

ENGINE! ~ ENGINE!



Western States Fire Apparatus

by Steve Hagy – Photos by Bill Hattersley

Founded in 1955 in Cornelius, Oregon this company began building fire apparatus on commercial truck chassis with the majority of their sales to fire departments in Washington and Oregon. Ford chassis constituted the bulk of their deliveries with the “F” series being a popular choice. Western States was an avid supplier of engines and pumper/tankers equipped with front mounted pumps. Custom chassis apparatus was offered beginning in the 1960s with FWD and Seagrave being the go-to brands. Competition from other regional and national manufacturers caused the company to close up shop in 2003.



Both the 1956 and 1957 Chevrolet chassis had the same appearance and were used in abundance by manufacturers coast to coast. This 1957 delivery to Sheridan, Oregon was equipped with a 750-gpm pump and 400-gallon booster tank. That white paint job really stands out as it sits near a forest.



Hillsboro, Oregon took delivery of this 1,250-gpm engine with an “Intra-Cab” pump in 1973. The “Intra-Cab” was a front mounted pump that was built into a cab-forward chassis. Seagrave was the dominant supplier of chassis for this style of apparatus, however FWD, Spartan, and Duplex chassis were also available.



Located along the banks of the Snake and Clearwater rivers, Lewiston, Idaho took delivery of this 1,000-gpm pumper using the well-liked “C” series Ford chassis in 1963. This apparatus changed with the needs of the department as the hard suction hose has been replaced with air packs.



Kenworth began building trucks in Seattle, Washington during 1923. A popular brand in the Northwest United States many of their chassis have been used for fire engines. Scappoose, Oregon received this big Kenworth/Western States rig in 1978. It has a 1,250-gpm pump and carries 2,000 gallons of water.



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~ On the Front Cover ~

Maxim publicity photo of a Trailer Mounted Fire Fighting Pump.
Part 2 of Bill Blunden's article on Trailer Mounted Fire Fighting
Pumps is in this issue. Photo courtesy Bill Blunden.

Chief's Chair

Fellow SPAAMFAA Members,

First, I would like to apologize to all members of the Union Fire Historical Society for not giving the proper credit to your organization in the last issue of Engine! ~ Engine!. The Allentown Spring Thaw has been organized and promoted by the Union Fire Historical Society for several years and your hard work and efforts are to be saluted. Please forgive my senior brain fart!

I have attended the Spring Thaw and the Pump Primers fire flea market nearly 20 years and I am always amazed at the friendships that have evolved from attending these events. SPAAMFAA activities are a special opportunity to make long-lasting friendships with individuals and families that share the same interest in fire apparatus and its history. My wife, Jeanne and son, Patrick have enjoyed every adventure. Our family has been enriched with "new" friends from all over the United States, Canada and even Australia.

The summer meeting in York, Pennsylvania was no exception. It was great to see so many members enjoying the muster, flea market, banquet, and the special tours. The White Rose Chapter, aka, The Old Fire Farts did a great job. Hats off to the members of the chapter that stepped-up to the task after the untimely death of Robert Straw.

The SPAAMFAA Board of Trustees (BOT), have been busy communicating electronically to keep the organization moving forward

Chief's Chair (continued)

since the summer meeting. One high priority is refreshing the website. A committee has been established and I am proposing a BOT Zoom meeting the first week in November. Based on the information discussed at that meeting, recommendations will be made at the winter meeting in Kissimmee, Florida.

Speaking of Florida, have you made your reservations? Bob Romig and his crew have assembled an exciting itinerary. I urge everyone to get your reservations in early and don't forget your suntan lotion.... a good time will be had by all.

John and Amy Tippet do an outstanding job of publishing the Silver Trumpet, but they could use some help. John travels extensively for the Fallen Firefighters Foundation and would like to share this opportunity with a few more volunteers. John and Amy would be happy to discuss their needs and provide you with direction. Don't hesitate to contact them if you can help.

Speaking of publications, by now you have received the latest issue of Engine!~ Engine!, published by Scott Rollins and his new assistant, Duane A. Trautman..... another great read. SPAAMFAA is endowed with many talented people. My thanks to all.

In closing, as always, please feel free to contact me at:
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Best,
Cos

Editor's Notebook

Greetings,

Part two of Bill Blunden's article on Trailer Mounted Fire-Fighting Pumps is in this issue. Bill covers the American version of the Trailer Mounted Fire-Fighting Pumps and the many ways Americans built and used Trailer Mounted Fire-Fighting Pumps. It is amazing that over the course of the war over 15,000 of these were manufactured, but very few are around today.

Tom Shand gives us an in-depth article on the Rescue/Squad apparatus that has served the city of Syracuse (NY) so well. Tom's article covers the beginning of a rescue companies in Syracuse with the conversion of a 1925 Federal/Obenchain Boyer to the rigs of the mid-1990s including a tandem axle monster manufactured by Emergency One.

Our friend Thorsten Umbach from Germany put together an article on the San Francisco Fire Department's Central Shop and their many pieces of shop-built apparatus. The amount of skill in the San Fran Shops was amazing.

It is time to start sending your muster photos for publication. Please send photos of both apparatus and people.

Enjoy,
Scott Rollins, *Co-Editor*
Duane Trautman, *Co-Editor*

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Trailer Mounted Fire Fighting Pumps

Part II

By Bill Blunden

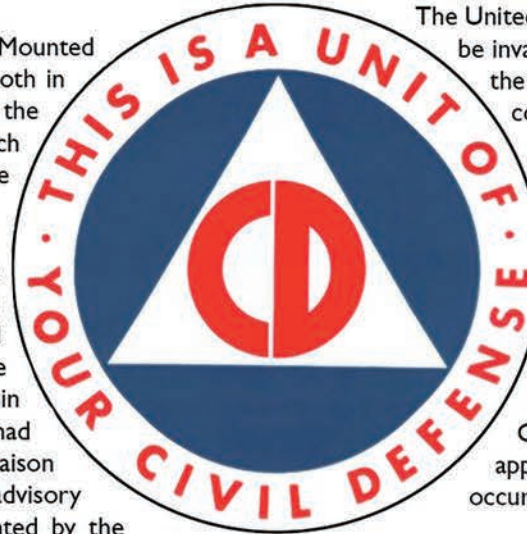
Civil Defense in the United States

In the United States, there were two applications for the Trailer Mounted Fire Fighting Pumps (TMFFP). The military used these units both in the states and overseas. In the states, these units helped form the backbone of the civil defense firefighting program. Research indicates that both applications used a "standard design" for the TMFFP's.

