



LANDMARK GOES DOWN. The Peoples Hotel on First Street was once a center of activity and the walls could tell many tales about early life in Morehead. The hotel was destroyed in this fire November, 1946. Sam Allens Store was also destroyed.
Photo: Art Stewart

Jack Ellis

Peoples Hotel Fire
FIRST ST. NOV. 1946
Sam Allens Store (Foreground)

I have home MOVIES OF
THE FIREMEN EQUIPMENT
THIS FIRE IN MOREHEAD: 1946.

Art Student

From The Collection Of

Dr. Jack D. Ellis

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Dr. Jack D. Ellis
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Morehead Memories — People and Places

Fire, water and firemen, part 1

Continued from Page A-6

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Fire truck would not start - house burned

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Melvin Hamm had asked my father, and he had agreed, to serve as one of the volunteer firemen. After attending a couple of training sessions, he got his first fire call one below-zero bitter cold February night.

He jumped up, put on his clothes and ran to the fire station. But he returned in an hour sweating profusely. They were unable to get the old fire truck

started. The men had pushed the truck down Bishop Avenue and Railroad Street, but it never did start.

Unfortunately, the home of Mr. and Mrs. D.B. Cornett on Fifth Street burned to the ground. (My father was so disgusted that he ended his fire fighting career before it was started). Therefore, on May 12, 1943, the City of Morehead purchased its third truck in 18 years.

But not before it was badly needed.

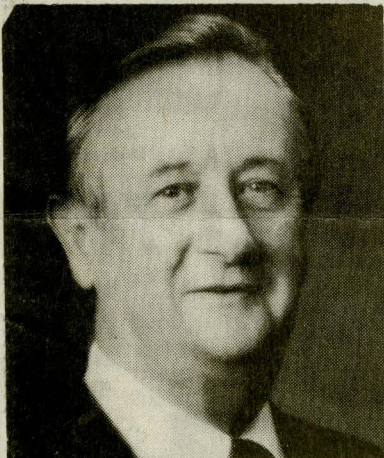
Correction

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However, Faye is alive and now living in Anderson, Ind. Her name is Faye (Sparkman) Anderson.



The People's Hotel, a three-story wooden structure owned by Ezra Proctor, was destroyed by fire in 1946. The small, one-story structure in the foreground was Sam Allen's grocery store. They were located on what is now First Street next to the Big Store. (Photo courtesy of Roger and Bernice Barber).



About the author

Dr. Jack D. Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library Director and a retired minister.



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Boy

More

1939

MEMORIES OF PARADES
PAST.

3cals

BOY SCOUTS AND VOLUNTEER
FIREMEN RIDE AND OLD
FIRETRUCK DRIVEN BY

CHIEF I.C.B. McCULLOUGH
HEADED WEST DOWN

MAIN STREET IN JULY
1939 PARADE

VIEW IS FROM CORNER OF
NORMAL AVE AND MAIN
STREET. THE S.M. CAUDILL

BUILDING WAS UNDER
CONSTRUCTION. (BUILDING

NOW OWNED BY GRIFFITH
MECHANICAL COMPANY).

truck

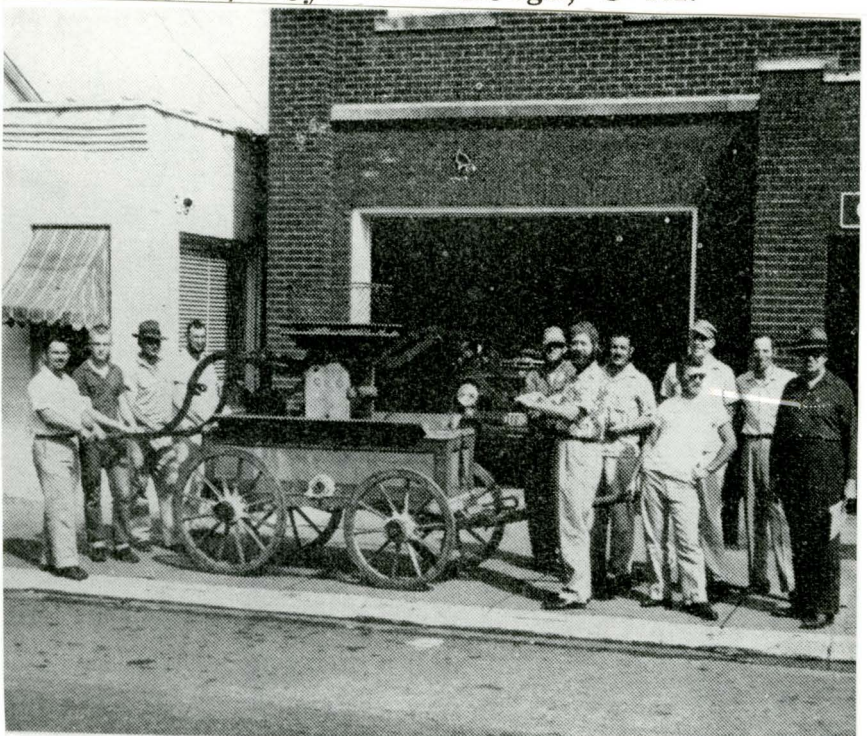
e

de - ~~1939~~

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Firemen; from left: Bobbie Grey, Denny Northcutt, John Bays, C. G. Clayton, Jimmy Williams, Curley Barker, Creed Patrick, Roy Reynolds, Walter Calvert, Talmadge Cline, Boyd McCullough, Chief.



