

Year in Review 2009

December 9, 2009

Cover Photo

Residential structure fire at 22 MacLellan Street.

Firefighters Joan Keller and Brittany Cameron assist Firefighter Scott Lycan with his breathing apparatus.

Picture taken by Monique Chiasson, Truro Daily News.

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Call Volume Increases Slightly

The Brigade responded to 295 calls with eight of those incidents being classified as a fire that caused some type of damage or occupied the service for extended period of time.

The eight incidents included residential fires at 22 MacLellan Street and 181 Young. In addition to the residential fires we responded to two apartment fires at 47 Braemer Court and 110 Lorne Street. The Brigade also responded to two commercial fires. The first fire was a propane feed fire at Robertson Candy (43 Charles Street) and the old Hero’s Restaurant at 131 Esplanade Street. This was the second fire at that location in three years. One of the more time consuming incidents was the 60+ tons of card-

board that burned off of Willow Lane (6 hours). The final major incident was an electrical fire at Townsview Estates, 310 Abenaki Road. One firefighter was sent to hospital after being exposed to an electrical arc.

In addition to the fires, the Brigade responded to three motor vehicle accidents that reported entrapments. Luckily, we did not need to extricate anyone from their vehicles. We did respond to 7 more motor vehicle accidents in 2009 than in 2008. Nearly 1/3 of all the motor vehicle accidents occurred at the intersection of Queen and Lorne Streets.

We had only one hazardous materials call during the year and that was at



Structure Fire at 22 MacLellan Street — March 31

the hospital. The local hazardous material team provided assistance to our members. We also required the hazardous materials team for a strange odour detected in an apartment on Curtis Drive.

Our members did an excellent job extinguishing all fires and preventing unnecessary losses. It is a credit to their pride and professionalism.

Chief Tom Bremner Resigns

Truro’s first paid Chief resigned in September to accept an employment opportunity on Salt Springs Island in BC.

Chief Bremner arrived in

Truro in February of 2005 and served nearly 4 1/2 years as Chief before relocating to the west coast.

The Brigade had a farewell party for Tom on

September 3rd and presented him with a picture and gift card.



“Walk in Our Boots”

In 2008 the membership committee was trying to find a creative way to increase our membership. In May the Brigade held a membership drive that was named “Walk in our Boots”. The day was successful as it resulted in several new members.

In 2009, we attempted our second annual “Walk in our Boots” membership drive and although we were not as successful in securing members it was incredibly well attended by the public with in excess of 120 people attending the event.

The event had several positives, first was the increase awareness of the volunteers in the Fire Service. The second thing was it allowed the public to come to the station and meet the volunteer firefighters that serve their community. It is hoped that both of these things will entice members of the public to join the fire service.

Displays of equipment and the ability to interact with our equipment and in some cases don the gear



Smokey the Bear attended the second annual “Walk in our Boots” campaign.

seems to appeal to both children and adults as everyone has had dreams of being firefighter.

The Department of Natural Resources brought along Smokey the Bear and one of their fire trucks. The aerial ladder was setup, as well demonstrations on ladder rescues, high pressure lifting bags and spraying water.

The “Walk in our Boots” was done in conjunction with a barbeque the week before at the Sobey’s store as our members raised over \$550 for the MD Association.

Awards

At the 2009 Annual Brigade Meeting the membership selected its Firefighter and Officer of the Year awards. The membership chose John Congdon as the Firefighter of the Year and David Westlake for the Officer of the Year.

This is John’s first time winning the award. John has been a member since 2002 and is active on the fire ground and with sports.

David Westlake was selected as the Officer of the Year. This was David’s third time winning this award and he last won the award in 2007.



John Congdon



David Westlake

Officers for 2010

The 2010 officers were selected at our annual meeting in December and the incoming slate officers will have a new leader in the upcoming year. David Westlake decided to step down as Deputy Chief after four years of service and Alan Sutherland was selected as the new Deputy Chief in 2010. Alan has plenty of experience as a fire officer, most recently as the Assistant Deputy Chief.

