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**Celebrating 225 years of the Union Fire Company
and volunteer firefighting in Cumberland County**



TO THE RESCUE

June 27, 2014
Cumberland
Golf Club





A History of the Union Fire Company

1789 – 2013

By Randy Watts

The Union Fire Company was formally organized on April 6, 1789. The move to form the fire company had started after a devastating fire that destroyed several houses in the area of what is now 9 North Hanover Street. The company copied by-laws widely used by other fire companies of the era that can be traced to the Union Fire Company of Philadelphia formed in 1736. They ordered a hand engine from Philadelphia and built a shed to house it on the square near the present Civil War Soldiers monument.

The company became inactive by 1807 and languished until it was re-organized in 1819. In 1821 the Union Fire Company and the Cumberland Fire Company (1809) built a two story Town Hall. The apparatus was housed on the first floor and each company occupied half of the space. This building and the adjoining Court House were destroyed by an arson fire in March 1845. Three of the four hand engines and both hose carriages were destroyed.

The town's citizens quickly raised money to replace the lost engines and to help the fire companies rebuild. The Union built a one story frame building on West Louther Street. The town bought them a new Agnew engine and a hose carriage. In 1859 the Union built a new two story brick fire house on this lot (34 West Louther Street) and remained there until 1889.

The Union supplied many soldiers to the Union Army and several members died in service to their country in the Civil War. William E. Miller, a winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions at Gettysburg, was a long-time member and leader of the company after the war.

The Union celebrated its Centennial in a big way in 1889. They purchased one of the finest hose carriages in Pennsylvania, built the station still in service at 35 West Louther Street and hosted that year's State Fireman's Convention.

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The Union purchased their first steamer in 1870. It was replaced in 1896 by another Silsby which is now owned and preserved by the Easton Maryland Fire Company. The steamers, which weighed as much as 6,000 pounds, were hand pulled until 1910 when the town supplied the Union with horses.

The horses proved very expensive to feed and maintain and were replaced by a motorized engine in August 1913, the first in the Cumberland Valley. In fact the engine was not even placed in service when it was called to Newville to assist at a conflagration there.

The first soldier from Cumberland County to die in European combat during World War I was Orlando Newcomer, an active member of the Union.

In 1931 the Union organized its Rural Service to provide contracted fire protection in the townships around Carlisle after the borough refused to let their engines respond out of town. Originally they purchased an engine from the Prospect Manufacturing Company of Ohio, but this engine proved to be too small and was replaced by a Hahn engine in 1935. This engine is now preserved at the Pennsylvania National Fire Museum in Harrisburg.

The Union's first Line of Duty Death came in 1938 when Chief James Dysert died as a result of injuries he sustained at an earlier call.

Scores of Union members served in World War II, and two died while in service to their country.

The Union's Rural Service was modernized in 1954 with the purchase of their first tanker and again in 1955 with the purchase of a new Ward LaFrance engine. Since then, the company has continued to update and expand the services they offer to the town and surrounding areas. In 1977 a three bay addition to the west of the 1888 station. This was extensively remodeled in 2010.



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Cumberland County's volunteer fire companies reflect a 225-year tradition of dedicated individuals organizing to protect their communities from the threat of destructive fire. When towns were small, fires were fought by bucket brigades, neighbors helping neighbors. As communities grew and the complexity of fire protection increased, fire companies were formed to purchase equipment and provide the organization needed to suppress fires.

The first fire companies were in the larger towns; Carlisle, Shippensburg, Mechanicsburg, Newville and Churchtown. All of these towns had fire companies before the Civil War.

In Carlisle the Union Fire Company was formed after a disastrous fire in late 1788 but became inactive around 1805. The Cumberland Fire Company formed in 1809 after a deadly fire in Carlisle's east end. The Union was revived in 1819 and additional companies formed as the town grew - the Good Will in 1855 and the Empire in 1859. Carlisle's last fire company, the Friendship, organized in 1911 as the town expanded.

Mechanicsburg also had an early fire company, the Pilot, founded in 1832. That company had a checkered existence and was replaced by the Washington Fire Company in 1858. As the town expanded, the Rescue Hook and Ladder was added in 1885. A disastrous fire in 1903 resulted in the formation of the Citizens Fire Company.