K CITY FIREMEN
DEMONSTRATE EARLY
HAND PUMPER
THAT WAS USED
IN MOREHEAD
IN THE 1920S

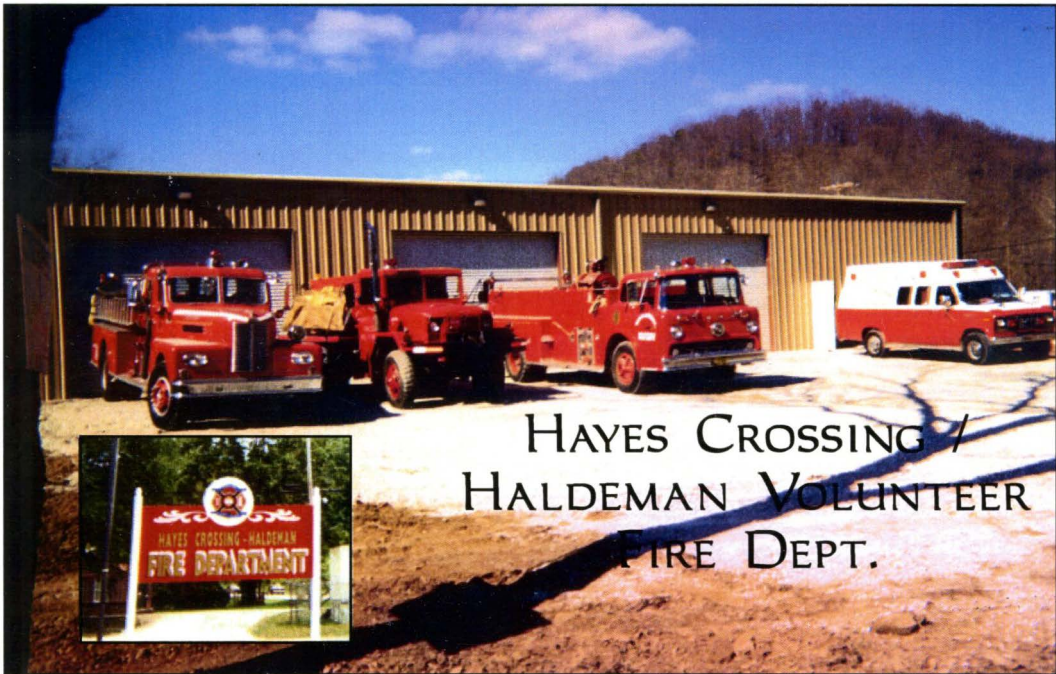
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IX (6)

MOREHEAD FIRE DEPT
DEMONSTRATE A

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HAND PUMPER
1900

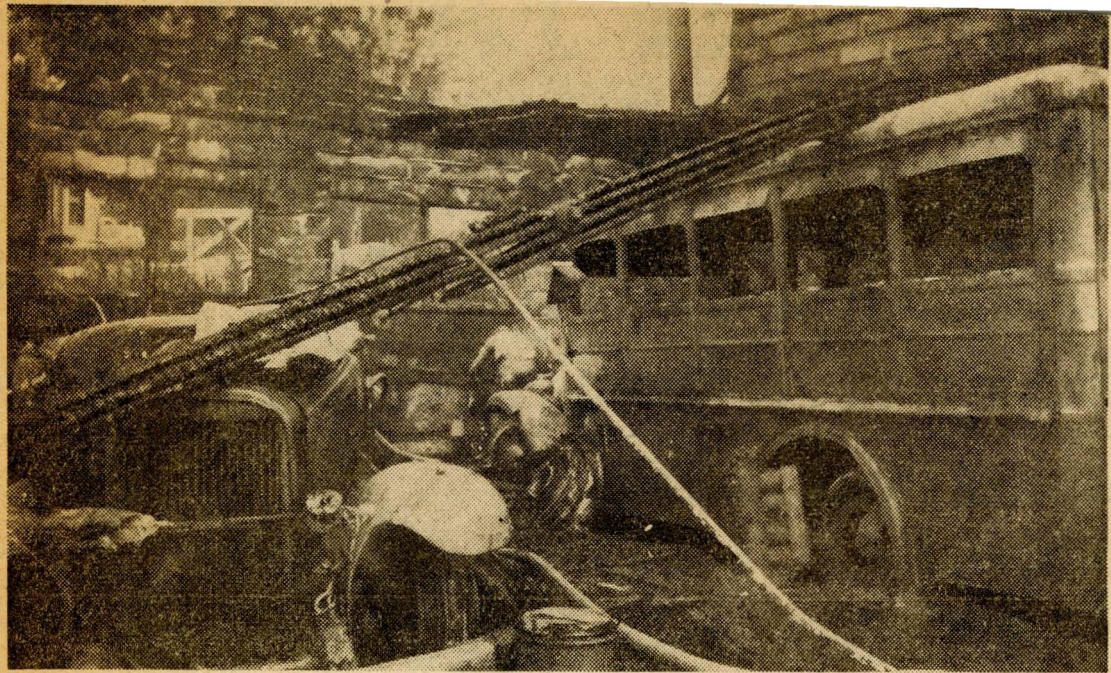


HAYES CROSSING /
HALDEAMAN VOLUNTEER
FIRE DEPT.



HAYES CROSSING / HALDEMAN
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.
6400 U.S. 60 EAST
MOREHEAD, KY 40351

**From The Collection Of:
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
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Morehead, KY 40351
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From The Collection of ⁵⁻⁴ ~~Miss~~
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
552 W. Sun St. 80,000
Morehead, KY 40351
606-794-7473 39

32 CARS
& BUSES
DESTROYED
IN FIRE ON
MAIN ST

John
JULY 5 1939



DurhamEvans Vows Read

The marriage of Miss Madeline Durham, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Durham of Soldier



LANDMARK GOES—The Peoples Hotel in Morehead was once the center of activity and the walls could tell many stories about the early life in the town. The hotel was destroyed in this fire in November, 1946.

MOREHEAD, W. VA.

Fire Department Due Great Praise For Good Work

ONLY
1938

FIRST FIRE RESCUE

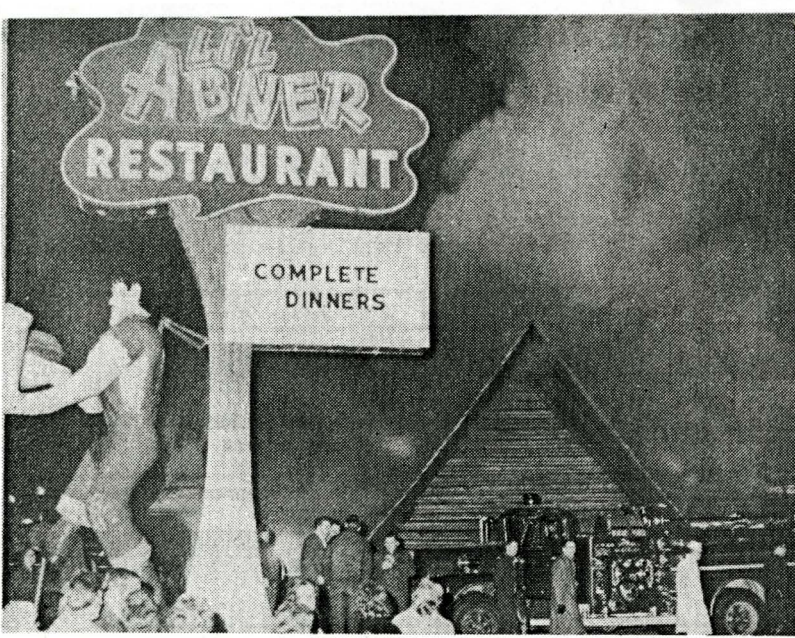
Department Saves Numerous Buildings By Heroic Efforts During Blaze

In the mad scramble following the flood, most citizens of Morehead have overlooked the excellent work done by the Morehead Fire Department on the morning of the fire which completely destroyed the City Hotel.

