



History of the Department

The City of Highland Park is a medium-sized, primarily residential community about 30 miles north of Chicago on the shores of Lake Michigan. As this is being written in the summer of 1989 Highland Park has a population of about 30,000 residents and encompasses about 12.5 square miles in land area. The city is transected by two major railroads and a major highway.

The city began as a small waypoint on the trail between Chicago and Milwaukee known as Port Clinton. Long a summer community for many of Chicago's haute society, there are a number of private residences, particularly along the lakeshore on the city's east side, which rival other cities' major landmarks in architectural splendor and monetary value.

The Highland Park Fire Department has a long and colorful history. It was organized in approximately the last month of 1889 by a group of men under the leadership of Andrew Bock, and was to be known as the Highland Park Volunteer Fire Department. Although the city was twenty years old at the time, there had been very little progress in the form of fire protection.

Incorporated as a city in 1869, the population expanded at a rapid pace. As the population grew, people became aware of the need for fire protection; however, the city was not financially able to do much about it. This was evidenced by the following excerpt taken from the minutes of a council meeting held on May 30, 1870. "Your Committee on Fire and Water recommend that the city buy two Babcock fire extinguishers, one to be placed at the hotel and the other at the Highland Park Building Company store. Further, that all home owners in the city be compelled to buy a ladder and have it ready at all times in case of fire. Signed, S. S. Streeter, Chairman." At this same meeting, Alderman Fay moved that the committee should inquire into the expediency of procuring these two extinguishers by public subscription and to ascertain the price and terms on which they could be secured. The meeting ended with no further comment.

Some months later, the Fire and Water Committee reported that the fire extinguishers could be purchased from the Babcock Company for a sum of twenty dollars, with unconditional terms. The aldermen accepted this sum of money as reasonable. They started a fund drive in the city to purchase the two fire extinguishers and in a week's time the total sum of twenty dollars was raised. They then purchased the two extinguishers and installed them in the proposed buildings.

In the following years, little, if anything, was done to improve on fire protection in the city. In 1888, Professor Elisha Gray and William Boyington undertook a private investigation of the water conditions in the city and determined that a new water works was needed. The city complied by purchasing a new steam pump which would supply water to a wooden tank situated on the second floor of the city building. The water would flow by gravity through a system of watermains installed in the city. The water main system, however, was incomplete and hydrants were located erratically throughout town.

In summer of 1888, William Boyington's home was destroyed by fire because of the lack of water. To the astonishment of the people, the newly installed steam pump failed to deliver the few hydrants with proper water supply.

This tragedy set into motion the requests for an organized fire department. Again, as in the past, little, if anything, was done to improve fire protection in the city until late in 1889.

About noon on the windy day of November 1, 1888, a railway engineer noticed smoke billowing from Northwestern Military Academy, located at Ravine Drive and St. Johns Avenue. The shrill blast of a locomotive whistle notified residents of impending danger. In a matter of minutes, the building was totally engulfed in flames and crumbled to the ground. Townspeople watching this disaster, noticed a burning ember fall on the roof of Henry Sampson's home. With nothing to combat the fire, they started throwing blocks of wood at the burning shingles, but to no avail. They only added more fuel to the fire. With the wind blowing, embers were soon blown to the roof of the Zook home. James McDonald, landlord of the Zooks, along with two assistants, raised a ladder and formed a bucket brigade. With full buckets of water being handed to him via ladder, James McDonald scampered across the rooftop quenching burning embers as he went.

Shortly after this fire, which almost destroyed the business district, Colonel Davidson offered to organize a volunteer fire department and said that the Northwestern Military Academy would furnish a ladder if the city would provide a hose cart and 50 water buckets. The aldermen claimed that the city had no ordinance to cover such a department; however, they felt the city's population was large enough to warrant a volunteer fire department to improve the protection that they were receiving from disorganized citizens.

It must be assumed that in December of 1889, Andrew Bock, a citizen of the city who was stressing the town's need for a fire department, impressed the city council enough for them to purchase two hose carts, and the city went as far as to honor Bock's idea of two company fire departments.

From December 1889, there were two active volunteer fire companies in town under the leadership of Andrew Bock, who was known as the "Chief Fire Marshal." One of these companies, known as the Dutch Company which manned a two wheeled hose cart, was located at Freberg's Livery Stable on St. Johns Avenue, just north of Elm Place. The second company was the Irish Company which manned a hose cart located in a shed at the city building, located on the corner of Central and Green Bay. Great rivalry existed between these two worthy outfits. Whenever the alarm sounded, both rushed to the scene of the fire. The fire was often less important than the five dollar reward given by the council to the first company to arrive at the scene. Afterward, the losing company would treat the winner to beer, shared by all. There was continuous arguing, and often open fisticuffs broke out to determine who was the winner. More often than not, these

hostilities took place before the fire was extinguished.

In spring of 1890, Arthur McPherson and Elisha Gray enabled Highland Park to pioneer in the use of electric lighting. They built an electric power plant which was located at the Elm Place crossing and owned by Fredrick Cushing and Frank Hawkins. People were still fearful of electricity at this time and many problems arose to hamper the two men's work. One of the main problems was the council's failure to permit trimming of foliage which was interfering with the electric wires.

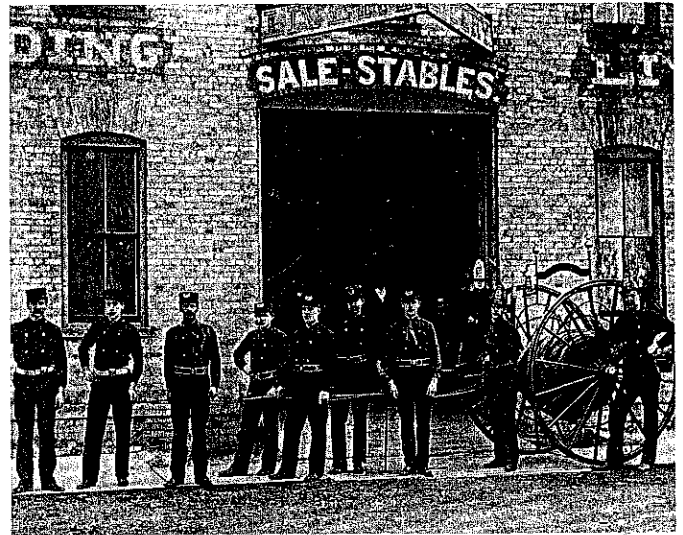
At the foot of Lake Avenue stood a massive oak tree which was the pride of Dr. Colburn. Just before dawn one morning, Arthur McPherson hooked a bare wire around the tree and attached a jumper to a neighboring light pole. Several minutes later, the electric plant whistle awakened the new Volunteer Fire Department.



Andrew Bock, Chief, picture 1895. Volunteer Fire Department of Highland Park.

Apparently there is some doubt as to whether or not there were two or three fire companies in town shortly after the turn of the century. One explanation that can be offered is that after the fire which destroyed the Trinity Church in December of 1889, and the fire in the locker room of Exmoor Country Club in 1904, the citizens were aroused to the need of a more efficient fire department. Colonel Parmenas Turnley took this as meaning more manpower and equipment. He and a group of North Highland Parkers proposed to organize another fire company if the city would provide a hose cart. At the same time, the citizens formed an association and took several surveys. They recommended that buildings be inspected, new watermains be installed, and said that the reason for the inefficient operation of the fire department was too many firemen.

The aldermen, respecting the association's report, rejected Colonel Turnley's proposal and also ordered the resignation of Company No. 1's Hose Company #11. The angry crew members retaliated by stringing hose line backwards. The next time the alarm sounded, members of Company No. 1 found that piece of equipment useless when they responded to Harry Mills Ice House. As a consequence, the building was totally destroyed.

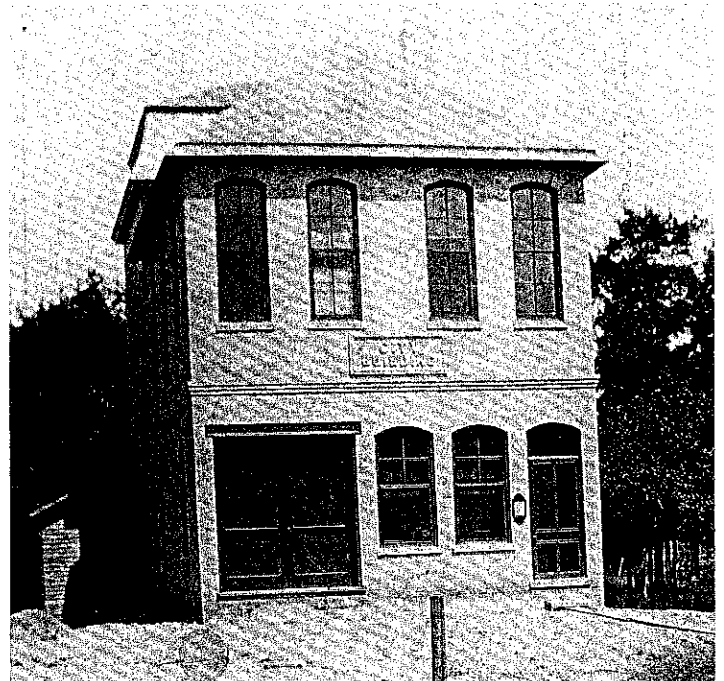


Highland Park Volunteer Fire Department - 1902, Ringdahl's Stables.

The citizens further suggested that more adequate space be provided for the fire department. They claimed that the shed being used was too small, stating that there was no space for storing and drying hose nor space enough to put hats and coats away. They further claimed that during the winter months hose and hose carts would freeze rendering them useless.

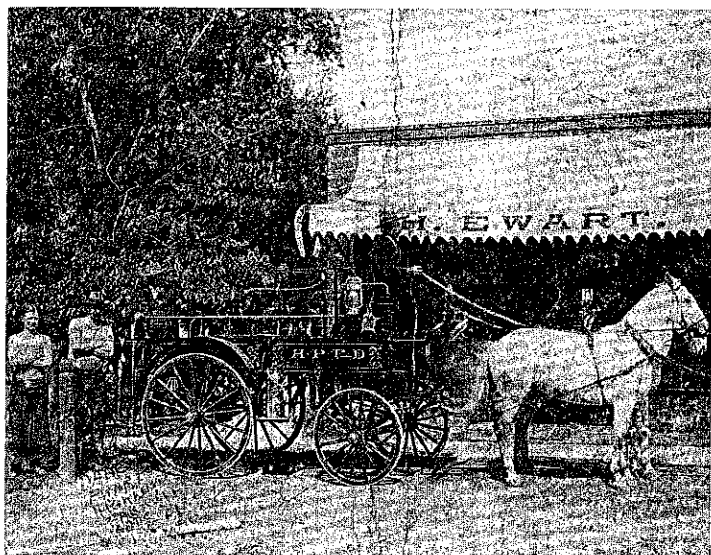
At the next council meeting, Alderman Cushing proposed that a new fire station be constructed. Other aldermen wanted the building large enough to house the public library, all city offices, and the fire department. Mayor Evans replied, "We cannot afford so large a building." The meeting adjourned with no action being taken.

Several months later, after another series of fires had almost destroyed the business district, the people demanded that the council provide proper facilities for the fire department. Shortly thereafter, construction was started on an adequate fire station. It was a two story brick building located on the corner of Green Bay Road and Central Avenue.



City Building Central and Green Bay Avenues. The shed on the side of the city building housed the hose cart of the "Irish Company".

Even with the construction of a new fire station, the people still weren't satisfied with the fire protection that they were receiving. Meetings were held to discuss the merits of different types of fire protection equipment. Many people were in favor of the steam type fire apparatus then being used by the Chicago Fire Department. The majority, however, preferred the horse-drawn hose wagon with the manual hand pump. At no one meeting was there any definite answer made as to the type of equipment the city should acquire.



This horse-drawn wagon with manual pump was given to the city by D. Ewart (blacksmith) in 1908.

In 1908, a blacksmith in Highland Park by the name of Ewart, built and presented to the city, a horse-drawn hose wagon with a manual hand pump. Chief Fire Marshal William Witten and the firemen accepted this piece of equipment with profound enthusiasm and promptly placed the two-wheeled hose carts in reserve. This innovation was a great improvement over the old method because it enabled the firemen to respond to fire alarms faster and to pump increased amounts of water.

Hand engines were normally operated at about sixty strokes a minute, and sometimes speeded up to double this tempo. A stroke consisted of a full up and down motion of the brakes and at normal paces, a man could last at this pumping about ten minutes, less if the speed was very great. Firemen frequently suffered from torn fingers and broken arms sustained when jumping in as relief when an engine was being operated at high speed.

The pride firemen took in their engines extended to decorating them almost to the point of art, the work done on their off-duty time and at their own expense.

People of all ages would line the streets to watch these men with their red suspenders race through the town ringing the bell on the hose wagon as they went to answer an alarm. More excitement was generated by the fire department's responding to an alarm than by the "Fourth of July Parade." However, these were to be short lived days as the motorized vehicles became more popular and useful than the horse-drawn.

In 1910, the City of Highland Park encompassed an area of 5½ miles, with a population of 4,029 citizens. The hub of this fair community was the business district which was comprised of four blocks. In these four blocks, one could find clothing stores, drug stores, grocery stores, and livery stables. Much pride and care went into these buildings, but the overall construction left something to be desired.



Happ's Blacksmith Shop - John Happ on left, his son Harry on right.

Construction in this area was generally wood trussed brick and frame with wooden shingles for roofing. About 80% of the stores in this area were three stories in height with the remainder being one and two story buildings. Most buildings in the residential area were of frame construction with wooden shingles for roofing. With construction of this type, fire hazards were numerous. In most cases, fires were caused by sparks emitted from chimneys due to wood and coal burning furnaces. Chimneys at this time were not equipped with spark arrestors and the city had no ordinance for them.

In the spring of 1911, flames almost destroyed the business district when fire broke out in a barn owned by Philip Goldberg, located behind the Palace Market and the Geminer & Gripp Grocery. The fire quickly spread to adjoining buildings by way of the wooden trusses that connected each building. Firemen were considerably late due to the fact that the whistle, which was being used as a fire alarm, was situated atop the pumping station located on the beach and could not be heard distinctly in town where most firemen spent their time.

Fear of flames and other troubles in the city found the people supporting the John Oliver ticket. Mr. Oliver was an outsider who was running for mayor. Oliver proposed a new fire department with better equipment, a new police department, and also a new board of health, if elected mayor. John Oliver impressed the people enough for them to vote for him and, in November of 1911, John Oliver became Mayor of Highland Park.

