2024 Newsletter Of The Year
BOX 52 Association

Box 52 Association
The Line Box

I.F.B.A. Member club since 1955!

Vol. 23 No. 1

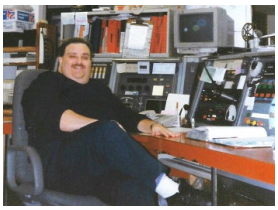
EXTRA!

SOMERVILLE 5TH ALARM!

Fire Destroys Another Mercantile Broadway Block!



Full Report in Issue No. 2



From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of the Line Box for this Box 52 season. This issue has a great line up of articles that you will enjoy.

We have had a few additions to the Staff. Bill Wilderman comes on board as our proof reader. Jeff Brown has taken on the role of Photo Editor.

In this issue we have a few stories that were sent to us by members of recent fire duty in their communities. It is very simple to do and we have several ways you can contribute articles:

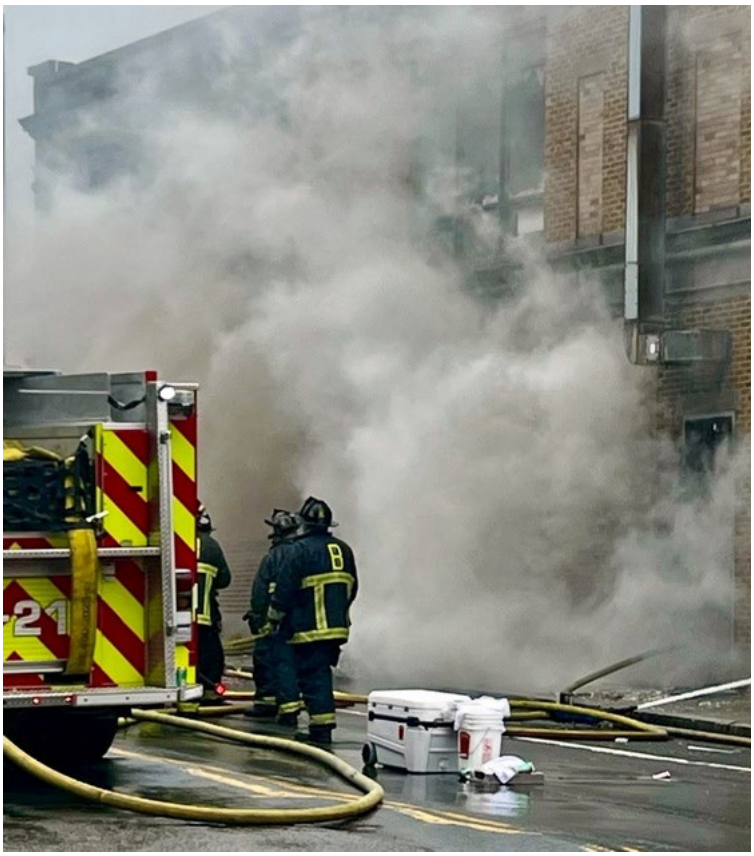
1. You can write the article and submit it.
2. You can suggest an idea for an article. If you want to take a shot at writing the Staff can help you out. Or, you can send us some information and we can work with you to produce an article.
3. You do not have to be a member of the Association to submit or suggest an article.

So it really is pretty easy, the first step is to contact us at the Associations email address: box52boston@hotmail.com.

Do you realize that we are two years away from twenty-five years of publishing the Line Box! This year the Association is 114 years old and as in the past it will be another great year!

Eleven Alarms Sounded!
Major Blazes in Boston and Somerville over 48 Hours!
Boston 6-2127
72 Warren Street
September 28th, 2026

Boston Fire Alarm struck Box 2127 for smoke in the building at 72 Warren Street in Dudley Square at 0728 hours. Second alarm was ordered by Captain Tuohy of Ladder Company 4 at 0734 hours. The fire building was a two story 200 x 200 foot commercial building. The allout was sounded at 1257 hours.



Time	Alarm	Engine	Ladder	Rescue	Chief/ Special
0728	2127	14, 3, 37, 42	4, 26		Dist. 7
	WF/RIT		23, TL-3		H1, Dists. 8, 9
0734	2-2127	21, 22, 24	15, 17	2	Div. 2 (C7), Dist. 4
0743	3-2127	17, 39			
0748	4-2127	7, 10			C-2
0758	5-2127	33, 28, 41	16, 24, 29		C-1
0852	6-2127	52, 2, 49			


D-9
DISTRICT CHIEF
JOE'S
FAMOUS
JOE'S
FAMOUS


UGI'S
BOSTON
BOSTON

Somerville 5-71

1137-1147 Broadway

September 30th, 2026

Somerville Ladder Company 3 was returning to their Teele Square quarters when they saw the fire alarm strobes flashing and smoke off the roof. They ordered Fire Alarm to strike the box. The fire was in a three story brick mixed occupancy with commercial tenants on the first floor and apartments on the upper two floors. The fire building was opposite Engine Co. 6 & Ladder 3's station.







Time	Alarm	Engine	Ladder	Rescue	Chief/ Special
1650	71	6, 7, 1	L3, Twr-1	1	C-3
1654	WF-71	5			C-2
1657	2-71	2, 3, Arl. E2	L2		C-1
1703	3-71	Camb. E4, Med. E5, Bos. E32	Camb, L1 Med. L1	Camb Sq. 4	Camb. Div. 1
1707	Sp. Call		Che Twr 1 Eve. L1		
1710	4-71	Bel. E4, Che. E1, Mal. E1			
1742	5-71	Lex. E4, Brkl. E1, Rev. E4	Brkl. L2		
1825	Sp. Call	Wat. E1			Wat. C3

The interior shots from the next day were provided by retired Som. Dist. Chief Frank Lee.





Special thanks to Line Box Staffers Paul Christian, Edward Morrissey and retired Somerville District Chief Frank Lee for their assistance and photos for these fire reports.



BELMONT, MASSCHUSETTS

By: Line Box Staffers Dave Parr, Mark Roche,
Review by Chief David Frizzell (ret)
Current photos courtesy of Mike Boynton

Belmont is a town in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. It is a western suburb of Boston and is part of the Greater Boston metropolitan area. As of the 2020 U.S. census, its population was 27,295, an increase of 10.4% from 2010. The town has an area of 4.7 square miles. Belmont is bordered by Cambridge on the east, Arlington on the north, Lexington on the northwest, Waltham on the west, and Watertown on the south.



Belmont was once served by two railroads, the Fitchburg Railroad and the Central Massachusetts Railroad, both of which later became part of the Boston & Maine Railroad system. Originally the two railroads each had their own separate trackage through town, but in 1952 the Central Mass tracks were removed between Hill's Crossing and Clematis Brook (Waltham), and rail traffic was rerouted over the Fitchburg line. Presently, the MBTA operates the Fitchburg Line through Belmont as part of its MBTA

commuter rail service. Passenger service on the line terminates at Wachusett station in Fitchburg. The railroad basically divides the town into two districts with three crossing points.

Belmont was also serviced by the MTA (Predecessor to the MBTA) and it had two trolley's that served Belmont from Cambridge. The first one traveled from Cambridge on Huron Ave to Grove Street then Bright Road. It took a sharp turn to the west at Concord Avenue. It continued down a divided Concord Avenue with trolley tracks and trolley traffic on one side and automobile traffic on the other (the road is still divided with automobile traffic on both sides one side for east bound and the other for west bound. The trolley continued to Belmont Center and there was a loop turn around where the current Fire Station 2 sits.

