LADY WARREN HOSE
COMPANY NO. 5



125TH ANNIVERSARY
1869-1994

History of Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5



125TH ANNIVERSARY | 1869-1994

Acknowledgment

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Preface

Níor dh_n Dia Doras riamh nar oscail Sé ceann eile.
Irish Gaelige

God never closed one door without opening another.
Translation of Irish Saying

The "Great Potato Famine" in nineteenth century Ireland was a major factor in Irish emigration into the United States. Starving and unemployed, these immigrants secured what passage they could to bring them to the "land of opportunity" in the hope of a better life in America. Great numbers of Irish immigrants sailed into New York Harbor. Many settled in the Hudson Valley finding employment in the numerous brickyards that had lined the west bank of the Hudson River in then, the Village of Warren.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all member of Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5, past and present, living and deceased. All of whom contributed to make the Company what is is today.

In Memoriam



Our Departed Officers and Members

To the many Deceased Members of Our Company, may we say;

"Our comrades performed their duties well; their tasks are at an end. Danger never deterred them from the course of duty. The alarm has sounded and our comrades have responded to their last call."

THE FIREMAN *Unknown author - 1890*

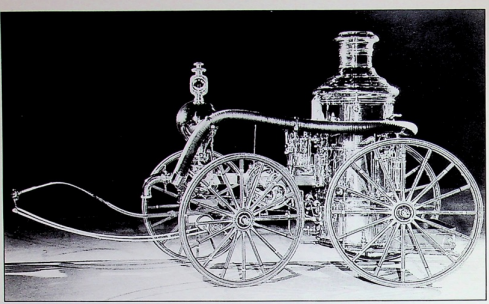


He jumps at the flames, his blood is up in arms; his soul full of enthusiasm. Nor does he draw regular breath until his enemy is overthrown, till the flames are drowned and quenched in torrents of water.

And the Fireman! Who more gallant and brave? His calling is indeed a noble one. His first duty, to save life, his next to protect property. Truly an evangelical mission. All the years of his life - the prime of his manhood and his more mature existence - are devoted to his calling. To be a fireman in the real sense he must possess qualities, physical and mental, which, when combined, form the real hero.

He is brave, loyal, and progressive, thoroughly self-reliant, and to often as tender-hearted as a child. He is a public servant of the highest order who cannot be to highly prized.

Chapter 1: 1869 - 1879



Hand drawn Clapp and Jones Steamer circa 1865 similar to the one owned by Lady Warren Steam Fire Engine Co. No. 5

Back in 1869, a group of robust gentlemen from the brickyards met and formed their own fire company - Lady Warren Steam Fire Engine Company No. 5. The company was born in strife and controversy; it's members were unwanted and unwelcome and many verbal brick-bats were hurled in their direction - all of which bounced off the tough hides of those lusty "Sons of Erin."

Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5 has rarely been treated like a lady. As a matter of fact, since its organization in July of 1869, it has been treated more like the village shrew then the queen sister of Haverstraw's five fire companies.

It is simply historical record that the "Green Book" boys, as they are known in Fire Department annals, have had to battle like a woman scorned for every improvement they have sought since Isaac Buchanan was elected their first Foreman (Captain).

A New Fire Company

(June 12, 1869) At a meeting called by the citizens of the Village of Warren and held in the room of Union Engine Co. No. 2 for the purpose of organizing a company to be attached to Steam Fire Engine "Lady Warren" No. 5, Isaac Buchanan was named temporary Chairman

and Isaac M. Purdy, Secretary.

The following were enrolled as members of the new Company:

Isaac Buchanan	John R. Smith
Edward Felter	Paul Russell
Isaac M. Purdy	G. H. Westervelt
Edward Bedell	Theo. V. Dutcher
Meltior Campbell	George W. Mott
Winslow Jersey	Thomas J. Tallman
James P. Duffy	E. M. Newmann
J. A. Westervelt	Aaron Sneneker
Hiram Keesler	William R. Pitts
William Mott	Edward Cosgrove
Averill Buchanan	Al J. Carson
C. W. Fredericks	John Hudson
Alsi Baldwin	Brad. Moore
Samuel Campbell	James W. Florence
John J. Smith	Al. Springteen
Charles H. Turner	George Phillips

Thirty-two members in total.

The election of permanent officers were then held:

Foreman - Isaac Buchanan
Assistant Foreman - Edward Felter
Secretary - Isaac M. Purdy

Isaac Buchanan, Edward Felter, and Jacob A. Westervelt were appointed a committee to draft and report a Constitution and By-Laws for the government of the Company. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of Warren Village held June 19, 1869, all members being present the following business was transacted:

RESOLVED, The Trustees of the Village of Warren cause to be raised by Tax upon the taxable inhabitants of said village, qualified to vote for the raising of taxes, the sum of $5,000.00 for the following purposes to wit:

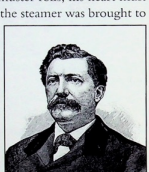
(1) The sum of $2,000.00, for the purchase of a Steam Fire Engine. (2) The sum of $3,000.00, for the purchase of 400 feet of hose; (3) the construction of five new cisterns; (4) Folding Brakes for Engines Nos. 1 and 2; (5) enlargement of Engine House No. 2; and (6) a light truck for Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1.

The progress and growth of the Village of Warren, N.Y. caused several of the leading citizens

to propose the purchase of a steam fire engine in the year 1869. Although it was admitted that a mechanical engine of some kind was a growing necessity for the Village's fire protection, this proposition was not received favorably. The estimated price of $2,000.00 was not appreciated by the conservative element. They stated the two hand engines were able to afford all the fire protection necessary.

R. A. VerValen was President of the Village at that time and O.W. Parsons was the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department. Both of these gentlemen were opposed to the purchase of the steamer. However, John L. deNoyelles, member of the Village Board, was an ardent advocate of a steam fire engine. He was the most powerful factor in village affairs, and was considered its most popular citizen. So confident was he in the success of the "Pro-steamer" movement that he overestimated public opinion. Pending the holding of a special election for the purchase of the steamer, Mr. deNoyelles arranged for the purchase of an engine from one Chirstopher Nugent of New York City. An advance payment of $365.20 for the apparatus was paid out of deNoyelle's own pocket.

While Mr. deNoyelles' name cannot be found on the company's muster rolls, his heart must certainly have been with the "Green Book." Through his efforts, the steamer was brought to Warren before the special election in May 1870 that was to decide whether the village was for or against its purchase. It was stored at the freight house on the steamboat dock at the foot of Main Street.



So sure were Mr. deNoyelles and his supporters that the taxpayers of the young village would welcome the steamer with open arms that they failed to campaign for their cause. The opposition took advantage of the laxity and successfully defeated the referendum.

Undaunted by the results of the taxpayers' whims, Mr. deNoyelles stood his ground and his laconic comment was: "The steamer has come to stay." Within a few days after the vote he took off for New York City, paid in full for the steamer, and came back to Warren with the receipt.

Generally though, Mr. deNoyelles life became fraught with agitation. On November 18, 1869, William R. Lane brought legal suit against Mr. deNoyelles for his independent action, and the Village Board refused to audit Mr. deNoyelles' bill of $365.20 representing part payment for the steamer. But Lady Warren did get the steamer. It was brought up from the steamboat dock and housed in a barn on Broad Street, and when two fires broke out in John Hall's bottling works on West Street, it showed its immense value. Mr. Hall's barns almost were destroyed, but the steamer so outshone the hand-operated that the apparatus the taxpayers knew they had been wrong. Nevertheless, the controversy over the steamer continued with the ownership

being contested, although it was actually in the possession of Lady Warren and quartered in the Division Street building which was also occupied by Union Fire Engine Company No. 2.

Over the years, Lady Warren has been involved in many controversies and here was no exception for the Union Company. In desperation, the Village Fathers combined the newly formed fire company with members of Union Engine Co. No. 2. The two companies mixed like "oil and water." One can imagine the walls of the old fire house on Division Street quivering as those hardy vamps aired their differences.



Former quarters of Union Hose Co. No. 2 and Lady Warren Engine Co. No. 5 on Division Street. Building shown as it appeared in the 1930's.

Because members of Union Engine were distraught, they presented a petition signed by the company members urging the Village Board to remove Lady Warren Steam Engine Co. No. 5 from their house or to build a new one for Lady Warren. On motion, the petition was referred to the Committee on the Fire Department. This committee reported they had examined the case, and found the Board was unable to meet Union's demands, having no means at their disposal.

The marriage ended April 21, 1870 when Lady Warren was provided with a meeting place. Their steamer was quartered in Osborne Hall on Liberty Street, which was also occupied by the Village Government, Rescue Hook and Ladder Company, and the Village lockup in the basement.



Osborne Hall, Liberty Street - Home of Village Government, Police lock-up, and quarters of Rescue Hook & Ladder Co. No. 1 and Lady Warren Steam Fire Engine Co. No. 5. Lady Warren occupied these quarters from April 1870 to April 1884.

The Building Of Insurrection Hall

It would seem that throughout Lady Warren's history, the members have not always seen eye-to-eye with Fire Department or Village Officials. The first of many of these clashes took place in the Fall of 1870. Lady Warren was invited to attend a parade in the Village of Sing Sing, our Westchester neighbor across the river. Members busily polished the Steamer's brass and prepared their bright blue parade uniforms for the event, only to have Chief Engineer Ornimal Parsons (an anti-steamer man), call for a departmental parade on the very same day as the Sing Sing Parade. Chief Parsons refused permission for Lady Warren to take the steamer to Sing Sing as by this time, it had been placed in the charge of the Fire Department. Building a reputation the Company has strived to maintain, Lady Warren attended the Sing Sing Parade anyway. This incident was taken as an affront to Chief Parsons and Lady Warren was disbanded.

The members of "Insurrection Hall" were not about to accept the disbandment of their company lying down. On February 20, 1871, the company was reorganized as Lady Warren Engine Company No. 5 with James Fleming as Foreman and the following as members:

Thomas Reilly
Felix McCabe
Thomas McCauley
Morris Foley
John McGovern
Seamus Finnigan
Richard Murphy
Edward Burns
John Connley
George Titus
Hiram Kessler
Timothy Hargadan
John McCormick
Edward Troy
Charles Grossen
John Hall
Michael Toppin
John Fox
Timothy Byrnes
Patrick Redmon
John Hoey
John O'Brien
William Freeman
William Smith
Thomas Burke
Thomas P. Clark
Thomas Sheridan
John Reilly
Michael Kelly
Peter McCabe
James O'Brien
Patrick Sliney
Thomas Nolan
Patrick Barrett
George Ward
John Dunnigan
Antoine Schmidt

Once again, the Company organized without the official recognition of the Village.

Steamer Swings the Election

Almost two years after the steamer came to the Village of Warren, the Board still had not approved its purchase. Finally, on March 6, 1871, the steamer referendum went to the people

and was approved. This was one year after John L. deNoyelles resigned from the Board over the steamer dispute.

While records contain no reference, the special election for the purpose of approving the purchase took place at the United States Hotel. This was said to be one of the most exciting elections that ever took place in the old days in Warren. Mr. deNoyelles had his warm partisans, and in addition, the steamer was a favorite part of the Fire Department with the populace. Those who remembered the incident said they did not remember the number of votes cast for the proposition, but that it was carried overwhelmingly. It was related that the Engine was stationed at the corner of Main and Second Street pumping water while the election was in progress as a demonstration of her usefulness in case of need. While thus engaged, sparks from the working engine flew on the Craney barn. The live sparks set fire to the barn causing considerable excitement. But, as the engine was working in perfect order, the fire was quenched without doing serious damage.

The quarrel between the warring elements over the steamer would not die down with certain Village Officials even after the election. The controversy continued a year, but anti-steamer forces were given the death blow when a special election was called March 20, 1872 to determine if Mr. Lane should be reimbursed for the $250.00 he paid to Edward Wells, his attorney, for the legal suit against Mr. deNoyelles. Thirty-one persons had petitioned for Mr. Lane, but the vote was emphatic: 103 against and only 23 for the measure.

Once the steamer was in possession of the company and approved by the Village, the Lady Warren boys had firefighting muscle which they put to good use at every opportunity. Thus, Lady Warren had won her first battle.

Even though it had its steamer, Lady Warren remained a company that was shunted from "pillar to post." The village government built an addition on the quarters of Union Engine Company No. 2 on Division Street and Lady Warren was housed there for a while. Later, it had meeting rooms over Daniel William's Harness Store in the United States Hotel building, and would take over the Union Engine Company's quarters when the company was disbanded some time later.

Lady on the Fritz

Over the next several years, the Steamer was wrought with many mechanical failures. On December 1, 1873 ,the Board of Engineers sent a communication to the Village Board of Trustees, calling their attention to the crippled and serious condition of the Lady Warren Steam Engine.

At a meeting held on December 23, 1873, a contract was awarded to Peter Vanderburgh and Isaac Duryea to repair the engine at a cost of $130.00.

Historical Footnote

On April 14, 1874, the name of the Village was changed by an act of the legislature to the Village of Haverstraw and known as Chapter 174. The fire companies held their first elections free from restraint and interference on the part of the Board of Trustees.

The early 1870's saw the Steamer riddled with problems starting with the boiler flues being out of order in 1875. Early in 1876, the steam engine practically gave out, and it was decided to have extensive repairs made to it, if not to rebuild it. At a meeting on August 7, 1876, Chief Conklin appointed a committee to visit Elizabeth, N.J. and inspect an engine that had been recently rebuilt at the works of J. W. Dennison in Newark, N. J.

The committee, on September 26th, reported the results of their visit and found the work to be satisfactory. A motion was adopted calling for a special election to appropriate $1,500.00 to re-build the engine. The money was to be raised in three annual installments of $500.00 each. The proposition was adopted at the election on October 23, 1876 and a contract was made with John Dennison at the price mentioned by resolution of the Village Board on November 6, 1876. At the same meeting, a motion was made and seconded to purchase a stove for Lady Warren Engine Co.

The Lady and Mutual Hose

Steamer "Lady Warren" was rebuilt in 1876 which increased its pumping capacity and power force twofold, enabling it to put water on a fire in less than four minutes. It became necessary to locate her a large volume water sources, which also required more hose - 500 to 600 foot lays were not uncommon.

During this time, a group of citizens presented a petition to the Village Board for the purpose of forming a new company to be known as Mutual Hose. The petition, which also asked that the hose carriage and hose in the possession of Lady Warren be turned over to them, was presented December 4, 1876. It was accepted and the formation of the company was approved. However, there was no mention of the hose carriage and hose that belonged to Lady Warren.

At a special meeting on March 19, 1877, a communication was received from Chief Conklin recommending the purchase of a hose cart for Mutual Hose Co. No. 1 to carry the steamer Lady Warren's hose. Also at that meeting, a motion was made that John Hoey be appointed as engineer of Lady Warren Engine Company for one month from the date. His salary to be at the rate of $50.00 per year.

Historical Footnote

At the regular meeting of the Village Board on July 2, 1877, a motion was made and seconded to purchase a half ton of coal for the steamer "Lady Warren."

A milestone for Lady Warren was reached in 1878 with the election of Patrick Barrett as her first Chief Engineer of the Haverstraw Fire Department. On September 2, 1878, Lady Warren once again requested permission to attend the Sing Sing Fire Department Parade held on September 18, 1878. This time with the Chief in their corner, permission was granted and the boys from "Insurrection Hall" avoided the hassle of being disbanded again!

During that September 2nd meeting, the Board of Engineers (Chiefs) requested that Mutual Hose Co. No. 1 be disbanded due to neglect of duty. This request was approved and the disbandment led to the formation of Truimph Hose Co. No. 1, which was attached to steamer "Lady Warren." True to form, members of Lady Warren "crossed horns" with "Department Brass" even when the "Brass" was from their own ranks. This is evident from the communication of Chief Barrett on December 2, 1878 when he requested dismissal from the Haverstraw Fire Department of Lady Warren Foreman (Captain) James McAvoy for neglect of duty and disrespect for the Chief.

Foreman McAvoy was requested to appear before the Board and show cause why he should not be dismissed from the Fire Department. Presenting himself before the Board, McAvoy stated he was willing to obey the orders of Chief Barrett, but could not leave his place of business on the day named in the complaint of said Chief, as it was Saturday. The Board then exonerated Chief Barrett from any blame in consequence of the order of the committee on the Fire Department not being fulfilled, whereupon the Chief withdrew his petition for dismissal of McAvoy. Foreman (Captain) McAvoy was the first but history will bear out not the last Lady Warren Captain to be suspended from the Haverstraw Fire Department.

Chapter 2: 1880 - 1889

The Village of Haverstraw was growing during the early 1880s and it was evident that fire protection had to grow with it. There were valid reasons the populace wanted a fire company in the western section of the village. Existing companies were concentrated near the river and in the heart of Haverstraw, and Lady Warren turned its gaze toward upper Broadway. It was moved and seconded at the Village Board meeting of January 3, 1882 that a committee of three be appointed by the Chair to find a location for an engine house and company near St. Peter's Church.

At the July 7, 1882 Board meeting, Trustee Keesler moved that the Village President appoint a building committee of three Trustees with the power to engage a competent person to draw a plan for a new engine house. If the person drawing the plan was as builder he would be awarded the contract. The committee was to report at the next meeting of the Board. As is typical in government, the wheels grind Ever so slowly. No action would be taken on the new engine house for some time.

The occasion of a fire in the village on July 31, 1882 demonstrated the fact that the fire service was entirely insufficient, and that the Village needed more apparatus for the fire service. It was recommended by the Board of Engineers that a steam fire engine be purchase along with extra hose. They urged the taxpayers to petition the Village Board to call a special election to supply these needs together with a further supply of water.

It was moved and seconded that the Chair appoint a committee of three to ascertain the amount of money necessary to carry out the recommended action of the Board of Engineers. At the Village Board meeting on September 8, 1882, it was resolved that the sum of $5,000.00 be raised by assessment and tax for the purpose of purchasing a Steam Fire Engine and 2,000 feet of hose. Although action was taken on the water system, there is no evidence which supports the purchase of a new steamer.

For several years prior to 1884, Lady Warren's Steamer had been located in the alleyway adjoining Union Engine Fire House on Division Street. This place was very damp causing the iron work in the boiler to corrode and rust. The dampness also destroyed the engine's usefulness.

Following the report of the Board of Engineers after the May 1883 inspection, Mr. James Fleming was employed to put new tubes in the boiler of Steamer "Lady Warren" and to make necessary repairs. This was done and the steamer placed in good order.

Apparently the steamer was not re-housed at that time and the it required frequent repairs. A

special election was held on June 30, 1884 for the purpose of voting an expenditure of $500.00 for repairs on the steamer. The defeat of the proposition was probably due to the fact that the water system was also being instituted, and those in favor of the water movement contended that the water pressure would be sufficient without the aid of an engine.

Notwithstanding, the necessity of repairs to the engine was so apparent to the Village Trustees that a contract was made with Mr. Peter Vandenburgh to repair the boiler at a cost of $360.00. Mayor Richard VerValen took the matter in his own hands and solicited public funds. In prior years, the steam engine had performed so well at fires along the brickyards that the brick makers made donations for the repairs.

Great was the concern in the 1800s over a sufficient supply of water for fire fighting purposes. Various opinions and ideas were presented to village officials. The committee on water reported the possibility of a dam in the vicinity of Gurnee Avenue, which would hold approximately 30,000 gallons. Pipes and hydrants would cost about $17,000.00.

Another opinion came in the form of a report from Chief Thomas Clark of Lady Warren Engine Co. He recommended that cisterns be built with one each in front of the engine houses of Companies No. 2 and 5. Included in the same report, he recommended building new engine houses for the aforementioned companies.

A communication was received at the Village Board meeting April 1, 1884 in which Chief Clark stated that Union Engine Co. No. 2 had disbanded. The company had deserted the house and handed over the keys. Lady Warren petitioned the Board asking permission to use the meeting room of the disbanded company. Permission was granted and Lady Warren took over the Union Hose Engine House on April 8, 1884.

At the village board Meeting on April 24, 1884, it was resolved that the application of John Lockwood and others to lay pipe through the streets of the Village of Haverstraw, in accordance with the laws of 1873 for the purpose of introducing water in said village be, granted. The target date for this project was June 1886.

The Committee on fire hydrants reported at the village board meeting of May 18, 1886 that they had offered Mr. Lockwood the sum of $1,000.00 for all the water the Fire Department would need. A total of forty hydrants would be installed, and the village would have the option to purchase these hydrants within a period of five years. It was resolved at this same meeting to offer the water company the sum of $1,200.00 per year for all the water the village would need for fire fighting purposes. Thirteen hydrants were installed and ready for use on July 5, 1886, and six more were to be installed in the near future.

Despite earlier mention of inadequate equipment, the Haverstraw Fire Department was far

ahead of surrounding rural communities and willing to assist when needed. An early Mutual Aid in the winter of 1886 supports this fact. In the absence of the Village President and the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department, the Steamer of Lady Warren Engine Co., Rescue Hook and Ladder Co., and Truimph Hose Co. responded to the aid of the citizens of Grassy Point during a fire on the premises of Thomas Dinan by order of the First Assistant Chief. By doing so, they prevented what might have been a great conflagration. By resolution of the Board, the Assistant Engineer and the aforementioned companies received the commendation of the Board.

The next few years were a time for growth and change in the Haverstraw Fire Department and Lady Warren. Isaac Purdy of Rescue Hook and Ladder was elected Chief of the Department on March 5, 1887. Twenty days later, Chief Purdy resigned from the office and William Bonnett, also from Rescue, was appointed by the Village Board to the position of Chief Engineer. Chief Bonnett is recognized as the father of the "modern" Haverstraw Fire Department. To emphasize the rocky road Lady Warren was forced to pursue, it was Chief Bonnett who said in his annual report to the Village Board that Lady Warren was "without a house and apparatus of any account."

The Lady Moves Uptown

The Village Board meeting of February 7, 1888 was crucial in the history of Lady Warren. Chief Bonnett recommended that the steamer "Lady Warren" be disposed, and that a new carriage be purchased for the company. Further, he recommended the property on Division Street be sold and a new house built for Lady Warren near St. Peter's Church.

On April 5, 1888, the company was reorganized and became known as Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5. This was followed by the proposal of a new building and at the March 8, 1888 election, the taxpayers voted in favor of the building. Unfortunately, an obstacle was encountered that proved more difficult than getting the taxpayers to vote the money. The citizens living on upper Broadway near the intersection of Westside Avenue demanded that the firehouse be built in that section as many new homes had been erected in the neighborhood. Fire protection was demanded and an earnest effort was made to have the new firehouse built as far up Broadway as Orchard Street.

The majority of Lady Warren's members desired a lot south of St. Peter's Church on Broadway. Thus, Lady Warren became engaged in yet another battle. Even before selecting the site for the new house, the Building Committee was authorized to dispose of the engine house property on Division Street by public auction.

Historical Footnote

The first night parade ever held by the Haverstraw Fire Department took place on the night of Wednesday, September 12, 1888.

Chief Bonnett brought the displeasure of the company when he held steadfast to his belief that the steamer should be sold due to the fact that it was in worthless condition and the water pressure with the aid of forty hydrants was sufficient to meet any emergency. He also insisted that the new engine house be built on land north of St. Peter's Church.

It pays to have political friends in high places, and the Lady Warren boys were certainly not going to let any opportunity slip by that would help them attain their goals. James Gourley was elected a Village Trustee, mainly through the efforts of Lady Warren Hose. His motion on a proposition to raise $2,000.00 for building a new firehouse was submitted at the annual Village election of March 7, 1889. The proposition was carried by the vote of 134 to 24.

Agreeing with Lady Warren's members, the Village Board voted to purchase a lot from Mr. George Sherwood for the purpose of building the new quarters of Lady Warren at its April 9, 1889 meeting. This lot was located on Broadway near Edgar Street, south of St. Peter's Church. With their new political clout, Lady Warren got its way and had won yet another battle.

It should be noted at this time that all opposition to Chief Bonnett's plan to sell the old steamer was withdrawn when the building was approved. The Trustees also agreed to purchase a new carriage for Lady Warren. The Steamer was sold for $175.00 on March 23, 1889.

The building contract was awarded to A. J. Carson for the sum of $2,172.00 and the cornerstone was laid in June. The building was accepted by the Village Board on November 7, 1889. Lady Warren had her first new home. It is apparent that a "Green Book" boy never lacked determination even - in "Billy" Bonnett's day.

W.A. (Sock) Curran used to have his trade troubles in his saloon next to No.5's firehouse before Lady Warren moved up to its new quarters on Broadway. Curran would be out on the steps of the saloon, jingling his money in his pants pocket, and commiserating with the men from No. 5's on his lack of business.

"You'd think I had smallpox at my house the way the customers stay away from my bar," he'd tell the firemen. The firemen would agree and tell Sock about the business other nearby saloons were doing; but while Sock jingled his coins and was kept talking to his neighbors, the firemen would slide away one by one, go around behind the place and sneak into the saloon behind Curran's back for a quick one or a schooner of beer. Then they would rejoin the group out front so somebody else could benefit.

During this time, Lady Warren members always had as a uniform a blue shirt and were known at the time as "The Boys in Blue." They were considered the best fire fighters in the Department and they were generally first at a fire.

Chapter 3: 1890 - 1899

1890 found Lady Warren well settled in their new quarters on Broadway. Now that the dust had settled from the turmoil of the 1880s the following decade was relatively tranquil. The records do not reflect many fires and none of any great consequence. The state of the Haverstraw Fire Department is reflected in the following annual report of Chief William "Wee Billy" Bonnett dated February 11, 1890: "The Department consists of four Engineers, the Chief and three Assistants, and one hundred and forty members. There is a Hook and Ladder with twenty-nine members, two hose carriages - Truimph Hose Co. No. 1 with twenty-seven members, General Warren Hose Co. No. 2 with thirty-two members, and Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 with twenty-six members by no carriage. In addition, there are three hose carts in good condition, a hand pumper in reserve, and 2,500 feet of hose. During the year the Department had been called eleven times. It was recommended that a new carriage be procured for Lady Warren."



The Engine House of Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 on Broadway, circa 1903. Note Parade Carriage in front and Hose Jumper inside the doorway. Lady Warren occupied these quarters from November 1889 to May 1955.

A resolution was made at the Village Board meeting of February 18, 1890 by Trustee Thomas Clark to raise $1,000.00 for the purchase of 500 feet of hose and Lady Warren's hose carriage. The election held on March 18th approved this proposition with a vote of 130 yea, 19 nay and 1 blank. With the approval, a committee was set up on April 15th to purchase the hose carriage. This committee consisted of the Board of Trustees, the Foreman, and Assistant Foreman of Lady Warren.

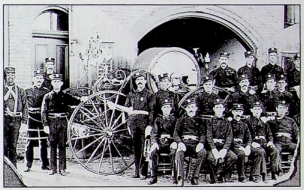
Directed by the Village Board, the committee purchased a Lafayette and Doty Hose Carriage. On May 20th, Trustee Gourley reported the committee appointed to purchase the hose carriage had attended to that duty. Now with a new hose carriage parked in their new firehouse, all was

definitely peaceful in "Insurrection Hall."

The hose carriage or "Jumper" as they were often called was hand drawn and would remain in service until 1916. In time of an alarm, the nearest crew would run for the firehouse and start to pull the Jumper toward the fire. This was tough work and a man tired quickly.

As the "Jumper" rolled down the street, more firemen would show. Each in turn grabbed the towing ropes and started to pull the heavy rig. Needless to say as the jumper got rolling, it took some fancy footwork to stay ahead of its momentum. When a man became exhausted from running and pulling he had two bad choices, continue to stumble along or let go the towing rope and throw himself off to one side to avoid being run over by the heavy jumper.

Sometimes the firemen were lucky. A passing horse team would take the jumper in tow and the men running along side to the scene of the fire. One afternoon, West Haverstraw needed assistance. A member of Lady Warren, Jim Kelly, was near the firehouse with his beer truck, which was pulled by a team of mules. With the jumper hooked to the back of the beer truck, Kelly kept the mules moving at a fast pace toward the towering pall of smoke. They got to the fire in record time but with two badly "winded" mules who never again pulled a beer truck or anything else.