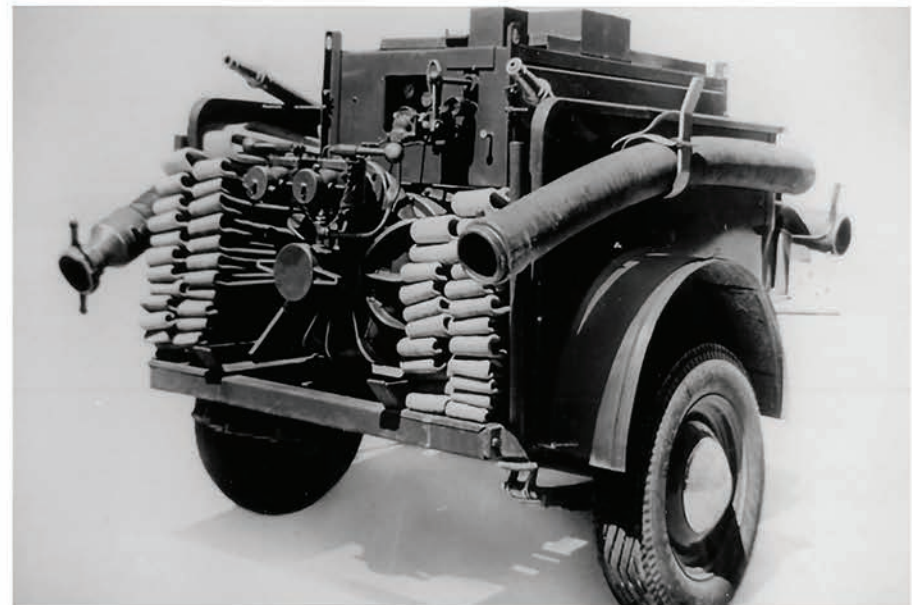
The story of fire trailer pumpers used for civil defense in the United States begins with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 8248 on September 8, 1939 which established the Office for Emergency Management. On May 25, 1940 the Office for Emergency Management (OEM) was established within the Executive Office of the President. Originally, the OEM had certain functions performed under the direction of the Liaison Officer for Emergency Management. Over the next year, an advisory commission to the Council of National Defense was appointed by the President. State governors were advised to re-establish defense councils that were originally established April 19, 1917 (in 1918, local units had numbered 182,000). Regional conferences on civil defense were held in New York City, New Orleans, Salt Lake City, Chicago, and Memphis. Drafts of model laws were sent to the states for consideration and on May 20, 1941, executive order 8757 established the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) within the Office for Emergency Management. This was designed to ensure effective coordination of Federal relations with state and local governments engaged in the furtherance of war programs and to facilitate participation by all persons in war programs. Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia of New York City was named as the director on a volunteer basis without compensation.

With the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, it became apparent that the war had come to our doorstep and that immediate action was necessary. Shortly after the attack, civil defense transitioned from a planning exercise to actual accomplishments. Due the planning that was done prior to this, the OCD was put in a very good position to make the transition. On January 27 1942, Congress approved Public Law 415 which authorized an appropriation not to exceed \$100,000,000 to provide protection of persons and property from bombing attacks in the United States. The act was approved on February 21 1942, appropriating the money to the OCD. The act specified that no part of the money was to be used for the employment of persons, the rent of facilities, or

the purchase of equipment and supplies to promote, produce, or carry on instruction or direct instruction in physical fitness by dancers, fan dancing, street shows, theatrical performances or other public entertainment. On April 2nd, the first procurement order was a request for \$36,000,000 to buy and deliver to the OCD, approximately 18,000 units of firefighting equipment complete with hose and accessories.



The United States was worried about the possibility that our country could be invaded or bombed by both the Japanese and the Germans. Early in the war, it was thought that the Japanese, attacking from the west, could drop bombs as far east as the Mississippi River, and that the Germans could reach as far west as the Mississippi from the east coast. During this period, engineers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia held a conference for the purpose of considering the design and building of trailer mounted fire-fighting pumping units similar to those that were used in England during the Blitz by Germany. The experience of London was used as a guide and pattern for what could happen here and what to do about it. In London, they had developed trailers, hauled by taxis and other civilian vehicles to get firefighting capabilities to areas in need. The OCD decided that it was necessary to provide special firefighting apparatus in the areas where bombings or sabotage were likely to occur and prove disastrous.



Standard trailer mounted fire fighting pump.

The final design of the trailer pumps consisted of a 2-wheeled trailer on which was installed a skid mounted pump package. Hale was the builder of most of the pump packages, however there is evidence of a number built by both Darley and American Marsh. The standard pump package was a 500-gpm single stage centrifugal pump driven by an industrial gasoline engine. There were some builders who also developed 250-gpm and 750-gpm models, however these were rare. The skid mounted pump package was used for both the OCD trailer pumps and flatbed trucks.

While the standard engine for these units was a Chrysler 6-cylinder flathead engine, Buffalo Fire Appliance of Buffalo (NY) and Maxim Motors of Middleboro (MA) used a Ford flathead V-8 motor in their pumping units. American Marsh also used a smaller Ford engine on its pump trailers. Most engines produced between 75 and 100 horsepower to drive the pump unit. The engine package included a starting motor and switch, generator, voltage regulator, air cleaner, fuel pump, ignition, choke, and throttle controls. An indirect auxiliary cooler provided cooling while the engine was pumping. A standard velocity-type governor was supplied to limit excessive speed and pressure.

These 2-wheel trailers were built by a number of contractors and accounted for slight differences of appearance, however the basic design remained the same. As you look through the photos you will see features of the pumping units are remarkably similar, however there are unique differences such as stabilizers, trailer materials and how the units were moved manually. The units were built with steel rimmed tires, pneumatic and solid rubber tires. OCD had a standard equipment package for the trailers but generally did not include hose. They were often pulled by automobiles which limited the weight that could be placed on the trailers. Equipment included: two hard suction, suction strainer, suction adapters, three pump cans, two nozzles, ax, bar, dry cell lanterns, and simple tools. Additionally, five sets of turnout gear were included with the unit.

With the design being completed, the challenge then became obtaining the materials necessary to actually build the units. During this time, supplies of critical materials were lacking due to the increased production of battle equipment for the war. It is interesting to note that in the operator's manual for the Chrysler pumping units, there is an important notice stating that:

“CHANGES IN MATERIAL AND SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS IN THE DESIGN OF THE FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT MAY BE MADE DUE TO THE INABILITY TO PROCURE MATERIALS ORIGINALLY SPECIFIED. HOWEVER, SUCH PARTS OR ASSEMBLIES INVOLVED WILL BE INTERCHANGABLE WITH THE ORIGINAL DESIGN WHEREVER POSSIBLE.”

The John Deere manual stated the same in much simpler terms;

“SPECIFICATIONS OF MATERIAL ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.”

There was no brass or copper available for hose couplings or bearings in the pump units. There was no rubber for tires or hose. The cotton for the hose jackets was also in short supply as it was being used for uniforms and explosives. This necessitated the need to rethink how this equipment could be manufactured. Nozzles, hose couplings and tools were made from cast iron instead of brass. It is easy to identify a civil defense nozzle as it is all cast with no brass components, and all have the CD logo stamped or cast into them.

Because of the national rubber shortage, instead of rubber tires, the trailers were designed with steel tired wheels. In looking at different builders manuals, it appears that steel wheels were standard, at least initially. The steel wheels proved to be problematic at best. The John Deere operator's manual has an important warning on page 3 in capital letters stating that:

“WHEN EQUIPPED WITH STEEL WHEELS, SPEED OF 25 MILES PER HOUR SHOULD NOT BE EXCEEDED ON HARD SURFACED ROADS, NOR SHOULD 15 MILES PER HOUR BE EXCEEDED ON ROUGH ROADS OR CROSS COUNTRY TERRAIN. WHEN EQUIPPED WITH RUBBER TIRES, THESE LIMITS CAN BE EXTENDED. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT STEEL WHEELS ON THIS TRAILER SHOULD BE REPLACED WITH RUBBER TIRED WHEELS AS SOON AS THE EMERGENCY RUBBER SHORTAGE IS ELIMINATED.”

