1875, with Charlie Berner was his assistant. Berner took over when Suydam resigned partially through his term.

For all the loose control, the system actually worked pretty well, and everybody seemed satisfied with it. The companies were very choosy about who gained membership. The volunteers were well aware of the very real dangers a serious conflagration could present, and they took both their training and their duties very seriously.

Keen rivalry existed between the units, but since it rarely got out of hand, this was considered a healthy situation. Annual inspections and competitive drills kept the men on their toes, and there were enough real fires to help them avoid getting rusty.[1]

## 1875 - The Hand Engines Become History

The era of firefighting with steam pumpers was here. Although it might seem that the hand engine companies labored under overwhelming disadvantages in comparison to the newer steam engines, this was not actually the case. The steamer put on a spectacular show as they raced to the fires, smoke and sparks belching from their shiny chimneys atop the big black boilers. Brass work gleaming and bells clanging, the horsed teams thundered down the street. But the show was usually more colorful than useful. The steamers generated a lot more pressure than the hand pumpers and in theory should have thrown a stream of water much further. Unfortunately, this was not the reality. The additional power was seldom of any help because the linen hoses weren't strong enough, and had an annoying habit of bursting in the heat of battle. This was to the glee of the men working the older apparatus. Driven by pride and a good supply of men to spell each other, they could deliver steady water streams to the fire for long periods of time. The pride of image, and stubbornness of the men of the hand rigs, was something that could not be built into the 'newfangled tea kettles'.

Germania and Guardian might win the race to the fires, arriving ahead of Astor and Franklin, but as often as not, they'd be replacing burst hose lines while the other men pumped merrily away. During annual inspection competitions, the hand outfits regularly showed their ability to throw a stream just as far as their more spectacular rivals. Another advantage of the hand pumpers was their size and maneuverability. They could often squeeze into tighter spots, so they might gain the better angle for the 'save'.

The fact that the steamers were horse drawn didn't insure that they would always be the first to arrive either. The companies didn't own their own team of horses and the city did not provide them. The department ran an independent system, paying a bounty to the first citizen arriving at the fire house with a team after the alarm sounded.

In 1875, the boys of Guardian Company dug deep into

their own pockets and bought a team for themselves. But the horses were only at the fire house at night, however and weren't available during the daytime. What they did during the day is not recorded, but it is thought they may have been rented out for other work during daylight hours.

"Enterprise" engine had another serious defect. Since the city had no water mains, the usual source of water was the river or nearby cisterns. Thus, the water level was always an important consideration. But Enterprise's suction pipe was several feet too short and could barely reach the water from the river bridges. In low water periods, it was practically useless.

Guardian Company was also the proud owner of a fifty-two foot water tower, and with it, the boys could reach the rooftop of any building in town.

A difficulty facing all the units was assembling. As volunteers, they maintained no on-duty shifts, and when the alarm was sounded, everybody had to come from their homes or business. There were often serious delays until enough men turned out to get going. This was particularly true on holidays and weekends.

One of the fastest turnouts in the history of the department occurred in the 1860's during one of the frequent firemen's balls. The boys had thoughtfully brought their apparatus along and parked it outside the hall. When the fire, which was not very serious, had been quenched, the whole gang trooped back to Klaus Hall, rejoined their waiting ladies, and finished their party.

The city was not divided into anything resembling today's fire districts. Consequently, everybody available turned out for each alarm. The Chief was responsible for coordinating the work of the company, but since there were no phones, he couldn't do much until everyone was at the scene. Then, if he desired, he could send certain units back to their stations to stand by for any additional services, which were all too often required. It was generally conceded that thieves set fires deliberately to distract police and firefighters while they conducted robberies elsewhere.

There was always intense rivalry to be the first to the scene and into action, possibly due to the ten dollar fee for the first to arrive. In Green Bay however, the rivalry did not get out of hand as often as it did in larger cities, where larger companies deliberately interfered with each other, and sometimes showed more enthusiasm with battling each other than in fighting the fires.

Tempers sometimes flared during the periodic competitive drills but the boys forgot most of their differences when the sparks of a real fire started flying. Fire was too much of an ever present menace to life and limb to tolerate any funny business at the scene.

Membership in a volunteer company was eagerly sought, with many members holding their positions for years, and only then stepping aside to allow their own sons to carry on the tradition. This accounts for the nepotism often seen in fire companies then, and for that matter, later on in police forces. There were traditional fire fightin' families, and their continuity was believed to make them the best.

Also a great source of pride for the fire fighters as well as hubs of social activity, were the very fancy club rooms of the companies, which were contained right in the fire houses. They were fiercely proud of their appearances on parade and during drills as they were of the history of their units.

The Franklin Hose Company in full uniform.
*(Neville Public Museum)*

By and large, the volunteers tried hard to be as efficient as the system allowed. In fact, in 1875 the department ranked high in the State for efficiency, drill, and in the condition of their equipment. The steamer companies took meticulous care of their engines and had them sparkling and ready to roll at all times.

Louis Denis, engineer of the Guardian Company, was particularly proud of a tricky hand brake he had devised for his Clapp & Jones. And although J.M. Bertles was unhappy about "Enterprises" shortcomings, he conceded nothing when it came down to 'eye-wash'.

Despite the general efficiency and morale of the department, there was feeling in the city council that maintaining four companies was too expensive. The volunteers received no pay, but the expense of buying equipment, especially hose, was considerable.

When the city purchased new and stronger hose for the steamer companies in 1875, it was decided that the increased efficiency of those units made the hand companies unnecessary. Late in the fall, the council ordered Astor and Franklin to disband and they sold their equipment. A Hook and Ladder company called Washington was formed to replace them. Astor and Franklin were loudly unhappy. Astor especially, when it was learned that it's fire station and club house were to be converted into a city pest house. Members wrote indignant letters to the papers, but there was nothing they could do about it. The 'reorganization' went through.

When a Gazette reporter made a survey of the department shortly after the realignment, he found the new hook and ladder company short of equipment, and it's club rooms not as elaborate as those of the older units. It had only eighteen members, with T.P. Hill as foreman, Chris Meister as assistant, A. Michael as secretary, and H. Danz was the treasurer.

There were no further major reorganizations until 1891. The department continued on a voluntary basis through the 1880's, but they were facing the popular conviction that the system had outlived it's day. Still, the volunteers had enough influence to stall any more revolutionary moves for more than a decade until 1891, when the first paid, full time Green Bay Fire Department was founded.[2]

## Volunteers Fade Into History – 1880-1891

Pride and tradition, backed by enthusiasm are tough to kill. Green Bay found that out between 1880 and 1891 when it tried to replace it's volunteer fire department with a full time, professional system. Far from making headway, the trend actually suffered a setback when both the Green Bay and the Fort Howard volunteer departments increased in size. Sometime after 1875, (the exact date is not known), a third hose company was reconstituted in Green Bay, although nothing is remembered about it's equipment or membership. In 1891 the city finally adopted a paid system. Fort Howard added a second volunteer unit called Resolute Company. In Green Bay, incidentally, the habit of naming fire companies had gone out of fashion. Now they were simply known as Hose Company 1,2,3..., or Hook and Ladder Company 1,2...etc.

The decisive step toward the abolition of the volunteers was taken by Mayor James H. Elmore in his re-election inaugural speech in the spring of 1891, when he flatly recommended the 'scrappin' of the old system'. The mayor also indicated that Historic Germania Company had officially disbanded. But a group of volunteers was keeping it alive.

A few months later, the City Council approved the plan, and Carl Herrmann, last volunteer Chief, was instructed to make the changeover. He designated September 17th, 1891 as the date of the last formal inspection of the volunteer department. Plans were made to bring nearly forty years of service to a close with appropriate ceremonies.

The day opened with the traditional competition, followed by a huge parade. "Old Crocodile", the city's first little hand engine, was hauled from the bone yard behind one of the fire houses and dressed up for it's farewell appearance. Many old volunteers, some of them dating back to 1854, turned out to drag "Ol Croc" through the streets of Green Bay for the last time. The Fort Howard Department took part in the festivities, displaying a certain insensitivity and a certain lack of chivalry, by winning the competitive drill.

That night a big banquet and ball were held at Turner Hall. The place echoed with nostalgic speeches and reminiscences. Al Gray, the long time Chief of the Fort Howard Department, and the most consummate politician in the town's history, was principle speaker.

Mayor Elmore thanked the retiring volunteers on behalf of the city for long and conscientious service. There were many expressions of regret at the passing of an era, but if any real opposition to the movement existed, it stayed quiet.

Contemporary newspaper reports do not tell exactly when the reorganization was effected. Herrmann remained as Acting Chief and the department was cut to two companies, each consisting of from four to six men.

The new setup appears to have been in effect by November, although there is no definite information to the point. Sometime thereafter, before 1895, Fort Howard also took the big step and formed a professional department. When the cities consolidated in 1895 as a provision of the new charter, it was specified that a fire company would be maintained on the west side of the river. This was accomplished by incorporating the Fort Howard department into the existing system, increasing it by one unit.

William Kennedy was given the task of selecting the men to be retained, and became the first chief of the new department. Supervising the ticklish reorganization was a threesome of Franks from the city council, Frank E. Murphy, Frank J.B. DuChateau, and Frank Desnoyers.

As reorganized, the department had a complement of a chief and twelve firemen, divided into two hose companies and one hook and ladder company. Company One was made up of James Church, Captain, William Johnson and Tod Fleming, pipemen, and Bart Lyman as the driver. Frank Bodart was captain of #2 Company, A.H. Brice and James Simon as pipemen, and Peter Olson as driver. The Hook & Ladder unit was headed by James Bardouche, with A.S. Church as driver. Other members were Gus Delwiche and John Sweeney.

Equipment then in use included two steam pumpers, one of them being Germania's old Amoskeag, a horse drawn hook and ladder truck, two sleighs for winter use, two hand, and three horse drawn hose carts, four extinguishers, and seven horses. The horses, beautifully trained and powerful animals, were town characters in their own right. The horses were remarkably well trained. When the fire bell sounded it's test call everyday at Noon, these horses would gallop from their stalls to a position at the head of the ladder wagon or other equipment. The special type harness was used and would then drop on them. The men would latch the harness buckles in a jiffy and in a matter of seconds their firefighting equipment was ready to roll.[3]

The equipment was generally not run out of the building on these tests but the quick hitchup was repeated each day and the horses maintained an uncanny speed and expertness in this operation.

Notice how the harnesses, suspended from the ceiling, drop onto the horses once they've backed into position.

Something of a living interest represented by these fine animals went out of the picture when motors took their place. Although as a firefighting medium, horse drawn equipment would probably be as inadequate as the hand pumper in it's day.

## A Paid Fire Department

"At the meeting of the Common Council Friday night, the Special Committee of Ald. H.E. Straubel, Frank E. Murphy, and Ben Gotfredson were appointed to make necessary suggestions for the reorganization of the Fire Department made a report recommending the adoption of a paid Fire Department.

The substance of the report is as follows: To adopt a fire alarm system, discontinue #3 Hose Company, that the property now known as #2 house, be sold and another be purchased near Main St. in the vicinity of Webster Ave. and place #2 hose cart in the new house. The hose carriage now known as #3, also the hand pumpers and #2 steamer would be sold. The men would be paid the following salaries: Hose Co. No. 1; One driver, $40.00 per month: one pipeman, also have charge of the electrical apparatus, $45.00 per month. One pipeman, who shall be Chief of the entire department, $50.00 per month, and four pipemen (call men) at $50.00 per year.

Hose Co. #2: One driver, $40.00 per month, one pipeman, who shall be assistant chief, $40.00 per month, one pipeman, $35.00 , and four call men, at $50.00 per year. Hook & Ladder Company; One driver, $40.00, one steersman, $35.00 , one ladderman, $35.00 per month, and four call men, at $50.00 per year.

The committee recommended to purchase a fire alarm system at a cost of $2,600; three teams of horses at $1,200; and three sets of swinging harness at $150, nine bedsteads, bedding, etc., &150, together with work on buildings, amounting in all to $4,300."[4]

The following news article describes the wisdom and specifics of the construction of what is referred to as the "Old #2 Fire Station" on Main Street: the aspect of wisdom for this expenditure, is presented analogous to that of two men building their homes. One builds quickly and cheaply on a bed of sand, while the other makes a greater investment for a strong foundation and then purchases insurance against the unknown perils of the future.

The description of the actual physical make-up of the fire house is roughly as follows. "The main plan of the building, designed by D.M. Harbean, is clear and plain. The main floor is occupied by the apparatus room for the hose cart with quickly adjustable harness suspended in front; the stable is back of the engine room. The front part of the upper floor is devoted to a large sleeping room whence the firemen, when the alarm is given, slide down onto the floor below on two 3 inch diameter polished brass poles, 26 feet long, through three foot diameter circular openings in the floor of the second story. The rear portion of the latter is set aside for bay rooms, lavatory, bathing and reading rooms."

The article goes on at length to describe a large, 23 1/2 foot by 51 foot apparatus room with automatic opening double doors, spacious horse stalls, good ventilation system, 11 to 14 inch thick walls, and on and on. The point of the article is plain. The author was apparently in the camp of those wanting to squelch the complaints of the die-hard all volunteer proponents. As the next few years passed, and the wisdom of the paid force became more evident, the volunteer camp suffered more and more deserters. Pride was becoming the victim of fact and circumstance.[5]

The wisdom of forming a paid department was slowly conceded by almost everybody, as time healed the wounds of pride and the realities of what fire could wreak upon a haphazard system could no longer be ignored. A small loss of economy was overshadowed by the gains in strength and efficiency.

A news article from 1892 attests to the swing in attitudes. Citing an early morning fire on Pine Street, it says, "the alarm was given and almost in an instant, the department, made up of trained firemen, under the command of Chief Kennedy, a man who thoroughly understands his business, was on the spot, and by hard, vigorous work, succeeded in subduing a blaze which might have spread to a disastrous extent had it not been so well handled. Another instance was noted only last Saturday in the fire in the warehouses in back of Cook's Hotel. Here again, everything was favorable for the development of a great fire. The burning buildings were surrounded on all sides by others that would have burned like tinder had the fire once gained a foothold. But the Department was at hand, and as in the Pine Street fire, worked so efficiently and well that it was soon extinguished with no great damage done. At this fire, there were many who were opposed to the establishment of a paid fire department, but as they saw the cool, methodical manner in which the work was done.... they were convinced then and there that they had been wrong, and a paid department was by far the best in every particular."[6]

Fire Chief William Kennedy's career came to an embarrassing end on June 13, 1906 when he was relieved of duties by the City Council. Kennedy and Alderman George Schwartz were found guilty of accepting bribes toward the purchase of two hosecarts from the Seagrave Corporation.

The plot was discovered when the Seagrave salesman, Charles Johnston, was chased down Washington street by the two city officials after he failed to deliver the agreed upon amount.

Taking over the position was John Sweeney. Chief Sweeney had been employed since the department was formed in 1891. He would continue in this capacity until his retirement on November 1, 1922.

Another interesting historical note from 1896, refers to the Fire Call Box System, and is taken from a miscellaneous directory of that time period. The 42 alarm boxes about town are all listed by location, followed by these directions for activating the alarm.

"How to Sound Alarm of Fire"... Notice: Keys of boxes can be found at the four houses nearest the box and are carried by all policemen. In case of fire, go to your nearest box, get key, unlock box, pull hook inside "Once" only, and let go. Stand by the box until the department arrives and direct them to the fire. To send alarm by telephone, call up Central Telephone Exchange, who will repeat to headquarters."

## "The Old Croc"

There is a lot of controversy over Green Bay's actual first piece of firefighting equipment. It is thought to be a little hand pumper that may have sat in the Neville Public Museum for many years. As a boy, I can remember the piece of equipment sitting there. The initial pumper owned by Green Bay was called 'Old Crocodile', but there is no record to say if in truth the one I saw was truly the original, or the second apparatus to serve. There will always be more than one side to the argument. One thought was that the '01' Croc'' was used to fight fires at the Fort Howard Army post when Zachary Taylor, then an Army General, ran the fort. The Neville Museum's account as of 1960, which says it could have been built by Harry Ludlum of New York City in the 1820's, and purchased by the Army and shipped to Fort Howard. Others say the original piece of equipment was bought from a sawmill operator named Robinson, who initially used it to wet down wood chips at night. The Fort Howard version has the Croc' being built in Detroit.

Unless you care to believe the folks at Algoma, Wisconsin who have a different idea, which they hold onto to the point of belligerency. They say that they have 'Old Crocodile', and the one at Neville was not the original. Algoma's story is that it's pumper was sent by John Jacob Astor to his Green Bay trading post and he later either sold or gave it to the city. Unfortunately, that theory holds less water than 01 Croc' did in it's prime. Astor had no trading post in Green Bay, but instead he had a warehouse which he sold to Ramsey Crooks in 1836. That fur company terminated all operations a full decade prior to the formation of a Green Bay Fire Department.

It is of record that the city council, in 1858, paid an Ephraim Shaler, the caretaker of Fort Howard, $250 for a surplus hand engine stored in the stockade. This would indicate the Ludlum Army version is correct, but who will ever know? As only too often happens, facts may fade with time and poor documentation, and become shaded by emotion, romanticism, and just plain bull stubbornness of those relating the story. We'll leave it to each of you to decide where 'Old Croc' lives or rests today.

Regardless of who had which rig when, the little hand pumpers did more than enough to earn a spot in our history. Many a frustrated steamer man hurled obscenities at the small rigs, after the steamers had burst a line in their fervor to outshine their 'lesser' counterparts at the fire scene, only

to realize the hand pumpers were still throwing steady 175-200 foot streams of water to save the day. If additional manpower was deemed necessary to man the hand pumps, the fire scene commanders had legal authority to draft any over-curious bystander to join the fray for as long as needed. This rarely did happen however, as the inbred pride of the men battling the blaze would only allow them to concede through sheer exhaustion.

Arriving at a fire, an intake hose was attached to the underside of the pump, housed in the box on top, and the other end was dropped into the nearest water source; a cistern or a river. Water was drawn into the box by the pump, which was handlebar operated, and forced out through another hose attached to the top.[7]

The little hand pumpers were a strange apparatus, looking something like an old railroad handcar, with a domed coffee grinder perched on one end. It resembled no animal ever seen to roam the face of the earth, but why was she called the 'Old Crocodile'? No one really knows any longer. But if you can't get the question out of mind, feel free to stop by one of our fire stations some balmy summer evening. Sit alongside the men on their bench and chances are, before you leave, someone will make something up.

Thank you for traveling with me through the formation and to the birth of the Green Bay Fire Department as a full—time paid department. I turn you over now, to fellow firefighters who can lead you through to our modern history, to our proud centennial. We are only here today only for the unpaid efforts of some brave and truly unique characters. Those who envisioned a need vital to the survival of our area from a struggling outpost, to the modern city we live in today. Without them, who knows what any of us would be doing today? Many areas still rely partly or strictly on volunteers for their fire protection, and this country would not exist as it is today, without them. Let us thank them all. *Tony Lison*

1923 Horse drawn ladder truck - Fire Station No. 1 - 100 Block S. Washington St.

Hose Company No. 3 - Outfitted for Winter Running.

Pierce-Arrow Chief's Car - It also doubled as a rescue squad, with the rumble seat serving as the patient's seat.

**Footnotes**

1. Jack Rudolph, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 15 February 1964
2. Jack Rudolph, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 29 February 1964
3. Jack Rudolph, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 26 March 1960
4. State Gazette, 27 May 1891
5. State Gazette, 9 March 1892
6. State Gazette, 9 November 1892
7. Jack Rudolph, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 27 January 1962

# Mechanization and Modernization

## The Big Push

Although the first vehicle bought for the Green Bay Fire Department was bought back in 1914, a White from the now defunct Oneida Company of Green Bay, the push for this period actually began back in 1916. This was a year after the Cargill Grain elevator burned, lighting up the sky as far away as Casco, 25 miles away. It was said to be the most spectacular fire in Green Bay history.

Mayor Elmer S. Hall started a long period of upgrading with a speech to the City Council of Green Bay. This was the first important step, one that is carried on later by the Fire Chief, Ralph Drum, during his long reign of twenty-two years, 1927 to 1949. The 'White' marked the last time the Fire Chief would arrive at a fire on horseback or in a two-wheeled buggy.

Mayor Hall began his speech with an evaluation of the fire department: "When we stop to realize the large number of hotels, hospitals, and other buildings, and then consider the fact that our fire department equipment is fast becoming inefficient and obsolete when compared with present day methods of fighting fire, and the further fact that this equipment has received no material additions in nearly twenty years, we can readily understand it is important that we should take the necessary measures to give this city up-to-date equipment for fire protection."

A similar plea was made by the National Board of Fire Underwriters, back in December 1915. The National Board of Fire Underwriters is basically an insurance rating company that determines the risk of fire to a city or other area based on what kind of fire protection is given by the Fire Department and it's related services, such as the hydrants maintained by the Water Department. It also includes hazards such as the age of buildings, the risks due to the kinds of materials and industries, and many other considerations. Then they determine insurance costs for the particular city.

Their findings were also given to the council by Mayor Hall: "Financial support inadequate, companies insufficient, undermanned and lack equipment, chemical and ladder service weak, engine of too small capacity, facility for handling heavy streams insufficient, hose supply inadequate, 40 percent in doubtful condition. Fire methods good with equipment provided."

"The Board of Underwriters recommends the installation at Station No. 1 of an automobile combined pump, chemical, and hose wagon, capable of delivering 700 gallons per minute, and an automobile quick raising 75 foot aerial ladder truck." With these recommendations, Mayor Hall passed along his own, more specific recommendation to the committee.

"The immediate purchase of an automobile combined pump, chemical and hose wagon and an automobile aerial ladder for Station Number 1. Taking the chemical and hose wagon now in Station No. 1, placing it on an automobile chassis and installing it at Station No. 3, and placing an automobile chassis under the hose wagon now in service at Station No. 2. The hose wagon now at Station No. 3 to be held in reserve and motorized later. The ladders on the ladder truck now at No. 1 to be divided between Station No. 2 and No. 3 and mounted on hose wagons."

He then recommended moving Station No. 1 from it's present location, next to where the Bay Theater now stands, to somewhere on Adams or Jefferson streets. He also called for an additional station on the west side of the river, but it would be many years before this was accomplished. This was to be Station No. 4.

The mayor continued with an estimation of what this was all going to cost to the city, "The cost of securing the new equipment as recommended will be about $20,000. The motorized equipment would cost about $60.00 per month for the four machines, less than the wages of one extra fireman. But they would 'practically gain four extra firemen' as drivers would be at liberty to do firemen's work while at fires, there being no horses to care for."

He must have found agreement within the Council, because the equipment would be soon to follow.

In 1919, an Oneida two-ton truck was bought, and the box from a truck at Number 3's was placed over it. When this was finished it replaced three horses, the oldest of the two were sold. Total cost of this project was $3375.

In 1920, they purchased an American LaFrance fire engine. It was a 750 gallon, combination pump and hose wagon, fully equipped with chemical tank and hose. All for $11,500. It was considered "... probably the most powerful engine and is the lightest, setting well above the road. Therefore making it safe over rough roads." The old steamer it replaced was tucked away for emergencies, and was eventually sold to Kewaunee. So that an aerial truck could be bought later, bids for a new hose cart were turned down by the council.

The next year bids were accepted to buy the aerial, another American LaFrance, for a cost of $15,640. It was a six-cylinder, 75 foot aerial hook and ladder truck, and curiously, with front wheel drive.

In a couple of years the Chief was granted a new car. His choices ranged between the usual Fords, Chevrolets, Dodges, and Lincolns, as well as Chalmers, White, Willis Sainte Claire, Velie, Hupmobile, and Paige, Nash, Studebakers, and many other now extinct car companies. The final cost of the Buick he chose was $1092,75, bought from Geehan Buick Co. Next year it was yet another American LaFrance, a 1000 Gallon-per-minute pumper.

Understandingly, getting the stations moved and built were another thing. Cost factors with this involved bonding and other financial arrangements.

Bidding on new Station Number 1 wasn't even started until November 5, 1929, about ten years later. Also in 1929, the Fire Department was authorized to buy the Pierce-Arrow touring car of John Hoberg for $800. Bidding for the new station recommended for the west side wouldn't begin until 1948.

