History of the New Central Fire Station Site

History of the Lincoln Highway

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

History of the Cedar Rapids Fire Department

Introduction

Introduction

The Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station was inundated during the historic floods of June 2008. As a result of presidentially declared major federal disaster; the City of Cedar Rapids applied for funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistant Program, for the permanent relocation of the Central Fire Station, eligible under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The Central Fire Station was damaged as a result of the flooding in June 2008. A new site for Central Fire Station was chosen on 1st Avenue between 6th and 7th Streets.

All properties that required demolition for the relocation were reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to determine if historic properties would be af

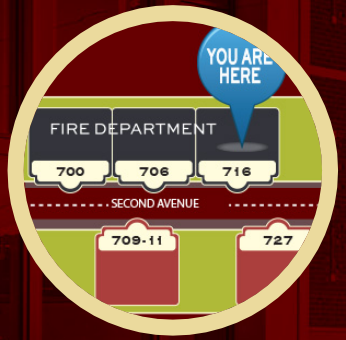
federally-funded action. FEMA, in consultation with the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI), determined that the Barron Motor Supply and Bennett Tire and Battery Building located at 702-706 2nd Avenue SE was eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as a contributing resource to the NRHP eligible Automobile Row Historic District, which included nine commercial buildings on either side of 2nd Avenue SE between 6th and 7th Streets SE.

Introduction

In an effort to resolve adverse effects to historic properties resulting from the property relocation, FEMA, in consultation with the SHSI and additional consulting parties developed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), that outlined measures, which once implemented, would resolve the adverse effects. The mitigation measures stipulated in the MOA included development, fabrication and installation of an interpretive kiosk along the 2nd Avenue side of the new Central Fire Station site, and development of this exhibit that features the history of the Lincoln Highway in Cedar Rapids highlighting the history of former buildings on the site and their association with the impact of automobiles along the Lincoln Highway, and the history of the Cedar Rapids Fire Department including historic fire stations, and significant moments/events in the history of the fire department such as volunteer and professional firefighting, technological changes, major fires, and fire station architecture.

This exhibit was produced under the terms of a Memorandum of Agreement, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, among the U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department, the City of Cedar Rapids, Cedar Rapids Fire Department, Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission, Linn County Historic Preservation Commission, Linn County History Center, and Preservation Iowa, regarding the demolition of historic properties in Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa. FEMA administered Federal disaster assistance through FEMA's Public Assistance Program pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act for the demolition of historic properties required for the permanent relocation of the Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station to a site out of the floodplain. The Central Fire Station was substantially damaged by flooding in July 2008 that resulted in declared disaster DR-1763-IA.

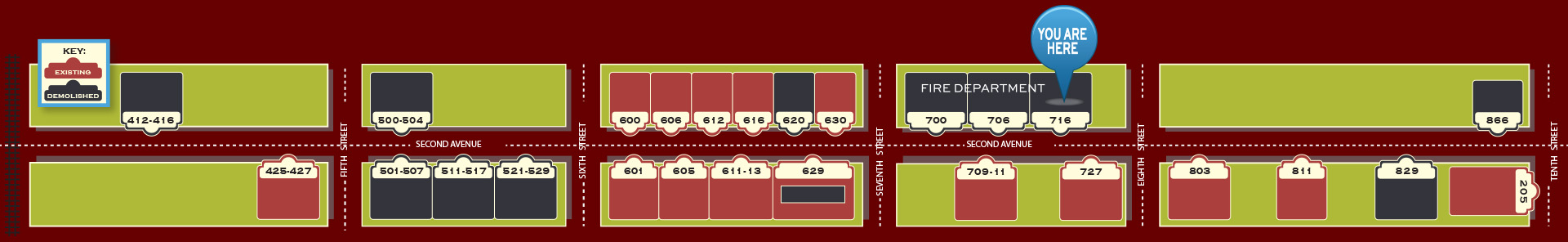
History of the New Central Fire Station Site



Automobile Row Interactive Map

Automobile Row & the Lincoln Highway

Automobile Row Interactive Map



Tap a location for more information

425-427-429 Second Avenue

Previous
MAIN MENU
SECTION MENU
Next

501-507 Second Avenue

511-517-521-529 Second Avenue

601 Second Avenue

Previous
MAIN MENU
SECTION MENU
Next

605 Second Avenue

600 Second Avenue

Previous
MAIN MENU
SECTION MENU
Next

700 Second Avenue

706 Second Avenue

205 10th Street SE

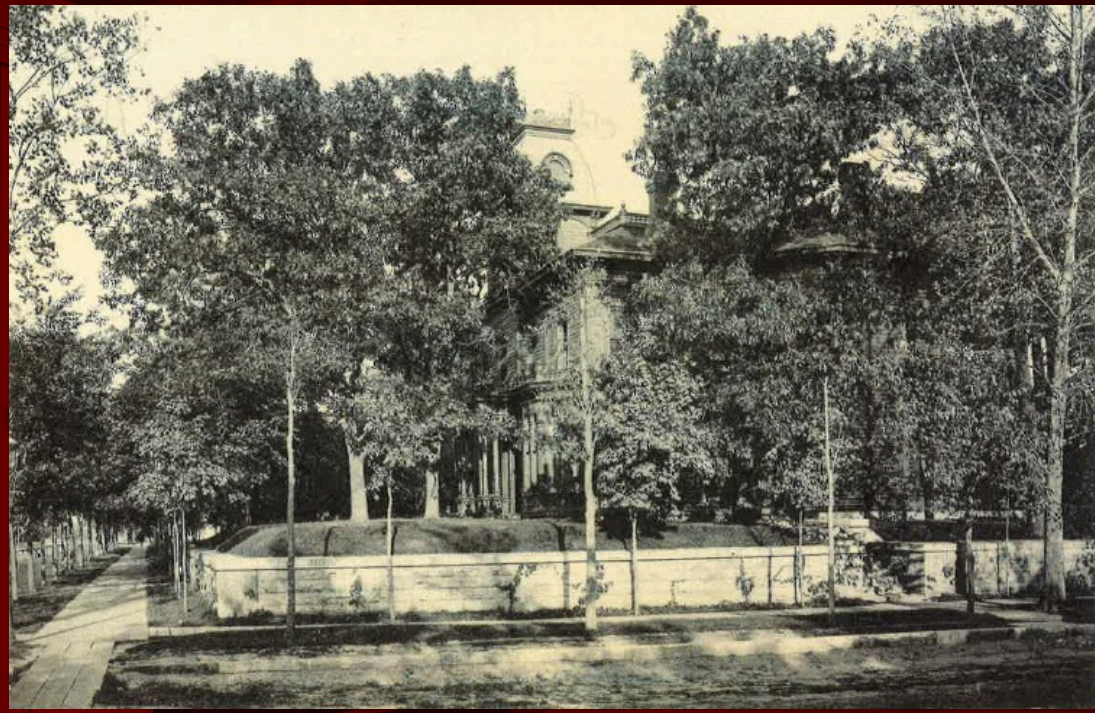
Previous
MAIN MENU
SECTION MENU
Next

829 Second Avenue

Mansion Hill

Now home to the 2013 Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station building, the 700 block of First Avenue SE has a history dating back to the 1870s. This block of First Avenue East was an important section of the "Mansion Hill" district between 1875 and 1915. Mansion Hill was developed as an area containing over 100 stately homes inhabited by the leading families of Cedar Rapids in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Stephen Dows Mansion (1880)



The most significant residence built on this block was a large mansion for the family of the Honorable Captain Stephen Dows in the early 1880s at 705 First Avenue SE. Dows was involved in many ventures including railroad development and the formation of the city's primary electric utility. An 1896 city directory gave his occupation as "capitalist".

(continued)

Stephen Dows Mansion (1880)

The Dows family continued to live at 705 First Avenue SE until about 1910. The Dows mansion was then used as a Boarding House operated by Blanche Porter until about 1920. By 1922, the Dows mansion was converted for use by the Cedar Rapids School District for their Board of Education offices. The school district only used the large house for a few years and it then became an apartment house for a couple of years before being abandoned and then demolished in the 1930s. Then this corner of First Avenue and Seventh Street SE became a longtime parking lot, first for Handler Motor Company, followed by Rapids Chevrolet and then a private parking lot until construction of the new Central Fire Station began in 2012.

Henry & Julie Kirk House (1875)

The two-story brick cottage at 717 First Avenue SE was a home for the family of Henry and Julia Kirk in about 1875. Mr. Kirk was a secretary for the T.M. Sinclair & Co. meat packinghouse in Cedar Rapids. This residence was torn down in the late 1930's to accommodate more parking for the Handler Motor Company, which was located across the alley in the 700 block of Second Avenue SE.

Charles Arnutt House (1870)

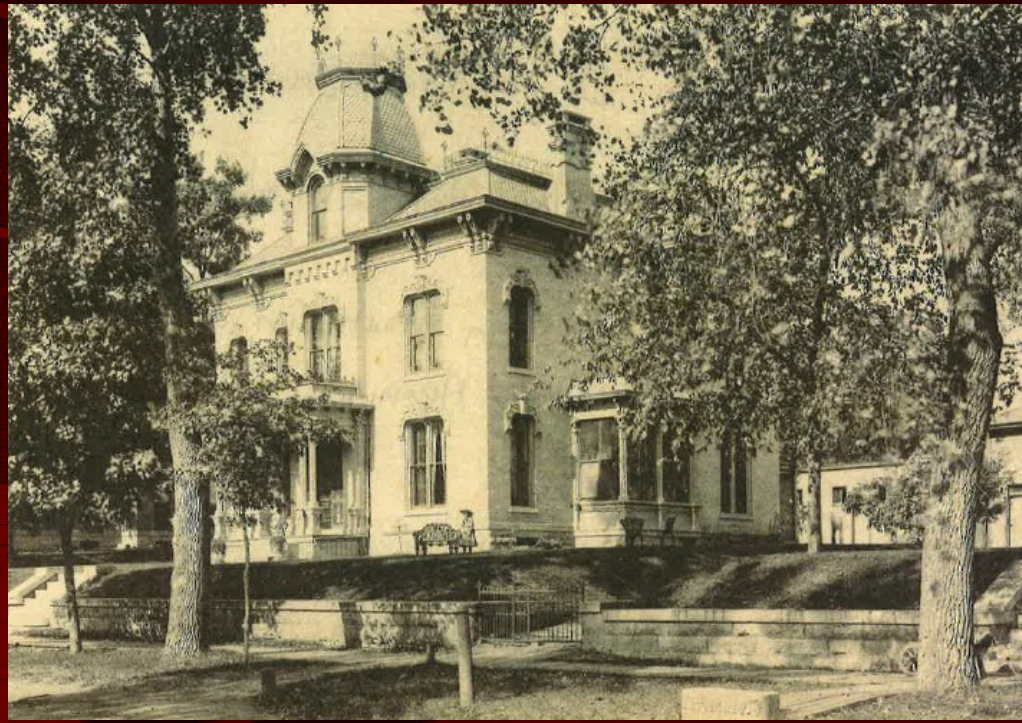
Although its neighbors were gone by 1940, the house at 729 First Avenue SE at the corner of 8th Street SE stood until 1957. The family of Charles Arnutt lived in this house from 1917 to 1950. In 1917, Arnutt was a bookkeeper for the Douglas Company starch factory in Cedar Rapids. The two houses at 109 and 111 Eighth Street SE directly behind the Arnutt house were also demolished in the late 1950s, ending the residential history of the 700 block of First Avenue SE.

From the late 1950s until early 2012, the entire 700 block of First Avenue SE was used for parking lots with the exception of a small cinderblock building built at 725 First Avenue SE in the 1960s to be used as an automobile sales office. The last business to use this small building was Bob's Wholesale Cars.

The small building and the large parking lots were then destroyed to make way for construction of the new Cedar Rapids Central F opened in 2013.

E.C. Preston House (1878)

The largest and most impressive was the Preston family home at 716 Second Avenue SE in the middle of the block. E. C. Preston and his son Isaac Preston were prominent attorneys in Cedar Rapids for many decades.



Henry Ferguson House (1880)

The brick mansion at 706 Second Avenue SE near the corner of 7th Street SE was the home of Henry Ferguson's family in 1880. Mr. Ferguson was a local capitalist involved in many business ventures including the Iowa Railway Company. The Ferguson family moved into this brick residence from their previous home in the country on the outskirts of town on First Avenue West.

Theodore Stickney House (1885)

The third brick mansion at 726 Second Avenue SE near the corner of 8th Street SE was the longtime residence of the Stickney family of Cedar Rapids. In 1893, Theodore Stickney was paymaster and purchasing agent for the local Burlington Cedar Rapids and Northern Railway.

Douglas House (1897)

Planned in 1895 and built in 1896-97, this two and a half story Georgian Revival style residence was built as a new home for the George B. Douglas family and opened in 1897. Architect was Henry Ives Cobb of Chicago. Douglas was one of three sons of George Douglas Sr. who founded the Douglas and Stuart Mill of Cedar Rapids in 1873 which became the Quaker Oats facility. George B. Douglas and his wife Irene had three daughters, two of them, Ellen and Margaret, lived at this address in their early childhood.

Douglas House (1897)

In 1906, the Douglas family decided to purchase the 1884 Sinclair mansion at 1965 First Avenue SE and renamed it "Brucemore". Members of the Sinclair family purchased the 800 Second Avenue SE Douglas home to be "closer to town". The result: an elegant "house swap" between these two leading families of Cedar Rapids. Sinclair family members that began living at 800 Second Avenue SE in 1906 included Caroline Sinclair, widow to Thomas M. Sinclair, who started the Sinclair Meatpacking Company in 1871 and died in an 1881 accident at the plant.

Douglas House (1897)

The Sinclair family utilized the old Douglas home until 1923 when it was sold to the John B. Turner family for conversion to a funeral home operation. Turner Funeral Home at 800 Second Avenue SE opened in 1924. The Turner's built a large two story addition to the 1897 home. Family member David Turner had been a lifelong friend of artist Grant Wood and Wood was engaged to create interior architectural elements and details for the house.

Douglas House (1897)

By 1982, the Turner Funeral Home was sold to the Linge family of Cedar Rapids, who continued to operate it as a funeral service facility. The Linge's had earlier established the Cedar Memorial Cemetery and funeral services property in NE Cedar Rapids in the late 1920's. The 800 Second Avenue SE facility was renamed the Cedar Memorial Grant Wood Chapel and funeral services continued in the structure until the early 2000's.

Douglas House (1897)

The facility discontinued offering funeral services shortly before the Cedar Rapids Flood of 2008. Not affected by the flood, the property was temporarily utilized by cultural entities impacted by the flood such as Theatre Cedar Rapids in the months after the disaster. By the end of 2012, the property was owned by the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation. As of late 2014, the historic former Douglas/Sinclair/Turner property at 800 Second Avenue SE is being prepared to be the new home of the History Center (Linn County Historical Society/museum). The property was listed on the National register of Historic Places in 1982.

5 Turner Alley (1897)

Originally built as a carriage house in 1897 for the new George B Douglas residence at 800 Second Avenue SE. This one and a half story brick structure featured a large hayloft on its upper level and was consistent in size and design with other carriage houses built within Cedar Rapids' "Mansion Hill" district between 1875 and 1905.

5 Turner Alley (1897)

Sometime between 1900 and 1905, the Douglas family purchased the property next door at 810-816 Second Avenue SE for expansion of their lot and this brick carriage house was moved along the alley to the rear of the newly acquired lot. from 1906 to 1923, the structure served as a carriage house and early garage for vehicles belonging to the Sinclair family, second owners of the 1897 Douglas residence.

5 Turner Alley (1897)

In 1924, the former Douglas/Sinclair home was converted for use as the John B. Turner Funeral Home. The lower level of the carriage house became parking for funeral home vehicles. The former hayloft above was converted into a unique living space and art studio designed by regionalist artist Grant Wood. Wood shared the living space initially with his mother Hattie and sister Nan. From 1924 to 1934, many of Grant Wood's most notable works of art were painted in this old carriage house loft space including the iconic "American Gothic" in 1930. Wood created the 5 Turner Alley address since he did not have access to Second Avenue SE.

5 Turner Alley (1897)

In 1935, Wood moved to Iowa City. The carriage house loft was preserved as Grant Wood designed it and maintained as an apartment rental. Tenants who lived in the space through the 1980's were not permitted to alter the interior design. Currently, 5 Turner Alley is owned and cared for by the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art and is available for viewing most weekends between March and December to the public.

History of the Lincoln Highway

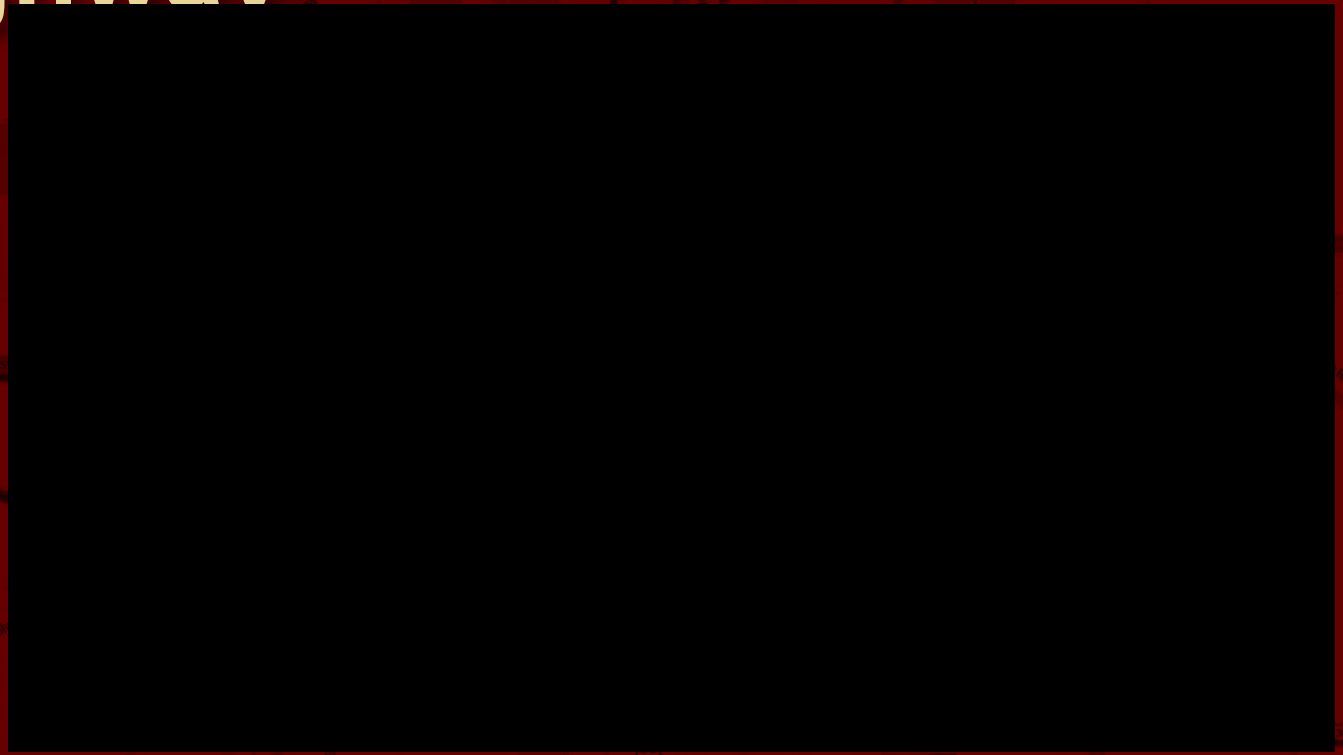
A Ride Along the Lincoln Highway

LINCOLN L HIGHWAY

Lincoln Highway comes to Cedar Rapids

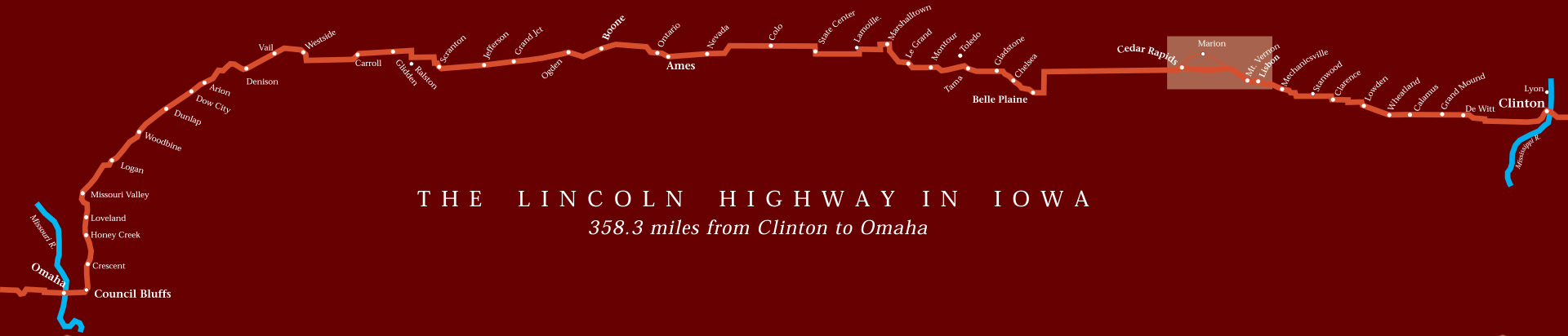
Lincoln Highway Impacts Mansion Row

A Ride Along the Lincoln Highway



Lincoln Highway comes to Cedar Rapids

In 1913, the Lincoln Highway Association incorporated into its projected new highway the Iowa Official Transcontinental Route, an early attempt at an auto trail that followed the main line of the Chicago & Northwestern Railway across Iowa. This action assured that Cedar Rapids would be on the Lincoln Highway.



Lincoln Highway comes to Cedar Rapids

The highway came into Cedar Rapids from the northeast by way of Marion and left the city to the southwest, connecting there with the old stage coach road to Toledo. On four occasions since then the highway's route through the city has undergone major changes, each time bringing the route farther south until the highway today bypasses the city entirely. The map indicates the original and four subsequent routes the highway has followed in Cedar Rapids.

First Route (1913-1921)

Departing Marion on Marion Boulevard, the Lincoln Highway entered Cedar Rapids on 1st Avenue, crossed the Cedar River on the 1st Avenue Bridge, and, on a shifting combination of connecting streets, reached Johnson Avenue and an eventual exit from the city. However, in 1916, the highway was relocated to 2nd Avenue and thereafter crossed the river on the 2nd Avenue bridge.

Second Route (1922-1938)

Routing the highway from Mt. Vernon to Cedar Rapids via Marion recognized Marion’s importance as county seat. However, in 1919 Cedar Rapids became the county seat, and by 1921 a more direct route connecting the two cities, Mt. Vernon Road, was fully paved. Touted at first as an optional route, by 1924 Mt. Vernon Road was the official Lincoln Highway route, continuing via 10th Street SE to 2nd Avenue. This became the route of U.S. 30 after November, 1925, when numbers replaced names on federal highways.

Third Route (1939-1954)

The construction of a new bridge in 1938 over the Cedar River at 8th Avenue provided a shorter route for U.S. 30 through the city. Now the highway could leave Mt. Vernon Road at 8th Avenue and, after crossing the river, maneuver briefly on 2nd Street and K Street until reaching 16th Avenue. Although this route completely skirted the downtown commercial area, it opened the way for a great commercial expansion of highway-related businesses on 16th Avenue SW.

Fourth Route (1955-1986)

The earliest phase in the process of getting the route of U.S. 30 located outside the city began in 1955, when a newly constructed road south of the city became the highway. However, the new bypass was incomplete, ending abruptly at 6th Street SW, where the highway then re-entered the city and went north until reaching 16th Avenue. Many highway-related businesses established along Mt. Vernon Road faced drastically reduced patronage when that road ceased to be the highway's route.

Fifth Route (1986-present)

After another three decades, the U.S. 30 bypass of Cedar Rapids was completed. This time it was the many highway-related businesses on 16th Avenue that felt the impact of an abrupt abandonment of a portion of the highway's route. From the point of view of long-distance motorists, the finished U.S. 30 bypass was a great improvement over all of the earlier routes that took motorists into the city. Moreover, the resulting unimpeded movement of traffic on U.S. 30 matched exactly the long-term objective of the founders of the Lincoln Highway.

Lincoln Highway & Mansion Row

In the years just prior to 1920, the national Lincoln Highway automobile route was moved from First Avenue to Second Avenue in the Downtown Cedar Rapids area. Residential real estate on Second Avenue between the Fourth Street railroad tracks and Tenth Street SE became valuable for commercial redevelopment to facilitate the new wave of automobile traffic.

Lincoln Highway & Mansion Row

In 1918, a new one story automobile garage and auto sales building was constructed on the corner at 700 Second Avenue SE. The east wall of this new one story commercial building was within inches of the western edge of the Ferguson mansion at 706 Second Avenue SE. The Ferguson mansion was demolished a few years later in 1923 for another one story brick faced automobile garage. The same year saw the destruction of the Stickney mansion on the other end of the block at 726 Second Avenue SE. It was replaced by a one story commercial building that contained three retail storefronts with an automobile garage in the back facing Eighth Street SE.

Lincoln Highway & Mansion Row

For five years from 1923 to 1928, new one story commercial buildings were constructed on either side of the Preston mansion at 716 Second Avenue SE. By the end of 1928, the Preston home was also destroyed for a large new automobile garage that could hold 100 cars. As the Preston mansion was the last residence on the block, the residential history of the 700 block of Second Avenue was ended.

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

History

Automobile Row & the Lincoln Highway

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

In September 1902, the Cedar Rapids Automobile Club was formed by local automobile owners. At that time, there were nineteen privately owned automobiles in the city. Various agents around the city had an additional ten automobiles in stock at that time (CR Evening Gazette 1902:3). Though autmobile agents were present, newspaper research indicates that automobile companies began to organize around 1905. The W. H. Stepanek Automobile Company was advertising as early as February 1905 (CR Evening Gazette 1905:10). The Weaver Automobile Company, located at 120 S. 1st Street, was selling Red touring cars as early as May 1906 (CR Republican 1906:7).

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

In 1907, several more dealers emerged on the south side of downtown: Henderson Auto Co. and American Auto Co. both at 212 4th Ave SE. In 1909, the Cedar Rapids Auto Co. built a new building, designed by Cedar Rapids architects Dieman & Fiske, at 213-215 4th Avenue SE. This area of 4th Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Streets SE became known as Automobile Row. (CR Evening Gazette 1909:11). By 1911, five of the seven automobile dealers listed in the city directory were located in the area.

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

Around 1913, automobile dealers began to built new buildings in the 600 block of 2nd Avenue SE. In January 1913, the Barton-Ford Motor Company announced construction of a new building, designed by architect W. J. Brown at 608-610 2nd Avenue SE (Evening Gazette 1913a:16). Moon Auto Sales constructed a building at 606 2nd Avenue SE around 1913 (CR City Directory 1914). The move to 2nd Avenue was attributed by the Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette to some auto dealers, who were leasing quarters on 4th Avenue SE and looking for their own property (CR Evening Gazette 1913b:7).

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

However, around that same time, news of a transcontinental route traveling through Cedar Rapids was prevalent. The first route of the Lincoln Highway followed 1st Avenue from Marion through Cedar Rapids (Lincoln Highway Association n.d.:12). News of this route through Cedar Rapids undoubtedly had some influence on the location of automobile dealers in the vicinity of 2nd Avenue SE. It wasn’t until 1919, that the Mount Vernon Road cutoff was designated as the second route of the Lincoln Highway from the Seedling Mile to 10th Street SE.

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

By 1920, 17 of the 29 auto dealers in the city were concentrated in the 500-700 block of 2nd Avenue and the general vicinity (CR City Directory 1920). In 1923, the Barish Brothers Motor Company built a dealership at 601-605 2nd Avenue SE. Around that same time, the Loomis Motor Company built a building at the other end of the block at 630 2nd Avenue SE (CR City Directories).

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

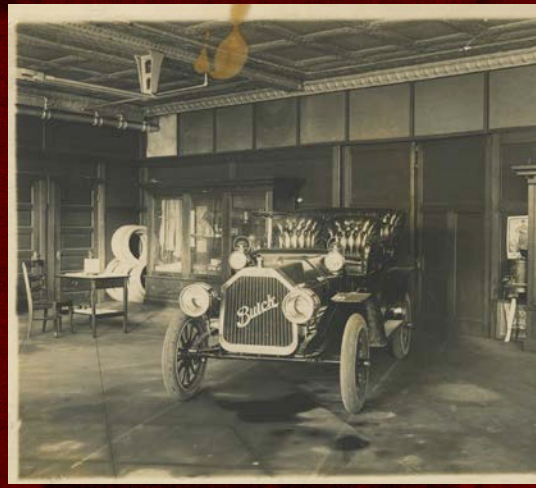
By 1935, 11 of the 14 automobile dealers were located along 2nd and 3rd Avenues SE from the 400 to 700 block. Some of the larger dealers included Allen Motor Co., Handler Motor Co., Rapids Chevrolet Co., Rude Auto Co., and Wagner Motor Co. (CR City Directory 1935).

History of Automobile Row in Cedar Rapids

By 1939, Rapids Chevrolet Co. moved one block north to 601-605 1st Avenue (CR City Directory 1939-40). Through the 1940s and 1950s, new and used auto dealers began to appear along 1st Avenue. By 1950, the Allen Motor Co. had moved to 1st Avenue and a new dealer, Schamberger Motor Co. had a building at 1020 1st Avenue NE. The area along 1st and 2nd Avenues continued to be the center of new and used automobile business until at least the mid-1960s (CR City Directories).