In spite of all these difficulties, the OCD trailer pumpers were procured and delivered within a space of less than two years. When it is considered that all this material and equipment was obtained in addition to the tremendous demands of the war effort, it will be appreciated that a great deal of loyal and patriotic effort on the part of manufacturers and technical committees was involved. The OCD distributed 15,000 trailer pumpers, each carrying a pumping unit powered by a gasoline engine, suction hoses, fire hose, lanterns, shovels, and other equipment necessary for fighting fire. These units went to approximately 2,800 individual communities.

The next order of business was the development of policies and procedures for the distribution of equipment. OCD determined that the primary areas of concern were the coastal zones along the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. It was felt that not only were they the most easily accessed, but they also had communities where essential war materials plants were located. As the war progressed, the Gulf Coast and Great Lakes areas were added to the potential target zone list. It was not the intent of the OCD to protect war plants in the communities they were located in. That responsibility fell to the Army and Navy. OCD protection was strictly for the civilian population and property in the war industrial areas. It is interesting to note that the legal restrictions imposed by the OCD were complicated and often misunderstood. Because this equipment was purchased with public funds designated for a specific purpose, this required an extensive educational program to ensure that the property distributed by OCD could not be used as privately or municipally owned equipment.

One of the interesting things about these units was the materials required to not only build them, but to equip them. In 1940, the entire production of fire hose for the country amounted to 14,000,000 feet. Initially, the intent was to supply each trailer pump with 1,500 feet of hose. This would have amounted to 30,000,000 feet of hose to be procured, or over twice the yearly production of fire hose. The OCD did however manage to secure 10,800,000 feet of hose or a little over 500 feet per trailer.

Many of the OCD units were delivered to various coastal cities and other areas considered to be prime targets in the event of an attack. Major cities such as San Francisco and New York City received a number of both trailer pumpers as well as skid mounted units. Some were used as they were delivered while others, once delivered, were modified in the fire department shops to serve a specific purpose. Some skid units were placed on trucks to be used as auxiliary fire trucks in the community. New York City placed many of the skid units they received on shop made trailers for use around the city. The following section illustrates how the various communities around the country dealt with the units they were given.



*1932 Diamond T from Westmont, PA with department built trailer pump.
Photo is part of Charles Beckwith Collection courtesy of Robert Lloyd.*

Each pump trailer was equipped with three "pump cans" or portable extinguishers. These extinguishers were usually carried on the front of the unit. A triangular wooden block on the floor of the unit directly in front of the radiator kept the extinguishers from moving about in transit. They were also secured to the side of the trailer with leather straps.

NEW YORK CITY

Chief John Calderone of the FDNY shared the following FDNY history and photos. This is one area of FDNY apparatus research that he could find little specific information on, perhaps due to wartime security. One thing he did find was that FDNY conducted a test of 500-gpm trailer pumps from eight different manufacturers on 8/23/41 at the Battery. Unfortunately, there is no existing information to identify the manufacturers who took part in this demonstration. There are two known photos of this testing.

During 1942 and 1943, a large number (one source says 412) of portable pumps were obtained. Some were skid mounted, others on 2-wheel trailers while still others were mounted on 4-wheel trailers built by the FDNY Shops. It appears most of these had Chrysler engines with 500-gpm pumps and were painted gray. There are indications that every firehouse was issued one of these units. In the case of engine companies with



*FDNY conducted a test of 500-gpm trailer pumps from eight different manufacturers in August of 1941.
Photo from the Alex Black Collection.*



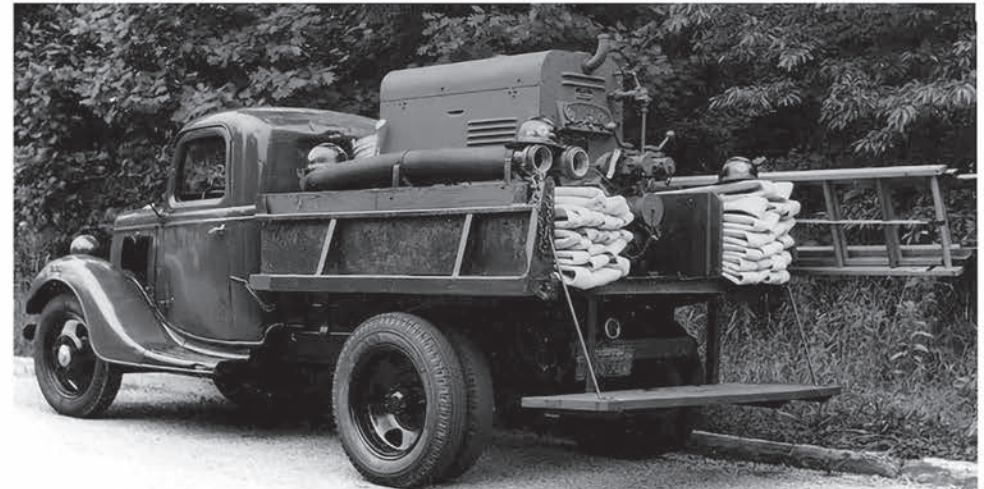
*FDNY conducted a test of 500-gpm trailer pumps from eight different manufacturers in August of 1941.
Photo from the John Calderone Collection.*

hose wagons, one trailer was assigned to the hose wagon so that the company could be divided with the pumper operating as one engine company, and the hose wagon and trailer pump operating as a separate engine company. There was also at least one case where auxiliary firefighters mounted a pump on their own truck.

In addition to using Chiefs' vehicles and hose wagons, New York City appears to have made arrangements for the trailer units to be towed to the fire scene by taxis, as did London. The following two photos show an unusual firefighting trailer produced by Hoyer Products tested by the FDNY in 1941.



*1929 FDNY Seagrave Hose Wagon (Engine 258) and John Deere Trailer Pump.
Photo from the John Calderone Collection.*



*Skid unit removed and placed on civilian vehicle by auxiliary firefighters of Engine 163.
Photo from the John Calderone Collection.*



*In the photo above, New York City appears to have made arrangements for the trailer units to be towed to the fire scene by taxis as shown in this demonstration.
Photo from the John Calderone Collection.*



Above is another view of the taxi experiment in New York. The trailer pump manufactured by Heyer probably has the nicest lines of any trailer pump I have seen.

Photo from the John Calderone Collection.

American Manufacturers

Following the conference at Fort Belvoir, VA, the specifications for the standard trailer mounted firefighting pump was published. This became the standard for all trailer pumps built in the U.S. As Chrysler records indicate, all orders for trailer pumps were built in accordance with U.S. Engineers specifications for military use and those for use at home were built to meet OCD specifications. There were a number of manufacturers in the United States who were selected. During the research for this book, I have found at least 14 different companies who produced the units, both for the military and for the civil defense department. The most current list includes:

- Hale Fire Pump Company, Conshohocken, PA
- Chrysler Corporation, Detroit, MI
- John Deere Company, Moline, IL
- Champion (W.S. Darley), Melrose Park, IL
- Maxim Motor Company, Middleboro, MA
- Sanford Fire Apparatus, Syracuse, NY
- Howe Fire Apparatus Company, Anderson, IN
- LaBour company Inc., Elkhart, IN

- Buffalo Fire Appliance, Buffalo, NY
- Ralph B Carter Company, Hackensack, NJ
- Twin Coach Company, Kent, OH
- Sealand Corporation, Southport, CT
- Farrar Company, Woodville, MA
- Barton-American Marsh, Battle Creek, MI

It seems that every day, I find another company who advertised that their company built these pumps. Many, such as Chrysler, produced substantial numbers, while others such as Sealand appear to have produced only a small quantity. With the exception of Chrysler Corporation, accurate records of how many were produced by each company are essentially non-existent. Most of the companies have long since closed and their records are lost. Others have little information on what was produced due to the strict security during this period in our history. The government considered these units to be extremely important to our national security and therefore the exact numbers and delivery records were top secret. Many company records have been lost to fire, others kept on index cards written in pencil, stored away, never to see the light of day. I was fortunate enough to have the help of a number of people to help try and piece together existing records and build this listing. Many people from across the country have submitted pictures and other pieces of information that have aided this project. James Davis was able to acquire some detailed company records from Chrysler Corporation which have been invaluable in piecing together this story. For some, manufacturers, an isolated advertisement is all the evidence that exists of their contribution to the war effort here at home....