## Working Conditions

Fire Department annual salaries in 1921 were as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chief | $2,217.60 |
| Assistant Chief | $1,740.00 |
| Captain | $1,620.00 |
| Engineer | $1,620.00 |
| Lieutenant | $1,560.00 |
| Firefighters | $1,500.00 (After 1st year) |
| Firefighters | $1,380.00 (1st year) |

Personnel were given a reduction in the number of hours they worked per week in 1922 after working under the two-platoon system. Prior to this the firefighters took one day off per week, taken in two twelve hour shifts every three or four days, but only if it didn't interfere with the usual routine. If it did, you'd wait longer. Under this system, they were working 82 hours a week. With the new system, hours were cut down to 72 hours per week, still a long way from the 53 hours we now work.

The long hours required during all of this time was known to break up many a home. While the job was undoubtedly a great source of pride for the children of a firefighter, the lack of time spent with the children and wives was not, particularly for the wives. With the pay also being insufficient at the time, many of them took in boarders. More than one firefighter came home to an empty house, his wife no longer able to stand the isolation, and having left with the boarder. This was reportedly a fairly common event.

This job may be one that you could well give your life for, as well as your personal home life, but getting to be a firefighter has always been difficult due to the number of applicants for it, as well as for a variety of other reasons that are always changing with the times. These may be the reasons why it has always been held onto so strenuously, despite it's imperfections.

## Hiring Requirements

To get on the Fire Department in the twenty's, as well as the Police Department, these requirements had to be met:

1.) You must be a citizen of Green Bay.
2.) You must be between the ages of 21 and 35.
3.) You cannot have been convicted of any crime.
4.) You must be able to read and write the English language understandingly.
5.) And you must first pass a physical and a mental test.

Previous dismissal from the department except for physical ailment was sufficient reason for rejection.

Also, every member was expected to devote his entire time to the duties of the department, and was not allowed to work outside of the department.

Lined up in front of Station 1 at 115 South Washington is a 1924 American-LaFrance 1000 GPM pumper, a 1920 American-LaFrance 750 GPM pumper, and a 1921 American LaFrance Type 31 75-foot aerial ladder truck.

Just like today, they were subject to call-in for emergencies, but also, they were not allowed out of the city without first gaining permission of the Chief.

Drinking alcohol was not allowed either on or off the job.

They couldn't 'sell or assign' any part of his salary or 'incur or contract any debts or liabilities'. Even credit cards would've been unacceptable. And politics were limited to 'exercising your suffrage', which I believe, meant voting privileges only.

Probation was for six months, to be confirmed or denied by the Police and Fire Commission. Many of these same rules are still steadfastly adhered to, but others of them have also fallen by the wayside, victims of modern times and morality.

In 1927, the Fire Department consisted of:

1 Chief
1 Assistant Chief
6 Captains
1 Mechanic

and a "sufficient number of 'subordinates' to sufficiently man the equipment." We now call these 'subordinates' engineers and privates, or firefighters.

## Discord Within The City Departments

On the 17th of May, 1927, the City Council voted to reinstate two members of the Fire Department who were placed on pension by the Firemen's Pension Fund of the City of Green Bay. This action was considered, "selfish and personal and being done without regard to the best interests of the taxpayers of the City of Green Bay." (City Council Minutes)

The two firefighters involved were Acting Chief Charles Kornowski and Captain Michael Theisen. After unanimously recommending the reinstatement, the Mayor also instructed the City Attorney to investigate the action of the board. Nothing was found in our research to indicate if this investigation was started, or caused any actions later.

In the 1930's, conflicts arose again between the firefighters and an outside organization, this time it was with the Pension system. In May of 1932, Lester Stievo was placed on the city pension rolls, having been certified by doctors to have a 'Neurasthenic condition' that was due to his job on the Fire Department. Apparently he had been denied prior to this, and now the Council had allowed him to be pensioned off.

Another time firefighters were taken off duty by an outside agency, was in the early 1970's when four members of this department were laid off by the Mayor for political reasons. After promising to cut the city budget in his election speeches, he achieved it by laying off personnel in some of the city departments, irregardless of any hardships and problems caused these people and their departments. Some were off for more than a year before they had all been called back in. But unlike 1927, this time no investigation was ever called for.

## Breathing Apparatus

On December 6, 1927, it was recommended to purchase a Metropolitan-type LaFrance 1000 Gallon-per-minute pumper. But much more importantly, 'Fresh-Air Masks' were also asked for.

Even though this notes the beginning of our concern for the smoke that we breath at almost any fire, being a 'Leatherlunger' is still the accepted practice for firefighters in many cities, including Green Bay's not too distant past.

It was almost an initiation rite used to break in the new recruits and was practiced by many of the senior members of the department. When a young firefighter got off the rig to follow his company officer into the burning building, he was never sure whether or not he should go for the breathing apparatus first. Most of the time, unless told specifically to get it, the Self-Contained-Breathing-Apparatus (SCBA), would be left on the rig.

Being 'hauled into the office' for getting one without permission was a very possible occurrence. But more likely you would receive lots of hassling from your buddies about your lack of 'manhood' or unwillingness to 'eat a little smoke'. But this peer pressure, along with it's giggles, hid the concern in the back of our minds about what we were doing to ourselves. Yet, like any initiation rite practiced, it also served to bond us together.

But eventually common sense and the insurance industry has since gotten our department to make the wearing of this breathing apparatus mandatory. We are no longer required to hack and cough up black soot to be accepted by the 'Old Guard'.

## Changing Station Locations

This period also saw the moving of two fire stations. In 1929 Station No. 1 moved from it's location on South Washington, next to where the Bay Theater is today, to it's present location, at the south end of Washington Street at it's meeting with Adams Street. This was near where the waterworks were at that time, one reason given for moving the station to this location. But eventually the waterworks would also move away from this site, although years after it's proximity was necessary for the Fire Department. The final cost of the project would be $37,000, but $31,000 of that was raised by selling the old station on Washington Street. Another $6000 was taken from a contingency fund.

Also to be moved during this period was Number 3 Station. Formerly at 118 South Pearl Street near the Fox River, it was moved to the corner of Shawano and Hazel Streets in 1937.

## The Drum Era

That same year, a flurry of changes was caused within the department. This was the second of the strong forces behind the mechanization and modernization of this department. It was the appointment of Ralph Drum as the new Chief in June. He immediately changed this department

from a small town organization, into a "thoroughly modern, well trained, and highly efficient force."[1]

One of the first changes Chief Drum made was the rethreading of the hydrants of Green bay to fit the rigs of the other communities around the city. Earlier our department had severed some of it's ties with the surrounding communities by ending the mutual aid.

A committee had been formed to discuss Mutual Aid to the surrounding communities. They reported that the city's limited resources were too badly strained if our equipment were to be taken out of the city. But Green Bay was willing to grant extensions to cover our neighbors past the ninety day period if they showed a willingness to improve their own Fire Departments.

Chief Ralph Drum

Drum reversed this by calling for possible aid from outside towns within our boundaries. Coming from the small town of Ladysmith, Wisconsin, perhaps he felt the necessity for all neighboring communities to assist each other more than his large city counterparts. This helpful coexistence is still part of our department today, especially in the field of Emergency Medical Services, our rescue squads pass over each other's borders regularly.

The first school to train the firefighters was set up by Chief Drum and Les Braemer, the drill master. They taught at Number 1 Station using the information that they had gotten from the fire schools they attended in Milwaukee and Memphis.

Not to leave anything get past him, Chief Drum also started up the Fire Department Band. It was organized on July 27th, 1932 with a request for instruments, and continued until World War 2, when it was neglected and eventually ceased to exist. Along with this he organized the Fire Department Orchestra, and Fire Department baseball team. As was typical of Drum, this team was noted for having won 29 consecutive games. Yet, as hard driving as Drum seemed, especially to those who have worked under him, he was not without his gentler and kinder side.

On Feb 14, 1933, fire caused damage estimated at $1,500 to the residence of August Nitz, 722 Crooks Street, and firefighters from two stations fought the blaze for nearly two hours. George Nitz Jr., age 3, slept comfortably through the event.

The residence was occupied by three families: those of August Nitz; his son, George, and George Fox. Young George was sleeping in a first floor bedroom, and his grandmother, afraid that the child's safety was threatened, suggested that he be awakened.

"Let him sleep," said Fire Chief Drum, who knew the fire was on the third floor and didn't expect it to get any lower. So the child slept on and his first knowledge of the fire was received when he awoke that morning.

The cause of the fire was at first said to be due to defective wiring, but an examination by Chief Drum and Fire Inspector August Joppe revealed that oversized fuses may have been responsible.

The fire started on the third floor, directly in the center of the home, and spread in all directions, penetrating the shingles on the roof. Firefighters of Stations 1 and 2 responded at 8:55 PM.[2]

## Moving Number Three Station

Back in July of 1927, the Fire Committee recommended having the old YMCA building at the corner of West Walnut and Chestnut remodeled and used as a fire station in place of the old one on Pearl Street. While this was approved by the City Council, it eventually fell through because of legal questions involving the school districts's intentions for the building at the time it was bought.

After it was decided that the station would be located on Shawano Avenue, it was studied as to whether or not it could be constructed out of stone rather than brick, stone must've been either too costly, or otherwise impractical.

During the construction of the new station, Chief Drum insisted on having built with it, a training tower, which would reach a height of fifty feet, and a small auditorium for classes. When the classroom wasn't being used to train the firefighters, it was loaned out to the Redeemer Lutheran congregation for use as a Sunday school lecture room. Each of the thirty men on the department were expected to drill on the tower at least once every week-and-a-half. Jumping off the top of it, and into a safety net below was one of the drills until the injuries caused this to be stopped. Afternoons were saved for inspections and

tours of various businesses that might be encountered in their districts. Total cost of this new fire station would be $49,000.

## Fire Losses

But the year 1927 was also a bad one for fires. It started with the Vocational School burning. Then a month later, we gave DePere mutual aid, pumping water for five hours at a burning building. Then on August 22 of that year, an explosion at the Barkhausen Warehouse caused it's second fire, and it again burned, taking more than five hours to extinguish.

1931 claimed a Hurlbut Company coal pile on November 7. It is probably the lengthiest fire fought for a long time to come, it was battled for 30 hours the first time, and three days later, for another 37 hours.

Fire losses between 1920 and 1930 ranged between lows of $55,207 and $57,094 in the years of 1921 and 1927, respectively, to a high in 1929 of 111,406. Chief Drum, with his increase of efficiency and morale, quickly dropped it down to $26,664 in 1930. Even considering the 'feast or famine' nature of fire fighting, (the bunching together of fires for no apparent reason with sometimes large lapses of time in between), this was undoubtedly a direct result of his efforts. During this time the property values rose steadily from around $260,000 to $280,000.

In January of 1930 the department listed their equipment by station as being:

Number 1 Station:
- 1 Ahrens Fox, 1000 Gallon pumper
- 1 Reo Service Truck (ladders)
- 1 Oneida Hose Truck (reserve)
- 1 combination Chief's car and First Aid Car.

Number 2 Station:
- 1 American LaFrance 750 Gallon pumper
- 1 American LaFrance Aerial Truck (manned only for hospitals, schools, and in the business district)

Number 3 Station:
- 1 American LaFrance 1000 gallon pumper
- 1 Ahrens Fox Service Truck

This equipment was appraised at a cost of $174,679, Number 1's and 3's had 1250 Gallon-Per-Minute (GPM) pumps, with a 1000 GPM pump at Number 2's. A 1000 Gallon truck was also held in reserve at Number 3's. One of the aerials were capable of pumping 250 GPM, while the other had a 500 GPM pump. Two Dalmatians, Lucky at Station No. 1, and Jiggs at No. 3's filled their traditional roles. Twenty-nine men were on duty each day to protect the following in the 13.6 miles of the city:

- 6711 frame buildings
- 1189 brick and stone buildings
- 77 iron clad
- 64 concrete block
- 45 fire resistive steel and frame
- 39 reinforced concrete 81 unclassified buildings.

This included 26 schools and 3 hospitals.

The budget for 1931, with about the same equipment, was $158,548.17. Salaries cost $105,676 of it, hydrants cost another $37,165, upkeep and supplies for the three houses cost $4140, and apparatus cost $1692.

1932 had a couple of major fires, the Betten Warehouse fire, and on October 27th, the Chicago Northwestern Depot burned down. At the end of July the planned tests for new fire and police department applicants included both a physical and a mental test.

In 1936, ladder truck bids were again taken out. The cost of it was only $7906.38.

## Dispatching Started

December 3rd, 1936, marked the beginning of a permanent dispatching system for the fire department. Prior to this, dispatching was handled by a rotation of the firefighters on the floor, including newly hired men as soon as they were able to handle the job. At this time three dispatchers were named by the Police and Fire Commission: William L. Hagarty, 22; W.J. Phillips, 24; and Clarence Shaha, 33. They were the top scorers in a group of about 30 applicants, as scored by the 5 members of this commission.

Scores were developed by using the written test score for one-half of the total points, 25 percent was given for passing the physical test, and another 25 percent given for the general appearance, demeanor, and general fitness for the job.

Dispatchers were going to work 8 hour shifts at Number 1 firehouse. This included answering the phones and incidental work assigned by the Chief. At the time there were Call Boxes on the street corners that rang directly in the dispatch center whenever they were picked up. These men were released from their duties on the floor as firefighters, and were paid $100 per month. This was now a full time job. While the floor personnel worked twenty-four hours on and twenty-four hours off with the platoon system, the Fire Prevention inspectors were working during their off- duty days.

Towards the end of the 30's, there were several major fires. On October 13th, 1937, a furniture store at 408 North Adams burned to the ground. On February 15, 1939, the Modern Meat Market also burned down. On September 20th, 1940, a three-story building burned down that was owned by Gordon Bent. It had $19,000 damage to the building, and $16,000 damage to it's contents. And finally on October 28th of the same year, Norcor Manufacturing, a 2-story brick factory on Bridge and Pearl Streets, also had a terrible fire.

1941 brought another aerial truck to the department. They purchased another LaFrance, this time a sixty-five foot aerial. The cost was $14,050. This is currently our reserve ladder truck, though under a different chassis.

## Firefighter Health

While no Green Bay firefighter has ever lost their life from being burned to death, there are always many injuries

to the firefighters from burns and other physical trauma to our bodies. A couple of them have also lost their lives from heart attacks and other causes while on duty. Back in 1917, Chief Sweeney froze his feet during a fire at the Larsen Canning Company.

In 1939 firefighter Fred N. Mathews collapsed and died from a heart attack while his truck was on the apron at Number 1 Station. They had just returned from an alarm. Then again, in 1943, Frank Nooyen also died of a heart attack while fighting a $30,000 lumber fire. Later, in 1945, Art Christensen died from injuries believed to have been received during a $47,000 fire at Wisconsin Wholesalers Lumber Company.

There were also two firefighters who died during World War II while serving in the military. Clifford Coppens died in France, and pilot Ivan Gillespie died in the states from a plane crash.

Ivan Gillespie (center) visits with Ed Steeno and George Sharp while on furlough. He died four days later in a plane crash. December 1942.

From the inception of the department and through to the present, lumber and paper products has always been the major industry of the city. It's rapid burning nature was the cause of many of the major fires here.

Today we battle the same enemy as yesterday, but with a whole different set of tools, and different methods for firefighting. But as many changes as will always occur, firefighting will always be a dangerous, dirty, and sometimes boring job, done by fragile men and women who will always do their best. *Karl Hinrichs*

**Footnotes**

1. Jack Rudolph, Green Bay Press-Gazette, exact date unknown 1949
2. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 14 February 1933

Engineer Alan 'Zeke' Marto working the Ladder Pipe on the 150 foot 'Big Stick', imported from Germany.

# Post War

The period of 1945 to 1969 was one of expansion for the city. This was especially true for the Fire Department. It had increased manpower from 62 members in 1946, to 97 members ten years later, and up to 187 by the end of 1969. The number of stations increased from three to six and the pieces of apparatus from 10 to 24.

Apparatus purchases had been postponed during World War II. The reasoning was that not only were there money and material shortages, but also the fear that the quality of the workmanship might be inferior during that period since the majority of manufacturing was geared toward the war effort.

An accident involving the Station 2 pumper and the chief's car on May 23, 1945 pressed the council into approving purchases of new apparatus. The accident occurred when Stations 1 and 2 were responding to a fire call at 416 South Quincy Street. The two vehicles approached the intersection of Walnut and Monroe from different directions, collided, and injured four firefighters. Pipeman Goldie Nellis was most seriously injured when he was thrown from the tailboard of the pumper. He suffered a skull fracture and fractured shoulders and ribs. Also injured were John Boucher, Chief's Car Driver Bill Phillips, and Assistant Chief Ed Steeno.

The 750 GPM American LaFrance pumper was replaced with a new Mack Type 125, 1250 GPM pumper. The cost of the rig, with the optional six-man, three-door cab was $12,478.48. This pumper was placed at Station 1. A year later, another Mack was purchased and placed in service at Station 3.

The year 1946 brought two wage increases for department personnel. Annual base salaries, effective January 1, were as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Assistant Chief | $2,700.00 |
| Captain | 2,400.00 |
| Lieutenant | 2,370.00 |
| Engineer | 2,340.00 |
| Assistant Engineer | 2,310.00 |
| Driver | 2,280.00 |
| Firefighter after third year | 2,190.00 |
| Third year | 2,090.00 |
| Second year | 1,990.00 |
| First year | 1,890.00 |
| Dispatcher | 1,590.00 |

Six months later, the ranks received another annual increase of $140 to $150 each.

Under the leadership of Chief Drum in the 1940's, the department continued to impress upon the council and citizens the need for a second fire station on the city's growing west side.

In February 1947, after years of political debate, a city committee officially began a study of the need for an additional station and placement of it. In May, the Building Committee decided to retain the lot on the southwest corner of Ninth and Maple Streets.

On January 20, 1948 the City Council released the bids for the new station, which finally opened in November 1949. Station 4 was equipped with yet another Mack 1250 GPM pumper, this one at a cost of $15,951.50.

Just a few months earlier, Chief Drum had submitted his retirement notice due to ill health. The department had been under the command of William Gleason since July 1. Chief Gleason began his career back on March 1, 1922 and was appointed as the first Master Mechanic two years later. On June 19, 1929 he was promoted to Assistant Chief, while retaining the posts of Mechanic and Drill Master. He was named Assistant Chief in charge of one of the two platoons on July 18, 1936 and held that position until becoming Chief. He remained in charge of the department for the next five years.

A steps toward modernization was the purchase of a new FM radiotelephone system in February 1950. This was a joint venture with the police department and cost $11,100.00.

That June, Fire Department and City Council leaders expressed concern about leaving the city limits on fire calls. They agreed that there would be no routine fire protection outside the city limits unless fire contracts were signed, and payment equal to the city tax rate was received in advance.

In April 1951, Chief Gleason submitted plans for placement of a new rescue unit. The Clintonville Four Wheel Drive Company was low bidder at $12,645,20. The unit was equipped with a Pierce heavy duty body and was placed in service at Station 1. Only minor vehicle purchases were made the next few years. In 1952 a Pontiac chief's car was purchased, and in 1953 it was a GMC pickup.

The department joined the State Civil Defense Plan in April of 1952, becoming part of the Third Mobile Battalion. This venture would bring additional disaster training and equipment to the city's firefighters.

When Chief Gleason retired on April 15, 1954, Assistant Chief John Anderson was appointed to the position. Anderson started on the department September 13, 1926. He was promoted to Lieutenant January 24, 1930, to Captain July 1, 1938, and to Assistant Chief June 1, 1946.

A major incident during Chief Anderson's term was an explosion and subsequent fire at a tank farm on North Broadway, on September 10, 1954. Two firefighters, Captain Louie Leanna and Harvey Graume were within 30 feet of the tank when it exploded.

Graume recalled how both men were thrown when the blast occurred. He said he struggled to get back over the dike, and was making his way to the rescue squad when he heard a call for help. It was Captain Leanna, stuck in the

mud. He had to be pulled from his boots to get free. With their skin blistered from the heat, both men eventually made their way to safety.

The northwest side would be the site of another fuel fire ten years later. On April 13, 1964 a tank filled with 15,500 gallons of diesel fuel caught fire at the Chicago Northwestern railroad yard. Sparks from a passing locomotive set off a grass fire which made its way to the fuel tank.

A fear throughout the nation in the 1950's was the risk of contracting polio. Two of Green Bay's firefighter's were stricken with the virus. Wally Nolan was 31 years old when he first noticed the soreness on August 13, 1955. After a few days he was paralyzed up to his armpits. Shortly after that, another firefighter, Jim Minsart, was brought into the hospital. He was in worse condition than Nolan and ended up in an iron lung. The following February Jim Minsart died. Nolan, after months of painful therapy at Wood Hospital in Milwaukee, came back home. Eventually he was able to return to a job at the department, although confined to a wheelchair.

Firefighters pay their last respects to James Minsart who died February 16, 1956. *(Green Bay Press-Gazette)*

On August 1, 1955 David Zuidmulder was promoted to Chief after John Anderson retired, also due to ill health. Chief Zuidmulder, a Green Bay Packer alumni, had started with the department on July 1, 1934, and held positions of Driver, Assistant Engineer, Engineer, Lieutenant, and Captain. During his tenure, one of Green Bay's present fire stations was acquired by annexation and two others were built. In April of 1964 the city expanded to the east when it annexed the Town of Preble. Included was the town's fire station on the corner of Deckner Avenue and Henry Street, the apparatus, and employees Dick Panure, Bernard Oskey, Roland Delforge, Henry DeGreef, John Shaw, Jim Arvey, Murlin LaLuzerne, Gerald VanCampenhout, and Ron Schauer. Panure later became the Town of Allouez Fire Chief.

Station 2 at 1018 Main Street was 73 years old when it was replaced by the newly constructed facility at the corner of University Avenue and Webster Street. It was built at a cost of $150,621.00 and was dedicated to former Chief Ralph Drum.

Station 6, at 1701 West Mason, was welcomed by those living on the far opposite side of the river. Twenty years had passed since the fire protection had been expanded on the west side. The station was opened on November 13, 1969 and is dedicated to Chief Zuidmulder's 38 years of service to the community. In the beginning Station 6 was equipped with the department's existing reserve apparatus. Along with the station came the additional firefighters to man it. These men have come to be known as 'The Fabulous 27."

Those who worked with Chief Zuidmulder tell us he liked big rigs. One of them was the Magirus aerial ladder purchased in 1957 for $44,850.00. This German-made 150-footer was built with a modified 88 millimeter gun mount, and was placed on a Seagrave chassis. The veterans recall that after being mechanically extended, they would climb to the end of the ladder and manually extend the final fly section. The 150-footer met its demise during a winter fire. Frozen in the extended position, the ladder gradually thawed out and came crashing down as gravity took over. Firefighter Tom Titulaer had just stepped off of the ladder when it came down. How it missed injuring him or others nearby was considered a miracle.

When we think of the 1960's, many will remember the rock and roll music and the great cars. But Green Bay firefighters will also recall the many major fires that occurred during the period. On June 8, 1961, a fire at Genny's Furniture Outlet on North Broadway caused over $76,000.00 damage. In 1963 the Blackstone Hotel at 113 Dousman Street sustained damages of over $84,000, a total loss.

But these two losses would seem minimal when compared to the blazes during downtown reconstruction. The Gregby Urban Renewal Project was initiated to revitalize Green Bay's downtown area. Many of the old buildings were to be razed and new construction would be started to upgrade the inner city.

However, while in the process of tearing down, someone was hastening the project along. This arsonist liked torching the vacant buildings, and at times couldn't wait for them to be emptied. Department veterans remember the fires as an almost nightly occurrence. They were ordered to stand fire watches while off-duty. Issued a portable radio, the firefighters and would sit in an abandoned building, just waiting for the fire bug to arrive. In some cases, while waiting in one building, a blaze would begin three or four doors down the street.

On February 24, 1965 firefighters battled a fire in subzero temperatures at the Broadway Bowl, a ten-lane establishment on the city's near west side. The building was leveled. The March 3rd fire at the Leader Furniture Store, 518 Main Street, began on the second story, but there was nothing there to cause the blaze. Yet when the first units arrived on the scene, it was already totally out of control.

The Chief was quoted as saying, 'The fire just got going in the middle of the floor, then rolled inside the building, until it got so hot that it popped the windows, and that was that." A few days later, a fire at the Odd Fellows Temple, 224 North Adams, started in or on the roof and wiped out the building.

