The History of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department

INCORPORATED

1916–2013

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLEAN, VIRGINIA

VOLUME 1

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Dedication

The history of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department is dedicated to the countless thousands of men and women who have volunteered and worked at the McLean stations. These sets of watchful eyes have served on many different levels to keep the citizens of McLean safe during the past nine decades. The history is thus a story of their dedication and service.

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Preface

The history is being written with two purposes in mind:

First – to capture the events which were relevant to the formation of and helped shape the development of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department and to make them available to current and future members of the department. It is the desire of those putting this history together that current and future members will use this information to better understand the organization and to use it as a guide for the future.

Second – to share with the citizens of McLean the pivotal role that this department has played in their community for nearly a century.

This history of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department has been divided into three more or less equal sections:

1920s to early 1950s:	**Formative Years**
1950s to 1980s:	**Transition Years**
1980s to 2013:	**Present Era**

Acknowledgements

This collection and writing of this history of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department was initially the work of six individuals: John R. 'Jack' Akre; Clyde E. Clark; Thomas E. Corner; Ralph W. Darne; G. Dennis Isley and Homer W. Johns who worked over the course of many years to piece together the history from both written records and verbalized memories.

The project lay dormant for several years as some of the initial group moved out of the area and one died. The project was restarted during the winter of 2012/2013 with the hope of completing the work by late fall. Augustus "Gus" Connery, Raymond Hansborough and Philip Kline each contributed partial written historical records of their time with the department.

Many additional individuals have also contributed to this effort: Jackie Bean, Warren Danzenbaker, Richard "Dick" Griffith, Carole Herrick, James W. Hood, Mandy Mathis, Vida McAuliffe and Karen Washburn.

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1920s to 1950s – A Period of Formation

Early McLean

In the early 1900s what is known today as McLean was nothing more than a small collection of homes and businesses situated between the existing villages of Lewinsville and Langley Fork. The arrival of the Great Falls & Old Dominion Railroad on July 4, 1906 changed the area dramatically. This was an electrical railroad that ran between Rosslyn and Great Falls Park. The stop at Chain Bridge Road was originally called Ingleside and included a post office. By 1910 the name of the stop and post office changed to **McLean** and in 1911 the post offices at Chesterbrook, Langley, and Lewinsville were merged into McLean office. The McLean post office operated out of a general store owned by **Henry Alonzo Storm**. The store was a collecting point for area farmers who used the electric rail line to ship milk, other dairy products, and produce into the District. The village of McLean did not have any local fire protection.

1920s to 1950s – A Period of Formation

The nearest available firefighting equipment had to be summoned from the **Cherrydale Volunteer Fire Department** in Arlington County, which was organized in 1898. The Cherrydale station, located at Lee Highway and Donaldson Street (previously North Pollard Street), was approximately five miles from McLean. However, assistance from other departments in Arlington County, the Town of Falls Church and the District of Columbia Fire Department is noted in earlier records. It was obvious to the residents of McLean and the surrounding area that the existing fire protection was not sufficient, and that the McLean area should have a local fire company. Considering how sparsely populated the area was at the time, fires were not infrequent. Homes, barns, and woodland fires were significant in number and often spectacular in nature. One such fire occurred in August of 1919 on the farm of **Douglass S. Mackall** at Langley. This fire destroyed three barns plus tons of hay and straw. The fire was reported at 8:30 p.m. Local neighbors formed a bucket brigade without much success. It is reported that this fire could be seen as far away as the District of Columbia.

Due to the absence of any early written records, it is believed that the initial establishment of the **McLean Fire Department** must have been sometime between 1916 and 1922. This belief is based on available written departmental records that specifically tell of disbanding the original **McLean Community Fire Association** and reorganizing it during a meeting held on May 29, 1922. All of the officers of the McLean Community Fire Association are noted as having been re-elected at this same meeting. The officers were; **James H. Beattie**, President; **Michael James Gartland**, Chief; **Henry A. Storm**, Assistant Chief; **Benjamin Faidley**, Engine Tender; **Arthur M. "Pop" Taylor**, Fire Marshal; **Clyde W. Koontz**, Secretary/Treasurer; and **Henry C. Mackall**, Legal Advisor. Additional members present at this meeting included: **Louis Magarity**, **John Clements 'L.C.' Storm**, **Clifton H. Laughlin**, **R F. Koester**, **Theodore M. Corner**, **John H. Carper**, and **Samuel R. 'Epp' Pearson**. These individuals along with the officers mentioned above are now considered as charter members of the **McLean Volunteer Fire Department**.

Storm General Store and Post Office. Note: shed in rear, at left, where the first McLean fire truck was housed.

The meetings of the McLean Community Fire Association were often held upstairs in **Henry Alonzo Storm's General Store**, which was located on the north side of Chain Bridge Road between the tracks of the Great Falls & Old Dominion Railroad (today Old Dominion Drive) and Elm Street. In 1922, **J. Gartland** was appointed to serve as the first chief of the McLean Community Fire Association. Gartland, originally from the District of Columbia, worked for the United States government. He maintained this position through 1923, thus making him the chief when the McLean Volunteer Fire Department was incorporated. However, shortly thereafter, he relocated back into the District.

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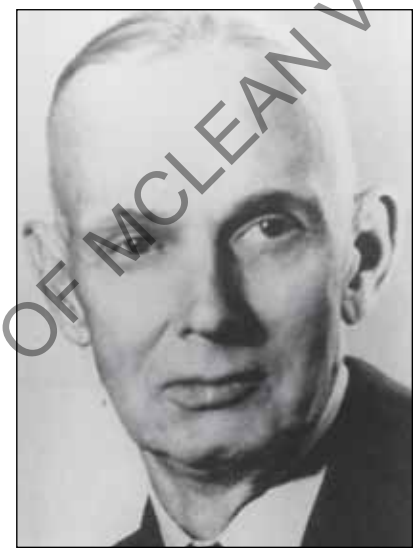
Michael J. Gartland

Michael J. Gartland was the first Chief of the McLean Community Fire Association and served in such capacity from 1922 through 1923.

James H. Beattie



James H. Beattie served as President of the department from 1922 through 1923 when he was elected as Chief. He held the title of Chief of the department from January 1924 through January 1936. He was a long time resident of McLean, who was also considered a co-founder of the McLean department. Beattie was employed as a senior horticulturist with the Department of Agriculture in charge of production, breeding, and disease investigation of peanuts.

During Beatties tenure, the Cherrydale Volunteer Fire Department loaned the **McLean Community Fire Association** a chemical cart. This was McLean's first piece of firefighting equipment. It was simply a two-wheeled cart that carried a 20 gallon tank and could be either pulled by human effort or towed by vehicle to a fire. After the cart arrived in McLean, sometime in early 1922, it was stored in a shed behind Storm's General Store. A farm bell, supplied by **Julian Walters**, was placed next to the shed and used to summon volunteer firefighters when there was an emergency. Prior to the receipt of the chemical cart the McLean Community Fire Association launched its first fund raising drive using flyers mailed to residents in the area. In October 1922 the **McLean School and Civil League** donated 20 percent of the net amount of the proceeds from the McLean Day Festival to the McLean Community Fire Association treasury.

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Chemical Fire Engine Operation

Chemical fire engines were popular in fire service history from the 1890s until sometime in the 1930s. This popularity was due to the fact that they were simple in design and could produce an effective firefighting stream more quickly (5 to 10 seconds) than their predecessors the steam driven engines.

Truck chassis were outfitted with one or more metal tanks which held anywhere from 20 to 45 gallons of water. Sodium bicarbonate was added to the water when the tank was filled. On the top side of the tank, at one end, was a covered opening into which a container of sulfuric acid was placed. In the bottom of the tank was a long metal agitator. To operate this firefighting device the soda acid bottle was punctured starting a chemical reaction (hence chemical engine) that produced carbon dioxide gas. This gas expanded rapidly with use of the agitator to produce pressure on the water in the tank to upwards of 1,000 pounds per square inch. Water from the tank was discharged through a hose which was attached to the tank. The only "downside" to this type of operation was that once activated all of the water was discharged from the tank regardless of the size of the fire. Chemical engines faded from fire service use in the early 1930s when fire pumps were placed on truck chassis and the truck carried its own water.