Automobile Row & the Lincoln Highway

The 1920s saw a great expansion in the production and sales of automobiles, which spurred a remarkable growth in the number of automobile-related businesses along 2nd Avenue, NE, the route of the Lincoln Highway. Soon this portion of 2nd Avenue became known informally as “Automobile Row” in recognition of the twenty-seven buildings there that housed businesses dedicated to the sale or servicing of automobiles.



Automobile Dealers, Filling Stations, and Accoutrements

The most glamorous of the new auto-related businesses were the automobile dealerships, whose showrooms always had at least one or two cars on display. The number of car manufacturers increased throughout the 1920s, yielding ever more local dealerships, each of which wanted a high-visibility location. Concentrating many dealers in a walkable area actually boosted the business of all dealers.

Automobile Dealers, Filling Stations, and Accoutrements

Another new type of business spawned on Automobile Row was the “filling station,” which sold gasoline, oil, and miscellaneous supplies and sometimes also had an attendant who could fix tires and do other small repairs. From the filling station quickly evolved the all-purpose service station staffed with trained mechanics. At both types of station, a uniformed attendant often washed the windshield and checked the oil and tire pressures in addition to pumping the gas.

Automobile Dealers, Filling Stations, and Accoutrements

In the earliest days of motoring, much specialized equipment was required or at least desired. Well-to-do male owners of automobiles could buy driving coats and other accoutrements in stores located not far from the auto dealerships. Their wives could find proper finery for riding at the nearby new department stores, such as Killian's, which featured "the latest driving fashions."

Cabin Camps

The earliest routings of the Lincoln Highway in Cedar Rapids ran into the downtown business district, which was well organized to meet the needs of railroad passengers and offered restaurants and hotel accommodations to motorists as well. However, motorists soon became aware of the inconveniences (and additional expenses, too) of bringing a car into the heart of the city for an overnight stay. Very quickly, “cabin camps”—the forerunners of today’s motels—sprang up near the city’s outskirts. Often also offering gas and food, they provided a convenience that downtown businesses couldn’t match. After 1938, U.S. 30 no longer even traversed Automobile Row or brought motorists downtown.

Changes on Automobile Row

After World War II, the auto-related businesses on Automobile Row faced rapidly changing circumstances. The enormous post-war demand for new cars, as well as changes in financing that facilitated automobile purchases, induced dealers to build up large inventories of various models and colors. *"Like it? Drive this one home—No waiting, consumer credit available to all!"* By the early 1960s, dealers were moving from no-longer-adequate quarters to the edges of the city, where land for expansion was available. That spelled the end of Automobile Row as it will be remembered in history.

Changes on Automobile Row

Of the twenty-seven auto-related buildings on 2nd Avenue that constituted Automobile Row, only fifteen remain. Despite the missing buildings, however, Automobile Row still comprises the largest collection of automobile-related structures in Cedar Rapids, and they attest to the impact on the city of the coming of both the automobile and the Lincoln Highway.

History of the Cedar Rapids Fire Department

Firefighters

Firefighting History

Fire Stations

Significant Fires

Cedar Rapids Fire Department mechanics Ray Bollman (left) and Don Fox put the bumper back on a 1970 Pirsch pumper they are refurbishing for the department. The truck was rust-riddled and needed major repairs, so the men squeezed the work in among their other duties to avoid sending the truck out for expensive body work.

Gazette photo by Chris Stewart

Firemen rescue rusty pumper

Mechanics bring C.R. truck back to life

By Jeff Burnham
Gazette staff writer

ike an aging major leaguer, the 1970 Pirsch was washed up.

The fire truck had helped put out hundreds of blazes in Cedar Rapids. But rust had eaten through much of its body about a year ago, threatening to put the Pirsch out — to the junkyard.

"Usually we would send it back to the company body work," recalled Assistant Chief Phil But that would have cost at least $25,000, and we didn't have the money in the budget."

The results: The Pirsch will return to service within a few weeks, almost as good as new. The price: about $3,300 for parts, with no additional labor costs, meaning a savings of more than $20,000 compared with what it might have cost.

Chief mechanic Fox and assistant mechanic Bollman, working at the garage next to the Central Fire Station, maintain the department's fleet of 13 trucks. Starting May 11, they worked on the Pirsch in their spare time.

"Basically, we just took it completely apart and cleaned off all the rust," Fox said, adding that several rusted-through pieces had to be replaced. In addition, they got some much-needed help from the city's Streets Department in painting the Pirsch.

An interesting note in the story behind the decision [illegible] said some firefighters indicated a desire to return to red trucks.

Gorman said a survey of the department showed an "overwhelming" desire for red trucks or white over red trucks. He explained that many departments went to yellow trucks based on studies indicating that color was more visible than red, but said there has been no conclusive evidence that yellow trucks are safer.

Gorman decided to go with white over red, adding that it could take 10 years or more to complete the conversion.

As for the Pirsch, the work is done, but they're still waiting for the decals and stripes they ordered before the truck can be put back into service. Fox [illegible] that should happen soon.

MAIN MENU

SECTION MENU

Previous

1.1.1992 Personnel and Apparatus in Color

Next

1.24.1960 Elks Club Fire 4 Capt George Leehman

1.5.1979 Personnel with Dog at House Fire

MAIN MENU

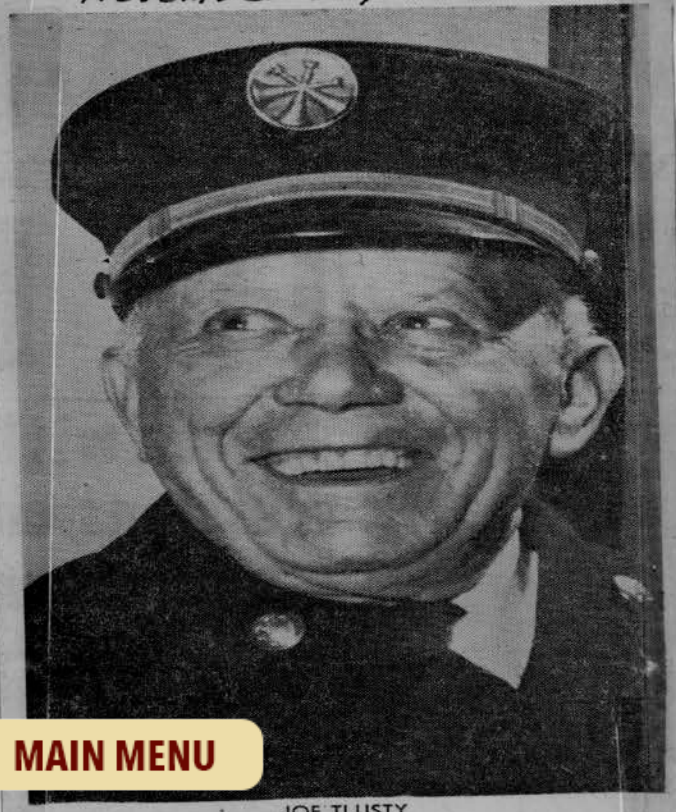
SECTION MENU

Previous

Next

11.14.1985 Personnel in Color

November 30, 1946



JOE TLUSTY

. . . Last of the real old-timers. . . .

* * *

Retirement of Tlusty Marks End of an Era

By Carl Kane.

When Assistant Chief Joseph Tlusty closed the door behind him at Central Fire station Friday night, it marked the end of an era in Cedar Rapids fire fighting annals.

Tlusty, whose retirement is effective today, is the last of the real oldtimers on the department—the only active fireman who saw duty when horses pulled the hose wagons and the men worked 24 hours per day, seven days a week with only a single night off.

It was 47 years ago, in 1899, that Tlusty became a regular member of the department, but he had been on a substitute basis for a year before that.

He was present at most of the city's big fires—the Brosch and Ryan elevator fire, Clifton hotel tragedy in which several persons were killed, and the Penick and Ford and Quaker Oats explosions.

He has seen the inauguration and development of the civil service system, retirement pay, and training program, the mechanization of the fire department, including the high-powered modern rigs, use of booster pumps and other developments of fire fighting which are taken for granted today.

Retirement Just That.

To Tlusty retirement means just that. He can't see taking on some other job. If he wanted to keep on working, he'd stay with the department. But the fellows at the station didn't let him answer any alarms Friday, his last day.

One day a few years ago a fireman slated for retirement suffered a broken leg on his last day of work. A blood clot formed and four days later, the fireman was dead.

The men at Central station figure Tlusty earned his retirem They were going to see he got it.

"I'm going to miss this," said Tlusty, looking around. "Whenever I hear that siren, I'm going to wonder where they're going and what they're going to find."

Before Civil Service.

Before civil service became effective, the fire chief had to stand election regularly and a fireman was liable to lose his job with any change of administration.

"However, they never bothered the fire department that way as much as the policemen," Tlusty said. "Of course, if you voted right, your chances of getting on the department were better but at $50 a month they always needed men."

That $50 was pay for 24 hours every day with one night a week off, from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. The men also had one hour off for each meal, but by the time one caught a street car both ways, there was about a half hour left for eating.

"'Why don't you go to the penitentiary?' was what the fellows in my gang asked me when I joined the department," Tlusty recalls. (He was not quite 22 at the time.)

"I did give up a lot of fun since I only had one night a week off but our family wasn't wealthy and they needed any help I could give them."

A reporter asked, "Would you do it the same way again."

Tlusty bowed his head in thought. He apparently was seriously considering the question. Then he raised his head and the twinkle men around the fire station have known for almost half a century was in his eyes.

"I believe I would. Yes, by golly, I would."

Praises Innovations.

Tlusty was active in bringing about the retirement system, serving on the committee which urged legislators to adopt the program. Far from an "old fogey" about innovations, he can't say enough for the present day equipment and training methods.

"If we were equipped then the way we are today, the Quaker Oats fire never would have gotten half as far as it did, he declares.

That blaze, a million and a half dollar fire, happened in 1905 and lack of booster pumps hampered the work. Firemen were dependent upon hydrant pressure; a situation was made even more difficult on that occasion when one of the mains blew up.

Rerouted Water.

They had to battle the blaze with limited water until workmen could reroute water through the mains around the destroyed section.

"I was shining my shoes that night when the alarm sounded," Tlusty remembers. "I had one of them done and didn't get back to do the other one for a week. We were up there keeping an eye on the smouldering remains that long.

"Just before the alarm, one of the fellows had remarked, 'I hope we have a million dollar fire tonight.' Well, he had a million and a half dollars worth before that night was over."

Tlusty, who occasionally drove the teams "in a pinch," was asked how the horses were trained in the early days.

Just Like Men.

"You know, those horses were just like men," he said. "Some of them would get it in no time and some of them never did catch on.

"We'd train them by sounding the bell and then leading them out to the wagon. Some of the horses v after be Others h

Harne the ceilin under it. Then it was lowered, the collar was snapped shut and the fire rig was ready to go.

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11.30.1946 Tlusty Retirement Article

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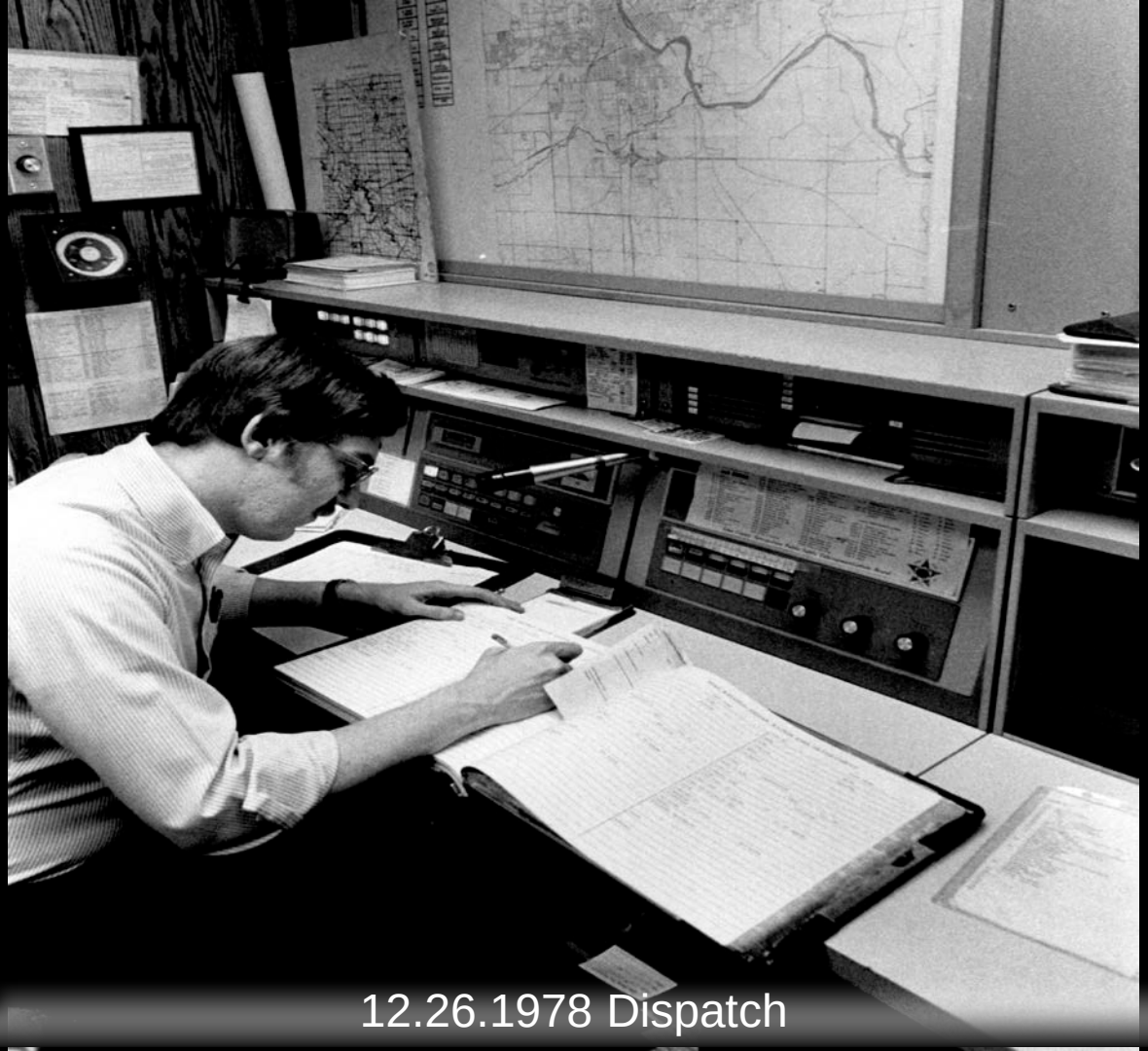
12.16.1952 Chief Emil P. Kohout, Car



12.26.1978 Dispatch

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12.7.1953 Memorial for Chief Kohout at Station 7

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1870-1880 Memorial

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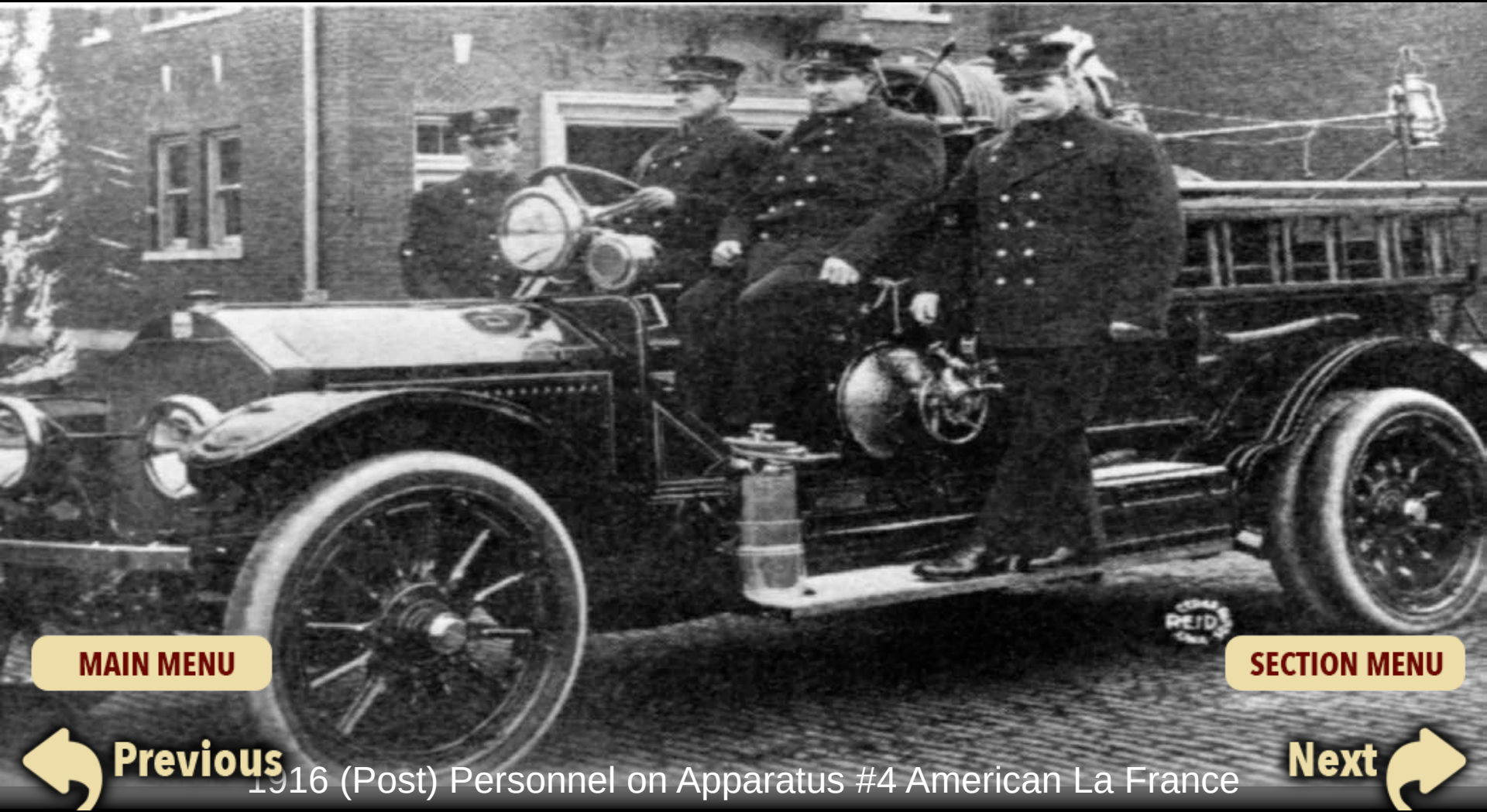
1906 Personnel and Horse (Buggy)

1914-1917 Personnel and Apparatus



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1916 (Post) Personnel on Apparatus #4 American La France

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1929 Sax Band

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1930 Sax Band

1932-1953 Chief E.P. Kohout

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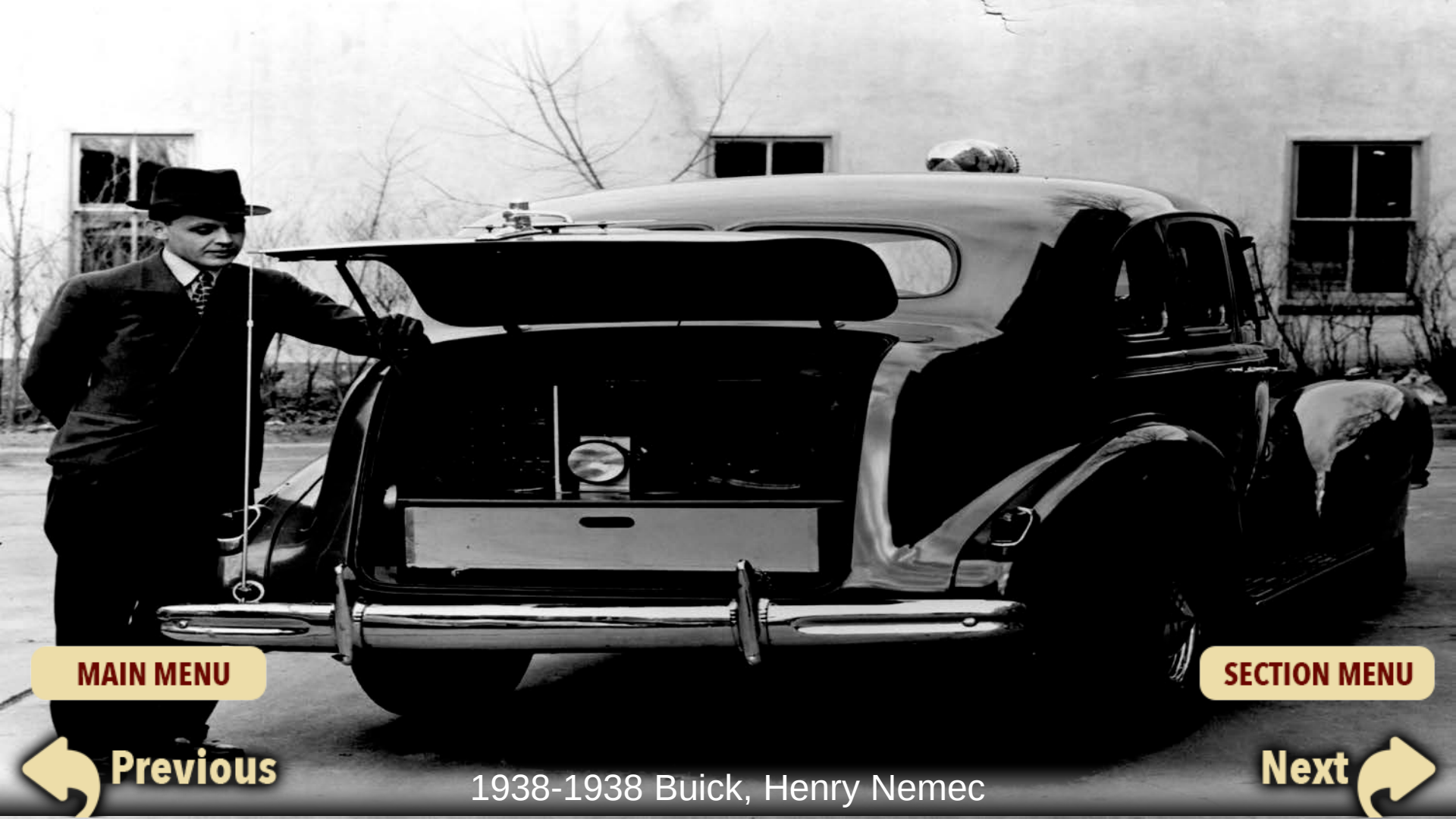
1938 Hose House 5 Crew Shot



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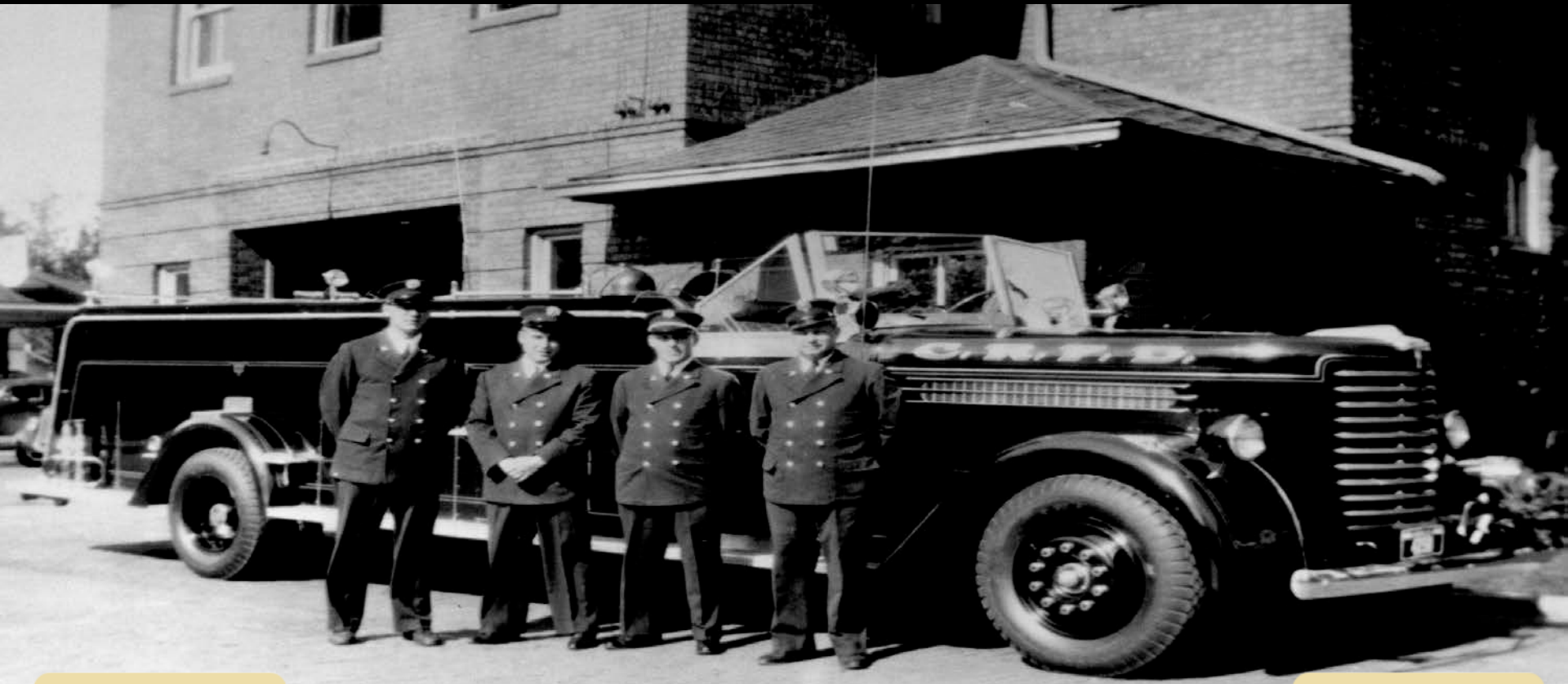
1938-1938 Buick, Henry Nemec

1939 Hose Co. 2 Crew Shot



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1942 Apparatus, Personnel

1942 Hose Co. 4 Crew Shot

1948 Station 7 Crew Shot

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1949 (or Earlier) Men Around Desk

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1950 Ellison, Kohout, Kerron

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1950's Personnel

1951 - 1961 Personnel

1951 - 1961 Personnel

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1954 (latest) Men on Apparatus

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1954 George Karns with Steamer

1954 Group Photo

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1954 Individual Group Photo

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1955 (Nov) Dog on Apparatus Front Seat

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1955 (Nov) Station 7 Personnel, Apparatus and Dog

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1955 (Nov) Station 7 Personnel, Apparatus and Dog

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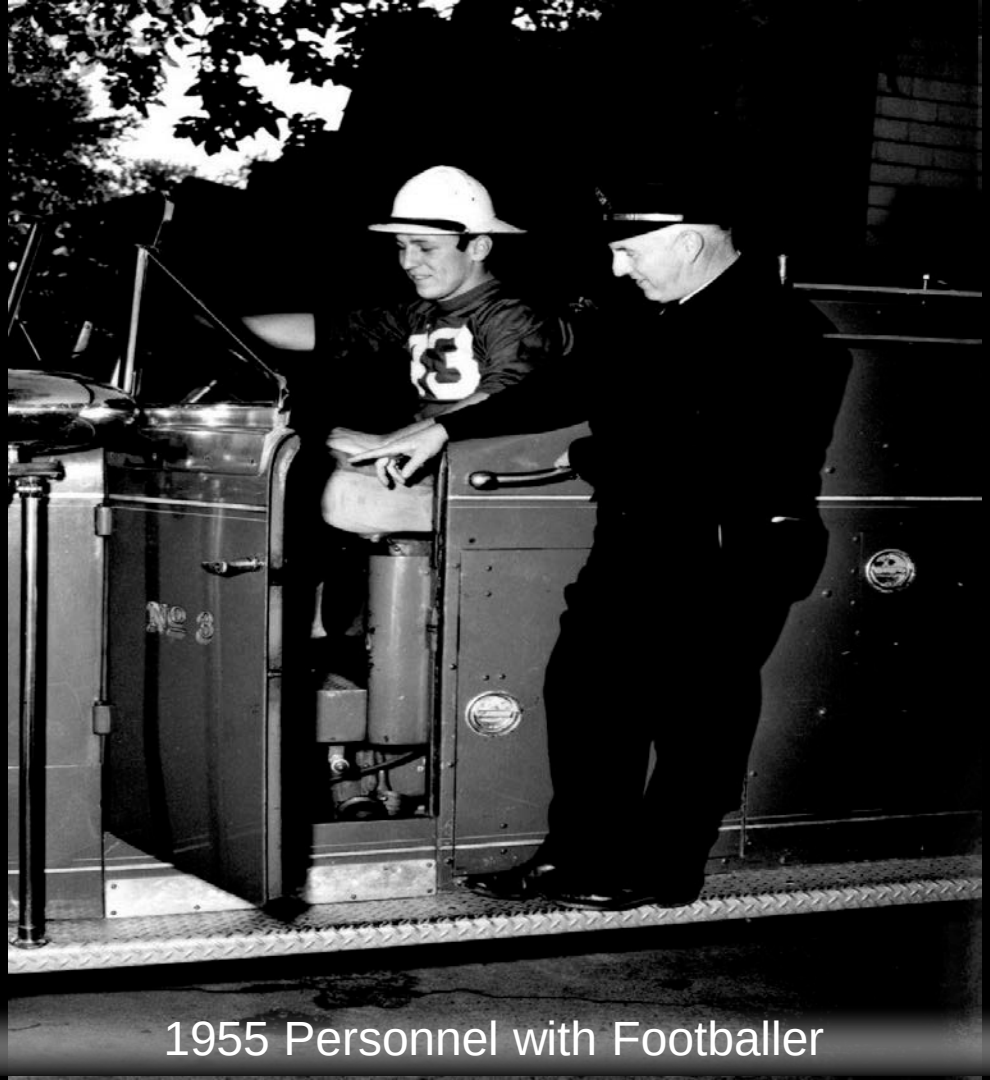
1955 (or Earlier) Personnel Equipment



