

A HISTORY OF THE NARROWSBURG VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Compiled from Department Records

By
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The Petition

On Tuesday, March 4, 1902, thirty nine concerned citizens of the hamlet of Narrowsburg signed a petition supporting a proposal to form and organize a Hook and Ladder Company to protect "Narrowsburg and vicinity". Two nights later, they met at the Arlington Hotel, operated by J.G. Gutheil, and temporary elections were held. Elsworth E. Williams and Nils P. Rasmussen were voted to the offices of Chief Engineer and Assistant Chief Engineer respectively. They were then designated to visit nearby communities and develop ideas as to what form of fire protection organization would be appropriate for Narrowsburg.

The Forming

On March 14th, the fledgling organization met again and following some discussion it was decided to form Fire Department comprised of an engine company, a hose company, and a hook & ladder company instead of just the hook & ladder company originally envisioned. Chief Williams and Assistant Chief Rasmussen reported that they had visited the communities of Honesdale, Traceyville and Union Hill (both sections of present day Honesdale) and made inquiry of their volunteers, as well as having written to several fire equipment firms. In this same meeting, the Narrowsburg Fire Department's first officers were elected with Frank Kinne, President, R.F. Rigby, Vice President, John S. Anderson, Secretary, and John H. Kirk, Treasurer. A Soliciting Committee was then appointed to explore how to fund the equipping of the Department.

On March 21st, L.C.W. Schneider of the Soliciting Committee reported to the Department that they had secured \$274 in subscriptions for equipment purchase and expected to be able to raise between \$350 and \$400. In this same meeting, it was decided that a new piece of fire apparatus was beyond the financial reach of the Department and another committee was appointed to research costs of used equipment. At a meeting on April 1st, a review of several proposals from apparatus vendors was made, and it was unanimously voted to accept a Proposal & Contract from the S.F. Hayward Company in New York City to purchase a second hand Gleason & Bailey Hand Fire Engine "in se, for \$350.00. Members decided to make payment for the equipment within 30 days after inspection and acceptance of the engine.

Constitution and By-Laws Three Companies Formed

One week later, on April 8th, the members met at the hotel of Charles Miller, for the purpose of adopting a Constitution and By-Laws. It was determined that the Department would be comprised of three companies, each having it's own elected Foreman and Assistant Foreman who reported to the Chief Engineer. These units were named the Cataract Engine Company No. 1, Alert Hose Company No. 1, and the Tusten Hook & Ladder Company No.1. The By-Laws which were

adopted that date provided that “any person of good character and standing” would be eligible for membership. Dues were set at \$1 per annum, payable in quarterly installments. The laws also dictated that members should not appear at a meeting or on duty “in a state of intoxication”, nor should they be guilty of “using insulting, indecent, or improper language, conduct unbecoming a gentleman, or otherwise being a disgrace to the Department”. Members who missed meetings were to be fined 10 cents, and absence at a fire resulted in a 25 cent fine. Intoxication or improper behavior mandated a \$1 fine or expulsion from the Department, as did bringing liquor near the apparatus or in the firehouse (which did not then exist). The same penalty was to be imposed upon any member who made public the proceedings of any meeting. It was also at this meeting that 25 men signed the Constitution and By-Laws as charter members with agreement being made that the charter remain open for 30 days for additional signatures.

The First Regular Meeting

The first regular meeting of the Narrowsburg Fire Department (NFD) was held on May 13, 1902 at the Sons of Liberty Hall in Narrowsburg, which had donated free use of their facility to the Department for one year. The Secretary reported that 48 charter members had signed up and paid dues (one late comer was allowed to sign as a charter member in June). It was reported that the fire engine had been received via the Erie Railroad at a shipping cost of \$13.13, of which the railroad would donate half, but it was found not to be “as per the Proposal & Contract”, although S.F. Hayward & Co. did agree to furnish 22 feet of new suction hose and miscellaneous spare parts. By a vote of 27 to 10, the members voted to offer Hayward \$300 for the Gleason and Bailey Hand Fire Engine and hose.

The July 4th Picnic

At the June 10th meeting, a Mr. Gleason of the Hayward Company was in attendance and stated that they would accept the \$300 offer and the deal was finalized. The Department at the same time voted to purchase a new hose cart at a cost of \$60. It was also at this meeting that Nils Rasmussen proposed the idea of a picnic to be held to benefit the Department, and a special meeting was scheduled for one week later. The special meeting was subsequently held and after much discussion the members voted to hold a July 4th Picnic. In this same meeting, the Department was divided by the Chief into three companies who then each elected their officers. Respectively, the following officers were elected as Foreman and Assistant Foreman: Alert Hose Co. (7 members) L.C.W. Schneider and George Ammer; Tusten Hook & Ladder Co. (8 members), John Marold and John Stadler, and Cataract Engine Co. (all remaining members), C.H. Welch and Charles Engelmann.

In the following month’s meeting, it was reported that the July 4th picnic had resulted in a profit to the Department of \$116.30. At that time it was voted that the Department limit membership to those 16 years old and above, although up to six members could be under that age but not less than 12 years old.

Incorporation

At the August meeting, discussion revolved around the construction of a firehouse in

which to store the hand pumper and hose cart, which were currently being housed in J.G. Gutheil's upper barn near the Arlington Hotel. A committee was appointed to explore the cost of a "Department House", as it was referred to. Also in this meeting, regular practices for use of the apparatus were scheduled for the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, and the subject of incorporating the Department was discussed.

In a special meeting held on September 2, 1902, the 20 members present were informed that a two story "house", 24 X 40 feet, would cost about \$500 to build, but the Department lacked a lot on which to construct the building. At a meeting one week later, a committee was appointed to solicit 25 cents per month from property owners in the village in order to raise money to build a firehouse.

The last meeting of 1902 noted that the Department had held an "entertainment" in November which had raised \$60.80, and the Treasurer showed a balance of \$227.77 in the bank account. It was also reported that in November, a Certificate of Incorporation dated October 25th, had been filed with the County Clerk's Office and was good for thirty years.

1903

Narrowsburg Fire District Formed

Feb - This month saw the purchase of two axes and a duty trumpet which were added to the inventory of six lanterns previously purchased. At this same meeting the first discussion of forming a Fire District was also held. **July** - A second successful July 4th Picnic was held and it was recorded that \$126.43 had been spent for parade uniforms; any member who lost or destroyed his uniform was subject to a payment of \$3.50. **Aug** - A committee was appointed to solicit signatures from taxpayers so that a Fire District could be formed within the "Village of Narrowsburg". This was accomplished by the September meeting, and the matter referred to the Town Supervisor. **Nov** - A concert was held as a fundraiser which netted the Department 77 cents. **Dec** - It was reported that the required law creating the Narrowsburg Fire District had been passed by the Sullivan County Board of Supervisors and the Secretary was charged with notifying the Tusten Town Clerk to call a special election for the purpose of electing three Fire Commissioners, with the District Treasurer appropriating \$2000 for the purchase of a lot and erection of a firehouse. Since December (1902), the fire apparatus had been stored in a building leased from the Erie Railroad for one year. Meetings were still being held at the Sons of Liberty Hall for an annual rental of \$10 which included coal and oil.

