

# FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

1911-1961



HOPEWELL, NEW JERSEY

# CONGRATULATIONS FROM YOUR NEW NEIGHBOR !!!



**A**LL OF US AT WESTERN ELECTRIC ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER EXTEND OUR HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS TO HOPEWELL'S FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR FIFTY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.

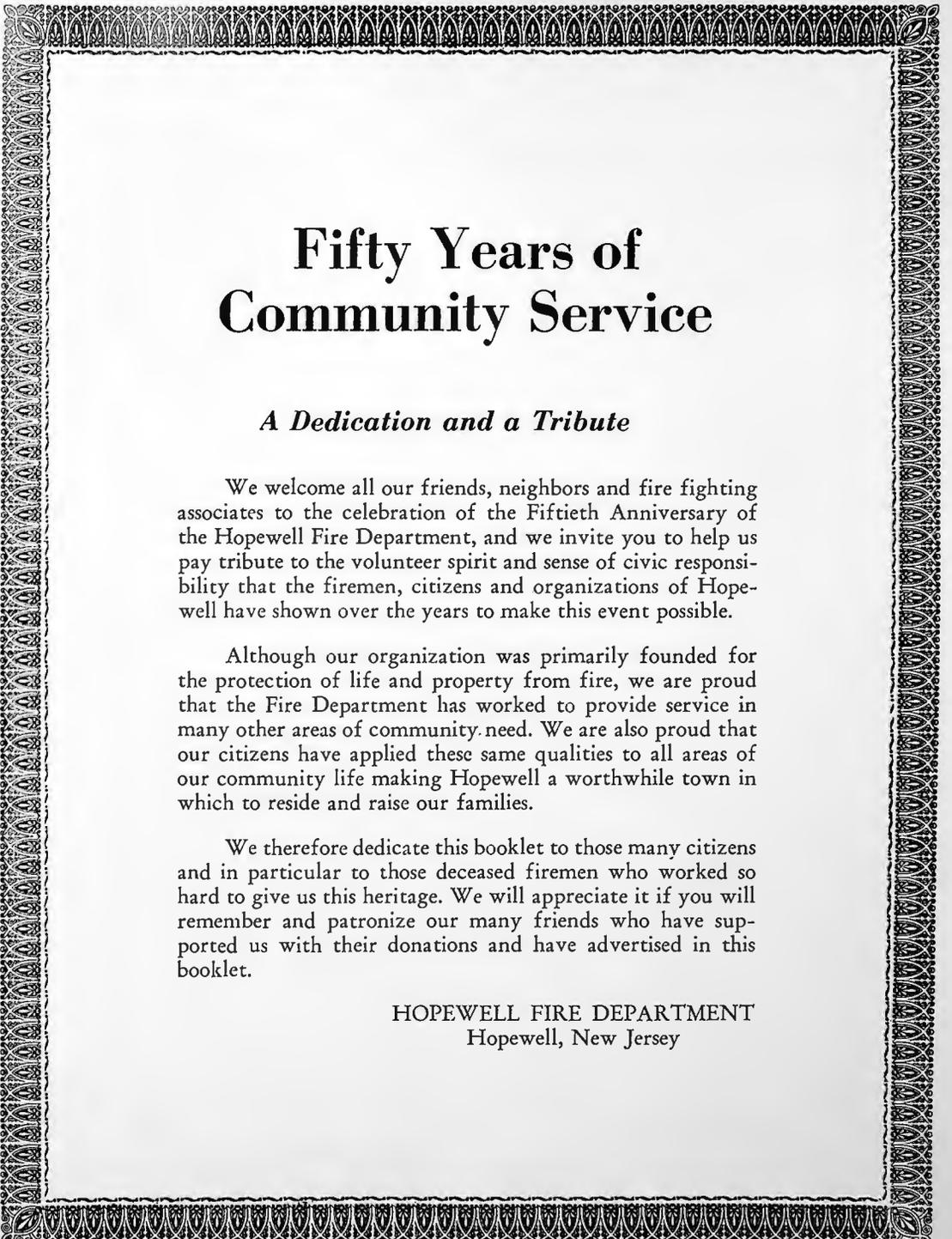
AT WESTERN ELECTRIC, WE TOO SPECIALIZE IN SERVICE—SERVING THE NATION'S COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS AS MANUFACTURING AND SUPPLY UNIT OF BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM. AND, RESEARCH CARRIED OUT AT THE ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER WILL MEAN EVEN BETTER TELEPHONE SERVICE FOR BELL SUBSCRIBERS.

LOCATED, TEMPORARILY, IN THE FORMER PRINCETON FILM CENTER BUILDING THE ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER WILL SOON BE MOVING INTO TWO SPANKING NEW BUILDINGS ON CARTER ROAD. AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE ARCHITECT'S DRAWING ABOVE, OUR NEW AIR-CONDITIONED CENTER HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO BLEND WITH THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF ITS 192-ACRE SETTING. THE POND IN THE FOREGROUND SERVES AS AN EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY FOR ADDITIONAL FIRE PROTECTION TO THE NEW BUILDINGS.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO MANY FRUITFUL YEARS HERE AND OFFER OUR BEST WISHES FOR THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF HOPEWELL'S FIRE DEPARTMENT.



PRINCETON ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER CARTER ROAD, HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP, N. J.



# Fifty Years of Community Service

## *A Dedication and a Tribute*

We welcome all our friends, neighbors and fire fighting associates to the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Hopewell Fire Department, and we invite you to help us pay tribute to the volunteer spirit and sense of civic responsibility that the firemen, citizens and organizations of Hopewell have shown over the years to make this event possible.

Although our organization was primarily founded for the protection of life and property from fire, we are proud that the Fire Department has worked to provide service in many other areas of community need. We are also proud that our citizens have applied these same qualities to all areas of our community life making Hopewell a worthwhile town in which to reside and raise our families.

We therefore dedicate this booklet to those many citizens and in particular to those deceased firemen who worked so hard to give us this heritage. We will appreciate it if you will remember and patronize our many friends who have supported us with their donations and have advertised in this booklet.

HOPEWELL FIRE DEPARTMENT  
Hopewell, New Jersey

# HOPEWELL FIRE DEPARTMENT SALUTES OUR PAST OFFICERS



PAST LEADERSHIP — All the living past fire chiefs were photographed at the Fire House in 1959. Reading from left to right, front row—Harry Wolfe, the first chief (who has since passed away); Charles E. Williamson, George R. Carver, Jr., George Jones, Leslie Warman, Samuel E. Copner; back row — George Voorhees, Ernest Adler, Reynold Dansberry, Ralph Lanning, Carl Smith, Mahlon Riley and Alvin Cranstoun. Deceased chiefs are; Clarence E. Hoagland, A. N. Johnson and Clarence Runyon.

## PAST CHIEFS

1911—John Titus  
(July 5 to Aug. 2) Temporary  
1911-1912—Harry Wolfe  
1913-1917—C. E. Hoagland  
1918—A. N. Johnson  
1919-1936—Chas. E. Williamson  
1937-1938—George R. Carver, Jr.

1939-1940—Clarence Runyon  
1941-1942—George Jones  
1943-1944—Leslie Warman  
1945-1946—Samuel E. Copner  
1947-1948—George R. Voorhees  
1949-1950—Ernest Adler

1951-1952—Reynold Dansberry  
1953-1954—Ralph Lanning  
1955-1956—Carl Smith  
1957-1958—Mahlon Riley  
1959-1960—Alvin Cranstoun  
1961- —John Hall

## PAST PRESIDENTS

1911-1913—Fred I. Sutphen  
1914-1915—Jos. S. Williamson  
1916-1917—A. N. Johnson  
1918-1921—E. V. Savidge  
1922-1927—Edwin Savidge  
1928-1935—Alfred H. Smith  
-1936—Dezzie Casey

1937-1938—R. B. Hullfish  
1939-1940—Dezzie Casey  
1941-1942—George Carver, Jr.  
1943-1944—Walter Benson  
1945-1946—Clarence Runyon  
1947-1948—Walter Benson  
1949-1950—R. A. VanDoren

1951-1952—Walter Taylor  
1953-1954—Harry Hall  
1955-1956—Arthur Wright  
1957-1958—John Cromwell  
1957-1960—Harvey Fish  
1961- —Theodore Sinclair

# Early History Of Fire Protection In Hopewell

## *Hopewell's First Organized Fire Company*

"Hopewell is a small village, pleasantly situated on the Mercer and Somerset Railroad, sixteen miles north of Trenton. It contains two general stores, a harness-maker's and a safe-maker's shop, a millinery establishment, a carriage and wagon manufactory, a flour mill, two or three extensive grain warehouses, a good hotel and a resident physician. There are about 35 dwellings and the estimated population is two hundred." This is a picture of Hopewell in 1875 according to the Historical Atlas of Mercer County.

It was in this peaceful setting that the first Fire Company of Hopewell saw its beginning. We find that on May 18th, 1877 "a portion of the citizens of Hopewell met at Phillips Hall, to take into consideration the propriety of forming an organization for the protection of person and property from fire."

The interested group met again on May 25, 1877 when a constitution was adopted and members approved. This group ordered a truck on July 24, 1877 for \$200 from Weber Bros. of Ringoes.

On November 16, 1877, a special meeting was held. At which time the company signed the necessary state papers and chose a name — "Hopewell Hook and Ladder Company No. 1."

The new truck arrived in Hopewell on December 20, 1877. Ceremonies were held in front of the First Baptist Church. It was then paraded through the streets drawn by four horses and all agreed it was "a very handsome piece of work." So Hopewell saw the birth of its first fire company.

The truck was housed in a building erected by the fire company on a lot located next to the Calvary Baptist Parsonage in the center of town and owned by Charles Drake.