The second came from Harvard Square out Mount Auburn Street to Belmont Street to Trapelo Road. The trolley tracks originally continued past Waverley square with an at grade crossing of the Fitchburg Railroad and Central Massachusetts Railroad and terminated at Waverley Oaks Park. The grade crossing was removed when the new Waverley rail station was built in the mid-50s and the depression of the railroad right of way through Waverley to the west. This required the installation of two bridges in Waverley Square.

In the 1960's the trolley service to Belmont Center was abandoned for buses but the Waverley route was converted to "trackless trollies". The tracks were abandoned in the street and decades letter there are still portions of the track and ties buried under the street. This used a new two wire catenary and provided clean transportation. The trackless trollies ceased operation in March of 2022 and the 73 bus route will have EV buses in the future.



Trackless Trolley Passing the Old Waverley Station 445 Trapelo Road (Engine 1)

Today, Belmont remains a primarily residential suburb, with little population growth since the 1950s. It is best known for the mansion-filled Belmont Hill neighborhood, although most

residents live in more densely settled, low-lying areas around the Hill. There are three major commercial centers in the town: Belmont Center in the center, Cushing Square in the south, and Waverley Square in the west. Town Hall and other civic buildings are in Belmont Center. Large tracts of land from former farms and greenhouse estates form public or publicly accessible areas such as Rock Meadow, Habitat, and various town fields. The McLean Hospital psychiatric facility, known worldwide, was built in 1895 at 115 Mill St. on 308 acres of land at Waverly Oaks Hill. The Mormon LDS Church was built prominently on the highest elevation in town viewed by hundreds of travelers along Route 2 each day.

The Belmont Fire Department is a full-time career fire department under the command of Acting Chief Andrew Tobio. Full-time Administrative Staff includes a Fire Prevention Captain and Lieutenant, a Training Division Lieutenant and a civilian Administrative Assistant.

The Department works a 42-hour week working using 4 work groups or platoons. Suppression personnel work 24 hours on and 3 days off. Firefighters are represented by Local 1637 of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF).

The four duty shifts are comprised of: (1) Captain serving as the Shift Commander, (3) Lieutenants and 8/9 firefighters for a total of 12/13 members per shift, with a minimum staffing of 11 per shift. The Department operates two engine companies, two reserve engines, one aerial ladder company, one reserve aerial ladder, one ALS level Ambulances, one reserve ambulance, and a Brush Truck responding from two fire stations. The department responds to over 4,500 incidents annually including emergency medical calls. The Department provides fire suppression, Paramedic level EMS, hazardous materials and technical rescue capabilities to the Town of Belmont. It also conducts fire prevention, code enforcement and fire investigation duties for the community.

Belmont operates a Gamewell Class B 100 mil fire alarm box system. 911 emergency calls are received by Civilian Dispatchers at the Combined Dispatch Center located in the Police Station. Belmont operates on a radio frequency of 482.775 Mhz with a PL code of 77.0. Belmont belongs to the Metrofire (District 13) mutual aid network.

Typical responses to alarms is; 1 engine or 1 ladder to still alarms: 2 engines, 1 ladder, rescue and the Captain Shift Commander (Car 3) to street or master box alarms, and to structural fires

DEPARTMENT LOCATIONS AND APPARATUS ROSTER



HEADQUARTERS – Station 1 - 297 Trapelo Road (Built 2006)

- Engine 1: 2025 E-One Typhoon 1500/510/20F
- Engine 3: 2014 E-One Typhoon E-MAX 1250/520/20F - RESERVE
- Squad 1: 2008 Ford F-550 4X4 Brush 125/250/15F
- Rescue 1: 2022 Ford F-550 /Horton Ambulance
- Rescue 2: 2017 Ford F-550 / Horton Ambulance 4X4 RESERVE
- TSU-1: 2015 Ford F-150 4X4
- Car 1: 2022 Ford HYBRID, Fire Chief
- Car 2: 2017 FORD INTERCEPTOR, Assistant Fire Chief
- Car 3: 2022 Chevrolet Tahoe 4WD Utility Vehicle, Shift Commander/Captain
- Car 4: 2017 Ford INTERCEPTOR, Captain/Fire Prevention Officer
- Car 5: 2006 Ford F-550 4x4, Training Officer
- Car 6: 2015 Ford EXPEDITION – RESERVE

STATION 2 – 99 Leonard Street (Built 2006)

- Engine 2: 2021 E-One Typhoon E-MAX 1500/510/20F
- Engine 4: 2005 E-One Typhoon 1250/500 RESERVE
- Ladder 1: 2014 E-One Cyclone II 100′ RMA
- Ladder 2: 1999 E-One 110′ RMA RESERVE



A Brief History

Belmont was serviced by three fire stations from the early 1900's until 2006. Engine 1 operated in the Waverley section of the Town. Originally hand drawn apparatus stored in Waverley Hall. In 1905 the Waverley Station at 445 Trapelo Road was opened. The building was the former Bulter School. The station was supposed to be for "temporary use" but was operated as a fire station for almost 100 years.

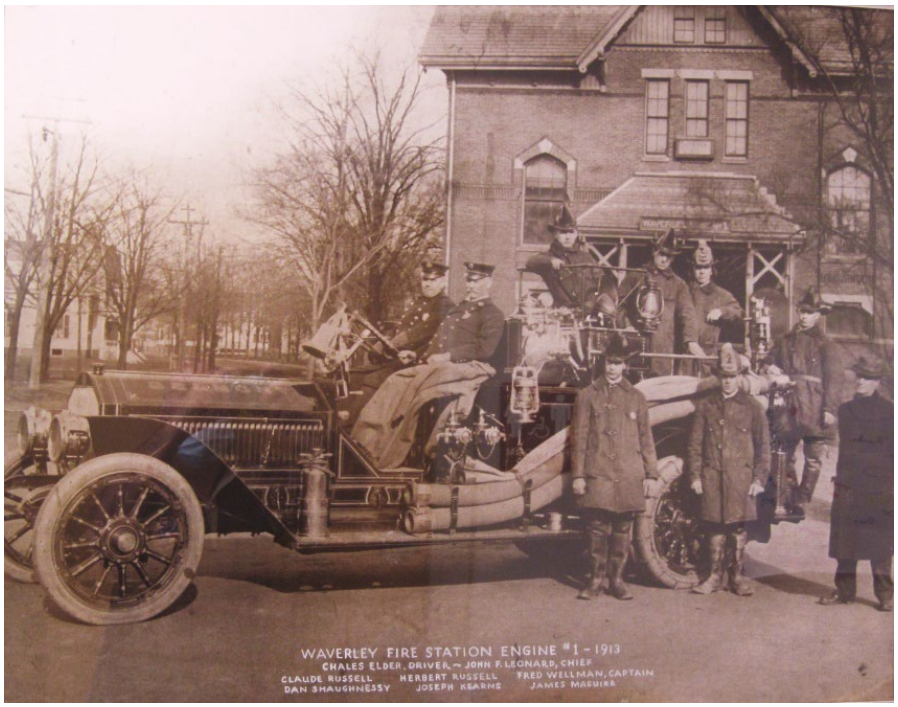


Hose 2 and Ladder 1 ran out of the Headquarters Station built in 1899. The iron tracks for the carriage wheels and remnants of the horse stalls were still there when the department moved to the new stations in 2006.



Harvard Lawn Station with Knox Engine

The original wooden Harvard Lawn Station was the first station to get motorized apparatus. Belmont transitioned from hand drawn or horse drawn apparatus in the early 1900's. The first motorized was a Knox pumper assigned to Hose 3 at Harvard Lawn.



In 1913 an American LaFrance Type 12 Triple combination pumper was purchased and placed in service at the Waverley Station.



In 1917 the Town purchased a 1917 Maxim city service truck that was located at Headquarters

In 1923 another American LaFrance Type 75 Triple Combination pumper was purchased and assigned to Headquarters. The entire fleet was motorized at this point.