In February of 1923, the **McLean Community Fire Association** voted to acquire its first piece of motorized firefighting equipment in the form of a gasoline powered one-ton truck made by the General Motors Corporation. The truck was purchased from the General Motors Truck Company of Washington, D. C. for $1440. The McLean Community Fire Association also purchased for $1,275, four 20 gallon chemical tanks from the Buffalo Chemical Fire Extinguisher Company, and paid GMC to install three of them onto the new truck. The **Silver Spring Fire Department** in Maryland sent representatives to McLean to provide instruction on the correct way to handle a fire using the new equipment. The chemical truck was ready for service in the summer of 1923. McLean now had a "chemical engine" at a cost that was around $2800.

The name McLean Community Fire Association was short-lived. The association applied for and received a charter from the State Corporation Commission to incorporate under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This was recorded in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth on March 27, 1923, and in the Clerk's Office of Fairfax County on April 12, 1923. Since this was the first charter of its nature in Fairfax County, the fire department was designated as "Company 1", and the name of the organization officially changed to the **McLean Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.**

Under the new name, the McLean Volunteer Fire Department purchased a Chevrolet touring car chassis in the fall of 1923 and the small 20-gallon chemical tank, purchased earlier in the year, was placed upon it.

This vehicle did not have running boards or floor boards, but it did have a wooden box that served as the driver's seat. It was most likely the first brush fire fighting truck in Fairfax County, now giving McLean two "fire engines". It is only natural that if there is a fire department, there is an engine house, more commonly called a fire station. Residents in McLean were "ahead of the curve" on this matter. During the period while the McLean Community Fire Association was waiting to be officially incorporated, James and Maude Beattie, on January 15, 1923, proposed conveying a small portion of their property that faced Chain Bridge Road to the new McLean Volunteer Fire Department for the purpose of building a fire station. The Beattie's farmhouse was located at the northwest corner of Chain Bridge Road

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and Ingleside Avenue, and their property ran from Chain Bridge Road to Cedar Street (now Redmond Drive). It wasn't until September 4, 1924, that a deed was written for the Beattie's to sell one sixth of an acre of their land to the McLean Volunteer Fire Department for $10, however it was not recorded until March 16, 1927. Meanwhile, construction for McLean's first engine house began in October of 1924 and was completed early the following year at a cost of approximately $5,000, plus another $2,000 for furnishings. The excavation work was done using a team of horses supplied by **John C. Storm**, and much of the labor needed to erect the building was done by the 25 members of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department who donated their time on evenings and weekends.

At the July 27, 1925 meeting it was decided to approach the ladies in McLean with a request that they form an auxiliary to benefit the McLean Volunteer Fire Department. The women would conduct their own meetings and have their own officers. The women formed the Ladies Auxiliary in October, 1925.

The McLean firefighters began to have concerns about the availability of water when fighting fires in rural areas. Discussions began in February, 1926 to construct a 8' x 8' x 60' underground cistern in front of the engine house which would hold thousands of gallons of water, allowing a pumper to be filled. For a cost of $400 an underground cistern was completed in October of 1928. The cistern still remains today. During that same month a Chevrolet chassis was received on which three chemical tanks were mounted.

Many felt that a second cistern was needed. It may be noted that the department was very instrumental in working with the Franklin Sherman School and McLean Civic League to have a second cistern built alongside of the front driveway of the School.

The McLean Volunteer Fire Department took over the operations of McLean Day in 1926 as a way to raise funds. Renamed the McLean Carnival, this event was turned into a three-day affair held at the Civic League Lot adjacent to the Franklin Sherman School. One of its more popular attractions was a beauty contest.

The student enrollment at the Franklin Sherman School had increased significantly since the school opened in 1914 with 29 students. By 1927 the McLVFD felt that the school was in need of a fire escape in case of an emergency. A tubular escape was installed on the outside of the southeast side of the building leading from a second story exit to the ground below. The escape was to be the key component in the numerous fire drills over the years, however, it was mainly used as a "theme park attraction" by area youth when no one was watching.

In 1927 the McLVFD purchased a boat, an out-board motor, and a trailer to assist with water rescue operations. In November of the same year, an electric house siren was purchased and installed on the roof of the engine house. Its purpose was to alert and summon the volunteers to the station when an emergency arose. It could be activated from the station, Storm's Store, or **Chief Beattie's** house. When there was an emergency, the siren operated for a full five minutes in order for it to be heard by the volunteer firefighters, and could be heard for miles in all directions.

In 1928 a significant change in policy occurred. **Chief Beattie** announced in May of that year only one engine from the McLean station would respond to fires outside of the district. The purpose of this policy was to assure that at least one engine would always be available to provide service in McLean.

Evergreen trees were planted along Cedar Street in 1929. One of the trees planted along Chain Bridge Road on the side of the station was decorated every year to serve as the community Christmas tree.

In November of this same year, **Mr. John C. Thorpe** was employed by the department for $5 a month to serve as the building custodian during the winter months to keep the pumps on the fire engines from freezing.

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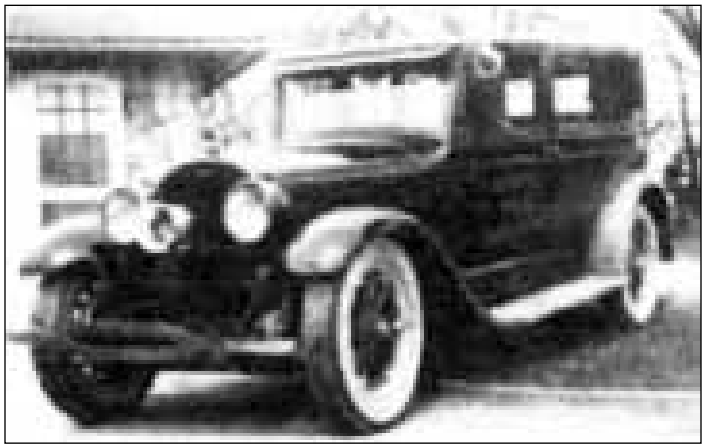
Pumping Engines

With the purchase of the 1930 Brockway the department entered a new era of firefighting. The use of chemical engines was discontinued in favor of placing a pump across the frame rails of a truck chassis which had the capability of taking water from a tank which was situated behind the pump under the hose carrying part of the unit and placing the water under sufficient pressure to extinguish a fire. Water could also be gotten from a fire hydrant or a static source such as a pond, lake, or in some cases, a swimming hole. Pumps were rated by the number of gallons per minute that they could discharge. The Brockway had a pump capable of discharging 500 gallons of water per minute when operated at full capacity. Today the department vehicles which actually fight the fire have pump capacities of 1,250 gallons per minute or more. These fire fighting vehicles have gone by several names in the lexicon of firefighting over the years: wagons, pumpers, or just engines. The term engine is used today. The water holding tanks have increased over the years from a few hundred gallons to the design of today where most engines carry more than 700 gallons of water.

As the village of McLean was expanding, more firefighting equipment was necessary. Chief Beattie donated a used Buick chassis in late 1931, and it was placed in service in December as a hose truck that carried 1000 feet of 2 ½ inch hose. More vehicles and equipment led to building a large two-story attachment to the rear of the original two-bay engine house in 1932. The additional vehicles and equipment were kept on the lower level, while the upper level of the new building was used for such things as meetings, dinners, and fund-raising events. The cost of the new structure was minimal, because all of the necessary materials were donated and the labor was provided by volunteers.

