

**February 11, 1897**

A meeting of the citizen's and taxpayers of the eastern part of the Borough of Columbia was held at the Eagle Hotel of Mr. Mathias Swartz, which was located at 408-410 Manor Street, to discuss the matter of a fire company in the eastern part of the Borough of Columbia. Mr. George M. Weisser was unanimously chosen as chairman, and Mr. Michael B. Wolf was unanimously chosen as Secretary.

**February 18, 1897**

A meeting of the proposed fire company was held at the Eagle Hotel. A motion was made to form a permanent organization and the first officers were elected. The membership fee was set at 50 cents. A motion was made to create a steam fire engine and hose company and to go by the name of Susquehanna Steam Fire Engine And Hose Company #4.

H.K. Miller, Peter Buck, Gottlieb Young, William Lucas, Charles Cassidy, John G. Snavely and George M. Weisser were chosen to look for a suitable location on which to locate the company.

**March 24, 1897**

Until the current building was built in 1901 the company's meetings were held in the Manor Street School House. The company motioned to purchase the land of the Gossler Estate for \$1,500.00 through C.C. Kauffman of the Columbia Trust Company.

Also at this meeting the charter for the company was granted by the County of Lancaster.

**March 29, 1897**

The land of Phillip Gossler's estate was purchased with a \$10 down payment. It was originally purchased as a triangular piece. The company purchased 302 feet along Manor Street. The company then exchanged 100 feet of this land with Gottlieb Young for ground to the rear of his lot. This left the company with a square lot of 202 feet on Manor Street by 120 feet deep. It was originally intended to keep 32 feet of this land for the company's building and then sell off the rest of the land for building lots but this did not occur (Columbia Weekly Spy 4/2/1897).

**September 9, 1897**

The proposed constitution and by-laws were read for the second time by the committee of Joseph A. Fischer, Frank Schank, Levi S. Young, Michael B. Wolf and John G. Snavely and they were accepted by the membership. The Building Committee consisting of W.H. Lucas, George M. Weisser, Joseph A. Fischer, Peter M. Buck, Charles Cassidy, Richard Smith and John G. Snavely was instructed to secure plans and specifications for an engine house.

**December 28, 1897**

A motion was made to hold a fundraising fair in Mozart Hall, which was located at 144 South Third Street. All of the local fire companies offered to lend their support wherever possible to support our cause.

**January 13, 1898**

The company had a balance of \$120 in its treasury after nearly a year of existence.

**April 14 to April 23, 1898**

The first fundraising fair of the company took place and was reported as such: "The fair of the "embryo" Susquehanna Fire Company is now in progress in the Mozart Hall and it is hoped that it will be well patronized by our people. The boys and the girls too, have worked hard to make it a success and they must not be disappointed." (Columbia Independent, April 19, 1898). A profit of \$833.02 was realized by this event.

**July 14, 1898**

The Building Committee was granted full power to act to get plans, specifications and drawings for an engine house and was instructed to make their report at the next company meeting.

**July 29, 1898**

The land bought by the company from the Gossler estate was paid for in full.

**August 11, 1898**

The Building Committee was instructed to get specifications for drawings they had procured and to find out the cost of a three-story building.

**September 8, 1898**

The company received a letter from W.W. Wunder of Reading, which provided a description of a hose carriage. A committee consisting of William W. Blackson, E.L. Fornwalt, A.A. Snavely, Peter Buck and Andrew Messer was approved to inquire about the price of a new hose carriage.

**October 13, 1898**

Mr. Daniel M. Rothenberger, an architect from Lancaster submitted his plans and specifications for a building to cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000. This original plan called for a three-story building with a kitchen in the basement and an elevator to transport materials to the upper floors. The first floor would be used as the engine room, the second floor as a parlor and meeting room and the third floor for socials and public gatherings. This plan was later modified into the two-story structure, which currently stands (Columbia Daily News 10/14/1898).

**October 24, 1898**

It was reported that the hose carriage in Reading could be purchased at a cost of \$230. The committee was authorized to go and inspect the same. The cost of the trip was \$1.82. William W. Blackson, Peter Buck and George M. Weisser made the trip at which time a \$5 down payment was made on the carriage.

**November 10, 1898**

Mr. W.W. Blackson reported for the hose carriage committee. They investigated and contracted for the hose carriage along with the following items: 1 pair of horse shafts, 1 driver's seat cushion, 1 brake, 1 platform, 1 ax, 1 bar, 2 bells, 3 lamps, 2 hand lamps, 2 torches, 1 hand tongue and 125 feet of rope all for \$200. The report was accepted and the committee was told to see the railroad company about shipping the carriage to Columbia.

The President was instructed to appoint a committee to be responsible for erecting a temporary house for the hose carriage. The committee was named as Peter Hable, chairman, Phares Hall, Frank Schank, Matthew Foehlinger, Charles Cassidy and J. Caswell. This wood frame building measured 12 feet by 28 feet.

**November 24, 1898**

A Thanksgiving Day parade was scheduled to celebrate the hose carriage's arrival. It was scheduled for 7 p.m. and was to pass over the principle streets and past every firehouse in the Borough. A ball was to be held after the parade in the Armory. Due to a large snowstorm the event was a failure and the parade was canceled. The carriage was delivered by the Reading & Columbia Railroad and was unloaded from the rail yard on November 26th. The events were then held on December 3, 1898. The parade route was Bank Alley and Locust to Fourth to Walnut to Second to Union to Sixth. It then countermarched to Fourth to Manor to Tenth. The housing took place and the parade countermarched to Fourth to Union to Fifth to Walnut to the Armory. (Columbia Daily News 11/25/1898).

**December 6, 1898**

The Susquehanna Steam Fire Engine and Hose Company No. 4 was officially recognized as part of the Columbia Fire Department by the Borough Council and was also admitted to the Columbia Borough Fireman's Relief Association.

**January 12, 1899**

The hose carriage was reported in good condition with 450 feet of hose. It was reported out for a fire at Herbert's coal yard and on alarms of fire at Capt. Herman Reuter's smoke house on Manor Street.