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5, Circa 1892, in front of the original Broadway firehouse. Members are wearing the blue shirts for which they were dubbed the "Boys in Blue." Also note the parade carriage surrounded by the firemen.

To illustrate just how quiet the early 1890s actually were, we quote the Chief's report of March 24, 1891 where he states the staggering figure of five alarms of fire for the year with one being false. The years did hold growth, however, for the Department. An association known as the "monitors" with meeting rooms located at Hahn's corner was organized on June 4, 1895. From that association sprang the present Relief Hose Company No. 3.

For many years, the method of alerting villagers to fires was the night watchman dashing through the streets and calling "fire" at the top of his lungs as he headed for the Methodist Church on Fourth Street to toll the church bell. Following that came the day of the brickyards and their steam whistles would join in the alarm. It was then that the Lighting Company erected a building on West Broad Street on the site of the present Knights of Columbus building. On

the roof was perched a steam whistle, which sounded an alarm, that would wake the dead. It is said it could be heard in Stony Point. This whistle was dubbed the "Screetcher" and the "Mocking Bird." When it sounded the fear of God spread throughout the Village. But it did the job.

This system, for its time, was as thorough as it was simple. Each firehouse in the village and the Electric Light Company were connected by telephone, and the fire alarm panel was located at the Light Company building. A system of section whistles had been adopted by the Fire Department. When an alarm was "sent in," the "Screetcher," after sounding one continual screetch, designated the section the fire was located in by giving a corresponding number of short whistles. This was repeated as often as was necessary while the alarm was being sounded. In this way, a great deal of unnecessary confusion and labor was averted by the firemen.

Although the "Screetcher" was an effective method of alerting firemen of an alarm in the past, with the Village still growing, there was a need for a system which would provide a more exact location. Village Trustees Gourley and Mardorf were appointed to a committee to ascertain and report the cost of a fire horn and such an alarm system.

The committee reported on a proposed fire alarm system which would have six fire box locations: (1) South of Clove House; (2) North of Clove House - east of West Street, south of Main Street; (3) All areas south of the Clove House - west of West Street and south of New Main Street; (4) All areas north of Main Street and east of Broadway; (5) All areas north of New Main Street west of Broadway to the mountains on a line from St. Peter's Church; and (6) All areas of the Village north of St. Peter's Church.

A resolution was passed by the Village Board that a proposition be submitted to the Village Taxpayers to raise the sum of $2,100.00 to install a "coded" fire alarm system from the Gamewell Company of which $1,000.00 was to be paid in the year 1897 and the balance during 1898. The results of the election held on August 10, 1897, were 56 nay and 15 yea, thus defeating the proposition. The taxpayers would realize the folly of their whim and would eventually approve the coded system some years later at a greater cost.

The mid 1890s would see Lady Warren's third Chief Engineer of the Department. On March 13, 1896, Bernard Fox was elected Chief with four Assistants: James Gourley, John McCormack, Jacob Hafele, and Daniel Springsteen.

It appears the later years of 1890 were devoid of any type of significant activity, according to all official accounts. We can only assume that the Lady Warren boys were content and saw no need to "Insurrect."

Chapter 4: 1900 - 1919

While the late 1890s were indeed peaceful, it would be only natural that the early 1900s would be filled with controversy within the Department. For it was in the year 1900 that three of the five Companies banded together in what was then called the "Combination." They decided they would control the naming of the Chief and Assistants. And so, for eight years, Companies No. 2, No. 3, and No. 5 held those offices to the exclusion of the other two Companies. Were those two Companies unhappy? You can bet they were and through some sort of maneuvering in 1908, Companies No. 1 and No. 4 broke the combination by banding together with Company No. 2. That "Combination" held until 1914 when the Department was to host the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Convention.

Bernard Fox of Lady Warren, then Democratic leader of the village, decided he wanted to be Chief. Through political maneuvering, No. 2's delegates were induced to throw their support to Companies 3 and 5. The story of that move, it is said, would fill a book and is too lengthy to even start mentioning here. At any rate, that last "Combination" remained in effect for twenty years from 1914 to 1934. It was through the efforts of then Department Chief Charles M. Fales and First Assistant Chief John J. Feeney of Companies No. 2 and No. 5 respectively, that the "Combination" came to an end once and for all.

It should be noted that over the "Combination" years General Warren Co. No. 2 was the key Company. They were always in there and through the action of their delegates and much political maneuvering, the Department By-Laws were amended to provide for a Chief and four Assistants. And so it came to pass that on June 8, 1934, each company was given equal representation.

Haverstraw Host Hudson Valley Convention and Parade

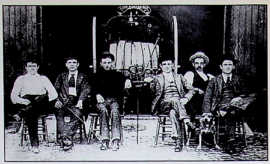
The "Combination" was not the only preoccupation in the early 1900s. In anticipation of hosting the 1903 Hudson Valley Convention and Parade, a proposition was submitted to the Village Board for the purpose of raising $1,000.00 by assessment and taxation to assist in defraying the expenses for the event. This October 1902 proposition was



1903 Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association Parade held in Haverstraw. Lady Warren marching up Broadway under the leadership of Foreman Edward Lyons, members were wearing long blue coats in vogue at the time.

passed by an overwhelming majority.

So it was at the April 1903 meeting of the Hudson Valley in Catskill, N.Y. that James A. Goldsmith of Rescue Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 was elected President of the Association. At this same meeting, it was also voted that the Annual Convention and Parade would be held in the Village of Haverstraw in June of that year.



Members of Lady Warren Hose Co. No.5 in front of Broadway Engine House circa 1903: Peter Reilly, Patrick Walsh, John Hurley, Jim McGovern, Hugh Pezo, Bernie Fox. *Note Hose Jumper inside Engine House.*

Lady Warren participated in this parade under the leadership of Foreman Edward Lyons and Assistant Foreman Mark O'Brien. Sporting their "famous" uniforms, the "Boys in Blue" marched to the music of St. Peter's Drum Corp with their Parade Carriage. Upon the conclusion of the Parade, the Judges dined at the Oddfellows Hall as guests of Lady Warren. During this period, the Chief of the Department was Michael McCabe, a Lady Warren member who had been elected Chief in 1901.

Rumor has it that the Parade held on June 16, 1903 was the most interesting event in the history of the Hudson Valley Firemen's Association with nearly forty companies in the line of march. Surely this was the largest parade the Village of Haverstraw had seen to that time.

Historical Footnote

The early 1900s saw Lady Warren's relationship with Relief Hose Company No. 3 as friendly, but they were sincere rivals. The friendship was warm and the two companies would join together in various social functions. They would stick together on Department matters as is evident from their association during the "Combination" years.

In the summer of 1903, Lady Warren would begin a tradition that would last with them to this day. A major source of entertainment during this pre-television period was summer time Sunday afternoon baseball games. Barges busy during the week hauling bricks, were covered with chairs and awnings on Sundays and pulled by tug boat up and down the Hudson Valley loaded with Lady Warren's Baseball Team and their fans. It was common to load refreshments aboard as well. Usually barrels of fresh drinking water were included. An old timer, Charlie Siebold, tells a story of one such excursion to Verplank, N.Y. During the course of a heated game, pranksters from the Verplank Club wandered down to the dock and proceeded to salt the drinking water supply of Lady Warren. One can only imagine the retribution which resulted.

On June 20, 1903, the Lady Warren Baseball Team defeated the strong YMCC club from Yonkers, N.Y. in a hot game by the score of 16 - 4. The Lady Warren Club, it is rumored,

drew a great many fans as they played teams up and down the Hudson River. On July 23, 1903, two hundred and fifty Lady Warren fans boarded the steamer "Bessie" and traveled down to Yonkers to support their team. Lady Warren defeated Yonkers by the score of 14 - 1. As you will see in later years, Lady Warren would continue to have championship teams in a variety of sports and maintain a sports oriented company.

Tragedy Strikes Haverstraw

An important date in the history of Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department was January 8, 1906, the day of the infamous landslide. Approximately 11:00 PM on that fateful Monday night, an immense landslide occurred in the northeast end of the Village and brought death, desolation, and ruin to many household and terror and grief to most of the residents.



Overall view of the landslide looking north from Liberty Street.



Results of the landslide, January 8, 1906, near Rockland and Clinton Street.

The slide, or series of slides, began shortly before eleven o'clock and followed in rapid succession for possibly half an hour, causing the loss of nineteen lives including three members of the Haverstraw Fire Department: Abraham Dias and William Hughes of Cosgriff Hose Co. No. 4, and Joseph Albert of General Warren. The slide sent a strip of land, in crescent shape, extending from Allison Avenue to Jefferson Street into the clay holes of the Excelsior, Gillies, and Eckerson properties, carrying all that was left of Division and Rockland Streets from Division north.

The scene that followed was one of stunned panic and disbelief. The residents of the vicinity were terror stricken. Such scenes of hardship and misery were never before witnessed in Haverstraw. Women and children were running in the snow barefooted. Warm-hearted impulsive men were grabbing them up any carrying them to shelter. Strong men were removing their overcoats and overshoes insisting the women put them on in order that they be protected from the cold.

As the news of the terrible disaster became known and it was found that a large number of lives were lost, the terror became a frenzy. Additionally, a great wave of flames, nearly a thousand feet long, was sending forth fire brands among the buildings in the vicinity, causing consternation, dread, and fear everywhere. Compounding matters, the hydrants were frozen on the west end of the streets, and the water pressure, owing to the breaking of the mains caused by the slide,

were worthless. This situation, with the flames and sparks flying in every direction and the strong and willing men more anxious to assist their stricken neighbors, as helpless as babies in the most dire extremity, was surely a pathetic scene. The very hopelessness of the situation seemed to lend inspiration and courage to those engaged in the work, evidenced by acts of personal heroism, and the seemingly the tireless effort that followed.



Aftermath of the landslide looking north on Rockland Street on the day after the tragedy.

For a while it seemed as if the whole eastern end of the village was doomed. The siren whistle on the Electric Light works failed to respond. Its whistle was pitifully weak, and hardly more than a shrill sound. In order to get the people aroused to the situation, men hurried through the streets shouting at the top of their lungs and pounding on the doors to wake people to the scene. Shortly afterwards, the S. W. Johnson Steam Fire Engine Company of Garnerville had been summoned by telephone and responded to the appeal of Haverstraw and the difficulties of an insufficient water supply was remedied.

The shut off gates at the easterly end of the streets were finally located, and the running, wasting water through the broken pipes controlled. The steam engine worked soon after arrival and the furnished a stream on the buildings which had taken fire. It lent new life to the disheartened men who were working with an energy born of desperation. Soon hose lines from vantage points on Clinton, Division, and Broad Streets were in operation and streams of water were continuously pouring on the burning buildings. A gale was blowing. It was bitter cold and the water froze on the firemen and workers enclosing them as a sheet of ice. The tireless energy, unselfish devotion, and willing eagerness of the firemen and citizens could not be adequately described or appreciated by the people of the grief stricken village. Men holding the hose braved death in their efforts to be of assistance. The burning debris on the banks was hurled and pushed over by the men who risked their lives in the work.

One instance serves as an illustration. When the Meyer's house, a frame building, on the corner of Rockland and Clinton Streets went over, the building broke in two, leaving the half adjoining the Meyer's brick house standing. This was connected to the brick house by a shed or area way and was surrounded by a series of sheds, stables and outhouses. This caught fire. Not a drop of water was to be had. Realizing that if the fire continued its progress the whole house would soon be in flames, a number of men started to push the building down. In order to break its unchecked progress, it was necessary to tear down the connection between the buildings. Mr. Richard W. Oldfield, Ex-Chief Michael McCabe of Lady Warren, with a number of other men attempted the work of demolishing, but were driven back from the

flames. When defeat seemed almost certain and just as if to meet the emergency, two brave muscular fellows appeared.

The Drexel Brothers, Louis and Joseph, demolished the enclosed passage way with axes. Louis, the younger of the two, did not stop until the last board from the top was gone. He had hardly stepped back when the burning house with a large slice of earth went down. With pries made of poles and beams, the burning house was dumped over the bank, preventing the spread of fire and saving the entire block.



Laborers hired by the Village searching for bodies, after the landslide tragedy. January 8, 1906.

Haverstraw's Goodhearted People

The hospitality and generosity of the people of the village were proven that terrible night. While no such calamity had ever befallen the people and no occasion so frightful or so terrific, the people of the village without regard to creed or code, generously opened their hearts, their purses, and their homes. Motherly women opened their homes and many men opened their purses. Nearly every house west of Rockland Street that was beyond danger, on Clinton, Division, and Jefferson Streets was open to their less fortunate neighbors, taking in most of the naked men, women, and children. While many of them could barely afford the sacrifice, they still clothed the naked and generously supplied warmth and food. When the news of the frightful incident reached the hotel, Con Chapman opened the doors to these unfortunate people. As the firemen worked with superhuman energy, Mr. George Mardorf cooked a big boiler of coffee and secured rolls and other articles of food that had been prepared in Mardorf's Bakery to give warmth and strength to the fighting firemen. This was followed by Alderman Cohen and Martin A. Driscol furnishing an abundance of coffee and sandwiches. Mrs. Cullen had open house, as did others living in the vicinity. It was common words everywhere: "Come in, come in, what can I do to help you?"

Warnings Not Heeded

In order to make bricks in the later part of 1905 on the Gillies property, it was necessary to excavate much lower than was safe. Owing to the frost in the ground and notwithstanding the premonitions of danger, most of the people residing in what would be the devastated and stricken district believed that no slides would occur until the frost was leaving the ground and in some cases, no alarm was felt at all. Nobody believed that a slide of such magnitude could occur. Yet the whole rear north center of the block divided by Division and Broad Streets owned by the Abrams Estate, Charles Gillies, Wilkins, and VanWart properties was gone, and in the rear of the Abram's property, fully four hundred feet running north had disappeared.

It had been reported on the 6th or 7th of that fateful January that a great crevice appeared on the north end of Liberty Street. Anticipating danger, the Excelsior Brick Company, through Mr. Denton DeBaun, notified their various tenants to move. Mr. DeBaun, however, like many others did not apprehend any great danger, and according to his own statement, did not notify all the people. If these warnings were given to most of the tenants on the easterly end of the property as is said to have been done by Mr. DeBaun, they were not heeded.

This year, 1994, is the 88th Anniversary of the catastrophe. The area of the slide is still there - part of the "Bull-Line" pond. "There's a twist in the Hudson River right there and it was Bowline Point in riverman's talk, but the 'Bull-line' it was to village residents."

The banks of the Bull-line are now tree covered. There is little to show the tragedy which occurred so many years ago. As we gaze from our quarters into the Bull-line and up Jefferson Street, let this thought come to mind: "We honor the memory of the members lost, for they stand for the unselfish spirit upon which our Fire Department is built."

Eleven years after initial discussion on the inadequate fire alarm system (probably brought home by the landslide tragedy), the Fire Committee reported at the Village Board meeting of May 7, 1906 that the village was devoid of a regular fire alarm. They moved that a special committee be appointed to make temporary arrangement with the churches for the ringing of the bells in case of fire.

The Fire Committee reported at the next Board meeting on June 4th that arrangements had indeed been made with the churches to ring their bells for any alarm of fire both day and night. At this same meeting, the Village Clerk was instructed to notify the Westinghouse Brake Company of New York City to have their engineers sent to the village for the purpose of installing an air compressor suitable for the operation of a fire horn.

It was not until the Board Meeting of March 4, 1907 that any affirmative action was taken on the fire alarm. At that meeting, a motion was made to raise $5,000.00 by taxation to install an electrical fire alarm system. This system was to consist of a motor engine, twelve alarm boxes, a whistle, which could be heard for more than ten miles, a compressed air tank, and any other devices necessary in the operation of the system. Had the village taxpayers acted positively on the system back in 1885, they would have saved themselves some $2,000.00.

With money allotted, it seemed progress would be a little swifter. A representative from the W. A. Sheehan Company of New York City appeared before the board on May 29, 1907 and illustrated his fire alarm system. It appears the board may not have been overwhelmed by this system since the Clerk was instructed to contact the Gamewell Company on the same matter.

Mr. Theodore Tomney, representing the Gamewell Fire Alarm Company, demonstrated the

electrical device used in the "modern" fire alarm systems then in use by various cities, towns, and villages. The Board decided at the June 25th meeting to take up the matter at a future meeting and would consider the Gamewell Company.

Trustee Carson, at the July 16th Board meeting, moved that eight Gamewell Fire Alarm boxes be installed with an indicator in each of the firehouses, and that the contact for the fire alarm system be awarded to the W. M. Sheehan Company. On motion, this was tabled until the next meeting. At this next meeting, July 23rd, the motion to award the W. M. Sheehan Co. to install the fire alarm system was voted on and the result was a tie by the members present. The motion was declared lost.

On a motion at the September 5th meeting, the Committee on the fire alarm was empowered to install the fire alarm in the village. This system would include twelve fire alarm boxes, switch board, and a whistle blowing machine.

Not until 1908 did the village finally contract with the Gamewell Company to install such a system. The twelve street boxes, which when activated, gave a coded signal on the fire whistle located on the Corporation Rooms on Fourth Street so that the Fire Department would be able to respond to a location in the vicinity of the box.

Inevitably, their use was abused and many false alarms were sounded. That problem was partially overcome by removing the keys that opened the boxes and placing them in several locations where one would have to run, possibly wake up the guardian whose name was posted on the pole above the box, procure the key, run back to the box, open it, and pull the hook. Again, one can imagine the valuable time lost in that operation. In time everything changes. The same fire alarm system is still in operation in the village. However, the keys have long since been replaced by a much simpler system, but the false alarms still persist.

To illustrate the severe problem with false alarms we quote an article which appeared in the January 16, 1909 edition of The Rockland County Times. "The false fire alarm fiends again had their appetites satisfied shortly after midnight Saturday night.

Three distinct fire alarms were sounded, two from Box 34 located at about the intersection of Clove Avenue and West Street, and the third alarm from Box 41, at Hudson and Fairmont Avenues.

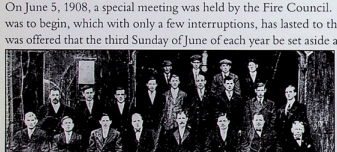
Most of the members of the department were just enjoying their first sleep when so cruelly aroused. The whole department responded only to find themselves the victims of a hoax. This is cruel kind of joking, because it not only fools the people for the time being, but fools them when real alarms are sounded and makes them tardy in answering calls."

Another night, several of the men were at the firehouse when the alarm rang. Counting the box number, Peter Reilly turned to the other men and said, "let's go, but take your time, that's a false alarm." Reilly was a bad prophet. It was not a false alarm; it was a fire in his house! The problem of false alarms plagues us still today - not only with boxes being pulled, but by alarms being telephoned in as well.

The first caretaker of the new fire alarm system was Everett Turner. He was appointed to this position in January 1908 and given an annual salary of $100.00. It appears Mr. Turner didn't last long in that position for on May 19, 1908, Louis Rube was appointed as Fire Alarm Superintendent on the motion of Trustee Bedell. This appointment was largely due to Mr. Rube's knowledge of the Gamewell Alarm and the working of the plant. October of 1908, Superintendent Rube was granted permission to proceed with the stringing of the fire alarm wires, and to have a heating system installed in the Fire Alarm building.

The fire alarm has had several superintendents. Ex-Chief Thomas "Frank" Sullivan from Lady Warren held the position for years. Upon his death, the title and responsibilities for the system were inherited by his son Robert Sullivan, also from Lady Warren, and the current Chief of the Fire Department. Chief Robert Sullivan holds the position of Fire Alarm Superintendent to date.

On June 5, 1908, a special meeting was held by the Fire Council. At this meeting, a tradition was to begin, which with only a few interruptions, has lasted to the present day. A resolution was offered that the third Sunday of June of each year be set aside as Firemen's Memorial Day. The Department would assemble at 2:00 P.M. and march to the cemetery, hold a suitable memorial service, and decorate the graves of their deceased brothers.



Members of Lady Warren in front of the firehouse on Broadway sporting their Sunday best. Circa 1910.

Each company was to be notified that the first Memorial Day would be held on June 21, 1908. The secretaries of each company would provide the names of all departed brothers. All companies were to meet at the Corporation Rooms on Fourth Street at 2:00 P.M. and music would be provided by the Department. A motion was also made to extend an invitation to the S. W. Johnson Steam Engine Company of Garnerville to participate. Caps only were the uniform of the day.

At the beginning of this tradition, all members of the Department carried flowers to decorate the graves of all the deceased brothers. Lady Warren was the last to do so when the practice was discontinued in June of 1967.

Although the Firemen's Memorial has withstood the test of time it nearly ended one year later in 1909. The following account is borrowed from The Rockland County Times:

"The beautiful custom established last year of decorating the graves of departed comrades by the members of the Haverstraw Fire Department in which members of the S. W. Johnson Company of Garnerville participated, is to be abandoned, but let us all hope only temporarily and that time which buries all resentment and heals all dissension will work its magic charm and smooth over the dissension now existing because of the failure to agree on a musical organization, the presence of which would be necessary to make the day quite successful.

The Times was earnestly of the opinion that when a sometimes hotheaded personality was superseded by more diplomatic suave dispositions, the dissension in vogue a few years ago would be all smoothed out and the differences abridged in a common cause for the good of the whole.

But it seems that even all the diplomacy of Chief Shankey to bring about the spirit of consideration, is not equal to the occasion.

As a result of this feeling or spirit of rivalry as to who shall control or dictate what shall be done, the memorial service that it was thought would be held on Sunday, June 18th are to be abandoned."

Whether or not a service was held in June 1909 is not known to the authors. We do know that at some point in time the practice was resumed, ceasing once again during World War I, and the Fire Department Memorial is held annually to this time. However, on April 27, 1933, the Fire Council did vote to change the Service to the 2nd Sunday of June.

An era of antique fire apparatus ended on June 10, 1915 when the Village Board empowered the Fire Committee to dispose of the old "Parade Carriage" of Lady Warren. The early 1900s would see many changes in fire fighting equipment. The day of the hand and horse drawn apparatus was rapidly drawing to a close for the Haverstraw Fire Department. A committee from Lady Warren was present at the Board meeting of June 14, 1916 and stated they intended to purchase an automobile to be converted into a fire truck. The committee requested that the Board assist in the purchase of equipment and maintenance costs. A sum of $300.00 was appropriated for this purpose.

The Lady Warren committee came back to the Board September 13, 1916 and reported they had



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5, Circa 1903. In front of the Engine House, Broadway. *Back Row:* Jack Coyne, John O'Brien, Jim Tierney, Mike Hughes, Charles Heck, Hollis "Coty" Griffin, Alphonse Willett, Frank Fay, James Fahey, Harry Hughes. *Middle Row:* John Nicolsen, Mark O'Brien, George Smith, Emmett McDermott, Jack Horan, Tom Sheridan, Wesley Springstead, Joe Sheridan, Eddie Willet, Mat "Doc" Kennedy, Pat McGrath, Bill "Sock" Curran. *Front Row:* Dave Finnegan, Frank Clancey, Jim McCabe, Bill Tierney, Joe "Doc" Brennan, Tom Walsh, Tom Scales, Peter Curran, Peter Reilly, Peter Lynch, Tom Dolan, Buster Willett, Lary Cullen, Bill "Piker" Reilly, Jim Nicholson.

purchased an automobile and would have it in service in the near future. They had purchased a Pope-Hartford passenger automobile from Denton Fowler, one of Haverstraw's brick makers. It was converted into a hose wagon by the construction of a hose body on the chassis in back of the front seat. The exact date Lady Warren's "first" motorized apparatus went into service is unknown, but it wouldn't take long for the company to put it to good use.

On May 5, 1917, the people of Haverstraw were wakened to an early Saturday morning alarm of fire at Stalter's Luncheon on New Main Street. The fire, which had originated near the large range along the east side of the building, was discovered blazing fiercely at about three o'clock. Before being discovered by the local watchman, the fire gained considerable headway and was burning through the front of the building. The fire had gained such headway because the attempt to operate the fire alarm from the boxes in the vicinity of Main Street and Broadway were fruitless. Regarding the origin of the fire, the May 1917 edition of The Rockland County Times stated: "Whether or not a gas jet was left burning in one of the jets of the range, or rats coming along gnawed matches that ignited the sulfur which communicated with the inflammable material kept close to the range and cooking equipment for convenience, no one knows."

The whole Stalter building was a fiery furnace as the fire had leaped from the confines of the Stalter building and made its way across the street to the Bonnett building and across a fifty foot vacant lot to the Majestic Theater to the west. The Bonnett building was badly scorched and blistered, and the windows in the upper portion of the building were broken along with the big plate glass window of the store occupied by Joseph V. Flynn due to the extreme heat. Mr. Flynn had a Packard piano valued at $400.00 on exhibition. This was badly blistered and damaged to such an extent as to make its further use nearly worthless. The Majestic Theater which was sheathed with metal was not damaged except for the blistering of paint on the east side of the building.

The *Rockland County Times* had reported, that when the fire alarm had finally sounded summoning the Fire Department, the firemen were splendid and this was one of the stiffest fires they had confronted in many years under these conditions.

Once again, however, it appears there were difficulties with the village's fire alarm system. It is unknown to the authors exactly how long it would take to straighten out the problems with the fire alarm, but as in the past, government moves in strange and mysterious ways. The following quote from *The Rockland County Times* sheds some light on the village government of that period: "We are living under a cheap government that is operated obstentiously with a view to economy so that the political propaganda can be carried out, but in reality as extravagant as ever operated in this community, we get just what we pay for."

Later in the year on September 8th, a fire had been reported in an unoccupied building north of Waldron's Foundry. Once again, the fire alarm had been tardy, but this time the brickyard whistles had joined in alarming the firemen. Lady Warren had responded with their new motorized apparatus and were first on the scene.

World War I was well underway when in March of 1918 three members of Lady Warren would go off to fight for their country. James Fahey was one of Haverstraw's first men to enlist and was serving in France. Phil Willet and James A. Nicholson had been recently drafted.

Historical Footnote

Lady Warren held its 17th Annual Ball on March 17, 1918. Peter A. Reilly, Chairman of the event, reported that music was provided by Professor Fox's Jazz Orchestra. Tickets were purchased for fifty cents each.

Early in 1918, Lady Warren was turning its eyes toward a new fire apparatus. The Pope-Hartford, which they had acquired in 1916, was after all used, and the hose body make-shift to boot.

A proposition presented to the Village Board on March 3, 1918 requested that the following

sums of money be appropriated - $7,500.00 for the purchase of a new fire truck for General Warren and $7,500.00 for a new truck for Lady Warren, both of which to include pumps. It is apparent that the moneys were not appropriated by the Board.

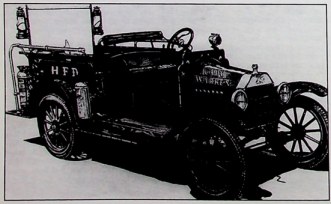
Lady Warren did at this time have a powerful ally in Editor and publisher of The Rockland County Times, Ex-Chief Michael McCabe of Lady Warren. He was certainly an individual, who with the mighty pen, could sway public opinion. The following article appeared in the March 15, 1919 edition of the paper:

"Not withstanding the Democrats won an unexpected and complete victory in the Peekskill Charter Election last week, the citizens voted eleven thousand dollars in appropriations for their fire department.

The citizens of Haverstraw can follow that good example next week at their Charter Election by voting an appropriation of $2,000.00 for the purchase of an automobile fire apparatus for Lady Warren Hose. Co. No. 5.

This company is one of the most important parts of our fire fighting equipment and they should be provided with an apparatus for efficient services, with the high rate of insurance premiums now in force and the inadequate water service at times, the chemical or auxiliary equipment is a positive necessity."

June 26, 1919, Lady Warren took possession of it's first "brand new" fire apparatus, a Ford Model T American LaFrance with an attached chemical tank which was purchased through the Taylor Garage for the sum of $2,000.00. This would replace the converted Pope-Hartford passenger automobile, which was purchased by Fire Chief Barbera on July 26, 1919 for $50.00.