AND 7 BUSES

The fire, one of the most disastrous in the history of Morehead, completely destroyed the City Hotel and seven school busses, at an estimated loss of \$75,000 to Alf Casky. The fire when the department arrived had made astonishing headway, and spectators were convinced that the entire block would go in the flames. The outstanding work of the firemen confined the blaze to the one building.

Property owners whose buildings were threatened are unanimous in their praise of the work done by the volunteer fire department under the leadership of Lon Fannin.



In 1964, Morehead's firemen fought to contain the fire that destroyed the Li'l Abner Restaurant on East Main Street at College Boulevard. (Bob Grey photo).



Morehead firemen at their annual dinner in the 1950s. From left are Boyd McCullough, Walter "Tag" Calvert, John Bays, Ora Cline, Herb Elam, Curley Barker, Jim Williams, unidentified, unidentified, Bob Grey, Wallace Fannin, Creed Patrick, unidentified, C.G. Clayton, Joe Mauk, Cecil Landreth, Adrian Razor and W.H. Rice. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

14
 writer's father-in-law rented his small cabin to two of the carnival workers. Then late on night, as he accidentally walked behind the cabin, he caught two people climbing through a window.

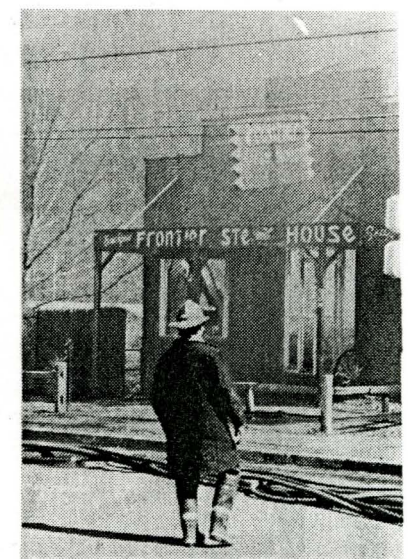
He went around to the front door and returned their money and told them to leave. There were eight people that left. But fortunately, thanks to the keen sense of smell by Blind Jim Day there was no loss of life in the hotel blaze. But most of the guests who escaped were only wearing their night clothes. However, no one complained because they were all alive.

Firemen respond quickly

Morehead's firemen responded quickly to that fire call. As they arrived, the whole block seemed to be ablaze. People were standing around dazed, in their night clothes, not knowing what to do.



Lionel "Lon" Fannin, C&O ticket agent, and Morehead's fire chief in 1939, during the flood and fire.



Fire destroyed Morehead's (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

Fire, water and firemen, part 1

Continued from Page A-6

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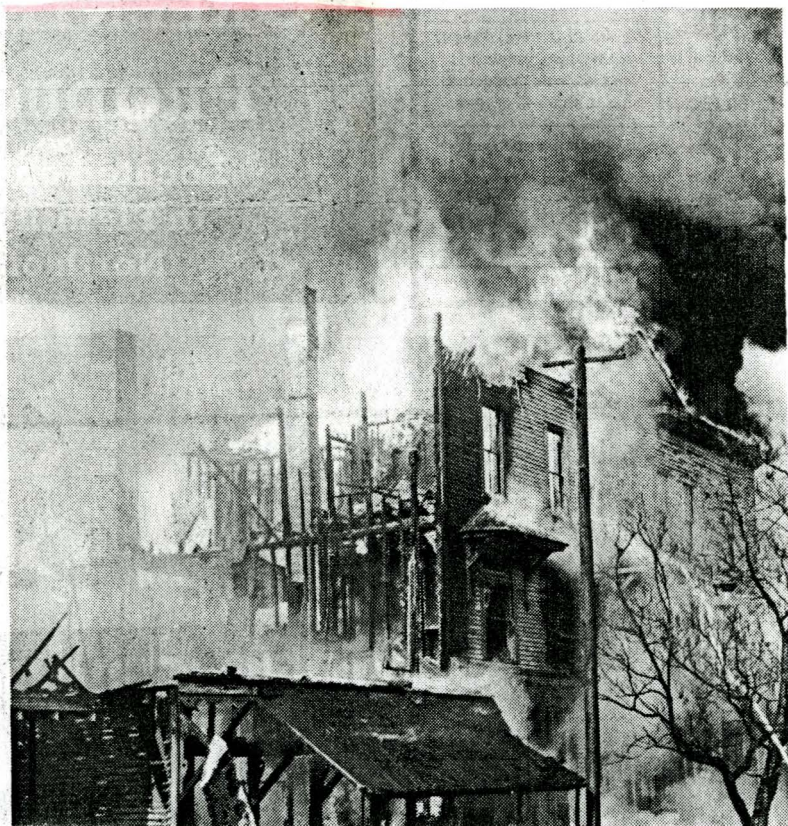
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PART I

A

Morehead Memories — People and Places

Fire, water and firemen, part 1

By Jack Ellis

"We went through fire and through water, but you brought us out." (Psalm 66:12)

Every city and town across this great land of ours has had many major fires and valiant firefighters. Morehead is no exception, and throughout history has had a record of disastrous fires and courageous firemen. Morehead, just as in every community, has tried to make proper preparation to combat those fires when they occurred.

Early fires fought with buckets

During the late 1800s, most of the city's fire fighting was done by friends and neighbors as they formed bucket brigades. By the early 1900s, not much had changed in the city's ability to extinguish those fires as they occurred.

However, practically every fire was a lesson in fire fighting futility, because by the time help arrived, it was too late, and about all that could be saved was a few pieces of furniture and a few personal items.

The reasons for that was the buildings were made of highly combustionable wood and the slow response time, as well as the shortage of available water.

Power plant fire prompts purchase of fire engine

Feb. 12, 1914, was a bitter cold night in Morehead. That was also the night that the new Morehead Power Plant

BURNED AND WAS

behind the present Dixie Grill.

With the acquisition of the new fire engine, the local fire fighting success rate improved. But the volunteer firefighters consisted of those eager individuals who could get to the fire first after the alarm sounded. (Before the fire alarm was installed, the local church bells were used as a fire alarm). But those that responded had very

little or no training. However, they were willing and eager to learn, but more organization and structure was needed.

Morehead's first firemen appointed

On Dec. 11, 1922, the city council recognized that more was needed for a volunteer fire department than to just sound the alarm and see who responded. Therefore, they appointed Isaac Blair as the first fire chief. (He was local residents' Don and Paul Blair's grandfather).