1955 Personnel with Footballer

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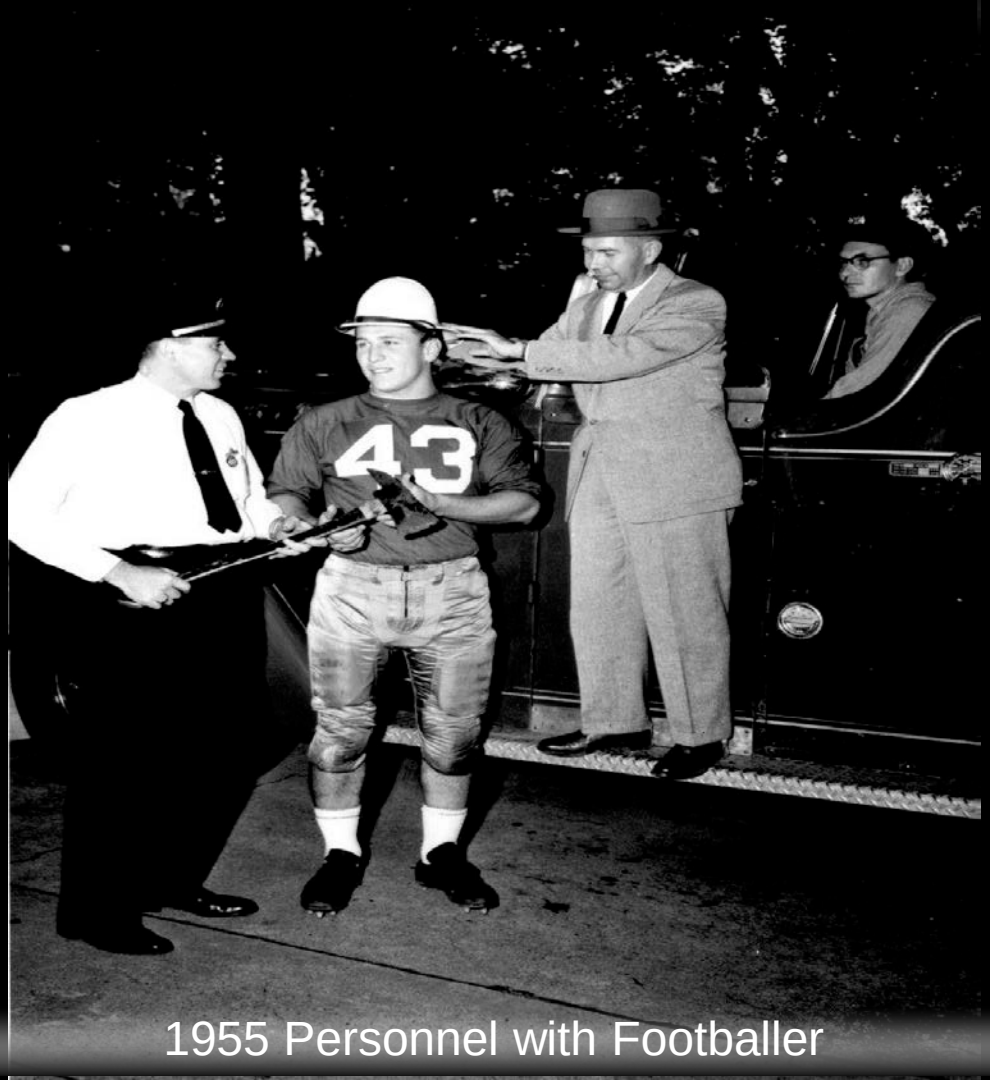
1955 Personnel with Footballer



1955 Personnel with Footballer

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1956 Personnel Crew Shot

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1956 Personnel, Building, Apparatus Crew Shot

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1957 Apparatus Maintenance

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1957 Personnel and Apparatus

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1957 Station 6 Crew Shot

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1958 (or Earlier) Personnel Working in Station

1960 (Jan) Ralph Rauch and Bob Currell

1961 Apparatus, Personnel

1963 (Mar) Central FS Crew Shot

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1963-1967 Children at Apparatus

1968 Chief McMickle

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1968 Personnel All Shifts

1968 Personnel Fire Prevention Bureau

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1968 Personnel First Shift

1969 Explorer Post to Iowa State Fire School

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1969 Explorer Post to Iowa State Fire School

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1973 (Dec) Dick Harman at Desk with Helmets

1973 Personnel (Annual Report)

1973 Personnel, Truck

1976 (May) Bob Simon Funeral

1976 (May) Bob Simon Funeral

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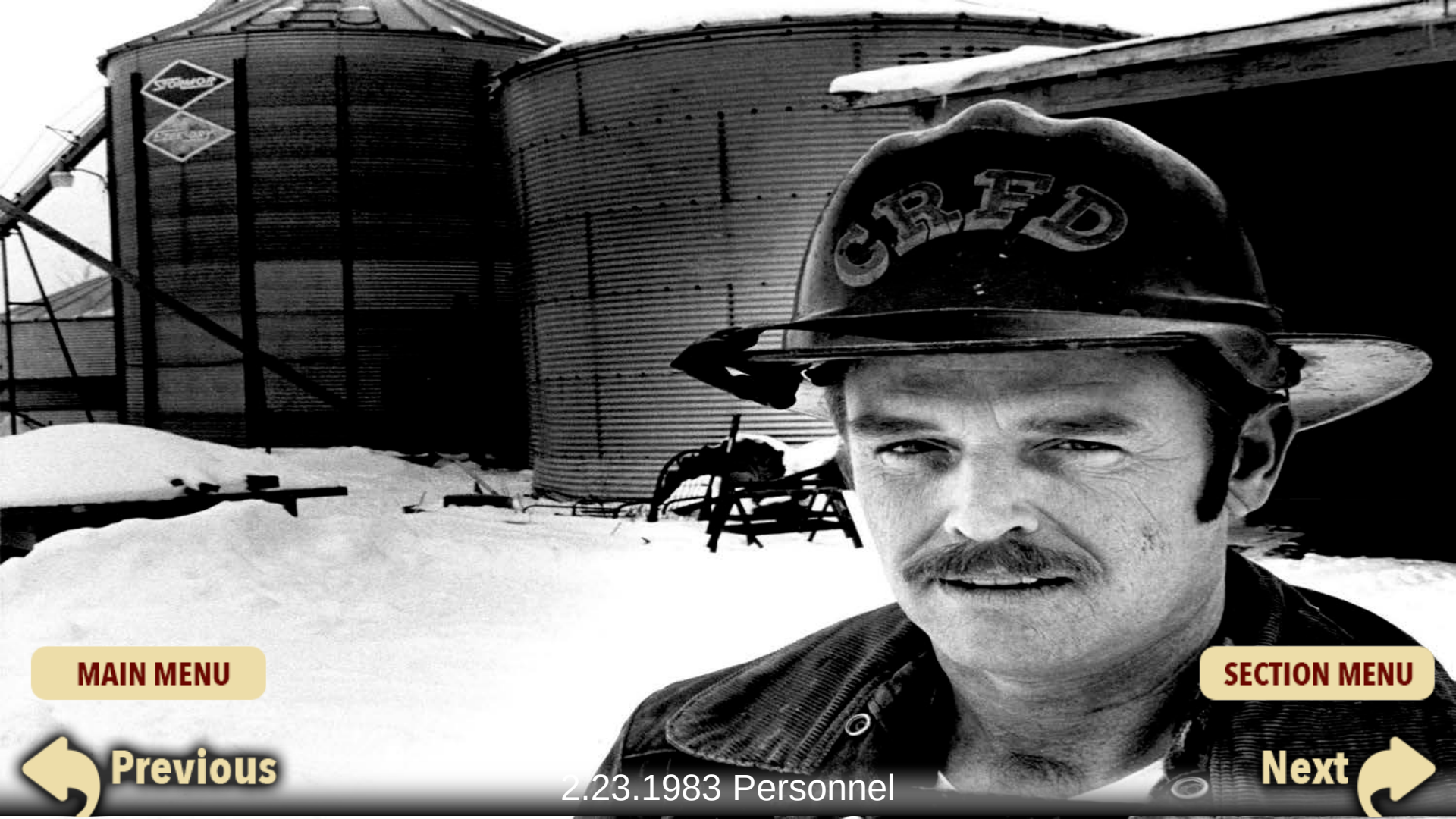
1978 Chief McAllen at Desk



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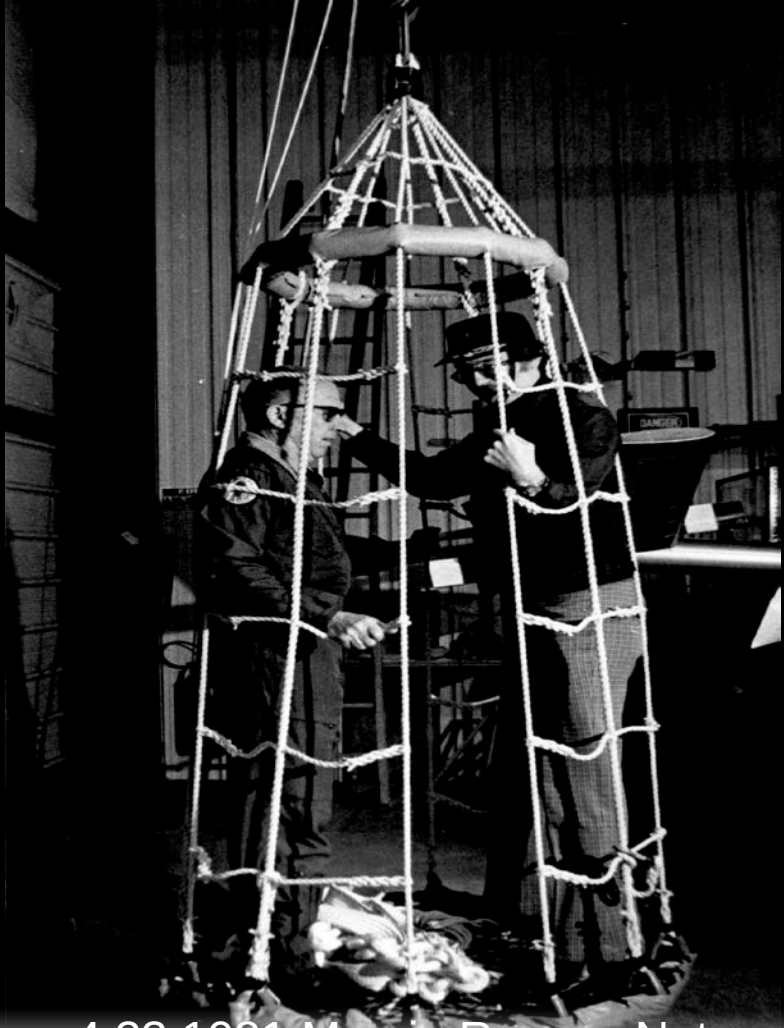
2.23.1983 Personnel



4.23.1981 Men in Rescue Net

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5.16.1938 Central FS Crew

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5.16.1938 Central FS Crew

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5.16.1938 Central FS Crew

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5.16.1938 Central FS Crew

5.16.1938 Central FS Crew

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5.16.1938 Central FS Crew

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7.10.1985 Personnel - Model Trucks

9.2.1969 Personnel-Woman

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9.30.1996 House Fire Training with Personnel

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Apparatus and Personnel

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Apparatus and Personnel

C.R.F.D.
C.R.F.D.

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Bohemian American, Crew Shot

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Bohemian American, Crew Shot

Car, Personnel

Car, Personnel

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Central FS Crew Shot

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Central FS Crew Shot

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Chief Jesse Hunter

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Child on Apparatus

Crew at Central Station

Fire (House) B Novotny, Spielb

Fire Pole (Bill Hostak at Station 5)

Fire Station No 3 Crew Shot

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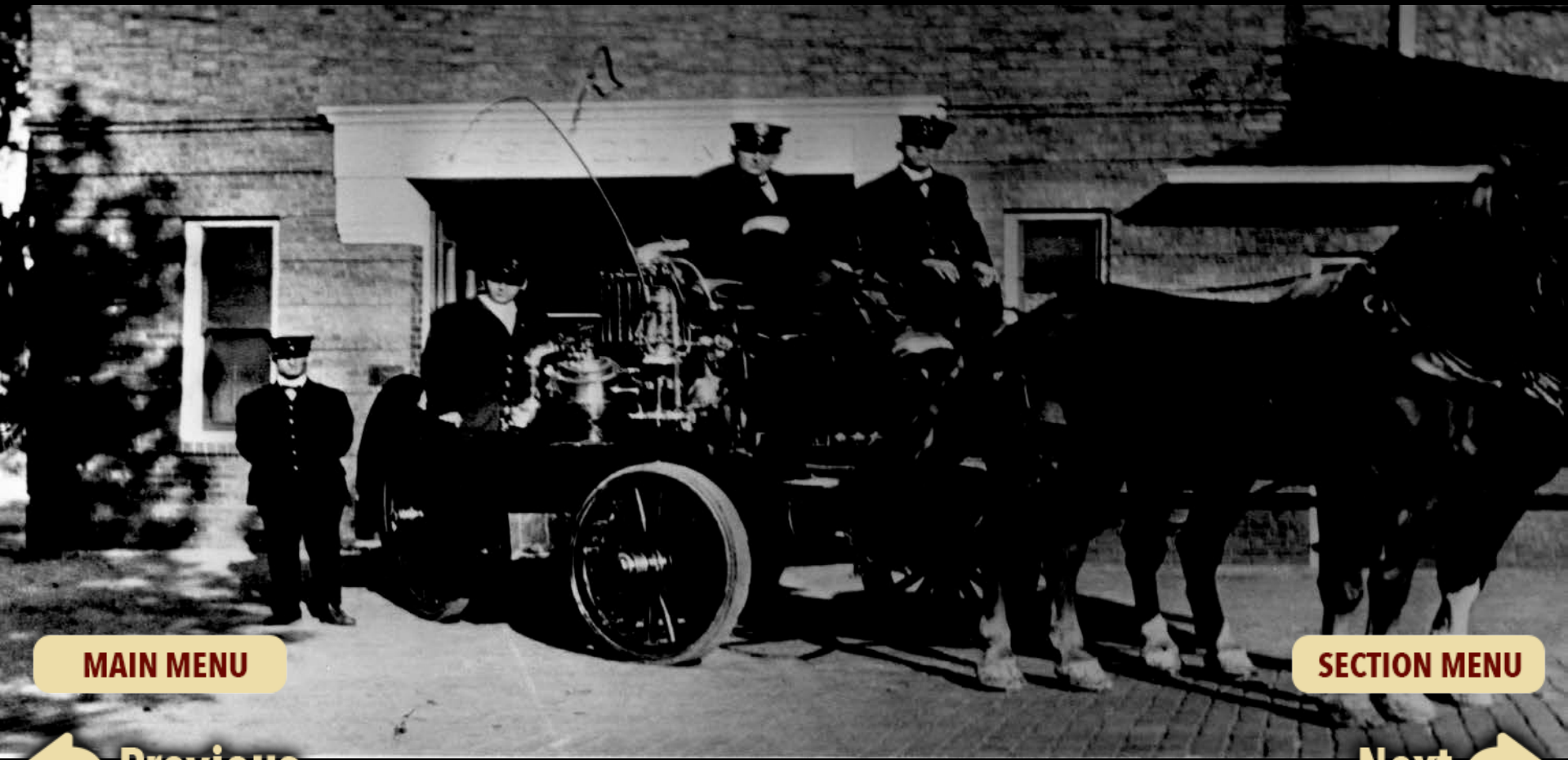
Horse-Drawn Apparatus



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Hose Co. No. 4 Crew Shot

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Hose Co. No. 5 Crew Shot

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Man with Fire Alarm Repeater Upstairs

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Men at Work

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Men in Foam

Men in Gear near Apparatus

Men with Flyers

landfill on prime farmland, according

Firefighting fanatic

C.R. dispatcher calls it quits because he can't get enough of it

By Rick Smith
Gazette staff writer

Fascination gained in youth for the lights, sirens and romance of firefighting can leave a telling mark.

Just consider Cedar Rapids Fire Department dispatcher Richard Harman's basement: It's a dusty crowd of fire collectibles of nearly every kind, from toy fire vehicles, to valuable Smokey Bear posters, to girlie fire calendars.

The number of model firetrucks here alone runs to 500. The telephone's a miniature firetruck. The window curtains feature firetrucks.

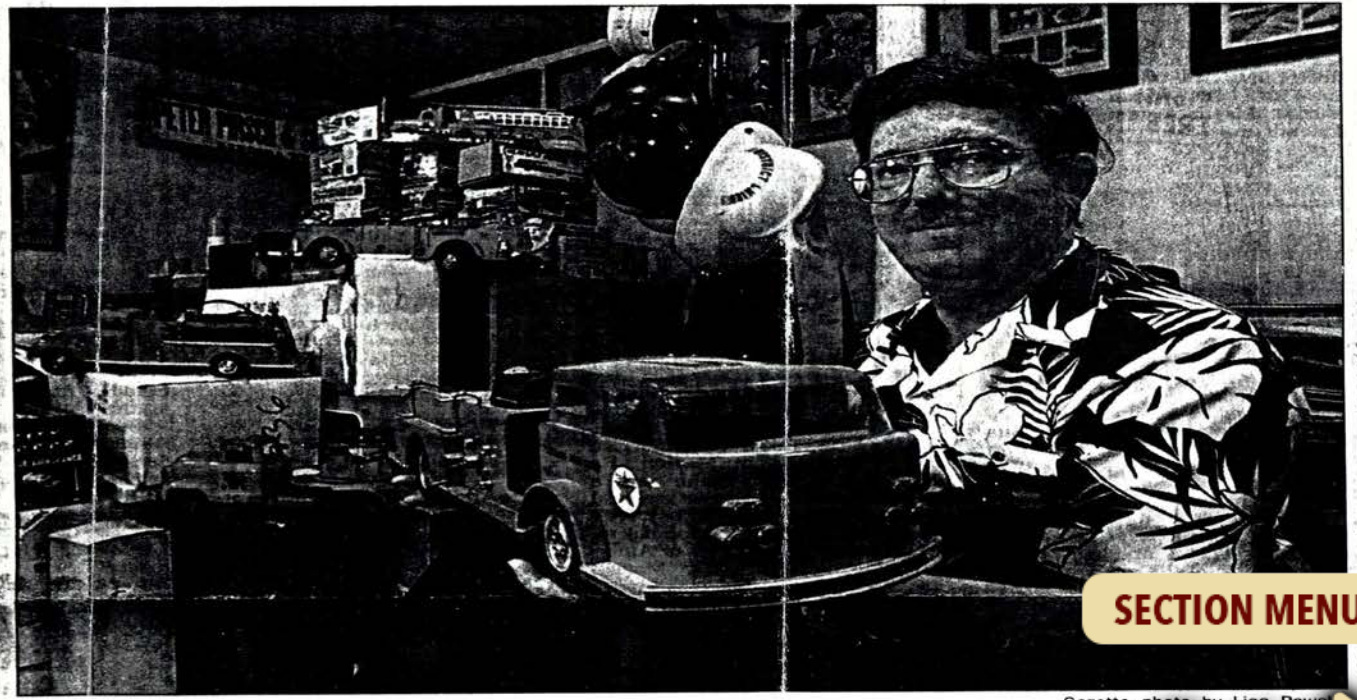
Richard Harman says if a boss had only asked, he might have continued as a dispatcher.

That's the least of the proof of Harman's first love.

What other Fire Department employee or volunteer spends as many weekends traveling to firefighter get-togethers as Harman? How many other paid department members show up, off-duty, to [illegible] Who else [illegible] old, fire[illegible] devotion like that and look out: A bomb can go off.

And so it has.

This week Harman, a 28-year em[illegible] Fire De[illegible] basement [illegible] collection and tried to explain



Gazette photo by Lisa Powel

Richard Harman of Cedar Rapids keeps a collection of 500 toy firetrucks in his basement. Harman was [illegible] many years with the Cedar Rapids Fire Department until those duties were recently moved to the new [illegible]

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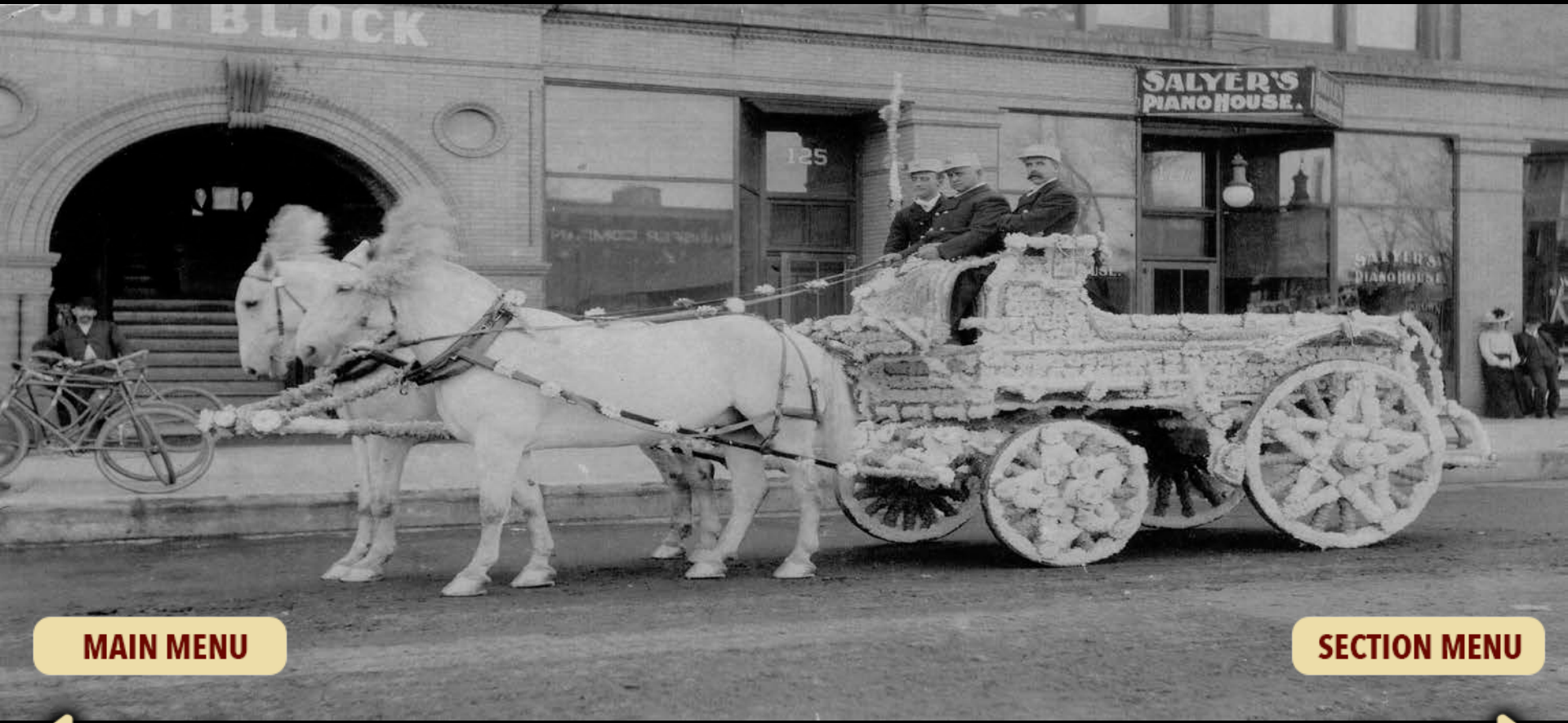
Model Trucks Article

PETER PARSCH & SO
DANNON
YOGURT



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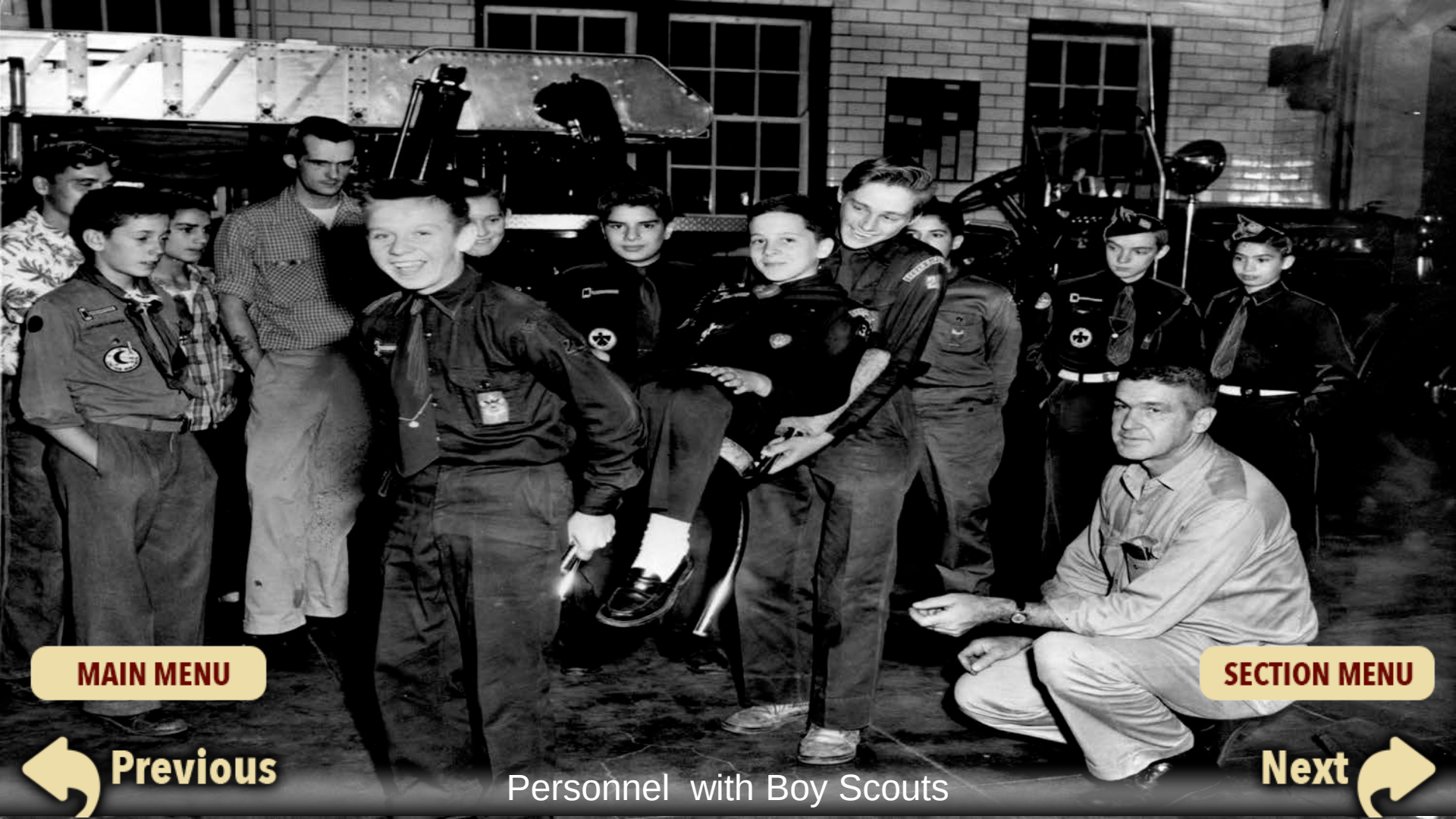

Personnel with Boy Scouts

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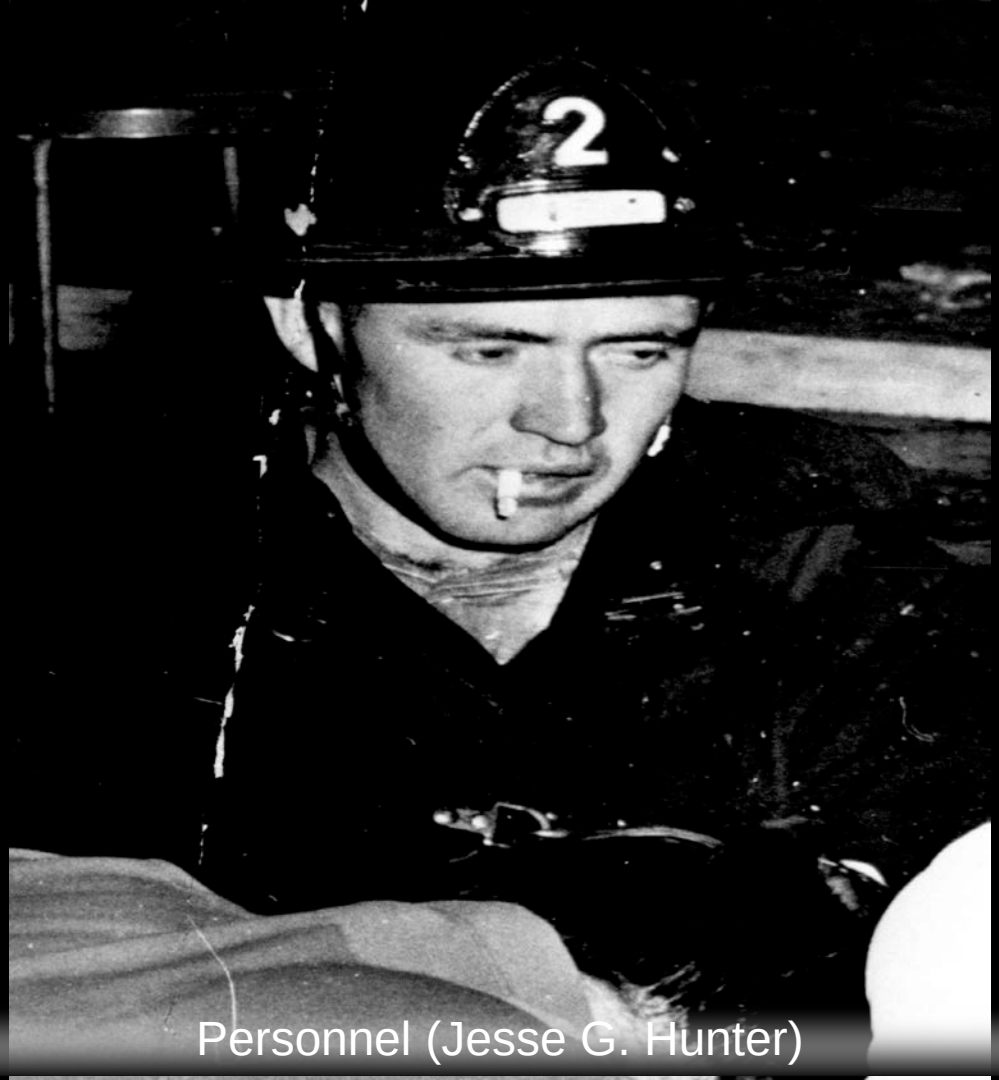
Personnel