**April 21, 1899**

Four-Sixty-One Manor Street was the scene of the company's first attempt at fighting a fire. The Columbia Daily News reported the event as such: "An alarm was sounded to which the Susquehanna Fire Company responded with their carriage. An ax was brought into service and the boards cut from where the smoke came. The flames were soon located and extinguished with the aid of a plug stream. The East End fire laddies received considerable praise for their promptness in responding. This was their first attempt at firefighting and they gained a complete victory". The origin was spontaneous combustion and the damage was set at \$25. (Columbia Daily News 4/22/1899).

**May 1, 1899**

The hose carriage was housed during a parade held for the Keystone Fire Company's dedication of their new building. The route of the parade was Second and Locust to Eighth to Walnut to Second to Union to eighth, counter march to Fourth to Manor to Tenth, counter march to Fourth to Keystone Hall. (Columbia Daily News 5/1/1899).

**May 11, 1899**

The company received its first borough appropriation for \$300 and arranged for electric light and telephone to be placed in the engine house.

**January 11, 1900**

After purchasing the hose carriage and planning to build the engine house the company was left with a balance of \$14.69.

**May 11, 1900**

A motion was made allowing the Building Committee to obtain plans for a hose house not to exceed \$4,000.

**September 13, 1900**

The trustees were instructed to inquire, and if satisfactory, to arrange for the change of the voting place in the ward from a private house to the Susquehanna Hose House.

**February 14, 1901**

A motion was made to allow the Building Committee to hold a meeting and arrange to proceed in erecting a hose house for the company on its lot of ground bought by the committee for that purpose.

**March 14, 1901**

W.H. Lucas reported the Building Committee decided to put up a two-story hose house and arranged with an architect for remodeling the Rothenberger plan for a hose house.

**June 13, 1901**

Mr. W.H. Lucas reported for the Building Committee as the bids for a new building were opened. After reading all of the bids the Building Committee was granted full power to proceed at once with the hose house at a cost of \$5,900. John J. Weeber of Columbia was selected as the general contractor for the project. The contract was awarded July 11, 1901.

**September 21, 1901**

The cornerstone for the building was laid in place and a lawn festival was held. Mr. Frank S. Given presided over the ceremony. The prominent men of town served as speakers for the event. They were Walter C. Douglass Esq., The Honorable C.C. Kauffman, Major J.W. Yocum and Dr. G.W. Berntheizel. Their speeches were related to the mission and usefulness of a fire company, its opportunities for guarding the property of the citizens and the necessity for maintaining discipline and promoting the best interests of its members. The Wrightsville Band provided the music for the event. John Weeber and 2 members of each fire company helped lay the cornerstone (Columbia Weekly Spy 9/27/1901) (Columbia Daily News 9/23/1901).

**October 17, 1901**

A mortgage of \$4,500 at 5 1/2% interest was signed with the Columbia Trust Company for the building contract.

**January 10, 1902**

The By-Laws were revised with a committee of C.E. Graybill, John G. Snavely, George T. Black, Joseph E. Gue and Levi S. Young.

**March 18, 1902**

A motion was made that as John J. Weeber had completed the company building satisfactorily and the committee had accepted the building, the company released and canceled the bond given for his faithful performance of the contract.

**May 1, 1902**

A parade and ball for the dedication of the building was to take place on this date but was postponed due to a small pox outbreak in the borough. (Columbia Daily News 5/1/1902).

**May 8, 1902**

The trustees reported the sale of the old hose house for \$15 to a hunting club. No mention was made of the name. Also, the trustees were authorized to sell 25 feet of ground, the east line of the lot to be 14 feet west from the new hose house for the sum of \$300. This was sold on June 12, 1902.

**August 30, 1902**

The dedication of the hose house took place with a festival at 7 p.m. with well over one thousand people in attendance. All of the fire companies and societies of Columbia along with Wrightsville and Marietta were invited. At 5:30 p.m. a parade was held led by the Ironville Band. The parade marched into Locust Street and back to the station. The dedication took place at 7:30 p.m. with W.H. Lucas presiding. The Honorable C.C. Kauffman, Dr. G.W. Berntheizel and J.C. Yocum, Esq. provided speeches to the crowd. The first uniform of the company is mentioned as being a red shirt with a blue cap, blue pants, a white belt and tie (Columbia Daily News 8/30/1902) & (Columbia Weekly Spy 8/29/1902).

**November 13, 1902**

An application for renting the second floor of the hose house for a Sunday school was made by a committee from St. John's Lutheran Church, 6th and Locust Streets. After some discussion the trustees were authorized to rent the second floor of the hose house for a Sunday school. This Sunday school grew into St. James's Lutheran Church at Tenth & Manor Streets.

**February 26, 1903**

In the Boro Council report of the Fire Committee a special mention was given to the Susquehanna Fire Company stating, "As they have completed their new house which is an ornament as well as a benefit to that part of town and we believe they are now situated that they give ample protection to that portion of the borough." (Columbia Weekly Spy 2/27/1903).

**May 6, 1903**

A special meeting was called to hear the report of the committee attending the testing of the steam fire engine at York, PA. W.H. Lucas reported the committee was at York and saw the steamer of the Vigilant Fire Company tested on May 4th. The engine raised water 14 feet from the Codorus Creek and sent a stream 250 feet and was in good working order. The company voted to purchase the steamer at a price of \$750.

**July 1, 1903**

The steamer arrived from York with twenty members of the Vigilant Fire Company of York in attendance. The steamer was promptly hitched to the "handsome black horses" of George Kaufhold and taken to the riverfront at Walnut Street to be tested. This drew a crowd of upwards of one thousand people as reported in the Columbia Spy. 7 1/2 minutes after lighting the fire, the engine started and water was thrown with three separate streams thrown at once (Columbia Weekly Spy 7/2/1903) & (Columbia Daily News 7/2/1903).

**July 4, 1903**

The new steam fire engine was housed as part of the Borough's 4th of July parade. This parade marched all throughout town and concluded with a fireworks display on the "hill north of Chestnut Street." The L.Button & Son Company made the steamer. It was delivered to the Vigilant Fire Company of York on March 4, 1885 at a cost of \$4,000 and a weight of 6,200 pounds. The committee from the Vigilant Fire Company of York stated that their city made a mistake in allowing the steam fire engine to leave the city of York (Columbia Independent 7/4/1903).

**August 19, 1903**

Four hundred feet of new hose was purchased from the Eureka Fire Hose Company to go along with the purchase of the steamer.