Newville also had several early fire companies, perhaps as early as 1833, but little definite information exists until the 1870s. The same can be said of Shiremanstown and New Kingstown; both reportedly had fire companies before 1880, but no verifiable history exists.

It seems likely Shippensburg may have had a fire company before the 1843 organization of the Vigilant Hose Company, but again no reliable information exists. The Cumberland Valley Hose Company was formed there in 1857. Over the years the Alert, Niagara and Keystone Hook and Ladder companies also existed there, but they did not survive for any length of time.

The smallest town to have a documented fire company before the Civil War is Churchtown. The Churchtown Union Fire Company records date to 1860 and the company's apparatus still exists.

Washington Fire Co. #1 of Mechanicsburg, Pa operated this 1917 Luverne which was apparently built on a high quality automobile chassis.



A number of fire companies formed between 1895 and the First World War, many after major fires that caused residents of the expanding towns to become concerned for the safety of their own homes. Much of this growth was fed by the expanding trolley network within the county.

Mount Holly organized its fire company in 1895. By 1902, Boiling Springs had a chemical fire engine that remained in service until the 1930s, when the company disbanded. With the growth of the Enola Yards several fire companies were formed there; Enola Fire Company (later Citizens) in 1905, Midway in 1907, and a fire brigade at the PRR's Enola yard around 1905.

On the West Shore the Citizens Fire Company of New Cumberland formed in 1895, Citizens of Lemoyne in 1906, Wormleysburg in 1909, West Fairview in 1908, Camp Hill in 1908 and Shiremanstown in 1908 after a major fire destroyed a number of buildings there. Another major fire led to the formation of the New Kingstown Fire Company in 1911.

Several fire companies formed in the years between the World Wars; Elkwood in Lower Allen Township adjacent to New Cumberland in 1922, Summerdale Fire Company in 1923, Lower Allen Township in 1934, and Williams Grove in 1937 as part of the park.

The Grantham Fire Company was formed in 1942, a new company in Boiling Springs in 1943, and West Enola in 1944, all out of a spirit of Civil Defense. Also during World War II, the Navy Depot was constructed and a paid fire company was started there in 1942. Cumberland County's other military installation, Carlisle Barracks, has had on-site fire protection since at least 1845 when it is documented that their hand engine assisted Carlisle as the Town Hall and Court House burned. The Carlisle Indian School had an active fire brigade operated by the students there until 1917, and since 1918, the post has had a paid fire company.



After the war suburban growth led to the founding of the Upper Frankford Fire Company in 1949, Penn Township in 1952, Hampden Township Fire Company, Silver Springs Fire Company and the Lisburn Fire Company in 1954, Newburg Hopewell in 1957, and North Middleton in 1959. The Friendship Hose Company of Newville opened a sub-station in Plainfield in 1954, and in 1961, this group became the West Pennsboro Fire Company.

The last companies formed in the 1970s; the Creekside in East Pennsboro Township in 1974 and the South Newton Fire Company, formerly a sub-station of the Vigilant of Shippensburg, in 1976.

With improvements in technology, increasing pressure to reduce costs and declining volunteer rosters, the number of fire companies in the county has decreased in past decades. One of the first mergers of volunteer fire companies in Pennsylvania was the 1966 merger of the Elkwood and Citizens Fire Companies in New Cumberland. In 1975, the Rescue of Mechanicsburg merged into the Citizens Fire Company. In Carlisle the Cumberland, Good Will, Empire and Friendship have all been merged into Carlisle Fire Rescue Services. On the West Shore the Citizens of Lemoyne and the Wormleysburg Fire Company merged into the West Shore Bureau of Fire. Recently the South Middleton Fire Company was merged with Mount Holly and the Citizens of Enola and Summerdale merged to form Northeast Fire and Rescue. Other mergers are in the planning stages.

While it seems likely that volunteer firefighters will remain a vital part of fire protection in Cumberland County for years to come, it has been necessary for a number of communities to add paid drivers in recent years, especially during daylight hours. The trends of additional paid firefighters and consolidation seem likely to continue.



The first known fire house in Monroe Township. This structure – a bit worse for wear at the time of this image – was located on High Street in the Village of Churchtown and housed the fire company's two hand-drawn fire engines.