Following a very serious automobile accident near McLean in 1934, several victims had to be transported in the hose bed on top of a fire engine to the Old Emergency Hospital on New York Avenue in Washington, D.C. Soon after this incident the McLVFD established a Rescue Squad, but was in need of an ambulance. **The Ladies Auxiliary** reorganized in 1935 so that it could better support the station in its fund-raising efforts by holding bake sales, raffles, dinners, helping at the annual carnival, and providing refreshments for the firefighters during times of emergencies. Efforts were initiated by **Catherine Storm** and **Sophie Carper** to raise money to help purchase an ambulance. In order to finance the purchase of this ambulance a raffle was held. The winner of this raffle was **Mrs. Grace Magarity** - a long time resident of the McLean area. Her winnings - the doll you see pictured. Following Mrs. Magarity's death in early 1964 her husband Fred returned the doll to the Fire Department to be maintained in the spirit of their other awards and memories. The raffle netted $105.



In 1935 the Rescue Squad was established, and they purchased a 1931 Cadillac sedan which was converted to the first ambulance in Fairfax County.

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As the years passed a marching unit was organized by the ladies who won numerous trophies at parades in the region during the 1950s and 1960s. During the early to mid-1970s many of the surrounding fire departments established mobile canteen units as a part of their ladies auxiliaries. Station wagons and small box trucks were most commonly used. The Falls Church and Vienna departments were two nearby companies that went in this direction to supply food and drink to firefighters engaged in large scale, lengthy emergencies. McLean did not choose to move in this direction and so in the mid-1970s the auxiliary at McLean was disbanded.

In 1935 the McLVFD purchased a custom built fire truck pumper from Peter Pirsch and Sons. The Pirsch pumper came equipped with a 500 gallon per minute pump and was able to carry 500 gallons of water. The trucks and other equipment manufactured by Peter Pirsch and Sons were of high quality, so the McLVFD continued to purchase their products for the next 35 years. Currently, the 1935 Pirsch pumper remains in Fairfax County, and is owned by a life member of the McLVFD.

In 1935, there was an increase in the McLVFD membership bringing the total to 92 members. In the same year the McLVFD supported the Franconia Volunteer Fire Department becoming a member of the Fairfax County Volunteer Firemen's Association and loaned them 200 feet of single jacket hose. The fire marshal for the department reported that a total of 275 calls for assistance were answered by the McLVFD for the period of 1930 through 1935.

The volunteer firemen did more than fight fires: as noted, they also provided life-saving emergency services. Because the demand for such services was continually increasing, all the members of the McLVFD were provided instruction in basic first aid. A second ambulance was added to the fleet of vehicles in 1938, this ambulance was a Cadillac Meteor, a hearse style vehicle, which was purchased from the City of Alexandria. A third ambulance, a 1939 Cadillac La Salle, was purchased new and remained with the squad until 1948, when a new Cadillac ambulance was purchased. Over the next 20 years, the McLVFD purchased a number of ambulances that consisted primarily of Cadillacs.

In January of 1936, **John H. Carper** was elected chief of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department and **James Beattie** assumed the position of President. Carper served as chief from 1936 thru 1951, at which time he became president and served in that capacity until December of 1969. During his tenure as chief, Carper decided that the engine house should be locked when no activities were in progress. During World War II Chief Carper was appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to serve as the fire chief for Fairfax County. At one point, Carper was the fire chief for the McLean department and Fairfax County at the same time. As the fire chief for Fairfax County Carper's primary role was to ensure, through a state regulated department known as the War Materials Board, that the 11 volunteer fire departments would be able to obtain rationed items such as replacement tires and gasoline. Carper remained as the fire chief for Fairfax County until 1963, at which time, the fire department of Fairfax County was reorganized. The position of Chief was eliminated and replaced with a Fairfax County Fire Administrator; Willis Burton became the county's first person to hold this title. Carper served on the board of the Fairfax County Fire Commission from 1946 to 1960, and at one point, served as Chairman. During this time he was instrumental in the planning and development of Fairfax County's first radio

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communication system for alerting the individual fire department in cases of emergency.

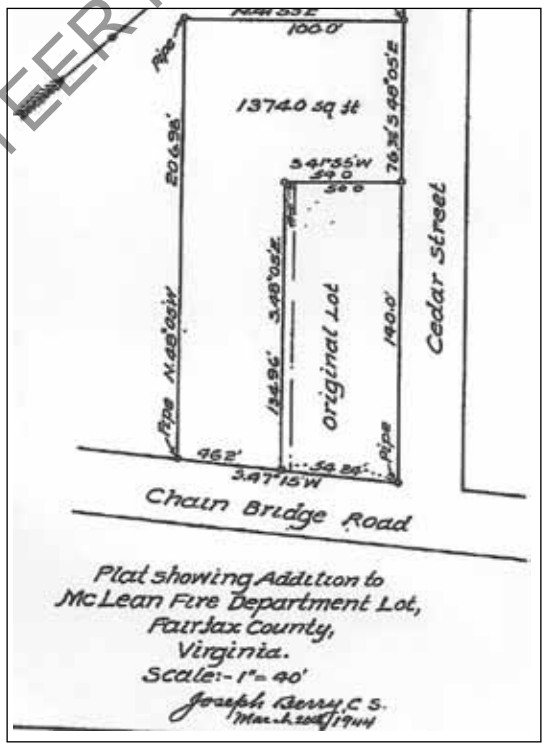
After a great deal of planning and negotiations with the C & P Telephone Company, a direct telephone line was set up between the McLean Fire Station and the Falls Church telephone exchange on Great Falls Street in February of 1937. To report a fire an individual would phone a telephone operator at the Falls Church exchange, who would then call the fire emergency number for McLean (424J1) which rang at the station, Storm's General Store, and Chief Beattie's house. Someone would then have to turn on the siren. The siren was located on top of the firehouse and sat atop spindly metal legs. When the dial telephone system became available, around 1939, a person would still report the emergency to a Falls Church operator, who automatically activated the siren atop the spindly legged siren tower.

A second deed was drawn up between the **James Beattie** and the **McLean Volunteer Fire Department** on January 13, 1939 that called for the Beatties to sell 560 square feet of their property to the McLVFD that lay adjacent to the western side of the firehouse for $10. Again, there was a lengthy period of time before it was recorded on September 21, 1940. Also, in 1939 a hose tower was added beneath the siren tower. This included a block and tackle for hoisting the cotton jacket hose up to where it would hang until it was dry to avoid rot and mildew.

As the 1930s came to a close the McLean Volunteer Fire Department continued to be a focal point for the McLean community and would continue as such for the next several decades. Community meetings were often conducted around a large coffee pot in the kitchen. The firemen held periodic safety inspection and evacuation drills at the Franklin Sherman School, and were advocates for road conditions that would provide better safety for everyone, especially the children who often walked to school. From its inception, the McLVFD was an all-volunteer organization; it did not receive any funding from Fairfax County. The organization had to rely on a variety of methods to raise funds, one of which was the McLean carnival and other events were hosted by the Ladies Auxiliary who were the principle for fund raising activities. This was supplemented by such activities as door to door solicitations, placement of tin cans in homes and businesses for the collection of coins, and hosting activities at the firehouse where an admission was charged for minstrel shows, boxing matches, turkey shoots, and plays in which the volunteers served as actors.

The United Stated became involved in World War II after the attack upon Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. McLean's location near the nation's capital city kept everyone "on high alert." A four-sided cupola-type structure was added to the engine house the following year to identify and watch for possible enemy aircraft that might fly over the area. For the remainder of the war, spotters continued to man the observation tower. These spotters were made up of the men, women, and youths who resided in the McLean area. They took shifts, were given binoculars, and kept a log book so that they could record every plane that flew by. There were always at least two persons in the tower. Even Irene Jackson, the wife of Supreme Court Associate Justice Robert Jackson, volunteered in this capacity. The log book of one of the volunteer firemen, **John Greene**, can be found at the Virginia Room in the Fairfax County Public Library.

In 1942, the McLean Volunteer Fire Department sponsored the organization of the Forestville Volunteer Fire Department which was later renamed **Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.** in the mid 1950's.



On June 28, 1944, for a price of $5, the McLean Volunteer Fire Department purchased an additional 13,740 square feet of land from the Beatties. The original deed, written in 1924, contained a restrictive clause which stated "Subject to the condition that this tract, or any improvements placed thereon, shall be used only for volunteer fire fighting purposes." The Beatties conveyed the land, granting the release of this encumbrance.