In 1927 a Seagrave Chemical “Chemical 2” was purchased and was assigned to Headquarters and the 1923 ALF was reassigned to Engine 3 replacing the Knox.

The “new” Harvard Lawn station was built in 1928, enlarged in 1957, modified in 1999, closed in 2006.



Harvard Lawn Station Farview Ave in Belmont prior to 1957 addition. Now a single family home.



1930 American LaFrance 1000 GPM unit 2218 was ordered but never made it to Belmont as it was involved in a train derailment and was scrapped. A replacement order 2344 arrived and stationed at Waverley for 24 years Engine 1, then reserve Engine 5

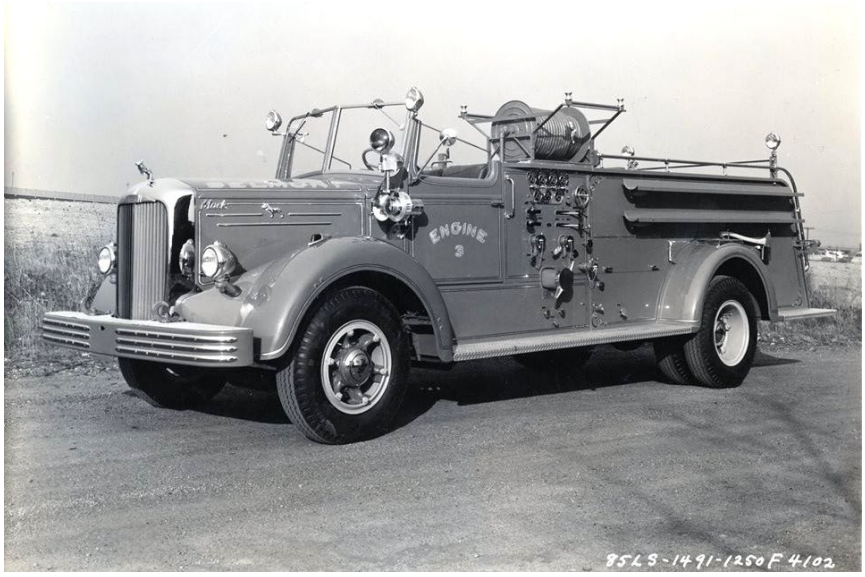


1937 Seagrave 65’ Junior Aerial (metal) Ladder 1, then reserve Ladder 2 until August 23, 1977, in front of Waverley Station



1945 Buffalo 750 GPM Class A Pump Engine 2, then reserve Engine 4

The Mack Years



1950 Mack L Model 750 GPM Class B Pump Engine 3, then reserve Engine 4



1954 Mack B Model 750 GPM Class A Pump Engine 1, then reserve Engine 4



1962 Maxim 85′ Aerial Ladder 1, then reserve Ladder 2



1965 Dodge Boyertown “Bread Box” Civil Defense Rescue (non-transport)



1966 Mack B Model 1000 GPM 300 WT Class A Pump, Engine 2,
then Engine 3, back to Engine 2, then reserve Engine 4



1972 Ford/Pirsch 1000 GPM 500 WT Class A Pump Engine 2,
then Engine 3, then reserve Engine 4 (last engine to have a rear step)

Transition to Red & White



1979 Seagrave 100’ Rear Mount Aerial Ladder 1, then reserve Ladder 2



1983 Mack CF 1000 GPM 500 WT Class A Pump Engine 1, then Engine 4

The E-One Years



1986 E-One Hurricane1250 GPM 500 WT Engine 2,
then Engine 3, then Engine 1, then reserve Engine 4



1988 E-Cyclone 1250 GPM 500 WT Engine 2 then reserve Engine 4
(First fully enclosed 4-door cab for Belmont)



1999 E-One 110’ Ladder, Ladder 1, then reserve Ladder 2 (still in reserve)



Engine 1 and Engine 2 had similar E-One Typhoon 1250 GPM pumpers
(2003 & 2005 respectively)



2007 International/E-One 1000/500/30F

2007 E-One Classic Fire International 4X4 Chasiss 1000 GPM 500WT 30F reserve Engine 3

Transition to Smoke Grey over Red









Harvard Lawn Station Bell is now part of the Roland A Weatherbee Memorial



Dedicated to the Memory of
Firefighter Roland A. Weatherbee
Engine Co.3
Died In the Line of Duty
March 4, 1985 (Box 74)

Twin Rivers Technology
780 Washington St. Quincy, MA.
Structure Fire
August 8, 2026

By Members Tim Marks (Capt. QFD) and Chris Barry (Lieutenant QFD)

On August 8, 2026, at 19:24 hours, the Quincy Fire Department, Fire Alarm Office received an alarm of fire from Box 2112 assigned to the Twin Rivers Technology Facility at 780 Washington St. located at the confluence of the Town and Fore Rivers where they merge into the Atlantic Ocean. This facility acts as a refinery that handles, stores and processes fatty oils such as coconut oil, palm oil and beef tallow. During the production process these oils are hydrolyzed using hydrogen under pressure and high temperatures. Due to the nature of this industrial facility and the products stored there as well as the processes that are ongoing this Box automatically results in a full box assignment. This consisted of E-3 (first due, Quincy Point), E-1, L-1, R-1, C-2 (Headquarters), and E-4, L-2 (Wollaston). Upon arrival of E-3, the crew was informed by Twin Rivers staff that a pull station had been activated in Bldg. 13. While the crew of E-3 was enroute to investigate the pull station, they received additional information from staff employees of an active fire in the tank farm area behind Bldg. 13. The crew of E-3 then observed active fire on the Charlie "C" side of the building. This side of the facility is adjacent to and faces the Town River. E-3 determined that the best access would be from the Delta "D" side of the facility, along the Fore River side of the building. They then stretched a 1 ¾" hand line to the area of the fire.

Upon arrival of HQ's companies, C-2 assumed command of the incident and had E-1 stretch a 2 ½" line to back up E-3 as well as a 2 ½" line with Blitz Gun to the area of the fire. L-1 and L-2 set up and flowed ladder pipes due to the nature of the fire and experience from previous fires in the tank farm area of the facility.

C-2 struck a 2nd alarm for additional manpower. This resulted in E-2 (North Quincy), E-5 (West Quincy), and L-4 (Houghs Neck) responding to the scene. As well as E-8 (Germantown) and L-5 (North Quincy) to cover HQ's, E-7 (Squantum) to cover West Quincy, a Boston engine and ladder to cover North Quincy and a Weymouth engine to cover Quincy Point. Additionally, notifications were made to C-1 (Chief of Dept.), Lt Barry (OIC, Fire Alarm), and Car-15 (Air Supply) to respond. A-10 (Boston Sparks) responded to the scene to provide assistance to members working at the incident. Notifications were made by Lt Barry to the Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection, USCG Sector Boston and USCG National Response Center due to the materials that were burning and the proximity to the ocean. The fire was placed under control at 22:05 hrs. A fire watch was detailed to the fire building. Two

members were treated for heat stress. The Quincy Fire Dept. was assisted by Quincy Police units as well as Brewster Ambulance Co. at the scene.



Bargain Center Fire

Somerville, MA – October 20, 1971

By Frank Lee, Somerville FD (ret.)

The Bargain Center occupied part of a pie-shaped lot with one and two-story taxpayer-type attached buildings at 212–228 Elm Street. The block ran 320 feet along Elm Street, with depths varying from 65 feet on the Bravo side (Russell Street) to 127 feet on the Delta side (Bowers Avenue). Occupants included Royal Furniture, the Cadillac Café, Ming Toy Chinese Restaurant, the Bargain Center, and the Sweater Shop. The Bargain Center itself was two stories with a full basement—an early version of Building 19. Whatever you needed, they usually had it, mostly from fire and insurance salvage. The basement stored all the flammables: paints, solvents, adhesives, and similar materials. The first and second floors had housewares and lots of clothing. A heavy fire load to say the least. The stairways were wide open, with no fire doors. A partial second floor began twenty feet back from the front wall; it had no partitions and overlooked the first floor.