Personnel

Personnel



Personnel (Jesse G. Hunter)

5251
GROUP 3

Personnel and Apparatus

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Personnel and Car

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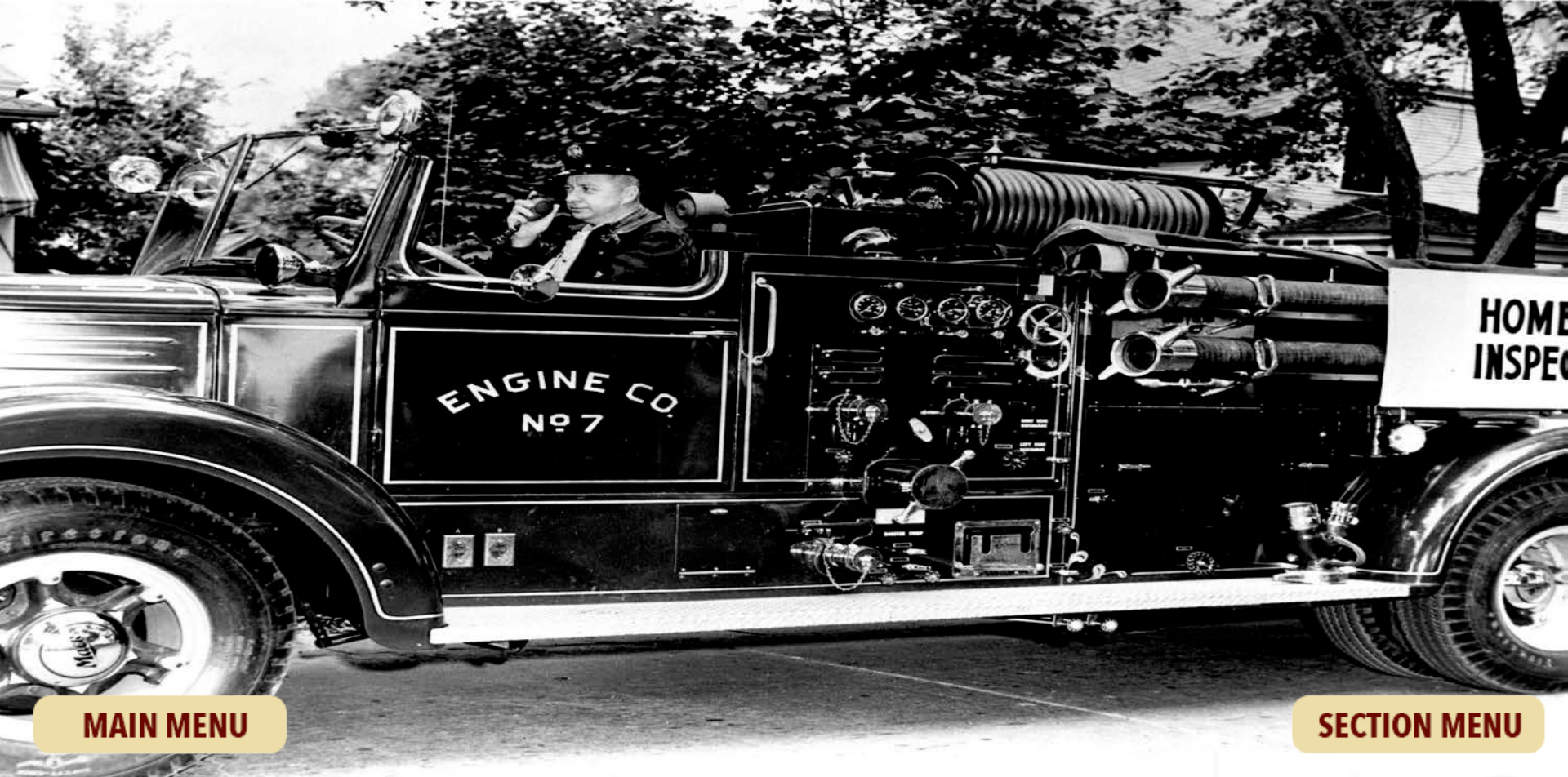
Personnel Crew Photo



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Personnel Driving Apparatus (Engine Co 7)

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Personnel in front of Central Station

Personnel in Station Bunk

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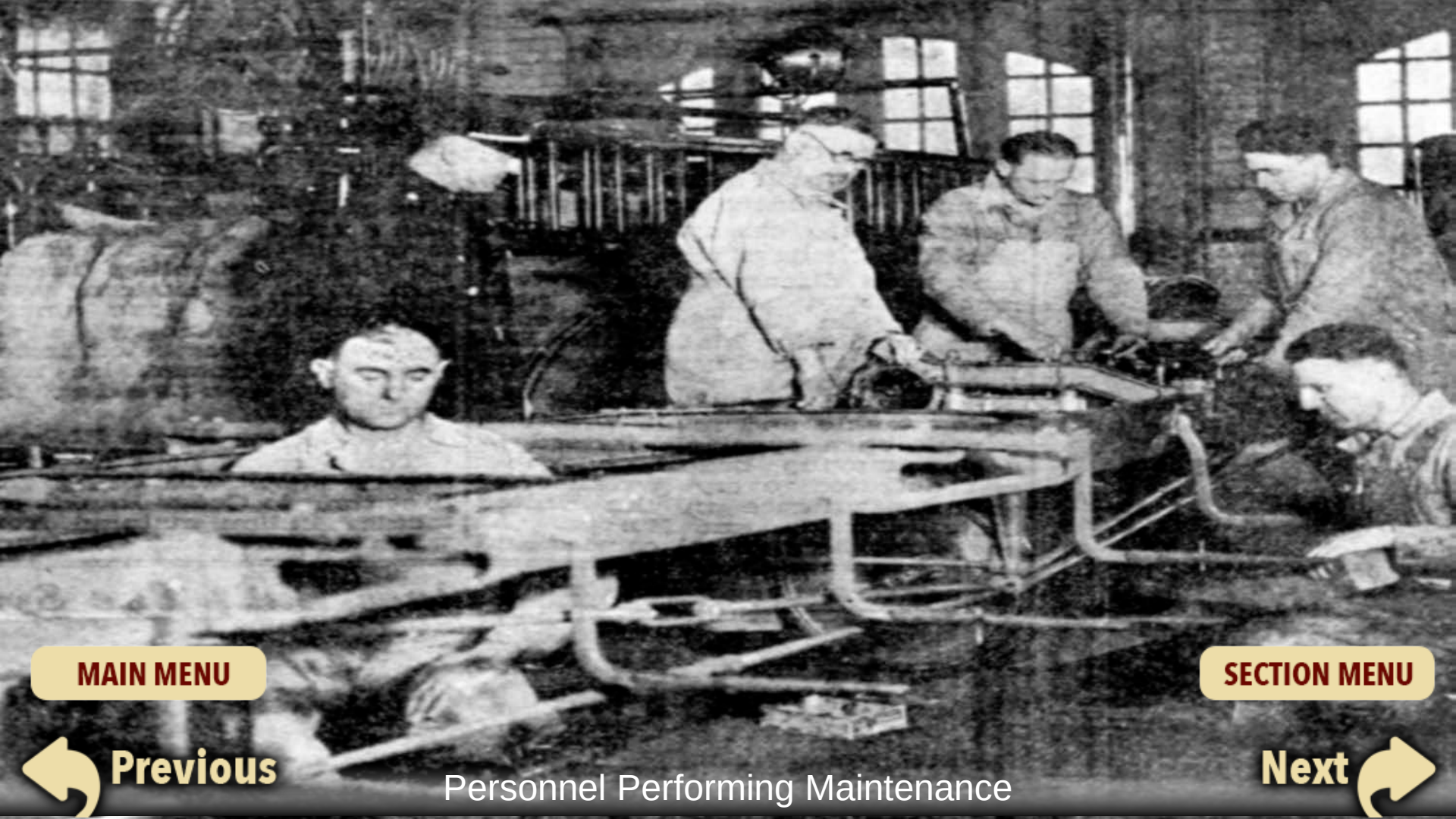
Personnel next to Yellow Engine



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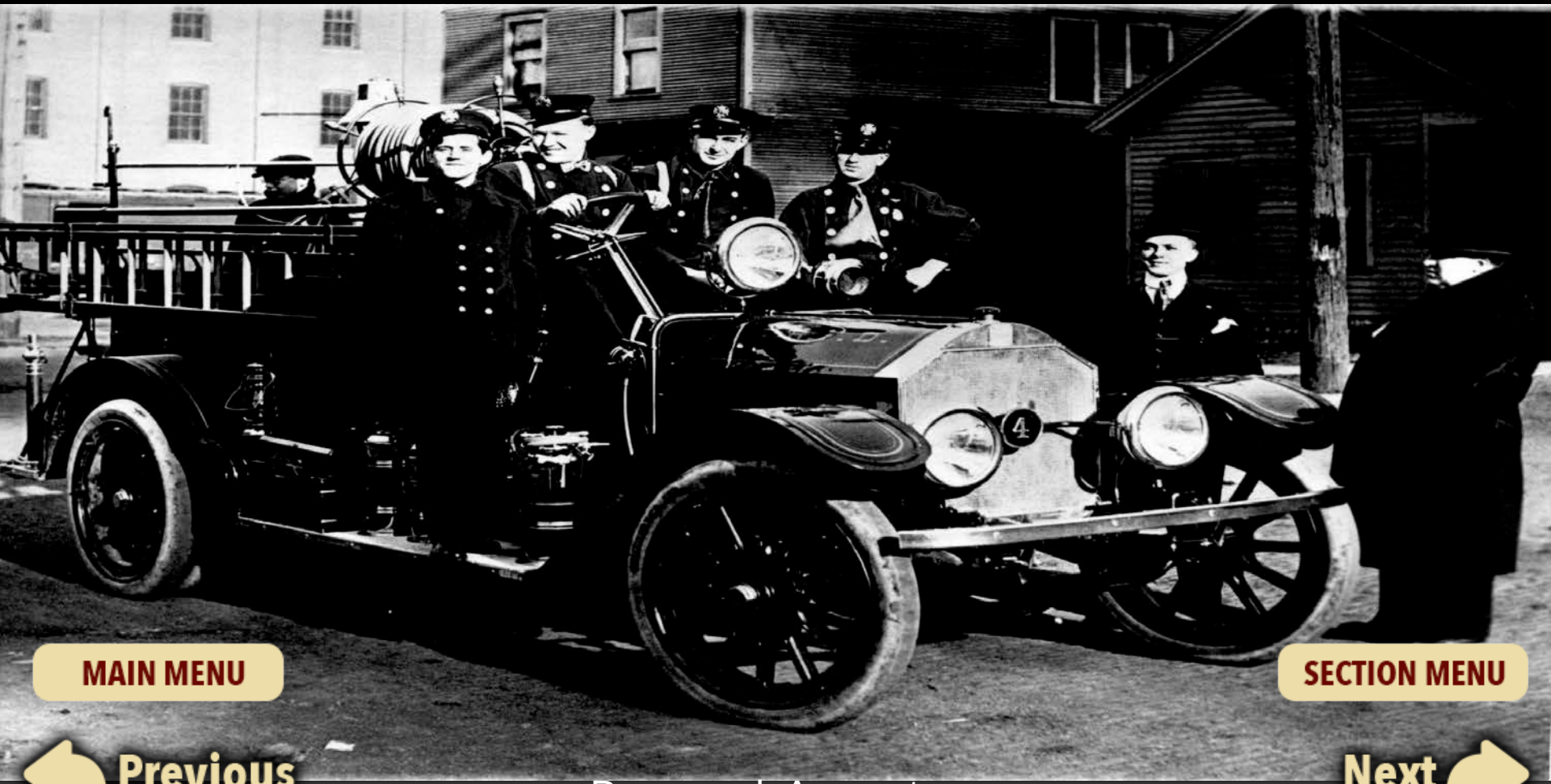
Personnel Performing Maintenance

Personnel using SCBA



Personnel, Apparatus

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Personnel, Equipment Apparatus

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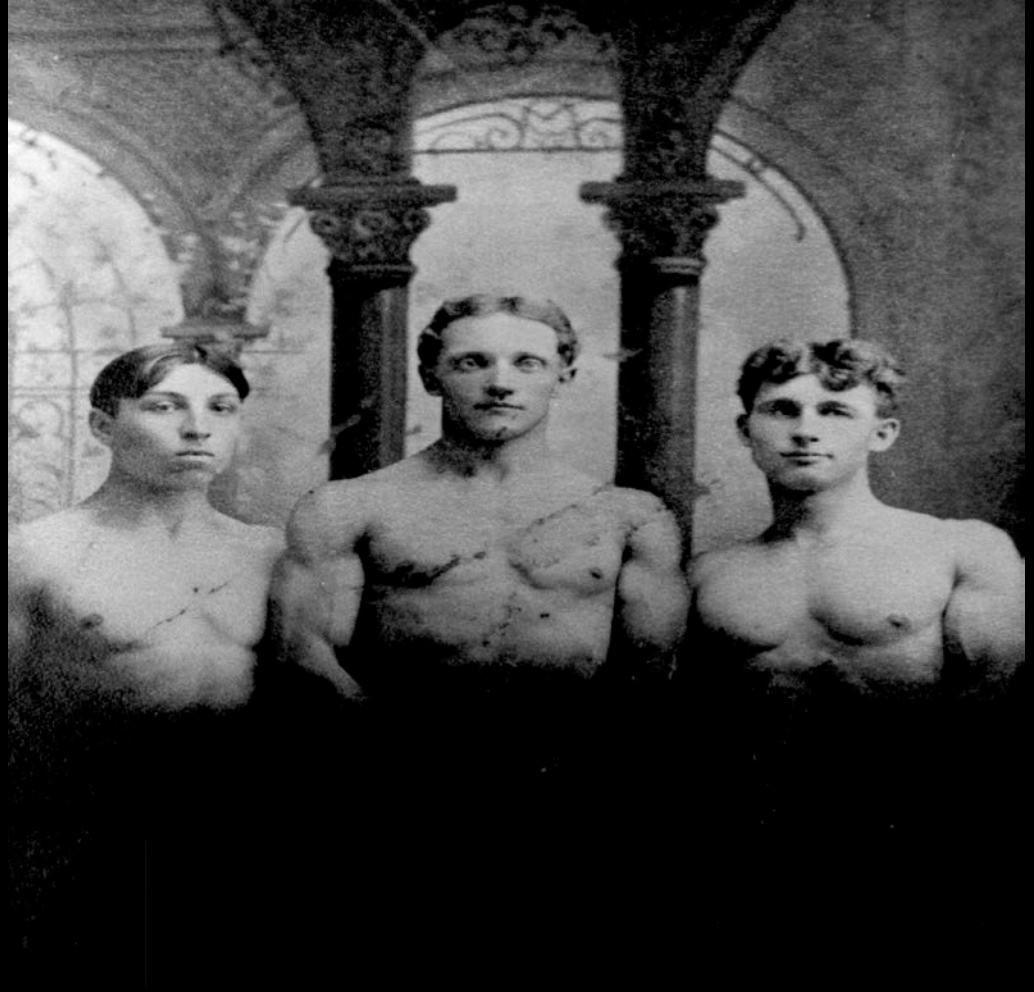

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Three Men

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Two Men On-Scene at Fire

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

As early as 1862, there was discussion in the Cedar Valley Times regarding the organization of a fire department (Cedar Valley Times 5-22-1862:3). Many businessmen were against the venture as most of the commercial buildings were already covered by fire insurance (Cedar Valley Times 5-2-1867:2). On February 12, 1869, the Cedar Rapids City Council passed an ordinance establishing a fire department (CR Times 2-18-1869:2). The ordinance did not specify the number of companies just their organizational structure and duties. In June 1869, the City Council instructed the purchase of a “hook and ladder” and “truck and ladder” for use by the volunteer fire department (CR Times 6-17-1869:2).

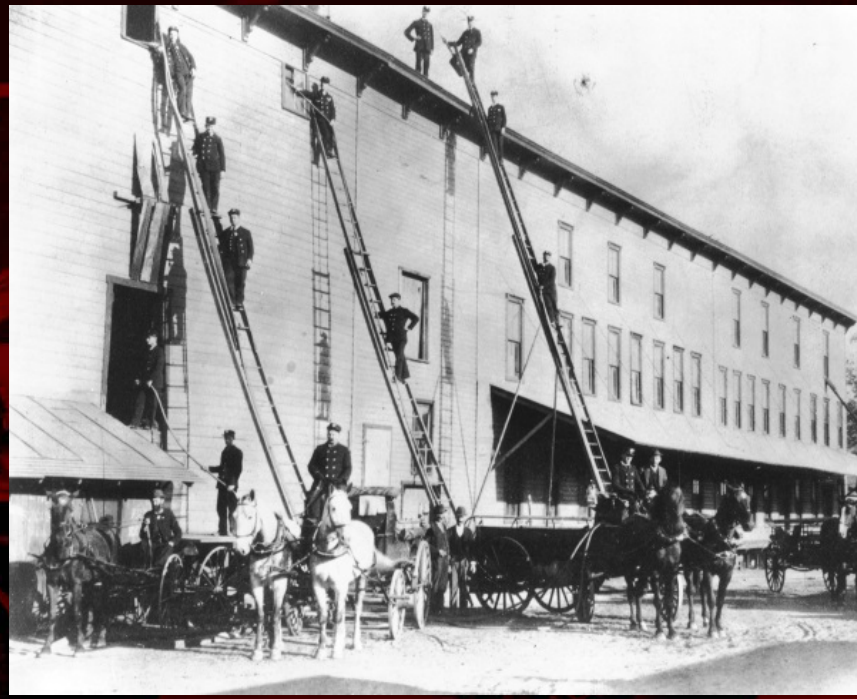
Establishing a Presence (1889-1909)

On February 4, 1869, the City of Cedar Rapids began organizing its first volunteer fire department. On March 1, 1869, the City's first Silsby Steamer Engine and 500 feet of hose arrived at a cost of $6,000. By March 11, 1869, the fire department became fully organized with J.J. Snouffer as the foreman. The fire equipment of that day included nine two-wheeled carts, one four-wheeled cart, two large hook and ladder trucks, and one supply wagon.

Establishing a Presence (1889-1909)

On June 23, 1894, the Cedar Rapids Fire Department became a paid department. Cedar Rapids would now be covered by a unified fire department as opposed to a collection of individual volunteer fire companies.

In 1899, the department moved out of its humble beginnings in Old City Hall and into a new station on 214 Third Street NE. Equipment owned by the department grew more numerous and increasingly effective every year, including several teams of reliable horses and an aerial truck with a 55 foot ladder.



Modernizing the Department (1909-1929)

Change continued within the Cedar Rapids Fire Department beyond the early 1900s. In 1912 the first motorized engine appeared, and by 1914 the first gas-powered engine was purchased; horses were completely replaced by 1919. The fire station at 214 Third Street NE was also replaced when, in 1917, the iconic, brick Central Fire Station at 427 First Street SE opened.

Modernizing the Department (1909-1929)

Over time, this station would be altered to fit changing needs and size of equipment, but it would house the department for almost 70 years. Echoes of this traditional architecture can be seen in the present Central Fire Station today.

Advancing the Techniques (1949-1969)

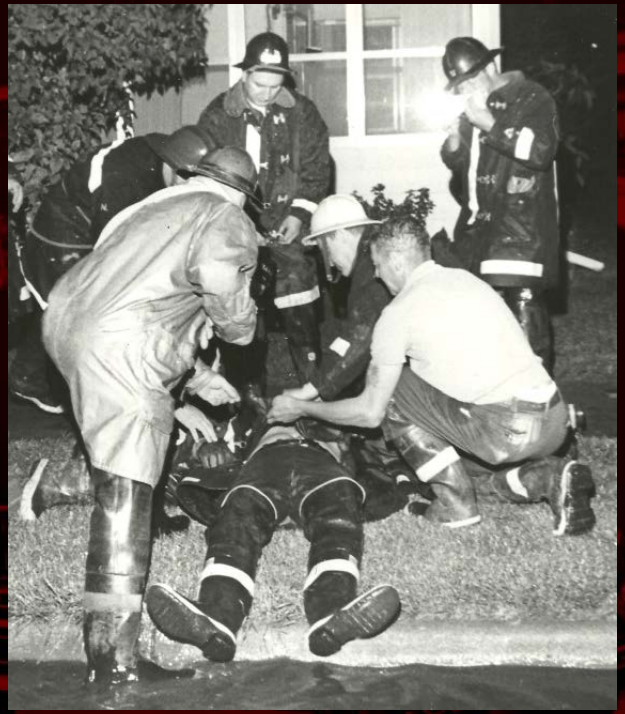
After one hundred years of existence, financial loss from fires around Cedar Rapids totaled over $15,000,000. However, the 1950s and 1960s found the Cedar Rapids Fire Department thriving in terms of the advancements in equipment and technology used in the profession. The older engines were retired to Ellis Park and Bever Park for children to play on and were replaced by the latest models equipped with resuscitators.

Advancing the Techniques (1949-1969)

Several of the local stations were remodeled during this time alongside the construction of two new stations, 5 and 6. New equipment such as foam machines and hand cranked air lines to supply air to firefighters aided the 134 men working in the department at this time.

Expanding Operations (1969-1989)

By the 1970s, the Cedar Rapids Fire Department was once again evolving. Emergency calls meant more than simply responding to fires—with 11 deaths from residential fires in 1970 alone, not to mention the inherent danger of firefighting, the Cedar Rapids firefighters needed to be prepared for a variety of situations.



Expanding Operations (1969-1989)

During the 1980s, all firefighters became certified in CPR and Emergency Medical Technician-Ambulance to provide out-of-hospital emergency care for victims of sudden illness or injury. The Fire Department also created specialty response teams to manage hazardous materials incidents, confined space, high angle and rope rescues, trench rescue, and water operations.

Continuing Tradition (1989-2009)

The incorporation of EMT training in the 1980s continued to grow, and in 2000, Fire Stations 8 and 9 became provisional paramedic level stations, expanding advanced emergency medical care to areas furthest away from hospitals. By 2009, 55 percent of all calls that firefighters responded to were medical calls.

Continuing Tradition (1989-2009)

In 1997, the Cedar Rapids Fire Department established another special unit: the Honor Guard. One of the first in Iowa, the Cedar Rapids Fire Department Honor Guard carries out traditional duties during ceremonial occasions such as memorials, funerals, and other special events, and trains other departments in the area. The original Guard began with 12 members, but continues to grow and honor those who have served and contributed to the Fire Department's mission.

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

In 1870, there was a disagreement between several fire companies and the City Council over the election of the chief and assistant engineer of the Fire Department. The Hook and Ladder Company recommended W. D. Watrous for chief engineer and S.B. Fleek as assistant engineer to the City Council. The City Council instead chose George A. Lincoln and H. Hale for the positions (*CR Times* 4-7-1870:2). The Hook and Ladder Company refused to take orders from the new chief engineer; so, from March 1870 to March 1871 the City had no fire department. At that time there were only two fire companies, the Hook and Ladder and the Independent Fire Company No. 1, which was, as its name suggests, not controlled by the city though they did acknowledge the chief engineer as their commander. By March 1871, a new election was held and Hiel Hale was elected as chief engineer of the Fire Department (*CR Times* 3-9-1871:3).

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

By April 1872, there were three fire companies: the Steam Engine Company and Hook and Ladder Company both organized by the City and housed in the City Hall, and the Independent Fire Company, located at the foot of Iowa Avenue (First Avenue)(*CR Times* 4-4-1872:2) (Dolezal 1993:12). By 1875, one more fire company was organized: Wm. Greene Independent Fire Company No. 2 (*CR Times* 5-20-1875:2). On November 13, 1871, city ordinance established the fire police with a force of between 15 and 30 men. The fire police were charged with maintaining order at the site of fires, inspecting dwellings, and compelling owners with fixing building defects (Dolezal 1993:12).

The source of water for the fire department at that time included several cisterns built by the city. In 1871, six new brick cisterns were constructed on Iowa Avenue (First Avenue), Linn Street (A Avenue NE), two on Sanford Street (Eighth Avenue SE), two on Madison Street (Ninth Avenue SW)(*CR Times* 4-4-1872:2).

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

Three “substantial” hose houses were constructed in 1876 at the corner of Van Buren and Greene Streets (Fifth Street and Eighth Avenue SE), corner of Adams and LeGare Streets (Tenth Avenue and Third Street SE), and the corner of Van Buren and Linn Streets (Fifth Street and A Avenue NE). All of these hose houses were on land leased from private landowners. As mentioned above, the Independent Fire Company also had a frame building at the foot of First Avenue (*CR Times* 3-22-1877:2). By 1879, another independent company, the Henderson Hose Company, joined the fire department (*CR Times* 3-20-1879:1).

In 1882, the Bohemian-American Hose Company was formed as the Third Ward Hose Company on Third Street SE (Dolezal 1993:13). In 1885, J.W. Kouba was listed as the unit foreman in the Cedar Rapids City directory. By 1893, the unit renamed itself as the Bohemian-American Hose Company and was housed in the rear of the new C.S.P.S. Hall constructed in 1891 (Cedar Rapids City Directories; Hunter 2012). J.W. Kouba ties the Third Ward Hose Company to the Bohemian-American Hose Company as he was a member of the latter in 1895.

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

By 1889, there were nine fire companies at seven locations. All of these companies were located in proximity to the large industries of the city, which were highly prone to create large fires (Hunter 2012). All of the hose houses and buildings for the companies were of frame construction, built on leased land (except for City Hall, which was owned by the city):

- Independent Fire Co. No. 1, Second Street between First and A Avenue
- Steamer Hose Co., City Hall
- Relief Hook and Ladder Co., City Hall
- Third Ward Hose Co., Third Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues SE
- Fourth Ward Hose Co., First Street between Second and Third Avenues SW
- Henderson Hose Co. (Independent), Third Street between Second and Third Avenues SE
- First Ward Hose Co., Fifth Street between B and C Avenues NE
- L. M. Ayers Hook and Ladder Co., at Fourth Ward Hose House
- Sixth Ward Hose Co., corner of Seventh Avenue and Second Street SW

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

In the early 1890s, citizens and businessmen began to realize the disadvantages of having an all volunteer fire department. In 1891, the Third, Fifth, and Sixth Ward hose houses had to be moved as the owners of the land wanted to build on the property (*C.R. Evening Gazette* 7-23-1891:2). In August 1893, fire insurance rates increased in the city. This increase was, in part, blamed by the absence of a paid fire department (*C.R. Evening Gazette* 8-1-1893:5). The *Gazette* noted that Dubuque, Des Moines, Davenport, and Burlington all had paid fire departments.

In February 1894, the Cedar Rapids Mayor Daniels and the City Council agreed that a paid fire department was necessary (*CR Evening Gazette* 2-17-1894:4). Just a week later plans had begun for the removal of the fire companies at City Hall to a new location and the renovation of City Hall for city offices (*CR Evening Gazette* 2-24-1894:5). Ordinance No. 365, enacted in March 1894, established the Board of Public Works in the City of Cedar Rapids, which governed the new paid fire department (*CR Standard* 3-22-1894:4). All volunteer fire fighters from both city and independent companies resigned and had to apply for positions in the new paid fire department.

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

As most of the volunteer hose houses were on leased land, the new paid fire department necessitated construction of new frame hose houses. A new frame central fire station was constructed ca. 1900 on Third Street NE between A and B Avenues. Three additional stations were constructed by 1904. Station A was located on First Street SW between Second and Third Avenues. Station B, built ca. 1898, was located on the Coe College campus at the corner of B Avenue and 13th Street NE. Station C, built ca. 1893, was on Third Street SE behind the C.S.P.S. Hall (Dolezal 1993:20).

History of the Fire Department in Cedar Rapids

On June 18, 1907, Station A was inspected by the fire committee, who were “forcibly impressed” with the poor condition of the building (*Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette* 1907:6). Councilman H.S. Keffer from the city’s Department of Parks and Public Property wrote in a letter to the City Council on June 24, 1908, “…during the past week the firemen of station on the west side have found it necessary to leave the station during storms. The condition of the building being such that it is imperative that better quarters be provided at once.” (Dolezal 1993:32). On that same day, the City Council directed Councilman Keffer and Shermin to investigate locations for two new fire stations on the west side.