**November 10, 1904**

A letter from W.W. Wunder was received stating that he had a hose carriage for sale. A committee was appointed to inspect the carriage and given instruction that if the carriage proved suitable to purchase it for a price not exceeding \$200.

**January 12, 1905**

The committee on the hose carriage reported their transaction in Reading, PA as to the purchase of a hose carriage for the company.

**May 4, 1905**

The steamer was paid for in full.

**July 13, 1905**

The company executed a deed to the Columbia Electric Light, Heat and Power Company for a lot of ground situated on Manor Street between 9th and 10th Street containing 115 feet on Manor Street and extending in depth 110 feet on receipt of \$1,380.

**September 19, 1905**

A special meeting was held to consider the necessity of purchasing a hose wagon so the company could move one thousand feet of hose to fires. The Columbia Wagon Company advised the company they could build a platform spring wagon at a cost of \$85. The terms were agreed to and the wagon was received October 21, 1905.

**November 22 to 24, 1906**

A three day festival, fair and supper was held to mark the company's tenth anniversary. A short parade kicked off the celebration as the Metropolitan Band marched with company members to each of the other companies in town. They then marched back to the fire hall and took part in the festival with speeches by Dr. G.W. Berntheizel, Frank S. Given and J.W. Yocum (Columbia Daily News 11/22/1906).

**January 9, 1908**

The Boro Council Fire Committee reported that it was an imperative necessity to have the Susquehanna engine repaired and placed in condition for service. They were willing to give the company \$1,000 toward the rebuilding of the steamer. (Columbia Daily News 1/10/1908).

**June 3, 1908**

The steamer was tested at the Walnut Street riverfront after being returned from the Waterford Steam Fire Engine Works in New York. The interior of the engine was rebuilt and an iron boiler replaced the old steel boiler. The steamer was also upgraded to the current standards of the day. During the test the steamer was able to throw water in 7 minutes, 20 seconds (Columbia Daily News 6/4/1908).

**March 12, 1909**

The company was referred to as "The Hambone's" in print for the first time (Columbia Daily News 3/12/1909).

**January 8, 1919**

The talk began among members in order to plan to buy the company's first motorized piece of apparatus. The president was authorized to appoint a committee to solicit among the members to ascertain how many would give a specified amount each month for a year toward motorizing the company's apparatus. The committee was established as Guy Hall, Anthony Flick, Michael Fry, Eli Lockard, Salem Wall, Samuel Johns, John Fritz, Edward Dubach, Harry Shultz, Amos Bachman and Jacob Myers.

**February 14, 1919**

The mortgage on the engine house was paid off in full.

**November 15, 1919**

A celebration banquet for the returning World War I veterans of the company was held. A short parade led by Aston's Band and the veterans marched from the firehouse to Locust Street and back, arriving at the firehouse at 8 p.m. The guests of honor were General E.C. Shannon and Lt. Col. C.N. Berntheizel. At this event the highlight was a ceremonial burning of the mortgage by A.A. Snavely. The ceremonies were held on the first floor of the engine house, followed by dinner on the second floor. The evening ended with dancing to the music of Aston's Band. The company motto at this time was "We Try to Save." It was noted that the company's equipment included a steamer with a hose carriage and wagon containing 1,200 feet of hose. Among the items listed on the menu for the event were "Susquehanna sweet potatoes" and cigars.

The Columbia News gave the following account: "The Ninth Ward came into its own Saturday evening when Susquehanna Fire Company #4 located at Tenth & Manor Streets extended a welcome home and banquet to their members who had served in the Great World War, and also burned their mortgage which leaves the company free from debt. It was a most successful affair and will go down in the history of the company as one of the most momentous events ever held by that hustling organization. The company had 56 men in the service

and every one came back, a record that it is doubtful can be equaled by any other organization" (Columbia Daily News 11/17/1919).

**November 11, 1920**

It was approved by the company to begin motorization of the apparatus starting with a house-to-house canvass that would include all of the local industries. The motor fund began with a sum of \$1,998. (Columbia Daily News & Spy, November 12, 1920).

**February 10, 1921**

The company deemed that there was enough money collected in the motor fund to begin writing different manufacturers asking for their catalogues.

**March 10, 1921**

A committee was established to visit surrounding cities and towns to investigate their motorized apparatus. The committee was George Mann, Coleman Fry, Benjamin Fager, William Reehl and Ed Freind.

**April 14, 1921**

The Motorizing Committee gave the following report to the company. Bids were received from American LaFrance, Ahrens Fox and Seagrave. The bids read as follows: The American LaFrance bid was \$12,500 for their Triple Combination Pumping and Chemical Hose Car of 800 gallon capacity gear pump and \$12,700 for the same pumper with the 1,000 gallon capacity motor with terms to suit the company. The Ahrens Fox Co. bid was \$13,000 for the 800-gallon pumper with a "piston pump." The terms were cash in 10 days from date of delivery. The Seagrave Company's bid was \$12,675 for their 800-gallon pumper with a "centrifugal pump." Their terms were cash in 10 days from date of delivery.

The bids were reviewed and after some lengthily discussion concerning the advantages and disadvantages of each bid the company voted to motorize with the American LaFrance bid since they were most willing to work with the company concerning finances.

**April 17, 1921**

A special meeting was held on this date to determine the specifications of the American LaFrance pumper. Mr. J.E. Chalfant of the American LaFrance Company was in attendance and said that the quoted specifications were correct. He also stated that the pumper would be delivered with a delivery engineer. The terms of the contract were set as whole or part payment within 10 days of delivery and the balance in one and two years noted at 6% interest delivered in 90 working days. The final price was set at \$12,500 for the 800-gallon pumper with \$5,000 due on delivery, a one-year note of \$3,750 and a two-year note of \$3,750.

**September 2, 1921**

The American LaFrance engine arrived at the train yard and was taken on a drive throughout town. It was then taken back to the engine house and put on display (Columbia Daily News, September 3, 1921).

**September 3 to 5, 1921**

A three-day festival was held in the Manor Street schoolyard and in the engine house and yard in celebration of the new engine. The Shawnee Band provided the music. A parade was held on the 5th (Labor Day) beginning at 1 p.m. The members of the company marched with the Shawnee Band to Fourth and Cherry Streets where members of Columbia #1 and Shawnee met them. The procession continued over Fourth Street to the Keystone's and continued to Second and Walnut to meet with the Vigilant members. This completed procession continued up Locust Street to Eighth Street and ended back at the station house at Tenth and Manor Streets. The local dignitaries present made several address of welcome and the engine was housed with a representative of each company standing on the apparatus.