During the next decade, the community and the fire company was fortunate that no major fires occurred to seriously endanger life and property. In the year 1891, the hotel stable and shed burned to the ground with the loss of five horses, \$50 worth of hay and about \$200 in harness. That same year negotiations were started for the purchase of a lot for a new fire house and in 1893 the Trustees were directed to purchase the lot on Greenwood Avenue where the "Mirror of America" building now stands.

## *A Great Conflagration Devastates The Center of Hopewell*

On July 31, 1893, the most serious fire ever experienced by Hopewell laid many of the buildings in the center of the borough in ashes. The detailed account of this fire as published in the Hopewell Herald on August 3rd follows:

*"It was the noon hour. The people of the village were just sitting down to their midday meal when the shrill cry of 'fire', 'fire' rang out in the sultry air, voiced by little Scott Dansberry, and was immediately taken up and echoed and re-echoed hoarsely from a hundred throats throughout the length and breadth of the town. Instantly all was uproar and excitement; the people directed their hurried footsteps in the direction of the cry, and located the fire in the barn on the property of C. Bebre, in the rear of his immense new hall, and between it and the Hook & Ladder Truck House, right in the center of town. The Hook and Company was at the scene of the fire in a very few minutes, and aided*

*by all good citizens, worked with nerve and determination, but the scarcity of water and the intense heat prevented effective work on the already doomed buildings.*

*A few minutes served to show the utter helplessness of the bucket brigade in such an emergency, and their further efforts were directed toward saving adjoining property.*

*The Truck house, W. W. Morrell's meat and vegetable market and Merz's Jewelry store were so close to the great burning building that no effort was made to save them and they were soon a mass of flames. The parsonage of the Calvary Baptist Church, directly across Greenwood Avenue next caught fire, all efforts to prevent it being futile.*

*By this time hundreds of men from all the country round were on the ground, and all worked with a determination born of desperation to prevent the spread of the devouring element to Cook's large business block, the Baptist Church, Dalrymple's tenement houses, the church sheds, and the houses of Madames Hill and Dalrymple. If these buildings had been burned, which they were in imminent danger of doing, the conflagration would have become general, and all that would now be left to tell Hopewell ever existed would be a mass of dust and ashes.*

*A line of hose from the wash pave of Cray's hotel was carried down the street for a distance of a hundred yards to the roof of the church, and by keeping it constantly wet, fire was kept off. A line of hose from A. S. Cook's family hydrant was taken to the roof of Cook's block and by keeping it deluged with water the fire fiend was kept from obtaining a permanent hold, although it was on fire half a dozen times in as many different places. The post office and part of the stock of A. F. Naylor's furniture store, and the household goods of Herbert Davison were hurriedly removed, and were badly damaged from rough usage, falling sparks and water.*

*Bucket brigades worked manfully to save the other imperiled houses, and succeeded, although almost exhausted by the intense heat and hard work which they were compelled to undergo.*

*A stiff breeze was blowing at the time, and the burning embers were carried to a considerable distance, starting little blazes in several places about town, but realizing that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty (or safety)" every coal was pounced upon and extinguished before it could do any damage.*

*The Pennington fire department was telegraphed for, and although arriving too late to help save property, the fire laddies did effective work in extinguishing the blaze, and are entitled to and receive the thanks of Hopewell en masse. The Bound Brook and Trenton departments were also at the depot in readiness to come when telegrams were sent that the fire was under control.*

*The fire was discovered by Scott Dansberry, who, with a companion, was playing near the barn. The fire apparently started in a hay loft.*

*The large hall which was the centre of the blaze, in a partially completed condition, and being perfectly dry, and open all through, the plastering not yet having been done,*

was a tinderbox, through which the flames spread with giant strides. It was 12:15 when the alarm was raised and 12:30 when the great building caught. At 1 P.M., only 30 minutes later, it was a heap of ruins. The building frame, 46x90 feet, four stories and basement. It was partly occupied by Mr. Bebre as a hardware store, plumbing and tin shop, and as a residence. John Whitehead occupied the basement as a tobacco and cigar store and pool room.

Loss on buildings and contents — Bebre's \$12,000, insurance \$9,500. Whitehead's, \$1,000, insurance, \$600. The parsonage was a neat frame dwelling, loss \$1,500 insurance \$1,000. Hook and Ladder, \$200, no insurance. Morrell's meat market, building and stock, \$275, insurance \$100. Merz's jewelry, new one story frame, just completed, loss including stock, \$400, no insurance. Cook's block, large sheeted building 40x70 feet, containing three stores, the post office and a dwelling, damage can hardly be estimated, probably about \$300. Fully insured. Mesdames Hill and Dalrymple's houses, frame dwellings, fences and sidewalks burned, loss about \$150, fully insured. J. M. Dalrymple's tenement houses, loss \$200, fully covered. The escape of the town from annihilation was extremely narrow and should be a warning to the community that better fire protection is absolutely necessary.

The Herald has heretofore urged the town to place fire plugs at convenient points about town, and when it was proved Monday that two plug streams would have prevented an expensive fire, it could easily be seen whether the advice was wise or otherwise.

By burning of Bebre's Hall and adjacent buildings, Hopewell has suffered a loss from which it will take years to recover. Indeed it is doubtful if we again see so massive a building erected here, at least for many years."

The task of rebuilding and reorganizing began at once with arrangements being made with the schools and churches to ring their bells in case of fire and the building of a temporary fire house.

### The Union Fire Company Is Formed

A number of Borough Citizens were still not satisfied that adequate fire protection was being provided. On March 25, 1895 a public meeting was held for the purpose of organizing another fire company. C. E. Voorhees was elected chairman; E. V. Savidge, secretary; J. B. Lewis, vice-president; William W. Drake, treasurer; John B. Skillman, foreman; T. A. Pierson, first assistant foreman; E. E. Seville, second assistant foreman; George R. Carver, George E. Pierson and George Snowden, trustees. They chose the name of "The Union Fire Company". Committees were appointed to meet with the Borough Council and the Water Company in an attempt to have fire hydrants installed. They ordered a fire engine on the trial basis that the hand pumper would throw a stream of water over the Calvary Baptist Church steeple. The engine cost approximately \$500 and was housed on the property of Dr. Pierson.

There was considerable competition between the two companies at various fires over the next several years although The Hook and Ladder Company did ask the Union Fire Company if they would be interested in renting a room in the new fire house being planned by them. This offer was refused.

The Union Fire Company was not to be outdone and so started plans to erect a fire house. The American Hose Company of Bound Brook donated an old steel railroad engine tire to be used as a fire alarm. The alarm was mounted on a tower located in the rear of the Hopewell House Hotel at what is now West Broad and Mercer Streets. The Union Company paid a freight bill of 42 cents for shipment of the alarm. (This amount was reimbursed by the America Hose Company with appropriate ceremonies in 1956).

### Columbia Hall Built — 1895

Committees were appointed from the Hook and Ladder Company to draw up plans, estimate costs and raise funds for the erection of a new fire house on November 1, 1895. At the following meeting it was agreed that the building should have the following specifications: size 35x50 feet, 2 stories high, first floor ceiling 9 feet — second floor ceiling 14 feet, 2 dry closets outside of building, open fire in hall, 2 stairs, one heater, tin roof, estimated cost for painted and completed frame building to be \$2,04.84. The sale of bonds was reported to be a success and it was agreed to purchase additional land to increase the size of the lot to 41 feet wide and 60 feet deep at an estimated cost of \$50.

On December 20th it was reported that the bidder, Bender and Pittenger, refused to sign a contract so the work was broken into separate parts to be accomplished as follows: Abram Golden, all lumber — \$747.94; Blackwell and Hill, millwork and doors, etc. — \$410; H. D. Sutphin, carpenter work — \$309, Milton Shade, tin roof and material — \$128, Collings and Hoagland, painting and material — \$97.

At this meeting, it was voted to call the new building Columbia Hall. (Few people know that at one time Hopewell was called Columbia.)

### COOK'S BLOCK DESTROYED BY FIRE



COOK'S BLOCK BUILDING — Corner East Broad Street and North Greenwood Ave. (Present site of Hopewell Branch, Princeton Bank and Trust).

Cook's Block was burned to the ground by a fire of unknown origin at 1 a.m. on July 12, 1899. This frame building with sheet metal outer covering housed the businesses of T. J. Sheppard, grocery; Matt DiPuglia, barber; Hopewell Telephone and Construction central office; A. Zanelli, fruit store; James Smith, tailor; F. F. Holcombe, post office; E. S. Brewer, warehouses; and the Jr. O.U.A.M. and Knights of Pythias lodges. John S. Van Dyke's law office, a one story frame building in the rear also burned.

The fire was discovered by Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Sheppard who were awakened when their baby started choking from the smoke. The fire started in the corner basement, occupied by A. Zanelli, and when first discovered was very small but before the firemen could get a stream of water on it had gotten beyond their control and no effort was made to save the burning building. Their attention was devoted to the surrounding property. The building burned very slowly and there was scarcely any wind to increase the fury of the fire. The tardiness of the Union Company in coupling their hose, in the confusion in their work, was criticized by many and showed that they needed much drilling.

## Volunteer Companies Have Difficulties

During the next few years each company experienced their share of problems. The records, however, are not sufficiently complete to provide a full report of all the happenings. The record of fires was also not kept in any particular order. At one point the minutes of the Union Company showed a report that there were not enough men present to run out the engine and the minutes of the Hook and Ladder Company show that an invitation from the Wear Post 108, G.A.R., to participate in the Memorial Day parade was declined due to the fire truck not being in shape to parade.

The hearsay stories of the period tell of fights between these two companies at fires; taking apparatus away from each other, holding water battles and at one point it is reported that the Water Company sat on the fire hydrants and wouldn't allow them to use the water because no arrangements had been made to pay for the water used. (The Water Company in those days was privately owned.)