1904

A Firehouse Is Built

This year and the next saw continuations of the July 4th Picnic and other fundraisers held in order to accumulate money toward the construction of a firehouse. These were held at the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) Hall. **Oct** - Minutes reflect that Vice President Charles Engelmann was unanimously expelled "for working against the interests of this Department at the appropriation meeting for the Fire District on September 17th". The Department's first land purchase occurred at a

1905

Feb - Minutes reflect that Mr. Taylor was paid for constructing the firehouse. **Nov** - Secretary John S. Anderson, was authorized to “procure a good lock with ten keys for the Engine House”. **Dec** - Treasurer John H. Kirk was instructed to withdraw \$200 from the National Bank of Port Jervis and deposit it in an interest bearing account at Knapp Brothers Bankers in Callicoon Depot, NY, a financial move that would haunt the Department for the next thirty years.

1906

June – This month’s meeting’s main discussion held that badges should be bought for members; it was eventually decided that if members wanted them, they should pay for their own. **Oct** - Plans were made to have an oyster dinner and dance on Thanksgiving Eve, an event which became an annual fund raiser. The dinner was held at a profit of \$22.79 and served as the precursor for the Harvest Dinner, which was held each November into the 1960’s.

1907

Dec – For the first time, a meeting was not held due to a lack of sufficient members present.

1908

June - Having used an “engine tire” (train wheel rim) adjacent to the firehouse as the village fire alarm with unsatisfactory results since 1902, the Department voted to buy a 36” bell from the Cincinnati Bell Foundry Co. at a price of \$65. **Aug** - The bell was received and placed in a newly constructed bell tower (cost \$93.83) but proved unsatisfactory and was returned. This resulted in the company sending another bell to try, but that too was sent back. For the first time since 1902, the fund raising Picnic was not held on July 4th but took place in August.

1909

A Fire Alarm Bell Purchased

Savings Lost In Bank Closure

Jan - After further research, another bell was ordered from the White and Van Glahn Co. at a cost \$42.76 with a shipping on the Erie Railroad costing an additional \$3.61. This bell was found to suit the needs of the Department. **April** - The Department learned that Knapp Brothers Bankers in Callicoon had closed its doors on April 8th, leaving the Department no access to more than two thirds of its total savings of just over \$625. **Aug** - The "Summer Picnic" was again held during this month to raise funds, and N.P. Rasmussen suggested that subscriptions should be taken from property owners in the vicinity of the Fire Department lot in order to underwrite the building of a water cistern on the property. This was eventually accomplished in October, 1911, and held 6'4" of water. **Oct** - no meeting was held due to the lack of a quorum.

1910

Jan - The first meeting of this year resulted in the purchase of 200' of hose from the Fabric Fire Hose Co. at 70 cents a foot. Meetings continued to be held at Tusten Lodge of I.O.O.F at a cost of \$10 per annum. **April** - Treasurer Kirk reported a balance on hand of \$309 with more than \$400 tied up in the Knapp Bros. Bank closure.

1911

No significant activity was reported for this year other than the previously mentioned cistern construction to serve as a neighborhood water supply.

1912

April - A dance was held to help pay off the cost of the cistern when the adjoining property owners reneged on their pledges of financial support. The dance yielded a profit of \$56 which was used to pay off the total construction cost of \$250. **Sept** - An award payment of \$33.13 was received from the bankruptcy referee in the Knapp Bros. Bank case.

1913

Department members vote to return to July 4th as the Summer Picnic date and in doing so break a \$200 profit for the first time.

1914

No significant activity reported in minutes for this year, although seven monthly meetings were held.

1915

Nov - A committee was formed to prepare plans for the construction of a more suitable firehouse.

1916

Sept - The Summer Picnic planned for August was not held due to a “prevailing epidemic”. From this point in time no meetings are held through February of the next year.

1917

Apr - The Department received another payment from the Knapp Bros. Bank bankruptcy referee in the amount of \$110.42. **June** - The Department purchased two \$50 Liberty Bonds in a show of patriotic support following America’s having entered World War I in April.

1918

Jan - In a cost cutting measure, meetings are moved from the I.O.O.F. Hall to John Hessling’s. It was also voted that “members joining the colors” (armed forces) be exempt from paying dues, a Department tradition which is carried to this day. **May** - the bell tower that had been erected in 1908 is found to be in poor condition and is subsequently torn down by Fred Yatho in October at a cost of \$7.50. Meetings are not held again until the following April.

1919

Only two meetings were held this year, April and May. Members discuss the sale of the alarm bell for \$40 but no action is taken.

1920

May - NFD makes a purchase of a 30’ X 50’ piece of land at rear of the firehouse lot from Mrs. Neiger for \$50. No meetings are held June through September. **Oct** - The alarm bell is sold for \$25.

1921

July - An entertainment fundraiser was held July 18th, but only three monthly meetings were conducted throughout the year. Members discuss reviving the Fire District which had ceased to function as a governmental entity, requesting the Town Clerk to call for an election of Fire Commissioners.

1922 – 1923

During these two years a total of three meetings were held. The only significant transaction that took place was the purchase of a 20’ by 30’ piece of land from J.C. Branning in April 1923.

1924

The Village Queen

Feb – At a special meeting on February 26th, after hearing a presentation from American La France representative Mr. Higgins, members voted to enter into contract for a Village Queen Fire Engine for \$1350, that model having been manufactured since October, 1922. **March** - Plans for a new building

were discussed after having lain dormant since 1915. **Aug** - Minutes note that the Village Queen had been delivered on the 12th and was found to be acceptable. Members also voted to purchase 300 feet of hose at a cost of 70 cents per foot, a “shut off nozzle” for \$35, an “electric sirene [sic] fire alarm”, also for \$35, as well as four non-freezing chemical fire extinguishers with refills. The Village Queen apparatus was hand drawn but equipped with a Model T Ford gasoline engine with which to pump water. The Department still possesses this piece of equipment, which is proudly displayed at area parades.

1925

Groundbreaking For New Firehouse/Community Hall Oakland Hall Burns

May - Members vote 25 to 5 to build a new firehouse using \$1000 of Department savings plus \$3000 to be obtained by subscriptions, as well as profits from the July 4th Picnic and a minstrel show. The leading proponent of this project was member and Lutheran Pastor Rev. Conrad Reisch. It was agreed that if the necessary \$3000 was not raised by July 15th, the project was to be abandoned. **July** - At a meeting on the 14th, it was proudly reported that the minstrel show raised \$213, the July 4th Picnic \$613 in spite of rain, and a door to door canvass brought in \$1823 in cash and \$482 in pledges, making the Firehouse and Community House a possibility. **Aug** - On the 11th, plans were submitted by the committee for a two story structure 40' X 90', with a total projected cost to be approximately \$15,000. **Sept** - Groundbreaking for the firehouse/community house was held on the 25th. **Dec** - Minutes report a devastating fire at the Oakland Hall on November 22nd, with three members being paid \$5 each by the Department for remaining at the scene over night in the capacity of “fire watchers”. Ironically, the original Oakland Hall had burned in the early morning hours of March 6, 1902, the date of the first organizational meeting of the then unformed Narrowsburg Fire Department.