**September 19, 1921**

The engine was accepted as satisfactory after testing.

**October 13, 1921**

At this meeting the hose wagon was sold for \$10 to Charles Misal and a payment of \$8,500 was made on the engine.

**July 1, 1925**

A special meeting was held to discuss and authorize the purchasing of additional property adjoining the company. This property was the Kendig farm, 293 feet in size. It was motioned to purchase 130 feet and to take an option on the balance to the best advantage of the company. This land is now the site of the bingo/dance hall building and parking lot area.

**October 14, 1926**

Engineer William Wood reported having sold the old steam engine for \$85. There is no record in the minutes or treasury books detailing to whom it was sold.

**August 28, 1945**

A special meeting took place to plan for a Borough-wide VJ Day Celebration and the marching club was also reformed.

**February 13, 1946**

A "Welcome Home Banquet" was held at the State Armory in honor of the company's World War II veterans. The company had 211 members in the armed services during the war including five who paid the supreme sacrifice. The keynote speaker was Guy K. Bard, a Lancaster County native who was serving as a Judge in Philadelphia District Court. He spoke on the virtues of a volunteer organization and urged all who were present to never forget the sacrifices made by the servicemen. After A.A. Snavelly read the roll call of members who had served in the war a special moment of silence was observed for the members who had lost their lives defending our country. They were Norman Caswell, Charles Haines, Vincent Wickenheiser, Carl Messer and David Huber. There were over 300 people in attendance for this event (Columbia Daily News, February 12, 1946).

**January 9, 1947**

At this company meeting a discussion took place concerning the subject of a new pumper, being that the 1921 LaFrance was now showing its age. A committee was appointed to inspect some of the pumpers recently purchased by other local companies. The committee was established as John Fritz, Howard Bard, Nevin Bachman, Robert Reisinger, Jacob Allison, Stephen Reehl and Mervin Bongart.

**April 19 and 20, 1947**

The 50th Anniversary of the company was officially recognized with a Turkey Banquet followed by a Sunday worship service at St. James Lutheran Church. The Columbia News reported that "today while still the "youngster" in Columbia's five company fire department the Susque's hold the unique position of being the largest in membership and a leader in other respects" (Columbia Daily News 4/19/1947).

**September 9, 1947**

Robert Reisinger spoke for the apparatus investigating committee. He stated that the committee had been to Lancaster City, Norristown and Elizabethtown among other places and the committee found some of the most modern up-to-date equipment possible in their travels. He urged the company to consider the beginning of the process to purchase a new pumper.

**December 11, 1947**

L.R. Byler of the American LaFrance Foamite Corporation was in attendance at this meeting. He had with him a new engine recently purchased by the Wrightsville Fire Company for all of the members inspection. After answering all of the members questions and concerns Mr. Byler excused himself from the meeting. After some discussion the company voted to purchase a new American LaFrance Invader 700 Series pumper with an enclosed cab, a 750-gallon per minute pump and a 150-gallon booster tank at a cost of \$14,250. A committee was established to attend to the details of this purchase. That committee was Stephen Reehl, Robert Reisinger, Nevin Bachman, William Kanawbel, Bernard Foehlinger and John Fritz.

**July 1, 1948**

It was voted by the company to hold a gala Labor Day celebration for the housing of the new American LaFrance. The committee was appointed as Jacob Allison, Bernard Foehlinger, Stephen Reehl and Amos Bachman.

**July 9, 1948**

The American LaFrance was shipped from their plant in Elmira, NY to Columbia via the Pennsylvania Railroad. It arrived here on July 12th. After tests the engine was accepted on July 17th. The total price after additional items, including the distinctive "roto ray" light, a Federal siren, deluge gun and Carbon Dioxide extinguisher were placed on the engine came to \$15,413.50.

The new engine was on display in a parade held for the Shawnee Fire Company No. 3 who had just placed a new Seagrave engine into service. The Columbia News reported this to be the biggest stride in the Columbia Fire Department since 1917 when motorization began. The Keystone Fire Company and the Columbia Borough Fire Police also had new apparatus on display in this parade.

**August 12, 1948**

At this company meeting Joseph Nitroy and Cliff Covert, representatives of the newly formed fire company at Silver Spring were present. They stated to the membership that their company was in need of a pumper but they had very little money in their treasury. They asked for the chance to purchase the company's 1921 LaFrance when it was replaced with the 1948 LaFrance. After much discussion among the members present it was decided to help out our neighbors and sell them the 1921 LaFrance for the token cost of \$1.00. This transaction was completed on September 11, 1948 when the engine was delivered to Silver Spring during their first carnival. (Columbia Daily News, 8/13/1948).

**September 3, 1948**

This was the start of the four-day carnival in celebration of the new engine. The carnival promised "games, amusements, eats" with "Steve Riley & His Susquehanna Mountaineers" Friday night.

**September 4, 1948**

A parade, drum corp meet and the housing took place on this day. The parade took place at 3:30 p.m. with \$1,500 in prizes awarded. The parade route was Manor to Fourth to Union to Eighth to Locust to Second to Mill to Fourth to Manor and back to the firehouse for the housing. The housing occurred at 5:30 p.m. with companies from as far away as Sunbury taking part. The evening concluded with an Invitation Drum Corp Exhibition at 6 p.m. at Glatfelter's Field.

**September 5, 1948**

The celebration continued on Sunday with a special 11 a.m. worship service held at St. James Lutheran Church.

**September 6, 1948**

The successful carnival came to an end on Labor Day with a "Gigantic Fireworks Display" held over McGinnis Field at 10:30 p.m.

**September 10, 1948**

The 1948 American LaFrance was officially placed into service at 9 p.m.

**July 14, 1949**

The idea of erecting an adjoining building to house the 1948 LaFrance was brought before the company. Company members and volunteer help could supply any work.

**September 19, 1949**

The plans for the building addition were finalized. The members of the company would build the structure at a cost of \$3,500.

**February 4, 1950**

The pumper was housed in the new building for the first time.

**December 6, 1959**

The company applied for and was granted a liquor license to govern the operation of the Social Club.