Fires coming within a short time of each other and having no definite cause had officials suspecting arson.

In the evening of March 27, flames leapt from the front window of a two-story building at 628 Main Street. Another suspicious fire, it destroyed the St. Vincent DePaul Society, Maske Electric, and the Emerald Isle Tavern. The first ten weeks of the year went down as one of the most hectic in the department's history. Rapidly approaching fire losses of half a million dollars, it had seen more valuation go up in smoke than in the past six years combined.

While '65 and '66 are in the books as years of great property loss, it is shadowed by the loss of life due to fire. January 30, 1965 is the day tragedy struck the Kagerbauer home at 993 Shawano Avenue. Fire claimed the lives of five children, ages 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7, as well as their 26 year old mother. Only the father escaped death. He suffered a severe arm laceration when he was forced to jump from a second story window and wait for firefighters in 17 below zero temperatures. Officials said the fire probably began in the couch, caused by a forgotten cigarette.

A little over a year later, February 4, 1966, eight people perished in a pre-dawn fire that completely destroyed a downtown Green Bay landmark. The first alarm for the Astor Hotel, 209 North Adams, was logged at 12:13 a.m. by Dispatcher Tim Madden. Assistant Chief Abe Martell called the second alarm when he arrived at the scene minutes later. Firefighters continued to rescue people for two hours, while taking eight hours to control the blaze.

The Astor Hotel fire on February 4, 1966.

Thirty people were known to have escaped harm, and the department listed the property loss at $256,207.95.

In June of 1966 the department accepted delivery of two Seagrave 1250 GPM pumpers known as the "Vigilantes." The new apparatus included built-in foam equipment. Their crews spent the rest of the summer becoming familiar with their capabilities.

Firefighters are a different breed. They make inspections, unlock doors, cut rings from fingers, free workmen from cave-ins, search for drowning victims and they run the gauntlet of busy intersections to render help to victims that need assistance.

So, if you need help, call a firefighter, make them your friend, because they will always be there when you need one. *Jeff Stauber*

Fire Destroys Helgerson Plumbing on the corner of Main and Roosevelt on June 19, at 4:50 P.M., 1969.

# The Super 70's

The 70's started out just like any other era, with Chief Dave Zuidmulder at the helm of a ship in need of repair. Green Bay was in need of new fire rigs, and most repair work was just a band aid for many of the old and weary vehicles. Ten of Green Bay's rigs were over 20 years old. A used Snorkel was purchased in August of 1970 at a cost of $35,000. The apparatus weighed in at 48,000 pounds and was very unique in its style. It was similar to an aerial ladder truck with the exception of a 90-foot, three-section boom with a bucket on the end of it. The Snorkel could reach the eighth floor of St. Vincent Hospital.

Green Bay owned the fire boat "Tonawanda" built in 1941, and acquired in 1964, the boat was originally bought by the National Park Service, and used on Lake Superior for trips to Isle Royal. The 42 foot boat had an 8 foot beam and was powered by a Buda Diesel, 6 cylinder, 145 horsepower engine. It had a 32 volt electrical system with a fresh and salt water cooling system, with a 100 gallon fuel tank.In eight years of service it never made a fire call. Now better known as the "Leaky Teaky", the bilge pumps worked harder keeping water out of the engine compartment than the fire pump worked to pump water out of the nozzles. It was berthed just south of the Mason Street bridge. For obvious reasons the boat was sold on October 5, 1972.

In 1971, Chief Zuidmulder announced that the first automatic transmission would be tested on No.3's Rescue Squad, a 1968 International. It worked so well that, from that point on, all new rigs were to be ordered with automatics. This was a great start on updating the fire vehicles and having fewer problems with gearing.

With the ever rising problem of related-fire deaths across the United States, the Green Bay Fire Department, under the direction of Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention, Millard Vanderkelin, initiated "OPERATION EDITH", (Exit Drills In The Home). This program started in the summer of 1971 and continued that fall, with fire inspectors going into the Green Bay Schools,instructing children to have their parents and family members set up ways to get out of their house in case of fire. They were also instructed to have a place outside of their home to meet, to make sure all family members were safe.

The snorkel at the scene of the Edlo Arcade fire on February 11, 1972.

In 1971, fire killed 12,200 people nationally. In Green Bay alone, 4 people lost their lives, 19 people were injured, and 32 firefighters were injured in the line of duty.

Chief Dave Zuidmulder officially retired on March 31, 1972. On February 11, 1972, the Police and Fire Commission had named William Phillips as Acting Fire Chief of the Green Bay Department because he was the only Assistant Chief not to apply for the permanent position. Sixteen men from the department took a written test, and officials said the new chief would be announced by midFebruary.

Phillips, 59, found his first day as Acting Chief a very busy one. Firefighters were called to the scene of a fire at the Edlo Arcade buiiding (Baums Corners) at 11:08 that evening. A short time after they arrived, flames shot through the roof and spread throughout the upper floor.

For the first several hours, firefighters managed to confine the fire to the attic and third floor. But about 3:30 a.m., it spread to the second floor. Around 6:30, the first floor also became engulfed in flames, and an hour later the front of the building collapsed.

Deputy Chief Vernon Fontaine, who directed operations at the fire said,"When firefighters arrived, smoke was seeping from the building, but the source could not be located. When we opened up the building, that's when it took off." Shortly after 8:00 a.m., a new crew replaced the cold and tired firefighters who had been fighting the fire for nearly nine hours in sub-zero temperatures. Assistant Chief Lloyd Daniels took charge of the new shift of men.[1]

### New Chief Takes Over

On March 1, 1972 Gerald Selissen, took over as Acting Chief of the Green Bay Fire Department. He officially became Chief one month later. Selissen had entered the department on June 19, 1953, was promoted to Engineer January 1, 1965, and Lieutenant October 20, 1969. Under his direction the department moved forward with many of Chief Zuidmulder's programs. Also, in March 1972, a new maintenance shop was built at 108 North Henry Street to improve the service work done on all fire department apparatus.

In June of 1972, a new Training Committee was selected consisting of Captains Harland Anderson and Lawrence Sullivan, Lieutenants Russell Reynolds and Eugene Clark and Fire Engineers Ronald Marto, James Mommaerts and Tom Sturm. This committee met every three months to lay out drill schedules and subjects for company training for a ninety day period.

A program of inspections by crew members was instituted in 1972. Commonly known as in-service inspections, this program was started in the second half of the year to give responding crews a method of familiarization of buildings they may be entering under fire conditions. Hopefully this would enable personnel to acquaint themselves with surroundings, thereby cutting fire losses and injuries.

Chief Gerald B. Selissen

On November 5, a spectacular fire of undetermined origin destroyed the Wisconsin-Michigan Auto Salvage Company building at 1749 South Broadway. Fire officials said the flames had completely engulfed the building by the time the first units arrived. Six trucks from three west side stations were used to fight the blaze. The fire was not under control until 5:00 a.m.[2]

In the Fall of 1973, twenty-two men of the department began training for the Paramedic program. It was an intensive program given by Bellin, St Mary's, and St. Vincent Hospitals. It was the brain child of Captain Harold Kaye, who had much to do with this training and the beginning of this program. His ideas and thoughts about this program were started in 1971." With this program's success, It's kind of like a dream come true," Captain Kaye said.

Fire Prevention Week in 1973 got off to a bad start as fire gutted a paint and glass store valued at $250,000. Hoffer Glass Inc., 512 No. Monroe Ave, appeared a total loss. The blaze was reported to the Green Bay Fire Department at 2:07 a.m. and the fire had apparently burned through the roof by the time firefighters arrived on the scene. Flames spread from the back of the building, where supplies of glass, paint and two company trucks had been stored. Firefighters were able to remove two new delivery trucks from a garage. However one new truck was lost in the fire. Eight fire vehicles from three stations responded to the fire and it was brought under control about 4:00 a.m.[3]

In 1974 the major portion of daily training was conducted by company officers. They followed a quarterly training schedule set up by the training committee; Captain Harland Anderson as chairman. Some of the subjects were Scott Air-Pak, ventilation, salvage and overhaul, ropes, knots and hoisting tools, ground ladders, drafting and light pumping, tanker operations, and aerial operations.

In addition, training sessions were held at an abandoned farm, with our new high pressure pumps and high expansion foam nozzles. After training was completed, the new equipment was put into service.

The firefighters were also trained by Wisconsin Public Service in the care and safety of natural gas and electricity in problem situations. Engineer Ron Marto held classes for all firefighters explaining our boats, dragging operations, water safety, and water rescue. In-service inspection classes were held by Captain Jack Basche and Lieutenant Bill Smerz before the crews went out inspecting.

In 1974 a start at setting up an Associate Degree Fire Science Course was made at Northeast Wisconsin Technical School. The first credit course was held during the spring semester and another during the fall. Toward the end of the year the state board approved the entire degree course, and a coordinator-instructor position at N.W.T.I. was created.

Pre-fire tours were conducted at quite a few of the large buildings in Green Bay, and firefighters became involved in the tunneling work being done at the Metropolitan Sewerage Plant. The crews were taken through the area and much was learned about mining operations. The training paid off, when on May 12, 1975, a methane gas explosion occurred at the North Quincy Street complex, killing four workers. It took two days to clear the tunnel of explosive gases. On May 14, Lieutenant DeLyle Lindow and Firefighter Bruce VandenPlas made their way into the tunnel and found the bodies of the four men.

There were no fire deaths in Green Bay in 1974, but there were 20 injuries to residents and 25 injuries to firefighters.

Now, close your eyes and think back to about 1975, on a hot, steaming summer day, with the sun on double time, and you are driving past a fire house. What image comes to your mind?

Most people immediately have a clear vision of six or seven firefighters relaxing, with chairs leaning back against a firehouse. A game of cribbage is going on, and the men have little to do other than watch the cars go by, as they while away the hours between alarms.

A peaceful, assuring scene? Perhaps, but it's a completely false one, even in the mind's eye. Maybe 20 years ago, in smaller towns that was the way it was. But not today, not in Green Bay fire stations.

Local firefighters refer to their stations, rather affectionately, by the plural of it's local number;"3's" or "number three's" or "over at fours".

"Number Three's is the oldest firehouse on the west side of the Fox river and remains one of the most on-view public buildings in Green Bay. Over at "3's", a hot summer day meant rugged discipline for the three shifts that alternate 24 hour shifts during a seven day work week.

On a breezy, beautiful afternoon, the "A" shift at "3's" was almost ready for supper at 4:30 p.m. Firefighters eat early all over the city so that they are ready for possible kitchen fires at regular supper hours. The same goes for noon meals which are generally eaten at 10:30 a.m.

The shift, usually 11 men, had finished "drill school", realistic drilling with ladders and pumps, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Captain Frank Dziengeleski, from "Fives" fire station at Deckner and Henry St. was on duty, substituting for the usual "A" shift leader, Deputy Chief Larry Sullivan, who was off duty.

"Most firefighters can do almost everything," said Dziengeleski. "Things have changed tremendously in just a few years. We have more diversified summer accidents; there are micro wave ovens in use, bikes and motorcycles, outdoor grilling, and more and more plastics to catch fire. Also the number of rescue calls has risen in the last few years".

The number of rescue squad calls have increased almost beyond belief in the last few years. Heart attack victims, industrial falls, alcoholics needing help on the street, auto accidents, and even women having babies on the way to the hospital are part of the rescue squad's details.

Dinners at the firehouse are not elaborate, but they are certainly ample and well prepared. Last weeks fare one night was a deep dish casserole of ham and scalloped potatoes. The firefighters pay for their own food. The meals are pro-rated during pay periods and firefighters share expenses for their meals.

What are a few of their other duties? (Outside of answering fire calls, lest we forget!). They must keep all equipment washed, cleaned and replaced. This is done during the early morning hours with a strict eye on all rigs, including the Deputy Chiefs car, the three man ladder truck, the four man pumper, the four man rescue squad, and the one man salvage rig which carries air masks, rescue tools, fans, salvage covers, and other related equipment).

Captain Jim Sherlock, from No.6 station house at 1701 W. Mason St, was on duty on another morning, temporarily replacing the "B" Shift leader, Deputy Chief Richard Mocco. Sherlock believes the rescue squad paramedics are the best trained in the state.

Part of the daily routine is keeping up with the "hydrant book." he said, "And with the mushrooming of new homes in the Green Bay area, we have

quite a job." The hydrant book is like our Bible, it's basically an invaluable handbook that charts all of Green Bay's streets, every new street, the location of the fire hydrants, other street intersections, and diagramming of industrial buildings. The book must be updated when new streets and areas are reported by the city engineer's office.

In-service inspections go on all year round. You have probably seen firefighters inspecting your favorite coffee shop for hazards and locations of fire extinguishers. This occurs every three months, summer being no exception.

The annual sale of Packer tickets at all fire houses for the intra-squad game would be peaking this week and next; the game would continue to draw a heavy ticket office crowd at all fire stations, especially in the late afternoon and evenings.

Nobody within the circle of the Green Bay Fire Department actually promotes station tours, but then, nobody discourages the Boy Scouts, Brownies, passers-by, and kids biking by in the summer heat, from stopping by for a tour. If you're lucky, one of the crew might even slide down the brass pole for you. After all, the majority of Green Bay's Firefighters are natives. Some of who received their vocational calling from their childhood hero worship of firefighters.

Is the summertime scene at engine house "3" a peaceful one? Not at all, nor should it be in terms of the mammoth expanse of the human service that it covers, most of it emergency related. But there is a rather serene atmosphere about the building, an aura coming from a tough sort of faith and respect the men have for their dedication.[4]

In 1976 there were no deaths due to fires in the City of Green Bay. But there were 11 fire related injuries to the public, and three firefighters were injured during the year. The largest fire during 1976 was at American Can Company with the total loss of $118,000.

That summer, the department was among the first in the state to purchase a Hurst Extrication Tool, more commonly called the "Jaws of Life." Used in forcible entry and auto extrication, the hydraulic tool was used throughout the county when requested. Another forcible entry tool, the Jet-Axe, was used with success, but was taken off the market a few years later. Our on-scene photography capability was updated with a new camera, and a new 3% foam concentrate was put into service.

A new recruit training program was begun, a cooperative effort of the department, the IAFF (International Association of Fire Fighters), and the State Department of Industry, Labor, and Human Relations. The apprenticeship certified the recruits as journeymen firefighters after three and one-half years of on-the-job training and testing.

All apparatus changed to the new lime-yellow paint scheme in 1976, replacing the traditional fire engine red. The subject of apparatus color will still bring about a lively discussion among firefighters. Studies have shown that the brighter color is easier seen in low light conditions, but proponents of red say that it is more readily identifiable as a fire engine. As of this day, we remain with white over lime-yellow, the newest apparatus having a reflective band of white encircling the rig.

1977 was a year to remember, or maybe a year to forget, according to many firefighters. There were six deaths due to fires that year, and over 30 arson connected incidents.

January 11, a fire at 1220 Main Street, gutted Peanuts Howard's Bar. Firefighters fought the blaze in sub-zero temperatures for about seven hours, but it was a losing effort.

A fire on February 11 roared through the offices of the Green Bay And Western Railroad Depot on the city's near west side, destroying the 100 year old landmark.

March 5, a fire in downtown Green Bay made ruins out of the Masonic Temple at the corner of Adams and Cherry St. The complete roof burned off the building. Only the exterior walls remained.

April 26, a fire that apparently started in the kitchen area of the King's X Supper Club, gutted it and another North Broadway business, and damaged three others. Seven people were hurt as a result of the fire.

April 29, losses exceeded a half million dollars in a fire that gutted Bertrand's Sport Shop at 106 North Washington Street and damaged two adjacent businesses.

May 13, four fires which occurred within a four-square block area on Green Bay's northwest side were termed "suspicious" by Green Bay Fire Inspector Jack Basche. The fires struck two garages, a couch on a back porch of an apartment, and the Larson Company.

The first began around 2:00 a.m. at the 333 Club, 333 North Broadway. A couch on the porch of an apartment above the tavern was ignited, causing an undetermined amount of damage.

Firefighters were called out again within 15 minutes to extinguish two garage fires in the alley located between the 400 blocks of Maple and Chestnut Ave. The garages were only four structures apart. Firefighters, arriving from two directions, didn't know they were at separate fires and waited patiently for each other to arrive.

While fire crews were picking up after the garage fires, about 3:28 a.m., they noticed a glow in the sky over the Larson Company, 520 North Broadway. This would be their last and largest fire of the night.

Flames leapt 30 to 40 feet in the air from a stack of wooden pallets. Heat and flames from the pile ignited the company warehouses and another company building. Upwards of $15,000 damage was done to the pallets, the warehouse, and to electrical wiring.[5]

There were many more fires of undetermined origin during the spring and summer of 1977 that served to baffle the fire inspectors.

But on July 15, 1977 fire officials got a break. A suspect was arrested in Green Bay and charged with 12 counts of arson. Tavern and downtown businessmen might've been able to rest easier from then on. Green Bay Police officers arrested the 29 year old man after the second fire in four months at the Challenger Bar, 1264 Main St. After extensive questioning and investigation by city police and fire officials, the suspect was tied to a series of fires from February to July. Deputy Police Chief Fred Mathews and City Fire Inspector Jack Basche expressed relief at apprehending the suspect.[6]

Property damage due to fires in the first six months of 1977 was over the $2,000,000 mark. We are fortunate that there was no loss of life.

Even though an arsonist was arrested, Green Bay firefighters had more bad luck.

On July 26, eight people were injured when a Green Bay rescue squad was involved in a accident at 2:45 p.m. on the way to St Vincent Hospital. It carried a patient that was suffering from a heart condition. Red lights and sirens were both working when the accident occurred. Fire personnel injured were; Lieutenant John Kollman, Fire Engineer Arnold Goral, and Firefighters David Riebe and Tom Peterson.[7]

With the same shift working, a 1:30 a.m. blaze at 218 E. Walnut Street, took the lives of three people. The fire started in an apartment above "The Lounge Tavern." Damage was intense to the second and third floor apartments.

A man who lived in a second floor apartment, said as he sat in a police car in his night shirt, that all he could remember was "the guy next door hollering fire...you couldn't get water to throw on it, it spread so fast."[8]

In 1978, training began to intensify. All personnel were certified in C.P.R. (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation), by instructor Terry Timmerman.

The second "Jaws of Life", was purchased so we would have one on each side of the river. Green Bay also purchased two sets of air bags which are used for jacking up vehicles and for extricating people from trapped areas, such as car accidents and cave ins. Also added to inventory was the first automatic ladder pipe.

In 1978, Green Bay saw the formation of 'The Arson Investigation Squad'. It was formed in cooperation with the Green Bay Police Department and was made up of fire inspectors and police officers. A course of Arson Investigation was offered at N.W.T.I. for the first time. In 1978 there were 39 arson connected fires and 4 deaths due to fires in Green Bay.

On June 10, 1978, at a fire at a Main Street gas station, the manager was forced to run through flames to escape his burning building.

Jim Wadzinski, 33, received burns when his cutting torch ignited vapors at his Texaco Service Station at 1995 Main. The steel building was virtually destroyed, with losses estimated at over $100,000.

Attacking the Texaco Service Station fire on June 10, 1978. *(Press-Gazette, Neville Public Museum)*

Deputy Chief Joe Morgan supervised 21 firefighters and seven fire department units at the scene after the call came in at 3:55 p.m. He said the torch apparently set off vapors common to filling stations: paint, paint thinners, brake fluids, and spray cans.

Steve Peltier, a Texaco employee, gave an eyewitness account hours later at the scene. He was soot-black from head to toe, his hands were the color of a standard black telephone. He said he was inside the garage taking inventory, about 10 feet from where Wadzinski was working, when an explosion threw him against a nearby car.

"By the time I could reach for the fire extinguisher, there were flames all around it." He said Wadzinski was trapped in the back room."It was pretty gory. He ran out through the flames."

Peltier was still angry about what happened next, hours after the fire was out: "The man is rolling on the grass on fire and some idiot is taking pictures! I couldn't believe that. If I hadn't been so appalled, I would have broken his neck. That upset me more than anything."

Jim Wadzinski's younger brother, Phil, also complained angerly. "Write something about the people taking pictures of someone on fire!" Neither man could identify the photographer. (Press-Gazette photographer John Roemer arrived a few minutes later). The building was a shambles of blackened walls, burned tires, broken glass, and ponds of water.[9]

In 1979 the Green Bay Fire Department started using the National Fire Incident Reporting System, (NFIRS). Designed to assist personnel at each level of government, the basic flow of information in the system is as follows: Local fire departments collect data in a common format and sends it to their state offices. The state processes the data from all of it's localities and sends feedback reports back to them. Once a quarter the state sends a tape to the National Fire Protection Agency, which uses the data for national estimates and many special studies of fire problems.

In January of 1979 the Green Bay Fire Department made a vast improvement on their S.C.B.A., (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus). They went from pressure demand to positive pressure masks. This was a great advantage to firefighters because this gave clear air to them at all times, and they had less problems getting a proper seal on their facepieces.

The 70's were trying times. Green Bay had many fire deaths, many accidents, explosions, arsonists, you name it. But all in all we also had many improvements along the way.

From the beginning of the Paramedic Program, to the purchasing of new rigs and equipment, Operation EDITH, to Fire Prevention Week, the 70's probably opened the eyes of many people along the way, and if it saved one life, it was a positive time in our history. *Randy Rybicki*

**Footnotes**

1. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 14 February 1972
2. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 5 November 1972
3. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 8 October 1973
4. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 26 July 1975
5. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 14 May 1977
6. Green Bay Press Gazette, 16 July 1977
7. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 25 July 1977
8. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 27 July 1977
9. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11 June 1978

Firefighters arrive at Peanuts Howards Bar the morning of January 11, 1977. *(Press Gazette, Neville Public Museum)*

# 1980 to Present

On May 25, 1980 the Green Bay Press-Gazette published the following article by Reporter Keith Goldschmidt. He related his experiences after spending the day at Fire Station 2 on University Avenue. The story represents "a day in the life of a firefighter" in the early 1980's.

"On any given day, firefighters arrive at their respective fire stations between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. Then they put their firefighting gear on the rigs they will be riding for the next 24 hours. They walk into the kitchen, grab a cup of coffee and begin talking to other firefighters about squad calls, fire calls, and the many other things that happen during a 24 hour shift.

If it's a normal day, the city can expect ten squad calls and two fire calls. They don't know when they will come and they don't really talk about what kind of a day to expect.

By 8:00 a.m. most of the firefighters have glanced through the morning newspaper, had at least two cups of coffee, and now begin making their beds.

The dormitory closely resembles a military barracks, with single beds scattered in one or two large rooms. Each bed has a chair, and some have reading lights. Flat sheets are folded neatly into square corners. All it needs is a drill sergeant flipping a quarter on the beds to check the tightness of the sheets to make the scene complete.

After the dorm is straightened, firefighters go to clean their area of responsibility. Some clean the kitchen and TV room, other go into the office, and the youngest private cleans the bathrooms. But most go to the apparatus floor where the fire rigs and rescue rigs are parked. They sweep and wet mop the floors and wipe each rig with a damp cloth. Even the tires are meticulously washed every morning. None of the firefighters really know why, other than the department wants clean equipment, although cleaning the tires also gives them a daily inspection for stones and foreign objects.

After cleaning all the equipment, firefighters return to the kitchen for more coffee and personal study. One person in the group usually has cooking experience and will lend his or her expertise in the kitchen. Sometimes they are complimented with an assistant, or 'Bull', cook. This term originated up in the northwoods lumber camps. The assistant cook had a yolk that went across his shoulders to carry water buckets to the kitchen. After an 11:00 a.m. lunch, it is time to relax for a few hours.

At 1:00 all fire personnel join in a regular training session. Today they leave the station for a dead end street to teach new personnel how to handle hose lines, but on the way they check out streets under construction and a possible street closing.

Knowing streets is an essential part of the job. When a call comes in, there is not much time to look up maps to find out where to go. Speed is essential around the fire station, so fire engineers and older firefighters study streets until they are as familiar with their districts as they are with the layout of their own home. The Fire Department is also notified by the Department of Public Works as to street closings so they can figure alternate routes around the construction sites.

After younger firefighters train with hoses, and engineers practice with different pressures at their pump, the drill has ended. All hose lines are picked up and all personnel return to their respective stations.