(Cedar Rapids Gazette, January 9, 1904)

Architecture of the Fire Department

New fire stations constructed at the beginning of the twentieth century were a departure from the two-story frame, false front stations found in the downtown area of Cedar Rapids. New stations built out in the residential areas of the city took on a decidedly residential feel in the popular architectural styles of the time.

Hose House No. 2 (1909)

Hose House No. 2 was constructed at 423 Fifth Street NW in 1908 and was occupied by the fireman by February 1909. The two-story, Prairie style brick structure was built in a T-shaped plan with a belcast, hipped roof clad with asphalt shingles. One story hipped roof extensions are located within the ell of the T and on the northeast corner of the building. Brick walls, which are 14” thick, are comprised of Boone brick, which is a dark red, mottled, hard-fired, brick. Established in 1911, the Boone Brick, Tile and Paving Company in Boone, Iowa manufactured paving, sidewalk and building brick, hollow blocks and drain tile. Hose House No. 2 was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Hose House No. 5 (1910)

As this station replaced Station A on First Street SW, a new station was needed to cover the southwest neighborhoods. Hence, the second west side fire station was erected in Riverside Park near the intersection of C and First Streets SW. Bids for the new station were taken in July 1909 (*CR Evening Gazette* 7-15-1909:6). The new building was designed by R. R. Mayberry but was strikingly similar to the Prairie style Josselyn and Taylor design for Hose House No. 2. The two and a half story brick building took on an even stronger residential feel with its cross gable roof and small gable front extension on its main façade. By March 3, 1910, the new Hose House No. 5 was complete and firemen were occupying the building (*CR Evening Gazette* 3-3-1910:3). This fire station was torn down in ?

Hose House No. 6 (1912)

The new Hose House No. 6 was also designed by R.R. Mayberry in the Prairie style as well. This building marked a transition to a more rectangular form with a hipped roof, deep eaves, multi-pane windows, and brick pilasters. The new station was opened on May 8, 1912 at 404 Seventeenth Street SE (Dolezal 1993:38-36).

Hose House No. 4 (1916)

Hose House No. 4 was designed by C.A. Dieman and Company. This station followed the rectangular form and hipped roof of Hose House No. 6 but featured more classically inspired details such as the round arch windows on the first floor and a round arch, multi-pane dormer. The station was constructed in 1916 at 1109 Third Street SE (CR Republican 1-16-1916:27). In August 1917, both the fire department and City agreed that a new central fire station was necessary. On November 8, 1917, construction was underway at 427 First Street SE. The building was completed by June 1918 (Dolezal 1993:38-39). Hose House No. 4 is currently owned by CSPS.

Hose House No. 3 (1925)

As with the other fire stations of the period, Hose House No. 3 was constructed in the popular residential style of the period, Tudor Revival. This station was the only structure to be constructed in this style. The use of brick buttresses on the end walls of the side gable structure and between the overhead doors are an interesting variation on the style. The station was completed at 1424 B Avenue NE and was the last station to be constructed in the 1920s (Dolezal 1993:45). This fire station was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Mid-Century Fire Stations

In the 1950s, new stations were being built as the city expanded on the southwest and southeast sides. In 1957, a new fire station was built at 509 Wilson Avenue SW to replace Hose House No. 5. In that same year a new Station No. 6 was built at 2416 Mount Vernon Road (Dolezal 1993:67). The former Hose House No. 6 was converted for use by the Cedar Rapids Playground and Recreation Commission (Dolezal 1993:68). Hose House No. 4 was closed in 1962 (Dolezal 1993:70). By 1968, there were ten fire stations in the city including the Central Fire Station. The only hose houses still in operation at that time were Central Fire Station, Hose House No. 2, and Hose House No. 3 (Cedar Rapids Fire Department 1968:19). In 1983, the City proposed construction of a new central fire station, combining operations with Hose House No. 2 on E Avenue NW (Cedar Rapids Gazette 8-28-1983:15A). When the new central fire station on Third Street NW was completed in 1985, Hose House No. 2 was closed.

Today, many of the fire stations in Cedar Rapids remain as vital buildings in their respective neighborhoods. The former Central Fire Station was listed to the National Register of Historic Places and sits vacant.

Cedar Rapids Fire Department mechanics Ray Bollman (left) and Don Fox put the bumper back on a 1970 Pirsch pumper they are refurbishing for the department. The truck was rust-riddled and needed major repairs, so the men squeezed the work in among their other duties to avoid sending the truck out for expensive body work.

Gazette photo by Chris Stewart

Firemen rescue rusty pumper

Mechanics bring C.R. truck back to life

By Jeff Burnham
Gazette staff writer

ike an aging major leaguer, the 1970 Pirsch was washed up.

The fire truck had helped put out hundreds of blazes in Cedar Rapids. But rust had eaten through much of its body about a year ago, threatening to put the Pirsch out — to the junkyard.

"Usually we would send it back to the company body work," recalled Assistant Chief Phil But that would have cost at least $25,000, and we didn't have the money in the budget."

The results: The Pirsch will return to service within a few weeks, almost as good as new. The price: about $3,300 for parts, with no additional labor costs, meaning a savings of more than $20,000 compared with what it might have cost.

Chief mechanic Fox and assistant mechanic Bollman, working at the garage next to the Central Fire Station, maintain the department's fleet of 13 trucks. Starting May 11, they worked on the Pirsch in their spare time.

"Basically, we just took it completely apart and cleaned off all the rust," Fox said, adding that several rusted-through pieces had to be replaced. In addition, they got some much-needed help from the city's Streets Department in painting the Pirsch.

An interesting note in the story behind the decision [illegible] said some firefighters indicated a desire to return to red trucks.

Gorman said a survey of the department showed an "overwhelming" desire for red trucks or white over red trucks. He explained that many departments went to yellow trucks based on studies indicating that color was more visible than red, but said there has been no conclusive evidence that yellow trucks are safer.

Gorman decided to go with white over red, adding that it could take 10 years or more to complete the conversion.

As for the Pirsch, the work is done, but they're still waiting for the decals and stripes they ordered before the truck can be put back into service. Fox [illegible] that should happen soon.

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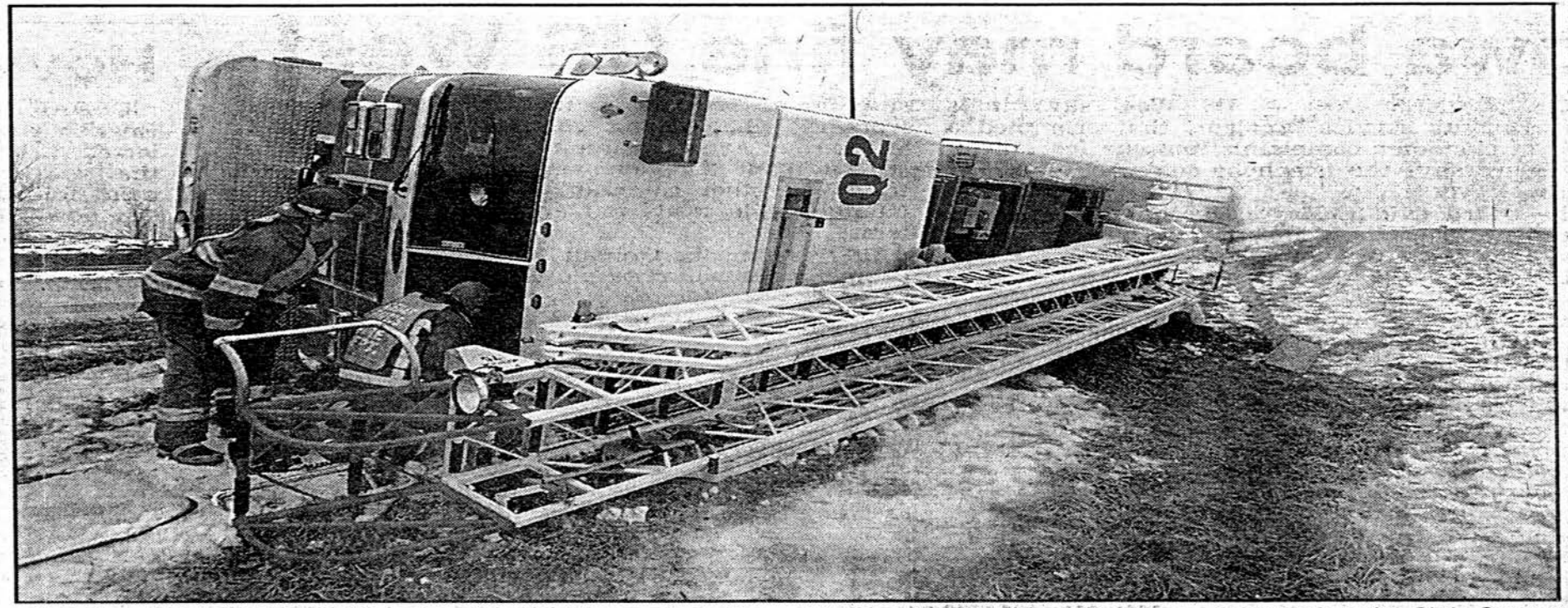
1.15.1968 Two Engines

1.16.1979 Truck



Gazette photo by Chris Stewart

Ice storm casualty

A $400,000 aerial ladder firetruck bought by Cedar Rapids only a year ago rests on its side in the median of [illegible] ualty of the ice storm that hit the area Friday morning. The truck, carrying fo[illegible] [illegible]he ice-glazed highway when the driver attempted to turn off at the Kirkwo[illegible] The truck slid into the median and tipped over. All firefighters on board were wearing safety belts, and none was seriously hurt. Safety Commissioner J.D. Smith estimated repairs would run $100,000, which must come from [illegible] fu[illegible] because the city is self-insured. The truck will be hauled to the Pierce factory at Apple[illegible] [illegible]mated the truck would be out of service for at least two months. An older ladde[illegible] [illegible] in the meantime.

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feguarding st Fire

Another cause of fire in connection with electricity can be from overloading a circuit which is not protected by a fuse of the right strength.

Your wires can get too "hot" if

Insist on approved labeled cord with appliances, lamps and cord attachments.

you try to take too much current over them. But if your circuit is properly fused you cannot take too much because the minute you start to—the fuse blows and you can't get any electricity, let alone too much. A fuse has just one function and that is to prevent wires getting too hot from overload. Your electrician should be able to tell you the correct fuse for your various circuits. On the average house circuit it is wise to

Be sure to have all electrical repairs and wiring made by a competent electrical contractor.

use a 15 ampere fuse. And ever a fuse blows that is signal that you are expecting uch from the circuit—or that you are using a defective appliance or an appliance with a defective cord.

Our recommendation for safeguarding your home against any ity of fires caused by elec- to first: Ask to have an l inspector come to your

shipped as such or made into Manila cigars.

"The islands' forests provide not only valuable cabinet, veneer and dye woods, but also gums, resins, and rattan from which wicker-work furniture is woven. Palms furnish natives with numerous products from teeth for rakes to industrial alcohol.

"Although the Philippines are chiefly agricultural, only about 16,300 square miles of their 114,-400 square miles of area are cultivated. One of the several reasons is the abundance of coarse grasses that spring up if fields are neglected. In many cases it is easier to clear a patch in the jungle than to reclaim a field captured by grasses. It is not surprising that many of the islands' exports are fibers, and fiber products.

"Manila hemp, a fiber from the abaca, a cousin of the banana plant, provides not only some of the world's strangest rope and cordage, and tough manila wrapping paper, but is woven into rugs, slippers, baskets, and brushes.

"Other exports shipped from the Philippines include reptile skin goods, daintily embroidered lingerie, and infants' wear, lumbang oil, sea shells to be manufactured into buttons and lamp shades, and ylang-ylang oil, an exquisite, costly essence rivaling attar of roses. This little known oil is distilled from the greenish-yellow, fragrant flower of the tree of the same name."

CINEMA CHAT

BY WANDA MONTZ

The most lively picture of the week was the Baer-Louis fight, despite no dramatization, no plot. Joe Louis' face as he came off the gory battlefield was a picture to see. It was a study in calm repose, as if he had done no more than pick a couple of daisies.

Chic Sale plays the part of Abraham Lincoln in "The Perfect Tribute," a short educational film designed to educate the masses with respect to the Gettysburg address. A better choice might have been the Illinois farmer who looks like Lincoln and aspires to the presidency that could give him [illegible]

Rally Day Program To Be Held At Church Of God

A Rally day program will be held at Church of God, L avenue at Eighth street NW, today at 9:45 a.m. The program which includes a pageant, "Service for Him," follows:

Congregational song.
Scripture reading.
Hymn, "The Lord is My Shepherd," by Winifred Miller, Dorothy Atkins, Evelyn Hadsell, Caroline Hodgdon, Lucille Kardatake and Mrs. R. N. Coolidge.
Prayer.
Solo, "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings," (Liddle), Mrs. R. N. Coolidge.
Illustrated sermon, the Rev. R. N. Coolidge.
Offertory, violin solo, Evelyn Hadsell.
Announcements, the pastor.
Congregational song.
Short pageant, "Service for Him." Characters—Ruth, Mrs. Seninger; artist, Winifred Miller; singer, Evelyn Hadsell; writer, Opal Franks; spirit of service, Dorothy Atkins; beginner and primary children.
Song by beginners and primaries.
Exercise, "Something Every Day," Junior Dorsey, Ethel Van Velkenbers, Richard Kelly and Bobby Coolidge.
Recitations—"Little Links," Marilyn Parsons; "Stay-at-Homes," Natlee Brown; "His Harvest," Agnes Wise; "The Sunday School Fan," Garnet Franks; "Every Sunday Rally Day," Merl Wise; "Every One a Worker," Deloris Welton.
Secretary's annual report, Mrs. L. A. Wise.
Presentation of promotion certificates, Sunday school superintendent.
Consecration service for officers and teachers of the Sunday school, led by the pastor.
Benediction.

Louis E. Snelgrove is trying to evolve by kindness a race of tame honey bees at the Clifton Zoological gardens, Bristol, England, and expects the next generation to be docile as kittens, retaining their sting, but never using it.

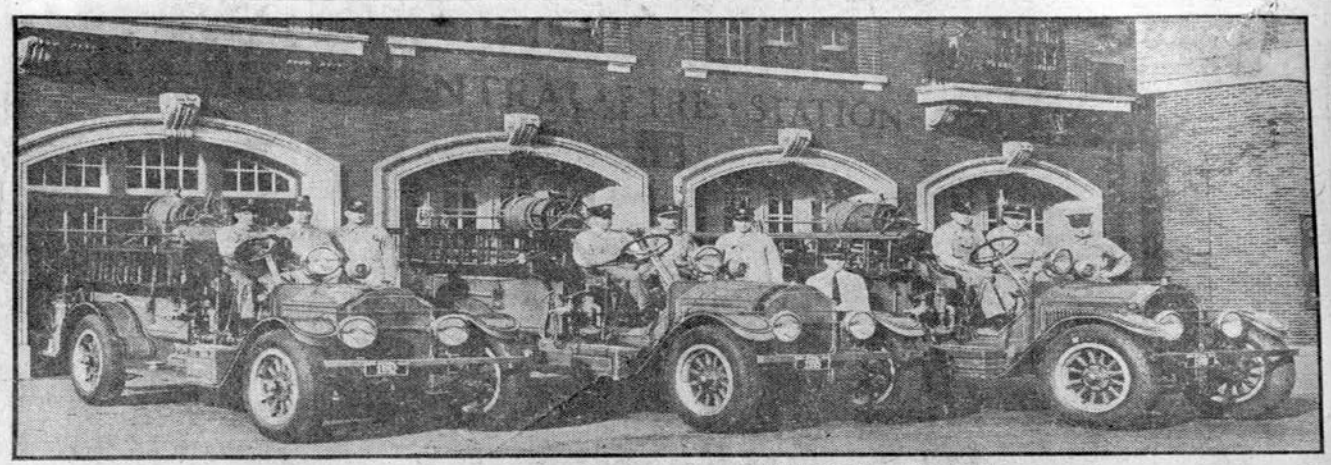
DON PEDRO AND HIS ORCHESTRA COMING TO DANCELAND THURSDAY

DON PEDRO.

Don Pedro and his orchestr will furnish the music for danc ing at Danceland from 9 to Thursday evening, Manage Frank Brookhiser has announce Pedro, who has played at the loca ballroom before, is the greates individual artist who has ever ap

GIANT Circ
HEATER
VALUE!

Given New Lease On Life By Dept. Mechanics



—Thompson photo: Tru-Art cut

Pictured here are the three rebuilt fire trucks which are now giving Cedar Rapids as good service as new machines through the work of department members in the machine shop under the direction of Harry Hall, fire department mechanic. The men pictured with the apparatus from left to right are Harry Hall, chief mechanic, William Besta, Donald Kelly, A. J. Novak, Capt. E. I. Thompson, Richard Vlach, Chief E. P. Kohout, John Hunter, Capt. Joe Gaskill and Floyd Byrnes.

BY TAIT CUMMINS

In the illustration accompanying this article there is a trio of motor vehicles, the combined age of which is fifty-one years. All three machines are in service for the Cedar Rapids fire department despite their age and by actual test perform better today than when they came from the factory.

Just because the old rigs are still in service probably isn't sufficient reason for more than passing mention but the fact that they are capable of pumping more water today than when they were built is unusual. The answer can be found in the machine shop of the fire station where the veteran pumpers were renovated this summer.

Oldest Bought In 1916.

a matter of fact, few pri-
-owned vehicles would even
running condition at the
ages of the outfits. The oldest pumper was purchased by the city in 1916 and has been used since. The others were obtained in 1919. At that time, they were "tops" in
ting equipment. They are
good as can be purchased
nary fire-fighting.
year, however, the
was forced to purchase

When the new pumpers were placed in service, Chief E. P. Kohout realized his three pumpers in service with the new ones were in poor condition, actually unfit for use and downright dangerous in case of an emergency.

To meet that situation, he decided to overhaul the rigs and the work started in the machine shop at the central station. Members of the department did the work under the direction of Harry Hall, fire department mechanic.

Output Above Specifications.

The pumpers were dismantled to the frame, completely renovated and refinished. The pumps were re-bored and every questionable part brought up to par. Each of the three pumpers was given the same sort of treatment. And when the tests were made, there
question about the
chines threw more water than the specifications for such outfits require. Chief Kohout expects the three rigs to serve the city for five or six more years.

Satisfied with the work done this year in bringing the department equipment up to an acceptable standard, Chief Kohout plans next year to take the two old rigs which were shelved for the new equipment and make one good pumper out of the pair. He hopes to find good parts on one to replace bad parts on the other. The desired result is one pumper which can be pressed into service in emergencies without weakening the efficiency of the department's mechanical strength.

Alarm Boxes Relocated.

In connection with the constant effort of Chief Kohout to bring his mechanical equipment up to

relocated recently to comply with the National Board of Fire Underwriters recommendations. In regard to the work, Chief Kohout said:

"As the alarm boxes are now located, in no case will it be necessary to go more than 400 feet from any point in the business district to reach a fire alarm box. The department is launching a program in connection with the national board over a period of years to extend the fire alarm system in accordance with the board's recommendations. Each year we plan to improve and add to the fire alarm system. It is also planned to extend the underground wires to eliminate as much overhead wire as possible."

Locations of fire alarm boxes in the business district fol
avenue and First street N
ond avenue and First str
Fourth avenue and First
SE, Fifth avenue and
street SE, Third avenue and Second street SE, First avenue and Second street NE, Fourth avenue and Third street SE, Second avenue and Third street SE, A avenue and Third street NE, Third avenue and Fourth street SE, First
enue and Fourth street NE
urth avenue and Fifth street SE

CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE

These Fire Trucks, Total Age 51 Years, Are Given New Lease On Life By Dept. Mechanics

—Thompson photo: Tru-Art cut.

Pictured here are the three rebuilt fire trucks which are now giving Cedar Rapids as good service as new machines through the work of department members in the machine shop under the direction of Harry Hall, fire department mechanic. The men pictured with the apparatus from left to right are Harry Hall, chief mechanic, William Besta, Donald Kelly, A. J. Novak, Capt. E. I. Thompson, Richard Vlach, Chief E. P. Kohout, John Hunter, Capt. Joe Gaskill and Floyd Byrnes.

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Locations of fire alarm boxes in the business district follow: avenue and First street NE, Second avenue and First street SE, avenue and First street

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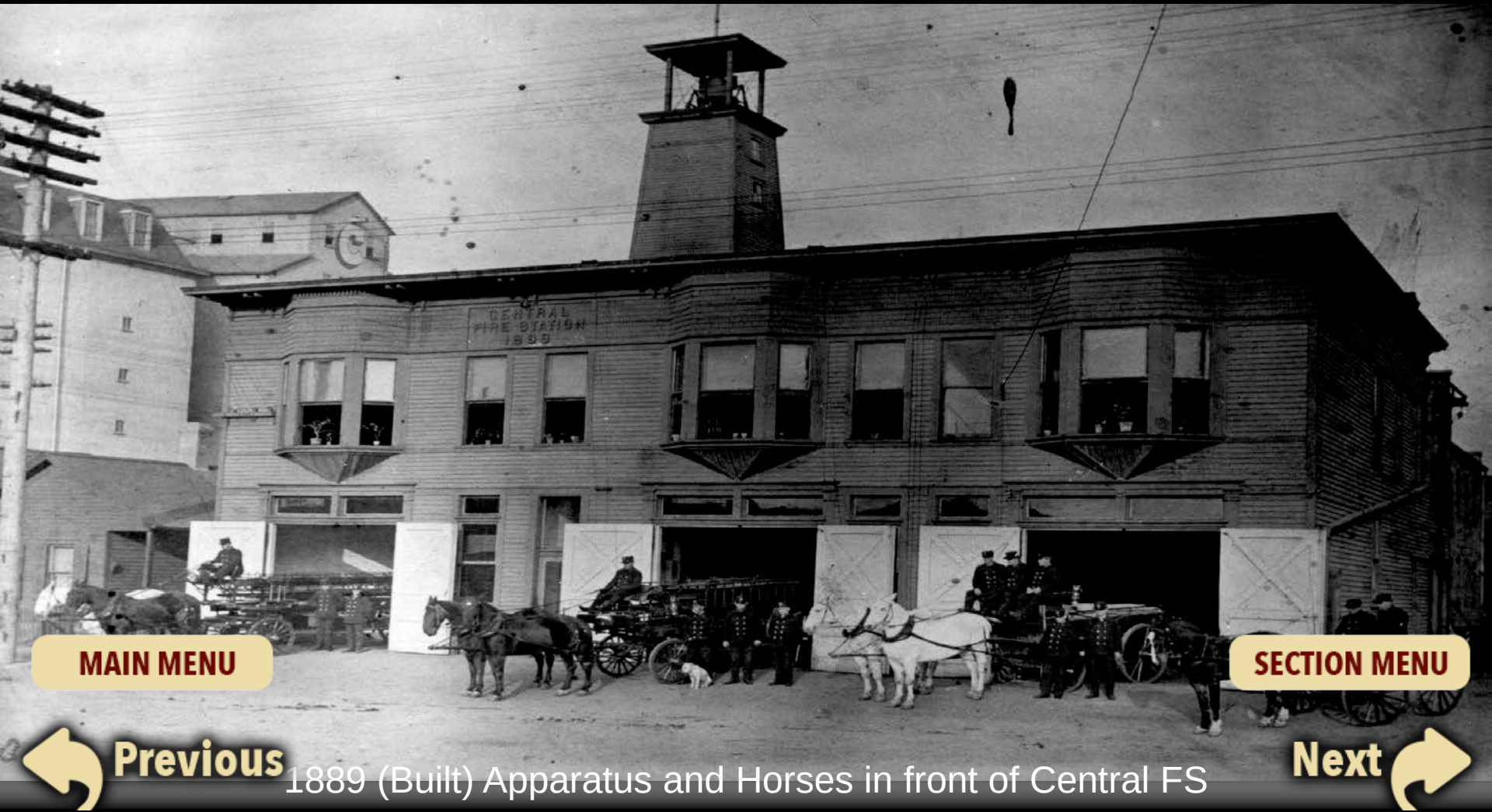

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1889 (Built) Apparatus and Horses in front of Central FS

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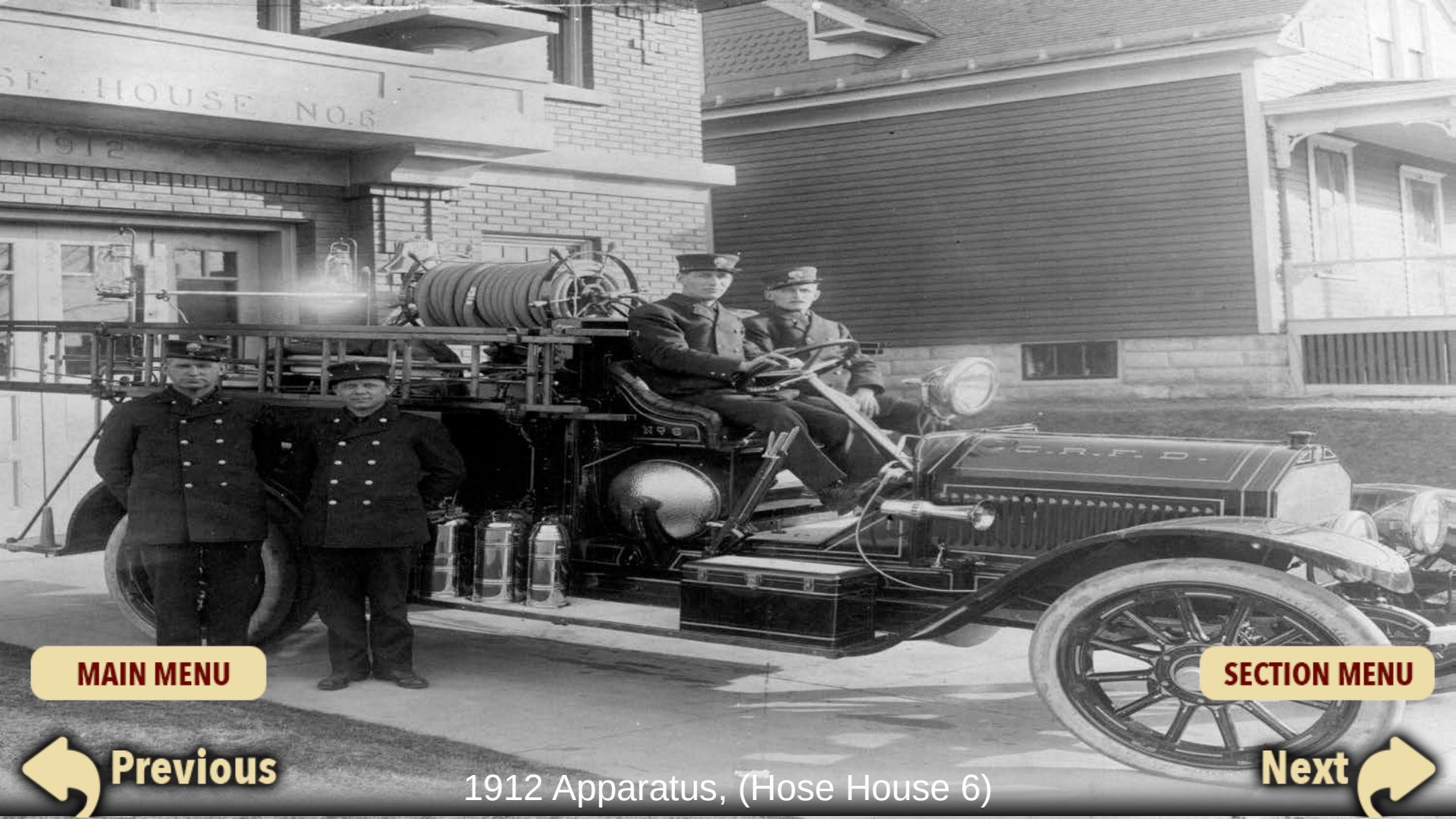