October 20, 1971, was partly cloudy, with temperatures in the high 50s and winds of 8 to 12 mph. At 0743, Somerville Fire Alarm received a call for an odor of smoke in the vicinity of the Cadillac Café at 216 Elm Street. Box 427 (Elm Street at Bowers Avenue) was struck at 0744. The response consisted of four engines (including Cambridge Engine 4 on the line box), two trucks, and the 303 car (Captain O'Connor, Acting District Chief).On arrival, companies found nothing visible and only a faint odor of smoke outside the Cadillac Café. There was no access without forcible entry, and the key holder was ten minutes away.



Companies stood by until he arrived. Once the door was opened, a good smoke condition was found, but no fire. The front door of Ming Toy Chinese Restaurant was forced; heavy smoke and high heat were coming up from the basement. The only entrance to the basement was a narrow stairway near the front of the restaurant. Engines 6 and 7 were ordered to stretch 1½-inch lines to the basement. Ladder 3 raised its 75-foot aerial to the roof of Ming Toy and opened it. When companies reached the basement, fire was rolling across the ceiling. Engine 1 was special-called at 0809.

Deputy Chief Brosnahan in 302 took in the fire when Engine 1 was dispatched. On his arrival, the first-floor walls and ceilings of Ming Toy and the Cadillac Café were being pulled. Heavy fire was found running up the walls and across the ceiling of Ming Toy, rolling toward the Delta side. The second alarm was transmitted at 0816, and companies were ordered out of the basement. Next in line was the Bargain Center. Entry was forced, and the building was found filling with smoke. The front windows were taken out, and lines were ordered to the cellar and first floor. Ladder 3 was ordered to reposition its aerial to the two-story roof of the Bargain Center and begin opening up. The third alarm was transmitted at 0825.

Fire was now showing from the vent holes on Ming Toy A special call for two engines and a truck was sent at 0840. Every vent hole that was cut soon showed high heat, followed by fire. Heavy fire was



running across the cockloft toward the Delta side. Engine 5's 1954 ALF, hooked up on Elm Street at Russell Street and feeding three lines, suffered a broken drive axle and was unable to pump. A special call for a replacement pumper brought Cambridge Engine 8 to take Engine 5's position. Meanwhile, Engine 5's crew stretched 150 feet of 2½-inch line from Engine 7's pump (hooked up across the street in front of the Rosebud Diner) into the front of the Bargain Center, reduced it to 1½-inch, and attempted to advance into the basement. Engine 3 also stretched a 2½-inch line into the Bargain Center, reduced it to 1½-inch, and pushed toward the basement. When both Engine 3 and Engine 5 reached the basement landing, they encountered excessive heat and could advance no farther. They were backed up by Engine 6 with a 1½-inch line. Boston Engine 32 also came down the stairs with a 2½-inch line. Heat continued to build until the companies began retreating up the stairs. The Boston District Chief ordered everyone out. Moments later the fire erupted on them, forcing them to abandon their lines. The members barely made it to the street when heavy black smoke began pushing from the building. Immediately thereafter, heavy fire blew out of the openings of the Bargain Center. Three engines and a truck were special-called.

Fire was now pushing from all openings of the Bargain Center and extending into the Sweater Shop at the Delta end. Fire also began venting from the rear, exposing houses on Bowers Avenue and Cottage Avenue. Engine 3's wagon was repositioned to Bowers Avenue to use its deck gun on the house at 5–7 Bowers, which sustained moderate roof damage and heavy sidewall damage. Houses on Cottage

Avenue sustained heat damage. Ladder pipes and deck guns went to work on the Bargain Center and



Sweater Shop. Companies could not get water into the second floor from the street because of the large signage across the front of the Bargain Center. Deputy Chief Brosnahan ordered members and apparatus away from the front to establish a collapse zone. Within five to ten minutes the metal signage began dropping from the building, followed by multiple small collapses of the parapet wall.

The fire next extended into Royal Furniture from the Cadillac Café. Ladder companies had difficulty opening the floors to apply Bresnan nozzles into the basements. Companies were soon withdrawn from the Cadillac, only minutes before the roof sagged and eventually collapsed into the basement. A special call to Boston for K-12 saws brought Boston Ladder 2, Ladder 15, and Boston Rescue 1.Companies remained heavily engaged throughout the rest of the day tour. Five ladder pipes were flowing, with Cambridge Ladder 4 operating both its bed pipe and fly pipe. Six deck guns were in use along with numerous handlines. During the afternoon, Medford Engine 5, pumping on Cottage Avenue, broke down and was replaced by Boston Engine 11. With the collapses, the fire became deep-seated and companies had no direct access to it. Engines 1 and 4 applied more than 40 gallons of high-expansion foam to the basement of Ming Toy, without success. Boston Rescue 1 was returned around 1630. Most mutual-aid companies remained after the shift change at 1800. Mutual-aid units began to be relieved around 2200 hours. Somerville companies remained on scene well into the next day. The All-Out was sounded on October 21 at 1440. The entire block had to be demolished.

Response Timeline:

0744: Box 427 – E6, E7, E4, CAM E4, **L3, L4,** 303 Car (Acting District Chief O'Connor)

0809: Special Call – E1; also 302 Car (Deputy Chief Brosnahan)

0816: 2nd Alarm – E5, E3, E9 (Aux), CAM E5, **SOM L1**

0825: 3rd Alarm – SOM E2, ARL E4, BOS E32, **CAM L4**

Special Calls during the day:

SOM 410 & 410A Lighting Plants (Aux)

BOS E3, E11; BOS **L2, L15**; **BOS Rescue 1**

ARL E2, **L2**, Lighting Plant (Aux)

CAM E8, E11 (Aux), Lighting Plant (Aux)

MED E5, **L2**

EVE E3, **L3**

WAT two Lighting Plants

(SOM L2 out of service – mechanical)

A total of 18 engine companies, 10 ladder companies, one heavy rescue, and four lighting plants worked the fire. Fifteen Somerville firefighters were transported to the hospital, along with an unknown number of mutual-aid firefighters. Numerous firefighters were treated on scene by the Red Cross for eye irritations and smoke inhalation.Total insurance payout on the five businesses was $480,000—approximately $3.9 million in today's dollars.

Six-alarm fire fight stop flames from spreading down Foundry Street in Wakefield
Vacant building destroyed; crews used 1.5M gallons of water to douse blaze.

BY: Line Box Staffer Dave Parr
Special thanks to Chief Tom Purcell and Box 52 member Joe Hourihan
Photos provided by Box 52 member Kevin Boyle



WAKEFIELD — Miraculously, no one was seriously injured as crews faced with over 90-degree temperatures and oppressive humidity battled a six-alarm fire in a vacant commercial building Friday afternoon on Foundry Street.

Firefighters from 25 communities pitched in to battle the blaze at 102 Foundry St., across from West Side Auto Body and once home to the rattan furniture-making Middlesex Reed Company. The building, surrounded by current businesses like 128 Plumbing, Heating, Cooling and Electric, had recently been purchased and was scheduled for demolition, according to Fire Chief Thomas Purcell.

At 1455 hours on Friday, August 7, 2026, Wakefield Police transferred a 911 caller to the Fire Department reporting a structure fire at 102 Foundry St. Box 211 was transmitted at 1456.

