

The Auckland Fire Brigade 1874-2024 Project

The 1940s – 1940-1949

The early 1940s presented many problems for the Fire Brigade. Shortages of firemen, materials and supplies due to the war held up progress particularly in building the new fire station in Pitt St. The War Cabinet decided to put fire brigades of New Zealand on war footing, the intention to draft certain men for training as auxiliary firemen in lieu of territorial service. Volunteers continued to join the brigade as EFS (Emergency Fire Service) personnel and were paid on a scale as privates in the territorials.

Many Auckland MFB staff served in the military both overseas and at home. Management reported difficulty maintaining staff numbers as they were required to offer replacements employment only for the duration of the war. Wages and conditions for this limited period were unattractive. On April 9 1942 permanent firemen were declared essential work. The NZ Manpower Office strictly controlled all workers movements. On June 12 1945 the Brigade were 30 under strength, pre-war strength was 195, currently 157.

Nine Auckland Firemen served overseas during WW2 and four were killed in action. Nationally sixty Fire Brigade Officers and Firemen died during World War Two. Personnel who served in any war had time served included in time toward their UFBA [United Fire Brigades' Association] service honours.

January 1940 Maadi Base Camp, Egypt was occupied, built of wood had two major fires. First fire soon after, in the picture theatre. That fire initiated an order to find Firemen going through Camp and Camp Fire Brigade soon established, two appliances, a trailer pump, fire station. The kitchen fire was when Bert Manning was there.

March 7 1940, Thursday, politics, following statements made at the Fire Boards' conference a few days before, the Municipal Association discussed the whole matter of drafting by-laws in regard to the safety of buildings and people therein in the event of fire. The opinion was expressed that the formation of Fire Boards had been a retrograde step, and a resolution was carried that Fire Board control should revert to local authorities. Can't find what the issues were. Maybe Local Councils, the Drainage Board, and the Fire Board in sometimes had by-laws in conflict with each other. Councils often had differing building codes in conflict with their neighbouring Council.

March 28 1940, Auckland MFB granted extension of service for twelve months to Senior Station Officer Percy [PL] Williams, once Brigade's Deputy Superintendent, and Fireman B Hansen, both due for retirement. Extension made under the war emergency regulations. SSO Percy Williams retired May 28 1941, after 34 years' service. Hansen still there 1945.

March 28 1940, Thursday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board considered report from Chief Public Health Officer on defects in Fire Brigade accommodation, arrangements were considered in detail. The Board decided on certain improvements to be carried out after discussions with the Health Officer to enable the Brigade work to be satisfactorily carried on pending the erection of the proposed new station.

April 12 1940, Friday, the Post and Telegraph Department confirmed it cost one penny to telephone the Fire Brigade in an emergency from a public telephone box. Superintendent Patrick Deere, Greymouth VFB, asked the Post and Telegraph Department if they would accept a certain amount from his Fire Board so that people would be able to call the Station and report fires without having to put the penny in the slot, but the P&T Department refused to accept such a proposal. Firemen

carried pennies in a tin on their appliance and in their tunic pockets into the 1960's so they could phone the Watchroom. Days before RT's.

June 26 1940, Wednesday, Fire Board authorised construction of the five married quarters blocks [Pitt St block, flats 22-27, built later], work started October 14 1940. Builder AG Granter, architect Daniel Boys Patterson, cost £44,444. Poynton Terrace were the first flats [flats 1-5] occupied in December 1941, the remainder [6-21] occupied end February 1942. Shortage of materials held up construction. In 1996 this block of flats [1-5] sold to the Methodist Church behind.

June 26 1940, Wednesday, insurance group members on the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board reminded the public that insurance companies were not responsible to pay out for fires caused by enemy raids. Conditions were same as those pertaining to earthquake risks.

July 10 1940, Wednesday, the Automobile Association [Auckland], in five days, organised a fleet of 500 private motor cars for use in the event of fire emergency. The Motorist Fire Patrol Units extended from the City to St Heliers, New Lynn, Mangere, Otahuhu and North Shore districts. The cars were used by the fire and technical group of the EPS [Emergency Precautions Scheme], arranged in groups of ten and leaders appointed to the groups. There was a reserve of private car owners to fill any vacancies which might occur in the fleet. Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson wrote to the AA in appreciation of them organising the fleet so promptly.

July 13 1940, at 20:10, Saturday, Joe Kostanich [42, married, Helensville] was hit and killed by No1 pump from Headquarters Fire Station, first of two pumps responding, corner Hobson Street and Victoria Street West. Kostanich and a friend were walking across road, they slowed and changed direction to let appliance pass. Kostanich shook off his companion's grip and started to run across in front of the appliance where he was hit by front bumper and thrown twenty yards. Driver Leonard Robert George [Tiger] Harlen, speed 35-40 mph, OIC Deputy Superintendent George A Mackenzie. The appliance stopped and left one man with first aid kit. Kostanich died thirty-five minutes after getting to hospital. The SFA box call at Albert and Customs Streets was a MFA [malicious false alarm].

July 25 1940, Thursday, following tests in Queen Street, Auckland CC agreed to fit 100 new screwdown hydrants each and every year to replace ball hydrants. High risk areas to be replaced first. Only screwdown hydrants to be fitted henceforth. Improved hydraulic efficiency, better flow and eliminated problems from ball type [leaks, balls dropping etc]. Ball hydrants marked with white paint [hollow triangle] and new screwdown hydrants with yellow paint [triangle painted in], blue 'cat's eye' studs near centre of road started in early 1990's. Most of the 'last' ball hydrants had gone by late 1970's. One on a wharf lasted longer before 'being beyond repair'. Became illegal under the Water Supply Protection Regulations to install ball hydrants because in the event of loss of water pressure, all the balls sank within their casing and foul water could enter the water mains. In the UK a cholera or typhoid epidemic was blamed on ball hydrants allowing sewage to enter main.

July 26 1940, Friday, the fireman's pole used in the old Albert Street fire watchtower was about to be fitted as the flagpole on the Richmond Yacht Club new clubhouse, St Marys Bay boat harbour wall. The pole had been purchased by George Hedlund, long serving Auckland Metropolitan Foreman and Volunteer Fire Police, at a liquidation sale, for a few shillings some years before. The pole was heart kauri, thirty foot long, six inches diameter, and in perfect condition.

August 29 1940, Thursday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board donated £1,000 to the "New Zealand Herald's Aeroplane Fund". A fund set up nationwide to raise funds for the purchase of aircraft for the RAF.

September 6 1940, Friday, tender, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board, new Central Fire Station, Poynton Terrace, new married quarters, tenders will be received up to 12 noon, Friday, September 6 1940. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Daniel B Patterson, Architect [Reg], 23 Shortland Street. Auckland.

September 13 1940, Friday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade Officers and men sent a fraternal message expressing admiration for the work of the London Firemen under German fire bombings cabled to the London Fire Brigade. The message was "A magnificent effort. The eyes of the world are upon you. We are all with you in spirit, and would like to stand side by side. Keep up the good work." The original ended "Good luck - Kia Ora", wartime censorship ruled no message in a foreign language may leave New Zealand by cable, so good luck - Kia Ora was deleted.

September 25 1940, Wednesday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board agreed to increase all salaries which range up to £500 year by five per cent. Staff had already received five per cent granted by the Court under their award.

October 2 1940, Wednesday, final of the Auckland interhouse billiard tournament was won by Pt Chevalier Fire Brigade Club beating Mt Eden Fire Brigade Club. Large number of teams had entered and competition was keen. The winning team was Foreman Peter Healey, Firemen J Robertson, R Hendry, W Sherer and W Chirnside.

October 28 1940, Monday, the Senior Officers in the Auckland MFB were Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson [35 years' service], Deputy Superintendent George [GA] Mackenzie [15 years], Acting Third Officer Bob [Robert] Walker [20 years], Acting Fourth Officer Russell Preston [13 years]. Honorary Surgeon Doctor Norman Murray 17 years' service.

October 28 1940, Monday, Honorary Surgeon Doctor Norman [DNW] Murray awarded twenty-year AMFB bar, and Honorary Surgeon Doctor Alexander [AH] Kirker eleven-year UFBA bar. Both were also Police Doctors.

Beginning November 1940, thirty senior boy scouts [15 to 18] in six squads began three months intensive firefighting training three nights a week and every Saturday afternoon at City Headquarters Fire Station under the direction of Deputy Superintendent George [GA] Mackenzie. They were the first Auckland citizens to enrol in EPS/EFS. Squad depleted by demands of armed forces, new scout recruits called up.

November 27 1940, Wednesday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board presented service medals to Board members Michael [MJ] Coyle and John [JB] Paterson. Michael John Coyle joined Auckland Fire Brigade 1884 under Superintendent John Hughes, an old Firebrigadesman before joining the old Fire Board in 1925. Member of Auckland Hospital Board for 23 years. He died March 19 1941 age 77. JB Paterson had fifty years' service with local body affairs, on Fire Board for 14 years.

November 27 1940, Wednesday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade appealed the Auckland Area Manpower Committee in respect to six Permanent, fourteen Auxiliary and seven Volunteer Firemen who had been called in the ballot for territorial service. The Board sought information on the dates the auxiliary Firemen joined the Brigade. Superintendent Bill [W L] Wilson undertook to supply detail to indicate whether any of the men had joined since the outbreak of war.

December 13 1940, Friday, War Cabinet decided to put fire brigades of New Zealand on war footing, intention was to draft certain men for training as auxiliary firemen in lieu of territorial service.

Year ending Tuesday, December 31 1940, Auckland MFB attended 996 calls, no major fires or incidents. There were 218 FAGI's [false alarm good intent] 115 MFA's [malicious false alarms]. Auckland MFB budget £50,125. Staff; 72 permanent, 38 auxiliary, 46 Volunteer. Plant included 25 motors, 2 telescopic ladders. 48 telephone points, 645 SFAs, and 118 PFAs. Stations 14 - Central at Pitt Street, Western District [later Ponsonby], Pt Chevalier, Avondale, Remuera, Parnell, Tamaki [now St Heliers], Mt Albert, Mt Eden, Mt Roskill, Onehunga, Great South Road [now Ellerslie], Mt Wellington No1 and Mt Wellington No2.