1926

Cornerstone Is Laid, Contains History

Feb - Members voted to extend the charter of incorporation for 50 years and float a bond for \$10,000 for the firehouse/community hall building. **May** - the Department Trustees were authorized to take a mortgage for that amount. At that same meeting, it was decided that the July Picnic was to be held on the 5th because the 4th was a Sunday. **June** - The cornerstone for firehouse/community hall was laid June 25th by long time Secretary John S. Anderson and is engraved “Narrowsburg Fire Department, Inc. 1926”. The limestone piece serves as a time capsule in that it contains a short history of the development of the firehouse, as well as a list of those who contributed to its funding and those who built it. This list was also noted in a building committee report dated July 13, 1926, and reflects the 256 names of citizens who, with the Department’s \$1000, gave \$4302.64 in cash and pledges. Some of those who were unable to provide money pledged several days’ labor. **Aug** - Land at the rear of the firehouse was leased from Mr. James A. Lillie, and a corporate seal was purchased through the First National Bank. **Oct** - On October 12th, 41 members met at John Hessling’s, thanked him for many years of hosting meetings, and then paraded to the new firehouse for the first meeting

there. Financial records relating to the construction project indicate that the payroll was made out to local contractor Ed C. Wilbert; that William J. Heins was the architect; that numerous carloads of brick had to be unloaded by laborers; lumber was purchased from the Weiden and Barnes saw mills; roof materials obtained from John S. Anderson; trucking was done by O.E. Vannatta and Reining; electrical work completed by A.N. Heins; and chairs bought from N.P. Rasmussen. **Nov** – Rev. Reisch was appointed as Manager of Moving Picture Activities for the Community House theater.

1927

A 25th Anniversary Dinner

June - As a way to help pay off the building bond, motion pictures were held in theater portion of the community hall. A combination 25th Anniversary celebration and formal opening of the fire hall was held June 8th. Members were invited to the “banquet”, and guests included neighboring Chiefs along with NFD’s first president, Frank Kinne. A musical program followed dinner as the evening’s entertainment. Secretary John S. Anderson was honored for 25 years of service in that office. The dinner was held at a cost of \$1.65 a plate. **July** - During the summer, weekly dances were held to raise money and the Department had to obtain a dance hall license from Town of Tusten for \$5. **Aug** - A hose cart was received from the Liberty Fire Department, refurbished and put into service as members were still relying on the Village Queen and the 1902 hose cart.

1928

Feb – Members discussed contacting the Big Eddy Telephone Company to install a telephone in the firehouse. **May** – A truck is sought to serve as a hose carrier as the two-wheeled cart does not contain enough hose capacity and is difficult to pull by hand. **Nov** - Member Augustus “Gus” Stranahan was authorized to receive subscriptions to the amount of \$2500 to purchase a fire truck. Minutes do not reflect if a truck was purchased or not.

1929

Village Queen Almost Sold

July - upon inquiry from C.D. Young of New York City, the Department’s members indicated their willingness to sell the Village Queen for \$250. Minutes from that same meeting report that 30 members of the Department will respond to Honesdale Co. No. 1 on August 10th after being invited to be guests of that company. Minutes from this decade noted the Department holding numerous dances, clambakes, and dinners in addition to the July 4th Picnic to raise money. Income was also derived from movies and rental of Community Hall for various events. **Sept** – Correspondence was received from the prospective buyers of the Village Queen indicating that it was not in the condition they’d believed it to be, so they were no longer interested. **Oct** - Treasurer L.C.W. Schneider advised there were not enough funds on hand to pay school taxes and the bond interest due next month, so he loaned the Department \$40.24 to enable payment. A lock and 12 keys were purchased for the sliding doors on the apparatus room.

1930

March - NFD joined with the State Firemen's Association in writing to elected officials to oppose volunteer firemen losing exemption from jury duty.

1931

Three Companies Abolished Village Queen Given To Fire Commissioners

April - At the annual election of officers, a member was elected to the office of 2nd Assistant Chief; that promotion was subsequently voided when members realized there was no such rank in the Department. **May** - The Secretary was instructed to write to FASNY, the statewide firemen's association, and advise that the original three companies within the NFD no longer exist. **May** - Frank Kinne, the Department's first President, spoke at the meeting on the origins of the Department "in 1893", possibly referring to a devastating fire which consumed most of the structures on Main Street that year, including the Arlington Hotel. **Nov** - NFD voted to join the Sullivan County Volunteer Firemen's Association. Narrowsburg Fire Commissioners are paying \$150 per year for rental of apparatus room. **Dec** - Members voted to turn the Village Queen over to the Board of Fire Commissioners after discussing its condition and whether the apparatus should be refitted.

1932

April - Revised Constitution and By-Laws were adopted. **May/June** - Minutes make references to the Department's "beach property" and the need to build a bridge over the road leading to it. **Sept** - Approval was given by the Fire Commissioners to take the fire truck to the County Field Day at Jeffersonville in October as long as the equipment was left on a "suitable truck".

1933

Feb - A rifle range was constructed in Community Hall basement and a rifle club was set to meet weekly. **Mar** - The idea of re-forming the Department into companies is again discussed and a By-Laws change is proposed to allow each company to have not less than ten members but no more than twenty. This change was enacted at the next meeting. **June** - The monthly meeting was interrupted by members responding to a large fire at the Beechnut Casino in Beach Lake. **Dec** - The third and final payment from Knapp Bros. Bankers in the amount of \$17.67 was received. This bankruptcy had been pending since 1909 and cost the Department several hundred dollars in savings and interest.

1935/1936

The whereabouts of the departmental minutes for the period April 1935 to April 1937 are unknown.

1937

July - This month's meeting was cancelled due to a call of a large fire at "Stag Hall" on the Queens Council Boy Scout property at Ten Mile River. **Oct** - Although not enough members showed for the

meeting to produce a quorum, minutes report “Phil Gebhart, Lud Gebhart, Fred Hendrix, Dick Behling and two other fellows told a few stories and went home”.

1938

Jan - Members vote to discontinue movies as money is being lost each night. **June** - The Department enters into a five-year lease with Mr. Harvey English of Hancock, NY as tenant to operate the theater for an annual rental fee of \$700.

1939

April - At the Annual Meeting members enjoyed a guest speaker from the Scranton area, a Mr. Hall, reported to be the oldest fireman in Pennsylvania. He told of starting a fire company in Scranton, also of being a “torch boy” to light way for apparatus when he began his involvement in the fire service in 1876. Correspondence was received from the Lake Huntington Fire Co. announcing their second annual field day to be held at the Lorraine Hotel. **Sept** – minutes from the period 1902 to 1932 were back in the hands of NFD after a relative of a former Secretary refused to turn them over. He did so only after hearing from an attorney retained by the Department. **Oct** - Chief Ray Dexter reports having 1000’ of “good” hose plus 600’ that could be used in an emergency. Discussion continued throughout this year of re-forming companies within the Department.

1940

March - Although minutes do not report when the 1939 Mack pumper had been purchased, minutes from this month’s meeting contain the first reference to that fire truck. **April** - The Chief’s annual report cited 5 calls for 1939 versus 9 for 1938.

1941

April – The clubrooms above the apparatus room were finally finished due to a \$700 loan made to the Department by charter member Nils P. Rasmussen. The loan had been necessitated by a need to improve acoustics after a switch to movies with sound in the theater several years prior. Mr. Rasmussen took back only \$400 of the loan stating it was his wish that the balance be used for further improvement of the rooms. **July** – This year’s July 4th Picnic was to be held on the grounds of the American Legion Hall on Grove Street.