On arrival in Car 3 at 1501 hours, Shift Commander Fire Captain Mike Long (C7) reported smoke and fire showing and ordered a working fire. As crews began deploying handlines, Captain Long ordered a second alarm transmitted at 1505 hours. Wakefield Engine 1's crew, led by Lieutenant Erik Cole, deployed a 2 ½" handline halfway down the 'B' side of the structure to engage the heavy volume of fire showing. Wakefield Engine 2 led by Acting Lieutenant Chris Sullivan secured a water supply and immediately deployed a blitz gun to attack heavy fire from the Foundry street side of the structure. Ladder 1 threw the aerial ladder from the 'B' side and began setting up for master stream operations under the command of Lieutenant Gary Hill.



Second alarm mutual aid engine companies Stoneham Engine 1, Reading Engine 3, and Melrose Engine 2 arrived quickly to supply additional water to the scene, and their crews immediately went to work assisting Wakefield companies.

Deputy Chief John Walsh (C2) arrived on scene, assumed command, and due to the heavy amount of fire showing from the 100' x 200', one-story, vacant commercial structure, ordered a third alarm at 1510 hours. Deputy Walsh ordered all companies to take a defensive posture as all fire attack would take place from the exterior — no interior operations due to the large volume of fire and size of the structure. Mutual aid from Lynnfield Ladder 1, North Reading Ladder 1, and Saugus Engine 1 also arrived.

Chief Tom Purcell (C1) arrived and met with Deputy Walsh for an assessment of fire conditions and assumed command of the fire-ground with Deputy Walsh assuming operations. At this time, Ladder 1 Officer Lieutenant Gary Hill reported a partial roof collapse.





Chief Purcell immediately called for the MBTA commuter rail to be shut down on the Haverhill line, both inbound and outbound rails, due to the fire's proximity to the commuter rail tracks. The command post was established directly across from the fire building, and the department's command/accountability monitoring system was deployed. The extreme temperatures and high humidity created difficult fire-ground operations for all personnel on scene. Cataldo Ambulance and Rehab 5 set up a rehab area as firefighters were shuttled in and out of the rehab area back to the staging area with the expected work time in the heavy gear and high temperatures averaging about 15 minutes until fatigue set in. Incoming mutual aid Chiefs from bordering communities were given sectors to manage due to the size of the structure. Chief Glenn Davis from Lynnfield was designated 'B'" sector command as 2 ½" hand lines were relocated and deployed from the exposure parking area.





Chief Purcell struck a fourth alarm at 1529 hours with the fire threatening the exposure building at 116 Foundry Street. Several oil trucks were parked within 15 feet of the fire building and had to be moved in short order. Reading Chief Rick Nelson was designated ‘C’ sector command on the North Ave. side of the structure. Chief Purcell routed North Reading Ladder 1, Malden Ladder 1, along with Saugus Engine 1 and Woburn Engine 2 to the North Ave sector for aerial master stream operations as there was a heavy amount of smoke and fire at the rear blowing over the commuter rail. Companies strategically placed aerial apparatus into the Wood-Master Tree Service yard and the adjoining properties, right up to the commuter rail along the North Avenue corridor, to get water on the fire from the ‘C’ side rear of the burning structure.

Wakefield Captain Brian Purcell (C5), along with Reading Assistant Chief John Keough, assumed responsibility of the ‘D’ side of the structure and made aggressive attempts at pushing fire away from the exposure building located at 116 Foundry Street. During this time multiple explosions occurred blowing out windows and were reported as ‘urgent traffic’ to Command from Lieutenant Cole and Captain Purcell on the ‘B’ and ‘D’ sides of the occupancy – drastically propelling the volume of fire throughout the structure.

METROFIRE RUNNING CARD

WAKEFIELD — MUTUAL AID BOX 8233

FIREGROUND PRIMARY CHANNEL Wakefield Fire Ch. 1 483.4375							ALT. FG North FIREGROUND ALPHA			
COVERING PRIMARY CHANNEL North DISTRICT							ALT. COV None			
	TO FIRE						COVER			
ALARM	ENGINES			LADDERS	SPECIAL	CHIEFS	ENGINES			LADDER
1ST							Headquarters			
WF	STON									
2ND	REA	MEL		NREA			SAU	WOB		LYNF*
3RD	(SAU)	(WOB)	MID*	(LYNF*)			MAL	WIL**		MAL
4TH	(MAL)	(WIL)**	WINC	(MAL)			DAN*	LYN		BUR-TL
5TH	(DAN)	(LYN)	PEA*	(BUR) TL			REV	LEX		REV
6TH	(REV)	(LEX)	SOM	(REV)			CHE	ARL		CHE-TL
7TH	(CHE)	(ARL)	SAL*	(CHE) TL			MED	MSPRT		MED
8TH	(MED)	(MSPRT)	BEV*	(MED)			EVE	WAL		EVE
9TH	(EVE)	(WAL)	SWA*	(EVE)			BEL	CAM		SOM-TL
10TH	(BEL)	(CAM)	MAR*	(SOM) TL			BOS	WAT		BOS
ADDITIONAL	ENGINES:	CAM, BOS, WAL			LADDERS:	CAMB, WAL, BOS			Rev Date	Issue Date
( ) Responding from Coverage Assignment. All Blank Companies above Heavy Line are per Local Runcards									7/23/2025	2026-1

*BEV (Beverley), DAN (Danvers), LYNF (Lynnfield), MAR (Marblehead), MID (Middleton), NREA (N. Reading), PEA (Peabody), SAL (Salem),, SWA (Swampscott), Contact Thru BEVERLY CONTROL ** WIL (Wilmington) Contact Thru WESTFORD CONTROL

Chief Purcell struck a 5th alarm at 1550 hours, ordering more resources to the fire-ground. More firefighters were needed on scene and additional Engine companies to supply water from distant fire hydrants. Lynnfield fire, operating a Saugus aerial ladder and a Burlington tower ladder were placed on the 'D' side protecting exposure buildings and throwing heavy amounts of water onto the fire building from that side.

The Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department was on scene and cut power into the building and disconnected all live gas lines from the street. It was at this time that Chief Purcell met with Steve Fitzpatrick Jr. of the DPW's Water & Sewer Division, agreeing that Fitzpatrick needed to boost the water pressure in town. Fitzpatrick and his crew remained on scene throughout coordinating with fire-ground command in maintaining the water pressure needed on Foundry Street, North Avenue and the surrounding areas.

The Wakefield Police Department were also handling multiple traffic bottlenecks due to the fire, including the closing of the North Avenue corridor during peak rush hour on a Friday afternoon. As thousands of gallons of water were thrown on the fire the remainder of the roof began to collapse, creating heavy columns of black smoke that were seen from as far away as the Zakim Bridge in Boston. Heavy fire conditions were apparent, and the extreme heat and high humidity were wearing on fire crews. The Department of Fire Services, the Wakefield Police, as well as Everett Fire Dispatcher

Tim Gorman, deployed drones high above the fire in order to give Chief Purcell and the command staff an infrared picture of progress being made and where the fire was burning hottest in order to best locate the high-powered master stream appliances from surrounding ladder companies. At this time, the Department had the fire building surrounded with heavy appliances and master stream devices flowing thousands of gallons of water into the structure.

Chief Purcell transmitted a 6th alarm at 1610 hours to bring in additional resources and personnel to relieve firefighters working in high heat/humidity conditions. Mike's Gym at 10 Broadway was utilized as the staging area for incoming apparatus. Arlington Engine 2, Lexington Engine 1, and Medford Ladder 2 were assigned to cover Wakefield fire headquarters. Companies from as far as Somerville, Chelsea, and Revere responded to work at the active scene.