January 1941, ten men selected to be trained by Brigade Officers ahead of their appointment as EFS [Emergency Fire Service] Officers. From April 1941 EFS on duty at 34 stations every night. February 1942 EFS Headquarters located upstairs in second floor Wembley Building, corner Beresford and Pitt Street, next to Fire Headquarters. District Commander Mike [Lionel Sinclair] Abbott in charge, he was Scout Commissioner for Training and Organisation before. Auckland had six Divisions, 15 executive officers, 58 non-commissioned officers, and a maximum strength of 750 personnel including five women who served with Auckland MFB at Pitt Street Headquarters. One Division covered the North Shore. Each Division had five trailer pumps. EFS stood down September 30 1944. The UK had over 130,000 trailer pumps during the War.

January 31 1941, 15;30, Friday, outside the Auckland Savings Bank, Queen Street, five Firemen sold tickets in the Patriotic Fund Art Union to passers-by. Their fire appliance was parked alongside ready for instant response. They did a brisk business and together with their fire appliance had removed to their station before the five o'clock rush began.

March 4 1941, 19:00, Tuesday, enrolment of recruits for the Emergency Fire Service held at Fire Brigade Headquarters, Pitt Street, Newton. Further enrolments will be received nightly from 19:00 to 21:00. until further notice. Applicants living in the North Shore area may enrol at either the Central or Devonport Stations. Only men unlikely to be required for military service [married men with two or more children, or men already rejected for military service on account of minor disabilities, and men in reserved occupations, etc.. etc], will be considered. Successful candidates, who should preferably be not less than 5ft 8in in height, will be required to undergo a medical examination, and if passed fit will be enlisted for the duration of the war and six months thereafter. The conditions of service are similar to those of the City Fire Brigades, may be perused at the Central Fire Station, Pitt Street. WL Wilson, MIFireE. Superintendent, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade. Few if any applications arrived on first night, Firemen dressed as civilians for the press photographers.

March 4 1941, Tuesday, EFS [Emergency Fire Service] Firemen were paid on a scale equivalent to Privates in the territorials. Leading Firemen ranked with Lance-Corporal and Section Officers to Corporal. Divisional Officers ranked as a Captain, their assistants as a Lieutenant. The Commandant held rank equal to a Major, his Adjutant equivalent to a Lieutenant. That EFS staff were paid and Volunteer Firemen were not often caused friction and many complaints.

March 7 1941, Friday, EFS [Emergency Fire Service] recruiting, suitable men were responding steadily to the call for volunteers, recruiting at the Central Fire Station was continuing until the numbers had joined. It was stated that men of good type were coming forward and their training would begin in a month or six weeks, at Pitt Street.

April 4 1941, Friday, appointments were made nationally consequential to the newly created EFS [Emergency Fire Service]. Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson appointed Auckland District Fire Controller in terms of the Emergency Reserve Corps Regulations. Roy Girling-Butcher, National

Inspector of Fire Brigades, Department of Internal Affairs, was appointed the Dominion Fire Controller.

April 18 1941, Friday, J Bonham, area officer of Auckland branch of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Scheme, led a physical training period, part of normal Brigade routine at Pitt Street Station. The change from old style physical drill was appreciated by staff, eliminated much of the monotony from old exercises.

April 19 1941, Saturday, local newspaper NZ Herald published Mix a pound of flowers of sulphur with half a pound of powdered saltpetre, and occasionally, when the fire is red and clear, throw in an ounce or two of the mixture. This removes accumulated dust and soot and saves the necessity of frequent chimney sweeping.

May 3 1941, Saturday, EFS [Emergency Fire Service] recruitment, over 300 men had volunteered, 251 passed fit. However, until there was adequate lighting in Beresford Street, the full training of recruits cannot proceed. When training was well advanced, a number of emergency fire stations and billets were established in the city and certain suburbs where equipment will be stored. Each division is divided into sections of about 15 men under an officer. Equipped with a trailer pump and a quantity of hose and other material, each section became a self-contained mobile unit. The strength of the various divisions ranged from about 60 to 90 men.

May 28 1941, Wednesday, Senior Station Officer Percy [Lionel Percival] Williams retired after 34 years' service. End of May 1910 played rugby league for three seasons in Wigan. Returned late May 1918, appointed Deputy Superintendent Auckland FB, later dropped back to Foreman, 1923 Officer in Charge new Western District [later Ponsonby]. Williams had attended every large fire in the city in the past thirty years.

May 30 1941, Friday, AMFB Third Officer EA [Ernest Albert] Ander enlisted in NZ 2nd Expeditionary Force, soon appointed Warrant Officer, Fire Section, Maadi Base Camp near Cairo, Egypt. December 1928 he was a Motorman [Driver] in Hamilton FB, June 1929 Superintendent Otahuhu, June 1932 Superintendent Mt Roskill, April 1933 Station Officer AMFB Mt Roskill, January 1934 Ellerslie, 1938 Third Officer Auckland MFB. November 1942 back to AMFB as Third Officer, in his absence Robert Walker was the Acting Third Officer. Sergeant Bert [HS] Manning [ex Auckland] was 2nd IC to Ander, and later replaced him as Firemaster WO1. Manning retired an Auckland SSO.

May 31 1941, Saturday, wartime legislation introduced whereby between the time the wartime emergency warning signal sounded and the all clear given, all vehicles had to cover all lights with paper. This included all fire appliances except when responding to calls. In mid-July 1941, Auckland fitted a red light just above and behind the driver to indicate it was a fire engine on urgent response, some Policemen had not recognised vehicles with lights on going quickly were fire appliances and had stopped them.

Mid-1941, wartime emergency signal were sirens sounding five seconds on and 5 seconds off for two minutes. The all clear was the continuous sounding of the sirens for two minutes. The first of three tests of the system in Auckland conducted on December 23 1941

June 7 1941, Saturday, Barry Brigham [Deputy Mayor Mt Albert] and Alfred [AP] Hartnoll elected as local body representatives, other than Auckland City Council, on Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board. Unsuccessful candidate was Bob [RM] McCulloch. The voting was: Barry Brigham 145; Alfred [AP] Hartnoll 114; RM McCulloch 87.

July 23 1941, Wednesday, John [JJ] Kingston. Thomas [TC] Buddle [NZ Insurance], Charles [CH] Wyatt and CL Green re-elected to the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board as representatives of the insurance companies.

July 23 1941, Wednesday, Auckland Fire Brigades' employees decided not to seek a new industrial award when the present one expired but to extend it for a further term as a practical patriotic gesture and in view of war conditions. Chairman, John [JJ] Kingston appreciated gesture but it would stultify the efforts to secure one Dominion award. Fire Service dispute that was in Arbitration Court at the time excluded Auckland MFB.

August 6 1941, 13:00, Wednesday, Fire Station sirens throughout metropolitan area tested to determine the efficiency as emergency warnings. Signals were three short blasts from the sirens. Sirens at Wellesley Street and Customs Street intersections with Queen Street were heard by a large number of people in spite of the normal noise of the streets. But in areas away from the district Fire Station the result was not audible. Overall test not acceptable, extra sirens to be installed.

August 25 1941, Monday, Auckland Hospital Board Chairman, Allan J Moody, said that when visiting the Hospital last Thursday. he was horrified to find that there was no fire drill. Some years ago, the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board Superintendent, Bill [WL] Wilson said the Brigade had trained orderlies and nursing staff in protection against fire. Moody said immediate steps are to be taken to institute fire drill in Auckland Hospital.

September 15 1941, Monday, John Kingston, chairman of the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board, Bill [WL] Wilson Superintendent, and Captain Thomas J Watts, secretary of the United Fire Brigades' Association, left for Wellington on the express train to attend a conference of Fire Boards.

September 16 1941, Tuesday, Minister of National Service, Bob [R] Semple [Labour], called a joint conference of the New Zealand Fire Boards Association, the Federation of Firemen's Unions and 33 Superintendents as technical personnel from NZ Fire Brigades. It was difficult recruiting Firemen under the man power conditions and determined the exact functions of each emergency firefighting organisation. It was hard to obtain sufficient trained personnel to maintain Brigades in a state of efficiency. Permanent firefighting service and the Emergency Fire Service had separate duties; a great measure of co-ordination was needed between the two. Those in the EFS had to learn their new role, he did not want any conflict between the two organisations. There must be unity. No undermining of the permanent fire services would not be tolerated. The EFS was to be ready to help and receive all the training possible so that its members could fill any gaps in the permanent service. They were expected to work with the Firemen's Union. All Semple wanted was a plain working plan.

September 22 1941, Monday, 450 EFS [Emergency Fire Service] staff paraded outside first Pitt Street Fire Station, Beresford Street, for District Commander Lionel [LS] Abbott. Wet drills completed under direction of H Roy, EFS Central Divisional Officer at Central Station. Auckland Waterside Workers' Band played as the official band for the new EFS. All bandsmen were Fire Policemen under the Emergency Precautions Scheme. From August 7 1955 until 1961 the Auckland Seafarers' Silver Band became the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade Band.

November 25 1941, 12:00, Tuesday, tenders advertised and closed to build the Superintendents house at the new Pitt Street Fire Station. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Daniel B Patterson, Architect [Reg], 23 Shortland Street, Auckland. The cost of the overall Fire Station project had increased significantly, the Fire Board decided not to build the house plus some flats. The proposed house location was off Poynton Terrace behind flats 19 and 20.

November 25 1941, 12:00, Tuesday, tenders closed to build the Central Fire Station administrative block and block of flats [22-27] adjoining [included workshops]. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Daniel B Patterson, Architect [Reg], 23 Shortland Street, Auckland. Awarded to DC Street Construction Co, Hamilton.

November 26 1941, Wednesday, Sergeant Dick or Neil [Frank Neil] Robertson [24] killed in action, Libya, North Africa. Robertson was a fireman at Central Fire Station, Pitt Street.