Mayor Oliver's first act was to change the fire alarm system, stating that the present whistle was inadequate because it was not audible in town. Agents from the Chicago Fire Appliance were invited to Highland Park to demonstrate the different types of fire alarm systems. More interest than confidence inspired responsible people to witness these demonstrations. One system was to their liking, however, and in 1912, the "Bell System" was inaugurated into the city. In conjunction with the telephone company and the fire station, a bell was rung simultaneously in all the firemen's homes and in the station to notify the men that their services were needed. This innovation was the first of two major changes by Mayor Oliver to try and modernize the fire department.

In 1912, by popular subscription, the city acquired a new American La France Fire Engine. Although the fund was short some \$500 to \$1,000, the City fathers elected to make up the difference from the town's own fund. The new engine cost \$5,500.

List of Past Fire Chief's as I could get it from various people.

William J. Henning
Chief, Fire Department
Assistant Chief

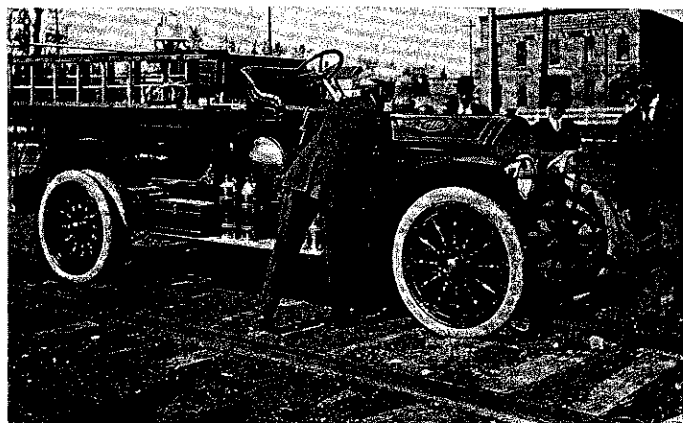
Year	Chief	Assistant Chief
1904-05	Andy Bock	Wm. Witten
1906-07	John Sheahen	Paul Gieser
1908-09	Wm. Witten	E. E. Farmer
1910-11	E. E. Farmer	Elmer Evans
1912-13	A. A. Gieser	Otto Lawrentz
1914-15	E. C. Hoshin (Vol. Chief)	Wm. Cummings
1915-23	E. C. Hoshin (PD Chief)	Wm. Cummings
1923-43	E. C. Hoskin	Wm. Cummings
1943	Wm. J. Hennig	Joseph Boylan (1945)
1952	Wm. J. Hennig	Joseph Boylan
1953	Wm. J. Hennig	Joseph Boylan
1958	J. Boylan (1-1-58)	W. C. Hennig (5-1-58)
1963	W. C. Hennig (Acting)(8-1-63)	
1964	W. C. Hennig (5-4-64)	

The new engine was a 40 horsepower, four cylinder engine and was technically called a combination Hose and Chemical Truck. It carried 1,100 feet of 2½ inch hose, two straight pipe nozzles, 200 feet of chemical hose and two Babcock three-gallon chemical extinguishers. Other items included 4 axes, 1 pike pole and a 20-foot straight ladder.

The tank on the engine was chrome-plated copper, and contained a mixture of bicarbonate of soda and acid which, when combined, would build up pressure in the tank. The pressure, approximately 150 pounds per square inch, was measured by a gauge mounted on the side. The gauge was monitored by the rig operator, who would make sure the pressure remained adequate to discharge a stream of the solution. The tank had a 40-gallon capacity and a connection for hydrant hook-ups.

This new innovation struck fear into the hearts of firemen and townspeople alike. Firemen were apprehensive about the buildup of pressure and afraid that the soda-acid solution would damage their hoses. Their fears were allayed by the explanation that the hoses were specially made and would not be harmed.

At Mayor Oliver's invitation, the firemen took the town's children for rides around the city, and soon the people accepted the new engine.



The Good Old Days - The arrival of Highland Parks first fire engine in 1912 attracted a crowd of men and boys who watched the unloading of the shiny new vehicle from a box car. The LaFrance fire engine was purchased with \$5,500 donated by citizens. Fred Lindstrom and Carl Arnswald were hired to drive the new machine and they learned to maneuver the vehicle by driving around the city giving rides to children. (Historical Society photo).

Not many of the men knew how to drive this new apparatus, which made it necessary for Mayor Oliver to hire two men at regular hours and salaries to drive the truck. Fred Lindstrom and Carl Arnswald thus became the first full-time paid firemen in Highland Park.

Along with the new fire engine, the fire department had in reserve a village ladder truck, which was drawn by a team of horses. This piece of equipment carried one 40 foot extension ladder, one 10 foot ladder, and one 12 foot ladder. It could only be used during the day because the streets of the city were not very bright at night and visibility was poor. Since the horses were on loan from a local merchant, they remained at the fire station from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. During the day two police officers were on duty at the fire station and three police officers manned the station at night. They would respond to all alarms with the apparatus while the volunteers were being called. Each volunteer received \$1.00 per call and 50 cents per hour for services.

For the first time, in 1913, the city was inspected for a fire insurance rating. The inspectors pointed out various areas in which the city could improve its fire protection.

The first improvement was to set up a code to be followed in the construction of the buildings in the business district, next by improving the water supply available to the fire hydrants in the city. They also suggested that the fire department acquire a properly designed ladder wagon to replace the present one now being held in reserve. They also thought that the city should replace the volunteers with a full-time paid fire department.

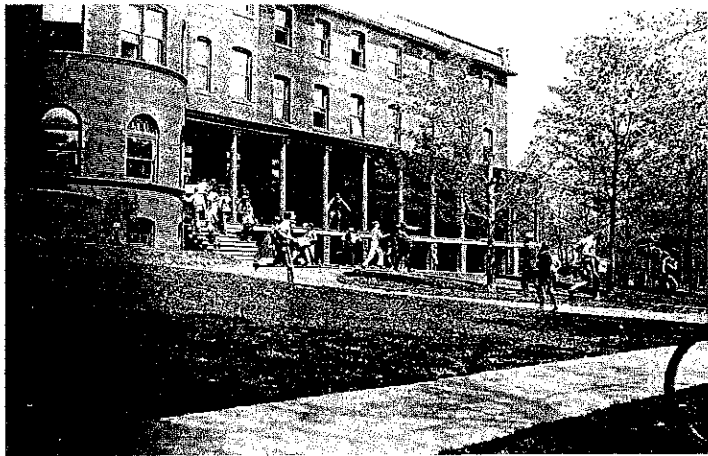
With a population of 4,000, the city was not financially strong enough to undertake all these recommendations at one time. They first decided to improve the water supply to the city. The city built a steel tank behind the fire station which measured 16 feet in diameter and 100 feet in height. The capacity of this water tank was 150,000 gallons. The pumping station would supply the tank with water while water would flow by gravity feed to the city from the tank. Pressure from the pumping station could also be supplied to the 12 inch main feeding the city in time of emergency so that the fire department would have enough water. With the installation of a new water supply system, the city increased the number of fire hydrants to 236; thereby, making the fire department's job of obtaining water that much easier. The pressure on these hydrants left something to be desired. In the business district, the pressure in the hydrants was only 45 pounds per square inch. It was considerably lower in the residential area. The fire department had no pumper at this time and hose was run from the hydrants to produce water streams. The amount of fire hose was inadequate, permitting the firemen to obtain only two water streams at most. The hose was also in poor repair and often would rupture during operation. The total amount of reserve hose was 400 feet and this, too, was in poor repair.

The lack of ladders also contributed to the overall operating conditions of the fire department. With buildings being of the two and three story variety, firemen would often be unable to reach upper stories to protect exposures and cover nearby roofs. As noted before, the construction of this period was very important. Fires were often in the advanced stages before the fire department arrived.

In 1915, the city council passed an ordinance regulating the manufacture, storage, use or distribution of flammable liquids. This was another major step for Highland Park in the way of establishing better fire protection.

Even with these major improvements, the Northwestern Military Academy, located on the corner of St. Johns Avenue and Ravine Drive, was destroyed by fire on May 1, 1915. The Academy had been burned out once before on November 1, 1888, and this

proved to be the last time. Upon the arrival of the fire department, the massive structure was totally engulfed in flames. The cadets, assuming they themselves could handle the fire, turned in the alarm too late when the fire proved too much for them. The entire building was lost at an estimated cost of \$75,000. Shortly after this tragedy, the Military Academy moved to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.



Before the fire



The Academy in flames

The fact that the cadets tried to extinguish the fire themselves points out another reason why the efficiency of the fire department wasn't better than it was. People were aware of the disastrous effects of the soda acid chemical upon their belongings and, instead of calling the fire department, people would try to combat the fire themselves, often causing widespread damage. The soda-acid truck was a great innovation to Highland Park, but it often caused more damage than the actual fire. The cure was often worse than the disease.

For several more years the city depended upon the volunteer fire department with their chemical hose truck for fire protection. Then, in 1919, the city passed the "Highland Park Code of 1919." This code set forth building requirements, fire limits, and many general ordinances pertaining to various topics in the city.

The code distributed the administrative powers among five departments as follows:

1. Department of Public Affairs
2. Department of Accounts and Finances
3. Department of Public Health and Safety
4. Department of Streets and Public Improvements
5. Department of Public Property

Fire Department Inventory Jan 1-1915

1	Combination Auto Chemical + Hose Truck		
1	horse drawn hose wagon		
1	horse drawn hook + ladder wagon		
550	ft. new hose		
1000	ft. old hose		
4	hand chemical extinguishers		
1	3 way cast iron nozzle		
4	putty poles		
6	ladders		
7	crow bars		
2	hose carts		
4	nozzles		
3	horse blankets		
2	Jarppauline		
15	helmets		
1	raincoat		
1	60 gallon gas tank		
1	60 " oil "		
6	fire axes		
18	chairs		
1	mop + pail		
1	5 gal kerosene can		
3	beds		
6	shirts		
6	pillows		
3	blankets		
7	stoves		
100	ft. garden hose		
7	steel brooms		
1	lawnmower		
1	lawn spray		
1	lawn mower		

INVENTORY 12
Inventory taken from 1915
logbook

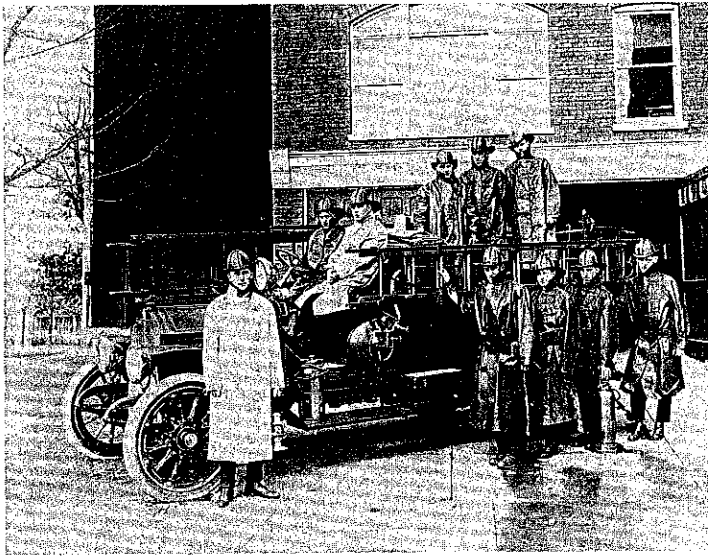
By this code, the city council would determine the powers and duties of each department, of the officers and employees, and the rules and regulations to be followed.

Under this code, the fire department was placed under the control of the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety.

There were two offices created in the fire department. One was the office of Chief Fire Marshal and the other the office of Assistant Chief Fire Marshal. These two officers were assigned certain powers and duties to be carried out by them and the men assigned under them. The code called for as many firemen as council might see fit to provide. By this code, the City of Highland Park became what it is today.

The change from the aldermanic form of government to the commission form of municipal government enabled Highland Park to progress at a rapid pace. Each department could evaluate its own progress and report its findings. This proved of great value to the fire department in coming years.

In 1919, the fire department brought to the attention of the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety the need for a fire engine capable of increasing the water pressure supplied by hydrants and forcing it through fire hose at a greater pressure. At the same time, firemen could lay lines directly from the hydrants thereby increasing the total output of water. In this manner, the chemical truck would not be used as extensively and damage from water would not be as severe as from the soda-acid solution. This information was taken under consideration and, in the latter part of 1919, the fire department was presented with a Ford pumper.



1917-1918 - On engine: H. Kock, Ed Hoskin, A. Peterson, Joe Genest, Lloyd Sheahan.
Standing: Wm. Cummings, Wm. Fosbender and George Clark.

This pumper was capable of delivering 250 gallons per minute at a pressure of 125 pounds per square inch, through two discharge ports. This piece of apparatus carried 900 feet of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch hose, one 25 foot extension ladder, one smoke mask, two shut-off nozzles, one pike pole and two $2\frac{1}{2}$ gallon chemical extinguishers. With the addition of this vehicle, the fire department consisted of one ladder wagon carrying one 40 foot extension ladder, one 10 foot straight ladder, and one 12 foot straight ladder. The other apparatus was the soda-acid truck carrying 1,100 feet of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch hose, two straight pipe nozzles, 200 feet of chemical hose, two 3-gallon chemical extinguishers, 4 axes, one pike pole, and a 20 foot straight ladder. These three pieces of equipment were manned by one Chief Fire Marshal, one Assistant Chief Fire Marshal, and twelve volunteers, with two full-time paid drivers.

In 1919, a personnel count and an equipment inventory would have looked something like this: one Chief Fire Marshal, one Assistant Chief Fire Marshal and twelve volunteers. Two men on a full-time basis. They were the men who drove the vehicles. One man was on duty during the day, the other was on duty during the night. Each received a salary of \$150.00 per month while the volunteers received \$1.00 per call and \$10.00 per month for services rendered. The total amount of hose was 2,900 feet; 2,000 feet were on the apparatus and 900 feet in reserve. Total feet in ladders amounted to 107 feet. There were 200 feet of chemical hose, one smoke mask, four axes, two pike poles, two shut-off nozzles, two straight pipe nozzles, two $2\frac{1}{2}$ gallon chemical extinguishers, and two three-gallon chemical extinguishers. Two of the vehicles were motorized, the other was horse-drawn.