From 1897 to 1910, both companies also engaged in a running fight with the Mayor and the council to establish various forms of firemen's relief and some uniform control at fires. They requested, and eventually got, aid in the purchase of hose and other equipment. They petitioned for the appointment of a single fire chief to control both companies at fires, this was not accomplished for various reasons. They asked for tax relief and in 1908 the Council finally agreed to pay the firemen and amount equivalent to the tax on \$500 that year.

## Hook And Ladder Company Celebrates Anniversary

On May 25, 1908, a benefit and celebration of the 31st anniversary of the organization of the Hopewell Hook and Ladder Company was held in Columbia Hall.

The committee of ladies in charge of the program provided an attractive program of music and recitations which was faultlessly rendered and judging from the applause, was immensely appreciated.

During the program secretary John M. Dalrymple gave a report as follows:

*"Ladies and Gentlemen: I have been called upon by your committee to relate some things that happened 31 years ago on this date, the 31st anniversary of the Hook and Ladder Company which took place May 25, 1877. Now this seems a long while to remember, and also to look backward to, but it seems such a short time when it has passed that we can hardly realize how swift time passeth. On May 1, 1877, the handsome residence of Jonathan V. Blackwell, which stood on a part of the foundation where Charles A. Holcombe's residence now stands, took fire from a defective fire and was totally destroyed on account of not having ladders at hand long enough to reach up to where the fire was. I want to say right here that the Blackwell residence was one of the finest and cost more money than any dwelling that has ever been built in this borough or vicinity with the exception of Professor Webster Edgerly's residence. The Blackwell residence was built in 1857 by Titus Brothers of Trenton and cost \$17,000, and this was at a time when lumber and labor were cheap. After this loss to our community of such a handsome residence, it was essential that some kind of fire apparatus be purchased for the then small village, for the protection of person and property from fire. The question of organizing a fire company and procuring some kind of fire apparatus was then agitated."*

Then Mr. Dalrymple made an abridged report of the 32 fires answered by the Fire Company in the ensuing 31 years.

## "Four Fires In Five Days"

Early in 1911 the Hopewell Herald reported on those fires and had the following commentary,

*"While the fire department had good results, it can be attributed more to good luck than to good management. They were indeed fortunate, but it may not always be so. It was perfectly ridiculous to see the apparatus of each company being dragged along at a snail's gait by a lot of boys. It is high time that we awoke to the situation, and get the two companies to consolidate into one live company, not two dead ones, and get equipped to fight fires right, or organize a new company."*

*At the fire Friday the hose had not been properly cared for after being used the day before and was frozen together, which necessitated a delay before water could be gotten through it. Had the flames secured a good start, the damage would have been much greater than it was and the building might have been totally destroyed. We have a high pressure and there should be no excuse for not being equipped to the minute for fire fighting. It is time to put petty jealousies aside and work in harmony. We have been acting like school boys in this matter long enough, in consequence of which our insurances are prohibitive. Also where is the wisdom of pulling out that heavy engine every time there is an alarm sounded? It is not used nor needed, when the fire can be reached from a plug. When such is the case why not leave the engine in the house and exert our energy toward getting the hose cart at the scene of the conflagration and the hose fast to the plug. A stream of water on a fire quickly is what is needed. It is said that the engine is not in working condition anyway."*

*It is said that neither company has a lantern on any of their apparatus that can be used and that nearly all the nails on the Hook and Ladder truck leak badly."*

*Let us all take more interest in our fire department, before we have a serious fire, when it will be too late, and see to it that it is properly equipped."*

*It is rumored that there is a move on foot to organize another company that will be fully fitted up with hose cart, chemical extinguishers, and hook and ladder truck combined, a large amount of money has already been pledged. The promoters are said to be meeting with encouragement on all sides, as the people of the town are thoroughly disgusted with this dog in the manger business which exists between the two present companies."*

## Hopewell Fire Department Organized

On April 7, 1911, a meeting was held in the rooms of the Hopewell Athletic Club for the purpose of organizing a fire company. (This club was located above the drug store.) Temporary officers were William Reid, chairman; Robert Zulauf, secretary and Charles L. Williamson, treasurer. After reading the call of the meeting and the list of names on the petition, a motion was made that the name of the new company would be the Hopewell Fire Department, also that this company would be permanent. Committees were appointed to raise funds and extend invitations to the Hook and Ladder and the Union Companies to join the new company and to look into the matter of securing fire apparatus and draft by-laws. At the July meeting, Henry E. Sutphin of the Union Company advised that this company had disbanded and would merge with the new company. (However some members did not follow and continued to maintain records and activities for several years.) John H. Titus was appointed temporary fire chief of the new company.



FIRST CHEMICAL ENGINE AT SEMINARY AVE. FIRE HOUSE — left to right are: Elmer Van Dyke, Harry Cox, William Cray, Charles Williamson.

### *Hopewell Fire Department Recognized As Under Borough Jurisdiction*

Application was made to the Borough Council in August of 1911 for the Hopewell Fire Department to come under Borough authority and the municipality to establish an annual fire appropriation of \$250. This was accomplished and Harry Wolfe was elected the first permanent Chief. Other officers were President, Fred I. Sutphin; Vice-President, William I. Reid; Secretary, Edwin V. Savidge; Treasurer, J. Mason Ege; Trustees, William N. Skillman, Harry E. Sutphin and George E. Pierson. Other active officers were: Foreman, Clarence E. Hoagland, First Assistant Foreman, George L. Stout; Second Assistant Foreman, Charles W. Stout.

The members recorded at that time were as follows: George E. Pierson, Scott Dansbury, Harold Mathews, Lorraine F. Blackwell, Charles E. Williamson, Joseph S. Williamson, Wilmer Moore, Charles H. Wyckoff, Clarence A. Runyon, Harry L. Cox, Daniel C. Wyckoff, Clinton M. Young, Harry Wolfe, R. Leigh Hurley, John S. Blackwell, Fred S. Manners, Harry E. Sutphin, Roe B. Hullfish, William E. Piggott, LeRoy T. Blackwell, Marion Voorhees, Charles W. Ege, John C. Fisher, Michael J. Norton, Clarence E. Hoagland, Jonathan Kitchen, Irving E. Rink, Charles W. Stout, Irvin D. Van Nest, Van C. Blackwell, Elmer E. Van Dyke, Fred S. Servis, John H. Skillman, Fred I. Sutphen, George L. Stout, John H. Titus, Frank Naylor, Charles W. Hoagland, Edgar L. Labaw, Fred H. Noll, Howard W. Larason, Patrick Faherty, Robert Zulauf, Edward M. Haynes, Fred M. Leigh, Joseph B. Hill, Theodore A. Pierson, Edwin V. Savidge, William K. Race, Charles L. Williamson, J. Mason Ege, Cornelius N. Allen, Jr., John L. Bellis, William Y. Johnson, Daniel A. Northrup, William J. Braunworth, Russell S. Lanning, John A. Reddan, John M. Servis, William W. Wyckoff, Andrew J. Wyckoff, William N. Skillman, Peter Van Fleet, George E. Snowden, William V. Van Dyke, J. William Cray, Harry P. Grim, Edward R. Whitehead, William I. Reid, John R. Fletcher, John N. Race, John B. Garrison, Farley F. Holcombe, Louis Labaw, Amos C. Bond, William S. Hixson, C. Herbert Fetter, Theodore M. Hall, S. Voorhees Van Zandt, Matti Di Puglia, John H. Merz, Fred G. Fritz, H. Mount Williamson, Abram S. Golden, George W. Staples, George W. Thorn, C. Howard Wilson, T. Romeyn Voorhees, John H. Fetter, Robert P. Miller, John Corcoran, John McVeigh, Howard L. Stout, J. Howard Dilts.

### *Chemical Engine Ordered — Celebration Planned*

The new Fire Department proceeded at rapid pace to secure equipment and materials. A new chemical engine was ordered on July 10, 1911 from the Combination Ladder Company of Providence, R. I. at a cost of \$1,055 with delivery to be in 100 days. Preparations were also made to purchase 500 feet of 2½" hose and a new hose cart.

The fine relations that exists between neighboring fire departments was evident in these early days as shown by this letter:

*"Pennington, N. J., July 15, 1911*

*Officers and Members of the Hopewell Fire Department  
Hopewell, N. J.  
Gentlemen:*

*Pennington Fire Company sends congratulations and is pleased to learn of the success of the citizens of Hopewell in organizing a fire department, and approve purchase of a four wheel chemical engine.*

*We trust, when fully equipped, the organization may, by united intelligence and efficient work, win credit to themselves in furnishing complete fire protection to the homes of Hopewell.*

*Yours truly,  
Henry L. Laning, Secretary"*

The new department jumped into planning for a big demonstration to be held on November 11, 1911 to celebrate the arrival of the new engine. Invitations were extended to Rocky Hill, Pennington and the two Borough companies to participate. A carnival was held for three days preceding the parade and the committee (Lorraine F. Blackwell, William N. Skillman and Charles E. Williamson) reported receipts of \$870.27 and expenditures of \$394.62.

January 3, 1912 marked the first meeting in their new fire house. (This building still stands in the rear of the Central Hotel, E. Broad and Seminary Avenue (now known as Hopewell Valley Inn). Some years ago the upper story of this building was used as the Hopewell Public Library and it also served as the first home of the Hopewell Building and Loan Association.

The Department purchased their first uniforms (shirts, belts and caps) for a parade held in Princeton on June 17, 1912, with the invitation coming from Mercer Engine Company No. 3. They also spent \$49 to hire a 15 piece band. The Ladies Auxiliary donated a banner to be displayed at the parade.

### Firemen's Relief Association Organized

Late in 1912 and into 1913, the Hopewell Fire Department studied the requirements for organizing a Firemen's Relief Association. In 1913 the Company joined the New Jersey State Firemen's Relief Association.