**November 10, 1960**

The By-Laws were revised to bring them up to current standards and to govern the operation of the Social Club. This committee consisted of Howard Fritz, Robert Klinestever, Charles Odenwalt and George Mann.

**August 12, 1965**

Robert Zercher brought to the company's attention a 1949 Ford F-1 Panel Truck for sale by William Kanawbel for \$75.00. The company voted to purchase this vehicle with the intent of using it as an equipment and rescue truck. This marked the beginning of the company's dedication and involvement in rescue services. A flat-bottomed boat was also donated to the company for use as a water emergency craft.

**October 8 to 14, 1967**

The first mention of the company's involvement with fire prevention week was made. This included two evenings of an open house from 7-9 p.m. and featured equipment demonstrations, films and lectures.

**October 10, 1968**

The official organization of the Rescue Squad took place as the company voted to approve the proposed plan. This plan was also submitted to Borough Council to obtain their certification and recognition. Kenneth Bailey, Ronald Fritz Sr., John Mann and Robert Zercher were the organizers of this squad.

**May 8, 1969**

The 1949 Ford Panel Rescue Truck was sold for \$100. It was replaced with a 1950 Dodge Step Van, which was larger in size. This allowed the Rescue Squad to carry more equipment and personnel to a call.

**October 8, 1970**

It was mentioned at this meeting that the company should begin looking at another pumper to either replace or compliment the 1948 LaFrance. An invitation to inspect the Mack factory in Allentown was accepted at this time.

**November 12, 1970**

At this company meeting Charles Reese reported for the Engine Committee. He stated that bids were received from Mack and American LaFrance. The bid from Mack was \$39,790 while the LaFrance bid was \$40,000. After much discussion by the membership on the subject it was decided to accept the bid of the Mack Truck Manufacturing Company at a cost of \$39,790. Reasons for this acceptance were the fact that Mack had a service center in Lancaster making repairs handy and the fact that the 1948 LaFrance was in need of extensive

repairs possibly costing several thousand dollars. The Mack would come equipped with a 1,000 gallon per minute pump and a 500-gallon tank.

**May 12, 1971**

The idea arose of selling the 1948 LaFrance since the Mack was ordered. The price was fixed at \$7000, including equipment with 1000 feet of 2 1/2 inch hose, radio and old coats & boots, portable pumps and helmets. This idea was later abandoned as it was decided to keep the LaFrance in service as a reserve engine. It continued to serve the company well for many years afterwards.

**June 9, 1971**

The Mack engine arrived and was officially placed in service on October 14th at 9 p.m.

**April 15, 1972**

A housing and anniversary celebration was held for the Mack engine. The ceremony began at 2 p.m. with a special recognition of George W. Mann, George Klinestever Sr. and Fred Elslager, three of the company's oldest members. A number of local dignitaries spoke, followed by William W. Bair, PA State Fire Instructor. The festivities concluded with a dance later that evening.

**October 12, 1972**

A diagram of a proposed new engine house was put on display.

**May 3, 1973**

A special meeting was held concerning the bids for a new building addition. The bid of Kreider and Diller of \$80,000 was accepted for the construction of a new two bay addition with a full kitchen, restrooms and boiler room/storage area measuring 80 feet by 70 feet.

**June 15, 1973**

The 1950 Dodge Step Van Rescue Truck was replaced with a 1964 Ford F-100 4 wheel drive pickup truck to be used for rescue operations.

**May 1, 1974**

A groundbreaking ceremony for the new addition took place.

**February 1, 1975**

The building addition was completed and occupied by the company.

**April 26, 1975**

The new addition to the company was dedicated in memory of William D. Kanawbel a long-time member of the company who held many different offices throughout his life. He had been chairman of the Building Committee when he passed away. Senator Ralph Hess served as the main speaker for the day. The highlight of the program was the presentation of a memorial plaque to Mrs. Josephine Kanawbel to be displayed in the new hall. The festivities concluded later that evening with a dance for the membership.

**December 11, 1975**

A motion was made to set aside certain portions of money from various projects toward the purchase of a future new rescue van. Barry Doutrich and Carl Swingler were appointed co-chairmen of a New Rescue Committee.

**February 13, 1976**

Barry Doutrich reported that the Rescue Committee had visited several local fire companies in Lancaster and Dauphin Counties to inspect their rescue apparatus. He also announced a trip to the Hammerly Rescue Manufacturing Plant in Hamburg, PA was being arranged.

**June 10, 1976**

In an effort to upgrade the company's rescue capabilities it was voted to purchase a Hurst Tool ("Jaws of Life") for a price of \$4,947 to be utilized at vehicle accidents. It was ordered and received on August 12, 1976.

**July 8, 1976**

Columbia Borough's Cascade System for refilling air cylinders was placed in service at the station.

**August 12, 1976**

Borough Council designated the company as the official Rescue Squad of the community.

**October 23, 1976**

A special meeting was held on this date to consider the bids received for a new rescue vehicle. After some discussion the company voted to accept the bid of the Hammerly Custom Products Company for \$44,898. This included a 200-gallon water tank with pump, 300 feet of hose, flood light system, 800-pound winch and a cascade air system. It also had the capability of transporting eight personnel. The bid for the chassis was awarded to Garden Spot Motors at a cost of \$17,898 for a 1977 Ford chassis. The final cost of the vehicle after customization and equipment purchases totaled \$85,000.

Karl Durborrow, Public Relations Committee Chairman, spoke for the company saying, "The Susque's feel the lives of the citizens who live, work or travel in and around Columbia are worth the effort put forth by the company volunteers to protect them" (Columbia Daily News 10/24/1976)

**August 11, 1977**

The 1977 Ford/Hammerly Rescue was placed in service with a complete line of Hurst extrication equipment. These items in addition to the cascade system, lighting and pump made this unit a premier piece of apparatus throughout the region. The 1964 Ford pickup was kept in service to be used exclusively as a water emergency vehicle to transport the boat to incidents.

**October 13, 1977**

The By-Laws were revised and updated to include new sections on the Rescue truck. This committee included William Colin, Ronald Fritz, George Klinestever, Kenneth Bailey and Joseph Reisinger.

**February 13, 1978**

The company purchased the adjoining Keperling property of 718 Manor Street for the cost of \$22,500 to rent out as apartment space.

**April 29, 1978**

The housing ceremony for the Rescue Truck was held with local dignitaries speaking followed by a dance to conclude the evening.