1919 Model T Ford American LaFrance of Lady Warren

Chapter 5: 1920 - 1929

Although the Model T Ford American LaFrance was purchased new, it would only be in service for approximately six years, and would be subject to some difficulties. Responding to a fire in Garnerville during a blizzard in the winter of 1920, Lady Warren members, aboard their year old Model T, were confronted by large snow drifts which stopped them dead in their tracks in front of St. Peter's Church, this lest than a block away from the firehouse. The truck did eventually make it to Garnerville, and the hose it carried was a welcome sight to the Garnerville fire fighters. Charlie Siebold and two other Lady Warren members were nearly frozen by the time they arrived at the scene of the fire, and were all but useless. A neighboring woman took the three frozen Mutual Aiders in and sat them around her wood stove to help them thaw out.

On a Thursday morning in mid-August 1920, the recently arrived apparatus would prove just how effective it could be. A fire in the Reardon Tire & Vulcanizing shop on Broadway which had started by the gas meter was quickly subdued just before 11 AM on that day.

The members of Lady Warren under the command of Chief Peter A. Reilly were on the scene and had the chemical apparatus connected with the hose in operation in just 2-1/2 minutes from the sounding of the alarm, which had been put in by Police Officer Coyne who was on duty at Main Street and Broadway. The incident illustrated that the investment of the citizens in adequate fire protection was the best possible kind for the protection of the citizens of Haverstraw.

By 1924, one of the last years the Model T was in service, it must certainly have been in a state of disrepair. A story told to the authors is as follows: Responding to a fire on Main Street with a full crew of Lady Warren members aboard, the Model T lost both front wheels while making the turn at the Bank Corner. The wooden spokes had broken, probably due to the combination of excessive weight and the hard left turn they were trying to make - no doubt at an excellerated rate of speed. It is unknown if their destination was ever reached, but that is highly unlikely.

"EVER ALERT FIREMEN PREVENT SERIOUS LOSS." This phrase which appeared in a 1924 article in The Rockland County Times holds true to date for the members of the Haverstraw Fire Department. Late May and into early June of 1924, three separate fires broke out in the Village within a four day period, which illustrates this quite nicely. Saturday night May 31st a fire broke out in the residence opposite Lady Warren's engine house. The quick response to the alarm by No. 5's prevented serious damage to the building.

On Sunday, June 1st, a silent alarm was received which proved to be a grass fire near the



Aftermath of the Majestic Theater Fire - March 28, 1924.



The Fred Bonnet building across the street from the Majestic Theater Fire - March 28, 1924.



Majestic Theater Fire - March 28, 1924 - looking east on New Main Street from the corner of Maple Avenue.



Majestic Theater Fire - New Main Street. Frank "Shann" O'Brien young in center.

residence of Mr. Fred Kieser on Clove Avenue. General Warren Hose Co. #2 was the first to arrive on the scene of the fire which had gained considerable headway and threatened to destroy a large portion of the fence along the State Highway. No. 2's managed to extinguish the fire before any damage was done.

Finally, on Tuesday June 3rd, in response to an alarm, it was found that the home occupied by Mr. Robert Williams on Middle Street was on fire. Plumbers had been engaged connecting a hot water boiler and in some manner unexplainable a leaking gas pipe caught fire. The blaze was extinguished by the Department without any very serious damage being done.

On Friday afternoon, March 28, 1924, the Village of Haverstraw faced their worst blaze since the land slide tragedy. The fire which began in the chimney of the Majestic Theater would burn for approximately 14 hours, and all the energy and resources available were used by the Haverstraw Fire Department. West Haverstraw, Garnerville, Stony Point, Congers, Nyack, South Nyack and Suffern aided the Haverstraw men to help conquer the blaze. When the alarm was sounded, the dense pall of smoke enveloped the entire business district. The tardy fire alarm and the worthlessness of the water system let the fire gain complete headway.



Haverstraw Fire Department Firemen's Memorial Parade - June 15, 1924. Corner of Westside and Conklin Avenues - Members were carrying flowers to decorate the graves as was the custom at that time.

When the firemen arrived at the theater it was impossible to get within seeing distance. The great frame structure was a mass of fire with shooting flames jumping across New Main Street, lapping the Hoyt Garage, the Stalter Restaurant, the flying sparks and embers setting fire to the store awnings. On-lookers stood around the sidewalk and grit their teeth while watching the firemen, handicapped by the lack of water pressure, fight the flames with scarcely enough pressure to do more than ooze out of the nozzles end. The firemen made a vigorous fight from the rear following the flames, once the water pressure was augmented by the S. W. Johnson Fire Company, keeping the sides of the Hoyt Garage and the Stalter building well watered. The wind appeared to be blowing from the northwest and this carried the fire from the top of the towers across the street and into the gable of the Fred Bonnett house. heat was so intense that the fire made rapid headway in the Bonnett house and gained a mighty fighting force by the time the firemen could get their hose lines in place, With the arrival of the firemen from Nyack and other Mutual Aid Companies there were many little blazes that kept them busy. Flying sparks caught the eaves of the Bonnett laundry building, a flying spark lodged in the Rabitan building alongside of Washington Hall, and the eaves of the Synagogue caught fire, but all were handled promptly. Only those who were within few hundred feet of the fire when the wind was blowing could appreciate what the firemen had suffered as they fought the blaze. The heat was so intense, it cracked the glass in businesses across the street, but the firemen stood heroically like men on a battle deck as flames ranged around them. As was the case in the great landslide tragedy, the citizens of Haverstraw joined together with the firemen in an effort to extinguish the fire. Men were on the roofs from the Bonnett building to Broadway watching for flying embers, and other men ran around and notified women to close their doors and windows to deep sparks from entering.

When the fourteen hour ordeal ended, the Majestic Theater was only embers and ashes. The Bonnett building was gone from the store floor up and many personal effects were ruined.

The fire was hardly out when a swarm of linemen from the Light and Power Company, as well as the Telephone company were on the job making temporary connections which enabled The

Rockland County Times to get their edition out. A quote from that issue is as follows:

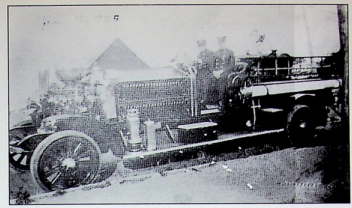
"Oh Pilgrims, Pilgrims of Haverstraw, fellow taxpayers when will you wake up and buy yourselves an efficient, ample supply of a water system and firefighting equipment. The writer lost fully $10,000.00 on the 4th of February and now others lose fully $50,000.00. You have a fine force of firefighting heroes, but they are handicapped. It may be your turn next."

As the Village of Haverstraw continued to grow in the 1920's so did the frequency of fires. Despite continuing difficulties with the alarm system and in many cases inadequate or faulty hydrant system, the men of the Haverstraw Fire Department performed valiantly and extinguished the fires as best they could within the limits of their resources. They sought improvements or replacement for equipment which would enable them to provide better fire protection for the community they served. And so it was on September 6, 1924, that the members of Lady Warren presented a petition to the Village Board, signed by the residents, asking them to call a Special Election for the purpose of voting on a proposition to appropriate $13,000.00 for a new fire truck and equipment.

Members of the company, in order to educate the taxpayers, planned to have sample trucks come to the Village for a demonstration. On Thursday, September 20th, early in the evening a demonstrator who had charge of an Ahrens-Fox pumping engine gave a demonstration at the Emeline dock on how well the engine could pump and throw water. It pumped 1,030 gallons per minute and threw the water clean over the Chrystenah dock. The members then adjourned to the engine house, and after much discussion on ways and means of letting the taxpayers know the value of the truck and it's actual cost to each taxpayer the meeting went into a social session. Refreshments were served and the villagers were entertained by jokes, songs, and dancing by members of the company, as well as by members connected with the Murphy Show.

Since many of the Village Taxpayers were commuters and not available to witness the demonstration, they therefore could not see for themselves just what was to be done with their money. Another demonstration was arranged for a Sunday afternoon under the direction of Lady Warren members. In order to give the people of the Village a complete opportunity to see the capacity of various apparatus both the Ahrens-fox Company and the American LaFrance Company were on hand for the demonstration. Working under perhaps the hardest possible conditions, the Ahrens-Fox apparatus from the Emeline dock pumped a stream in a line of hose leading up Main Street, into Second Street, through Middle Street and up West Street, through the school lane to the school yard on the Clove Avenue side, fully one half mile and not withstanding the possible loose connections that permitted leaks, the stream was nearly sufficient to put water over the school house.

The American LaFrance while working continuously could not quite equal the demonstration of



Ahrens-Fox June 1925. John McCormack at the wheel.



Members of Lady Warren picking up hose on Ridges Street after the Elks Circus Field Fire, July 19, 1929. Driver of the apparatus is Mike Natale seated Vic Horan; Hosebed -Frank Rundell and Vincent Welsh; standing in rear - Val Rembe, Ed Lynch, and Pete Reilly wearing straw hat; Harris Huott standing by front fender. *Now the hand rubber tires still in use.*

the Ahrens-Fox, although possibly the difference in price would justify the difference in power. The contest of superior claims of the Ahrens-Fox and discussing the features of the pumping contest, the argument was made and seems to be well founded that the Ahrens-Fox machine completely outclassed the other apparatus. The point, therefore, that the Trustees would have to consider in the purchase would be the advantages not only of the mechanical power in pumping of the Ahrens-Fox but that the American LaFrance Company had offered to pay $1,000.00 for the old apparatus as opposed to the $500.00 offered by the Ahrens-Fox Company. Since most of the Lady Warren members favored the Ahrens-Fox the Village Trustees response was "notwithstanding these features, price will have to be considered." Once again Lady Warren was involved in yet another battle with the Village Board.

Although the records do not reflect what transpired between Lady Warren and the Village Fathers, it is evident that the battle was won by the "Boys in Blue."

The Ahrens-Fox was delivered to the Village of Haverstraw on January 24, 1925, carefully loaded in an open box car and accompanied by an expert from the factory. On February 7, 1925 approximately fifty Lady Warren members and their friends assembled in the engine house to enjoy what was intended as a double barreled event, the holding of the company's

ainment and the reception and official receipt of the new Ahrens-Fox apparatus. ad been delivered several weeks before, it was not officially turned over to the ustees of the Village because of unseen delays in the payment to the Ahrens-Fox der the provisions of the contact made for it's purchase. Mayor Snedeker and Trustees expected a representative from the Company be present, to instruct the ady Warren on how to successfully operate the pump, and to turn over possession us to the Village.

nstance that disappointment arose. The failure of the Ahrens-Fox representative ppearance led the Village Officials to make an announcement that the official not to be made. Despite this, happy and pleasant speeches were made by Mayor other members of the Village Board and the celebration continued. The food cooked, of the most appetizing variety, there was an abundance of Feronia cigars so that the program as arranged was carried out, and generous hospitality of Lady the occasion more than passingly attractive. The problems with the payment somewhere along the line and the "Fox" was officially in the possession of No.

it seems, was always having problems with it's apparatus and the "Cannonball" she was and is called was no exception. While answering alarm at the Dykins and in mid-February, 1926, members attempted to force the "Fox" through a snow he truck became stuck in the drift they tried to back it out resulting in stripping causing considerable damage to the rear end of the vehicle. The men proceeded foot and extinguished it with chemicals. The "Fox" was repaired the next day.

e long before the Ahrens-Fox proved to the villagers that they had made an ce in it's purchase. On April 11, 1926, a fire broke out in the round house of ey New York Railroad that destroyed the structure and consumed one of the cars employed in the operation for passenger service between Spring Valley and t was the first needful demonstration of the new fire apparatus and it's first use the taxpayers made a wonderfully profitable investment. The "Cannonball" utely perfectly, rendering splendid service and helped to keep the fire from ther buildings.

Fox was given yet another chance to prove it's usefulness when it was called to a ckland Lake Ice House, on April 20, 1926. The raging flames which spread from to another by the ferocious wind, completely destroyed the central ice house ery village in the county was summoned to render assistance. Lady Warren with -Fox made a record at the fire and as a consequence, Chief Arthur Post, from swelled up with pride as his "baby", while other engines were running hot, nocking, ran as smooth as a sewing machine in an effort to pump Rockland Lake



Haverstraw Fire Council 1929 *Top Row:* John Hessian, Dave Campbell, Bill Babcock, Fred Racker, and Jackie Bennett. *Bottom Row:* Henry Krebs, John Maloney, Henry Behrens, and Fred Waldron.

dry if necessary to quench the fire.

An early morning fire on September 15, 1928, in the kiln shed of the Hudson River Brick Company demonstrates the ingenuity of the Lady Warren firefighters. The fire which was caused by the explosion of a gasoline tank destroyed over 100 feet of kiln shed and damage estimated at approximately $10,000.00. Initially, the brickyard workers tried to extinguish the blaze. When they realized that their efforts were accomplishing little, they blew the brickyard whistle to secure help. A Haverstraw Village Patrolman who was walking down Broadway, saw the flames and heard the whistles' call of distress, and promptly turned in the fire alarm at the Bank Corner. The members of Lady Warren responding to the fire built a sort of temporary platform of logs in order for that Ahrens-Fox could get closer to the river to pump a greater supply of water on the blazing shed. Haverstraw's Firemen worked feverishly for nearly five hours to extinguish the blaze.

The 1920's proved to be an extremely busy decade for Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department. Many more fires are indicated for the period but a lack of sufficient details made it impossible to properly recount.

Chapter 6: 1930 - 1939

If per chance you think green fire helmets look strange, you are not the first to come to that conclusion. In the early 30's when the Lady Warren crew showed up to a fire, the Village Fathers took one look and their screams could be heard on top the High Tor. An order to repaint the helmets traditional black was ignored.

But the Village Fathers were not to be ignored so easily. A delegation actually supervised the repaint job. the village officials left the fire house, secure in the knowledge that the offensive green helmets were no more. For, sedate black helmets, hung in neat rows, awaiting their next needed moment. Came the next fire, the company rolled down the street and went to work. Each fireman's noggin was protected by a green helmet.

Back to Lady Warren's firehouse, went the Village Fathers. Sternly they ordered the helmets painted black. Meekly the "Sons of Erin" complied with the order. Came the next fire, you could pick out the Lady Warren crew, they were all wearing green helmets.

No one ever kept score on the see-saw, black-green contest, but all one has to do is glance at the company today to see, who won the battle. Every thing else the company owns is painted green including the pumper. (But that is another story yet to be told). It had been said if a member of the company ever "turns up his toes" you will recognize his as a Lady Warren fireman. The soles of his boots will be painted green. It should be noted here that as of the last several years the boot soles are no longer painted green.

Why all the green? Because a few lads - with red creeping up their neck - wanted to see a bit of green among the ladders and axes of the volunteer fire department.

During the early years of the Village of Haverstraw, the residents have learned first hand the devastation that fire can do and the need for an effective method of firefighting. In April of 1930 the Village Fathers began many projects to improve the water pressure in the village and to finally bring the municipal services up to date. After a long battle with the residents of the village, a water reservoir tank was installed on Hillside Avenue. After installation, tests showed a dramatic increase in pressure and that the improvements would increase fire protection to a great degree.

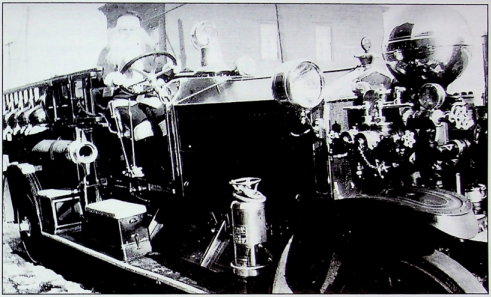
Along with solving the water pressure problem, the village would also make improvements to the fire alarm system. On September 6, 1930 two new fire alarm boxes were purchased and installed in areas that had grown since the fire alarm system was introduced.

As you have read in previous Chapters, there were many occasions where the fire alarm was

delayed due to a malfunction or the water pressure was inadequate, which hampered village firemen and caused serious destruction. These changes were a signal to the people of Haverstraw that the Village Board was aware of the problems of the past and that the improvements were long over due.

Historical Footnote

On December 13, 1930, the Haverstraw Fire Department decided to establish the Fire Police to rope off areas around the fire scenes, to prevent accident and injury to the spectators.



Charlie Siebold at Santa Claus arrives at quarters aboard the Ahrens-Fox. December 23, 1930.

On December 23, 1930 Lady Warren held their first Christmas Party of record. From the first inkling notes of Santa Claus' bell until the last gift was presented, the party was a huge success. Santa Claus who was dressed in an outfit borrowed from the Broadway Theater and members of the committee hurried about to see that each one of the three hundred kids who visited Santa were well taken care of, the happiness was complete. The entire firehouse was decorated and a large number of guests stopped in to see the beautiful tree and decorations. Lady Warren members were happy to have given the children a good time and very grateful to everyone who donated clothing which was given out to the needy children. Although it is unknown exactly when the Christmas parties for the children stopped, Lady Warren continues to hold their annual Christmas party for the members, and the quarters and grounds of the firehouse are always decorated to perfection during the Holiday Season.

A fire at the Kay-fries Laboratories early on Sunday morning, January 24, 1931, caused considerable damage and confusion before it was extinguished. The employees of the West

Haverstraw based plant initially tried to extinguish the flames with their own chemical apparatus but were unable to do so. Somehow the Haverstraw Fire Department had received the call before the West Haverstraw Fire Department. Lady Warren with their Ahrens-fox answered the call under the command of Assistant Chief Charles Fales, and after ascertaining that West Haverstraw had not been called, they immediately put in a call to which West Haverstraw soon responded. The remainder of the fire was put out by the booster tank of the Ahrens-fox and one hand line which was operated by West Haverstraw.

Everytime a volunteer fireman answers a call, he puts his life on the line, and has no idea what to expect. This was the case on September 19, 1931 when the Haverstraw Fire Department responded to a fire on an oil barge carrying 35,000 gallons of gasoline. The Captain of the barge was injured when he leaped from the blazing pilot house at the rear of the barge. When the firemen arrived at the scene they were undecided at first on how exactly to fight the flames, fearing to use water because of the proximity of gasoline. However, as soon as the black smoke cleared the firemen noticed only the super structure of the cabin was ablaze and within a few minutes Lady Warren and General Warren directed two heavy streams of water onto the roof of the cabin. After the heavy fire had been extinguished, the firemen turned the hoses onto the huge gasoline tank, cooling it off for fear that the heat would ignite the heavy vapors coming out of the ventilators. Several firemen then climbed aboard the craft and did the clean up work with hand extinguishers, and all could then breathe a sigh of relief.

On Thursday evening, November 26, 1931, Lady Warren responded to a car fire owned by Mr. & Mrs. Bert Mackey of Spring Street. While responding to the alarm, the rear end of the Ahrens-fox had somehow been "ripped out" and the apparatus had to be towed to a local garage. Although a car fire would not normally be a topic of any great consequence, this would prove to be the most important car fire in Lady Warren's history.

Another First for Lady Warren.

On the morning of November 28, 1931 at 5:15 the quarters of Lady Warren caught fire. The fire which must have been burning for some time was discovered by Joseph Petrichko of Pratt Street on his way to work at the Village Hall. As he passed the firehouse, he noticed smoke coming from a ventilator near the roof of the building. After going around to the side doorway, Petrichko noticed flames and smoke inside the firehouse and immediately pulled box 63, to which all companies responded. One can imagine the frustration felt by the Lady Warren members who could not fight the fire in their own home. The day before the celebrated "Cannonball" as the Ahrens-Fox was known was taken to a local garage for repairs from damage sustained at a car fire. Thus it was that it was not damaged, "the Luck of the Irish" prevailed."

But still they stood by as the rest of the department extinguished the blaze. Upon entering the building the firemen discovered that the fire was confined largely to the stairwell leading from the main floor down to the cellar, and also to the second floor of the building. Had not

the firehouse been made of brick, it was felt, there would have been a major conflagration, as it is situated among many frame housed and was adjacent to the Shankey garage, where thousands of gallons of gasoline were stored. The fact that the fire had been burning for some time had been attested by the evidence on the second floor. The fire trumpet which was kept atop a piano was completely melted down from the heat and it was surprising to find that the company banner, hanging on the south wall was completely destroyed, the only part remaining being the pole.

It was determined that the cause of the fire was due to a wiring defect. Recently, however, some light was shed on how the fire actually originated. Ex-Chief John J. Feeney at his 101st Birthday Party related the tale. It seems that the electrical fuses in the firehouse were prone to "blowing." As was a common habit in those days a penny was placed in the fuse socket in order to complete the circuit - these often resulted in disaster. This is exactly what occurred on the evening prior to the fire. Ex-Chief Feeney told the members present at the time, who had actually put the penny in the fuse box, but his name will remain anonymous here.

Early in January 1932 an appeal went out from Lady Warren in an attempt to restore their library and treasure of old pictures and mementos which had been destroyed in the November '31 fire of the engine house.

The members felt that although a building can be replaced, nothing could take the place of the old time company insignia, banner, and photographs which were a complete loss. All of the pictures of former members of the company and other decorations were badly damaged.

It was the hope of the officer of the company to restore the building itself to its former condition. They appealed to friends of the company to present old time pictures of the exterior of the firehouse and of the old apparatus, group pictures, and pictures of the Board of Engineers of the Haverstraw Fire Department, and other similar pictures.

Little did the Lady Warren members, back in 1932, realize the far reaching affect the fire would incur on the company. Not only were photographs and memorabilia lost but also all of the company's records. Some sixty-two years later the great loss suffered so many years ago is felt by the authors of this book. So much history lost. So many irreplaceable photographs never again to be seen. The loss even today is immeasurable. Early accounts of the Company are sketchy. This due to that fateful fire of November 28, 1931.

A grim and desperate four hour battle was waged by more than one hundred volunteer firemen as a fierce fire destroyed the Haverstraw High School on Hudson and Fairmount Avenue. The first alarm of fire was turned in by Marcy Silversteen and Thomas Ryder shortly before 11:30 PM on June 8, 1935. A second and third alarm were sent in as soon as fire officials arrived on the scene and surveyed the extent of the flames. Aid was summoned from the Nyack and

West Haverstraw departments bringing four additional companies and pieces of apparatus to the blaze.

A half dozen hose lines were stretched from points as far away as the Capitol Theater on Hudson Avenue and New Main Street, and the powerful motor pumps of the apparatus threw terrific streams of water up to the roof of the high building. Although it had proved difficult, if not impossible, to discover where the blaze started, once it reached the roof of the structure the fire spread with startling rapidity.

Firemen who were on the roof early in the course of the blaze discovered the entire roof to be warm as is the fire was burning the metal roof of the whole structure. The firemen aided by a heavy downpour of rain coupled with the absence of any appreciable wind succeeded in minimizing the damage to neighboring structures.



Ruins of Kieser's Mill – Louis Hoyt Fire – August 6, 1935. Site of the present Provident Savings and Loan New Main Street and Maple Avenue.

The burning building make a tremendous spectacle and drew hundreds of spectators who watched the battle with the flames, not withstanding the rain. Spectators could hear the metal ceilings in the rooms buckling under the strain of the heat, and at times loud crashes were heard as radiators and other non-combustible heavy articles fell from one floor to the one beneath. One of the most spectacular sights occurred when the bell tower crashed into the ruined building. The flames were brought under control after a four hour battle. Seven fire fighters were cut or burned during the course of the blaze, all were treated by the Department Surgeon, Dr. Frank P. Redmond.



Aftermath of Louis Hoyt fire on New Main Street – August 6, 1935.

On August 6, 1935 shortly after midnight the entire village was aroused by a terrific explosion that caused the citizens to think of everything from another landslide to

a disaster at the storage tanks of the West Shore Gas Company. Within minutes the fire whistle sounded and the firemen arrived on the scene of Hoyts Garage on New Main Street, that not only destroyed the building but took the life of the proprietor Lou Hoyt. When firemen arrived, people were already hurrying desperately to salvage their possessions, for it was with the speed of a destructive fury that the flames crashes up through the roof of the doomed garage and raced to every corner of the frame building. The fire demolished the Kieser Feed Mill and the adjoining Donato building, beside badly damaging the Provident Savings and Loan Building.

Lady Warren operated at the corner of Maple Avenue and New Main Street and directed its attack at the Kieser Feed Mill, the three stories which were already a flaming inferno. Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Cohen and son Ronald descended from their apartment above Hobbs Floral Shop on the corner of Maple and New Main via a ladder erected by the members of Lady Warren. The spectacular exit from their home was caused by the inability of the Cohen's to descend to the street through their front hall due to the terrific heat.

Other families who occupied an apartment in the Donato building had to dash to safety in only their night clothes, and saw their worldly possessions ravished by the on rushing flames. More than twenty firemen sustained cuts, bruises and burns, the most seriously being Chief Charles Fales who sustained burns to his shoulder and face. There were firemen battling the blaze from every direction. Their untiring efforts brought many to the point of exhaustion just when the reinforcements from other communities arrived.

Seems like some thing just don't change. Back in the 1930's Lady Warren must have had a tough time getting members to participate in various functions, such as parades meetings and the like. Every fire company has its share of characters and Lady Warren certainly it no exception there either. A particular individual, J.J. O'Brien to be specific certainly fit that category. He was the Company Secretary during the 30's, and definitely had a way with words. A letter he sent to all Lady Warren members in February 1936 follows - uncut, uncensored and in its entirety:



Lou Hoyt Fire - August 6, 1935: Men surrounding the location of Lou Hoyt's body - Back of Garage-facing west - Swift's Packing House and Erie Station in background (Bill Uhl's Garage).

LADY WARREN HOSE CO. NO. 5
HAVERSTRAW, N.Y.

February 27, 1936

Dear Member:-

As you may or may not know we are trying to get some kind of a new uniform for the members and have only a limited amount of money. The last two meetings didn't get us anywhere as about twenty-five attended each and worried too much about the other fifty who apparently aren't interested enough to at least come around once on a question such as this. We will have another regular meeting Tuesday, March 3rd at 8PM and if you have anything on your mind about new uniforms get around to the meeting and then you won't have any kick coming about knowing or not knowing about what's coming off. We will attempt to arrive at something more or less satisfactory to everybody and some of the questions will be:

Do you want a uniform?
Do you want a shirt and trouser combination?
Do you want a long, coat, short coat or what?
Are you willing to kick in part of the cost?
Are you going to use the uniform after you get it?
If not, what do you want one for?
Are you willing to spend all kinds of money so long as it is the Company's and not yours?
If so are you willing to help the Company raise IT?

If you don't get to the next meeting don't bellyache afterwards.

In addition, there will be nomination of officers for the next year at this meeting.

If any of you have forgotten where the engine house is you just walk up or, down Broadway as the case may be and you'll find it next to Swannee's on one side and Shankeys's garage on the other. You can't miss the place.

J.J.O'Brien
Sec'y.



June 1939 - Lady Warren marching on Firemen's Memorial Sunday.



August 19, 1939 - Ahrens-Fox at inspection parade after new paint and gold leaf John McCormick at wheel and "Sargeant" the dalmation with Mike DeGiso on running board.

For the second time within a year a fire destroyed a major portion of the Haverstraw High School. The fire which occurred on Saturday night March 8, 1936 gutted the entire top floor of the Simon building at West Broad Street and Maple Avenue, where the upper three classes of the school were quartered. Several firemen were injured battling the blaze which required all the efforts of the department as well as West Haverstraw, Garnerville and one Nyack company, for three hours after the alarm sounded at 1:30 in the morning. Sergeant Joseph Brennan was leaving Brown's diner and heard what sounded like an explosion followed by a crash of glass, and turned toward the building to see smoke and flames in the structure. He ran to box 53 at Broadway and turned in the alarm which within minutes brought out the department. As flames shot through the roof of the structure, fear was felt for the neighboring buildings, especially the new structure of the Provident Building and Loan Association on the south side of the Simon building. The damage sustained to the building was terrific. The large roof rafters were burned almost completely while the steel roof girders were twisted and bent by the heat.

The partitions erected by the school were all destroyed and the desks in the classroom were damaged beyond reclamation. Despite the first fear of the firemen, the water supply was adequate for the emergency as seven pumpers drew water from the mains at different hydrants to supply the need for the tremendous amount of water which was poured into the building. Daylight had already begun to break before the last of the firemen left the scene approximately six hours after the initial alarm was sounded.

Simenovsky Fire Brings Out Real Smokeaters

The Haverstraw Fire Department earned its title of "smokeaters" on Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1937 when a fire broke out shortly after noon in the cellar of the Haverstraw

Variety Store, owned by Max Simenovsky, at 43 Broadway.