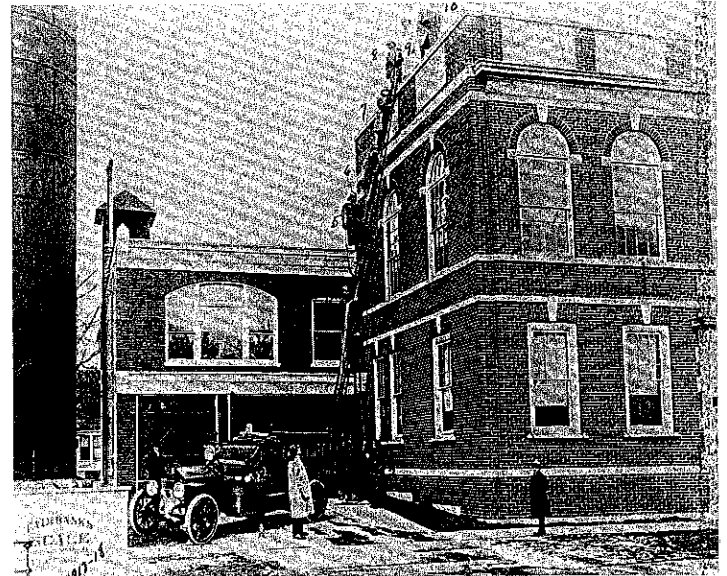
Still, the personnel were not receiving any type of training in the field of fire fighting. It was believed that firemen learned as they gained experience, which, as time went on, was proven wrong.

The life of firemen in the early days was not so much spent fighting fires as fighting boredom. The volunteer firemen had jobs and gave only their spare time to run to fires and maybe a day a week for clean-up work in the firehouse. But the men who spent the 10 or 12 hours every day or night with one ear tuned for the alarm and the other on buzzing flies or philosophy from a chair—they were the ones who put in time the hard way.

There was work to be done at the stations, but when it was completed some men with initiative had studies or hobbies to keep their time occupied. The equipment was in constant need of

cleaning, and the brass always needed polishing. After a run, the pumper chemical wagon or hook and ladder had to be washed down and wiped dry. Any hose used had to be laid out and dried. The engines and machinery needed regular maintenance and repair. The horses had to be cared for and daily fire drills were held to keep the men alert. The drills were also used to enable crews to cut seconds and hopefully minutes off the time between the alarm and the getaway.

It was at this time that firemen began their tradition of charity work as their presence at meetings and social gatherings added color, glamour and prestige to the occasion. There were athletic contests, baseball games, parades, all of which required training and preparation.



1917-1918 Ladder Drill, corner of Central and Green Bay, city building to the right.

Total Fire Calls for 1920 - 53.

Grand Totals 15

House " 33

Automobile 1

Garage 1

Horse Stables 2

<i>6440</i>	<i>Value on</i>	<i>Insurance Paid on Buildings</i>	<i>\$4,555.00</i>	<i>Total \$8,212.00</i>
	<i>Value of</i>	<i>Insurance Paid on Contents</i>	<i>\$3,657.00</i>	

Summary of calls from the log of 1920.

In 1922, the fire department recommended that the chemical truck be converted to a ladder truck. This would enable firemen to reach the upper stories and roofs of buildings to perform proper fire fighting evolutions and rescue operations. The longest ladder available to them now was the 40 footer, which was often not quite long enough or was already in use by other personnel.

The idea was accepted by the City Council and the chemical truck was taken to the Peter Pirsch Fire Apparatus Company in Racine, Wisconsin. There it was to be converted to chemical, ladder and hose truck. The idea of making it a three-in-one combination was to give it more versatility and to have extra equipment readily available to the firemen on the fire ground if needed.

After the conversion, the ladder truck carried one 50-foot extension ladder, one 40-foot extension ladder, two 28-foot extension ladders, two 20-foot straight ladders, and several 10 and 12 foot roof ladders. Along with these ladders, the truck carried 500 feet of 2½ inch hose and various sized tips for the nozzle. The truck also had a 40 gallon chemical tank which was equipped with a connection for hydrant hook-ups and carried 300 feet of 1 inch chemical hose.

This piece of equipment proved to be an invaluable aid to the fire department in the next few months. Shortly after the conversion of the chemical truck, the Ford 250 G.P.M. pumper broke down at a fire. Minor repairs were made and the pumper was placed back on the line. Several weeks later this pumper broke down again and was not able to be put on the first line of defense. The city then purchased a Packard 750 G.P.M. rotary gear pumper. This new rig was placed on the first line of defense, and the Ford pumper was placed in reserve. The new pumper carried 1,100 feet of two and one-half inch fire hose.

In 1921, it was recommended that the city have a fully paid fire department. After the conversion of the chemical truck and the purchase of a new pumper, the city council elected to hire a Chief Fire Marshal on a full-time paid basis. In 1925, Edward Hoskin was hired as the Chief Fire Marshal of Highland Park. He was to be paid the sum of \$20.00 per month.

Chief Hoskin immediately proposed that the entire fire department be organized into one unit and that each member receive a set salary.



Chief Hoskin
1922-1932

In 1924, the City Council proposed that the fire department be on a full-time paid basis with each member working regular hours and receiving regular earnings. This proposal won unanimous support from the townspeople and was put into effect immediately.

Each member would work a full 24 hours and would be off a full 24 hours, but was subject to recall if need be. The firemen would eat and sleep at the station while on duty. No member would leave the city without notifying the Chief beforehand. This was to insure that there would be enough men available in case of a general recall. Living limitations were set in effect so that each member could respond to the station in a reasonable amount of time if called in from off-duty hours. These limitations were as follows:

- As far west as McGovern Avenue
- As far north as Vine Avenue
- No further than the railway tracks east
- And no further south than Laurel Avenue.

Every fire station in these glory days had its bunkroom and kitchen. A full crew was required to be ready to jump into the rigs and be off at the first clang of the alarm, so meals and sleep were subject to that call. Work was arranged so that small groups slept and ate on a rotating basis.

Mealtime in the firehouse was then, and still is, often the high point of the day. Even now some serious competition between station house cooks can be found. It isn't unheard of for an off-duty cook to be called at home to supply details of a popular recipe.

The bunkroom was located on the second floor above the apparatus and horses. It usually contained food storage and perhaps pool or card tables. The hay for the horses was hoisted by block-and-tackle at the rear. The bunkroom itself consisted of cots with a circular hole in the floor for the brass fire pole. When the men went to bed their suspended pants were draped over their boots by the side of the cot. When an alarm was sounded a quick motion of a leap from cot to clothes and a flip of galluses over the shoulder was all that was needed before they headed down the pole to the ground where the apparatus might already be in motion.

The men on night watch played cards, read newspapers and took part in "firehouse chats." The afternoon usually brought visitors to see the horses or the new red pumper. The lady across the street might bring over a cake or sack of apples and the boys would have to be watched to see they didn't sneak under the chains and hide somewhere in the shadows.



R. Sneed, A. A. Proctor
playing horseshoes, 1928

Every firehouse had a mascot or pet of some type. Traditionally the pet was a dog, preferably a Dalmation who would run to the fire ahead of the horses to clear the street or ride to the fire on the apparatus and stand guard allowing no one but the firemen near it. The tradition continued past the time when horse-drawn apparatus was phased out. Unfortunately, the dogs began to succumb to the effects of an advancing society and some died in traffic or lost their lives to railroad trains. The effect was hard on the men, many of whom became attached to the pets, and the practice was eventually abandoned. (It is rumored that one station even had a monkey as a mascot. As the story goes, this little fellow had no use whatsoever for the Fire Chief of the time and wasn't shy about demonstrating his feelings.)

Most of the volunteers were dissatisfied with this type of department and did not want to work as full-time firemen. As a result, the paid fire department in 1924 consisted of one chief and six men. The two-platoon system was to be the standard method used for the duty days. Each platoon would consist of three men working 24 hours. The chief was not subject to this system.

Number fires January	13	False Alarms	5	Explosions	2	Total Calls	146
" Feb	13	" Crans	21	Spontaneous Comb	2	Hose Laid	19,800 ft
" March	20	Children + Mats	7	Electric Appliances	9	Water used	757,290
" April	15	Oil Burners	8	Machinery	2	Miles Traveled	223
" May	8	Electric Wires	2	Hot Ashes	2	Inquiries	2
" June	10	Automobiles	17	Gasoline	7	Rescued	3
" July	15	Miscellaneous	2	Cigars etc	3	Chemicals	760 gal
" Aug	4	Over Heated Furnaces	9	Lightning	2	" Foam	15 gal
" Sept	7	Engine Sparks	1	Tar + Grease	2	Ladders raised	826 ft
" Oct	5	Chimney Sparks	8	Low Res Fire	627.84	Hours Engine Pumped	46
" November	13	Defective Chimneys	10	Res Capita Loss	6.11	Pulmotor Calls	5
" December	23	Burning Rubbish	16				
	146						

Insurance on Buildings	\$385.50	52000	Low on Buildings	\$65.690	Value Insured on Buildings	\$748.800	Total	\$983,800
Insurance on Contents	\$126.500	Total \$5,000.00	Loss on Contents	\$259.75	Value Insured on Contents	\$235,000		

Summary of calls from the log of 1927.

The population was expanding very rapidly and by 1927 an estimated 13,000 people were living within the city limits. That year the city was inspected again for fire insurance. Upon completion of the inspection, the city was given a Class 7 rating. This was due to many discrepancies found by the team of engineers, or what they considered discrepancies. One was the condition of the hydrants, which they thought poor; next, only four hose lines could be laid and have adequate pressure. The fire department was considered too small to provide proper fire protection as their equipment, such as fire hose, nozzles, etc. was inadequate and in poor repair. The fire station was also considered too small, providing no room for repair work. The fire department maintained 3,000 feet of fire hose of which 1,600 feet was carried on the apparatus, and 1,400 feet was held in reserve.

Between the years of 1924 and 1929, the fire department realized that the response time from the central station to the Ravinia area was considerably long. Fires were often in the advanced stages before they arrived. This was cause for the city to build a sub-station in Ravinia. In December of 1929, the fire

By 1931, the Highland Park Fire Department consisted of two stations, three motor fire apparatus, and 14 fully paid firemen. These firemen, along with other city employees, were under pressures exerted by certain citizens who thought they were receiving wages that were too high for their respective positions. The American Legion proposed that the city protect its employees from severe salary slashes and holding back promotion to high positions by placing the city under Civil Service Law.

Following a general election in April of 1931, Mayor Emil B. Metzel issued a proclamation on June 6, 1931, which placed the city under Civil Service Law. Under this law, the Mayor, with the approval of the City Council, appoints three Civil Service Commissioners who serve a term of three years. The commission itself appoints a Secretary and Chief Examiner. On July 6, 1931, Mayor Metzel appointed the first Civil Service Commission, namely: Charles R. Dennett, A. B. Cook, and John A. Putman. This group elected Mr. Putman as Chairman and appointed Bert Brand as Secretary. This Commission started working on rules and regulations, and when Mr. Cook resigned on May 10, 1932, Byron C. Howes was appointed to succeed him. A great deal of work was done on tentative rules and regulations, but none were put into final form for adoption until after the reappointment of the board on December 3, 1934. Final rules and regulations were adopted on April 23, 1935. Along with the passage of the Civil Service Law, the city passed an ordinance establishing the Firemen's Pension Fund in accordance with the laws of Illinois. The city had included provisions for this fund in its annual tax levy since 1931. Among other income received by the pension fund was five percent of the salaries of firemen; donations including receipts from the annual Firemen's Ball; a portion of certain city fees, and interest and dividends on securities held as an investment.

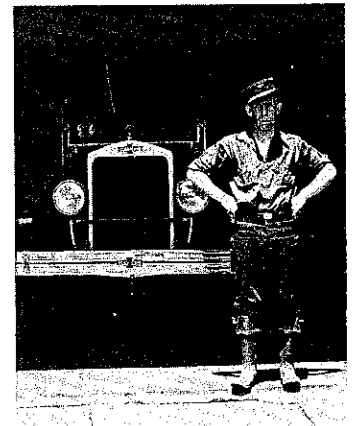


Ravinia Fire Station

department moved into its new station in Ravinia. Along with the expansion to a second fire station, the city enlisted five men and purchased a new engine. This new engine was an American La France 750 G.P.M. pumper with a rotary gear type pump. The location of this pumper was to be central station and its number was 3. The 750 G.P.M. Packard pumper was to move to the new Ravinia station. The Packard was known as Engine #2. The ladder wagon, known as Truck #1, would remain at central station.



Cameron and Boylan 1932

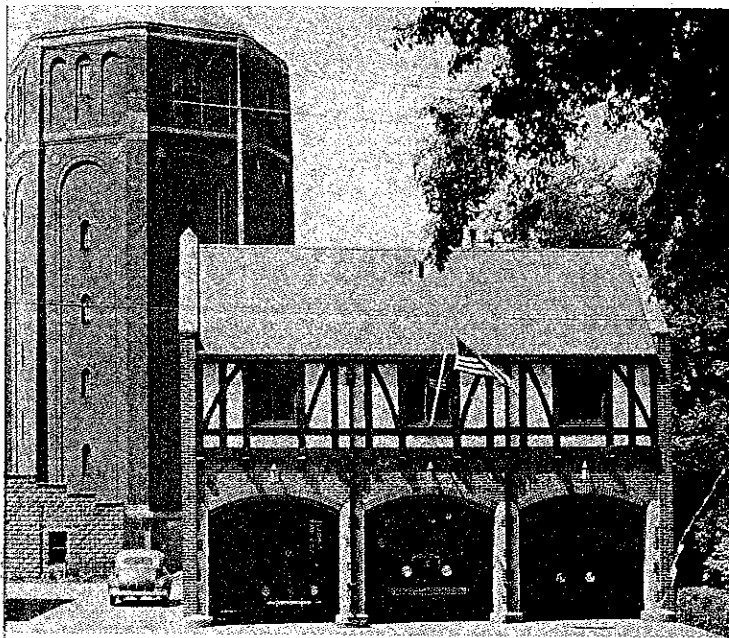


Ray Mann 1932

Under the pension fund, firemen are eligible to receive monthly payments after serving at least 20 years of active service and reaching the age of 50. Firemen are also eligible for payments from the pension fund if disabled and unable to return to work. Wives and children of firemen who lose their lives in the line of duty are also eligible for payments from the pension fund.

On November 3, 1937, Engine No. 10 replaced Engine No. 2, the 750 G.P.M. Packard pumper, which had incurred major engine trouble and was not fit for service. Engine No. 10 was on loan to the Highland Park Fire Department from a nearby community until the delivery of a new Pirsch 750 G.P.M. pumper purchased by the city.

In April 1938, the Peter Pirsch Fire Apparatus Company delivered to the City of Highland Park one 750 G.P.M. pumper with all the specified equipment. After preliminary tests were run, this engine, known as Engine No. 4, was placed into service. This engine carried 1200 feet of 2½ inch hose; one 12 foot ladder; one 24 foot extension ladder; one 200 gallon booster tank and an assortment of small tools and equipment. This pumper had two suction ports and two discharge ports, one of each on both sides of the apparatus. This enabled hydrant hook-ups with little difficulty, and the connection of hand lines.