December 2 1941, Tuesday, contract awarded to DC Street Construction Co, Hamilton to erect the new Central Fire Station, corner Greys Avenue and Pitt Street. The administration block was a two-floor building, with drill tower at the back. Accommodation was provided on the street level for eight appliances. Opening off the engine room is the Watchroom, the Deputy Superintendent's office, with accommodation for the flying squad. The north wing had a mess for Firemen and one for Officers, a kitchen, lounge and card room. In the basement was a boiler, battery room and store rooms. The south wing has the administrative offices. Cubicles for single men are provided on both floors of the north wing. A total of 33 cubicles will be provided for single men. Some are also on the first and second floor of the south wing. Laundries and drying rooms are provided. In the centre of the building above the engine room is a social hall with a kitchenette. Provision has been made for a projection room for the screening of films in the social hall. From each floor are sliding poles to the ground floor. The tower at the back of the building will contain a staircase giving access to each floor, the centre of the tower is for drying hose. In the wall of the tower will be windows of different types for use in drill, the drill ground at the back of the station. Six flats [22 - 27] for married men are in the adjoining building fronting Pitt Street and to the south of the administrative block. Each flat will contain kitchen, living room and two bedrooms. The workshops were part of this building, opens onto rear yard.

December 6 1941, Saturday, newly appointed Auckland EFS [Emergency Fire Service] Divisional Officers, Section Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers paraded in their six Divisions. NCOs received their chevrons, Officers, not yet in uniform, received their epaulettes later. Appointed were - Auckland District Commander Lionel [LS] Abbott. Central Division: Divisional Officers NW Small and H Roy, Senior Section Officers, AL Windsor and CR Sparks. Eastern Division: Divisional Officer RA Hawkeswood, Assistant Divisional Officer SB Diamond, Senior Section Officer T Townson. Western Division: Divisional Officer LOM Brown, Senior Section Officer EAE Tait. Southern Division: Divisional Officer RW Phipps, Senior Section Officer A Wilson. Mounts Division [Mt Eden, Mt Albert, Mt Roskill] Divisional Officer SG Peek, Assistant Divisional Officers AE Stevens and FS Rand, Senior Section Officer T McLockington. Northern Division: Divisional Officer GM Fildes, Assistant Divisional Officer AMC Spooner, Senior Section Officers York, T Mackelvie and GA Simons.

Auckland EFS [Emergency Fire Service] had six Divisions. each were divided into Sections of about 15 men under an Officer. Equipped with a trailer pump, quantity of hose and other equipment, each Section was a self-contained mobile unit. The strength of the various Divisions ranged from 60 to 90 men. For minor outbreaks the sections operated independently, but for serious fires the Emergency Firemen would work under trained personnel of the permanent Brigades.

December 7 1941, Sunday, Japan bombed Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, that started the Pacific War and severely threatened New Zealand's security. The USA were suddenly drawn into the war. February 19 1942, 242 Japanese aircraft attacked Darwin, northern Australia, threat had got a lot closer to home. German and Japanese surface raiders and submarines operated in New Zealand waters on several occasions throughout the war, sinking a total of four ships while Japanese reconnaissance

aircraft, launched from submarines, flew over Auckland and Wellington, preparing for a projected Japanese invasion of New Zealand.

December 10 1941, Wednesday, National Emergency Reserve Corps Regulations issued for the compulsory fire protection of buildings [fire spotters or watchers] came into effect. Required owners to provide firefighting equipment, with occupiers and their employees in the buildings to serve, during an emergency, as fire patrols and firefighters, and to undertake training for that purpose. The high-risk area covered business interests in Queen Street, Karangahape Road, Symonds Street and Newmarket. Fire Technical Group Committee was augmented with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturers Association and Employers' Association. Fire watchers were not required to stay awake. Not a popular or successful scheme. Ended July 14 1943 along with other regulations, October 15 1943 facilities able to be dispensed.

Mid December 1941, all done by December 22 1941, all brass fire helmets painted wartime grey, Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent helmets had gold combs. Replaced in April 1942 with locally made Army style and grade pressed steel helmets with the word Fire on the front. August 25 1943 unpainted polished brass helmets returned.

December 15 1941, Monday, Emergency Precautions order issued to form fire guards for 24-hour, 7-day protection of large commercial buildings. Responsibility to organise such a watch system with the occupiers. Names of leaders and other personnel to the EPS [Emergency Precautions Service] Office, Huddart Parker Building, Quay Street. Liability for fire-watching duty was imposed on all men in the building except those who had certain responsibilities as members of the EPS, or those who were "actively connected" with the armed forces, or who are members of the Home Guard. Fire watchers at night were not expected under the conditions at that time to remain awake. Attempts to establish on voluntary basis had failed, February 6 1942 order issued compelling a fire guard system by Thursday February 19 1942.

December 16 1941, Tuesday, seven Women's War Service Auxiliary [WWSA] volunteers joined Auckland MFB, employed to drive fire brigade trucks, drive relief men to outstations, operate first aid fire equipment, and do messenger driving duties. Capable, in emergency, driving the heaviest firefighting appliances. Women initially wore their auxiliary khaki uniforms but by July 1942 wore Fire Service uniform. Five worked full time the day shift [09:00 to 17:00] weekdays and two volunteered to do day shift at weekends. April 27 1943 Auckland Motor and Horse Drivers Union asked the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board to recognise that they come within its award. Resolved women were voluntary workers and only did emergency work, did not come under Drivers Award.

December 16 1941, Tuesday, twenty-two of the required thirty-three volunteer women started their Watchroom training at first Pitt Street Headquarters. Three women were assigned to every outstation. When the air raid siren sounded, they were to go to their Station. By July 1942 there were sixty-five drawn from the Women's War Service Auxiliary employed at Headquarters and all outstations doing Watchroom and Controlroom duties, Miss Ina Avenell in charge.

December 19 1941, Friday, Governor-General, Sir Cyril Newall [1941-1946], accompanied by Mayor John [JAC] Allum [1941-1952], visited the decontamination hut and first-aid post in Newmarket, the Central Fire Station, Pitt Street, where he witnessed an incendiary bomb display, and Mt Eden Fire Station. The Newmarket decontamination hut was a special brick building, 75ft 20ft, in the Council yard. They were all designed as a splinter-proof buildings, had a double row of sandbags on the roof. They would not have withstood a hit or close bomb blast. The buildings were zinc-lined and housed essential decontamination plant. There were six in total, Newmarket, one in City Council

yards Freemans Bay, Allenby Avenue in Devonport, Northcote, Sandringham and Te Papapa. They were gas proof, the idea being that blister gases, such as mustard - lewisite, after being removed from a contaminated person, the gas was prevented from escaping. April 9 1968 was the next Governor General visit to Auckland Fire Brigade, a display at Mt Wellington Training Centre.

December 23 1941, about 05:00, Tuesday, first test of air raid alarm sirens in metropolitan Auckland. System had about one hundred sirens installed, at least ten more sirens promised after test to increase audibility. Fire Brigade controlled the operation of the sirens.

December 30 1941, just before 20:00, Tuesday, a responding fire appliance siren was mistaken by EPS [Emergency Precautions Service] staff for an emergency alarm. A test of the system was widely anticipated that evening, actually set for 21:10, confusion took over and other emergency sirens sounded. Some EPS staff had pre-empted the event and time and were moving to their post early. All EPS movements now activated and drills, including blackout, implemented early. The mayor started the real test as scheduled, no confusion over the "all clear".

January 2 1942, Friday, all fire sirens on appliances and stations disconnected to avoid confusion with air raid sirens. Various types of 'bells', 'horns' and 'two tone horns'. ringing brake drums by hand, experimented with. Appliance response speeds were reduced because audibility was poor. December 6 1943 sirens permitted to be used again, but in long blasts, the wartime emergency system of sirens on 5 seconds and off 5 seconds still applied. December 9 1943, Thursday morning, first time a siren used, shed fire, Eden Terrace. Later at 20:50, first time fire appliances used sirens in Queen Street since the restriction imposed about two years ago before, lifted. Public warned in advance by siren corner of Wellesley Street and Queen Street. Vehicle fleet repainted red replacing wartime grey.

January 3 1942, Saturday, new Controlroom temporarily in social room upstairs Central Fire Station, Pitt Street, while room on ground floor strengthened to withstand heaviest air attack. Two large blackboards showed number of vehicles, pumps and other equipment available at each major station and their positions at any given time. A large map of the whole metropolitan district and one of the city areas, both accurately divided into District Sections. About sixty-five appliances and trucks fitted with hose and pumps were available. All stations and sub-stations were marked on one of the boards and flagged when a fire occurred. Many pins, varying sizes, shapes and colours, each own meaning, ready to put on the map when extent of incident known. There were pins to show a break in a water main, live wires down, show hose layers etc. January 8 1942, sandbag barricade completed around the exterior of Watchroom.

January 8 1942, Thursday, sandbag barricade completed around the exterior of Watchroom at Pitt Street Headquarters to protect it an enemy attack. The Watchroom was on the north, Pitt Street side of the station. Both the Watchroom and Controlroom were timbered internally with heavy wood to strengthen them. They were considered efficient shelters except for a direct hit.

January 14 1942, Wednesday, Greater Auckland EFS [Emergency Fire Service] were operating from twenty emergency fire stations equipped with trailer pumps, 450 auxiliary firemen. The Motorist Fire Patrol Units had 500 patrol cars [privately owned] staffed by 1,000 men.

From February 9 1942, Monday, EFS [Emergency Fire Service] required one third of their members to be available on call, one week in three, in billets or quarters near the Fire Station they were attached to. Two hours drill every day on duty, were remunerated for those hours. At beginning were on duty 24 hours over weekends. Essential only one firefighting organisation in Auckland, embracing Fire Brigade, it's Auxiliary Firemen and Volunteers, EFS and the Emergency Precautions Service

members. August 20 1943, duty requirement relaxed, between the hours of 19:00 and 07:00. for weekly periods not more often than one week in five.