**February 8, 1979**

A committee consisting of Stu Keyser, Fred States, William Colin and Lee Splain was set up to formulate plans for a company banquet to be held February 9, 1980. This was the restart of the company's annual banquets, which had been discontinued in the late 1960's.

**June 14, 1979**

The company took a step toward protecting its future membership by establishing a Junior Firefighter program open to young adults ages 14 to 18.

**February 13, 1980**

The company voted to purchase 1200 feet of 5-inch hose and two adapters at a price of \$7000 marking the

beginning of the company's use of a new firefighting concept--Large Diameter Hose.

**December 8, 1983**

At this meeting it was decided to upgrade the river rescue operations and equipment of the company. A committee of Keith Maurer, Wayne Nau, Stu Keyser, Ron Fritz Sr., George Schmitt Sr. and George Klinestever was appointed. The work started by this committee later grew into the 1984 Chevrolet Rescue unit—Rescue 8-4-2.

**January 1, 1984**

A Hazardous Materials Response Team was established within the company after extensive time and training took place.

**January 12, 1984**

The 1964 Ford pickup was beginning to deteriorate and a new river rescue vehicle was checked into. As talk went on it was decided to upgrade completely and purchase a 4 by 4 pickup with an enclosed body so the company would have a second rescue unit available if Rescue 8-4-1 was unavailable.

**February 9, 1984**

The company voted to purchase a 1984 Chevrolet 4 wheel drive pickup with an enclosed body at a cost of \$19,203. This unit replaced the 1964 Ford and was placed into service with a full compliment of equipment on December 9, 1984.

**July 12, 1984**

The 1964 Ford Rescue was sold to Robert Brooks for \$ 227.00.

**June 13, 1985**

The PP&L property located beside the apartment building of 718 Manor Street was reported as going up for sale. The company purchased this property for the sum of \$10,000.

**April 10, 1986**

A utility trailer was purchased for use in Haz-Mat activities.

**June 12, 1986**

It was noted at this meeting that the garage to the rear of the property was in poor condition. It was recommended to replace it before winter weather set in. At the August 14, 1986 meeting the company voted to install an Agway 40' x 30' shed with 2 bay doors for a cost of \$8,432. This building was used to house Rescue 8-4-2, the boat and the Hazardous Materials unit until the new addition was built in 1999.

**January 1, 1990**

The company's Hazardous Materials Response Team was officially placed out of service due to the time constraints of training and the costs incurred with response to incidents.

**May 5, 1994**

A special meeting was held for the specific purpose of discussing the future planning of the Fire Company involving finances, manpower, equipment and property needs. President George Klinestever named a Long Range Planning Committee as follows: Albert Schmitt, Gerald Fischer, Joseph Groft, Richard Miller Jr., Michael Hetter, Robert Buzzendore, Ron Fritz Sr., Jay Barninger, Henry Reese and John G. Green

**January 12, 1995**

A New Rescue Truck Committee was formed to replace the 1977 Ford/Hammerly, which had become outdated. Joseph Groft, Richard Miller Jr., Michael Hetter, Charles Reese Jr., Albert Schmitt, Lester Schoelkoph and Robert Kline were named to this committee.

At this meeting it was also decided to appoint a By-Law Revision Committee due to the limitations of the original company charter, which was only valid for 99 years and the fact that the by-laws were not updated for nearly twenty years. The members named to this committee were Robert Buzzendore, Mary Barninger, Gerald Fischer, John Green, Christopher Rose and Eugene Schmitt.

**January 31, 1995**

The 1948 American LaFrance was permanently removed from active fire service. It was now to be used for training exercises and as a parade piece only.

**March 9, 1995**

The rescue boat was upgraded with a new motor, depth finder and steering wheel system for an approximate cost of \$4500.

**July 13, 1995**

Henry Reese, Long Range Planning Committee Chairman reported that the committee felt it was time to act on the razing of the apartment building at 718 Manor Street for several reasons, most notably the anticipation of future expansion of the facilities and the fact that the fire company is not conducive to being in the landlord business.

**December 14, 1995**

The Rescue Truck Committee presented their recommendations to the company. After some discussion the chassis for a new rescue truck was approved as a D8400 model from Simon-Duplex at a cost of \$176,447. The body was also approved as a Cardinal Series Stainless Steel Rescue Body to be ordered from Saulsbury at a cost of \$290,000. This vehicle would be able to transport 10 personnel to emergency operations.

**January 11, 1996**

The Long Range Planning Committee recommended erecting a new three bay engine building on the site of the demolished apartment building. A Building Committee was established consisting of Scott Rhoads, Joseph Stehman, Douglas Kemmerly, Bryan Keyser, John Gainer, Michael Hetter, Garry Wiseman Jr., Michael Zercher and Steven Yohn

**June 13, 1996**

A computer system was installed to create better record keeping and more efficient operations of the company.

**September 1, 1996**

Sets of Standard Operating Guideline's went into effect in an attempt to better control the organization and make it more efficient

**September 5, 1996**

The company approved the completely revised Constitution and By-Laws.

**September 28, 1996**

Columbia # 1 Fire Department hosted the 117th Annual Pennsylvania State Firemen's Convention parade. The Simon Duplex chassis for the new rescue truck was on display in the parade before it was sent to Saulsbury Manufacturing in Tully, New York for completion.

**October 31, 1996**

At this meeting the Building Committee brought their final report to the company. The contract for a new 3 bay addition was awarded to Lockard Construction, Inc. of Wrightsville, PA at a base cost of \$520,780. This addition measured 64 feet by 90 feet and included 3 apparatus bays, separate men and women's locker/shower facilities, an equipment storage/work area, crew lounge, kitchen, office space, meeting rooms and a full basement.

**November 16, 1996**

A ground-breaking ceremony was held for the new building with the Building Committee, company officers and Borough officials present for the occasion. Lockard Construction was on site to begin work on the new building on Monday November 18th.

**February 15, 1997**

The 18th Annual Banquet was held. This event marked the beginning of the company's year long 100th Anniversary Celebration.

**April 10, 1997**

The new rescue vehicle arrived at 10 a.m. from Saulsbury's plant in Tully, N.Y. at the firehouse amid a large group of members. The cost of the vehicle was \$475,383. After inspecting the vehicle it was taken on an informal parade through town. Until the completion of the new building addition this unit was housed at Fire Department Mount Joy who graciously allowed us to keep it at their station.