Highland Park Fire Station 1, 1943

On January 1, 1941, the fire department moved into its new station located at 1830 Green Bay Road, just around the corner from where it had been. This new station allowed the firemen to perform that which was not possible in the old station. This new station, to be called "Central Station," was equipped with a hose tower which made it possible for the men to hang wet fire hose after it was washed, to allow it to dry in the proper manner. The building was comprised of two stories. The second floor was made up of the chief's office, dormitory, meeting room and wash room. The first floor contained the apparatus room, desk area, dining room and kitchen. The basement contained the boiler room, and the rest was storage room for janitorial supplies and equipment for the proper functioning of the department. The apparatus room contained enough space for the parking of every motor vehicle except the chief's auto. This amount of space proved its value for several years to come.

In 1943, Chief Edward Hoskin retired and William J. Hennig was promoted to chief.



Fire
Prevention
is
Everybody's
Business
—W. J. Hennig

The war years had a definite effect on the fire department. As a result of the loss of men periodically to serve military duty, other men were hired as temporary appointees to replace the men in war service. These men served the department well, learning all they could in a limited time. Without the whole-hearted cooperation of these men, the fire protection of the city would have been seriously hampered. By 1946, all of the men who served in the armed forces were back and took up their positions where they had left off.

In 1944, the Office of Civilian Defense presented the fire department a new "Three-in-One-Inhalator." This new inhalator was purchased by the Office of Civilian Defense for \$444 complete with two spare tanks of oxygen.

On February 25, 1947, the people of Highland Park were urged to vote "Yes" on a proposed bond issue of \$32,000 that would enable the city to purchase a new 75 foot aerial ladder truck. At the time of the proposal, the fire department was operating a ladder wagon that was purchased in 1913 as a soda-acid-tank truck and was subsequently converted to a ladder wagon in 1922. For 34 years this piece of equipment had served the community with un-failingly but, in the course of 34 years, the fire service had progressed rapidly. As a consequence, this valiant old lady of the fire department became, by all modern standards, obsolete. As if in answer to the prayers of the people who knew what this bond issue would mean to their fire protection, Mayor Garnett received the following letter from the Illinois Inspection Bureau in regard to the status of the present ladder wagon.

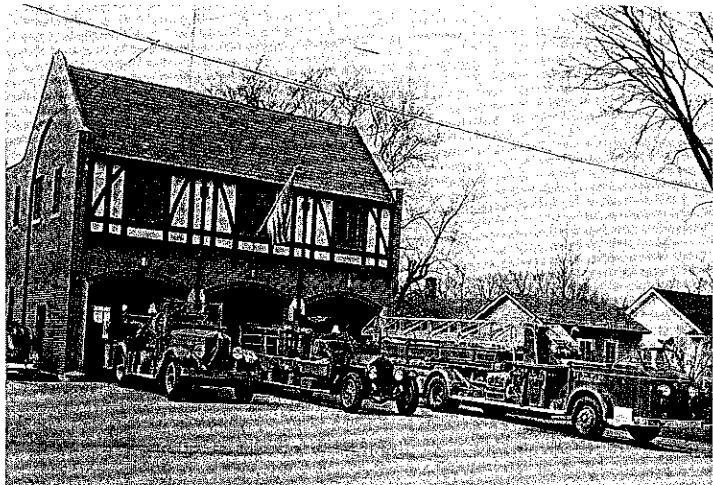
To Mayor Garnett,
Mayor of the City of Highland Park:

We have been advised that your city is at present contemplating the purchase of a motor fire apparatus of the pumper booster, ladder and hose type having a capacity of at least 750 G.P.M. and equipped with a 75 foot aerial ladder, to replace the present ladder and hose truck now located at Fire Station No. 1.

Our records show that the present vehicle, which was originally purchased in 1913 and subsequently remodeled in 1922, is at present in very unreliable condition. Dependence upon this obsolete vehicle to furnish needed ladder and supplementary extinguishing service is poor fire protection practice and based on its present value as compared to modern standards can no longer be considered as satisfactory to meet requirements. We, therefore, urge that the contemplated action be immediately taken so that Highland Park will have available apparatus as required to warrant recognition under the standards presently applicable.

Yours very truly,
C. W. Solderstrom, Manager

In late 1947, the bond issue of \$32,000 for the new aerial ladder truck was passed and the order was placed with the American La France Fire Apparatus Company. In March of 1949, the new truck was delivered to Central Station. As with all new apparatus, specification and acceptance tests are done to insure proper performance. Chief Hennig, along with an agent from the American La France Corporation, immediately proceeded to run the prescribed tests. On March 23, 1949, Truck No. 100 was accepted by Chief Hennig and placed into service, being located at Central Station.



Station 1 Green Bay Road, Engine 103, 1922 ladder truck, new 1949 ladder truck #100.

Truck No. 100 was what the fire service called a "Quint." It had a combination of five different operations: one pump capable of delivering 750 G.P.M., one 75 foot aerial ladder, one booster tank carrying 150 gallons of water, a total of 211 feet of ground ladders, and enough space for 800 feet of 2½ inch hose. It also carried an assortment of minor equipment used in fire fighting operations such as portable generators, pumps, heavy-duty cutting tools, life net, ropes of various sizes and lengths, and various types and sizes of master stream nozzles. The ground ladders consisted of one 20-foot, two 16-foot roof ladders, one 12-foot roof ladder, one 28-foot ladder, one 24-foot ladder, one 50-foot extension (Bangor) ladder, one 35-foot extension ladder, and one 10-foot attic ladder. Except for the aerial ladder, which was aluminum alloy, all the other ladders were made of West Coast Douglas Fir for the beams and second growth hickory for the rungs. This method of construction insured proper strength and durability.

Truck No. 100 was manned by the off-duty personnel when the general alarm was sounded for fires that required additional manpower and equipment. Day to day maintenance was the responsibility of the men on duty who inspected and made repairs as needed.

In 1948, the fire department suffered a tremendous setback. In an effort to recover a deficit of \$45,000, the city council laid off several employees, including three firemen and two policemen.

Due to the firing of these men and the leaves of absence of two others, Chief Hennig was forced to close the Ravinia Station on July 15, 1948, and move all the equipment to the Central station. Many residents of the Ravinia area tried to protest Chief Hennig's action, but in light of the limited fire personnel available, the city council rebuked this protest.

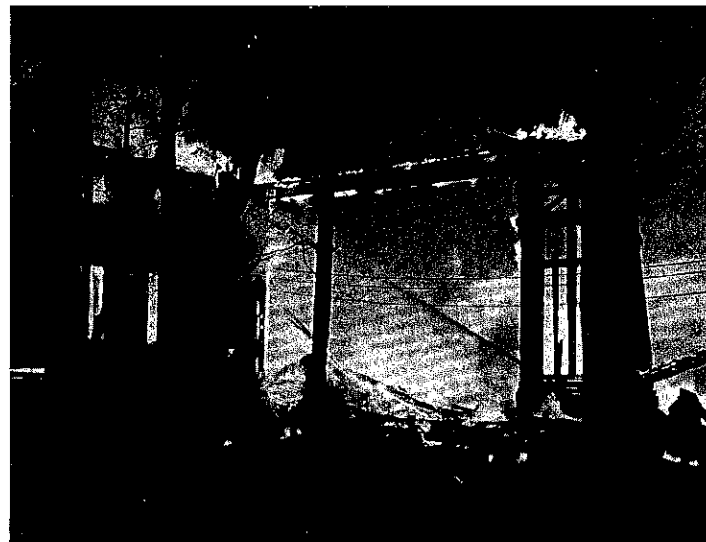
With the return of one man from his leave of absence and by placing the Assistant Chief on the line, Chief Hennig was able to reopen the Ravinia Fire Station on October 30, 1948, at 9:00 a.m. The department was still undermanned by the loss of the three

RAVINIA PARK

The Chicago & Milwaukee Electric Railroad opens its new pleasure resort, Ravinia Park next Monday with a first class performance, entitled "Vivian's Pappas." The company will come direct from Powers Theatre with Blanche Ring as the star.

The Electric Railroad Company have expended several hundred thousand dollars on this new resort, having a first class steel fireproof Theatre, an elegant Casino, and a large Stadium, up-to-date in all respects. Neither money or effort has been spared to make "Ravinia Park" a high-toned pleasure spot, free from all objectionable features. Too much praise cannot be given Mr. Frost for the sagacity, public spirit and faith in the people exhibited in his plans and expenditure in this enterprise. It will be of immense local advantage to us, as it provides fine entertainments at our very doors.

The city officials visit the Park today as Mr. Frost's guests, to inspect the buildings and ground, as well as enjoy his hospitality.



Ravinia Park Pavilion fire on May 14, 1949.

men. With this type of program, each platoon would have the minimum amount of men to operate both stations and equipment adequately.

Although the fire department had provided excellent coverage to the Ravinia area, the reopening of the station took a burden off the minds of the residents of Ravinia.

Up until late 1949, the fire department and other departments in the city were working under a confusing circumstance. The city had not instituted any regulation as to the numbering and naming of streets. Oftentimes the fire department would respond to an alarm, only to find that they had the right street and number but the wrong location. This led Mayor Patten to organize a committee to look into the possibility of a system by which streets and street numbers could be selected without duplication. The name of this system was the "grid plan." Members of the committee noted that the system had been instituted by other communities with very satisfying results. By the "grid plan," the numbering of houses would start at County Line Road as Number 1, and go north as far as the city limits. East to West streets would start at the lake front as Number 1, and go west as far as the western city limits. Mayor Patten favored this system along with the committee and plans were started promptly. Many street names remained the same, but the new numbering system eliminated the confusion; however, many street names were dropped and new ones added.

In May 1952, as a result of State Law, firemen's working hours were reduced from 84 per week to 72 per week. Working 84 hours per week meant that the firemen worked 24 hours and were off 24 hours. With the reduction in hours, which came to be known as the "Kelly" system, each man was given an extra day off every 12 days. This extra day was called a "Kelly." The total hours worked per week by each fireman was figured on a six-week basis. This system was favored by many firemen but there were several who would have preferred the 24 and 24 type.

In 1953, the department added new men to the staff to give added manpower and to offset loss of manpower due to retirement. By the end of 1953, the department consisted of one chief fire marshal, one assistant chief and 16 men.

On the 14th of October, 1954, the fire department received a new pumper from the American La France Fire Apparatus Company. After acceptance tests were run, this new pumper was placed in service on November 26, 1954. This was a quad pumper capable of pumping 1,000 gallons per minute. It was numbered Engine 101, and Engine 103, which was a 1929 La France pumper, was placed in reserve. Engine No. 101 was housed at Central Station.



Engine 101 at Station 2, 1950s.

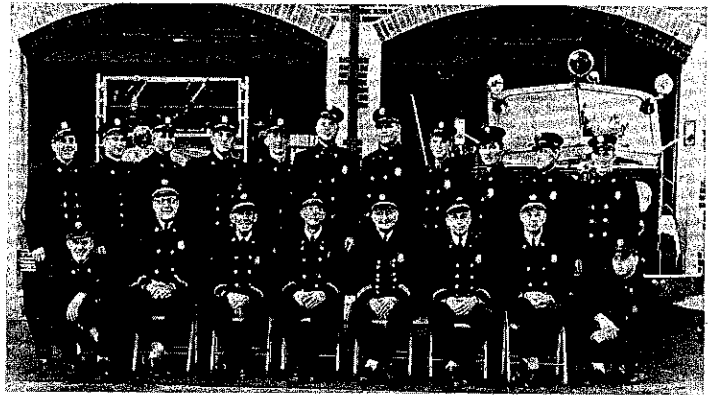
On April 30, 1958, Engine No. 104 was lost to the fire department because of major engine trouble. Engine No. 103 returned to service immediately. Engine No. 104 was irreparably damaged due to a thrown piston. Specifications were drawn up for a new pumper immediately.

In September of 1957, the fire department instituted the radio receiver-alarm system for notifying off-duty personnel that their services were needed. This system replaced the bell system which had been used since 1913.

On July 27, 1959, Chief Boylan and Assistant Chief W. C. Henning traveled to Chicago to pick up the new pumper. On July 28, 1959, these two men delivered the new 1,000 gallon per minute pumper to Central Station. Acceptance tests were started immediately and on August 24, 1959, at 10:30 a.m., the new Engine No. 104 was officially placed in service. Engine No. 103 was turned over to the Park Board for their own use. Because of its age, it was not of value to the department.

Old Engine 103 came full circle in the early 1980s when Chief Bart Moran negotiated its return to the department from the Park Board. Through the efforts of off-duty personnel and funds donated by the firefighters' union and others it was restored to running condition and refinished. As this is written it serves as an

operating parade display. (It still requires two men to stop the old girl; one standing on the brake pedal and one hauling with all his might on the hand brake lever. When this rig was in front line service it wasn't unheard of for it to overshoot an address. The firemen would shout to a befuddled citizen, "Don't go away, we'll be right back!" and they would drive around the block, returning in a moment to stop where they had intended to stop the first time.)



Department Picture Taken at Old Station #1 on Green Bay Road in 1955 - Front row: B. Moran, R. Botker, R. Mann, J. Boylan, W. Hennig, L. Petersen, F. Freberg, J. Marchi.

Back row: J. Kilkeny, B. Hennig, E. Shriver, J. Nizzi, R. Lundgren, N. Freberg, B. Perry, R. Richardson, J. Koon, J. Perry, A. Willis.



W. Perry, W. J. Henning, J. Boylan, R. Mann, L. Peterson, B. Moran, J. Marchi, W. C. Henning, E. Shriver.



April 21, 1957 Strang's Toy Store

In the final minutes of its last session in 1959, the Illinois State Legislature passed a bill prohibiting the merger of fire and police departments. Governor Stratton did not sign this bill into law, but local officials were pessimistic. This bill would stymie a proposed plan by Highland Park to combine the two departments. Local officials claimed that with the population growth and the construction of a new Public Safety Building, the fire department would have to be expanded by the hiring of 10 men, and the police department by 23 men. They also claimed that by 1961, the city tax levy would increase by 10% if the merger were not enacted.

Due to the difference in pensions between the fire and police departments, the merger was not possible. Firemen would not be covered while acting as policemen and vice-versa for police officers. The cost of a separate insurance policy to cover such a plan was such as to nullify the savings the plan was intended for. Bill No. 713 was never enacted by Governor Stratton and, in 1963, the same bill was vetoed by Governor Kerner.

In 1961, after the \$650,000 fire loss in the business district, James Borowitz, a city council candidate, proposed a Fire Inspection Law. He urged Highland Park to adopt the code prepared by the National Board of Fire Underwriters. The code was recognized officially by the City Council and City Manager, Ralph Snyder, on February 15, 1961. This code was taken from the National Fire Protection Association model code with location adaptations. Up until this time, the city had no such code and recommendations to violators of fire hazards could not be enforced. The code set up a fire prevention bureau under the supervision of the Chief Fire Marshal.