Dave Williams will return as Assistant Deputy Chief and Jamie Coulter, Duncan MacDonald and John Congdon are returning as Captains.

Nathaniel Cameron and Craig Matthews are returning for their second year as Lieutenants and Scott Lycan was selected to the third lieutenant. The position was available after Shawn Hale decided not to re-offer. Scott is highly trained and will serve the Brigade well..



Alan Sutherland

The officers of 2010 will have clean slate as they get to work with the new Fire Chief, Blois Currie. Together they will have an op-

portunity to lead our fire service for many years to come.

The executive officers of the Brigade are all returning in 2010. Mike Hennessy will return as Treasurer, Dorothy Rogers is back as Steward and John Nolan is returning as the Secretary. Both Mike and John have held they positions for several years and Dorothy will be serving her second year as Steward.

Brigade Training

The Brigade's attendance at practices was good again in 2009. There were 72 training sessions offered to the volunteers. The majority of these topics were targeted at advanced topics focusing on breathing apparatus and interior searches. At year end, the membership amassed 1652 man-hours and that averaged out to 48.5 hours per member.

We utilized five guest lecturers throughout the year and the topics



Firefighters training in SCBA endurance

discussed by these lecturers was quite diverse.

Diane Lee coordinated an informative session on critical incident stress. Lawrence Nicoll, a retired firefighter from Toronto gave two detailed sessions on ventilation and Chris Quartermain of Micmac Fire Safety gave us an orientation of our new extrication equipment. Career member Robert Power provide training on the fire apparatus and career member Mike Mabey assisted with a

session on water rescue.

In addition to guest lectures we had the opportunity to attend lectures on crime scene management by fire investigator Wayne Chapdelaine. Duncan MacDonald was the only member to attend the FDIC Conference in Wolfville this year.

The training committee did an excellent job in utilizing our members as training instructors in 2009 with eleven members instructing at least one training lecture.

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Extrication Equipment Upgraded

The Service updated its vehicle extrication equipment in 2009 by utilizing the JEPP funding grants.

Our set of Holmatro hydraulic rescue equipment was originally purchased in 1994 and our upgraded equipment was put into service in September after all fire service personnel were trained by the supplier.

The original set of vehicle rescue

equipment was purchased as part of a County wide initiative to place this specialized equipment in strategic locations throughout Colchester's fire services.

The new set is Holmatro's Core Technology and consists of a hydraulic cutter,



spreader and ram, a dual hydraulic pump, a personal hydraulic pump, a hydraulic foot pump and a set of four high pressure pneumatic lifting bags.

We have used our extrication equipment on many occasions in our protection area and have responded into the County when requested.

Training Certifications

Our membership was quite active in training over the past year with several of our members attaining certifications in firefighting.

Scott Lycan received confirmation that he completed his certification for the Firefighter Level 1 that he wrote in December of 2008. Scott along with Nathaniel Cameron

wrote the Pro-Board exam for their Firefighter Level 2 certification. Both were successful and in addition to their Level 2, they also obtained their Hazardous Materials Operations certification.

Nathaniel was also successful in completing his Water Rescue Technician certification.

Evan Price and Amy Aktinson completed a Wildland Firefighting Course. Amy, Evan, Brittany Cameron, Joan Keller and Adam Thomas all completed their TFS Standard 1 training. David Westlake completed a course in Basic Emergency Management. Dorothy Rogers completed all the Level 1 training modules offered through the CFFA.