Clouds of billowing smoke poured from the cellar of the building as the firemen attacked the flames. Their first move was to ventilate the cellar to see where the fire was blazing. The first firemen entering the smoke filled cellar wore gas masks to protect themselves. The blaze was soon located and extinguished.

The fire really broke out because Richard (Hack) Freeman shivered. Freeman and Sol Simenovsky, son of the store owner, were in the rear of the store and about to enjoy lunch when Hack shivered. Solicitous for the comfort of his pal, Sol pushed ahead the thermostat controlling the furnace in the cellar.

A short time later both Hack and Sol, neither of whom was "skinny" moved as fast as they had in a long time. Hack dashed for the fire alarm box and Solly just dashed around, but in short order the firemen were at the scene and had the blaze under control. The only serious damage was done by the smoke.

Fire Guts House When Whistle Develops Trouble – September 3, 1938

Fire completely gutted the house of the Centkowski (Bismark) family on Riverside Avenue and caused approximately $10.000.00 in damage. Had the firemen been able to locate the fire within a few minutes after the whistle blew, the story might have been different.

The fire alarm from Box 35 proved to be defective when the whistle was blown, and blew the number 34 once. All fire companies responded and went down West Street as far as the deNoyelles brickyard as smoke was pouring from the kiln sheds. When the firemen discovered that a kiln was being burned, they thought the fire was a false alarm.

In the meantime, the first floor of the two story brick residence on Riverside was being enveloped in flames, and a telephone call was made to Police Headquarters. The desk officer, learning the location of the actual fire, notified Chief Spissinger at the Bank corner and Lieutenant Manion in the police car.

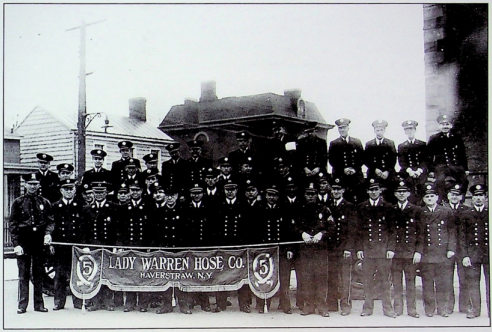
The two officers rushed down to West Street and notified Chief John J. Feeney, who directed his men to the scene of the fire at the southern end of the village. The fire was caused by an overheated oil stove in the kitchen which had exploded. Approximately fifteen minutes had elapsed between the sounding of the alarm and the time the firemen reached the scene, which was a blazing furnace.

Firemen from Relief Hose Company, Cosgriff Hose Company, and Lady Warren Hose Company laid hose from the hydrants in the vicinity. Firemen from Rescue Hook & Ladder

Company used their ladders in an effort to combat the flames, while men from General Warren Emergency Company helped to salvage what belongings they could.

It took the fireman more than a half an hour to put out the flames, which had eaten the floors and walls of the brick structure. Although the roof did not collapse, the rafters which supported it were badly charred.

The firemen believed that if the location of the fire had been known promptly when the whistle started blowing, they could have prevented the almost complete destruction of the interior of the house and saved many more personal belongings.



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5. Circa 1939. Ridge and Union Streets next to the Old St. Peter's School. *Back Row:* Dominic Gerace, Ambrose Smith, Clarence Horan, Jack McCormuck, Buster Willett, William Huott, Charles Siebold, Michael DeGuso, Jim Freeman, Frank Smith, Ed Fox, James Sullivan, John Hulcle, Farrell (Tom) Freeman. *Middle Row:* Bob Bell, Larry Murray, Joe Lawless, Frank Hession, Ed Lynch, Eddie Willett. *Bottom Row:* Henry Graulich, Chief Jack Feeney, Andrew Morrison, Ex-Chief Diamond Lubonty, Val Rembe, Ex-Chief Arthur Post, Richard Freeman, Tom Nolan, Benny Welsh, Jack O'Brien, Weyant Springstead, Harris Huott, Rich Lawless, Phil Piccarella, Frank Horney, Frank Sullivan, George Horan, John Gokey, Gus Smith, Patty Reilly, Mike Natale.

Chapter 7: 1940 - 1949

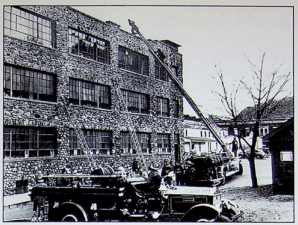
It seems that the majority of major fires throughout Haverstraw's history have occurred during extremely cold weather and this was to be true in the early 1940's. A fire on January 18, 1940 left seven families homeless and two firemen injured in the blaze that gutted the top floor of the Simon and Sons furniture store on Broadway. The alarm was sounded at approximately 5 o'clock in the morning from box 53, and within minutes the first units were on the scene under the command of Chief John J. Feeney of Lady Warren. The fire had gained considerable headway since the tenants in the building had smelled a slight odor of smoke but paid little attention to it and did not realize that there was a fire until the blaze came through the floor. Lady Warren, the first company on the scene, hooked up to the hydrant on Broadway and Division Street and stretched a two and one half inch hoseline through the interior of the building up to the third floor. Considerable time was lost because the hydrant was frozen, as was the hydrant at Broadway and Broad Street which Cosgriff Hose had laid in from. Escaping gas from the meters added even more fuel to the fire as the leaping flames made a spectacular sight, and could be seen from as far away as New City. The Haverstraw Fire Department was on the scene for nearly five hours, and used a total of twelve hoselines to extinguish the blaze.

The fourth story of the building was completely destroyed. The third floor was gutted and the first and second floors were damaged by smoke and water.

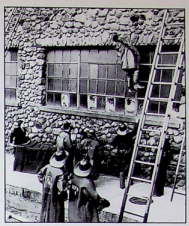
At the Village Board meeting on January 25, 1940, the board of trustees commended the Haverstraw Fire Department for their excellent work at the Simon fire. Trustee George Friscoe praised the work of the department but especially the work of Rescue Hook and Ladder Company No. 1. He called attention to the fact that some village residents had referred to their apparatus as only a "parade wagon" but stated when he saw it in operation at the fire it made him proud to be a member of the village board.

Hudson Valley Comes to Haverstraw

On Saturday, June 29, 1940 the residents of Haverstraw witnessed one of the largest and certainly one of the most colorful Firemen's Parades ever staged as the 51st Annual Convention of the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association marched through the street of the village. Nearly six thousand men and women comprising seventy-five companies and numerous musical organization participated, with an estimated thirty thousand spectators on hand to watch the parade. Throughout the day and for a greater part of the night Haverstraw echoed with the blaze of music and the tramp of marching feet. The village was overwhelmed by the crowds that swarmed into it just before noon. It was almost impossible to get service at any of the village restaurants. Men and women circled from one restaurant to another in a vain effort to find one which was not crowded.



Civilian Defense drill at the Simon Building on Broad Street and Maple Avenue. April 21, 1942.



Civilian Defense drill at the Simon Building. April 21, 1942.

Despite the huge crowds present in the village, the parade proceeded without a hitch, with few disorders and no arrests. Something you will never see in the village again.

Historical Footnote

On July 8, 1940 Michael McCabe, dean of Rockland County Newspapermen, died at the Nyack Hospital. He was 76 years old. An Ex-Chief of the Haverstraw Fire Department from Lady Warren, and Editor and Publisher of the Rockland County Times since 1893, Mike McCabe had been a powerful influence in the community. The authors of this book owe him a great deal of thanks as much of our information came from his articles.

Almost a year to date, on January 25, 1941, fire once again struck the Simon Furniture Store at 25 Broadway, causing serious damage to Mayor Charles Engle's Sport Shop. The afternoon blaze originated in the roof of the frame extension which housed the back room of the sport shop. Mayor Engles was sitting at his desk when smoke began to pour in about him. The Haverstraw Fire Department answered the general alarm under the command of Chief William Babcock of Cosgriff Hose Company No. 4. The firemen attacked the blaze through the cellar of the first house on West Broad Street, in order to approach the flames from the rear, as other lines were positioned in the sport shop. Fireman Jack Campbell of Cosgriff Hose was injured when he was knocked from a ladder while fighting the blaze and was treated by Dr. Emanual Freund. Approximately $2,000.00 worth of sporting goods stored in the back room of the shop were damaged by fire and water.

The World at War

The attack of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, plunged the United States into World War II, and the effects were felt in every city, village and hamlet across the country. The

Village of Haverstraw was no exception. Daily, newspapers listed the men who volunteered or were drafted into the various branches of military service. The whole country was gearing up to go to war, to restore world peace and rescue countries occupied or under the threat of occupation by foreign and viscous dictators.

Here in the village, as elsewhere, preparations were being made for the possibility of an air attack on the United States. At the meeting of the Village Board on January 17, 1942, Ex-Chief John J. Feeney of Lady Warren was unanimously appointed to the position of Defense Coordinator for the Village, and Dr. Matthew J. Sullivan was appointed Chief of Emergency Medical Services.

Many drills and tests were conducted under the direction of Ex-Chief Feeney. Sunday, April 21, 1942, saw an all-out drill of the Civilian Defense organization in Haverstraw Village. A spectacular three hour test of the organization of nurses, doctors, first aiders, Red Cross crews, firemen and other trained units charged with the responsibility of combating disaster from the air or sabotage, was held at the Simon Building on Broad Street and Maple Avenue. This was only one of many incidents during a busy afternoon of the defense tests overseen by our own Jack Feeney.

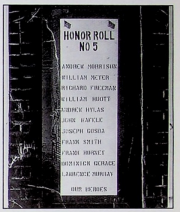
Almost fifty years and one fire later, the quarters of Lady Warren had been deteriorating at an alarming rate. In his annual report to the Village on March 3, 1942, Chief William Babcock requested "that the work contemplated on the quarters of Lady Warren be done as soon as possible due to it's dilapidated condition." He also recommended the establishment of additional fire alarm boxes in residential areas not adequately covered by the current system which had originated in 1929. A total of sixty alarms were answered during the year with twenty-one structure fires and only five false alarms.

At the regular Company Meeting of April 7, 1942, Captain Frank Sullivan announced that the Village Board had offered to remodel the building, and requested suggestions from the company. The following members were then appointed to the re-modeling committee: Michael Lubonty, John Feeney, Richard Holland, Vincent Welsh, Herman Wessler, Ambrose Smith, John Gokey and Bernard Hughes. The committee was to report back to the company before meeting with the Village Board.

By January 1943, eight Lady Warren members were serving in the armed forces of the United States. But it would not be long before that number grew to eleven. This showing of patriotism and service to country did impact on the Company however. With the young able bodied men of the Company off fighting the war, the fire protection of the Village from Lady Warren's end was left in the hands of the older members. This situation prompted a motion at the Company Meeting of February 2, 1943, to take ten boys into the Company to be trained as firefighters. Whether or not this was actually done is uncertain. Company records do not

mention this proposal again either Pro or Con. What is certain is that older members that were not answering alarms were notified by mail to be sure to answer alarms of fire in the future.

Lady Warren's World War II Service Men were not forgotten during their time of service. An "Honor Roll" was created and placed on the front of the firehouse, listing the names of our gallant "Heroes." A service flag was purchased and upon motion was to be hung "permanently" in the company's meeting room. Every Christmas gifts were sent to each of the men, either in the form of cigarettes or money depending on the financial situation of the Company that particular year. No matter how small the gift they were always remembered. And, at the August 1, 1944 Company Meeting it was proposed and adopted that all affairs being run by the Company for profit would be divided with 50% being placed in a Service Men's Fund. This fund was established for the expressed purpose of a social function to be held when the men returned at the termination of the War.



The Honor Roll hung on the old firehouse (91 Broadway) during World War II. The names of Ambrose Smith and Bernard Hughes were added to the Honor Roll after this picture had been taken.

Late summer of 1944 brought sad new to Lady Warren. At the close of the September 3rd meeting, Captain Thomas "Frank" Sullivan rose from the "Chair" and called for a moment of silence. This in memory of Lady Warren's First Lieutenant William Huott, who had been killed in action in France on June 24, 1944. On the motion of Bob Bell a Mass would be offered on Sunday, September 9th at 8:00 AM. Bill Huott was the only Company member to die in World War II. It was not until July 7, 1948 that Huott's body finally returned home to Haverstraw. Services were held the following day, and conducted by the Department Chaplain, Father Remey of St. Mary's Church. *"Requiescat in Pace."*



Private William Huott, 1st Lieutenant of Lady Warren killed in action in France on June 24, 1944.

Sometime between April 1942 and October 1944, the company apparently decided that fixing the old firehouse just would not do. Discussion at the October 3, 1944 company meeting centered on the ways and means of raising money for equipping a new building. A new committee to be known as the Arrangements and Building committee was created and given charge of all affairs thereafter to raise funds. This new committee was appointed by Captain Sullivan at the November 8, 1944 meeting and consisted of the following members: Robert Bell, Vincent Welsh,

Michael Lubonty, John Feeney, Thomas Welsh, Herman Wessler, Edward O'Connell, Joseph Lawless, James Freeman, John Gokey, Richard Holland, Frank Sullivan, Andrew Sullivan, Thomas Freeman and Frank Rundell. The committee was given the power to act, between meetings, on anything that arose whereby the company would benefit. These actions to be presented at the next company meeting thereafter for approval.

Not to leave anything to chance, the company voted, at the December 5, 1944 meeting, that the Village be advised to purchase the land situated on the east side of Broadway north of Jefferson Street, where the old diner sat, as the site for erection of the new building.

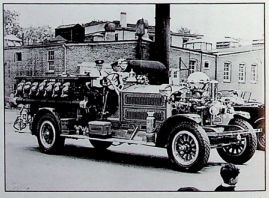
The new firehouse was to be part of the post war public works planning projects. Plans for the building were drawn up in April 1945 by Nyack architect John Thornley. And a "Grand" building did he plan. But, as fate would have it, the Public Works Department ran out of money before an allotment could be made for the construction of the new building. Lady Warren would not get her new firehouse. At least not for some time.



Ex-Chief Michael "Diamond" Lubonty and World War II veteran Bernard Hughes, Sr. Circa 1945.

The later years of the 1940's were happier times for the world in general. The "War" over, the men back home, a normal existence had resumed. Lady Warren did have a social function for the returning Vets in the form of a dinner which was held in the early months of 1946. Later that year the Rockland County Volunteer Firemen's Association also held a welcome home dinner for it's members who were veterans. This event was held on Saturday August 24, 1946 at Krucker's in Ladentown. Veterans of the Association belonging to Lady Warren were extended free invitations.

December 1949 saw Lady Warren sponsor one of many Old Time Minstrel Shows. The show was held on December 7th and 8th at the Haverstraw High School Auditorium. Many company members participated in the show along with local talent and the Haverstraw High School Band. Songs for the upcoming holiday season gave an uplifting and joyous end to the year, and the decade which had begun in death, destruction and despair for much of the world. For Lady Warren peace and tranquillity reigned that December. The 1950's would be another story altogether.



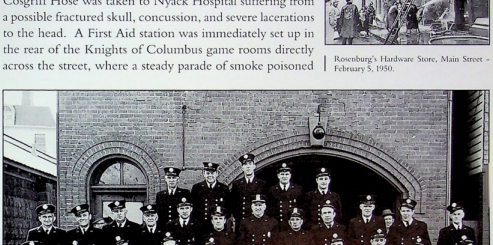
Haverstraw Fire Department - Firemen's Memorial Day June, 1940. Driver John McCormick and passenger Robert Bell.

Chapter 8: 1950 - 1959

The professionalism and courage of the Haverstraw Fire Department was put to task early in the 1950's when a fire threatened the entire business section of the village on February 5, 1950. The fire, which completely gutted the O.N. Rosenburg and Son's Hardware Store at 12 Main Street, created havoc from the flames, smoke, and noxious fumes. Between thirty and fifty firemen were treated for smoke poisoning and one fireman, Adolph Sebastian, from Cosgriff Hose was taken to Nyack Hospital suffering from a possible fractured skull, concussion, and severe lacerations to the head. A First Aid station was immediately set up in the rear of the Knights of Columbus game rooms directly across the street, where a steady parade of smoke poisoned



Rosenburg's Hardware Store, Main Street - February 5, 1950.



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - Company Photo 1954. *Front Row:* William "Skiddy" McCormick, Sam Hopper, Vincent Welch, Frank Sullivan, Richard Clark, Art Kelly, John Croyle, Jack Feeney, Michael "Diamond" Lubonty, Joe Schvanda, John McCormick. *Second Row:* Robert Bell, Ted Gerioux, James Lewis, Bill Maynard, Thomas Welch, Michael "Lupo" DeGuo, Carmine Martello, Dan DiCarlo, Harry McNichol, Frank Rundell, James J. Freeman. *Third Row:* Tom Carella, Fred DeCota, Vic Horan (doorway), Andrew Morrison, Charlie Siebold, Red Bulley, John Hafele, Henry Granlik, Alphonse Gamboli, William Welky, Robert McNichol, Frank Horney (in back), Frank "Sham" O'Brien, Patrick Barry. *Top Row:* Andrew Kenyock, Richard Holland, John "Toots" Lawless, George Carrella, Douglas Dodd.

firemen were treated, released, and went back out into the cold to carry on the battle to save Haverstraw's stores.

Soon aerial ladders and thousands of feet of hose rose over the copings of nearby buildings as firemen scaled neighboring roofs to fight the fire from above. Meanwhile, other firemen pushed in from the front of the blazing store, as others worked from the back and from an annex entrance on West Street, in an attempt to stop the flames within the L-shaped structure. In addition to the paint and hardware store itself, the second floor which contained many offices, and the third floor which was the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Rosenburg, were completely carried away by the flames from below, which were fueled by large quantities of paint, turpentine, wallpaper, and numerous articles of hardware.

Near the rear of the building, where it made its L-turn leading to West Street, additional quantities of paint and other explosive compounds had been stored. The danger of any sudden explosion was heightened by the fact that the burning building was linked with a number of other structures including the Haverstraw Methodist Church.

The Haverstraw Fire Department, under the leadership of Chief Vincent Welsh from Lady Warren, did an outstanding job in preventing the fire from spreading to adjoining exposures. Damage to the adjacent buildings to the east and west were described by insurance adjusters as slight. To the east of the burning store was "Feeney's Bar and Grill," which also suffered slight damage and was owned by Ex-Chief John "Jack" Feeney from Lady Warren.

Historical Footnote

On Saturday, June 20, 1954, twenty thousand spectators looked on as the Haverstraw Fire Department hosted the Hudson Valley Firemen's Parade for the fourth time this century. The colorful units came in numbers exceeding anything the 100 year old village had seen since the days of it's first leather-hosed companies.

Haverstraw was passing a milestone and so was the Fire Department as Anthony Delisio, Chief from Rescue Hook and Ladder was, elected President of the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association.

Applause broke thunderously from the sidewalks and bunting-draped porches as the Haverstraw Fire Department marched by. The ranks were neat and proud, and prouder still were Chief Delisio and Mayor Harry Schuler. The four hour parade, which contained approximately seventy units and 90 pieces of apparatus, had been flawless and was indeed one of Haverstraw's greatest and finest parades.

Since 1945, one thought occupied the mindset of the members of Lady Warren, the construction of a new firehouse on the east side of Broadway almost directly across from the building they occupied when they first took possession in 1890. An all out effort was made to convince the Village Fathers and to educate the village taxpayers as to the benefits of having a new firehouse built. They would not be satisfied nor would they rest until the proposition was placed before

the voters.

A letter campaign was undertaken in which the Company advised the voters that to maintain the sixty-three year old building then in use would cost more than to maintain a new building, which would eventually pay for itself by eliminating very costly repair bills. The letter further stated that regardless of repairs the current building would still be old and impractical, and that the cost in taxes for the new building would only increase $0.65 per thousand.



April 1954. Ex-chief - John Feeney, Assistant Chief - Frank Sullivan, 1st Lieutenant. - John Croyle, Captain - Art Kelley, 2nd Lieutenant. Richard J. Clark, Ex-chief - Michael Lubonty, Ex-Chief - Vincent Welsh, Secretary - Rod Bulley, Treasurer - George Carella.

Also pointed out was the importance of moving the building across the street because of the increase in traffic on that portion of Broadway, and the inability for drivers of the fire truck to see approaching vehicles around the bend north of the firehouse.

Perseverance paid off and the vote was to be taken, in six polls, at a special election on January 6, 1953, which would or would not authorize a bond issue and a $3,600.00 capital note for the construction of the new building. Lady Warren members naturally were extremely interested in the outcome of the vote and set up their own information center in the Municipal Building, the headquarters for the tally of the votes. The "Green Book" boys received the results of the vote even before the returns had been completed by village officials. At the outset, it looked bad for Lady Warren, and up until the time the District No. 2 returns came in the members sat and groaned.

The first report was received from District No. 5, with forty-three "NO" and thirty-one "YES." The groans began. The returns from District No. 6 all but made the men sit down and cry, with fourteen "YES" and fifty-six "No." Village Trustee John Taylor tallied the two districts and stated: "Ninety-nine taxpayers have voted "NO" and forty-five "YES;" it looks bad fellows."

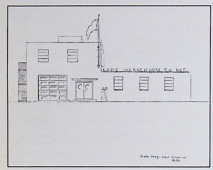
The moans and groans soon turned to cheers when the results of the vote from Lady Warren's quarters, the polling location for the 2nd District, were phoned in by Frank Sullivan. The vote stood at eighty "YES" and seven "NO." The total vote was then one hundred twenty-five "YES" and one hundred six "NO."

From that point on, the tide of the "battle" turned. The "Boys in Blue" became more and more enthusiastic and confident of victory when District No. 1 hiked the margin to twenty-three with a thirty-eight to thirty-four "YES" vote.
Still, Lady Warren feared another return such as the one from District No. 5. But the vote at

the high school, District No. 3, boosted the margin to thirty-four, with a thirty-six to twenty-five "YES" vote.

The victory came shortly thereafter, unofficially, when the returns from District No. 4 came in with forty-one "YES" and twenty-eight "NO." The taxpayers had spoken and approved by a vote of two hundred forty to one hundred ninety-three, the proposition authorizing the issuance of $67,500.00 in serial bonds and $3,600.00 in capital notes to erect the new building. Lady Warren had won! Trustee Taylor announced it, it was official and the celebrating began.

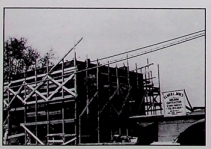
Now all that needed be done was to go out to bid and begin construction, or so the "Green Book" boys thought. Bids for construction of the new building were received at the Municipal Building on June 17, 1953. In addition, separate and independent bids for plumbing and gas-fitting; steam heating, hot water heating, ventilating and air conditioning apparatus, and electrical wiring and standard lighting fixtures were also received by the board.



Final action on the low bid of $71,454.98 was taken by the village board on July 8, 1953. One can only imagine the state of Lady Warren's members on that night when all of the bids for the new firehouse were rejected by the village board. The cost of construction had exceeded the $71,000.00 appropriated at the taxpayer's election of January. The low bids for construction that had been received by the board in June had totaled $71,465.00, and left no money out of the original appropriation for architectural, legal or engineering fees, which amounted to eight or ten thousand dollars more.



Truck floor being prepared for concrete.



New fire house under construction.

Mayor Harry W. Schuler speaking for the board stated the decision left three possible courses of action: (1) A new election be held to obtain additional money, (2) Submission of revised plans and getting new estimates, or (3) Dropping the plans for the building if no agreement could be reached on a plan within the appropriation. The village board then held a private meeting with Lady Warren members and architect John Stone

Thornley. It is reported that the "Green Book" boys were "displeased" with the entire setup and vehement in their statements to the board. The village board, however, remained adamant and refused to exceed the amount specified in the proposition voted by the people.

The feeling of Lady Warren was that the people had voted for a specific type of building which included a recreation hall that would be used for their children as a youth center. They were led to believe the price stated in the request for the appropriation was the price that would adequately do the job and there would have been no problems had the board given a true cost of the building for the people to vote on.

What a dilemma! With the board tossing the "hot potato" back into the lap of Lady Warren, the decision was, for all practical purposes, left with the firemen. Lady Warren was opposed to another election fearing the results might be different and leave them without a building at all. On the other hand, they were hesitant to accept a new building which would be no better in design or purpose than the current building.



South side.

A special meeting was called by the company to discuss this most unfortunate turn of events. At that meeting, it was proposed that an attorney be hired by the company to handle the situation. Although the company members voted not to engage a lawyer, it was reported that a leading attorney had tentatively agreed to represent the company in proceedings to compel action by the village.



Backyard view.

The village board met with Lady Warren members and architect Thornley in a special session on July 30th, in an attempt to resolve the impasse created by the boards previous actions. The construction of the new building was re-bid as a result of that special meeting.



Front view.

The second opening of bids took place on Wednesday August 12, 1953, and left the situation just about where it was. Low bids for the job totaled $77,267.00, still far above the $71,000.00 appropriated, and still with no provision for

architectural, engineering, and legal fees.

No action was taken by the village board pending further conferences with architect Thornley and representatives from Lady Warren. At a meeting on August 26th, it was decided to revise the plans for the proposed building. The principal change was the elimination of a wing proposed for the south end of the building. The recreation hall, which was to be in that part of the building, would be incorporated in the basement of the revised structure. Bids were sought for a third time. Finally, on Wednesday November 24, 1953, the village board awarded the contracts based on the new bids as follows: Elmer Jones of Stony Point at $53,330.00 for general contracting; John Ochs of Congers at $2,462.00 for electrical work; and Nelson Phillips of Stony Point at $2,685.00 for plumbing, and $2,875.00 for heating.

Construction of the new firehouse began in 1954 under the watchful eye of Assistant Chief Frank Sullivan, who also chaired the building committee. Completion of the project was promised in approximately six months. The job, six months behind schedule, was plagued with delays and cost overruns. The basement floor had to be done over and other work as well. Part of the funds had to come from Lady Warren when the amount raised by referendum proved to be inadequate. The membership was particularly irritated over the fact that the Wayne Hose Company firehouse in Stony Point was started after theirs and was already catching up. The "Green Book" boys put it this way: "the contractor is angry, the architect is angry - and certainly we are angry." This prompted the members to wrap the unfinished building in a large ribbon with an attached sign which read "Do Not Open till Christmas of 1955." This made the village board angry!



1954 - Fire house wrapped like a Christmas present.



June 1955 - Lady Warren Hose new quarters. Building completed and Ahrens-Fox ready to go.

Eventually the new home of Lady Warren was finished, and accepted by the village board at a special meeting on Tuesday March 29, 1955. The board's action followed a detailed inspection of the new structure by village officials, and a conference with John Thornley and Elmer Jones, at which time final details for the acceptance were ironed out. Some details were modified, and adjustments were made in the final contract price, which included the elimination of stair treads to the second floor stairway (which saved a whopping

$100.00) and the "island" for shrubbery at the entrance.

Lady Warren was now able to move into her new home. Scaled down and less elaborate than originally planned, it was a new and adequate home nonetheless.

The Harold B. Holt Post, American Legion, had their eye on Lady Warren's old building since the referendum for the new firehouse passed on January 6, 1953, but felt the minimum sale price of $7,500.00 set by the village board was too high. Another interested party was Anthony DePalma, who owned a bar and restaurant near the firehouse. However, the board indicated that a community organization such as the Legion would have preference in the negotiations and reconsidered the asking price.

On Wednesday May 25, 1955 the old firehouse was sold to the American Legion, Harold B. Holt Post #46 for the sum of $2,500.00. The Post occupied the building until January 1992 when it was turned over to the Arts Alliance of Haverstraw, an organization which occupies the building presently.

An open house was held on Saturday, May 28th, to celebrate the occupancy of the new firehouse. The building committee headed by Assistant Chief Frank Sullivan planned the event to which the public was invited. A crowd of several hundred people attended the open house party and inspection of the new quarters. Hundreds of hot dogs and large quantities of other food and refreshments were served by the firemen to their guests. In the evening, there was a block dance on Broadway in front of the firehouse to the music of the Hudson Valley Ramblers. The dance began at 8:00 P.M. and lasted into the wee hours.