In 1961, the Fire Prevention Bureau was placed under the supervision of Chief W. C. Hennig, assisted by Captain Bart Moran. They made regular inspections of schools, business establishments, and buildings of public assemblies. Violations were recorded and brought to the attention of the proper authorities and, if not corrected, penalties were imposed.

On March 3, 1964, a team of engineers for the Illinois Inspection and Rating Bureau, now known as the Insurance Services Office or ISO, started their inspection of the city's fire defenses in order to determine the city's fire protection classification. Classifications are based on a 1 through 10 basis; 1 being the best, 10 being the poorest. Highland Park had had a rating of 5 since 1958.

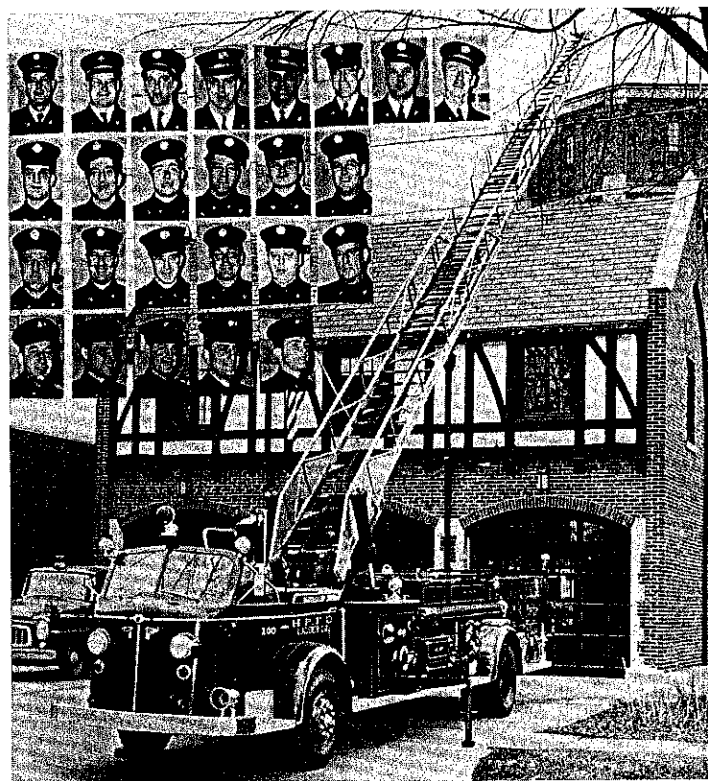
Major items considered in the evaluation were:

1. The water department's reliability and adequacy toward meeting both regular consumption and fire flow demands;
2. The fire department, including fire alarm facilities, and fire prevention work as well as apparatus, equipment, training and manpower available for combatting a fire once it starts;
3. Police operations during a fire; and
4. The effectiveness of the city's building code and its enforcement.

Under this inspection, each piece of apparatus was tested against its performance tests with consideration of age. Points were added if the age of a piece of apparatus exceeded a certain period. Recommendations and comments were made as to how the city could further improve its fire protection. After this inspection, the city was given a Class 4 rating.

In January of 1963, the fire and police departments moved into their new quarters at the Public Safety Building, 1677 Old Deerfield Road, built to afford better protection for the City of Highland Park. At the time the station was contemplated, the west

side of town was separated from both fire stations by the Chicago & North Western freight tracks. Interestingly enough, it was at almost this time that the state decided to convert the intersection of Deerfield Rd. and Route 41 to an overpass and cloverleaf arrangement which made the freight line a moot issue.



Station 1 Green Bay Road Truck 100 1961 - J. Boylan, W. C. Henning, W. Richardson, B. Moran, E. Shriver, A. Willis, N. Freberg, R. Lundgren, R. Castellari, J. Kilkenny, M. Netzer, H. Kuchling, J. Blevins, P. Pankowicz, J. Nizzi, J. Karlovich, T. Mann, G. Fowler, J. Marchi, J. Perry, Sr., L. Fabbri, R. Pearson, J. Perry, Jr., J. Ugolini, T. Garrity.



Coffee with J. Karlovich and R. Castellari.

A new 1,000 G.P.M. pumper manufactured by the American La France Corp. was housed in this building. With the addition of the new station and new pumper, the fire department could ensure the best possible fire protection available. This new pumper was designated Engine No. 105.

Engine Number 105 was purchased for a price of \$25,885.00. It was capable of delivering 1,000 G.P.M. This engine was equipped with a 300 gallon booster tank, two reels of 200 feet of 1 inch hose located on both sides of the rig, one 35 foot aluminum ladder, one 16 foot aluminum roof ladder, 1800 feet of 2½ inch hose, 600 feet of 1½ inch hose, several lengths of suction hose for drafting or hydrant connections, several lengths of soft suction hose 3 inches in diameter, and various amounts of small tools and equipment.



Fire Department 1963 - Front row: G. Fowler, A. Willis, B. Lundgren, E. Schriver, T. Mann, R. Richardson, N. Freberg, B. Moran, P. Pankiewicz.
Middle Row: J. Boylan, A. Schneider, B. Pearson, J. Perry, Sr., J. Kilkenny, D.

Wichert, H. Kuchling, P. Anderson, B. Arlington, J. Blevins, W. Hennig.
Back row: M. Netzer, J. Perry, L. Fabbri, Wydra, J. Ugolini, J. Nizzi, R. McLaughlin, J. Karlovich.



At Open House in 1966—B. Moran and A. Willis.

This engine was seriously damaged in September of 1969 when it was involved in an accident at Greenbay Rd. and Laurel Ave.

On August 30, 1966, the fire department became the provider of emergency ambulance service in the City of Highland Park. This was the result of the unexpected cancellation of service from a private operator who went out of business.

The ambulance was delivered to the West Side Fire Station, and was purchased under a lease agreement for a price of \$7573.75, after passage of an ordinance to allow for the establishment of the emergency service. A schedule of charges for the service was instituted.

The unit, designated as Ambulance 102, was a 1966 Oldsmobile 98, specifically built as an ambulance, fully equipped for first aid, and for the transportation of the critically ill and injured.

The ambulance was manned by one Lieutenant and one fire fighter and responded to requests for emergency transportation or help. In the first four months of operation the ambulance responded to 127 emergency calls. Each year thereafter, the number of calls for the ambulance increased with a total of 211 calls in 1967, and 324 in 1968.

To make the most efficient use of the ambulance and equipment, the officers and men on the fire department began going to some of the schools that were set up with particular attention given to first aid and ambulance service. Trauma schools, along with first aid classes, were attended, and the fire department became the sponsor of an Annual Seminar that dealt with the Care and Transportation of the Critically Ill and Injured. The instructors for the seminars were some of the staff members of the Highland Park Hospital, who, by sharing some of their medical knowledge, helped the men on the department and especially those men assigned to the ambulance.

The scope of the department's rescue skills was further enhanced during 1967 when a SCUBA/Rescue team was born. Initial training was essentially of the on-the-job variety. The nine charter members of the team were issued SCUBA gear and dove in Jackson Harbor under the tutelage of the Chicago Fire Department. They were told to disregard any old human remains found clad in "cement overshoes," testimony to the merciless justice of the Mafia during the days of Al Capone. After a while, the men began to seek more formalized education in SCUBA techniques in the form of YMCA courses.

The team's initial equipment, in addition to their personal gear, consisted of a 14' runabout with a 9 horse outboard engine and a towbar. This small boat was deemed inadequate and was augmented by a 19' Evinrude with a 350 horsepower sterndrive in 1980. This boat was better suited to operations in the often unpredictable waters of Lake Michigan. The boats were quartered first at Station #1 and later at Station #4 after its completion. They were transported to the emergency scene on trailers by Dive

Team members. In 1989 the two boats were replaced with a 17' inflatable boat with a 40 horsepower outboard motor similar to those used by the British Navy and Jacques Cousteau. It was felt that this boat would serve the team's Lake Michigan needs as well as their smaller ponds and lakes.

During the 1980s the team had the opportunity to cooperate with the US Coast Guard and National Safety Council, among others, in producing and presenting a number of public water- and boating-safety demonstrations. It was also at about this time that a university research physician by the name of Dr. Martin Neimeroff began to publish studies which suggested that drowning victims previously thought dead might be salvageable if their immersion in cold enough water was limited to less than one hour or so. His findings have since become proven and accepted, and this helped to move the dive team further into the realm of rescuers as opposed to body recovery technicians. The team had the opportunity to work with Dr. Neimeroff at a demonstration in Chicago.

On November 16, 1968, Engine No. 106 was delivered to the Highland Park Fire Department by the American La France Fire Apparatus Company. This engine was purchased by the city at a cost of \$36,158.00. It was capable of delivering 1250 G.P.M. at 150 P.S.I. and was equipped with a 300 gallon booster tank, two reels of 200 feet of 1 inch hose located on both sides of the engine, one 35-foot aluminum extension ladder, one 16-foot roof ladder, 1800 feet of 2½ inch hose, 600 feet of 1½ inch hose, two 10-foot lengths of hard suction hose for drafting or hydrant connections, two 30-foot lengths of 3 inch suction hose and various amounts of small tools and equipment. Engine No. 106 came with a new innovation in fire apparatus; a roof! Until this time fire apparatus lacked this luxury. It was felt that the better visibility justified the need for windshield wipers on both the inside and outside of the windshield. Of course, at this time men still occasionally rode to fires on the tailboards of the rigs, so sympathy for the men in front was limited; at least they had a windshield.

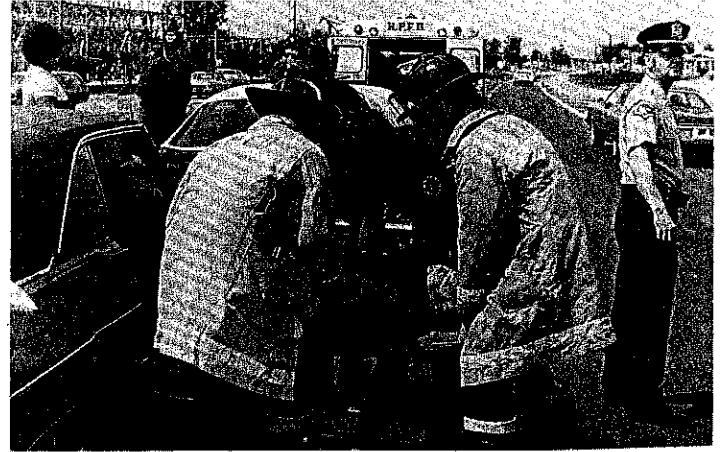
It was getting to the point that all of the specialized tools and equipment required for firefighting would no longer fit on the engines and ladder truck. What was needed was a vehicle capable of transporting heavy rescue equipment, power saws, hydraulic jacks, an auxiliary generator, portable pump, and an air supply system for refilling self-contained breathing apparatus, as well as additional spare tools, salvage equipment and a field lighting system. Chief Hennig and Assistant Chief Moran designed a squad truck powered by a Dodge engine and built on a custom chassis with a task-specific body which featured large compartments accessible from inside and outside the rig. The squad had another feature which likely made it popular with the men: an auxiliary heater and enough space inside for six or eight men to seek refuge from the cold winter winds. Squad 108 was delivered to the department in 1970.

After having gotten into the ambulance business in 1966 through the back door, so to speak, the department, in 1973, expanded the ambulance role. While prior to this time the department had been certifying personnel as state registered Emergency Medical Technicians, certain personnel were now going to become Paramedics. Until this time the ambulance service in Highland Park was pretty much a "throw and go" operation. Care in the field was usually limited to bandaging wounds and supplying oxygen. The definitive treatment of illness and injuries only occurred at the hospital. The ambulance service was largely just a transportation mechanism.

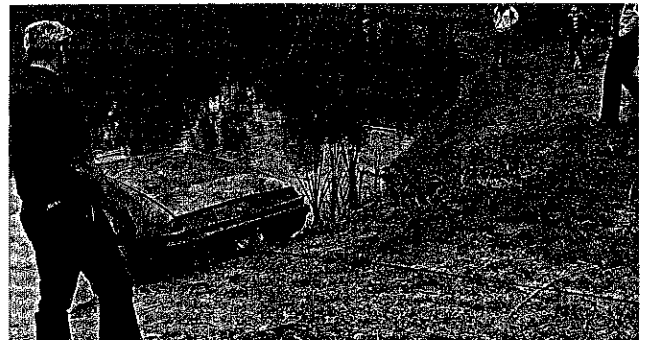
After six or more months of training and education, a certified paramedic could practice invasive techniques such as starting intravenous fluids to treat shock victims, could administer drugs

and could read and interpret electrocardiograms. Through a sophisticated radio communications system the paramedics became the eyes, ears and hands of the hospital physician in the field. This meant that treatment began immediately when the ambulance arrived and continued uninterrupted. As a result of this development the department became a complete rescue organization, capable not only of rescuing people from burning buildings, but of treating their injuries right at the scene.

This transition was not all sweetness and light, however. In part through the efforts of a popular television series of the era, the paramedics became the darlings of the public and the media. Not all firemen in Highland Park were trained as paramedics, however, and there was a certain feeling of competition between the two groups initially. So, too, some members of the medical fraternity were suspicious of these newly minted heros. Eventually, of course, the novelty wore off and these specialists became accepted without reservation.



Vehicle accident, Park Avenue and Route 41, August 1977.



R. Castellari moves a sunken car.



R. Castellari sets up squad equipment.

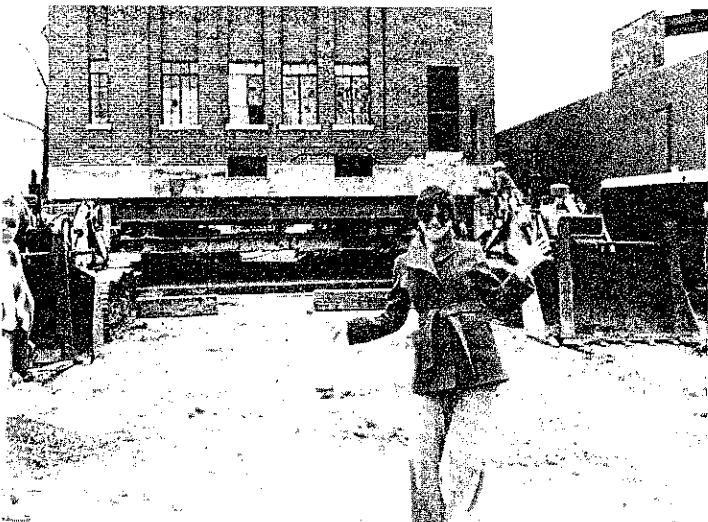


North Deere Park Ravine Rescue, R. Zahnle, S. Drake use the stokes basket.

