

THE LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT: A HISTORY



AL PEOPLES
LARRY PEOPLES
2012

ABOUT THIS DIGITAL EDITION

This digital edition was created in April 2026 by Mike Legeros from source files provided by the authors. Some changes were made to the original content, including:

- Some apparatus photos were replaced with higher-quality digital versions photographed by Lee Wilson and with similar poses.
- The factory photo of the 2012 Pierce Impel pumper was replaced with a higher-quality digital version.
- Some formatting was changed to improve readability, including heading spacing, page caption text justification, tables created for tabular information, and addition spacing between some list items.
- Photo pages are portrait-oriented, instead of landscape-oriented as in the printed edition.
- Page numbering is different than the printed edition.
- An addendum was added at the end, created by Mike Legeros, with new content included photos of apparatus purchased after 2012 and new research notes on the early history of the Louisburg Fire Department.

**THE
LOUISBURG
FIRE DEPARTMENT:
A HISTORY**

1906 – 2012

106 YEARS

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LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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The Louisburg Fire Department:
A History

Front Cover Photo:

“Maude”

Louisburg’s first fire engine, a 1921 American LaFrance
Photo by Larry Peoples

Back Cover Photo:

Louisburg Fire Department Logo
Designed by Ray Hodges

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all of the members of the Louisburg Fire Department, past and present, who have served and are serving this community. For the past one-hundred plus years, these men have labored, under some of the worst and most trying conditions, to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Louisburg. Although there have been a few broken bones, cuts, scratches, and an occasional fender-bender, this department has been graciously blessed in that no member has ever perished in the line of duty. We can only hope that this trend continues for another one-hundred years. We all thank the past generations for their service, support the current generation, and encourage future generations to volunteer their services as these men have.

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PREFACE

Now, the question is: Why did we decide to write this book? The idea began when Al wrote an article relating to the Louisburg Fire Department for the *Franklin County Heritage Book* in 2011. After finishing the article, we talked about the possibility of writing a book on the history of the fire department. We already had a start with the article, as brief as it was, but it was a starting point. We talked about Al writing the book, Larry compiling the pictures, and both doing the research. The pictures were available in the department archives, in various sizes, shapes, and condition. Larry, a whiz on the camera, decided that he could reproduce the pictures on his digital camera and resize and edit them for the book. As time went by, our “good idea” got lost in the shuffle. In January 2012, we talked about it again and decided that now was the time. So, here it is.

We have attempted to tell the history of the Louisburg Fire Department through the use of text and pictures. Neither of us are writers, but as some wise old sage (Al) once said, “It’s not how you say it, it’s what you say.” We might not spell all of the words correctly, and we might not use proper grammar, but we are going to tell you all about the Louisburg Fire Department, to the best of our abilities. We used the department’s archives of records and pictures, the Minutes of the Louisburg Fire Department meetings, Minutes of the Louisburg Town Council meetings, information from web sites, and articles from newspaper archives. In addition, we interviewed as many retired firemen and local citizens as possible. In addition, there are anecdotal stories relating to some of the earlier members of the department.

It is our hope that this book will not only be interesting to read, but also informative. We also hope that the reader will

learn about the history of the Louisburg Fire Department, as well as its growth and modernization.

Some of the larger fires that occurred in Louisburg throughout the years are mentioned. Obviously, all of the thousands of alarms responded to could not be listed, but some of the more notable ones, especially those resulting in large monetary losses, are described.

As a matter of respect for the families of those who may have lost a loved one in a fire, there are no mention of fires that resulted in the loss of life.

Al Peoples
Larry Peoples
July 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, and foremost, thanks go to the Town of Louisburg. Without the support of the mayors, council members, and town managers, administratively and financially, this fire department would not exist and would not have achieved the level of success and recognition that it now enjoys. The town's continued support throughout the years has shown a high level of commitment to the citizens of Louisburg, as well as to the firemen who have served these citizens. The Town of Louisburg's support is an absolute requirement for the continued success and growth of the department. If past history is used as an indicator of future actions, the Louisburg Fire Department should have a bright future.

Secondly, all of the past fire chiefs and officers who have served must be recognized and thanked for their efforts in leading the department. In addition to the administration of the department, these officers recruited, trained, and supported the volunteers. They also fought many fires, side-by-side, with the volunteers.

Thirdly, there are the men who have volunteered their time and effort to train, fight fires, and promote fire safety. Without these men, there would not be a Louisburg Fire Department.

And fourth, but certainly not least, are the wives, girl friends, and parents of these men. Their encouragement and support is invaluable. Although this encouragement and support is not always readily apparent, we all have the satisfaction of knowing that it is there.

It is also important to thank the people who helped provide information and support for this book. Carolyn Patterson, Town Clerk, was most helpful in locating and providing copies of the Minutes of the Town of Louisburg Town Council

Meetings. These minutes were an invaluable source for the early history of the department. Louisburg Fire Department Lieutenant Ramey Seal helped by providing the department's archives, including Minutes of the Louisburg Fire Department Meetings, rosters, and pictures. Louisburg Fireman L. S. Ward, Jr. assisted by providing research in the microfilm archives of newspapers in the Franklin County Library. And last but not least, Amanda Peoples provided invaluable assistance with the cover design

INTRODUCTION

What do a human being and the Louisburg Fire Department have in common? If you think about it, both have similar life cycles. They are both born, one from a biological stand point and the other from an organizational standpoint. They both have parents. The fire department has a parent—the Town of Louisburg.

At infancy, the child and the fire department are both nurtured by parents, relatives, and friends. The fire department's parent is the Town of Louisburg, its relatives are the members of the department, and the friends are the citizens of Louisburg, who support the department.

The child grows older, going through the trials and tribulations of learning to crawl, walk, and talk. Similarly, the fire department must reach organizational stability, acquire equipment and apparatus, and recruit and train firemen. They both experience growing pains and rely on family and friends for comfort and support.

Next come the teen years. Just as the child has grown and developed, the fire department has outgrown some of its equipment, and there are additional firemen requiring more equipment. Soon, they have both completed those fickle teen years and have become young adults.

There will still be a few growing pains and some valuable lessons to be learned, but this young adult and the fire department have reached a stage of maturity and stability in life. Yes, there will be new equipment and apparatus, new technology, new tactics, and yes, even new firemen through the years. This is what the department relies on for sustenance.

Soon, they both reach old age. Here is where the big differences begin. The human will eventually grow older and die. The fire department will not die, but continue to survive throughout the ages. But the Louisburg Fire Department will always need its parents, relatives, and friends for support, in order to continue to serve in the best possible manner.

This book will attempt to trace the life of the Louisburg Fire Department from its birth and formative years, through its teens and young adulthood, and to its maturity. This history will show that the fire department was “fed, clothed, educated, and raised” to the best of its family’s ability. It was a job well done!

ABOUT THE LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Louisburg Fire Department serves all residential, institutional, and commercial properties located within the Central Fire District of Franklin County, which includes Louisburg. The department provides fire protection for an area of approximately 75 square miles. The current Louisburg Fire Department is a combination department, consisting of a staff of five full-time paid personnel, five part-time paid personnel and 35 volunteers (“Fire Department”).

The full-time engineers drive and operate the fire apparatus, and the volunteers are the primary firefighters. These firefighters must attend monthly administrative and training activities, attain state-sanctioned certifications, and must respond to a minimum percentage of all fire alarms in order to maintain membership.

This paid/volunteer department maintains a North Carolina Department of Insurance fire protection rating of “4,” which is one of the best ratings that a town the size of Louisburg can achieve. The out-of-town (areas not served by fire hydrants) rating is a “9/S,” which is average for a rural department or a municipal department serving a rural area (“Fire Department”).

Most small municipal and rural departments are completely volunteer departments. Louisburg’s paid/volunteer system reflects the commitment of the Town of Louisburg to fund this important public safety service that provides Louisburg’s citizens with immediate response to threats to their property by fire and other natural disasters.

ORIGINS OF FIREFIGHTING

Before the story of the Louisburg Fire Department begins, the origins of firefighting will be discussed. This will give the reader some idea of how firefighting has evolved over time, leading up to the story of the Louisburg Fire Department's history.

Since prehistoric man discovered fire and its many benefits, fire has caused problems, including the loss of life and property. Thousands of years after the discovery of fire, early man stopped roaming the wilds in search of food. He became more settled, raising food crops in addition to hunting. Many thousands of years passed, and the first settlements appeared. The first settlements were family units, growing eventually into extended families, and ultimately to entire tribes. This trend led to the development of villages and ultimately to the growth of towns and cities.

These early people first lived in shelters made of skins or dried grasses, which were stretched over wooden frames. Cooking fires were outside, making fire damage unlikely. However, once these early people started building permanent structures, it was a natural evolution for them to bring fire into the dwelling, not only for cooking food but also for light and warmth.

It was obvious by now that fire in a dwelling was creating the potential risk of disaster. But, survival required taking these risks as a part of the advancement of civilization. Life for these people was far more comfortable than for their predecessors, and thus, risks were to be taken in order to continue this advancement. However, after many lives were lost, as well as possessions and homes, it was necessary for some form of fire suppression to be developed.

An early form of fire suppression was used, to an unknown extent, in the second century BC by the early Egyptians. Ctesibus built a basic hand pump that could produce a broken stream of water. However, the idea was lost until the fire pump was reinvented in about AD 1500 (“History of Fire Fighting”). This is the earliest known record of firefighting or of a fire company.

Several centuries later, after being nearly destroyed by uncontrollable fires, Rome developed a fire service during the first century AD. This “fire department” consisted of approximately 7000 “firemen,” many of whom may have been slaves, although evidence of this has not been found. They relied on using bucket brigades as the main tool, but also used axes, poles, and hooks, often tearing down buildings in advance of the flames—a “back fire” of sorts. These firemen, also called “vigils,” patrolled the streets watching for fires and possessed police authority (“History of Firefighting”).

Now that the formation of the world’s first firefighting efforts has been described it is time to “fast-forward” to the origins of firefighting in the United States. The first recorded structure fire in the colonies came in 1608. On January 7th of that year, barely a year after its formation, Jamestown suffered a major fire that leveled most of the settlement (“History of Fire Fighting”). This disaster almost caused the collapse of the first settlement in the New World.

In 1653, Boston had a catastrophic fire, which created the necessity of a local ordinance requiring that all homes have at least one ladder. Evidently, this was required for escape from a burning dwelling. This fire also led to the public’s purchase of fire equipment, particularly leather buckets (Legeros). In Colonial America, many towns had laws that required residents to purchase fire buckets and keep them in good

repair. Most residents had more than one bucket with their names painted on them so that they could be retrieved after the bucket brigade's job ended ("History of Fire Fighting").

Boston purchased a state of the art fire engine in 1676. This "engine," purchased in England, was most likely a wagon with a hand operated pump mounted on it. It was pulled by the men of the department, as the first use of horses for pulling the fire apparatus did not come about until 1832 in New York City. The first steam-powered pumpers did not arrive on the scene until the early 1800s (Legeros).

The first fire engine company was formed in Boston in 1678. This is credited as being the first full-time fire department in the country (Legeros).

The first volunteer fire department in the United States was formed in Pennsylvania in 1736 by Ben Franklin. Coincidentally, Franklin is also credited with starting the first fire insurance company in America ("History of Fire Fighting").

Fire insurance companies would often provide "fire markers" to go in front of all insured residences and businesses to let the firefighters know which were insured and which were not. This led to problems, as many non-insured properties, which were located adjacent to properties which were insured, were lost. Some insurance companies paid incentives for the fire departments' work, which benefitted the insurance company ("History of Fire Fighting").

Horse-drawn engines were used throughout the country for a number of years. The steam powered pumpers replaced human-powered machines in the mid 1800s. However, the horse was still used to transport the engine to the scene. In 1910, the first gasoline-powered engines that used the engine to power the truck and the pump were put into use. February

6, 1923 marked the retirement of the last response of a horse-drawn apparatus in Chicago. Chicago became the first large city in the country to become completely motorized (“History of Fire Fighting”).

Louisburg was not far behind with the acquisition of fire fighting apparatus. Louisburg purchased its first gasoline-powered engine in August 1921, although it did not arrive and go into service until December 1921. This was the beginning of a new era of firefighting in Louisburg and the end of the fire house horse, wagon, and hose reel.

This discussion of the origins of firefighting gives an idea of what transpired, not only in this country but around the world, leading up to the formation and growth of the Louisburg Fire Department.

IN THE BEGINNING

The most frequently-asked question is: “When was the Louisburg Fire Department created?” The department archives state that it was formed in the late, to very late, 1800s. However, the source and accuracy of this information is unverifiable and questionable. The first factual information comes from the Minutes of the Louisburg Town Council, which date back to January 1906. (Note: Minutes of earlier town council meetings were lost in a fire at an unknown date and location.) The January 2, 1906 minutes read as follows: “Moved & 2nd that Wm Baily (Chief) be instructed to purchase Fire Wagon and horse for the Fire Department at the best terms available” (Town of Louisburg. 2 January 1906). This information confirms that the department was in existence at this time.

The next mention of the fire department states that money was donated by the town to pay the membership dues for the department to join the Interstate Fire Association. At this same meeting, Baily was instructed to buy coats, hats, and boots for the department (Town of Louisburg. 1 June 1906).

The June 1907 Town Council meeting minutes show that William Baily “was reelected Chief of the Fire Company with the salary being the same as previous” (Town of Louisburg. 15 May 1907).

These references prove that the fire department was in existence as a Town of Louisburg Department on January 2, 1906. Also, they show that the department had been in existence for a period of time, as evidenced by stating that the fire chief was re-elected with the same salary. It is not known how long it had been since its formation.

The department may have been recently formed in 1906, with just enough time having passed for the department to become organized to the point of purchasing the fire wagon and the firemen's clothing. Or, it may have been formed, as some think, in the late 1800s and had finally become stable enough that funds became available from the town for these purchases.

At this point, it can only be factually said that the fire department was formed prior to January 1906. How long before is a matter of speculation and will never be verified, unless additional documents are located.

LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT HISTORICAL TIMELINE

PRE-1900

As previously mentioned, the Louisburg Fire Department was organized as the Louisburg Fire Brigade sometime in the very late 1800s. William Baily was one of the organizers and became the first fire chief. Baily was also on the Louisburg Town Council from 1903-1909.

The first fire house was constructed around this time on Bull Run Alley (now Johnson Street). This building was of wood construction and nothing is known as to its size or amenities. It had sleeping quarters of some sort, as the night policeman slept in the firehouse during the day and was large enough to house the fire wagon and a hose reel. It is believed that this structure was built around 1900 (“Outline of Fire Department History”).

1900s

Although there is no reference found, the department probably used a bucket brigade prior to the purchase of the fire wagon. The bucket brigade would most likely have been comprised of the volunteer firemen, as well as citizens of the town. This was the normal procedure during this era.

The previous chapter states that a fire wagon and horse were purchased in 1906. This fire wagon was used by connecting the fire hose that was carried on the wagon to a fire hydrant and using the water system pressure to produce the firefighting stream.

The fire wagon carried 1000 feet of 2.5 inch hose and the hose reel carried an additional 300 feet of 2.5 inch hose.

There was an additional 300 feet of hose in reserve at the fire house (“NC Maps.” 1914).

A 1906 photo shows the fire wagon and a hose reel. The hose reel, with additional hose, was towed behind the wagon or pulled by the firemen. Apparently, this was the first firefighting apparatus in service by the department. According to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, the fire department never utilized a “hand or steam engine” (“NC Maps.” 1908). (Sanborn was the company that inspected the towns water system and fire department in order to determine the fire department’s fire insurance rating). This equipment was used for a number of years until the first gasoline-powered engine was placed into service.

This would be a good opportunity to describe the town’s water system, as it was obviously a necessity for firefighting efforts.

The Town of Louisburg constructed the water system and installed water lines in 1906. The system pumped water from the Tar River, which was then run through a filter, and eventually into a 700,000 gallon reservoir. It was then pumped to a 300,000 gallon stand pipe, which was located behind the old Mills School Building. This was the highest point in town. The water was pumped to the stand pipe by a 1000 gallon per minute Fairbanks Morse centrifugal pump through an eight inch main. There was a 500 gallon per minute Fairbanks Morse pump for back-up use. Both pumps were run by fuel oil engines. The water in the 120 foot tall stand pipe then gravity flowed into the distribution system through a ten inch main. In 1914, there was approximately 4.5 miles of 4” to 10” mains in the distribution system. The system included 35 double or triple hydrants, referring to the number of hose connections on each hydrant. The average

daily consumption for the town in 1914 was 15,000 gallons per day (“NC Maps.” 1914).

In 1922, the water distribution system had been added to and was then about five miles with 37 hydrants. The pumps were replaced in 1921, probably with similar size units. The average daily consumption of water for the town was now up to 125,000 gallons per day (“NC Maps.” 1922). According to these figures, the average daily water consumption for the town increased by over 700% in eight years.

Chief Baily was authorized to purchase boots, coats, and hats in June 1906, which was probably the first purchase of “turn-out gear” by the department (Town of Louisburg. 1 June 1906).

The Town Council elected Baily as Chief of the Louisburg Fire Department during the May 15, 1907 meeting. Although, it states that he was elected, it is evident that he was re-elected as it states “with salary same as heretofore” (Town of Louisburg. 15 May 1907).

There may have been a problem with non-authorized persons entering or loitering at the fire house or being a little overzealous in attempting to assist the firemen in the early days. On October 4, 1907, the Town Council ordered that an ordinance be created to address this problem. It reads, in part, “...an ordinance, making it a fine from this date, of \$2.00 for any person not a member of the fire Co. to get on hose wagon, or to interfere with or impede progress of Fire Co. in any way or to enter fire House except with member of Fire Co. or a member of Board of Town commissioners or Mayor” (Town of Louisburg. 4 October 1907).

In September 1908, the Town Council authorized the purchase of additional fire hose for the hose reel. A contract

was given to the Gutta Percha Rubber Company of New York City for the purchase of 300 feet of rubber hose at a price of \$1.10 per foot. Finances were evidently tight at the time as the contract called for the “payment to be due 12 months from the date of contract, with the privilege of renewing the contract for six months at a 6% interest rate” (Town of Louisburg. 11 September 1908). There seemed to be an assumption that the treasury might be too low to afford payment at the end of twelve months.

During the Town Council meeting of October 4, 1909, the hiring of a fireman and night policeman was authorized. It was “Moved & 2nd that one man be employed to stay at the fire house in the day & police the town at night & be on call day & night to perform the duties of driver of the fire wagon at a salary of \$35.00 per month & 2 suits of clothes per year (carried)” (Town of Louisburg. 4 October 1909).

Evidently, another person was hired as fireman and night policeman sometime prior to 1906, when the available minutes of the Louisburg Town Council begin, or after the October 4, 1909 meeting. The October 4th meeting authorized the hiring of only one man. However, during the December 3, 1909 meeting of the council, a motion was made to rescind an order passed in the October 1909 meeting that released one man and required the other to perform the duties of both. James Allen Harris and J. C. Tucker had “their duties returned as before as Night Police and Fire House Drivers” (Town of Louisburg. 3 December 1909). This shows that two firemen were employed at this time. It is unknown who was hired first.

There was at least one fire of interest during this time period. In the first week of November of 1906, there was a potentially destructive fire at Lancaster’s Stables, which was just west of the jail. “The entire building was ablaze, but with

the firemen's quick response, they had it under control in just a few minutes. This structure, which was owned by G.W. Ford, suffered about \$500.00 in damages" ("Lancaster Stables Fire").

The work of the local firemen was observed by some out-of-town businessmen who made comments that prompted the following statement in the newspaper: "Traveling men who witnessed the work of the firemen pronounced it as good of work as they had seen in the big cities" ("Lancaster Stables Fire").

A couple more points need to be mentioned relative to this fire. One, this fire occurred before the fire department had any motorized equipment; therefore, the fire wagon and hose reel were utilized. The hose was connected to a hydrant on the town water system which served as the water source.

Secondly, the town's water system being new at this time prompted one of the firemen to comment on the importance "of the new water system and the wise decision to install it" ("Lancaster Stables Fire").

1910s

During the April 1, 1910 meeting of the Town Council, it was "Moved & 2nd that the Chief of Fire Department and in his absence the Chief of Police have in the Fire House at all times one Horse, that he may be of service of the Fire Company at all calls of Fire Co." Also during this meeting, J. A. Harris was reappointed to his position as fireman and night policeman, with a raise to \$40.00 per month (Town of Louisburg. 1 April 1910).

In the first week of February of 1911, the town "purchased two fine fire horses to take the place of the one recently sold

and to do the town hauling.” These horses were described as “very pretty specimens of horse flesh” (“Town Buys Horses”). There was no reason mentioned for buying two to replace one.

The treasurer of the fire department was instructed to remit annual dues to the State Firemen’s Association during a called meeting of the Louisburg Fire Department on March 9, 1911 (“Fire Company Meets”). This is the first mention of the department being a member of the state association, although it may have been a member earlier.

On May 15, 1911, W. H. Ruffin was nominated and unanimously elected as Chief of the Fire Department. Ruffin was the second chief, succeeding William Baily (Town of Louisburg. 15 May 1911). It is unknown exactly how many years Baily served as the fire chief.

The next significant action of the council, as related to the fire department, came during the May 10, 1913 meeting when S. P. Boddie became Fire Chief. The nomination was made and seconded, and Boddie received six votes, and was thus elected as chief (Town of Louisburg. 10 May 1913). Boddie succeeded W. H. Ruffin, who had served a two year term.

In January 1914, additional turn-out gear was acquired when the purchase of twelve rubber coats and boots was authorized. This was the second purchase of turn-out gear mentioned, although some may have been purchased before 1906 (Town of Louisburg. 2 January 1914).

The department received \$150.00 from the Town Council on July 3, 1914 for the purpose of attending the state convention and tournament (Town of Louisburg. 3 July 1914). This was at least the second year that the department participated in the event, according to the minutes. This is

mentioned to show that the Louisburg Fire Department became involved with the North Carolina State Firemen's Association at a very early date, not only early for the department but also early in the history of the state convention and tournament. The department was represented at the state association's annual convention continuously up until the recent years.

Also during the July 3 meeting, the town agreed to "pay expenses of expert fireman sent by the State to instruct fire companies" (Town of Louisburg. 3 July 1914). This seems to indicate that this was the first opportunity for the firemen to receive sanctioned training.

In 1914, the Louisburg Fire Department hired what may have been its first part-time paid fireman. On October 30, 1914, Chief Boddie was authorized by the Town Council to hire Kip Thompson. He was hired at a "salary of \$12.50 per week for as long as his services are satisfactory" (Town of Louisburg. 20 October 1914). Previous employment of fire department staff all stated that this person would be a fireman and night policeman. Although it was not stated, he was probably hired as a fireman and night policeman. It is also unknown as to whether he replaced J.A. Harris or J.C. Tucker.

The only reference to the fire department in 1915 came during the February 27th meeting when Chief Boddie was approved for a raise to \$50.00 per year. The previous salary is unknown. (Town of Louisburg. 27 February 1915).

Boddie submitted his resignation as fire chief at the August 4, 1916 meeting of the Town Council and it was accepted. It was moved and seconded that the assistant chief serve as chief until another chief could be elected (Town of Louisburg. 4 August 1916). It is unknown why Boddie resigned or who

the assistant chief was who served in the interim. Boddie served a term of three years and three months.

Four months passed before a new fire chief was appointed. During the December 29, 1916 meeting of the Town Council, N. B. Allsbrook was appointed fire chief (Town of Louisburg. 29 December 1916). Allsbrook may have been the assistant chief who served out the term of S.P. Boddie.

There was only one action by the Town Council in 1917 relating to the fire department. B. H. Meadows was nominated and elected “for Keeper of the fire house & any other duties assigned to him by the board” (Town of Louisburg. 15 June 1917). It is not clear whether this was a new position or if Meadows was a replacement. Different terminology was used to describe various positions at different meetings of the council, but at this point in time this is apparently still a daytime-only position.

Allsbrook served as chief for a year before submitting his resignation during the January 10, 1918 meeting of the council. The resignation was accepted. During that same meeting, J. A. Townes was elected chief of the department (Town of Louisburg. 10 January 1918).

J. A. Townes died sometime in 1919, after serving for just under a year and a half. It was moved and seconded during the July 28, 1919 meeting of the Town Council that Dr. A. H. Fleming be elected as chief of the department (Town of Louisburg. 28 July 1919).

There were a couple of notable fires in Louisburg during this period. On January 5, 1912, the Scoggin Drug Store on Main Street burned. The entire interior of the building was destroyed leaving the “hull” worthless. The estimated loss was \$13,000.00 (Johnson, Elizabeth).

Another major fire occurred on October 24, 1914 when the Hotel Franklin burned. This building, owned by G. W. Ford, was a total loss with a \$30,000.00 estimated loss (Johnson, Elizabeth).

1920s

The 1920s would see big changes in the Louisburg Fire Department. This was the beginning of becoming motorized and phasing out the horse drawn wagon and hose reel. On February 25, 1920, the Louisburg Fire Department's first "fire truck" was put into service. "The town commissioners are to be congratulated upon having provided Louisburg with a fire truck. Since the steam power had been done away with at the power house the town officials have had the truck, heretofore used for hauling fuel, built over, and made into a fire truck. The hose was placed on it Wednesday and it was put in readiness in the fire house. This will mean quite a big saving to the town and will be equally as safe and a great deal faster than horse drawn vehicles" ("New Fire Truck").

Although this apparatus was "homemade," so to speak, it was a far better alternative than the horse-drawn apparatus that was being used by the department prior to this time. This demonstrates the early desire of the Town of Louisburg and the Louisburg Fire Department to use its ingenuity and determination to improve its equipment and therefore improve its ability to protect the citizens of the town and their property.

The topic of a new fire engine came up with the Louisburg Town Council sometime in mid-1920. Evidently, considerable discussion was held and it was agreed that a new fire engine was necessary. This would be Louisburg Fire Department's first commercially-built fire engine.

On August 24, 1920, the Town Council met in a special session called by the mayor. The mayor appointed a committee consisting of the entire board and Fire Chief Dr. Fleming and provided instructions to go to Atlanta, Georgia to inspect the fire truck. This was to be at the expense of the manufacturer. If this truck was found to be satisfactory, they were authorized to make the purchase (Town of Louisburg. 24 August 1920). It is not clear why the group went to Atlanta instead of Elmira, New York where the American LaFrance manufacturing facilities were located. There may have been a sales office and show room in Atlanta, or perhaps they were looking at a similar engine that was already in service.

The engine being considered for purchase was an American LaFrance Type #75, which sold for \$12,500.00. The Type 75's are triple combination pumpers, that is, they have a fire pump, carry fire hose in the rear, and have a chemical (soda-acid type) extinguisher on board. This fire engine has a 105-horsepower six-cylinder T-head engine, which was also manufactured by American LaFrance. It has a rotary gear pump that was rated at 750 gallons per minute. The transmission is a three speed manual with a chain driven rear axle. This fire engine was considered "the standard of fire trucks for its day" (The Legend Continues: Historical Timeline).

Three days later, on August 27, the mayor called another council meeting. It was moved and seconded that the matter of purchasing this engine be deferred. However, the motion did not pass (Town of Louisburg. 27 August 1920). It is unlikely that the committee made the trip to Atlanta and back in three days.

A follow-up motion was made and seconded "that the Mayor appoint a committee to draft an ordinance providing for

the issuance of \$12,500.00 in municipal bonds allowing for the purchase of the American LaFrance fire engine and report to a meeting to be called by the Mayor, and that said committee shall report an ordinance which shall be valid and the same be approved by the people by vote or by failure to demand an election, then it is the decision of the board that such engine be purchased according to the contract tendered by Fire, and the Mayor is hereby authorized to execute such contract on behalf of the town & subject to the authority of the Board to issue such bonds. Motion carried” (Town of Louisburg. 27 August 1920).

In 1921, during the July 1 meeting, a new fire chief was elected by the Town Council. O. C. Hill was elected for a term of two years as “Supt of Lights & water, Fire Chief, with police authority at a salary of \$175.00 per month” (Town of Louisburg. 1 July 1921). Hill replaced Dr. A. H. Fleming, who had served for the previous two years.

There was no further mention found relating to the approval of the purchase of the fire engine until the August 12, 1921 meeting when it was “Moved & 2nd that a (1921) La France Fire Engine Type #75, including 250 feet of hose, be purchased at the price of \$12,500 delivered & installed in the town of Louisburg NC. Motion Carried” (Town of Louisburg. 12 August 1921). American LaFrance Type #75 Serial #3682 found a home in Louisburg and became known as “Maude.” No one knows the origin of this name.

It is interesting to note that no further records were found showing that the ordinance was approved. However, evidence of its approval appears by action taken in the August 17, 1921 meeting of the council when it was moved and seconded that Ordinance #28 be amended to make changes to the gasoline and motor oil used by the engine (Town of Louisburg. 17

August 1921). This was after the approval to purchase the fire engine, but it is mentioned to show that by amending Ordinance #28, that the purchase of the engine was obviously approved. These minutes were not very legible, but this was probably a change as related to the specifications of the new fire engine. It is also interesting to note the time lapse from when the ordinance was authorized in August 1920 until the actual purchase of the fire engine in August 1921. This was probably related to the administrative work involved in the bond issuance.

"Maude" finally arrived at the railroad depot during the week of December 18, 1921. "The new fire truck purchased by the Town of Louisburg in the summer arrived this week and will be given a try out as soon as the factory representative arrives. It is a modern machine with all the latest equipment including chemical engine. Supt. Hill (Fire Chief O. C. Hill) has had the fire house remodeled and put in shape to receive the new engine, which is expected to be moved from the depot any day, and has made arrangements for ordering a siren at once" ("New Fire Truck"). The fire engine came equipped with a "hand-cranked" siren, which was standard. The siren ordered was an upgrade to an electric one. Although "Maude's" actual service date is unknown, it was probably within the last week of December 1921.

Once "Maude" was outfitted, she carried 1500 feet of 2.5 inch hose in addition to the 40 gallon chemical tank. The department also had a reserve of 1000 feet of 2.5 inch hose. The hose reel held 500 feet of 2.5 inch hose and was now stationed on "Kenmoor Avenue" ("NC Maps." 1922).

Louisburg had a fire district in 1921, as evidenced by the fact that during the December 30, 1921 council meeting this district was extended. It is not stated if this was a tax district

or what prompted the extension. “Moved & 2nd that the Fire district of the Town of Louisburg be extended so as to take in the territory with the following boundaries-to wit: beginning at a point on the west side of Church St. 151 feet north of the curbing, intersection of Nash & Church Sts. Thence running west along the northern wall of Harris, Hodges Motor Co, 86 feet to the outer edge of the western wall of said Harris, Hodges Motor Co, thence, south in a straight line to Tar River. Carried” (Town of Louisburg. 30 December 1921).

On March 7, 1922, the resignation of O. C. Hill as fire chief was received by the Town Council and accepted. He served as chief for just less than one year. The council then elected W. N. Fuller as Chief of the Louisburg Fire Department at a salary of \$50.00 per year and “with power to organize the fire Company, with ten men at a salary of \$25.00 per year each, & report the names to the Board & to the insurance Commissioner without delay” (Town of Louisburg. 7 March 1922). This is the only mention found relating to any salary for the firemen. It was mentioned every year for a number of years that the firemen would be exempted from poll taxes.

Prior to the May 17, 1923 meeting of the council, the fire chief had always been elected by the council. However, during this meeting it was moved, seconded, and carried that the fire chief would be appointed at the preference of the fire department (Town of Louisburg. 17 May 1923). From this date until today, that procedure has remained. The members of the fire department elect the chief and his name is submitted to the council for their concurrence.

Also during this meeting, a motion was made, seconded, and carried that “C. E. (Carnal) Pace be appointed Fireman Fire Department and night Police” (Town of Louisburg. May 22 1923).

Another change in fire chief came in 1924, when during the July 11th meeting of the Town Council, the resignation of W. N. Fuller was presented and accepted by the board. Fuller served for two years and four months. J. E. Thomas was elected to replace Fuller (Town of Louisburg. 11 July 1924).

There was still another change in fire chief in 1925. On July 3, 1925, F. J. Beasley was appointed chief of the department to replace Thomas (Town of Louisburg. 3 July 1925). Thomas had served for one year.