They also appointed the following men as the first members of the Morehead Volunteer Fire Department: V. Hunt, Leo Oppenheimer, Hartley Battson, Moody Alderman, Oliver Caudill, Earl Young, Tom Hogge, J.B. Calvert Sr., Melvin Hamm, Alf Caskey and D.C. Caudill.

Those men formed the first structured Morehead Volunteer Fire Department. They were required to attend some meetings and have some training. Therefore, after the city

HAD A NEW TRUCK AND

the right mix of manpower machines and water at the right time.

Following that fire, city council authorized a committee to make a recommendation for a new fire engine.

On Feb. 9, 1926, the search committee requested the city purchase a second fire engine. They recommended the vehicle be purchased from the Boyer Fire Apparatus Company of Logansport, Ind. The new fire engine was "state of the art" first line equipment and consisted of a fire engine mounted on Ford chassis and engine. The total cost was \$2,700, which was expensive for that time.

Severe drought limits water to four hours a day

1930 was the year of one of the greatest droughts in this region. Like the summer of 1999, it rained very little in the spring and even less in the summer.

The drought was so severe that the city rationed water to its customers. Finally, the water shortage became so critical that the water was turned off 20 of the 24 hours each day.

If it had not been for the vision of the city fathers (and mothers) who made the decision in the 1960s to go to Licking River for Morehead's water supply, we would probably be a that state today.

In 1960, it became apparent that if Morehead was to ever grow, it must have more water. The city council consisted of George Hill, Paul J. Reynold, Bobby Allen, Roger Caudill, Austin Riddle and Wilbur

1925-MOREHEAD WAS A 5TH CLASS CITY

People and Places

15 15

The firemen quickly moved the people back and set up a barrier as they connected their hoses and started pouring water into the fiery inferno.

Someone called the Olive Hill fire department and they soon responded. Both fire crews valiantly battled the blaze until long after daylight and at one time it appeared that the whole city block would burn.

Among those firemen who fought that major fire and flood on successive nights were: Chief Lionel Fannin, C.B. McCullough, Tag Calvert, Cecil Landreth, John Bays, Joe Mauk, Mason Jayne, Ernest Jayne, Luther Jayne and many others. Those men helped to establish the high standard of courage and sacrifice for all of Morehead's future firefighters.



A July 4, 1939 fire destroyed the Caskey Hotel and several businesses on Main Street in Morehead the night before the 1939 flood. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

Allen family fought to save their store

On July 4, 1939, young Hubert Allen lived above their family-owned business almost directly across the street from the hotel. He vividly recalled being awakened that night about 2 a.m. by the sirens, as the fire truck came dashing down the street.

He and his family got up and went downstairs and out on the street. Hubert recalled, "The heat was so intense we had to move away from our building, and it seemed certain the whole block would burn."

Hubert said his job was to get on top of their roof with a shovel, and as the burning embers landed on their roof, he would shovel them over the side.

However, their windows were all broken anyway, but their building survived even though all the eyewitnesses thought the whole city block would be destroyed. Also those spectators said, except for the herculean effort by Morehead's valiant volunteer fire fighters, the whole block would have burned.

Morehead fire chief Lionel Fannin said that the absence of any wind that night was the deciding factor in being able to contain the fire to one building and those businesses located in that building.

Hubert Allen's sister, Bess, went to bed early the next night after being up all night fighting to keep their building from catching fire. She said before retiring for the night, "I'm so tired it will sure take more than

(17) bottle. Some were actually located unexploded, under the fallen timbers.

Most of the surrounding buildings had some smoke and water damage, as well as broken windows. The Eagles Nest suffered \$300 damage the night of the fire and \$500 the next night in the flood.

Also, those displaced carnival people who barely escaped the fire with their life, would, the next night, barely escape the flash flood with their life. (I doubt if any of them ever returned to Morehead).

They had been hit with a double "whammy."

Pucky Jayne Bradley, whose family was one family that was damaged by both the fire and the flood, recalled her experience the night of the fire.

She recalled standing across the street and watching the firefighters as they tried to contain the blaze. She also recalled some of them praying for rain to help contain the blaze. (Little did they realize the flood would come the next night).

Her dad, W.L. Jayne had a garage in an adjoining building, but was in the process of moving to a new site on East Main Street. (Present site of Larry Fannin Chevrolet).

The customer accounts were still in the building, so her dad sent someone into the building to get those papers.

"They were afraid that the building would burn also," she

looked because of the flood that came 24 hours later with such tragic loss of life. Those firemen had been up almost all night fighting fire and the next night they were up almost all night fighting for their homes and lives.

Fire chief Fannin lost everything he had in the flood, as did some of the other firemen. They were also called to help rescue flood victims and search for bodies.

Fire and flood brought maturity to volunteer firemen

Morehead's volunteer firemen came of age in those two nights. Like a military unit trained for combat, and when the battle came, they met the test of fire.

Thus, with those two major crises, they responded successfully to those crises! From that time on, the firemen knew they could succeed under almost any conditions. It instilled confidence and pride in their unit.

There were other major fire: People's Hotel on Railroad Street, "Li'l Abner" Restaurant on East Main Street and the Roger Lewis business and hotel on Main Street and others.

But in each case the Morehead Volunteer Fire Department has responded with great courage and success. Today they are second to none in volunteer fire departments. Many of these volunteers go on to become professional firefighters in municipal fire departments.

again to try and keep the water out of the store.

Seven businesses and seven buses destroyed

In addition to the hotel, there were seven other businesses located in that building that were destroyed in that fire. Those businesses were Caskey Tire Company, Caskey Taxi Cab Company, Trail Barber Shop, Morehead Real Estate Company, Parkers Pool Room, W.P.A. Packhorse Library, seven school buses owned by Alf Caskey and leased to the county and the Snell and Wendell (S&W) Liquor Store.

Some bourbon bottles salvaged

In preparation for the 4th of July celebration, the S&W Liquor Store had just received a large shipment of bourbon and scotch whiskey. And all through the night as those bottles exploded by the intense heat, it sounded like gunfire.

Also, that highly flammable alcohol added fuel to the flames. But the next day, some of the local characters known for tipping the bottle, frantically searched through the blackened embers looking for an unexplod-

brought home and the next night the flood came and they had to be moved upstairs since water was about five feet deep on the first floor."

One could say those records were permanent since they withstood both flood and fire.

Great loss of property - no loss of life

Mr. Alf Caskey's loss in the fire was estimated at \$75,000, none of which he said was covered by insurance. (In 1939, \$75,000 was probably like \$1 million today).

Most of the other businesses were covered by insurance. However, Caskey rebuilt his business even without insurance.

Morehead had suffered a major fire to its downtown business section. But the volunteer firemen were due great praise for their heroic efforts. They succeeded in saving many buildings because of their hard work.