With improved medical knowledge came improved rescue techniques. The men trained in vehicle extrication techniques until they could disassemble a crushed car from around a trapped victim without risk of further injuring the victim.

As the department's skills evolved, so did their need for space. It was finally decided to relocate Station #1 to larger quarters about 2 blocks to the south at the intersection of Greenbay and Laurel. The new station #1 wasn't all that it was cracked up to be, however. Whereas the original plans included a basement and other amenities, the finished product lacked the basement as a cost-saving measure. The station also had a completely glassed in apparatus bay which kept three men busy for an entire day with rags and window cleaner one day a week. It was a long trot from the officers' bunk to the only bathroom on the other side of the building late at night as well.

Old Station No. 1 had not ended its useful life, however. In the spring of 1976 the old station was cut free of its foundation and moved about 300 yards to the west down a slope and placed on a new foundation behind the community center and adjoining Sunset Park. The whole moving process was followed with considerable interest by the whole community. Some, probably half, expected the process to end up in a pile of rubble, but the building movers had prepared well and the 570 ton building was transferred without incident. Old station #1 now serves as a youth center.



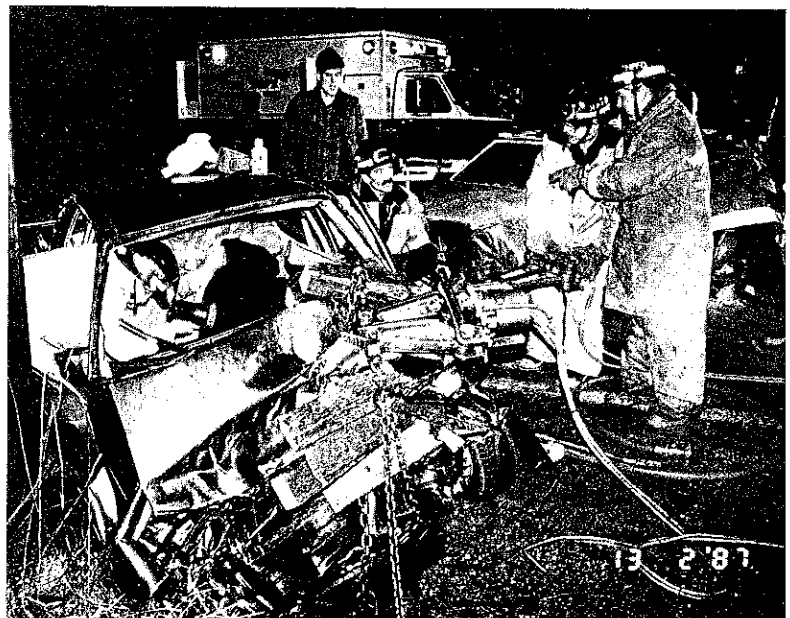
Moving old Central Station to new location as Youth Center.

The first modular ambulance was delivered late in the summer of 1975. This was quite an improvement over the previous station wagon style ambulances which preceded it. In it the paramedics and EMTs could move about to reach drugs and other supplies. It was possible to perform CPR without straddling the patient and banging one's head on the ceiling.

Engine No. 104 had been in service for 19 years by the time 1976 rolled around. It needed a new powerplant and the booster tank leaked. The paint looked pretty ratty, too. Solution: have the firefighters fix it. And they did. Engine No. 104 was the first engine to receive a diesel powerplant to replace its inefficient and hard-to-find-parts-for six cylinder gasoline powered Continental motor. It also got an automatic transmission, the height of luxury. A new booster tank was installed. One observer was somewhat shocked when he saw the Chief and a Captain standing precariously on the tank in an attempt to balance it as it swung suspended from a block and tackle slung from the ceiling while it was being installed.

Engine No. 104 had become something of a test bed. Grumman, the aerospace company, had recently developed a radio controlled nozzle and engine valve system which would allow the fireman on the pipe to control the engine pressure from inside the fire building. This, of course, sounded great. The potential to eliminate the need for an engineer or to, in effect, add one man to each engine company was very appealing, indeed. Engine No. 104 was fitted with the system in the summer of 1979. Strangely enough, the darned thing worked (at least most of the time). Stranger yet, Grumman suddenly decided that they wanted it back. So, after a short service life with the Highland Park Fire Department, Grumman paid us to remove what we had paid them to install.

Sometimes it seems that the fire service is a little late for the boat where technology is concerned. In the summer of 1977, though, Highland Park was on the cutting edge. It was at that time that the "Hurst Tool," known to its manufacturer as the "Jaws of Life," was delivered. This engineering marvel consisted of a hydraulic power pack and scissors-like pair of jaws which could either push or pull with 10,000 pounds of force to dismantle a wrecked car in a matter of minutes or even seconds or lift heavy machinery.



Route 22 and Ridge Road, February 1987 - C. Ugaste, R. Zahnle, L. Fabbri, M. Dunn.

The increasing public awareness of CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and the critical 4 to 6 minute period between cardiac arrest and death helped to make possible the construction of Station #4 at Half Day Road and Summit Avenue in 1978. Up until this time the far north end of town had lacked a fire station within a 4 to 6 minute response time. With the completion of this station no address in Highland Park was beyond a 1.6 mile radius from a station. Due to some quirky engineering requirements necessitated by large sewer and water lines buried on the site, this station presented a challenge to its architects. The result must have been successful, though, because Station 4 received national recognition for the way it blended into the surrounding residential neighborhood.

As we have seen, the fire department had by this time expanded its talents far beyond the strict limitations of fire extinguishment. The art and science of "getting the wet stuff on the red stuff" was not lost, though. 1979 was a busy year in terms of pure firefighting in Highland Park, with the recall signal being sent out a record number of times. Since 1913 the department had used a telephone system for recalling off-duty personnel in the event that all of the department's on-duty resources were insufficient. The phrase "Ring the bells!" didn't die with the implementation of the radio recall system which replaced it, though. To this day some officers will radio the dispatch center and say, "Ring the bells, gimme the off-shift!" when pulling up on a working job which will require more manpower than is immediately available. Even in this day of Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements which provide a means of augmenting a department's strength in time of need, it is still the responsibility of the requesting department to fully utilize their own resources first.

The riots during the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago alerted the Chicago Fire Department to the need for a mutual aid system which they could call upon when they were stretched to the limit. This realization gave birth to the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) in 1969. The MABAS system grew in the ensuing 20 years to the point where it now is actively established in all of the counties surrounding Chicago. This program provides an orderly and coordinated method of providing mutual aid throughout the Chicago Metropolitan area through the use of prearranged response assignments and specifically assigned radio frequencies. Highland Park has been an active participant in this system since its inception, even to the extent of having been issued, at one time, riot shields for its helmets.

Automatic aid is distinguished from mutual aid in that automatic aid is extended without a special request. Highland Park has had such automatic aid agreements with its neighbors since about 1980. Under these agreements a unit from a town sharing its borders with Highland Park will automatically respond to a unit on specified types of calls to certain areas. First arriving units assume command of the fire scene regardless of which town they come from. These reciprocal agreements have proven themselves a boon time and again.

Perhaps a fireman's most prized possession was his leather helmet, provided he was lucky enough to have been issued one in the first place. It provided protection from falling objects on the fireground. Its design was painstakingly crafted to shed water and not dump it down the collar of a turnout coat. It could be worn backwards so that the bill protected one's face from radiant heat. When fitted with a large rubber band cut from an old inner tube its convolutions provided the perfect storage spot for door wedges and a small flashlight which was perfect for illuminating the task at hand. Beyond all of its practical virtues, it was a symbol of a job that firefighters like to think only a chosen few are called to. The design of the old leather "New Yorker" style helmet dates



Anthony Kropp (12) checking Fire Department Centennial display.

back almost a century, maybe more. It was largely handmade of traditional materials. The leather shape gradually was transformed by heat and moisture into something as personal as its wearer. Who can forget the photos of Robert Quinn, perennial Fire Commissioner of Highland Park's lesser neighbor to the south, Chicago, wearing a truly "gnarly" and battered leather helmet. All firefighters aspired to eventually have a helmet just as personalized. An unsubstantiated story has it that a fireman was once caught by his buddies in the basement of a firehouse with his helmet chucked in a vise. He was diligently "personalizing" it with a blowtorch. This was, of course, considered cheating by those whose helmets had acquired the salty look legitimately, and he was roundly criticized.

Imagine, then, the thoughts of the men when it was announced in 1980 that their beloved "New Yorkers" were no longer considered adequate protection and would be phased out. New recruits were the first to appear with the new plastic helmets. They were black and ugly and were promptly dubbed "Nazi Helmets," and their appearance seemed to justify the name. Men who had leather helmets became devious in their attempts to forestall giving them up. Even the Chief avoided his own edict for as long as he gracefully could. In the end their efforts proved futile and everyone had to wear the new and "improved" plastic helmets. The old helmets did, however, begin to mysteriously disappear rather than get turned in in exchange for the new ones.

Before 911 became the official emergency telephone number for all emergency services in Highland Park the Fire Department emergency number was 432-2121, known in the stations as the "two-one-two-one line." Calling this number automatically activated amplified speakers throughout all of the fire stations which broadcast the entire phone conversation. As we have seen, the 911 System was placed into operation in 1979; but for a number of years thereafter some elements of the old alarm system remained in place. Occasionally, particularly in the case of operator assisted calls, the speakers would open without warning to the frantic, almost hysterical screams of a caller. If this happened late at night, the shock was often enough to launch the firemen almost physically from their bunks as if suddenly levitated by some brutal, mad magician. It was a startling, physically painful way to wake up, but it got people moving in a hurry.

Early on the morning of 28 April 1982 such a call, a "screamer," was heard in the firehouses. An almost incoherent woman reported an explosion and fire next door to her house on Leslee Lane. As the first due engine left the station in Ravinia

they could see reflected in the sky the unmistakable yellow-orange glow of a fully involved structure fire. As Acting Lieutenant Len Fabbri and his crew rounded the corner from Greenbay Road onto Leslee Lane they were greeted by the sight of flames billowing out the windows like the clouds of a rapidly growing thunderstorm. Radio reports to incoming engine companies confirmed the worst: The house was occupied, and some of the residents were unaccounted for.

Len Fabbri said, "It took me a minute to calm down, because we could see flames in the sky, and there was just the three of us going in on a fire we could see from the firehouse. When we heard that there were people trapped we were going to try to find them and hold it (the fire) back until help got there. And, of course, it seemed like hours before the second-due engine got there.

With Bob Anthony manning the pump panel, Curt Taylor attempted to hold the fire at bay with an inch and a half handline as Len laddered the bedroom and made a futile attempt to rescue the occupants.

Help arrived. Assignments were given. Hoses were laid. Engines were connected to hydrants. Additional personnel were requested. Firemen ran in all directions, seemingly without meaning or direction, but each knowing his purpose.

Eventually, massive doses of water had their desired effect and the tiger was coaxed back into his cage. Crews moved in to mop up spot fires and to pull ceilings and walls behind which the tiger's offspring like to hide. All but essential personnel were ordered out of the building for a much-needed rest. Partly in an attempt to preserve evidence for the required investigation, but in larger measure in respect for the dead, only a small team searched for the bodies. They found the charred bodies of a mother and her ten year old son crouched by the windows where, in their desperate attempt at escape, they died.

As the promise of dawn became reality, the coroner's car left quietly. The engines and the firemen returned to their stations, more work yet to be done. Hose had to be washed and hung to dry. Hose beds on the engines had to be reloaded. Air packs cleaned and refilled, tools cleaned, handlights and radios recharged, axes sharpened, and rigs washed. As the rest of the world started their working day, some of the men went home, their shift ended. Other firemen, who had crawled from their warm beds at home early that morning in response to the recall signal, were obliged to stay. Their scheduled 24 hour tour of duty had just begun.

That very day the department responded to another major fire. Already physically and emotionally drained, the same men who had gone to Leslee Lane that early morning spent another tough 8 hours fighting a hard won battle in a house on Prospect Avenue. One lieutenant held forth that the second fire might have been an emotional blessing in disguise for the men, in that it tended to take their minds off of the day's earlier fire.

Firefighters and their families have long supported charitable endeavors; but never have the wives become as involved as they did one morning in 1982. The Highland Park Firefighters' Association in cooperation with the Fire Department have sponsored pancake breakfasts to support the Muscular Dystrophy Association since around 1980. The firemen's wives and kids traditionally showed up to help. On Sunday, 26 July '82, with the effort in full swing, someone looked out of the dayroom window at Station 1 and reported what appeared to be smoke down the street on Laurel Avenue. Almost simultaneously the alarm speaker opened to report a fire at the Olsen Printing shop at 616 Laurel. Of course, all of the rigs went barrelling down the street to the fire, which turned out to be an all-hands affair. The crowd thought it was all great fun, except for the firemen's families who

were left holding the bag. They were left with the task of serving all of those hungry guests. Mary Allen, who had been an honorary firefighter and caterer for many years, was in large part responsible for the success of these breakfasts. She was virtually an institution and referred to the firemen as "her boys." This Sunday she marshalled the wives and together they helped to serve pancakes and sausages to an estimated 2,000 persons in absence of the firemen.

Over the years the terminus of the Edens Expressway at Clavey Road has been the scene of a number of spectacular and all too often fatal accidents. Partly due to the fact that a driver can leave Florida and travel over a thousand miles before encountering the traffic signal at this intersection, and partly due to the configuration of the road, cars and even huge semi-trailer rigs have slammed into other traffic waiting at the light with bone-chilling results. The scope of the problem became so large that this intersection has received national attention.



Accident Clavey and Route 41 - Firefighters D. Knoll, C. Kropp, R. Ensign. In car are Lt. T. O'Donovan, D. Campagni, M. Dunn and R. Mattson.



Cohen Fire, Prospect Avenue, L. Fabbri, B. Arlington and J. Ugolini.

A little after midnight on the morning of 22 March 1983 a trucker hauling a semi-trailer load of steel apparently succumbed to "highway-hypnosis" or fatigue and rammed into the rear of a fuel tanker carrying almost eight thousand gallons of gasoline which was stopped, waiting for the traffic light. In a moment, the gasoline leaking from the damaged tanker ignited and bathed a car in the next lane in fire. A young nursing student who was a passenger in the car, although severely burned, managed to pull her brother and a friend from the car. As Fire Department paramedics tended to these three victims, other firemen began to deal with the fire which could be seen for miles.