The need for a central fire alarm system was recognized and a committee was appointed to procure a bell, select a location and erect a tower. It was felt that an electric attachment should be provided to ring the alarm. A bell and tower were erected on land donated by the heirs of the Hannah M. Drake estate to be used for that purpose for a period of 25 years. The alarm was installed near the present location of the fire siren and was completed in early 1914 but did not prove satisfactory and a larger bell was installed in 1915. A remote control was installed in Fred Sutphen's house on Columbia Avenue.

The new Fire Department proved to be a very active group since they undertook to have an annual carnival which was continued for a number of years. Open air dances were held and a tent was secured for that purpose and a number of successful winter activities were held including a traditional "smoker".

### Decide To Motorize Chemical Engine

A committee consisting of Dr. T. A. Pierson, J. M. Ege and C. W. Hoagland was appointed to investigate the cost of purchasing a motorized fire fighting apparatus. They were authorized to purchase a Buick chassis equipped with a suitable body so that the tanks and equipment from the chemical engine could be mounted upon it. The cost was \$1,695. Considerable discussion centered about the use of "airless" tires. The truck was placed in service in 1916 and the stripped fire truck was sold to S. Smith Ege for \$15. Apparently, this new form of transportation had its problems since the Fire Chief initiated two motions at the meeting of September 1, 1916. First that a committee meet with the Borough Council to discuss policy and procedures for answering fire alarms outside of the Borough, and second, a new rule must be initiated limiting the number of men to 8 on the engine at any one time.

The chief reported a total of 7 fires for the year 1916. Two barn fires; 2 fires on Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, an oil stove, a chimney fire and a minor fire at St. Michael's Orphanage.

### Hook And Ladder And Union Fire Companies United

Although some members of the two older companies had joined the Hopewell Fire Department, the remaining members had continued their fire fighting activities although they had been unsuccessful in getting the Council in naming one of their members as the Borough Fire Chief and financing of new equipment presented some problems. Committees from both companies met in April of 1917, they reported agreement on a merger plan which was ratified by both companies to become effective on July 6, 1917. The new company was known as the Union Hook and Ladder Company. The property turned over by the Union Company consisted of a lot fully paid for (which had been intended for a fire house), several hundred feet of first class hose, a hos cart, a pump, (which may be useful sometime when there is a fire near a running stream), about one dozen chemical fire extinguishers, lamps for firmen and over \$200 in cash.

### H. F. D. Takes Equipment Inventory

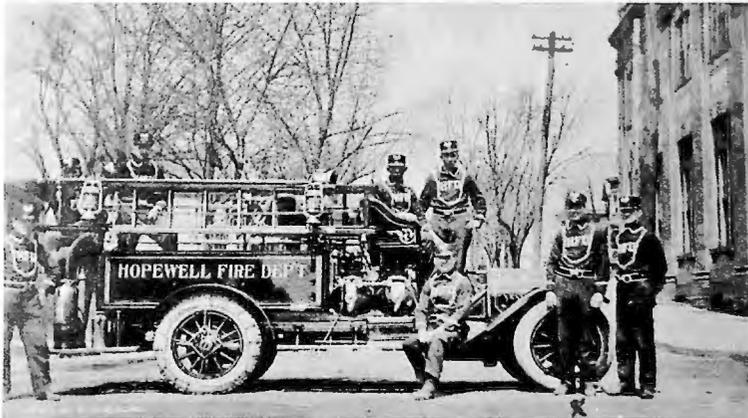
The Department received particular tribute and a \$30 donation from the Directors of the Hopewell National Bank for the valuable service rendered at their fire on December 3, 1917. Chief Hoagland reported that about 8 tanks of chemicals were used.

The members of the Hopewell Fire Department took a physical inventory early in 1918, to give the Borough Council an accurate record of the equipment and apparatus owned by the Fire Department at that time. The inventory was as follows:

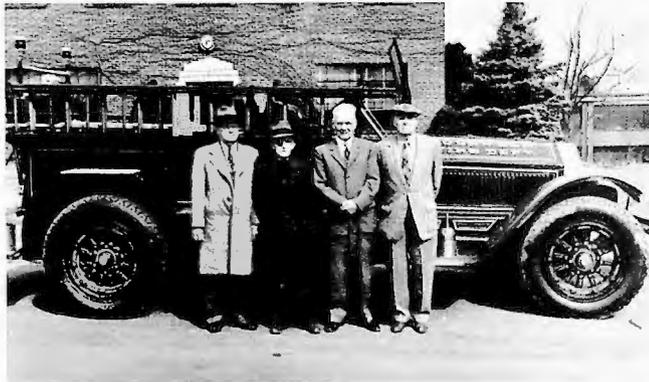
Combination Auto Chemical Truck	\$1,992.88
600 Ft. Fabric Standard Fire Hose	520.00
Fire Alarm Tower, Bell and Wiring	699.70
1 Large Tent	230.00
Chemical Tanks, Search Light, Ladders, Chemical Hose and other equipment taken from wagon and placed on Auto. Truck	200.00
12 Collapsible Pails	18.00
1 Desk and 4 dozen chairs	43.00
6 Oil coats, 6 hats and 6 pair rubber boots	42.39
1 Extra hose nozzles	10.00

Total Value

\$3,755.97



BUICK CHEMICAL TRUCK



PURCHASING COMMITTEE FOR AMERICAN LA FRANCE PUMPER — John S. Blackwell, Edward Jones, Jr. (who has passed away since picture was taken), Rev. William J. Hayes; and Charles E. Williamson, who was Chief at that time. Dr. T. A. Pierson was also a member of the original committee.

### *Union Hook & Ladder Merges With H. F. D.*

An unsuccessful attempt was made by a committee from the Fire Department in January 1919 to have the Hook and Ladder Company and the Hopewell Fire Department confer and work out a merger. However a delegation from the Union Hook and Ladder Company did attend a meeting of the Hopewell Fire Department in January, 1920 and present a resolution calling for such a merger under the name of the Union Hook and Ladder Company. This resolution was rejected after due consideration by the Hopewell Fire Department. Finally on July 1, 1921, the members of the Union Hook and Ladder Company then petitioned the Hopewell Fire Department requesting that all their members in good standing be accepted as a body into the Fire Department. All fire apparatus and hose was turned over free of debt, however, due to the nature of the outstanding bonds on Columbia Hall, this property was not included.

### *Ladies Auxiliary Purchases Electric Siren*

The members of the Fire Department recognized the many deficiencies of the existing alarm system even though the bell was equipped with an electric ringing attachment. The batteries required constant attention and on several occasions refused to operate the mechanism. On October 7, 1920, the Ladies Auxiliary advised the Fire Department that they wished to purchase a Fire Alarm System and desired a committee from the H. F. D. to act in their behalf. A committee was appointed (Charles E. Williamson, Dr. T. A. Pierson and E. V. Savidge) and they immediately contacted several companies to examine and try various bells and sirens. On April 1, 1921, the Chief reported that an electric siren and a 20 foot tower addition had been purchased. The siren was purchased from the Federal Electric Company at a cost of \$655.

In July 1921, a committee was appointed to attend a Mercer County Firemen's Association meeting to be held at Broad Street Park, Trenton, N. J. Hopewell Fire Department was elected to membership at that meeting.

After the merging of the two fire companies, the Hopewell Fire Department requested that the Council assist in providing for new quarters for the consolidated company. Arrangements were completed to use the Council Room and Apparatus Room in Columbia Hall and the first meeting was held there on December 1, 1921.

### *American La France Pumper Purchased*

The Fire Department had been quite successful in the operation of their annual carnivals, in fact they realized a profit of \$2,600 in 1921. With things looking good financially, it was agreed that the fire apparatus should be modernized. Steps were taken to have the Council increase the size of the fire appropriation and committees were named to request Hopewell Township to include an appropriation in their budget for the services of the Hopewell Fire Department. At the November 3, 1922 meeting a committee consisting of Dr. T. A. Pierson, Rev. Wm. J. Hayes, John S. Blackwell, Edward Jones, Jr. and Chief Charles E. Williamson was authorized to select and purchase a fire engine equal to or better than a La France. In addition the committee was requested to ascertain if the Council would appropriate funds for the new truck. The committee selected the American La France Type 75 Triple Combination Pumping, Chemical and Hose Car with 750 G. P. M. capacity at a cost of \$12,500. The Department voted to pay \$4,000 down and take a note for the balance of \$8,500. Then, at the December, 1922 meeting, they voted unanimously to turn over to the Borough, the pumper, the Buck fire truck and the Ford truck (which came from the Hook and Ladder Company in the merger), all for price of one dollar, with the Borough to assume the responsibility for the \$8,500 note.

The Ford truck was converted into a general purpose truck and used by the Borough for a number of years.

During the next several years, the Fire Department was very active with the annual carnival as their primary fund raising effort. Their fire fighting services were in constant use with a significant increase in the number of large building fires particularly in the surrounding rural areas. In 1928, Chief Williamson reported 3 house fires, 2 barns, 2 chimneys, a grass fire and some out-buildings. There was also a number of calls during this period to extinguish fires on motor vehicles which were becoming increasingly popular. Now that the fire apparatus was fully motorized, the Department was responding to calls for assistance at Rocky Hill, Belle Mead, Lawrence Township, Blawenburg and Hopewell Township. The Fire Department contacted Montgomery Township in 1928 in an effort to secure an appropriation for fire protection services and finally in 1931 an appropriation of \$200 was granted.

## Firemen Demonstrate On Washington Bicentennial — 1932

The firemen decided to sponsor a celebration in October 1932 to coincide with the Washington Bicentennial and Fire Prevention Week. The object was stated — "that the people of the borough be given an opportunity to view the different fire apparatuses, and to aid the drive for new members in the local company." The parade was considered by the Hopewell Herald in an article published after the occasion — "to be the largest and finest of its character ever held here. There were close to 500 firemen and others in line in the parade from various towns in this section, who with their attractive uniforms and apparatus made a splendid and colorful display. Following the parade a clam bake was held at Overlook." (Adam Ziegler's Overlook Farm restaurant was located in the large frame house on the Hopewell-Pennington Road which has until recently been occupied by Hopewell Manor.)