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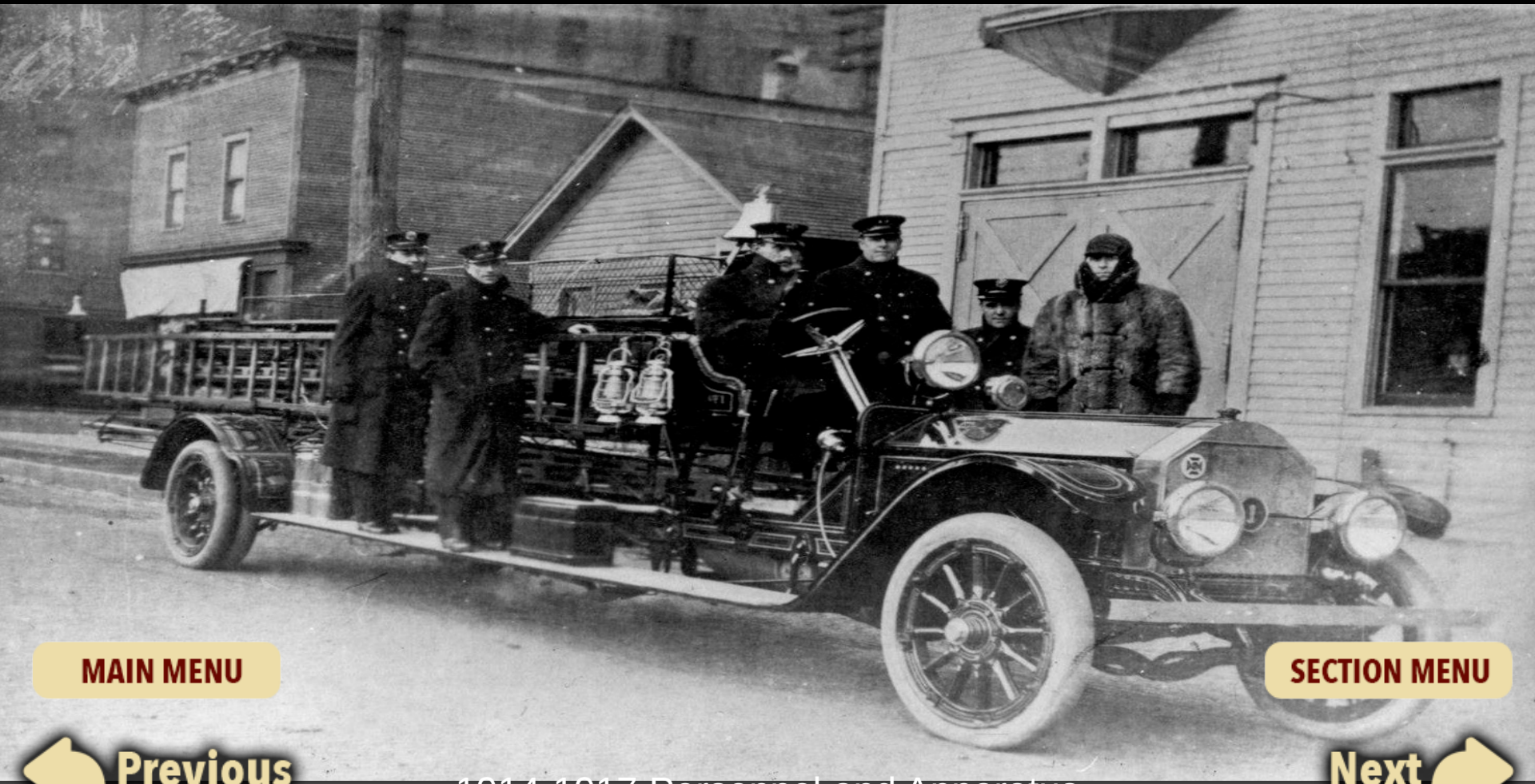
1912 Apparatus, (Hose House 6)



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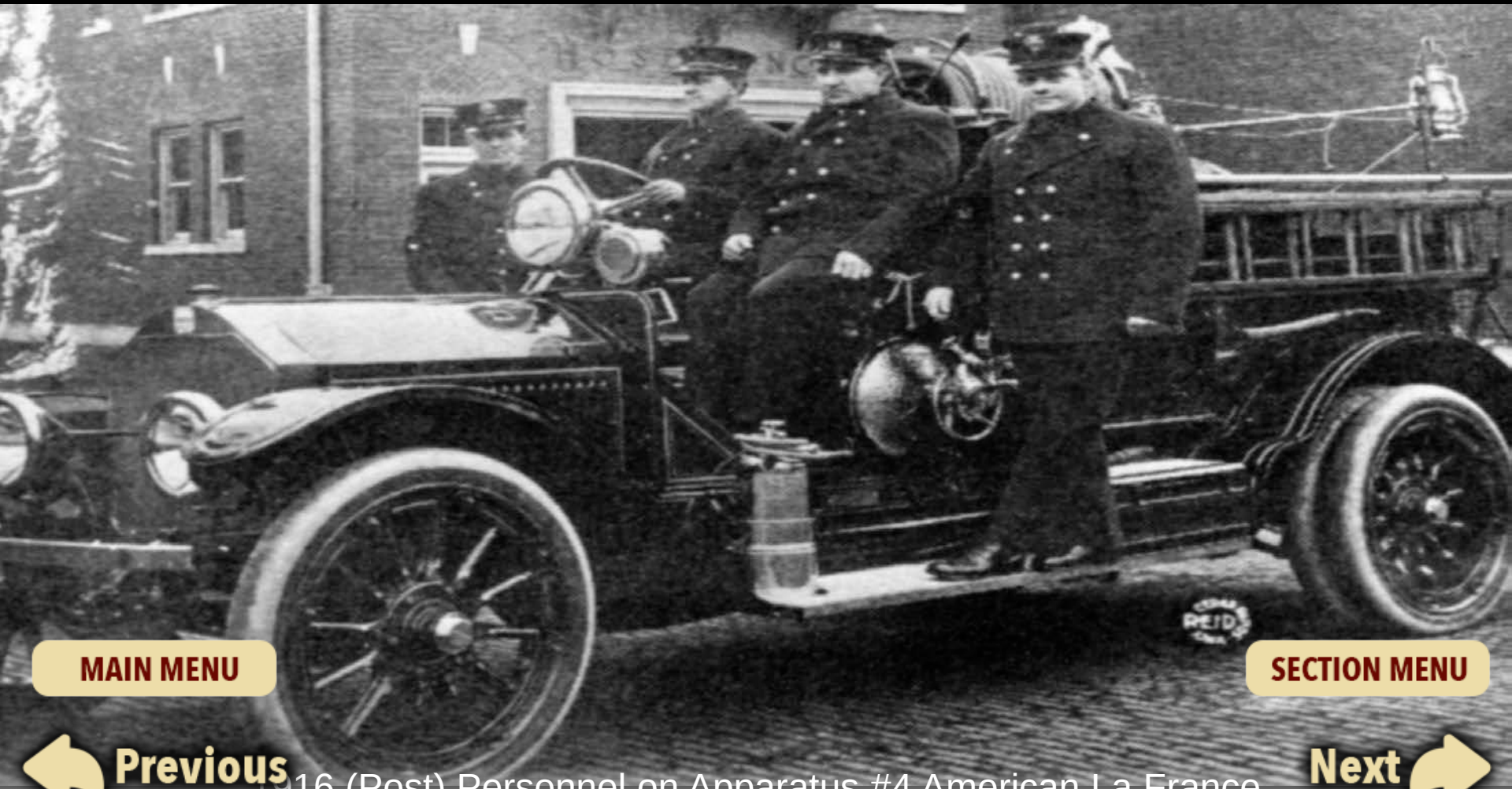
1914-1917 Personnel and Apparatus



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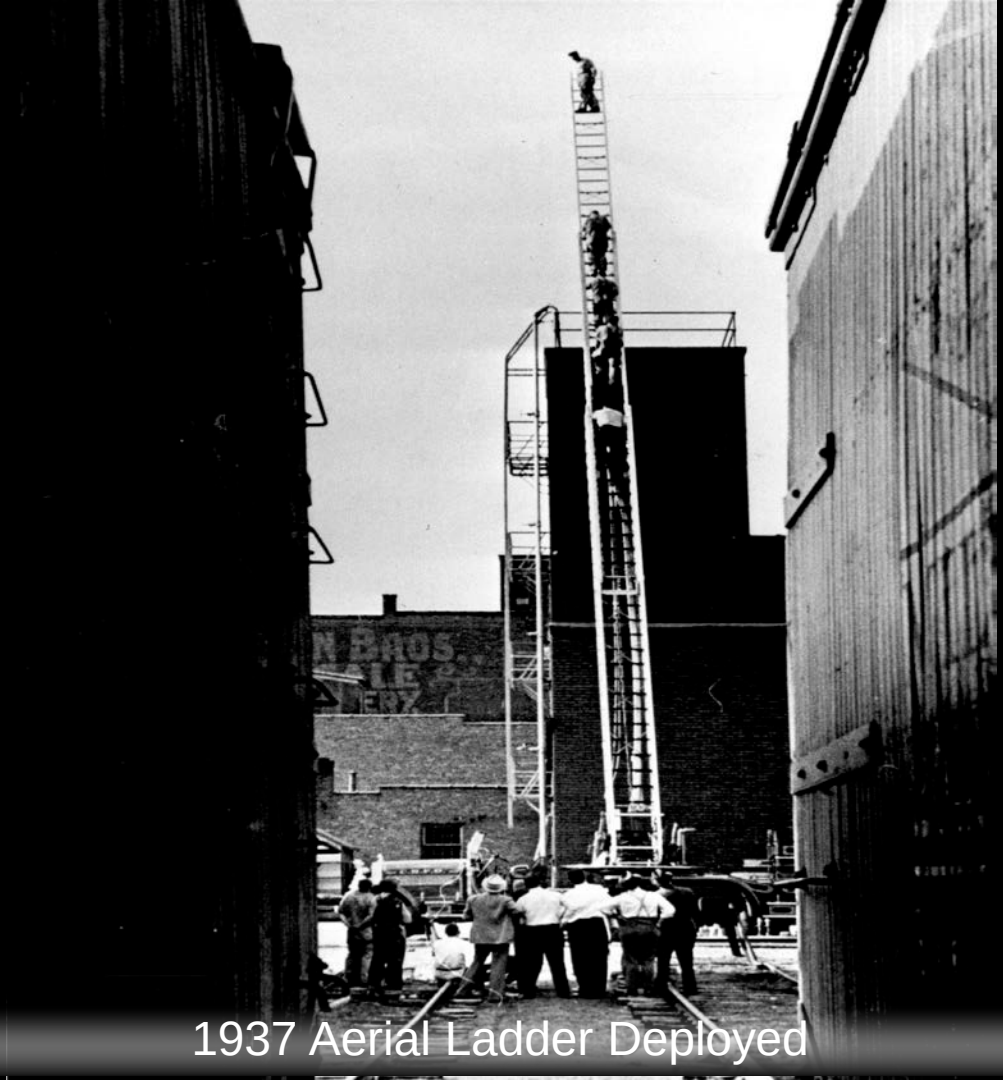
1916 (Post) Personnel on Apparatus #4 American La France

1931 (Jan or Feb) Apparatus in Use



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1937 Aerial Ladder Deployed

1937 Aerial Ladder Deployed

Fire Department equipment includes a 75-

1937 Aerial Ladder Truck

—T

HE $17,000 AERIAL LADDER TRUCK, pride of the Cedar Rapids fire department, is shown above
rs, under the direction of Walter Pretzman, delivery engineer of the Peter Pirsch company, Kenos
trying out the new rig Friday. The truck was driven here Thursday by Pretzman and Harry Hall,
en is in the front seat beside Glenn Powers, shown behind the wh
ts se job it was Friday to guide the rear wheels which turn in opp
s. Standing in front of the truck from left to right, are Wes Benesh, commissioner of public safet
t, fire chief, and Mr. Pretzman.

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1940 Apparatus (Quard Factor) Pirsch

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1954 (or Earlier) Ladder Truck with Men

1954 Crew Shot

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1954 Parade Apparatus (Steamer)

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1954 Parade Apparatus (Steamer)

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1955 (Nov) Station 7 Apparatus with Personnel and Dog

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1955 (Nov) Station 7 Apparatus with Personnel and Dog

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1955 Apparatus (Pirsch)

1955 Fire, Aerial Ladder Deployed

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1955 Parade (Fire Prevention), Multiple Apparatus

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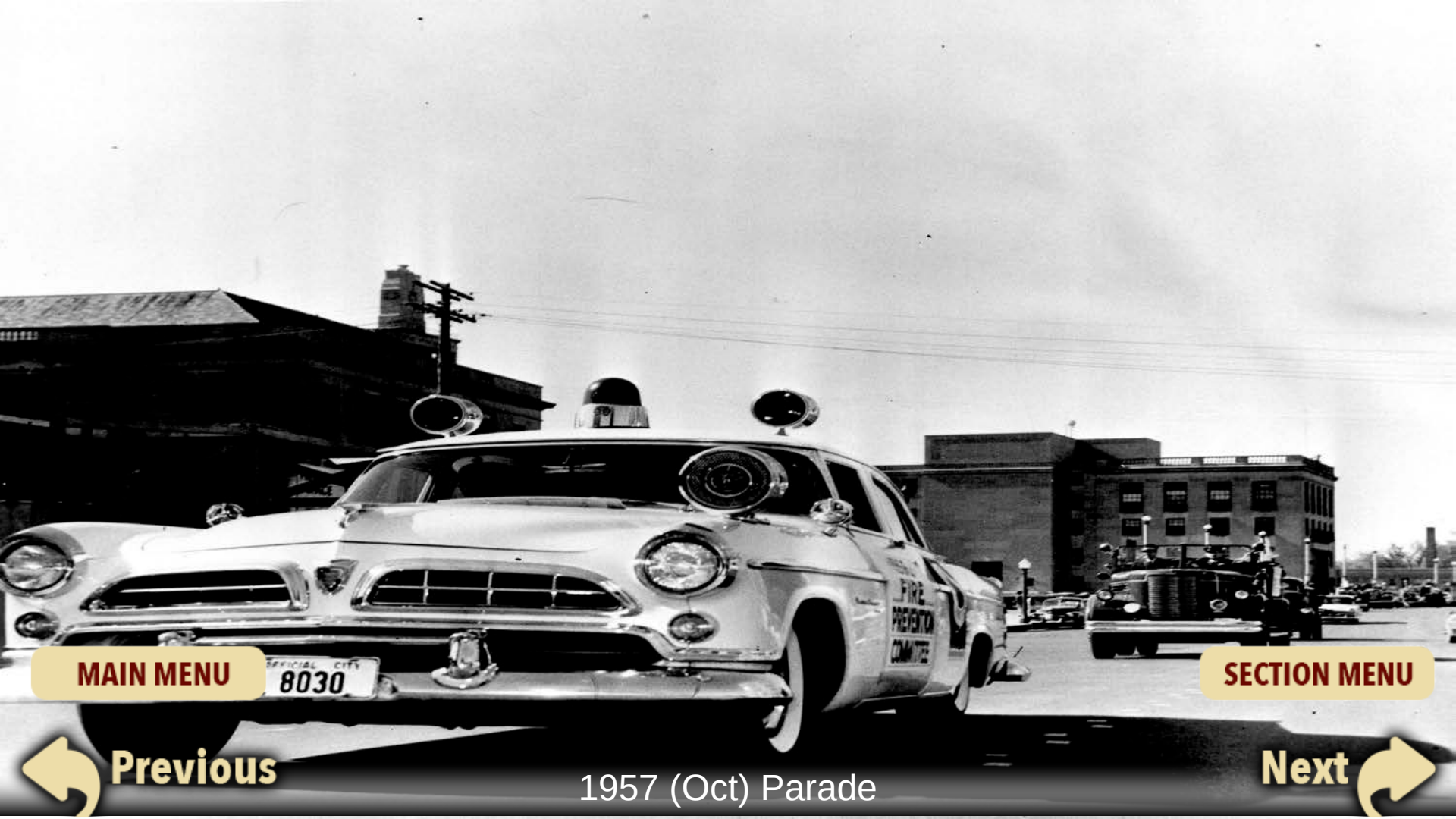
1957 (Oct) Parade



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1957 (Oct) Parade

1957 (Oct) Parade

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1957 (Oct) Parade

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1957 Apparatus

1957 Apparatus Maintenance

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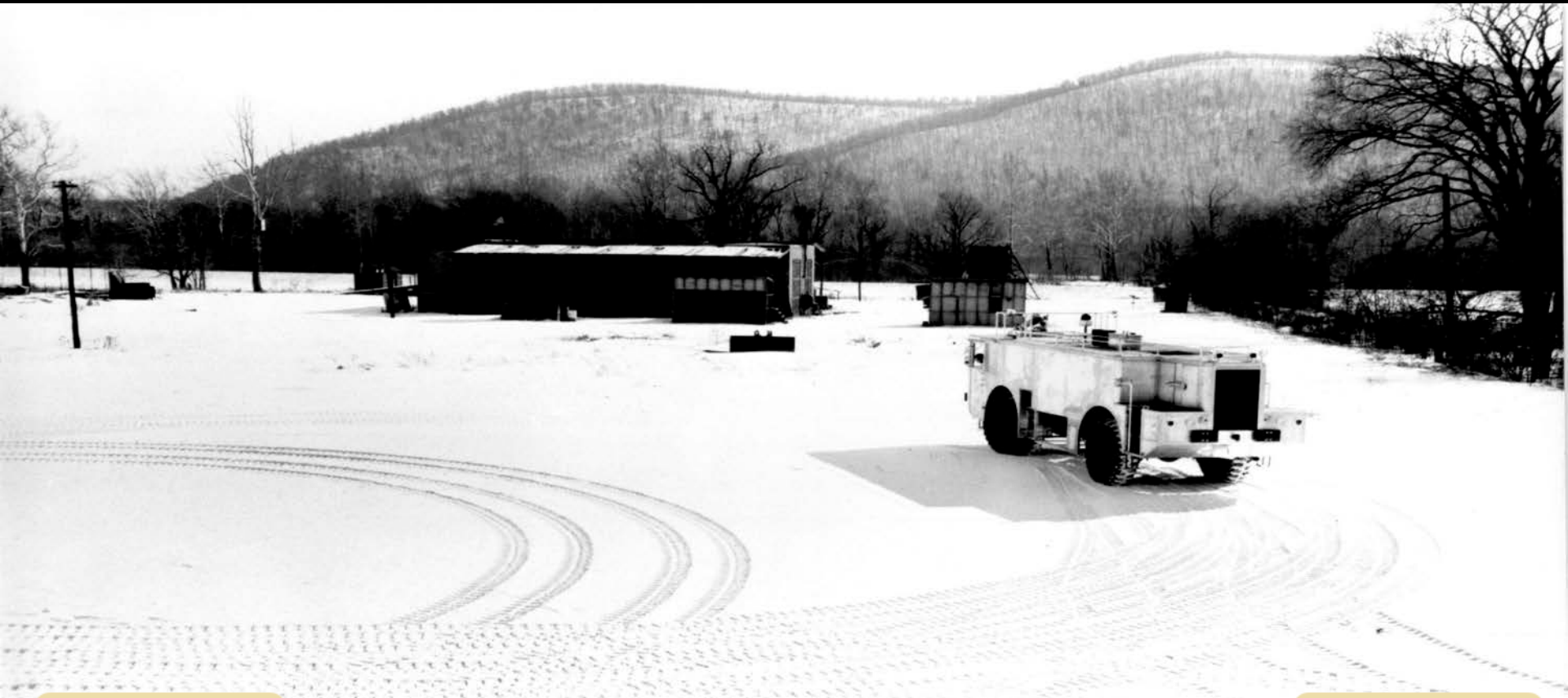
1963 (Feb) Airport Apparatus



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1963 (Feb) Airport Apparatus

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1963 (June) Airport Demo Red One

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1963 (June) Airport Demo Red One

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1963 (June) Demo Foam

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1963 (June) Demo Foam

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1965 (or Later) Aerial Ladder Deployed

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1967 (April) Two Engines

1967 (or Later) Mini Racer

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1967 (or Later) Mini Racer

1973 Truck

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2.14.1968 Collision Damage in Front

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2.14.1968 Collision Damage in Rear

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2.14.1968 Collision

CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE, FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 1935.

Councilmen And Fire Chief Inspect New Trucks

—Thompson photo: Tru-Art cut

Members of the city council Thursday joined Fire Chief Emil P. Kohout in inspecting the two new 750-gallon capacity fire trucks which the city has purchased for approximately $20,000. Amid much pushing of dash-board gadgets, ringing of bells and owing of sirens indulged in by the city fathers their picture was apped. From left to right on the trucks are Frank K. Hahn, blic improvement commissioner; Dan Kruidenier, public safety; Stefan, parks; Chief Kohout, Mayor W. J. Neill and L. D. Burgus, finance. A state inspector Friday conducted public tests of the new pumpers.

3.15.1935 Article on Apparatus

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3.17.1936 Collision with Trolley

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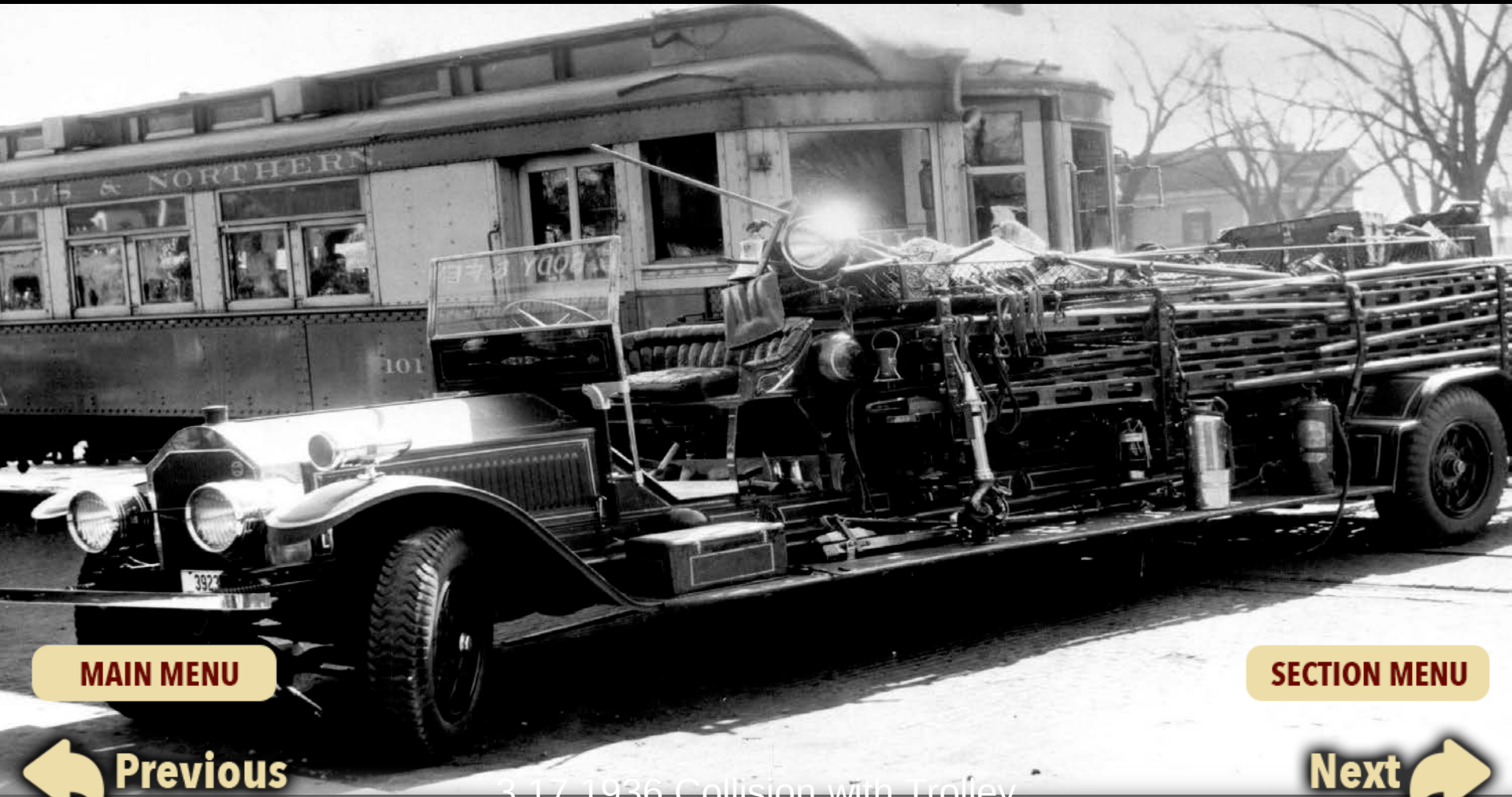

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3.17.1936 Collision with Trolley

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3.17.1936 Collision with Trolley

—Gazette photo

ER FOR KENWOOD STATION—This new short whee
s ce of fire-fighting equipment to be added to the Ce re
lepartment. The pumper arrived at Central station Wednesday afternoon for testing
t will be assigned to station No. 7 in Kenwood.

April

4.28.1949 Article for Apparatus at Kenwood

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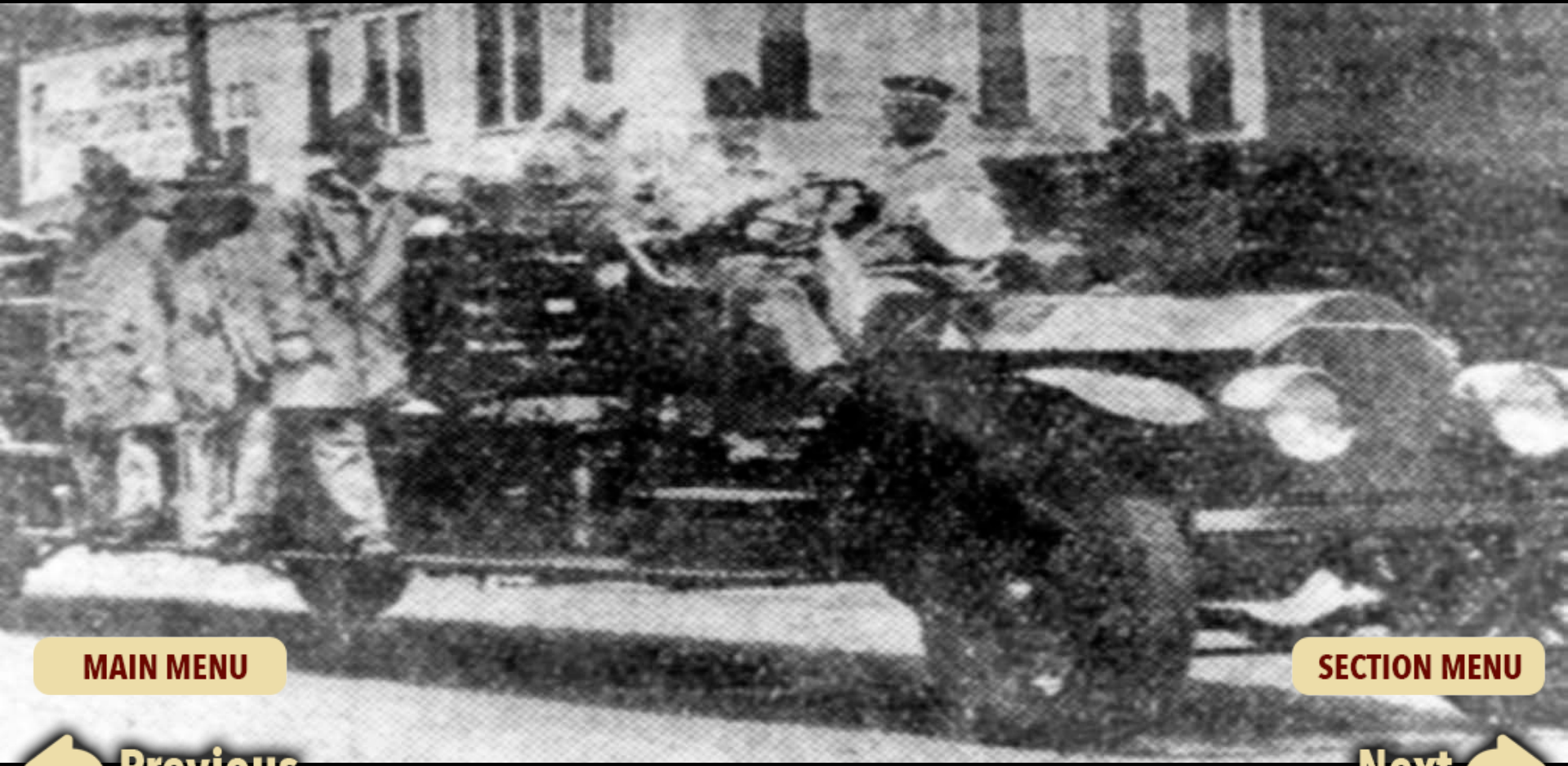
5.25.19?? Event in Grain Belt Dist



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5.25.1930 (1927) American La France

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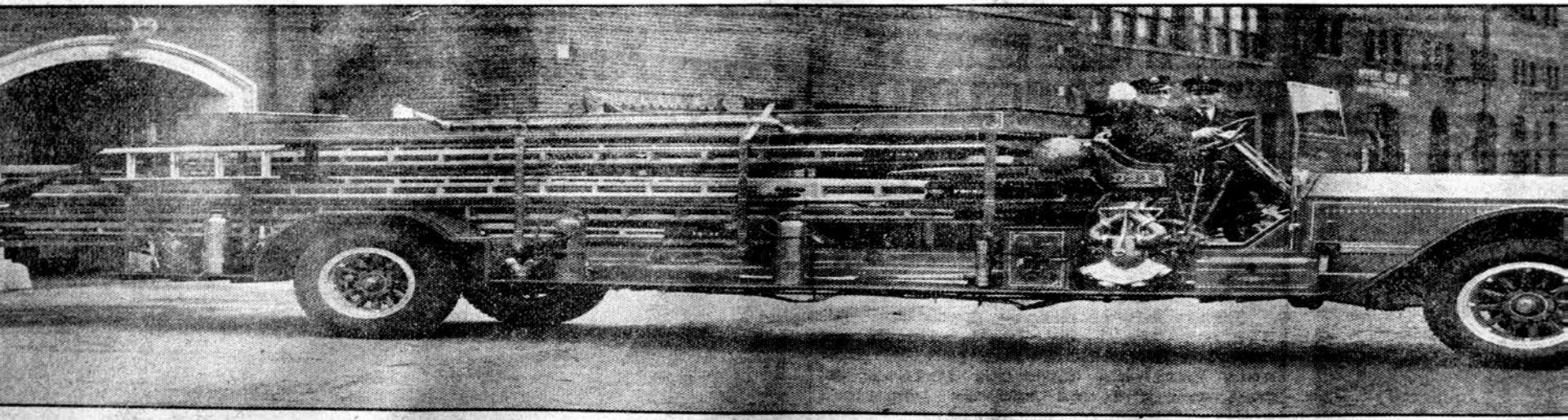
5.27.1944 Fire (Wilder Grain Co) Aerial Ladder Deployed

CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE, SUNDAY, JUN

remen Rebuild Big Truck Damaged In C



hief E. P. Kohout will rest ably easier in the future hook and ladder truck pove in service at the cen- on instead of the 21-year- que" which has served as eme hile rtm the ecl hen oo, urban car struck the No. Second avenue and Tenth ot re

many new parts and fittings including a complete set of ladders to replace all ladders smashed in the wreck. It has been rebuilt from the ground, however, by the firemen on duty at the central station under Mechanic Harry Hall's direction and Chief Kohout conservatively estimates the saving at $2,000.