Additional help from neighboring communities began to arrive and a strategy for dealing with the fire began to develop. A Crash/Fire/Rescue truck was offered by Naval Air Station Glenview. These rigs are used in aircraft firefighting and are equipped with huge foam capacities ideally suited to extinguishing major fuel fires. Chief Moran, however, declined their offer. He wisely decided to allow the fire to burn and to protect the surrounding area with master streams while small teams of firemen and policemen knocked on doors in the adjacent neighborhoods to monitor houses for gasoline vapors. The gasoline would thus be consumed and the fire and the environmental impact limited. The effect of raw gasoline pouring onto the ground and into the sewers from the ruptured tanker would have been far more dangerous than the effects of the option chosen. Although it sometimes seems difficult for citizens to understand, it is often true that the fire department's most responsible action is to take no action. This was such a situation.

As so often happens in this business, the light of early morning saw the coroner's wagon leaving the scene. The driver of the steel hauler had died instantly in the crash. The heroic young woman was not as fortunate. She died of her burns weeks later.

This accident fueled a public hue and cry for a remedy to the woes of the intersection which, after yet more deaths, some of them as fiery as this day's, would result in rumble strips and, ultimately, an underpass at the infamous "Clavey and 41."

One of the philosophical changes in the fire service over the years has been the greater emphasis placed on fire prevention, as compared to fire fighting. We have become more aware of the truth of the old saw: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. It didn't take long to recognize that one of the most effective methods of fire prevention is through education. In keeping with this philosophy, the 1980s became the decade of public education in Highland Park. Although the department had, for years, spread the good word about preventing fires, particularly during the month of October, their effort was never before as tightly focused on education, nor as well funded. By 1989 the department was providing classes on a continuing basis which dealt with a wide diversity of subjects including CPR, classes for children specifically keyed to age group and taught throughout the year, rather than just during Fire Prevention Month (October), training for nursing home and hospital personnel in fire extinguisher use, classes for babysitters, et cetera.

With municipal funds augmented by donations from other organizations including the firefighters' association, the department obtained "Pluggy," a remote controlled robot in the form of a fire hydrant. Radio equipped and capable of "conversing" with children through its operator, this brightly colored three foot tall educational tool is a great hit with the kids.

October 1983 marked the beginning of a joint venture between the department and the Deerfield Township office under the guidance of township supervisor Robert Moroney. The township began purchasing battery operated smoke detectors and the department began installing them in the homes of senior citizens.

One of the prices of maintaining a top-notch fire department is constant training. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive training facility, the city council was approached with the notion of building a training tower and drill field at the site of the defunct Highland Park Landfill. This facility was completed in the summer of 1985 and contains a four-story training tower, a drafting pit for pump training and apparatus service testing, and a drill field where vehicle extrication training can be performed. In addition, a natural gas training area built in cooperation with the North Shore Gas Company was completed in 1989.

The spring of 1987 saw some changes in the chain of command structure within the city and the fire department. A change of mayor, city manager, and the retirement of Chief Bart Moran all occurred within the space of a few months. The City Manager placed the fire department under the supervision of the newly created position of Director of Public Safety, which was filled by the former Police Chief Michael Bonamarte. Assistant Chief Al G. Schneider was promoted to Fire Chief and the position of Assistant Chief was abolished.

In November of 1988 the firefighters availed themselves of the right to bargain collectively, which had been affirmed by the state legislature a couple of years earlier, and received their first contract with the city. This was the culmination of almost two expensive years of negotiation with the city. The contract spelled out wages, working conditions, management rights, and grievance procedures. The Highland Park Firefighters Local 822 of the International Association of Firefighters was elected as the bargaining agent for the men. The contract and the state statute prohibit both strikes and lockouts.

The process had probably really begun twelve years before, 1976, when the firemen had initiated a cessation of all voluntary activities. This was in response to the city's refusal to discuss the firefighters' requests for pay parity with the Police Department and additional personnel. This earlier issue ended in more or less a dead heat a few months later, due, in part with the local association's disillusionment with the representative supplied them by the International Association of Firefighters. It seemed the man had a one word vocabulary: Strike! The men, although firm in their convictions, felt that such action ran counter to their equally strong commitment to the citizens of Highland Park, and to what it meant to be a fireman.



L. Fabbri working robot during Pancake Breakfast.

THE FUTURE?

Can anyone say what the next hundred years holds for the Highland Park Fire Department? Not to a certainty, no. A few educated guesses might be offered, though.

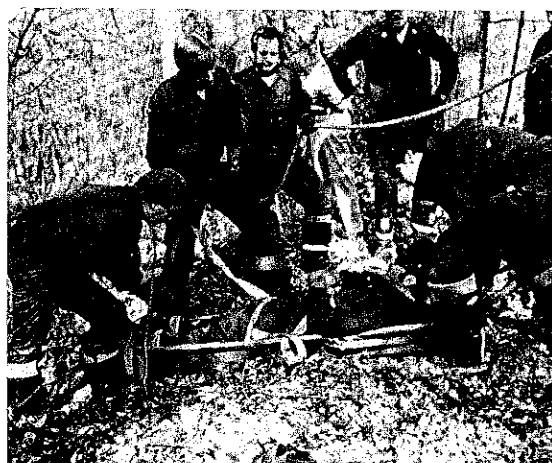
Fire prevention has become equally as important a function of the fire service as fire suppression. We have come to the realization that strong enforcement of fire codes and a vigorous educational program can have a significant positive impact on fire losses. The installation of automatic sprinkler systems in both commercial and, now, residential occupancies can almost eliminate loss of life due to fire. In the coming century we can hope to see these systems become as common as air conditioning is today. In the last twenty years small, inexpensive smoke detectors have become universally available at a cost that anyone can afford. It now costs less to equip a home with complete smoke detector coverage than it costs to take the family out to dinner. It will continue to be the task of the Fire Prevention Bureau to see to it that these and other advances do not go to waste. If they are successful we can hope to see the statistical rate of fire deaths and injuries come more into line with those of other first world countries.

Hazardous Materials or HazMats as they are known in the trade, didn't even exist as a concept until perhaps 25 years ago. As the widespread use and transportation of these chemical compounds has become commonplace, the responsibility for dealing with them has fallen to the fire department. As ever growing quantities of HazMats are transported and used in our society, there will be a corresponding rise in the number of incidents requiring the intervention of the fire department. This will mandate higher

levels of training and funding for the fire department in order to meet these needs.

The locations of Highland Park's four fire stations was determined more or less by the way the town grew; as areas became populated and the need for fire protection became apparent a station was built to provide that coverage. Now that Highland Park has reached what will almost surely be its final shape, it becomes apparent that Stations 1 and 3 are somewhat redundant. An effort is underway to convince the City that a single station located near the intersection of Deerfield Road and Route 41 would be more efficient. Coupled with this is the need for additional personnel in order to bring engine company manning strengths up to safer levels. While engines presently respond most often with only two firefighters, three is felt to be the minimum manning level consistent with safety. It is hoped that these two efforts will meet with success before the department is too far into its second century.

In the last hundred years technology has advanced by quantum leaps. With these advances has come a greater need for education in the fire service in order to meet the challenges which already are upon us and those which will come. This education will encompass a far broader range of topics than could have even been hinted at a century ago. These topics will stray from the traditional firefighting subjects into areas which are far beyond fire suppression. This does not imply that firefighting as our predecessors knew it will become passe', but a shifting focus in which our repertoire will take on new acts.



B. Shift ravine rescue drill.

MAJOR FIRES AND MUTUAL AID

In 1888, William Boyington's home located on Sheridan Road, at present time Sheridan and Riparian, (he was a prominent figure in Highland Park) was destroyed by fire. There was no fire department at this time, so people formed a bucket brigade and tried to fight the fire in this manner. It was a valiant effort, but to no avail. Boyington's mansion was an architect's masterpiece. People visiting the city would make it their first stop and before leaving the city, they would also stop. It was a tremendous loss to the people as well as to the town.

In 1888, fire destroyed the Highland Park Hotel, headquarters for the cadets of Northwestern Military Academy, which, in 1876, had been a exclusive girls' school. The fire almost destroyed the entire business district. Credit must be given to James McDonald, who formed a bucket brigade and scampered across roof tops extinguishing hot embers as they fell from the burning hotel.

Fire destroyed the Catholic Church located at the corner of Laurel and McGovern Avenues, in 1903. The fire department at this time consisted of Chief Andrew Bock and twelve volunteers. Their equipment was comprised of two hose carts which were drawn by the men. When they arrived at the scene, the church was totally engulfed leaving them only to cover an adjacent building with their two very weak hose lines. The saving of this building was heartening to the townspeople, but the loss of the church was something they would never forget.

In the spring of 1911, fire broke out on a barn located behind the Geminer & Gripp grocery store, owned by Philip Goldberg. The volunteer fire department was considerably late due to the fact that the fire alarm whistle located atop the pumping station could not be heard during the day because of the distance and the noise created by the people in town doing business. The fire was stopped before much damage was caused, but this was a good point for John Oliver to use for his campaign for mayor.

The Northwestern Military Academy, rebuilt in 1888-1889 at an estimated cost of \$75,000, was lost to fire on May 1, 1915. This tragedy occurred after the fire department had made two major changes. They had installed a bell system to notify the volunteers that their services were needed and had received a motorized fire vehicle. Perhaps more than ever before, people realized the danger and havoc fire can cause. Even with their new equipment, the firemen were unable to check the progress of that fire. History has it that the fire alarm had not been turned in immediately but was delayed by the cadets who thought they could extinguish the fire themselves.

On March 10, 1916, the parishioners of Immaculate Conception, located on Deerfield Road just west of Green Bay Road, suffered a tremendous loss. Fire gutted the entire school leaving only the four brick walls standing. Again, the fire alarm was delayed and when firemen reached the scene, the fire was well on its way. With only two hose lines, and one twenty foot ladder, the fire department made a valiant, but hopeless, effort to save the school. This fire set into motion the next change to occur in the fire department a few years later.

On November 4, 1920, the Highwood Fire Department asked the Highland Park Fire Department for assistance to battle a fire in the Quartermaster Store located in Fort Sheridan. The Highwood and Highland Park Fire Departments battled the blaze for more than two hours. The estimated damage was \$25,000. This was the second mutual aid call that Highland Park had answered. The first mutual aid call came in on July 28, 1920, from the residents living in Prairie View, located west of Highland Park by around 15 miles. Prairie View reported that they had a three story warehouse and hotel combination on fire. Although the distance was considered great by many of the people in town, the Highland

Park Fire Department responded with hopes of saving this building for the residents of Prairie View. By the time they arrived, the building was a mass of flames. The only useful purpose they could serve was to cool down the surrounding area. The total loss amounted to \$50,000.

At 12:05 in the morning of May 4, 1921, the fire department received an alarm that fire had broken out in a two and one-half story frame house, located at 138 Lake Avenue. When the firemen arrived, the fire was issuing through an opening in the roof. They immediately hooked to a hydrant and laid two hose lines. Upon entering the house, they noticed that the fire had destroyed the entire first floor and was located on the second floor burning freely through the roof. For 7½ hours firemen fought to contain the fire. By 7:30 in the morning, the house was totally destroyed along with the contents. The estimated loss was \$25,000.

On February 6, 1922, Garnett's dry goods store, at the corner of Central Avenue and First Street, suffered a loss of \$45,000, due to a fire. The fire department received the alarm by phone at 5:30 in the evening and were assisted by 40 citizens upon their arrival. The pumper worked approximately six hours and pumped an estimated 50,000 gallons of water. The structural damage was set at \$15,000 while the estimated loss on contents was set at \$30,000. This was the first major fire in the business district since the fire in Philip Goldberg's barn.

March 13, 1924, St. Mary's Church and School, located on Deerfield Road just west of Green Bay Road, was destroyed by fire. The building was estimated to cost \$85,000. Fire loss was estimated at \$50,000. The entire contents of the building were destroyed.

On the 23rd of December, 1926, fire caused an estimated \$50,000 loss to the Huber Toy Factory located on St. Johns Avenue. Fire Departments from Highland Park, Fort Sheridan, Deerfield and Highwood responded to the alarm sent by Highland Park for mutual aid.

On June 14, 1944, three stores were damaged by fire, totalling \$10,000 loss. The fire started in the Central Cleaners and Dryers located at 384 Central Avenue and spread to Shelton's Hamburger Grill and Huber (an electric store). Three firemen were injured in this fire when a hot water heater exploded. Three fire companies responded to this alarm—Highland Park, Highwood and Fort Sheridan.

On June 6, 1945, the Highland Park and Highwood Fire Departments responded to the Athletic Field House located on Park Avenue West in Highland Park. For three hours they fought to bring the fire under control, which was caused by a bolt of lightning. Estimated damage was set at \$75,000. The building was built by students of Highland Park High School in 1936. Construction was of brick veneer over tile. The building was 100 feet long by 30 feet wide.

In December 1945, fire destroyed the government owned U.S.O. located at 21 N. Green Bay Road. At the height of the fire, the roof gave way, collapsing into the first floor. Along with the Highland Park Fire Department, Highwood and Fort Sheridan Fire Departments responded to the fire. A total of 26 firemen laid 3,000 feet of hose to combat the fire. Flames were as high as 50 feet and were visible from a half mile away. Damage was set at \$50,000.

At 12:15 on the afternoon of March 1, 1946, the Highwood and Highland Park Fire Departments responded to the most destructive fire they had ever been involved with. Fire swept through four stores and five apartments, located on Waukegan Avenue at the Highland Park and Highwood boundary, causing \$150,000 worth of damage before being stopped. Fort Sheridan was called later to

help in the operation. The four departments battled the blaze for over 8 hours using an untold amount of water and fire hose. One fireman was overcome by smoke and taken to the hospital immediately in critical condition. He later reported back for duty with no ill side effects. There were no persons in the apartments at the time of the fire.

On February 4, 1947, Zengler Dry Cleaning Plant, located at 25 North Sheridan Road, was destroyed by fire, a \$30,000 loss. Fire Departments from Highwood and Fort Sheridan assisted Highland Park, from 4:30 in the morning to 9:00 in the morning.

On July 11, 1947, the Nathan home, located at 333 Moraine Road, was destroyed by fire. Estimated damage was at \$30,000. The fire started in the attic, apparently from sparks emitted from the incinerator located in the basement. It was a two hour battle.

On May 15, 1949, the Ravinia Band Shell and Pavilion were lost to fire. 1400 reserve seats were also destroyed. Departments from Highland Park, Winnetka, Glencoe, and Highwood used a total of 6 hydrants and 5,000 feet of hose. Damage was set at \$200,000. Cause was undertermined. The buildings were built in 1904.

On January 1, 1950, there was a \$15,000 loss to the home of Kenneth W. Morine, located at 242 Prospect Avenue. Departments from Glencoe and Highwood assisted Highland Park in this blaze. The fire was discovered by Mr. Morine at 5:50 in the morning. He assisted his wife and children outside while a neighbor called the fire department. Cause was determined to be a lighted cigarette on a davenport.