Final Disposition

It is amazing that with all the trailer pumps that were produced during the war years, so few survived. A total of 15,000 units with 500-gpm pumps were distributed to 2,800 communities. It is interesting to note that the production and assignment of these units was very closely regulated, especially those that went to the Office of Civil Defense.

The rules also specified that at the end of the program the units were to be returned to OCD distribution centers but there was nothing specified about what was to happen to them after that. In an article by Colonel E.L. White in Fire Engineering Magazine July 1944, Col. White explained the following:

"Questions have been raised as to the Post-war status of this equipment and as to the possible effect of its existence on the regular fire equipment manufacturing industry. The OCD can make no post-war plans. The legislation under which the office operates only allows for the distribution of the material in one manner, and this is by loan to political subdivisions for the purposes specified. The possibility of any of this fire equipment being sold will depend upon a change in legislation or a decision that this is no longer necessary for civilian defense and may be sold as surplus through the Surplus War Products Administration."

"As to what is to happen to the equipment after the war, various suggestions have been made whereby it would be offered for sale to the communities in which it now exists. It could also be made available for sale to rural fire districts, it could be offered to institutions, etc. But, at present, the OCD cannot authoritatively consider any of these possibilities."

When the Surplus Property Act became a public law in October 1944, it marked the inauguration of the most gigantic merchandising activity ever attempted. There were 8,800 categories of items ranging from matches to magnesium plants, mess kits, furniture, clothing, and fire fighting equipment. The O'Mahoney-Mancuso Amendment to the act required that priority be granted in filling requirements of certain groups in the following manner:

- (a) Transfers to government agencies for their own use shall be given priority over disposals to all others.
- (b) Disposals to veterans to acquire property to establish and maintain their own small business or agricultural enterprise
- (c) Purchasers by reconstruction Finance Corporation
- (d) Disposals to state and local governments for their own use

In another publication more definitive information was published. It was reported that information has been received on the program for the disposal of some 12,000 500-gpm pumping units. These are being sold on a "where is, as is" basis through the Regional Offices of the Surplus Property Division of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Prices for the 500-gpm pumpers with equipment subject to certain discounts for wholesale quantities are as follows: Trailer pump with pump motor and accessories, \$349.26.

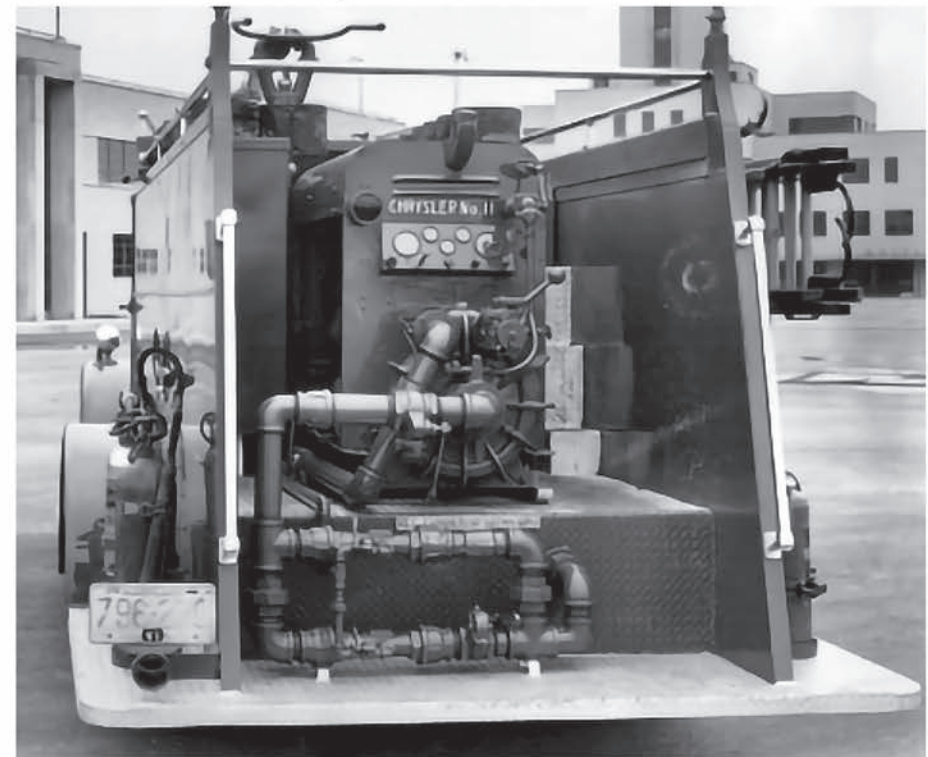
The program now in effect apparently did not include provisions for distribution of these pumps to states which did not receive allocations under the Air Raid Defense program and thus disregards the most important recommendations of the NFPA committee on Farm Fire Protection stating that the pumps should not be sold en masse to the highest bidder, but should be rationed to the several states on a formula basis. They should be distributed to the farming areas to aid in reducing losses to food, feed and critical building materials.

Thus, many of these units were given or sold to farms to help with irrigation while others were kept by the fire departments where they were originally distributed. In many instances these small units became the basis for the first fire trucks of newly formed volunteer fire departments when the pump units were taken off the trailers and attached to trucks.

Unfortunately, there is not a lot of information available regarding military TMFFPs due to the secrecy of the war. It appears that the units that were sent overseas for the war effort were left there and not returned to the United States. What happened to these units is unknown and it is assumed that they were used for farming and other



*Hale pump package on a flat-bed truck of the Cleveland Auxiliary Fire Department for illustration of pump package.
Photo from the Paul Nelson Collection.*



Rear mounted pump on a truck used at an airport.



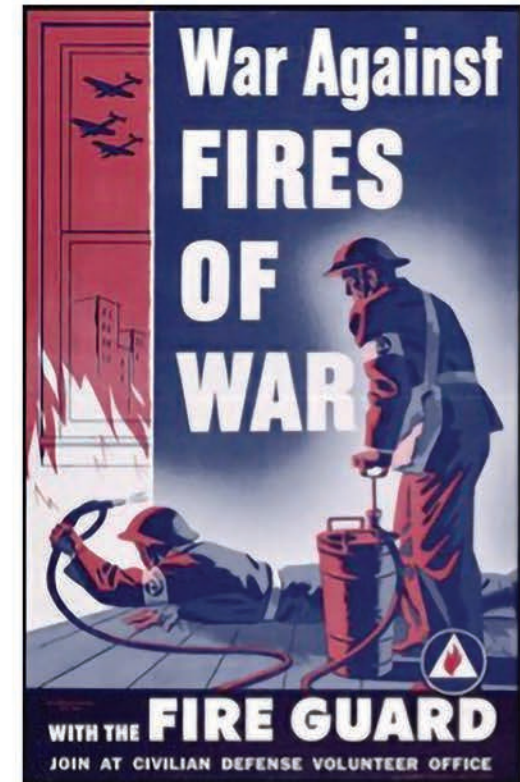
*Unknown fire department with 500-gpm Ford pumper and unknown make trailer pump.
Charles Beckwith Collection courtesy of Robert Lloyd.*

civilian purposes, but this is pure speculation as no records have been found as to their disposition.