At 4:00 p.m. all personnel have returned and dinner is prepared and served. For the rest of the evening firefighters are free to do as they wish. Some work on their cars or watch TV, while others play cards. Some just sit and relax and hope the rest of the night is spent quietly.

By 6:00 a.m. the next morning the crew is awake and shaving or washing up, while the relief shift is slowly sifting into the building to relieve these firefighters.

In that particular 24 hour day there were 5 rescue squad calls and 1 fire call, which was a false alarm. A little below average for a day, but then, averages don't mean much at a fire station."[1]

A fire on January 4, 1981 destroyed a building at 1744 South Broadway which formerly housed the Tectron Tube Division of Menco Corporation.

Firefighters fought the large fire as well as the subzero temperatures. The mercury dipped to minus fifteen below zero.

It took twelve hours, using half of the city's fire equipment for firefighters to extinguish the blaze. Engineer John Faikel suffered rib injuries when he was struck with a broken fire hose.

With the increasing growth in the city's rural areas, the prolonged response times dictated the need for another east side station. At 13:00 hours on March 22, 1982, Green Bay Fire Station 7 officially opened. The newest station's address is 3489 Humboldt Road where, hopefully, someday Bay Settlement Road will intersect.

The crew working at the station on the opening day was Captain Bob Villenauve, Engineers Dick Konop and Mike Jensen, and Firefighters Fred Strenski and Rick Hilbert. The new station had been equipped with a new Ford 1000 GPM pumper built by 3-D Fire Apparatus of Shawano, Wisconsin. Along with the pumper was the 1978 GMC 1250 gallon tanker that had previously been at Station 5. The department's 65-foot reserve aerial is also stationed there.

The new facility includes an outdoor patio area, vegetable garden, earth-bermed walls, and solar heating panels on the apparatus floor's south wall.

## Proctor and Gamble Fox Burns

The following is a personal experience of firefighter Karl Hinrichs:

The night, March 15, 1985, was typical of so many others, the rescue squad put in a few calls during the day and evening, and we were all turned in for the night.

We were awakened by the alert tones. It was a fire call for the Proctor and Gamble Fox River Plant. At Station 2, the dispatcher gave us the building and riser numbers while we dressed and climbed on our rigs.

Upon arrival at the mill we were taken to a parent roll storage building within it. A wagon cart sat along a wall with singed parent rolls on it, and more burned paper around and under the cart. Friction from the wheels had ignited the paper dust stuck to them, and it had spread to the rolls it was carrying.

When we arrived we were told that someone had chased the cart through the plant after seeing it burning and leaving a trail of burning paper on the floor. When he got it stopped they extinguished all the fire on the cart and rolls. Or so we thought...

While returning to the station thoughts ran through our minds of all the possibilities that could have happened from a burning trail through a paper storage warehouse. But we missed one.

Shortly after getting back to sleep, about 3:00 a.m., we were again awakened. We took a return trip back to the plant.

We arrived at the back of the plant and entered Building 64. Lieutenant Travis Robinson, the squad officer, led Keith Lindbo and myself from Fire-Rescue 72.

As we entered, a thin layer of smoke was moving along the ceiling. Plant workers were spraying water between the stacks of parent rolls and the wall adjoining Building 92. There was a small fire burning behind the rolls. We took up the lines for a moment, then Lieutenant Robinson sent Keith and myself back outside to get air masks. By the time we walked to the back of the building and the door, the smoke was rolling down the wall in a heavy sheet.

When we exited, both Salvage 2 and Fire-Rescue 72 had been moved to the north end of the building, where the Command Post was being set up. We had no choice but to run around the building and find them. When we finally got there we had to take a moments rest before we could struggle into the air masks and go back to work.

Through the night the fire was contained to within Building 92, but we couldn't tell how much fire was in there. With no lights and extremely heavy smoke inside the doors, visibility was non-existent.

The pump engineers were in constant radio communications, trying to leave each other with enough hydrant pressure to keep their pumps out of vacuum. Aerial ladders were raised to the roof for opening and closing the vents up there, and hose lines were stretched from all directions around the building, just in case it broke through it's containment somewhere. New sources of water were eagerly sought as the pressures and supplies dwindled.

The floor within the plant had a one foot deep river running swiftly under foot and through the web of criss-crossed hose lines. Some barricades to direct the water were attempted by using already soggy paper products, but this was mostly washed or kicked away rather than working.

Attempts to enter the building were made throughout the night, but with the zero visibility, the barricades of fallen parent rolls, and the likelihood of more of them falling, they ended a short distance from the doors. Weighing many tons apiece when wet, even on their sides they stood taller than most men, and you couldn't see or hear them falling. You would just hear a faint thud as they squashed against the floor, and feel the cement shake under our feet.

After a shift change at 07:00, with a few firefighters held over for a couple of hours, they tried a new tactic. By shutting off the sprinkler system periodically, the smoke was allowed to vent through the roof openings, and visibility was improved. The hose lines were then advanced into the building as far as possible. When heat and smoke reached intense levels again, the firefighters backed out of the building, and the sprinklers were reactivated to knock the fire down again. After a wait the lines were advanced further. This was repeated until the fire was finally beaten down.

When it was all over, it was thought that a burning ember had floated along the ceiling and dropped onto a stack of parent rolls in a far corner of Building 92.

Estimates of the damages started at a modest 1.5 million dollars, but quickly escalated to 4 or 5 million. The product in Building 92 was totally ruined, from water damage as well as from fire. Most of the paper stored in buildings around 92 were also heavily damaged from the massive amounts of water circulating around the floor. Part of the roof was also replaced as the intense heat warped the steel roof beams as well as the metal sheeting of the roof itself.

## A Sad Wedding Reception

One of the saddest fires of the decade was on April 20, 1985. At it's height, the fire spawned smoke so thick it blotted out the bright sun and cast deep shadows over a bride, her groom, and their wedding party. They saw their planned reception go up in flames.

From a shed that reportedly had nothing flammable inside, flames, with a stiff wind behind them, leaped over to the Eagles Nest Supper Club on Green Bay's east shore, and methodically destroyed the building. Although half of Green Bay's firefighters fought intense heat and black billowing smoke, they couldn't stop the blaze from spreading along the 150 foot long building in the shallow attic above a false ceiling. The wooden structure was quickly evacuated and no one was injured. Total damage to the building and contents were estimated at $750,000.

'A' ABOVE: Winds fan the flames as a disappointed bride leaves her wedding reception.

'B' BELOW: Ladder 3 towers over the burning Carlton West. *(Press-Gazette Photos)*

## Singing The Blues

When you think of the Carlton West, picture these people: James Darin, Bob Hope, Connie Stevens, Harry Chapin, Bill Cosby, Ronnie Milsap. Liberace, Dionne Warwick, Roy Clark, Tom Jones, B.B.King, Wayne Newton, The Oak Ridge Boys, and Gallagher.

These people are all just memories after a fire at the Carlton Celebrity Room on January 9, 1986 destroyed the 1000 seat dinner theatre.

Firefighters not only fought fire but they also fought heavy smoke, searing heat, and toe-numbing cold. This was not a typical fire, in fact it was one of Green Bay's most expensive fire in the last 30 years.

Deputy Chief Al Minor didn't know this when he arrived on the scene just before 4:00 a.m., but he knew a roaring fire was inside the building. He saw fire breaking through the roof and many blackened spots on the outside of the metal building.

Two different crews entered the building with hoses but were driven out by 2000 degree temperatures. "Once it gets going like that, there isn't much that can be done," said Minor.

In a Press-Gazette interview Chief Gerald Selissen said, "Firefighters train for all types of fires. Ninety-five percent of our fires are small. It's the 5% of the fires that are large, and that's what we train hard for."

We did the best we could with what we had, but no training in the world could have stopped the Carlton West from burning down, said Deputy Chief Minor.

Here is a partial list of Green Bay's worst fires.

1. 1985-Proctor & Gamble Fox-$4,500,000
2. 1990-Tosca Ltd.-$2,000,000
3. 1986-Carlton West-$1,500,000
4. 1957-McDonalds Warehouse-Bay Beach Rd.-$1,356,155
5. 1979-Apartment Complex-2060 Van Duren-$751,000
6. 1985-Eagles Nest Supper Club-$750,000
7. 1982-Proctor & Gamble Fox River Mill-$350,000
8. 1977-Masonic Temple-200 Cherry St-$348,000
9. 1990-McDonald Warehouse-$300,000-Printech
10. 1981-Blazing Saddles Saloon-531 Main-$281,000
11. 1977-Warehouse-344 Berger St.-$279,000
12. 1977-Bertrands Sport Shop-106 N.Washington-$278,000
13. 1977-GB&W Railroad Depot-$271,000
14. 1973-Hoffer Glass-$267,000
15. 1979-Warehouse-1514 Morrow St.-$267,000
16. 1966-Astor Hotel-209 N.Adams-$256,000

Another fire, on February 8,1986, destroyed Mass Advertising, 1306 Main Street. Bright flames and thick smoke, were ripping through the roof of the single story building when firefighters arrived from two east side stations.

Firefighters were able to keep the fire from spreading to a car dealership next door. The brick walls held up well against the flames and heat except for one section in the back of the building. Total losses to the building and contents was $150,000.00.

A spectacular fire in a warehouse at Smitty's Salvage & Supply, 2325 Main Street on April 26, 1986, completely destroyed the building. The warehouse was formerly the Kos Lumber Company which operated the business from 1940 till 1978. The building, which was located next to the Highway 141 viaduct, was insulated with wood chips. "We wrote it off as soon as we arrived on the scene," said Deputy Chief Harold Kaye.

The heat from the fire melted telephone cables, temporarily wiping out phone service to the Denmark, Wisconsin area.

Due to its location next to the viaduct, and on the border between Green Bay and Bellevue, a single dead-end main was the lone source of water. After a second alarm was called, the additional manpower was used to carry 2-1/2 hose lines from Brosig Street, across the Chicago Northwestern railroad tracks, to the north side of the fireground. Captain Lyle Warner was taken to the hospital for observation due to heat exhaustion, but returned to the fire scene shortly after. Fire crews remained on the scene throughout the night guarding against flare-ups and the spread of fire to adjacent buildings.

## Breakfast Club Established

The Retiree's Breakfast Club was established in May of 1986, with the help of Ron Desotell and Harold Kaye, who thought a get-together of retired firefighters was needed.

The first breakfast meeting was held at the V.F.W. and the organization seemed to blossom. The men talked over legislation that might effect their retirement, rising insurance costs, and many other pieces of information, but

Ron Desotell, Butch Smeester, and Harold Kaye.

mainly it was a good old firefighter bull session.

The President of the club was chosen by Ron and Harold. The first man to walk in the door at the first breakfast would be the President. It just happened to be Raymond "Butch" Smeester. He ran the meetings until his death October 9th, 1988. After his death, Wilfred Motquin took over and has been at the helm ever since.

Breakfast meetings are scheduled once a month, but with attendance growing, the club had to find a new home. They now meet at The Bay Family Restaurant on the west side.

If you are a retired firefighter, the breakfast club is the place to go. They may not solve all the world problems, but they sure have a good time trying.

In July of 1986 all Green Bay firefighters were measured for new custom-tailored protective clothing. The new gear consisted of a turnout coat and pants constructed of a PBI® outer shell, Goretex® vapor barrier, and a quilted Nomex® thermal liner. Also issued to each firefighter was a protective hood made of the PBI® material. This would make our department-issued gear NFPA compliant, offering us protection from burns and injuries we never had in the past.

The next change in clothing would be station uniforms. In 1989 the department switched to station-wear made of flame retardant FLAMEX® material. After years of gray uniforms, the officers would be wearing light blue shirts and navy blue pants, while engineers and privates would be dressed entirely in navy blue.

The FLAMEX® uniform would be short-lived, as by July 1992, we will again change to new station-wear, this time made of NOMEX 2000® with all line personnel wearing the light blue/dark blue colors.

## A Record Challenged?

In early October of 1986, in a two hour span, the Green Bay Fire Department had nine rescue squad calls, a record which may still stand today. Normally the department averages about 12 calls a day, but in a two hour period they were called to help a man suffering a heart attack, a youth who was very sick, a woman who was hemorrhaging, multiple victims of a car accident, and other calls. They were so busy, a private squad from County Rescue Service, a squad from De Pere, and a squad from Ashwaubenon, were all called into the city at one time. At this time it already looked like Green Bay was in need of a third Paramedic Rescue Squad.

## Mechanics 'R' Us

On March 3, 1987. a controversy occurred in the City Council chambers about refilling the Fire Department mechanics positions.

One of the three authorized captain-mechanics' positions had been vacant for several months due to retirement, and another was to be open in a very short time. The councils' 18-5 vote to refer the issue back to the Personnel Committee overrode the committee's previous 3-2 recommendation to fill the slot immediately. It boiled down to whether the mechanics should retain a Captain ranking, or whether the post should be filled with unranked firefighters or civilians. Mechanics worked a 9 hour shift in the fire department garage and were on firefighting duty the remainder of their 24 hour shift.

On April 9, 1987, the city council recommended the hiring of one Captain/Mechanic position. On a unanimous vote the council held open the last position until a manpower and workload study could be completed. After many months of study they voted to hire two full-time, civilian mechanics to work in the shop and to return the present Captain/Mechanic to line duty.

Applications were taken, and tests were given by the city for the positions. On January 20, 1989, Ron Mazola and Dan Young took over as mechanics for the Fire Department. A vote by Firefighters Local 141 to include these two men in the Union was passed, and they are now the only non-firefighters in the Local.

## High Rise Rescue

An April 2, 1987 fire at the Y.M.C.A. in downtown Green Bay had 71 men evacuating the residential floors of the building, and killed a 93 year old man. The main portion of the building was built in 1925. Most of the residents fled down the stairs and the fire escape. Three men escaped down the fire department aerial ladders. It was a rare chance to use our high/rise rescue and firefighting techniques. In an old structure such as this, with over 70 residents, the consequences should have been worse and the efforts of the firefighters, could easily have been much

Firefighters work at evacuating the downtown YMCA during the April 2, 1987 fire. *(Green Bay Press-Gazette)*

more difficult and dangerous. Firefighters found one man on the fourth floor landing, said Deputy Chief John Marshall. Paramedics took him out on a stretcher.

The fire was confined to one room, with a lot of smoke and water damage to the rest of the building. Estimated damage to the building and contents was $150,000.

## Safe or Sorry

On February 1, 1988, the evacuation of hundreds of west side residents was a matter of being safe rather than sorry. A truck carrying containers of chlorine and phosphoric acid overturned in a ditch on West Mason Street near Hillcrest Drive at 9:15 a.m.

Dozens of law enforcement and fire personnel wearing self-contained-breathing-apparatus, blockaded roads and went door to door to evacuate those within a square mile of the scene.

Evacuation was ordered because officials didn't know whether containers inside the tipped truck had ruptured. The mixture of acid and chlorine could have caused a violent reaction and produced toxic gas.

Green Bay Staff Chief Gerald Van Campenhout said there was no spillage and evacuation went smoothly. He thanked residents and the news media for their cooperation.

## A Squad Is Needed

On July 29, 1988, discussion was held by paramedics from Green Bay and a staff writer of the Green Bay Press-Gazette about the need for a third front line rescue squad for the city.

Paramedics in Green Bay said that a third squad was needed to adequately serve the city's 94,000 residents.

We're just short. There's no getting around that, said Ron Phillips, a Green Bay Paramedic. I've had days when I didn't want to go on another run. With only having two squads, there is no one to relieve us, Phillips said. At the time, Green Bay had two rescue squads operating daily and was assisted by Ashwaubenon, Allouez, De Pere, and County Rescue when the two squads were tied up .

I don't think it's fair to lean so heavily on the other services, said Deputy Chief Gerald O'Dell, a 33 year veteran of the department. "Our rescue personnel are burning out. They're tired, he said. Green Bay has a highly qualified staff, said O'Dell. But exhausted Paramedics handling life-threatening situations create a risk. Sooner or later that's going to catch up with us.

The stress of knowing there can be no relief, even after handling an accident with severe trauma, is the kind of stress Green Bay Paramedics have to live with." said Phillips. That stress is becoming more difficult as the number of times squad personnel must go without sleep increases during their 24 shift.

It's getting to a point where someone asks you about what type of runs you went on, and they all run together,' said Fire Captain Jerome Rabetski. 'You lose the individuality of the calls because you're running 8 to 15 of them per day.

As of July 1988, Green Bay rescue squads had mutually assisted on 37 calls out of the city. Rescue squads assisting in Green Bay from out of town rescue services had made 122 calls. Two Green Bay rescue squads completed 5,600 calls in 1987, and Ashwaubenon, a community of 15,000 which also has two rescue squads, made 800 runs.

Some relief comes to Green Bay by mutual aid agreements with Ashwaubenon, Allouez, De Pere, and County Rescue services. County Rescue is Green Bay's first backup when it's two squads are unavailable.

A fee of $200 is paid to assisting rescue squads if paramedic services are needed, and $100 for emergency medical technician services. (As of this writing Green Bay has three paramedic squads.)

## Green Bay Fire Department Honor Guard

*by Dennis Metz*

The present day Green Bay Fire Department Honor Guard was established in 1988.

The unit is really two units in one, and consists of firefighters who volunteer their off duty time to serve as representatives of our city and our department.

The first unit provides Fire Department representation at the funerals of active and retired members of our department, and at the funerals of firefighters throughout the State of Wisconsin. In addition, when requested by the Chief of the Department, the Honor Guard attends the funerals of local and city officials.

When requested by the family of the deceased, the Honor Guard provides pallbearers, casket guards, and works with the family and the funeral director in an effort to assure a dignified funeral service.

The unit is also fortunate to have two trumpet players, Pete Sponholtz and Rick Mercier, and bagpiper Dennis Metz, for special music when it is requested.

The second unit, called the Color Guard, represents the Department in parades and has been used to open local conventions and memorial services in the Green Bay area.

The Honor Guard units operate under the authority of the Chief of the Green Bay Fire Department and a committee of three active members of the guard units, Dennis Metz, Steve Peggs, and Tim Smits.

Thanks to the support of our city officials and the men and women of the Green Bay Fire Department, this unit has been well received, and has been in every way, a success.

## Backdraft Explosion

A January 2, 1989 fire at a residence at 1053 Newtols St. destroyed the home. The basement of the house was fully involved as firefighters arrived on the scene. They entered the basement in a attempt to fight the blaze, but were forced back by a backdraft explosion. "It was a good thing firefighters were completely covered or they would

have been burned," Acting Deputy Chief Jim Jeanquart said. Damage was estimated at $80,000. The fire was reported at 6:03 a.m.

The people who got out were very lucky, said Jeanquart, adding that it was believed that three people inside the house were awakened by smoke alarms. "I'm sure the smoke alarms saved their lives," said Jeanquart. The use of smoke alarms were introduced into law in 1979.

Acting Deputy Chief Lyle Warner said, "The likely cause of the fire was a strand of Christmas lights that may have short circuited around a basement fireplace."

## A Grateful Man

Just try and stop Dan Lopez from saying thanks when he has his mind made up to be thankful. He won't be stopped.

A janitor at Jackson School in Green Bay as well as a violinist, Lopez was helped in a medical emergency on February 18, 1989 by rescue personnel of the Green Bay Fire Department. Now he's planning to thank the rescue crew and won't take no" for an answer.

Mr. Lopez was setting up chairs in the school auditorium on Feb. 9 when he had a severe dizzy spell. Thinking he had the flu he went home early. Two hours later, he was vomiting blood and on the verge of unconsciousness. The problem turned out to be a bleeding ulcer. "Another half hour and I wouldn't be talking to you," Lopez said. "I'd be six feet under." A neighbor called the rescue squad when she heard him calling for help.

Once out of the hospital, he planned to present the ambulance crew with a plaque. Never mind that the crew told him they can't except a gift on duty. "It's too late, It's already been bought, and their gonna get it if they want it or not," Lopez said, "Fifty-five dollars, nothing but the best."

Mr. Lopez was hurting badly according to paramedic Chester (Cal) Lintz. When the rescue squad arrived that day, blood was all over the apartment and Lopez was already in shock. "His blood pressure was dangerously low, and his pulse rate was very slow, but when a patient responds to treatment, textbook style, that's pretty rewarding," said Lintz.

Lintz and other members of the rescue squad said they were just doing their job.

"I go about 210, but when he shook my hand, I thought he was going to break it," said Lt. Tom Thorpe who was in charge of the crew. He kept shaking it and telling me were angels of mercy."[2]

## Reorganization

On March 3, 1989. Green Bay Fire Department officials recommended a reorganization of the department. If the City Council agreed to a plan recommended by a city committee. Green Bay would change the way it promotes firefighters and oversees fire scenes. The restructure plan was prompted by a 1988 management survey of 146 U.S. cities that show the City of Green Bay spends more money per capita on firefighting than all but seven other cities.

Reorganization, as recommended by the Personnel Committee, would eventually reduce the total number of Fire Department employees through attrition, from 207 to 203. When reorganization was completed, there was one new secretary, but five fewer employees who fight fires. Fire Operations Chief Jerry Rabetski said that, despite the reductions, the plan will mean officers who oversee fire scenes will be more qualified, and will be able to get to fires more quickly. There will be District Commanders in charge on each side of the Fox River, with one Shift Commander and one Deputy Chief to oversee the department.

The reorganization portion, which was negotiated with Firefighters' Union Local 141, also calls for the elimination of promotions based solely on seniority. Instead, firefighters would be promoted through a system that relies 30 percent on a written test, 35 percent on a performance evaluation, and 35 percent on seniority. Reorganization was expected to save the city $218,000 a year once it was implemented.

## Gone With The Wind

Brown County's mutual aid disaster plan was tested when on July 11, 1989 about 40 people were treated for minor injuries at Green Bay hospitals, after a circus tent collapsed at the Toby Tyler Circus in the village of Howard. The tent collapsed shortly before 3 p.m. when strong winds lifted the tent off the ground and knocked down the poles that were holding it up. The tent was 42 feet high, 274 feet long, and 134 feet wide. It was designed to withstand winds up to 75 miles per hour.

The National Weather Service reported a peak wind gust of 45 m.p.h. at 2:48 p.m., but higher gusts could have occurred.

About 1200 people were attending the circus when the tent fell on the crowd. It was about 20 minutes into the performance. Most of the injured were taken to St. Mary's and St. Vincent Hospitals by Howard, Green Bay, and Ashwaubenon squads, as well as by private ambulance.

Praise was given by many people at the scene for the cooperation of rescue and law enforcement personnel of the numerous communities that responded.

## A Shot In The Arm

On August 3, 1989, a vaccination program turned out to be a real shot in the arm for the Green Bay Fire Department.

Members received inoculations against viral Hepatitis B at the City Health Department that week. The shots given to firefighters and medical services workers were administered over a six month period. 'Over a number of years we've had several exposures to the virus, and it's been an ongoing worry ever since we got into the rescue business, said Operations Chief Jerry Rabetski.

## Arson

A warehouse fire that caused more than $3,000,000 in damage, on January 23, 1990, was undoubtedly the work of an arsonist. No other heat source could be found for the fire at North Quincy Street and Bay Beach Road. It started among pallets and cardboard on a loading dock before spreading throughout the building owned by McDonald Warehousing Corp. This was according to Staff Chief Gerald Van Campenhout of the Department's Fire Prevention Bureau.

The warehouse was the third building owned by McDonald Warehousing that was damaged by fire since October 29, 1989, when fire destroyed Tosca Ltd., 701 Bay Beach Road. The Tosca fire burned the 50,000 square foot structure to the ground. The loss was estimated at $2,000,000.

A building located only a few hundred feet from Tosca, sustained damage in yet another arson fire on December 27, 1989.

In this fire, most of the damage involved equipment owned by Printech Inc., 219 Bay Beach Road. The company's machinery was saved, but it's inventory; large rolls of paper once stacked to the now missing roof, came tumbling down or were knocked down and destroyed by a day long overhaul operation.

The fire was discovered by two Printech employees who smelled smoke and discovered it coming from beneath a door to a storage area. One L.P. gas tank from a fork lift truck exploded in the fire and four others blew their valves, venting gas that probably provided fuel for the fire.

Acting Deputy Chief Byron Weycker said he was surprised firefighters were able to contain the fire. They were helped by a fire door on one end of the building that closed off fire travel in that direction. On the opposite end the door failed to close and firefighters were forced to stop it with their own efforts and water.