Firemen's Memorial

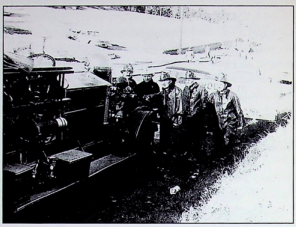
Traditionally, every year since its inception in June 1908, the Haverstraw Fire Department has paid tribute to their departed members in a memorial service. By May 1955, work was well underway to erect a permanent memorial on the plaza at the foot of Main Street overlooking the Hudson River.

The new memorial was designed and erected under the supervision of the H.K. Peacock Memorial Studios of New York City. A new fence was erected around the old "Monument" site, which had been paved with flagstone. The memorial, cut from Vermont granite, is simple in design, with a helmeted head of a fireman in bas-relief and simple wording add to its quiet dignity: "In memory of the Volunteer Firemen of the Village of Haverstraw - Erected by the Haverstraw Fire Department 1955."

Because of the location of the monument, the parade route reversed its customary tradition, starting from the Municipal Building up New Main Street, across Hudson Avenue, down Westside Avenue and Broadway, and then down Main Street. The Department was escorted

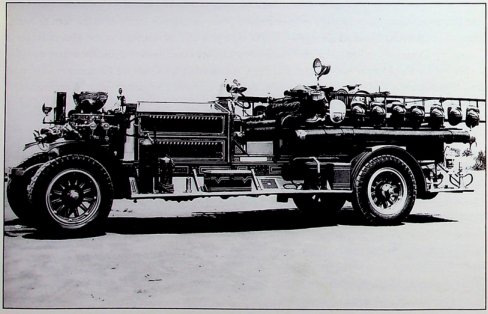
by the New Jersey and New York Firemen's Band.

Although there were downpours of rain earlier and later on that Sunday, June 16th, the weather was clear for the ceremonies at the monument and the parade, which preceded the formal program. Assistant Chief Charles M. Wurm, program chairman and master of ceremonies, led the assembled firemen and several hundred spectators in the pledge of allegiance, after which the invocation was asked by the Rev. William J. Remey, a Department Chaplain.



December 1957 - Lodge Fire - AhrensFox standing by. George Fay, Chief Simko, Tom Sullivan, Art Kelly, Rich Clark.

Mayor Harry W. Schuler spoke of the new monument as a symbol of the spirit of cooperation which made Haverstraw a healthy community. He also pointed out



1925 Ahrens-Fox as it looked in 1950.

that the memorial was erected with funds that had remained from the previous years firemen's convention hosted by the Haverstraw Fire Department.

Prior to the unveiling, the 23rd Psalm was read by Rev. Harold J. Quigley, a Department Chaplain. Chief Thomas Schuler from General Warren Emergency Co. No. 2 then unveiled the memorial, the culmination of the dreams of department leaders for many years. A wreath honoring the departed members was placed by Chief Schuler. After the memorial wreath had been placed by Chief Schuler, the band played "Nearer My God to Thee."

Department secretary Wilson Turner then read the names of Andrew Petrichko of Cosgriff Hose Co. No. 4 and Valentine Rembe of Lady Warren, who had died during the past year. "Taps" sounded from the steps of the King's Daughters Library by John Arabitto, bugler with the New Jersey and New York Firemen's Band.

Captain Michael H. Prendergast of Rescue Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 delivered the dedication address, in which he emphasized the historical significance of the site chosen for the monument. In the early days of the fire department, at that time a century previous, practically all of the organizations events took place in the neighborhood of the monument. He went on to praise the work done by members long since departed, in serving the community faithfully over the years. Following Captain Prendergast's address, Rabbi Moshe Kranzler, Department Chaplain, pronounced the benediction and the band played the "Star Spangled Banner."

The firemen's memorial has since been moved from its original location at the foot of Main Street to its present location along Route 9W on a plot of land donated by the Mount Repose Cemetery. Annually in June, the Haverstraw Fire Department marches to the site where wreaths are placed by the Department Chief and the Captain of each of the five Companies as well as the Department's Ladies Auxiliary. It has become a custom to gather for a "Communion" breakfast after the memorial service is concluded.

First Firehouse Auction

Lady Warren held its first Annual Dinner in their new firehouse on January 7, 1956. The interior of the building was decorated with green and white streamers, and a roast beef dinner was served under the direction of Andrew Sullivan and his committee. James J. Freeman was toastmaster for the event, and there were brief speeches by Ex-Chief Michael Lubonty, Ex-Chief Vincent Welsh, Assistant Chief Frank Sullivan, Captain John Croyle, First Lieutenant Richard Clark, Second Lieutenant John Lawless, Secretary Roderick Bulley and Treasurer George Carella.

Historical Footnote

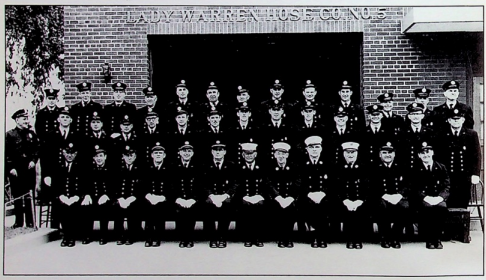
Peter Reilly passed away on January 12, 1956, at the age of 80. He was a life member of Lady Warren, an Ex-Chief of the Haverstraw Fire Department, a constable and deputy sheriff. Yet to generations, "Petey"

was the person who knew where to locate the boys and girls who found the charms and appeals of the great outdoors more fun than going to school He had served as the Haverstraw school system's truant officer for many years.

On February 23, 1956, Chief Joseph Simko from Relief Hose Co. No. 3, recommended a plan to purchase two-way radios for each of the five companies and try to bring the department into the twentieth century. The proposal provoked heated exchanges between the Chief and a few members of the village board. Chief Simko told the board he was "not telling them how to run their affairs;" he was just trying to improve the department. At the village board meeting of April 24, 1956, Mayor Harry Schuler told the fire department that the board was not in favor of the radios at that time and he had not appropriated funds for the purchase in the new fiscal budget. It is unknown to the authors when the radio plan was finally implemented, but it is hard to picture today's department without them.

The Great Badge and Hat Controversy

For many, years the officers of Lady Warren wore gold badges, insignia, and buttons on their dress uniform. This also included a gold band on the blue hat they also wore. Apparently, at the October 1956 Fire Council Meeting, it was proposed that only Chief Officers of the Department would wear gold and that all company officers would wear silver badges and



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - Company Photo 1958. *Top Row:* Jerry Clabby, Frank O'Brien, Donato DiCarlo, Charles Siebold, Art Kelly, William Welky, Fred DeCota, John Sebastian, William Maynard, John Lubonty, Carmen Martello, John Hafele, James Freeman, Sr. *Middle Row:* Joseph Kenyock, Richard J. Clark, Gene Willet, Red Bulley, Joseph Morina, Sr., William Livsey, Sr., Clarence Horan, Jr., Frank McGowan, George Horan, Bernard Hughes, Jr., William Tiner, Joseph Kwiecinski, Thomas Duffy - Alphonse Gamboli in Fire Police Uniform. *Front Row:* Andrew Kenyock, Edward Giroux, Sam Hopper, Robert McNichol, James Lewis, Thomas Sullivan, Michael Lubonty, Frank Sullivan, Jack Feeney, Vincent Welsh, John Croyle, Ambrose Lubonty.

accessories. At Lady Warren's company meeting on November 6, 1956, Art Kelly took exception to the statement contained in the Fire Council minutes. After discussing the matter, Lady Warren decided they would not make a change in their uniforms and thus started a controversy, which in part, has continued on and off to the present day.

The controversy continued to fester at the January 4, 1957 company meeting when Wardens Croyle and Jones reported on the December 1956 Council Minutes. According to the instructions given to Lady Warren's Wardens, they were to ask about the company officer's badges. They reported that at the last council meeting (December 1956) a "non-existing" Warden stated that Lady Warren's Wardens were out of order, and that the question of badges had been settled by the department. The company discussed the matter and determined the Council Minutes were out of order and the Wardens were instructed to notify the Council of the company's decision.

Once again, at the June 6, 1957 company meeting, the matter of badges resurfaced. A motion by Art Kelly was passed stating that " Lady Warren has their own badges and if the other companies of the department wish to conform to us they would be more than welcome."

Further action was taken by the company at the July 1, 1958 meeting, on a motion by Danny DiCarlo and seconded by George Horan pertaining to the gold badges worn by Lady Warren's officers. "We shall keep the gold badges." This motion was passed and carried.

It wasn't until July 1959 that action was taken by the company regarding the hats which would be worn by department and company officers. It had been proposed that Chiefs and Company line officers would wear white hats in department parades. It was the feeling of the company at that July 7th meeting that the company instructed the wardens to vote in favor of the Chiefs wearing white hats in department parades, but that line officers were to wear blue.

Good-bye gold! The question of silver badges once again reared its ugly head at the September 1, 1959 company meeting. After lengthy discussion a motion was made by Vincent Welsh and seconded by Roderick Bulley, that the company finally go along with the department and change to the silver badges - but no white hats for company officers. The motion was duly passed and carried. The company eventually went along with the white hats for company line officers as well. But controversy over uniforms still continues as will be seen in later accounts.

Out with the Old - In with the New

Jumping back in time we take you once again to Lady Warren's company meeting of November 6, 1956, which would be the start of a new era for the company. At that meeting, Captain Lawless appointed a committee consisting of Danny DiCarlo, Frank Sullivan, John Croyle, and Vincent Welsh to investigate the possibility of purchasing a new fire truck to replace the



Haverstraw Fire Department Underwater Rescue Team at Bear Mt. Pool. *Top Row:* G. Horan #5, Gene Willett #5, F. LoPresti #1. *Front Row:* Jim Schuler #2, T. Sullivan #5, A. Liabony #5, C. Horan #5, G. Mcelroy #4.



Underwater Rescue Team - Bulline Pond - January 1959. Jack Gunnity, Tom LoPresti, Frank Sullivan, Tom Sullivan, Bob Cuscak, Jim Schuler (in the water).

"renowned" Ahrens-Fox. The Fox had been in continuous service for thirty-one since it had been purchased in 1925. After gaining approval from the village board in December 1956, the committee spent countless hours trying to find an apparatus that would please everyone. At the April meeting in 1957, Committee Chairman Dan DiCarlo reported to the company that the committee had run into a "snake" in their attempt to get the company a new Ahrens-fox since the price was a little too high for the village board. He also stated that he would keep working on the idea of a piston pump until he thought it was hopeless. And, at the company meeting in June 1957, the committee reported that it was indeed hopeless since the Ahrens-Fox Company was out of business. The committee recommended to go with the Mack Company. On August 29, 1957, the Village Board approved the purchase of a $25,000.00, 1000 GPM, Mack pumper to replace the "Cannonball." On June 19, 1958 Lady Warren took delivery of their new apparatus, and one week later on June 26th, retired the Ahrens-Fox, after thirty-three years of faithful service, with a siren blowing farewell on its last journey out of the village.

Historical Footnote

The last alarm answered by the Ahrens-Fox was on June 4, 1958, Box 62 on Union Street. The fire was out on arrival.

An underwater rescue team was added to the Haverstraw Fire Department in August 1958. Nine firemen had trained for three months at the Bear Mountain Pool to develop the sub-surface rescue techniques. Three instructors were also a part of the group of nine "Scuba-Divers." Eugene Willett and Thomas Sullivan of Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 and James Schuler of General Warren Emergency Co. No. 2 had enrolled the previous winter in a course sponsored by the Piermont Fire Department at the Nyack Y.M.C.A. Their training took three months and the fee for the course was paid by the men themselves.

The summer training for the rest of the team was made possible through the cooperation of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, which permitted the men to use the pool. The department and the Village Board agreed to purchase the equipment to get the team started. Lady Warren offered the use of the meeting room for the "teams" meetings and helped to raise money to buy the equipment. The divers were Clarence Horan, George Horan and Ambrose Lubonty of Lady Warren, Griffith McElroy and James Finnerty of Cosgriff Hose, and Frank LoPresti of Rescue Hook and Ladder.

On August 8, 1958, William VanPelt had gone down in the Bull Line off the end of Jefferson Street. Team member Tom Sullivan suited up to go below and search. Sullivan went without a mask since his was missing from the gear box which was stored on General Warren's truck. Both divers ran out of air and the underwater search was abandoned.

Chief Sullivan and a village patrolman proceeded to comb the area with grappling hooks from General Warren's boat. It was not long after that Chief Sullivan hooked a finger of the victim and the body was recovered. Chief Frank Sullivan was a master with the "hooks." Over the years he had recovered more than ten victims from various bodies of water both in and out of the Village of Haverstraw.

Rescuers were Ready on a Cold Day

Approximately 4:43 P.M.. on January 5, 1959, four employees of the Empire State Chair Company factory reported seeing a child on a sled coasting west to east from Jefferson Street over the Bull Line pond and then plunge into its icy waters. A village patrolman and a volunteer fireman, ignoring the steel sharp blasts of wind, put out in the aluminum dory of General Warren Emergency Co., combing the water with grappling hooks. They returned to shore numbed by the cold and coated with ice from the backwash of their lurching craft.



Blinkey Mike - Lady Warren's first Dalmatian mascot - 1959.

Tom Sullivan of Lady Warren and a member of the departments "Scuba" team, put on his gear and prepared to submerge into the ponds depths near the chair factory at the foot of Allison Avenue and Broad Street. Had there been sure indication the child was lost somewhere below, he would have gone down.

"The wind whipped like a dozen cat-o-nine tails. The temperature was under 15 degrees and falling fast in the gathering twilight." At 5:15 P.M. Chief Frank Sullivan of Lady Warren told his men to return to quarters. A box and discarded Christmas tree had been mistaken for a boy on his sleigh. Although this proved a false alarm, Haverstraw's "Dive" team was ready, willing,

and able to do the job.

The Underwater Rescue Team did make a recovery during the winter of 1959 - 60. The team undertook an "ice" dive to test their new underwater dry suits. While breaking through the ice, a crow bar from General Warren's truck slipped through the hole and sunk to the bottom of the Bull Line. This prompted the following from Chief Frank Sullivan: "I don't care about testing those damn dry suits, but you better get your ass on the bottom and get that crow bar."

Historical Footnote

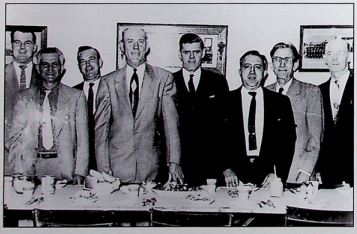
"Blinky Mike," first Dalmatian mascot of Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5 responded to his first alarm on March 29, 1959.

The Green Tie Incident of '59

The squabble over the regulation uniform for the Haverstraw Fire Department continued into 1959. The Fire Council was determined to have a standard uniform for the men when they marched as a department.

As well as the gold/silver button issue and the white/blue hat issue, there was also the matter of collar ornaments on the uniform coats. They were to be eliminated. Since the late 1800's Lady Warren's collar ornaments, "LW"s, were actually embroidered into the jackets and could not be removed without destroying the jackets. The controversy continued.

But it was the Department Inspection Parade held on Saturday August 29, 1959 that sent the Department Officers and the Village Board into a tizzy. The year 1959 marked the 90th Anniversary of Lady Warren's founding andgreen "Western" style ties so indicating had been purchased as part of the celebration. Just prior to "step-off" all of the Lady Warren members in attendance put on a green tie over their black "regulation" tie and proceeded with the march.



25 Year Dinner: T. Sullivan, T. Carella, J. Lewis, F. Horan, R. McNichol, F. Rundell, F. Gokey, F. Sullivan.



Leaving Haverstraw for Mardi Gras Parade at Orangetown Engine Company, Nyack, NY. October 1959. *Front Row:* Frank Horan, John Hafele, Sy Jones (General Warren), Frank Sullivan, Blinky Mike. *Second Row:* Jerry Clabby, Charles Fales (General Warren), Jim Lewis, Teddy Gerioux, Ambrose Lubonty, Richard J. Clark. *Third Row:* Frank McGowan, Tom Duffy, Patty Hurley, Richard McNichol, Tom Sullivan.

When the company marched past the reviewing stand, Mayor William J. Freeman, the Village Board, and the Department Officers, were furious. Frank Sullivan of Lady Warren was Department chief at the time, but had no knowledge of what the company was up to until it passed in review.

"The wearing of the green" came up for discussion when a special meeting of the Fire Council was called on September 10, 1959 for a hearing and disposition of Lady Warren's disobeying of the orders of dress in the parade held for inspection. Only members of the Fire Council and the officers of Lady Warren had a voice at that meeting. Captain James Lewis and 1st Lieutenant Robert McNichol represented the company. 2nd Lieutenant Thomas Sullivan was absent.

The Council was most displeased with the incident since the form of dress for the parade had been established just two days prior at the August Council Meeting. They felt the action taken by Lady Warren was nothing short of blatant disregard and disobedience for a policy set for the

parade and the move was deliberate in their estimation.

Captain Lewis reported he did not give the order for the men to don the ties. They had merely been purchased for the 90th Anniversary and it was a spur of the moment decision to wear them in the parade.

Many of the council members didn't buy it as is apparent from the minutes of that meeting. As the meeting progressed, it was obvious that most members would not be content with a mere slap on the hand for Lady Warren and her officers. Options discussed ranged from disbanding the company, or removing the officers to monetary fines.

At the conclusion, it was determined that the company would be fined $1.00 for each man in the line of march, and the fine would be paid one week after the next company meeting. It was also stated that if the fine was not paid, the Captain and Lieutenants would be suspended for thirty days, and subject to further suspensions if the fine was not paid within thirty days. The company was also warned that if another such incident were to occur, the Officers would be dismissed from the department. The fine of $40.00 was duly paid, by an anonymous donor, $1.00 for each of 39 men in the line of march and $1.00 for "Blinky Mike" who also sported a green tie for the parade.

Jamaicans Like Green Ties

Not everyone was displeased with the green ties of Lady Warren. The following is taken from the front page of *The Rockland County Times* on September 17, 1959:

"Editor, The Times:

We have just returned from an upstate vacation which included a day tour in your lovely town. We were fortunate to have stopped on Aug. 29 and to have seen a most enjoyable parade.

The bands were wonderful, and everyone I spoke to enjoyed the marches. Haverstraw can be very proud of their firemen. The trumpets of flowers gave an atmosphere of years gone by.

And not being Irish, but appreciating democracy, we especially enjoyed your company with the friendly dog and the green ties. They were a heart-warming sight and brought a lift to the parade.

If it is not asking too much, we would appreciate your conveying by print our thanks to your town and firemen for their parade, which was a highlight to our vacation.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Medved and family
Jamaica, N.Y., Sept. 10

Now It Can Be Told

Was the action of the Lady Warren deliberate and in defiance of the Fire Council on that August day?

Recently, discussions with members present during the incident reveal that was not the case. It seems that several Lady Warren members had attended the wedding of Gene Willet earlier in the day. During the course of the wedding, their "Attitudes" were amply "Adjusted." At the lineup 2nd Lieutenant Sullivan remarked that the green ties were in the car and why not wear them in the parade. The green ties were worn over the black regulation ties so that the company would be in compliance with the Fire Councils prescribed uniform for the day.

Who Was That Anonymous Donor?

For years the company was led to believe or just simply believed that Dr. Matthew Sullivan, a renowned local physician with no affiliation with Lady Warren, paid the $40.00 fine. Just this past summer (1994) the real donor was rooted out and confessed to the donation. James Freeman, a sixty-six year Lady Warren member, was actually the Company's benefactor.

Chapter 9: 1960 - 1969

The 1960's were a busy time for the members of Lady Warren. In just nine years the Company would be celebrating it's 100th Anniversary. Much of the early 60's was devoted to raising funds for the Centennial Celebration. These fund raisers took the form of Turkey Raffles and Irish Nites, and a couple of unusual ones as well.

During the summer of 1960, a committee headed by Tom Sullivan arranged an engagement with a Rockland County All Star Softball Team and "The King and His Court." This unique four man softball team traveled much of the United States and Canada, taking on the nine man home teams. July 20, 1960 was the night of the big game. A crowd estimated at about 2,500 fans (one of the largest groups to attend a sporting event in twenty years) watched as the famed softball pitcher and his team mates handcuffed the regulation Rockland All-star team. During the course of the game the "King" Eddie Feigner pitched to one batter from his knees, to one batter from second base, and to one batter blindfolded. The game ended with a score of 3 to 1 in favor of "The King and His Court".

July 4, 1961 saw Lady Warren, under Tom Duffy's committee, sponsor yet another sporting event, when a Rockland County All Star Softball team took on the "California Cuties." Seven hundred pleased customers went home satisfied by the comedy antics of the baseball clowns which comprised the ""Cuties." The team of eleven men dressed in women's fashions, played the All Stars under the lights of the Haverstraw Little League, beating them 5-2.

The big event for the year, however, was the return of "The King and His Court." This event once again chaired by Tom Sullivan, was held at the Babe Ruth Field, West Haverstraw, on Wednesday August 2, 1961. They came, they saw and they were entertained as the unbelievable Feigner and his Court once again trounced the Rockland All-Stars. This was to be the last time Lady Warren would sponsor this event. At the regular meeting in April 1962, the Company voted not to hire "The King and His Court for the summer or 1962, nor would they do so again.



1960 Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association Parade in Monticello, New York. Frank Sullivan walking Blinky Mike, Danny DiCarlo and Jack Dianis pulling hose cart.

HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

1962 "Haverstraw - A British flag flew over Haverstraw yesterday for the first time in 187 years of American independence. It went unnoticed for more than 9 hours.
A Canadian flag featuring the British Union on a red field was run up on the flagpole of the Lady Warren

Hose Company No. 5 firehouse before 7 A.M. The flag remained there all day until it was hauled down shortly before 5 P.M. by Fireman Charles Sebold."

Village Fire Chief George Stokes reported the flag was believed to have been found on a Village garbage truck and flown as a joke. The Village is not taking the incident lightly, added Stokes.

When questioned about the incident, fireman from Lady Warren said that only Blinky-Mike knows who did it, but isn't talking.

On January 28, 1963 the Village of Haverstraw was struck with yet another devastating blaze that burned for more than nine hours and caused approximately $200,000.00 in damage to the Vandenburgh building on Broadway. The fire began about 1:30 P.M. in the basement of Doughty's Drug store which was owned and operated by Mr. And Mrs. Harry Zeh. The fire completely destroyed the Drug Store and two apartments above it, and forced the evacuation of the People's Bank and many of the adjoining buildings. Billowing clouds of smoke from both the front and rear of the building were blown across the entire business district, turning the midday sun into a dim orange glow over Broadway. Reports indicated that the smoke was visible across the Hudson River in Tarrytown. In the basement of Doughty's Drug Store was a tremendous stock of cards and cardboard products which prevented the fire department from gaining entry in to it. The fire continued to burn for hours and the department's efforts



The aftermath of Doughty's Drug Store fire which occurred January 28, 1963 and burned for more than nine hours.



The "Old Guard" - Charlie Siebold and Blinky Mike watching the day pass by. Summer 1963.

were hampered by the severe cold weather. Ice piled up on the hoses and the streets, as much as six inches in some places. Sheer volume of water finally triumphed, and after nine hours of battle the fire was officially pronounced dead, at 10:30 P.M. Along with Haverstraw's five Companies, the West Haverstraw Fire Department and the Empire Hook and Ladder Co. #1 of Nyack were also at the scene. The Rockland County Times reported that ten firemen were injured in the blaze, all minor bruises and smoke inhalation.

During the early part of the year 1962, a general discussion among the five companies of the Haverstraw Fire Department was held for making the long standing parade route of the Annual Inspection shorter. It was the general opinion of most department members that the present route was to long (approximately 3-1/2 miles). This came about from complaints from the various musical units and guest companies who appear in the parade, as well as some complaints from the older members of the Haverstraw Fire Department. In some cases musical units base their price on the length of the march.

The proposed new route for the Inspection Parade was to be as follows: east on Tor Avenue, north on West Street, north on Broadway, west on Westside Avenue, south on Hudson Avenue, east on Tor Avenue, north on Clove Avenue, east on New Main Street. The official breakup spot would be New Main Street and Maple Avenue. The vote at the Fire Council Meeting of August 1962 was as follows: Cosgriff Hose Company No. 4, Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5, and Relief Hose Company No. 3 in favor of the new route. Rescue Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 was opposed. General Warren Emergency Company No. 2 voted to go with the majority vote. It was declared at this meeting of the Council that the new route would be in effect for the 1963 Inspection Parade. The Chairman for the 1963 parade, Assistant Chief John Croyle of Lady Warren, set up the parade using this plan.

The Wrong Way Parade

At 5:55 P.M., August 10, 1963, just five minutes before the parade was to begin, the companies were informed by Village Mayor William J. Freeman that the old parade route would be followed. His excuse was that the village was never informed of the change. True, no official letter was sent to the Village Board due to an oversight on the part of the Fire Council, but to make a statement that he had never heard of this change for a whole year when the whole fire department and hundreds of citizens of the Village knew of it, is hard to comprehend.

Lady Warren and Cosgriff Hose took exception to the sudden change in the parade route, which had been voted on and approved by the Fire Council. And, when the parade started on

Maple Avenue at Tor Avenue, Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5, under the leadership of Captain George Horan, and Cosgriff Hose Company No. 4 left the rest of the parade, turning east on Tor Avenue to West Street. They continued north on West Street to the Bank Corner along with their guests. There they waited until the parade came along and resumed their appointed places in the line of march. The two companies apparatus had been sent along the prescribed route.

Official notice was taken at the Village Board Meeting, Wednesday August 14, 1963, regarding the dispute that had arisen over the parade. Mayor Freeman decreed that the two offending companies would forfeit the money ($81.00) the village usually contributed toward hiring marching bands for the parade. This action was taken since the two companies did not follow the full route of the parade but chose to take their own route. Mayor Freeman further stated that the Board would meet with the Fire Council to "attempt to strengthen the relationship between the Board and its subdivisions."

During the month of April, 1964, the newly elected Chief of the Haverstraw Fire Department Joseph P. Gordon of General Warren Emergency Company No. 2, appeared before the Village Board to inform them of the date of the Annual Inspection, and the new parade route. The Board, at this time, decided the old route would still be in effect, despite the wishes of the Chief of the Department and the Fire Council.

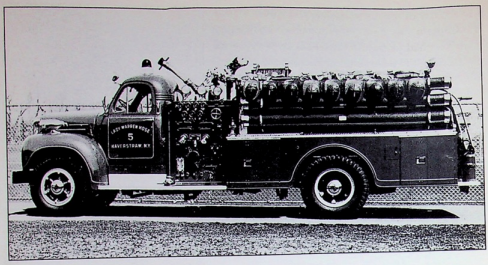
Rebellious Firemen Face Rebuke

"Old timers in the Haverstraw Fire Department used to call the headquarters of Lady Warren 'Insurrection Hall.' The company's rebellious actions in August 1964 once again gave rise to that label. The annual inspection and parade of August 1, 1964, were at the seat of the displeasure of the company, as the Village Board persisted in having the Fire Department follow the old parade route.

When the Village Board and the Fire Chiefs came around to inspect Lady Warren's quarters, there was no officer present, and a proper inspection could not be made. Furthermore, the company chose not to march in the inspection parade. It is believed that this was the first time, in then, the 110 years of the Haverstraw Fire Departments history that any company refused to take part in an official departmental inspection."

Needless to say these actions greatly agitated the Village Fathers. "They are good firemen and if the whistle blew tonight, they would roll," Mayor William J. Freeman said, "but their actions at the inspection were disrespectful to the Village Board, the Fire Department and every taxpayer in the village."

When Mayor Freeman asked what the "Fire Council was going to do about it," Chief Joseph



1958 Mack as it looked in 1964 with Blinky Mike on top.

Gordon, replied that the Council lacked jurisdiction, and only the Board could act. Trustee Dominic Gamboli stated: "I don't think we should forget about it. We should meet with the fire chiefs and No. 5's and see what can be done."

The Mayor replied that the fire company took their actions knowingly. "I don't think talk will do any good." He later stated the ultimate action that could face the company would be to take the fire engine out of the company headquarters and lock the firehouse door. The mayor did point out that all are volunteers and any disciplinary action should necessarily be viewed in that light.