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M&Z began in 1946 by James J. Macdonald. James, a native of Boston, was sent to Carlisle for fighter-pilot training at Dickinson College during the war effort. After the war, he returned to Carlisle with his bride, Veryl, who was from nearby Mt. Holly Springs. With jobs hard to find after the war, James began refinishing and reupholstering furniture (which he learned from a "how-to" book). The name "M&Z" came from "Macdonald" and "Zell", who was his partner in the early years.

Area rug cleaning was added into the business the following year. Shortly after that the demand for wall-to-wall carpet was beginning to grow. James capitalized on this by developing a long lasting relationship with Masland Carpets, a major carpet manufacturer in Carlisle, PA. He would regularly take his trucks to the mill to pick up loads of remnants and rolls of carpet. M&Z quickly became one of Masland's largest customers.

In 1961, M&Z expanded to open another store in Mechanicsburg. Several years later, M&Z crossed the river to Harrisburg. With 3 large stores in central Pennsylvania, M&Z became the area's premier carpet retailer.

M&Z is a local family business. James J. Macdonald, the founder, comes to work everyday and monitors the operations. His son Steve is president. Bill Downs, James's son-in-law, is the general manager. Ted Macdonald, another son, is in charge of the workroom and cleaning operation.

325 Arch Street
Carlisle, PA 17013
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6029 Carlisle Pike
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
Phone (717) 766-0288

4747 Jonestown Road
Harrisburg, PA
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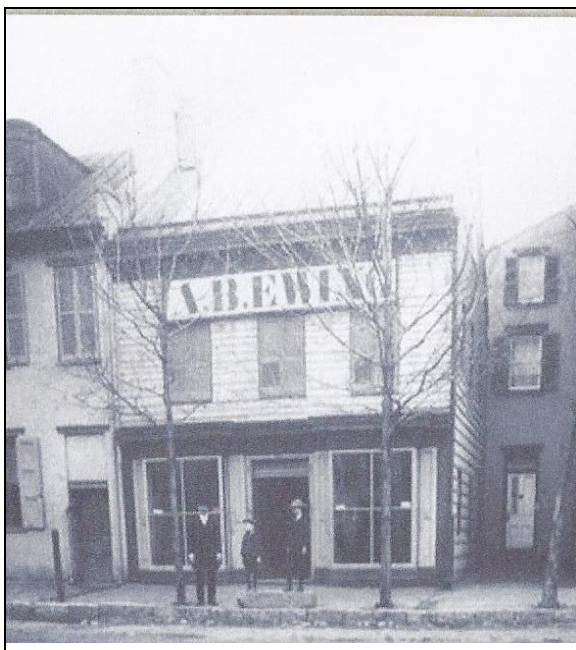
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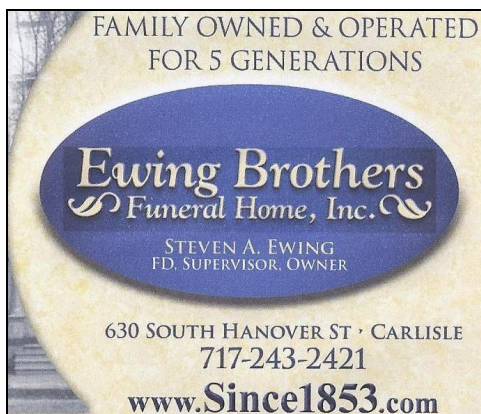


1853



2014

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Jessie Morrison Ewing, FD (1892 ~ 1988)

William J. Ewing, FD (1898 ~ 1934)

Hastings A. Ewing, FD(1866 ~ 1924)

Alexander B. Ewing, FD(1831 ~ 1903)



Richard "Dick" Dutrey 1927 -2014

Cumberland County was in Dick Dutrey's blood. His roots go back in Cumberland County for many generations and forward to include all of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Dick's involvements in the Cumberland County Historical Society (CCHS) demonstrate his love for local history.

Dick volunteered many hours to C.C.H.S. during his retirement and was honored as volunteer of the year in 1996. His pet projects included various programming, the Museum and the 1996 expansion.

Dick was also heavily involved in the Union Fire Company from a very early age. His home was only two doors down from the fire house. While still in high school, he, his father Paul, and his big brother Bob, responded to all the calls, all hours of the day and night. Their boots and gear were kept by the back door.