## A Nation-Wide Search Is Started

On March 3rd, 1990, the city of Green Bay began an national search for a successor to retiring Fire Chief Gerald Selissen. Advertisements were sent out to local newspapers, to Madison and Milwaukee newspapers and to two national fire journals.

The city Police and Fire Commission took applications until April 10, 1990. They made the decision not to restrict applications just to those within the Green Bay Fire Department.

Gerald Selissen, who served Green Bay as Fire Chief for 18 years, retired on July 31, 1990. A surprise party at the Rock Garden Supper Club was given for him on July 26.

Many of Chief Selissen's friends, co-workers, family

Lieutenant Larry Schauer and Firefighter Arnie Wolff man a 2½" line at Tosca Ltd. on October 29, 1989. *(Green Bay Press-Gazette)*

members, and city dignitaries came to wish him a fond farewell and a happy retirement. Many stories were told about Jerry, some good and some bad, (but not real bad). The party was a complete success, and fun was had by all.

## Tower Drive Bridge Tragedy

On Monday, March 12, 1990, normalcy bypassed Green Bay. In the fog of an interstate bridge and in the space of a horrifying few minutes, a world of sense and order ended. It ended on the westbound lane of Interstate Highway 43, where the road climbs toward it's peak at the Tower Drive Bridge. Less than a mile west of the Webster Avenue ramp, 50 vehicles entered one side of a blinding hellground of fog and factory emissions, and didn't come out the other side. There was mayhem. The routine of a Green Bay Monday became twisted, crashing metal. It became squealing tires, streams of gasoline, explosions of fire, billows of smoke, pain, and death. It became the worse accident, in total vehicles involved, in Wisconsin's history.

Three people died on that bridge and 31 people were taken to Green Bay hospitals. In a piece of highway that normally would fit just half of them, 50 vehicles stopped suddenly and found a deadly and costly way to share space. Most of them would never run again. Some would never look like vehicles again. Lives were changed on the Tower Drive Bridge.

Coroner Genie Williams' job is to work with the living, perhaps more than to deal with the dead. She was summoned to the bridge at 7:45 a.m., and she dreaded what was to come. First they told me two, then they said three,' she said, referring to the number killed. In her mind, she was begging them to stop counting. 'I know somewhere there are people waiting, she said. 'there are people I'm going to have to talk to.

A couple of hours later she would be at Bay Beach, sitting on a bus marked "Fire Department" telling people their loved ones had passed away.

Patrolman Steve Krouth, in the middle of his first day on the job, was standing watch outside the door of the bus. His first assignment, guarding the pavilion where detectives were interviewing those involved in the accident, hadn't been much fun.

'It's kind of a shock, seeing all these people coming in looking for their loved ones.' he said. We took their names and phone numbers and told them we'd get back to them when we found out more."

Later, firefighters, paramedics, and police officers would wonder why there hadn't been more deaths. The flames, licking so close to the rivers of gas, had not ignited them. The tanker, so close to the fireball, had not exploded. Maybe it was because the southwest wind chased the flames off the bridge instead of toward the line of cars, or maybe it was the fact that the bridges metal expansion joint acted like a drain just behind the fire, dropping gallons of gasoline and fuel oil through a crack to the ground below.

Minutes after the accident, a spectacular sun broke through to illuminate the bridge. It was helpful to firefighters and rescue efforts, but too late to prevent the tragedy in the first place.

Dr. Robert Zimmerman, an emergency room physician at St. Vincent Hospital who was brought to the scene, could only shake his head and say. "God was smiling on us that day."[3]

## Water Water Everywhere

Another aspect of the firefighter's job is water rescue. And on June 22, 1990, firefighters got to use their training.

In a 20 hour period, Green Bay received 4.83 inches of rain, eclipsing the old record of 1975 which was 4.60 inches. The worst hit area was along the East River, where hundreds of people's basements were flooded. With the electric power out, their sump pumps were unable to run.

Firefighters, Red Cross volunteers, and Police personnel were hard at work, physically carrying people to safe ground from their homes through waist deep water. The best transportation from these areas became canoe's and small fishing boats.

While firefighters and other volunteers worked feverishly at getting people out of the flood area, another call came in to Fire Dispatch.

A canoe with three young people in it was making it's way down the East River, just south of the Mason Street bridge, when it capsized. Three went into the water and were drawn under the bridge, but only two came out the other side.

A fourteen year old girl was caught under the bridge in an air pocket hanging by a girder on the underside of the bridge.

Police and firefighters arrived at the scene, but they didn't know if she was still alive. On a whim, Police Officer Scott Miller put his ear to the railing of the bridge and heard her yell. While Officer Miller listened, he tried to narrow down where she was knocking on the underside of the bridge.

Two divers were preparing to dive in to take a look. Brown County Officer Gregg Haney and Green Bay Police Officer Bob Hagland began feeling their way beneath the bridge in murky, swirling water, while firefighters held onto them with ropes from above. Two other divers, Dave Baumgart and Steve DeTerra of the Fire Department were also in their gear and ready to relieve the men if the need would arise.

Officer Haney told Acting Deputy Chief Byron Weycker that it would be to risky to try and have the girl swim from under the bridge with one of the divers, so a decision was made to cut a hole through the bridge from on top with a jackhammer. Two and one half hours later, firefighters and police officers pulled 14 year old Carol Jicha through a three foot hole in the bridge.

When Miss Jicha was pulled out, onlookers and rescuers alike cheered, for a life was saved.[4]

Before this rescue was accomplished, a cloud of leaking ammonia at the Stokely USA's Green Bay Canning Corp. sent at least four people to the hospital, and caused the evacuation of dozens of plant employees, passersby, and businesses along Main Street.

People who could smell or see the pungent ammonia vapors were being instructed to evacuate or close their doors and windows and remain indoors, Deputy Fire Chief Jim Jeanquart said. Staying behind closed doors and windows is a new technique called In-house evacuation. Instead of risking lives by moving them through a potentially hazardous environment outside, they are told to seal up their houses and remain there unless instructed otherwise. Any machinery that could cause an influx of air, such as airconditioners and furnaces, were to be turned off, and temporarily sealed.

The ammonia, used as a refrigerant, began leaking from a one foot-wide pipe inside the plant about 9:30 a.m.. Just before 11:00 a.m. the leak was stopped by firefighters repeatedly entering and searching for the valve to turn it off. Professionals from the Bassett Company then bled off the excess pressure into an expansion tank, thus relieving the danger of an explosion.

And as a somewhat more comical, but no less dangerous occurrence, firefighters were called in to herd propane tanks that were floating down Baird's Creek. The tanks, lifted from their emplacement at the Gauthier Trailer Court, were floating towards the large ammonia tanks at the Morning Glory Plant downstream. The propane was trickling out of the broken lines as they were being swept down the usually trickling creek. Engineer Don Ward and Firefighters Webb Jenkel and Tom Albers used ropes and pike poles to corral the 1000 pound tanks, and tied them to large trees along the banks. Deputy Chief Jeanquart worried that the propane tanks would rupture and explode if they hit the bridge abutment just before the ammonia tanks. All the tanks were captured by "the wranglers of the Green Bay Fire Department.

## Water Fight Team

*by Mike Malecki*

The Water Fight Team was started in June of 1990 by firefighter Gary Wiese, who gained the water-fighting knowledge during his volunteer days.

The team presently consists of 15 members, and is growing as interest catches on. Members who attend a water fight are divided into teams of 3 or 4, consisting of one nozzleman, one back-up man and one or two hose handlers.

Each team has 2 minutes to use their water stream to force an empty, suspended barrel over their opponents heads. The water fight is either single or double elimination, with trophies and prize money for first and second place.

Food and refreshments are enjoyed after the water fights, and members have a chance to meet firefighters from surrounding areas. Water fights are held from Memorial Day through Labor Day, with fights being held every weekend. They are usually sponsored by volunteer departments during their annual picnics. The Green Bay Fire Department plans to sponsor their first water fight on the 4th of July during Celebrate Americafest, hoping to make it an annual event.

The team had fair success during it's rookie year, winning five trophies. Joining in the fun in the women's bracket were wives and girlfriends of firefighters. They placed second in their third fight of the year.

## A New Chief Is Appointed

On Thursday, June 21, 1990, John Troeger was named Fire Chief of Green Bay. He was chosen from three finalists by the Police and Fire Commission. It is the first time in recent history Green Bay has gone outside of it's own department to select a Fire Chief.

Chief Troeger, most recently the Public Safety Director in Urbana, Illinois, began his career as a firefighter in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1960. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1967, and Captain in 1970, before becoming Fire Chief in Xenia, Ohio on February 1973.

Troeger said he had not sent out a resume since taking Urbana's Public Safety Director position in 1976, but he said the combined police and fire position of public safety became frustrating, prompting him to apply for the Green Bay job.

Chief John Troeger
*(John Roemer Photo)*

Chief Troeger understands that local firefighters aren't used to taking orders from an outsider. "But" he said, "That's O.K. He's used to coming in from the outside to give them. Some people aren't going to be happy initially, but I think we can overcome that."

Troeger, and his wife Carol, have four grown children.[5]

During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, many of our local troops were sent to active duty in Saudi Arabia and many other areas. When the 432nd Civil Affairs Company left Green Bay via Fort Bragg, they took with them, Green Bay's official City flag, which was presented to the unit by Mayor Sam Halloin. It was designed by Theresa Devroy, daughter of former Deputy Chief Wilfred "Joe" and Gen Devroy, when she was a student at Green Bay West High School, in 1973. Joe was a Green Bay firefighter for thirty-five years.

## Rigs and Equipment

This is a list of rigs in service as of April 1991:

Engine 1.
1979 Duplex-1250 G.P.M.-6 cyl Detroit Diesel
Ladder 1.
1973 Seagrave Eagle-100 foot Ladder Truck
Rescue 1.
1988 Ford E-350
Chief's Car.
1990 Dodge Ram Charger
Engine 2.
1990 Spartan-1000 G.P.M.-6 cyl Cummins Diesel
Rescue 2.
1987 Ford E-350
Salvage 2.
1985 GMC Step-Van
Mini Pump 2.
1976 GMC 4x4
Foam Truck 2.
1954 International Harvester-4 ton
Engine 3.
1991 Spartan-1250 G.P.M.-6 cyl Cummins Diesel
Ladder 3.
1965 Seagrave-100 foot Ladder Truck
Engine 4.
1979 Duplex-1250 G.P.M.-6 cyl Detroit Diesel
Engine 5.
1989 Kovatch-1000 G.P.M.-8 cyl Cat Diesel
Ladder 5.
1982 Seagrave-100 foot Ladder Truck
Engine 6.
1990 Mack-1250 G.P.M.-6cyl Mack Diesel
Salvage 6.
1978 GMC Step-Van
Rescue 6.
1988 Ford E-350
Tanker 6.
1978 GMC-1250 gallon capacity
Engine 7.
1981 Ford/3D-1000 G.P.M.-8 cyl Cat Diesel
Tanker 7.
1991 Chevrolet Kodiak-1500 gallon capacity
Reserve.
1971 Ford-65 foot ladder-(gas engine)
Arson Rig.
1977 Chevrolet-AR4
Fire Bus.
1975 GMC-45 passenger

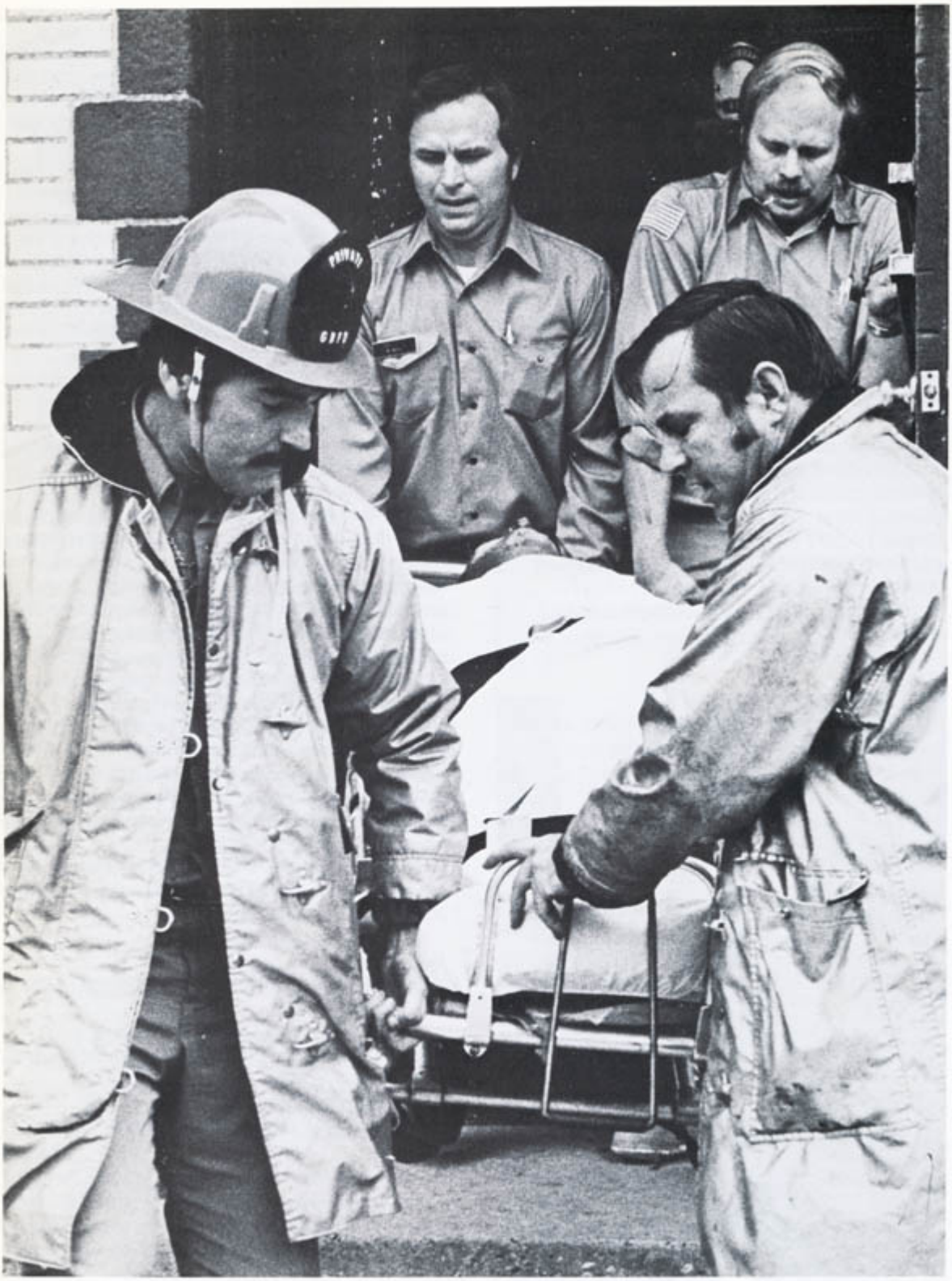
We have seen 100 years of history pass before our eyes. Where do we go from here? No one really knows. There will be many fires, many floods, and many rescue calls, but what I do know is, many good firefighters have given their entire lives to the fire service of the City of Green Bay, and we can only think about the future, but not really know. There is vigilance, bravery, and pride in this department, and you really have to be there to know the extent of what I'm talking about. But the practical jokes, the dousing with water, and the other silly things that are done in a fire station, all stop when the fire alarm goes off.

We have honored our fallen firefighters who have passed away, and stood by their coffins in their honor. We have felt sorrow for their loved ones and cried tears many times.

We have won some and we have lost some, but if we can save just one life, it makes it all worth being a Green Bay firefighter. *Randy Rybicki*

**Footnotes**

1. Keith Goldschmidt, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 25 May 1980
2. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 18 February 1989
3. Julie Bell/Tony Walter, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 13 March, 1990
4. Green Bay Press-Gazette, 24 June 1990
5. Julie Bell, Green Bay Press-Gazette, 23 June 1990



Nick Moore, Bob Nuss, Bruce VandenPlas and Bob Cormier
with patient in late 1970's. *(John Roemer Photo)*

# Emergency Medical Services

The Green Bay Fire Department has served two roles in the community, responding to fire alarms and emergency medical calls since 1927. In the 1930's, Chief Ralph Drum personally answered first aid calls in his 1929 Pierce Arrow chief's car.

The city's only rescue squad responded from Station 1 until a second unit was manned full-time at Station 3 in the early part of 1956. Many of the rescue calls in those days were of the load and go variety, something that seems to have come full circle. The paramedics are again being taught to do the same in the most severe trauma cases.

During the years 1955-57 squad calls hovered at 230. In 1958 the number rose to 277, and jumped to 360 by the end of 1959. In 1962 the two rescue squads responded to 421 alarms.

In 1966, the entire department received medical training from Doctors Austin, Sullivan, Crawford, and Warpinski. That year the number of emergency calls topped 1,000.

In 1967 both shifts received instruction in the use and care of their new oxygen resuscitators.

In the department's annual report for 1971, Deputy Chief Alfred Minor, in charge of maintenance, made an urgent plea for two new rescue vehicles, due to the high number of calls they were answering. Minor's report did not fall on deaf ears.

In 1973, the Fort Howard Paper Foundation donated two new Horton ambulances, along with two $5,000 monitor/defribillators. The type I Squads were a new experience for the men, who before were answering alarms in a 1967 Reo 4 by 4 from Station 2, and a 1968 International from Station 3.

The summer of 1972, Dr. Richardson approached Registered Nurse Dolores Collins, a Bellin Hospital employee, about forming a mobile coronary care unit which would be required at all Green Bay Packer Football games. Richardson, Collins, and Cardiac Technician Tom Lochran, organized the drugs, defibrillator, and the supplies they thought would be necessary for the task. Upon entering Lambeau Stadium, the cardiac team set up next to the Fire Department's rescue squad, a fixture at the game for years. They approached the fire officer and asked about space to work in case of a cardiac emergency, and were given the O.K. to use the rescue squad if needed. Captain Harold Kaye also offered the assistance of himself and his men. During one of the games that season, a former Packer player suffered cardiac arrest on the sidelines, and the new team went to work.

The firefighters who assisted, along with a large share of the 52,000 spectators, were amazed the man was resuscitated. Captain Kaye later asked why firefighters couldn't become paramedics? Soon after Nurse Collins asked herself the same question as she attempted to resuscitate her brother, who had suffered a cardiac arrest. Hearing sirens approaching the scene, she could think of no reason the men should not have the training and equipment that was necessary.

In May 1973 Nurse Collins was ready to begin teaching. Because there were no standards set up for paramedics, Cardiologist Howard Palay compiled information from programs in Milwaukee and the West Coast, and set up training guidelines for a local program. Beginning with cardiac modules, the men received lectures at the fire stations and clinical experience in the cardiac care unit at Bellin Hospital. They also witnessed heart catheterization, heart surgery, and autopsies. Miss Collins recruited fellow CCU nurses to assist in teaching practical skills at both the fire station and the hospital.

During the first year of training, the department responded to 2,879 rescue squad calls. Station 2 made 1,393, Station 3 made 1,396, and a 1953 backup squad at Station 4 made 90 calls.

Dolores 'Dee' Collins R.N.

At first the paramedics could practice advanced techniques only when a registered nurse was along, but after an auto accident sidelined Miss Collins, she convinced the physicians to let the men work without her, so that the program wouldn't fail.

By 1975 there were 22 firefighters training in the emergency rooms under the direction of Dr. Arthur Haines at St. Vincent Hospital and Dr. Clarence Novotny at St. Mary's Hospital. The men had completed there instruc-

tions and were ready to go even before the State of Wisconsin, in a legislative backlog, was ready to administer the licensing exam. That year the number of calls jumped to 3,761. They were divided almost evenly at 1,815 for Fire Rescue 72 and 1,825 for Fire Rescue 73. The reserve squad, now at Station 1 answered 121 calls. When the State was finally ready to begin testing, the firefighters received a final refresher class at Northeast Wisconsin Technical Institute from Instructor Jeff Clark. They received their Emergency Medical Technician-Advanced licenses in 1976. Since then paramedics have been trained through the technical college in cooperation with the city's three hospitals.

Some of the early Paramedic trainees standing behind Dee Collins. L to R: Gerald O'Dell, Joseph Kamps, William Schmidt, William Panure, Robert King, Ronald Phillips, Michael Lison, and Glen Paradise.

Deputy Chief Harold Kaye, who served as Squad Director since the start of the Paramedic Program, retired December 31, 1988. Captain Robert Cormier was then appointed to the position, and served in that capacity as a Deputy Chief until his death on June 6, 1991.

At present, the department has 35 licensed paramedics and 57 licensed Emergency Medical Technicians. During the mid-70's to the mid-80's, completion of the basic EMT course was required for all newly hired firefighters. The instruction is now voluntary, with classes filled by seniority as openings arise. The entire department receives Basic Life Support instruction annually.

The Green Bay Fire Department's advanced life support squads, now at Station 1, 2, and 6 responded to over 5000 calls last year. The Emergency Medical Services program in the city can be considered one of the departments biggest successes. *Jeff Stauber*

BELOW: Mark Ullmer, Ted Schultz, Randy Rybicki and Dave Riebe. In background are, Dick Katers, Harvey Graume and Wayne Anderson. *(Ken Behrend Photo)*

# Local 141; A Brief History

Paid firefighters began organizing themselves into clubs and associations from the time they first appeared in the mid 19th century. Many of these groups were organized for the assistance of firefighters who were injured on the job or for families of firefighters who died.

By the middle of the 20th century, professional firefighters were beginning to organize themselves into local unions. The first of these to be chartered by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was in Pittsburgh, PA, a union which still holds #1 in the International Association of Firefighters.

By the end of 1916, there were 17 AFL chartered unions in the United States and one in Vancouver, Canada. The World War I surge of interest in unionism was eagerly joined by professional firefighters. More than 40 local unions were chartered by the AFL in 1917, and interest grew in establishing an international union. The result was a charter convention called in Baltimore, MD, the next year, which was attended by 24 local unions. It's deliberation resulted in the founding of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) on February 28, 1918, and its chartering by the AFL. Green Bay Firefighter's Local 141 was one of the original charter member of the IAFF. The original membership of Local 141 consisted of 24 men with the charter officers being: Henry Harris, President; August Kemp, Vice President; and August Janquart, Secretary-Treasurer. Henry Faulkner was Chief of the Green Bay Fire Department at the time of affiliation with the IAFF.

In 1919, Local 141 became affiliated with the Wisconsin Federation of Labor and the Green Bay Federated Trades Council. These two organizations were to become the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO, and the Greater Green Bay Labor Council, respectively. To this day, Local 141 retains its affiliation to these organizations.

In 1918, one of the first issues tackled by the newly chartered local was instituting of the platoon system for firefighters. They were working a 72 hour shift after which they were allowed 16 hours off. It wasn't until the mid-1930's that evidence shows that this was achieved, and a 24 hour platoon system began. At the time of this monumental change, the officers of Local 141 were: Elmer Schoen, President; Victor Cravillion, Vice President; and Ed Vanark, Secretary-Treasurer. In the interim these positions were held by various individuals including Presidents: Florence Biemeret, Henry Harris, William Cropsey, John Anderson, and Howard Anderson; Vice Presidents: Warren Spofford, William Hasse, Dan Donavan, Peter Peckinpaugh, and Lester Braemer; and Secretary-Treasurers Howard Anderson, Joseph Brockman, Francis Golling, and Elmer Schoen.

By the mid-1930's, membership in Local 141 had risen to 58 firefighters. 1935 also saw Green Bay host a convention of organized firefighters from throughout Wisconsin. This convention was attended by two organized groups of firefighters within the state. They were the Federated Firefighters of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Paid Firefighters Association. Uniquely, each Local in the state maintained membership in both organizations and their conventions were held together, one occupying the morning session and the other meeting in the afternoon session of a three day convention. A joint session was held on the last day of the convention to discuss joint ventures. The sole purpose of the Wis. Paid Firefighters was to educate and talk to legislative groups and individual legislators in an attempt to get favorable results on firefighting issues. At some point prior to 1960, the Federated Firefighters of Wisconsin (P.F.F.W.) changed their name to the United Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin.