But their efforts were over-

such as Ashland, Lewisville, Lexington and Georgetown, as well as in the state fire marshal's office.

Morehead's very capable full time fire chief, Dale Adkins says the department now has 40 volunteer firemen. They have four fire trucks, one pumper, one tanker, one ladder truck, two brush trucks and one air-lighting truck.

Last year the fire department responded to 475 calls. Hopefully you will never need them but when you do, they will be there quickly and know what to do.

During the past 100 years, Morehead has had 16 very capable fire chiefs. Those men are:

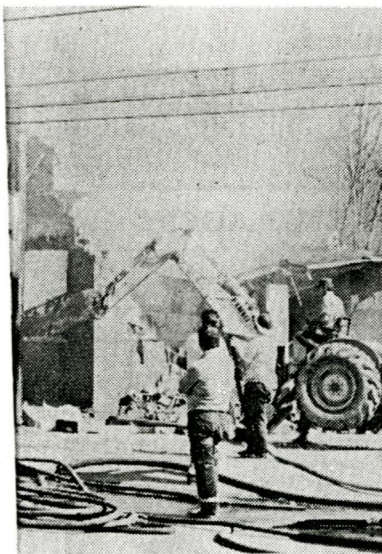
Isaac C. Blair, Melvin Hamm, Norman Wells, Jack Cecil, Lionel Fannin, C.B. McCullough, Walter "Tag" Calvert, Joe Mauk, William Lee Helwig,

Glenn Terrell, Harold Holbrook Jr., Raymond Adkins, William Hankinson, Ronnie Day, Randy Walker and Dale Adkins.

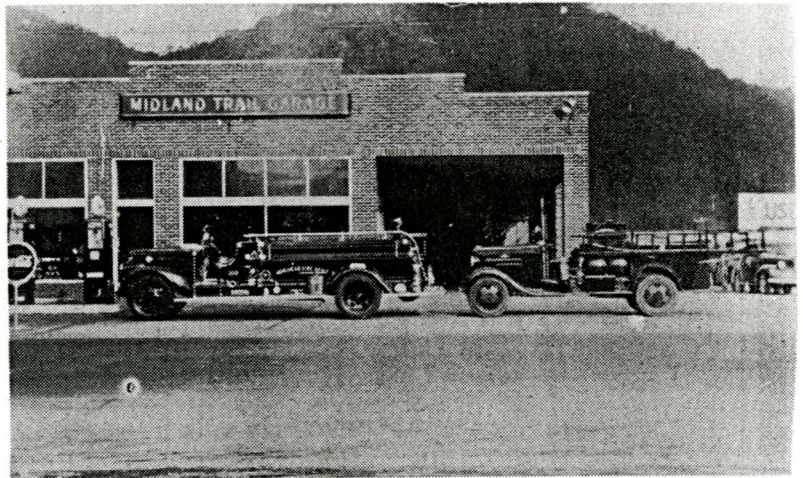
Correction

The article Fire, Water and Firemen Part I, dated Aug. 6, sub heading City Council Voted New Water System and Pipeline, the second paragraph should have read:

"The vote was tied. Mr. Hill, Reynolds and Allen voted to go to the river (not lake) ... That vote created a breach between the town and college (not city)."



Frontier Steak House in 1974. (Photo by Denny Northcutt).



Morehead's early fire trucks from the 1930-40 era. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

St. Claire bloo

Bus no. 9709 Driver Casten Rodburn
Fugh, pre-trip 6:15 a.m., leave home: 6:30 a.m.; 1st pickup is Cemetery: 6:45 a.m.; 1st pickup is on Seas Branch at Rowan Water Tower; 2nd is at foot of hill; 7:00 Veterans Lane; 7:03 up Old House Creek; Turn is at Muss Hollow & 86; go to high school, return home 8:15 a.m. 2:40 p.m. leave home, 3:00 high school, to Rt. 32, turn left up cold springs to Creek, turn left up cold springs to 1st rd, on right turn back down cross Old House Creek, go up Ewing Road, to end of road, & turn around, come back out to Rt. 32, turn left down Rt. 32 turn right on (7:20) Patty's Lick to of road turn right to Rt. 32 th left on Messer Road. Next right Applegate, then left on Rt. 32 Carpeland turn left into park lot; got to Rodburn school 7:30; high school kids off of bus #s 96 & 86; go to high school, return home 8:15 a.m. 2:40 p.m. leave home, 3:00 high school, to Rt. 32, turn left up cold springs to Creek, turn left up cold springs to 1st rd, on right turn back down cross Old House Creek, go up Ewing Road, to end of road, & turn around, come back out to Rt. 32, turn left down Rt. 32 turn home 4:30 p.m.

Rowan schoo

pletely destroyed by fire.

After connecting the city power lines to the Maggard and Bradley private power line, the city council decided more was needed to be done to improve the local fire fighting capability.

It was then that city council voted to purchase a fire engine and establish a fire department to be manned by volunteers.

The city immediately ordered its first fire engine from the American La France Fire Engine Company (a company still in business today).

The new engine was a horse-drawn engine, (but could also be pulled by tractor), and had a hand pumper with a 300 gallon storage tank. The cost of that engine is unknown, but it took the city five years to pay for it. The last payment was made Aug. 1, 1919. The new engine was housed in a wooden shed in the alley just off Bishop Avenue,



Melvin Hamm was one in Morehead's first group of volunteer firemen in 1922. He was also the second fire chief in 1931.

and men to operate it, it was about to do something even more dramatic to improve local fire fighting.

Water system voted overwhelmingly

On July 10, 1922, the city council proposed a referendum for a bond issue to establish a water system for Morehead. It was placed on the November 1922 ballot and the results were 298 for water and 3 against. With overwhelming majority for building the new water plant, the city moved rapidly. They immediately proposed for the sale of bonds to pay for the new system

On April 5, 1924, \$25,000 in bonds were sold to Woody, Heimerdinger and Watts of Cincinnati, Ohio to pay for the new water filtration plant and water lines.

Then by Oct. 24, 1924, a local committee appointed by city council staked off the location for the new water filtration plant. That site was near the present dam on Triplett Creek near the Wendell Ford Bridge. The first water lines were laid in Morehead in 1925, which improved the local residents quality of life as well as the quality of fire fighting.

Second fire engine purchased

In 1925, even after the new city water system was installed, there was another major fire. But it seemed the main reason the business was not saved was the old American La France fire engine failed to function properly. It seemed Morehead was having a difficult time getting

the mayor. Several studies indicated that the city faced a severe water shortage in the near future. Also, in order to attract industry, for the college to grow, and to ever get a hospital, more water was needed.