As a member of the fire company, Dick was instrumental in fundraising to purchase a critically needed tanker truck to help fight rural fires. He was also instrumental in preserving the Union's rich history. He was Asst. Hose Director 1944-1945 and 1951-1954, Asst. Foreman 1955, and Chief Foreman 1958. He was also a trustee in 1958, 1960 and 1964. The family's involvement in the Union was "passed down" and mentored from generation to generation since the Civil War.

He was also involved in many other facets of life in Cumberland County. A few of these were as a long time owner of Dutrey's Shoes; board member of Project 61 (a redevelopment plan of the downtown in the 60's); board member of Cumberland County Municipal Authority; active member of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Dick remained active in the community right up to the end with his involvement on the board of the Cumberland County Municipal Authority.

Carlisle could always count on Dick Dutrey to lend his support wherever it was needed and worthy.

Muster Rules

-The Tee Markers are small replicas of antique fire engines with color coded ladders.

- All Women will hit from the Red Tees
- All Men 65 and older will hit from the Black Tees
- Men 64 and younger will hit from the White Tees
- All players will hit from the same Tees on the Par 3's, which are color coded Red, White, & Black

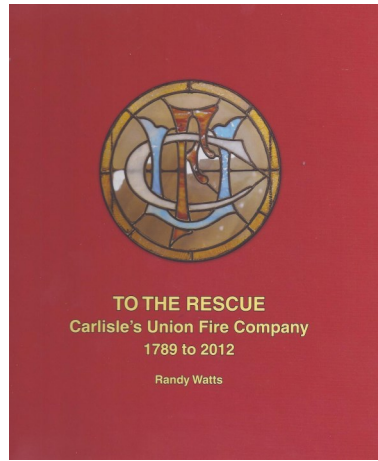
- All players must use a hickory shafted club on hole # 11. Clubs will be provided at the tee. Do not use a regular club from your bag on this tee. You must have purchased a ticket to be eligible for the prize.

-This is a scramble. The best ball of the 4 team players will be selected on each shot from the tee into the hole. Each player must use three tee shots. First ball in hole ends play.

-The ball may be moved one (1) club length, no closer to the hole, except when on the green, in a sand trap or behind a hazard (e.g. tree).

-The total number of strokes, using the best ball on each shot, will be recorded on the score card for each hole. At the end of the round, the 18 hole score will be totaled, signed and turned into the Scorekeeper.

-To maintain pace of play, please adhere to limit of one mulligan per player.



Written by Randy Watts, the story is told in 12 detailed chapters based on extensive research from the company's records and over 220 years of newspaper articles and other documents. It relates the history of the company to the life of Carlisle since its founding in 1751. The story is enhanced with nearly 200 photographs, maps and graphics (many never published).

It is an exciting story told in the words of people who watched it unfold. This book is perfect for the reader who enjoys the history of the local area, volunteer fire service, and America!

Copies are available at
History On High – The Shop, 35 W. High Street
10% discount to CCHS members

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Historical Society**

A young boy with short brown hair, seen from the back and side, is looking over a swimming pool. He is wearing orange swim trunks. The pool has blue lane lines and other people are visible in the background. A large, semi-transparent blue cross is overlaid on the image, serving as a background for the text.