The only Green Bay Firefighter to hold a state office was Elmer Schoen, who held the office of President during the 1950's. Since that time, other members of Local 141 to seek firefighter offices at the state level were Thomas McIntyre, Jerome Rabetski, and John Rogers.

During the remainder of the 1930's and into the 1940's, Local 141 dealt with such issues as a wage freeze during World War II, modernization of the department, and an increase in duties that included building inspections, pre-fire planning, and first aid. This was the forerunner of today's Emergency Medical Services (E.M.S.) system, and was under the personal direction of Chief Ralph Drum. An "oxygen inhalator" was carried in the chief's car along with a "full supply of first aid equipment."

In 1949, Fire Station #4 opened it's doors and this saw the membership of Local 141 increase to approximately 68 men. During this period of Local 141, various individuals held official positions within the union. They included Presidents: Clarence Shaha, William Selissen, and Thomas Farrell; Vice Presidents: Louis Leanna, Henry Truckey, and Elmer Schoen; and Secretary-Treasurers; Louis Vandenbush, William Phillips, Milan Kraus, and Vernon Fontaine.

The 1950's saw the Local turn their attention to such issues as retirement pensions, residency, and the passage of some bargaining laws at the state level. According to Royal Taylor, retired past President and a current member of the Retired Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin, firefighters in the State of Wisconsin have always had the right to bargain for a fair and equitable contract but no formal or legal direction was provided as to who would bargain with. The early strategy of organized firefighters was to get the fire chief on their side of an issue and then hope he would be able to persuade management to take the firefighters view of that issue. It wasn't until the 1950's and 60's that firefighters made significant strides in bargaining with the

passage of State Laws regarding fact-finding, employee's rights, and arbitration. The fact that it took state laws to enable firefighters to obtain a fair salary and retirement benefits led them to the realization that the political process and their involvement in it was not only important but necessary.

Out of this realization grew lobbying efforts on both the state and national level that continue today. Through voluntary contributions, the PFFW PAC (political action committee) and FIREPAC (political action committee of the international) have become the driving force behind firefighter issues for today and into the future. During the 1950's Local 141 was led by such capable individuals as Presidents: David Zuidmulder, Donald Kolbusz, and Harvey Younk; Vice Presidents: Donald Kolbusz, Alfred Minor, Wallace Nolan; and Treasurers: Harvey Younk, Alex Smeester, and Russell Reynolds.

The decade of the 1960's saw such issues as pension benefits, parity with the Police Department, wage increases, and health insurance as a concern for all.

As early as 1966, Local 141 established an Insurance Committee to ensure members were adequately protected and their interests looked after. This insurance committee was established by President Gerald Selissen in January of 1966. It was chaired by Donald Kolbusz, with other members being Jack LaFave, Leo Anderson, and Val Brown. The purpose of the committee was to assist all members of the Department on 'problems pertaining to insurance." The Insurance Committee of Local 141 at present is Chaired by Earl McGregor, with John Charles, Daniel Kennedy, and Anthony Lison as members.

April 1964 saw the membership of Local 141 increase in size to approximately 120 firefighters when the City of Green Bay annexed the Town of Preble. The Preble Fire Station became Station No.5 of the Green Bay Fire Department.

In September of 1967, the 56 hour work week became reality for Local 141 after years of bargaining for a shorter work week. A third shift was added to facilitate this move and firefighters began working under this system, called the California Plan. This additional shift increased the membership in Local 141 so that by the end of 1967 there were 137 members.

In 1969, another substantial increase in membership occurred when Station No.6 opened in November.

This continued growth enabled Local 141 to become a stronger force at the bargaining table and within the community. During the 1960's and into the 1970's, Local 141 annually assisted the Green Bay Packer Corporation in holding its Annual Intra-Squad Game. They assisted by selling tickets for the organization and in manning first-aid stations at the games. For their efforts, a portion of the proceeds was received by Local 141 to be used for charitable contributions. Those charities included Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, the Salvation Army, Rawhide Boy's Ranch, and Babe Ruth Baseball, among others. Through this effort, a special relationship developed between Local 141 and Coach Vince Lombardi that continued up until the time of his death.

Muscular Dystrophy, perhaps the most noted of all firefighter charities, continues to be a favorite of Local 141. From being capably led by Richard Mocco, Harold Kaye, and David Bultman in the 1950's and 1960's. Today, through the work of the MDA Committee, Local 141 collects and donates thousands of dollars annually to MDA of Northeastern Wisconsin. The principle fund-raisers are two annual events, a late Winter Sock Hop, and a Summer Hog Wrestle. The present MDA Committee consists of Richard Cheslock, Dan Truckey, David Baumgart, Tim Johnson, and Peter Sponholtz.

In the 1960's the officers included, Presidents: Gerald Selissen and Donald Kolbusz; Vice Presidents: Richard Mocco, Richard Katers, Timothy Madden, Byron Weycker, and Roland Becker; Secretaries: Wallace Nolan, Neal Van Caster, Russell Reynolds, and Armand Wendricks; and Treasurers: James Wulk, Byron Weycker, Robert King, and Russell Reynolds.

The decade of the 1970's began with Local 141 serving as host to the PFFW Convention in 1970. Chairman of the Convention Committee was Roland Becker. 1974 saw Local 141 attend its first IAFF Convention. The delegates who attended and represented Local 141 were Russell Reynolds and Russell Nelson.

Also during this decade, the principle officers became automatic delegates to all PFFW Conventions attended by Local 141. Prior to this time, all delegates were elected by secret ballot at union meetings. During the 70's, bargaining concerns centered around pension benefits, insurance costs and coverages, pay for Emergency Medical providers, health and safety issues, cost of living pay adjustments, and lay-offs.

In 1973 due to budget constraints, Mayor Thomas Atkinson and the City laid-off 4 members of Local 141. Those members were Gerald Scheller, Jack Ollman, Mike Lison, and Roger Truckey. It was a year later that the last of the laid-off firefighters were re-hired. In December of 1974, after Mayor Thomas Atkinson failed to deliver on a campaign promise for a cost of living wage increase, a large contingent from the membership of Local 141, led by President Thomas DePas, descended upon City Hall to conduct informal picketing. The purpose of this picketing was to generate support for the firefighters amidst these broken promises, and to bring a sense of unity to the Local. Contrary to the belief of many, there was no intention of Local 141 ever going out on strike. Instrumental in carrying out the informational picketing were the wives of the membership who supplied much of the physical labor and moral support that was needed.

With the increased work load brought on by medical emergencies, bargaining began in 1976 to acquire extra compensation for emergency medical personnel. It wasn't until September of 1977 that extra pay was achieved for

members who were part of the EMS System.

Throughout the history of Local 141, meetings were held at various locations including fire stations and taverns. In August of 1974, Local 141 moved into a permanent home at the Labor Temple on Elizabeth Street. For a minimal monthly rent, union meetings could be held there and still continue to be today.

During the 1970's various individuals served as officers of Local 141. These included, Presidents: Gerald Selissen, Richard Katers, Arnie Goral, Thomas DePas, and Jerome Rabetski; Vice Presidents: Richard Katers, Timothy Madden, Eugene Dwyer, Russell Nelsen, Jerome Rabetski, and Earl McGregor; Secretary: Armand Wendricks; and Treasurers: Byron Weycker and Thomas McIntyre. Occasionally, Sergeants at Arms were appointed by the President for individual meetings. These included Lawrence Sullivan, Earl DeBoth, and Richard Konop.

The 1980's once again saw some of the same issues resurface that had previously faced Local 141. These included insurance costs, retirement benefits, health and safety issues for firefighters, EMS issues, and fair and equitable wage increases. In 1982 the membership in Local 141 increased to about 190 members with the opening of Station #7 on Humboldt Road, and during the 80's it reached an all-time high of 196. It has hovered near that mark since.

In response to an added emphasis on firefighter health and safety, a Safety Committee was appointed by President Jerome Rabetski in 1984. The original committee consisted of Ronald Marto, Timothy Madden, Edwin Crummy III, Chester Lintz, and Robert Cormier, with Edwin Crummy serving as the first chairman.

The first EMS Committee was also appointed by President Rabetski at about the same time. Members serving on it were Chairman Ronald Phillips, Joseph Matzke, Mark Schroeder, David Riebe, Cal Lintz, Todd Selissen, and Robert Cormier.

1986 saw the Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin Annual Convention return to Green Bay after a 16 year absence. Co-chaired by Thomas DePas and Lawrence LaMere, the convention was a great success and is still remembered as one of the finest conventions in the history of the PFFW.

The principle officers of Local 141 during the 1980's were, Presidents: Jerome Rabetski, Earl McGregor, John Rogers, and Richard Sloan; Vice Presidents: Earl McGregor, Lawrence LaMere, John Rogers, and Edward Vandenack; Secretary: Armand Wendricks; Treasurer: Thomas McIntyre. McIntyre was elected as Secretary-Treasurer in 1985.

In late 1990 and into 1991, Operation Desert Storm occupied the minds of many union members as two of our members were called up for active duty in the Armed Forces. Wayne Huempfner served his country in the Persian Gulf area while Daniel Kennedy was called to the Naval Hospital at Great Lakes, Illinois.

As Local 141 enters the 1990's, many of the same issues that were a great concern to firefighters 40 or 50 years ago are still a concern today. A reduction of retirement and pension benefits are a constant target of those in public office, insurance costs are seemingly uncontrollable, inflation is once again eroding pay checks, and new demands are being placed upon firefighters almost daily.

With these issues and others in mind, comes the constant reminder that the current leadership of Local 141 has a vast amount of work ahead of them. This leadership presently consists of: President Richard Sloan, Vice President Steve Wolford, and Secretary-Treasurer Leonard Orlando.

A special thanks to the International Association of Firefighters, Glen Burger of the Public Relations Department of the IAFF, Royal Taylor of the Retired Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin, and all the past Secretaries of Local 141, who maintained accurate records that allowed much of this material to be researched. *Leonard "Tony" Orlando*

# Green Bay Fire Department Honor Guard

At the right are the Honor Guard musicians Pete Sponholtz, Dennis Metz, and Rick Mercier. The Directors of the Honor Guard, in the photograph below, are Tim Smits, Dennis Metz, and Steve Peggs.

Honor Guard members in the photographs on the opposite page are (top, L to R); Dick Albers, Randy Rybicki, Jim Miller, Jeff Jacobe, Harold Watermolen, Tim Madden, Bruce VandenPlas, Jeff Jansen, Al Klimek, Gerald Scheller, Roger Piontek, and Jeff Stauber.
Bottom: Ann Watzka, Steve Wolford, Mike Nieft, Terry Timmerman, Tom DePas, Earl McGregor, Ed Jarosz, Ed Crummy, Mike Skaleski, and Dave Baumgart.

BPSI

Fire rages at the Blackstone Hotel on Dousman Street. In the foreground is Pump 92, a 1956 Seagrave. The date of the fire was February 21, 1963.

Photo courtesy of Al Minor.

Preparing to load a patient in the Reo rescue squad are Harold Watermolen, Bob King, Harold Kaye, and Tom Titulaer. Dick Briquelet looks on.

Photo courtesy of H. Kaye.

Pump 91, a 1946 Mack 1250 GPM pumper. The photo was taken during an annual service test on the east bank of the Fox River. The exact date is unknown, probably in the early 1960's.

Photo courtesy of Al Minor.

Stations 1 and 2 made this fire call on South Webster Avenue in the early morning of Easter Sunday 1982. The converted apartment building, of balloon construction, ended up to be unrepairable when finally extinguished.

Photo courtesy of Dan Becker.

The silhouette of Ladder 5 at the McDonald Warehouse/Printech fire on January 23, 1990. Only the center of the long building was destroyed, the ends being saved by firewalls and master streams. The location of the building is 219 Bay Beach Road.

GBFD photograph.

Engine 1 now, a 1979 Duplex by 3-D Fire Apparatus of Shawano, Wisconsin. The unit was reconditioned and a new 1250 GPM pump added in 1990

Team members (L to R) Jim Miller, Dan Truckey, Dave Truckey, Sam Al-Saadi, Ed Crummy, and Don Phillips.

RIGHT: Jim Miller and Sam Al-Saadi work with a piece of detection equipment.
BELOW: Mike Skaleski checks out an air supply line.

Don Phillips, Dan Truckey, and Dave Truckey during a training session.

RIGHT: Ed Crummy checks over a SCBA facepiece.

Haz-Mat Team Member Mark Schroeder

# Haz-Mat Response Team

In September 1988, 25 area firefighters were selected to begin training as members of the Brown County Hazardous Material Response Team. The group, including Green Bay Firefighters Sam Al-Saadi, Ed Crummy, Jim Miller, Don Phillips, Mike Skaleski, and Dan Truckey, completed their training at Lakeshore Technical College in May 1989. The team members are trained to the 'Specialist' level.

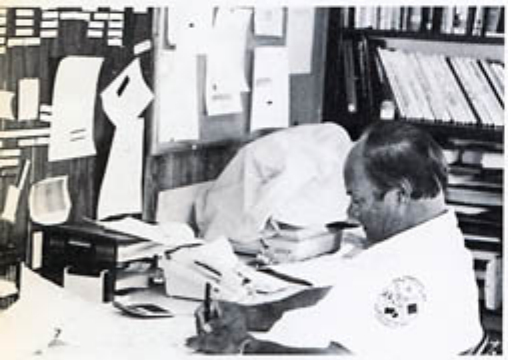
In June 1991, Firefighters Mark Schroeder and Dave Truckey were selected as members and have since completed training.

Dave Truckey, Dan Truckey, Sam Al-Saadi and Ed Crummy assist Don Phillips into a Level A, fully encapsulated suit.

Mike Skaleski readying a SCBA in the team's equipment trailer, a 40-foot fifth wheel. The trailer contains a computer resource center, personal protective clothing, and tools essential to controlling material leaks & spills.

# Fire Station 1

Fire Station 1, located at 501 South Washington Street, was built in 1929 at a cost of $35,497.40, and has housed the offices of the Fire Chief and his staff since then. In the past, it has also been home to the fire inspectors, dispatchers, and mechanics. Normally staffed with 11-14 personnel, the station is equipped with Rescue 1, Engine 1, Ladder 1, as well as the single Deputy Chief's car. The station's fire district includes the near east side of the city.



LEFT: Administrative Assistant Shona Klarkowski at work.
BELOW: Rescue 1 is a 1988 Ford staffed with a minimum of two paramedics and officer.
OPPOSITE PAGE: The Deputy Chief's car is a 1990 Dodge Ramcharger, Engine 1 is a 1979 Duplex by 3-D, and Ladder 1 is a 1973 Seagrave 100 foot aerial. At the bottom, Paramedic Steve DeTerra digs into another meal postponed by a squad call.

Visiting with Lt. Bob Nuss are retirees Ken Stievo and Tom Sturm, back in Green Bay while on vacation.

Fire Station 1 at 501 South Washington Street.

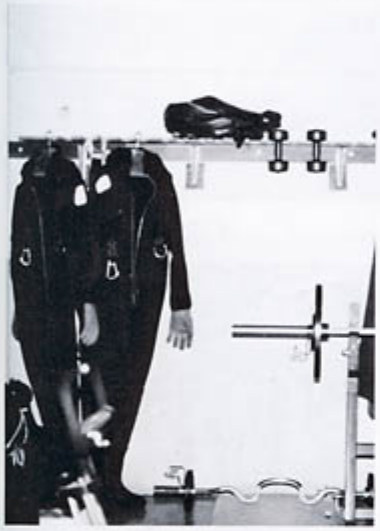
# Fire Station 2

RIGHT: Mark Schroeder assists in the preparation of a noon lunch.
BELOW: Daren Krueger cleans up the apparatus floor after a morning drill session.

ABOVE: Foam Truck 2 is a 1954 IH with stake bed that carries the department's supply of AFFF foam concentrate.
RIGHT: Rescue 2 is a 1987 Ford squad, possibly the last one to be ordered with a gas engine. It is due for replacement in August 1991.

Salvage 2 is a 1985 Grumman van customized to fit the department's special equipment. The unit carries a Hurst Tool, air bags, SCBA, and the many hand tools required at the fire and accident scene.

Fire Station 2, located at 929 University Avenue, was built in 1964. The station's large east side fire district includes the hospitals, Proctor and Gamble, James River, and Green Bay Packaging Paper Mills.



LEFT: Water rescue suits and equipment are stored at Station 2. The engine company will don the suits and be ready for rescue when they arrive at the emergency scene.

ABOVE: Mini-Pump 2 and the rescue boats. The mini-pump responds to brush and leaf fires, car ramp fires, and tows the boat to the scene of water emergencies.

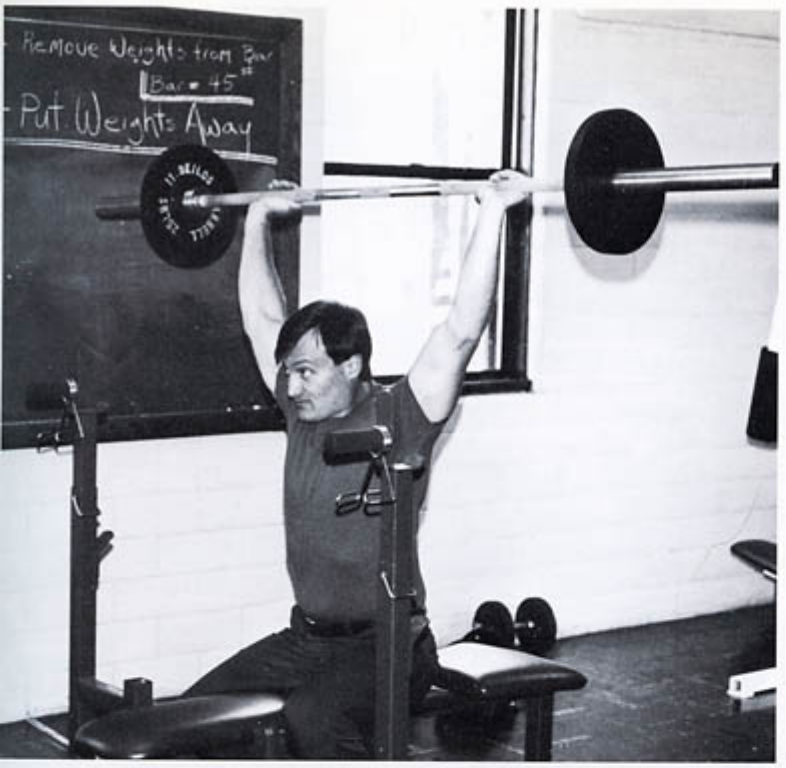
Engine 2 is a 1990 Spartan/3-D. The rig features a totally enclosed cab and top-mounted pump control panel. The pump is rated at 1000 GPM.

# Fire Station 3

Fire Station 3, 885 Shawano Avenue, was built in 1937 at a cost of $37,376.00. The station is presently home to Engine 3 and Ladder 3 with seven total personnel. At one time, the station held five rigs and 15 men. Ladder 3's district is the entire west side, while the engine company covers all but the far southwest corner of the city.

RIGHT: Tom McIntyre in 3's office.
BELOW: Ladder 3 is a 1965 Seagrave 100 foot aerial.

ABOVE: The department's newest rig is Engine 3, a 1991 Spartan built by 3-D Fire Apparatus. The pump is rated at 1250 GPM, and features an enclosed cab and top-mounted pump controls, and a pre-connected Stinger nozzle.
RIGHT: Camera-shy firefighters.




Tom Greely shows off the recently acquired weight equipment, a joint effort of the city and the firefighter's welfare association.

Fire Station 3, 885 Shawano Avenue.

# Fire Station 4

Fire Station 4 was the city's second west side station. It was built at 601 Ninth Street in 1949. Presently, the station is home to a single engine company and four firefighters. Their fire district includes the near west and southwest parts of the city. One of the county's haz-mat vehicles is also garaged at the station.

Because the station has only one story and no basement, the exercise equipment is located in the dormitory.
TOP RIGHT: Personnel at the station are responsible for the maintenance of the department's radio batteries.

Engine 4 is a 1979 Duplex built by 3-D Fire Apparatus. The pump, rated at 1250 GPM, is from one of the Macks purchased in the late 1940's. The unit was rebuilt in late 1989 when the booster lines were removed and front crosslays were added.

Fire Station 4 at 601 Ninth Street.

# Fire Station 5

Fire Station 5 is located at the corner of Deckner and Henry on the city's east side. The station was acquired when the city annexed the Town of Preble in 1964. The station is normally manned with seven firefighters for the engine and ladder companies.

Mike Malecki stirs up another of his firehouse recipes.

Pete Sponholtz shows Captain Mike Bushy an interesting item in an IFSTA manual. Yeah, sure Pete!

RIGHT: Being next to the training office always means extra work for the crew. Here's Dave with another project.

Fire Station 5 is located at 1809 Deckner Avenue. The equipment stationed here is a 1989 Ford/Kovatch pumper rated at 1000 GPM and a 1982 Seagrave 100 foot aerial ladder.

Engine 6 is a 1977 Mack pumper rated at 1250 GPM. The rig was rebuilt in 1990 when the top-mounted control panel and enclosed cab were added.

Salvage 6 is a 1978 GMC ValueVan that has been modified to fit the department's needs.

Tanker 6 is a 1978 GMC with a 1250 gallon capacity. It was originally stationed at Number 5, then Number 7 from 1983 to 1991. The unit is officially unmanned, and responds only to the rural west side areas.

# Fire Station 6

Fire Station 6, 1701 West Mason Street, was built in 1969 to cover the far west side of the city. The building is dedicated to the late Chief David Zuidmulder. Located next to Fireman's Park, a portion of the building is shared with the Park Department.

TOP LEFT: Lt. Joe Kamps in the dining/kitchen area of the station.
LEFT: Rescue 6 is a 1988 Ford modular ambulance.

The SCBA repair center for the department is located at Number 6.

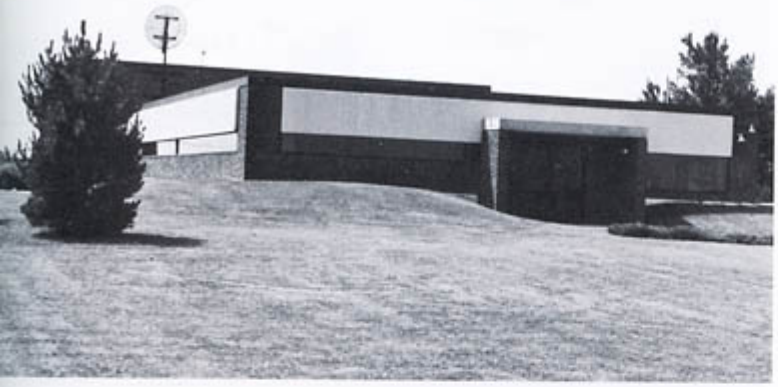
Fire Station 6, 1701 West Mason Street.

# Fire Station 7

Engineer Dick Nachtwey relaxes in the TV room. The station is now equipped with a satellite dish to receive educational broadcasts (FETN).

Ladder 8 is a 1971 Ford 65-foot aerial that serves as the department's reserve ladder truck.
RIGHT: Fire Station 7 from the southwest.

Engine 7 is a 1981 Ford pumper built by 3-D Fire Apparatus. The single stage pump is rated at 1000 GPM.



Fire Station 7, located at 3489 Humboldt Road, was built in 1982. The station covers the city's far east side, a large part of which is rural.

Major facilities in the station's fire district are the Brown County Mental Health Center and UWGB.

The station's modern design includes solar panels to assist in the winter heating.

LEFT: Lt. Jim Deacon checks the daily log book in the station's office.

ABOVE: Firefighter Terry Eckstein exercises in the station's rec room/workout area.

Tanker 7 is a 1991 Chevrolet Kodiak with a 1500 gallon water capacity. The unit was built by 3-D Fire Apparatus of Shawano.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Shona Klarkowski

FIRE CHIEF
John Troeger

DEPUTY CHIEF
Lyle Warner

DEPUTY CHIEF
James Jeanquart

DEPUTY CHIEF
Ronald Schauer

# Fire Department Administration

ASSISTANT CHIEF
Jerome Rabetski

CLERK/TYPIST
Sharon Roulette

SHIFT COMMANDER
Michael Lane

SHIFT COMMANDER
Byron Weycker

SHIFT COMMANDER
Harold Watermolen

STAFF COMMANDER
Richard Briquelet

STAFF COMMANDER
David Bultman

Training with the department's new 1956 Seagrave pumper are Robert "Pinky" King, Lawrence "Duke" DeKeyser, Lieutenant Milan Krause, and Engineer Mitchell Grzybowski.