1942

Jan - With World War II in progress, minutes show members being asked to attend a paper drive, view a film of the London blitz to learn how to extinguish incendiary bomb fires, and attend a meeting at the Lava FD to hear about the establishment of a listening post for enemy aircraft. **June** - The Department voted to buy a trailer for \$25 to carry extra hose in answer to a long running controversy with Fire Commissioners over the truck leaving the District for emergency calls. The July 4th Picnic was cancelled due to a “question of help and otherwise settled conditions”.

1943

April - Firemen discuss having a blood donation but learn from the Red Cross that there is no equipment in Sullivan County to take blood with. **May** – During the monthly meeting, a call came in announcing a “Black Out” and the gathering was quickly adjourned. **July** - July 4th was again cancelled due to “the help and food problem and gasoline restriction”. **Oct** - Records indicate the Department has about 1100’ of hose and if leaving District, they would leave 300-400’ on a trailer. A vote was made to buy an additional 200’ with the proviso that the Fire Commissioners would reimburse the Department when money became available

1944

No significant activity was recorded for this year.

1945

Tusten Protection District Formed

Feb – NFD voted to sponsor a Boy Scout Troop. **March** - Minutes note the death of Frank Kinne, the department’s first President. It was also noted that there had been a devastating fire at the three story Gebhart Building on Main Street (present site of the Fleet Bank) at which fire departments from Lava, Beach Lake, Honesdale, Lake Huntington and Callicoon assisted. **May** – It was voted that an Honor Roll be placed in the meeting room listing members serving in the Armed Forces. Reimbursement by the Fire District for fire hose was put off for one year pending the Commissioners installing a fire siren. Blood types of members were to be listed in the firehouse in the event it is needed. **Sept** – A special meeting was held to discuss obtaining additional equipment now that the (Tusten) Fire Protection District has been formed. A vote of 13 to 8 was taken to purchase a new truck at a cost of not more than \$5000, the price not including hose. Another vote was taken as to whom to buy the vehicle from, either Joe Hankins (Ford dealer) or Malcolm Dexter (Chevrolet dealer), both of whom were members, but it resulted in a tie. President Carl W. “Dick” Behling cast the deciding vote in favor of a Chevrolet truck. **Oct** - The Truck Committee reports the truck will have an enclosed cab, chromium trim and 200’ of booster hose. **Nov** – The annual (turkey) Harvest Dinner was scheduled to be held; the charge will be \$1.50 for adults.

1946

Fire Siren Installed

Jan – A new 2 ½ hp siren has been ordered by Fire Commissioners. **Apr** – NFD signs a contract with Town of Tusten Board to provide town wide fire protection at \$500 per year. Members decide to reinstate the July 4th Picnic after not hosting it during the war years. **May** – Minutes note that the new siren has been installed (on the roof of the Oellrich & Behling store on Main St.) and it was recommend to Fire Commissioners that a time clock be put on siren for daily (noon) test. **Sept** – The death of long term Treasurer L.C.W. Schneider who had served diligently in that position for the past 32 years was noted. **Dec** – Records indicate that the new truck, a 1946 Chevrolet, was in service.

1947

July 4th At The Airport

March – Siren signals were changed to 4 blasts for an out of town fire, 16 blasts for an in town call. **June** – Discussion was held regarding the purchase of uniforms; members are to pay 50% of the cost. **July** – Minutes indicate the July 4th Picnic being held at the local airport, that bus service to the event was favorable, and talk dealt with erecting permanent buildings on airport. **Aug** – Reference is made to Jim Burbank restoring an early photo of the Department's members and identifying those who are posed therein. **Sept** – Members were measured by the local tailor, Mr. Arthur Buettner, for new uniforms which consisted of red wool shirts, dark blue pants with white a stripe, uniform cap and tie. **Oct** – Fire Commissioners give NFD their old siren, which in turn is given to the Lava FD. Members discuss re-joining the Sullivan County Volunteer Firemen's Association (SCVFA) after having dropped out of that organization in 1941.

1948

Jan – Ludwig "Uncle Lud" Gebhart, a charter member, reported that the photograph that Jim Burbank is restoring was taken in front of Oakland Hotel on July 4, 1903. This picture currently hangs in the firehouse and not only depicts the first members in their parade uniforms, but also shows the Gleason & Bailey hand pumper and hose cart. **April** – By-Laws were amended to allow the organization of a Ladies' Auxiliary, however none was formed. **June** – NFD votes to re-join the SCVFA. **July** – A special meeting was held July 1st regarding the tragic accidental death of Malcolm Dexter, a long time active member. It was decided by the 43 members present to hold the July 4th Field Day, but then it is not held. **Dec** – Reference is made to Department participating in opening of the "new bridge" [Erie RR overpass on Bridge Street].

1949

Oct – Master switches are to be placed in '39 Mack and '46 Chevy to avoid inadvertent battery drain. **Nov** – A vote is taken to purchase 15 blue lights and sell them to the membership at cost.

1950

April – The death of Nils P. Rasmussen, charter member and the first Assistant Chief of NFD, is noted.

1951

Death Of Member In Combat

Jan – Committee Chairman Ludwig Gebhart presents NFD with \$10,000 in cancelled bonds signifying that the Community Hall building is paid for. **March** - A special meeting is held on the 28th in which it is decided to renovate the Community Hall basement and add an 18' extension. **June**

– A decision to hold no July 4th Field Day is made, but no reason for that is given in the minutes. **Nov** – The Department is saddened to learn that member William Meyer was killed in combat in Korea on November 7th.

1952

Golden Jubilee Dinner

Jan - A vote is made that charter members be given a life membership in the Department. **May** – Minutes mention that NFD's Golden Jubilee Dinner had been held and that the meal had been prepared by Beach Lake Ladies' Auxiliary. **July** – This year's July 4th Field Day featured a demolition derby organized by member Ken Hazard. **Aug** – The death of charter member Paul E. Schneider, who served as NFD President from 1916 to 1931 was noted. **Oct** – The coal boiler in Community Hall was replaced by oil heat

1953

Tusten Centennial Celebration

March – Member Joe Hankins volunteered to re-paint the Village Queen. **July** – Minutes note a fire at the (Delaware interstate)“bridge project”. Mention is made to put an ad in the local paper that when fire siren sounds, non-members refrain from using the phone so that the fire location can be discerned. Discussion was also held of NFD operating concession stands during Town of Tusten Centennial Celebration in August. **Oct** – Notice was given that Fire Commissioners will increase their rental payment for the apparatus room from \$400 to \$600.

1954

Purchase Of The Airport Property

March – An Airport Purchase Committee appointed. **April** – Members vote 31 to 4 to purchase the Narrowsburg airport (currently Lander’s Campground) depending on the price that owner, Dr. George R. Mills of Callicoon, wants for it. **Aug** – Members vote 35 to 13 to allow the Department Trustees to purchase the airport property for \$16,000. **Sept** – members voted 31 to 3 to have the Trustees borrow \$14,000 from bank for a ten year mortgage at 4% interest. The official purchase date was October 24th. **Dec** – It was noted that hangar doors require repair in wake of Hurricane Hazel which had passed through the region.

1955

There was no significant activity reported for this year.

1956

First July 4th Chicken BBQ

Jan – The movie theater is leased to Mr. Len Thompson; dog shows of 400 animals are being held at airport in 1950’s attracting crowds of about 800. **June** – Members decide to change the July 4th format by hosting a chicken BBQ instead of the usual cold supper meal. **Aug** – A special meeting held to select Civil Defense material from US Government that would become property of the Department after four years. **Dec** - A decision is made to move Department record books from file cabinets at the airport to the safe in Stranahan’s Store.