**June 11, 1997**

At 6:49 p.m. the 1977 Ford/Hammerly Rescue (Rescue 8-4-1) was officially removed from service. Its last call was answered on June 10, 1997, a working vehicle fire at the west bound Prospect Road off ramp of Route 30. The rescue was the first on location and its pump and crew extinguished the fire.

**June 13, 1997**

The 1977 Ford/Hammerly rescue was loaded on a flatbed trailer at the corner of Front & Locust Streets and hauled to the city of Bathurst, New Brunswick, Canada at 9 a.m. where it was to be used as a combination Rescue/Haz-Mat unit. They purchased the vehicle at a price of \$52,000.

**July 10, 1997**

The building addition was completed by Lockard, Incorporated.

**November 15, 1997**

A Building Dedication and Rescue Housing ceremony took place. Robert A. Herman, District Justice for Columbia Borough served as the Master of Ceremonies. Jeff Helm, the Emergency Management Coordinator of Columbia Borough served as the main speaker. Scott Rhoads spoke on behalf of the building committee and Joseph Groft Jr. spoke on behalf of the rescue truck committee. A plaque dedicated to the membership for display in the new addition was presented to the company. Another plaque for display in the rescue truck was presented to honor Kenneth Bailey, Ronald Fritz Sr., John Mann and Robert Zercher, the four men most instrumental in forming the rescue squad within the company. The last part of the ceremony featured the housing of the rescue truck followed by a dance to conclude the evening.

**February 21, 1998**

The Kitchen Committee presented the company with a new MSA Argus model thermal imaging device at the 19th Annual Banquet making the company the first in the county and one of the first in the region to own this groundbreaking life-saving device.

**April 1, 1998**

A seven-page article highlighting the new rescue unit appeared in the nationally published "Fire/Rescue Magazine."

**January 14, 1999**

After several months of discussion on the subject both pro and con the company voted to form a New Engine Committee in order to begin investigating and planning a new pumper to replace the 1971 Mack which had begun to show its age. President Klinestever appointed Henry Reese and Michael Hetter as co-chairman along with Charles Reese, Richard Miller Jr., Eugene Schmitt, Bryan Keyser and Mark Fritz.

**February 11, 1999**

Henry Reese reported for the New Engine Committee saying that a preliminary statement would be issued at the company banquet on the project. He also noted that the committee had made plans to travel to surrounding companies to inspect their apparatus. Also at this meeting the company approved the signing of a contract with Columbia Borough establishing an Emergency Operations Center at the fire company for Borough-wide use in the event of disaster or other large scale emergencies.

**May 13, 1999**

Mike Hetter reported the Engine Committee traveled to Wrightsville, Maytown, Lampeter, Roherstown and Millersville. Meetings with American LaFrance, Spartan, Pierce and E-One were scheduled.

**July 8, 1999**

Henry Reese submitted a letter, informing Borough Council President Tim Swartz of the Companies intentions of replacing the 1971 Mack CF600 pumper currently in service with a new NFPA 1901 compliant apparatus.

**August 12, 1999**

Henry Reese reported after many meetings with several manufacturers, the field has been narrowed to American LaFrance (Eagle), E-One (Cyclone), Pierce (Quantum) & KME (Renegade).

**April 29, 2000**

Jim Fazekas, Regional Sales Manager with Waterous Fire Pumps, demonstrated the latest Compressed Air Foam System for extinguishing fires. Several live fire scenarios (vehicle, skid piles, brush and live burn of a mobile home) at the Deascenti Landfill were used to demonstrate the impressive capabilities of CAFS. The event was successful in convincing the Committee and company members that attended the session that CAFS was going to be an option the new apparatus would not be without.

**May 11, 2000**

Charles Reese, Bob Hetter & Todd Boyles traveled with representatives from American LaFrance on a bus trip to Cleveland, NC, to inspect the American LaFrance Chassis Manufacturing Facility. The trip was at no cost to the company and proved beneficial in making the final choice of apparatus.

**July 13, 2000**

Henry Reese reported that visits to American LaFrance's body manufacturing RD Murray facility in Hamburg, NY and KME Manufacturing in Toppohocken, PA were beneficial in attempting to make the final choice of manufacturer.

**January 11, 2001**

Henry Reese reported the Engine Committee decided unanimously to choose American LaFrance to build the new apparatus, if approved by the company. This came after several months of meeting, reviewing specifications and cost analysis by the committee members.

**March 21, 2001**

A special meeting of the company was held to decide on approval of the final proposal submitted by the Engine Committee to purchase a new Class A Custom Fire Apparatus to replace the 1971 Mack CF600 Pumper. The membership voted favorably to purchase an American LaFrance Eagle Custom Pumper at an initial contract price of \$433,087.00 plus \$10,000 in added equipment.

Specifications are as follows:

Cab:	ALF 148 Raised Roof with Eight Firefighter Riding Positions
Fire Body:	ALF Dominion Fire Body, with 12 Gauge 304L Stainless Steel
Engine:	Detroit Diesel Series 60 430 bhp, Six Cylinder
Transmission:	Allison HD 4060P Six Speed Automatic
Pump:	Waterous CSU-1500. 1500 GPM Single Stage Mid-ship
Water Tank:	500 US Gallon Fiberglass Water Tank
CAFS:	Waterous Eclipse 200 CFM. Foam Pro 2002 Electronic Foam Proportioning System. With 125 US Gallon Fiberglass Foam Tanks
Generator:	AMPS Model 1061-UP 10,000 watt hydraulic, PTO Driven

After much discussion it was decided to also include a Compressed Air Foam System, one of the latest innovations in firefighter safety and fire suppression technology. The Chassis will be manufactured in Cleveland, North Carolina and will be transported to RD Murray, in Hamburg, NY to install the Fire Body. The completed apparatus will then be transferred to MidLantic LTI in Ephrata, PA for portable equipment mounting and final detailing.

**March 29, 2001**

Ken Denlinger, Sales Manager and Tony Mastrobattista, Sales Representative of MidLantic American LaFrance met with the Engine Committee, Company officers and members to formally sign the contract for the new engine. A down payment of \$ 106,599.50 was placed on the apparatus, resulting in a cost savings of \$ 6,689.00 off the contract price.