The Louisburg Fire Department participated in the Firemen's Relief Fund as early as 1926. During the October 29, 1926 meeting of the Town Council, it was decided to replace the current trustees of the Firemen's Relief Fund with a new group (Town of Louisburg. 29 October 1926). This was the first mention of the relief fund, and it is not known how long that Louisburg had been participating when the decision to replace the trustees was made. The Firemen's Relief Fund was started in 1907; therefore, it is very likely that the Louisburg Fire Department had been a member from a much earlier date.

The Firefighters' Relief Fund benefit is authorized by General Statutes 58-84-1 through 58-84-60, which was passed into Legislation in 1907. Its purpose was to financially assist firefighters that may have been injured while volunteering their service to their community. It is funded by a percentage of the tax paid on property coverage pursuant to G.S 105-228.5. With Workman's Compensation benefits becoming more prevalent, local fund balances increased and the Relief Fund was not relied on as heavily. The General Statute has been amended several times over the years, primarily to allow for additional uses of the fund. These uses include supplemental retirement, other insurance and pension

protection, and the provision of educational benefits for firemen and their dependants (“Fire/Rescue Grants and Relief Fund”).

Chief Beasley appeared before the council meeting on January 7, 1927 and asked “that someone be compensated to sleep at the fire house nightly and be required to see that the fire engine is gotten out promptly on fire alarms.” Herman Murphy was hired for this position at a salary of \$15.00 per month (Town of Louisburg. 7 January 1927).

Assistant Fire Chief F. M. Fuller appeared before the Town Council at the December 7, 1928 meeting and “presented a letter from dept. asking board to appt. J. S. Howell as fire chief. The nomination of J. S. Howell as Chief of the Fire Department is unanimously accepted” by the council. Beasley had served as chief for three years and five months. Some additional fire hose was also approved for purchase during this meeting (Town of Louisburg. 7 December 1928).

It is unclear why the department made this request after Beasley had served as chief for three years and five months, which does not seem to be a full term. Although it is not stated, this request was probably the result of the department changing the terms of office to run concurrently with the calendar year. If so, this would be the result of the department voting in a new chief and forwarding the name to the Town Council for approval.

The 1920s saw several large fires. On February 13, 1920, the K. P. Hill Stables located on Nash and Church Streets (later the site of Rowe Chevrolet) burned. The horses were lost. The estimated damage was \$125,000.00 (Johnson, Elizabeth).

On March 14, 1921, an early morning fire started in the rear of the third story of Williams Furniture Store. The fire quickly spread through the roof of the L. Kline & Co., and into the roof of the L.P.Hicks Store on the corner of Main and Nash Streets. Several other businesses in these buildings were also affected. The Williams Furniture Store building, owned by Mrs. W.P. Neal was a total loss. The other buildings damaged were owned by G.W. Ford and F.N. Edgerton. The total loss, from all of the businesses affected, was estimated to be \$150,000.00. The *Franklin Times* article stated the following: "Too much praise cannot be given the firemen and the citizens who joined them in their heroic work in fighting the flames, as it is due to their untiring and undaunted efforts that the entire block and possibly the larger portion of Louisburg's business districts are not at this time smouldering in ashes" ("\$150,000 Fire Monday Morning").

One of the interesting things about this fire is that it occurred during the period of time that the Louisburg Fire Department was using the "homemade" fire truck. This fire truck, placed into service in 1920, was a converted fuel truck with fire hose added. This was the first motorized vehicle owned by the department. It was not until December of 1921 that the first commercially built fire engine was placed into service.

Another large fire came on April 1, 1927. The Louisburg College Annex (formerly the Female Academy) was destroyed. This was one of the oldest buildings on campus (Johnson, Elizabeth).

On December 5, 1928, an even larger fire at Louisburg College caused extensive damage to Old Main and the West Wing, with Davis Building suffering water damage. Fire units from Raleigh, Rocky Mount, Henderson, and Franklinton were

called in for assistance in extinguishing this fire. The Raleigh fire unit was reported to have been on the scene within 36 minutes. The fire, which was discovered in the area of the Chapel, was discovered at 1:00 AM. The fire was brought under control at around 4:00 AM. It was believed to have started in the area of the heating system. There were approximately 150 female students asleep in their dormitory rooms on the top two floors of West Wing. All of the students escaped safely and in orderly fashion. There were only three minor injuries. The loss was estimated at \$150,000.00 to \$200,000.00. These buildings were rebuilt (Johnson, Elizabeth).

1930s

January 1930 began with a good report from the fire department at the Louisburg Town Council's first meeting of the year. "Mr. J. S. Howell, Chief of the Fire Dept presented his report which indicated a very excellent showing for the Fire Department. The report was as follows.

Gentlemen:

I beg leave to report on fire conditions for the year ending Dec 31st 1929.

Loss on Buildings	\$2,727.35
Loss on Contents	\$1,163.50
Total	\$3,890.85

On behalf of the Fire Department and every member of the same, I wish to thank you and all the officials of the town for the hearty support you have given the Fire Department. It is our purpose to merit the confidence which has been imposed upon us and we want you to know that we are always ready to answer the first call to every one of our duties.

I beg to remain
Yours very truly
J. S. Howell, Chief F. D.

The report was accepted with thanks for the fine work done by the Fire Dept” (Town of Louisburg. 31 January 1930).

This is the first report found from a fire chief referring to the previous year’s firefighting activity. Evidence shows that the department had a very successful year of protecting the town and the Town Council expressed its appreciation.

The year 1931 shows a number of new and innovative changes for the department. August 13, 1931 was a landmark date for the Louisburg Fire Department. During the Town Council meeting, Chief Howell brought up an item that would mark a big change for firefighting efforts in the town. “Mr. J. S. Howell suggested to the Board that a Colored Fire Company be organized, with headquarters in South Louisburg. Mr. Howell stated that this would not only be a great assistance to the Louisburg Fire Department, but that it would possibly lower the fire insurance rates in Louisburg in an amount greater than the cost of upkeep of a Colored Reel Team” (Town of Louisburg. 4 August 1931).

The board instructed Chief Howell to thoroughly investigate the above proposal and to present an estimate of the expenses of a Colored Fire Company to the Board at a future meeting (Town of Louisburg. 4 August 1931).

Fire Chief Howell presented four requests at the October meeting of the Town Council in 1931. The first was for the purchase of additional fire hose.

The second is of more interest. The chief asked for a fire hydrant to be installed “at the Gulf Filling Station on So. Main

Street, to which the fire truck can be connected” (Town of Louisburg. 6 October 1931). This appears to have been the first hydrant located south of the Tar River.

The third request also marks a change for the town and the department. Chief Howell “emphasized the need for a fire inspector to inspect and demand remedy of all fire hazards in the town.” The board authorized Assistant Fire Chief F. M. Fuller to “make all possible inspections of fire hazards for a period of five days with pay at \$3.00 per day” (Town of Louisburg. 6 October 1931).

The last request was for the town to pay the dues for the “Colored Fire Company to become members of the State Colored Fire Association.” The Clerk to the Board was instructed to pay the amount of \$7.50 to the secretary of the state association (Town of Louisburg. 6 October 1931).

The interesting thing of note here is that there is no mention of the Colored Fire Company being approved by the council since the earlier meeting (August 4, 1931) when Chief Howell made the suggestion of forming the company. But paying the dues to the state association for the Colored Company is evidence that the company was approved and was active.

During the September 6, 1932 meeting of the council, the Clerk to the Board was again instructed to send a check for the current year’s dues for the Colored Fire Company to F. W. Pullen, Financial Secretary of the North Carolina Colored Volunteer Fire Association (Town of Louisburg. 6 September 1932). This is further evidence of the company’s activities. More information will follow concerning the Colored Fire Company in another chapter.

As shown above, Chief J. S. Howell had done a remarkable job during his three and a half year tenure as chief of the department. He led the department during a time of much change. He was replaced as chief during the July 10, 1933 meeting of the Louisburg Town Council, after serving for four years and seven months. The council received a request from ten members of the department that F. M. (Fes) Fuller be appointed chief. It was not noted in the minutes if Howell retired or resigned, as it appears that his term ended several months early. At any rate, Fuller was appointed chief of the department (Town of Louisburg. 10 July 1933).

During the July 23, 1934 meeting, the clerk to the board read letters from South Eastern Underwriters Association and the N. C. Inspection and Rating Bureau. These letters "demanded that a man capable of operating the fire truck be on duty at the fire house at all times and that two men capable of operating the fire truck, be on duty and sleep in the fire house every night." The council instructed the clerk to respond with a letter stating that the town would honor the request; however, no further action was taken (Town of Louisburg. 23 July 1934).

The issue of the required fire personnel came up again during the August 3rd meeting. This time, not only did the South Eastern Underwriters Association and the N. C. Inspection and Rating Bureau repeat "their demands of the past several months that the Town of Louisburg employ a trained fireman to stay on duty in the Fire House every day and two trained men to sleep in the Fire House every night, and that there must be a trained man on duty in the Fire House AT ALL TIMES," but they added that "either these men must be employed or the Town of Louisburg will be reduced to a third class rating, instead of its present second class rating" (Town of Louisburg. 3 August 1934).

There was a great deal of discussion on the pros and cons of hiring these positions with the fire rating remaining a second class versus not hiring these positions and having the fire rating drop to a third class. Evidently, the additional cost of insurance protection for property owners with the lower class rating prompted the council to hire the new positions. After thorough debate, the following motion was passed: "That the Town of Louisburg, N. C. employ a trained man to stay on duty in the Fire House every day and to sleep in the Fire House every night, at a salary not to exceed \$50.00 per Month; that an additional trained man be employed to sleep in the Fire House every night, at a salary not to exceed \$10.00 per month; that these men be under the supervision of the Chief of Police; that the services of the present Truck Driver be dispensed with effective September 1, 1934" (Town of Louisburg. 3 August 1934).

After this matter was settled, a follow-up motion prevailed that Graham Holmes be employed to "serve on duty at the fire house and to sleep in the fire house every night." It was then motioned, seconded, and carried that the sleeping quarters of the fire house be "put into good condition" (Town of Louisburg. 3 August 1934).

All other references to "paid" personnel mentioned either being a "night policeman and fireman" or "keeper of the Fire House." This seems to indicate that the "keeper of the fire house" was a daytime-only position and the "night policeman and fireman" was also a daytime position, as the night policeman would be on patrol during the night hours.

Assuming this to be correct, this would mean that Graham Holmes was the first actual full-time paid fireman working for the Louisburg Fire Department. The mandate from the South Eastern Underwriters Association and the N. C. Inspection

and Rating Bureau emphasized that there would be a trained fireman at the fire house at all times.

One thing that is not clear is if Herman Murphy was still employed at that time and filled the other mandated position as “the trained fireman to be hired to sleep in the fire house at night” (Town of Louisburg. 3 August 1934). This is very likely the case. Graham Holmes was the only name mentioned to meet the mandate of the South Eastern Underwriters Association and the N. C. Inspection and Rating Bureau.

Another paid fireman was hired during the August 8, 1939 meeting of the board. “After considering a number of applicants for the position, the Board decided to offer the position to Raymond Joyner at a salary of \$50.00 for the first thirty days of training, and \$75.00 per month thereafter provided that he learns the work to the satisfaction of the Board of Commissioners.” Mr. Joyner accepted the position, agreeing to these terms. Newell Allen was employed as assistant fireman at a salary of \$15.00 per month (Town of Louisburg. 8 August 1939). Evidently, Allen and Joyner replaced Holmes and Murphy, though it was not stated in the minutes of the Town Council. This would have made them the third and fourth paid firemen working for the department.

There was no reference found to large or significant fires during the decade of the 1930s.

The year 1936 marks 30 years since the first known written reference to the Louisburg Fire Department can be found. The department made great strides during this time and appeared to be in good condition. The following is a list (in no particular order) of events and actions that occurred during this period:

- The horse, wagon, and reel were replaced with a modern 1921 American LaFrance fire engine

- The first fire house was built
- Turn-out gear was purchased, consisting of coats, gloves, and boots
- Firefighting equipment was purchased, primarily hose and nozzles
- The first paid part-time firemen were hired
- The first paid full-time firemen were hired
- The “Colored Fire Company” was formed
- The first “expert fireman from the State” was brought in to train department members
- The firemen became members of the Firemen’s Relief Fund
- Twelve fire chiefs served during the time period

1940s

During the May 10, 1940 meeting of the Town Council, “the Fire Committee was instructed to consult applicants for the position of assistant fireman and ascertain if it is possible to secure two assistant firemen who will agree to alternate on the job” (Town of Louisburg. 10 May 1940). No further evidence was found to verify if or when anyone was hired.

A motion was passed during the August 9 meeting “instructing the Town Attorney to draw an ordinance designating the Fire District boundaries to be the same as those provided for in an Ordinance dated January 1, 1915” (Town of Louisburg. 9 August 1940). The district and an addition to it were described earlier.

On September 5 of 1941, the Town Council granted the “Colored Fire Company” use of the recently built (National Guard) Armory for the purpose of holding a dance to raise money for the company. Councilman Shearin made the

motion to this effect and it carried (Town of Louisburg. 5 September 1941).

During the March 6, 1942 meeting of the town council, “A delegation of colored residents of the Blacktown section petitioned the board for an adequate water main and fire hydrant to protect their homes against fire. A motion was passed authorizing the construction of adequate water main and hydrant provided it is possible to secure the necessary pipe and hydrant” (Town of Louisburg. 6 March 1942.) This is the second mention of installing fire hydrants on the south side of town, the first being in October of 1931.

The fire chief received authorization from the Town Council for the purchase of supplies to improve the fire house on September 11, 1942. These materials included a window, paint, plywood, and other necessary items (Town of Louisburg. 11 September 1942). These were the first improvements to the fire house since 1934, when Graham Holmes was hired, and the council instructed the chief to have the sleeping quarters “put into good condition.”

Evidently “Maude,” the 1921 American LaFrance fire engine was experiencing some problems in 1943. On March 5 the Town Council entertained a motion, which was seconded and carried, “That an expert American LaFrance service man be employed to inspect the Town’s fire engine and to make any and all necessary repairs to it” (Town of Louisburg. 5 March 1943). It is uncertain what repairs were necessary for the 22-year-old fire engine.

On July 6 the council again addressed the fire engine when it was “ordered that a factory representative from the American LaFrance-Foamite Corporation be secured to completely overhaul the fire truck” (Town of Louisburg. 6 July 1943). Although there is no further mention of this complete

overhaul, it was apparently completed successfully. "Maude" was in service for another six years.

The subject of the fire house and its condition was brought up again during the February 9, 1945 meeting of the Town Council. The Building Committee was instructed by the board to make an estimate of the cost of necessary repairs and improvements to the fire house and to present this estimate with its recommendations to the council at its next regular meeting (Town of Louisburg. 9 February 1945).

Another issue to arise at this time was the volume of the new electric siren. It is unknown where the siren was located, but evidently it could not be heard very far. The council decided to take some action to attempt to solve the problem. Commissioner W.J. Shearin informed the council that in order to increase the volume of the new siren it would need to be moved from its present location to a higher point. The board agreed to purchase a twenty- foot steel tower to be located on top of the building owned by Franklin County on the corner of Market and Court Streets (Town of Louisburg. 7 September 1945). The new siren would be located on top of this tower, which would greatly increase its height. It is unknown if this was the same steel tower that was later placed on top of the fire house that was built in 1948.

The new siren alarm system was a replacement for one that had been in service since at least 1922 ("NC Maps." 1922). This first siren was located on top of the Owen and Ford Building, which was located on the corner of Nash and Market Streets (Johnson Jr., A.F.). The building burned down in a fire on June 11, 1945 during what is usually referred to as the "Old Opera House Fire."

Prior to the first siren atop the “Old Opera House,” the fire alarm was sounded by the bell at the Court House and church bells (“NC Maps.” 1914).

On November 9, 1945, a representative of the American LaFrance-Foamite Corp appeared before the council with a proposal to sell the town a new fire engine for \$9,350.00. The council discussed the proposal and appointed a committee to investigate the need for a new truck. The committee was instructed to report its findings and make a recommendation within two weeks. This was the first mention of the fire truck situation since 1943 when money was authorized to be spent to hire a representative from American LaFrance-Foamite to completely overhaul the 1921 model fire truck (Town of Louisburg. 9 November 1945).

Chief Fuller advised the Town Council that there was definitely a need for a new fire truck, but he did not attempt to advise what type or brand of truck should be purchased (Town of Louisburg. 9 November 1945). Although this engine was “completely overhauled” just two years earlier, “Maude” had been in service for 24 years.

The issue of the new tower for the siren came up again during this meeting. Commissioner Shearin was authorized to look into the purchase of a used steel tower on which to place the siren (Town of Louisburg. 9 November 1945).

A special session of the Town Council was held on December 18, 1945 in order for the committee that had been formed to research the purchase of the new fire truck to make its report as ordered during the November meeting. The committee reported “that it had inspected three fire trucks at Fort Bragg, which had been declared surplus property by the U. S. Dept of Commerce. The committee found that these fire trucks were in bad condition and that they could not

recommend their purchase. The committee also inspected a Mack fire truck, which had been recently purchased by the town of Erwin, NC, and the members of the committee were favorably impressed by the performance of this truck.” However, the committee did not have a recommendation to make on the purchase of a fire truck (Town of Louisburg. 18 December 1945).

The next action on the purchase of the new fire truck came on January 11, 1946 when three proposals were presented. Representatives of Howe Fire Apparatus Co., American Fire Apparatus Co., and American LaFrance-Foamite Corp. were present and made their proposals (Town of Louisburg. 11 January 1946).

After these proposals were made and discussed by the council, Commissioner Shearin made the following motion: “That the Board of Town Commissioners hereby declare that an emergency exists, due to the bad condition of the town’s only fire engine which has been in use since 1921; and that the town of Louisburg, NC purchase a Ford truck chassis upon which to mount fire fighting apparatus.” This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 11 January 1946).

The matter of the condition of fire hydrants within the town was also discussed during this meeting. Evidently problems with hydrants had been experienced. The following motion was made: “That the town of Louisburg adopt and install in the future a standard make of fire hydrants, to replace the old Pratt & Cady hydrants as they wear out.” This motion carried. At this time, the town clerk informed the board that “for the past five years Mathews fire hydrants had been purchased and installed, as needed, and that the Mathews hydrant was highly recommended by the Raleigh, NC Fire Department” (Town of Louisburg. 11 January 1946).

The situation with the 1921 American LaFrance fire truck and the purchase of a new truck was evidently a matter of great importance for the council. A second special session was called on January 15 concerning the new truck. "The purpose of the meeting as stated to the Board by Commissioner Shearin was the further consideration of the purchase of a firefighting equipment. The Board voted to instruct its attorney to properly and legally advertise for competitive bids on firefighting equipment" (Town of Louisburg. 15 January 1946).

The council held a third special session on January 28, 1946 in order to discuss the new fire truck. The purpose of this meeting was "for the purpose of opening and considering sealed bids on firefighting equipment. Sealed bids on fire fighting apparatus were received from the American Fire Apparatus Co., and the American LaFrance-Foamite Corp. The contract was let to the American Fire Apparatus Co. for a 500 gal. per Minute Duplex-Multi Stage pump with 200 gallon booster tank and other equipment for the sum of \$2980.00. The bid of the American-LaFrance-Foamite Corp was \$3,050.00" ("Buys Fire Pump"). To be clear, this bid was for the pump, body, and other accessories to be mounted on a separate chassis.

"The contract for a chassis and cab was let to Griffin-Tharrington Motor Co. for a Ford 158" chassis and cab, 1 ½ ton, 100 HP truck, equipped with 7.50 x 20 tires, dual rear and single front helper springs, oil filter, oil bath, air cleaner and heavy duty radiator, for the sum of \$1,391.32 delivered to Battle Creek, Michigan" ("Buys Fire Pump").

"The special committee appointed by the Mayor to investigate and inspect firefighting equipment reported to the board that the Committee together with Fire Chief F. M. Fuller,

and Messers. McFarland and N. D. Medlin had inspected a truck built by the American Fire Apparatus Co., at Roanoke, VA., and a truck built by the American-LaFrance-Foamite Corp. at Chapel Hill, NC, and that the consensus of opinion favored the truck that was purchased by the Board” (“Buys Fire Pump”).

“The Board instructed the same special committee (Commissioners Shearin, Timberlake, and Wheless) to provide suitable housing for the town’s firefighting equipment, at the lowest possible cost” (“Buys Fire Pump”). This indicated that “Maude” was still in service along with the new fire truck and that a larger facility was needed. “Maude” would continue to serve until 1952, when it was replaced by the new American LaFrance.

The issue of the new siren was brought before the Town Council again during the March 11 meeting. The council approved the acceptance of and payment for the siren alarm, which was purchased from the Federal Electric Co. for the sum of \$529.35. Also, Commissioner Shearin was authorized to purchase the used steel water tower that was mentioned during the November 1945 meeting. This approval was contingent on permission from the County Commissioners to place the tower on top of the county Welfare Building (Town of Louisburg. 11 March 1946).

During the April 5, 1946 meeting of the council, the subject of suitable housing for the town’s firefighting equipment was discussed again. “Mr. W.J. Shearin informed the Board that the Special Committee appointed by the Board for the purpose of building a fire house recommends that the West wing of the Armory gun sheds be converted into a fire house. Mr. Shearin stated that the Committee believed that this can be done for approximately \$2000.00 whereas it will cost

\$10,000.00 to build a new fire house on the location of the present fire house. Mr. Shearin made the motion that the recommendations of this special committee be adopted by the board. Mr. Word seconded the motion and it was carried” (Town of Louisburg. 5 April 1946).

The discussion of the new fire house was continued during the May 7 meeting. Fire Chief F. M. Fuller addressed the Town Council and informed it “that the fire company at a recent meeting expressed its disapproval of the Boards recent decision to convert the Armory Building gun sheds into a fire house. He stated that the members of the fire company requested the Board to spend whatever money it had planned to spend in converting the gun sheds on a permanent enlargement and improvement of the present dilapidated fire house. The members of the fire company hope to have a decent recreation room (dining hall) in the proposed new fire house” (Town of Louisburg. 7 May 1946). This request was referred to the Fire Committee for study, and this committee was asked to make a report with recommendations to the council as soon as possible.

Chief Fuller also informed the council that several new members had recently joined the fire company and that the Louisburg Fire Department now had seventeen members.

Another special session of the council concerning the new fire house was held on May 20. After considerable discussion, it was decided to attempt to finance a remodeled fire house without a proposed \$15,000.00 bond issue and postpone the building of a new fire house until building costs were reduced. A motion was made and seconded “that the Board rescind its former instructions to its Attorney to prepare the necessary forms for bond issues for Fire House bonds in

the amount of \$15,000.00 ..." (Town of Louisburg. 20 May 1946).

During the July 5 meeting of the Town Council, the discussion returned to the purchase of the new fire truck. A motion was made, seconded, and carried "that Commissioner W.J. Shearin be sent to Cleveland, Ohio, to accept delivery of the new fire truck, and that he be authorized and instructed to drive the truck to Louisburg, NC" (Town of Louisburg. 5 July 1946).

The new fire truck arrived in Louisburg on July 29, after its trip from Cleveland. It was designated as "Engine 1," and put into service shortly thereafter ("New Fire Truck Arrives"). For the first time, the Louisburg Fire Department had two fire engines in service.

The council changed its discussion, from a new truck and new station, to new equipment during the December 13 meeting (Town of Louisburg. 13 December 1946). The council approved the purchase of a fire net and a ladder that would be long enough to reach the top windows of any building in town ("To Purchase Water Pipe"). It has long been said that this ladder was purchased for its potential use at Louisburg College. The college had already experienced a couple of destructive fires, one being in Main Building, which has four stories. It has also been said that the college purchased the ladder for the fire department. It is known that the ladder was stored at Louisburg College for a number of years before it was moved to the fire house. The ladder was placed under the steps at the front of Main Building. Evidently, the purchase of the net was also in consideration of the four-story building at the college, as well as buildings in downtown Louisburg. This action by the council dispels any idea that this equipment was purchased by the college.

Fortunately, neither the net nor the ladder was ever required to be used, other than for training purposes.

The fire department held its monthly meeting on March 3, 1947 and heard a report from the fire house committee. The report stated: "things favorable and that the property has been leased from the County for ninety-nine years for the sum of one dollar a year. They also reported that Mr. K. B. White has been contacted in regards to the building and that he was to meet with the Town Commissioners on Tuesday morning in regards to starting work on the new fire house" ("Firemen Meet"). The leased property referred to was the same location as the fire house that was to be replaced.

A special session of the Town Council was held the following morning, March 4th, in order to continue discussion on the new fire house. Mr. Kelly White presented the plans, which were in the rough at that time, and gave an estimate of around \$10,000.00 for construction of the proposed facility. After an extensive discussion on the building plans and financing, Commissioner Shearin made the following motion: "That a special committee of Mayor W.C. Webb and Commissioners Timberlake, Word, and Wheless, be appointed and instructed to work with Mr. White in planning and constructing a new Fire House, as per the estimate, and that Wheless be appointed to act as purchasing agent for this special committee. The motion was seconded and passed by the Board" ("To Build New Fire House").

On June 6, 1947, the council returned to the issue of the new fire station. The committee on the new fire house presented the idea of "employing Carl A. Harris and his veteran vocational students to build the walls to the new fire house" (Town of Louisburg. 6 June 1947). A motion to this effect was made, seconded, and carried.

Carl Harris was Principal of the Franklin County Training School (renamed as the Riverside Union School in 1959). The school had a vocational education program at that time for African-American veterans returning from World War II. These veterans, who were drafted before graduating from high school, returned home from the war and this program was created as a means of providing vocational training. The training was primarily for those seeking jobs as masons and to gain experience for future endeavors. These veterans built the gymnasium and “Porch Building” for the Training School (“Working History of Franklin County Schools”). There was no information found to confirm that the veterans actually participated in the construction of the new fire station.

A potential source of funding for the new fire house was brought up by Commissioner Shearin during the August 8, 1947 session of the council. Shearin made a motion “that the possibility of using the accumulated Firemen’s Relief Fund owned by the Louisburg Fire Dept. temporarily, for the purpose of building a new fire house, and to be repaid by the Town of Louisburg, be investigated immediately” (Town of Louisburg. 8 August 1947). The motion was seconded and carried.

It seems to be very clear at this point that the Louisburg Town Council took the fire department, the fire apparatus, and a functional fire house very seriously. The council appeared to be intent on providing the best equipment and facilities possible, but at the same time being very careful to make the best decision possible from an economic standpoint.

Fire Chief F.M. (Fes) Fuller served until October 17 of 1947, with just over fourteen years as chief of the department. He died of a heart attack while leaving a meeting of the Town Council (“Funeral Services for F. M. Fuller”). At that time, the

Town Council meetings were held at the Armory Building on Nash Street.

“At a meeting of the Louisburg Fire Department on Wednesday night (October 22, 1947), Mr. G. Herman Murphy was elected Chief of the Fire Department to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Chief F.M. Fuller. Mr. Murphy has been a member of the local fire department for a number of years and he is well qualified for this important position” (“G. H. Murphy Elected Chief”).

The formal opening of the new fire house came on May 3, 1948. The Fire Department held an opening supper with many notable guests. Mayor W.C. Webb dedicated the Recreation Room/Meeting Hall as the “Festus M. Fuller Recreation Room.” Fire Chief Murphy thanked the Mayor, Town Council, and the tax-payers who made the new fire house possible (“Formal Opening Fire House”).

The new fire house was located on the same site as the previous one. The first station, which was constructed in the early 1900s, was renovated somewhat in 1934 and again in 1942. This new station would serve until 1991.

Chief Murphy advised the Town Council during the February 6 meeting that Raymond Joyner was planning to resign as fireman in the near future. A motion was made that the chief be authorized to hire a fireman of his choice. This motion carried (Town of Louisburg. 6 February 1948). Joe Perry was hired as a full-time engineer on March 1, 1948 (Louisburg Fire Department). He would be the fifth full-time paid engineer hired by the town. Joyner had been employed for about nine years.

On March 5, 1948, Fire Chief Murphy recommended to the Board that the town purchase a second-hand fire truck from

Henderson. Commissioner Shearin made the following motion: "That Mr. Murphy be authorized to purchase the truck for the sum of \$125.00 providing the wheels were interchangeable with the Town's present truck." This motion was seconded and carried unanimously ("Buys Old Fire Engine"). This purchase was for the acquisition of the tires and wheels on the used truck, which would be used for replacements to go on the 1921 American LaFrance fire truck. The steel spoke wheels would replace the wood spoke wheels on "Maude."

In late 1948, or early 1949, The Louisburg Rescue Service was created, starting out as a unit of the fire department. In September 1948, the fire department began a fund raiser to raise \$500.00 for the purchase of an "artificial respirator." It was the intent of the Louisburg Fire Department to form a Rescue Squad Unit, as a part of the department, and respond to emergency calls throughout Franklin County. This "Emerson Resuscitator" was the first piece of life-saving emergency equipment purchased by the department, other than for firefighting purposes ("Artificial Respirator"). Asher Johnson, a volunteer fireman at that time, was made "responsible for operating the newly purchased" lifesaving device (Johnson Jr., A.F.). Later, Johnson became one of the founding members of the Louisburg Rescue Service. This was at the time that the Rescue Service split from the fire department and became a separate town department (more on this later).

Also in 1948, the Louisburg Fire Department started an annual fund raising event for the purpose of obtaining necessary funds to purchase a vehicle to be used by the rescue squad. The event was held from 1948 through 1952 in conjunction with the town carnival, which was held at Pruitt

Town, just east of town on NC 56 Highway (“Outline of Fire Department History”).

The decade of the 1940s saw several destructive fires in Louisburg. On June 11, 1945, the Owen and Ford Building on the corner of Nash and Market Streets burned. The fire was attributed to lightning striking the elevator shaft in Owen’s Dime Store. The heat from the fire was so intense that it broke plate glass windows across the street at H.C. Taylor’s and Fox’s stores. Businesses lost included King Candy Co., Mrs. Julia P. Scott Dress Shop, E. F. Griffin Law Firm, the Masonic Lodge, Owen’s Dime Store, Harris Cash and Carry Market, and others. This fire is commonly referred to as the “Old Opera House” fire. This building, which previously housed the Opera House, was constructed about 1890. The structure was a total loss at an estimated \$100,000.00 (Johnson, Elizabeth).

The Old Franklin Hotel on Main Street burned on December 14, 1949. The fire, which started in the basement, resulted in a total loss. The building was located at the current location of Lancaster Apartments. It is unclear if this was the rebuild of the hotel that was destroyed in 1914 or another hotel with a similar name (Johnson, Elizabeth).

There is an interesting tale concerning this fire that has been handed down for a number of years. This was a very large fire, on a very cold winter night. The Louisburg firemen saw that fighting this fire and, at the same time, be able to protect the surrounding properties was beyond their capability. A call was put in to a larger, neighboring city for assistance, to which they promptly responded. After all possible effort had been placed into saving this structure, the result was a total loss. The firemen, both from the neighboring city and Louisburg gathered back at the fire house after the fire was

over. By this time, it is very late, or it should be said, very early the next morning, just before dawn and extremely frigid. So the story goes, one of the local firemen pulled out a bottle of an adult beverage. Several of the other firemen happened to have a supply of their own, decided to pull out their bottles. The Louisburg boys, being the neighborly type, offered the visiting boys a sip, as a thank you gesture for their help battling this blaze on such a dreadfully cold night. The end result is pretty much obvious. One drink led to another, and most likely each department offered a toast to the other, several times over. When they finally found their way back to their home station in the larger neighboring city, they were, for lack of more fitting words, "drunk as skunks." Later that morning, the fire chief of the neighboring city reportedly called the Louisburg Fire Chief, and "politely asked" that Louisburg never call them again for assistance. Now it must be remembered, this was a long time ago and stories have a way of being exaggerated over time, and this incident may actually have never happened. The only known facts are that the hotel burned down on a cold winter night in December and an out of town fire department was asked to assist the local department. You decide....

1950s

The Town Council authorized the purchase of two Scott Air Packs during the August 1950 meeting. This was the first purchase of self-contained breathing apparatus for the fire department (Town of Louisburg. 23 October 1950). The breathing equipment was essential for doing search and rescue in heavy smoke conditions.

The fire house, only built three years previously, was damaged during a fire involving the Lancaster and Green Building in early 1951. The location of a building by this name

is unknown; however, it was evidently in close proximity to the fire house for this structure fire to have caused damages to the fire house. The council approved using the money received from the fire insurance company to repair damage to the fire house. The extent of the damage is unknown (Town of Louisburg. 9 February 1951).