1957

Jan – All members of the Department are blood typed; a map of fire hydrant locations is made by member Jim Burbank. **April** – Members discuss considering a lease of part of the airport if industry can be found. **May** – NFD votes 29 to 3 to go on record to agree to lease 3 ½ acres of the airport as an industrial site, noting that the sale agreement with Dr Mills requires that the land stay as an airport for five full years. The site selected for development was on the upper end of the property which was off the runway portion of the field. **Aug** – The issue of being able to raise a telephone operator at night when there is a fire was discussed; member Art Meyers is to speak to the operators to be more alert.

1958

Jan – Members are informed of a proposed Sullivan County fire radio system at a cost to the Department of \$715, with the government to pick up half the cost. **Dec** - Discussion was also held over the last half of year about the purchase of a new fire truck, however members determine that the apparatus room needs a new floor due to rotted timbers, and it may not be big enough to accommodate a modern fire truck.

1959

Jan – The Truck Committee reports an expenditure of \$12,000 to \$17,000 is required in order to purchase the size truck desired by the Department. Members vote 32 to 2 to purchase the new pumper at that cost with a suggestion made to move the Mack to a sub-station in Beaver Brook after the new truck has been delivered. Also discussed at this meeting was the possibility of establishing a mobile home park on the airport property. **Feb** – A representative of Mack Trucks appeared at the monthly meeting to discuss a new truck and offered about \$2500 for the 1939 Mack. **May** – The bid for the new truck was awarded to the low bidder, Narrowsburg Motor Sales, at \$4795 for the chassis. Members later voted to expend approximately \$9000 for a body manufactured by Maxim Fire Equipment. **Sept** –Members discuss using a bulldozer owned by the Narrowsburg Lumber Co. to fix Pebbly Beach so that boats can be launched easier. Four members per month are appointed to patrol the airport campground and issue permits for camping. **Oct** – Placement of “fire phones” in certain locations in town to better handle fire calls was discussed; (phones were eventually placed in Tegeler’s Store on Main St. for day calls and the homes of Oscar & Fred Rasmussen for night calls).

1960

Jan – The new fire phone system is installed, however the phones are not equipped with buttons which allow the alarm to be activated. This problem is subsequently rectified by the Big Eddy Telephone Company. During the course of this month the new 1959 Ford pumper is delivered. **Feb** – The fire phone system is now operational, however problems arise with curious citizens calling the number to learn the location of the alarm. Throughout this year, extensive work was done at the airport property including a new roof on the large hangar, with repairs to doors, windows and the office area. There was also an on-going discussion concerning the obtaining of a new siren through Civil Defense, and members are informed that NFD would have to pay one half of the cost of \$1300, plus \$225 for a remote control and \$200 for an air raid trainer. It was also noted that the Mack engine block is cracked and needs repair. The issue of starting a Ladies’ Auxiliary is again raised and women are spoken to; they advise they are willing to help but do not want to form an auxiliary.

1961

*Airport Property and Community Hall Are Offered As College Site
Airport Mortgage Is Paid Off*

Jan – The 1939 Mack engine is sent to a Newburgh repair facility for examination. NFD makes a resolution and an “informal offer” to the Sullivan County Board of Supervisors that for \$1, they would convey the Community Hall and airport properties for a community college site. It is believed

that the current fair market value of the airport property is \$125,000 and that of the Community Hall is about \$64,500. **March** – Members vote to purchase a 1946 Ford “Brush Rabbit” grass/brush fire truck from the Yulan FD for \$75. **April** – The 1939 Mack has been repaired, placed in care of Chief Jay Stewart, and is to be stored at the airport. The airport property is being run as a campground with members patrolling same on a regular basis in order to issue permits. **July** – NFD pledges \$1000 in two \$500 payments toward the Medical Center to be built on the Flats. As of July 13th, the airport property is paid off in full and the Department has no mortgage. **Aug** – Chief Stewart is authorized to purchase 300’ of hose at \$2.04 per foot. This will be added to the existing inventory of 1200’ plus an additional 300’ is to be bought by the Fire Commissioners. **Sept** – Chief Jay Stewart is authorized to purchase two Scott Airpacks, the first self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) owned by the Department. **Oct** – A group in Beaver Brook is interested in forming a fire company, NFD will sell 1946 Chevrolet pumper to them for \$750. **Dec** – The new airpacks are used for the first time at a fire at Emil’s Halfway House (currently Kelly’s Adult Home) on Route 97.

1962

Jan – The 1946 Chevrolet pumper is sold to Long Eddy FD for \$750. NFD attempts to get the telephone number “1234” from the Big Eddy Telephone Company as part of countywide movement to have “1234” as a standard fire call number, but find out that phone numbers here begin at 2300. **April** – Members observe the 60th Anniversary of the Department and burn the airport mortgage papers to signify our lack of indebtedness. **June** - Members are advised the Henry J sound car, used for many July 4th Field Days, is beyond repair and it is suggested the sound system be put on Brush Rabbit, but no action is taken. **Aug** - Chief Chris Ropke reports that a two-way radio has been installed in the 1959 Ford, which is the Department’s first due pumper. The Brush Rabbit is being stored in C.L. Tegeler’s garage on Erie Avenue due to lack of space in the firehouse. **Sept** – The theater tenant wants to close it from October to June due to not enough business, but agrees to stay open when the Department votes to pay for heat and lights during those months. **Dec** – Member J. Frank Behling has been given the original Narrowsburg Fire Department charter by Dave Barnes and is to have it framed and posted in the meeting room.

1963

Jan – A copy of the NFD charter is given to Jim Burbank for framing. The original charter and two deeds are being kept in President George W. Seibert’s safe deposit box. **April** - Chiefs from Honesdale and Yulan attend the Annual meeting along with 71 of 141 NFD members. **Aug** - NFD replaces a 27 year old “inhalator” with a new, state of the art \$500 resuscitator; the old one is given to Lava FD. Stickers with the phone numbers of NFD, Lava FD and the New York State Troopers are distributed by the Department to the community. **Oct** - NFD votes 26 to 2 to loan the Narrowsburg Industrial Development Corp. \$1000, interest free, for 6 months regarding a possible factory to be sited in Narrowsburg. **Nov** – Members are measured for uniforms; prices include cap \$6.50, shirt \$18, and pants \$19.

1964

First SCUBA Divers
Vote To Sell Airport

Feb - Members Bill Berger and Nathaniel “Skip” Feagles undergo SCUBA training in Liberty, NY to become the Department’s first divers. **April** – The movie theater is rented to Fred Meyers \$100 per month with the stipulation that it must stay open 11 months per year; the Department is to pay heat and electric except in July and August. **May** – Discussion is undertaken of having the airport property turned into a State Park. **Aug** – Acting upon an inquiry by a pilot from Warwick, NY who wished to buy airport property and operate it as a combination airport, campground and private beach, members voted 34 to 17 in favor of selling if conditions were favorable to the Department. **Sept** – Members vote to sell the airport property to the buyer from Warwick for \$25,000. **Oct** – After much discussion, members rejected the proposal to sell airport by a vote of 54 to 11.