City council voted new water system and pipeline

The city council agreed something must be done. They disagreed on what to do. The choice was between expanding the present treatment plant and using Eagle Lake as an additional source; or to lay a pipeline to Licking River.

The vote was tied. Mr. Hill, Reynolds and Allen voted to go to the lake, and the other three voted against it. Eldon Evans voted to go to the river. As a result of the vote, the water supply to Morehead was severely curtailed, creating a breach between the town and city.

That made some women in Morehead mad. Lucille Evans, Mabel Reynolds, Agnes Williams, Jean Hill, Terry Caudill, Patty Smith, Lois Holley and many more women started an organization called "Women for Water."

For months, they lobbied local residents, Frankfort and Washington, D.C. They finally succeeded in getting a grant to help get the new pipeline and water plant for Morehead.

Women for Water should be commended

The vision of those city council members and the determination of those hard working women should be commended. Today, without the rich resource of water from the Licking River,

Continued on Page A-7



More Plaudits For ⁵⁻¹⁴⁻⁵⁵
Our Fire Department **R.E.N.**

Morehead's Volunteer Fire Department received a \$100 check from the City of Flemingsburg this week, but returned it.

Flemingsburg Mayor Dan A. Jones wrote Fire Chief C. B. McCullough: "Please find enclosed check in appreciation of the fine service you rendered our city Saturday night. We certainly feel the effect of the 'good neighbor' policy when we are only 26 minutes away from expert fire fighting equipment and personnel. Morehead should feel proud of its fine fire department."

Mayor William H. Layne said: "We are happy to have been of service to Flemingsburg when their school building was burned . . . we know that if we ever needed them they would come to our aid."

The Morehead department also answered an urgent call Thursday from Olive Hill as \$250,000 damage was done to the plant of General Refractories. This was one of the worst fires in Olive Hill's history, although the major portion of the large, continuous kiln firebrick plant, was not greatly damaged.

Morehead, Olive Hill, Grayson, Ashland and some other towns in this section belong to a fireman's association whereby each answers the call of the other. For example, if the Grayson Department is called to Olive Hill the Ashland Department moves to Grayson as a stand-by . . . if Olive Hill comes to Morehead the Grayson Department moves to Olive Hill and Ashland protects Grayson.

However, Morehead has three trucks and it has never been necessary for them to ask for the standby. The three trucks also enable Morehead to answer alarms to rural sections, and still have the town protected with ample equipment and firemen.

Morehead's department has, for several years, ranked as Kentucky's best volunteer firemen's group.

Morehead Memories - People and Places

Fire-Water-and Firemen, Part II

By Jack D. Ellis

How great a matter a little fire kindles! (James 3:5)
Fire and flood deliver double "whammy"

On July 4, 1939, Morehead suffered the worst fire in its history. But on July 5 (the next night), a flash flood devastated Morehead and Rowan County.

The flood destroyed 200 homes and businesses throughout the community and resulted in the loss of 25 lives. However, because of all the lives that were lost in that flood, very few people ever knew of the fire.

It started almost exactly 24 hours prior to the flash flood, and gave Morehead a double disaster "whammy."

Alertness of blind man saves hotel guests

The City Hotel, owned by Mr. Alf Caskey, was a three-story, 32-room brick structure, located in the heart of Morehead's main business district (where Arby's restaurant is now located).

The carnival was in town and all the rooms were packed to capacity. Jim Day (whose name was later changed to Jillson Setters) was a partially blind itinerant musician who was sleeping in the lobby that night.

About 1:30 a.m., as smoke spread throughout the building, Jim's keen sense of smell awakened him. Alarmed, he groped his way through to owner Caskey's apartment and pound-

ed on his door to awaken him. Caskey and his family rushed out, and he called the fire department and started down the halls awakening the guests.

Night of fire and fear recalled

Ten year-old Billie Jean Caskey recalled the horror of that night. She and her father, Lester Caskey, and step-mother lived in an apartment on the second floor.

"I was awakened by my grandfather (Alf Caskey) pounding on the door, and my father throwing a few items out the window. Then he grabbed my hand and we all ran from the burning inferno wearing only our night clothes. Later on that night, some of my family (Hubert and Beulah Pennington) came and took me home with them. It was a terrible night, but little did I realize that the next night would be even worse for so many people (the flood)."

Carnival workers crowd Morehead

On that night of July 4, 1939, Morehead was preparing for a giant July 4th celebration. The great J.F. Sparks Carnival was in town. The hotel was filled with carnival workers and probably had many more guests in the rooms than had registered. (They were known to do that).



About the author

Dr. Jack D. Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library Director and a retired minister.

Because on one occasion, this

The firemen quickly moved the people back and set up a barrier as they connected their hoses and started pouring water into the fiery inferno.

Someone called the Olive Hill fire department and they soon responded. Both fire crews valiantly battled the blaze until long after daylight and at one time it appeared that the whole city block would burn.

Among those firemen who fought that major fire and flood on successive nights were: Chief Lionel Fannin, C.B. McCullough, Tag Calvert, Cecil Landreth, John Bays, Joe Mauk, Mason Jayne, Ernest Jayne, Luther Jayne and many others. Those men helped to establish the high standard of courage and sacrifice for all of Morehead's future firefighters.

Allen family fought to save their store

On July 4, 1939, young Hubert Allen lived above their family-owned business almost directly across the street from the hotel. He vividly recalled being awakened that night about 2 a.m. by the sirens, as the fire truck came dashing down the street.

He and his family got up and went downstairs and out on the street. Hubert recalled, "The heat was so intense we had to move away from our building, and it seemed certain the whole block would burn."

Hubert said his job was to get on top of their roof with a shovel, and as the burning embers landed on their roof, he would shovel them over the side.

However, their windows were all broken anyway, but their building survived even though all the eyewitnesses thought the whole city block would be destroyed. Also those spectators said, except for the herculean effort by Morehead's valiant volunteer fire fighters, the whole block would have burned.

Morehead fire chief Lionel Fannin said that the absence of any wind that night was the deciding factor in being able to contain the fire to one building and those businesses located in that building.

Hubert Allen's sister, Bess, went to bed early the next night after being up all night fighting to keep their building from catching fire. She said before retiring for the night, "I'm so tired it will sure take more than a fire to get me up tonight."



A July 4, 1939 fire destroyed the Caskey Hotel and seven businesses on Main Street in Morehead the night before the 1939 flood. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

ed bottle. Some were actually located unexploded, under the fallen timbers.

Most of the surrounding buildings had some smoke and water damage, as well as broken windows. The Eagles Nest suffered \$300 damage the night of the fire and \$500 the next night in the flood.