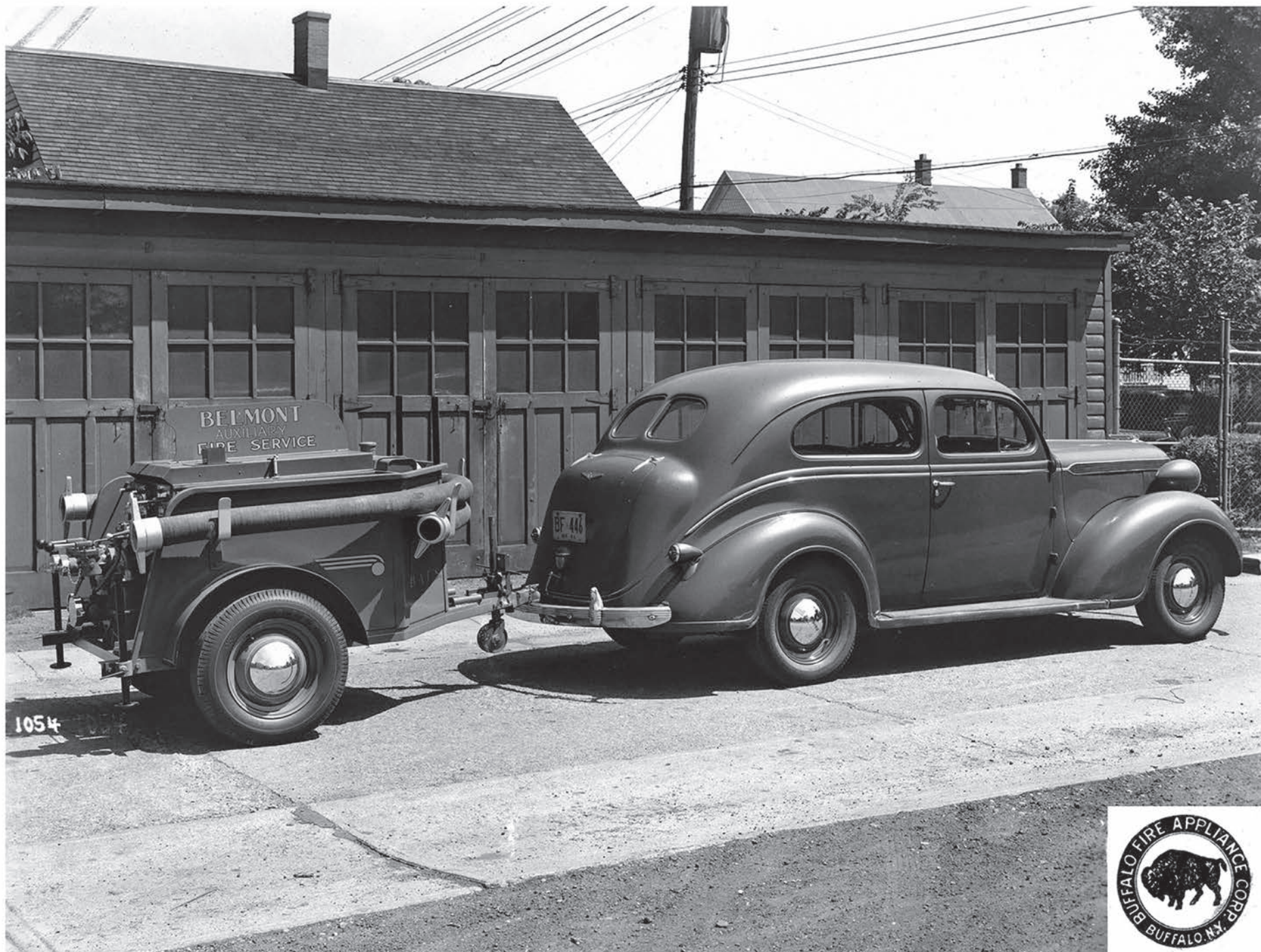
In the United States, it appears that most of the units that were used stateside were destroyed. There are a number of units that survived as farming pumps and a few that were kept by small rural fire departments for use in their communities. These units pop up occasionally from barns and garages where they have been stored for many years.

At the end of the day, although these units did not see the action that the units in England did during the Blitz, they remain a part of the fire fighting history of our country. The lessons learned in England helped prepare for attacks on our soil, and the trailer mounted fire-fighting pumps were on the front line of the civil defense program of the United States. They remain as,

The Forgotten Fire Engines of World War II.....



Maxim Blitz Buggies training in Hamden, CT.



The Belmont Auxiliary Fire Service trailer mounted fire-fighting pump being pulled by a car. Photo courtesy of Pete West.

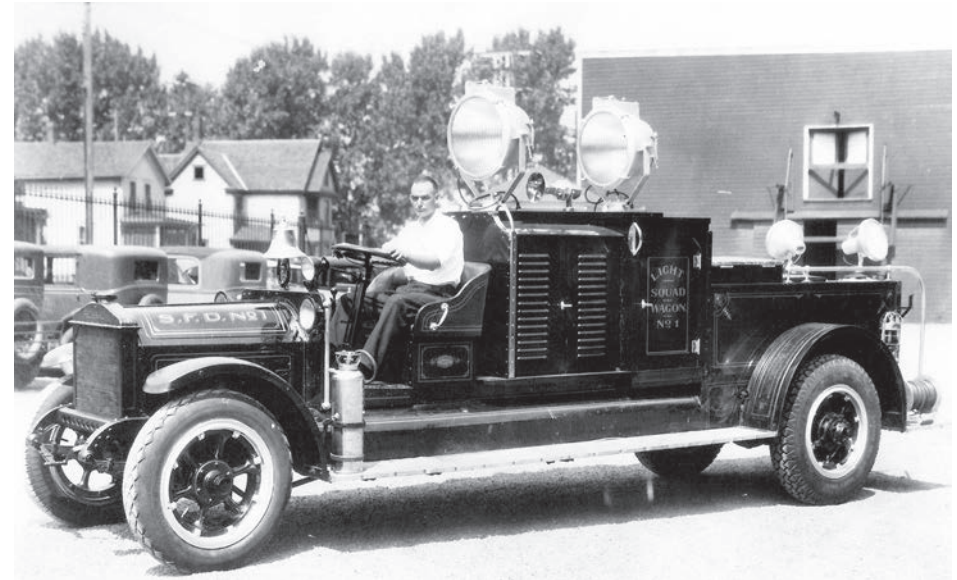
History of the Syracuse, New York Rescue Company, 1933-1997

by Tom Shand

During 1933, the Syracuse Fire Department was operating with twenty-one engines, nine truck companies and a water tower with nominal staffing of four to five personnel on each apparatus. Under the direction of Chief Edward Geiselman, the department saw the need to organize a supplemental firefighting company to provide additional manpower at incidents similar to flying squads and rescue companies that had served with larger departments. The depression era left the department with few options to acquire a new piece of apparatus, so the Chief turned to the department's master mechanic, Harold Trotter.