Mayor A. F. Giese was the grand marshal and was accompanied by Mayor Moonan of Lambertville. Kenneth Williamson was in charge of the colors. Companies in attendance included Lambertville, Washington Crossing, Pennington, Lawrenceville, Rocky Hill, Lawrence Road, East Amwell Township (Ringoes). Floats were entered by the H. A. Smith Machine Company (now Rockwell Manufacturing Company) with the worlds largest meter register and a nicely decorated float by Herbert F. Rorer the local hardware merchant. A model T Ford known as the "Crowbar Special" was driven by William Sangston. This attracted considerable attention due to the ingenuity of the decorations.

The Princeton companies could not attend due to their being needed for traffic duty at the Princeton-Cornell football game and Pennington Road was absent due to their apparatus being at Mercer Air Port, where an air meet was in progress.

The committee for this event was Alfred H. Smith, Chairman; Charles E. Williamson, Harry Wolfe, George R. Carver, Jr., Arch M. Adam, Russell H. Drake, William Weaver, Harry Latto and Water Benson.

Things returned to normal after the celebration and an increase in new members was noted. The committee on By-Laws submitted a final draft early in 1933 and these were approved by the Department. An invitation from the Niagara Hose Company No. 6, Burlington, N. J. was accepted to parade at a "Firemen's Day" celebration held there in August 1933. Pennington and Rocky Hill volunteered to cover the Hopewell territory during their absence.

## Hopewell And Pennington Fire Departments Demonstrate Pumping Relay Technique

One of the major problems facing firemen at the scene of a rural fire is the absence of an adequate water supply adjacent to the conflagration. Mr. George W. Pugh of the Rushing Hose Company, supported by the Mercer County Board of Freeholders was instrumental in proposing the installation of dams in rural streams to provide an adequate water supply for fire purposes. A dam was constructed near Woodsville and the Hopewell and Pennington companies demonstrated that a stream of water could be relayed by the pumps over a distance of one half mile to the scene of a fire within 15 minutes from the time of the alarm. Representatives from many of the Mercer County companies were on hand to witness the demonstration which was held in September, 1933.

## Two Major Fires In Borough Same Night

Hopewell Borough saw two devastating fires on the night of February 12, 1934 which could have resulted in a partial destruction of the business section and the western residential section. At midnight, a fire was discovered by Mrs. J. N. Race and also by Theodore Lowe in a building owned by J. B. Drake and

located in the rear of the Hopewell Bank. The building, which housed the barber shop and pool room of Frank Di Puglia was completely enveloped in flames upon the arrival of the firemen who concentrated on saving the Bank Building, the Central Garage and other nearby structures. Fourteen hundred feet of hose in four lines was used by Chief Williamson's men.

At 3:00 A.M. a blaze was discovered in the home of William S. Bond on West Prospect Street by his son-in-law, Dezzie Casey. He notified Walter Benson, near neighbor, and then assisted his wife, father and mother-in-law and the Casey daughters, Lois and Roberta from the burning home. The fire was believed started by an over-heated chimney and it gutted one side of the nine room residence including the kitchen, dining room and attic. The rest of the dwelling was damaged by smoke and water. Foreman Harry Wolfe was overcome by smoke and was confined to his home.



## 1936 GMC-Hahn Pumper Purchased

The need for additional modern fire fighting apparatus was being felt within the fire company and a number of discussions on the subject were held over a period of several years. Various motions were made at meetings starting in 1930 to get the ball rolling on fulfilling these requirements. Various committees were appointed to ascertain the apparatus requirements and determine ways and means of financing such a purchase. Chief Williamson outlined specifications for a 500 gallon pumper at the May 1935 Department meeting. A committee report to the Borough was delivered on August 12, 1935 suggesting that the Council procure a new apparatus of the booster type which would be lighter in weight than the La France pumper, to be used on small fires in the Borough and on all rural fires where there were no water mains. In addition, it was pointed out that the Fire Department had pledged \$500 and the Ladies Auxiliary \$1,000 to be loaned to the Borough without interest. This proposition did not stimulate much interest in the Council since it involved raising the budget and possibly charging surrounding communities directly for fire service.

The Fire Department recognized the advantages of operating carnivals as fund raising affairs and the Firemen's Carnival was reinstated as it had not been held for a number of years and the Department treasury was sufficiently depleted that it was necessary to borrow money to make change.

The 1936 apparatus committee, consisting of G. N. Holcombe, Chairman; Harry Wolfe, Charles E. Williamson, C. A. Runyon, George Jones and George R. Carver, Jr. received the authority of the Fire Department to arrange the financing and purchase of a new fire apparatus. Bids were received and the committee selected an apparatus to be constructed by the Hahn Motor Company on a G.M.C. chassis. The chassis was purchased from George S. Clark for \$1,134. The balance of the equipment cost \$2,225 for a total of \$3,359. The new truck was delivered on New Year's Eve 1936. The Hahn Motor Company agreed to accept the Buick Chemical engine as a trade-in. A resolution was adopted on November 5, 1937 that the Fire Department present to the Borough of Hopewell the new fire truck which was fully paid for and unencumbered.

### Fire Department Moves To Present Quarters

The Columbia Hall Association contacted the Fire Department in July, 1939 to advise them of the plans for a new motion picture theatre to be constructed on the site of Columbia Hall, in which the fire-fighting equipment was housed. The Fire Department immediately appointed a committee to work out a solution for this housing problem with the Borough Council.

The Department vacated Columbia Hall by the end of the year with meetings being held in the local grammar school. Plans for remodeling the old Hopewell High School (the present municipal building) were initiated jointly by the Fire Department and the Borough Council. The Fire Company approved \$2,000 to be donated to the Borough for the renovations and the balance of the expense be reimbursed from 65% of the yearly carnival receipts until the bonds were retired. Funds totaling approximately \$4,500 from the 1940, 1941 and 1942 carnivals were turned over to the Borough. The total cost of the renovations was \$18,257. Carnivals were not held for a few years after 1942 due to World War II.

The first meeting in the new quarters was held on June 6, 1941. S. E. Copner was appointed chairman of a dedication committee. A parade and dedication ceremonies were held on June 21, 1941. Fifteen fire companies were invited and the company's first chief, Harry Wolfe, was the parade marshal.

### First Aid Training Initiated

President Dezzie Casey, Chief Clarence Runyon and Robert Van Doren were appointed as a committee to organize a First Aid Course in March, 1939. Nineteen members of the Department took this course which included a demonstration by the Public Service First Aid team. Mr. Albert P. Gulick was the instructor of the first class. He was elected an honorary member of the Department and presented with a watch in appreciation of his efforts.

The value of this course was soon apparent when the Department received the following letter from the American Red Cross concerning the actions of Francis Burke, a member of the Fire Company, after an automobile accident near Glen Gardner, N. J.:

September 15, 1939

Mr. C. A. Runyon, Chief  
Hopewell Fire Department  
Hopewell, N. J.

Dear Mr. Runyon:

*As Chairman of the Trenton Chapter, American Red Cross, I want to commend, on behalf of our entire Executive Board, your Department for the unusual and efficient first aid treatment rendered during the accident on State Highway 30 when Mr. Burke, in my opinion, saved the life of a victim of the accident.*

*The American Red Cross is proud to extend its commendation and trust that you will extend our sincere thoughts to your entire Fire Department.*

Sincerely,  
A. W. BOWERS  
Chairman

In February, 1941, a resolution was adopted amending the Constitution and By-Laws to provide for a First Aid Unit within the Fire Department. Francis Burke was named the first captain. The members continued to take the required courses over the next few years and were in attendance at fires to render service.



FIRE HOUSE AND MUNICIPAL BUILDING

### Junior Fire Corps Organized

Discussions were held on numerous occasions in 1942 and 1943 on the advisability of creating a Junior Fire Fighting Corps to relieve the man-power shortage and to encourage young men to join the Department. The Borough Council agreed to cover these young men with insurance in June, 1943 and a committee consisting of Chief Leslie Warman, George Voorhees, S. E. Copner and Ernest Adler was appointed to organize this Unit. The organization was completed and officers installed in October with Ernest Adler acting as instructor.

The success of this training was soon evident and the enthusiasm of these young men encouraged the Department to organize another class of sixteen Junior Firemen in July, 1945. This program has been continued over the years and has resulted in providing the community with a very dynamic Fire Department.

Mrs. Louis Smith of W. Broad Street requested that the Fire Department inspect her residence for hazards in July 1945 and as a result the Borough officially designated the fire-fighting officers as the Borough Fire Inspectors. This service has been provided to the citizens of Hopewell on numerous occasions since that time. The Department has also sponsored numerous fire prevention programs both locally and in connection with the County and State Fire Organizations. The most notable service has been provided in conjunction with our local Board of Education. This includes inspection of the school building, performance of fire drills, and cooperation in fire prevention education of the children.

Chief Copner reported a total of 24 alarms in 1945 of which 8 were house or building fires. An average of 21 firemen responded to each, including 7 junior firemen. Included were serious fires at the Eagle Bakery on Mercer Street and the Calvary Baptist Church on Broad Street.

### Hopewell Fire Department Band Sponsored

The Hopewell Fire Department sponsored a band for a period of time. A committee consisting of Herbert Wilson, Harry Hall and George R. Carver was appointed in May, 1947 to investigate the possibilities of organizing a band. It was agreed to hire Mr. Martin Meyer of Trenton to act as instructor. This band was outfitted with uniforms and participated in a number of parades with the local firemen, including the local Memorial Day parade. Their first concert was given on Christmas Eve, 1947. They went on to win second prize at the State Fair in October, 1948. The band agreed to continue operating under their own organization in July, 1950 and the Fire Department withdrew their sponsorship.