LEFT: Dick Briquelet instructs John Lawler in proper ground ladder technique. (GBFD photo by Bob Nuss)
BELOW: Captains Al Minor and Harold Koch train with early resuscitation equipment. Date unknown. (GBFD photo)

# Fire Training Bureau

The Fire Department Training Bureau is located at 1817 Deckner Avenue. The drill-masters' duties include instructing new recruits, issuing equipment, scheduling classes and drill sessions, and filing the department's drill records.

Past Training Officers include Bill Gleason, Harold Koch, Gerald O'Dell, Harold Vanderlin, Bob Rose, and Mike Lane.

Les Braemer, Ed Kassner, Dan Donovon, and Elmer Schoen raise a ladder onto Station 3's drill tower sometime in the early 1940's. (Norman DuPont photo)

ABOVE: An early drill session across the street from Fire Station 1.
LEFT: Training with the 150 foot aerial behind Station 3. (GBFD photo)

# Fire Prevention Bureau

The Fire Prevention Bureau is located at 1817 Deckner Ave. next to Fire Station 5. The division was moved there in the early 1980's from it's previous location at Fire Station 1.

Currently the division has three full-time personnel who have been promoted from the firefighting ranks. Their duties include fire inspections and code enforcement, coordination of in-service inspections, fire safety education, and fire investigation in cooperation with the Brown County Arson Task Force.

A major project that the bureau helped to coordinate in 1990 was the distribution of smoke alarm batteries in high risk neighborhoods.

RIGHT: A 1966 photo of Training and Prevention Officers Harold Koch, Bill Phillips, Lloyd Daniels, and Rolee Becker.

ABOVE: Former Deputy Chief John Basche is shown here investigating a suspicious fire at 1133 South Broadway on February 2, 1975.

STAFF COMMANDER
Gerald VanCampenhout

RIGHT: The Fire Robot spreads the fire safety message at area schools and special events.

The Fire and Arson Investigation Unit is a joint fire and police effort. Their vehicle is a 1977 Chevrolet/Horton rescue squad that was modified for their use.

The Green Bay Fire Department Training and Prevention Bureau located at 1817 Deckner Avenue.

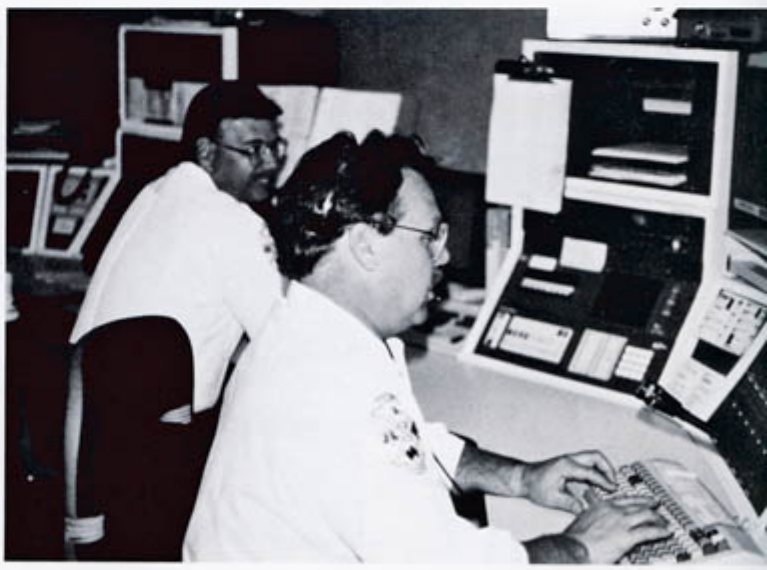
CAPTAIN
Michael Jensen

LIEUTENANT
Cecil Bailey

# Fire Dispatch

All emergency calls are received at the combined fire/police dispatch center which is located in the basement of the police station at 307 S. Adams. The dispatchers had previously been located at Fire Station 1 since its construction in 1929. The department uses Enhanced 911 and a computer aided dispatch system, and is in the process of switching to an 800 MHz radio system. All six dispatchers have been promoted from the firefighting ranks.

ABOVE: Captain Larry Bader checks a printed message shipped from the dispatch center to Station 3.



TOP: The combined dispatch center is located in the Green Bay Police Headquarters at 307 South Adams Street.
ABOVE: Dispatchers Bruce VandenPlas and Tom DePas work at the radio console.

ABOVE: Lt. Bruce VandenPlas enters department records into
he computer.
RIGHT: Lt. Tom DePas at the radio console.

LIEUTENANT
Robert Schleis

LIEUTENANT
Tom DePas

LIEUTENANT
Bruce VandenPlas

LIEUTENANT
Tim Smits

LIEUTENANT
Gary Schrader

LIEUTENANT
Dave Parmentier

# District Commanders

Clyde Pasterski
Jim Sloan
Dan Perra
Pete Marto

Jim Barrett
Larry LaMere
John Giesler
Russ Nelsen

Tim Madden
Duane Meetz
Bill Schmidt
Ken Dellis

# Captains

Gary Greenawald
George Kupsch
Tom Christensen
Dick Konop

Larry Bader
Ron Phillips
Tom Thorpe
Bill Brunette

Ron Wesoloski
Al Reichwald
Jerry VanEss
Loren Roethlisberger

LEFT: Tom Thorpe wets the smoldering remains of a mattress fire at 808 7th Street on December 30, 1975. (Green Bay Press-Gazette Photo)

ABOVE: B-shift picks up after a fire call on South Quincy Street on June 14, 1974. (LeFebvre Photography)

# Lieutenants

Bernard DeGroot
Mike Bushy
Joe Kamps
Robert Boulanger

Bob VanHemelryk
Dick Sloan
Bob Nuss
Ed Vandenack

Jim Deacon
Don Keon
Ken Lasee
Andy Malecki

Ted Wigman
Larry Schauer
Wayne Keon
Don Ward

Dick Cheslock
Doug Millar
Tom Rein
Fred Strenski

No photo — Guy DeGroot

# Engineers

Floyd Cropsey
Dick Nachtwey
Mike Rowe
Earl McGregor

Tom Tilkens
Tom Tatar
Tom McIntyre
Roger Pingel

Lance Woldt
John Brunette
Tom Swille
Roger Pecard

John Charles
David Baierl
Tom Titulaer
Pat Proctor

Dave Riebe
Terry Timmerman
Glen Sorenson
Roger Piontek

# Engineers

Mike Lison
Jack Ollman
Roger Truckey
Jerry Scheller

Randy Rybicki
Gil Nowak
John VandenAvond
Tom Peterson

Tom Strenski
Steve Wolford
Larry Erdmann
Ed Crummy

Rick Hilbert
Ted Schultz
Jeff Hendricks
Tom Cravillion

Dick Albers
Tom Atkinson
Dean Wiegand
Mark Mandich

No photo — Bert Veldhuizen

# Engineers

Mike Geohegan
Nick Moore

Mike Coniff
Mark Ullmer

Jay Selissen
Mike Sigl

Tim Johnson
Jeff Stauber

Dan Kennedy
Greg Amato

TOP: Rick Hilbert climbs Ladder 3 during Fire Prevention Week. (John Roemer photo)
ABOVE: Firefighters Tom Titulaer and Jim Deacon direct a hose stream between buildings to protect exposures during a fire at Peanuts Howard's Tavern on January 11, 1977. (Press-Gazette, Neville Public Museum)

# Firefighters

ABOVE: A crowd gathers as flames rise over Smitty's Salvage on April 26, 1986.

RIGHT: Dousing the fire at Brandy's Tavern, 409 South Washington Street on February 27, 1989. (Green Bay Press-Gazette photos)

Tom Albers
Bob Krueger
Dave Blakeslee
Jim McConnell

Keith Lindbo
Webb Jenkel
Tom Greely
Jeff Jacobe

Greg Fredrickson
Jim Miller
Jerry McNamara

# Firefighters

Dave Champeau
Joe DuBois
Scott Quigley
Mark LaFrombois

Don Phillips
Rick VanCaster
Mike Lepak
Mark Plate

Todd Selissen
Jim Williquette
Mike Malecki
Mark Schroeder

Don Ullmer
Bill Ruggles
Paul Arvey
Keith Vieau

Jim DeGroot
Tony Lison
Karl Hinrichs
Mike LeMere

# Firefighters

John Rogers
Cal Lintz
Gary Doeren
Dave Ritter

Mike Skaleski
Scott Merline
Pat Burns
Larry Wilson

Len Orlando
Dan Truckey
Sam Al-Saadi
Dave Mensch

Steve Peggs
Dennis Metz
Jon Fredrickson
Jeff Jansen

Dave Baumgart
Dave Flick
Bob Conrad
Pete Sponholtz

No photo — Steve Zasada

# Firefighters

Gary Kraszewski
Rick Mercier
Steve DeTerra
Wayne Huempfner

Terry Eckstein
Ann Watzka
Jon Beckman
Al Klimek

Bill Zehms
April Jensen
Arnie Wolff
Mike Nieft

LEFT: Sam Al-Saadi and Steve DeTerra train with a ground ladder. (GBFD photo by Bob Nuss)

ABOVE: Fire destroys the Becks' farm, 3002 Brook Park Drive on September 16, 1989. (Press-Gazette photo)

# Firefighters

Ed Jarosz
Bob Wiegert
Mitch Warner
Jerry Johnson

Dan Gunn
Gary Wiese
Tom Dorsey
Bob Ruck

Pat Gagan
Jon Schnell
Tom Malecki
Todd LoCascio

Dave Kamps
Wayne Lane
Daren Krueger
John Lawler

Dave Truckey
Jeff Minix
Chris Pasterski

# Mechanics

The Fire Department Shop, located at 130 North Henry Street, was built in 1972 near Fire Station 5. The facility is presently staffed with two civilian mechanics, Ron Mazola and Dan Young. Prior to construction of this building, the shop was located at Fire Station 1. The mechanic's vehicle is a 1991 Dodge Ram 150.

Mechanics Ron Mazola (top) and Dan Young.
LEFT: The Fire Department Shop located on North Henry Street.

# Retired Personnel

ABOVE: Engineer John Faikel sits next to a red fox that made its way into Station 4. It was later brought to the city pound. (Press-Gazette photo)

RIGHT: Engineer Terry Wohlfeil keeps a close watch on his pumper's gauges.

Leo Anderson
Wayne Anderson
Jim Arvey
Charles Ault

John Basche
Dick Basten
Leon Becker
Roland Becker

Chris Bournelis
Roger Briggs
Val Brown
Gerald Burbey

# Retired Personnel

Don Buth
Roger Cauwenbergh
Eugene Clark
Alton Counard

Lloyd Daniels
Jerry Davidson
Earl DeBoth
Henry DeGreef

Bob Delaney
Roland Delforge
Don DeNamur
Ron Desotell

Jerry DeVillers
Carl DuChateau
Norman DuPont
Eugene Dwyer

Frank Dziengeleski
John Falkel
Tom Farrell
Vernon Fontaine

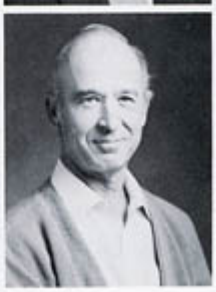
# Retired Personnel

Jim Francois
Curt Gilson
Arnold Goral
Mitchell Grzybowski

Bill Hagerty
Tom Hogan
Dick Katers
Harold Kaye

Roger King
Harold Koch
Don Koeppen
Don Kolbusz — no photo

John Kollman
John LaFave
Murlin LaLuzerne
Gerald Lambert



DeLyle Lindow
Tom Londo
Steve Mandich
John Marshall

# Retired Personnel

Alan Marto
Ron Marto

Jim Matzke
Al Minor

Dick Mocco
Wilfred Motquin

Mel Murray
Wally Nolan

Gerald O'Dell
Bill Panure

TOP: Assistant Chief Lloyd Daniels and Firefighter Jack Ollman at 1800 South Norwood.
ABOVE: Jerry VanEss, Gene Dwyer, and Jim Francois (#109) at 1262 Stuart. (John Roemer photo)

# Retired Personnel

ABOVE: Murlin LaLuzerne and Jerry DeVillers tend a 2½" hose line during the Sure-Way fire in the 1200 block of Main Street. (Press-Gazette photo)

RIGHT: Captain Chet Binish and Don DeNamur add foam concentrate to a pumper during a training exercise on June 18, 1966. (Press-Gazette photo)

Glen Paradise
Russell Reynolds
Travis Robinson
Bob Rose

Raymond Rozek
John Shaw
Jim Sherlock
Bill Smerz

Ken Stievo
Emil Strenski
Tom Sturm
Bob Truckey

# Retired Personnel

Ervin Tyczkowski
Neal VanCaster

Millard VanderKelen
Harold Vanderlin

Bob Villenauve
Armand Wendricks

Paul Wochenske
Terry Wohlfeil

Ray Wozniak
James Wulk

TOP: Leo Anderson drags a 2½" line while setting up for a practice burn.
ABOVE: Jerry Burbey, Roger Pingel, and Ron Marto at Diana Manufacturing on August 22, 1976. (John Roemer photo)

# In Memory Of . . .

Sam Aebischer
Harland Anderson
Harold Bennett
Bill Bomber

Al Buershinger
Roman Clark
Robert Cormier
Larry DeKeyser

Wilfred Devroy
Harvey Graume
Henry Harris
Robert King

Jerry Klarner
Joe Matzke
Robert Nelson
Bernard Oudeans

Bill Phillips
Joe Morgan
Elmer Schoen
George Sharp

Alex Smeester
Ray Smeester
Arnold Stache
Ed Steeno

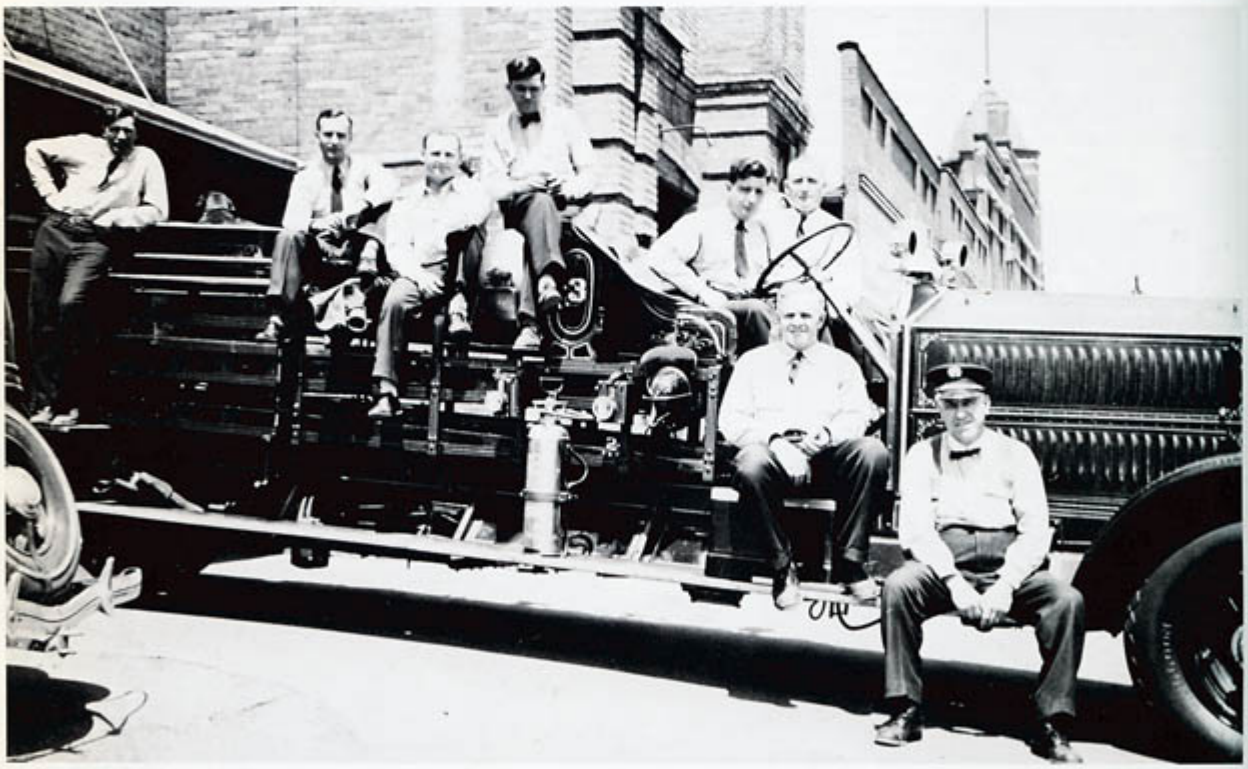
Larry Sullivan
Henry Truckey
Bob Wautlet
Harvey Younk

LEFT: Robert Cormier funeral.
ABOVE: Charles Willard funeral.

GREEN BAY FIRE DEPARTMENT
1920
J.J. MULLENS
Mr CROPSY
AUG. JOPPE
GUS KEMPS
GUS. COUNARD
HENRY NOEL
V.J. CRAVILION
LIEUT. MICH. THIESEN
CHIEF JOHN SWEENEY
MAYOR ELMER S. HALL
NICK GUDENKAUF
LIEUT. GUS JANQUART
ASST. CHIEF CHAS. KORNOSKY
LIEUT. L. FLEMING
CAPT. HENRY FAULKNER
CAPT. CHAS. WOODARD
CHAS. CRAVILION
CAPT. MAT DIRING
J.M. LESTER
J. BROKMAN
R.A. McDONALD
N. HARRIS
ED. STEENO
F. BIEMERET
JOHN DE BAKER
P. PECKINGPAUGH

L to R, Row 1: Earl DeBoth, Al Newtols, Bill Selissen, Les Braemer, Abe Martell, Chief Bill Gleason, Al Buershinger, Bill Manders, Milt Newman. Row 2: Jim Sherlock, Ron Desotell, Larry Sullivan, John Basche, Tom Farrell, Arnold Stache, Joe Devroy, Bob Wautlet, Ray Rozek, Vern Fontaine. Row 3: Harold Koch, Roman Clark, Roger King, Harold Vanderlin, Frank Dziengeleski, Millard VanderKelen, Bill Phillips, Norb Vanden-Branden, Russ Reynolds, Wally Nolan. These photos were taken in 1950 for the Wisconsin Magazine. (Lefebvre-Luebke photo)

L to R, Row 1: Ed Beebe, Bill Jacques, Sam Aebischer, Louie Leanna, Ray Clark, Chief Bill Gleason, Elmer Schoen, Harold Kaye, Carl DuChateau, Bob Nelson. Row 2: Chet Barlament, Joe Morgan, Don Kolbusz, Chet Binish, Milan Krause, Alan Marto, Bernard Oudeans, Alex Smeesters, Ken Stievo, Curt Gilson, Val Brown, Mitch Grzybowski. Row 3: Harold Bennett, Al Minor, Harvey Younk, John Stroobants, Orville Monson, Emil Strenski, Andrew Reis, Lloyd Daniels, Larry DeKeyser, Ray Terrian, Fred Rein, Harland Anderson. (Lefebvre-Luebke photo)



TOP: Leon Becker, Bill Newtols, Bill Phillips, and Bob Truckey relax on the park benches in front of Station 1.

ABOVE: On the Ahrens-Fox ladder truck at old Station 3 are (L to R) Ed VanArk, Ed Kassner, George Sharp, Henry Bitters, Norm DuPont, Frank Nooyen, Gus Kemps, and Captain Gus Counard. The date of the photograph is June 7, 1936.

LEFT: The Fire Department poses in front of newly constructed Station 1.
BELOW: Kneeling; (L to R) Bill Jacques, Gene Jonet, Abe Martell, Jack Anderson, Coroner Tim Blaney, Chief Bill Gleason, Dave Zuidmulder, Bill Selissen, Ray Rozek, Joe Devroy, Norb Vandenbranden, Al Minor, Harold Bennett, Frank Dziengeleski, Standing; Les Braemer, Bill Beebe, Roger King, Louie Vandenbush, Don Buth, Bill Panure, Al Newtols, Harold Vanderlin, Bob Wautlet, Milt Newman, Wally Nolan, Jack LaFave. Back Row; Bill Phillips, Orv Monson, Chet Binish, Joe Morgan, Lloyd Daniels, Ron Desotell, Mitch Grzybowski, Milan Krause, Joe Beefe, John Boucher, Jerry Lambert, Hank Bitters, Millard VanderKelen, Al Buerschinger, Bill Hagerty, Ed VanArk, Jim Sherlock. Photo taken in 1949. (Lefebvre-Luebke Photograph)

# The Green Bay Fire Department Band

L to R, Front: S. Aebischer, A. Kemps, L. Leanna, Wm. Bomber, J. Boucher, R. Clark, G. Gilsoul, N. Herlache. Row 2: J. Simon, C. Steeno, F. Mathews, E. Schoen, D. Donovan, E. VanArk, Wm. Selissen, L. Braemer, A. Christiansen. Row 3: V. Cravillion, F. Nooyen, Wm. Haase, C. Barlament, Wm. Jacques, J. Lester, F. Christiansen. At the left is Director Lee Smith, Chief Ralph Drum, and Mascot Billy Drum.

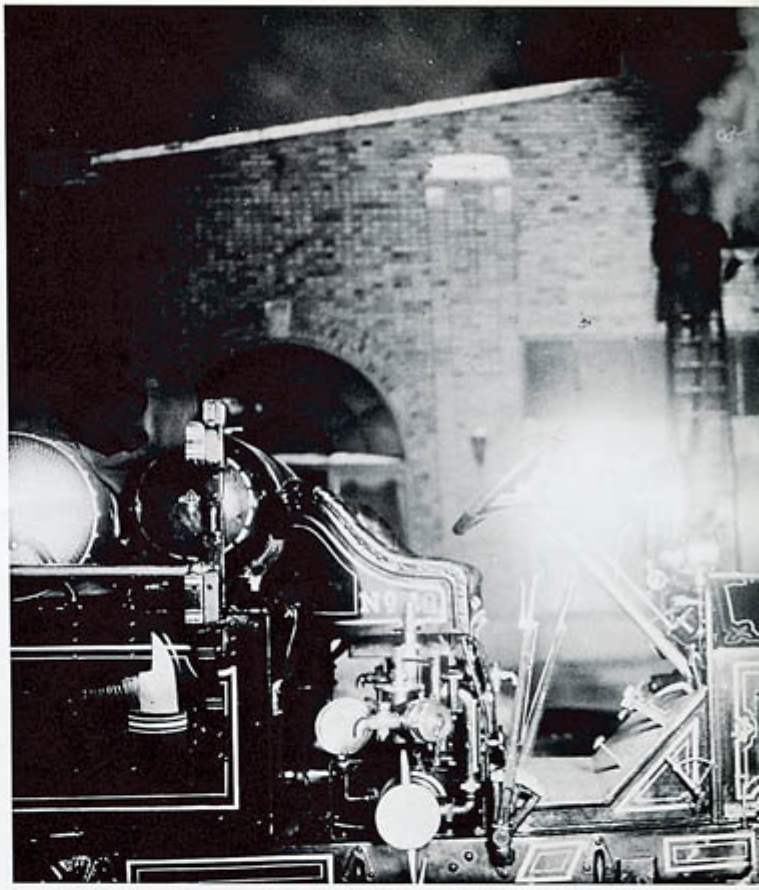
# GBFD Baseball Team

L to R, Front: Chester Binish, David Zuidmulder, William Phillips, Bat Boy Billy Drum, Ray Clark, William Hagerty, Jack Anderson. Standing: Chief Ralph Drum, Lloyd Daniels, Milan Krause, George Sharp, Louie VandenBusch, Edward VanArk, Harvey Younk. The team was champion of the city employee league in 1939 and 1940.

At the left is a GBFD baseball team in the early 1980's. In the photo below are (clockwise from top left) Bernard Oudeans, Ron Desotell, Alex Smeester, Tom Farrell, and Mike Pickett.

Doing some spring housecleaning on the apparatus floor at Station 1 are (L to R) Alfred Minor, Robert "Pinky" King, Harvey Graume, Harold Kaye, Ron Desotell, and Robert Truckey. The exact date of the photograph is unknown, probably in the mid 1950's.