When the Village of Eastwood was annexed into Syracuse, a 1925 Federal/Obenchain-Boyer 500-gpm pumper was acquired. It was Trotter who would oversee the modification of the Federal for the varied use as a squad. The fire pump and chemical tanks were removed and replaced with a Kohler 4-cylinder engine coupled to a 2.0 Kw 110-volt DC generator. The new rig featured two 750-watt and four 250-watt portable floodlights, 1,100 feet of electrical cord and other equipment. The company was referred to as the Light Squad and went into service on December 1, 1933, quartered with Engine Company 6. While this vehicle initially met the needs of the newly formed company, the open cab and lack of protection from the weather meant that the crew took a beating from the elements while responding to alarms. In addition, the Continental six-cylinder motor with 33 horsepower proved to be no match for the city's hilly terrain.

The first custom built Light Squad was placed into service during October 1941 with the delivery of a Chevrolet model AJ four door cab built by a local company, Salina Body Works. Built on a 185-inch wheelbase, the rig had a unique appearance and was equipped with a Kohler 5.0 Kw generator, portable floodlights, electric cable, acetylene torch, salvage equipment and hand tools. During 1951 Chief William Connelly set out to create a rescue company that would expand the scope of operations to replace the Light Squad. The result was the formation of Rescue Company One. During August 1951, Syracuse placed an order with the Approved Fire Equipment Company



This 1924 Federal chassis built by Obenchain Boyer was modified by the department's master mechanic providing a Kohler 2.0 Kw generator, floodlights, cable reels and other equipment. This vehicle was originally built for the Eastwood Volunteer Fire Department. Photo from the collection of Tom W. Shand.

for a Senior Model rescue constructed on a GMC HC-754 chassis with a 201-inch wheelbase. The rescue was equipped with twenty-two enclosed body compartments, two large floodlights that elevated from inside of the body, and a 10.0 Kw generator. A second vehicle was acquired for Rescue Company One and placed into service on November 10, 1962. This rig was a GMC panel van ambulance built by the Automotive Conversion Corporation and utilized to transport injured members. The official name and radio designation of the two-piece unit was Rescue Company One and the First Aid Company.

The GMC/Approved rescue was replaced in 1966 with a Seagrave 70th Anniversary Series with bodywork by Welch Fire Apparatus of Marion, Wisconsin. This unit was powered by a 325 horsepower Waukesha gasoline engine and was equipped with a power take off, front bumper winch rated at 7,000 pounds, and a 10.0 Kw direct drive generator. Rescue Company One was one of the first pieces of apparatus to be outfitted with both a mechanical and an electronic siren and was equipped with five rotating Dietz red beacon lights on the roof. The outward appearance of this unit remained the same until 1978 when the department shops performed some bodywork and repainted the apparatus safety yellow.

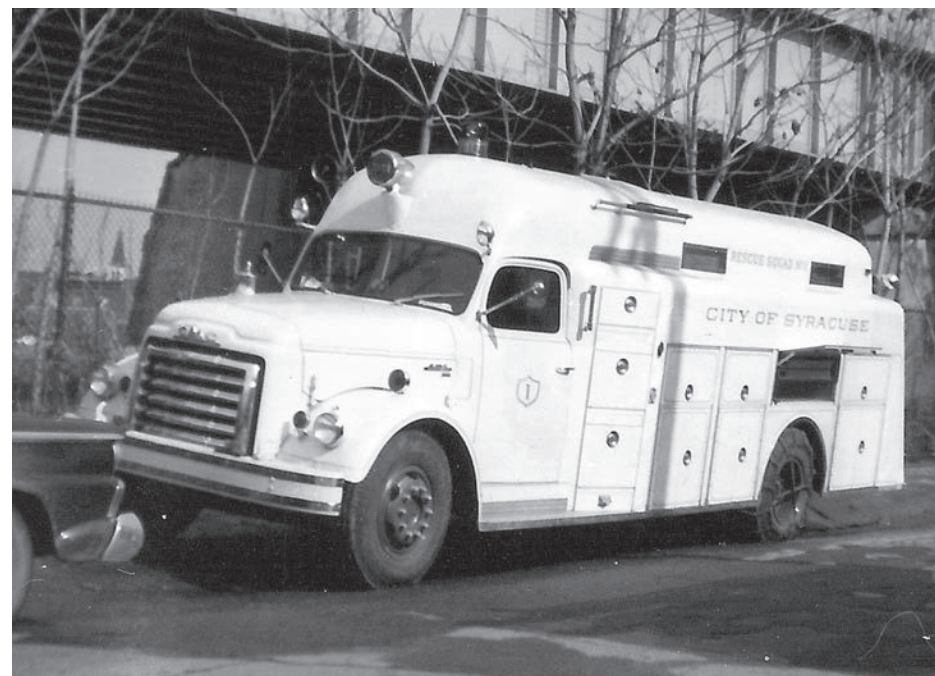


The Light Squad operated this 1941 Chevrolet four door cab chassis with custom bodywork built by the Salina Body Works enabling the company to carry additional equipment with a 5.0 Kw generator and floodlights. Photo from the collection of Tom W. Shand.

In 1970, the department acquired from Eastern Ambulance a used 1965 Cadillac Hess and Eisenhardt ambulance to utilize as a spare for the First Aid Company. Unfortunately, this vehicle was destroyed in an accident while responding to an alarm and was replaced with a 1970 Chevy C-20/ Gerstenslager. Shortly after being placed into service, the radio designation for the First Aid Company was changed to Rescue Two. Several years later, a 1975 Chevy C-30 modular ambulance built by Medicoach of Oneonta,

New York was assigned as Rescue Two and the first unit to be painted in the department's new yellow color. This vehicle was replaced in 1981 with a larger Chevrolet model C-60 chassis with an aluminum body built by the Modular Ambulance Corporation of Grand Prairie, Texas.

By 1974, a newly completed Fire Station 1, 900 South State Street accommodated the Rescue Company and the Squad Company. Initially operating with Truck 1's former 1968 Seagrave 100-foot aerial, the Rescue and Squad became a three-piece company. The 1968 aerial was replaced by Truck 2's 1973 Seagrave 100-foot aerial during October of 1976. The Rescue would be added to the normal dispatch assignment at the discretion of the Rescue Company officer and would normally respond to incidents in the downtown business district, university area, hospitals and any targeted hazards.



The Rescue Company received their first custom built vehicle with this 1951 GMC chassis with a walk in body built by Approved Fire Equipment Company. This Senior Model rescue was built on a 201-inch wheelbase and equipped with a 10.0 Kw direct drive generator and cost \$27,750 when new. Photo from the collection of Tom W. Shand.

The Seagrave/Welch rescue was beginning to show its age and was replaced with a 1977 International Paystar 5070 chassis with a walk in body manufactured by Saulsbury Fire Apparatus from nearby Tully, New York. This heavy rescue was the first built by Saulsbury to have a walk-through provision from the body into the cab and was rebuilt by the department shops during 1986. This rescue vehicle had a very rugged appearance with aluminum tread plate front fenders, Dietz beacon lights, and Mars lights mounted on the front of the apparatus. In January 1982, the department acquired a used rescue vehicle from the Dewitt Fire Department to serve as a spare apparatus for Rescue One. This unit was built by Lyncoach of Oneonta, New York on a Ford chassis and had a parcel van style walk in body.

The three-piece rescue company received an update in 1985 with the acquisition of an Emergency One Hurricane 135-foot rear mount aerial ladder that was placed into service during June. A year later, Rescue One received a tandem axle Saulsbury rescue built on an International Paystar chassis with a 23-foot walk in body. This was the first stainless steel apparatus to serve Syracuse. A new Rescue Two was placed into service in February 1988 with the delivery of a Type III ambulance built on a Ford E-350 chassis with a Braun module. This unit served the department until January 1992 when it was replaced by a Type I Braun modular body built on a Ford F-350 chassis.