That difference is the saving which resulted from doing the work here, Chief Kohout explained Saturday. Freight alone on the work, if the truck had been sent to the factory, would have cost

ceeded $500. The work on the repairing and rebuilding would also have been charged to the city and experts say $2,000 is too moderate a figure.

Since March 15, Chief Kohout has had only one hook and ladder truck available and that a machine twenty-one years old which had been retired from service before Kohout took over the chief's job. It is practically worn out and not suited for the work in a city the size of Cedar Rapids, Kohout points out, and only filled the breach because of extra effort on the part of the firemen.

In that connection, praised the men who pair work on the t they had turned out a would be a credit to All parts were repl necessary and the en ed fi d accident, is still con home. Chief Kohout day that Carter mal factor d i the jo e perma d.

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6.7.1936 Article on Apparatus

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7.2.1959 Fire (#3 Engine)

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7.23.1914 Collision

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9.7.1950 Fire, Apparatus in Use

10.6.1935 Article on Apparatus

10.6.1935 Article on Apparatus

Aerial Ladder Deployed

Aerial Ladder Deployed

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Aerial Ladder Deployed

Aerial Ladder Deployed

Airport Rescue

Airport Rescue

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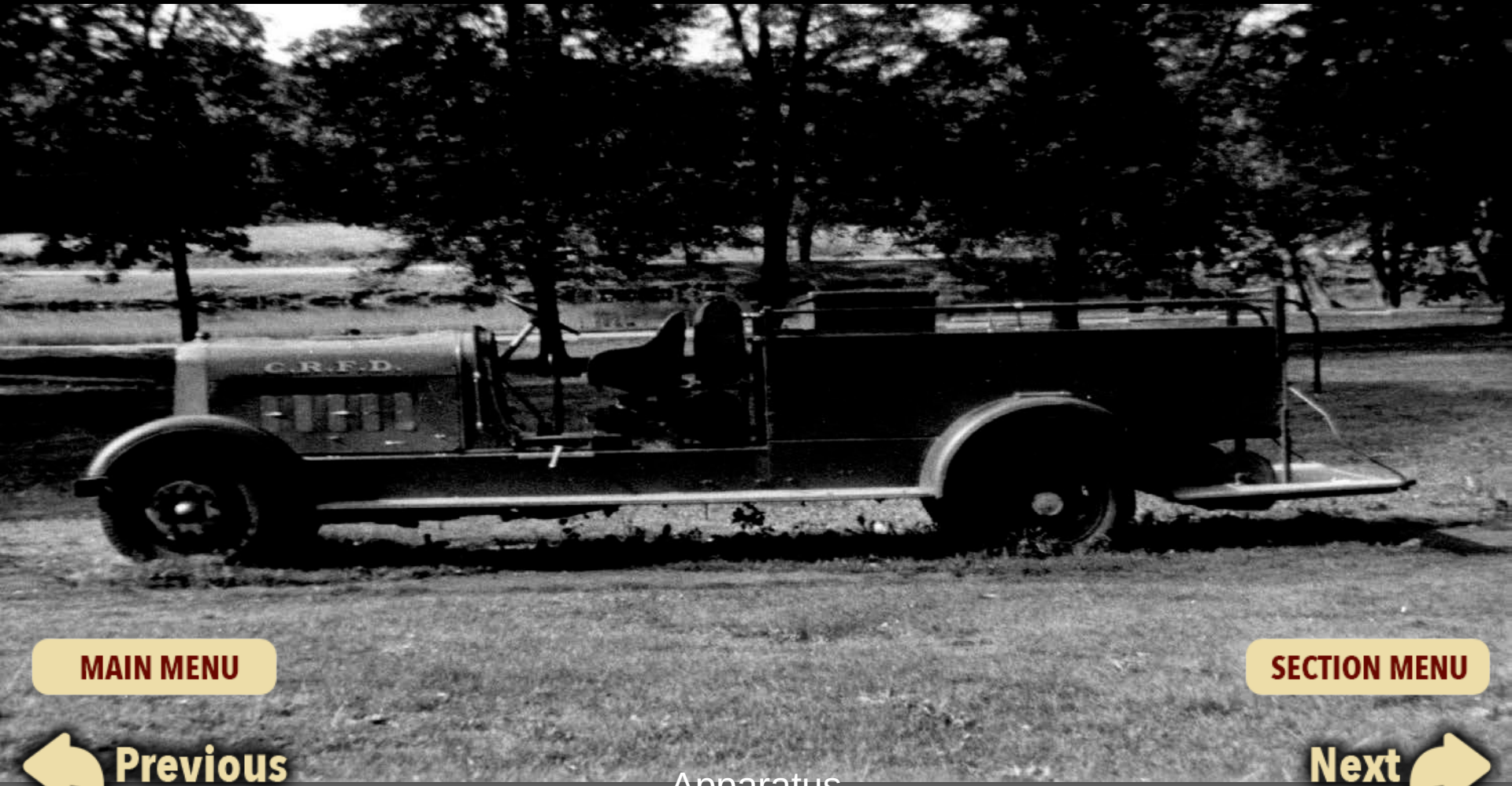
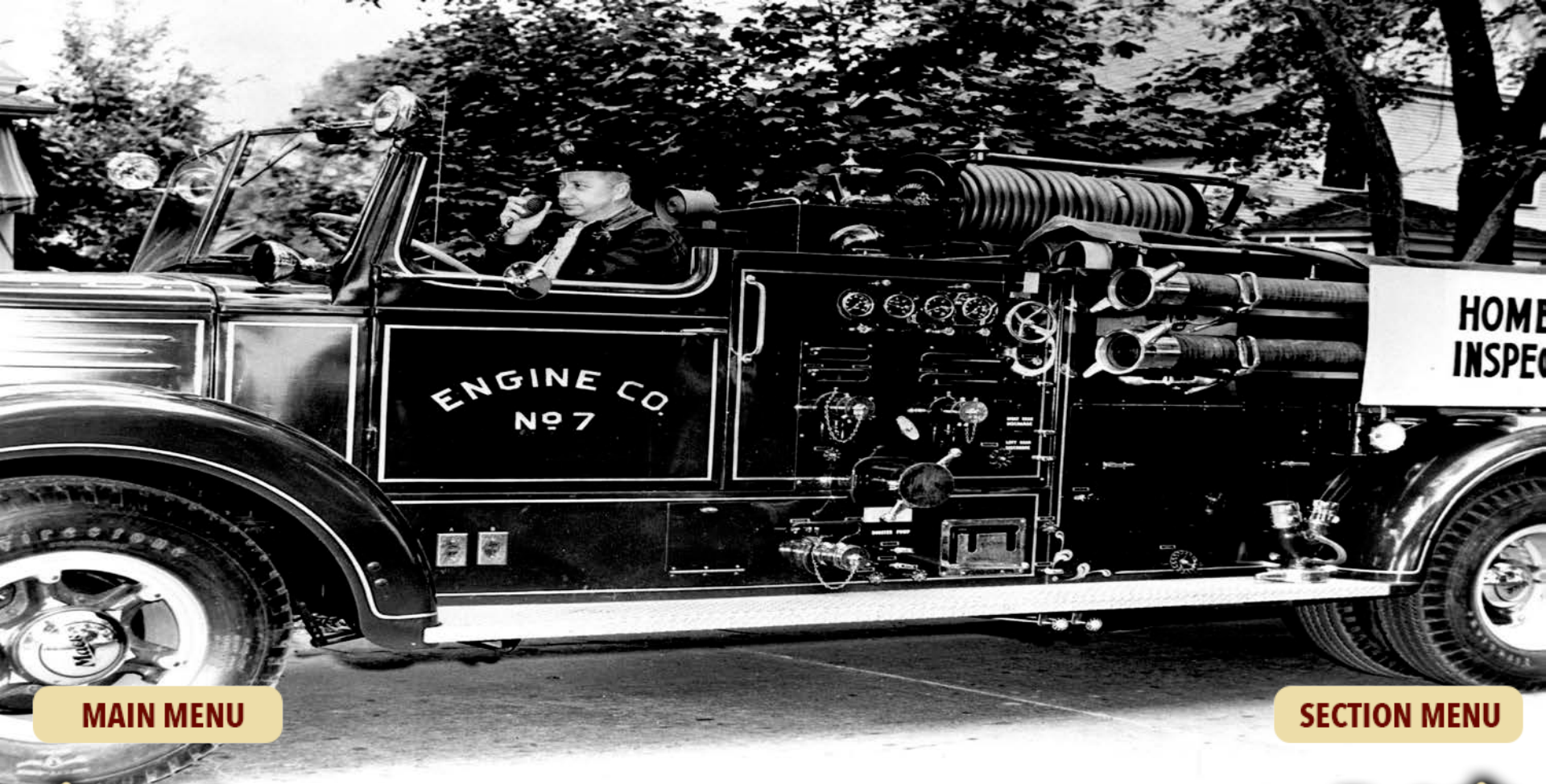
Apparatus



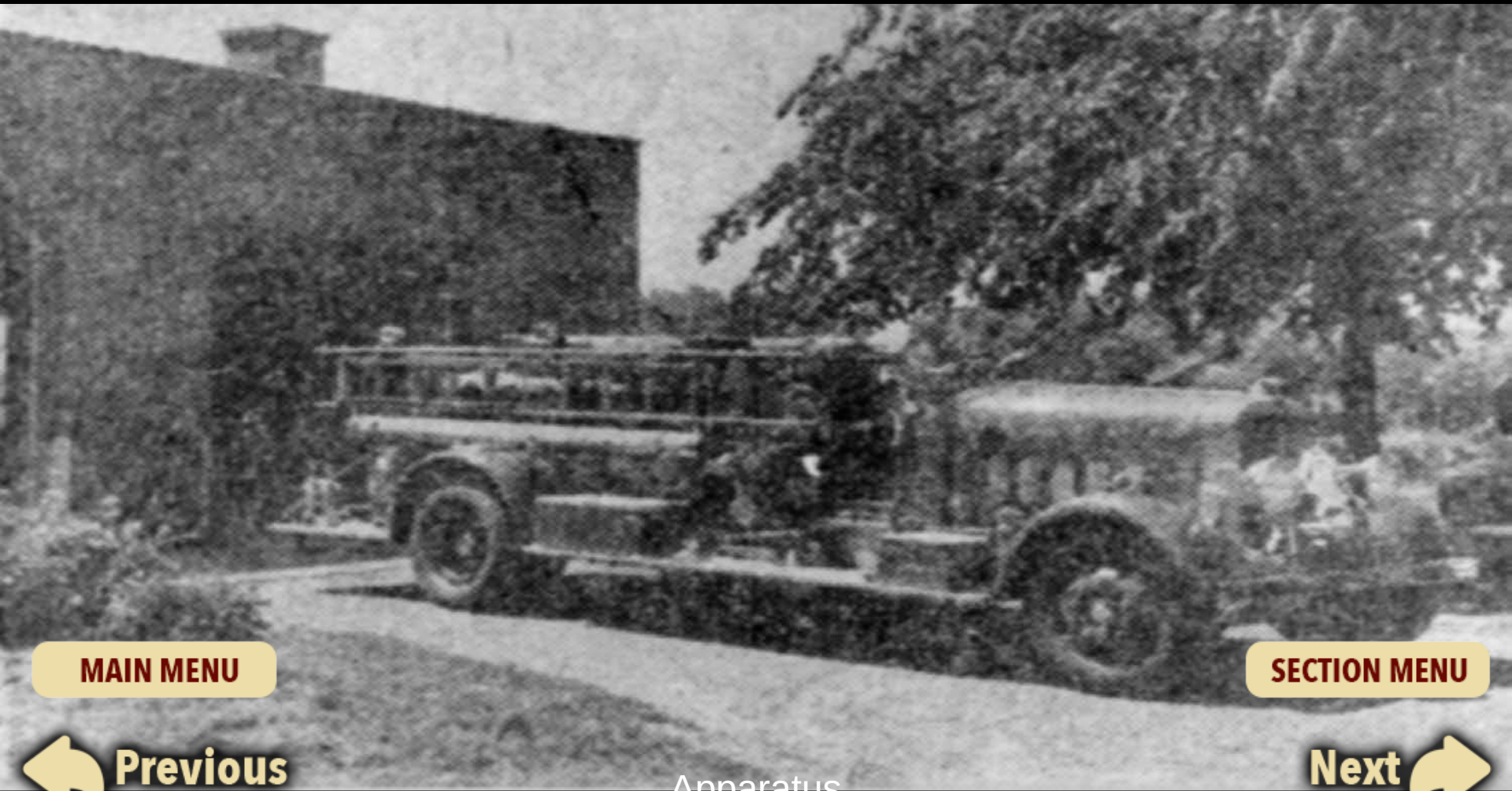
Apparatus

Mack
NGINE CO.
No 4

Apparatus



Apparatus (Engine Co 7), Personnel



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Apparatus and Personnel

Apparatus Downtown, in Use

Apparatus Downtown, in Use

Apparatus in Front of Station

Apparatus in Use

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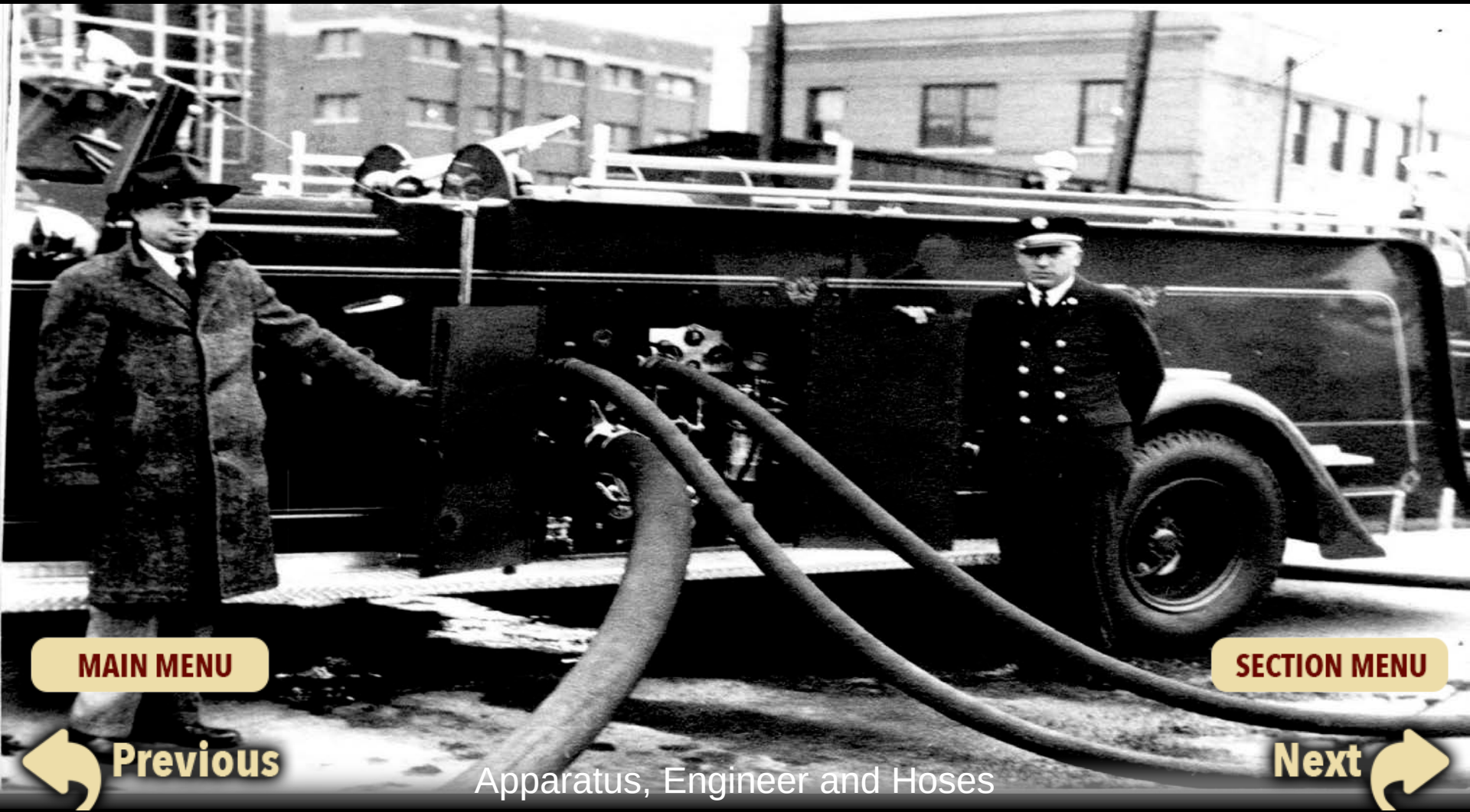
Apparatus on Scene

Apparatus Pirsch Front

Apparatus Pirsch Rear

Apparatus Pump Test

Apparatus with Tools



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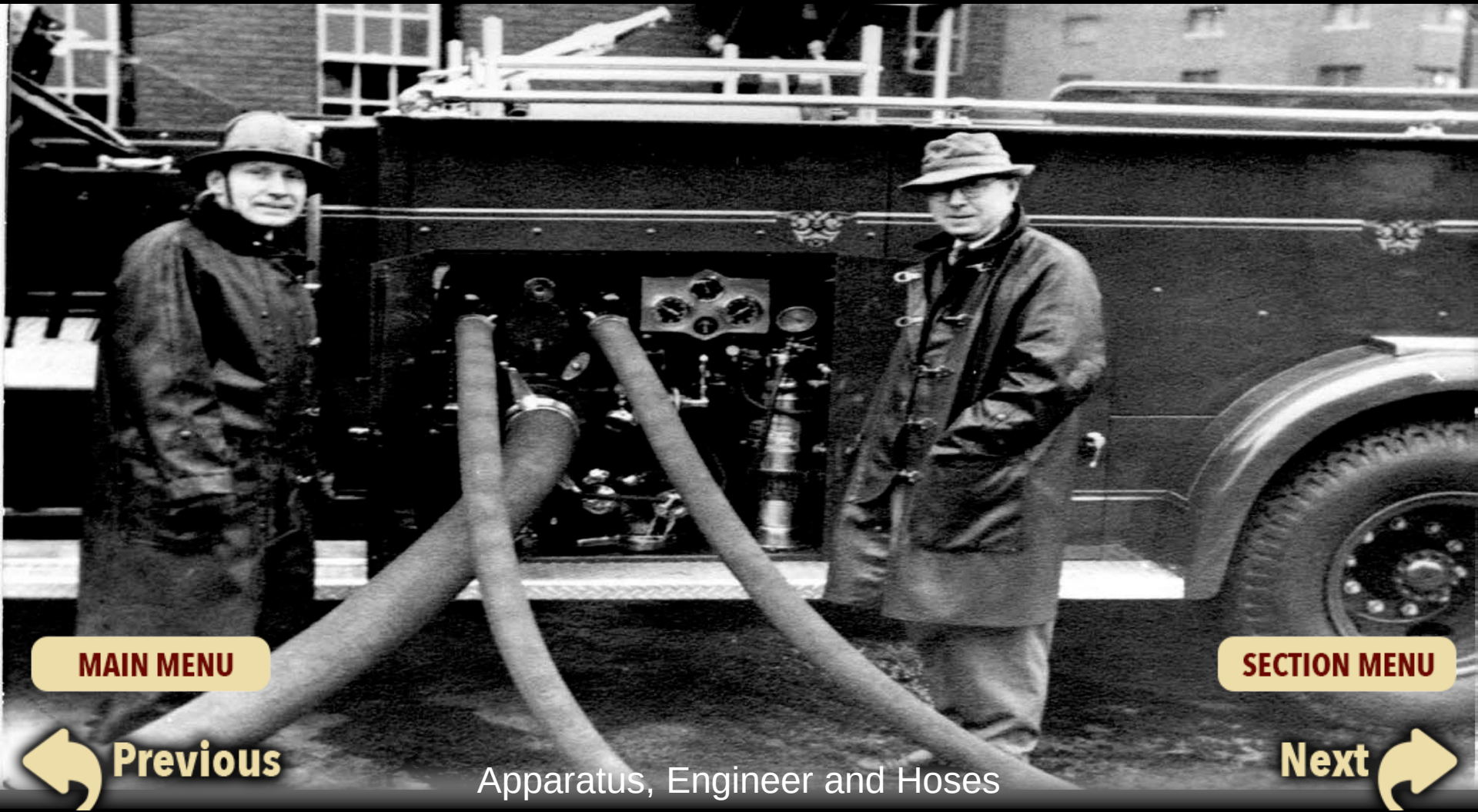
Apparatus, Engineer and Hoses



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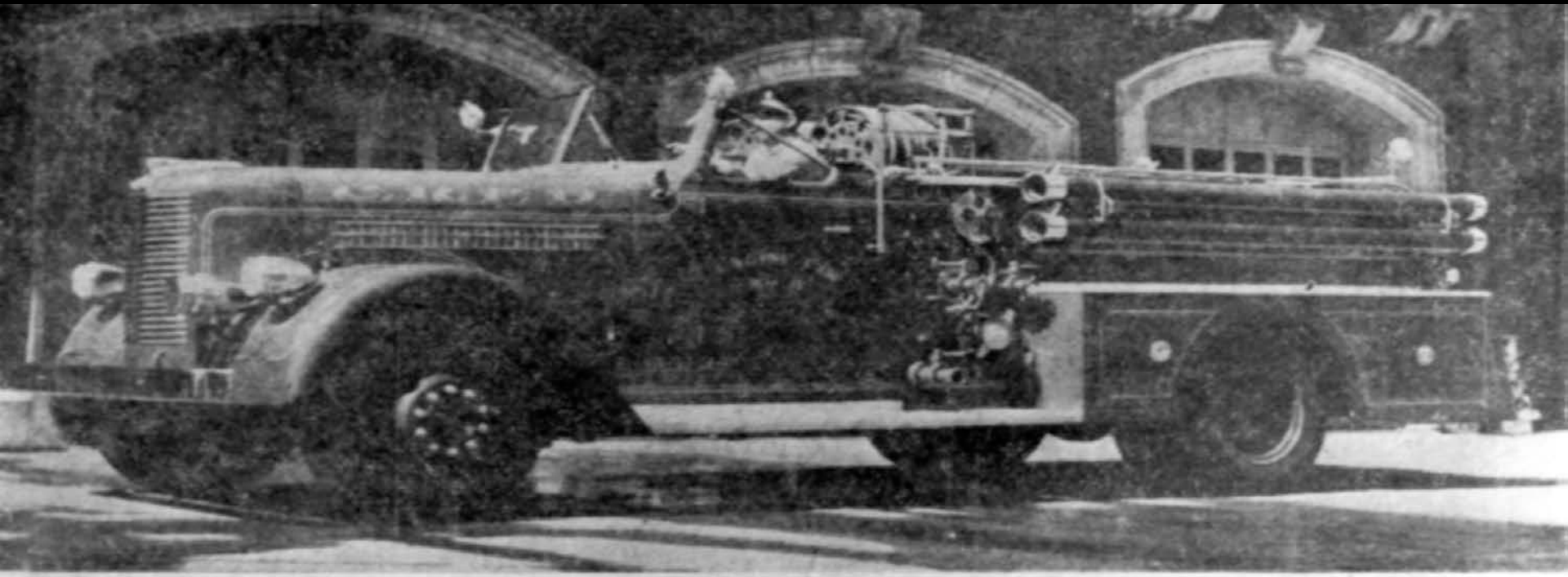
Apparatus, Engineer and Hoses

Apparatus, Personnel

Apparatus



—Gazette photo.

NEWEST FIRE RIG for the Cedar Rapids fire department is this $14,000 Peter Pirsch truck which will carry 450 gallons of water on it, in addition to both special and standard fire-fighting eq ed particularly for use in those outlying Cedar Rapids areas ts of ce, the truck is the first of two such units the fire departme al features of the apparatus include both high-pressure and regulation fog nozzles. Powered by a 240-horsepower Waukesha motor, the truck has a 172-inch wheelbase; will be equipped with to-

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Boat River Rescue

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Central FS, Aerial Ladder Truck

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Central FS, Apparatus

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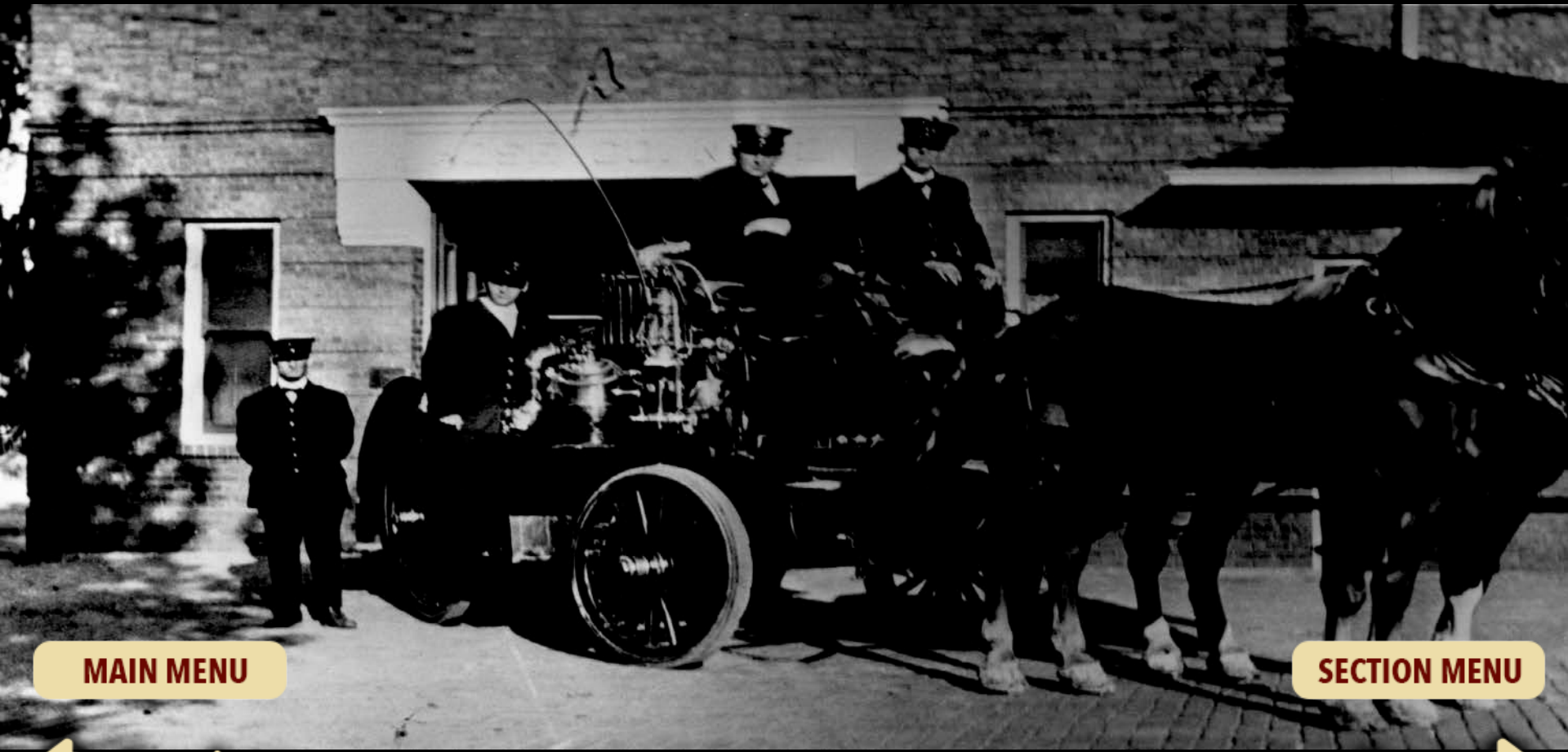
Central FS, Personnel, Apparatus



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Horse-Drawn Apparatus, Horses