February 13 1942, Friday, EPS [Emergency Precautions Service] Headquarters moved from Huddart Parker Building, Quay Street, to Wembley Building, former Auckland Gas Co showroom building, corner Pitt and Beresford Streets. Upper floor already converted into sleeping quarters for EFS [Emergency Fire Service] attached to Central Sire Station, one-third of EFS Firemen on duty for one week at a time. Wembley ground floor used for administration by EPS and EFS.

March 2 1942, Monday, construction started on circular 60,000-gallon EWS [emergency water supply] reservoir, built on vacant land, corner Albert Street and Cook Street, for emergency firefighting purposes. The fifty feet diameter tanks often had fish in to control mosquitos.

March 9 1942, 09:47, Monday, sirens sounded, large scale Emergency Precaution Scheme air raid exercise involved thousands of people. Three RNZAF Hudson bomber aircraft flew low up Queen Street, they buzzed boats on the harbour carrying key people to their positions on the Shore, flew low over Onehunga and the Shore. All emergency sections or groups were exercised. In Symonds Street auxiliary firemen, looked efficient in their grey helmets, were dispersed standing ready for a call. An ancillary Fire Service truck hurtled towards Remuera. At Mission Bay clouds of black smoke indicated that an aeroplane had "crashed" on a vacant section. In actuality it was a mass of smouldering rubbish, with a hard core of old tyres, the stench of burning rubber made the morning horrible.....

April 1942, circular 100,000-gallon EWS [emergency water supply] reservoir built in Albert Park, between Sir George Grey's statue and the meteorological station, water for emergency firefighting purposes. One water main from the reservoir lead to Victoria Street and another to Wellesley Street, both mains fitted with fire hydrants. The tank was dug into the park with the top flush with ground. EWS tanks often had fish in to control the mosquitos.

April 1942, six riser pipes fitted with 6" [150mm] round thread female couplings installed at intervals along wharf side of Quay Street, against high metal railing fence. Fitted to enable Fire Service pumps to connect suction hose and quickly draft salt water from the harbour. Part of programme to provide EWS [Emergency Water Supplies]. Remained for many years, heavily encrusted, never used in anger.

April 1942, smaller outer area Councils dissatisfied with level of their EFS [Emergency Fire Service] fire protection and cost. Suburban councils wanted units located in residential areas reserved for duty there and not called away. Were advised emergency cars and trucks stayed in district. Destruction of suburban houses only limited national importance. EFS stood down from September 18 1944.

April 22 1942, afternoon, Wednesday, responding appliance, at speed, Symonds Street, had to swerve violently on the wet road and tram tracks to avoid traffic. Many motorists failed to recognise the clanging warning signal of the approaching appliance; they did not pull over to the kerb. The familiar sirens were replaced from January 7 1942 by clangs and horns at the request of the EPS [Emergency Precautions Scheme] authorities so as not to cause confusion when wartime emergency sirens were sounded.

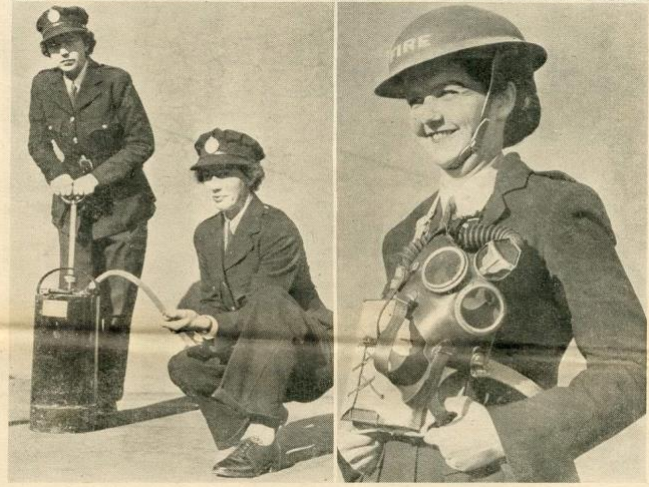
May 3 1942, at 06:00, Sunday, Central Division, EFS [Emergency Fire Service] exercise pumped water from the harbour alongside the Ferry Steps, Quay Street, through 5,000ft of 3.75-inch canvas feeder hose to Greys Avenue. The 1937 Dennis pump was set into the tide, eight trailer pumps relayed the

water up Albert Street and down Cook Street, two leads [deliveries] got to work on the Town Hall. Divisional Officer NW Small in charge. Took 16 minutes 35 seconds to get water on.

May 27 1942, lunch time, Wednesday, Emergency Fire Service staff gave a water display between Princes Wharf and Ferry Building. Pumping from the harbour using nine trailer pumps, sixteen deliveries gave a solid curtain of water 40 feet in the air. Auckland Fire Service's had forty-five trailer pumps. Some of unit's trailer pumps and fire engines paraded through Karangahape Road and Queen Street before the display were led by a military band. Women's War Service Auxiliary and staff from the Chief Post Office sold £1 Liberty bonds.

Mid July 1942, AD Wilson, born in Auckland, went to UK age 17, 1934 [age 27] joined London Fire Brigade, six years later seconded to London regional staff, later transferred to Home Security Office. Assisted organise UK's National Fire Service as a Headquarters Staff Officer, rank Assistant Fire Force Commander. Was in New Zealand to advise Emergency Precautions Service. Returned to London mid December 1942. "His comprehensive report would 'serve as a very valuable guide, for it is practically the first text book on firefighting in this country". Caused some problems when he considered saluting could heighten efficiency and create pride. Auckland Superintendent Bill Wilson said saluting was practised in Wellington, but he did not consider them any more efficient!!

By July 24 1942, Friday, there were five permanent women [drivers] in the Fire Service and another sixty-five employed in the central Controlroom and station Watchrooms. The five were Rae Bartlett, Dorothy Davidson, Barbara Dickson, Pat Robson, and Tally Nichols [?]. April 28 1943, Auckland Motor and Horse Drivers Union asked Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board to recognise that these workers came within its award. Board resolved that as the women were voluntary workers and only did emergency work, they did not come under the Drivers' Union award.



WOMEN REPLACING MEN AT AUCKLAND CENTRAL FIRE STATION

EMERGENCY FIRE SERVICE

NORTHERN DIVISION - 1943



July 30 1942, Thursday, Regulations passed fixing maximum speed limit of 40 miles an hour for all motor transport throughout New Zealand. Exemptions granted for Fire Brigades, Police, Traffic Inspectors, Ambulances, Naval, Army and Air Forces, and Ministers of the Crown. Objective was to save fuel during the war.

August 13 1942, Thursday, annual meeting of the Auckland Old Boys' Fire Brigade Association, following elected: President R Hutchison: Vice-Presidents: J Conway and William Harkins; committee, E Austin, JG Patterson, W Hunt, F Cook, E Paterson; secretary treasurer Tip [Albert Arthur] Joynt; auditors H Smith and E Paterson.

August 15 1942, 00:13, Saturday, three young women firewatchers called Brigade to 5 Darby Street, City. The women employed by National Bank, were on firewatch at a club where they were members. The fire in the workroom of Miss M Spear's millinery shop was thought to have started at an electrical appliance. Appliances from Headquarters, Western District [later Ponsonby] and Parnell attended. Fire easily extinguished, only damage to a wooden table and the electrical wiring.

September 1 1942, Tuesday, Private Bert or Bluey [BR] Munns [26] died from wounds, prisoner of war, El Alamein, Egypt, North Africa. Munns was a fireman at Central Fire Station, Pitt Street.

September 17 1942, Thursday, Dominion Fire Controller and head of the EFS [Emergency Fire Service], Roy Girling-Butcher said before No1 Armed Forces Appeal Board [Wellington] "If we are going to have an attack here, in the near future at any rate, both Headquarters Staff and Vice-Admiral Robert L Ghormley, US Navy, Commander, South Pacific Force and Area. have said it is most

likely to be a hit-and-run affair, not an invasion attack. In that event, the units first engaged would be the anti-aircraft batteries and the Fire Services." In New Zealand, the EFS had only six full-time officers in the whole of the Dominion organisation, which exceeded 3,000 men. In Britain, the Fire Services had been placed on exactly the same footing as the Army, and men were allocated from the manpower pool to either the Army or the Fire Services according to needs. Appeal was adjourned sine die, to be reviewed in six months. System did not change.

September 19 1942, Saturday, Fire Motorist Patrol members demonstrated Emergency Fire Service equipment at Avondale Fire Station. Five teams picked from various groups in Area No5 of the Emergency Precaution Scheme competed in hose drills showing very good competency.

September 21 1942, Monday, Arbitration Award made no increases in Auckland MFB staff pay but awarded a special bonus of five shillings a week for the extra duties during the war. Weekly hours were 144 hours on duty, 24 hours off every fourth day, 14 days leave every quarter. Station routine started at 06:30, by 06:45 some were at drill, others scrubbing and repairing hose. Breakfast from 08:00 until 09:00 roll call. After breakfast the "rookie" squad [new hands] drilled with hose, pump, ladders and other equipment. Rest of staff involved in routine work, some trades were, bootmaker, painter, carpenter, plumber and mechanic. At 14:30 station routine ended after half-hour physical drill.

October 24 1942, Saturday, Private Charles Emmerson Edwards [38], died in action, El Alamein, Egypt, North Africa. Charles was a fireman at Central Fire Station, Pitt Street.

November 1 1942, Sunday, Philip [Philip Shaw] Smith [22], Sergeant, Spitfire Pilot, died during a convoy patrol off Isle of Wight, South England in bad weather. Smith was a fireman at Central Fire Station, Pitt Street.

November 27 1942, 06:00, Friday, whole of Auckland full scale air raid test was held. Wet morning, low clouds prevented RNZAF flying to add realism. Sirens sounded; everybody was expected to behave exactly as if the alarm were for an actual raid. All members of the Emergency Precautions Service, including fire guards, took up the posts allotted to them in a raid. At some locations "casualties" arrived on stretchers. Auckland FB and EFS resources mobilised and moved. Agreed no further need to test the system.