1965

President Emeritus Elected
Vote To Sell Portion Of Airport For Industry
Vote To Grant DEC Boat Launch Site

March – Two additional SCUBA divers being trained. NFD agrees to contribute \$1500 toward the purchase by the Fire District of a 4-wheel drive pick-up truck to be outfitted for brush fire fighting. **April** – The senior member of the Department, Ludwig G. “Uncle Lud” Gebhart, also a charter member, was elected by acclamation as President Emeritus of the NFD for his many and varied contributions to the organization. **May** – NFD received a communication from William Rinn, one of the few remaining charter members. He was living in Mill Rift, Pa, and was near 83 years old. Mr. Rinn was sent a life membership card and the best regards of the Department. Members hear a proposal to allot some acres of the airport property to a firm which manufactures fiberglass sports equipment (fishing rods, arrows, pool cues), and vote 48 to 2 to have a committee explore the proposal further. Members also learn of DEC plans to put a boat launch in the upper eddy on Department property now being used as cornfield by Cameron Baim. **June** – Members vote 45 to 10 to sell a portion of airport property for light industrial use. **Aug** – Records indicate that the Brush Rabbit and a 1934 Dodge truck were sold, this is the first reference in the minutes to the Dodge. **Oct** – Members vote 21 to 2 in favor of adopting a resolution granting the DEC a parcel of land on which to build a boat launch.

1966

Feb – The Secretary notes that there are 134 members on the Department roll but average attendance at monthly meetings is 9. **March** – Ongoing discussion was held regarding establishing a satellite fire station in Beaver Brook using a 1938 Ward LaFrance that is stored in a hangar at the airport. Member Rev.Donald P.Beck was appointed by the Sullivan County Bureau of Fire to serve as District 1 Deputy Fire Coordinator. **April** – At a special meeting a resolution to sell 9 acres of the airport to the Narrowsburg Industrial Development Corp. is rejected in a 39 to 9 vote. **June** – Minutes reflect that four airplanes are still being stored at airport property (owners: John Mohrmann, Herman Esselman, Charles Smith, and Ronald Bodens). Campground permits are being issued at Stranahan’s Store and checked by members who regularly patrol the grounds.

1967

*Mary Henz Property Purchased For Firehouse
The Last Charter Member Passes Away*

Jan – Secretary George H. Oellrich reports he has obtained the 1902-1931 meeting minutes which had been held for several years by the family of a deceased member. **March** – A vote was made to purchase a 1962 Chevrolet panel truck from Jack Denny Chevrolet for \$850 to be used as dive unit truck. **April** – At the Annual Meeting the following members were recognized for 50 years of service and awarded marble pen and pencil sets: J. Frank Behling, Ludwig G. Gebhart, Fred H. Rasmussen and Augustus J. Stranahan. **May** – A campground rental fee of \$2 per night is set for six or less people; members continue to patrol and issue permits. The new dive/rescue truck is placed into service. Members discuss the need to house all apparatus in one location as several pieces are now housed throughout the village, and the firehouse is only large enough to hold two trucks. **Oct** – NFD fire police join the Sullivan Co. Fire Police Association. In an effort to consolidate equipment, members approve a proposal to purchase the Mary Henz property on Bridge Street opposite the Oasis Restaurant for \$10,000 due to the large cinderblock garage on the site. She would be allowed to live in the house for her lifetime. At a special meeting on Oct 25th, members vote 22 to 1 to purchase the Henz property for \$8,000; payment to be \$5000 cash and a \$3000 mortgage. **Nov** – Note was made of the passing on November 14th at age 86 of “Uncle Lud “ Gebhart, the last remaining charter member of the Department. Closing on the Henz property was Nov 25th.

1968

Aug – Members vote to accept the 1939 Mack pumper from the Fire Commissioners in their anticipation of ordering a new truck; it needs a new motor. **Dec** – A vote was made to upgrade electric service to airport property by having NYSE&G run a line across the Delaware River from Pennsylvania.

1969

Tusten Ambulance Corps Is Formed

Feb – Discussion was held to have a two day July 4th Field Day as the 4th falls on Friday this year. **May** – Long time Airport Committee Chairman John Race reports that several lean-tos have been given to NFD by the Ten Mile River Boy Scout camps and have been dismantled and transported to the airport campground. **Aug** – It was noted that members were not in favor of repeating the two-day Field Day owing to manpower required and lack of attendance by the public. NFD has been using a fire siren loaned from the Lake Huntington FD for several months while ours is repaired. Minutes note that a new pumper has been delivered, a 1969 Chevrolet equipped with a high pressure John Bean pump. **Sept** – NFD divers assisted at Labor Day weekend hydroplane boat races held in the upper and lower Delaware River eddies, the event having been put on by the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce. NFD votes to sponsor starting an ambulance service upon receiving notice from Dr. John Stirna that Rasmussen Sons will cease their service on November 1st. **Oct** – At this month’s meeting it was learned that an ambulance corps was being formed and the Department donated \$100. **Dec** – NFD provides one of the two spaces in the firehouse apparatus room for

storage of the ambulance corps' vehicle and space in the Henz property garage for their equipment.

1970

Airport Campground Is Leased To Robert Lander

Jan – NFD has been advised by NYS Department of Health that improvements must be made if we are to continue operating the campground. The Department decides to explore offers from Bob Lander and the Upper Delaware Campground of Callicoon to lease the property. Members vote unanimously to lease the property, then vote 18 to 1 to accept the proposal by Bob Lander and appointed a committee to develop a lease agreement. At a special meeting later that month members voted 32 to 10 to sign lease with Mr. Lander. **Oct** – NFD hosts the Sullivan Co. Volunteer Firemen's (SCVFA) parade at a monetary loss of between \$300 and \$400. **Nov** – Members discuss the possibility of adding three bay garage to front of the Henz property and selling the Community Hall to the Town of Tusten. A radio base station has been installed at the firehouse.

1971

March – The movie theater is being leased for \$1500 per year. **July** – A By-Laws change allows 17 year olds to become members, however they must be 21 to drive the apparatus. The Tusten Town Board indicates they are not interested in purchasing Community Hall. **Aug** – NFD votes to purchase a new 10 hp, three phase siren for \$1850, to be mounted on a 13' tower crafted by welder Bruce Grund of Cohecton Center. The siren will be placed on the roof of the Henz garage. **Oct** – Members again hosted the SCVFA annual parade and county field day. Discussion was raised again as to the feasibility of forming a Ladies' Auxiliary. **Nov** – NFD rejects an offer by Bob Lander to purchase the airport property by a 54 to 12 vote. It was noted that the Town of Tusten Town Board had passed a resolution requesting that the property be preserved for use of the townspeople and that if the Department was forced by circumstances to sell it, that the Town of Tusten be given right of first refusal (the lease dictated that Mr. Lander had this right).

1972

April – Members received drawings and plans from T. Willard DeSantis, Industrial Arts teacher at the local school, for new firehouse on Henz property. **May** – A two day camping show was held at the airport property during which the Department ran the beer stand, realizing a profit of \$44. **July** – Minutes note the response of the Emergency Truck to the severe flood in Wilkes Barre as a result of Hurricane Agnes. Discussion as to a firehouse site continued with suggestions of using the Henz property or buying the Bailer property adjacent to Community Hall, and to offer that building to the Town of Tusten for a price not to exceed \$45,000.