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By 1945 the Brockway pumper was worn out, and the McLVFD found it necessary to purchase a Federal Motor Truck chassis and the fire equipment from the old Brockway was placed on the new chassis. A portion of the funding for this project was made available from the Fairfax County Fire Levy Fund, which was set up during the 1930s for handling special requests from individual fire departments within the county.

Samuel Redmond ("Sam") was hired as a full-time employee by the McLean Volunteer Fire Department in 1946. This arrangement continued for approximately two years until Fairfax County began paying one-half of his salary. In July of 1949, Fairfax County began hiring personnel at an annual salary of $2,500. The first to be hired was Redmond, who was assigned badge #1, and assigned to Company 1. Redmond's hours of work at the McLean Station were Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

In the spring of 1947 the original cinder block firehouse was taken down. In its place a one story structure was erected containing four bays, a meeting area, kitchen and office space. The cost of the new structure was $43,950.

The first heavy duty rescue squad truck was purchased from the Peter Pirsch Company in 1950. This truck could respond to both fire emergencies and automobile accidents, and was equipped with a 500 gallon per minute pump and carried 250 gallons of water. There was no roof over the cab and the rear of the truck was also uncovered. There were bench seats along either side of a walkway that ran the length of the vehicle. This Peter Pirsch truck was equipped with a generator, large flood lights, and carried tools for getting trapped persons out of automobiles. The following year the first two-way radio for the station was installed on the truck. This allowed for better communications between the firemen and the fire alarm office in the City of Fairfax.

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1950s to 1980s – A Time of Transition

In 1953 a new Cadillac Superior ambulance was purchased for $8,913 to replace an older unit. The department was answering more than a dozen ambulance calls per month. In 1954 the department received its first self-contained breathing apparatus to assist firefighters when inside a burning structure.

In 1955 the second group of career firefighters were hired by the county. On August 1, 1955, **John R. "Jack" Akre**, badge # 17, was hired by Fairfax County and assigned to Company 1, McLean. With the hiring of the second career person the station could then be staffed 24 hours a day Monday through Friday, Sam and Jack shared alternating weeks of day work and night work leaving the weekends and holidays to be covered by the volunteers. In 1958 the third career person, **Earl D. Rice**, was hired and assigned to McLean, which then made it possible to have at least one person working twenty four hours a day seven days a week. These men worked a rotating schedule of seven days of day work, with three days off and seven days of night work with five days off.

In 1956 two new pieces of equipment were added to the fleet, the first was an engine capable of pumping 750 gallons of water a minute and carrying 400 gallons of water. This engine was manufactured by Peter Pirsch and cost around $19,000. The second engine added was a Ford F600 chassis equipped with a pump and carrying 400 gallons of water. This unit served as a brush truck for fighting woodland fires, which replaced the 1939 Chevrolet water wagon that had been destroyed in an accident.

The department reported answering 470 requests for both fires and ambulance service for the year 1956. In 1959 the department purchased another Cadillac Superior ambulance. The Rescue Squad reported responding to a total of 410 calls for that year.

As time went on, a hose tower was added on the outside of the building and a number of renovations were undertaken to incorporate a larger bunk room and watch room in the 1960's. With the hiring of additional career staff in the early 1970's the department again undertook the building of several significant additions to the rear and side, which included a much larger bunk room, multipurpose room and office area.

A second 750 gallon per minute pumper was added to the fleet in 1962. This was also a Peter Pirsch engine equipped to carry 400 gallons of water.

In 1964 the department purchased a replacement for the 1950 Rescue Squad truck. The new unit had a Peter Pirsch chassis. The body was placed on a chassis by Gerstenslager in Worchester, Ohio. An air cascade system for filling self-contained breathing apparatus and a compressor for filling the cascade system was added. The squad also contained all of the victim extrication equipment carried at the time and a small pump and a 200 gallon water tank complemented the unit. An 'A' frame winch system could be operated off of the rear of this unit to aid in freeing persons trapped in vehicular accidents.

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At this point in the history of the department there were seven career personnel, thirty-five volunteers, two ambulances, three pumping engines, a heavy rescue squad truck, a boat with motor and trailer, and a chief's vehicle. Also purchased in 1964 was a Chevrolet Carry-All to be used as the second ambulance and later a utility vehicle. In 1966 another Cadillac ambulance was purchased. In 1968 the rear of the building was enlarged to provide space for larger sleeping quarters, a training room and additional office space.

The department purchased a 4-wheel drive Willy's CJ-5 Jeep in 1969 to be used for brush firefighting. This vehicle had a 50 gallon per minute Panama water pump and a 100 gallon water tank.

In 1970 the last Peter Pirsch engine was purchased. This engine could pump 750 gallons of water a minute and carried 400 gallons of water. This engine was the first diesel powered unit in the fleet at McLean. The engine was badly damaged in an accident in 1972 at which time it was painted white over red, and some years after the accident a top was added to the driver's compartment. The engine is still in the fleet and housed at the McLean station. It is used today to attend community events, birthday parties, and to carry Santa Claus throughout McLean during the Christmas season. When this engine was repaired and repainted another first for the department occurred – a three inch yellow strip was added along the side of the cab and the body to increase visibility of the unit when it was situated on the scene of a call. The addition of this stripping was so popular with the staff all apparatus that the department had at that time was stripped in a similar fashion. Over the years the stripping size and design was changed but always with the thought in mind of increased safety for personnel working at the scene of an emergency.

The Rescue Squad, in their efforts to keep pace with certain state requirements for emergency ambulances, moved away from their traditional Cadillac's when they purchased, from the SWAB Company, a modular type

ambulance which soon became the basic design of choice for ambulances. This unit, a Type I, was built by the SWAB Company, on a Ford chassis at a cost of $14,850. It was one of the first modular type ambulances in the county. In addition to providing more room in the patient care portion of the ambulance, the modular design allowed for the box (patient carrying portion of the unit) to be removed after years of use and placed on a new chassis. This was not possible with the Cadillac ambulances which preceded the modular design.

PROPERTY OF McLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

In 1973, the McLean Volunteer Fire Department purchased and put into service the first Aerial Platform in Northern Virginia. It was built by Sutphen Fire Apparatus and had an 85 foot telescoping boom with a bucket on the end. It was equipped with a 12 KW generator, 1000 GPM pump and carried 200 gallons of water.

The department admitted its first female volunteer firefighter, **Lisa Gillette**, in December of 1974. In July of the same year the first county minority firefighter, **Edward Caudle**, was assigned to McLean as a paramedic.

At a cost of $80,000, the department purchased its first cab forward engine in 1979. This unit, built by Sutphen Fire Apparatus, featured a 1,250 gallon per minute pump and carried 500 gallons of water. The cab forward design allowed for at least four firefighters to ride seated and enclosed to emergency calls. The 1979 Sutphen pumper was sold to a volunteer department in Centre, North Carolina.

In 1979 the department replaced its 1964 heavy rescue with a GMC truck on which a Saulsbury body was built. This unit was completely enclosed in the rear and contained a bench seat for up to four firefighters. It carried 200 gallons of water with the capability of producing foam.

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

1980s to 2013 – The Department in its Present Form

In 1981 the first career female to be assigned to work rotating shift work was assigned to McLean.

In 1986 a Pierce Arrow engine was purchased from Pierce Manufacturing Company. It featured a 1,250 gallon per minute pump, carried 500 gallons of water and had a completely enclosed four door cab. The 1986 engine was formally dedicated to **Sam Redmond** in 1988. At the ceremony marking this dedication a plaque was placed on the engine noting that the engine was called 'Old Sam'.