Fire Call Breakdown

(December 1, 2008 - November 30, 2009)

Structure / Apartment Fires - 6

Dumpsters - 2

Composters - 1

Burnt Food / Stove Fires - 13

Report of Smoke / Fire - 15

Large Debris Pile Fire - 1

Residential Alarm - 18

Commercial Alarm - 37

Institutional Alarm - 56

Sprinkler Alarm - 28

Vehicle Fires - 5

Motor Vehicle Accidents - 29

Motor Vehicle Accidents (JAWS) - 3

Hazardous Materials Accidents - 1

Flue Fires - 8

Grass Fire / Brush Fires - 7

Mutual Aid (Code 6) - 2

Mutual Aid (Manpower) - 4

Mutual Aid (Standby) - 7

Downed Lines / Poles - 3

Electrical - 2

Strange Odours - 2

Lifelight Landings - 15

Elevator - 4

Furnace Fires / Backfires - 4

Small Fires (Inside) - 2

Small Fires (Outside)- 7

Miscellaneous - 10

Monthly Breakdowns

December - 36 calls (499 man-hours)

January - 30 calls (432 man-hours)

February - 19 calls (173 man-hours)

March - 24 calls (421 man-hours)

April - 21 calls (236 man-hours)

May - 26 calls (284 man-hours)

June - 24 calls (255 man-hours)

July - 22 calls (303 man-hours)

August - 23 calls (285 man-hours)

September - 26 calls (251 man-hours)

October - 25 calls (484 man-hours)

November - 21 calls (313 man-hours)

Members with more than 125 man-hours on the fire scene.

Firefighter Amy Atkinson (167)

Firefighter Brittany Cameron (130)

Lieutenant Nathaniel Cameron (215)

Captain Jamie Coulter (127)

Firefighter Arthur Chestnut (166)

Firefighter Joan Keller (201)

Captain Duncan MacDonald (140)

Firefighter Scott MacKay (183)

Lieutenant Craig Matthews (222)

Firefighter John Nolan (189)

Firefighter Daton Pearl (209)

Firefighter Evan Price (142)

Firefighter Alan Sutherland (142)

Deputy Chief David Westlake (246)

Assistant Deputy Chief Dave Williams (185)

It should be noted that the following members amassed over 75 man-hours on the fire scenes: Firefighter Stephen Boyd (94), Captain John Congdon (77), Firefighter Geoff Fisher (94), Firefighter Dwayne Hartlen (77), Firefighter Tim Hicks (98), Firefighter Rod Higgins (110), Firefighter Scott Lycan (115), Firefighter Roxanne McManus (76), Firefighter Dorothy Rogers (83) and Firefighter Adam Thomas (96).

Brigade Training (continued)

It should be recognized that our members are training more. Nearly half of the Brigade attended a special training session and ten of the members amassed 60 or more man-hours in training. Those members were Amy Atkinson (157), Joan Keller (130), Brittany Cameron (124), Nathaniel Cameron (121), Evan Price (110), Scott Lycan (107), David Westlake (96), Adam Thomas (72) Craig Matthews (68) and Geoff Fisher (63). The average training hours per member exceeded last year by 30 minutes.

Some of the members of the Brigade instructed training sessions for other fire services in the County.

Craig Matthews and Nathaniel Cameron instructed on aerial operations in Hilden. Nathaniel and Alan Sutherland did a hydrant training in Hilden and David Westlake gave a session on reading smoke in Salmon River and North River.

In the spring, David Westlake took a training course from DNR on wildland fire incident command and took part with Chief Bremner in a mock exercise that DNR and EMO coordinated that focused on a forest fire near Victoria Park.



Firefighter ladder rescue

Our members took courses in traffic control and first aid/CPR. We had three members attend the County training day in October and four members instructed sessions at the training event.

Training was incredibly positive again in 2009 and new Training Coordinator Craig Matthews did a good job in his first year. Our members continue to embrace our training program and make it the better each year. Some changes could occur in 2010 with the new senior officers.