One of the most contentious issues to ever face the Louisburg Fire Department came during a special session of the Town Council on February 26, 1951. This matter involved the fire department responding to fire alarms outside of the city limits of Louisburg (Town of Louisburg. 26 February 1951).

Chief Murphy advised the Town Council that the number of requests for the fire department to respond to calls outside of the city limits were increasing rapidly. He stated that this was becoming a growing expense for the town's taxpayers. Murphy further stated that he had given this matter a great deal of thought and could not arrive at a solution for the problem. "He suggested that a club of rural property owners might be organized and a plan for paying monthly or annual dues into a treasury adopted as a means of paying for protecting the property of the members of the club." A thorough discussion of this problem took place. Some members of the Board stated that the fire equipment should not cross the town limit and in no event should the fire truck be driven very far from the town limits. The consensus of opinion was that the rural property needed fire protection, but that the solution of this need was a problem for the Franklin County Commissioners (Town of Louisburg. 26 February 1951).

As a result of this discussion, a committee was appointed and instructed to request the Board of County Commissioners

to buy the necessary firefighting equipment and to organize one or more County Fire Companies, in order to provide fire protection for the rural homes and property throughout Franklin County (Town of Louisburg. 26 February 1951).

In 1952, the subject of another new fire truck was brought up during the May 9, meeting of the Town Council. Chief Murphy informed the council of the need for a modern fire truck. He stated that the department had one truck that was not dependable as it was 31 years old. The mayor instructed the Finance Committee to work with the fire chief and see what could be worked out (Town of Louisburg. 9 May 1952).

The topic of a new fire truck continued during a special session of the Town Council on May 29 for the purpose of discussing the purchase of a new truck. A representative of the American LaFrance-Foamite Corp. was present to answer any questions relating to fire fighting apparatus. After a discussion of the condition of the present truck, Commissioner Shearin made the following motion: "That the Board of Town Commissioners advertise for bids for a fire truck and that said bids to be Opened June 11th, 1952 at 11 o'clock A. M. Specifications for said truck to be worked out by fire Chief Murphy and that a notice of advertisement for the bids be published in the News and Observer. Motion seconded and carried" (Town of Louisburg. 29 May 1952).

The bids for the new fire truck were opened in a special session of the Town Council on June 11. "The following bid was received from the American LaFrance-Foamite Corp: For 1 American LaFrance Invader 750-gallon engine equipped in accordance with the town of Louisburg, NC specifications and to ship same in about 150 days after execution of the contract for the sum of \$15,994.00 F.O.B. Elmira, NY. Freight allowed

to destination Louisburg with terms to be mutually agreed upon” (Town of Louisburg. 11 Jun 1952).

Then “Commissioner Shearin moved that the Town of Louisburg lease, with the option to buy, the engine described in the proposal of the American LaFrance-Foamite Corp. at the price therein set out and that the lease agreement to be arranged by a representative of the above mentioned company and by the Finance Committee of the Town of Louisburg. The motion was then seconded and carried” (Town of Louisburg. 11 June 1952). There is no further mention of the purchase arrangements for this truck, so it can be assumed that the lease-to-purchase option was used.

This new engine was a 1952 American LaFrance 700 Series “Invader” with a 215 horsepower engine, a 750- gallon per minute pump, a 150-gallon tank, and all standard firefighting equipment (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). This was called a “curbside pumper.” The pump control panel was located on the right side of the vehicle so that the operator would not be in the street but on the “curb” side of the truck while operating the pump. The fire engine was received by the town and went into service sometime in late 1952.

Another special session of the Town Council was held on August 18 in order to discuss the fire department responding to call outside of the town limits. The council ordered Chief Murphy not to answer any fire alarms outside the city limits of Louisburg after September 15, 1952. The council agreed, however, that it would be willing to negotiate with any group, or individual, within the Louisburg area, for the furnishing of fire protection. This was dependant on terms to be worked out by any such group and the council (Town of Louisburg. 18 August 1952).

At the September 5 Town Council meeting, it was moved that the deadline of furnishing fire protection outside of town be postponed until such time as the new fire truck that was under order was received and placed into service. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 5 September 1952).

At the same meeting, “the Finance Committee and the Fire Chief were instructed to work out a schedule of rates, terms, and conditions of furnishing fire protection to the residents outside of the city limits” (Town of Louisburg. 5 September 1952).

Commissioner Shearin made a motion that the ordinance presented to the council governing the response to fire alarms outside of the city limits be adopted. His motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 5 December 1952).

This ordinance, An Ordinance of the Commissioners of the Town of Louisburg Relating to Outside Fire Service, is too long to include in this writing. The ordinance says, paraphrasing, that the fire department had offered fire protection in many cases to residents outside of town, and that the town recognized the need for continuation of this service, but it posed an undue burden on the taxpayers of Louisburg, and the persons receiving this benefit should pay a proportionate share of the costs. It was therefore ordained that from January 1, 1953 forward that no fire service would be offered outside of the city limits, except under a number of cases which were outlined in the ordinance. There was a \$10.00 per year fee for residences and businesses within a five-mile radius of the corporate limits of Louisburg. There were also other legalities set forth in the contract that would have to be signed by the person owning any fee simple title to

any improved property within the defined area (Town of Louisburg. 5 December 1952).

As mentioned earlier, the Louisburg Fire Department started a fund raising effort in 1948 for the purpose of purchasing a vehicle for the Louisburg Rescue Squad, which was still a unit of the fire department at that time. The vehicle was donated to the Town of Louisburg for use by the Rescue Squad on March 2, 1953. The efforts of this fund raising endeavor came to fruition as shown in a resolution adopted by the council on April 10, 1953. The resolution acknowledges that “the motor truck was donated to the town for use by the rescue squad to be used for the saving of human life in the event of emergencies land disaster, said truck being fully paid for from funds raised by our local firemen, without expense to the Town” (Town of Louisburg. 10 April 1953).

The resolution goes on to “attempt to express, not only the deep and sincere appreciation of the Board, but of all of the people of the Town and this entire community for this unselfish and public-spirited act” (Town of Louisburg. 10 April 1953).

The fire house was enlarged in 1953, adding space for the rescue squad vehicle, which had been donated by the fire department. Although the exact date is undetermined, it would probably have been after the truck was donated on April 10. The addition consisted of another bay, added to the east side of the fire house (“Outline of Fire Department History”).

During the June 24 meeting, “Councilman Shearin made the following motion: That the employment of Mr. W. T. May as assistant engineer for the fire Dept. and as town jailer be approved. Commissioner Murphy seconded this motion and it was carried. The board established May’s salary at \$50.00 per

week and that of Joe Perry at \$50.00 per week, and instructed the employment of May to begin July 1, 1954 (Town of Louisburg. 24 June 1954). May was the sixth full-time paid engineer for the department, apparently replacing Newell Allen who had been hired as assistant fireman (engineer) in 1939. Allen had been employed for 15 years.

During the August 5, 1955 Town Council meeting, a discussion was held concerning the purchase of a larger rescue truck to replace the one being used by the rescue unit of the fire department. A committee was formed to investigate the possibilities of purchasing a one-ton panel truck. The bid for this vehicle was to reflect the trade-in value of the existing vehicle. Bids were to be opened at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the council (Town of Louisburg. 5 August 1955).

The only bid received for the new vehicle was opened during the September 9 meeting. The council felt that the "trading difference" between the new vehicle and the existing vehicle was too high, thus the bid was rejected (Town of Louisburg. 9 September 1955).

Representatives of the local Civil Air Patrol were present at this same meeting. They stated that if a new vehicle was purchased for the rescue unit that the Civil Air Patrol was interested in the old truck for use by the patrol during emergencies (Town of Louisburg. 9 September 1955).

The Civil Air Patrol was represented again at the October meeting of the Town Council. This time, they told the council that Franklin County and the Town of Franklinton had agreed to contribute up to \$250.00 to the Civil Air Patrol for the purchase of the one-half ton Chevrolet panel truck (Town of Louisburg. 7 October 1955).

A motion was then made that the town advertise for bids for the one-ton panel truck, with dual rear wheels and overload springs, to be used by the rescue unit. The bids were to be opened at a special session of the council. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 7 October 1955).

The Louisburg Town Council held a special session on October 28, 1955 for the purpose of opening bids for the new vehicle for the rescue unit. Three bids were received, with Rowe Chevrolet Company having the only bid that met the specifications of the advertisement. Therefore, the bid from Rowe Chevrolet was ordered to be held open until the next regular meeting for further information of the bid (Town of Louisburg. 28 October 1955).

The discussion of the new rescue truck continued at the November 11 meeting of the council. Again the price came in too high, so the town clerk was instructed to advertise for bids once again. This time the specifications were changed to single rear wheels, rather than dual wheels (Town of Louisburg. 11 November 1955).

The bid from Louisburg Tractor and Truck Company was accepted on December 9, 1955. The vehicle was a 1956 model GMC one-ton panel truck with eight cylinder engine and deluxe cab at a price of \$1,890.14 (Town of Louisburg. 9 December 1955).

During the August 6, 1956 meeting of the council, "Members of the Board were informed that Mr. W.T. May had tendered his resignation effective August 31, 1956, as a fireman to accept employment with the City of Rocky Mount, NC." May had worked for the department since July 1, 1954, being employed for two years. The Board then considered applications to fill the vacancy. The members of the Board felt

that all applicants were qualified but expressed opinion that a single person would stay at the fire house on his nights off and would be ready to carry the second truck out if the need arose. After consideration Mr. Karl Pernell was employed as a fireman at a salary of \$45.00 per week, employment to begin September 2, 1956” (Town of Louisburg. 10 August 1956). Pernell was the seventh full-time paid engineer to be hired by the town.

A new fire alarm system was placed into use in 1957. The new system replaced the older electric powered siren, which was put into service in early 1945. This modern system incorporated the use of air horns to sound the alarm. Basically, the system used an air compressor to charge a pressure tank that was located on a tower on top of the fire station. This pressure tank provided air to sound the horns, which could be heard over most of the town. Number codes were used to designate different sectors of town so that the firemen would know to which area to respond. Each sector of town had a number sequence which was made into a code wheel.

The process was as follows: A call came in and the engineer received the location. The engineer then selected the code wheel that corresponded to that particular sector of town and placed it on the activator for the air horns. The alarm was then triggered and the number sequence was repeated on the alarm system for a predetermined number of cycles. There were a total of 14 codes, 12 were for the fire department sectors of town, one was for the rescue squad, and one was for the National Guard Mobilization signal (Louisburg Fire Department. 1956).

Prior to this new alarm system, the fire truck would leave a stream of water in the street from the fire house to the scene

of the fire. The firemen would either have to go by the fire house, find the stream of water, and then follow it to the scene of the alarm, or if it was intercepted on the way to the fire house, the firemen would then follow it to the scene. This may have been an antiquated system, but it was all that they had and it worked.

The money to fund the purchase of this new alarm system came from Federal Civil Defense Administration matching funds, through the North Carolina Council of Civil Defense. The initial application process was begun by Dr. John T. Lloyd, who was the Director of Civil Defense for Louisburg in 1955 and 1956. The approval letter from the state, dated August 21, 1956, was addressed to W.F. (Wimpy) Shelton, who was Director of Civil Defense for Louisburg at that time. Interestingly, the letter of approval was signed by Edward F. Griffin, Director of North Carolina Council of Civil Defense (Louisburg Fire Department. 1956). Griffin was also from Louisburg.

W.F. Shelton, Director of Civil Defense for the Town of Louisburg, NC, and A.F. Johnson, Jr. appeared before the council on September 7, 1956. "Mr. Shelton and Mr. Johnson told members of the Board that the Federal Government had approved the purchase of an air raid warning system for the town of Louisburg and to pay one-half of the cost of same, or \$2105.00, whichever is less." It was moved "that the Town of Louisburg advertise for bids for an air horn alarm system for use of the Town of Louisburg Civil Defense organization according to specifications worked out by the Director of Civil Defense" (Town of Louisburg. 7 September 1956).

The total cost of the new system was \$2643.00, of which \$2105.00 was paid by the Federal Civil Defense Administration matching funds through the North Carolina

Council of Civil Defense. This included the components of the system and the code wheels, which were purchased from Wipper and Associates of Coral Gables, Florida. Hardwick Welding and Machine Works of Louisburg installed the system for \$275.00, including assorted plumbing parts and labor (Louisburg Fire Department. 1956).

One interesting thing in W.F. Shelton's letter of justification for receiving these funds is reference to a letter from the Director of Civil Defense for Raleigh. The director supported the approval of funds for Louisburg in his letter, stating that Louisburg and Franklin County served a role as a support area for the "Target City" of Raleigh (Louisburg Fire Department. 1956). It must be remembered that this was during the Cold War and just a few years before the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

The new air horn alarm system was placed into service in February 1957. An invoice from Wipper and Associates shows that the equipment was shipped on January 19. An invoice from Hardwick Welding and Machine Works for the installation of the system was dated February 1 (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

A big change came about during the September 6, 1957 meeting of the Louisburg Town Council when the following motion was made: "That all functions of the rescue unit now operating as a part of the Louisburg Fire Department be transferred to the Louisburg Civil Defense Unit and that all equipment and supplies be turned over to the Civil Defense Unit for the purpose of operating same by the Louisburg Civil Defense Unit." This motion was seconded and carried by a unanimous vote. The matter of housing for the rescue operation was also discussed, but no action was taken (Town of Louisburg. 6 September 1957). The rescue unit of the

Louisburg Fire Department, which was formed in late 1948 or early 1949, was no longer a unit of the fire department after about an eight-year relationship.

During the August 5, 1957 meeting of the fire department, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to appoint a committee to draft a constitution and by-laws for the operation of the fire department (Louisburg Fire Department. 5 August 1957). The draft of the "Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisburg Fire Department" were read section by section during the October meeting of the department. After a few minor changes, they were adopted with a roll call vote (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 October 1957).

Mr. James Johnson, Secretary of the Louisburg Fire Department, appeared before the Town Council at the October 11, 1957 meeting. He requested that the town pay the cost of printing, in book form, the recently adopted "Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisburg Fire Department." Councilman Shearin moved that the town manager be authorized to have 100 copies of these rules and regulations printed at a cost of \$75.00. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg.11 October 1957).

Captain A.F. Johnson, Jr., of the Civil Defense Rescue Unit, was also present at the October 11 meeting. Johnson informed members of the council that the A.H. Spencer property on South Main Street could be obtained by lease for the Civil Defense Headquarters to house the rescue squad equipment. He also stated that the property could be leased for one year for the sum of \$500.00. It was moved that the Town of Louisburg lease this property on Depot Hill on South Main Street, for a period of a year, for use of the rescue unit of the Department of Civil Defense at a rate of \$500.00 per annum, payable quarterly. The motion was seconded and

unanimously passed. The town attorney was instructed to prepare the necessary lease agreement (Town of Louisburg. 11 October 1957).

The subject of the rescue squad answering all fire alarms came up during the December 2, 1957 meeting of the fire department. A motion was made and seconded that the Louisburg Fire Department Executive Committee makes the decision on this request. Rescue Chief A.F. Johnson, Jr. asked for a decision as soon as possible (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 December 1957).

As a follow up to the previous meeting, the Executive Committee of the fire department stated a desire, on behalf of the department, that the Louisburg Rescue Squad be requested to respond to all night fire alarms during the January 2, 1958 meeting (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 January 1958).

On March 5, 1958, at the Louisburg Fire Department meeting, Chief Murphy submitted his letter of resignation. The firemen would have no part of this. A motion was made not to accept Chief Murphy's letter. The motion was seconded, a roll call vote was held, and the department voted unanimously to reject the resignation (Louisburg Fire Department. 5 May 1958). Murphy served as chief for two additional years.

During the December 10, 1958 meeting of the Town Council, it was moved that the town manager be authorized to negotiate an additional lease for the A.H. Spencer property for the rescue service. This lease was for a period of one year and was not to exceed an annual rental of \$600.00. If possible, the town manager was to secure an option for the lease of the same property on a yearly basis for an additional period of four years, at the same rate. This motion was

seconded and passed (Town of Louisburg. 10 December 1958).

At the March 6, 1959 meeting of the Town Council, W.F. Shelton, Director of Civil Defense, informed the council that the Federal Civil Defense has approved a Louisburg Civil Defense Public Service Radio System, and that it has been licensed by the F.C.C. He stated that the system would consist of a base station and six mobile units, with an approximate cost of \$2500.00. He stated further that the Federal Civil Defense would pay approximately one-half of the total cost of this equipment. Shelton recommended that the town advertise for bids for same. Motion by Councilman Shearin was seconded that the town manager was authorized to advertise for bids for the above equipment (Town of Louisburg. 6 March 1959).

Another important event occurred during this meeting, which would change the manner in which firemen were notified of an alarm and greatly increase their response time. A motion was made, seconded and carried that the manager was to be authorized to install a telephone fire alarm system, consisting of service to twenty volunteer firemen's telephones for a period of one year, not to exceed \$305.00 (Town of Louisburg. 6 March 1959).

The telephone emergency alarm system was used in addition to the air horn alarm system, as the new system only served twenty firemen when first put into use. This number was increased in 1963. The "hot line" at the station could be picked up, the firemen's phones rung automatically, and the location of the fire was announced to the volunteers. The old air horn system would still be used in conjunction with the phones for a few more years.

Robert Lee Harris appeared before the Town Council at the July 10 meeting on behalf of the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company. He requested funds for the expenses to attend the firemen's convention to be held in Wilson. "A motion was made, seconded, and carried to pay \$75.00 for the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company to attend the state colored firemen's convention in Wilson" (Town of Louisburg. 10 July 1959).

A motion was made during the July 10 meeting of the Town Council "that the Town of Louisburg permit the County of Franklin to install a radio transmitter on town property adjacent to the standpipe located behind what was then Mills High School and to permit the erection of an antenna on top of the standpipe. This was providing that the antenna meets with the correct federal agency approval, and that the transmitter be protected so that it will not be a hazard to life or property. It was also stated that the Town of Louisburg would agree to install the cable, furnished by the County, from the courthouse and fire house to the transmitter and erect the antenna and necessary cable from the transmitter to the antenna. The town would assume its proportionate cost of all mobile radio units and remote units used by the town. This motion was made with consideration that the town may terminate this agreement upon two years notice, and that the town shall have the privilege of using the transmitter, which shall be maintained by the County of Franklin, and that the total expenditure of the town for equipment and outside labor shall not exceed \$1500.00" (Town of Louisburg. 10 July 1959). This motion seconded and carried unanimously

This action by the Town Council followed the authorization to purchase the radio equipment discussed during the March 6 meeting of the Town Council. It appears that the town and county worked together to create the first radio system to be used by Sheriff's Department, Louisburg Police Department,

and the Louisburg Fire Department. The motion stated that the town would be allowed to use the transmitter with its mobile radio units. This was the first radio system used by the fire department.

The reason for suggesting that this was the first radio system to be used by the Sheriff's Department, Louisburg Police and Fire Departments is as follows. First, the county and town agreed to install the transmitter and antenna system jointly. Secondly, the town agreed to purchase a base station and six mobile units, with the Federal Civil Defense paying half. Thirdly, the base station was located in the fire house and evidently the mobile units were installed in each of the two fire engines, the town police car, and the sheriff's cars.

Prior to the installation of this radio system, the Louisburg Police Department had a base station, with a remote unit located in the fire house, as well as a mobile unit in the police car. During the day, and each night, when no one was in the police station, the firemen on duty had to dispatch the police and the highway patrol.

It was decided during the January 1958 meeting of the Louisburg Fire Department that the Rescue Squad would be requested to respond to all night fire alarms.

At the August 1959 meeting of the Louisburg Town Council, the subject of when the fire department would respond with the rescue squad calls was discussed. A motion was made that the town authorize the fire department to dispatch fire apparatus, as necessary, to the scene of out of town motor vehicle, aircraft, or railroad accidents, assuming that such apparatus was available at the time and did not pose undue hazard to the town, as determined by the fire chief. This response would be requested by the rescue

squad. The motion was seconded but failed to receive the necessary votes to carry (Town of Louisburg. 7 August 1959).

The subject of fire department response to rescue calls was revisited at the September 11, 1959 meeting of the Town Council. This time, a motion was made to amend the Ordinance of the Town of Louisburg as related to the response of the fire department to out of town alarms with the rescue squad. The motion proposed adding a new subsection that read as follows: "To protect the transient automobiles, trucks, and aircraft of any individual or corporation in the event of accident or fire" (Town of Louisburg. 11 September 1959). This time the motion was seconded and carried.

The year 1952 was a bad year for the lumber company businesses in Louisburg. On June 20, the Taylor-Thayer Lumber Company burned, losing machinery and 160,000 board feet of lumber. The loss was estimated at \$50,000.00.

Then, less than two weeks later, Pruitt Lumber Company was destroyed by fire. This fire, which was started by a burning sawdust pile, was aggravated by high winds. This fire resulted in a \$125,000.00 loss (Johnson, Elizabeth).

Another notable fire in this decade was the Fleming Fruit Company, which occurred on June 5, 1959. This structure was located on Depot Hill on South Main Street and resulted in an estimated \$10,000.00 loss (Johnson, Elizabeth).

1960s

W.J. "Pete" Shearin was approved by the Town Council to replace Herman Murphy as fire chief. This announcement was made during the January 1960 meeting of the fire department. Murphy had served as chief of the department for

12 years and two months (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 January 1960).

(Note: The names of the council members making motions and/or seconding motions relating to the fire department have been omitted throughout most of this history. This is not meant to overlook their contributions, but to make this a straightforward read without too many names to keep up with. However, Councilman W.J. (Pete) Shearin's name has been shown quite a few times during his tenure as a Town Council member, from 1940 until 1960. This was done purposely in order to demonstrate the contributions and dedication shown by Mr. Shearin during his tenure as a Louisburg Town Councilman. It seems to be a natural progression for him to become Chief of the Louisburg Fire Department as he had previously shown a great deal of interest and concern for the department.)

Also during the January meeting, an amendment to the Louisburg Fire Department By-laws was proposed that would not allow members of the rescue squad to apply for membership in the fire department, nor would members of the fire department be allowed to join the rescue squad (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 January 1960).

The by-law amendment that was proposed at the January meeting was approved, after laying over the required time, during the March 14 meeting of the fire department (Louisburg Fire Department. 14 March 1960). This amendment went into effect immediately.

Around 1960, the Louisburg Fire Department purchased an Army surplus tanker through the Civil Defense. The vehicle was about a 1944 model GMC 353 D, 2½ ton 6X6 tanker. It was an open-cab military style vehicle with a 750-gallon tank. It was painted a yellow military drab color when purchased

and never changed in the four years it was in service (“Outline of Fire Department History”).

The rescue squad moved from its location on South Main Street to its new headquarters in 1960. This modern building, which is currently their home, is located on Davis Street (“Outline of Fire Department History”). A great deal of the construction of this facility was completed by the squad members.

Rowe Chevrolet began donating the use of a station wagon to the squad in August 1960. This vehicle was donated to be used as an ambulance. The donation of a station wagon continued for several years (“Outline of Fire Department History”).

The organizational meeting of the Franklin County Fireman’s Association was held on July 13, 1962. This meeting was held at Norris Collins’ cabin at Mitchner’s Pond. On October 9, 1962, the first annual county wide meeting of the association was held at the Franklin County Courthouse. The Louisburg Fire Department was a member of the Franklin County Fireman’s Association from its inception. The other original members of the association were Franklinton, Youngsville, Bunn, Justice, Centerville, and Epsom (Franklin County Fireman’s Association).

On August 10, 1962, several members of the fire department appeared before the council explaining the need for a new fire truck. It was moved that the town advertise for bids for a cab and chassis to be equipped as a fire truck to comply with the specifications already on file in the office of the town administrator. The motion was seconded and carried. Evidently, this group of firemen was present to reinforce the need for the new truck, as specifications were already on file (Town of Louisburg. 10 August 1962). This was

the first evidence of a request for the new vehicle or the specifications.

A follow-up motion was made to advertise for bids to provide a 750-gallon per minute pump to be mounted on the commercial cab and chassis that was discussed above. This motion was also seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 10 August 1962).

The town administrator opened the bids for the new fire apparatus during the September 7, 1962 meeting of the council. Seagrave entered a bid of \$10,590.00 and American LaFrance's bid came in at \$11,600.00. The bids were discussed and tabled (Town of Louisburg. 7 September 1962).

It was also moved during this meeting "that the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company be permitted to extend an invitation to the State Colored Fire Association to hold their 1963 convention in Louisburg." The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 7 September 1962). This would be the first of two times that this convention was held in Louisburg. (The Colored Fire Company was originally referred to as the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company, and these titles were still being used interchangeably in 1962.)

The bids that were received on September 7 for the commercial cab and chassis were rejected and the town administrator was authorized to readvertise for bids for a cab and chassis for a Ford C-850, or equivalent, with a 477-cubic inch engine and four barrel carburetor as well as Ford C-1000, or equivalent, with a 534-cubic inch engine and a four-barrel carburetor. A motion was made, seconded, and carried (Town of Louisburg. 21 September 1962).

During this same meeting of the council, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the bid from Seagrave. This bid, in the amount of \$10,590.00, was for the 750-gallon per minute pump and accessories to be mounted on the commercial chassis (Town of Louisburg. 21 September 1962).

On October 5, bids for the cab and chassis were reopened. The bids were as follows: Farmers Tractor and Truck Company at \$5,989.02, W. S. Boyd Sales Company at \$7,383.85, and Seagrave Corporation with a bid of \$6,195.00. It was "moved that the town accept the bid of Seagrave Corp. for Ford C-850 cab and chassis in the amount of \$6,195.00 as being the lowest bid meeting the specification as advertised" (Town of Louisburg. 5 October 1962). This motion was seconded and carried.

These actions resulted in both bids, including cab, chassis, pump, and all other accessories, being approved. The total price of the fire engine was \$16,785.00. This vehicle would be nicknamed "Lizzie."

Mr. W.F. Shelton, who appeared before the council on March 6, 1959, then as the Director of Civil Defense, returned to the council on January 11, 1963. This time he appeared as "a Director of the Franklin County Firemen's Association." Again, his request was "for the use of the town standpipe for a radio antenna and communication installation similar to that now being used by the town and county for law enforcement officers." The terms were the same as previous, which is that the town would not incur any cost. The request was approved by the council (Town of Louisburg. 11 January 1963),

The antenna and communications equipment to be installed at the standpipe was very similar to what was already installed at this location. The difference was that the existing

system was for law enforcement use and the proposed system would be for the Franklin County Fireman's Association to be used by the fire departments within the county.

The project, which was in the making for over two years, would cost an estimated \$10,000.00. The Franklin County Commissioners donated \$4,000.00 per year for two years to the Firemen's Association for the completion of this project ("Central Alarm System Installed In County").

This system was not only designed for communications but as a central alarm system for the county fire departments. The system consisted of a base station located at the Louisburg Fire House and units located in each of the county's volunteer fire departments.

The base station, located at the Louisburg Fire Department, would be "manned by Louisburg's two full-time engineers plus a third engineer that would be hired as a part of the Central Alarm Program." Tom Denton, Jr., hired as the third engineer, was to be paid by the Firemen's Association through the Town of Louisburg ("Central Alarm System Installed In County"). Denton became the ninth full-time paid engineer working for the department. With this new position, the staff reached three full-time firemen, working in rotation.

The new central alarm system worked as follows: The emergency would be called in to a countywide phone number and answered by the engineer on call in Louisburg. This engineer would receive the necessary information as to name, location, and type of fire. The alarm for that particular fire department would be activated from Louisburg. When the first fireman arrived at that firehouse, he would radio back to Louisburg for the information on the alarm. This may sound somewhat crude by today's standards; however, it was state

of the art for that time period (“Central Alarm System Installed In County”).

Several members of the fire department appeared before the council at the April 17, 1963 meeting. They requested that the council consider replacing the Army surplus tanker truck. It was moved “that the Town Administrator be authorized to advertise for bids for a 2 ton rated cab and chassis to be used as a fire truck tanker to replace the present surplus tanker obtained through the civil defense and a 1250-gallon full skirted, single compartment, water tank, complete with baffles to fit said cab and chassis” (Town of Louisburg. 17 April 1963). The motion was seconded and carried.

At this same meeting, the 1946 Ford fire truck was declared surplus and authorization was given to accept sealed bids for its sale.

The Louisburg Fire Department phone alarm system was proposed to be added to in 1963. Twenty additional phones were requested, for a total of 40 (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Every member would now be connected to the system if this request was approved. Only 10 of the 20 phones requested were approved at this time.

On May 1, 1963, a special session of the council was held. The “purpose of this session was to open bids for the cab and chassis and tank to be used for a fire truck and to open bids for the sale of the 1946 Ford fire truck (surplus) and to attend to any other business” (Town of Louisburg. 1 May 1963).

“The following bids from the following companies for the sale of 1 – 1946 Ford Fire Truck:

Jack Slagle Fire Equipment Supply.....	\$2305.95
Town of Pine Level.....	\$2251.51
John W. Barnes Enterprises.....	\$1625.00

East Nash Fire Dept, Wilson.....\$1000.00

It was moved that the high bid from Jack Slagle Supply in the amount of \$2305.95 be accepted. Seconded and carried” (Town of Louisburg. 1 May 1963).

“The Town Administrator opened bids from the following companies for the purchase of a cab and chassis for a new fire truck and 1250-gallon tank:

Griffin Motor Co (Cab and chassis)....., \$3027.48
Alexander Welding & Mfg Co (Tank)..... \$1101.53
American Fire Apparatus (comb).....\$5614.00

Motion was made that the low bid of Griffin Motor Co. in the amount of \$3207.48 for the custom cab and chassis with the 271-horsepower engine be accepted. Seconded and carried” (Town of Louisburg. 1 May 1963).

“Motion was made that the low bid of Alexander Welding Co. in the amount of \$1101.53 (including tax) for the 1250-gallon tank to be installed on cab and chassis as per specification be accepted. Seconded and carried” (Town of Louisburg. 1 May 1963). The fire department tanker was received and put into service sometime in mid to late 1963.

On October 11, 1963, several members of the fire department appeared before the Town Council on behalf of the Louisburg Fire Department “expressing concerns about the role that the department would have in the new Franklin County (Central) Fire Alarms System” (Town of Louisburg. 11 October 1963).

A fire department resolution was presented to the council. The department felt that the system should be placed at a neutral site. It was the thought of the department that “placing

this system in the Louisburg Fire Department would not promote harmony and peace within the Association” (Town of Louisburg. 11 October 1963). The department also felt that the system should be operated by the association.

The operation of the Central Alarm System came up again at the December 6 meeting of the Town Council. It was “moved that the Town of Louisburg enter into a contract with the County of Franklin to operate the central fire alarm network for a period of one year. The base radio was to be placed in the Louisburg Fire House, and the contract was to be for one year from the date the base station was installed” (Town of Louisburg. 6 December 1963). Evidently, the resolution presented by the fire department at the October meeting, which favored placing the central alarm system at a neutral site, did not carry much weight.

Some of the members of the fire department decided that the time had come for the department to have a full-time paid fire chief. On June 5, 1964, a petition signed by twelve members of the fire department, was presented to the Town Council. The department felt “that by having a qualified and experienced full-time fire chief that the department would be in a position to provide much better service and protection for the property and lives of the people of Louisburg” (Town of Louisburg. 5 June 1964). Evidently, this idea did not carry much weight with the council either, as it was not mentioned again.

Fire Chief Shearin and Robert Lee Harris appeared before the council on November 5, 1965 on behalf of the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company. The purpose of their presence was to discuss equipment for the Hose and Reel Company. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the Town Administrator be

authorized to investigate the cost of twelve coats (Town of Louisburg. 5 November 1965).

Gerald Eury was hired as an engineer on December 4, 1965. He would be the ninth full-time firemen to serve the department. Gerald replaced Tommy Denton, who had recently resigned (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

At the December 16th meeting of the council, a motion was made, seconded, and carried that authorized the town administrator to purchase 12 coats for the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company (Town of Louisburg. 16 December 1965).

In January of 1966, R. G. Person, Jr. became fire chief, replacing Pete Shearin, who served as a fireman for 38 years and was chief for six years.

Gray Moon was hired as a full-time engineer on March 1, 1968. He made the tenth full-time fireman hired by the department. Gray replaced Karl Pernell, who had resigned in November 1967 (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Pernell was employed by the department for 11 years.

The decade of the 1960s is remembered as a period of time with many large fires in the town of Louisburg. It was also noted for additional fires at local lumber companies.