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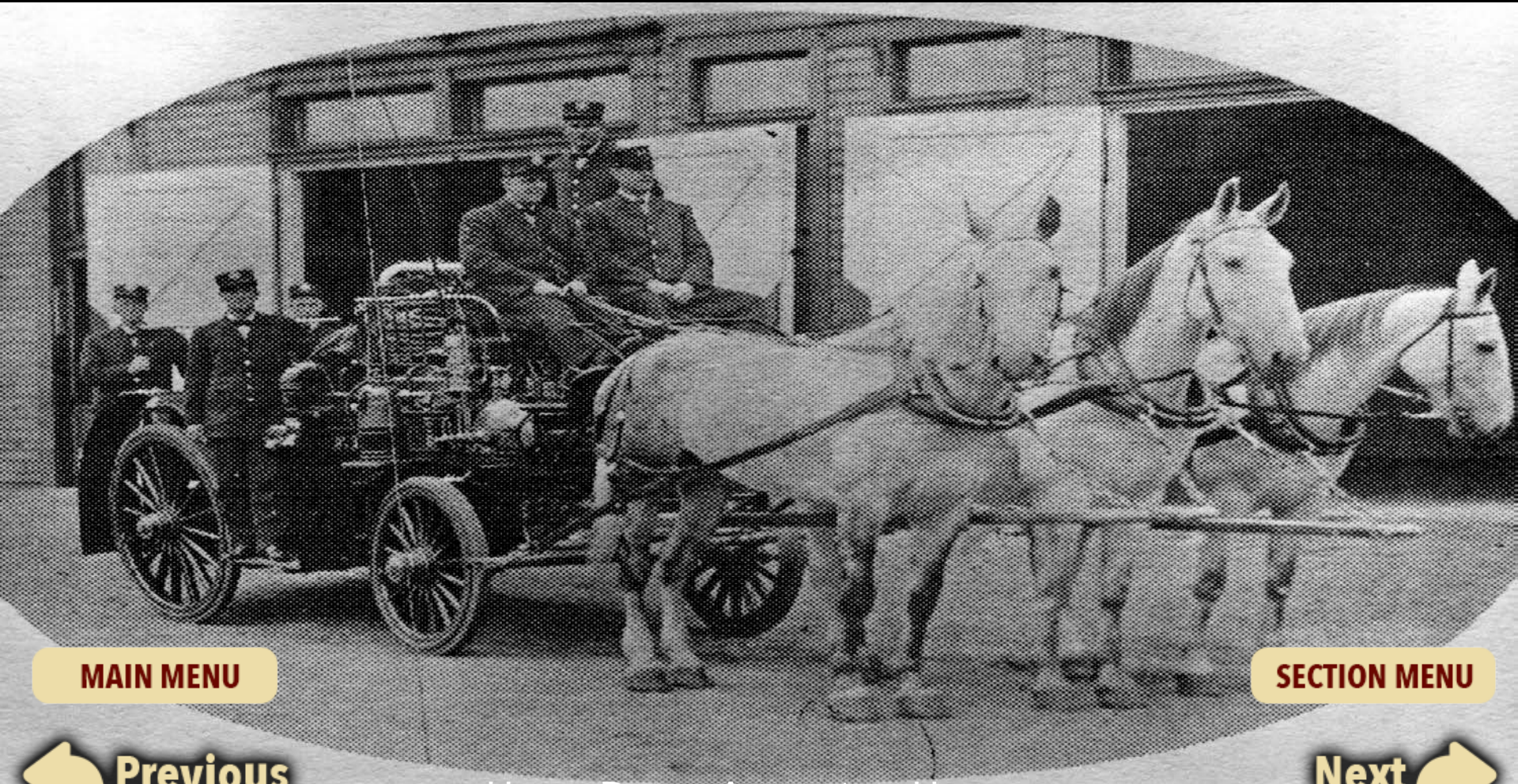
Horse-Drawn Apparatus, Horses



Horse-Drawn Apparatus, Horses

Multiple Aerial Ladders Deployed

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Multiple Aerial Ladders Deployed

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Parade

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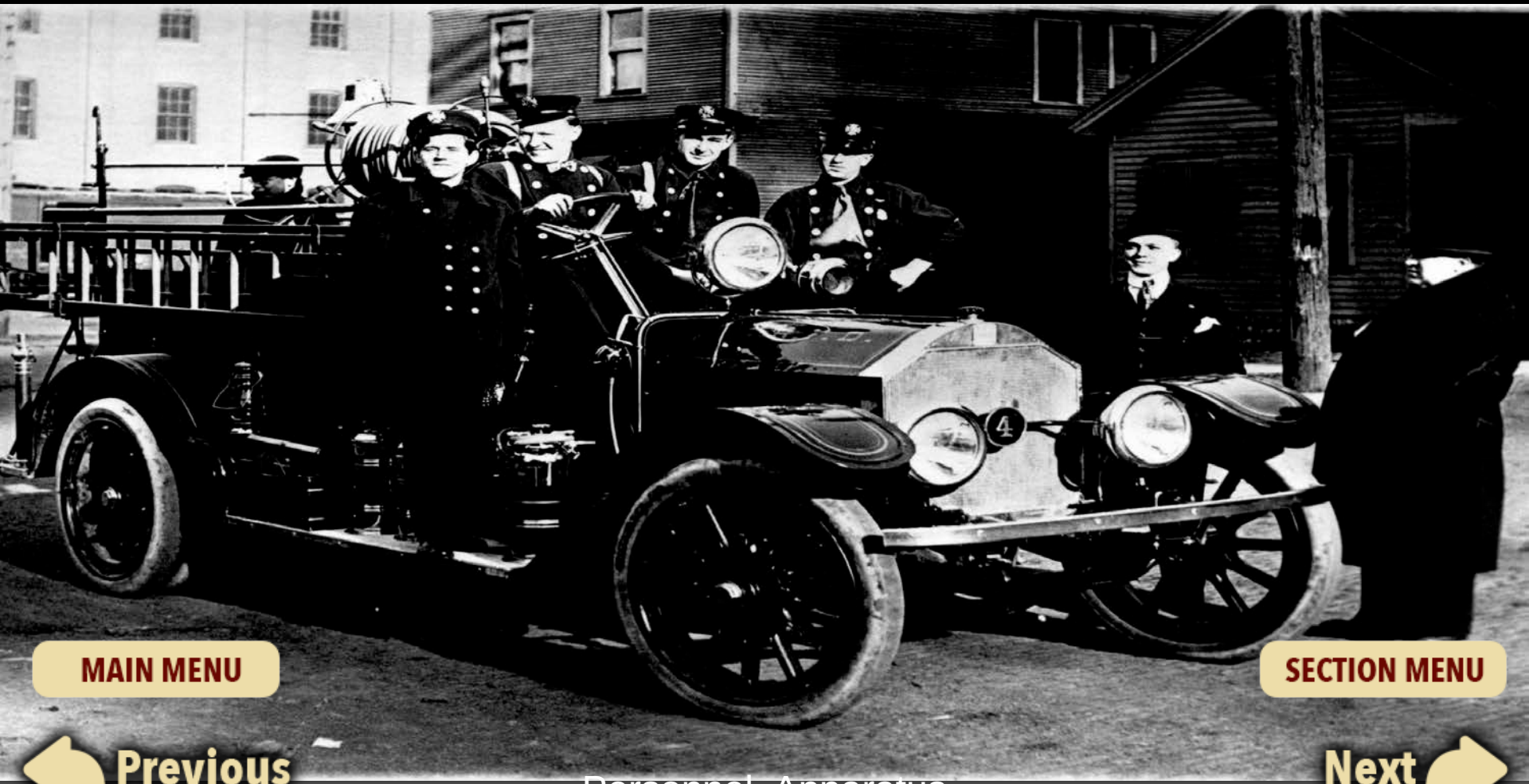

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Snorkel, Aerial Ladder

Snorkel, Aerial Ladder

Station 5 Apparatus and Personnel

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Two Aparatus in Mud

Vehicles with River Rescue Boat

Yellow Aerial Ladder Deployed

Yellow Apparatus

American Cereal Company (Quaker Oats) Fire, 1905

On March 7, 1905, flames engulfed the world's largest cereal mill at the time, the American Cereal Company, a local company which would later be purchased by Quaker Oats. Spontaneous combustion caused an explosion in the hull grinding room and the factory burned at an alarming rate, the second major fire to occur to the company in less than five years. Two lives were lost, approximately 600 people were temporarily out of work, and the monetary loss totaled $766,427. The Cedar Rapids firefighters were on duty for 26 hours straight and gallantly contained the blaze to the mill.

Douglas Starch Works Fire (1919)

An explosion at the Douglas Starch Works plant, the current site of Penford Products, on May 22, 1919 resulted in the largest loss of life in a single incident in the state of Iowa. The explosion was said to have been felt from 30 miles away and shattered windows within a three miles radius of the site. The fire, a result of spontaneous combustion, caused the plant to burn for ten days, ultimately costing nearly two and a half million dollars. Still, the most significant loss was the 43 workers who died in the tragedy. The Cedar Rapids firefighters worked continuously during this time, suffering burns, injuries and smoke inhalation, but eventually contained the fire.

Residential Fires

Throughout its history, the department has always dealt with residential fires and incidents throughout the neighborhoods of Cedar Rapids. From 1949 to 1969 residential fires resulted in 36 deaths, but the fire department continued to work tireless to keep the community safe. Increase focus on fire prevention encouraged installation of smoke alarms in homes and buildings, allowing the fire department to be more effective.

Toxic Tuesday (1985)

A chemical fire on July 15, 1985 at the old city sewage treatment plant caused mass evacuations for 10,000 people in Cedar Rapids—the largest evacuation in Iowa history. Police closed the city to outsiders as a steady wind carried smoke from the fire contained hydrochloric gas throughout the community. The fire department was called in to control the situation and after working for 22 hours, firefighters used a combination of water, foam and dirt to finally smother the remains.

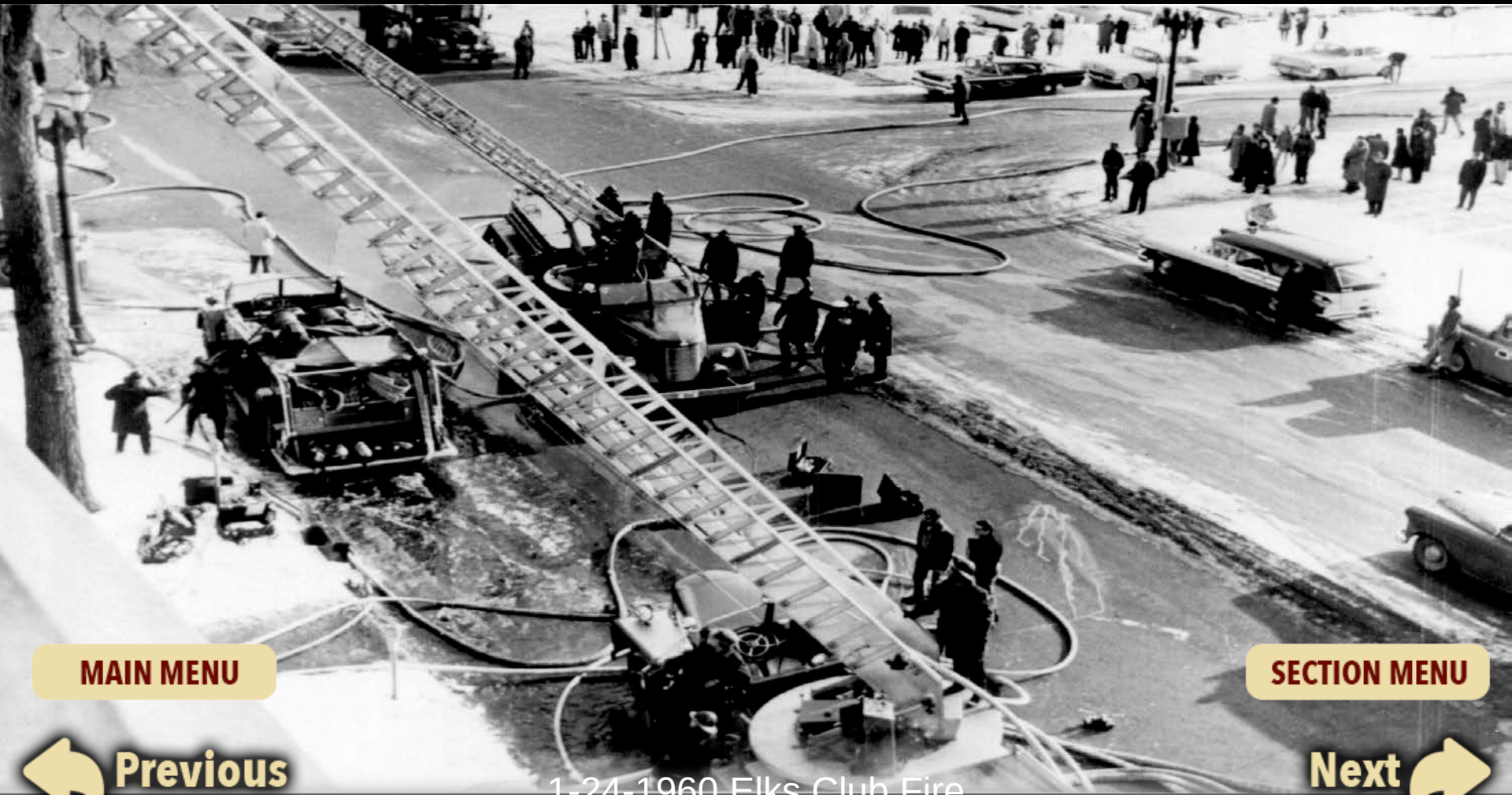
Flood of 2008

The flood in the summer of 2008 is remembered in Cedar Rapids history as a momentous disaster. The city had experienced flooding before, but the Cedar River reached new levels that June. Many areas of the city were severely affected as the water levels rose at alarming rates, including the downtown business district and the Time Czech and Czech Village neighborhoods. The river crested on June 13 at 31.12 feet, nineteen feet above the flood level, eleven feet above the previous record high and nearly four feet above the 500 year flood levels.

Flood of 2008

The Fire Department worked tirelessly to remove citizens from danger, performing 423 boat rescues on June 11, 12 and 13. Firefighters simultaneously responded to emergency situations, checked residential areas, and dealt with the loss of their own Central Fire Station.

1-24-1960 Elks Club Fire



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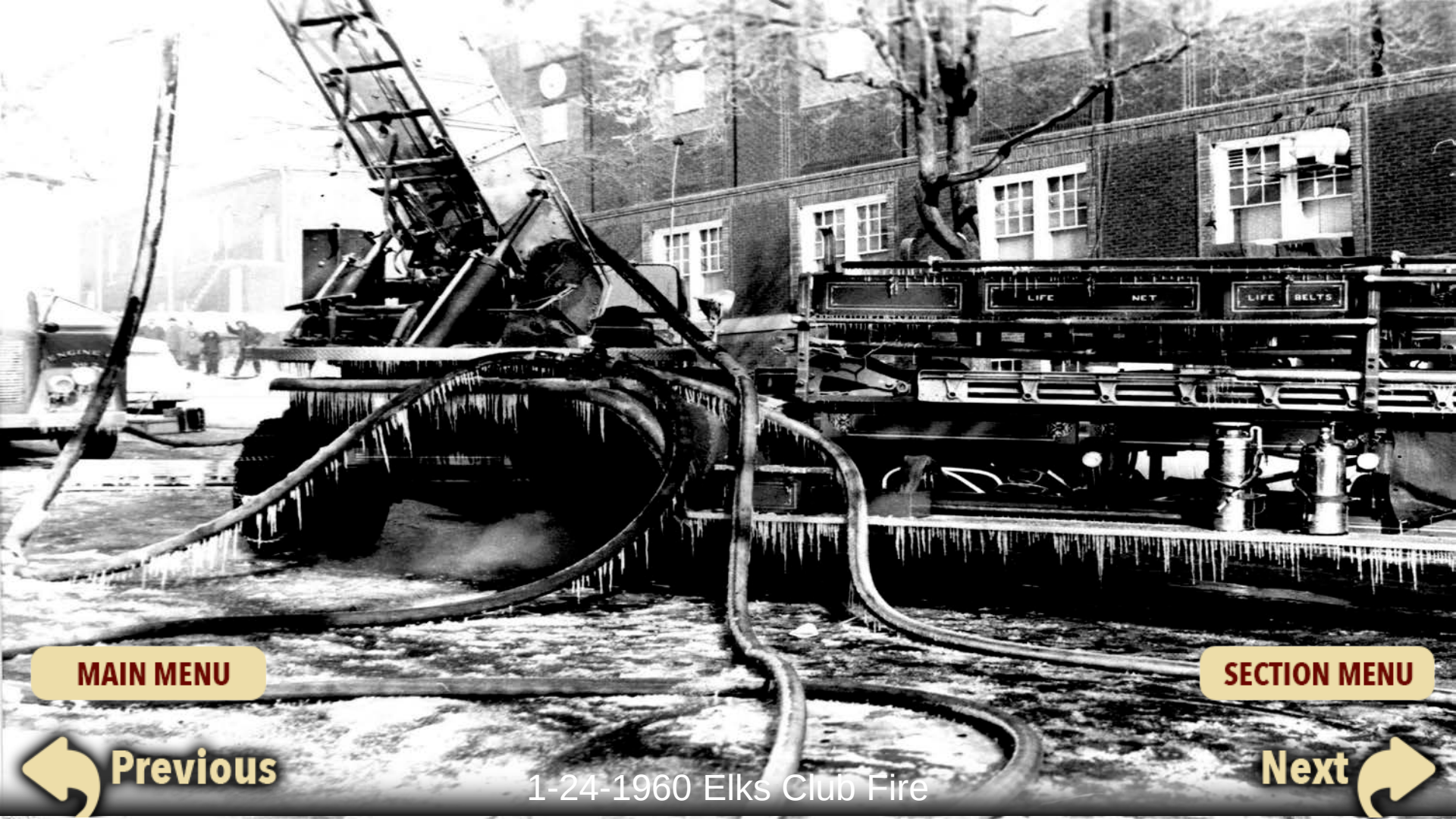
1-24-1960 Elks Club Fire



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1-24-1960 Elks Club Fire

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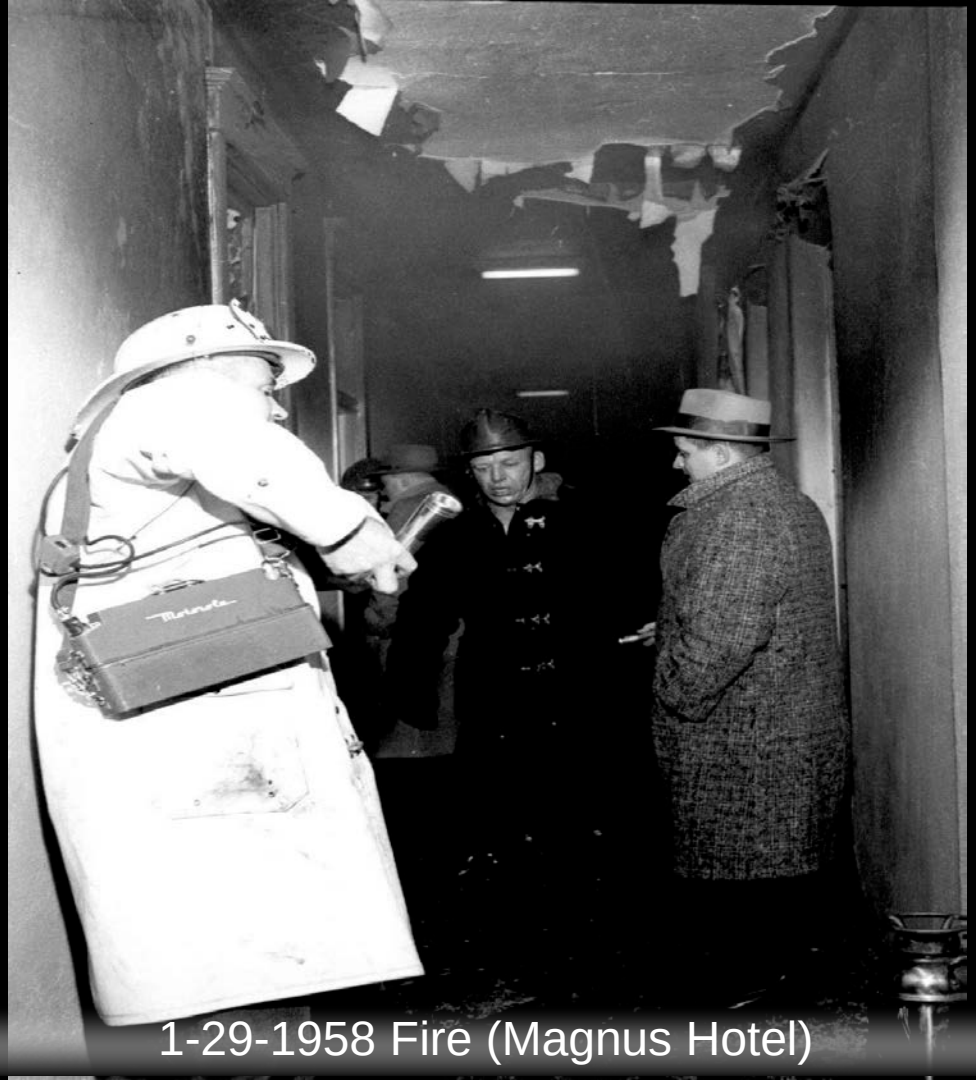
1-29-1958 Fire (Magnus Hotel)



1-29-1958 Fire (Magnus Hotel)

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1-29-1958 Fire (Magnus Hotel)

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1929 (Jan) Fire (Harrison School)

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1949 (Post) Fire

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1951 (latest) Fire

1955 (latest) Fire

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1955 Fire Drill at Quaker Oats

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1955 Fire Drill at Quaker Oats

1955 Fire, Aerial Ladder

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1958-1960 Fire by National Oats

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2-20-1957 Fire (Ocie Culp Home)

2-20-1957 Fire (Ocie Culp Home)

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2-8-1958 Fire

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4-10-1959 Fire (Mrs- Margarite Shaffer)

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5-27-1944 Fire (Wilder Grain Co)

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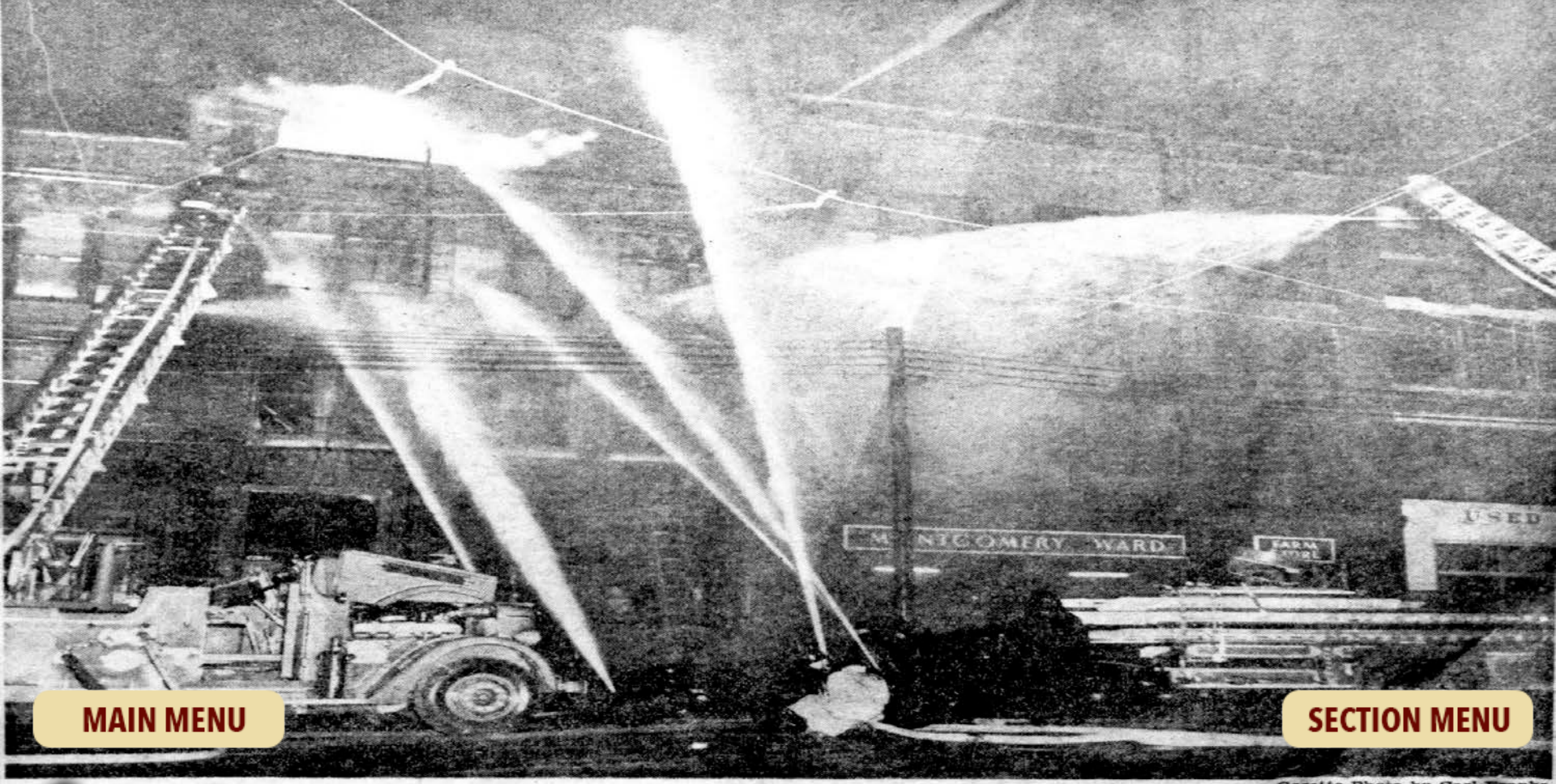
5-27-1944 Fire (Wilder Grain Co)



Gazette Photo by Carl Franks.

RE SPECTACLE—One of the most spectacular assemblies of firefighting apparatus Ce
d at work during the early hours of Saturday morning battling the $200,
Ma g Company's warehou pounding streams

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5-27-1951 Fire (May's Drug WH) Article

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6-6-1979 Vehicle Fire in Color

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7-2-1959 Fire (#3 Engine)

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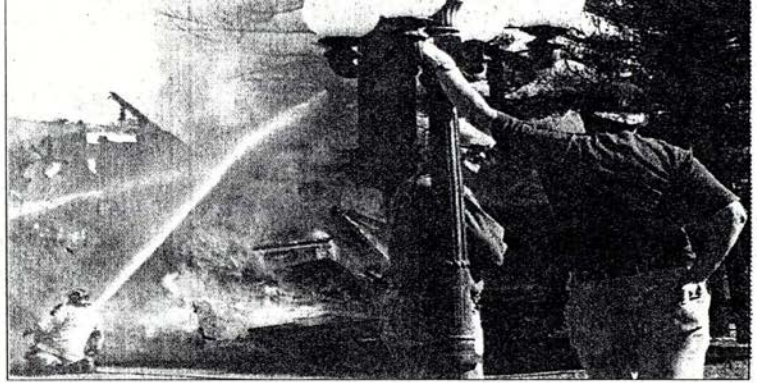
9-30-1996 House Fire Training

RIGHT: Jeff Nelson (left) of Hiawatha and Richard Harman of Cedar Rapids came to watch the practice fire Saturday in Hiawatha. Harman, a dispatcher with the Cedar Rapids Fire Department, is a self-described "fire buff," a fire historian and collector of fire memorabilia. BELOW: This uninhabitable house at Center Point and Boyson roads was burned, at the request of the owners, as part of the training exercise. About 35 firefighters participated, practicing skills such as handling hose lines.



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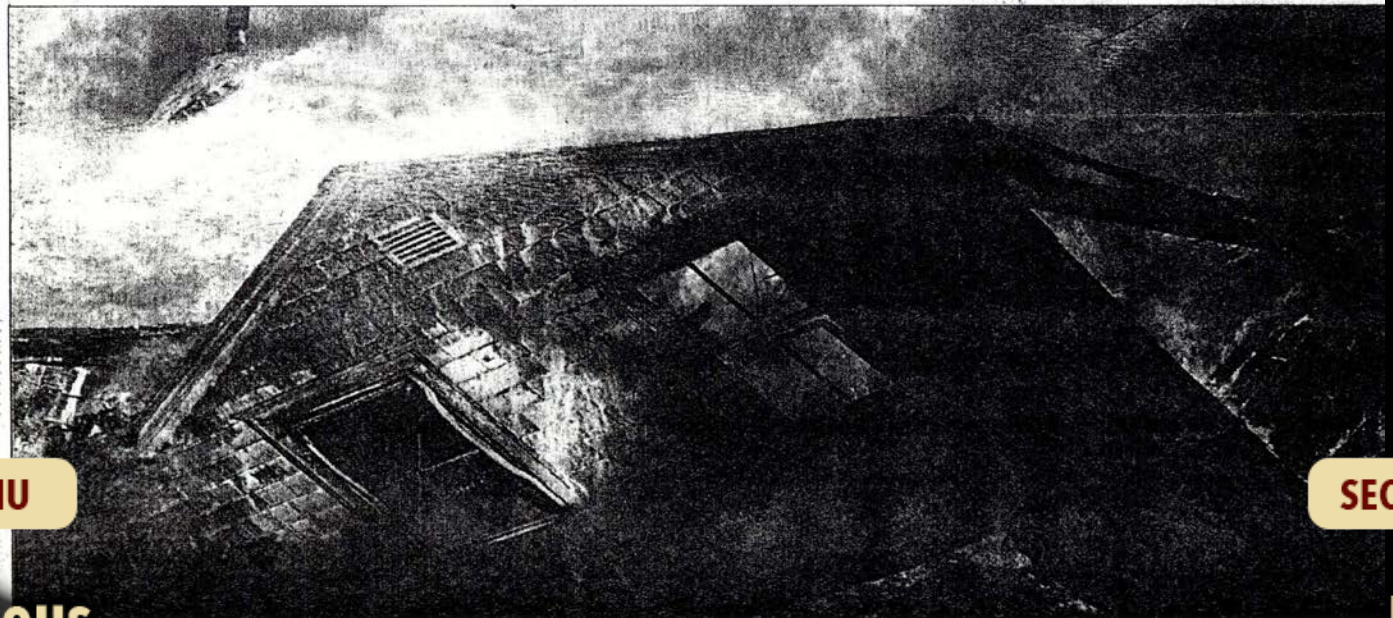
house



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9-30-1996 House Fire Training

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9-7-1950 Fire, Apparatus in Use

Fire (Attic)

Fire (House) Personnel B Novotny, Spielb

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Men at Fire