1973

Plans To Sell Community Hall

Feb – In response to an inquiry from the Narrowsburg Central School to rent the Community Hall basement for classroom space for three years, members rejected the request 37 to 9. Members then

voted to sell the Community Hall to the Town of Tusten for a proposed price of \$25,000 by a vote of 39 to 9. **Sept** – Plans were presented for a 34’by 60’ firehouse on the Henz property, estimated cost \$51,000. Members feel Community Hall would have to be sold to finance the new building, and that the hall should be offered to the Town for \$25,000. **Oct** – The shortage of fuel for heating is noted and use of the Community Hall limited as the cost of heating oil has risen to 40 cents per gallon.

1974

First Female Member

Jan – No weekly drills are being held due to the shortage of gasoline. **Feb** –Three cans of gasoline were stolen from the firehouse. **March** - Carol J. Beck is elected as the first female member of the Department. **Nov** – NFD explores securing a possible FHA loan for a new firehouse, but are unable to sell Community Hall at this time due to the lease with the theater tenant

1975

New Firehouse Property Bought

April – Ken Hazard is awarded a plaque commemorating his many years of serving as the July 4th Chairman. **May** – At a special meeting, members were presented with two choices for building a new firehouse. The first was for a new 42’ by 65’ structure on the Henz property at an estimated cost of \$56,000 and an anticipated mortgage of \$19,000. The second involved purchasing the Jack Denny Chevrolet garage for \$60,500 with an estimated mortgage of \$8,500 after the Community Hall and Henz property were sold. The vote was 26 to 14 to buy the car dealership garage. **Oct** – Members learn that the new firehouse roof is in poor condition and will cost \$5000 to \$6000 to repair.

1976

March – Members discuss contacting the Erie-Lackawana Railroad to allow a crossing to be installed from the airport property to Kirk Road. An open house for new firehouse is scheduled for June 13th. The Henz property is rented to Stanley Kuta for use as a welding and fabricating shop with an option to purchase after one year for \$15,000. **May** – At the suggestion of member James O’Brien, members change meeting format to begin each meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance in order to commemorate the nation’s Bi-Centennial. The practice continues to this day. **July** – NFD participated in the Town of Tusten Bi-Centennial celebration, which was held July 3rd thru the 5th. A severe thunder and lightning storm occurred during the July 4th parade and knocked out power in parts of town. **Oct** – NFD allows town police car to be stored at the firehouse so that the ambulance can be kept in the town hall. Members consider a request from campground tenant Bob Lander to pay 1/3 of the cost of installing a 75’ long swimming pool on the property. **Nov** – Members vote to purchase red Fire Department jackets with white lettering and will pay 50% of the cost.

1977

75th Anniversary

Jan – NFD purchased a 1500 gallon, canvas portable water tank; gasoline for trucks is 41.4 cents per gallon. **July** – A purchase of chairs and a table is approved so that Department meetings can be held at the firehouse and not at the Town Hall. A new emergency vehicle (the former Rasmussen furniture van) was placed into service; it had been bought in the spring for \$800 from Mills Chevrolet of Callicoon and completely retrofitted by members for use as a dive/rescue truck. **Oct** – With the arrival of a table and chairs, the Department held its first monthly meeting in the new firehouse. **Nov** – A 75th Anniversary dinner/dance was held at the Arlington Hotel on Main Street with more than 150 tickets being sold to the event. **Dec** – Local contractor Ken Crandall is hired to enlarge the meeting room and install a tile ceiling.

1978

April – Treasurer William “Doc” Keenan retired after serving in that office since 1954 and was awarded a plaque for his dedicated service. **Sept** – Mobile radios are placed into service in the Brush Rabbit and the Emergency/Dive Truck; a base station is also installed at the firehouse. **Nov** – A memorial dinner was held in memory of long time member J. Frank Behling who had left a gift to the Department with a request that it be used for that purpose.

1979

Tragic Loss To The Community

Feb – 12 Plectron home alert radios are purchased for use by active members with an additional 6 ordered. **June** – Tragedy struck on the 29th with Assistant Chief Paul Brock, and members Brett Hankins and Jay Laraia all suffering fatal injuries while returning from a parade in Montrose, Pennsylvania. No July 4th Field Day is held out of respect to the families for their losses. **Aug** – An early morning fire destroys the Lander’s camp store on the airport property. **Dec** – Minutes mention the huge fire that destroyed the Peggy Runway Lodge on Route 652 in Pennsylvania the previous month.

1980

Jan – Minutes note that members Ken Hazard and Earl Mohn are in the process of restoring the 1939 Mack which had been out of service for some time due to a blown engine. **April** – A memorial service was conducted by Rev. Donald Beck for the three members lost in the June, 1979 accident. **June** – Fire Commissioners advise each active member has been insured with a \$10,000 life insurance policy. NFD is fielding a squad of five fully equipped SCUBA divers. A proposal to house the ambulance corps so that the local State Police station can be moved to the Town Hall is rejected by the Department due to concerns over lack of truck space if that move is undertaken. **Aug** – Money is allotted for re-painting of the 1939 Mack. **Nov** – The Department agrees to partner with the Fire Commissioners and pay \$12,500 of \$42,500 for a new mini-pumper/brush truck to replace the loss of the former Brush Rabbit in the June, 1979 accident in Montrose.

1981

April – Officers and members who have served 25 or more years were awarded decorative ceramic mugs, other members could purchase them also.

1982

Jan – Authorization is given for Chief Art Hawker to purchase a white coat and helmet; heretofore all members of the Department wore the same color turnout gear without designation of rank. New coats were also ordered to have the Captain and Lieutenant ranks lettered on back. Resulting from a discussion of the need for more energy efficient doors, a firehouse renovation committee is appointed. **Apr** – Member John H. Race is awarded a plaque for saving the life of a girl who was drowning in the Delaware River the previous July 4th. **June** – The Department sold smoke detectors to the community at cost; 55 were distributed. **July** – NFD receives the first of many Exxon Community Service Grants through member George “Chris” Behling. This first grant was used to purchase a portable radio. **Dec** – A renovation plan for the firehouse is presented by the committee that had been studying same since January

1983

Major Firehouse Renovation

April – NFD votes to undertake a \$68,000 renovation of the firehouse using plans drawn up by Industrial Arts teacher T. Willard DeSantis. Bids were awarded to the Albert E. Van Keuren Construction Co. of Narrowsburg to do the construction. The major feature of this project was the large engine room, which allowed four trucks to be parked abreast and exit directly onto Bridge Street through two electric overhead doors. **Sept** – A fire that started in a top floor electric motor totally destroyed Honor Brand Feeds on Main Street. NFD was assisted by many adjoining departments from as far away as Honesdale.

1984

Feb – Preliminary discussion is held about purchasing a “Jaws of Life” rescue tool.

1985

April – Carol Beck is elected Vice President, the first female elected officer in the Department’s history. After a fund raising period of several months, enough money was accrued and a “Jaws of Life” hydraulic rescue tool was ordered. **Sept** – A Truck Committee was appointed to research purchasing a replacement for the 1959 Ford pumper.

1986

Jan – Rev. Beck and wife Carol, soon to leave the community, were presented with an engraved plaque for their 21 years of service to the Department. **Feb** – A corned beef dinner was held using a bequest left to the Department for that purpose by departed member Carl W. “Dick” Behling. **July** – Fire Commissioners solicit bids for a new 1000 gpm pumper with a 750 gallon water tank and diesel engine. Narrowsburg Motors received the bid for the chassis at \$33,000. **Oct** – The 1972 Ford

SCUBA truck is taken off the road due to poor condition and insurance dropped. Owing to outdated equipment and lack of divers, NFD ceases the operation of its diving squad.