On January 15, 1960, Pruitt Lumber Company suffered another loss of between \$15,000.00 and \$20,000.00 when a large dry lumber shed and several stacks of lumber outside were destroyed. Winds of 25 to 30 miles per hour caused the fire to endanger nearby buildings and hampered the suppression of the fire. Justice Fire Department assisted in extinguishing the fire (Johnson, Elizabeth).

The main building on the campus of the Franklin County Training School, later known as Riverside High School,

burned on March 9, 1960. This fire occurred shortly after students were dismissed from school because of a blinding snow storm. The damage estimate to the school was about \$75,000.00, part of which was covered by insurance (Johnson, Elizabeth).

On June 20, 1963, Taylor-Thayer Lumber Company suffered another fire. This fire, which started in the sawdust boiler room, resulted in thousands of dollars in damages. As ironic as it may seem, both the 1952 and 1963 fires were on June 20 (Johnson, Elizabeth).

A large warehouse fire on South Main Street occurred on January 29, 1964. In addition to Ford's Southside Warehouse, Bunn's Grocery, Weaver's Clothing, and the abandoned Cooper's Gin were destroyed, resulting in a loss of an estimated \$150,000.00. Wind conditions caused this fire to threaten the entire south side of town. Fire units from Bunn, Franklinton, Epsom, Justice, and Centerville came to the assistance of the Louisburg department (Johnson, Elizabeth).

On December 11, 1965, South Main Street was the scene of another large fire when the Blount Building burned. This building housed Dallas Blount's Funeral Home and the Franklin County Colored Library. The fire resulted in a total loss (Johnson, Elizabeth).

Another large fire hit South Main Street again on November 20, 1966. This fire was in the same block as the warehouse fire in 1964. Businesses destroyed during this fire were Green's Café, a barber shop, Franco Auto Parts, and a tavern. Fuller and Hayes Grocery, located adjacent to this scene, suffered water and smoke damage (Johnson, Elizabeth).

A very hot and dangerous fire occurred in 1960. This was when Joyner Wholesale Building Supply Co., located on South Main Street, was totally destroyed by fire (Joyner). The fire was so hot that one crew of firemen was assigned to cooling the fuel storage tanks at the adjacent Little River Oil Plant. Fortunately, they were successful in their efforts to prevent these tanks from exploding, but unfortunately the Joyner building and its contents were a total loss. No estimate on the damages is available.

Louisburg College experienced another fire loss on April 22, 1967, when the Faculty-Student Apartment Building caught fire. The building was saved, but suffered heavy smoke and water damage. Lightning was ruled as the cause of the fire (Johnson, Elizabeth).

The year of 1967 also saw the loss of two local eating and entertainment establishments. On May 21, the Village Drive Inn was destroyed by a fire, and on June 1, the Little Acorn Drive Inn went up in smoke (Johnson, Elizabeth).

Wilson Building Supply on the East River Road experienced a loss on March 7, 1968 when the lumber storage building burned (Johnson, Elizabeth).

On November 6, 1968, a fire on the corner of South Main and Bull Run Alley (now Johnson Street) almost caused the loss of the fire house. Fortunately, the hard work of the department resulted in only minor smoke damage to the fire house. The early morning fire destroyed the building, which was referred to as the old ABC Store. The structure ran from South Main to the east and was adjoined by the fire house. It contained several businesses including two pool rooms and a grill. The structure was totally destroyed, with an estimated \$50,000.00 loss (Johnson, Elizabeth).

Just short of seven weeks later, in December 1968, another large fire hit downtown Louisburg. This fire was actually across South Main Street from the Bull Run Alley fire. The Friendly Warehouse, Mullen's Shoe Shop, and Mullen's Department Store were totally destroyed.

According to many of the veteran firemen, this was one of the hottest fires that they had ever experienced, primarily because of the old wooden structure and all of the tobacco dust that had accumulated over the years in the building. Several nearby buildings, including McKinne's Seaboard Store, were threatened. The estimated loss was set at \$150,000.00 (Johnson, Elizabeth).

Green Hill Country Club had a fire on September 5, 1969. Lightning was the probable cause of this fire, which resulted in \$30,000.00 in damages (Johnson, Elizabeth).

The year 1966 marks 60 years since the first known written reference to the Louisburg Fire Department can be found. The department had made great strides during the first 30 years and appeared to be in good condition. It appears that the department has continued this growth and development. The following is a list (in no particular order) of events and actions that occurred during this most recent 30 year period:

- Nine additional full-time paid firemen served during this period
- Three additional fire chiefs served
- The 1921 American LaFrance fire engine was replaced with a 1946 Ford fire engine
- A new 1952 American LaFrance fire engine was purchased
- The 1952 American LaFrance was replaced with a new 1963 Seagrave fire engine

- An Army surplus tanker was purchased about 1960
- The Army surplus tanker was replaced with a new 1964 Ford tanker
- A new fire house was built in 1948
- The fire house was enlarged in 1953
- Contract was established for responding to out of town fires
- A new air horn alarm system was installed
- A new telephone alarm system was implemented

1970s

On February 5, 1970, Chief Person appeared before the Town Council and requested that the council consider the purchase of a new fire truck. Mayor Peoples appointed a committee to work with Chief Person on the matter of specifications and funding relative to the purchase of a new fire truck (Town of Louisburg. 5 February 1970).

Mr. James Johnson, Secretary of the Louisburg Fire Department, appeared before the council on July 12, 1971 and requested that the council investigate the possibility of obtaining additional emergency call phones for the members of the fire department (Town of Louisburg. 12 July 1971). It appears that no action was taken on this request at this meeting. Evidently, the addition of twenty phones mentioned in 1963 did not work out and only ten of the requested phones were approved. That would have made phones available for thirty members.

At the September 13 meeting of the Town Council, a motion was made "that the Town Clerk be authorized to advertise for bids for radio equipment for the Fire Department, specifications to be determined by the Fire Chief, said bids to be opened October 12, 1972, at 7:30 o'clock PM. Seconded

and carried unanimously” (Town of Louisburg. 13 September 1971).

On October 18, the fire department made another request for the emergency call phones, this time asking for ten additional phones. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the request for the ten phones be granted (Town of Louisburg. 18 October 1971). This would mean that all firemen would have the emergency call phones. This is most likely when the air horn alarm system was taken out of service.

Also during this meeting, the bids for the radio equipment mentioned in the September meeting were opened. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that Motorola Communications bid for \$2871.00 be approved (Town of Louisburg. 18 October 1971). These radios were the first hand-held (walkie-talkie) units in the department. The units were originally carried on each fire engine and made available to the first officer to arrive on the scene of the fire. Later, as more units were purchased, each engineer and officer had one.

A special session of the Town Council was held on November 1, 1971 for the purpose of hearing a report from the committee on the specifications for the new fire truck. The committee reported that the specifications were in order and ready to be submitted for bids. A motion was made that the town advertise for bids for the new fire apparatus and the bids were to be opened on December 13, 1971. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 1 November 1971).

The department began participation in the North Carolina State Firemen’s Pension Fund in 1971. This allowed firemen, in good standing and with a minimum of 20 years of service, to retire and draw a small pension at age 55. In order to

remain a member of the department, fire call and training attendance had to be maintained at levels approved by the state. This is a very important and valuable benefit for the firemen.

In late 1971 or early 1972, the minimum age for becoming a member of the fire department was changed. The previous requirement for an applicant to be 21 years of age was reduced to 18.

Karl Pernell replaced R. G. Person, Jr. as Chief of the Louisburg Fire Department in January of 1972. Person had served as chief for four years.

On January 10, 1972, the only bid for the new fire apparatus received by the Town Council was from Wyigul-Sanders Ford. A motion was made that the bid of \$10,535.75 be left open for 30 days (Town of Louisburg. 10 January 1972).

Fire Chief Pernell presented additional information on the fire truck chassis during the February 14 meeting of the council. A motion was then made, seconded, and carried that Wyigul-Sanders be awarded the bid. It was then moved that bids for the pump apparatus be advertised. This motion was also seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 14 February 1972).

The town administrator reported that two bids were received for the fire truck pump apparatus at the March 13 meeting. Mr. David Lee, sales representative from Howe Manufacturing Company was present for questions. Howe's bid of \$21,684.57 was accepted by the council (Town of Louisburg. 13 March 1972). This engine, serial number 13636, consisted of a 1972 Ford chassis with Howe apparatus mounted. It was powered by a Caterpillar V-225 diesel engine.

The engine pumped at a rate of 1000 gallons per minute and had a 500-gallon tank (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). The total price of this fire engine was \$32,220.32.

A special session of the Town Council was held on March 27, at which time the town administrator reported that a new position for fireman/dispatcher had been approved under the Emergency Employment Act. This position, which created the fourth engineer position, was filled by Horace Sweet who became the eleventh full-time engineer hired. The administrator went on to say that he would attempt to get another position approved in order to reduce the number of hours the firemen worked per week from 85 to 72 (Town of Louisburg. 27 March 1972).

The mayor was a guest of the Louisburg Fire Department at their April meeting. The mayor complimented the department on their recent renovations to the hall and sleeping quarters. The fire station had been remodeled and updated. The kitchen was redone and the living quarters, restrooms, and showers were updated (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 May 1972).

Mike Wilson, Planning Director of Kerr-Criminal Justice Planning Unit, presented a proposal for a town-county emergency dispatching project at the September 11 meeting of the council. This project would work in conjunction with and improve the current central alarm system. It would add county-wide call-free telephone service for reporting emergencies and add the Police Information Network (PIN) terminal (Town of Louisburg. 11 September 1972).

Fire Chief Pernel presented the Town Council with a resolution from the Louisburg Volunteer Fire Department requesting a meeting of the various town and county officials involved to explore the effects of the proposal on the

Louisburg Fire Department. It was suggested by the council that a meeting be set up as requested and a compromise reached (Town of Louisburg. 11 September 1972).

On November 13, 1972, the council approved partial payment to Howe Manufacturing Company for the new fire truck. The payment of \$20,376.57 left a balance of \$2,220.00, which was for items not yet installed by Howe (Town of Louisburg. 13 November 1972). The new engine had been received with all accessories except for one ladder, with a roof ladder to nest within this ladder, plus the brackets for holding these ladders. The truck, designated as "Engine 2," was placed into service in the fall of 1972.

What came as a surprise to everyone was the fact that this new fire truck would not fit in the existing fire house. The engine was housed at the rescue building for a period of time while a solution for the problem at the fire house was sought. Fortunately, the old police "lock-up," located between the fire house and the police station, was no longer used. Therefore, the wall separating the two was removed, and the bay area was increased in size to hold both engines. The one large front roll-up door was also replaced with two smaller roll-up doors.

The issue of the fire protection contracts for properties outside the city limits of Louisburg came up again at the December 11 meeting of the council. It was moved that the fire contracts be extended at the same charge as had previously been charged. The council also approved a change in the ordinance as follows: "Be It Ordained By The Town Of Louisburg, NC that Section 2, Contracts for Outside Service, Article V. – Fire Service Outside the Corporate Limits – Chapter C, Fire Protection and Prevention is hereby amended

as follows: Delete paragraph (b) and add a new paragraph (b) as follows:

Any property covered under a fire service contract shall be subject to inspection by the Chief of the Fire Department or his duly authorized representative. If any violations of the State of North Carolina Fire Code are found to exist, the property owner shall be notified in writing stating the date of the inspection and the exact nature of the violation, and stating further that unless the violation is corrected within 30 days of the notice, the contract may be terminated by the Town Council of the Town of Louisburg and a pro rata refund made of the unexpired fee” (Town of Louisburg. 11 December 1972).

This change appears to strengthen the ordinance by giving the chief more power to inspect property protected under the ordinance and to provide a means of terminating the contract when necessary.

Evidently, some situation had arisen to bring up the topic of out of town fire protection again. This was the first mention of, or action taken concerning, the out of town fire response since An Ordinance of the Commissioners of the Town of Louisburg Relating to Outside Fire Service was approved in December 1952.

Charlie Lambert was hired as a full-time engineer on January 1, 1973, making him the twelfth engineer to work for the department. Charlie replaced Horace Sweet, who had recently resigned (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Sweet was employed by the department for less than a year.

The ordinance apparently led to the proposal for an important change in the operations of the Louisburg Fire Department during the May 14, 1973 meeting of the Town

Council. Fire Chief Karl Pernel introduced a proposal “that the Town offer fire protection to an area within a 5 mile radius of the town limits if the county provided the town with 1 additional fireman as a part of the county agreement to assist in dispatching.” (Note: the five mile radius proposed here corresponds to the five mile radius that the fire department was already responding to through the contractual agreements.) The town would need to provide a tanker-pumper truck to replace the existing tank truck. The fire chief pointed out that the additional man would be of benefit to the town in lowering the fire insurance rating. The Town Administrator pointed out that the town would lose approximately \$2,500.00 per year in outside fire contracts under the proposed agreement. The town administrator was instructed to contact the county administrator and request a joint meeting of the Town Council and county commissioners to discuss the matter (Town of Louisburg. 14 May 1973).

The idea of expanding the fire alarm response service area was not mentioned in the minutes of the Town Council or fire department again. There was evidently not a great deal of support for this move or the economics were not justified.

Another new position, the fifth, was created in 1974. During the March 27, 1972 meeting of the Town Council, a new position was created through the Emergency Employment Act. At that time, the town administrator stated that he would attempt to get another position approved in order to reduce the number of hours the firemen worked per week from 85 to 72 (Town of Louisburg. 27 March 1972). The administrator’s efforts were successful as evidenced by the creation of this new position. Kyle Prince was hired to fill this position on July 1, 1974. Kyle would be the thirteenth engineer to work for the department and this would be the fifth engineer position (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

About a year later, at the July 8, 1974 meeting, a new proposal concerning extended fire protection for the county came before the Louisburg Town Council. Chief Pernell presented a new fire tax district program for Louisburg and the surrounding area. The town administrator was asked to provide cost figures at the next regular council meeting (Town of Louisburg. 8 July 1974).

The new tax district was also discussed at the July meeting of the Louisburg Fire Department. After the plan was presented and questions answered, a motion was made and seconded that the department approve and support the plans for the new fire tax district (Louisburg Fire Department. 5 August 1974).

During the August 12 meeting of the Town Council, Karl Pernell presented "a request for the Council to approve a Louisburg Fire district plan. It was moved that the Louisburg Fire Department offer to give fire protection to the Louisburg Fire District, if approved for a \$20,000.00 a year budget, and that this money be set aside to purchase the additional equipment necessary to serve the district" (Town of Louisburg. 12 August 1974). At this time, the plan referred to the response area as the Louisburg Fire District; however, when it was approved it was changed to the Central Franklin County Rural Fire Protection Tax District.

Specifications for the new fire truck were presented by Chief Pernell at the February 10, 1975 meeting of the Town Council (Town of Louisburg. 10 February 1975). This fire truck would furnish protection for the new fire protection district, which would replace the contractual service for out of town fire alarms. When it was first mentioned, it was planned to purchase a new pumper/tanker vehicle to replace the existing

tanker. However, this plan changed and a new engine was proposed, with the pumper/tanker postponed.

The contract between the Town of Louisburg and the County of Franklin, which established the Central Franklin County Rural Fire Protection Tax District, was signed and became effective on July 1, 1975 (Town of Louisburg. 1 July 1975).

The Central Franklin Rural Fire Tax District (Central Franklin District) allowed for all citizens living within four miles of the station to be provided with fire protection. The old system of requiring contracts with individual property owners was terminated. The new system was funded by a property tax levy based on the value of the individual's property. Although there was some opposition to this tax, most citizens were very receptive, in view of the fact that it lowered their home owner's insurance premiums. The end result was that the savings in insurance premiums was greater than the amount of tax paid for the fire protection, in most cases. This was the first such district in the county. Currently, all county fire departments now have similar districts.

It was announced at the June meeting of the fire department that the tax district would go into effect July 1 and the department would be responding to all fire alarms within this geographic area. The chief also announced that with the district in effect that the department now needed to increase to a roster of 40 firemen (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 July 1975).

On July 14, it was moved during the Town Council meeting that the town administrator be authorized to negotiate with the low bidder on the fire apparatus and to report back at the next meeting. This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 14 July 1975).

Chief Pernell appeared before the Town Council again on August 11 in order answer any questions on the new fire engine. No action was taken (Town of Louisburg. 11 August 1975).

Finally on December 8, 1975, the bid for the new fire engine was awarded. It was moved “that the Fire Apparatus bid be awarded to Howe Fire Apparatus Co., for \$35,797.57 and the chassis be award to Dur-Ral Ford Truck Sales for \$16,998.96.” The total price came to \$52,796.14. This motion was seconded and carried unanimously (Town of Louisburg. 8 December 1975).

The fire truck would consist of a Ford chassis (C-8000) with mounted Howe apparatus (HR-102). It was powered by a Caterpillar V-3208 diesel engine. The engine pumped at a rate of 1000 gallons per minute and had a 750-gallon tank (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). This truck, designated as “Engine 3,” was placed into service in 1976.

Although the exact date is unknown, the first pagers (beepers) for the fire department’s volunteer members were received and put into service sometime in 1975 (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). These would be used for the firemen to receive fire alarm announcements, replacing the telephone alarm system. With the new system, the firemen would have the pager with him at all times. The paid staff was provided with pagers earlier in the 1970s.

The town surplused a pick-up truck from the electric department in early 1976. The fire department obtained this truck to be used as a utility vehicle. It would be used for hauling dirty hose back to the station from fire scenes, routine painting and flushing fire hydrants, and other non-emergency uses. Truck 5 was in service in March 1976. The pick-up truck was refurbished by the “Wild Bunch” and painted by Bill

Bailey. The Chief thanked those who helped work on it at the March 3, 1976 meeting of the fire department (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 March 1976).

Larry Peoples was hired as the fourteenth engineer for the department on July 1, 1976. He replaced Gray Moon, who had recently retired (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Moon was employed for 13 years.

The first mention of a new fire station came during the November meeting of the fire department. Chief Pernell announced that progress was being made for the new station. The committee working on this project had decided that a lot on the corner of Wade Avenue and Nash Street, across from Waccamaw Bank had been selected (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 December 1976). It is obvious that this was not the chosen location, but it does show that a move was being made toward a new facility.

It was announced during the July 1977 meeting of the fire department that the new fire truck should arrive around August 15. The members of the department discussed housing the new truck. A motion was made and seconded that the current building be expanded rather constructing a metal building (Louisburg Fire Department. 8 August 1977).

The department's suggestion to expand the existing fire house was not well received by the Town Council. At the August meeting of the fire department, it was announced that the new truck should arrive in September, and that the truck would be kept in a metal building beside the fire house (Louisburg Fire Department. 12 September 1977). Although it is not stated, this decision was most likely made in view of the fact that there was on-going discussion concerning building a new fire house and this was an economically feasible alternative.

The year of 1978 was a time for new facilities and remodeling existing facilities. It was announced at the department's January meeting that the free-standing metal building was completed. This structure was used for housing the new tanker/pumper truck (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 February 1978).

A building committee was appointed by the mayor at the February 5 meeting of the Town Council. The committee was instructed to look into the construction of a new fire house (Town of Louisburg. 5 February 1978).

In April 1979, Chief Pernell announced that the existing fire house had been completely painted and that a new shower had been installed in the men's quarters upstairs (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 May 1978).

During the September meeting of the fire department, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to build a shed adjacent to the fire house for the pick-up truck (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 October 1978). It was announced at the November meeting that the shed project had been completed (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 December 1978).

A motion was made to buy a surplus pick-up truck from the state at the October meeting of the fire department (Louisburg Fire Department. 5 November 1979). The vehicle would replace the used pick-up, which the members of the department had restored several years earlier. Evidently, there was not a suitable vehicle available through state surplus, as this vehicle, a 1974 Chevrolet pick-up, was purchased from Rowe Chevrolet.

It was announced at the November meeting of the fire department that every member of the department had now been furnished with a pager (beeper) for alarm

announcements (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 December 1979). This marked the replacement of the “hot line” emergency telephone alarm system. With each fireman carrying a pager, he could receive alarm calls at any location, not just at home.

The 1970s also had its share of destructive fires. The third large fire to hit Taylor-Thayer Lumber Co. hit on April 21, 1970. The 9,800 square foot two-story structure with newly installed machinery suffered an estimated \$200,000.00 loss (Johnson, Elizabeth).

The National Guard Armory, which also housed the Louisburg Town Hall, burned in early 1971. Although loss estimates are not available, the structure was a total loss. The building was replaced with a new National Guard Armory located on Bickett Boulevard and a new Town Hall located on the same site.

Joyner Manufacturing Company on Bickett Boulevard was destroyed by fire on June 9, 1975. This plant manufactured furniture components. The fire started in the vicinity of the loading docks in the shipping area, which was located at the rear of the building. The fire quickly spread through the center of the structure where 12 to 15 fifty-five gallon barrels of toluene (a highly explosive solvent) were located. These barrels blew up, creating quite an inferno. The building and equipment was a total loss, valued at approximately \$2,000,000.00. The only thing remaining after the clean-up was the concrete slab floor, on which the structure was rebuilt (Joyner). This was the second large fire for the Joyner family.

Although the damage was not immense, it is worthwhile to remember the Christmas Eve fires of 1975. The department responded to five fires simultaneously, with the alarms coming

in just a few minutes apart. It was later determined that these fires, all just south of US 401, were deliberately set.

1980s

The next few years saw the purchase of two new fire engines and a pick-up truck equipped to fight brush fires. There were also several changes in full time personnel.

The subject of the new fire house was revisited at the October 13, 1980 meeting of the Town Council. First, the council went into executive session for the purpose of discussing real estate matters. When back in open session it was announced that no action was taken. Then, a “motion was made that the town take an option on a piece of property for six months at the cost of \$1.00 for the purpose of building a Police and Fire Station” (Town of Louisburg. 13 October 1980). The motion was seconded and carried.

Additional upgrades and repairs were made to the existing fire house in October 1980. The men’s dormitory area was upgraded and the roof of the building was repaired (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 December 1980). Due to ongoing repairs to the existing building, the need for a new facility was stressed.

During the February 1982 meeting of the fire department, Chief Pernell announced that the department was looking into the possibility of buying a new pumper-tanker truck equipped with a quick-dump system (Louisburg Fire Department.3 May 1982). This would be a combination vehicle that could serve as a pumper and tanker. The previous tankers did not have pumping capabilities.

At the July 12 meeting of the Town Council, a motion was made that the town administrator be authorized to seek bids

for the lease-purchase of a new pumper-tanker truck for the fire department (Town of Louisburg. 12 July 1982).

The bids for the new fire apparatus were received on October 4. They were opened and reviewed, and it was moved that the bids be rejected and the town administrator be authorized to re-advertise (Town of Louisburg. 11 October 1982).

New bids were received and discussed at the November 8, 1982 meeting of the Town Council. It was moved "that the fire apparatus proposal be awarded to the low bidder, Grumman Emergency Products, Inc. for (1) Grumman "750 GPM Pumper 1250 Tanker Fire" apparatus as specified with one (1) Ford Chassis Model "C-8000" as specified for \$80,084.00 per the Lease Purchase Plan with a down payment being made of \$16,232.00 when the truck is delivered, the payments would be \$19,602.62 per year, for a four year period, at (8.5% interest rate). This motion was seconded and carried" (Town of Louisburg. 8 November 1982).

This pumper/tanker truck was equipped with a quick-dump system. At a fire scene that was not within reach of a fire hydrant, a portable pool was set up and the water in the tanker was emptied (quick-dumped) into the pool. The engine, which was pumping water to fight the fire, would then draft water from the pool in order to maintain a steady flow of water for the attack on the fire. After emptying its load into the pool, the tanker would then go to the closest water point, which could be a hydrant or a pond. It would then be refilled and return to empty another load into the pool. This would continue for as long as necessary. Often on large fire scenes, mutual aid trucks would be used to haul water to the pool.

At the July 1983 meeting of the fire department, it was announced that the results of the most recent inspection by

the Department of Insurance had been received. The fire department's rating was upgraded to a 5 (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 August 1983).

Chief Pernell announced during the August meeting of the fire department that the new pumper/tanker fire truck had been delivered. This truck, designated as "Truck 4," had been checked out and placed into service ("New Fire Unit Arrives").

For a number of years, the volunteer firemen were required to live within the city limits of Louisburg to be eligible for membership. At an unknown point in time, the bylaws were changed to allow the firemen to live within one mile of the city limits. At the July 1984 meeting of the fire department, a motion was made, seconded, and carried that the one-mile requirement be extended to two miles from the city limits (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 August 1984). Although there was some disagreement on this change, it was argued, successfully, that with the four-mile tax district, there was no reason that the volunteers could not live further from the city limits.

Joe Perry was replaced as a fire department engineer by Tony Wynne on October 1, 1984. Joe had recently retired, after being employed for about 36 years. Tony would be the fifteenth engineer to serve the department (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

The geographical extent of the response area of the Central Fire District came up at the January 1985 meeting of the fire department. A motion was made to extend the fire tax district from four miles to five miles, with the condition that the additional revenue be applied to the new fire house rather than going into the general fund. The motion was seconded and carried (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 February 1985).

The fire department's approval of extending the fire tax district was brought before the Town Council at the February 11 meeting of the council. After a discussion of the proposal, a motion was made "that upon the recommendation of Fire Chief Karl Pernell to extend the Franklin Central Fire District from four miles to five miles subject to the County Commissioners approval." This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 11 February 1985).

Johnny Aycock became the sixteenth engineer to serve the fire department. Johnny was hired on September 15, 1985, replacing Gerald Eury. Gerald had recently transferred to the town meter reading department (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

Chief Pernell informed the department of the availability of a used Dodge pick-up truck that could be purchased for the use as a brush truck at the September 1985 meeting of the fire department. A motion was made and carried to authorize the purchase this vehicle for an amount of up to \$900.00 through Army surplus (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 October 1985).

It was announced at the January 1986 meeting of the fire department that the brush truck had been placed into service (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 February 1986). This truck had a "slide load," which consisted of a gasoline operated pump, a one-inch pre-connect hose line, a water tank, plus other firefighting equipment, such as rakes and "fire flappers." This truck, designated as "Brush 6," would be used on all brush and woods fires.

Another important discussion, held during the same meeting, related to the Louisburg Colored Fire Company (Louisburg Hose and Reel Team) (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 February 1986). Since the companies trained and fought

fires together, it was decided that the two should have their dinner/business meetings together. It was suggested that this matter be discussed with the Colored Fire Company to gather their input and to gauge their interest in consolidation. No action was taken.

The subject of the new fire house came up again at the March 1986 meeting of the fire department. It was announced that the town had additional contact with the Byrd's Corporation concerning buying the old A&P Supermarket Building located on Wade Avenue (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 April 1986). This building was suitably located and was large enough to house the fire department, with sufficient bays for the apparatus, as well as the police department.

During the May 12 meeting of the Town Council, a motion was made to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing property acquisition. No action was taken during the executive session. Then, Mayor Allen announced that the Town was planning to purchase the old A&P Building for the Police and Fire Station. The purchase price would be \$225,000.00, with a gift from Byrd's for \$50,000.00 making the net price \$175,000.00 (Town of Louisburg. 12 May 1986).

The chief gave an update on the new fire house at the May meeting of the fire department. He updated the department on the plans for the town to purchase and renovate the A&P building. Chief Pernell was to meet with the architect on May 12 concerning the plans (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 June 1986).

During the June meeting of the fire department, another discussion was held concerning combining the Louisburg Fire Department and the Louisburg Colored Fire Company. Again,

no action was taken (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 July 1986).

The town attorney gave a report on the property acquisition at the September 7 meeting of the Town Council. He announced that the purchase of the A&P Building and property had been closed on. The town administrator then stated that the next step would be for the building committee to meet with the architect, Harold Annis. (Town of Louisburg.7 September 1986).

October 1986 marks the date of the merging of the Louisburg Fire Department and the Louisburg Colored Fire Company. At the October 6th meeting of the Louisburg Fire Department, a “motion was made and passed to consolidate the Black and White companies into one company.” This change was to go into effect immediately and both companies would have their dinner/business meeting together at the next monthly meeting (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 October 1986).

A motion was made during the January 1987 meeting of the fire department that would change the bylaws to extend the distance for volunteer membership in the fire department from two miles to three miles (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 February 1987). In August of 1984, the membership distance was increased from one to two miles. In February of 1985, the Central Fire District was extended from four to five miles. Therefore, by increasing the response distance for the district, it would make sense to increase the distance that a volunteer could live from the station and remain in the district.

After laying over the required time period, the change in the bylaws discussed in the January meeting were approved by the department (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 March

1987). This changed the distance that a volunteer could live from the station from two to three miles.

A report from the building committee was presented to the Town Council at the September 14, 1987 meeting. A proposed floor plan and a sketch of the façade were offered. After a discussion of the plans, a motion was made that the architect proceed with drawing the plans for the new facility. This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 14 September 1987).

At the November 9 meeting of the council, the architect, Harold Annis, presented the working drawings for the renovations to the A&P Building-Phase 1 (Town of Louisburg. 9 November 1987). Phase 1 was for the police department.

In December 1987, Karl Pernell retired after 16 years as the Fire Chief of the Louisburg Fire Department. Perry Faulkner was elected to be the new chief and began his term on January 1, 1988 ("Outline of Fire Department History").

Fire Chief Faulkner was present at the January 11, 1988 meeting of the Town Council. After a discussion on the building renovations, the chief spoke against some of the design work in the fire station area of the building. A committee from the Town Council was appointed to work with the fire department and address their concerns. It was also announced during this meeting that the police department section would be complete by mid-June (Town of Louisburg. 11 January 1988).

At the May meeting of the fire department, it was announced that the town was still negotiating with Byrd's Food Stores, Inc. to purchase some additional property adjacent to the fire station (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 June 1988). This property was necessary in order to increase the parking

area for the volunteers and for any groups or organizations utilizing the training center.

The discussion on the additional property acquisition came up at the August 15 meeting of the Town Council. After a discussion on the proposed acquisition, it was "moved that the Town of Louisburg purchase a 50' x 400' (.46 acres) strip of land located East of the present Police and Fire station on a Map of William T. Dement, Jr. Surveyor, dated 8/3/88 in the amount of \$45,000.00 from Byrd's Food Stores, Inc. This motion was seconded and carried" (Town of Louisburg. 15 August 1988).

It was also announced during this meeting that the police department had moved into their new quarters during the week of July 16.

The contract for renovating Phase 2 (Training Center) of the building "was awarded to Mark-Barnes Builders in the amount of \$91,212.00 on November 14, 1988" (Town of Louisburg. 14 November 1988).

Another new fire truck was the subject of discussion at the January meeting of the fire department. A list of specifications was drawn up for a proposed new pumper (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 February 1989).

The request for the new fire engine, along with the proposed specifications, was presented to the Town Council on March 20, 1989. Chief Faulkner, along with E.H. Smith and Larry Peoples from the department, made this presentation. It was moved by the council that this request be taken under advisement. This motion was seconded and carried unanimously (Town of Louisburg. 20 March 1989). It would be four years later, in July 1993, before the subject of purchasing this truck would be entertained again.

Larry Wynne was hired as an engineer for the department in March 1989. He replaced Kyle Prince who had recently transferred to the town meter reading department. Larry was the seventeenth engineer to serve (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Prince had been employed by the department for just under 15 years.

Chief Faulkner announced at the department's April meeting that a mutual aid agreement with all of the fire departments in the county had been signed (Louisburg Fire Department. 8 May 1989). This agreement meant that all departments agreed to respond with each other to lend assistance at any fire scene. When any department received an alarm, the designated mutual aid department would be dispatched at the same time.

Another engineer was hired in 1989. L.S. Ward, Jr. started on November 11, 1989. He was the eighteenth engineer and replaced Charlie Lambert after Charlie's retirement (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Lambert had been employed by the department for just over seven years.

The 1974 Chevrolet utility truck, which was placed into service in 1979, was replaced in 1989. A new 1989 Chevrolet S-10 pick-up truck was purchased for \$9,500.00 and placed into service immediately.

There were a number of large fires during the decade of the 1980s. On August 26, 1983, the Big Franklin Warehouse on Bickett Boulevard caught fire and resulted in a total loss. This was the first major fire in Louisburg in four years. The 45,000 square foot building held 200,000 pounds of tobacco at the time of the fire. The estimated loss from the fire was about \$1,000,000 ("Big Franklin Burns").