January 14 1943, Thursday, first case in Auckland, David McWilliams, in Police Court, on summons, charged with failing without lawful excuse, to comply with instructions to perform fire watching duty at Auckland Railway Station from 23:00 on September 21, until 07:00 the following day. He pleaded not guilty, said would do fire watching conditionally being allowed the equivalent time off the following day without loss of pay. John [J H] Luxford, SM, said everyone must do their duty in accordance with the law. If everyone was allowed to make their own conditions the whole scheme would fall to pieces and would lead to chaos. McWilliams fined £2 and costs.

January 27 1943, Wednesday, Thomas C Beech, Probationary Fire Brigadesman, lost his appeal at the Manpower Industrial Appeal Committee over his dismissal at the end of December 1942 for leaving the Watchroom for 15 minutes on December 29 1942 contrary to instructions. Beech had an unexpected lady visitor, he got someone to take his place. Deputy Superintendent George [GA] Mackenzie stated following instructions and discipline was extremely important in the Fire Brigade. It was Beech's second indiscretion in six weeks, on November 15 1942 Beech was off Station across the road without permission. He was reprimanded by the Superintendent.

February 24 1943, Wednesday, John James Kingston, South British Insurance, Chairman of the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board resigned due to his ill health. Elected a member of the Auckland Fire Board in 1914, chairman in 1919, Metropolitan Fire Board in 1933, elected first new chairman. Acted as Chairman of the EPS unit, fire organiser for the Auckland Metropolitan EPS area, member of New Zealand Fire Boards' Association. Barry Brigham appointed as his successor. member of the Fire Board since 1938, member of the Mt Albert Borough Council. CL Green appointed Board Deputy Chairman.

March 3 1943, Wednesday, George Samways [45. married], of 85 Vermont Street, Ponsonby, a labourer employed by DC Street Construction, fell from scaffolding working at the new Pitt Street Fire Station. He suffered injuries to the chest and spine, admitted to Auckland Hospital.

April 1 1943, Thursday, Hugh Duncan [Sun Insurance] elected an insurance companies' representative on the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board. He was well known in cricket and hockey as a player and administrator.

April 6 1943, Tuesday, Fireman Albert Clarke [43] Western District [later Ponsonby] Station, lost his appeal at the Auckland Manpower Committee to resign because saluting could be reimposed. Thursday, April 28 1943, Auckland Metropolitan Board agreed that saluting not required in the Brigade. It had ended some time before but remained in the Brigade's bylaws. Assistant Fire Force Officer AD Wilson, UK National Fire Service, a New Zealander back advising about firefighting under emergency wartime conditions, considered saluting could heighten efficiency and create pride. Auckland Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson said saluting was practised in Wellington, but he did not consider them any more efficient than Auckland. Clarke died in appliance crash December 9 1949.

May 9 1943, Sunday, a trailer pump was set drafting water from a deep pool on Lower Nihotupu Stream, two deliveries fed into 6" [150mm] pipe connected to the Huia pipeline. Three men looked after it day and night. Auckland had extreme shortage of water; many temporary sources pressed into service. May 13 1943, midday, another trailer pump set up on Lower Huia Stream to feed directly into pipeline. May 13 1943 Auckland Mayor John [JAC] Allum in his capacity as Chief Warden May 24 1943, Monday, denial, The Officers and Men of the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade are concerned about a statement recently published in the evidence given at a recent court martial concerning a disturbance between members of an Allied force and the Police. It was stated that Firemen armed with axes were engaged in the melee. The Fire Brigades' Union would be glad if you would publish a statement to the effect that on the evening in question no Brigadesmen were not absent from the Fire Board's premises and so could not have been concerned. GW Bolton [President], JWA. Stead [Secretary], Auckland Fire Brigadesmen's Union. Of the EPSO to declare a state of emergency due to the city water.

July 3. 1943, Saturday, wedding, at Pitt Street Methodist Church, by the Rev ET Olds. Mollie, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs WH Coulter, Grey Lynn, to Lloyd Foster, eldest son of Superintendent and Mrs. WL Wilson, Central Fire Station, Auckland.

July 14 1943, Wednesday, along with other WW2 emergency fire precaution regulations, high risk building fire watching or fire spotting ended. October 15 1943 facilities, equipment and systems able to be dispensed. Progress in fighting meant risk of enemy [Japan] attacking greatly reduced. Started December 10 1941. Not a popular or successful scheme.

July 28 1943, Wednesday, Government approved volunteers from the EFS [Emergency Fire Service], not in essential industries, taken onto permanent staff to fill vacancies. Government approved increased strength of Auckland Brigade to meet extra fire risk arising from war conditions. These

men were scattered about the various suburban stations. Military establishments had fire protection equipment installed and personnel always on the premises to limit fire damage. EFS members were able to be called for military service, however a number of them were in essential industries. The new Auckland EFS establishment was reset to three hundred and forty-three members.

August 20 1943, Friday, EFS [Emergency Fire Service] duty requirement relaxed nationally, now between 19:00 and 07:00, weekly periods not more often than one week in five, had been one week in three. A surprise enemy raid considered unlikely. The country was a large war base, justified retention of modified billeting scheme. Senior Fire Officers recommended increasing staff numbers in Metropolitan Brigades to protect the important temporary stores, offices, hospitals, war industries and the irreplaceable stocks of reserve materials.

August 25 1943, Wednesday, under EFS [Emergency Fire Service] Order, Auckland permanent staff increased from 96 to 125. Increase came from trained EFS staff [600 men], 21 volunteered and nine were directed. Six employers appealed against appointment, five were dismissed. Two workers appealed, one allowed on medical grounds. The fire risk had increased with the construction of three major and very large USA military store complexes at Sylvia Park, US Marines Camp Bunn at Tamaki [the last camp vacated by US forces in NZ], and Camp Euart [5,000 troops] at Mangere Crossing. Major hospitals at Camp Orange at Hobson Park, Cornwall Park, Ellerslie Racecourse and Avondale, Middlemore was built but mothballed until 1947. Other large camps were at Mechanics Bay [Rose Gardens], Victoria Park, Western Springs [Motions Road], Camp Hale at Auckland Domain Park and Waikaraka Park. All these buildings were built by NZ workers, mostly wood, in quick time, sites often had poor water supplies. Top secret fuel storage tanks built near railway tunnel, Swanson, as back-up fuel if tanks at Freemans Bay and Whenuapai attacked. Swanson fuelled planes at Whenuapai.

August 25 1943, Wednesday, polished brass fire helmets returned, unpainted. Back in mid-December 1941, all brass fire helmets were painted wartime grey, Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent helmets had gold combs, all done by December 22 1941. Painted brass helmets replaced in April 1942 with locally made Army style and grade pressed steel helmets with the word Fire in red on the front.

September 8 1943, Wednesday, body of young boy found floating in a emergency water supply tank, in front of Victoria Park grandstand, Freeman's Bay. He was John Henderson [4], son of Samuel [SW] Henderson, 31 England Street, Ponsonby. Tank was 8ft deep and contained 6ft of water. Apparently, he was playing on the tank, inside the security fence, over balanced and fell in.

Under EFS [Emergency Fire Service] Order, eight new and additional Auckland MFB permanent staff stationed at Otahuhu to increase fire protection at major USA military stores complexes at Sylvia Park and Mangere and assist at Tamaki and others. All costs paid by Government grant. September 27 1943, agreement reached between AMFB and Otahuhu BC for placement of permanent firemen for duration of war. Work started November 1943 on hutment, rear of the Otahuhu fire station, at the rear of the Council Chambers, Great South Road, for staff and two additional appliances. Otahuhu VFB backed up permanent crew to all calls in Otahuhu. April 1 1946, Otahuhu VFB incorporated into Auckland MFB. By 1948 the hutment had moved to Albion Road onto site of the current Fire Station built in 1952.

October 27 1943, Wednesday, "he's not doing too bad" was a remark made about an ex-Fireman of the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade who had just reached the age of retirement. The Fireman

had accepted a position with the Americans as a watchman on the wharves at £2 a day for the duration of the war and four years after.

November 15 1943, Monday, First Class Fireman Eric Sydney Bright [28] died in MV Trocas engine room fire. His brother George Claude Bright, Superintendent Suva FB and ex-Auckland MFB [1924-1926], drowned December 14 1938 [35]. He replaced Superintendent Frank Herring who returned to Auckland MFB. Another brother RW Bright served in Auckland MFB.

December 6 1943, Monday, sirens permitted to be used again, but in long blasts, the wartime emergency system of sirens on 5 seconds and off 5 seconds still applied. December 9 1943, Thursday morning, was first time siren used, shed fire, Eden Terrace. Later at 20:50, first time fire appliances used sirens in Queen Street since the restriction imposed about two years ago was lifted. Public warned in advance by siren corner of Wellesley Street and Queen Street. Vehicle fleet repainted red replacing wartime grey.

December 22 1943, Wednesday, Frank Malcolm Baker [35], tailor's presser, convicted in Police Court to two weeks imprisonment for causing a false alarm. At 21:42 the night before, Baker broke the street fire alarm box, corner Victoria Street West and Nelson Street. He pleaded guilty to wilfully breaking a glass worth six pence, committing mischief, and wilfully giving a false alarm. Had been twenty-one false alarms in previous ten months from this box. "On each alarm, three fire engines turn out at a cost of £5 per engine".

Year ending Friday, December 31 1943, Auckland MFB, no major fires in last twelve months, Fireman Eric Bright died fighting fire on MV Trocas. Establishment increased about 25 per cent by Government order to meet greater risks. Extra plant obtained, including an electrically controlled extension ladder [?]. Numbers in the Emergency Fire Service reduced in general retrenchment of civil defence organisations, brigade still utilised a number of trained EFS men as auxiliaries, spent one week in every six in billets in addition to their work in essential industries.

March 22 1944, Wednesday, Auckland MFB agree to vote £1,000 to the capital expenditure fund. Building up the fund was urged by Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson because much equipment was not obtainable at present would be required after the war. He septically mentioned fire alarm extensions and a new turntable ladder.