Personnel Changes

The year saw four new members join the Brigade. Tim Hicks, Kerm Tattrie, Bentley Rice and Jillian Ferrell began their tenure with the fire service and Tim was successfully voted in November. Unfortunately Jillian had to resign as she was accepted in medical school in Australia. Kerm and Bentley both have previous fire service experience. Kerm has past experience with the Wallace Fire Department and Bentley is the current Deputy Fire Marshal for the region and

gained his firefighting knowledge in the Digby Fire Department and as an instructor at the Fire School.



George Chestnut

Unfortunately we saw two long stand members of the service retire. George Chestnut and Rod Higgins are leaving the Brigade with over 50 years of combined experience.

The service's fire chief holds a honorary membership in the Brigade and the Brigade is looking forward to having new Fire Chief Blois Currie attend the meetings and participate in other Brigade functions when he official begins his tenure.



Rod Higgins

“Nancy” Turns 90

Our first motorized fire apparatus turned 90 in May last year. She was placed into service and remained active until 1960. “Nancy” has been through two major restorations and in May of 2006, she pumped water

for the first time since her retirement. The Brigade has appointed a committee who oversees her maintenance and restorations Nancy's primary care giver is past Fire Chief, Vince Weatherbee.



National Mentoring Program

The Brigade was approached in December of 2008 by one of newer members to participate in the National Mentoring Program through Dalhousie University. This program was a way to have students work for volunteer groups and have Molson's Brewery pay their summer employment with the volunteer groups. This was the first time that any university outside of Ontario ever participated in the program.

Evan Price currently is attending Dalhousie University and was the member who pitched the program. The Brigade was the first volunteer fire service to ever partake in the program. After the documentation was completed, Evan started working for the Brigade in the summer with two main objectives were to do some preliminary work on the National Firefighters Curling Champi-



Dalhousie University's participants in the National Mentoring Program.

onship that is returning to Nova Scotia in 2012 and to increase our awareness in the community so it could translate into new volunteers for the fire service. He also did some other administrative work, assisted in hall maintenance and supported other committees as needed.

Fire Prevention

Our members teamed up with Ryan Thibeau, the Fire Inspector again this year for Fire Prevention activities during Fire Prevention Week.

We had members accompany Ryan to Truro Elementary, Ecole de Acadien and the Christian Academy for fire education presentations. Special thanks to Amy Atkinson, Art Chestnut, Evan Price, Tim Hicks, Joan Keller, Bentley Rice, Jennifer Oudemans. In addition to the school programs, radio public service announcements were recorded and broadcasted during fire prevention week.

Salmon River Fire Brigade requested to have the service's fire safe house at there open house. David Westlake took the fire safe house and gave presentations to the visitors of their open house.

Incase You Forgot

Here are some items that might have been forgotten or just plainly missed.

- The Fire Service actually had two full time Fire Chiefs and one acting Fire Chief in 2009.
- We had to cancel our annual Church Parade because of a fire. This was the first time in recent memory that we could not attend due to an emergency.



Our retired members - Photo taken with "Nancy" at the annual lobster party

- On ten different occasions we had two calls occur at the same time.
- The Publicity committee was asked by the membership to generate a new webpage. The webpage should be up and running early in the new year.
- We had one past member pass away in 2009. Arlie Ferguson was retired from the Brigade and from the Fire Department.
- One of the largest equipment purchases made from the Brigade was for leather structural firefighting boots.
- The Public Safety Minister Peter Van Loan, Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff and NDP leader Jack Layton all visited our fire station this past year.

- Sobey's donated \$500 in gift certificates to the Brigade.

Interesting and Odd Calls

- On two different occasions we responded to motor vehicle accidents that involved a vehicle and a house. The first was on Robie Street and the second on Young Street.
- Firefighters responded the Superstore on Court Street for a small fire and once on scene we found three separate fires of that involved boxes of fire logs.
- Firefighters responded to two motor vehicle accidents in which the vehicle involved overturned by driving up onto an item. One vehicle drove up a power pole guide wire on Walker Street and the other up a tree on the Esplanade.

Truro Volunteer Fire Brigade

Dedication



2009

Year in Review