### Donates New Fire Truck Rockwell Manufacturing

During Chief Copners term of office as Fire Chief (1945-1946) he recommended that the Fire Department make plans with the Borough Council to jointly build up a sinking fund for the purchase of apparatus. The incoming Chief, George Voorhees, was named, with his fire fighting officers, as a committee to investigate apparatus needs. Councilman Fred Peterson and Fire Commissioner George Clark were appointed by the Borough to work with this committee. The committee recommended at the September, 1947 meeting, that a 750 gpm pumper be purchased. This was referred to the Borough Council. That body concurred with the recommendation and agreed to consider this item in the next municipal budget.

On the evening of the October, 1947 meeting, just prior to the opening of business, the Department responded to a minor fire at the Rockwell Mfg. Co. plant. Later that evening, they were joined at their meeting by several of the officials of the local Rockwell plant for fellowship.

At the end of the year, Chief Voorhees reported a total of 42 alarms for 1947 including 14 building fires with estimated losses at \$250,000. Included was a major fire at T. P. Reed & Son in Pennington, N. J.

At the February, 1948 meeting, it was announced Rockwell Mfg. Co. had purchased an American La France pumper to be given to the Borough for the Fire Department use. The Department was requested to send two men to Elmira, N. Y. for training. Ernest Adler and Raymond Dansberry were selected.

### Celebrate Housing of Engine

President Walter Benson appointed a general committee to handle the details of planning a celebration and the housing of the new apparatus. The members also voted that new uniforms should be purchased. These uniforms to be navy blue and gold with gold badges. The chiefs would have white leatherette hats and all members would be required to wear white gloves, black shoes and black socks when on parade or otherwise appearing as a group.

The parade celebrating the housing of the new apparatus was held on June 26, 1948. Officials of Rockwell Mfg. Co. were guests of honor and those present included: Col. W. F. Rockwell, Chairman of the Board; W. F. Rockwell, Jr., President; and H. S. Rockwell, General Manager of the Hopewell Division. W. F. Rockwell, Jr. was made an Honorary Fire Chief of the Hopewell Fire Department and was presented with a helmet in appreciation of his efforts on behalf of the entire community both for the apparatus, providing employment and performing many other acts to promote the welfare of the Borough. Mayor Kenneth Williamson, as the official host, accepted the apparatus for the Borough. A party sponsored by Rockwell was held in Princeton after the parade and presentation. There were approximately 1,300 people on foot in the line of march, plus 3 or 4 bands. At least 54 pieces of apparatus added much to the parade. Forty-nine fire companies were invited to attend. Trophies were given for the three best appearing companies and cash prizes were awarded to three bands.



PRESENTATION OF AMERICAN LA FRANCE PUMPER — JUNE 26, 1948 —  
W. F. Rockwell, Jr., president of Rockwell Manufacturing Co. and two oldest chiefs,  
Charles Williamson (seated) and Harry Wolfe are shown at the celebration.



AMBULANCE RESPONDS TO 100TH CALL  
ON APRIL 26, 1959

### Community Need Of Ambulance Service Considered

Although discussions had been held on numerous occasions as to the need to supply more complete first aid and rescue services to the community (in fact the Chairman of the first aid unit had been directed to investigate forming such a squad in April, 1948) the issue did not come to the foreground until July, 1950, when member John Cromwell spoke about the need of an ambulance in the Borough. After much discussion President Robert Van Doren appointed Dezzie Casey, John Cromwell and George Voorhees as a committee to investigate this need. The committee actively pursued their assignment and in October, D. L. Casey reported on First Aid Training Classes to begin that month with John V. Lawyer as the instructor. John Cromwell reported on ambulance specifications and George Voorhees reported on a meeting of 57 men and 5 women which was held at the Borough Hall and where a unanimous vote of confidence was offered. Carl Smith and Walter Taylor were added to the committee and it was agreed to investigate the financing and housing needs of the ambulance.

At the next meeting the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fire Department pledged \$1,500 and the Department agreed to apply \$3,000 toward an estimated \$8,000 cost of an ambulance. The Fire Department contacted the Borough Council and offered to donate a 1951 Cadillac Ambulance but after due consideration, the Borough refused to accept this offer because of the additional burden that the taxpayers would have to assume. The Department then instructed the committee to proceed with the purchase of the ambulance and a committee composed of the Board of Trustees, Ernest Adler and Frank Guiseppi was instructed to investigate the cost of an addition to the present fire house.

The First Aid Rescue Squad secured the Department's approval to elect their own officers in April, 1951 and Dezzie Casey was designated temporary Captain. The unit was named the "Hopewell Fire Department Ambulance Corps". President Walter Taylor appointed a committee to revise the constitution and by-laws of the Fire Department to cover this new organization.

A 1951 Cadillac ambulance with a Miller body was delivered and placed in service in April, 1951 with John Cromwell reporting the first call at the May meeting. The cost of the ambulance was met largely by donations from the public amounting to a total of over \$8,600.

The building committee secured approval of the plans for erecting an addition to the municipal building and work began in October, 1951. Frank Guiseppi reported that members were donating most of the labor but that material would be purchased by the Fire Department. However, the Ladies Auxiliary donated funds to cover the cost of the terrazzo floor. The building was completed during the winter of 1952-53.



FORD PUMPER IN ACTION AT BROOKSIDE  
INN FIRE — OCTOBER 12, 1955

### Two-Way Radios Purchased For Apparatus

Chief George Voorhees brought up the subject of two-way radios for the apparatus during the October, 1948 meeting. President Walter Benson appointed the fire-fighting officers as a committee to investigate. The Chief reported at the next meeting that the cost of outfitting the apparatus and the fire house would be approximately \$1,400. No further action was taken until March, 1950 when it was acknowledged that such equipment would have been helpful at a recent fire in Hopewell Township. Chief Ernest Adler and Assistant Chiefs, Reynold Dansberry, Ralph M. Lanning and Robert A. Van Doren were directed to inquire into the purchase of two-way radios. A proposal from RCA for installation of mobile communications equipment at a cost of \$2,250 was received at the June, 1950 meeting. Action to have this equipment installed was taken shortly thereafter. The installation was completed and accepted by the Department in February, 1951. Since that time other radio equipment has been procured and installed as additional apparatus has been secured until at the present time all the Fire Apparatus and the Ambulance are radio equipped. Much credit for providing engineering and maintenance services over the years must be given to former members Edward L. Cluff and Max Laird. William Kintner is presently in charge of the radio committee.

### 1953 Ford-American La France Fire Truck Purchased

Chief Reynold Dansberry reported to the Fire Department in June, 1952 that the fire fighting officers were discussing the need for a new fire apparatus. Specifications were prepared and prices secured for a 500 gpm pumper with a 500 gallon water tank. The Department met with the Borough Council to discuss financing problems and at the October, 1952 meeting the Fire Department agreed to pay the difference between the purchase price and the funds that the Borough had available at the time of delivery. The council ordered a Ford chassis with an American La France pump and body that same month.

The problem of paying for the new engine was particularly critical since new N. J. State gambling laws caused the Department to vote against holding a carnival in 1953. Past carnivals had been successful fund raising activities ever since they had been revived after World War II. Dezzie Casey and Samuel Hunt were appointed to form a fund raising committee. Close to \$8,000 was obtained in this drive. Mr. Herbert Rockwell of the Rockwell Mfg. Co., Hopewell Division, contributed \$4,500 and was made an honorary Chief of the Hopewell Fire Department in April, 1954. He was presented with a badge and cap "to show our gratitude for his most generous help in making our Department the best equipped and best manned Fire Department in this area". The new engine was delivered in October, 1953.



### **Rockwell Fire Brigade Formed**

The Hopewell Fire Department voted to dispose of the old truck and the American La France was sold to the Rockwell Mfg. Co. for the price of \$1.00. This apparatus was activated and a Fire Brigade was organized in that plant. Due to the fine cooperation between this industrial fire fighting group and the Borough forces, the community has benefited from this additional protection on several occasions. The Rockwell Fire Brigade has assured the Fire Department they are ready to assist in any emergency.

### **Fire Department Responds To Storm Emergencies**

The local volunteers have responded to all types of emergencies over the years but the best remembered non-fire calls for service occurred during the past six or eight years. Hurricane Diane struck the middle Atlantic states in August, 1955 and general flooding conditions resulted particularly along the Delaware River.

The Mercer County Civil Defense and Disaster Control Coordinator declared that a state of disaster existed in Mercer County. Hopewell was notified and the Local C.D. Director, Walter Benson, requested that the local Fire Department respond. During the period from noon, August 19 to 4 A.M., August 22, the Control Center at the Fire House was manned for a total of 55 hours. Men under the direction of Chief Carl Smith, served as auxiliary police and performed services such as pumping out the municipal buildings in the City of Trenton, cleaning mud and debris from roads and furnishing floodlights on the river (watching for bodies from flooded communities and summer camps up-river) at Titusville. In addition they furnished lighting equipment and a crew to Yardley, Pa. so salvage workers could continue work. During this emergency period a fire alarm was answered at the Fred Burd farm near Pennington.

A total of 600 man hours was worked by volunteers during this period and about 40 men submitted to inoculations as a protection against Typhoid Fever.

A similar period occurred during March, 1958 when 15 to 18 inches of snow fell on the area causing roads to be blocked and phone and power lines to be broken. The Fire Department was alerted and performed services in conjunction with the local Civil Defense organization for a 48 hour period. At least 25 men were available at all times under the direction of C. D. Director Ralph Lanning and Fire Chief Mahlon Riley. They responded to 39 calls for assistance during this period including furnishing emergency power from 3 portable generators, to evacuating families with the fire truck and billeting them in emergency housing provided at the Hopewell Elementary School. The P. T. A. and the Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary provided hot coffee and food. During this period the firemen responded to a disastrous fire at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Peterson at the Glen Moore Farm. The fire siren was inoperative due to the power failure and a unique system of chain phone calls made it possible for the apparatus to respond within minutes.