This classic 1966 Seagrave 70th Anniversary model rescue was built by Welch Fire Apparatus in Marion, Wisconsin. Seagrave supplied the chassis with the open cab and cowl with Welch mating the cab roof and bodywork with a streamlined appearance. This rig was powered by a Waukesha F-817G engine rated at 325 horsepower, with the Fire Department shops adding the front bumper winch and A-frame, assigned Seagrave serial number Q-4066. Photo by Jack Calderone.

The 1986 International/Saulsbury was replaced by a 1997 Emergency One Cyclone II with a 25-foot aluminum rescue body. At the time it was built, the new Rescue One was the largest rescue apparatus constructed by Emergency One and provided much needed new equipment to meet the needs of the department. The apparatus was painted safety yellow with white and red reflective stripes and would be one of the last delivered to feature this paint scheme.

The officers and members assigned to the rescue operations of the Syracuse Fire Department have responded to incidents large and small, performing heroic acts, most of which are lost to time. From a used 1925 Federal to the custom ordered rigs of the decades since, the apparatus assigned to Rescue Company One contribute to the storied history of the Syracuse rescue companies.



Syracuse Rescue One operated this 1977 International Paystar 5070 4X4 chassis with bodywork built by Saulsbury Fire Equipment. This rig defines the term Heavy Rescue and was the first walk through style body built by Saulsbury and equipped with a 17.0Kw direct drive generator, and A-Frame with a 20,000-pound hydraulic front winch. Photo by the late Pete Lund.



The Rescue Companies first tandem axle apparatus was this 1986 International Paystar 5070 chassis powered by a Detroit Diesel 8V-92TA engine rated at 450 horsepower on a 212-inch wheelbase built by Saulsbury Fire Equipment. The stainless steel body had a walk through from the cab and was equipped with a 17.0 Kw direct drive generator and carried Saulsbury serial number 2456. Photo by Tom W. Shand.



This 1997 Emergency One Cyclone apparatus was one of the last to enter the departments fleet in the chrome yellow color. Serial 17764 was built on a 246-inch wheelbase with a twenty five foot aluminum walk in body equipped with a 35 Kw Onan direct drive generator. In later years, the apparatus was repainted red to match the department's new paint scheme. Photo by Tom W. Shand.



This 1970 Chevrolet C-20 Gerstenslager rig was the second generation of the First Aid unit and featured twin Dietz beacons on the roof along with a Federal mechanical siren. This rig would be replaced in the future with a series of modular ambulance bodies built by Medicoach, Modulance and Braun. Photo by Jack Calderone.



Rescue Two operated with this 1992 Ford F-250 chassis carrying a Braun model BF-3000A modular body with serial number 2088. The compartment on top of the body carried a stokes basket and backboards. Photo by Tom W. Shand.



This 1973 Seagrave PA-20756 100 foot midship aerial ladder first served as Truck 2 and reassigned to the Rescue Company in 1976. This rig was equipped with 268 feet of ground ladders, including a scaling ladder mounted above the upper body compartments. Photo by the late Pete Lund.



This 1985 Emergency One Hurricane 135-foot aerial ladder was acquired to enhance the capabilities of the Rescue Company. This rig was one of twenty seven 135 foot ladders built by Emergency One assigned serial number 3984 and cost \$315,000 when new. Photo by Tom W. Shand.

The San Francisco Fire Department's Shop Built Apparatus

by Thorsten Umbach

Over the years, the San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) has had a fleet of one-of-a-kind apparatus converted at the San Francisco Central Shops. Many rigs which were quite serviceable were converted to various other uses by the fire department mechanical shops. Many received shop-built bodies. The following is an attempt to give an overview of these conversions.

The department had been using hose wagons with a high pressure monitor battery since 1915 and several combination hose and chemical wagons were converted for this the new duty. The first two units were converted American-LaFrance rigs, followed by a Schneer combination hose and chemical. The rigs received Gorter turret nozzles and larger hose beds.

The Gorter turret nozzles were designed by Henry H. Gorter while employed at the SFFD shops and patented in 1896. SFFD continued to use Gorter nozzles producing them as needed in their own machine shop facilities. The connection to the nozzle via a ball-and-socket joint allow rotate 360 degrees.

The Central Shop was still doing conversions as late as 1995.

All this written by me on my best knowledge.

Sources:

The foregoing data was obtained from records compiled by my late pen friend Rich Schneider. Article "San Francisco's Apparatus Conversion Program" (not sure about the source, could be Fire Engineering), articles by Dale Magee in his column "Times Past" in Fire Apparatus Journal.

Photos from T.Taggart, C.Arnold, R.Allen, and others.



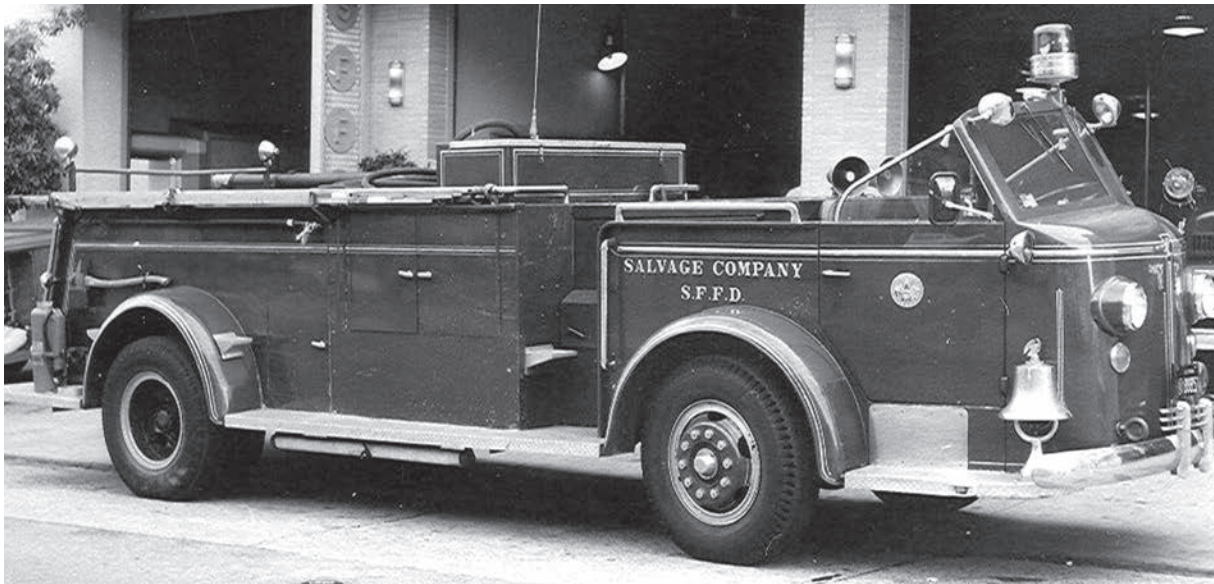
One of the two 1940 Fabco tank wagons that were converted into Hose Tenders with Gorter turrets between 1958 and 1960.



In 1946, a 1942 Chevrolet 1-1/2-ton chassis of a formerly Auxilliary Defense pumper received the shop-built body from a 1922 Buick to become the new "Coffee Wagon."



In 1986, the 1957 White/Van Pelt Salvage Wagon was converted to a Foam Carrier.