RIGHT: An early fire scene, possibly in the early 1940's. The American-LaFrance pumper's paintwork was finely detailed. At the Green Bay Planing Mill on April 15, 1946 are (L to R) unidentified, Orv Monson, Milan Krause, Elmer Schoen, Gene Jonet, unidentified, and Harvey Younk.



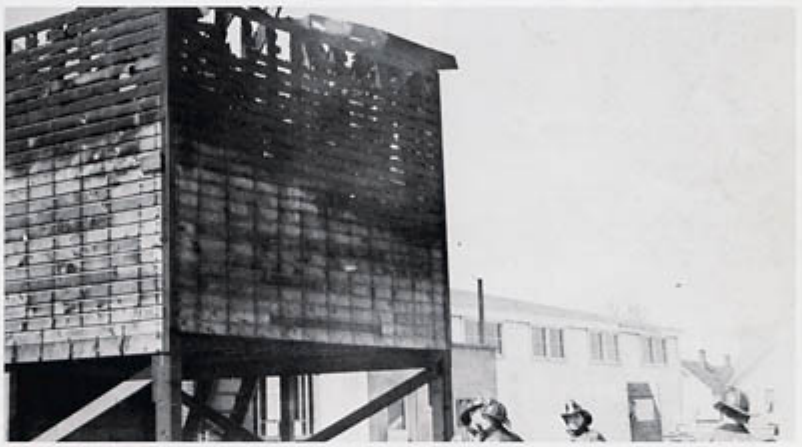
In 1926 the Vocational School at the corner of Chestnut and Walnut burned. At one time the city council had considered the building as a location for a west side fire station.

Larry DeKeyser and George Sharp pull a 2½ into place at the Green Bay Planing Mill fire.

# Major Fires

On the following pages are photographs we've collected of Green Bay fire scenes. We've identified firefighters whenever possible and have given credit to the photographer when noted on the original.

We hope the photographs will help you to recall some of the fire calls you've made in the past, and remember the close friendships that result from working together and depending on one another in emergency situations.



On April 15, 1946 firefighters were called to a fire at the Green Bay Planing Mill on the corner of Day and Elizabeth. It appears that the fire, in a sawdust bin, required some tricky maneuvering to extinguish.

A fire call on North Jackson Street on February 1, 1949.

A log fire at the Northern Paper Mill meant a few days of hard work for Green Bay firefighters in 1949. These photographs were taken on February 29.

Getting to the fire meant using a pulp loading crane to move the logs, then flooding the area with water.

Several days after the fire was out, the mill sponsored food and drink for the men, a common practice in those days as a way of saying thanks.

An insider's view of the empty courthouse annex after a fire on December 4, 1957.

# Major Fires

On Thanksgiving Day in 1953 the Green Bay City Hall Annex was destroyed by fire. It was also known as the McIntire/Burall building. John Anderson was Chief of the department at the time.

RIGHT: Harold Kaye dons a breathing apparatus while Assistant Chief Abe Martell looks on.
BELOW: Tom McIntyre and Zeke Marto assist a lady out of the building. (Press-Gazette photos)

A fire at the Midas Muffler Shop, 410 North Adams, started when an employee, working with a torch, cut through an auto's gas line. The date of the incident was June 8, 1963.

ABOVE: In the center is Zeke Marto.
RIGHT: The pumper from Station 1 at the fire scene. (Press-Gazette photos)

Station 1 lined up in the 100 block of South Washington on a night fire call. GBFD photo

On the morning of April 13, 1964 a storage tank filled with over 15,000 gallons of diesel fuel exploded and burned at the Chicago and Northwestern railroad yard.

The fire started when a switch engine caused a grass fire which spread to the tank farm area. Firefighters were worried the blaze would reach a nearby dynamite storage shed, but they were able to keep it away.

TOP: Chief Dave Zuidmulder directs his men at the scene.
LEFT: Clyde Pasterski and Tom Londo use the end of a flatcar for protection from the heat.
Getting lines in place while the fuel fire rages.

(L. to R) Dick Panure, Ben Oski, Chief David Zuidmulder, and Abe Martell look over maps of the Preble area on November 4, 1964.

Emil Strenski and Les Braemer survey the aftermath of a storage building fire. (GBFD photo)

The Broadway Bowl fire on February 24, 1965 started one of the worst years for fire losses in Green Bay history. As shown at the right, the building was consumed by flame and firefighters worked in the basement the next day.

Broadway Bowl photographs by Ken Behrend

The Kagerbauer home at 993 Shawano Avenue was the sight of one of the city's most tragic fires. The mother and five children perished on January 30, 1965. (Green Bay Press-Gazette)

Firefighters mask up for a fire at the House of Ryan Dealership at 724 Main Street.
LEFT: Assistant Chief Les Braemer eyes some of the damage.

Leader Furniture at 518 Main Street burned on March 3, 1965, another in a long string of big blazes. At the right are Byron Weycker, Dick Mocco, and Travis Robinson. In the photo below, Tom Londo, Erv Tyczkowski, Clyde Pasterski, and Bob Wautlet take a break to get warmed up.

Chief Selissen directs firefighters Andy Malecki and Tom Swille at Wisconsin-Michigan Auto Salvage on November 5, 1972.

Rolee Becker, Roger Truckey, Tim Smits, and Andy Malecki at Diana Manufacturing on August 27, 1976. (John Roemer photo)

Mike Bushy is on the turntable of Ladder 3 at Stewart's Smart Shop on February 1, 1969. (Press-Gazette photo by John Roemer)

TOP: Lloyd Daniels, Dan Perra, Tom Tatar at 1800 South Norwood in the late 1970's.
ABOVE: Tom Thorpe and John Charles with a rooftop line.

The Edlo Arcade Building, also known as Baums Corners, was destroyed by fire on February 11, 1972. The blaze was reported late that evening, and as the night progressed, the fire spread from the top to the lower floors. By the next day the final wall had fallen in.

The fire, another one fought in frigid temperatures, had started on the day that William Phillips was appointed Acting Chief while a new permanent chief was being decided upon. A month later, Gerald Selissen was named as the Chief of the Fire Department.

Mark Mandich and Bruce VandenPlas at 902 Kellogg on November 20, 1980. (John Roemer photo)

TOP: Nick Moore, Jerry Klarner, and Larry Bader at Tectron Tube. The 3 remaining photos show the progress of the Edlo Arcade fire, with the last wall falling the next morning. (John Roemer photos)

Firefighters enter a house on Kurtz Avenue on a cold 1986 winter night. (Press-Gazette photo)

Travis Robinson and Jack Ollman man a 2½" hose line at Hurlbut on May 4, 1979. (Press-Gazette, Neville Public Museum)

Ladder 5 towers over Mass Advertising, 1306 Main Street on February 8, 1986. Deputy Chief John Marshall estimated the loss at $150,000. (Press-Gazette photo)

MIDDLE: Fire at the nearly completed Meadows North Apartment Complex in the summer of 1979 was believed to have been caused by a plumber's torch. (Press-Gazette, Neville Public Museum)

ABOVE: Grace Christian Church at 2280 Nicolet Drive was destroyed by fire on July 26, 1987. (Press-Gazette photo)

At times, getting the patient to the squad is the hardest part of the call. Below, Lance Woldt, Scott Merline, Bob VanHemelryk, Bill Ruggles, and Greg Fredrickson use ladders, rope, and a stokes basket to get the job done. (Press-Gazette photo)

The first-aid car in 1930. At the bottom, H. T. Watermolen, H. Bennett, J. Kollman and B. DeGroot. 1/1/68 (Press-Gazette photo by Orvell Peterson)

An early Green Bay rescue squad. The make is International, the year unknown.

The 1952 FWD rescue squad in front of the newly completed Station 2 on University Avenue.

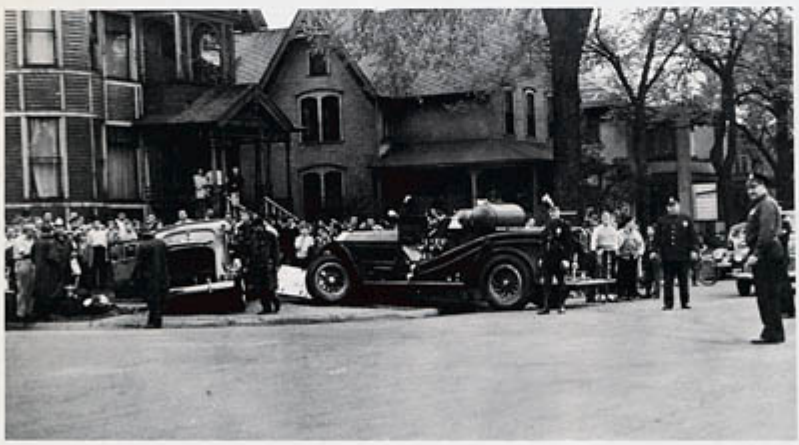
# GBFD Fire-Rescue

LEFT: Larry Schauer, Loren Roethlisberger, Police Officer Glen Mercier, and Mike Coniff transport a patient. Russ Kriwanek photo
BELOW: Paramedics Bob Krueger and Jeff Stauber assist an accident victim on March 21, 1985. (John Roemer photo)

Early paramedic students Joe Kamps, Mike Lison, and Gerald O'Dell listen intently to Cardiologist Howard Palay. (Ken Behrend photo)

The 1956 GMC rescue squad that was stationed at Number 3. (LeFebvre-Luebke photo)

One of the 1975 Dodge/Horton squads that were given to the city by Fort Howard Paper. The squads were later put on Chevrolet truck chassis. (Harold Watermolen photo)



# Accidents

While responding to a fire call at 416 South Quincy Street on May 23, 1945, the chief's car, which had been at Station 3, and the pumper responding from Station 2, met at the corner of Walnut and Monroe. The two vehicles ended up on the southeast terrace of the intersection.

Injured in the accident were Ed Steeno, Bill Phillips, John Boucher, and Goldie Nellis.

It would be the end for the American LaFrance pumper, one of Green Bay's first motorized rigs. The 750 GPM pumper had been purchased in March 1920 for $11,500.00, and had seen service in all three of the city's fire stations.

The top two photographs show Abe Martell and Harvey Graume after an accident while responding to a west side fire call. The incident with the chief's car occurred on the corner of West Mason and Ashland Avenue. The police officer investigating is Harold Brisk.

ABOVE: The Reo squad sustained little damage in one of the accidents it was in. There is no information on what the other vehicle looked like.
RIGHT: Jerry Lambert and Roger King try to dig Number 4's pumper out of a 'rut' on Seventh Street.

# Accidents

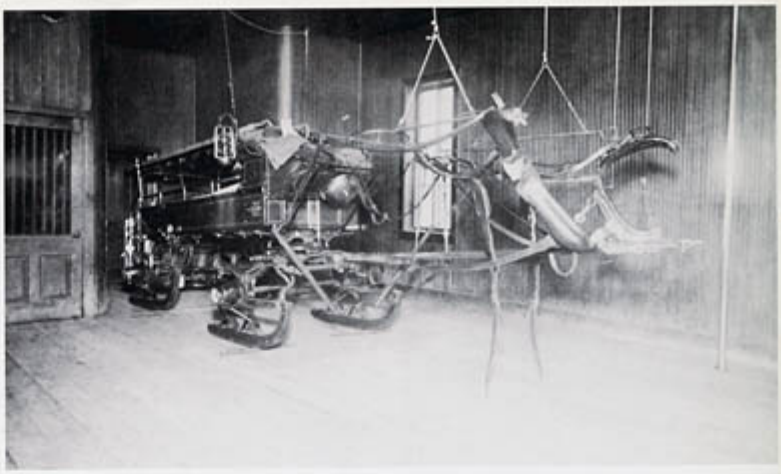
Three firefighters were injured when this accident occurred as they responded to a fire call. Joe Morgan, Dick Katers, and Dick VandeVoort were on their way to 617 South Jefferson in the morning of August 13, 1966, when the squad and a cement truck collided at the corner of Main and Monroe. All three were treated at St. Vincent Hospital.

The home on South Jefferson sustained extensive fire, smoke, and water damage.

Green Bay Press-Gazette photos by John Roemer

# Ladder 3

This early horse-drawn ladder rig is shown ready for a winter fire call. The harnesses are hung ready for the horses to move into position, and the runners can be removed and replaced with wheels when the weather permits.



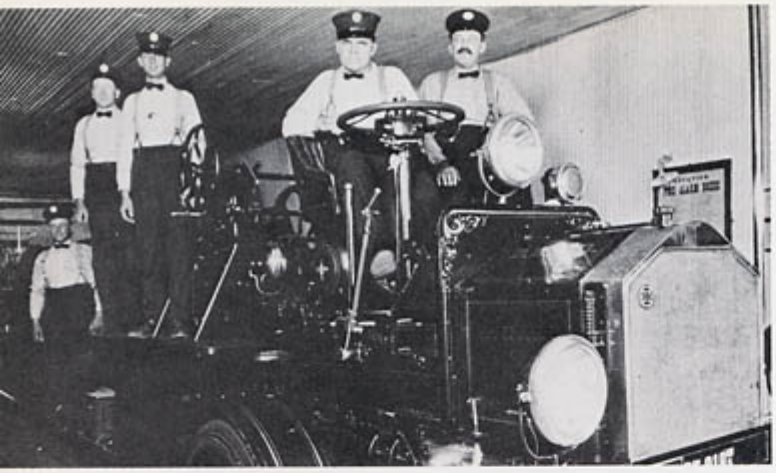
# A Steamer

This is one of the city's early steam pumpers. From the look of the uniforms worn, it is probably after the department had gone full-time. (Neville Public Museum)

# Hose Cart 3

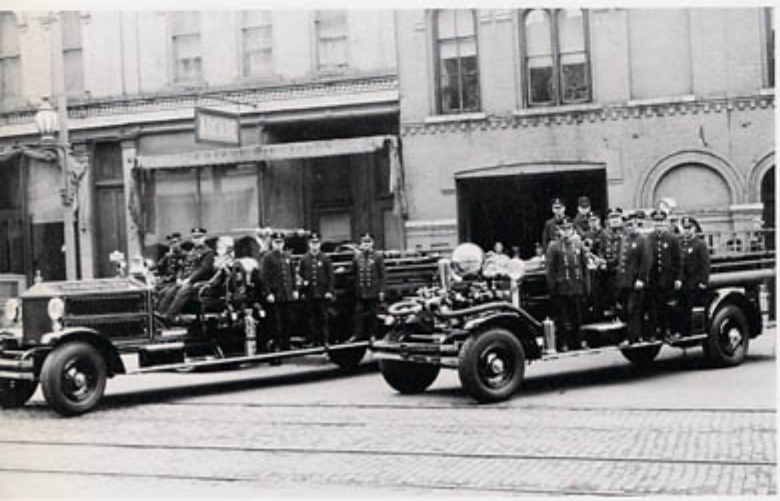
This is Green Bay's first piece of motorized fire apparatus. The chassis, an Oneida, was manufactured here in Green Bay. The rig was built in 1919 at a cost of $3,375.00. The only person identified in the photo is Gus Jeanquart (center).

# Ladder 1



Green Bay's first motorized ladder truck was this American LaFrance 75-footer. It was a two wheel front drive model and required a tillerman at the rear for steering. The early aerial devices were raised with springs. The cost of this model (Type 31) which was purchased in March 1921 was $15,640.00.

Firefighters pose with the 1924 American LaFrance 1000 GPM pumper. The men are not identified on this photo.



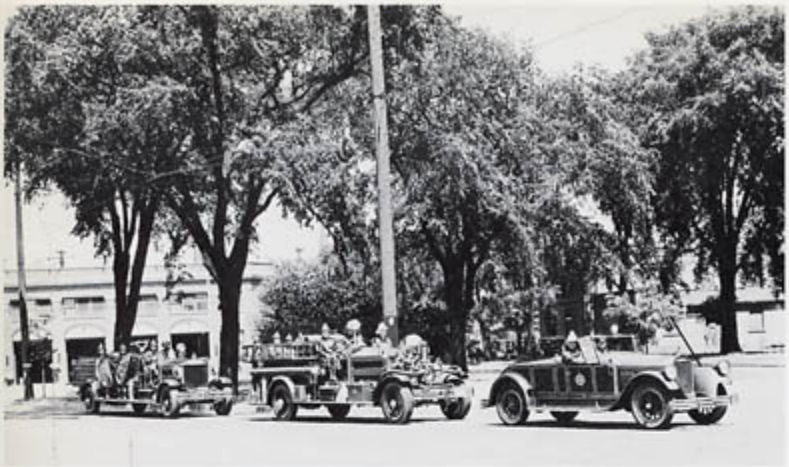
Showing off the department's Ahrens-Fox firefighting team. Pictured in front of old Fire Station 1 on South Washington Street is the 1928 Ahrens-Fox ladder truck and 1000 GPM pumper. The combined cost of the two new rigs was $20,600.00.

# Station 3

Pictured here on the 1920 American LaFrance 750 GPM pumper are (L to R) Ed VanArk, Henry Truckey, Lieutenant William Cropsey, and Clarence Steeno. The pumper's cost when new was $11,500.00. On the Ahrens-Fox ladder truck are Art Christianson, Ray Clark, Ed Beebe, and (unidentified). The photo was taken in front of Station 3 on Pearl Street in 1929.

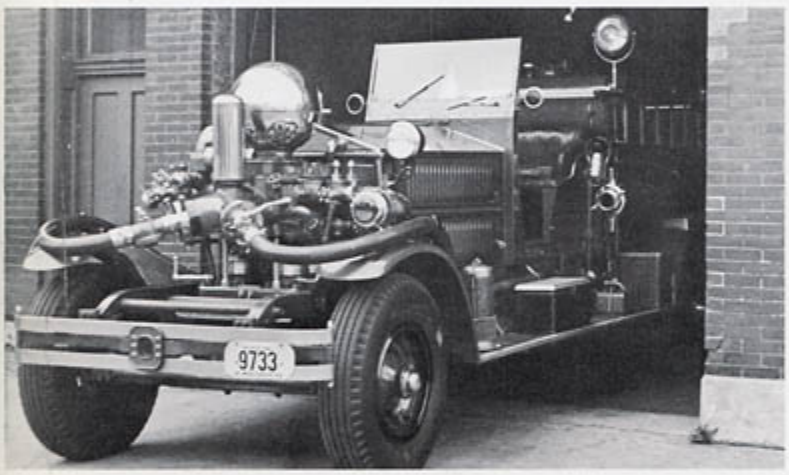
The Ahrens-Fox ladder truck years later. A windshield, electric siren, and radio antenna are some of the visible modifications that had been made on the rig at the time of this photo. (Lefebvre-Luebke photo)

The Pierce-Arrow chief's car was purchased used in November 1929 for $800.00. Shown here are (L to R) Lawrence Fleming, Bill Jacques, Goldie Nellis, Dan Donovan and Jack Anderson.



# Station 1

Lined up on Washington Street in 1930 are the Pierce-Arrow chief's car, and the Ahrens-Fox pumper and ladder truck. In the background is the recently completed Fire Station 1.




The Ahrens-Fox pokes it's nose out of old Station 2 on Main Street. After years of service in the city it was sold to the Fort Howard Paper Company where it served their fire brigade.

# Truck 1

This is the American LaFrance 65-foot aerial that was purchased in 1941. The ladder is still in service today, though under a different chassis. In the cab is Lucky, one of two fire dogs. The cost of the truck was $14,500 and it featured a V-12, 190 hp engine.

# Engine 1

This 1946 Mack pumper was the first of three for the department. The pumper was rated at 1250 GPM and cost $12,478.48 new. It featured a six-man, three-door cab and bronze pump.

# Station 3

The second Mack pumper was purchased in 1947. As the economic effects of the war disappeared, the rigs sported more chrome. Engine 3 can be distinguished by the chrome bumper. The cost of the rig was $13,593.46. Harvey Younk is in the 1936 American LaFrance quad which cost only $7,906.38.

# Engine 4

The last of the three Macks was this 1949 model. This one is set apart from the rest by the chrome grill, bumper, headlights, and pump fittings.

# Engine 1

This is one of the departments first Seagraves. Rated at 1250 GPM, the 1956 model saw service at Station 2. The cost of the rig was $23,945.00. (Lefebvre-Luebke photo)

# Ladder 1

The "Big Stick" was a 1957 150-foot Seagrave aerial. The unit is shown here not quite finished. (bumper missing) When in use, the ladder could reach the top of any building in the city. The unit cost $44,850.00.

Another Seagrave that was in service at Station 2 was this 1958 quad. The unit featured a pump rated at 1000 GPM and a full complement of ground ladders. The cost was $29,950.00. On the rig is Larry DeKeyser, while Elmer Schoen looks on. (Press-Gazette photo)

# The CD Rig

Posing in front of the 1962 GMC Civil Defense rig are (clockwise from center) Travis Robinson, Bernard Oudeans, Robert King, Neal Van-Caster, and Ken Stievo. The apparatus was stationed at Number 4 until it was converted to a mechanic's vehicle in the mid-70's.

# Salvage 2

This is the 1962 Reo 4 x 4 that first saw duty as a rescue squad and later, as shown in this 1986 photo, Salvage 2. The rig had challenged Green Bay's worst snowstorms and never lost. (Dan Becker photo)

# Preble

When the city annexed the Town of Preble in 1964 they acquired their apparatus. Lined up in front of a much shorter Preble Fire Station (now Station 5) are "Lulubelle", a 1948 White 600 GPM pumper, a 1952 International 750 GPM pumper, a 1952 International tanker, and an International rescue squad.

# Vigilantes

The photos on this page show the two 1966 Seagrave Vigilantes the department purchased. The pumps, originally in an all red paint scheme, are shown at their factory performance test in the top two photos. The units were equipped with pumps rated at 1250 GPM and featured built-in foam equipment.

This is Pump 92 after their conversion to diesel engines. Taken on June 27, 1977, it shows a single booster line had been added, and the paint scheme had been changed to white over lime yellow. Eventually the rigs were rebuilt without the foam equipment, the booster tanks were enlarged, and they were placed back into front line service in the mid-80's as Engines 2 and 3. They were replaced by new pumpers in 1990 and 1991. Engine 2 is on the auction block, while Engine 3 is in reserve status, renumbered as Engine 9.

# Chief's Car

At the right of this photo is one of two 1968 Ford vans that were used as Deputy's Chief's cars.

# Mini-Pump

Dave Bultman controls a leaf fire with the new 1969 Chevrolet ¾ ton four wheel drive. The drop-in pumping unit is equipped with a 150 gallon booster tank. The entire vehicle was painted orange. The drop-in unit is still in service today on Mini-Pump 2, a 1976 GMC.

# 1970 Howe

This is the 1970 Howe pumper that was originally purchased for Fire Station 6. The rig was painted orange when new, and the pump was rated at 1250 GPM. The unit was rebuilt by 3-D Fire Apparatus in the mid-80's, and returned to duty at Station 5 until 1989 when it was put into reserve status as Engine 9. The rig is now up for sale.

# Pump 92, 93

The two 1973 Fords on this page were manufactured by Seagrave and included high-pressure fog on the booster lines. The rigs were modified by Clintonville Fire Apparatus. A unique feature on the two rigs were the top-mounted hose reels for 800 feet of four-inch supply line. The top photo shows 92 at a fire call on the corner of Main and Monroe in 1984.

Pump 93 in the barn. The rig was rebuilt and put in reserve status when the 1966 Seagraves came back on line. 92 was sold at the city-county auction and is still in service today with a local rural fire department.

Pump 93 at 608 North Maple Street on March 2, 1979.

# Car 51

One of the two Dodge chief cars that were in use in the late 1970's. These were originally police vehicles for which the 1968 Ford vans were traded. Shown in the photo is Deputy Chief Dick Mocco.

# Pump 96

This Mack quadruple pumper was built in 1977 and is in service today as Engine 6. The rig was rebuilt in 1990. It featured a 1250 GPM pump and 750 gallon booster tank.

# Pump 91

Shown new, Pump 91 was purchased in 1979 along with the identical Pump 94. They were built by 3-D Fire Apparatus of Shawano, Wisconsin. On Duplex chassis, the rigs' bronze 1250 GPM pumps were from the Macks that were built in the late 1940's. They were rebuilt in 1989 and 1990, when the booster lines were removed, poly booster tanks were installed, and large diameter hose was added for supply line. The pump on Engine 1 has since been replaced with a new model.