### **New Ambulance And Fire Apparatus Considered**

Early in 1958, the members discussed the need for an equipment replacement program. A committee consisting of the Chiefs, the Ambulance Director, Fire Captain Ralph Lanning and Carl Smith were directed to look into this need. It was agreed that the ambulance and the 1936 GMC fire truck should be replaced during the next few years at a total estimated cost of \$38,000.

Once again funds presented a problem and a drive for funds was started in early 1959 under the direction of Chairman Jack Hall. This drive was completed early in 1960 with donations totaling \$8,825.

The Fire Department approved the purchase of a new ambulance on a Pontiac chassis with a Superior Body from the Wolfington Body Co., Philadelphia at a cost of \$9,350 in June, 1960. The new ambulance was received in August, 1960. The 1951 Cadillac ambulance was sold to a new rescue squad being formed in Kendall Park, N. J. at a price of \$1,500.

After much discussion concerning the features and costs of various fire apparatus, the fire fighting officers under Chief Alvin Cranstoun were directed to purchase a Mack 750 gpm pumper in September, 1960. It was estimated that approximately \$28,000 was required to cover the cost of the truck, hose and other equipment. The 1936 GMC Truck was sold to the Castoro Co. for \$250.

Various plans were initiated to secure the balance of funds required to purchase this equipment. A Bingo committee headed by Asst. Chief Ray Van Arsdale instituted weekly Bingo in the fire house on Saturday, February 11, 1961. These affairs are continuing at present. As a fringe benefit from this activity the engine room has been renovated by the Firemen and the Ladies Auxiliary. Bingo equipment and a central air conditioner for the municipal building have also been acquired.

Asst. Chief Richard Van Doren headed a committee to prepare this Anniversary Program. The profits from donations and advertisements are being used to defray the cost of the equipment. Donations of \$1,000 each were contributed by the Western Electric Research Center and the Rockwell Mfg. Co. and a donation of \$500 was received from the Hopewell Branch of the Princeton Bank and Trust Co. Other donations totaling approximately \$3,500 were received from businessmen and our other friends.

### **Public Support and Volunteer Service Is Essential to the Fire Department**

A review of the history of the Fire Department illustrates that the excellent public service provided by this organization over the years has only been possible due to the generous public support and the performance of service by our volunteers. We pledge ourselves to continue and improve this service as our community grows and as our way of life brings new requirements. We will continue to improve the training of our active personnel and will endeavor to maintain our equipment so that most emergencies can be answered. We ask that you, the public continue your understanding and support of our organization.

*The committee responsible for preparing this program would like to give particular credit to the following people for their contributors: Walter Benson, Charles Williamson, Russell Holcomb, Mahlon Riley, Mildred Ratbousky, Kenneth Williamson, Florence Bodine, Barbara Jefferson, Leroy Sharpe, George Rightmire, Jack Weart, Arthur Wright, Richard Edling, Edgar Smith, and Mr. Magill of Western Electric. We also appreciate the efforts of all the solicitors from the Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary and the Ambulance Corps who contacted our advertisers.*

# Ladies Auxiliary of the Hopewell Fire Department

1911-1961

By BARBARA JEFFERSON

Organized in 1911, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Hopewell Fire Department is also celebrating its "Golden Anniversary". With an original membership of 20, and with the object in view of helping the fire department raise funds, the founders of the Auxiliary started a tradition of service to the Fire Department, and the community as a whole, that still guides the present membership.

With a novelty booth; the sale of "Hopewell Dainties", (a fine grade of candy then made in Hopewell); and a chicken supper, a profit of \$335.85 was realized by the ladies from their first firemen's carnival.

Through the years, carnivals and dinners have been the chief sources of income for the organization. However, nothing was too small if it helped the cause to which the Auxiliary was dedicated; and blanket clubs, demonstrations following meetings, cake sales, traveling baskets, card parties, refreshments at weekly Bingo, and giving freely of opinions, at a dollar a head to the *Mirror of America*, as well as the sale of rugs, flags, magazine subscriptions and homemade soup helped to fill the always dwindling treasury.

As anyone who has worked on such projects can verify, it takes many willing workers and able leaders to accomplish such goals. The Ladies Auxiliary has been fortunate in this. Thus have they been able to contribute financially and in service to other civic activities, both local and national, too numerous to list.

Notable, perhaps, during World War II, were the projects of filling soldiers boxes for the Red Cross; raising hundreds of dollars for the U. S. O.; and sending Christmas boxes to all Hopewell boys in service.

When the war was over, the balance in the Soldiers Fund was turned over to Hopewell Valley American Legion Post 339 for their building fund. During the Korean War, many members donated blood to help our servicemen.

Serving Election Day Lunch and Dinner was started in 1944 as a money-making project and has since become so popular and well-known that it is now an annual affair. In the same way, the semi-annual Baked Ham Dinners have become part of the calendar.

Of course, aiding the Fire Department is the primary purpose of our existence. The members of the Auxiliary are proud to have been able to help financially by contributing many thousands of dollars, over the years, towards the purchase of new equipment — from an electric fire siren for the Borough in 1921 to the new engine in 1961, the list includes such things as rubber raincoats, a sign for the fire house, installation of a terrazzo floor and an overhead door for the ambulance room, banners and flags, as well as contributions towards new engines and ambulances.

But money isn't everything, they say; so we have helped by serving sandwiches and coffee to our hard working men (and

other fire companies too) during, or after big fires, such as the Kaufman Fire in 1953, the Vannoy fire in 1957 and the Rosenthal fire in 1959; helping with refreshments for local parades and other occasions; and soliciting. We have tried to be available to help, encourage, or boost morale, when needed.

A big day in our history came in June 26, 1948 — with the Dedication of the new fire truck which was donated by the Rockwell Mfg. Co. The women prepared sandwiches and other food for close to 1,500 participants.

Meetings have been held at members homes, in the beginning; at the Fire Department building on Seminary Avenue (now an apartment house) and Columbia Hall, as well as in the present fire house.

Active membership has increased from the original 20 to 199 at present—each one, a wife, mother, daughter or sister of a member of the H.F.D. Several of the charter members are still with us, on our Honor Roll of 20.

In 1950, it was decided a Junior Auxiliary was in order. These 17 young people quickly caught the spirit. They helped serve at our many dinners — and washed dishes. They operated a Fish Pond for the children at the carnival, and held bake sales to raise money. In 1953, it was decided that the Juniors should meet with the regular Auxiliary and become a part of its projects. The \$123 balance in their account was turned over to a local family in need, due to illness.

But it isn't all work. Life in the Auxiliary can be fun; as witness the annual Christmas Party, which draws almost 100 members, when spoofs on T.V. programs, skits (or perhaps "sketches" is a better word), and the singing of Christmas carols take over; family outings, with more than enough prizes for each child, parades, when we can march in the heat and look proudly at the neat picture the Hopewell Firemen make (though some aren't as young as they once were—and some are younger than most of us we remember too well); social hours after meetings, like a White Elephant Sale or Easter Hat Parade (all made by hand from who knows what); and a Memorial Day float which takes weeks to prepare and only hours to show; but mainly, perhaps, just the feeling of really belonging to something worthwhile and useful.

As fifty years draws to a close, members of the Ladies Auxiliary feel they are justified in looking back with pride. But, as all good working arrangements — it is part give, part take, and we must give credit where it is due. Without the help of many willing firemen to put up, take down, transport and then spend freely, and without the citizens of a town like Hopewell, who contribute in so many ways —and also spend when we sell, some of our projects might never have been started or at least not so successful. And without their appreciation for the work done by the Fire Department and Auxiliary, we might well become discouraged. Therefore, we would like to thank all — our firemen — our friends and neighbors — and our members for their support; and hope our next 50 years are as full as our past.

## PRESENT OFFICERS — LADIES AUXILIARY



Marilyn Bregenzer, *Treasurer*; Dot Fish, *President*; Jetta Hall, *Vice-President*; Claire Hall, *Secretary*.

### *Past Presidents of the Ladies Auxiliary*

1911-12—Mrs. L. F. Blackwell	1940 —Mrs. George Carver	1950-51—Mrs. Carl Wilson
1913 —Mrs. M. Ege	1941-42—Mrs. Harry Hall	1952 —Mrs. Ralph Lanning
1914 —Mrs. T. A. Pierson, Sr.	1943 —Mrs. Clara Righter	1953-54—Mrs. Mahlon Riley
1915 —Mrs. George Van Nest	1944-45—Mrs. Harry Hall	1955-56—Mrs. Alvin Cranstoun
1916-19—Mrs. F. M. Leigh	1946 —Mrs. Charles Davis	1959-60—Mrs. Robert Palmer
1920-21—Mrs. Howard Larason	1947 —Mrs. Clarence Runyon, Jr.	1959-60—Mrs. Robert Jefferson
1922-37—Mrs. C. E. Williamson	1948 —Mrs. George Carver	
1938-39—Mrs. Howard Larason	1949 —Mrs. Harry Hall	

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TO OUR FIREMEN

ON

THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**Ladies Auxiliary**

OF THE

**Hopewell Fire Department**

# PRESENT FIRE DEPARTMENT LEADERS



President Theodore Sinclair



Asst. Chief Raymond Van Arsdale  
and Chief John Hall



Seated (l. to r.): James Boughner, Theodore Sinclair, Carl Smith. Standing (l. to r.): Ralph Lanning, Rev. Curtis Hoffman, Edgar Smith, William Kintner.