One of two 1948 American-LaFrance 700 Series Tank Wagons that were converted into Salvage Units.



In 1985/1986 the old hose tenders became part of the portable water supply system (PWSS), an above-the-ground hydrant system to supplement the normal water supply or replace in the event of earthquake damage. Developed by Assistant Chief Blackburn. The rigs received heavy duty rear axle and rebuilt springs and were loaded with 5-inch hose, hose ramps, portable hydrants, and Gleeson valves (Gleeson valves are pressure relief valves which allow to reduce pressure from the high pressure hydrants from the city's high pressure water system, which were carried by the engines as well). The 1967 Ford C hose tender, the two 1950 Mack L hose tenders, 1950 Mack S, and a Ford C/Welch hose tender were refitted to operate with the PWSS as unmanned special units.

To turn off the high-pressure hydrant valves, SFFD ran pickup trucks with a hydraulic-operated spindle arm. These rigs ran as "Valve Wagons."



The hose tender and Gorter turret was installed by the Central Shop in early 1968 on this 1967 Ford C chassis. This was the third rig to use this hosebody!



In 1982 a service squad body and air cascade body was installed on new chassis, a 1981 Ford C. In 1989 the air cascade system was replaced by a Rix air compressor for on-scene refilling.





A 1975 Ford C/Gerstenlager Salvage Unit converted to Rescue Squad in 1977.



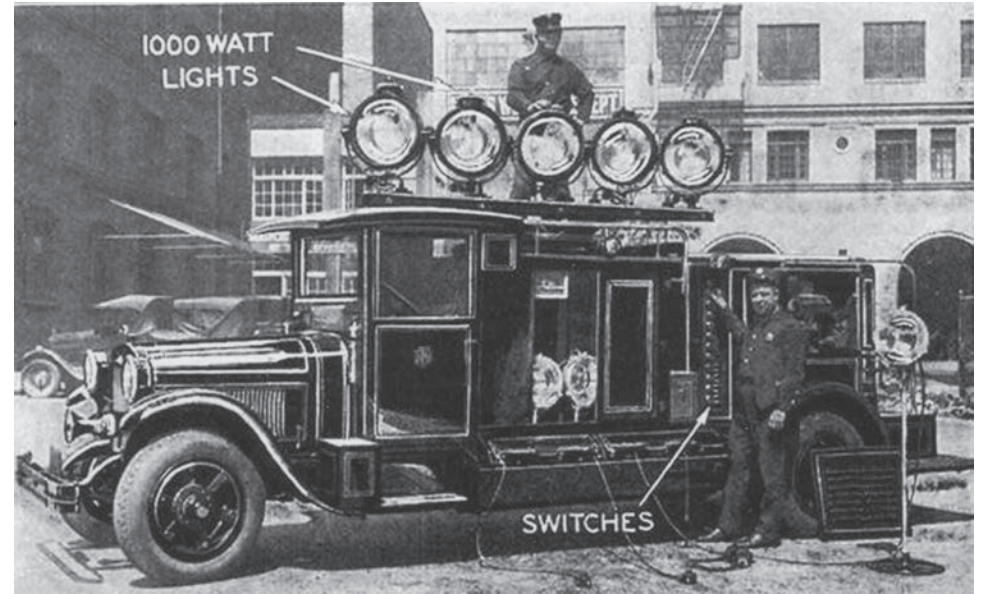
In 1977, the 1955 American LaFrance 700 Series former Rescue Squad became "Pollution Control Unit."

Air Compressor and Smoke Ejector Truck was built in the Shops on a new 1951 White WC-20 chassis with LeRoi Type 315G air compressor and two 50-ft canvas discharge tubes for smoke extractors. The rig was also used to bore holes with pavement breakers for standpipes.



A 1930 Mack Type-19 received a squad body that was built and then installed on chassis in the Central Shop.

SFFD bought two 1928 chassis from the Kleiber Motor Truck Company (manufactured in San Francisco) and the Central Shop built the bodies for Searchlight 1 & 2. Each rig received a Kohler 10,000 watt generator, one 2,000 watt floodlight, and five 1,000 watt floodlights mounted on a swivel bar on top of the body.



One of the two 1950 Seagrave tank that became ladder truck tractors with a 1939 Ahrens-Fox 85-foot wooden aerial ladder trailer.



Two Mack L chassis were purchased in 1950, but were not rebuilt into hose tenders until 1955 because there was not enough money in the budget. Upon delivery they were stored in a city warehouse for 4 1/2 years until the Central Shop had the budget and time to install the bodies built and Gorter turrets.



52 GMC with a Searchlight body from one of the Kleiber chassis.

FIRE APPARATUS PRESERVATION AWARD

The Fire Apparatus Preservation Certificate provides recognition for a fire department that maintains a piece of fire apparatus in original, near original, or restored condition. Any municipal, volunteer, industrial or military fire department is eligible. Any SPAAMFAA member or Chapter may nominate a fire department for this award.

Fire Department or Fire Company Organization Name

Williamsburg Fire Department

Apparatus information

1949 Mack 85LS Pumper

Apparatus History

Originally purchased by City of Williamsburg (VA) and protected the city until 1975. It has been lovingly maintained by the Williamsburg Fire Department and is now displayed in the new Williamsburg Fire Museum, which was incorporated into their new fire station, along with other apparatus & memorabilia.





Owner's Pride

1961 Mack C85F Quint

Eddie Gochenour & Brad Kenerim,
Martinsburg (WV) Fire Department



In 1961, the Martinsburg (WV) Fire Department took delivery of a new 1961 open cab Mack C85F equipped with an 85' midship ladder. The Mack was also equipped with a 750 gallon per minute pump and held a total of 150 gallons of water, with two separate 75 tanks on each side of the truck.

This Mack delivery in 1961 was a vast improvement for Martinsburg as the department was operating a 1929 American LaFrance 75' tiller. That 1929 tiller went to Shepherdstown, West Virginia. After serving the citizens of Martinsburg for 28 years, the 1961 Mack C ladder truck was replaced and once again Shepherdstown, West Virginia received the truck, although this time by donation from Martinsburg. Ultimately, the Mack C was sold to a collector, and in fact, was owned by several collectors.

Eddie Gochenour is a retired firefighter from Martinsburg, and part of his collection is a 1974 Mack CF (ex- Engine 5) from Martinsburg. Until recently, he also owned a 1981 Chevrolet/Pierce mini pumper from Martinsburg (ex- Squad 8). In 2023, Eddie learned about the Mack C ladder truck being privately owned in Pennsylvania and still marked as Shepherdstown. With a desire to acquire another formal Martinsburg fire truck that Eddie once rode on, the sale was made, and Eddie returned the 1961 Mack C 85' back to his residence just outside of Martinsburg.

After first ensuring that the truck was in operating condition, the process began of restoring the truck to its original condition when delivered. That work involved some bodywork, emergency light replacement, and changing the markings to Martinsburg.

As with most restorations, the work is never done. Some paint work and equipment acquisitions are in the foreseeable future. In 2024, the Mack C ladder truck made its first appearances at different musters and events under the Martinsburg lettering and graphics. Those probably most happy to see the truck are retired firefighters from Martinsburg who once served and operated on the 1961 Mack C 85-foot ladder truck.

Special thanks to Eddie Gochenour and Brad Kenerim for the opportunity to photograph this beautiful Mack C in its old Shepherdstown livery as well as with the Mack having its Martinsburg lettering and new striping.

Article and photograph by Mike Sanders