1987

Feb – Fund raising through an appeals letter is conducted for the first time. **March** – A donation of four life jackets and a flotation coat was received from the National Park Service. **July** – The new 1987 Ford pumper is received and placed into service. **Aug** - At the request of the Tusten Lions Club, NFD agrees to run the beer concession at the annual Oktoberfest. **Dec** – A new Homelite portable pump is obtained through one of George “Chris” Behling’s Exxon Community Service grants. The new Sullivan County Communications Center is due to open Dec 16th and will conduct weekly home alert tests.

1988

Feb – NFD enters into contract with the Town of Tusten for fire and emergency response service at the Town’s request. **Aug** – Problems are cited with the use of “fire phones” on which calls are received; authorization is made to purchase a new base radio station which will allow communication with the county control center as well as station to truck. The renovation loan is paid off on August 8th making the Department mortgage free. **Dec** – Fire Commissioners transfer ownership of the 1959 Ford pumper and the 1981 mini-pumper brush truck to the Department.

1989

Apr – Engraved plaques were presented to the following 50+ year members: Emil “Deacon” Oellrich, Frank Reith, Art Van Schoick, Walter “Joe” Hankins, and William Miller. **June** – A portable 3500 watt generator is obtained through an Exxon Community Service grant facilitated by George “Chris” Behling. **Oct** – A call diverter is installed in the firehouse to route fire calls directly to the Emergency Control Center in White Lake while allowing residents to still use the 252 exchange, thereby phasing out the “fire phone” system. Local businessman Ned Lang generously donated twelve dress uniforms for Department members.

1990

Plaque Erected To Honor Brock – Hankins - Laraia

Sept – A memorial service to honor the memory of Paul Brock, Brett Hankins, and Jay Laraia was held at the firehouse on Sept 9th. Following the memorial, a bronze plaque commemorating their service to the Department was placed above the firehouse entrance door. **Dec** – Emergency response policy was changed so that Lava FD is notified by pager whenever NFD is called and vice versa. This will allow members of both departments to be alerted to an impending response if mutual aid is needed.

1991

Jan – A special meeting was held January 15th to discuss the future of the airport property leased to

Lander's Campground, however no decision was made. **March** – Members are advised that the airport property has been appraised with a value of \$190,400. **April** – Joe Purcell is honored for 50 years of membership. **June** – Use of the call diverter is discontinued as local residents can now call the Emergency Control Center directly as a local call. **July** – This year's parade was dedicated to the Operation Desert Storm (invasion of Kuwait by Iraq) veterans; the Department also attended a parade in Monticello on July 19th dedicated to the same event.

1992

Jan – The 1959 Ford pumper was sold to former Narrowsburg resident John Vannatta of Leonardtown, Md. for \$1500. **May** – Minutes reflect that the Fire Commissioners are awaiting a DPW crane to move the fire siren from the former Henz garage to the roof of the Town Hall. **Oct** – One bay of the firehouse garage is loaned to the Tusten Lions Club for storage of materials.

1993

Feb – Hepatitis vaccine is purchased so that shots can be administered to active members. **July** – The July 4th Field Day was cut short when the fireworks vendor did not arrive from Long Island. As a result, money that had been paid to the firm was returned to the Department and a free show offered for 1994. **Oct** – Due to prior Field Day problems, members vote to have no beer stand at the 1994 July 4th.

1994

Jan – A \$1000 Exxon Community Service grant is received, and will be used toward the purchase of an inflatable rescue boat. **March** – The firehouse was used as a water distribution site when the town well required repairs. A full sized water tanker was parked in the engine room and residents brought in containers to be filled. **May** – A four-bottle cascade air system is given to the Department by the Lava Vol. FD; it will be used to re-fill SCBA and air rescue equipment. It was also made policy that due to manpower constraints on both departments, Lava and NFD would both be on automatic response for any calls in the Narrowsburg Fire District or Tusten Protection District. Members vote to hold no Field Day, only a parade. **Nov** – Members explore the possibility of re-instituting the SCUBA diving unit but find it to be cost prohibitive.

1995

May – Twenty-one members undergo newly mandated OSHA physical exams for interior and exterior firefighters. **July** – The re-constituted July 4th Field Day under the chairmanship of Mark Horton was a resounding success.

1996

Shadfest
Oktoberfest

May – In conjunction with the Lava Vol. FD and the Tusten Ambulance Corps, NFD participated in

ng is accepted, work to be accomplished between January and April at a cost of \$22,000. The new International pumper has been placed into service and the 1969 Chevrolet is being stored in the large hangar on the campground.

1999

Twentieth Anniversary Memorial

Jan – Owing to the financial loss of last year's July 4th, members decide to have a small parade, chicken BBQ, and raffle, but no Field Day. **May** – Red fire helmets are purchased for one Captain

and two Lieutenants so as to distinguish their ranks. The baseball field owned by the department on Airport Rd is named Firemen's Memorial Field in honor of all departed members. **July** – A 20th Anniversary memorial service was held on July 11th to honor Paul Brock, Brett Hankins, and Jay Laraia. The ceremony consisted of a procession from the firehouse to each cemetery where prayers were said and a Fireman's plaque was placed at the grave. A reception was held afterward at the th event was held except for an impromptu parade with one truck and several children. **Aug** – Discussion is held regarding the hosting of a fund raising type field day on Labor Day weekend of 2000 if a rides vendor can be found. **Sept** – NFD hosted a first ever golf tournament fundraiser at the Woodloch Pines Resort with Craig Burkle as the event chairman.

2000

Feb – Renovations to the meeting room that began in 1998 were finally completed. **April** – Pursuant to a new State law, criminal background checks are being completed on all prospective members. **May** – Members donate and barbecue a quantity of chicken at a large memorial service for departed member George "Chris" Behling. In addition, a plaque is installed in the meeting room in memory of his many and varied contributions to the Department. **Aug** – Heavy rains on August 14th resulted in flooding in the community with numerous calls for cellar pump outs, including the rescue of a woman on Buddenhagen Road who had been hit by lightning and had to be transported across a swollen stream. **Sept** – NFD hosted a two day Labor Day Field Day with the traditional parade and Chicken BBQ; financially the event was a loss. **Dec** – In conjunction with the Fire Commissioners, NFD purchased six new lightweight air packs equipped with Personal Alert Safety Systems. This represented the first upgrade in the Department's self contained breathing apparatus since the

2001

Jan – NFD, along with many other county fire departments, received a new desktop computer from Sullivan Co Bureau of Fire. The software provided allows the Department to record training, inventory, vehicle maintenance, and to submit incident reports to the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control via the Internet. **March** – Members are advised the rides vendor for the proposed Labor Day Field Day cannot enter into contract. It is decided to hold an open house and a take out chicken BBQ on July 4th as a fund raiser. **April** – Milton "Bud" Stranahan, a 54 year Department member, is honored by the Narrowsburg Fire District for serving more than 40 years as a Fire Commissioner. **June** – Paving of the firehouse apron and driveway is completed. **Dec** – NFD participated in a grant program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and was awarded funding to purchase 12 Personal Alarm Safety System (PASS) devices.

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