Louisburg College experienced another large fire when the historic West Wing of Main Building was severely damaged on December 2, 1988. The fire, which started from an electrical shortage in a fourth floor dormitory room, spread quickly into the attic of the building, which was constructed in 1857. No one was injured in the fire. Fire units from Bunn, Youngsville, Justice, White Level, Centerville, Mitchner's, and Franklinton responded as mutual aid for the Louisburg Fire Department. Firefighters had to hand carry hose up three flights of steps and then through the fourth floor to reach the blaze. Fortunately, the fire was confined to the fourth floor and the attic, although it did break through the roof. There was heavy smoke and water damage to the lower floors of the building. The fire was under control within less than an hour. The estimated loss from the fire was \$250,000.00.

1990s

During the April 9, 1990 meeting of the Town Council, it was moved that the approval of the formal contract for architectural services for the fire station be awarded to Harold Annis. This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 9 April 1990).

The matter of financing the new fire station came up at the June 11th meeting of the Town Council. The town administrator explained a financial proposal from United Carolina Bank and First Citizens Bank for a loan for the construction of the new fire station. It was moved that the loan be financed through First Citizens Bank at a rate of 7.34 percent interest for a ten-year period and that annual payments of \$57,190.05 be made. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously (Town of Louisburg. 11 June 1990).

During the July 9th meeting of the Town Council, a motion was made to approve the final plans for the new fire station.

Another motion was made that the architect be allowed to advertise for bids. A motion was made that the final payment for the A&P building and property, in the amount of \$59,920.000, be approved for payment. All three of the motions were seconded and carried unanimously (Town of Louisburg. 9 July 1990).

The bids for the project were reviewed and readied for approval at the November 13th meeting of the council. It was “Moved that the following contracts be awarded on the new fire station effective upon closing with First Citizens Bank.

General Contract – Trout & Riggs Construction Co.	
Base Bid	\$264,780.00
Alt GC-1	<u>2,000.00</u>
Total	\$266,780.00
Plumbing Contract – Braxton Britt Plumbing, Inc.	
Base Bid	\$22,900.00
HVAC Contract – Wesco, Inc.	
Base Bid	\$18,568.00
Electrical Contract – Finch Electrical Service	
Base Bid	\$69,675.00
Total Construction Award	\$377,923.00

Seconded and carried unanimously” (Town of Louisburg. 13 November 1990).

Chief Faulkner advised that the new station project was ahead of schedule at the April 1, 1991 meeting of the fire department. At the same meeting, a motion was made and carried that the chief be authorized to spend up to \$3,800.00 for a 1976 Chevrolet-Grumman step-van to be used as an equipment truck (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 April 1991).

Chief Faulkner was back before the Town Council at the April 8 meeting, this time presenting a list and estimated cost of items needed for the new station. Among the items on this

list were: furniture (offices, lounge, dining area, and bedrooms), kitchen needs (appliances, pots, pans, dinnerware, etc.), communications equipment, and assorted tools. The estimated amount of these items was \$19,856.00. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the budget be amended to allow for the purchase of these items (Town of Louisburg. 8 April 1991).

The matter of the recently purchased utility truck was discussed again at the May 6 meeting of the fire department. The chief was authorized to spend up to \$1,000.00 on equipment for the new equipment truck (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 May 1991).

At the May 13 meeting of the Town Council, it was moved that the council allow the architect to design curbing and concrete walks for the fire station project. If funds were not available, a budget amendment would be needed. This motion was seconded and carried. It was then moved that the paving of the fire station parking lot be paid for in the next budget year. This motion was also seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 13 May 1991).

Truck #7, the newly reworked equipment truck, was placed into service on in June (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 June 1991).

At the July 8 meeting of the Town Council, it was announced that the new fire station had been completed and a dedication and open house would be held on September 15. It was also announced that "Maude," the town's first fire engine, would be brought in for the ceremony by Jackie Lee, its current owner (Town of Louisburg. 8 July 1991).

A new, much larger and more modern fire station was completed and occupied in July 1991. This station, which is

currently in use, is located on Wade Avenue. This facility features a modern kitchen and dormitory for the paid men, as well as a lounge area, offices for the chief and secretary, a large meeting room with kitchen, lockers for the volunteers, and a spacious, heated bay area for the apparatus.

The day of the move to the new station, July 17, 1991, was a memorable one for the entire department. Although all of the furniture and appliances were new, there were still quite a few things to be moved. Most of this was done in advance of the “big move,” when all of the trucks were moved. In fitting style, the guys decided to have a parade. So, led off by the police car, each fire truck rolled out, in order, and slowly made its way up Market Street, down Nash Street, down Wade Avenue and into the parking lot of the new station. They were then backed into their new quarters, again in order. As one can imagine, each of the vehicles had all lights flashing, and all horns blowing, and all sirens screaming. After all, an event like this only happens once each lifetime. It had been 43 years since the last station was built.

Wayne Cottrell was hired by the fire department on April 1, 1991. Wayne replaced Johnny Aycock who had recently transferred to the town’s meter reading department. He was number nineteen on the list of engineers hired by the department. (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

The new fire station was formally dedicated on September 15, 1991. It was a hot, but festive day. There were speeches, including Mayor Allen, past Chief Shearin, past Chief Pernell, Chief Faulkner, Chief Lee of the Wade Fire Department, and special guest Chief Sherman Pickard of the Raleigh Fire Department. Pickard delivered the key note address. There were refreshments and entertainment, including blue grass music, Smokey the Bear, a clown, and a visit by the Duke Life

Flight helicopter. Of course, the highlight of the day was the return of "Maude." There were countless pictures taken of "Maude" with firemen and their families and, of course, many politicians. Floyd Griffin, one of the previous owners of "Maude," drove the vintage fire engine around town one more time.

In December 1991, Faulkner announced that he was not going to run for chief after serving four years. Timmy Smith was elected and began his term as chief in 1992, replacing Faulkner. Currently, Smith is in his twentieth year as chief.

In August 1992, the Louisburg Fire Department entered the computer age (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 August 1992). A computer and software were installed. The software was primarily used for keeping records of vehicle maintenance, fire alarms, firemen response and training, and personnel records.

Also, 1992 saw the creation of the position of Chief Engineer. This position serves as supervisor of the paid staff and oversees the daily operation of the department. Larry Peoples, who was currently a full-time engineer, assumed this responsibility. Larry held this position until his retirement in 2007.

During the June 7, 1993 meeting of the fire department, a committee was appointed to investigate the possibility of creating a scholarship (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 June 1993). The funds, which would come from the interest earned on money contributed to the Firemen's Relief Fund, would be used to provide scholarships for the children of active or retired firemen. There will be more on the scholarship in a subsequent chapter.

At this same meeting, a motion was made and seconded to extend the membership boundary from three miles from the

station to include the entire Central Fire District (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 June 1993). It had been extended in 1987 from two miles to three.

The town administrator explained the request for “an increase in the Central Fire District Tax at the May 10 meeting of the Town Council. Timmy Smith, Fire Chief, supported the increase to go toward the purchase of a new fire truck. It was then moved that the Central Fire tax rate be set to bring in an additional \$25,000.00 for the 1993-1994 budget year” (Town of Louisburg. 10 May 1993). This motion was seconded and carried.

Chief Smith gave a report on the progress toward purchasing a new fire truck at the July 12 meeting of the fire department. He stated that everything looked favorable at that time (Louisburg Fire Department. 12 July 1993). This is apparently the same truck that was discussed at the May 1989 Town Council meeting. The proposal for the purchase of this fire truck was tabled at that meeting, and this was the first subsequent mention of the purchase.

The details of the scholarship program were announced at the September 13 meeting of the fire department (Louisburg Fire Department. 13 September 1993). The guidelines for applying for the scholarship, requirements for being accepted, requirements for continuation of scholarship, and applicable institutions were explained.

Also during this meeting, the chief announced that the specifications were ready for the bidding process to begin on the new fire truck (Louisburg Fire Department. 13 September 1993).

Pete Tomlinson, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, presented the scholarship to the department at the October 4,

1993 meeting. Each section was read and explained and the application process discussed. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the scholarship plan be accepted and forwarded to the state for approval (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 October 1993).

At the November 1 meeting of the fire department, the chief informed the department that three bids were received for the new fire truck. "The bids were from Lee Fire, Dixie, and C.W. Williams" (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 November 1993).

Chief Smith announced at the December 6 meeting, that the new fire truck had been ordered from C.W. Williams, who submitted the lowest bid of \$196,860.00. It was also announced that the state had approved the scholarship plan and that it was now in effect (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 December 1993).

At the March 21, 1994 meeting of the Town Council, the town administrator presented a financing plan for the new fire truck. It was moved that the financing agreement for the new fire truck be for five years with First Citizens Bank with an interest rate of 4.15 percent. This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 21 March 1994).

It was announced during the April 4 meeting of the fire department that the new truck should be off the assembly line on March 15th (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 April 1994).

It was moved during the July 11 meeting of the Town Council that the following items be declared surplus: (1) 1963 Ford-Seagrave pumper fire truck, (2) 34 Motorola Page-Coms and parts with chargers, and (3) Motorola Mobile two-way VHF radios. It was seconded and carried unanimously (Town of Louisburg. 11 July 1994).

At the August 15 meeting, the council decided that due to the radio equipment's age that it would have very little monetary value and should be donated to the Gold Sand Fire Department (Town of Louisburg. 15 August 1994).

At the August 1 meeting, it was announced that the new Engine #1 was in service (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 August 1994). This would be the first fire engine in the department with air conditioning and an automatic transmission. It also had a 1250-gallon per minute pump, a 1000-gallon tank, and was powered by a Cummings 300 diesel engine.

It was announced at the November 7 meeting of the fire department that the Franklin County Fireman's Association was purchasing a smoke and fire training trailer for \$23,000.00 (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 November 1994). This would prove to be an invaluable training resource, not only for the fire departments in the county, but also for the schools. It is still used, particularly during Fire Prevention Week, at the schools.

During the March 18, 1996 meeting of the Town Council, Fire Chief Timmy Smith explained to the council that the tank on one of the fire trucks was leaking, losing about 100 gallons of water per day. It was moved to authorize the necessary repairs and the purchase of a poly tank at the approximate cost of \$12,000.00. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 18 March 1996).

During this same meeting, the town administrator reported that he was working with Envirotek, Inc. on the landscape plan for the Police and Fire Complex. He also reported that he had spoken with Mack Smith about the purchasing the strip of land adjacent to the Police and Fire Complex for additional parking.

Mr. Smith was to speak with the Byrd family and report back with a price (Town of Louisburg. 18 March 1996).

At the May 13 Town Council meeting, the town administrator stated that he had spoken with Mack Smith concerning the Byrd's property adjacent to the fire house, and that the Byrd family was hesitant to sell the property. The administrator said he would approach them with the idea of a lease agreement to see if it would be a viable option (Town of Louisburg. 13 May 1996).

Larry Peoples made a motion during the June 1 meeting of the fire department that the name of the scholarship be changed from the "Louisburg Fire Department Scholarship" to the "Joe Perry Memorial Scholarship." This motion was approved and carried (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 July 1996).

It was brought up at the December 2 meeting of the Town Council that the bid for roof repairs for the Police and Fire Complex had been received. The contract was awarded to Hamlin Roofing Co. for \$66,482.00. This repair included a new insulated roof (Town of Louisburg. 2 December 1996).

The administrator was authorized to proceed with the bid process for the paving of the Police/Fire Station Complex parking lot at the May 12, 1997 meeting of the council. A motion was offered, seconded, and carried (Town of Louisburg. 12 May 1997).

Arthur Holmes became the twentieth engineer to be hired by the department in July 1998. Arthur replaced Wayne Cottrell who had recently resigned (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

The years 1936 and 1966 marked 30 years and 60 years, respectively, since the first recorded documentation of the Louisburg Fire Department can be found. At the end of each of these 30-year periods, a brief summary of what had transpired during that time period was reviewed. Again, the following is a list (in no particular order) of events and actions taken during the most recent 30 years.

- Seven pieces of apparatus were put into service, some new (replacing existing apparatus) and some refurbished, including three engines and one engine/tanker combination, a utility pick-up truck, and an equipment van
- Three additional fire chiefs (one of the three currently serving)
- Six additional full-time paid personnel served
- A modern, new fire house was built in 1991
- The telephone emergency alarm system was replaced with beepers (page coms) for each fireman

2000s

It was announced at the January meeting of the fire department that the new pick-up truck should be in by January 7. This was a 2000 Dodge three-quarter ton truck that would be used as a utility truck. This vehicle was purchased for \$19,628.00. In 2003, it was converted to a brush truck with a slide load for use at brush/forest fires (Louisburg Fire Department. February 7, 2000).

At the March 20 meeting of the Town Council, the town administrator was “authorized to proceed with Lowe’s Foods on the purchase of 25 feet or whatever land is necessary, for a sewer line easement and additional parking space adjacent to the Louisburg Police/Fire Complex” (Town of Louisburg. 20

March 2000). This motion was seconded and carried. This piece of land, to the east of the fire station, would greatly increase the parking area for the fire station and training center. It was previously mentioned that the Byrd family was hesitant to sell this tract and the administrator was going to pursue a lease agreement. Evidently, the Byrd family reconsidered and decided to sell.

During the July meeting of the fire department, the chief announced that the purchase of a new fire engine was approved. The bidding process could now begin, after the final specifications had been decided on (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 August 2000).

A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously at the November 13 meeting of the Town Council to award the bid for an E-One Cyclone II pumper to C. W. Williams and Co. in the amount of \$245,677.00. This would be a 1250-GPM pumper with a 750-gallon tank powered by a Cummings 220 diesel engine. It would be designated as "Engine #3," replacing the 1976 Ford-Grumman engine (Louisburg Town Council. 13 November 2000).

In May 2001, Chief Smith and Larry Peoples went to Florida to verify that the new engine met the specifications of the contract. At the June meeting of the fire department, the chief announced that the new engine was now in Rocky Mount, receiving its final outfitting (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 July 2001).

The 1976 Ford-Grumman fire engine, which this new engine replaced, was donated to the Stumpy Point (NC) Fire Department, as was announced by the administrator at the August 13 meeting of the Town Council (Louisburg Town Council. 13 August 2001).

The Town Council announced that the Louisburg Fire Department had donated a fire engine to Stumpy Point. The favor was soon repaid. The town administrator shared at the September 10 Town Council meeting that the City of Tarboro had offered to donate a ladder truck to Louisburg. Chief Smith recommended that the town accept the offer. A motion to this effect was made, seconded, and carried (Town of Louisburg. 10 September 2001). This was a 1966 American LaFrance with an 85-foot ladder.

Chief Smith announced that the ladder truck was in service at the May 2003 meeting of the fire department. Training on this equipment began immediately (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 June 2002).

The fire department heard a report from the committee on purchasing a new slide load for the brush truck at the March 2003 meeting. The estimated price would be around \$13,000. A motion was made and seconded to continue to look into the price of a slide unit. There was also a discussion of buying a new pick-up truck since a new slide unit was being considered. Chief Smith said he would discuss this with the town (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 April 2003).

A follow-up report on the slide unit came during the April meeting. The committee recommended that the bid be awarded to C.W. Williams Co. A motion was made to this effect and was seconded. The chief also reported that he would continue talks with the town concerning the purchase of a new pick-up (Louisburg Fire Department. 5 May 2003).

Chief Smith reported that the new pick-up truck had been approved by the Town Council, but the truck would not be purchased until after the slide load unit had been completed and was ready for mounting, which was planned for August or September (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 August 2003).

A new communications console was to be installed at the fire house in November. The equipment would allow the Louisburg Fire House to be used as a backup for the Franklin County Dispatch Center in the event of failure of the main system (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 November 2003).

The new pick-up truck that had been approved for purchase the previous August went into service in very early 2004. This 2004 Ford pick-up was used as a utility vehicle. It was purchased for \$12,500.00.

Another engineer started service with the department when Randy Lanham was hired in May 2004. Randy replaced Arthur Holmes, who had recently transferred to the town water reclamation department. Randy was number twenty-one on the engineer list (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

The subject of another new vehicle was brought up at the May 2004 meeting of the fire department. Larry Peoples announced that the department was in the process of writing a grant proposal to receive funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in order to purchase a new vehicle. This new ladder truck would replace the ladder truck now in service (Louisburg Fire Department. 7 June 2004).

During the July meeting of the fire department, Chief Smith announced that the North Carolina Department of Insurance, Ratings and Inspections Division would be inspecting the department in November of 2004. It was the desire of the department to have the rating lowered from a "Class 5" to a "Class 4" rating (Louisburg Fire Department. 2 August 2004).

The grant proposal came up at the September 20 meeting of the Town Council. It was moved to adopt the Grant Project Ordinance, which authorized the purchase of a firefighting vehicle funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of

Homeland Security and town reserves. This motion was seconded and carried. It was then moved to approve the "Waiver of Bidding for Previously Bided Contracts" for the purchase of the HP 75 Sidestacker Aerial Cyclone II Chassis Fire Vehicle. This motion was also seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 20 September 2004).

It was announced at the October meeting of the fire department that the new ladder truck should arrive within two weeks (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 November 2004). This new ladder truck was an E-One Sidestacker Aerial "Cyclone II" with a 75-foot ladder, a 2,000-gallon per minute pump, and a 500-gallon tank. It is powered by a Cummings ISL diesel engine. The purchase price for this vehicle was \$432,428.00.

A motion was made at the December 20 meeting of the Town Council that the old ladder truck would be donated to the Town of Landis (NC). This donation was pursuant to G.S. 160A-274. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 20 December 2004). It seems as if the Louisburg Fire Department was living up to the old adage, "You scratch my back and I will scratch yours." The Town of Tarboro had donated the ladder truck to Louisburg, and in return, Louisburg donated it to Landis. There is another old adage, "Get the most bang for the buck."

The new ladder truck went into service in December 2004, according to an announcement by Chief Smith at the December 2004 meeting of the fire department.

During this same meeting, Larry Peoples advised that the inspection by the Department of Insurance seemed to have gone well. The results of the inspection would be announced in about 60 days (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 January 2005).

The news of the results of the Department of Insurance inspection for the Town of Louisburg's fire rating was announced at the February 21, 2005 meeting of the Town Council. "Fire Chief Timmy Smith, Assistant Chief Ray Patterson, and Chief Engineer Larry Peoples were present for Mayor Pernell's announcement that Louisburg's fire protection class has been lowered from a Class 5 to a Class 4. On behalf of the Council, Mayor Pernell stated that he was very pleased with this change as it should result in a decrease in the property insurance calculations for many insured commercial properties." Chief Smith stated that it was a "joint effort with the Council, Fire Department, and town staff and wanted to thank the Council for funding to install new fire hydrants which certainly made a difference" (Town of Louisburg. 21 February 2005). A Class 4 rating is one of the best ratings that a town the size of Louisburg can achieve.

Dalton West was hired as the twenty-second engineer for the department on March 1, 2005. He replaced L.S. Ward, Jr. who had recently retired. Dalton is currently serving in this position (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Ward was employed by the department for just over five years.

At the October 3 meeting of the fire department, Larry Peoples announced that the Department of Insurance had also performed its inspection for its "9(s)" rating (Louisburg Fire Department. 3 October 2005). This rating applies to the areas outside of town that are not served by fire hydrants, as opposed to the previously mentioned rating, which was for the town itself. He stated that this inspection also went well. This rating was expected to remain at a Class 9(s), which is average for a rural department or a municipal department serving a rural area.

Fire Chief Timmy Smith, Assistant Chief Ray Patterson, and Chief Engineer Larry Peoples were present at the Town Council meeting again on November 20, 2006. The purpose of attending this meeting was to announce that another grant had been received from Homeland Security. "Chief Smith explained that the approved project costs total \$58,420.00. He stated that the Federal share is \$55,499.00 and the town's share of the cost is \$2,921.00. Chief Smith requested an additional \$3,047.36 to purchase additional equipment not provided for in the grant but needed to be purchased in conjunction with the grant purchases. This included valves and adapters for the 5" hose." It was moved to approve \$5968.36 for the Town's share of the Homeland Security Grant. The motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 20 November 2006). The grant itself provided funds for the purchase of helmets, coats, pants, boots, and a thermal imaging camera.

On January 4, 2007, Ramey Seal was hired as an engineer for the department. He replaced Larry Peoples, who had recently retired. Peoples was employed as an engineer for 31 years. Ramey is currently serving as the twenty-third engineer for the department (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

Another engineer was hired on October 4, 2007. Chase Wammock became engineer number twenty-four and currently holds this position. Chase replaced Randy Lanham, who went to work for the Rocky Mount Fire Department (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010).

The idea of a second station was brought up at the October 6, 2008 meeting of the fire department (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 October 2008). The plan was to begin pursuing the idea of a second station sometime in the future.

This would be another step in providing the best possible fire protection for the town and its residents and would also help with the insurance rating from the Department of Insurance.

Larry Wynne was replaced as engineer for the department by Ray Yarborough on November 3, 2008. Larry had recently passed away. Ray became engineer number twenty-five and is currently in this position (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Wynne had been employed by the fire department for nineteen and a half years.

The idea of a replacement for the 1976 Chevrolet-Grumman equipment truck, which was put into service in 1991, came up at the December 1, 2008 meeting of the fire department. Stony Hill Fire Department had a Chevrolet Step Van equipment truck that was going to be sold. After a discussion by the department, it was decided to enter a bid for this vehicle (Louisburg Fire Department. 1 December 2008). This equipment truck was purchased for \$5,000.00 and went into service in early 2009. The 1976 equipment truck was sold to Gold Sand Fire Department for \$2,500.00.

2010s

Mark Rowe is the most recent engineer hired by the department, starting on February 20, 2010 and holds the number twenty-six position. Mark, who is currently serving, replaced Tony Wynne who had passed away (Louisburg Fire Department. 2010). Wynne was employed by the department for about 26 years.

It was announced at the April 4, 2011 meeting of the fire department that all of the renovations to the fire station had been completed (Louisburg Fire Department. 4 April 2011). This was the first work done on the new station, other than the roof replacement, since 1991. The renovation consisted of

new wall vinyl, new paint, and new carpet and tile in the restrooms, dormitory, kitchen, and lounge area.

At the June 6 meeting of the fire department, Chief Smith announced that he had met with the county concerning increasing the tax rate for the Central Fire District to help with the purchase of a new fire engine. He also stated that Mayor Pernell had said that without an increase in the tax rate there would not be a new fire engine (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 June 2011).

A public hearing concerning the new fire engine was held at the July 18 meeting of the Town Council. Mayor Pernell opened the public hearing on the purchase of a new fire truck. No one was present to speak in favor of, or in opposition to, the purchase. Mayor Pernell closed the public hearing. It was then moved to approve the purchase of a 2011 Pierce pumper tanker. This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 18 July 2011).

The new pumper is a 2011 Pierce "Impel" pumper tanker. The fire engine has a 1500-gallon per minute pump with a 1250-gallon tank and is powered by a Cummings ISL-9 400-horse power diesel engine. This vehicle was purchased for \$485,000.00.

A delegation from the fire department made a trip to the Pierce factory in Wisconsin to inspect the new fire engine to verify the specifications. A PowerPoint presentation was given at the September 12 meeting of the fire department showing the new fire engine and pictures from a tour of the production facilities (Louisburg Fire Department. 12 September 2011).

This new engine is state of the art. It has an on-board computer in the cab, which allows the firemen to have immediate access to pre-plan information on all commercial

properties in the district. It also has a computer-controlled data recorder. It is environmentally- friendly in that it has a system that burns off the diesel soot in the exhaust system before it is released into the air. As a safety feature, the engineer operates the pump from a top-mounted control panel. This also provides a much wider view of the fire scene.

The new fire engine arrived and was placed into service in February 2012.

At the February meeting of the fire department, a discussion was held relating to purchasing Maude and bringing her home. The department agreed to have a fund raising event with the proceeds going toward the purchase of Maude, "The Grand Old Lady" of the Louisburg Fire Department. After a lot of negotiations and the fund raising event, the purchase became a reality.

A group of firemen went to Jackie Lee's shop in Wade, North Carolina on July 11, 2012 in order to bring Maude home. There was also a considerable amount of spare parts to bring with her, consisting of two front fenders, a complete hood, a chassis with pump, an almost complete engine, and an assortment of other smaller parts. After loading and securing the fire truck and all of the parts, and giving Jackie a big "Thank You," the "convoy" headed back to Louisburg. Maude has now returned to her home at the Louisburg Fire Department.

Now, we come to today. There have been many new faces, many new pieces of equipment, and new fire stations, but the same determination and willingness of the firefighters to serve their community continues, and builds on the foundation that was started by the original Louisburg Fire Brigade over a hundred years ago.

LOUISBURG COLORED FIRE COMPANY

Although there is very little known history of the Colored Fire Company, this group played an important role in the history of the Louisburg Fire Department. The Colored Fire Company was originally named the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company, and these titles were still being used interchangeably until at least 1962.

The Louisburg Hose and Reel Team was formed in 1931. The team operated as a separate unit of the Louisburg Fire Department. They conducted their own monthly business and dinner meetings, which were originally held at the Lodge Hall on West River Road. In later years, the meetings were held at Otha Wilson's Automotive Repair Shop on the Bunn Road. At that time, Wilson was the captain of the Hose and Reel Team.

Although the Hose and Reel Team did some of their own training, most of the training was in conjunction with the main fire department. The team would join the other firemen at the fire house and the groups participated together in whatever training was provided during that particular training session.

In the early days, unfortunately, the team did not have the same quality turnout gear and telephone or pager alarm equipment as the main department. However, through the years this improved and ultimately every fireman in the department was equally equipped.

The Hose and Reel Team operated as an independent company administratively, but when responding to fire alarms, all of the fireman worked together, supported each other, and did the best possible job of protecting the lives and property of the citizens of Louisburg. This system worked well for a number of years. Ultimately, it was decided that a single fire department was the optimal manner of operating the fire

department and providing the best possible service to the town.

The organization of the Colored Fire Company was first discussed during the August 4, 1931 meeting of the Louisburg Town Council. During this meeting, "Mr. J. S. Howell (Chief of the Louisburg Fire Department at that time) suggested to the Board that a Colored Fire Company be organized, with headquarters in South Louisburg. Mr. Howell stated that this would not only be a great assistance to the Louisburg Fire Department, but that it would possibly lower the fire insurance rates in Louisburg in an amount greater than the cost of upkeep of a Colored Reel Team" (Town of Louisburg. 4 August 1931).

The Town Council instructed Chief Howell to "thoroughly investigate the above proposal and to present an estimate of the expenses of a Colored Fire Company to the Board at a future meeting" (Town of Louisburg. 4 August 1931).

According to the *Franklin Times*, the company was officially organized on August 10, 1931. "A colored reel team, as an auxiliary to the Louisburg Fire Department was organized by Chief J. S. Howell, on Monday night (August 10) with the following members: R. M. Williams, John King, Harry Hill, Walter Murray, Ed Gill, Thomas Williams, Willie Harris, John Henry Stallings, Jack Hayes, and Morris Brown. This company will be equipped at an early date with reel and hose and other necessary equipment and stationed on the South side of the Tar River" ("Colored Fire Company Organized").

The *Times* goes on to say, "A more complete organization awaits the return of the members and delegates of the Fire Department from the Firemen's Tournament (Convention) to be held at Tarboro beginning August 18th" ("Colored Fire Company Organized").

The above mentioned article from the *Franklin Times* says that the station was in south Louisburg. According to the Sanborn Insurance Company, the department had a reel storage station on “Kenmoor Avenue” in 1922. Therefore, it can be assumed that this is the same hose storage station that the Hose and Reel Team were using when formed in 1931.

The next mention of the new company was made during the October 6 Town Council meeting when a request was made for the town to pay the dues for the “Colored Fire Company to become members of the State Colored Fire Association.” The Clerk to the Board was instructed to pay the amount of \$7.50 to the secretary of the state association (Town of Louisburg. 6 October 1931).

The Colored Fire Company was praised by the *Franklin Times* for its prompt response to a fire on April 5, 1932. “The fire alarm Tuesday was occasioned by a pile of trash to the rear of the Mrs. Pattie Pittman home on east Nash Street, as it was found after the firemen arrived. The Fire Department was prompt to respond and especial credit is due the members of the colored fire company which is stationed on South Main Street for its speed in arriving at the scene” (“Fire Tuesday”).

During the September 6, 1932 meeting of the council, the Clerk to the Board was again instructed to send a check for the current year’s dues for the Colored Fire Company to F. W. Pullen, Financial Secretary of the North Carolina Colored Volunteer Fire Association (Town of Louisburg. 6 September 1932). This is further evidence of the company’s active role.

During the September 5, 1941 meeting of the council, W. J. Shearin offered the following motion: “That the Colored Fire Company be given the (National Guard) Armory Auditorium free of charge, for the purpose of holding a dance for the

benefit of the Colored Fire Company. The motion was seconded and carried” (Town of Louisburg. 5 September 1941). Although not mentioned in the minutes of the meeting, the proceeds from this fund raiser were probably used to purchase turn-out gear and other equipment.

Fire Chief Shearin and Robert Lee Harris appeared before the council on November 5, 1965 on behalf of the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company. Harris was probably the captain of the company at that time, though verification of this has not been found. The purpose of their presence was to discuss equipment for the Hose and Reel Company. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the Town Administrator be authorized to investigate the cost of twelve coats (Town of Louisburg. 5 November 1965).

At the December 16 meeting of the Town Council, a motion was made, seconded, and carried that authorized the Town Administrator to purchase 12 coats for the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company (Town of Louisburg. 16 December 1965). The members of the company preferred three-quarter length coats with hip length boots and helmets as their turnout gear.

As mentioned earlier, there is little recorded history of the Colored Fire Company. What is known is that the Colored Fire Company was an active member of the North Carolina Colored Volunteer Fire Association. This association was formed in 1888 or 1889 (Legeros). The Minutes of the Louisburg Town Council show that money was appropriated by the council for the company to have delegates attend the state convention most years from its organization in 1931 until it was merged with the Louisburg Fire Department.

The Louisburg Colored Fire Company hosted the North Carolina Colored Volunteer Fire Association’s Annual

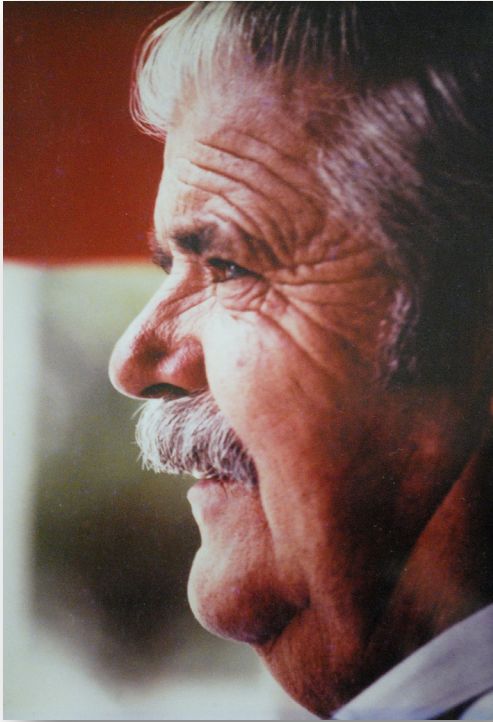
Convention twice. The first time the state convention was held in Louisburg was in 1963. During the September 7, 1962 meeting of the Louisburg Town Council, it was moved “that the Louisburg Hose and Reel Company be permitted to extend an invitation to the State Colored Fire Association to hold their 1963 convention in Louisburg.” This motion was seconded and carried (Town of Louisburg. 7 September 1962).

The second state convention hosted by the Louisburg Colored Fire Company was in the mid-1980s. The actual date has not been verified.

October 6, 1986 marks the date of the merger of the Louisburg Fire Department and the Louisburg Colored Fire Company. At the October 6 meeting of the Louisburg Fire Department, a “motion was made and passed to consolidate the Black and White companies into one company” (Louisburg Fire Department. 6 October 1986). This change was to go into effect immediately and both companies would have their dinner and business meeting together at the next monthly meeting.

Although the number of black members of the Louisburg Fire Department has been reduced slightly since the merger, these members continue to play a vital role in the protection of the people and property in the Town of Louisburg.

JOE PERRY



Joseph Clem (Joe) Perry
(1983)

(Photo Credit: Butch Gupton)

There is no way to present the history of the Louisburg Fire Department without including a chapter on Joseph Clem (Joe) Perry. Joe was a long time engineer with the department, serving for thirty-six years. He was known and loved by many and was a fixture at the firehouse and on the streets of Louisburg, until just before his death. It is a rare conversation relating to the Louisburg Fire Department that does not include some mention of Joe. Everyone in Louisburg

and the surrounding area knew Joe, whether it was as a fellow fire fighter, a personal friend, an acquaintance, or even those who only knew him by reputation. The stories told about Joe are endless.