The Captain, George Horan, and two Lieutenants, Howarth Macaulay and Edward McCormick were to be summoned to a meeting with the Village Board and the chief of the fire department.

The above account was taken from local newspapers, and tells only one side of the story and a slanted one at that.

At the regular meeting of Lady Warren, on July 7, 1964, the company voted not to participate in the Annual Inspection because it was still on record with the Fire Council that the new parade route was in effect. At no time was there any discussion on the part of the company not to have the apparatus and the building in the most efficient condition. The week prior to the parade date members of the company worked on the apparatus, building, and grounds. This fact could be substantiated by different members of the department, including an assistant chief, who observed this procedure while passing their quarters.

On the day of the inspection, as fate would have it, the Captain was at an outing in another township, which he had planned to attend many weeks prior to the date. The two Lieutenants were working.

It had been stated by some sources that the building was locked and no one was anywhere near the quarters. Truck Foreman Frank Sullivan, who was also the custodian of the building was on hand to show the Village Board and the Chiefs the apparatus and the building. The only room that was not open to the inspection team was the kitchen. This was due to the fact that no refreshments were being prepared, since the company would not be participating in the parade.

But as is often the case there was an unwillingness to get all of the facts and both sides of the story. A letter was written to the Editor of *The Rockland County Times* by Lady Warren Captain George Horan, on March 12, 1965, which stresses this point.

"To the Editor:
This is a thank you note from me to you, Mr. Editor, for publishing my letter to you and for your slanted reply.

It is too bad that you couldn't accept my invitation for a news conference but you were true to form. As always, you write yourself away from getting both sides of an issue. This is just another example of your unwillingness to get both sides of a story.

I have in my possession articles from the Times to prove that the article in question is incorrect. You may read them if you will just take the time and visit the Quarters of Lady Warren.

And in closing, Mr. Editor, I don't stack the deck like the members of the Two Face Club usually do."



The Broadway Theater, a Haverstraw landmark, was totally destroyed by fire on April 22, 1966.



So great was the volume of smoke and flame in the theater the major attack took place on the Lincoln Street side of the building.



Fire raged from the curtain tower at the rear of the theater. Once burning through the roof created a natural chimney.

It should be noted that after all was said and done, neither the department nor the village authorities took any real disciplinary action against Lady Warren.

For generations, the Broadway Theater stood as a Haverstraw landmark on the corner of Broadway and Lincoln Street. It was totally destroyed by a fire on April 22, 1966, which was reported at 5:00 P.M. And raged on for hours before it was finally extinguished.



Cosgriff Hose Co. No. 4 supplies water to hand lines used to battle the blaze.

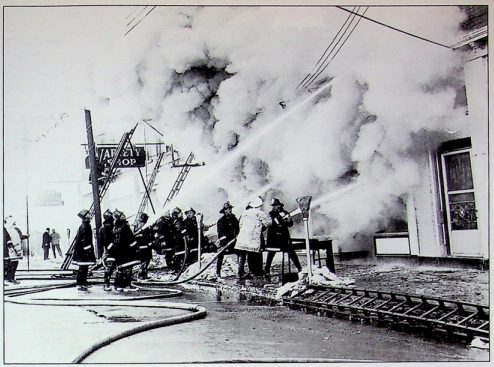
The battle against the fire was a technical triumph. Haverstraw fireman, directed by Chief McGuiness and his assistants, made the initial onslaught against the blaze. The first attack was made from the Lincoln Street side, since the blaze was concentrated in the orchestra area in front of the stage. As the flames swirled up to the concrete reinforced roof, the smoke increased until the positions on Lincoln Street were almost untenable. Firemen who had worked their way into the auditorium were driven back, as were the men on the roof.

A hose line on the adjacent building, 31 Broadway, kept the fire from spreading. Water poured on the Lincoln Street wall kept the fire from jumping across the street to the M & R Store building.

The firemen shifted positions with the progress of the blaze, minimizing the danger to adjacent structures. Mutual Aid companies were called to the scene and were deployed as follows: Wayne Hose Company No. 1 of Stony Point pumped from the Bull Line at McKenzie Avenue and Volunteer Hose Company of West Haverstraw was a relay pumper at Jefferson Street, pushing water to the fire scene. S. W. Johnson of Garnerville and David B. Roche of Thiells pumped water from the Empire Chair Factory to the scene. The firemen poured over 4,000 gallons of water a minute for more than four hours, well over a million gallons pouring from the nozzles.

The stage and scenery loft at the rear of the building proved an effective fire stop. The contents of the theater burned fiercely, but the concrete and terra cotta tile walls stood as a barrier. When the fire eventually burned through the roof of the scenery loft, it acted as a giant flue, pulling fire and smoke up into the tower.

Although the fire was contained to the theater building, there was extensive smoke damage in the neighboring building at 31 Broadway. Other buildings in the area suffered minor smoke damage. Paul Wolslavsky, whose house was directly in the shadow of the towering scene loft



Smoke billows from the Slacks Furniture Store, December 31, 1966. The fire burned for three hours destroying the store at #47, 49, and 51 as well as the Mertzel and Nelson home at #53 Broadway.

of the theater, was taken to the home of Mrs. Alfred Rosenberg for the night. Other senior citizens, afflicted by the smoke were cared for by relatives or neighbors.

Miraculously, no one was seriously injured during the nearly nine hour battle to contain and extinguish the blaze. Only minor injuries were reported by several of the firemen.

Another of Haverstraw's major blazes occurred on September 28, 1966, as fire ripped through the Congregation Sons of Jacob Synagogue on Clove Avenue. The alarm was sounded at 4:30 P.M. Fire had engulfed the entire roof and was shooting out of the rear windows when the department arrived on the scene, under the command of Chief Lawrence McGuiness. The Sacred Scrolls of the Torah were removed by members of the department while the fire raged overhead in the roof of the structure.

Only thirty minutes after the alarm was sounded, the roof over the main worship section collapsed with a resounding crash. Fortunately no one was injured. The Haverstraw Fire Department was aided by the West Haverstraw, Stony Point and David B. Roche Fire Departments.

On December 31, 1966, a fire destroyed the Slack's Furniture Store at #47, 49 and 51 Broadway, and burned for three hours. The blaze also completely destroyed the Mertzel and Nelson home at 53 Broadway. The fire was a raging inferno when discovered at 11:45 A.M. The Haverstraw Fire Department under the command of Chief Lawrence "Red" McGuiness, from Relief Hose Company No. 3, had to beat the flames back into the building from the front and rear. Due to the great amount of bedding and upholstered furniture, the fire was intense and extended in every direction. Chief McGuiness summoned aid from the West Haverstraw and Stony Point Fire Departments who drafted water from the Bull Line at Warren Avenue. The New City and Congers Fire Departments drafted water from the Bull Line at the Empire Chair Factory off Broad Street. Also called to the scene was the S. W. Johnson Fire Company of Garnerville, Orangetown Engine Company of Nyack, and the David B. Roche Fire Company of Thiells. As many as two hundred firefighters were involved in fighting the blaze. Three Haverstraw firefighters were injured in the blaze, the most serious being Assistant Chief Theodore Ginda of Cosgriff Hose. Chief Ginda was operating above the Slacks store when he was overcome by smoke and had to be carried out to the street by other firemen. Chief Ginda was revived by the crew of the Haverstraw Ambulance Corps and transported to Nyack Hospital, where he refused to be admitted. When he returned to the scene, Chief McGuiness refused to let him return to duty. This exemplifies the courage and determination of all Haverstraw's Firemen.

HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE:

The serious condition of John Croyle of Lady Warren was on everyone's mind as the Delegates to the Annual Chief's Convention met at Lady Warren, Saturday April 6, 1968. Retiring Chief Lawrence McGuiness of Relief Hose Co. No. 3, opened the meeting and appointed John McCabe to act as chairman for the convention. The first order of business was a prayer for Chief Croyle, and his unanimous election as Chief of the Haverstraw Fire Department followed.

Word then came to the convention floor that Chief Croyle, age 56, had died in the Nyack Hospital.

Fireman escorted their Chief at a funeral mass Wednesday April 10th at St. Peter's Church and the burial in the Parish Cemetary.

LADY WARREN'S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

After nearly a decade of planning and fund raising, the major event of Lady Warren's Centennial celebration came to pass on the weekend of September 5th and 6th, 1969. The festivities commenced with the 57th Annual Convention of the Rockland County Volunteer Firemen's Association. The business meeting was held on Friday September 5th, in the auditorium of the Haverstraw Middle School. As the association members filtered into the auditorium they were entertained by organ music provided by a young lad recruited for the occasion. During the memorial portion of the program a religious song was to be played, but much to the discomfort and dismay of the organist, the organ didn't provide even a squeak. This lad of 17 years of age later joined Lady Warren, eventually becoming Captain and co-author of this book.

The party started when the convention ended. The event was catered, at Lady Warren's quarters on Broadway, by Edward Sebastian. The menu included the standard hamburgers, hot dog, and an abundance shrimp and clams. Freddie Maresca, a local musician, provided organ music during the course of the evening. That convention party was the talk of Rockland County firemen for years afterwards.



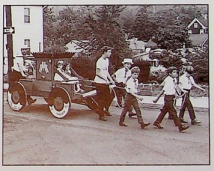
Lady Warren Quarters decked out in red, white, and blue bunting in preparation of the R.C.V.F.A. Parade. The major activity of the company's Centennial Celebration. September 6, 1969.

Saturday September 6th was the day of the "County" Parade. The firehouses in the village and most of the stores in the business district were decorated with red, white and blue bunting. A green line had been painted down the middle of Broadway. The town and village officials on the reviewing stand all sported green carnations on their lapels.



Leading the parade - the banner of Lady Warren carried by Larry and Jeff Lubonty and Charles DiCarlo. Behind the banner, Captain Donato DiCarlo, Sr., followed by from left to right 1st Lieutenant Vincent Ryan Sr., Assistant Chief James Lewis, and 2nd Lieutenant Ambrose Lubonty.

The parade was slated to step off at 3:00 P.M., however, Lady Warren's band had not yet arrived. Almost a year earlier the Company had arranged for the U.S. Military Academy Band from West Point to lead them in this "Anniversary" parade, with the understanding that if a military function should arise the band would not be able to attend. One can imagine the thoughts of the Company when the band hadn't arrived prior to the 3:00 PM step-off. The band was ,however, on it's way and stuck in construction traffic at the 9W bridge in Stony Point. It was not until 3:30 P.M. that the parade finally started. The proud members of Lady Warren began the march led by a Marine Corp Color Guard and the West Point Band. The men of Lady Warren looked quite dashing in the beards they had grown during the course of the anniversary celebration.



Centennial Cart being pulled by children of the members of Lady Warren. Guiding the cart at the rear George Horan.

Thirty-eight units, with their bands, participated in the parade, and it was a long and hot one. The first division of the parade was still passing the

"Bank Corner" when the lead units appeared at Maple Avenue, almost at the end of the line of march. After the parade refreshments, once again catered by Edward Sebastian, were served to all the marchers.

Later that evening the section of Broadway in front of Lady Warren's quarters had been closed to vehicular traffic and a grand block party held. There was music and dancing in the street 'til the wee hours. The village was also treated to a fireworks display that evening, designed by the Legion Fireworks Company of Beacon, New York. The fireworks were set off on the grounds of the Empire State Chair factory; the fifteen minute display of all green fireworks had cost Lady Warren $1,500.00.

The finale for the Centennial occurred on December 20, 1969 at the firehouse. All Company members and outside helpers were invited to this "stag" party.



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - Company Photo 1969. *Front Row:* James Madden, Jack Feeney, James Lewis, Ambrose Lubonty, Donato DiCarlo, Vincent T. Ryan, Sr., Thomas (Frank) Sullivan, Salvatore Cimino. *Second Row:* Michael Holland, Art Kelly, Howarth Macaulay, Jerome Fitzgerald, Harold Wilson, Andrw Kenyock. *Third Row:* Clarence Horan, Sr., Roderick Bulley, Frank O'Brien, Frank Horan, Donald Freeman, Vincent Campoli, William Welkey, Thomas O'Brien. *Fourth Row:* Henry Graulich, Clarence Horan, Jr., John Lawless, George Sealy, George Horan, Edward McCormick, Kenneth Beghie, Sr., Jospeh Morina, Sr., Edward Fox.

Chapter 10: 1970 - 1979

Fire and Fear Grips Village

During the 1970's, the Village of Haverstraw as well as the entire county was kept very busy with numerous fires that struck the area. It is estimated that the Haverstraw Fire Department responded to over one hundred working structure fires during the 1970s, many of them being arson fires. This led to the Rockland County Sheriff's Bureau of Criminal Identification forming a specialized arson unit which was headed by Superindentant Tom Sullivan, an Ex-Captain from Lady Warren.

In an article from The Rockland Times, Mayor Raphael Mertzel was quoted as saying "There is fear gripping the Village of Haverstraw. It is a fear brought on by a demented firebug who seems to have no regard for human lives or property." Mayor Mertzel appealed to the public for help in apprehending the individual who seemed to delight in the number of fires that he started and which kept the village fire department on the run. It was not uncommon during that decade for firemen and police officers alike to "stake out" various locations in the Village in the hope of catching the "firebug". The Haverstraw Fire Department will hopefully never again be as busy as it was in the 1970s, but it was this time in history that the department through much practice gained the experience and knowledge that has been passed down over the years to make the Haverstraw Fire Department one of the best fire departments in the County.

Historical Footnote

Lady Warren honored Ex-Chief John "Jack" Feeney at a testimonial dinner for his fifty years of dedicated service to the Company and the Haverstraw Fire Department on September 26, 1970. The event was held at the Lodge, now the Terrace On The Hudson, and was attended by firemen from several companies and fire departments as well as Jack's many business and political friends. The toastmaster for the occasion was long time Lady Warren member Richard Holland, with Ex-Chief Charles "Smokey" Fales as the keynote speaker. The invocation and benediction were pronounced by Rt. Rev. Msgr. William J. Flannery, pastor of St. Peter's Church.

The stately Hi Tor mountain stands sentinel over the Village of Haverstraw and Haverstraw Bay, the widest portion of the Hudson River. It is believed by some geologists to be the oldest rock mass on the face of the earth, and served as an important lookout during the Revolutionary War for British ships sailing up and down the Hudson River. The seven hundred foot summit offers spectacular scenic vistas of the Hudson Valley and the City



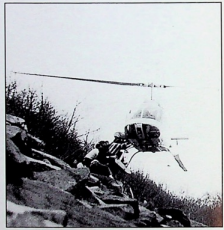
Members of Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department move one of the victims down a rope slide.

of New York and is a popular spot for hikers and photographers alike.

And so it was on Saturday, April 3, 1971, a day that will always live in the memories of Lady Warren members and the Haverstraw Fire Department. At approximately 2:00 P.M., Lady Warren Ex-Captain George Horan was in his backyard, which adjoins the shear cliffs just north of the summit, when he heard screams. He ran for his binoculars and returned to his yard in time to see a girl lose her footing and bounce down the cliff. He immediately took off through his backyard and stared the climb up to the victim, hampered by loose rocks and boulders. He was followed by his neighbors Vincent Ryan, Sr., Captain of Lady Warren and Donato "Danny" DiCarlo, an Ex-Captain. Not long after, the whistle sounded bringing nearly one hundred members of the department to aid in the rescue operation under the direction of Assistant Chief John "Jack" Ginnity of General Warren Emergency Co. No. 2. Two fifteen year old girls from New City had been hiking along the ridge and taking photographs when the accident occurred, with both girls falling nearly one hundred and fifty feet.



Francis "Bud" Wassmer, General Warren Emergency Co. No. 2, guides the helicopter into the pickup area.



Victims are loaded into the helicopter for the flight to the hospital. This event was a forerunner to the H.E.L.P. program.

Additionally, members of the Haverstraw Village Police Department, the Palisades Interstate Park Police, and the Haverstraw Ambulance Corp arrived at the scene, where one girl lay unconscious and the other with a broken leg, and both with multiple cuts and bruises. Emergency treatment was administered by Jack McGeorge and Francis "Bud" Wassmer, both of General Warren. A helicopter provided by Decair in Spring Valley was summoned to the scene to transport the victims, but was unable to land near them. Fireman using ropes, belts, and canvas stretchers created a unique conveyor line on which to slide the stretchers. Helicopter pilot Anthony Cosimario, who had flown in Vietnam, was able to anchor one of his landing skids on a rock ledge, guided by ground hand signals from Bud Wassmer, an Ex-Marine Helicopter Crew Chief. The other skid hung in mid-air as the stretchers were loaded into the helicopter for transport to Ramapo General Hospital. The operation was completed in approximately three

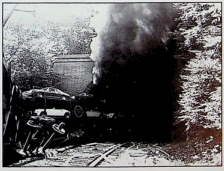
hours.

One of the many 1970s arson fires occurred on November 20, 1970 at 63 Main Street, leaving an eighteen month old boy and his pregnant mother dead. The alarm which sounded at 1:25 A.M. was actually the second alarm for this outside pull box that night. When the department arrived the second time, they found heavy fire and people hanging from the third story windows. Francisco Borgos, Jr. was hanging from the third story window by one arm and holding onto his oldest son with the other. Firemen used ladders to rescue the pair, but they were the only members of the Borgos family to survive the blaze.

The burned building had been the center of controversy. The village attempted unsuccessfully to condemn the property in 1967 and only five days prior to the fire, submitted papers to the State Supreme Court to have the building deemed as unfit for human habitation. Fire Chief Anthony Santora of Rescue Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 stated that the department had difficulty finding their way through a maze of partitions, which had been added to the third floor where the bodies were found.



Looking south towards tunnel. Crane lifting rail cars back on track.

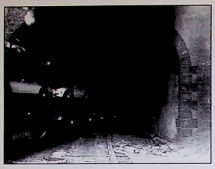


Entrance to tunnel. *Note how ice packs on ground.*

On June 6, 1974, one of the most complicated firefighting problems in Rockland's history occurred at 7:30 A.M. just as a fifty-two car train carrying new cars and chemicals derailed as the three diesel engines were approaching the south end of the railroad tunnel off of Riverside Avenue in an area known as "Dutchtown." The train had entered the Haverstraw end of the tunnel and was less than one hundred feet from the Congers opening when it left the rails.

Firemen then faced the difficulty of fighting the blaze in a solid stone tunnel as well as determining what chemicals were carried on the train. Haverstraw Village Police Chief John Bubanko ordered the evacuation of residents along Riverside Avenue.

The firemen along with representatives of the Penn Central Railroad were taking every precaution. Bubanko said the evacuation was a precautionary measure "We just don't know what was in the tunnel and we're not going to take any chances." Ex-Chief Theodore Ginda of Cosgriff Hose Co.



Railroad cars criss-crossed in tunnel. 1974 Camaro burning.



Former Chief Frank Sullivan analyzing the situation.

No. 4 described the scene in an article which appeared in The Journal News. "Fireman wearing air packs enabling them to breathe in the heavy smoke had to drag hoses over derailed freight cars, including one at the tunnels north end that lay across the broken tracks. The fireman crawled under freight cars to get at burning parts of the train, each moment fearing that something inside the tunnel might explode. They worked over tracks that were all ripped up." Operations to extinguish the blaze were also hampered by more than a thousand pounds of rock that had fallen from the ceiling of the tunnel. The "natural rock tunnel" had been dropping pieces of rock weighing up to three hundred pounds. Fireman from Haverstraw, Congers, West Haverstraw, Stony Point, New City, Valley Cottage, Nyack, and Spring Valley had all responded to the blaze, which eventually became a three and a one-half day ordeal.

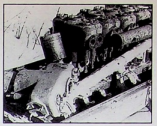
Approximately five hundred firemen were on the scene at the height of the incident, under the direction of Chief James Natale of Relief Hose Co. No. 3. Damage was estimated in the millions of dollars. Eventually, Penn Central Railroad had moved hundred ton cranes into position at both ends of the sixteen hundred foot tunnel to remove the derailed cars and final extinguishment was performed outside of the tunnel. Hose lengths by some estimates were stretched almost three miles. Rockland County Fire Coordinator William "Bill" Herman said he was pleased with the efforts of the local departments as well as with the railroad. "It brought out the point that we can all have different occupations and yet in an emergency, we can all work together for the common good."

Historical Footnote

At the regular company meeting of May 6, 1975, Captain Salvatore Cimino appointed a committee to specify a new truck to replace the 1000 GPM Mack pumper, which had been purchased in 1958. The committee was chaired by Danny DiCarlo, Sr. and included Ambrose Lubonty, Vincent Ryan, Sr., Howarth "Red" Macaulay, Frank Sullivan, George Horan, James Lewis, Sr., and the line officers, Capt. Cimino, 1st Lt. Robert "Babe" Hawkesworth, and 2nd Lt. Edward McCormick. The Village Board was duly notified that a truck committee had been formed.



The Ahrens-Fox prior to being returned to Rockland County.



Years of neglect and scavenging left the Fox a rusting pile of metal parts.



Restoration begins in Stony Point, NY in the Sullivan garage/firehouse.

The Resurrection of a Fox

Robert Sullivan's association with Lady Warren dates back to the mid and late 1950's when he was a mere toddler. His father would bring Bob to the firehouse and place him in the care of the "old timers." Some of his earliest memories were of the "Ahrens-Fox" which was still in service at that time. As a high school student in the early 1970s, he thought often of the "Cannon Ball" and the possibility of getting his hands on the old truck. Shortly after learning to drive, he set out in an attempt to locate #5's old rig, but with no success.

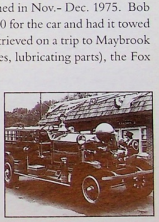
Fate took a hand on June 14, 1975 when Bob, then a two year Lady Warren member, was involved in a motorcycle accident. During his two month hospital stay, a photograph of the "Fox" hung in his room and the idea of getting the old truck occupied his mind constantly. When he was released from the hospital, he was determined. His first drive was with Greg Lewis, another young Lady Warren member, to Maybrook, New York where they located the truck in a field, where it had sat partially dismantled and rusting for years.

After two to three months of negotiating, a deal was finally reached in Nov.- Dec. 1975. Bob would trade a 1956 Chevy for the old "Fox." He had paid $75.00 for the car and had it towed to Maybrook from Orangeburg. The nickel plated "ball" was retrieved on a trip to Maybrook in January 1976. And, after three days of preparation (filling tires, lubricating parts), the Fox was once again home in Rockland County in April 1976.

The summer of 1976 was a busy time searching for the parts that would be needed for the restoration, and the work started that fall. By February 1977, the engine was once again running. During the course of the monumental task, much help was given by



Bob Sullivan hard at work.



Restoration complete. The Ahrens-Fox makes its debut at the Wayne Day Parade, Stony Point, NY, July 1977.

Frank Griser. Griser had been the Eastern Sales and Service Manager for the Ahrens-Fox Company, and had worked on the truck when it was in service. Training in the operation of the truck came from Bob's father, Frank Sullivan.

The truck was in presentable condition by July 1977 and made its first appearance in the "Wayne Day" Parade in Stony Point. Since that first parade the truck has been worked on constantly with parts being re-chromed, repainted, wood replaced and the leather seat covered. And is still ongoing.



Old Timers' ride the old rig. Driving is Ex-Chief Frank Sullivan; shotgun, Ex-Chief Jack Feeney; in the hose bed, Charlie Siebold (left) and Clarence Horan, Sr. (right). Rockland County Volunteer Firemen's Association Parade - September 1978.

Over the past twenty years since its "Resurrection," the "Fox" has participated in over sixty Musters and sixty parades and has won over forty trophies. The truck still invokes pride in members of Lady Warren and has oft times been used to carry the "Old Timers" in Company and Department Parades.

4-1000 Drivers On Strike

On a fine day during the summer of 1977, an incident occurred that would cause a general uproar within the Haverstraw Fire Department. It all started with a routine driver training session. Truck Foreman Jerome "Jerry" Felice was in the cab of the 1958 B Model Mack with trainee Brian Kynast, and 2nd Lt. Edwin Rauscher on the rear step. While rounding the turn from South Street to West Street, the truck jumped the curb flinging Lt. Rauscher to the pavement. Calls went out for a Chief and Lady Warren's Captain, Robert "Babe" Hawkesworth to respond to the scene. Assistant Chief Arthur Briell of General Warren Emergency Co. No. 2 arrived and requested the Village Police and an ambulance be dispatched as well. The police took a report, the ambulance took Lt. Rauscher to the Nyack Hospital, and everyone else went home.

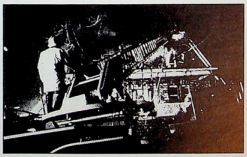
Sometime later, Kynast's personal automobile insurance was substantially increased due to the "personal injury" accident he had on that summer day. Upset over this, he sought the aid of the company. Frank Sullivan accompanied young Kynast to seek assistance from Mayor Raphael Mertzel, but to no avail. Letters were written to the Fire Council seeking its assistance. This created a furor in the department as the members insisted that the drivers of the village's fire apparatus be protected. Letters from the Fire Council were sent to the Village Board. This was to go on for several months, again with no satisfaction, but with many rumors and departmental uproar.

Then, mysteriously, one night a sign appeared in the window of Lady Warren's truck bay door which read "4-1000 Drivers On Strike". Mayor Mertzel, driving down Broadway spotted

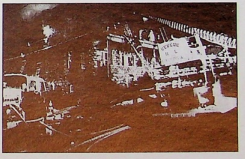
the sign, which sent him into a "tizzy." He immediately contacted Chief James Lewis of Lady Warren, demanding to know how firemen could strike. Of course, the Chief and the Company Officers knew nothing of the sign or who put it up, but it was promptly removed. Coincidentally, during the same time-frame the 4-1000 did not respond to several alarms for a variety of reasons. This prompted a rumor throughout the department that the 4-1000 drivers truly were on strike. After all was said and done, nothing was ever done about anything!

Early in March of 1978, during a two week period, eight Rockland County residents lost their lives in six separate fires. One of those six fires occurred at 59 Fairmount Avenue in the Village of Haverstraw. Seventeen people were living in the "Stone" house, some of them elderly, when a fire broke out at approximately 2:00 A.M. on March 16th. Killed in the blaze were William Welky, 58, a Lady Warren member and former president of the Rockland County Volunteer Firemen's Association, and another resident, Mrs. Margo LaPlante, age 33. Welky was found in his room and carried from the top floor of the two story building by firemen using a ladder. He was rushed to Community Hospital in Hillcrest where he was pronounced dead. Both victims had died of smoke inhalation. Quick action by the men of the Haverstraw Fire Department and the sounding smoke alarms were responsible for the death toll not being higher. The fire had apparently started when a clip-on type light slipped from the wall of a resident's room and falling into a pile of clothing.

An arson fire occurred in the early morning hours of October 26, 1979, which nearly claimed the lives of a mother and her three young children. The fire at Winther's Deli at 19 Broadway was reported at approximately 2:00 A.M. Tina Jones and her three young children fled to the roof of the building to escape from the smoke and flames, which poured from the deli located below their apartment. Members of the Haverstraw Fire Department raised ladders to the roof in order to effect the rescue. The building was destroyed by the fire but with no injuries to the occupants or the firemen from Haverstraw and members of Volunteer Hose Co. No. 2, West Haverstraw, and David B. Roche Co., Thiells. The firemen remained on the scene until 7:30 A.M.



The 4-99 in action at the "stone house" fire. April 15, 1978.



Cosgriff Hose Company No. 4 works the hydrant at the corner of Fairmont and Clover Avenues.



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - Company Photo 1979. *Front Row:* Albert Lynch. Andrew Merena, Assistant Chief Vincent T. Ryan, Sr., 2nd Lt. John J. Wentner, Captain Kenneth D. Beglise, Sr., 1st Lt. Robert Sullivan, Ex-Chief Frank Sullivan, Ex-Chief Jack Feeney, Clarence Horan, Sr., Richard J. Clark. *Middle Row:* Brian Kynast, Frank O'Brien,, Howarth Maculey, Robert Hawkesworth, George Horan, Edwin Rauscher, Vincent T. Ryan, Jr., Frank Pileggi. *Back Row:* John Alvarado, Joseph Miller, Edward (Teddy) Gerouix, Jerome (Jerry) Felice.