As time went on the overall facility became deficient of necessary space required for a modern day fire station and negotiations were entered into with Fairfax County to build a new facility. After a study of available sites was completed, it was determined that the new facility would need to be located in the same general area as the existing one and a parcel of land was eventually purchased one block away at the intersection of Laughlin and Whittier Avenues. This venture was a joint effort between the McLean Volunteer Fire Department and Fairfax County with the signing over of the older facility to the county as a good faith gesture to offset the expense of the new station. In the spring of 1987 the Golden Construction Company broke ground for the new station. The volunteer organization provided funds to complete the lower level to hold a meeting room and provide training space and offices for the organization. This station was the first in the county to have both a drafting pit and drill tower. The drafting pit is situated outside in the rear of the station and is used for pumping practice and other similar type evolutions. The drill tower is an integral part of the main structure. Located in the rear of the building, it is used for ladder evolutions and rope rappelling practice. It has a large round opening near the top and it is often seen by casual observers as a "clock tower", minus the clock face. The new station, an 18,000 square foot, four bay, drive through station, is a modern state of the art facility, opened in March of 1988 with sufficient career personnel on duty 24 hours a day to staff an Engine, Ladder Tower, Heavy Rescue Squad and Medic Unit. The total cost of this project exceeded $5,000,000. The dedication ceremony was held in June of 1988.

When the new station opened, Fairfax County retained the former station and turned it over to the McLean Community Center which transformed it into a Teen Center while taking great effort to maintain the "Fire House" motif. This facility "The Old Fire House Teen Center" located at Chain Bridge Road and Redmond Drive continues to serve as the community Teen Center at the time of this writing.

In the spring of 1988 the Sutphen Aerial Tower was sold and replaced by a 95 foot aerial tower purchased by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

In November of 1989 the department purchased its first diesel powered ambulance. The unit was built by Mobile Medical Corporation on a Ford F350 Chassis. This new unit replaced the ambulance purchased in 1985 by the McLean Volunteer Fire Department.

In 1990 the department placed in service its fourth heavy rescue squad truck. The unit was built by Pierce Manufacturing and was a walk through model with a six person cab. A telescoping light tower was positioned at the rear of the vehicle for night operations. The 1979 GMC/ Saulsbury rescue was sold to The Plains Volunteer Fire Department in Fauquier County, Virginia.

The 1985 ambulance was retrofitted by Aero Manufacturing and was placed in service as a new Advanced Life Support unit.

A four wheel drive Chevrolet Suburban utility vehicle was purchased in 1992 and outfitted with the capability to be a patient carrying vehicle to be used off road and in inclement weather.

In July of 1993 the department purchased another Pierce engine. Like the 1986 model this unit had a 1250 gallon per minute pump, carried 750 gallons of water and 40 gallons of firefighting foam, and featured a four man enclosed cab.

A children's **Fire Safety House** was purchased from Scotty RV in Pennsylvania at a cost of $30,000 in the spring of 1993. Monies for this trailer were made available by a matching grant basis between the McLean department and various community groups that included the McLean Citizens Foundation. As of this writing, more than 15,000 children, have received instructions on home fire safety and the planning of escape routes from the home in cases of emergency. The unit has been used extensively throughout the Commonwealth and the District of Columbia as a teaching tool.

In 1995 the department purchased a new Advanced Life Support ambulance from Excellance Company at a cost of $93,000. This unit was built on a Ford F450 chassis.

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

In 1996 the 1986 Pierce Arrow engine was sold to the Sperryville Volunteer Fire Department and a new 1997 Pierce Lance engine was ordered. At a cost of $315,000 this unit was equipped to carry emergency medical supplies so that it could serve as an emergency medical service unit when needed. The new engine was placed in service in December 1997.

In 2001 the McLean Volunteer Fire Department was approximately the fourth busiest engine company in Fairfax County. The volunteers remain very active with a membership of approximately 40 members who own and continue to purchase all of the apparatus with the exception of a 95 foot tower ladder which is county owned.

In 2004 the department purchased another ambulance on a large International chassis. The purpose of the larger chassis was to accommodate a larger patient carrying "box" which met all current standards. This medic ambulance was dedicated to **LaVeta Poole**, longtime member and historian of the Ladies Auxiliary at the Fire Prevention Open House of 2004.

In 2006 the department purchased yet another heavy rescue from Pierce Manufacturing Company. As with each new purchase there were upgrades. In addition to serving as a hazardous materials and fire suppression unit this vehicle carried two compliments of "Jaws" victim extraction tools. This feature allowed rescue personnel to work safely and effectively from either side of the vehicle and to have two sets of tools should the situation demand. Its predecessor 1990 unit was sold to a volunteer department in Pennsylvania.

Currently, the department carries over fifty members on its rolls. More than thirty of these serve as Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technicians or simply as EMTs. The remainder of the membership serves in administrative capacities. The membership supplements and supports a career staff of more than forty-five men and women who staff the fire station twenty-four hours a day.

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The McLean Volunteer Fire department continues to play a significant role in the McLean community. In 2009 the department initiated a December holiday parade in McLean with assistance from the Chamber of Commerce. The parade which currently features at least 60 plus marching and parading units is in its sixth year and attracts thousands of area residents on the first Sunday in December.

Conclusion

In conducting the research for the history of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department two vital and distinct mission's for the department are apparent. The first mission of the department would obviously have been to protect the property of the citizens of McLean and later to offer life saving services with the organization of the rescue squad (first aid and ambulance transport). The second and equally important mission would be the community outreach offered by the members of the department. This outreach, which continues to this day, has consisted of participation in and organization of the first McLean Days, providing fire prevention and health education via support of community events and conducting the annual Fire Prevention Open House. The concern for a safe school environment, safer and more dependable roads, and the development of a water main system as an aid to firefighting are only a few of the outreach efforts in which the department has been involved.

From an all volunteer department to a fully paid staffed department supplemented by trained and dedicated volunteers this department has served its community well. In turn, the members of our community have continued to support the McLean Volunteer Fire Department financially during the past 90 plus years, enabling us to continue our efforts to make McLean a safe community in which to live and work.

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Charter Members

James H. Beattie

John H. Carper

Theodore M. Corner

Benjamin Faidley

Michael J. Gartland

R. F. Koester

Clyde W. Koontz

Clifton H. Laughlin

Henry C. Mackall

James L. Magarity

Samuel R. Pearson

Henry A. Storm

J. Clements Storm

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean Volunteer Fire Department – Life Members