New Headquarters, Pitt Street and Greys Avenue. Tender let to DC Street Construction for £58,500 on December 1 1941, architect Danial Boys Patterson. Occupied April 26 1944. Brigade staff took 45 minutes to move the fire alarm receiving equipment, no calls were received during shift. Telephone switchboard moved by the Post and Telegraph Dept. Only 21 quarters were finished and the workshops block was still under construction. Officially opened on November 20 1944 [14:30, Monday] by Bill [WE] Parry, Minister of Internal Affairs. Station three floors and basement, four double appliance bays, 28 married quarters and 33 single quarters. The 72ft tower was for drill purposes and dry hose inside. The Fire Board had provided a sum of £4833-2-7 to build the Superintendents house at the rear of the present site [on Poynton Terrace] but overall finished costs were £162,000 including land [wage costs doubled], the house was never built.

From April 1944. Headquarters No1 pump operated as The Flyer, initially 1935 Ford V8, The Rattler. Objective very fast response, less than 17 seconds, as quick as old Station. Crew accommodation off the south wing, ground floor, overlooking the yard, just at the rear of the pump. The Officer had a bedroom off the engine room near the stairs to the tower. In the old Station, the flying squad occupy rooms adjacent to the Watchroom. The Flyer stopped February 1960 and area became new Brigade Watchroom.

The new Fire Headquarters at Pitt Street had a built-in movie projection box, first left off top floor north, projecting into the social room. The latest films were shown, usually on a Sunday evening, staff families, friends and neighbours attended, including Nurses from Lister House, St Helens Maternity Hospital across Pitt Street. A nominal entry fee paid for the hire of film. Many outstations also showed films. Stopped about 1962, advent of TV saw their demise. First projector was from the old Roxy Theatre, one Fireman previously been a projectionist. The old Roxy Theatre, 50 Queen Street, near Fort Street, Auckland Central, opened November 25 1911 as the Queen's Picture Theatre, The Hippodrome by 1918, renamed Roxy in 1935. January 15 1935 fire gutted Woolworths next door, formally Everybody's Theatre, Woolworths purchased the Roxy. New Roxy opened June 26 1935 on old Woolworths site next door. Closed June 30 1956.

The three-floor concrete building, on first corner Pitt [now Poynton] Terrace, now beside Fire Region Building, built late 1924 [61 feet by 68 feet]. When built occupied by Maoriland Motors, later a roller-skating rink over two floors, amusement parlour, furniture factory, Photo Engravers [1960's - 1970's], Parisian Ties [1980's - 2021+] and several light industries.

From July 1940 until late 1945 used as Carrie Hostel, a liquor free, overnight hostel for WW2 servicemen on leave or recently returned from overseas. Over 150,000 servicemen passed through, cost three shillings a night for bed and meals if they had money, otherwise free. Carrie was name of the building owner HJ Butcher's late wife; he provided building rent free.

September 13 1965, Monday, Anthony John Guilfoyle [24] died in a trench collapse on street outside Photo Engravers. Brigade rescued, performed CPR, resuscitator could not work, his airway blocked.

From mid-1942 until mid-1945 two of the many Auckland Servicemen's Clubs were in Pitt Street. The Wesley Bicentennial Hall beside the Methodist Church and the Catholic facility on the corner of Wellington [now Union] Street.

From April 26 1944, Wednesday, Emergency Fire Service, Central Division, temporarily occupied old Pitt Street Station, between 19:00 and 07:00 every day, staff numbers reduced from 15 to 5. Some emergency fire appliances and equipment stored there. Monday, July 3 1944 EFS Auckland District Commander Mike [Lionel S] Abbott said numbers and training continued at 1943 levels, 35 EFS men slept every night in emergency fire stations and Brigade fire stations.

June 1944, first Pitt Street Fire Station purchased by Sir Frank and Lady Mappin and gifted to St John Ambulance Association. They provided £16,000 for the purchase [£14,575] and renovation to make it suitable for St John. St John moved in July 5 1944, renovations begun September 4 1944 and was fully operational in November 1944. Provided garaging six Ambulances, six married quarters and twelve single quarters. Headquarters stayed in Rutland Street. In 1977 also became National Ambulance Officers Training School. Closed 1994 when St John built 40m down [north] Pitt Street. Converted to apartments with shop[s] in appliance room.

June 28 1944, Wednesday, Joyce [JW] Hyland [Auckland City Council] and Herbert [HAB] Brabant [Insurance companies] appointed to Auckland MFB. Cyril [CJ] Garland and Thomas [TC] Buddle had resigned. Barry Brigham [re-elected Chairman] and Alfred [AP] Hartnoll re-elected as representatives of local bodies other than City Council. Major Reg [RS] Judson VC [City Council] reappointed.

August 23 1944, Wednesday, Auckland MFB instructed by Inspector of Fire Brigades, Roy Girling Butcher, to reduce the wartime permanent staff by four men. Four men were selected, after request by Board, Inspector approved retention of two of the four at Government's cost. Total

strength of the brigade was one hundred and sixteen [116]. October 12 1944, twelve of the men who were directed to Auckland MFB about middle of 1943 were released. Formerly members EFS [Emergency Fire Service], had been retained from Army duty on appeal and directions of Manpower Officer as increased fire risks created by the war. About twenty-eight [28] men were directed from various industries to full time Firemen. The men were retained in the Brigade at the expense of the Government, retrenchment ordered by Roy Girling-Butcher, fire risk had decreased. Shifting of the war away from New Zealand and the reduced armed forces activity were factors lessening fire risk. The released men were all from essential industries and they returned to their former occupations.

September 27 1944, Wednesday, Barry Bringham, Auckland MFB Chairman paid tribute to the work Auckland Fire Police delivered. He said the volunteer group were an enthusiastic body and little was heard about their fine service. They were sworn in as special constables, wore a distinctive cap, armlet and khaki shirt.

September 30 1944, Saturday, Auckland and national EFS [Emergency Fire Service] stood down. Government made decision early September 1944; Auckland EFS staff advised Monday September 18 1944. Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson appealed to members of the EFS to volunteer for brigade auxiliary duty to provide additional staff at night.

October 25 1944, Wednesday, at Auckland MFB meeting, Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson was asked why a large proportion of Firemen had been suffering from fibrositis and lumbago in recent months, were their complaints due to exposure to the weather and any reason why firemen should not go to a fire inside an appliance, instead of having to sit or stand uncovered? Wilson replied the best of the men were serving overseas, fighting in the worst conditions imaginable. They are as tough as steel, and in comparison, with their life in battle. Firemen today lead the lives of gentlemen. The trouble with Firemen we have at present is that many of them are older men who are feeling the strain. Also, our firemen, like many other men, don't take enough physical exercise to keep fit. Molly-coddle people, and they'll get softer and softer. JWA Stead, Secretary of the Auckland Fire Brigade Employees' Union replied that the attack was unwarranted and was bitterly resented by the men, who are prevented by the Manpower Regulations from leaving a service where their efforts are so unnecessarily criticised. Several retired Firemen agreed with Wilson saying Firemen today can't stand up to the tough stuff. Wilson said he had been misinterpreted, was end of meeting, informal time.

December 2 1944, Saturday, temporary water reservoirs constructed in key positions under the Emergency Precautions Scheme for firefighting were being removed. Built at time of threat of Japanese invading. Maintenance costs and they were often used as rubbish receptacles, corresponding danger to the health of the community, hastened the decision to demolish them. One at the intersection of Victoria Street West, Union Street and Franklin Road been demolished and a traffic island was due to be built. Filling in the hole left by removing the 130,000-gallon tank on the corner Cook and Albert Streets was underway. Tanks often had fish in to control mosquitos.

December 23 1944, Saturday afternoon, about 100 children attended annual Christmas Party at Pitt Street Headquarters. Santa Claus arrived on fire appliance and distributed gifts from under a Christmas tree in the yard. Later everyone watched a movie in the social room.

January 14 1945, 16:44, Sunday, Flight Sergeant Bertram Leslie Ireland [33, married, five children], Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, RNZAF, killed in action, near RAF Westcott, Buckinghamshire, England. Crew on Vickers Wellington B Mark X bomber, serial number LN403 OP-V, crashed into

trees near Wotton Underwood Railway Station. Six crew killed, two injured. Ireland had joined Birkenhead VFB 1932.

March 2 1945, Friday, about 09:40 hours, Paymaster Victor [Roydon Victor] HUGO [55, married to Nancy] died in head on motor vehicle accident with oncoming 2-ton truck, Mt Smart Road, Penrose. Hugo was driving 1937 Ford V8, 1 ton GP [general purpose] pickup truck No1 from Great South Road [now Ellerslie] to Onehunga Stations delivering staff pay packets. The Ford V8 was wrecked. Junior Station Officer Aubert William Arthur Crook [32, married] was slightly injured. Hugo had been Auckland FB fireman 1908-1911, and again from 1932-1945. He was very well known in Auckland amateur sports, a keen footballer he played in all four codes. Went overseas in the main body in the First World War. Son of late NZ Inspector of Fire Brigades, TT Hugo. Alfred Jones [36, married] driver of other truck was slightly injured. Funeral held 13:30, next day, Saturday, at Central Fire Station, conducted by Rev FI Parsons. Aub Crook resigned as Third officer in 1953 after being passed over for appointment to Deputy Chief Fire Officer. Crook had been awarded MBE in January 1945, service as Warrant Officer, Firemaster RNZAF Station Hobsonville.

March 23 1945, Friday, appeals over seventy members of fire brigades heard in afternoon sitting No1 Armed Forces Appeal Board. Fifty-seven were Auckland MFB, 28 from permanent staff. Deputy Superintendent George Mackenzie said normal wartime strength of permanent staff was 97, now only 95. Pre-war establishment of auxiliary firemen was 59, at present only 14 on the staff. To make up this loss married men who had been in the EFS [Emergency Fire Service] continued to come on duty one week in five. George Mackenzie said at midnight each night Brigade was only 50 per cent of its pre-war strength. Pre-war establishment of volunteer firemen was 61, now only 37.