Also, those displaced carnival people who barely escaped the fire with their life, would, the next night, barely escape the flash flood with their life. (I doubt if any of them ever returned to Morehead).

They had been hit with a double "whammy."

Pucky Jayne Bradley, whose family was one family that was damaged by both the fire and the flood, recalled her experience the night of the fire.

She recalled standing across the street and watching the firefighters as they tried to contain the blaze. She also recalled some of them praying for rain to help contain the blaze. (Little did they realize the flood would come the next night).

Her dad, W.L. Jayne had a garage in an adjoining building, but was in the process of moving to a new site on East Main Street. (Present site of Larry Fannin Chevrolet).

The customer accounts were still in the building, so her dad sent someone into the building to get those papers.

"They were afraid that the building would burn also," she said. "All those papers were

looked because of the tragic flood that came 24 hours later with such tragic loss of life. Those firemen had been up almost all night fighting fire and the next night they were up almost all night fighting for their homes and lives.

Fire chief Fannin lost everything he had in the flood, as did some of the other firemen. They were also called to help rescue flood victims and search for bodies.

Fire and flood brought maturity to volunteer firemen

Morehead's volunteer firemen came of age in those two nights. Like a military unit trained for combat, and when the battle came, they met the test of fire.

Thus, with those two major crises, they responded successfully to those crises! From that time on, the firemen knew they could succeed under almost any conditions. It instilled confidence and pride in their unit.

There were other major fires, People's Hotel on Railroad Street, "Li'l Abner" Restaurant on East Main Street and the C. Roger Lewis business and home on Main Street and others.

But in each case the Morehead Volunteer Fire Department has responded with great courage and success. Today, they are second to none in volunteer fire departments. Many of these volunteers go on to become professional firefighters on municipal fire departments such as Ashland, Louisville,



In November 1946, Morehead firefighters battle a fire on First Street. The three-story wooden People's Hotel, owned by Ezra Proctor, and the one-story store building, owned by Sam Allen, were completely destroyed. However, the Big Store, left, and the Freight Station, right, were saved. (Photo courtesy of Roger and Bernice Barbour).



In 1964, Morehead's firemen fought to contain the fire that destroyed the Li'l Abner Restaurant on East Main Street at College Boulevard. (Bob Grey photo).



Morehead firemen at their annual dinner in the 1950s. From left are Boyd McCullough, Walter "Tag" Calvert, John Bays, Ora Cline, Herb Elam, Curley Barker, Jim Williams, unidentified, Bob Grey, Wallace Fannin, Creed Patrick, unidentified, C.G. Clayton, Joe Mauk, Cecil Landreth, Adrian Razor and W.H. Rice. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

writer's father-in-law rented his small cabin to two of the carnival workers. Then late one night, as he accidentally walked behind the cabin, he caught two people climbing through a window.

He went around to the front door and returned their money and told them to leave. There were eight people that left. But fortunately, thanks to the keen sense of smell by Blind Jim Day, there was no loss of life in that hotel blaze. But most of the guests who escaped were only wearing their night clothes. However, no one complained because they were all alive.

Firemen respond quickly

Morehead's firemen responded quickly to that fire call. As they arrived, the whole block seemed to be ablaze. People were standing around dazed, in their night clothes, not knowing what to do.



Lionel "Lon" Fannin, C&O ticket agent, and Morehead's fire chief in 1939, during the flood and fire.



Fire destroyed Morehead's Frontier Steak House in 1974. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

It did. A flood got her up again to try and keep the water out of the store.

Seven businesses and seven buses destroyed

In addition to the hotel, there were seven other businesses located in that building that were destroyed in that fire. Those businesses were Caskey Tire Company, Caskey Taxi Cab Company, Trail Barber Shop, Morehead Real Estate Company, Parkers Pool Room, W.P.A. Packhorse Library, seven school buses owned by Alf Caskey and leased to the county and the Snell and Wendell (S&W) Liquor Store.

Some bourbon bottles salvaged

In preparation for the 4th of July celebration, the S&W Liquor Store had just received a large shipment of bourbon and scotch whiskey. And all through the night as those bottles exploded by the intense heat, it sounded like gunfire.

Also, that highly flammable alcohol added fuel to the flames. But the next day, some of the local characters known for tipping the bottle, frantically searched through the blackened embers looking for an unexplod-

brought home and the next night the flood came and they had to be moved upstairs since water was about five feet deep on the first floor."

One could say those records were permanent since they withstood both flood and fire.

Great loss of property - no loss of life

Mr. Alf Caskey's loss in the fire was estimated at \$75,000, none of which he said was covered by insurance. (In 1939, \$75,000 was probably like \$1 million today).

Most of the other businesses were covered by insurance. However, Caskey rebuilt his business even without insurance.

Morehead had suffered a major fire to its downtown business section. But the volunteer firemen were due great praise for their heroic efforts. They succeeded in saving many buildings because of their hard work.

But their efforts were over-

Lexington and Georgetown, as well as in the state fire marshal's office.

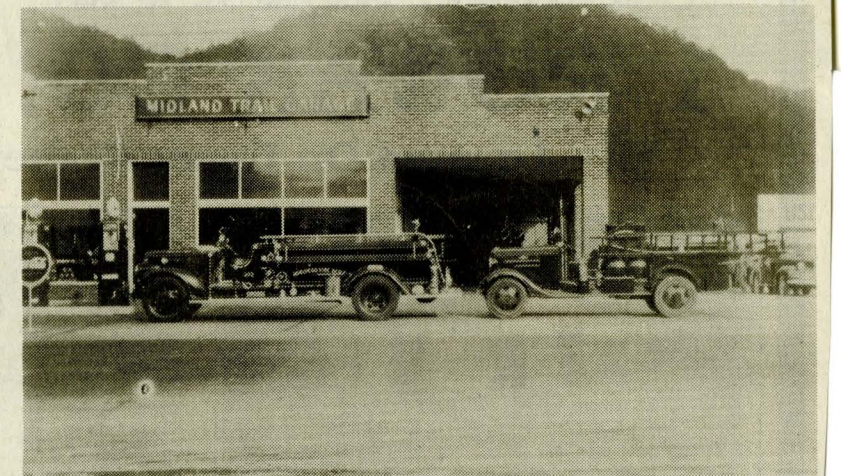
Morehead's very capable full-time fire chief, Dale Adkins, says the department now has 40 volunteer firemen. They have four fire trucks, one pumper, one tanker, one ladder truck, two brush trucks and one air-lighting truck.

Last year the fire department responded to 475 calls. Hopefully you will never need them but when you do, they will be there quickly and know what to do.