Beattie, James H.	1947	Payne, John N.	1973	Trammel, Horace W.	1979
Corner, T. M.	1947	Poling, Paul A.	1973	Hennings, Gerald L.	1980
Farver, H. R.	1947	Poole, Alfred	1973	Hinkle, Richard	1980
Gartland, M. J.	1947	Redmond, Samuel D.	1973	McIntire, Roger	1980
Magarity, G. Fred	1947	Revercomb, Everett E.	1973	Miller, Dewey Jack	1980
Magarity, James Lewis	1947	Robeson, Stewart H.	1973	Richardson, David L.	1980
Pearson, S. R. "Epp"	1947	Sanders, Bruce	1973	Richardson, Max M.	1980
Rogers, Preston J.	1947	Schmitz, Albert G.	1973	Spitler, Otis C.	1980
Storm, J. Clements	1947	Seip, Leonard W.	1973	Tabler, Charles B.	1980
Sanders, Earl D.	1949	Sherman, Ralph R.	1973	Wahl, John S., Jr.	1980
Trammel, F. L.	1949	Souder, Alfred T.	1973	Akre, Ruben	1983
Wheat, John A.	1949	Stoy, R. L.	1973	Evers, Ronald A.	1984
Byrnes, James, Sr.	1951	Trammel, Fench A.	1973	Blue, Joseph C., Jr.	1985
Magarity, Norman	1954	Wheat, William A.	1973	Darne, Ralph W.	1985
Carper, Stanley T.	1955	Gray, John R.	1974	Poole Philip E.	1985
Dailey, H. C. "Teapot"	1956	Lawless, Edward B.	1974	Richardson, Donald H.	1985
Corner, Thomas E.	1960	Poole, Irving	1974	Froelich, Robert W.	1986
Magarity, Alvin	1963	Brinkley, Floyd	1975	Kelliher, John	1986
Hall, Carlyle G.	1966	Faidley, Julian	1975	Laurel, James D.	1986
Mecca, Charles W.	1966	Frear, Jubert	1975	Magarity, James F.	1986
Wright, Melvin M.	1966	Frenzel, Franklin L.	1975	Clark, Clyde E.	1987
Bray, Frank, Sr.	1967	Gerwig, Everette	1975	Mutersbaugh, Cline M.	1987
Frenzel, William F.	1967	Gingell, Billy S.	1975	Endler, Leo F.	1988
Corner, M, Avery	1968	Kidwell, Lester	1975	Knott, Leroy G.	1988
Dailey, Harold	1968	Smith, Edward J.	1975	Frenzel, Richard B.	1989
Darne, Leonard R.	1968	Strawser, Gransis S., Jr.	1975	Holloway, Robert	1989
Carper, John H.	1971	Thompson, Hammond S., Jr.	1975	Hood, James W.	1989
Akre, Wayne	1972	Browne, S. Clifford	1976	Carpenter, David P.	1990
Byrnes, James, Jr.	1972	Carlson, Harold L.	1976	Earman, Donald C.	1990
Denbow, Jack	1972	Farver, Donald S.	1976	Bland, Richard	1991
Evans, Bayard D.	1972	Free, George F.	1976	Johns, Homer W.	1991
Mueller, Charles E.	1972	Hansborough, Julian W.	1976	Isley, George Dennis	1992
Akre, John R.	1973	Hansborough, Wade N.	1976	McIlwee, James T., Jr.	1997
Allen, Eugene C.	1973	Katz, Issac	1976	Flores, Robert A.	2002
Blue, Roland	1973	Rice, Earl D.	1976	Kirby, John E.	2003
Carper,Bright M.	1973	Robertson, E. H.	1976	Torpey, Paul	2010
Carper, Oswald E.	1973	Robertson, E. Lee	1976		
Chevez, Joseph G.	1973	Rosenbaum, Albert V.	1976		
Gandt, Basil	1973	Schmitz, Carl L.	1976		
Gicker, Franklin S.	1973	Sparger, Rober B.	1976		
Hansborough, Ray	1973	Wahl, Richard C.	1976		
Hennings, George W.	1973	Heath, James E.	1977		
Hood, Irvin	1973	Blue, Joseph C., Sr	1978		
Huffman, Lynn L.	1973	Swadley, Virgil H.	1978		
Klein, Philip F.	1973	Connery, Augustus V.	1979		
Knott, George	1973	Otten, Albert W.	1979		
Lawless, Fred S.	1973	Respass, Lee E.	1979		
Magarity, Henry T.	1973	Robertson, Hugh L.	1979		
Pattishall, Louis	1973	Stewart, James P.	1979		

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean Volunteer Fire Department - Presidents & Chiefs

Year	President	Chief
1922		Michael J. Gartland
1923	James H. Beattie	"
1924	"	James H. Beattie
1925	"	"
1926		"
1927		"
1928		"
1929		"
1930		"
1931		"
1932		"
1933		"
1934		"
1935		John Carper
1936	O. V. Carper	"
1937	"	"
1938	"	"
1939	"	"
1940	"	"
1941	"	"
1942	"	"
1943	O. V. Carper	"
1944	"	John Carper
1945		"
1946		"
1947		"
1948		"
1949		"
1950		"
1951		"
1952	Al Rosenbaum	Raymond E. Hansborough
1953	"	"
1954	"	"
1955	John Carper	Tom Corner
1956	"	"
1957	"	"
1958	"	"
1959	"	"
1960	"	"
1961	"	James Byrnes, Jr.
1962	"	"
1963	"	"
1964	"	"
1965	"	"
1966	"	"
1967	"	"

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean Volunteer Fire Department - Presidents & Chiefs

Year	President	Chief
1968	"	Virgil H. Swadley
1969	James Byrnes, Jr.	"
1970	"	Jack Akre
1971	"	Augustus V. Connery, Jr.
1972	"	"
1973	Dave Richardson	"
1974	"	"
1975	Augustus V. Connery, Jr	Homer W. Johns
1976	"	"
1977	G. Dennis Isley	"
1978	James W. Hood	"
1979	"	"
1980	David Graling	"
1981	Glenn Rosenthal	Augustus V. Connery, Jr.
1982	Jerry Edgerton	"
1983	"	"
1984	"	M. Alfred Poole
1985	Clyde E. Clark	"
1986	"	"
1987	Homer W. Johns	"
1988	"	"
1989	"	"
1990	"	Clyde E. Clark
1991	"	"
1992	"	"
1993	James E. Mclwee, Jr.	"
1994	G. Dennis Isley	Homer W. Johns
1995	"	Clyde E. Clark
1996	"	"
1997	"	"
1998	"	Homer W. Johns
1999	"	Clyde E. Clark
2000	"	"
2001	"	"
2002	"	"
2003	Reza Golesorkhi	"
2004	"	"
2005	"	"
2006	"	"
2007	"	"
2008	"	"
2009	"	"
2010	Steve Arner	Timo Klotz
2011	"	"
2012	"	"
2013	"	"

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Resolution

May 27, 1970

WHEREAS, John Carper was appointed Fairfax County Fire Chief in March, 1945, and served in that capacity until the Fire Services re-organization in 1963; and,

WHEREAS, he was Chairman of the Fire Commission from 1946 to 1960, and was never officially recognized for this service; and,

WHEREAS, he has been a member of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department since 1922, and served as the department's chief from January, 1936 to December, 1951, at which time he was elected president of that department until December, 1969; and,

WHEREAS, he was president of the County Volunteer Firemen's Association from the middle to late 1940's; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County does hereby commend John Carper for his long and dedicated service to the County, and does express to him the appreciation of the people of this County for his devotion to the cause of fire prevention and suppression.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting, and that a copy be presented to John Carper.

William S. Hoofnagle
William S. Hoofnagle
Chairman

Edna A. Bicksler
Edna A. Bicksler
Clerk

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Tribute to John H. Carper
7 June 1970

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

We have set aside a few hours today to pay tribute to a man who has devoted a great deal of his time in the initial efforts to establish the McLean Volunteer Fire Department and to continue his service to the department and to the community for a period of over 48 years, Mr. John H. Carper. I am sure that without the backing of his wife "Soph" this could not have been accomplished

From 1920 to 1922, John was active, along with others in the initial efforts to obtain firefighting equipment and facilities. In 1922 he was a member of the original group of men who organized the McLean Volunteer Fire Department.

In 1923 a charter was issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia and since that time the department has been known as the "McLean Volunteer Fire Department, Incorporated", the first incorporated fire company in Fairfax County. Mr. Carper was a charter member. From 1924 to 1926, he participated in company activities and served as Captain of the department from 1927 to 1934. From 1929 to 1969, he has served continuously as a member of the Board of Directors. In 1935 he was Assistant Chief of the department. From 1936 to 1950, John was President of the department.

These were Mr. Carper's contributions to the McLean community.

To the County of Fairfax his services have been of untold value. In 1933, through the major efforts of the Ladies Auxiliary, McLean initiated ambulance service. This, by way of note, was the beginning of ambulance service as a part of fire department operations in Fairfax County. From 1940 to 1944, John served as President of the "Fairfax County Volunteer Fireman's Association". From 1942 to 1945, he was Commander of the "McLean Civil Defense Unit" as well as the "Civil Defense Property Officer" for Fairfax County. In this position john was instrumental in acquiring firefighting equipment to establish, or supplement, firefighting facilities at Baileys Cross Roads, Clifton, Dunn Loring, Forestville, Groveton and Mt. Vernon. In 1945 he was appointed by the county as "Fire Chief of Fairfax County". He was responsible for the control of all fire chiefs within the County. He is the only person ever to hold this position.

From 1946 to 1960, John served as "Chairman of the Board of Fire commissioners" and during this tenure of office was the moving force which resulted in the establishment of:

1 – Central fire control.

2 – Dispatching of County Fire Equipment by radio.

3 – The County Fire Training Center.