## Administrative Officers

- President* — Theodore Sinclair  
*1st Vice-Pres.* — Rev. Curtis Hoffman  
*2nd Vice-Pres.* — Carl Smith  
*Secretary* — James Boughner  
*Treasurer* — Edgar Smith  
*Chaplain* — Rev. Curtis Hoffman  
*Trustees* — Ralph Lanning  
                   Mahlon Riley  
                   Edward Carver

## Fire Fighting Officers

- Chief* — John Hall  
*1st Asst. Chief* — Raymond Van Arsdale  
*2nd Asst. Chief* — Richard Van Doren  
*3rd Asst. Chief* — Albert Rathousky  
*Foremen* — James Wood  
                   Robert Caivano  
                   William Kintner



Richard Van Doren, Mayor Ernest Adler, Fire Commissioner Ralph Lanning, Robert Caivano, Albert Rathousky, John Hall.

## AMBULANCE CORPS OFFICERS



Director Mary Everitt



Captain Leroy Sharpe



Patricia Leigh, Secretary; Leroy Sharpe, Captain; James Boughner; Dorothy Fish, and Sally Spurtle, Lieutenants.

### Past Officers of The Ambulance Corps

1951-1953

Director: Dezzie Casey  
Captain: John Cromwell

1954

Director: John Cromwell  
Captain: Mark Palmatier

1955-1956

Director: Mark Palmatier  
Captain: Robert Jefferson

1957-1958

Director: Robert Jefferson  
Captain: Edgar Smith

1959-1960

Director: Edgar Smith  
Captain: Mary Everitt

## AMBULANCE CORPS HAS SERVED FOR TEN YEARS, 1951-1961



by EDGAR SMITH

The Ambulance Corps was organized in 1951 by the Fire Dept. and it responded to its first call for services in April of that year. The Ambulance Corps is financed and operated by the Fire Dept. as a specialized group within the department. Members of the Ambulance Corps must be members of the Fire Dept. or the Ladies Auxiliary who have successfully completed the requirements of the National Red Cross advanced first aid training plus further training in the use of ambulance equipment. In addition registered nurses and medical doctors are eligible. The Corps now has a membership of 24 active members and 23 Reserve members plus 11 Nurses. There are 8 instructors.

The first ambulance was purchased in 1951. This was a Miller body on a Cadillac chassis. This ambulance was driven 34,344 miles and was sold to a new ambulance squad in Kendall Park in August 1960 at which time delivery was taken of the present ambulance. The present ambulance is a Superior body on a Pontiac chassis and incorporates all the latest improvements in ambulance design. Both the original and the new ambulance have facilities for carrying three persons lying down.

Since it was organized, the Ambulance Corps has responded to 1,295 calls for service which include accidents, emergency illness, maternity, transportation of the ill and infirmed, response to major fire alarms, practice drills with neighboring ambulance squads and drills with the fire fighting personnel and equipment. Approximately 5,500 man-hours of time has been expended in these services and this does not include the many hours spent in training, maintenance and cleaning of equipment and organizational work.

In responding to an emergency call, the first order of importance is to arrive at the scene quickly without endangering the lives of other people or the ambulance crew. This means that the individual members called must drop whatever they are doing and rush to the Fire House. After arriving at the scene, the crew will take a slower pace, if there is no urgency, or will apply first aid as rapidly as possible when speed is needed. The ambulance is equipped with tourniquets, bandages, splints, a combination oxygen resuscitator, inhalator and aspirator, a second oxygen inhalator, extra oxygen tanks, blankets, sheets, pillows,

cot, two stretchers and many small items for the comfort of the ill and injured. The ambulance is also equipped with rescue equipment including a hydraulic power tool for prying objects apart, crow bars, fire axe, small fire extinguisher and heavy rope. Red flares and reflectors are carried for use on highways and two-way radio is used for communication with the Fire House, fire apparatus and with other ambulances and fire apparatus from neighboring communities. Heavy coats and boots are carried for the protection of crew in bad weather.

With auto accidents being more frequent than any other single type of accident, the Ambulance Corps has practiced the removal of victims from actual wrecked automobiles both in daylight and in darkness. Other practice sessions, such as for handling patients without causing pain or injury, are frequently held. Lecture for the proper care of emergency maternity cases and lectures on the care of victims subjected to radiation are attended by members.

A description of the activities of the Ambulance Corps would not be complete without a word or two about disruptions. In the night, most members are where they should be, in bed. Therefore the only disruption is the individual's sleep. In the daytime however, a clerk in a store suddenly dashes out leaving a good customer standing there — a production worker drops his tools and vanishes — an office worker leaps for the door leaving a trail of unfinished reports. The employers in this community permit such unscheduled disruptions in their operations without penalties to the employees. By this generous policy, the employers have earned the gratitude of the Hopewell Fire Dept. Ambulance Corps and also of the entire community.

The principal officers and the years in which they served are as follows:

1951-1953	1955-1956
Director: Dezzie Casey	Director: Mark Palmatier
Captain: John Cromwell	Captain: Robt. Jefferson
1954	1957-1958
Director: John Cromwell	Director: Robt. Jefferson
Captain: Mark Palmatier	Captain: Ned Smith
1959-1960	
Director: Ned Smith	
Captain: Mary Everitt	

## Police Work Closely With Fire Department

### *Hopewell Fire Police . . .*



(l. to r.): George Spencer, George Rightmire, Warren Lewis, Captain Charles Ralph, Lieutenant Robert Lewis. Absent were Lieutenant Robert Fisher, Al Casini, Ben Quinn.

### *Borough Police Department*



(l. to r.): Robert Lewis, Frank Guiseppi, Chief Thomas Fillebrown, and Joseph Rieszer.

---

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Superior-Pontiac Ambulance



Ford-La France 500 gpm Pumper

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PENNINGTON FIRE COMPANY, Pennington, New Jersey  
PENNINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SQUAD, Pennington,  
New Jersey

PROSPECT HEIGHTS FIRE COMPANY, Ewing Township,  
Trenton, New Jersey  
DE COU HOSE COMPANY, Trenton, New Jersey  
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP FIRE CO. NO. 2,  
Blawenburg, New Jersey  
LAWRENCE ROAD FIRE COMPANY, Trenton, New Jersey  
TRENTON EMERGENCY AND RESCUE SQUAD,  
Trenton, New Jersey

## DIVISION 2

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ROCKY HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT, Rocky Hill, New Jersey  
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CRANBURY FIRE DEPARTMENT, Cranbury, New Jersey  
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STOCKTON FIRE DEPARTMENT, Stockton, New Jersey

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New Jersey  
GLENDDOLA FIRE CO. NO. 1, Belmar, New Jersey  
HOPE HOSE COMPANY, Allentown, New Jersey  
MIDWAY FIRE COMPANY, Lahaska, Pennsylvania  
SOMERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT, Somerville, New Jersey

## DIVISION 6

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WHITE HORSE FIRE COMPANY, White Horse, New Jersey  
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# 50th Anniversary Celebration Committees



Seated (l. to r.) Richard Van Doren, John Hall, Dot Fish, Tom Fillebrown, Jetta Hall; Standing, John Cromwell Charles Ralph, John Wolfkeil, Raymond Van Arsdale, William Kintner, Rev. Curtis Hoffman.

*Chairman:* John Hall

*Co-Chairmen:* Raymond Van Arsdale, Richard Van Doren

## *General Sub-Committee*

Ernest Adler	Ralph Lanning
James Boughner	Mahlon Riley
Alvin Cranstoun	Carl Smith
Reynold Dansberry	George Voorhees

## *Communications Committee*

William Kintner	Leroy Sharpe
Bruce Van Sant	

## *Anniversary Program and Funds*

Richard Van Doren, Curtis Hoffman, John Wolfkeil  
*Team Captains — Advertisements:* Dezzie Casey, Charles Ralph, Ruth Carver, John Cromwell, Leroy Sharpe.

## *Decorations and Stands Construction*

Richard Hall	Edward Carver
George Drake	Harry Hall
George Voorhees	Thomas Cooper

## *Refreshments*

Raymond Van Arsdale	Dorothy Fish
Clarence Laird	Jeannette Hall
James Hall	Ruth Carver
Jetta Hall	

## *Parking*

Charles Ralph	Robert Fisher
Albert Rathousky	James Brizell
Warren Lewis	George Spencer

## *Line of March and Traffic Control*

Thomas Fillebrown	Frank Guiseppi
Joseph Rieszer	Robert Lewis

The committee expresses their thanks to the citizens, businessmen and parade participants for their cooperation in this celebration. Particular thanks are also given to the Mayor, Borough Council, Borough Police, N. J. State Police, Hopewell Township Police, Pennington Fire Dept., Hopewell Board of Education, Borough P.T.A., Master of Ceremonies — Jack Pinto, Judges, Dignitaries, and Ladies Auxiliary, and Mr. Frederick R. Wierdsma for their assistance.



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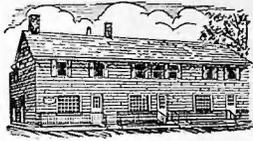
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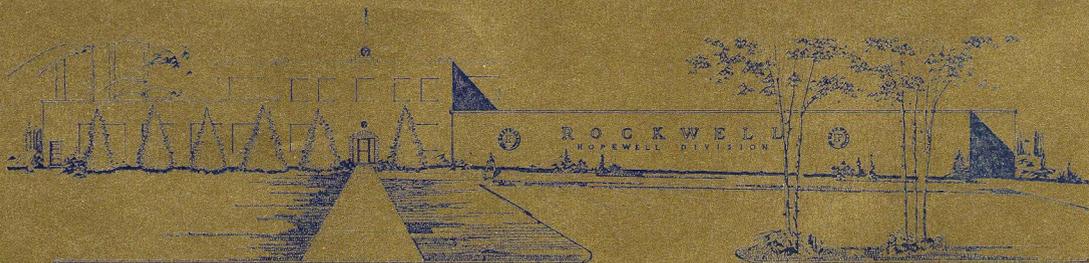
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