Joe was born on September 5, 1922 and died on March 25, 1996. He served as a full-time engineer for the fire department from March 1, 1948 until his retirement in October of 1984— over 36 years of devoted service.

One of Joe's favorite "duties" of the department was entertaining kids. Whether it was a kindergarten or elementary school class or a child whose parents brought them to visit the station, Joe was always willing and quick to show them the station. The highlight of the visit was to get to sit in one of the fire engines, and maybe even get to sound the siren. The lucky ones might even receive a ride in a fire engine with Joe. Of course, when JR (the fire house pet Dalmatian) was a "member," Joe had to share center stage with JR.

There is no way of knowing how many of these little guys who visited the station ended up becoming firemen because of Joe's time and attention. He was a true ambassador of the department and no one ever loved the Louisburg Fire Department more than Joe.

Joe also made it a point to have the fire engines shining like a "new dime." He must have driven thousands of miles after washing and drying each truck. He would always wear his white dress hat, cocked off to one side, and a big smile as he passed through town, waving to everyone he saw.

Joe was also known as a "ladies man." He never missed an opportunity for a hug (and occasionally a little kiss on the cheek, of course). Every female was fair game, regardless of

her age; Joe loved them all. Joe is quite possibly the only man that ever had three ladies serving as pallbearers at his funeral. How Betty ever put up with him is unknown—true love and devotion can be the only answer.

It is quite possible that Joe was the only engineer to ever drive two fire engines to the same fire. This actually occurred during the Fleming Fruit Company fire on June 5, 1959. As the story goes, it was a dreary, cold day when the fire occurred. The business was located just across the river on Depot Hill, about two long blocks from the fire house. When Joe arrived at the scene on the first engine out, the building was fully involved, and Joe was the only fireman present. Joe realized that a second engine was going to be necessary, but no one was there to fight the fire. He was the only engineer working. He also realized that two volunteers, V. A. Peoples and Jolly Bunn (both of whom were capable of operating the fire engine), both worked not very far away, and he could depend on them to take care of the first engine and provide water for the first volunteers arriving on the scene to attack the blaze. So, Joe headed back the fire station. Here the story gets a little fuzzy. One version says that he ran all the way back to the station. The other version says that he started running back to the station and hitched a ride in the police car. At any rate, he returned to the station and drove back to the scene of the fire with the second engine. Some joked that Joe panicked during the excitement, but everyone knew that Joe was doing some fast thinking and knew the best course of action to take in a difficult situation. As it turned out, it worked. When he returned, the first engine was pumping water, and the volunteers that had arrived were doing their best to battle the fire. Joe connected to a hydrant and ran a supply line to the first engine in order to provide a continuous flow of water.

Another thing Joe was known for, around the fire house anyway, was his good cooking. He would occasionally cook at the fire house for his “boys.” The meal usually consisted of a big pot of navy beans, with either fried chicken or some of Pete Aycock’s home-made sausage, and biscuits (for those too young to remember, Pete was the butcher at the Fuller & Hayes Grocery Store located on South Main Street). Joe could even make a canned biscuit taste good. Sliced tomatoes were usually included as well. Joe had mastered the art of navy bean cooking and few could come close to cooking them as well as he could. Maybe the memories and the years make those meals seem better than they really were, but that is doubtful! An entire book could be written about Joe!

On September 6, 1993, the Louisburg Fire Department Scholarship program was put into place for the children of current and honorary firemen. This scholarship is for use at any four-year, two-year, or community college as long as the student’s grade requirements are met. Funds for the scholarship come from the interest on the money contributed to the Fireman’s Relief Fund. On July 1, 1996, the scholarship was renamed the “Joe Perry Memorial Scholarship.” As of summer 2012, thirty-one students have received this scholarship. Joe would be very proud.

Joe was a great advocate of education at all levels. Joe told all of the kids that visited the firehouse to study hard and get a good education. As he always said, “If you don’t study hard and get a good education, you might end up like me...with no education.” Joe might not have had much formal education, but he was a very wise man. If wealth is measured by the number of friends one has, he was a wealthy man.

KYLE PRINCE AND “JR”



Kyle Prince and “JR”

(1986)

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)

It is hard to mention the name Kyle Prince without mentioning the name “JR,” and vice versa. Kyle brought “JR” to the firehouse in 1980, and they were a pair until the end. “JR” was a real firehouse Dalmation. There will be more on “JR” later.

Kyle Prince was an engineer for the Louisburg Fire Department from July 1, 1974 until early 1989. At that time, he

transferred to the town's electrical department as a meter reader, continuing his employment with the Town of Louisburg (Prince).

Anytime Kyle's name comes up, one immediately thinks of his practical jokes. He loved to play a joke on someone, and many were played on him, but he is the type person who can "dish it out and take it."

Although some of the stories about Kyle probably should not be included in any book, a few will be shared here.

In the mid 1970s, several of the boys in the "Wild Bunch" started playing golf. One day, they were going down to play the par three course that was located just south of Bunn. Kyle had just received his fire department beeper, but none of the others had one. However, all of the "Wild Bunch" had CB radios for communications. Kyle decided it was time for one of his jokes.

There were two pick-up trucks going to Bunn, with two in the first and Kyle and another member in the second. Kyle allowed the first truck to get a little ahead of him, and he turned into a farm path just before Bunn. He then got on his CB and said, "Old Blue, you and White Fox come on, we have a fire call. Me and Jazz Man are on the way back to town." The first truck pulled over to turn around and heard Kyle on the CB again. "Green Goat to Old Blue, ya'll hurry up, this is a big one." The boys in the first truck knew that Kyle had his pager and assumed that there was a fire call for Louisburg, so they turned around. They headed back to Louisburg, with red lights and flashers going and possibly exceeding the speed limit, but only by a little. They had only driven a short distance before they heard Kyle call and say, "Ya'll had better slow down and turn off those red lights before you get into trouble."

They looked to their right, saw Kyle backed up in the farm path, grinning, and knew they had been had.

Years ago, a fellow came into the fire house one day and asked to see a policeman. Kyle said there were no policemen available. The fellow said the he knew that there were two policemen in Louisburg, and he wanted to see one. Kyle repeated that they were unavailable, to which the fellow replied, "Where are they?" With a straight face, Kyle said, "Well, one of them came into work drunk this morning, and the other one had to take him home!" Only Kyle could get away with anything like that.

On another occasion, there was a fire early one cold January morning. There was a little light snow falling. Unfortunately, the blaze had too much of a start and the house was a total loss, burning to the ground. At sun-up, all of the firemen were back at the station reloading hose on the trucks and getting them back into "ready" condition. About that time, the phone rings and it is one of the area television stations that had heard about the fire and called requesting information for a news story. When asked what the suspected reason for the fire was, Kyle said, "We think it was probably caused by lightning." When asked about the extent of damages, Kyle said, "There was right much smoke and water damage." They thanked him for the information; however, for some reason, the story never made the news.

Kyle had a dry sense of humor. One afternoon several of the boys were sitting around the old fire house. It was an extremely hot, humid day. Everyone had said about all they felt like saying, and there was a lull in the conversation. After a minute or so, Kyle wiped the sweat from his forehead and said, "Man, it is hot today...I wish we could get eight to ten

inches of snow while it is warm enough to enjoy playing in it.” He never cracked a smile, got up and walked away.

And now, the story of “JR”. Kyle brought “JR” to the fire house in 1980. The full-blooded Dalmation was donated to the department by Ensley Nelms, who thought that every fire department needed a fire house dog. At that time “JR” was about three to four months old. He was a “member” of the fire department from 1980 until his death in early 1989 (Prince).

Kyle taught “JR” to smile. Anyone could say, “Smile, “JR,” and he would show every tooth he had, in a big grin. After the smile, he expected a hand shake, of course. His big smile was known far and near and brought him fame.

“JR” was obviously a local celebrity, but he also became a regional star after being on television several times. He was on WRAL TV 5 at least three times. One appearance was with Bill Leslie on the *Spirit of Carolina* in a segment entitled “JR”, The Fire House Dog.” He also starred in a segment of *PM Magazine* called “American Heroes.” This program was hosted by Susan Dahlin and Tom McNamara of WRAL TV.

“JR” again took center stage when the Town of Louisburg had “JR Day” in 1987. The big day was advertised in the local paper and was announced on the local radio station during the morning talk show. “JR” was given a bath and the fire truck was washed, as they were both readied for the big day. It was said that Kyle even took a shower that morning, even if it was not Saturday.

When the big moment came, Kyle and “JR” took one of the fire trucks along the parade route where the streets were lined with “JR” fans. The parade stopped at the Louisburg Town Hall where “JR” was greeted by Sid Stafford, representing the Louisburg Town Council. Sid welcomed the crowd and tied a

large red bow around “JR’s” neck. He then presented him to the crowd and proclaimed that it was “JR” Day in Louisburg. There were quite a few kids (old and young) assembled for the arrival of “JR.” And of course, “JR” was presenting his biggest smile and shaking everyone’s hand.

“JR” was pampered by the firemen and lived a good life, but he also experienced some bad luck in his life. His courting trips and his trip to the Cash and Carry Grocery Store for his daily slice of bologna often became dangerous. He was hit by cars four or five times and was almost given up for dead once. However, his buddies would come to the rescue. Joe Perry would go to every business and ask for a small contribution for “JR”’s veterinarian bills. Joe would go in with tears in his eyes, ask for a small donation for “poor old “JR,” and come out grinning.

One of the best stories on “JR” is a little lengthy, but worth sharing. “JR” would occasionally feel the call of nature and go off “courting” for a few days. Most of the time, he would return home, with his tail dragging and scratched and bruised from his escapades. He would lie around for a few days, receiving all of the attention possible and finally come back strong.

Well, one time he came back from one on these ventures with a cowboy boot—just one boot. It was brand new, without a scratch on the sole. There were no tags or any type of identification. So, Kyle placed the lone boot on top of the drink machine, thinking that maybe someone would call or come by to claim it. No one ever claimed the boot. After about a month, Kyle told “JR”, joking of course, to go find the other boot. It was about time for another “courting” trip anyway. The next day, “JR” disappears for a few days. When he returned, he brought the match for the first boot. Again, this boot was brand new, matching the style, color, and size of

the first boot perfectly. Joe Perry noticed that this pair of boots was his size. He tried them on. They fit perfectly, and he wore them for the rest of his life. This may be hard to believe, but it is the truth.

After nine years of fame, glory, and a number of close calls “JR” received his call and went to the “big firehouse in the sky.” It was a sad day for all, but his memory lives on. “JR” was “one of the boys.” His name and years of service were placed on the plaque in the fire house with the names of all of the other deceased firemen. What a fitting tribute for “our buddy.”

THE “WILD BUNCH”

During the early 1970s, training of the firefighters became more frequent and much more intense, as required by the Department of Insurance. New innovations in equipment and new ideas and tactics of firefighting were introduced. With more young firemen were becoming involved, Chief Pernell was focused on training and was determined that this new breed would do the best job possible of not only extinguishing fires, but also doing something new called “salvage.” On many fires, as much or more time was spent covering furniture with tarps to avoid water damage and “mopping up” afterwards as was spent on the actual suppression of the fire. Also, the volunteers started returning to the fire house after the fires to assist the engineers in getting the apparatus back into ready mode. This included washing dirty hose, reloading the trucks with clean hose, cleaning the air packs and recharging the air bottles, and returning the trucks to pre-fire condition. This new focus also served as a catalyst to create even more interest and involvement by the volunteers.

This young group of firemen worked as a team. Other than the fire chief, there was not a leader of the group. They supported each other, whether at a large fire, a small fire, during training, or at cleanup after the fire.

These firemen were also supportive of the engineers and tried to assist them at every opportunity. After all, the engineers were responsible for getting water to the firefighters quickly and efficiently. Efficiency means charging the correct line, at the correct time, and at the correct volume and pressure. The best engineers and the best firefighters are useless by themselves, but together they are a prime example of a great team effort working toward a common goal.

Chief Pernell was very supportive of this group and encouraged them to participate in all training and emphasized responding to as many fire calls as possible. He offered regular training in all aspects of fire fighting. Although the department had a training officer, members of this group often took the lead in instructing routine training. Classes offered by instructors from the Department of Insurance were brought in as often as possible for sanctioned training. The group could not get enough training.

At about this time, an instructor with the Department of Insurance named Mike Shelton was assigned to instruct a state-sanctioned course for the department. It was his first solo course, as he had just completed his training with veteran instructors of the Department of Insurance. He was already a very experienced firefighter before he became an instructor. Mike was a capable and confident instructor.

Mike came to Louisburg for the first night of class, confident and slightly cocky. After he introduced himself, the first thing he did was to announce a short quiz on fire fighting knowledge. His first question was: "Who formed the first volunteer fire department?" One of the guys said, "Ben Franklin." Correct. The second question was: "How many drops of water are there in a gallon?" Another fireman said "75,708." Correct again. He asked several more questions, all of which were answered immediately and correctly. Mike was amazed by this crowd. What he did not know was that one of the firemen had found Mike's class notes on the speaker's stand before the class started, and the boys were ready with the answers. He was probably never told about the review of his notes.

The first three nights of class were inside, with a lot of information on firefighting equipment and tactics. The fourth

night was the “live burn,” which took place in an abandoned house that was donated to the fire department. It would be used for training purposes, first for smoke training and then for the actual burn. The class members took turns going into the smoke filled house, using self-contained breathing apparatus and doing search and rescue. Next, the house was set on fire, and the class went in as teams and suppressed the fire, using different attacks and nozzle patterns. Then the house was allowed to burn until it was fully involved and was attacked from the outside.

The search and rescue training went well. Mike was maybe a little surprised at how well it went, but he suspected that the group would not do as well when it was time to enter a dark house and to open a door to a room completely involved with fire. After covering all of the safety precautions and methods of attack, he said, “Let’s go!” The firemen went into a completely dark interior room of the house. When Mike opened the door to the room that was burning, fire rolled out from the top of the door opening and into the room where the firemen were stationed. Before Mike could say another word, the group had opened up a good “fog” pattern and disappeared into the room. He figured this was just luck, or maybe the most experienced guys were up first, however, each group did the same. Mike was amazed at the skills he had just witnessed.

After the training was over, everyone went back to the fire house for a review of the events. Mike complimented everyone on a job well done. He was impressed with the expertise and dedication that he had just witnessed. In his closing remarks, he said, “Ya’ll are a wild bunch!” Well, the name stuck, and this group was forevermore known as the “Wild Bunch.”

Mike and the “Wild Bunch” gained admiration and respect for each other. After this course, each time the Louisburg Fire Department requested a class from the state, Mike jumped at the chance to come back to visit. After several more classes, he told the group that he had told stories about the “Wild Bunch” from one end of North Carolina to the other. He added that there was always a little skepticism as to the truth to some of the tales, but that he would emphasize that they were true.

To the casual observer, of which there were usually a few at a training fire, some of the methods and attacks utilized by the “Wild Bunch” appeared to be dangerous, if not downright stupid. It is not entirely outside of the realm of possibility that some of them may have been just that. However, these men were trained as well as possible, knew their limitations, and always had a back-up team watching them. There were occasions when the back-up team would call the attack team to back out. Occasionally, a “rookie” would wonder if he really wanted to be a fireman after a training session with the “Wild Bunch.” Fortunately, a few minor burns and scratches were all that ever occurred.

Mike enjoyed his visits to Louisburg and the boys took good care of him while he was in town. There was golf to be played each afternoon before class, and he was well entertained at the local “watering hole” after class each night. There were worse things than being assigned to a class in Louisburg.

At one of the regular department meetings several months after the “Wild Bunch” had received its new name, one of the veteran firemen made a comment concerning the group. He said, as he looked around the meeting hall at his

contemporaries, “I am glad that we have this “Wild Bunch,” because we all have become the Mild Bunch!”

So, now you know the rest of the story.

The “Wild Bunch” story is akin to a “perfect storm.” These guys were not unlike any other firemen. They were just at the right place at the right time. That is to say that this young, new group of firemen came when there were new innovations in equipment, new ideas and tactics of firefighting, and a new chief who focused on training. The result was the “Wild Bunch.” The young firemen today train just as intensely and are just as dedicated and would certainly be members of the “Wild Bunch” if they had been born several decades earlier.

CIVIC AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE EFFORTS

Through the years, the Louisburg Fire Department has led or assisted in many civic and humanitarian assistance efforts. Although there are more, several will be acknowledged here.

Since the mid 1990s, the fire department has worked with the local Girl Scout Troop in their annual cookie sales. The fire station has been used as the drop-off point for the incoming shipment of all of the cookies for the county troops. The firemen assist in unloading all of the many cases of cookies and help organize them by types, of which there are many. When the time comes for each individual Girl Scout to come by to receive her allotment to be distributed, the firemen always assist in loading each order into the vehicles. One bay would be full of cases of cookies.

Another effort of the local firemen was after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack of the World Trade Center in New York City. For a period of time after the attack, volunteers manned posts at the local Walmart and at the fire station. These volunteers took shifts standing in full turn-out gear in the heat of mid-September collecting monetary contributions for the relief effort in New York. A considerable sum of money was raised and then forwarded to the appropriate relief agency.

After Hurricane Floyd, and the subsequent flooding of eastern North Carolina, the fire department again came through. Floyd made landfall along the coastal area near Wilmington on September 16, 1999, and then proceeded up through the coastal area of the state and into Virginia. Again, the Louisburg Fire Department answered the call and came to assistance. This time, the fire station served as a drop-off

point for donations to be delivered to the flood ravaged areas. Many items, primarily bottled water, clothing items, and infant items (formula, food, diapers, etc.) were collected at the fire station. All of these donations were sorted by type and readied for transportation. The Franklin County Health Department, which had teams assisting the Edgecombe County Health Department, transported two pick-up trucks loaded with bottled water and infant supplies, mostly formula, in the early stages of the effort. Later, one of the volunteer firemen borrowed a large ten-wheel van from his employer and carried the bulk of the relief supplies to Tarboro. Although there were many who made contributions to the cause, the local Walmart stands out as a major source of donations, particularly bottled water and infant supplies.

One other incident involves a Christmas Eve fire in 1983 that destroyed a home that also served as a family business. As the temperature bounced around the zero mark, what started out as a relatively contained fire spread rapidly as the firemen battled not only the fire, but the elements as well. They were hampered by water freezing immediately on contact with the roof and the ladders, as well as the ground.

The family lost everything, including all of the children's Christmas gifts. It was early morning before the firemen were back in the station. Several firemen made calls to their families and friends, who in turn called more friends, and by sun-up, the fire station had a sizeable number of Christmas gifts, mostly already wrapped, for the children of the family. About daylight, a call was made to a family member who was asked to come by the station. When they arrived, they were shown what had been collected for them and the gifts were loaded for delivery. As the family extended their deepest gratitude to the firemen, there was hardly a dry eye in the entire group.

For the past several years, the fire department adopts a needy family at Christmas. The firemen make personal contributions to be used to assist a family who is in need of support during the Holiday Season. The department works with the Department of Social Services to select a family.

The Louisburg Fire Department, as well as all other fire departments, contributes more to its community than just firefighting and getting cats out of trees (which it has done on at least two occasions, not to mention one dog).

MAUDE: THE “GRAND OLD LADY”

Maude has finally returned to her home. The history of the purchase of Maude by the Town of Louisburg in 1921 is told elsewhere in this book; however, her birth will be refreshed briefly.

Maude is an American LaFrance Type 75 fire engine. She was born in Elmira, New York in 1921, and found her first home and put into fire service in the Louisburg Fire Department. She served her purpose well from 1921 until her retirement in 1952. The following is what transpired in her life from her retirement until the present.

After Maude was retired from active firefighting service, she was sold as surplus sometime in 1952 or 1953, and found her second home. She was purchased by a gentleman named Johnson, who lived in the Pilot-Riley area of Franklin County. Mr. Johnson used her for irrigating his tobacco crop for several years. Maude's 750-gallon per minute pump would surely have served this purpose well. When asked why he wanted to sell Maude, he replied that he could not afford the gas to run her (Griffin).

Maude was purchased from Mr. Johnson sometime in 1958 or 1959 by Floyd Griffin, the local Ford dealer. Floyd enjoyed artifacts, such as this fire engine (Griffin). Incidentally, he also bought the 1952 American LaFrance open-cab fire engine from Louisburg when it was taken out of service in 1972. He owned this truck until sometime in the late 1970s. Among the other interesting artifacts purchased by Griffin was the old clock that was mounted on First Citizens Bank, which was located on the corner of Main and Nash Streets. This clock was a landmark in Louisburg for many years.

Floyd and his son Bill carried a used truck to Mr. Johnson for him to consider purchasing for use on his farm. This old Chevrolet pick-up was solid, but not very pretty, having many dents. However, it did have a decent paint job. Being a plain work truck in the late 1950s, it did not have a lot of selling features, such as air conditioning or power steering. Floyd, being the salesman that he was, told Mr. Johnson that it did have a small six-cylinder engine that should get good gas mileage. The problem was that the truck had just been added to Griffin's inventory, and he had not actually looked at the engine. When Mr. Johnson asked to see the engine, Floyd raised the hood to find the largest V-8 engine Chevy made at the time. Floyd later said that when he looked under the hood that "the motor looked as big as the motor on the train that ran from Louisburg to Franklinton every day." Mr. Johnson just chuckled and bought the pick-up (Griffin).

About this time, Floyd saw an old fire engine sitting behind a barn and asked if it might be for sale. He recognized it as the retired Louisburg fire engine. He ended up buying the fire engine for a small sum and a black and white pony. Again, being the salesman that Floyd was, he already had a sale for the pony (Griffin).

Floyd, Bill, and Lindy Ball, who worked at the Ford Dealership at the time, went to pick up the fire engine a few days later. Floyd carried a five gallon can of gas for the fire truck. Lindy asked if he thought that was enough, to which Floyd replied, "Sure." Well, they made it about five miles and Maude stopped running. Floyd was checking the carburetor, and Lindy was checking the gas. It was out of gas (Ball). Maude was hooked up behind the wrecker with a chain, and they headed back to Louisburg. Bill and Lindy rode on the fire engine, which did not have any sign of brakes. Bill was doing the steering and Lindy was holding on. Floyd was towing the

fire engine at about 35 to 40 miles per hour and at one time a little bit faster. Every time he had to slow down, Maude would run into the back of the wrecker. With Maude's heavy steel bumper and rubber cushioning on the back of the wrecker, no damage was suffered by either vehicle (Griffin). Later, when Lindy asked Floyd why he was going so fast, Floyd said that he was tired of them running into the back of the wrecker (Ball). Bill and Lindy had an experience that neither wanted to repeat, but Maude had now found her third home.

Once back at the Griffin Motor Company garage, Maude was serviced, cleaned, and readied for her new service. She was the attraction at many parades, including one in Durham. Floyd would have the men at the garage pull her out occasionally and ready her for a new assignment. According to Wilson Clay, who worked at the Ford Dealership at the time, the happiest day of his life was when Floyd sold Maude (Griffin).

Christmas, in addition to parade time, was when Floyd enjoyed getting Maude out and taking her for a spin around town. He especially loved going to friends' homes and taking their kids for a ride (Griffin).

Sometime after Floyd purchased Maude, an agricultural chemical was accidentally spilled into a creek that flowed into the Franklinton City Reservoir. Several local farmers had their irrigation pumps set up trying to pump the reservoir down to clean it, but were not having a lot of success. Floyd and Maude came to the rescue. Maude pumped water out of the reservoir and into the creek below the dam to dilute it. Maude pumped for two days and nights nonstop. Fuel for the truck had to be hauled in steadily for the duration of the clean-up (Griffin).

Around 1984, Floyd sold Maude to Jackie Lee, a gentleman from Wade, North Carolina. Jackie was Chief of the Wade Fire Department and worked as a full-time fireman for the Fayetteville Fire Department. This was Maude's fourth home.

Jackie spent many hours, and a considerable sum of money restoring Maude. When he finished, she looked better than new, with all her original parts. Jackie carried her to numerous parades and other fire department-related events. He has since restored several other antique fire engines. Jackie is not only a dedicated fireman, but is equally as dedicated in maintaining antique fire engines.

Jackie brought Maude to Louisburg for the dedication of the new fire station in September 1991. Maude got as much, or more, attention than the new fire station. Floyd was there, of course. Jackie allowed Floyd to take Maude out for a trip around town, for old time's sake. Every child and many adults had their picture taken with Maude.

During the course of the day, Jackie made the comment that IF he ever decided to sell Maude that he would give the Louisburg Fire Department the first chance to purchase her. He was told how much the gesture was appreciated, but there was actually little thought that this would ever become a reality. Little did we know...

Maude has now come full-circle. She has returned to her home, at last. She will not have to be used for firefighting again. However, it is hoped that she will still be able to be an attraction for young and old for many more generations and maybe even make a few more parades. Maude will certainly be well-taken care of in her remaining years of life.

ASHER AND MAUDE: OLD FRIENDS REUNITE



Asher and "Maude"
(2012)

(Photo Credit: Larry Peoples)

Asher F. Johnson, Jr. is a lifelong resident of Franklin County, a well known newspaperman, a radio personality of the by-gone days, and a self proclaimed "cantankerous old --- ---." Although he is called a lot of things, his friends call him Asher.

What a lot of people do not realize about Asher is that he was very active in the Louisburg Fire Department, Louisburg Civil Defense Unit, and the Louisburg Rescue Service. Asher was active in the fire department from mid-1947, after he

returned home from World War II, until May 1958. The fire department rescue unit was transferred over to the Louisburg Civil Defense Unit in September 1957, at which time Asher became a member of the Civil Defense Rescue Unit. The Rescue Unit evolved into the Louisburg Rescue Service. He continued his service in the rescue squad for approximately 20 years.

As best that can be determined, Asher is the oldest living former member of the Louisburg Fire Department. He actually served in the fire department for a period of time when “Maude” was still in active service, as he became a member of the department in 1947 and “Maude” was taken out of service in 1952.

Asher’s memories of “Maude” actually go back earlier than 1947. When “just a young sprout, pattering around *The Franklin Times* office,” just around the corner from the fire house, Asher remembers hearing the old fire alarm siren. He would run up to the corner of Court and Market Streets and watch as “Maude” would head out on another alarm.

Asher never actually drove “Maude,” as there were paid firemen whose duties were to drive the apparatus to the fire and provide water to the firefighters. He did, however, respond to many alarms where “Maude” was utilized. At times, he rode on the back of the truck, pulled hose from the hose bed, and used the assorted tools carried onboard.

On July 19, 2012, Asher and “Maude” were reunited for the first time in years. After looking her over and telling a few stories, Asher climbed aboard and went for a ride around town. It was just like in the old days, except a few birthdays later for both!

LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT CHIEFS

The following is a list of all of the fire chiefs who have served the Louisburg Fire Department since its beginning. The dates served are included and are accurate, according to the Minutes of the Louisburg Town Council and the Minutes of the Louisburg Fire Department. This being said, there will not be a reference for each entry.

William Baily – On January 2, 1906, Baily was serving as chief. On May 15, 1907, Baily was re-elected chief with “salary at same.” This shows that Baily was, in fact, fire chief on January 2, 1906, although it is not known when he was first elected or if he was the first fire chief.

W. H. Ruffin – On May 15, 1911, Ruffin was nominated and elected chief by the Town Council. He served until May 10, 1913. This was a two year term.

S. P. Boddie – On May 10, 1913, Boddie was nominated and elected chief. On August 4, 1916, he submitted his resignation as chief. The assistant chief was appointed to serve until another chief was elected. Boddie served for three years and three months.

N. B. Allsbrook – On December 29, 1916, Allsbrook was appointed fire chief. It is very likely that he was assistant chief under Boddie and served out Boddie’s term before being appointed chief. On January 10, 1918, he resigned after a year as chief.

J. A. Townes – On January 10, 1918, Townes was elected chief. He died sometime just prior to July 28, 1919, when he was replaced after one year and six months.

Dr. A. H. Fleming – On July 28, 1919, Fleming was elected fire chief to succeed J. A. Townes, who was recently

deceased. He was replaced on July 1, 1921 after serving two years.

O. C. Hill – On July 1, 1921, Hill was elected chief. On March 7, 1922, his resignation as chief was accepted after serving for just under a year.

W. N. Fuller – On March 7, 1922, Fuller was appointed fire chief. On July 11, 1924, he resigned as fire chief. His service was for two years and four months.

J. E. Thomas – On July 11, 1924, Thomas was elected as fire chief to fill the unexpired term of W. N. Fuller. On July 3, 1925, he was replaced after a term of one year.

F. J. Beasley – On July 3, 1925, Beasley was elected to be fire chief. On December 7, 1928, he was replaced. His service was for three years and five months.

John (Johnny) S. Howell – On December 7, 1928, Howell was appointed chief at the request of the fire department. On July 10, 1933, he was replaced after four years and seven months.

Festus M. (Fes) Fuller – On July 10, 1933, Fuller was appointed as chief. He died as he left a Town Council meeting in mid-October 1947. His term was for fourteen years and three months.

G. H. (Herman) Murphy, Sr. – On October 22, 1947, Murphy replaced Fuller upon his death. He served until December 31, 1959. His service lasted for twelve years and two months.

W. J. (Pete) Shearin – In December 1959, Shearin was elected as chief and his term started January 1960. He served until December 1967, for a term of eight years.

R. G. Person, Jr. – Person was elected in December 1967 and he started his term in January 1968. He served until December 1971, for a service of four years.

Karl Thomas Pernell – Pernell was elected chief in December 1971 and he started his term in January 1972. He served until December 1987, for a term of sixteen years.

Perry Johnson Faulkner, II – Faulkner was elected in December 1987, and he started his term in January 1988. He served until December 1991, for a service of four years.

Timothy Duane (Timmy) Smith, Sr. – Smith was elected in December 1991 and started his term in January 1992. He continues to serve at the present.

Pictured below are all of the Chiefs of the Louisburg Fire Department whose pictures are available. Some of these are not the best of quality, but will suffice.



Chief John S. Howell
(December 7, 1928-July 10, 1933)
(Photo Credit: LFD)



Chief Festus M. Fuller
(July 10, 1933-October 1947)
(Photo Credit: LFD)



Chief George Herman Murphy, Sr.
(October 22, 1947-December 31, 1959)
(Photo Credit: Mrs. Winnie Sledge)



Chief W. J. (Pete) Shearin
(January 1960-December 1967)
(Photo Credit: LFD)



Chief R. G. Person, Jr.
(January 1968-December 1971)
(Photo Credit: Allen Person)



Chief Karl T. Pernell
(January 1972-December 1987)
(Photo Credit: Karl T. Pernell)



Chief Perry Johnson Faulkner, II
(January 1988-December 1991)
(Photo Credit: Perry Faulkner)



Chief Timothy Duane Smith, Sr.
(January 1992-)
(Photo Credit: Timmy Smith)

LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT

PAID PERSONNEL

As stated in a previous chapter, ABOUT THE LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT, the department is a paid-volunteer combination department. There are five full-time paid engineers and 35 volunteers. What is surprising is that the department has been a partially paid department since at least 1909. The early paid firemen were referred to as “night policeman and fire house driver.” This person slept at the fire house, responded to alarms, and performed general duties as a fireman, but at night he worked as a policeman. One of the paid firemen was referred to as “the Keeper of the Fire House.” Although they worked as firemen and were at the firehouse most of the time, they had other duties for at least eight hours every night.

In 1934, the first full-time paid fireman was hired by the Town of Louisburg. This practice continues through today. The routine started out with two men working every other day. As the third, fourth, and fifth positions were added, the schedule then went to two men on duty, with alternating schedules.

Some of the dates for the start and end of employment of the firemen may be inaccurate in the section on the part-time paid men. The minutes of the Town Council meetings gave the date of employment of these firemen, but did not include the date that they left employment. The ending date of a fireman’s employment is assumed to be just prior to the starting date of his successor. Also, who replaced who is unclear in some cases in the period from 1909 to 1927. The most likely scenario is presented.

PART-TIME PAID FIREMEN 1909 – 1927

The following is a list of all of the firemen who have served the Louisburg Fire Department in any part-time paid capacity.

J. A. Harris – Harris was hired about December of 1909 as “night police and fire house driver.”

J. C. Tucker – Tucker was hired about December of 1909 as “night police and fire house driver.” It is unclear if Harris or Tucker was hired first.