Wakefield fire crews did remove one occupant from the exposure "D" building at 116 Foundry Street early in the fire, who was overcome by smoke and transported to a local hospital. Several firefighters suffered heat related stress and were given IV fluids in the rehab area as Cataldo ambulance crews worked to keep personnel hydrated and fit to continue duty. No significant injuries were reported, and no firefighters were transported to the hospital.

Several fire companies were deployed into the residential buildings located at 62 and 69 Foundry Street to meter these occupancies for toxic smoke & gas levels and to check on occupants within the buildings as commuters rolled in from the work week. As thousands of gallons of water were poured into the structure, eventually, the heavy volume of fire was knocked down, and the fire was declared under control by Chief Purcell at 1756 hours.

Deputy Chief Walsh and Chief Purcell began the de-mobilization process of the 25 communities who responded to the fire to assist Wakefield – removing thousands of feet of fire hose. Working with personnel from 128 Plumbing & Electric, who had recently purchased 102 Foundry St., several large excavators were brought in to demolish the building as it was the only way fire companies could efficiently extinguish the remaining pockets of fire from the heavy timber construction within the structure. Wakefield Reserve Engines 4 and 5, along with Wakefield Ladder 1, and Cars 1, 2, and 3 (Command Staff) remained on scene washing down the heavy debris as excavators worked deep into the early morning hours to push all the walls inward and provide access for department streams. At 0301 on Saturday, August 8th, Chief Purcell terminated command and called for the all-out on Box 211. The fire remains under investigation with teams from Massachusetts State Police, Wakefield Police and Fire all working together.

The fire building was heavily involved upon the department's arrival and had a real head start. The first due Wakefield companies under Captain Long along with Deputy Walsh's immediate deployment of the initial arriving 2nd and 3rd alarm companies was instrumental in keeping this fire contained to the building of origin. The firefighters from all the communities who assisted took a beating in working to control this fire in the smoke-filled, high heat and humid conditions. It was reported by the Water Department that almost 1.5 million gallons of water were used during fire suppression efforts. Timely response, strong execution of strategy and tactics, combined with the assistance of all mutual aid

partners, resulted in containing this large fire to the building of origin and not spreading down the entirety of Foundry Street.

Chief Purcell was grateful to all the Metro Fire and Essex County fire communities who responded via mutual aid to assist with the stubborn blaze and provide coverage at Wakefield Fire Headquarters, as well as the tremendous assistance from the Wakefield Police Department, Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department, and the Wakefield DPW to include the Water & Sewer Dept. Additional appreciation extends to Cataldo Ambulance Service, The Dept. of Fire Services (DFS), Auxiliary Fire Lt. (ret.) Kevin Boyle and Roger Bakers Rehab Five for their support and assistance to all the crews on scene.



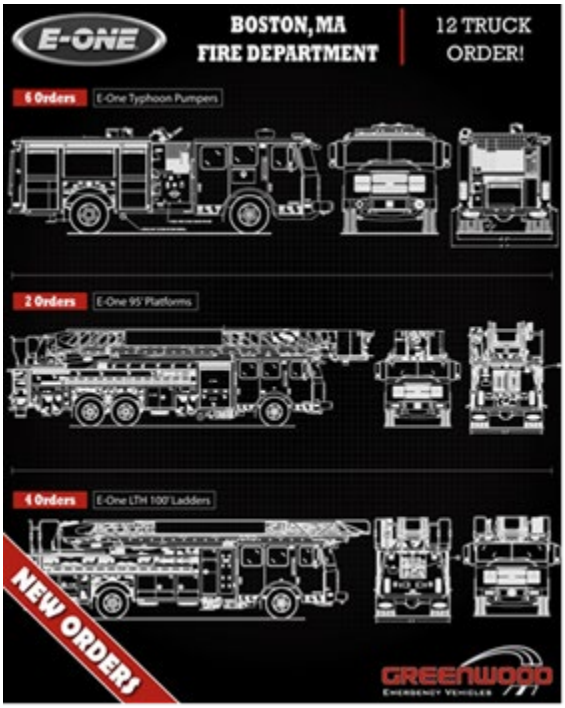


Apparatus Update

Article and photos by Line Box Writer Michael Boynton

The end of summer and early fall months have yielded a slew of new deliveries throughout Metro Boston, and within Beantown too. Since July, Boston took delivery of six new E-One Typhoon pumps, with Engines 3, 4, 7, 16, 41 and 53 getting new pieces. In addition, two new E-One Metro aerials arrived in the Hub, with Ladder 4 and Ladder 15 getting the new rigs. The news doesn't stop there, as just this month BFD has placed orders for twelve new E-Ones including six pumpers, four Metro aerials, and two rear-mount towers. It is expected that these will arrive over a two to three year period.

In addition to the Boston rigs, new pieces have been delivered to Peabody, Revere, Massport, Salem, Westwood, Weymouth, Saugus, Somerville, Wilmington and Quincy. Here are a few of those photos. Enjoy your fall!





Boston Engine 7 2026 Emergency-One Typhoon 1250/560/30 Class A foam. Other pumps in order went to Engines 3, 4, 16, 41, 53.



Boston Ladder 4 2026 Emergency-One Metro 100 ft. RMA, Twin to Ladder 15.



Peabody Engine 5 2026 Pierce Enforcer 1500/750. Sister rig assigned to Engine 2.



Quincy Engine 5 2025 KME Severe Service 1500/750



Revere Engine 4 2026 Emergency-One Typhoon 1250/570/30 Class A foam. A similar rig is assigned to Engine Company 2.



Saugus Engine 1 2026 Pierce Enforcer 1250/750



Somerville Engine 5 2026 Spartan/Toyne 1250/500/25 Class A



Swampscott Ladder 21 2026 Pierce Enforcer 100 ft. RMA



Westwood Squad 1 2026 IH All-Wheel Drive/Bulldog 1500/500



Weymouth Engine 2 2026 Emergency-One Typhoon 1500/1000/30 Class A



Wilmington Engine 2 2026 Spartan S180 1500/750

MASSPORT



Squad 1 - 2026 Ford F-550/Rosenbauer 4x4 1250/300/25F



Engine 1 2026 Rosenbauer Commander 1500/1500/220 Class A



Engine 4 2026 Oshkosh Striker 8X8 1500/4500/630 Class A/550 Lbs. Dry Chem./460 Haltron Agent/65 foot Snozzle. Engine 3 is assigned its twin.

"Fire in the Paint Locker!"

USS Lexington CVT-16
South Boston Naval Annex 666 Summer Street
3-7529
September 7th, 1969
By Line Box Editor Frank San Severino

On Monday morning, June 1st the USS Lexington CVT-16 (Training Aircraft Carrier – Editor) passed Boston Light and the outer harbor buoy sixteen nautical miles out and was greeted by two Navy tugs out of the Charlestown Navy Yard.

The Lexington was headed for Dry Dock No. 3 at the South Boston Naval Annex for a seven month overhaul. She would soon pass by her birth place and that of her namesake at Bethlehem Steel's Fore River Shipyard in Quincy.

CVT-16 was built as an Essex Class fleet aircraft carrier. Laid down on July 15th, 1941 as the USS Cabot. After the first carrier Lexington CV-2 was sunk at the Battle of the Coral Sea in May of 1942, the Cabot's name was changed to Lexington CV-16.

In 1969 her duty station was Pensacola, Florida training Navy and Marine pilots in aircraft carrier take-offs and landings. She was decommissioned and stricken from the Register on November 8th, 1991. Dry Dock No. 3 is the largest dry dock on the East Coast. It was built in 1919 of cement and granite. It is 1,158 ft 9 inches in length, 149 feet in width and 44 feet 9 inches deep. You may remember that in August of 1992 the Cunard Line Queen Elizabeth II struck an uncharted rock cropping off Vineyard Sound and Cuttyhunk Island and was repaired here. Today, it is owned and operated by Boston Ship Repair. The Dry Dock and several areas of the annex were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2022.