Chapter 11: 1980 - 1989

The early 1980s were once again a busy time for the Haverstraw Fire Department. Numerous arson and suspicious fires kept the department hopping. Additionally, the village was plagued with an extraordinarily high number of false alarms during the same period. There were so many false alarms in fact, that teams of firemen "staked out" selected "pull boxes" throughout the village. Fortunately, by the end of the 1980s the problem of both arsons and false alarms eased somewhat.

Feeney Room Dedicated



Ex-Chief Jack Feeney cuts the ribbon at the dedication of the Feeney Room - January 1980.



Lady Warren Captian Ken Begbi, Sr. and Assistant Chief Vincent Ryan make a presentation to "Uncle Jack" at the dedication.

Ex-Chief John "Jack" Feeney had been an active member of Lady Warren for over sixty years by the time 1980 rolled around. To honor this dedicated volunteer who had served as Chief of the department in 1938, the recreation room in Lady Warren's quarters was dedicated in his name.

The dedication ceremony was attended by company members, members of his family, and civic and political leaders from around the county. Among the presentations made that day was a brass plaque which named the room for all time "Feeney's Place." The plaque remains to date on the entrance door to the room.

Fire Destroys Turn of Century Landmark

On March 1, 1980, a fire destroyed the New Main Hotel at the corner of New Main Street and Maple Avenue. The alarm, which was turned in at 12:29 A.M., brought the Haverstraw Fire Department, under the command of Chief Michael Prendergast of Rescue Hook and Ladder, to the scene within minutes. When the firemen arrived, heavy smoke was showing from the

entire building and flames had engulfed rooms in the northwest corner of the building. The Haverstraw Fire Department fought the blaze for approximately six hours in sub-freezing temperatures and a wind chill factor well below zero. The Haverstraw Town Hall, which was located directly across the street, was opened during the fire to allow the firemen a chance to warm up. Mutual Aid companies from West Haverstraw, Stony Point, Congers, Hillcrest and Thiells Fire Departments all responded to the scene to assist. Thirty-four people were evacuated from the structure and no injuries were incurred. Over the years, the New Main Hotel would have numerous additional fires.

One of the many arson fires in the village occurred in the early morning hours of July 3, 1980. The fire destroyed the interior and part of the roof of the former sportswear factory at the corner of Wayne Avenue and Division Street. At the time of the fire, the vacant building was owned by the County of Rockland. The fire was brought under control within two hours. Fireman Martin Girling of General Warren Emergency Company was treated for a cut on the arm and fireman Joe Miller of Lady Warren was treated for smoke inhalation. The blaze was investigated by the Arson Unit of the Rockland County Sheriff's Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

Yet another arson fire on July 10, 1980 left three persons injured. When firemen arrived on the scene at 1:33 AM on that date, they found the three buildings at 7, 9, and 11 Division Street ablaze. The fire had apparently started in the 9 Division Street building, which was vacant and without electricity at the time of the fire. Marilyn Babcock of 11 Division Street was treated for smoke inhalation. Efrain Castro of Rescue Hook and Ladder suffered a laceration to the wrist and Ernie Fisher of Cosgriff Hose sprained his ankle. The Haverstraw Fire Department was on the scene of the fire for three hours and fifteen minutes.

The "Green Machine" Comes to Haverstraw



"Residents of the Village of Haverstraw will probably do a double take within the next few days when Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 receives its new apparatus - which is painted a Kelly Green. Lady Warren's new vehicle is probably the only one in the state - if not the country - which will be Kelly green." The Rockland County Times

1980 Hahn Pumper - designated 4-1501, Lady Warren's new fire truck.

June of 1980 saw the delivery of Lady Warren's new 1980 Hahn 1500 gpm pumper. The truck had been on display at the NYS Fire Chiefs Convention at the Concord Hotel in Sullivan County and driven to the village by Hahn Company representatives. It was a joyous time for Lady Warren members, all of whom were anxious for the delivery and the training with the new truck that would follow. Not a day went by that a crew of members would be seen operating the new truck. It was also a time to uncover any "bugs" which would have to be corrected.

During this time as well, the village was responsible for making payments on the apparatus. June came and went the members were becoming more and more familiar with the operation of the truck and its equipment. The list of "bugs" grew longer, and the village had not yet paid a dime to the Hahn Company. Sometime toward the middle of July an event occurred which devastated the members of Lady Warren, just as preparations were being made to put the new truck "in service."

Our Truck's Been Repossessed!!!

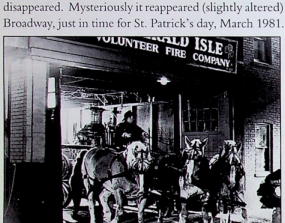
When the phone rang at "Print Sprint" in West Nyack, NY, Lady Warren Captain Ken Begbie, Sr. was not prepared for the question asked him by Village Mayor Anthony Bosico - "Where is your fire truck?" Captain Begbie's response was, "Last time I saw it, it was in the firehouse." Village and Fire Department officials were not aware of events which had occurred earlier in the day. At that time, the new Hahn was kept at the DPW garage on Dr. Girling Drive. On the morning of the day in question, two individuals from the Hahn Company arrived and advised DPW Superintendent Ralph Naples they had come to get the truck to make repairs. It so happened that Frank Sullivan of Lady Warren was at the DPW. He also was told the truck was being taken out for repairs. Sullivan directed the Hahn representatives to remove all hose and other items from the truck or they "weren't going anywhere." They complied with the Ex-Chief and off they went back to the factory in Pennsylvania.
Later that evening, Captain Ken Begbie, 1st Lt. Bob Sullivan, and 2nd Lt. John Wassmer met at Mayor Bosico's residence to get the facts of the situation and resolve the matter. That evening, Mayor Bosico made numerous calls to Hahn representatives. The truck returned to the village late in August. Danny DiCarlo and Vincent Ryan, Jr. made the trip to the factory with Ryan driving the truck back to Haverstraw. The truck was finally put into service early in September, and a "wet down" was held on September 27, 1980.

On October 16, 1981, a blaze at the Empire State Chair factory destroyed a portion of the one story brick factory at the foot of Liberty Street. The Haverstraw Fire Department responded shortly before 2 P.M. under the command of Assistant Chief Robert Drexler of Cosgriff Hose Co. No. 4. The blaze ,which was believed to have started when a florescent light broke in a room full of paint fumes, had taken the department an hour and a half to extinguish. This was one of many fires which has occurred at the Empire State Chair factory over the years, and has kept the Haverstraw Fire Department busy.

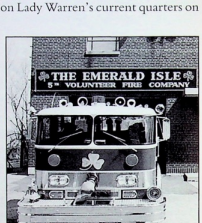
"Ragtime" Comes to Haverstraw

The Village of Haverstraw was buzzing with activity during the last two weeks of September 1980, as camera crews and actors filmed segments of the motion picture "Ragtime" staring James Gagney. This was to be Gagney's last performance prior to his death. The Wolfing Sheet Metal Shop on Middle Street was transformed into a firehouse for the "alarm response" scene. Telephone poles were camouflaged as trees, and a working "steamer" with a team of horses and driver were brought in to complete the scene. It should be noted that the meeting room in Lady Warren's old firehouse (91 Broadway) had been converted to firemen sleeping quarters complete with a "slide pole" for the scene just prior to the response scene.

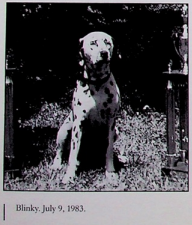
Shortly after the film crews left the village the sign which hung on the "Middle Street Firehouse" disappeared. Mysteriously it reappeared (slightly altered) on Lady Warren's current quarters on Broadway, just in time for St. Patrick's day, March 1981.



Firehouse scene from the movie "Ragtime" starring James Gagney. This scene was filmed on Middle Street, Haverstraw, N.Y. 1980.



Lady Warren decked out for St. Patrick's Day. *Note the sign hanging over the baby door. Wonder where that came from.*



Blinky. July 9, 1983.

Historical Footnote

Lady Warren's newest Dalmatian mascot "Blinky" moves into the firehouse during April 1982. Blinky was four months old at the time of his arrival. One of his favorite pastimes, in his younger days, was to dig under the chain link fence that surrounds the grounds of the firehouse. Usually on these unauthorized absences from company quarters, he would be apprehended by the Village Police. Members would be called to "bail him" out, or on rare occasions Blinky would spend the night in the local lockup and be brought home the following morning. Blinky became a true firedog and when the fire alarm sounded in company quarters no one could beat him to the truck.

On a frigid February evening in 1982 , the 2nd to be exact, another blaze struck the village, which kept the department busy the entire evening. The alarm sounded shortly before 9 P.M. summoning the Haverstraw Fire Department to 14 First Street, under the command of Chief Arthur Briell of General Warren Emergency Co. No. 2. When the department arrived the, entire front of the house was engulfed in flames, which quickly spread through the roof.
The entire street located one half block south of the Post Office was once all large Queen Ann type mansions owned by Haverstraw's brick makers and overlooked the scenic Hudson River. The buildings were now, for the most part, converted into large multi-family apartments, the modifications hampering the efforts of the department as well as the frigid temperatures. Seven families and twenty-eight people were forced out into the cold. Police and firemen evacuated six third floor residents who were forced to climb through a window and down a shaky fire escape to safety. In the most dramatic rescue of the evening, a fireman entered a smoky third floor apartment and carried two tiny parakeets out to safety.

More than two hundred and fifty firefighters from the Haverstraw, West Haverstraw, Congers, Stony Point, Thiells, Garnerville, and New City braved the chilling winds and slick icy streets as they fought to quell the ravaging blaze. Although no residents were injured, four firemen, three from Haverstraw and one from Congers, were treated for smoke inhalation.

The Great LW Controversy - Again!

Over the years, as covered previously, Lady Warren has been at the center of controversy regarding uniforms and the accessories worn on them. This problem presented itself at department parades in the late 1970s and on into the early 1980s. On several occasions, the men of Lady Warren were ordered to remove their LW collar insignia prior to "stepping off" at department parades. The LWs have been a part of Lady Warrens uniform since the late 1800s and at that time were sown into the collar of the uniform jackets. The modern versions are silver plate, which are held in place with "clutch pins."



Back from the Nyack Parade with trophies in hand - October 1982. *Kneeling:* David (Pot Roast) O'Brien, Steve Miller, Gene Hawkesworth, Bill Livsey, Willie Torres. *Standing:* Al Lynch, Joe Miller, Jerry Felice, John Wassmer, and Ken Begbie, Jr.

In June 1982, the Haverstraw Fire Department marched in the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association Parade in Menands, N.Y. Once again, prior to step, off the Lady Warren members were ordered to remove the LWs. Lady Warren Captain Robert Sullivan rounded up the men and advised them of the situation. He reminded them that the Company had fought

hard and long to maintain the LWs, which were so much a part of Lady Warrens history, and a source of Company pride. The Company members refused to remove the LWs and stepped out of the line of march, obviously to the displeasure of the department officers, and they watched the department march by from the side lines.

The LW situation was a main topic of discussion at the Lady Warren's regular company meeting on July 6, 1982. A letter was drafted to be sent to the Fire Council explaining our feelings about the LWs. It was pointed out that in all military and para-military organizations there are provisions for unit identity in uniforming, as well as the long history of wearing these devices on Company uniforms. The letter was read at the Fire Council Meeting on July 29, 1982 and a discussion followed. As a result of the discussion, a committee consisting of one man from each of the five companies serve on a committee to discuss regulation uniforms and accessories, and to make a recommendation to the Fire Council. This committee initially proposed changes to the departments by-laws, which did not provide for the wearing of collar insignia by other than the Chiefs and Company Officers. Finally, on June 30, 1983, amendments to Article 16, Section 5 of the department by-laws were approved, which provided for wearing lapel accessories, and took effect on April 1, 1984. Thus ends the great battle of the LWs. Interestingly, after the adoption of this by-law change, other companies in the department also started sporting collar insignia by members.



Mardi Gras Parade - Stony Point, NY. *Behind the hauser:* Bob Sullivan, Ken Begbie, Jr., Jerry Felice, David O'Brien, John Wassmer, Al Lynch, and Gene Hawkesworth. *In the wagon:* Jerry's "blow-up doll."

Historical Footnote

"Many residents in the village of Haverstraw the other day were mystified to see a white line running along the center of Broadway, culminating in a giant circle and arrows at the bank corner.

Actually, the line was a faint green in honor of St. Patrick. It seems that some of the Leprechauns got loose from their cage at Lady Warren Hose Company head quarters and decided if New York City could have a green stripe running down the middle of Fifth Avenue in honor of St. Patrick, so could Haverstraw. We understand that the police intercepted the Leprechauns at work and threatened to put them in another type of cage if they didn't cease their shenanigans." The Rockland County Times.

The green line, in fact, was painted in preparation for the upcoming Rockland County Volunteer Firemen's Association Parade hosted by the Haverstraw Fire Department in September of

1982. In order to do a nice neat job, a line painter had been "borrowed" from the New York State Thruway Authority.

"ARSONIST" STRIKES AGAIN



Aerial operation at the 21 Broadway fire. 4-99 is located on West Broad Street - January 18, 1983.



The "crew" from Lady Warren at the 21 Broadway fire. *First Row:* Bob Sullivan, John Alvarado, Steve Miller, Andy Mercera. *Second Row:* Bill Livsey, Carlos Cruz, Ken Begbie, Jr., Vinny Ryan, Jr., Al Lynch. January 19, 1983.

Once again in January of 1983, a rash of arson fires would strike the village and would eventually lead to the arrest of one individual. On January 18, 1983, at approximately 8 P.M., the Haverstraw Fire Department, under the command of Chief Frank Ferracane of Relief Hose Co. No. 3, was called to a structure fire at 21 Broadway. On arrival, the department was faced with a well advance fire due to the use of a flammable liquid which had been poured on the stairway which led upstairs to a three story apartment house, and which also housed the Karate International School on the first floor.

The department worked for approximately six hours to stop the blaze in frigid temperature and a severe smoke condition. The heavy smoke had extended nearly a block along Broadway and the flames could be seen for miles. Five people were slightly injured in the blaze that took nearly two hundred firemen from Haverstraw, West Haverstraw, Stony Point, Congers, and Garnerville to extinguish. After six hours of fighting the fire in the freezing temperatures, Lady Warren and the rest of the department was faced with yet another problem, frozen hose and equipment. The hose was frozen solid and had to be folded in long lengths and transported back to the firehouse in a members pickup where it would be able to thaw out and dry.



Frozen hose was thawed on both sides of the truck.

Nearly ten days later, yet another arson fire occurred which led to the arrest of an arsonist. The alarm was sounded at approximately 4 A.M. on January 28, 1983, which summoned the department to 10 Second Street. On arrival, the department was met with heavy fire on the outside of the house, which had extended to the second floor. The department worked for nearly two hours to extinguish the fire leaving the building with heavy smoke and water damage. Frankie Pinero was convicted and sentenced for the 21 Broadway

fire as well as the fire at 10 Second Street and served time in state prison.



Robert "Babe" Hawkesworth receives award for saving the life of James Rooney. Pictured are: 1st Lt. Joseph Miller, 2nd Lt. Gene Hawkesworth, "Babe" Hawkesworth, and Captain John Wassmer, all of Lady Warren.

Sunday evening March 28, 1983, the Haverstraw Fire Department responded to an alarm at 9 Union Street, the residence of James Rooney. Search and rescue operations were initiated upon arrival of the first responding units, resulting in the recovery of the victim by firemen Robert Hawkesworth of Lady Warren and Joseph Chapman of Cosgriff Hose Co. No. 4. After the victim was brought to the safety of the porch, fireman Angelo Leone of Relief Hose Co. No. 3 proceeded to administer CPR until Mr. Rooney was stabilized so he could be transported to the hospital.

As a result of their heroic acts, Hawkesworth, Chapman and Leone were honored with certificates of commendation by Haverstraw Village Mayor Frank Haera in May of 1983. Additionally, Hawkesworth and Chapman were cited for valor by the Haverstraw Elks at their Annual Fireman's Recognition Night. The recommendation letter to the Elks follows:

10 October, 1983
Mr. Thomas F. Forsythe, Jr., E.L.K.
B.P.O.E. Haverstraw Lodge #877
Elks Drive
Haverstraw, New York 10927

Dear Mr. Forsythe,

The membership of Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5, Haverstraw, New York is proud to submit the name of Fireman Robert Hawkesworth, for your consideration to be honored at this year's Firemen Recognition Dinner.

On the evening of March 28, 1983 at approximately 9:20 P.M. Fireman Hawkesworth

responded to a call at 9 Union Street in the Village of Haverstraw. Upon arrival at the scene Fireman Hawkesworth, along with Fireman Joseph Chapman of Cosgriff Hose Co. No. 4, initiated search and rescue operations. Reaching the second floor, while crawling on hands and knees, discovered a victim lying on the floor of the front bedroom. Both men carried the victim downstairs to the safety of the front porch. Arriving on the porch Fireman Hawkesworth called for oxygen and an ambulance, while keeping the victims burned hands immobilized.

The quick action of these men surely saved victim James Rooney from certain death, and this with total disregard to their own personal safety.

The courage and actions of Firemen Hawkesworth and Chapman are most commendable and deserving of recognition.

Firemanically Yours.
LADY WARREN HOSE COMPANY NO. 5

Captain John J. Wassmer
1st Assistant Chief Vincent T. Ryan, Sr.

The dinner at the Haverstraw Elks Lodge was attended by one hundred and fifty firefighters from all parts of the county.

First Fatal Fire in Five Years

"His wife hollered to him, 'The baby's safe, I've got the baby.' He may not have understood her."

When the units of the Haverstraw Fire Department responded to 329 Westside Avenue, shortly before 5 A.M. on September 11, 1984, the second floor of the building was engulfed in flames. First arriving members were advised there was possibly one person left in the building. Elizabeth Bailey and her eighteen month old daughter, Lauren, had fled the burning building, as did a family of four living on the first floor. Although the twenty-five year of Edward Bailey's wife called to him, he apparently did not hear or understand her since he did not immediately leave the second floor apartment as it filled with smoke and flames. He was overcome with smoke and died, within inches of a stairway that led to safely. The blaze was under control within a half an hour and the body of the victim discovered and removed from the building.

Lady Warren Avoids Trajedy

On Sunday morning January 6, 1985, the Haverstraw Fire Department responded to the Rockland Armor and Metals building at 36 Division Street for a report of a fire. The alarm sounded at 9:30 A.M. and within minutes, the department arrived under the command of



Apparatus and "street spaghetti" at the 36 Division Street fire. January 6, 1985.



Aerial and roof operations at the 36 Division Street fire.



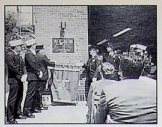
Through the roof - 36 Division Street Fire.

Assistant Chief Vincent Ryan of Lady Warren. The blaze which caused extensive damage to the building and its contents was believed to have been an accidental fire. Fireman James Swift of Rescue Hook and Ladder Co. No 1 was slightly injured and was treated and released at the scene. The department's efforts to extinguish the blaze were hampered when the roof collapsed into the second floor. This was the very spot where all three of Lady Warren's Line Officers were operating just minutes before the collapse. Just another case of the "Luck of the Irish."

A stubborn blaze swept through a Haverstraw landmark on May 21, 1985 leaving seventeen people homeless and causing more than $100,000 in damage. The alarm sounded at 12:30 P.M. bringing the department to 147-149 West Street under the command of Assistant Chief Robert Drexler of Cosgriff Hose Co. #4. Upon arrival, the department was confronted with a heavy smoke condition and clouds of black smoke traveling with a slight breeze could be seen for quite a distance. Firefighters worked for nearly two and one half hours on a humid afternoon to extinguish the blaze in which a cat and two dogs perished. "Thank God it happened in the daytime," said Village Police Chief Michael Holland, noting that the same blaze at night could have been a disaster. The buildings brick shell, which had survived the fire, had been built by the owners of Fowler's Brickyard in Haverstraw circa 1890. The original building was used as living quarters for brickyard employees.

Mets Win - Gene Loses

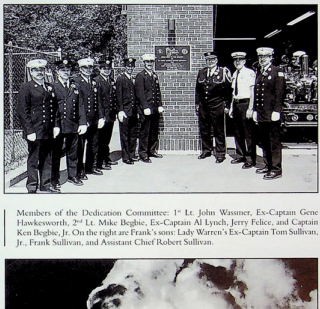
The Fall of 1986 was an exciting time for New York baseball fans. The New York Mets had made it to the World Series, something which had not occurred in some seventeen years. As fate would have it, several Lady Warren members were at the firehouse watching what would be the last game of the series. When the Mets won the game there was much jubilation, which prompted Lady Warren Captain Eugene Hawkesworth to broadcast over the County Fire Radio - "The Mets win, the Mets win." The unauthorized message was heard county wide and earned him a sixty day suspension from Chief Robert Drexler. This was only the second time in Lady Warren's history that a Captain would be suspended. The first, one hundred and eight years earlier, was the suspension of Foreman James McAvoy by Chief Patrick Barrett on December 2, 1878. At least this time, the chief was from a company other than Lady Warren.



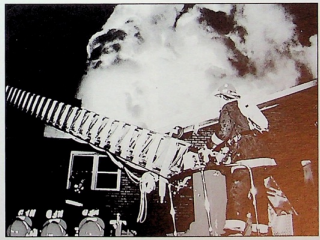
Members of the Dedication Committee unveil the memorial state.



The memorial stone.



Members of the Dedication Committee: 1st Lt. John Wassmer, Ex-Captain Gene Hawkesworth, 2nd Lt. Mike Begbie, Ex-Captain Al Lynch, Jerry Felice, and Captain Ken Begbie, Jr. On the right are Frank's sons: Lady Warren's Ex-Captain Tom Sullivan, Jr., Frank Sullivan, and Assistant Chief Robert Sullivan.



Flames rage from the roof of the Hi-Tor Apartments. December 2, 1989.

Ex-Chief Thomas "Frank" Sullivan passed away July 1988, after fifty-seven years of dedicated service to Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department. So great were his contributions to Lady Warren that the company wished to make a permanent memorial in his honor. At the regular company meeting of September 6, 1988, Captain Kenneth Begbie, Jr. appointed a committee to recommend a suitable memorial. After several months of discussion, it was decided by the committee to dedicate Company Headquarters, a fitting tribute to the man who had chaired the building committee and oversaw its construction. Approval was obtained from the Village Board, and the gears were set into motion. A memorial stone was purchased and the date of the dedication set for June 25, 1989.

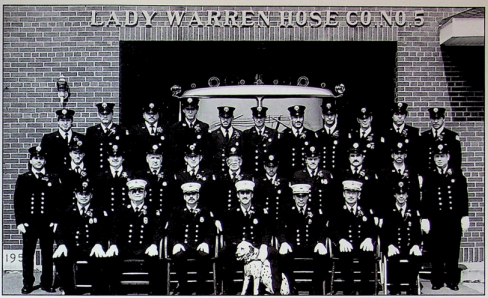
On the day of the dedication, Broadway was closed to traffic from Jefferson Street to Edgar Street, and chairs for the hundred plus audience were set up on the firehouse ramp and in the roadway. The welcome was given by Captain Ken Begbie, Jr., who also led the salute to the flag. Reverend Charles Kelly, Pastor of St. Peter's Church,

pronounced the Invocation, followed by the introduction of Frank's family, and dignitaries who included Congressman Benjamin Gilman, State Senator Joseph Holland, County Executive John Grant and Mayor Thomas Watson. The Keynote address was delivered by 1st Lieutenant John J. Wassmer, followed by remarks by Haverstraw Fire Department Chief Francis "Bud" Wassmer of General Warren Emergency Company #2. The memorial stone, which depicts Frank and the Ahrens Fox, was then unveiled by the Memorial Committee. A family response was given by Thomas F. Sullivan, Jr., an Ex-Captain of Lady Warren, followed by the Benediction delivered by Stuart Gates, Chaplain of the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association. At the conclusion of the formal ceremony, refreshments were served to all in attendance.

On December 2, 1989, another major fire occurred which destroyed a large section of the Hi Tor Apartments off Route 202. When the department arrived under the command of Chief "Bud" Wassmer of General Warren Emergency Co. #2, they were confronted with six apartments in the middle section, at the top level, engulfed in flames. The alarm was sounded at approximately 8 P.M. and it had taken the department approximately four hours to bring the fire under control. A total of eighteen families were left homeless and the Red Cross was called in to find temporary lodging. The department's efforts were hampered when a five inch supply line broke and water had to be pumped from the bottom of the steep hill, which leads to the apartment complex. The formation of ice on the hill due to the bone chilling temperatures was also a major problem. The fire, which was believed to have started in the kitchen of an apartment on the first floor, had brought approximately one hundred and fifty firemen to the scene. Firefighters from Haverstraw, West Haverstraw, Stony Point, and Thiells were called in to fight the blaze. No injuries were reported.



May, 1979 Lady Warren members surrounding 60 year member former Chief Jack Feeney. Robert Sullivan, Ken Begbie Jr., Mike Begbie, Eugene Hawkesworth, Rich Okeley, David O'Brien. *Bottom:* Joe Miller, Jack Feeney, Peter Rafferty.

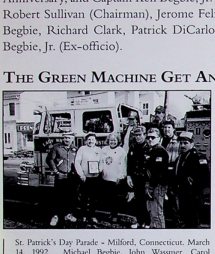


Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - Company Photo May 1989. *Front Row:* Warden Albert Lynch, Ex-Chief James Lewis, 1st Lt. John Wassmer, Captain Kenneth Begbie, Jr., 2nd Lt. Michael Begbie, Assistant Chief Robert Sullivan, Warden Jerome Felice. *Middle Row:* Jeff Nishanian, Tommy VanSkyock, Mario Stranese, Richard Clark, Dominic Pileggi, Edward Gerouis, Gillermo Torres, Eugene Hawkesworth, John Rotella, Eric Serrano, John Duffy. *Last Row:* Peter Rafferty, Christopher Farewell, George Zayas, Joseph Morina, Jose Luna, Kenneth Begbie, Sr., Joseph Miller, Leo Luna, Robert Hawkesworth, Jose Roman, Donald Farley.

Chapter 12: 1990 - 1994

The beginning of the 1990's was a relatively quiet period for Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department. The many arson fires that plagued the village (and the county in general) during the 1970s and1980s had pretty much ceased. Thoughts turned to Lady Warren's upcoming 125th Anniversary, and Captain Ken Begbie, Jr. appointed the Anniversary Committee consisting of Robert Sullivan (Chairman), Jerome Felice (Treasurer), John Wassmer (Secretary), Michael Begbie, Richard Clark, Patrick DiCarlo, Eugene Hawkesworth, Robert Martin, Kenneth Begbie, Jr. (Ex-officio).

The Green Machine Get An Invite



St. Patrick's Day Parade - Milford, Connecticut. March 14, 1992. Michael Begbie, John Wassmer, Carol Schneider (Milldford Parade Committee), Robert "Babe" Hawkesworth, Gene Hawkesworth, Jose Roman, Guillermo "Willie" Torres. On the running board: Albert Lynch, Jose Luna.

A surprise invitation came to Lady Warren on July 13, 1991. It seems that some of our neighbors from Connecticut happened by Lady Warren's Quarters earlier in the summer, and were quite taken by the green truck, resplendent with its shamrock and harps, that they saw sitting on the ramp. This prompted the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee Milford, Connecticut to contact Lady Warren and invite the Company to participate in their upcoming parade (March 14, 1992). The Company liked the idea and so with permission obtained to attend, the Green Machine left the State of New York for the first time since its repossession in 1980. Seven members marched in the parade with the truck to the delight of the spectators. It was decided the company would return to Milford the following year in full force and with a "pipe" band.

On March 3, 1992, Lady Warren lost one of its' giants in the passing of Ex-Chief John "Jack" Feeney, Sr. At the time of his death, "Uncle" Jack was 102 years old. Jack was born in Grassy Point and in his lifetime had captained the "Anna Brophy," a Hudson River brick transport. He was also the director of Civil Defense during the Second World War and a local businessman. He remained an active member of Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department all of his adult life, serving as department chief from 1938-1940.