In addition to the above activities, John bowled at least once a week, carries an average of 165 and plays cards with the boys 2 or 3 times a week. All of the above are in addition to his regular business of excavating, road building and grading.

The McLean Volunteer Fire Department, community and the County of Fairfax have benefited immensely from the untiring efforts in their behalf by John H. Carper.

The members of the fire department and community all share this feeling and say to you John "Thanks for a wonderful job".

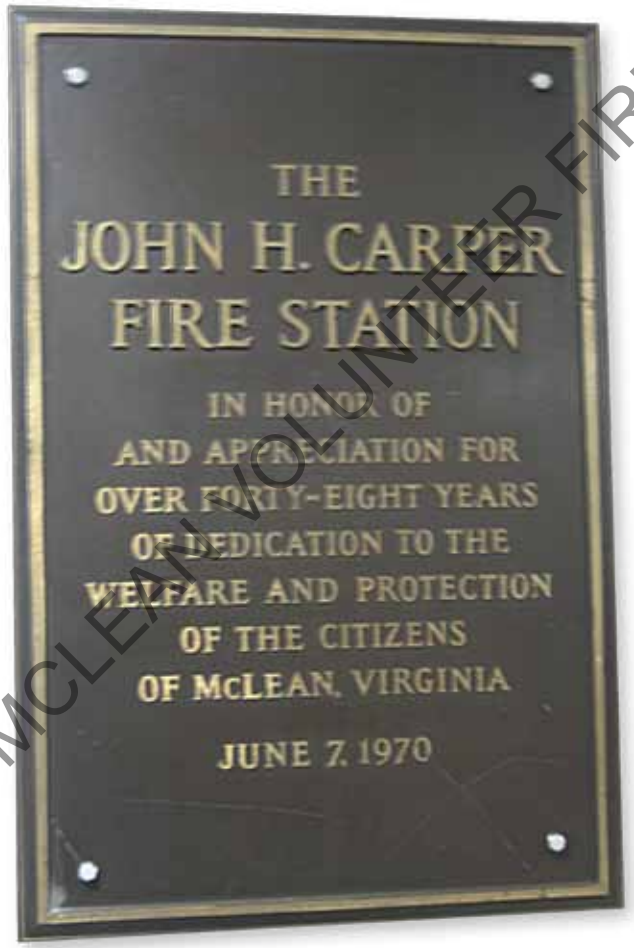
PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Conclusion

On behalf of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department, Incorporated we want to thank all participants for their tributes and presentations in honoring John H. Carper, "ON HIS DAY".

The department is grateful for his untiring efforts in our behalf in developing one of the finest, if not the finest, Fire Departments in the County.

Thanks to Mrs. Frances Sparger, Rectors Florists for the corsage and flowers and to all who have helped to make this affair a success.



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McLean VFD Fire and Rescue Patches

Patch Worn on Back of Corduroy Jacket

Rescue Patch
Early '70s early '80s

Early Rescue Squad Patch

Company Patch
Early '70s to Present

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Ladies Auxiliary Patch and Banner

Shoulder Patch

Parade Banner

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

1948 Stamps

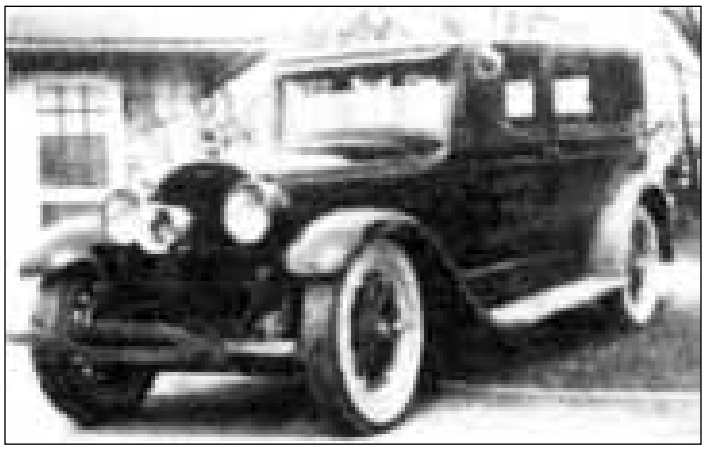
The United States Post Office issued stamps on October 4, 1948 to honor the 300th Anniversary of Volunteer Firemen in America. The stamps were issued in Dover, Delaware.

A total of 56,288 stamps were issued. The Postmaster General at the time was Jesse M. Donaldson. He signed the first day issue sheet of stamps which were presented to the McLean Volunteer Fire Department. The designer of the stamps William Roach and the engraver was R. M. Bowes.

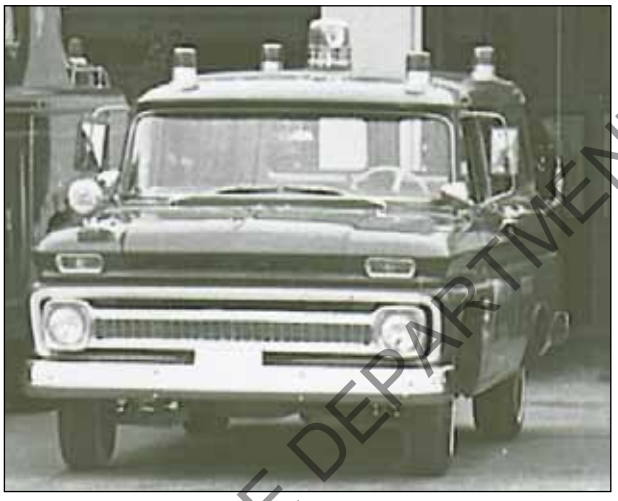
PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean VFD Ambulance History