The tugs positioned the carrier into the dock. The gates were closed and the water pumped out and the she was cradled properly. As the water was draining, workmen started to bring their equipment on board. The on board crew for the overhaul was 400 officers and men including her Captain Walter Hammett USN. The full complement when operational was 1,500 officers and men.

Per Navy standards when ships were in dry dock the following procedure was followed:

"A navy ship in drydock gets firefighting water through temporary shore-based fire connection manifolds and pumps supplied by the shipyard. Because the ship is out of the water, its internal sea-chest intakes (which normally pull in seawater) are dry and unusable."

How the System Works

- Shore Connections: Shipyards run large temporary hoses or pipes from pier-side or drydock water systems onto the vessel.

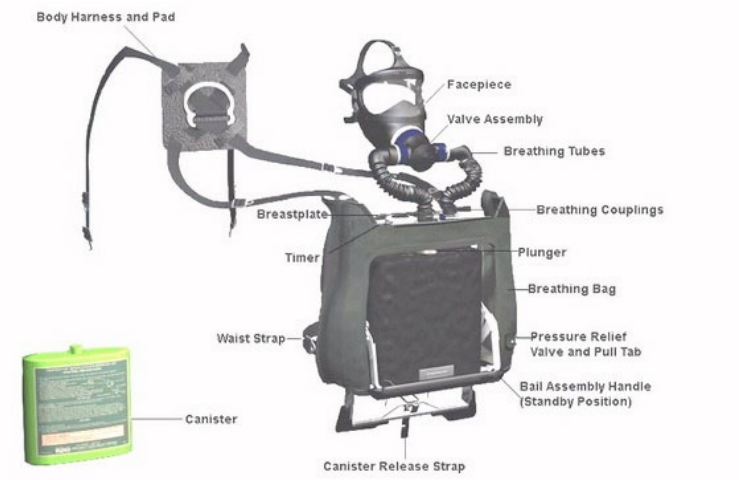
- Temporary Manifolds: These lines hook up to temporary fire hose manifold stations set up at strategic points across the ship.
- Pressure Requirements: Under naval safety standards (such as NAVSEA Standard Item 009-08), the yard must supply an uninterrupted, continuous water supply—often maintaining a minimum of 100 to 60 PSI of residual and static pressure—independent of the ship's own powerless or shut-down pumps.
- Integration: The shore supply ties directly into the ship's permanent fire main system or feeds independent temporary hose networks to ensure hoses and sprinklers stay pressurized for immediate emergency response.

FIRE! Boiler Room 1

Late on Sunday afternoon the first of the two 'Dog Watch" crews were on duty. The first dog watch went from 1600-1800 and the second dog watch from 1800-2000 hours.
Since she was in dry dock only one of her eight Babcock & Wilcox boilers was on line. This boiler was generating steam for cooking, laundry etc. Which was transferred to the engine room to supply the turbines.

At approximately 1702 hours the Boiler Tender on duty in the Number 1 Engine Room saw a large arc from some equipment which immediately ignited canvas sheets along with the 2 ½ canvas jacketed hose line and flammable overhaul parts and debris.

Thick black choking smoke soon filled the engine room, The Tender reached the phone to the Bridge and gave the report of a fire in the engine room. The Officer of the Deck ordered General Quarters, followed by the 1MC (1 Main Circuit – Editor) public address system reporting "fire in engine room 1! Many of the crew both on and off duty were surprised at the sounding of GQ in the dry dock. The crew went on the run to staff their battle stations, (According to retired Navy Captain William Malloy: "In a case like this, you would sound GQ and get everyone moving. Then you can issue orders for the DC fire parties, and make sure Damage Control Central gets manned".) Those assigned to Damage Control Parties ran to their assigned DC Lockers.



OXYGEN BREATHING APPARATUS (OBA) TYPE A-4

Meanwhile, the smoke was getting thicker and was now traveling through the vent system to other parts of the ship. The fire itself was growing larger. Sailors and workmen below decks were blinded by the smoke and groped their way topside and fresh air.

In the Navy every sailor is trained in firefighting which allowed Damage Control Central to fully man the DC Parties. The crews donned OBA (Oxygen Breathing Apparatus AKA Chemox Masks – Editor) and began to stretch 2 ½ inch attack lines some equipped with the Rockwood 90 combination brass nozzle and other with the long applicator fog pipes.

The crews attempted to gain entry to the engine room which was located in the forward part of the ship on decks 5 and 6 and ran the width of the ship. The smoke and heat pushed them back. Reports started to come in reporting the paint was starting to burn in the Number 1 fire room adjacent to the engine room. The fire was now starting to radiate heat via the steel bulkheads to compartments above, below and adjacent to the engine room. Additional hose lines were brought into operation using both big lines and 1 ½ inch lines equipped with applicator pipes to cool these areas.

With this information the call for the Annex Fire Department was made at 1712 hours. At this time period the Annex FD was staffed with a single engine company. With the arrival of the Duty Fire Chief he went aboard while the engine company grabbed a hydrant, masked up and dragged their own big line towards the fire.



Naval Annex Fire Station and Engine Co. 1. Photo collection of member Kevin Boyle.

Smoke was now pushing out of the ship via any opening. The order was given to open the hanger bay door for assisting with the access to the below deck access and provided some venting of the smoke if

possible. Sailors assigned to DC lines without breathing apparatus could not continue due the noxious and blinding smoke.

With reports coming in of the lack of progress getting to the seat of the fire Captain Hammett and the Annex Fire Chief made the decision to summon the Boston Fire Department for assistance.

BFD Operations

Staff member and retired BFD Commissioner Paul Christian supplies this information on BFD operations:

Fire fighting protocol for US Navy (and USCG) calls for the ship board fire-fighting party to initiate fire fighting. When they feel the effort is beyond their capabilities, the Captain will call for the Navy Yard Fire Department (an action which done only when he feels it is absolutely necessary.). Captains are very reluctant to allow anyone beyond their own command, to handle matters on their ship.

When the Navy Yard FD determines the fire is beyond their capabilities, they call for the city fire department - again an action that is usually quite delayed. At the time of this fire there was a Navy Yard FD in the South Boston Naval Annex and they did respond. The Charlestown Navy Yard also had a FD at that time, but I do not know if they responded to South Boston.

It is safe to say that the fire had considerable headway before the BFD responded.
Ship board fires are very manpower intensive - and they take quite a toll on firefighters given the extreme heat, limited access and dependence of self -contained breathing apparatus Navy OBA's (Oxygen Breathing Apparatus - rebreathers).

Ship board operations usually commence with compartmentation of the fire area all the sides and top and bottom. Compartment flooding with CO2 (steam and foam have also been utilized in some cases) is utilized and hose lines will be run and operated to cool the bulkheads and prevent extension of fire.

I had swapped that night, or I would have been there with Engine 43!

Fire Alarm received the call for the fire at 1807 hours. The fire had been burning for over an hour! Box 7529 was struck for the Annex. District 6 and Southie Companies turned out. Engine 31, the McTighe cast off and started for the Annex and Dry Dock No. 3. Division 1 was also responding.

With the arrival of first alarm companies they began operations as C6 and Car 6 went aboard and conferred with the Annex Duty Chief, Captain Hammett and the officers manning Damage Control Central to formulate a plan of attack. Companies were ordered to use their Chemox masks and those available on board the Lexington. The engines grabbed hydrants and laid in to the Dry Dock. Each Companies was led by a sailor with OBA to guide them through the smoke to the fire area. Additional manpower was summoned from sailors stationed at the Annex.