Kip Thompson – Thompson was hired on October 30, 1914, probably as “night police and fire house driver.” It is unclear whether he replaced Harris or Tucker.

B. H. Meadows – Meadows was hired on June 15, 1917 as “Keeper of the Fire House.” It is unclear whether he replaced Thompson or which of the previous two remained to work with Thompson.

C. E. (Carnal) Pace – Pace was hired on May 22, 1923 as “Fireman, Fire Department and Night Police.” Again, it is unknown which of the previous two men he replaced.

George Herman Murphy, Sr. – Murphy was hired on January 7, 1927. His job was stated as “to be compensated to sleep at the fire house nightly.” He probably replaced Carnal Pace

FULL-TIME PAID FIREMEN 1934 – Present

The following is a list of all of the firemen who have served the Louisburg Fire Department in a full-time paid capacity. The information on the full-time paid firemen from 1934 until today is accurate. The numbers in parentheses before each name is the position number. Using these numbers helps to track the progression of who replaced whom, and when.

(1) **Graham Holmes** – Holmes was hired on August 3, 1934. This was the first full-time position for the fire department. He evidently resigned August 8, 1939. He was employed for five years.

(2) **George Herman Murphy, Sr.** – Murphy was hired on August 3, 1934. It appears that he was still working part-time when the state Department of Insurance started requiring two full-time paid men in 1934. He was employed for five years before resigning in August of 1939.

(2) **Raymond Joyner** – Joyner was hired on August 8, 1939. He resigned in February of 1948 and was employed for about nine years. He likely replaced Herman Murphy.

(1) **Newell Allen** – Allen was hired on August 8, 1939 as “assistant fireman,” being the number two man. He appears to have resigned in mid 1954 and was employed for 15 years. He likely replaced Graham Holmes.

(2) **Joseph Clem (Joe) Perry** – Perry was hired on March 1, 1948. He retired in October of 1984 after being employed for 36 years. He replaced Raymond Joyner.

(1) **W. T. May** – May was hired on June 24, 1954 as “assistant engineer.” He resigned on August 31, 1956 after being employed about two years. He replaced Newell Allen.

(1) **Karl Thomas Pernell** – Pernell was hired on September 2, 1956 and resigned in November of 1967. He was employed 11 years and replaced W. T. May.

(3) **Sant Thomas (Tommy) Denton, Jr.** – Denton was hired in May of 1964 as the third member of a staff of now three engineers. This was a new position which was created as a part of the agreement with the County Firemen’s Association for Louisburg to staff the central alarm system. He resigned at an unknown date in very late 1964 or early 1965, being employed for about a year.

(3) **Gerald Jackson Eury** – Eury was hired on December 4, 1965. He transferred to town meter department about August 1985. He was employed 20 years and replaced Tommy Denton.

(1) **Willie Gray Moon** – Moon was hired on March 1, 1968 and retired on July 1, 1982. He was employed 14 years. He replaced Karl Pernell.

(4) **Horace Sweet** – Sweet was hired in March of 1972 as the fourth member of a staff of four and resigned in late 1972, after being employed less than one year. This new position was created under Emergency Employment Act, according to fire department timeline.

(4) **Charles Patty (Charlie) Lambert** – Lambert was hired on January 1, 1973 and retired on April 1, 1990, being employed for just over seventeen years. He replaced Horace Sweet.

(5) **Kyle Edward Prince** – Prince was hired on July 1, 1974 as the fifth member of a staff of five. He transferred to town meter department in early 1989. He was employed for just under 15 years. This was a new position according to fire department timeline.

(1) **Lawrence Ray (Larry) Peoples** – Peoples was hired on July 1, 1976 and retired on January 1, 2007 after being employed 31 years. He replaced Gray Moon.

(2) **Tony Clifton Wynne** – Wynne was hired on October 1, 1984. He died on March 17, 2010. He was employed almost 26 years and replaced Joe Perry.

(3) **Johnny Ray Aycock** – Aycock was hired on September 15, 1985 and transferred to the town meter department on March 1, 1990 after being employed five years. He replaced Gerald Eury.

(5) **Larry Carter Wynne** – Wynne was hired in March of 1989. He died September 16, 2008. He was employed for nineteen and a half years and replaced Kyle Prince.

(4) **Lemuel Smith (L.S.) Ward, Jr.** – Ward was hired on November 11, 1989 and retired on February 1, 2005, being employed for just over five years. He replaced Charlie Lambert.

(3) **Donald Wayne Cottrell** – Cottrell was hired in April 1991 and resigned in mid 1998 after seven years of employment. He replaced Johnny Aycock.

(3) **Arthur Newell Holmes, Jr.** – Holmes was hired in July of 1998 and transferred to the water reclamation department in March of 2004. He was employed for about six years and replaced Wayne Cottrell.

(3) **William Durand (Randy) Lanham** – Lanham was hired in May of 2004 and resigned in October of 2007. He was employed for three years and replaced Arthur Holmes.

(4) **Dalton Earl West** – West was hired on March 1, 2005 and is currently active. He replaced L.S. Ward, Jr.

(1) **Sidney Ramey Seal, II** – Seal was hired on January 4, 2007 and is currently active. He replaced Larry Peoples.

(3) **Chase Wammock** – Wammock was hired on October 5, 2007 and is currently active. He replaced Randy Lanham.

(5) **Earlie Ray Yarborough** – Yarborough was hired on November 3, 2008 and is currently active. He replaced Larry Wynne.

(2) **Mark Fenton Rowe** – Rowe was hired on February 20, 2010 and is currently active. He replaced Tony Wynne.

LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT ROSTER

This roster lists the names of all firemen who have served in the Louisburg Fire Department since 1906. These names came from the Minutes of the Louisburg Town Council meetings, the Minutes of the Louisburg Fire Department meetings, records of the fire department (rosters, training records, pension membership, etc)., and newspaper articles. Every effort was made to make this roster complete and accurate; however, some names may be missing from these records and some full names were not available. If any names are missing, it is apologized for.

Also listed is the number of years of service, if available, and status of each person listed. The following are abbreviations for status:

- A=Active
- D=Deceased
- H=Honorary
- O=Out of the Department.

A number of group photos of the department are included in the photo section at the end of this book.

“JR” (9-D)

Alford, Robert (Robby) P. (4-O)

Allen, Newell (D)

Allsbrook, N. B. (Chief) (D)

Almond Jr, Billy R. (Chaplain) (3-O)

Alston, Cheatham (D)

Alston, Cornelius Demetrius (15-A)

Alston, R. W. (Bob) (D)

Alston, Victor Leon (3-O)

Aycock, Bobby Ray (7-O)

Aycock, Johnny Ray (8-O)

Bailey, William (Bill) Earl (38-A)

Baily, William (Chief) (D)

Ball, Michael W. (3-O)

Barham, Terry Wayne (2-O)

Barth, Charles (Chuck) W.(4-O)

Batton, Darnell Alford (22-A)
 Beasley, F. J. (Chief) (D)
 Beasley, Paul B. (30-D)
 Beck, Robert C. (Chris) (30-H)
 Best, Shawn (5-A)
 Bishop, Greg Allen (4-O)
 Blacknall, James Andrew (2-O)
 Bobbit, Rob (D)
 Boddie, S. P. (Chief) (D)
 Bottoms, James Russell (15-A)
 Bowden, William Astor (D)
 Brown, Morris (D)
 Buck, Palmer L. (2-O)
 Bunn Jr, Leherald Meade (13-A)
 Bunn, George T. (Jolly) (26-D)
 Carter, Christopher (Chris) S.(2-O)
 Catlette, John S. (D)
 Champion, Brian K. (2-O)
 Clifton, M. S. (D)
 Collier, Darrell Kemp (22-H)
 Cooper, Michael (2-O)
 Cooper, W.(Will) J. (D)
 Cottrell Jr, Donald Wayne (1-O)
 Cottrell Sr, Gary Taylor (24-A)
 Cottrell, Donald Wayne (20-H)
 Daniels, John Cameron (1-O)
 Davis, John Wyatt (10-A)
 Davis, Joseph E. (5-O)
 Davis, M. S. (D)
 Davis, Tyron (6-O)
 Dement, William Thomas (23-D)
 Dennis, George (D)
 Denton Jr, S.T. (Tommy) (1-D)
 Denton Sr, S.T. (Tom) (32-D)
 Dickerson, _____ (D)
 Dunn Jr, William (Bill) Lee (1-O)
 Edwards, Henry M. (H.M.) (20-H)
 Edwards, James Raymond (36-D)
 Edwards, Joe E. (17-D)
 Edwards, Mathew K. (3-0)
 Edwards, Wesley Orin (21-H)
 Elam, Taylor Lynn (2-O)
 Eury, Gerald Jackson (20-H)
 Eury, Thomas Earl (2-O)
 Faulkner II, P. J.(Chief) (21-H)
 Faulkner III, Perry J. (7-O)
 Faulkner, Jerry Lee (3-O)
 Feamster, Tom (Chaplain) (O)
 Ferguson, Jeffrey D. (2-O)
 Fleming, Dr. A. H. (Chief) (D)
 Floyd Jr, Jimmy Darden (3-O)
 Floyd Sr, Jimmy Darden (24-A)
 Floyd, Jason Lee (2-O)
 Foster, Sam (D)
 Foster II, Samuel (1-O)
 Foster Jr, S. C. (Buster) (26-D)
 Foster, Ernest Nelson (20+ D)
 Foster, Harold (D)
 Frazier, Justin (1-O)
 Freeman, Wyatt Marion (30-D)
 Fuller, F. M. (Fes) (Chief) (26-D)
 Fuller, Leslie Gayle (2-D)
 Fuller, W. N. (Chief) (D)
 Gardner, Jeffrey (Jeff) S. (6-O)
 Garrett, John Carol (21-H)
 Gilbert Jr, William R.
 Gill, Ed (D)
 Gilliam, Michael (1-A)
 Grice, Brian (1-A)
 Griffin, Alton Howard (3-O)

Haley, Bobby Lee (2-O)
 Harris Jr, James Lee (2-0)
 Harris Jr, Simon N. (O)
 Harris, Allen (D)
 Harris, Frederick (Fred) W.(20-H)
 Harris, James Allen
 Harris, James Otis
 Harris, Jordan Clifton
 Harris, Robert Lee (D)
 Harris, Stuart (D)
 Harris, Willie (D)
 Hawkins, Leonard M. (17-O)
 Hayes Jr, Robert T. (Ted) (4-O)
 Hayes, Jack (D)
 Hayes, Jeremiah A. (6-O)
 Heath, Gregory L. (O)
 Hendrickson, Dwayne Alan (8-A)
 Hester, James B. (Ben) (4-O)
 Hicks, Robert M. (D)
 Hight, H. E. (D)
 Hill Jr, Willie Edward (8-O)
 Hill, Harry (D)
 Hill, O. C. (Chief) (D)
 Holmes Jr, Arthur Newell (20-D)
 Holmes, Graham (D)
 Holt, Henry W. (Red) (D)
 Holtz, Anthony Lawrence (2-O)
 Howell, John S. (Chief) (D)
 Jackson, William D. (D)
 Jeffreys, Kevin Todd (10-O)
 Johnson Jr, Asher F. (11-O)
 Johnson, Frederick (Fred) P.(5-O)
 Johnson, James A. (34-D)
 Jolly, Wilbur M. (D)
 Jones, Eugene Thorton (D)
 Jones, J. B. (D)
 Jones, Jerry Wayne (5-O)
 Jones, W. M. (D)
 Joyner Jr, Malcolm (Mack) E. (12-H)
 Joyner Sr, Malcolm Eugene (19-D)
 Joyner, Jason William (4-O)
 Joyner, Mathew Stephen (3-A)
 Joyner, Raymond B. (2-O)
 Joyner, Raymond (D)
 Kemp, Travis Vernon (3-O)
 King Jr, Johnny Clinton (13-H)
 King, John (D)
 King, Keith Edward (1-O)
 King, William Garland (Bill) (13-D)
 Knott, John Al (2-O)
 Knott, Phillip Glen (D)
 Kousis, Christopher (2-O)
 Lambert, Charlie Patty (18-D)
 Lancaster, Christopher Todd (1-O)
 Lancaster, Jim (D)
 Lanham, Christopher (1-A)
 Lanham, William D. (Randy) (13-A)
 Latta, W. M. (Chaplain) (D)
 Leonard, Willard .(Tommy) (16-H)
 Lester, Delbert Eugene (1-O)
 Little, Mathew LaFayette (7-O)
 Lloyd, Ned Insoe (12-H)
 Loftin, Spencer Cleveland (19-A)
 Lovin, William Lloyd (Billy) (14-O)
 Loyd, Mike (O)
 Madison, Thomas Christopher (1-O)
 Magoon, George A. (O)
 Marshall, John K. (Johnny) (2-O)
 Mathews, H. Spencer (D)
 May, Joseph Clark (3-A)

May, William T. (D)
 McFarland, Ernest H. (38-D)
 McKibben, Timothy M. (Tim) (4-O)
 McKinne, Phillip A. (O)
 McKnight, Don Earl (O)
 Meadows, B. H. (D)
 Medlin, Nobe D. (36-D)
 Miller Jr, Odell (O)
 Mitchel, Brandon Thomas (1-O)
 Moody, Clarence Gordon (O)
 Moon, Willie Gray (39-D)
 Moore Jr, Wilbur Wade (3-O)
 Morton, Willard Dewey (27-D)
 Mueller III, Noel John (O)
 Murphy Sr, George H. (Chief) (36-D)
 Murphy, Claude Hubert (36-D)
 Murray, John Austin (6-O)
 Murray, Ryan Douglas (4-O)
 Murray, Walter (D)
 Nash, Sam (D)
 Neal, Willie M. (O)
 Nobles Sr, Daniel Jared (20-A)
 Pace, Carnal E. (35-D)
 Palmer, J. L. (D)
 Patterson, Thomas Ray (24-A)
 Pearce Sr, Joseph A. (25-D)
 Pearce, Joseph E. (1-D)
 Peoples Jr, Vernice Al (Al) (26-H)
 Peoples Sr, Vernice Al (V. A.) (23-D)
 Peoples, Lawrence (Larry) R. (40-A)
 Perdue, Aaron Thomas (1-O)
 Pergerson, J. L. (O)
 Pernell, Karl Thomas (Chief) (32-H)
 Perry Jr, C. B. (10-D)
 Perry, Bonnie Edward (18-D)
 Perry, Darrell L. (D)
 Perry, James Thomas (J. T.) (20-D)
 Perry, John Henry (D)
 Perry, John Russell (D)
 Perry, Joseph Clem (Joe) (36-D)
 Perry, Larry Thomas (10-O)
 Perry, Wiley Davis (30-D)
 Person Jr, R. G. (Chief) (D)
 Person, Allen (O)
 Phillips, Christopher (Chris) A. (4-A)
 Pinell Jr, Clarence Elliott (22-H)
 Prince, Kyle Edward (16-H)
 Pulley, Frank E. (Chaplain) (D)
 Rabil, Edmond J. (Ed) (O)
 Rogers, James Albert (O)
 Rowe, Mark Fenton (6-A)
 Ruffin, W. H. (Chief) (D)
 Saunders, Todd Wilson (15-O)
 Seal II, Sidney Ramey (6-A)
 Senger, Adam Dale (2-O)
 Shearin, Lawrence Beron (D)
 Shearin, Richard (Ricky) B. (15-A)
 Shearin, Stacy Kyle (1-O)
 Shearin, W. J. (Pete) (Chief) (39-D)
 Shearon, Hubert P. (D)
 Shelton, William F. (Wimpy) (23-D)
 Smith Jr, Ernest H. (E. H.) (20+ H)
 Smith Jr, Johnnie J. (O)
 Smith Jr, Timothy D. (11-A)
 Smith Sr, Timothy D. (Chief) (34-A)
 Smith, Adam Christopher (5-A)
 Smith, Michael Wayne (O)
 Smith, Milton Elmo (20-D)
 Smith, Ricky Jay (12-O)
 Smith, William J. (2-O)

Southerland, Richard Scott (2-O)
 Spencer Jr, R.W. (Robbie) (18-O)
 Spencer, Caswell E. (D)
 Spruill, William Leslie (1-O)
 Stallings, John Henry (D)
 Stallings, Ronald Connell (Pete) (O)
 Stokes, Reginald (O)
 Strickland, Arthur G. (7-O)
 Strickland, John Earl (D)
 Strother, Charles Willie (20-D)
 Sweet, Horace (1-O)
 Tabron Jr, Carlton Earl (10-A)
 Tabron, Eddie Lee (1-O)
 Tharrington, Earl Howard (15-O)
 Tharrington, G.H.(Greg) (22-A)
 Thomas, J. E. (Chief) (D)
 Thompson, Kip (D)
 Tomlinson Jr, A. S. (Pete) (24-H)
 Townes, J. A. (Chief) (D)
 Tucker, J. C. (D)
 Walker Jr, Wilbert (O)
 Walker, James Earl (5-O)
 Wammock, Chase (7-A)
 Wammock, David Chase (7-A)
 Ward III, Lemuel S. (Smitty) (9-O)
 Ward Jr, Lemuel S. (L. S.) (27-A)
 Ward, Albert (D)
 Wells, Joseph Perrin (O)
 West, Dalton Earl (12-A)
 Wester, Tyler (A)
 Wester, William T. (Tommy) (21-A)
 Wheless, Frank (D)
 White, John Kelly (O)
 Wilder, Marshburn G. (Monk) (22-D)
 Williams III, Willie (5-O)
 Williams, Henry C (D).
 Williams, Irvin Lamont (10-H)
 Williams, R. M. (D)
 Williams, Thomas (D)
 Wilson, Otha Lee (30-D)
 Wood, Christopher M. (1-O)
 Wood, Vincent Gene (3-O)
 Woods, Jesse Milton (20-H)
 Wrenn, Tommy (O)
 Wynne, Larry Carter (20-D)
 Wynne, Tony Clifton (29-D)
 Wynne, Walter Morris (22-D)
 Yarborough, Earlie Ray (4-A)
 Yarborough, Harold Earl (25-H)
 Young, Randy Scott (13-A)

LOUISBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT APPARATUS LIST

The following is a list of all of the apparatus that has been used by the Louisburg Fire Department since 1906. As much information as could be gathered about each vehicle is included, as well as its length of service.

Photographs of most of the pieces of fire apparatus used by the department over the years are included in the photo section at the back of this book. Some of these pictures are obviously not of the best quality, but will have to suffice.

HORSE, FIRE WAGON, AND HOSE REEL

Year 1906

Note First known apparatus

MODIFIED FUEL TRUCK

Type Unknown

Year Model Unknown

In Service 1920

Serial # Unknown

Engine Unknown

Pump Unknown

Tank Unknown

Cost Unknown

Status Out of service at unknown date.

Note Modified fuel truck surplused by the power plant and added fire hose of unknown length or diameter. First motorized vehicle. Not commercial.

ENGINE #1 (First)

Type	American LaFrance Type 75 Triple Combination
Chassis	American LaFrance
Year Model	1921
In Service	December 1921
Serial #	3682
Engine	American LaFrance 105 HP
Pump	750 GPM
Tank	30 Gal (for chemical extinguisher)
Cost	\$12,500.00
Status	Out of service in 1952.
Note	Nicknamed "Maude." First commercial fire engine. Sold at least three times. Current owner Louisburg Fire Department.

ENGINE #1 (Second)

Type	Ford-American Fire Apparatus Engine
Chassis	Ford 1 ½ Ton
Year Model	1946
In Service	August 1946
Serial #	Not available
Engine	Ford 100 HP
Pump	500 GPM
Tank	200 Gal
Cost	\$4,371.32
Status	Out of service in 1963.
Note	Sold to Jack Slagle Fire Equipment Supply Co. for \$2,305.95

ENGINE #2 (First)

Type	American LaFrance 700 "Invader" Open Cab
Chassis	American LaFrance
Year Model	1952
In Service	Late 1952
Serial #	L-4660
Engine	American LaFrance 215 HP

Pump	750 GPM
Tank	250 Gal
Cost	\$15,944.00
Status	Out of service in 1972.
Note	Sold to Floyd Griffin, probably in 1973.

TANKER #1

Type	GMC 353 D – Tank Truck - 2 1/2 Ton 6X6
Chassis	General Motors
Year Model	About 1944
In Service	1960
Serial #	Not available
Engine	GMC 91.5 HP
Pump	Not applicable
Tank	750 Gal
Cost	Unknown
Status	Out of service in 1964.
Note	Army surplus, purchased through civil defense

ENGINE #1 (Second)

Type	Ford-Seagrave Engine
Chassis	Ford C-850
Year Model	1963
In Service	1963
Serial #	N-7105
Engine	Ford 477 Cu In
Pump	750 GPM
Tank	500 Gal
Cost	\$16,785.00 (Cab & Chassis)
Status	Out of service in 1994.
Note	Nicknamed "Lizzie." Surplused and raffled for a fund raiser. Won by Ramey Seal. Sold to Raeford Hayes.

TANKER #4 (First)

Type	Ford-Alexander Welding & Manufacturing
Chassis	Ford
Year Model	1963
In Service	Late 1963
Serial #	Not available
Engine	Ford 271 HP
Pump	Not applicable
Tank	1250 Gal
Cost	\$4,129.01
Status	Out of service in 1983.
Note	Surplused to town street department

ENGINE #2 (Second)

Type	Ford-Howe Engine
Chassis	C-8000
Year Model	1972
In Service	December 1972
Serial #	13636
Engine	Caterpillar V-225
Pump	1000 GPM
Tank	500 Gal
Cost	\$32,220.32
Status	Out of service December 2004
Note	First diesel engine vehicle. Tank replaced with a 600 gal. poly tank before retirement. Donated to Gold Sand Fire Department April 2005.

TRUCK #5 (First)

Type	Ford Utility Truck
Chassis	½ Ton F-150
Year Model	About 1972
In Service	1976)
Serial #	Unknown
Engine	Unknown
Pump	Not applicable

Tank	Not applicable
Cost	None
Status	Out of service in 1979
Note	Surplused from town electric department. Refurbished by the "Wild Bunch" and painted by Bill Bailey.

ENGINE #3 (First)

Type	Ford-Grumman Engine
Chassis	Ford C-8000
Year Model	1976
In Service	Late 1976
Serial #	15092-H0
Engine	Caterpillar 3208
Pump	1000 GPM
Tank	750 Gal
Cost	\$52,796.53
Status	Out of service in 2001.
Note	Donated to Stumpy Point Fire Department

Truck # 5 (Second)

Type	Chevrolet Utility Pick-up
Chassis	Unknown
Year Model	1974
In Service	December 1979
Serial #	Unknown
Engine	Unknown
Pump	Not applicable
Tank	Not applicable
Cost	Unknown.
Status	Out of service in 1989.
Note	Bought from Rowe Chevrolet. Replaced Ford pick-up put in service in 1976.

TANKER #4 (Second)

Type	Ford-Grumman Tanker
Chassis	Ford C-8000
Year Model	1983
In Service	August 1983
Serial #	16659-WC
Engine	Caterpillar 3208
Pump	750 GPM
Tank	1250
Cost	\$80,084.00
Status	Currently stationed at "Station 2" on Industrial Dr. (Town of Louisburg Operations Center).
Note	First tanker with "Quick Dump System"

TRUCK #6 (First)

Type	Dodge Brush Truck
Chassis	Dodge 1¼ Ton
Year Model	About 1982
In Service	February 1986
Serial #	Unknown
Engine	Unknown
Pump	150 GPM Slide Load
Tank	200 Gal
Cost	\$900.00 (Army surplus)
Status	Out of service in 2004
Note	Slide load added in 1987. First brush truck

TRUCK #5 (Third)

Type	Chevrolet S-10 Utility Truck
Chassis	Chevrolet
Year Model	1989
In Service	1989
Serial #	Unknown
Engine	Unknown
Pump	Not applicable
Tank	Not applicable

Cost \$9,500.00
Status Out of service in 2000
Note

TRUCK #7 (First)

Type Chevrolet-Grumman Step Van Equipment
Chassis Chevrolet
Year Model 1976
In Service June 1991
Serial # Unknown
Engine Unknown
Pump Not applicable
Tank Not applicable
Cost \$3,800.00
Status Out of service 2009
Note Sold to Gold Sand Fire Department for \$2500.00

ENGINE #1 (Third)

Type E-One "Protector" Engine
Chassis E-One
Year Model 1994
In Service August 1994
Serial # 4ENRAAA85R1003160
Engine Cummins 300
Pump 1250 FPM
Tank 1000 Gal
Cost \$196,860.00
Status In Service
Note First engine with automatic transmission and air conditioning

TRUCK #5 (Fourth)

Type	Dodge Ram 2500 Brush Truck
Chassis	Dodge ¾ Ton
Year Model	2000
In Service	2000
Serial #	3D7KF26Z1YM235301
Engine	Dodge 5.9 L
Pump	150 GPM
Tank	200 Gal
Cost	\$19,628.00
Status	In service
Note	Originally a utility truck, converted to brush truck in September 2003 when new slide load unit arrived.

ENGINE #3 (Second)

Type	E-One "Cyclone II" Engine
Chassis	E-One
Year Model	2001
In Service	Mid to late 2001
Serial #	4ENRAAA8X11003823
Engine	Cummings 330
Pump	1250 GPM
Tank	750 Gal
Cost	\$247,259.00
Status	In Service
Note	

LADDER #8 (First)

Type	American LaFrance Ladder Truck
Chassis	American LaFrance
Year Model	1966
In Service	2001
Serial #	Unknown
Engine	Probably 671 Detroit diesel
Pump	N/A

Tank	N/A
Cost	None. Donated by Tarboro Fire Department
Status	Out of service in 2004. Donated to Town of Landis (NC) Fire Department
Note	85" Ladder

TRUCK #6 (Second)

Type	Ford F-150 Utility Pick-up
Chassis	Ford ½ Ton
Year Model	2004
In Service	2004
Serial #	2FTRF17W04CA14937
Engine	Ford 4.6 L
Pump	Not Applicable
Tank	Not Applicable
Cost	\$12,500.00
Status	In service
Note	

LADDER #2 (Second)

Type	Ladder E-One Sidestacker "Cyclone II" Aerial
Chassis	E-One
Year Model	2004
In Service	December 2004
Serial #	128267
Engine	Cummings ISL
Pump	2000 GPM
Tank	500 Gal
Cost	About \$432,428.00
Status	In Service
Note	75' Ladder purchased with an "Assistance to Firefighters Grant" through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

TRUCK #7 (Second)

Type	Chevrolet Step Van Equipment Truck
Chassis	Chevrolet P-30
Year Model	1991
In Service	Early 2009
Serial #	1GCKP32J4M3304965
Engine	Chevrolet 6.2 L Diesel
Pump	Not applicable
Tank	Not applicable
Cost	\$5000.00
Status	In service
Note	Purchased from Stony Hill Fire Department

ENGINE #2 (Third)

Type	Pierce "Impel" Engine
Chassis	Pierce
Year Model	2011
In Service	February 2012
Serial #	4PICJ01AXCA012491
Engine	Cummings ISL-9 400 Hp
Pump	1500 GPM
Tank	1250 Gal
Cost	\$485,000.00
Status	In Service
Note	Pumper/Tanker

FIREFIGHTING: A FAMILY TRADITION

The question is always asked: “Why did you decide to become a firefighter?” You will hear varied and sundry answers to this question. One common answer is: “Because my Daddy is/was a fireman.”

These “generational” firemen started out going to the fire house with their fathers as kids and continued into their teen years. About this time, they would start responding to fire alarms with their fathers. When the age of 18, or just over, was reached, they decided to apply for membership in the department. Some of these kids left the department after a few years of service, either because of work obligations or realizing that firefighting was not their thing. Others are currently serving or have retired.

The Louisburg Fire Department has a number of members coming from the same family, either father and son(s), or brothers. Of all of the family connections, only three will be mentioned here in any detail, these being the Peoples, Smith, and Joyner families. The primary reason for mentioning only three families is that these are the only ones to have had four members from one family in the department and cover three generations. These three families have contributed about 211 combined years of experience. The names of other family groups will be listed also. Hopefully, no one will be overlooked.

PEOPLES



**Larry (in fire truck), Al (standing),
and Russell (kneeling)**

(2011)

(Photo Credit: Chelsea Kellner)

July 2012 marks a total of 104 years of service in the Louisburg Fire Department by the Peoples family of Louisburg. This ongoing service began in 1959 when V.A. Peoples, Sr. joined the Louisburg Fire Department. V.A. was a member for 23 years, serving on the Fireman's Relief/Pension Fund for a number of those years. V.A. passed away on January 23, 2001.

V.A. (Al), Jr., the oldest son, served with the department for almost 26 years, retiring in 2000. During his tenure, Al served as lieutenant, captain, and assistant chief and

continues to serve on the Joe Perry Memorial Scholarship Committee.

Larry, the second son, began his service as a volunteer in 1972. He continues his volunteer service, with 40 years currently. During this time, Larry served as lieutenant and captain and is currently deputy chief. He was also secretary/treasurer for the department for around 10 years. Larry worked fulltime as an engineer for the department for 30½ years, retiring from full time employment in 2007. He served for 15 years as chief engineer.

Russell Bottoms, grandson, became a member of the department in 1997. He continues his service, with almost 15 years and is currently serving as captain.

Also, although not a member of the Louisburg Fire Department, V.A. has another grandson who is a firefighter. Davis Sandling has been a member of the Franklinton Fire Department since 2003 and has been employed as a fulltime fireman since 2008

SMITH



Back Row: Adam, Duane, Timmy, Milton
Front Row: Holly, Pam
(Photo Credit: Timmy Smith)

This July also marks a total of 70 years of service in the Louisburg Fire Department for the Smith family.

Milton Elmo Smith joined the Louisburg Fire Department in 1969, thus beginning another family tradition of firefighting. Milton was an active member of the department for 20 years and served as chaplain, lieutenant, and assistant chief. He was a member of the Firemen's Relief Fund for a number of years, serving as its secretary. Milton passed away on June 9, 2012.

Timmy, Milton's son, currently has 34½ years of experience. He served as captain before becoming chief on January 1, 1992. He has currently been chief for twenty and a half years, making him the longest serving chief of the eighteen chiefs of the Louisburg Fire Department.

Duane and Adam, Timmy's sons are both members of the department. Duane has served for 10½ years and is currently a training officer. Adam has been a member of the department for five years and was recognized as "Fireman of the Year" for 2010.

JOYNER

The Joyner family has just less than 37 years of combined service in the Louisburg Fire Department. Malcolm Eugene (Mack) Joyner, Sr. became a member of the department in 1954. He resigned in 1973, after serving for 19 years. Mack passed away on March 18, 1995.

Mack Jr., following in his father's footsteps, joined the department in June 1976. He served for 12 years, retiring in 1988.

Bennett, the brother of Mack Jr., served for almost two years, joining in January of 1984 and resigning in November of 1986.

Jason, the son of Mack Jr. joined the department in December of 2005 and served for almost four years, resigning in October of 2009. None of the Joyners are currently active in the department.

Little did V.A., Milton, and Mack know when they volunteered to become firemen, they would be the inspiration for two additional generations of volunteers. There may be a third....who knows?

OTHER FAMILY GROUPS

Father & Two Sons

Faulkner II, Perry Johnson
Perry Johnson III
Jerry Lee

Floyd Sr., Jimmy Darden
Jimmy Darden Jr.
Jason Lee

Father & One Son

Aycock, Johnny Ray
Bobby Ray

Cottrell Sr., Donald Wayne
Donald Wayne Jr.

Denton Sr., Sant Thomas (Tom)
Sant Thomas Jr. (Tommy)

Edwards, Wesley Orin
Mathew K.