In January of 1956, the Highland Park Fire Department suffered the first fatality in its history. Lt. Frank Freberg collapsed and died while fighting a fire in a house located on Leslee Lane. Cause was undetermined. The buildings were built in 1904.

On January 20, 1959, there was a \$30,000 loss to an unoccupied home located at 2320 Sheridan Road, Highland Park. It was a three story home of brick construction. The cause was undetermined.

On June 9, 1960, painters using a blow torch to strip paint from the outside of a house, located at 195 Ivy Lane, started a fire in the library which spread rapidly throughout the house. Highwood assisted the Highland Park Fire Department in battling this blaze. Three firemen were injured during the action. One from Highland Park and two from Highwood, none seriously. Fire was so intense that the firemen were not able to reach the second floor from the inside. Holes were cut in the roof to gain entry. Damage to the interior was absolute with severe damage to the roof. Loss was set at \$100,000.



Ruby's Restaurant Fire, 1960, December, 2 1/2'' attack.

On December 28, 1960, fire caused an estimated \$650,000 loss in the heart of the business district. The fire apparently started in the basement of Ruby's Delicatessen, located at 621 Central Avenue, and spread to Minter's Ladies Apparel and the newly constructed Walgreen Store. The fire spread through the wood trusses connecting each building. Walgreen's had installed a fire wall during the construction, but it only extended up to the trusses. The fire spread over the fire wall rendering it useless. Four departments assisted Highland Park in fighting the fire. They were Winnetka, Glencoe, Highwood and Deerfield, totalling more than 40 firemen and nine pieces of equipment. The first alarm was turned in at 7:30 by a passerby. Chief Boylan immediately called Highwood for help, and around 10:00 p.m. asked assistance from Glencoe, Winnetka, and Deerfield. By 7:30 the following morning, Central Avenue was open to traffic and the last of the 9 pieces of equipment were removed. Flames were visible from several miles away, reaching 100 feet in the air. This was the worst fire to be suffered by a North Shore community in all previous years. It also set into motion the adoption of a Fire Inspection Law in Highland Park.

On January 21, 1961, there was a fire at the Steer Restaurant located at 183 Skokie Valley Road. The fire was discovered at 11:07 p.m. by the manager. Three fire engines and the aerial ladder company responded to this fire. There was considerable damage to the rear of the restaurant.

There was also damage from smoke to the neighboring stores on both sides. The damage to the restaurant was \$18,000.



An unknown firefighter down on April 21, 1957. Tending him is Robert Lundgren; left, Phil Pankiewicz.

On December 27, 1958, Lt. William Perry died in the line of duty. Lt. Perry suffered smoke inhalation and over-exertion while performing a rescue of a mother and her two children at their home located at 1802 Elmwood Drive. The mother noticed smoke in their bedroom shortly after her husband left for work. Unable to reach the operator, the mother called a friend who called the fire department. She was not able to leave the house because of the intense heat and smoke. Upon arrival, Lt. Perry found the front door locked. He and Chief Boylan forced the door open and rushed upstairs where the mother and the children were.

On February 2, 1962, the fire department responded to a house fire at 25 South Deere Park. The fire started in a crawl space in the basement and spread up through the walls and ceilings. The damage to the two-story residence was \$50,000.

On February 19, 1963, at 6:50 p.m., the fire department responded to a house fire at 901 Ridgewood Drive. This house was under construction. Apparently there was a malfunction to the boiler controls. The damage totalled to \$50,000.

On April 3, 1963, the fire department again responded to a fire at the Steer Restaurant located at 183 Skokie Valley Road. The fire apparently started in the grill area. Again there was smoke damage to the neighboring stores. The damage to the restaurant amounted to \$17,000.

A fire of undetermined origin in the rear stock room of the Sears Roebuck Co., located at 153 Skokie Valley Road, was discovered by the ADT Alarm which was set off by the sprinklers that went off in the stock room. The fire and smoke damage amounted to \$22,500.

On January 17, 1964, a gas explosion at 1440 Oakwood Drive caused \$17,000 damage and seriously burned the owner. It was found out later that the owner, the day before the fire, had pulled out the gas stove to paint the wall behind it. In moving the stove back a small leak was apparently caused in the gas pipe.

On May 28, 1964, a house fire was fought at 636 Onwentsia which resulted in the death of one woman and \$15,000 damage.

On July 9, 1965, the fire department responded to a fire in the basement of the house located at 2016 Westgate Terrace. This fire caused a large amount of damage to the basement where the owner had a small business and the first floor where he lived. The damage amounted to \$20,000.

On September 13, 1967, a garage fire was battled at 846 Park Avenue with a \$1,100 monetary loss and the death of a child.

On February 5, 1968, a neighbor reported a fire at 335 Lambert Tree. The two story house was vacant at the time of the fire. The fire apparently started in the basement under the kitchen. The cause of the fire was undetermined. Loss of the building and contents was \$30,000.

On April 14, 1968, the fire department again responded to a house fire at 335 Lambert Tree. This house which was almost totally destroyed in February was completely involved in fire. Again it was vacant. The cause of the fire was undetermined.

On August 7, 1968, the fire department responded to a house fire in the early morning hours at 2360 Sheridan Road. A house maid who was sleeping on the third floor had to be removed off the roof by the fire department. The fire started on an outside porch and spread throughout the house. Loss to the house and contents amounted to \$30,000.

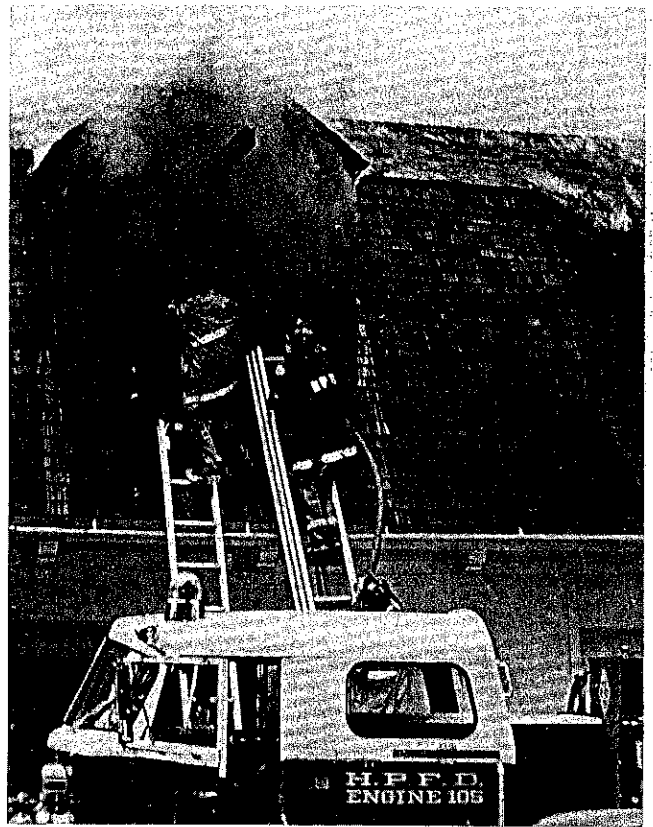
On November 22, 1968, the fire department responded to a fire at the Moraine Hotel located on Sheridan Road. All the fire equipment and fire personnel were needed at this fire. Mutual Aid was also requested by the Fire Chief. Fire equipment and personnel from Winnetka, Glencoe, Deerfield, and Highwood responded. The fire was contained to two apartments on the third floor. The fire loss amounted to \$40,000.

On February 25, 1970, the department responded to a house fire at 2095 Churchill Lane with a \$200,000 loss recorded.

On December 6, 1970, the fire department responded to a house fire at 1641 Ravine Lane which resulted in a \$500,000 loss.

Fire destroyed a large portion of a huge 3 story log house on Sylvester Ln. on September 17, 1976. The house was built during the 19th century on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan of logs which had been floated down the lake and then hauled to the top of the bluff.

Fire struck a hardware store on Greenbay Rd. in Highwood on



R. Castellari and crew attack a coach house fire, Waverly Road.

Sunday, November 19, 1976. Within an hour of the first alarm Highland Park had sent two engines, a squad truck, and an aerial ladder to assist the smaller Highwood Volunteer Fire Department. Fire attack was hindered by insufficient air supplies for breathing apparatus, the age and gerrymandered layout of the building, and inadequate water supplies. (It became necessary to tunnel under the C&NW Railroad tracks in order to lay additional lines so that other hydrants could be used.) In all, eight fire departments eventually responded to Highwood's requests for mutual aid. The fire destroyed five stores and ten apartments, leaving 26 people homeless.

On March 28, 1978, the department responded to a house fire at 110 Acorn Lane. The fire resulted in a reported \$85,000 loss.

On June 8, 1979, the fire department responded to a commercial fire at 2886 Skokie Valley Road. The fire loss was \$250,000 and totally destroyed a moving and storage company warehouse.

On July 28, 1979, the fire department responded to a commercial fire at 2132 Green Bay Road. The fire resulted in a \$115,000 loss.

On April 28, 1982, the fire department responded to a house fire at 255 Leslee Lane which resulted in the death of one woman and one child and a loss reported at \$150,000.

Also on April 28, 1982, the fire department responded to another house fire at 137 Prospect. This fire resulted in injury to 5 firefighters and a reported loss of \$300,000. The fire caused considerable suspicion at first. It seems that the estranged wife of the resident had previously conspired to have her husband killed and was at the time of the fire imprisoned. The cause, it was later determined, was a faulty television set.

On March 22, 1983, the fire department responded to a fuel tanker explosion at the intersection of Clavey Road and Edens Expressway. This accident resulted in 2 deaths and a total loss of all vehicles involved.

On August 2, 1985, the department answered a call for a commercial fire at 1530 Park Avenue. The fire resulted in a \$880,000 loss.

On December 13, 1986, the department responded to a report of a house fire at 2745 Fort Sheridan Road. The fire resulted in the death of one woman and a \$78,000 monetary loss.

On April 27, 1988, the department responded to a house fire at 2026 Deerfield Road with a loss of \$150,000.

On December 2, 1988, a house fire on Shady Lane summoned the fire department. This fire resulted in the death of one woman and a total loss of the home. Two civilians, including the woman's husband, were injured in an attempt to rescue her.

On February 4, 1989, the fire department responded to a house fire at 312 Temple Avenue. One occupant was injured and the house was a total loss.

A quick look at the Highland Park Fire Department:

Area protected: 12.5 square miles.

Population protected: 30,000.

Personnel: 1 Fire Chief, 3 Captains, 9 Lieutenants, 1 Fire Inspector, 33 Firefighters, 2 Secretaries (1 full-time, 1 part-time).

Station 31: 1700 Greenbay Road.

Engine 31: 1989 Seagrave 1500 GPM Pumper; 1 Lieutenant, 1 Firefighter.

Ambulance 31: 1988 Ford Type III Ambulance; 2 Firefighters.

Truck 31: 1973 American LaFrance 100' Aerial Ladder.

Station 32: 692 Burton Avenue.

Engine 32: 1982 American LaFrance 1500 GPM Pumper; 1 Lieutenant, 1 Firefighter.

Ambulance 32: 1983 Ford Type III Ambulance; 2 Firefighters.

Station 33: 1677 Old Deerfield Road.

Engine 33: 1987 Seagrave 1250 GPM Pumper; 1 Captain, 1 Firefighter.

Squad 33: 1986 Ford LN 8000 Heavy Rescue Squad; 1 Firefighter.

Fire Prevention Bureau: 1 Fire Inspector, 1 Secretary.

Chief's Office: 1 Fire Chief, 1 Secretary.

Station 34: 1100 Half Day Road.

Engine 34: 1968 American LaFrance 1500 GPM Pumper; 1 Lieutenant, 1 Firefighter.

Reserve Engine 34: 1978 Hamerly 400 GPM Mini-Pumper.

Reserve Ambulance 34: 1979 Ford Type III Ambulance.

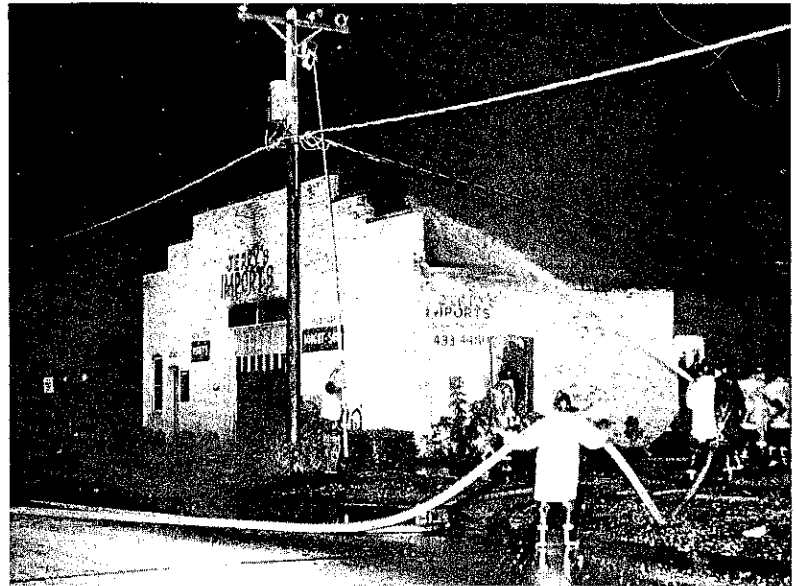
Boat 34: 1988 Achilles 17' inflatable rescue boat with 40 hp out-board motor.

1565 fire hydrants.

Alarms responded to January through July 1989: 2,049

Engine Co. assignments: 1376

Ambulance assignments: 679



Hose crew attacking major fire, Jerry Imports.



Temple Avenue fire
1989, A. Shift.

NOTE

The written history of the Highland Park Fire Department's first 80 years was initially published in 1969 during the centennial anniversary of the City of Highland Park. Our efforts to locate the author(s) were unsuccessful. I have taken the liberty of using this work almost in its entirety, having made only minor changes and additions. On the other hand, I bear the blame for the narrative from 1969 to present.

Lt. Jack Grandi and Teri Berube also contributed their fine talents to the writing of this history.

The history of Highland Park Fire Department in its first hundred years has been one of evolution and growth, almost a parable of life itself. Surely, the department will continue to mature during the next hundred years. None of the changes it enjoys or en-

dures, however, will alter one fact: It will still depend on the commitment and courage of a proud few people who are willing to challenge man's folly and nature's anger to "protect property and save lives". Although not necessarily referring to firefighters at the time, a British poet probably summed it up best:

I was shepherd to fools.

Causelessly bold or afraid.

They would not abide by my rules.

Yet they escaped, for I stayed.

Rudyard Kipling, 1918

This job gets in your blood. It also gets in your hair, your eyes, and your clothes. We love it.

Lt. Thomas R. O'Donovan, HPFD
July, 1989