Due to the smoke and heat conditions and the toll it was taking on the crew and the firefighters. Ambulances were summoned to the scene from the BCH along with Ambulettes from both the Boston and M.D.C. Police. One firefighter was transported to the BCH for inhalation of toxic fumes.

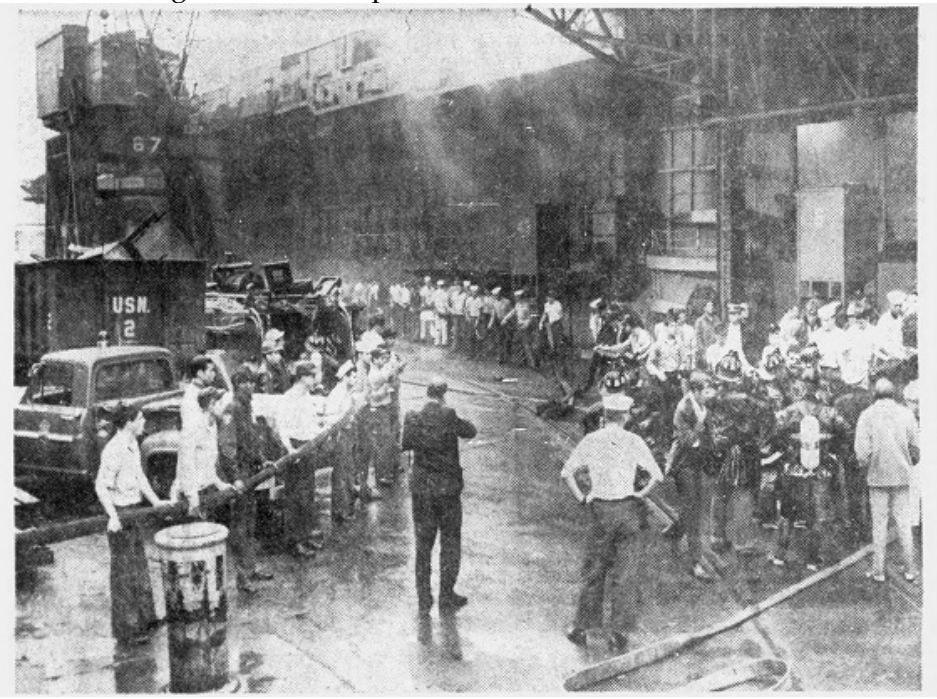


Photo by Bill Brett, Boston Globe Archives

Suppression efforts continued with little progress being made. Acting Chief of Department George Paul ordered a third alarm at 1854 hours and after reports that the fire had spread into the Number 1 Fire Room. Conferring with naval officers and BFD Chiefs it was thought that foam operations may be needed to quell the blaze. Engine Companies 5 and 20 were special called on the third alarm. At the time of the fire these were two of the designated foam engines in the fleet carrying the tried and true 3% mechanical foam.

One of the benefits of having additional sailors on scene was that manpower was available to stretch both supply and attack lines freeing firefighters to try and push their way through the noxious smoke into the engine room.

The cooling of compartments surrounding the engine and fire rooms was starting to show some progress in cooling these areas. This was allowing the attack to continue on the main body of fire.

On the flight deck a rehab area had been set up with oxygen resuscitators additional air bottles and cartridges for use in both the OBA's, Chemox and Scott masks

As time wore on, crews were able to push into the engine room and knock the main body of fire down. The thick smoke was still an issue and venting was still proving to be difficult.

By 2130 hours companies were being returned to their quarters and A/Chief Paul sent the Allout at 2204 hours, turning the operation back to the Lexington's crew.
Fire Commissioner James Kelly received the following letter of appreciation from the Yard Commander and was published in General Order No. 37 of September 19th 1969:

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

September 19, 1969 The following letter received by the Fire Commissioner is hereby published for the information of the department:

"Dear Commissioner: "On Sunday, 7 September 1969, acting on a request from the Boston Naval Shipyard, men and equipment from your department immediately responded to a serious fire aboard the USS LEXINGTON (CVT16). "The Shipyard wishes to express its appreciation for the outstanding service rendered by your firefighters. The assistance obtained from them materially aided in the protection of the ship and personnel, both military and civilian, from the many hazards associated with shipboard fires. "The dedication and professionalism displayed by your men at the scene was the major factor in reducing the seriousness of the fire. "Your cooperation and assistance in this instance and in the past is greatly appreciated.

Signed/ J. T. Collins Captain, USN Acting Shipyard Commander"

Box 7529 666 Summer Street

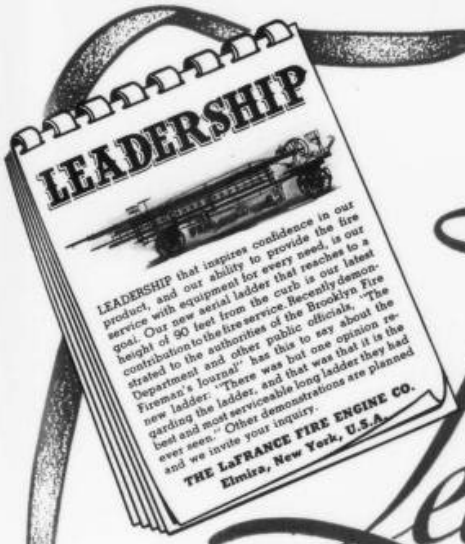
Time	Alarm	Engines	Ladders	Rescue	Chiefs
1807	7529	2, 39, 1, 31	19, 18	R	D6, C6
1828	2-7529	25, 7, 3, 43, 47	8, 20		D12, C2
1854	3-7529	20*, 10, 5*, 8			
2201	Allout				

Special thanks to Captain William Malloy USN retired and LB Staffer and retired BFD Fire Commissioner Paul Christian.



USS Lexington Museum Ship, courtesy of the USS Lexington Museum

Today, the USS Lexington is a museum ship in Corpus Christi, Texas. The memorial is located in Lexington opposite the Battle Green in front of the Buckman Tavern.



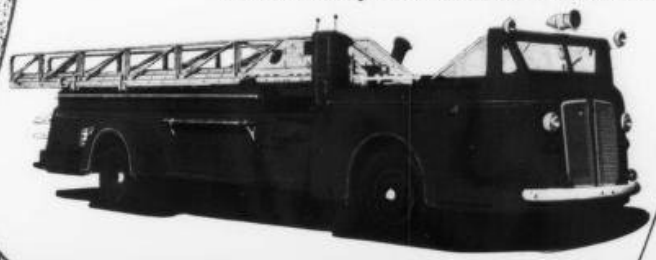
Leadership

today carries a greater responsibility to the fire service than required 75 years ago when the above pictured aerial truck was built. Since that time refinement and improvement in aerial ladder and truck design has been almost continuous to meet the changing needs of the fire service. American LaFrance is building the most complete line of modern aerial ladder trucks for the fire service. Four wheel and tractor drawn types are available to meet every need. The line of 4-wheel aerials is complete with aerial ladders available in lengths of 65 feet, 75 feet, 85 feet or 100 feet. All models are amply powered for road performance in keeping with modern traffic requirements.

The all-steel aerial ladder is one man operated with hydraulic power. The entire ladder is constructed of high tensile strength, corrosion resisting U.S.S. Cor-ten steel, and is the strongest aerial ladder ever offered to the fire service. Every safety feature essential to the control and operation of the aerial ladder is built into the structure. The highly maneuverable, compact yet accessible design of the 4-wheel aerial is finding increasing favor of the fire service for such reasons as:

LOWER COST — **BETTER DRIVER VISION**
SHORTER LENGTH — **EQUAL UTILITY**
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BETTER ROAD PERFORMANCE

Write for complete data on these modern aerials.



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Houston, Texas
Lincoln, Nebr.

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