**June 14, 2001**

Henry Reese reported several committee members (Charles Reese, Mark Fritz, Todd Boyles and Henry Reese) would travel to the American LaFrance, Hamburg NY facility for the Pre-Construction Conference with engineers from RD Murray.

**October 18, 2001**

The American LaFrance, Eagle Chassis was delivered to RD Murray in Hamburg, NY from Cleveland, NC.

**December 28 to 29, 2001**

The Committee traveled to RD Murray, Hamburg NY to inspect the progress and quality assurance of the new apparatus.

**January 26 to 27, 2002**

The Committee traveled to RD Murray, Hamburg NY for a mid – construction conference to inspect the progress and quality assurance of new apparatus.

**February 7 to 8, 2002**

The Committee traveled to RD Murray, Hamburg NY for a final acceptance conference, but failed to accept the vehicle as complete. Twenty-six items needed to be addressed to the Committee's satisfaction before final approval would be granted.

**March 14, 2002**

The new apparatus was transferred from the Hamburg, NY Facility to American LaFrance's Facility in Ephrata, PA for final portable equipment mounting and detailing.

**April 11, 2002**

It was decided at this meeting to advertise the 1971 Mack for sale by bid. It was also decided that if the bids received were not acceptable the company should look at possibly donating the engine to another fire company.

**April 26, 2002**

The polished new 2002 American LaFrance Eagle, with emergency lights, sirens and air horns blowing, was delivered to Manor Street, by Tony Mastrobattista, American LaFrance Sales Representative. Almost fifty members lined the way with much delight as the engine made its way to the firehouse.

**May 16 to 19, 2002**

The new apparatus was on loan to American LaFrance and was proudly on display as one of the featured units at the Lancaster County Fireman's Association Fire Expo in Harrisburg.

**October 19, 2002**

A Housing Ceremony took place to house the 2002 American LaFrance Eagle pumper. Robert A. Herman, Jr., District Justice for Columbia Borough served as Master of Ceremonies. Ed Mann, the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner served as the main speaker. Leo Lutz, Mayor presented remarks along with Henry J. Reese, Borough Fire Chief and Joseph J. Groft, Company Chief. Henry also gave a presentation on behalf of the Engine Committee. The engine was blessed by Reverend Ronald Bachman and housed by company members. The evening concluded with a dance in the company hall.

**November 14, 2002**

Mike Hetter reported receiving two bids for the 1971 Mack. A bid for \$ 2,500 was received from Ron Sahd of Sahd Salvage Center, Columbia. Another bid in the amount of \$ 2,000 was received from Echo Creek Campgrounds in Maryland. A motion to accept the bid from Sahd Salvage was placed on the floor but rejected by the membership. The company was reminded by Gene Schmitt that at a previous meeting the possibility of donating the engine to a less fortunate company was mentioned. Doug Kemmerly said he would look into an organization that donates apparatus to other needy companies. He would report back at a later meeting with the specific information. The two bids were to be tabled until more information on the donation procedure was gathered.

**December 12, 2002**

Bryan Keyser reported that he had contacted an organization named Helping Our Own. This organization matches fire companies willing to donate apparatus with those companies needing apparatus. Our company would sell the 1971 Mack to Helping Our Own for the token cost of \$ 1.00 to cover any liability costs. They in turn would choose the company most in need of the engine. After some discussion a motion passed to go with this recommendation. Bryan said he would contact Helping Our Own and report back at the January meeting.

**February 2, 2003**

The 1971 Mack was removed from service and the 2002 American LaFrance Eagle was placed in service. The Mack's last call was a working vehicle fire at Oak Hollow Apartments. The LaFrance's first call was an automatic fire alarm at Columbia High School.

**March 13, 2003**

The Engineers were instructed to complete all necessary paperwork in order to donate the 1971 Mack to Helping Our Own.

**June 21, 2003**

The 1971 Mack was loaded on a flat bed trailer in the fire company parking lot to be shipped to the Helping Our Own headquarters in Michigan. After inspection the Mack was to be sent to Viola, Arkansas. Viola is a town of about 800 people located in the north-central part of the state, in the Ozark Mountains area.

**August 14, 2003**

A Boat Committee was named at this meeting. The current rescue boat is 15 years old & due to general wear & tear needs replaced. Les Schoelkoph Jr., Garry Wiseman & Brent Keyser were named.

**October 9, 2003**

Les Schoelkoph reported the Boat Committee had begun contacting local dealers to see what type of updated equipment & special programs are available.

**November 13, 2003**

Brent Keyser reported Les Schoelkoph & Bill Keyser visited Big Bee Boats to see a variety of models to check prices & see if discount programs are available. The length of a new boat will probably be in the 17 to 18 foot range. Other dealers will be contacted to check for different models.

**December 11, 2003**

The Engine Committee was disbanded & the American LaFrance Eagle pumper was placed in the hands of the Chief Engineer's.

**March 11, 2004**

Brent Keyser reported a quote of \$ 4,658.78 was received from Seven Seas Marina in Middletown. This would be for a 16 foot boat. A 17 foot boat would cost \$ 5,344.78. Brent also reported a recommendation from the Boat Committee will be given at the April meeting.

**April 15, 2004**

Les Schoelkoph reported a 16' boat would cost \$ 4,428.78. A 17' boat would cost \$ 5,114.78. The current motor could be transferred at a minimal cost. The committee recommends going with the 17' model instead of the 16' model we currently have.

**August 12, 2004**

Brent Keyser reported the \$ 5,114.78 figure previously provided as the final boat cost has increased to \$ 8,034 due to price increase & changes made to the boat specifications including extra storage space. A motion was passed to purchase the boat at the cost of \$ 8,034.50 plus transfer fees for the engine & equipment.

**October 14, 2004**

Les Schoelkoph noted the boat arrived at Seven Seas Marina late last week. The intention is to have the motor & equipment transferred from the current boat sometime next week.

**November 11, 2004**

Brent Keyser reported the new boat is in stations & has been used on two calls. The old boat was sent to Sahd Salvage to get an estimate for scrap value. It was determined the scrap value would not be higher than the previous offer of \$ 500 from an interested buyer. It was passed to sell the boat for \$ 500 to Ron Miller.

*This updated history compiled by Christopher A. Rose, Company Historian, December 2004.*