1931 Cadillac Sedan –
Converted to first Ambulance



1964 Chevrolet Carry All – Purchased to serve as second Ambulance

1963 Cadillac Ambulance

1966 Cadillac Ambulance

1972 SWAB Modular Ambulance

1985 Chevrolet Mobil Medical

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean VFD Ambulance History

1991 Ford/Mobil Medical

1998 Ford/Horton

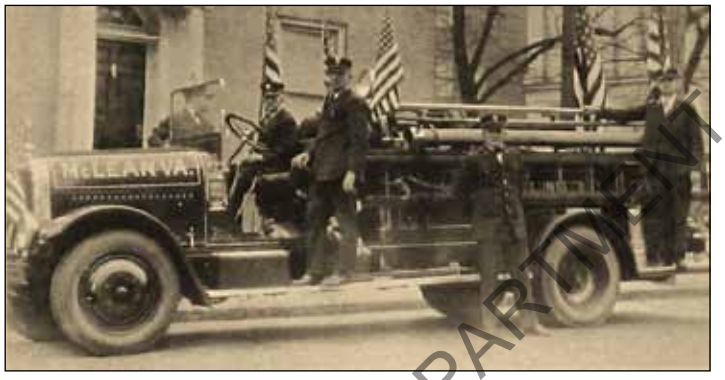
2004 Navigator
4300/LP Horton
Medic

2009 Navigator
4300/LP Horton
Medic

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean VFD Fire Apparatus

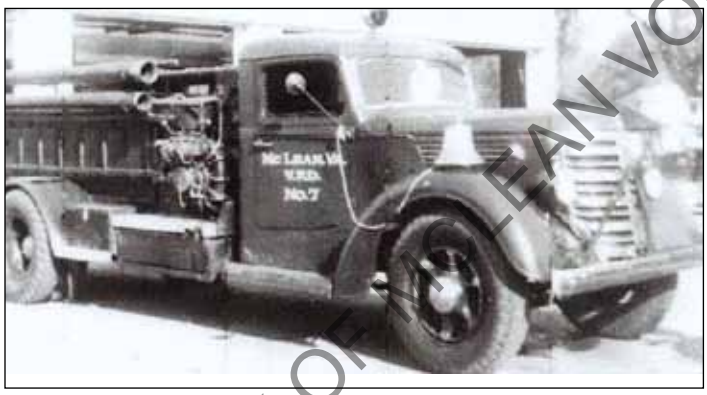
Circa 1920 Chemical Cart



1930 Brockway Engine

1935 Peter Pirsch Engine

1939 Chevrolet Water Wagon



1939 Federal Truck

1950 Rescue Squad Truck

1956 Ford Brush Truck

1956 Peter Pirsch Engine

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean VFD Fire Apparatus

1962 Peter Pirsch Pumper

1964 Peter Pirsch Squad

1962 Peter Pirsch Pumper repainted

1969 Willy's Jeep

1970 Peter Pirsch Pumper without top

1970 Peter Pirsch Pumper with top

1972 Ford Station Wagon

1973 Sutphen Aerial Platform

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean VFD Fire Apparatus

1979 Sutphen Pumper

1979 GMC/Saulsbury Squad

1983 Blazer Chief's Vehicle

1986 Pierce Engine

1990 Pierce Heavy Rescue Squad

1992 Suburban

1993 Pierce Pumper

1997 Pierce Pumper

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

McLean VFD Fire Apparatus

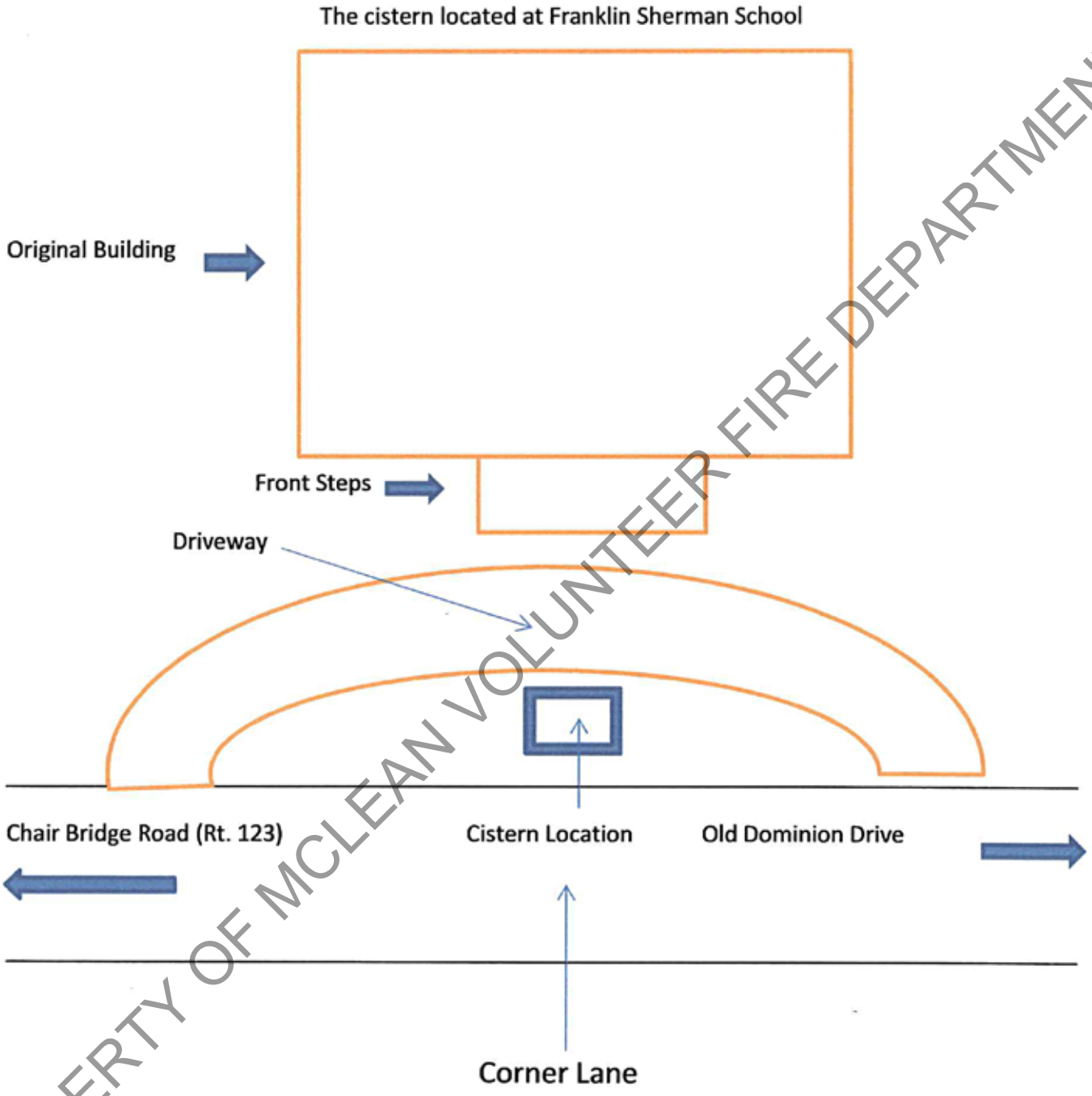
2006 Pierce Heavy Rescue Squad

2010 Utility Vehicle

1956 Pirsch, 1966 Cadillac, 1970 Pirsch, 1962 Pirsch, 1964 Pirsch Squad (Hidden)

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Cistern Located at Franklin Sherman School



PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

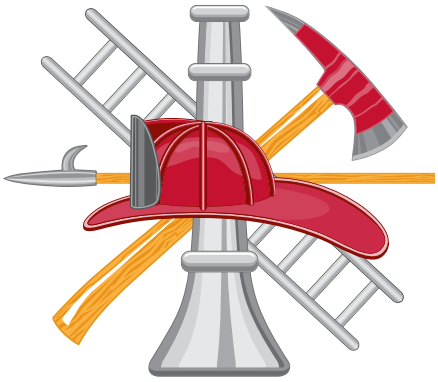
FIRE FIGHTERS

The sounds of the alarm wakes me,
Two hours of sleep, not enough, but more than enough.
Jumping into my gear, thoughts went spinning through my head.
I then bounded into the bright red fire truck.
Siren blaring, lights flashing, we headed down the deserted dark streets.
A block away, the flames and smoke were bellowing up through the clouds.
We pulled up and the confusion began,
Time seemed to stop.
Through the second story window, I heard a mother and her child screaming.
I had heard this scream many times before, but it never failed to touch my heart.
I sprang into action,
Busting down the door,
Lugging the heavy hose,
Breathing deeply.
Making my attempt to climb the stairs,
I felt the sweat dripping off my face inside my mask.
The flames were quickly making their way through the walls,
As fast as the water blasted through the hose, the flames seemed to be faster and stronger.
Hearing her muffled scream made me give it all I had,
Forgetting about the flame engulfed door, I rammed with all my might against it,
The door fell in just as the woman collapsed with the child in her arms.
I gathered the baby in my arms first,
Then fighting my way to the window,
I opened it and handed the small still child to the man on the ladder.
The mother was the next one to be handed out the window,
I waited until I saw them both get to the ground safely before I reached down for the hose.
I then made my way to the window for the third time,
Unfortunately I did not make it,
The last thing I heard was an eardrum blasting explosion.
The mother and her child apparently survived and are living a normal life again,
I think she visits my grave often,
Because I can feel her warmth and kindness through her prayers.
I know I'm not the only fire fighter who would risk their lives to save others,
If I could relive that day, I would do the same thing.
My one wish to you, is that the next time you say a prayer, you take a few seconds to
Remember the fire fighters of today and of yesterday,
I only ask this of you so they might remember how special and important they are.

Greta Tessman
3-8-95
English 8
Mrs. Rowe
Career Poem

PROPERTY OF MCLEAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Firefighter's Prayer



When I'm called to duty god
wherever flames may rage
give me strength to save a life
whatever be its age

Help me to embrace a little child
before it is too late
or save an older person from
the horror of that fate

Enable me to be alert
to hear the weakest shout
and quickly and efficiently
to put the fire out

I want to fill my calling and
to give the best in me
to guard my neighbor and
protect his property

And if according to your will
I have to lose my life
bless with your protecting hand
my children and my wife

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"Chief"

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The McLean Volunteer Fire Department

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