March 13, 1993 saw Lady Warren return once more to Milford, Connecticut for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. It was decided the Company would march in full dress uniform and with the green "Balmorals" which had been ordered for each member to wear at all of the parades; the company would attend during the Anniversary Year. Green carnations were ordered for each man in the line of march, and bouquets of green and white carnations for the trumpets carried



St. Patrick's Day Parade - Milford, Connecticut. March 13, 1993. Jose Luna, Thomas Horan, Gene Hawkesworth, William Bromley, Brendon Martin (the little guy), Robert Hawkesworth, Michael Begbie, Robert Martin, Kenneth Begbie, Jr., John Wassmer, preparing to line up.



St. Patrick's Day Parade - Milford, Connecticut. March 13, 1993. Company lined up and ready for step off, behind the Drum Corp of the Rockland County AOH Pipes and Drums.

by the officers. To aid in the march through Milford, the company hired the "Pipes and Drums of the Rockland County Ancient Order of Hibernians" led by Pipe Major Brian Larkin. A bus was provided by Gary Zeh to transport the company to and from the parade. Once again, Lady Warren was a big hit in Milford. A subsequent article in the "New Haven Register" featured a photograph of the "4-1501" and mention of the upcoming 125th Anniversary celebration.

"Home alerts for Department 4 - all members of the rappel team only report to the 9W lookout. Rappel team members only." The alarm issued by 44-Control on the afternoon of August 7, 1993 caused heads to turn and people to query "what rappel team?" A short time later the team consisting of Mike Begbie, Al Lynch, Leo Luna, Jose Luna, and John Wassmer arrived on the scene and proceeded to rig the lines that would be needed to reach the steep slope at the lookout. A week previous (July 30th), several severed parts of a human body had been found stuffed in a trash can at the popular rest stop overlooking the Hudson River. The team was brought in by the Haverstraw Police Department due to the steep terrain, which stretches from the parking area to the railroad tracks and road below, and requested to search for any other body parts, which might still be in the area.



August 7, 1993. Team member rappels down the cliff at the "lookout" searching for body parts.

Once the lines had been secured, team members suited up with harnesses and helmets and began the search. No body parts were located; however, nice "lush" stands of poison ivy were encountered and several members of the team "itched" and "scratched" for several days thereafter, despite long sleeve shirts and pants, and gloves.

The rappel team was actually formed two years earlier and was the brain child of Lady Warren Captain Ken Begbie, Jr., who felt that since the village has the "High Tor" in its backyard, the department should have a way of picking individuals from its cliffs, who might venture



Early Rappell Drill. Thomas "Babby" Babcock (Costriff Hose Co. No. 4) performs a "lock-off" from the rear of the hose tower of Lady Warren Hose Co. quarters.



Rappell Drill Rockland County Fire Training Center. Michael Begbie performs an invented rappel down the side of the six story training tower.



Rappell Drill Rockland County Fire Training Center. Mile Begbie "rescues" Rich Oakley from the 4th floor of the tower after rappelling from the roof.

too close to the edge. The idea gained popularity immediately and training began under Ex-Captain John Wassmer, a Certified Rappel Instructor with the Bergen County Police and Fire Academy, Mahwah, New Jersey.

Team members set to the task of learning specialized knots and the rope work needed to tie secure anchors and anchor systems for the rappel lines. The teams first rappel was from the hose tower at the rear of Lady Warren's Quarters, where members learned teamwork, and built confidence in each other and in the systems with which they wee working. As the team progressed and obtained more equipment, rappels were done from the tower at the Rockland County Fire Training Center, and later in clandestine trips to select cliffs in Bear Mountain State Park.

On Sunday, November 28th 1993, the Haverstraw Fire Department witnessed what would become one of its major fires in decades. At approximately 7:30 P.M., the alarm sounded for Box 216 (Main and Third Street) and the department responded under the command of Chief Robert Sullivan of Lady Warren. Upon arrival, the department was faced with a working fire in the rear of 67 Main Street, which was one of three adjoining apartment buildings. Lady Warren was the first pumper on the scene and Captain Michael Begbie quickly gathered his crew to make an aggressive attack on the fire. Hampered by high winds, heavy fire conditions, and buildings that were approximately 100+ years old, Lady Warren and the entire department literally took a beating trying to contain the blaze. The attack teams came dangerously close to being burned due to rapidly deteriorating conditions. When the Lady Warren members exited the building, their turnout coats and self-contained breathing apparatus were hot to the touch and the fluorescent stickers on their helmets had melted off from the heat. The fire quickly extended, eventually consuming all three buildings, and drawing more than 10 area fire departments from as far away as Nyack, in an attempt to quench the blaze.

At approximately 7:00 A.M. the following morning, the companies were finally back in service after a very long evening. The twelve-hour blaze left eight families homeless and left 67-71



Company Drill Rockland County Fire Training Center. Company members prepare to extinguish an oil pit fire. Captain Ken Begbie, Jr. in command.



Firematic Field Day - Rockland Lake, NY. Members in action during the pumping contest as the judges look on.



Firematic Field Day - Rockland Lake, NY. Shutting down, picking up.



Firematic Field Day - Rockland Lake, NY. Ye old "bucket brigade."

Main Street nothing more than a vacant lot.

Training, Training, Training, And More Training

For many years and in all probability for many years to come, Tuesday evenings have always been busy at the quarters of Lady Warren. To keep up with department and state guidelines as well as trying to "practice the trade" in order to be as safe and efficient as possible, Tuesday nights are designated as company drill night. On drill nights, company members are trained for all types of department and company operations including fires and dangerous or hazardous conditions. Countless hours have been spent trying to teach the newer members and refresh the seasoned members and their firematic skills.

During these drill nights, training varies from staying in quarters going over the equipment to going to actual live burns at the county training facility. Over the year's fire fighting has changed dramatically and continues to change. The members of Lady Warren are constantly learning and trying to hone their skills to protect themselves and the Village of Haverstraw from the devastating effect of fire. The training has proven successful. Over the years, the company has competed in the Rockland County Firematic Field Day, which is held at Rockland Lake, New York. This is a countywide event with participants from most of the counties fire departments, in which fireman pit their skills against one another. Lady Warren has faired quite well over the years.

1994 was a busy year for Lady Warren. The Anniversary Committee had been hard at work over the preceding few years and all of the upcoming events were planned. A large reproduction of the anniversary logo was hand painted by Ossman Signs of Garnerville, NY, and hung on the front of the firehouse throughout the year.

A reception was planned at Lady Warren Quarters after the January regular monthly company meeting for the years "kick-off." Food and beverages were in abundance on the

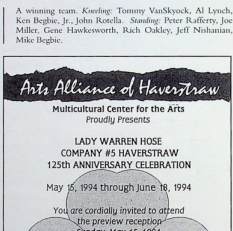
evening of January 4, 1994. As luck would have it, a storm "dumped" a significant amount of snow on the village that day and into the evening, resulting in a smaller crowd than expected. During the course of the evening, Gary Zeh, Chief Chauffeur of Rescue Hook and Ladder Co. #1, was given a certificate of Honorary Membership in Lady Warren, and presented with a plaque in thanks for all of his aid and support over the years.

An unexpected addition to the anniversary came in the form of an invitation from the "Arts Alliance of Haverstraw" to assemble a display in honor of the anniversary. Appropriately, the "Arts Alliance" is located at 91 Broadway, the building which served as Lady Warren's Quarters from 1890 until 1955 when the company moved "across the street" to its present quarters at 88 Broadway. Spearheaded by Joseph Morina, Jr., the exhibit opened with a preview and reception on Sunday May 15 1994 from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. The exhibit, which included historical memorabilia and photographs, remained open through June 18th.

he Anniversary Parade held on May 21, 1994 was in actuality the Haverstraw Fire Department BI-Annual Inspection Parade. Prior to the start of the parade, all of Lady Warrens' members, active and honorary, assembled on the ramp in front of the firehouse for the Anniversary photograph. Two photographs were taken that day: one with regulation uniform and the second with the green "Balmorals." A detachment of the United States Marine Corps from Newburgh, New York served as Color Guard to lead the Company. Once again, the Pipes and Drums of the Rockland County A.O.H. was hired to provide the music for the march. As had become a recent tradition, all Company members in the line of march sported a green carnation on his lapel. Following the parade, Lady Warren and guests were provided a substantial "feed" at St. Peter's School gym on Ridge Street.



A winning team. *Kneeling:* Tommy VanSkyock, Al Lynch, Ken Begbie, Jr., John Rotella. *Standing:* Peter Rafferty, Joe Miller, Gene Hawkesworth, Rich Oakley, Jeff Nishanian, Mike Begbie.



Anniversary Display at the Arts Alliance of Haverstraw. Advertisement ticket from the Lady Warren display.

During the day of the Parade, Lady Warren served as a U.S. Postal Station. Earlier in the year at the suggestion of Patrick DiCarlo, the United States Postal Service was petitioned to provide a special "cancel" stamp to be used for that day only. An Anniversary Envelope was designed and printed for the occasion, which included firematic stamps. Patrick and Charles DiCarlo, both postal employees, manned the "Lady Warren Station" for the event.

One of the most popular events of the Anniversary Celebration occurred on July 9, 1994 and featured a cruise down the East River to the Statue of Liberty on the Klondike, which sails from New Rochelle, New York. Once again, Gary Zeh provided transportation for the members and guests of Lady Warren for this grand event. Upon arrival dockside, the assembly was provided a "wine & cheese" party. Once the boat was underway the festivities



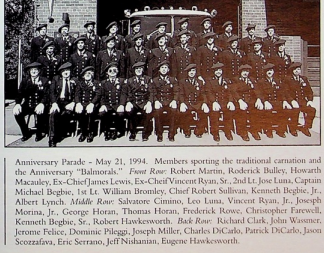
Joe Morina (event chairman) explains a photo display of historic fires and the great landslide of 1906.



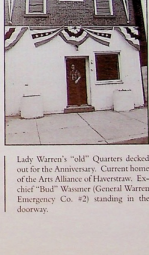
Lady Warren History on display. Some of the memorabilia on display at the Arts Alliance.



Lady Warren Quarters decked out for the anniversary. Hose cart ready to be moved across to the old firehouse.

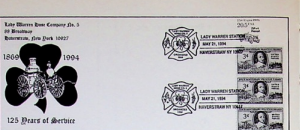


Anniversary Parade - May 21, 1994. Members sporting the traditional carnation and the Anniversary "Balmorals." *Front Row:* Robert Martin, Roderick Bulley, Howarth Macauley, Ex-Chief James Lewis, Ex-Chief Vincent Ryan, Sr., 2nd Lt. Jose Luna, Captain Michael Begbie, 1st Lt. William Bromley, Chief Robert Sullivan, Kenneth Begbie, Jr., Albert Lynch. *Middle Row:* Salvatore Cimino, Leo Luna, Vincent Ryan, Jr., Joseph Morina, Jr., George Horan, Thomas Horan, Frederick Rowe, Christopher Farewell, Kenneth Begbie, Sr., Robert Hawkesworth. *Back Row:* Richard Clark, John Wassmer, Jerome Felice, Dominic Pileggi, Joseph Miller, Charles DiCarlo, Patrick DiCarlo, Jason Scozzafava, Eric Serrano, Jeff Nishanian, Eugene Hawkesworth.



Lady Warren's "old" Quarters decked out for the Anniversary. Current home of the Arts Alliance of Haverstraw. Ex-chief "Bud" Wassmer (General Warren Emergency Co. #2) standing in the doorway.

started in full vigor. A buffet dinner was provided and the beverages "flowed." The upper deck of the craft was given over to the D.J. who provided music for the dancing pleasure of those so inclined. One of the most stirring segments of the trip occurred when the boat reached the Statue of Liberty. A display of fireworks, as if on cue, burst forth into the night sky providing a grand backdrop for the "Grand Lady," providing a truly awe-inspiring moment for all those on board. Coffee and anniversary cake was offered as the boat sailed from the "Statue" back up the East River, and a magnificent lower Manhattan in all of its lighted glory was viewed.



A temporary branch of the United States Post Office was set up in Lady Warren Quarters the day of the "Inspection Parade" May 21, 1994. Stamped envelopes were available that day from Postmaster Patrick DiCarlo.

Lady Warrens' "Family Picnic" was held at the Bowline Park on July 24, 1994. All Lady Warren members (active and honorary) and their families enjoyed the Sunday afternoon on the banks of the Hudson River, with a view of the back of the firehouse across the Bowl Line. Traditional picnic "chow" was the fare for the day. The town pool was available for any that wished to swim and games were provided for the children of the members.

The long awaited "Weekend Away" at the Friar Tuck Inn finally arrived August 19-21, 1994. Members and their "significant others" headed north on the New York State Thruway to Catskill, New York. Members and their wives enjoyed a weekend taking all advantage of the facilities and amenities offered by the Friar Tuck. In addition to a "cocktail" hour provided by the Inn, Lady Warren provided a well-stocked "Hospitality Room" for the duration of the stay. Saturday evening after dinner the "older" members enjoyed a live show featuring Paul Anka.

To celebrate with just the "guys," a "Stag Pig Roast" was held at Company Quarters on September 17, 1994. In addition to the guest of honor "the pig," there was an abundance of clams - both raw and steamed, shrimp, corn on the cob, and all of the other usual "pig-fest" trimmings. All of the members of the Haverstraw Fire Department were invited to join with Lady Warren for this gala event.

The final major activity for the anniversary year celebration was the 125th Anniversary Dinner held at the Holidome, Suffern, New York. The dinner was prefaced by a poolside "Attitude Adjustment Hour." The official program commenced at 8:30 P.M. with the "Welcome" provided by Chief Robert Sullivan, Chairman of the Anniversary Committee. Lady Warren Captain Michael Begbie led the assembly in the "Salute to the Flag," followed by the "Invocation" delivered by Chaplain John Wassmer. Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Ex-Captain Thomas F. Sullivan. Awards for 25 years of service were presented by the Company Officers to Donato DiCarlo, Jr. and Robert

Lady Warren Hose Company No. 5

125th Anniversary Dinner

October 20, 1994

"Ceab Mile Failte"
"One Hundred Thousand Welcomes"

Honoring

Donato DeCarlo, Jr.	25 Years
Robert Wadsworth	25 Years
Albert Lynch	Ex-Captain
Kenneth D. Begbie, Jr.	Ex-Captain
John J. Wassmer	Ex-Captain
Michael J. Begbie	Captain

The Yorktowne - Sheffler, New York

MENU

Attitude Adjustment Hour
7:30 - 8:30 PM

Buffet Dinner
8:30 PM

Tri-Color Salad - Basil Vinaigrette
or
Caesar Salad

Carving Station - Sliced Filet Mignon
Wok Station - Shrimp Teriyaki, Stir-Fried Vegetables
Pasta Station - Smirnoff Vodka Rigatoni

Chicken Marsala, Veal Francais
Peel and Eat Shrimp, Crab Claws
Vegetable Medley, Roasted Potatoes

Dessert
Anniversary Cake
White Chocolate Mousse in a Chocolate Shell

Coffee, Tea, Decafe

Amen

PROGRAM

Welcome	Robert Sullivan Chief
Salute to the Flag	Michael F. Begbie Captain
Invocation	John J. Wassmer Chaplain
Master of Ceremonies	Thomas F. Sullivan Ex-Captain
Dinner	All

Award Presentations

25 Years of Service	Company Officers
Ex-Captains	Former Company Captains
Members	125th Committee
Benediction	John J. Wassmer Chaplain

MUSIC BY

"D.J. Vinny"

8:30 PM - 12:30 AM

OFFICERS

Robert Sullivan	Chief
Michael Begbie	Captain
William Bromley	1st Lieutenant
Jose Luna	2nd Lieutenant
Eugene Hawkesworth	Secretary
Robert Sullivan	Treasurer
Al Lynch	Warden
Robert Martin	Warden

125th Anniversary Committee

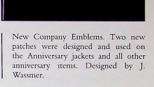
Robert Sullivan, Chairman

Kenneth D. Begbie, Jr	Jerome Felice
Michael Begbie	Eugene Hawkesworth
William Bromley	Robert Martin
Richard Clark	John J. Wassmer

Lady Warren Anniversary Dinner. Dinner Program.



New Company Emblems. Two new patches were designed and used on the Anniversary jackets and all other anniversary items. Designed by J. Wassmer.



Lady Warren Anniversary Dinner. The Anniversary Cake, served for dessert at the Anniversary Dinner.



Lady Warren Anniversary Dinner. Joe Natale presents Lady Warren with an anniversary gift from Relief Hose C. #3. Accepting are Chief Robert Sullivan, 2nd Lt. Jose Luna, 1st Lt. William Bromley, and Captain Michael Begbie.

Hawkesworth. Former Company Captains presented Eugene Hawkesworth, Albert Lynch, Ken Begbie, Jr., and John Wassmer with Ex-Captains plaques. The Anniversary Committee presented Service Certificates to all active and honorary members in attendance. Chaplain Wassmer delivered the benediction thus ending the official program. Following the benediction, there was dancing and "carrying on" to music provided by D. J. Vinny. The evening ended at approximately 12:30 A.M. Sunday morning.

During the course of the anniversary year, each member received the following: A company jacket, a lapel pin, tie bar, hat, and tee shirt all with the new anniversary logo. Miniature green

leather "New Yorker" helmets were purchased for each member of the company with his name and date of entry into the company hand painted on the shield. A lighted display cabinet was constructed in the "John J. Feeney" room of the firehouse to preserve and display the helmets for prosperity.

Sports

The members of Lady Warren have been very competitive in everything they did, from parades to fire fighting to just about anything. In particular this competitiveness has shown itself for many years in the different sporting events the company has participated in. As you have previously read, the company had one of the best baseball teams in the county in the early 1920's. Some things never change. After joining the Rockland County Firemen's fast pitch softball league in 1986, Lady Warren immediately became a team to reckon with. To date, since joining the league, the Lady Warren softball team has a very impressive record with 125 wins to just 10 losses. They have won the county championship 7 times and just recently became the first team in the history of the league to win 4 consecutive championships.

In the early 1980's, hockey was the sport of choice for Lady Warren. Five or six departments throughout the county had been playing in a county firemen's league and after a few challenges were thrown in the company's direction, the games were scheduled. After the first few games, the rest of the county realized Lady Warren had a few "All County" high school hockey players that were active members in the company, and the challenges suddenly stopped. The Lady Warren hockey team ended its illustrious career with an undefeated 3 – 0 record.



Lady Warren's County Champion Team. One of many.



Circa early 1980's - the hockey team that "couldn't be beat"!!

During the winter of 1989, the members decided to try something a little different, and participated in the Annual East Coast Volunteer Firemen's Ski Races, which is held at Hunter Mountain, New York. The timed event which consisted of a 5 man team holding one length of 1-1/2" hose and skiing down a steep hill through gates.



Lady Warren's "A" ski team at Hunter Mountain Firemen's Races - 1989.



Lady Warren's "B" ski team at Hunter Mountain Firemen's Races - 1989, just prior to "wiping out."

The two teams that Lady Warren sent up that day did not place in the top three places but a great time was had by all that attended.

Winning has always been important to the members of Lady Warren at whatever sport they participated in, but it has not been the most important thing. The friendships and bonds that the company has made over the years with different departments throughout the county as well as throughout the state is something that is far more important than winning, and is something that will never be forgotten.

In Conclusion

Thus ends 125 years of service. Lady Warren and the Haverstraw Fire Department have seen many changes in that time. One must wonder what those original members would think could they see the equipment and fire fighting techniques of the current day. Conversely, what a thrill it would be to be able to transport us back in time to actually see the fire fighting as it was done when the company was first formed.

During the first 125 years of service, many great men have passed through the doors of Lady Warren - countless men dedicating countless hours to make Lady Warren what it is today. In the beginning it was 100% Irish decent and now in 1994, we have a diversified number of nationalities that has changed with the village over the years. It has been the hope of the authors to paint a full picture of Lady Warren, and possibly shed some light on why the members are like they are. One thing that has not changed is the pride the members have in themselves, the company, and the Haverstraw Fire Department. The company did and still does "stand on tradition." Although it seems as we look back through history, the members of "Insurrection Hall" were at times a bit too much to handle. The Company has always stood its ground despite opposing opinions of the Fire Chiefs and the Village Fathers alike, be it over a parade route or our uniforms. Our members have often been stubborn and prone not to back down - but were never spiteful.

One can only speculate as to what the future holds for Lady Warren. The fires, drills, and working to keep the quarters and truck up to par will always require dedicated members. We only hope the company will continue on as it always has - stick to our guns, never forget our heritage and , be mindful of our traditions. Then we will always have a company in which we can be proud! We would be remiss should we not recognize the wives of our members over the past 125 years. As the old adage goes: "Behind every good man is a great woman." Our sincerest thanks to them for their patience and understanding.

Chaplins of Lady Warren

Lady Warren has had an excellent relationship with the clergy over the years. Three in particular had great impact on our membership.

Rev. Walter F. Hoffman

Rev. Hoffman was pastor of St. Luke's Church, Gurnee Avenue, Haverstraw, New York, and long time chaplain of the Rockland County Volunteer Firemen's Association. Lady Warren was one of Rev. Hoffman's favorite spots on Friday evenings, where he was somewhat a fixture. It is told that the Reverend would tell his wife he was going to visit Fr. Brown (then pastor of St. Peter's), and promptly pass by the Church and proceed down Broadway to Lady Warren's quarters. It was a common event for Father Brown to phone the firehouse to inform Rev. Hoffman that his wife was looking for him.

Rev. Edward Keehan

Father Keehan came to Haverstraw as a "Curat" at St. Peter's Church. Fr. Keehan was a very popular addition to St. Peter's and could often be seen in the school yard (St. Peter's School) shooting "hoops" with students. Fr. Keehan was always available for firehouse functions and was made an Honorary Member. He is currently pastor of St. Peter's Church, Yonkers, New York.

Rev. F. Peter Malet

Father Malet came to Haverstraw in the 1970s as a "Curat" at St. Peter's Church. He quickly became active in community affairs in and around the Village of Haverstraw. Father Pete was not only our Chaplain, but also a Department Chaplain and an active member of Lady Warren. He regularly attended Company Meetings, and when the whistle blew he ran out of the rectory and hopped on the truck. The guy you were on a line with could very well have been Fr. Pete. Father Malet died on December 14, 1980, at age 39, and is buried in Calvary Cemetery, in Poughkeepsie, New York, his hometown.

The Company's first "Official" Lay-Chaplain

Back in the early 1980's it became increasingly difficult to get a clergy member to come out and perform the firematic service for deceased members. As a result a committee was appointed by Captain John J. Wassmer, to draft a by-law creating the position of Company Chaplain. At the January meeting in 1984, ARTICLE X - Section 10 was adopted, which reads: "At the Regular Meeting in May the Captain shall appoint a Member of the Company, Active or Honorary, to serve as the Company Chaplain." The Company Chaplain would officiate at services for deceased members and provide the grace and benediction at company dinners.

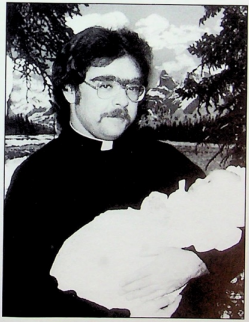
At the May meeting of 1984, Captain Wassmer appointed himself as Company Chaplain and has been reappointed each year to date.



Reverend Walter F. Hoffman



Reverend Edward Keehan



Reverend F. Peter Malet



Captain John J. Wassmer

Chiefs Of Lady Warren Co. No. 5



Patrick Barrett
1878-1879



Thomas Clark
1883-1884



Bernard Fox
1896-1897, 1914-1916



Michael McCabe
1901-1903



Peter Reilly
1916-1922, 1932



Arthur Post
1922-1928



Michael Lubonty
1933



John Feeney
1934-1940



Vincent Welsh
1940-1950



Thomas "Frank" Sullivan
1950-1960



John Croyle
1968



James Lewis
1968-1978



Vincent T. Ryan, Sr.
1978-1986



Robert H. Sullivan
1986-1995

Foremen & Captains

1869 – 1871	Isaac Buchanan
1871	James H. Fleming
1878	James McAvoy
1889	Nicholas Cox
1890	Philip A. Fox
1910	Peter Reilly
1915	John Nolan
1925	Mat "Doc" Kennedy
1926 – 1927	John Long
1927 – 1928	Bernard Fox
1928 – 1930	Michael Lubonty
1931 – 1934	Willford Willett
1934 – 1935	Edward Lynch
1935 – 1938	Vincent Welsh
1938 – 1940	Harris Huott
1940 – 1946	Thomas "Frank" Sullivan
1946 - 1948	Ambrose Smith
1948 – 1950	Herman Wessler
1950 – 1952	Gerard Sullivan
1952 – 1954	Arthur Kelly
1954 – 1956	John Croyle
1956 – 1958	John Lawless
1958 – 1960	James Lewis
1960 – 1961	Robert McNichols
1961 – 1963	Thomas F. Sullivan
1963 – 1966	George Horan
1966 – 1968	Howarth "Red" Macauley
1968 – 1970	Donato DiCarlo
1970 – 1972	Vincent T. Ryan, Sr.
1972 – 1975	Ambrose Lubonty
1975 – 1977	Salvatore Cimino
1977 – 1979	Robert Hawkesworth
1979 – 1981	Kenneth Begbie, Sr.
1981 – 1983	Robert Sullivan
1983 – 1985	John J. Wassmer
1985 – 1987	Eugene Hawkesworth
1987 – 1989	Albert J. Lynch
1989 – 1991	Kenneth Begbie, Jr.
1991 – 1993	John J. Wassmer
1993 – present	Michael Begbie

Active Members 1994



Kenneth
Begbie, Sr.



Kenneth
Begbie, Jr.



Michael
Begbie
Captain



William
Bromley
2nd Lieutenant



Roderick
Bulley



Richard
Clark



Charles
DiCarlo



Donato
DiCarlo, Jr.



Patrick
DiCarlo



John
Duffy



Christopher
Farewell



Donald
Farley



Jerome
Felice



Eugene
Hawkesworth
Truck Foreman



Robert
Hawkesworth



George
Horan



Thomas
Horan



William
Livsey



Albert
Lynch



Jose
Luna



Leo
Luna



Hawarth
Macauley



Robert
Martin



Joseph
Miller



Joseph
Morina, Jr.



Jeffrey
Nishanian



Dominic
Pileggi



Frederick
Rowe



Vincent T.
Ryan, Jr.



Fermin
Santana



Jason A.
Scozzafava



Robert Sullivan
Chief



Tommy
VanSkyock



Francis J.
Wassmer



John J.
Wassmer



George O.
Zayas
1st Lieutenant

Active Members Not Pictured

Edward Fox, James Lewis, John Lubonty, Frank McGowan, David O'Brien, Kenneth Patterson, Jose Roman, Eric Serrano, Mario Strianese, Blinky (Dalmation Mascot)

Honorary Active Members

Salvatore Cimino, Jerome Clabby, Donald Freeman, Richard Freeman, Rev. Edward Keehan, Brian Kynast, Gregory Lewis, James Lewis, Jr., James Madden, Fred Maresco, Edward McCormick, Robert McNichol, Andrew Merena, Jr., Thomas O'Brien, Edwin Rauscher, Joseph Rebuck, Frank Rundell, John Sebastian, Frank Sullivan, Thomas Sullivan, Gary Zeh

Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - 1994



Lady Warren Hose Co. No. 5 - Company Photo May 1994. Top Row: Richard J. Clark, John J. Wassmer, Jerome Felice, Dominic Pileggi, Joseph Miller, Charles DiCarlo, Patrick DiCarlo, Jason A. Scozzafava, Eric Serrano, Jeff Nishanian, Eugene Hawkesworth. Middle Row: Sal Cimino, Leo Luna, Vincent T. Ryan, Jr., Joseph Morina, Jr., George Horan, Thomas Horan, Fredrick Rowe, Christopher Farewell, Kenneth D. Begbie, Sr., Robert Hawkesworth. Bottom Row: Robert Martin, Roderick Bulley, Howarth Macauley, James Lewis, Sr., Vincent T. Ryan, Sr., Jose Luna, Michael F. Begbie, William Bromley, Robert Sullivan, Kenneth D. Begbie, Jr., Albert Lynch. Foreground: Brendan Martin with "Blinky."