LIVE FEARLESSSM

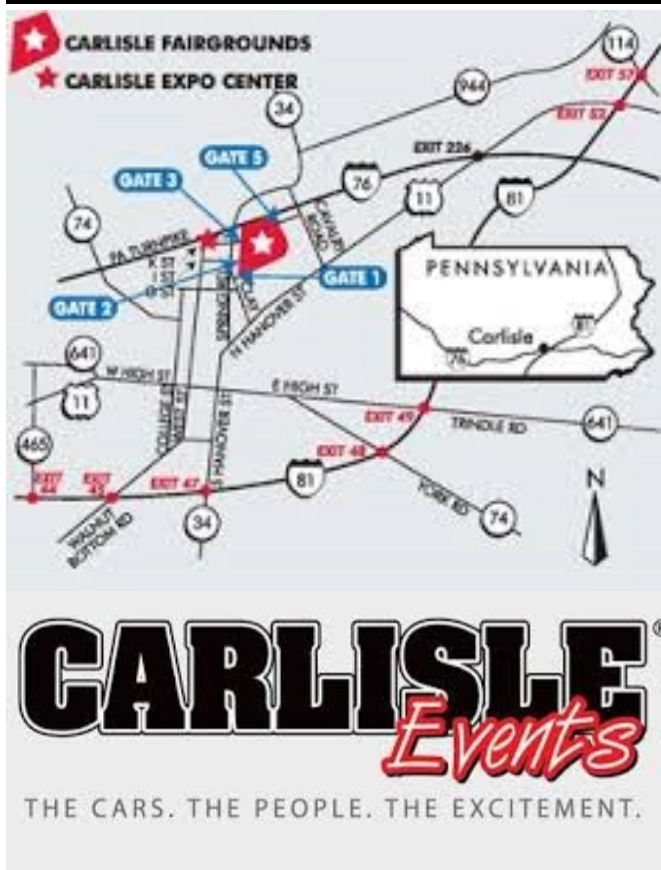
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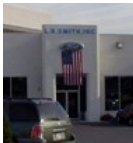
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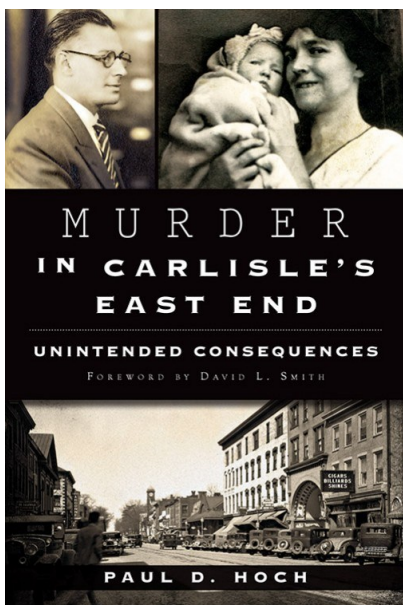
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On July 12, 1926, Frances Bowermaster McBride, a forty-year-old divorcée, called off her affair with twenty-seven-year-old Norman Morrison. Driven into a rage, Morrison tracked Frances to her home in Carlisle's East End, where she sat on the porch with her three-year-old daughter, Georgia, on her lap. Morrison shot and killed Frances before turning the pistol on himself. Morrison lived but was blinded. Young Georgia fell to the pavement unharmed.

Eventually standing trial, Morrison was convicted of first-degree murder. Historian Paul D. Hoch goes beyond the conviction as he traces the later lives of Morrison and Georgia McBride as she came of age in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Hoch spins a tale of murder, perseverance and, ultimately, redemption.

Retail Price: \$19.99 | ISBN: 9781626195158 | 128 pp.

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Ewing Brothers Funeral Home, Inc. Established 1853



Alexander Black (A.B.) Ewing was the only son of Armstrong and Elizabeth (Zimmerman) Ewing. He was born in Middletown, Dauphin County, PA on March 23, 1831. He came to Carlisle when he was eighteen and learned the trade of cabinetmaking and undertaking with Henry Fetter. In 1851, he married Miss Elizabeth Shrom. Together they had five children: four girls: Miss Florence V, Mrs. Samuel Gensler, Mrs. Grace Kieffer, Mrs. Herbert Bender; and one boy, Hastings A. All five children resided in Carlisle. He began business for himself in 1853 on the same premises until his death.

After the death of his daughter, Florence, he joined the St. John's Episcopal Church. He was a prominent member of fraternal orders in Carlisle. A.B. was a member of St. Johns Lodge, No. 260, F. & A.M.; St. John's Chapter, No. 171, St. John's Commandery, No. 8. The I.O.O.F.; No. 91, of which he had been a member for 52 years, and a conductor of the lodge for 37 years. He was also a member of the I.O.R.M.; No. 108, and of the Union Fire Company, in which he took great interest and was President for four years. He was the next to the oldest Mason and the next-oldest Odd Fellow in Carlisle. He was President of the Funeral Directors Association in the Southern District of Pennsylvania.

The title of Colonel was conferred to A.B. by unanimous consent of the community. It happened when the Confederate forces came to Carlisle and the U.S. troops stationed at the garrison fled to Harrisburg. Since he was the Post undertaker, he was left in sole command. A. B. died September 23, 1903. His death caused a great sense of sadness and loss to a very wide circle in Carlisle. His funeral was held from his residence at 159 West High Street, Carlisle. A.B. is buried in Ashland Cemetery.