Eury, Gerald Jackson
Thomas Earl

Lanham, William Durand (Randy)
Christopher

Person Jr., Robert Glenn (R.G.)
Allen

Shearin, Lawrence Beron
Richard Bryan (Ricky)

Tharrington, Earl Howard
Gregory Howard (Greg)

Ward Sr., Lemuel Smith (L.S.)
Lemuel Smith III (Smitty)

Wynne, Walter Morris
Tony Clifton

Brothers

Cottrell Sr., Donald Wayne Jr. & Gary Taylor

Johnson, James A., Asher F. Jr., & Frederick Pierce (Fred)

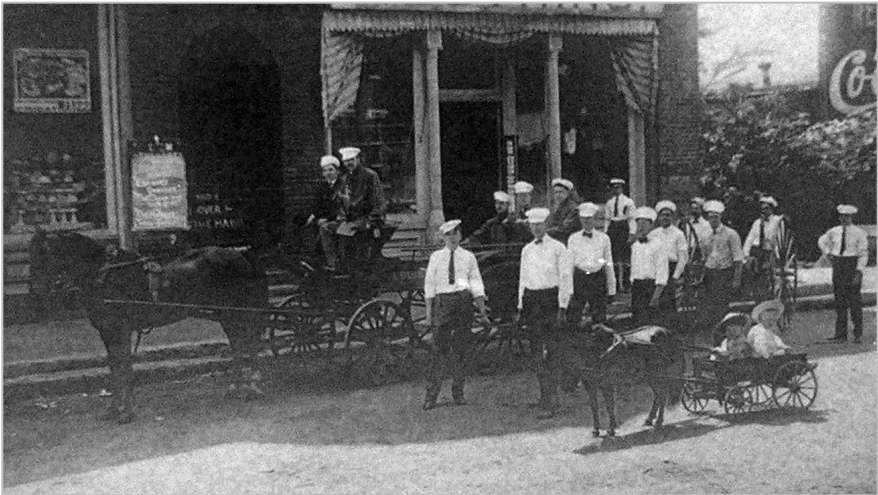
Murray, John Austin & Ryan Douglas

Smith Jr., Ernest Howard (E.H.) & Ricky Jay

Walker Jr., Wilbert & James Earl

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following are group photos of the department and photos of the many pieces of apparatus used by the department through the years. Group pictures have not been taken on a regular schedule through the years; therefore, these photos these are all of the photos available. Several of the utility vehicles and an equipment vehicle are not pictured, as these photos are not available. The quality of some of these pictures is not the best; however, this is all that are available.



1906

(Not in order) Sam Nash, Sam Foster, Will Cooper, Allen Harris, Stewart Harris, William Jackson, Jim Lancaster, Rob Bobbit, M.S. Clifton, Frank Wheless, Police Chief O.C. Hill, Fire Chief William Baily Children: George Ford, Jr., Pier Williamson

(Photo Credit: LFD)



Mid 1920s

Front Row: Henry W. (Red) Holt, Henry C. Williams, Claude H. Murphy, Festus M. Fuller

Back Row: Nobe Medlin, Cheatham Alston, Dickerson, Spencer Mathews, Carlton Pace, Herman Murphy, John S. Howell, E. H. McFarland

(Photo Credit: LFD)



1956

Front Row: Joe A. Pearce, Willie Strother, Davis Perry, Nelson Foster, "Pete" Shearin, W.M. Latta, James Johnson

Second Row: Karl Pernell, "Buster" Foster, Darrell Perry, Willard Morton, Wyatt Freeman, Maurice Wynne, "Jolly" Bunn, "Wimpy" Shelton, R.G. Person, Jr., Joe Perry

Back Row: Joe Edwards, V.A. Peoples, Mack Joyner, Gray Moon

(Photo Credit: LFD)



1973

Seated: Karl Pernell, Frank Pulley, Joe Perry, Charlie Lambert, Gray Moon, Gerald Eury

Second Row: James Johnson , Maurice Wynne, Willard Morton, Earl Tharrington, V. A. Peoples, Billy Lovin, Bill Bailey, Wyatt Freeman

Third Row: Tom Denton, Clarence Moody, Nelson Foster, "Monk" Wilder, Davis Perry, Chris Beck, "Jolly" Bunn, Al Peoples

Back Row: Astor Bowden, William Dement, Tommy Leonard, Milton Smith, John Garrett, Phillip Knott, Larry Peoples

(Photo Credit: Clint Fuller)



1975

Seated: Wyatt Freeman, Karl Pernell, "Jolly" Bunn

Second Row: Joe Perry, Charlie Lambert, Kyle Prince, Bill Bailey, Larry Peoples, Billy Lovin, Gerald Eury, Fred Johnson, Gray Moon

Third Row: Earl Tharrington, Al Peoples, , Pete Tomlinson Nelson Foster, Bill Almond, Milton Smith, Meade Bunn, Bill King, V.A. Peoples

Back Row: E.H. Smith, Chris Beck, Ned Lloyd, William Dement, John Garrett, John White, Tommy Leonard

(Photo Credit: Clint Fuller)



1983

Front Row: Kyle Prince, E.H. Smith, Billy Lovin, Milton Smith, Karl Pernell, Bill Bailey, Al Peoples

Second Row: Charlie Lambert, Gerald Eury, Chris Beck, Mack Joyner, Larry Perry, H.M. Edwards, Darrell Collier, Tony Wynne, J.T. Perry, Otha Wilson (Capt.), Willie Hill, Joe Perry, Leslie Fuller, Larry Peoples

Back Row: Vincent Wood, Pete Tomlinson, Gary Cottrell, Bill King, Tommy Leonard, Ned Lloyd, Harold Yarborough, James Walker

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



1986

Front Row: "JR", Kyle Prince, Otha Wilson, E.H. Smith, Karl Pernell, Bill Bailey, Al Peoples, Tony Wynne

Second Row: Johnny Aycock, Charlie Lambert, Arthur Holmes, L.S. Ward, Darrell Collier, John Garrett, H.M. Edwards, Ned Lloyd, Milton Smith, Perry Faulkner II, Larry Peoples, Perry Faulkner III, Gerald Eury, Chris Beck

Back Row: Tommy Leonard, Timmy Smith, Pete Tomlinson, Gary Cottrell, Bill King, Johnny Marshall, Bennett Joyner, Larry Perry, Mack Joyner, Harold Yarborough

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



1991
(Last Meeting at Old Fire House)

Kneeling: Todd Saunders, Johnny Aycock, Tony Wynne, Jesse Woods, Al Peoples, E. H. Smith, Perry Faulkner II, Timmy Smith, Otha Wilson, Larry Peoples, Wayne Cottrell, Larry Wynne, L.S. Ward

Standing: Tim McKibben, Bobby Aycock, Ray Patterson, Lee Dunn, Orin Edwards, Johnny King, Darrell Collier, Greg Tharrington, Elliott Pinnell, Irvin Williams, Perry Faulkner III, Robby Spencer, H.M. Edwards, Arthur Holmes, Jimmy Floyd, Darnell Batton, Chris Beck, Jeff Gardner, Gary Cottrell, Fred Harris, Meade Bunn

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



1994

Front Row: Tony Wynne, Wayne Cottrell, "Max," Ray Patterson, Al Peoples, Gary Cottrell, Timmy Smith, E.H. Smith, Pete Tomlinson, Larry Peoples, Larry Wynne, L.S. Ward

Second Row: Chris Beck, Austin Murray, Ricky Smith, Elliott Pinnell, Orin Edwards, Jimmy Floyd, Daniel Nobles, Spencer Loftin, Todd Jeffreys, Tommy Wester, William Smith

Back Row: Greg Tharrington, Fred Harris, Johnny King, Darnell Batton, Darrell Collier, Randy Young, Irvin Williams, Arthur Holmes, Robby Spencer, Perry Faulkner II, Ben Hester, H.M. Edwards

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



2001

Front Row: Spencer Loftin, Larry Wynne, Tommy Wester, Ray Patterson, Gary Cottrell, Timmy Smith, Bill Bailey, Todd Saunders, Arthur Holmes, L.S. Ward, Larry Peoples

Back Row: Mathew Little, Russell Bottoms, Greg Tharrington, Chuck Barth, Cornelius Alston, Fred Harris, Dwayne Hendrickson, Ricky Shearin, Elliott Pinnell, Willie Williams, Dalton West, Darnell Batton, Smitty Ward, Robby Spencer, Daniel Nobles, Jerry Jones, Jimmy Floyd, Orin Edwards, Todd Jeffreys

Standing on truck: Randy Lanham

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



2009

Front Row: Mathew Joyner, John Davis, Cornelius Alston, Adam Smith, Troy Shearin, Tommy Wester, Tyler Wester.

Second Row: Chris Phillips, William Bailey, Greg Tharrington, L.S. Ward (Asst. Chief), Timmy Smith (Chief), Ray Patterson (Asst. Chief), Larry Peoples, Elliott Pinnell, Spencer Loftin.

Back Row: Mark Rowe, Dalton West, Daniel Nobles, Jimmy Floyd, Adam Senger, Tyrone Davis, Randy Young, Darnell Batton, Carlton Tabron, Randy Lanham, Duane Smith, Matt Edwards, Ramey Seal, Ray Yarborough

(Photo Credit: LFD)

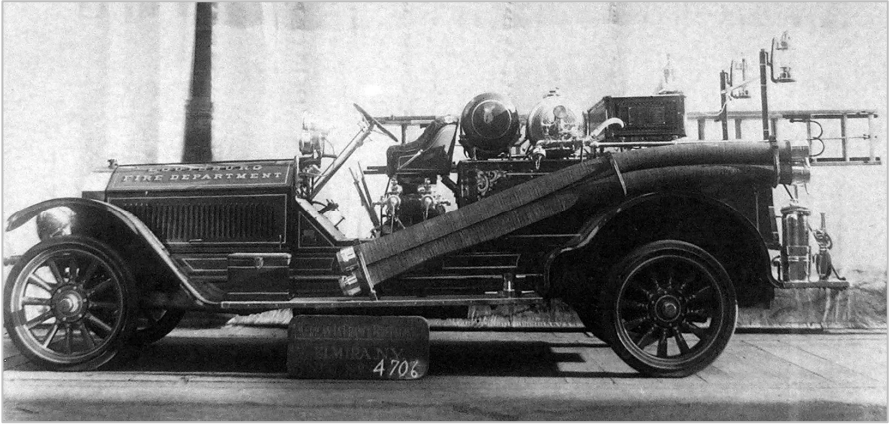


2012

Front Row: Ray Yarborough, Ramey Seal, Russell Bottoms, Greg Tharrington, Randy Lanham, Timmy Smith, Larry Peoples , Bill Bailey, Daniel Nobles, Chase Wommack, Dalton West

Back Row: Cornelius Alston, Chris Phillips, Brian Grice, Ricky Shearin, Ray Patterson, Carlton Tabron, Duane Smith, Mathew Joyner, Spencer Loftin, Darnell Batton, Michael Gilliam, Randy Young, Dwayne Hendrickson, John Davis, Clark May, Tommy Wester, Adam Smith, Meade Bunn, Chris Lanham, L.S. Ward

(Photo Credit: Larry Peoples)



1921 American LaFrance Fire Engine ("Maude")

(Photo Credit: LFD)



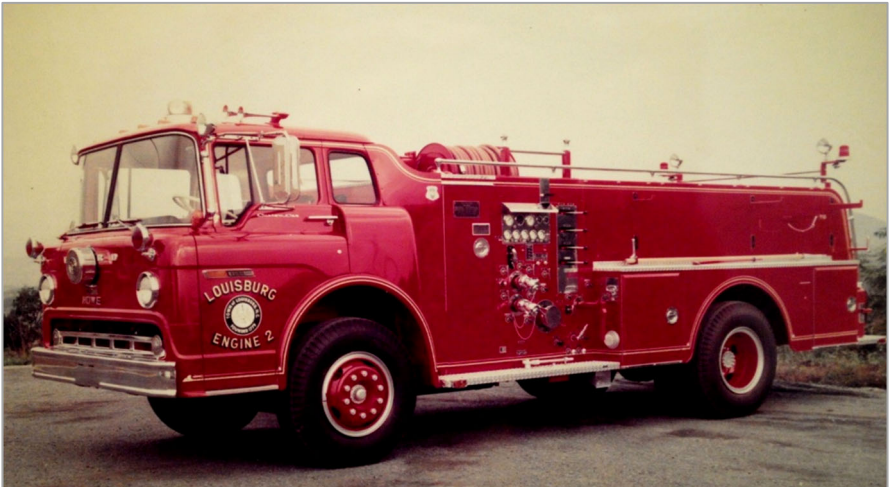
**1944 GMC Army Tanker
1947 Ford-American Fire Apparatus Engine
1952 American LaFrance Engine**

(Photo Credit: LFD)



1963 Ford-Seagrave Engine ("Lizzie")

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



1972 Ford-Howe Engine

(Photo Credit: Howe Fire Apparatus Company)



1976 Ford-Grumman Engine

(Photo Credit: Al Peoples)



1983 Ford-Grumman Tanker

(Photo Credit: Lee Wilson)



1994 E-One Engine

(Photo Credit: Larry Peoples)



2000 Dodge Brush Truck

(Photo Credit: Larry Peoples)



2001 E-One Engine

(Photo Credit: Lee Wilson)



1966 American LaFrance Ladder Truck

(Photo Credit: LFD)



2004 E-One Aerial Truck

(Photo Credit: Lee Wilson)



1991 Chevrolet Equipment Truck

(Photo Credit: Larry Peoples)



2011 Pierce Pumper/Tanker

(Photo Credit: Pierce Manufacturing Inc.)

FIREFIGHTER'S PRAYER

There have been a lot of good times around the fire house in the past one hundred plus years, but it must be remembered that firefighting is a very serious and dangerous job. Not everyone is cut out for this work. As stated elsewhere, the Louisburg Fire Department has been very fortunate not to have ever had a death of a member of the department answering an alarm or fighting a fire. We must all thank the Good Lord for this. And with that thought in mind, we will close this book with the following:

Firefighter's Prayer

When I am called to duty, God, wherever flames may rage;
Give me the strength to save some life, whatever be its age.

Help me embrace a little child before it is too late;
Or save an older person from the horrors of that fate.

Enable me to be alert, and hear the weakest shout,
And quickly and efficiently put the fire out.

I want to fill my calling and to give the best in me;
To guard my every neighbor and protect his property.

And if according to Your will I am to give my life,

Please bless with Your protecting hand,

My children and my wife.

Author Unknown

POSTFACE

In the preface, we stated that we were going to attempt to tell the history of the Louisburg Fire Department. It may not be one hundred percent accurate and it's certainly not one hundred percent complete, but as the old saying goes, "We gave it our best shot!" It is as accurate and as complete as it can be, using the references available to us.

We also stated that we hoped that this book would provide not only enjoyable reading but also be educational. It was definitely an educational experience for us in that we learned not only a lot about the fire department, but also about other events that occurred in Louisburg since the early 1900s. We also learned what is involved in researching all of the many sources while compiling information for this book. Although Al had written a book on family history several years ago, the style, form, setup, referencing, etc. had become a little "rusty." And on top of that, neither of us are English majors, which I guess is readily apparent if you have read this far.

So here we are. After researching the minutes of 1,272 Louisburg Town Council meetings (plus special sessions) and the minutes of 522 Louisburg Fire Department meetings and about 437 combined hours of work, we have the finished product.

We hope you found this book interesting, enjoyable, and entertaining.

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The authors chose to use parenthetical reference in the Modern Language Association (MLA) style for this book. This seemed to be a better fit for this book than conventional footnoting. The authors were as careful as possible to reference every resource used and to reference properly. If any information is improperly used or referenced, it was unintentional and we extend our apologies. Everything within quotation marks is reproduced as it was actually quoted from the various sources. It was decided not to use (sic) after each usage to denote misspellings, improper capitalizations, etc. as it would be redundant and very repetitive. It should be remembered that minutes of meetings are written hurriedly and may include abbreviations, incomplete sentences, or misspelled words.

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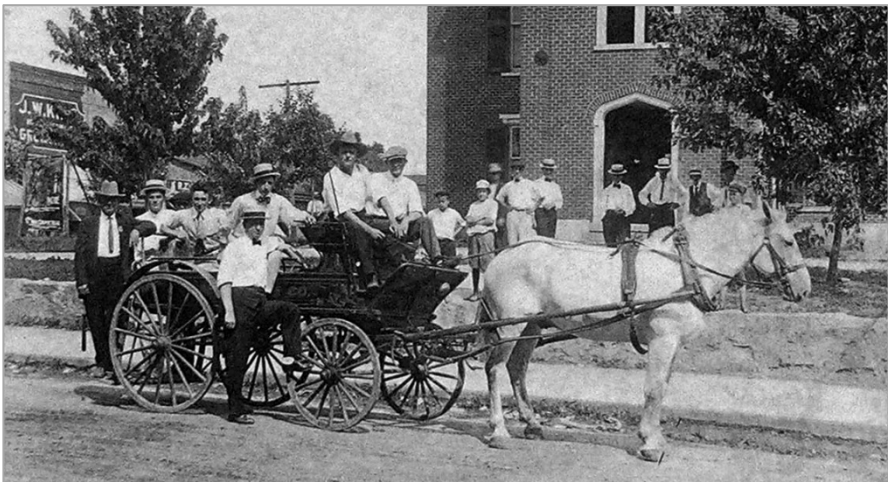
ADDENDUM - 2026

These pages contain addition content created by Mike Legeros in April 2026 for the digital edition of this book.

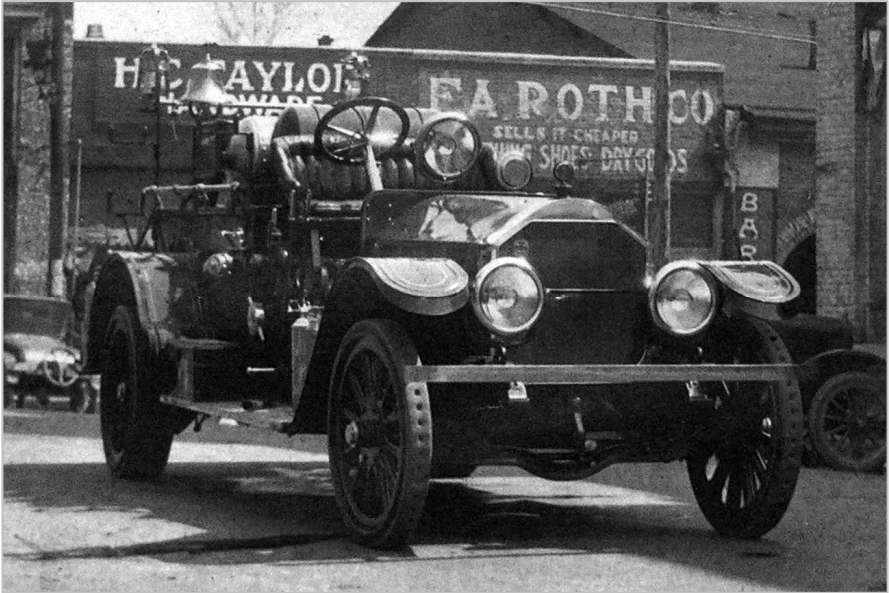
Part 1 - Historical Photos



(Photo Credit: LFD)



(Photo Credit: LFD)



(Photo Credit: LFD)

Part 2 - Apparatus Deliveries After 2012



Squad 1 photographed by Lee Wilson on December 5, 2015. The 1996 Freightliner/Hackney was refurbished by Hackney that year and received by the Louisburg Fire Department about two months earlier.



Engine 1 photographed by Lee Wilson on September 22, 2019. The 2019 Pierce Enforcer pumper, 1250/1000, was placed in service on August 30, 2019.

Part 3 – Louisburg Fire Protection – 1876 to 1908

This section presents research notes on the early history of the Louisburg Fire Department. It includes transcribed newspaper articles and summary information from Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

1876, Mar 03 – Franklin Courier

A Suggestion. — Several times lately we have felt the need of some organization, for the better protection of our property against fire. At present we are depended entirely on an unorganized, unfurnished, excited crowd, who in their wild frenzy, when the alarm bell rings, have nothing with which to contend with the devouring elements.

An engine, with our poor facilities for managing it, would be impracticable, and to sink reservoirs would involve an expense too heavy besides be a heavy tax to keep in repair. What then is best? We suggest that several public wells be dug, which are much needed for the citizens anyway, and that a number of Gutta Percha buckets say thirty or forty, and several sliding ladders and long handle hooks be purchased either by the citizens or the town authorities, and also a number of small force pumps, with this defence, we think that our property will be much more secure, than if we go to the expense of purchasing an engine and hose.

We throw out these suggestions, hoping that the citizens will meet and consider them, or others if in their judgment they may think best. But we do think that some step ought to be taken, and that without delay for a better protection against fire, and we hope the matter will not be postponed, but action will be taken and at once. Let us have buckets, ladders, hooks and hand pumps, and organize a hook and ladder company.

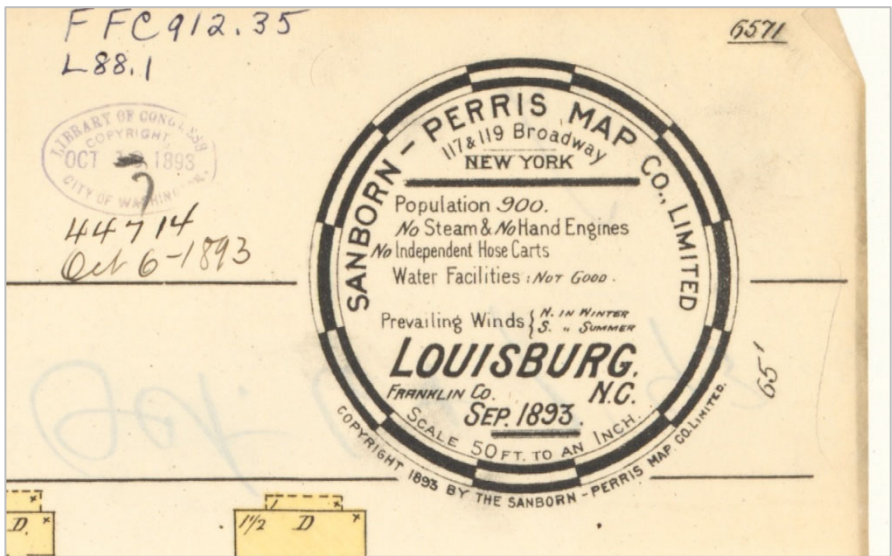
1893, September – Sanborn Map

Population 900.

No Steam & No Hand Engines

No Independent Hose Carts

Water Facilities: Not Good.



1893, Nov 2 – Franklin Times

Very Important

It is very important that all towns should have some kind of equipments for putting out fires, and strange to say, that although Louisburg has very often experienced the great want of something of the kind, yet the town has no organized fire department whatever, and whenever a fire occurs the only dependance is wooden buckets. We are led to this subject at this time by the following from the Charlotte Observer:

It seems almost remarkable that so many small towns should go on indefinitely, absolutely without protection of any sort against fire. In almost every case where a small town is swept away by fire, the news is accompanied by the report that the fire when first discovered could have been put out with one bucket of water. The equipment usually put up by a railroad company to furnish water to locomotives would in most cases save a small town.

This equipment is a tank that will hold about fifty thousand gallons of water and a small steam pump and boiler to fill it. The whole outfit can be put up for \$2,500 to \$3,000 and the hose necessary to reach most of the stores in small towns would not cost over \$1,000. Inside of five thousand dollars expended would make a fair fire protection for thousands of small towns that are now absolutely at the mercy of the flames.

1893, Nov 3 – Franklin Times

Fire District.

At a recent meeting of the commissioners of the Town of Louisburg, the ordinance in regard to the fire district was amended to read as follows:

Ordinance 12. The following shall be the fire limits of the town of Louisburg, viz: Within 200 feet of that part of Main street lying between Tar River bridge and the residence now occupied by O. H. Harris, within 200 feet of Nash street between Spring street and the ditch near the Franklin warehouse; within 200 feet of Court street; within 200 feet of Market street, and within said limits no wooden building shall be built or placed, nor any material used in the construction of the outside walls except stone, brick or cement; nor shall any building within said limits be covered or recovered with any wooden material.

By order of the Board,
J. A. Thomas, Mayor.
Geo. S. Baker, Clerk.

1896, Feb 7 – Franklin Times

Let us have the fire company. Also the hook and ladder company.

1896, April 3 – Franklin Times

What will the town fathers do about a fire department? Shall we have it, or shall we continue to take the risk with water buckets?

1898, Feb 18 – Franklin Times

At last our town authorities are taking steps toward furnishing some kind of apparatus to fight fire. R. G. Hart, one of our Commissioners, went to Greensboro this week to inspect a "truck" which the fire department of that city offered our town at a very reasonable price. Our GREATEST need is water works, but we commend this step on the part of our "city fathers" to "do something" in this direction. A hook and ladder and bucket company will be a great help when fires break out, and when the Legislature meets the authorities can then get the necessary legislation to furnish the town with a sufficient water supply.

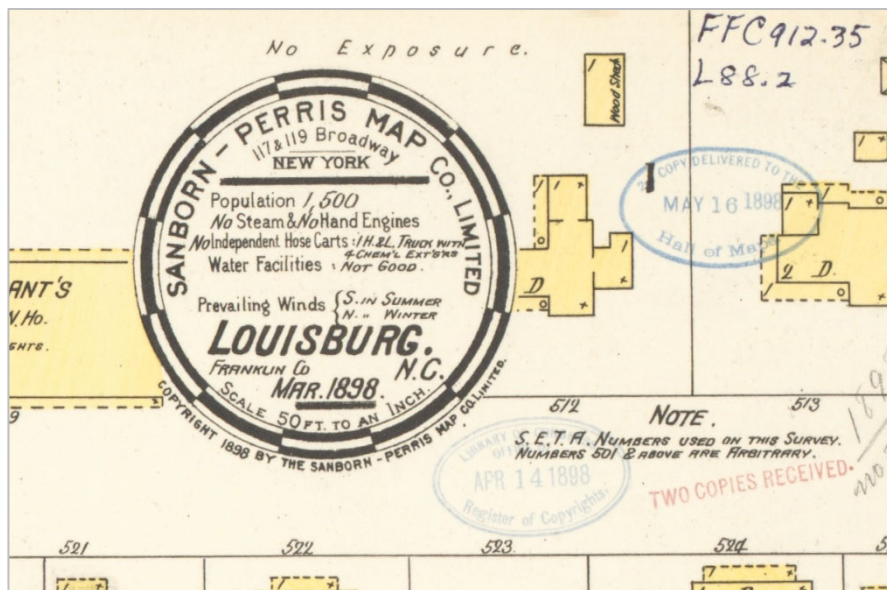
1898, March – Sanborn Map

Population 1,500

No Steam & No Hand Engines

No Independent Hose Carts; 1 H. & L. Truck with 4 Chem'l Ext'g's

Water Facilities: Not Good.



1898, March 23 – Franklin Times

The town authorities have purchased a hook and ladder truck from the town of Greensboro, and it will arrive in a few days. It was bought at a great bargain, and the Times commends the Commissioners for taking steps toward the establishment of some kind of system to aid in extinguishing fire. Now for water works. A small hand engine would be a good investment until the water works is established.

1898, May 23 – Greensboro Evening Telegram

Chief J. J. Stone went to Louisburg this morning to formally deliver the hook and ladder truck purchased from Greensboro by the Louisburg fire department.

1898, Jun 10 – Franklin Times

ANNUAL STATEMENT

—

OF THE TREASURER OF THE TOWN OF LOUISBURG FOR THE YEAR
ENDING THE 1ST MONDAY IN JUNE 1898.

—

GENERAL PURPOSE FUND.

—

DISBURSEMENTS

paid Hook & Ladder Wagon 350.00

1904, February – Sanborn Map

Population 1,500

Prevailing Winds S.W. in Winter.

Water Facilities: None.

No Steam & No Hand Engine

No Independent Hose Cart

No Hook & Ladder Truck

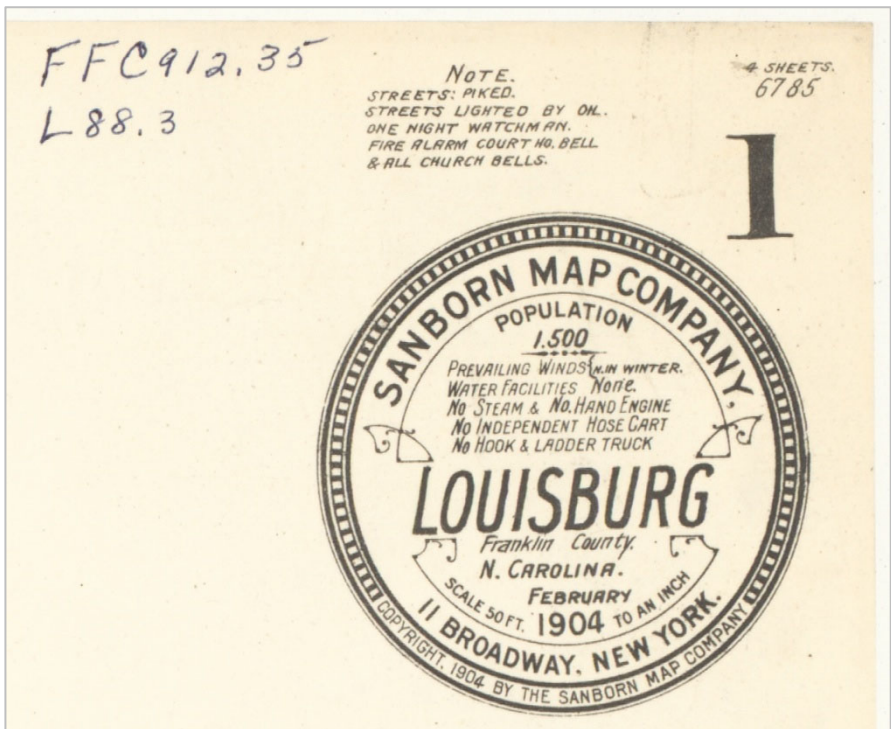
Note.

Streets: Piked.

Streets Lighted by Oil.

One Night Watchman.

Fire Alarm Court Ho. Bell & All Church Bells.



1905, Oct 20 – Franklin Times

A Fire Department was created and Wm. Bailey was unanimously elected Chief of said department.

[This action occurred at a special meeting of the town board on Monday night that was called for the purpose of accepting the newly completed waterworks and sewerage plant.]

1906, Feb 2 – Franklin Times

The Times is requested by S. C. Ford, Foreman of the Fire Department, to announce that there will be a meeting of the fire company on next Monday night, and it is desired that every member be present. The meeting will be held in the new quarters—third floor of Fire Department building.

1906, Feb 2 – Franklin Times

The new house for the Fire Department, located at the foot of Market Street, is nearing completion, and it presents a very neat appearance. It is three stories, including the basement. The basement will be used for the street team and implements, while the hose wagon and horses will occupy the second floor, and the third story will be fitted up for a bed room and a meeting place for the fire department.

1906, Oct 12 – Franklin Times

The new hose wagon for the Louisburg Fire Company arrived this week, and is a beauty. It was built by J. W. Evans, of Raleigh, and is all hand made. It cost \$300.

1907, Aug 09 – Franklin Times

Fireman's Tournament.

The Louisburg Fire Department was well represented in the Fireman's Tournament which was held at Wilmington this week. The following attended: S. P. Boddie, J. A. Turner, D. C. High, D. G. Pearce, M. S. Davis, S. B. Nash, W. J. Cooper, Ailen Harris, J. J. Lancaster.

They took the horse and wagon with them.

The boys were heard from yesterday and they write that they are having the time of their life. The horse and wagon are greatly admired and were given a prominent place in the large parade. There are about one thousand firemen in attendance. All the old officers were re-elected.

1907, Sep 20 – Franklin Times

The town has made a move toward a more efficient fire department. Mr. John Payne has been employed to stay on duty day and night to respond to alarms and get out the hose wagon. One of the rooms on the second floor of the Harris law building has been rented for his use and fitted up with gong and telephones. He will have charge of the horse.

—

A fire alarm on Monday night, a few minutes before twelve o'clock was caused by the burning of the shelter over the furnace of the Louisburg Foundry. The fire department responded promptly, but the distance from the nearest hydrant being too far for the hose to reach the fire the wagon had to return to the fire house to get more hose. This was done very quickly, the fire was however, under control with buckets. The amount of damage was small.

1908, March – Sanborn Map

Water Facilities

Works constructed 1906 & owned by town. Supply taken from Tar River & pumped to reservoir & stand pipe by Worthington pump, capacity 1000 per minute through an 8" pipe. Town supplied from stand pipe through 10" mains. Stand pipe 75 miles. Not of a 120' above Post Office. Capacity of stand pipe 30,000 gallons & reservoir 100,000 gallons. 42 miles of pipe from 4" to 6" in diameter. 35 hydrants. Pressure at Post Office about 62 lbs. Average daily consumption about 10,000 gallons.

Fire Dept.

35 volunteers, 2 paid & 1 permanent man. 1 horse.

One Independent hose cart. 1500' 2½" hose in good condition. Fire alarm Court Ho. & church bells.

Streets Piked. Streets lighted by Electricity.

One night watchman.