Year ending Saturday, March 31 1945, Auckland MFB attended 1,022 fire calls, loss estimated £76,521. Had been a wet summer, less vegetation fires. Two people died in fires. Comparative figures years were: 1940-41, 996; 1941-42, 1,198; and 1943-44, 1,444.

April 24 1945, Tuesday, Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson reported to the Fire Board that two new stations were required. One to replace Parnell and one to replace Mt Eden, moved to vicinity of Grange Road and Mt Eden Road to give better coverage to Epsom [the shift to Mt Albert in September 1970 made it worse until Balmoral opened]. He recommended that future stations be built with married quarters for the officers only, he said that it was his conviction that the "platoon system" would be introduced in New Zealand in the not very distant future. Under this system firemen would be on duty for a certain number of hours a day. They would then be like employees in other occupations, and could go to their own homes at the end of the duty period. February 2 1970, three shift system introduced.

May 9 1945, Wednesday, VE Day celebrated with restraint in New Zealand, not as big as upcoming VJ Day. Acting Prime Minister, Walter Nash, insisted that celebrations wait until British Prime Minister Winston Churchill officially announced the peace, heard at 01:00 on May 9th in New Zealand. National two-day holiday. Seems did not cause problems for Brigades.

May 24 1945, Thursday, Alfred [AP] Hartnoll represented the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board at the National Fire Brigades' Conference in Wellington.

June 27 1945, Wednesday, Percy Selwyn Butler, recently retired accountant, auditor and secretary for the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board died aged 83. He had held those roles since Fire Board's inception in 1907. He was also Secretary of the Auckland Underwriters' Association. Early August 1917, Private Edward Arthur Ormond Butler, New Zealand Expeditionary Force, only son of Mr and Mrs Percy Butler, Omaha Road, Remuera reported dead and buried by German Forces.

July 25 1945, Wednesday, AMFB approved purchase 1,000' of 2" [50mm] double-jacketed rubber lined hose at a total cost of about £275. "The hose was the first lead used at all fires and consequently received heavy wear and tear. None of this hose had been purchased since outbreak of war so stocks were exceedingly low".

August 4 1945, Saturday, Auckland City had 7,427 fire hydrants in its streets. Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade complained that some hydrants were not clearly marked. The survey showed 96.4 per cent of all hydrants had indicator plates nearby, more than half of the remainder were in Tamaki and Avondale streets where there were few or no buildings. In 1946 indicator markers will be placed near all hydrants not identified, with the possible exception of those in streets with no buildings.

August 15 1945, Wednesday, last of two days of Peace Celebrations, VJ Day, victory over Japan, end of WW2. Brigade said it was lucky no calls in main part of city, access was difficult due to amount broken glass on roads.

Four Auckland MFB Firemen died during World War Two. November 26 1941, Sergeant Dick or Neil [Frank Neil] Robertson [24] killed in action, Sidi Rezegh, Libya, North Africa. September 1 1942, Private Bluey or Bert [Bertram Raymond] Munns [26] Infantry, died from wounds, prisoner of war, El Alamein, Egypt, North Africa. October 24 1942, Private Charles [Charles Emmerson] Edwards [38], died in action, El Alamein, Egypt, North Africa. November 1 1942 Philip [Philip Shaw] Smith [22], Sergeant, Spitfire Pilot, during a convoy patrol off Isle of Wight, Hampshire, South England in bad weather.

Nine Auckland MFB Officers and Firemen served overseas during World War Two and returned. Ernie Ander, Bert Manning, Eric Bright [died November 15 1943 Trocas fire], Bob Reid, Stan Broadhead, F Davidson, Norm Wright [wounded, hospital ship sunk, rescued], Noel Glen and Bernard Wisnesky. Others joined the Auckland Brigade after the war: Horry Maddox [retired SSO] heavy bomber tail gunner, George [GA] Dickson [retired SSO] Army POW [1942] North Africa and escaped in Italy, Tony Walsh, [retired Senior Fireman] UK Army, escaped POW Italy, Bill Bright [retired Senior Fireman, had a stutter] crew on heavy bomber crashed on beach at foot Dover Cliffs, Arthur Monk [retired SSO and Auckland Union President] a teenage 'runner' in London blitz.

Nationally sixty Fire Brigade Officers and Firemen died during World War Two. Personnel who served in any war had time served included in time toward their UFBA [United Fire Brigades' Association] service honours.

As a wartime measure Firemen were on duty onboard ships on request during repairs. A continuous watch was carried out by permanent Firemen, they quelled a number of incipient fires without calling the Brigade, Eric Bright died. Firemen also attended loading and unloading explosives and ammunition, hundreds of thousands of tons were handled in Auckland. Huge quantities of wartime stores that went through the port posed new problems, not the least were the huge quantities of petrol stored in thousands of drums.

August 17 1945, Friday, Arbitration Court granted general increase in pay of eleven shillings eight pence a week to Northern Fire Brigades employees' award and Fire Brigade's Officers' award, retrospective to April 1 1945.

November 13 1945, Tuesday, Inspector of Fire Brigades Roy Girling-Butcher reported to the Minister of Internal Affairs Bill [WEI] Parry on proposed new structure for post war New Zealand Fire Services. It was recommended central direction while still retaining local administration. The Fire Service Council established November 7 1949. The first chairman of the Council [nominated by the Minister]

was Roy Girling-Butcher, replaced by Stan [SS - nickname steamship] Dean. Dean was Chairman Wellington Fire Board and retired Wellington Manager South British Insurance, also Chairman NZ Rugby Union.

December 5 1945, Wednesday, Auckland Fire Brigades Union were in dispute with the Fire Board over meal allowance when relieving at outstations. Old award provision was three shillings a day. Action was taken because of doubts as to the legal interpretation of the relevant clause in the new award. Union Secretary JWA Stead was also Government nominee on Fire Board and Secretary of Sandringham Branch of Labour Party. December 20 1945, James A Gilmour SM, Chairman of the Disputes Tribunal decided Firemen were now entitled to receive an allowance of two shillings a meal when relieving.

December 22 1945, Saturday, 150 children of Brigadesmen and Fire Policemen attended Christmas Party at new Pitt Street. Guest of honour was Sonny Mowatt from Wilson Home Takapuna, son of a Waihi Fireman. This was the second year for the children's Christmas party.

February 1946, Stan [SA] Gleadow, Auckland Manager Norwich Union Insurance, appointed to Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board. Appointed Chairman 1950 to 1951 replacing Barry Brigham who also replaced him. Again Chairman 1957 to 1965, replaced Alec [AL] Monteith. Ran a very tight ship, retired 1966, succeeded as Chairman by HE [Harold Edward] Watts from 1966 to 1973 [ex Newmarket VFB].

Sunday, March 31 1946, year ending, total fire loss in the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board's area was £102,691. Calls received were more than double year before. Altogether 2,052 calls were received, including 384 involving property, and 1,042 to grass and rubbish fires. The total calls were a brigade record. Budget was £70,625, 91 permanent staff, 47 volunteer staff and 25 auxiliary [sometimes called "gazob's"] staff.

April 1 1946, Monday, Otahuhu VFB incorporated into Auckland MFB. In 1944 five new permanent posts were stationed at Otahuhu to cover the major war storage facilities. June 1945 Otahuhu BC asked AMFB to join. Outgoing Volunteer Superintendent was Alf [AP] Eustace, had been appointed June 1932. Volunteer Deputy Superintendent Jack Kerr appointed permanent Officer in Charge. About 1962 Jack became a Senior Station Officer, February 2 1970, Third Officer [Southern Command], Jack died January 4 1971 aged 58. Son Ian Kerr had major input with new fire appliances with International Harvester in Penrose then Mills Tui in Rotorua.

July 1 1946, Monday, closed in fire engines had been used in Wellington for a while, but had not proved popular with Firemen, said Alfred [AP] Hartnoll, reporting to the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board. He added that the covered engine gave poor visibility to the driver and there was a possibility that firemen might not be able to get out in an emergency. A ballot had been held among firemen and this had shown conclusively that they preferred the open type. Seems at odds with other statements made at Board meetings.

July 2 1946, Tuesday, all twenty-six AMFB Officers had 24 hours' leave every fourth day, and 14 days' leave every three months. Award claim asked that Officers should be granted 24 hours leave every second day, Mr Stead said that the officers were required to be on duty under the continuous watch system for 72 hours before having a day off. The claim was unsuccessful.

December 4 1946, Wednesday, AMFB Chairman Barry Brigham said four union representatives who travelled to the recent Fire Board's Association conference in Wellington were able to obtain first class seats in the train, while the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board's representative had to travel

second class. Union Secretary, JWA Stead stated that the delegates obtained the seats because they applied as early as possible and received seats not required by other travellers one hour before the train left. Mr Stead said it was incorrect that the Minister of Internal Affairs used his influence to obtain the seats for the Union representatives.

February 27 1947, Thursday, JW Stead, Secretary of the Fire Brigade Employees' Union and member of Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board said at Board meeting the Brigade would have difficulty in finding sufficient men to fight one big fire and would be "completely sunk" if two big outbreaks occurred simultaneously. Brigade actual strength was eighty men, when it should be more than one hundred. Higher pay for unskilled jobs was one reason advanced for the lack of men offering.

Monday, March 17 to 19th 1947, annual UFBA [United Fire Brigades' Association] conference was held in Auckland. Conference called for the reintroduction of fire prevention week. Fireman-Driver Len [LRC] Harlen elected Junior Vice President of the. Accident Society of the United Fire] Brigades Association. first member of ' the Auckland Brigade on the executive for the first time since the foundation of the society in 1892.

April 28 1947, Monday, Auckland MFB and Police were on standby because two women were sold a can of petrol instead of kerosene. Radio warnings were broadcast. The most worried person was the shop assistant who discovered their error. At 20:00 the women informed the Police that the can was still unopened.

September 1947, Auckland MFB appliance, responding to a fire call, was halted by a Traffic Officer for two minutes because the traffic lights were red. The Regulation stated the driver of a fire engine committed a breach if he proceeded against traffic lights. The Fire Board requested the Minister of Transport amend the regulations. Problem quoted for Christchurch responding to Ballantyne's fire. May 21 1948 New Zealand Road Safety Council adopted a Transport Department recommendation that Fire Brigade vehicles should come to a stop in face of a red light, although they might move on again immediately. August 1 1948, Government gazetted amendment to the Traffic Regulations that allowed fire appliances to drive through red traffic lights when going to a fire, provided that the appliance's speed must be reduced to 10 miles per hour and a siren must be sounded as a warning to other motorists.

September 25 1947, Thursday, report that the Fire Brigade Union wanted all Volunteer Firemen to join the Fire Brigade Employees' Union was before Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board from the New Zealand Fire Boards' Association. A recent national ballot showed 2881 volunteer firemen were against joining the Firemen's Union and only 57 in favour. Mr L Glover, secretary of the New Zealand Firemen's Union, was determined that the men should join the Union, the Federation of Labour supported. By March 1 1948 agreement that all volunteer Brigadesmen outside the metropolitan areas would not be asked to join the union unless a vote was taken on the matter. The union still wanted all volunteers in brigades within metropolitan districts to become unionists automatically.

Tuesday, November 18 1947, 15:30 hours a fire broke out in the Ballantynes Department Store Furniture Department in Christchurch. Forty-one (41) people died and the subsequent Royal Commission of Inquiry would see many changes to the way fire brigades would operate in New Zealand.

November 18 1947, Tuesday, Forest and Rural Fires Act 1947 became effective. A number of significant and damaging fires in Taupo Rotorua area necessitated new legislation to prevent and extinguish vegetation fires. The State Forest Service provided most of the requisite management

and equipment, Replacement legislation enacted 1977. New Zealand Forest Service was abolished in 1987.

November 26 1947, Wednesday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board dissociated itself from the report that fire protection authorities had informed the Auckland Harbour Board that there was no objection to the establishment of storage tanks. It recommended that, all oil installations should be moved away from city areas, a policy that had been carried out in Brisbane.

December 11 1947, Thursday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade issued statement following recent Ballantynes fatal fire in Christchurch that a similar tragedy could happen in Auckland. It said they were inundated with requests to inspect buildings and advise fire protection control measures. The statement urged three fundamentals fire precautions. First, break up large floor areas with fire walls. Secondly, cut off vertical openings, such as lift shafts, with fire stops. Thirdly, eliminate late discovery and notification of a fire. Another necessity is regular evacuation drills. Brigade also said that staff often pay no attention to the sounding of automatic alarms.

April 1 1948, afternoon, Thursday, in heavy rain, Headquarters 1943 Fargo FK4 Hose Layer, fleet No3, collided with telegraph pole on sharp bend, Great North Road, Grey Lynn. They were responding to Westmere School, 81 Garnet Road, later proved to be a malicious false alarm. Injured were Junior Station Officer Jack [John Edward Keating] McConnell suffered injury to the face, and Fireman John Russell Forster injured back and slight lacerations to the scalp. Both treated in Hospital Fireman Driver A Little attempted to steer into the library grounds, struck the pole a glancing blow. Forster was flung off the back step onto the footpath. Driver Little and another Fireman who was on back step escaped injury. The front wheels, axle and springs were sheared off and the right-hand front was severely crushed. The impact brought down telephone wires, tramway overhead wires and a special wire for the district's fire alarm system. Appliance repaired.

From August 1948, Thursday, Cromwell cork leather composite helmets very slowly started to replace brass helmets. Seems brass helmets were also very slowly introduced into Auckland from about 1899 replacing leather helmets. All brass helmets gone in 1955, the brass helmet become a liability from the risk of electric shock to those who wore it. About 1961, black plastic NPL introduced, sometimes called the fibreglass helmet. The introduction of the NPL did not last long, cracked easily and broke, all decommissioned by late 1963. Replaced UK made Cromwell cork helmets and were replaced by Cromwell Metro helmets.

January 13 1949, Thursday, new award sought by Auckland Fire Brigades' Employees' Industrial Union of Workers. The secretary of the New Zealand Fire Brigades', Len Glover, opened proceedings saying the wages in the Auckland Brigade did not attract the right type of man. Staff had been on routine stoppage. August 15 1950, dispute still unresolved, Unions fighting for separate Awards.

March 10 1949, Thursday, new industrial award eliminated the Senior Station officer rank, all Officers below Inspecting Officer [later Fourth Officer] became Station Officers. Western District [later Ponsonby], Mt Albert, Ellerslie and Remuera still considered senior officers at an incident.

March 16 1949, Wednesday, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Board member FSJ Williams expressed concern at the number of resignations. "There is not a month goes by when we do not have several resignations. There must be some reason for all these men leaving. It is a very good job, one of the best in New Zealand."

Year ending Thursday, March 31 1949, the total fire loss in the Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade area was £'37,933. Annual report from Superintendent Bill [WL] Wilson.

April 5 1949, Tuesday, at annual IFE conference was held in Auckland, Inspecting Officer Aub [AWA] Crook [later Third Officer] said that 99 per cent of the building's in the country are so constructed that under favourable conditions they could be burnt to the ground by one nitwit with a cigarette. "No thinking person will deny that, at present the fire protection of this Dominion is in a sorry plight. Public complacency, allied with migratory fire protection laws and inadequate fire defences, both public and private, combine to create a situation shameful to a population which proudly claims to head the world in social services".

April 28 1949, Thursday, dispute, Auckland MFB employees refused to do routine after 14:00. The Union took a literal interpretation of the award fixing routine work from 07:00 to 14:00. Watchroom duties after 14:00 was being done by Officers. Referred to Arbitration Court.

1949, Auckland Metropolitan Fire Brigade consisted of 118 paid staff [27 Officers, 91 firemen] working 3 days on and 1 day off, 56 volunteer staff, and 14 Auxiliary Firemen. 13 paid stations 2 volunteer [Mt Wellington No1 and No2]. 20 pumps, 5 trailer pumps, 4 hose tenders, 2 TTL's [plus 1902 65' ladder in reserve at Mt Eden], 4 trucks, 1 Superintendent's car and 1 Inspecting car. Budget £98,520. Nine Fire Board members, had eleven members when Board was replaced in 1976 by NZFS.

October 1 1949, Saturday, Roy M Girling-Butcher retired as Inspector of Fire Brigades. April 1 1931, appointed Government Fire Inspector, previously Chief Inspector of Explosives, replaced Thomas T Hugo. February and March 1931, heavily involved restoring Napier after earthquake. October 1 1949 appointed first Chairman of New Zealand Fire Service Council. Died October 1 1952, age 65. Son Bill [William] Girling - Butcher [born March 30 1916] became Chief Fire Control Officer, New Zealand Forest Service, retired 1979 with QFSM.

October 1 1949, Saturday, Fire Service Act 1949 introduced after Ballantynes Commission of Inquiry and concerns from the Director-General of Fire Brigades about the efficiency of smaller Fire Boards. November 7 1949, Fire Service Council came into effect, took over the Minister's responsibility for efficient functioning of urban fire authorities. Council was responsible to Minister for oversight of urban fire authorities and their brigades, Department of Internal Affairs to concentrate on policy issues concerning fire, and assist Minister monitor Council. Council approved fire board's budget, Minister approved Council's budget. Standardisation of equipment and mutual assistance were included. First Chair was Roy Girling-Butcher, recently retired Director General of Fire Services. The Ballantynes Inquiry proposed a national fire service which was rejected. The Fire Services Act 1949 set up Fire Service Council to coordinate urban fire brigades, direct firefighter training and distribute equipment. March 11 1958, first national training school for firefighters officially opened, The Parade and Dee Street West, Island Bay, Wellington. Brigade Instructors course was underway, with some Wellington staff participated in opening display. Closed in 1995 Cummings restructure.

October 26 1949, Wednesday, Auckland MFB received a letter from Auckland City Council asking the Board to provide, without undue delay, fire extinguishers in all the flats occupied by married Firemen at the Central Fire Station. Fire Board were very surprised with request, flats were on a busy Fire Station with several fire appliances fitted with firefighting equipment. Board agreed to apply for exemption, never installed, although the odd handful of bicarbonate used on oven fires.

November 16 1949, Wednesday, Deputy Superintendent George Alexander Mackenzie appointed Superintendent [later Chief Fire Officer]. Replaced Bill [WL] Wilson who retired October 23 1949, had turned 66 early May. March 1956 Fire Board asked Mackenzie to resign as CFO. Reason never made public, word was enquiries into the purchase of the seven Dennis appliances [value over

£40,000] found defects in flow rates of the first aid or hose reel equipment. April 13 1956 Mackenzie became Deputy Chief Fire Officer, retired August 25 1961, over 800 people attended his farewell, set up own fire protection company in Auckland. Mackenzie was born in Glasgow in 1901, died October 24 1971 aged 70, in Auckland Hospital. Some say that he was treated rather poorly by the Fire Board at the time.

December 9 1949, just after 22:00, Friday. Firemen Albert CLARKE [50] and George Leonard OLIVER [22] both of Western District [later Ponsonby] station, died pined underneath the 1942 Ford V8 pump appliance, after it skidded on tram lines, hit a power pole, spun 20 yards [18m] and overturned, corner of Franklin Road and Victoria Street West, Freemans Bay. Four other crew injured, Ken [LK] McNamara, George [GD] Wright [23, driver], Charlie Rogers and J Wilson [Auxiliary] were all treated at Auckland Hospital, Station Officer Scotty [Andrew R] Mason thrown out, landed on Driver, did not seek assistance. Passengers on nearby Herne Bay bound trolley bus witnessed. Western District were going to a small fire in detached wood shed at Austral Super Paints Ltd, 102 Fanshawe Street. Faulty clutch, couldn't make change. December 14 1939, about 18:45, Western District 1926 Halley Simonis, same corner, collided with car. Scotty [AR] Mason also on this appliance.

Many thanks again to Cliff Mears who has tirelessly recorded the AFB history from log books, Fire Board Reports, Newspaper Cuttings, Scrap Books and other sources making our job so much easier.

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