During the past 100 years, Morehead has had 16 very capable fire chiefs. Those men are:

Isaac C. Blair, Melvin Hamm, Norman Wells, Jack Cecil, Lionel Fannin, C.B. McCullough, Walter "Tag" Calvert, Joe Mauk, William Lee Helwig,

Glenn Terrell, Harold Holbrook Jr., Raymond Adkins, William Hankinson, Ronnie Day, Randy Walker and Dale Adkins.

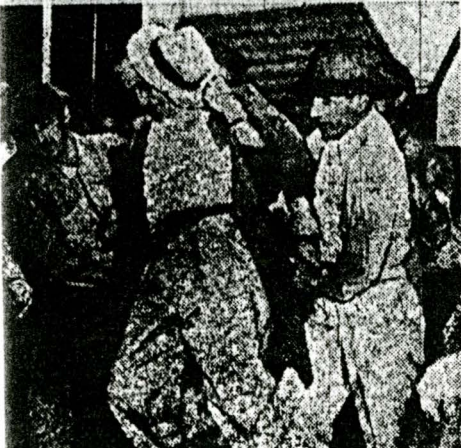


Morehead's early fire trucks from the 1930-40 era. (Photo courtesy of Denny Northcutt).

Correction

The article Fire, Water and Firemen Part I, dated Aug. 6, sub heading City Council Voted New Water System and Pipeline, the second paragraph should have read:

"The vote was tied. Mr. Hill, Reynolds and Allen voted to go to the river (not lake) ... That vote created a breach between the town and college (not city)."



SHERIFF . . . Sheriff Ed Lehmkull gets the hands of "Red" troops during a simulated of Hartley, Iowa, by make-believe Commu- nuce, sponsored by the American Legion, was staged in Mesumac, Wis., this spring.

Musicians To Parade Here Saturday

62 Students At Morehead Band Camp Schedule Demonstration

Sixty two musicians from more than a score of Kentucky High Schools will parade on Main Street in Morehead Saturday morning starting at 11 o'clock.

They are the students attending the annual band camp at Morehead State College. The parade will start at the courthouse on Main and continue to below Hargis Avenue.

At 1:30 Saturday afternoon the band camp will formally end with an open air concert on the college campus. In the event of rain this concert will be moved to the auditorium. There is no admission charge for this concert.

Kentucky Utilities Offers Preferred Stock In Kentucky

Kentucky investors will get first chance to buy 30,000 shares of Kentucky Utilities Company 4-3/4 per cent preferred stock under an unusual agreement between that company and seventeen security dealers operating in the state. R. M. Watt, company president, announced in Lexington on July 1.

A registration statement filed with Securities and Exchange Commission with respect to a public offering of the shares became effective on June 29.

Mr. Watt said the company has entered into an agreement with a group of securities dealers in Kentucky which provides:

1. That the stock be sold solely to residents of the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and (2) at the price of \$102.50 per share plus accrued dividends.

The company favors the plan, Mr. Watt pointed out, "Because we shall be glad to have our preferred stock held more widely by our customers and friends throughout the state, who already own 52.63 per cent of the shares of preferred stock now outstanding."

Former Rowan Youth Gets Music Scholarship

Jim Bob Fugate, the son of Mrs. Kenny Long, Lucasville, Ohio, formerly of Haldeman, left last week for Brevard, North Carolina, to take advantage of a scholarship awarded to him by the Conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, which entitles him to six weeks study of music at Transylvania Music Camp. He was accompanied on the trip by Mrs. Long, Bill McBrayer, Leila Fugate and Billie Gay Bailey.

Wholesale Prices Increase In Nation

Wholesale prices advanced 1.2 per cent during the week ended July 3, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today.

The bureau's index was 159 per cent of the 1926 average. That was one per cent over four weeks ago and 3.9 per cent above the comparable week of 1949.

Number 2 Fire Truck Gets Repair

Fire Department, Citizens To Pay Cost Of Pumper, Improvements

Morehead's fire department—generally classified as the best volunteer unit in Kentucky—moved today to further improve its fire fighting facilities. And, it won't cost the city anything.

The oldest of the two trucks in use, generally referred to by department members as "truck number one" has been sent to a firm in Indiana that will install a 500 gallon pumper, 200 gallon booster tank, suction hose, red lights, a new windshield and other accessories.

Fire chief C. B. McCullough said that the main draw-back with the old truck was that it did not have booster pumps, but while these are being installed it was decided to also do the other work. This will make the unit as well equipped to combat fires as the newer truck, number two.

Total cost of the repairs and outfitting will be \$1,750 but the fire department isn't asking the city council for any money. The department members are contributing \$750 from a fund they have built up. This was accumulated partly by contributions of other communities and individuals where the Morehead truck has gone to lend its assistance. Bulk of the \$750 however, comes from the members of the department themselves. They receive a dollar for each practice night and instead of drawing this money they've let it accumulate for many months.

Operation of two complete fire trucks will permit the Morehead department to answer calls to rural sections of Rowan County and to neighborhoods, without fire protection, in adjoining counties. The Rowan Fiscal court has indicated that it will contribute something to the repairs on the new truck while the balance of the \$1,750 will come from individuals and business firms who have expressed a willingness to lend financial assistance to the department.

"The improvements on this new truck means that if we do answer an out-of-city alarm that Morehead will be amply protected," McCullough said. He also (Continued Last Page, This Section)

Morehead Police Chief Resigns

Ed Hall, With Over Ten Years Service, Quits Monday Morning

Morehead chief-of-police Ed Hall resigned Monday morning. Mayor William H. Layne said that Hall's resignation was unexpected, but that he asked to immediately be relieved of his duties with the department. No successor has been named.

Hall has been chief of the Morehead department for over 10 years. The Morehead force has three patrolmen. The garbage collection department and the tax collections at Morehead are also under the jurisdiction of the police chief.

Hall has also been the principal leader in the movement for the establishment and improvement of Woodland Park at Rodburn, spending most of his off-duty time on this project. Two years ago he and a group from the Rod and Gun club secured from the federal government a 99 year lease on the park site, which is a part of the Cumberland National Forest.

Man Held At Mt. Sterling For Shooting Wife

Ray Pitts, 29, Estill county, is in jail at Mt. Sterling on a charge of malicious shooting and wounding with intent to kill in connection with the shooting of his wife, Mrs. Mary Williams Pitts, 27.

Sheriff Charlie Wilson said he arrested Pitts at the Mary Chiles hospital after Mrs. Pitts was admitted to the hospital for treatment of a shotgun wound in her side. Her condition was reported as good.

Sheriff Wilson said he learned that Mrs. Pitts had been shot with a 12-gauge single-barrel shotgun about 8 a. m. Thursday as she was talking to Henry Puckett, Estill county, near the Pitts' garden at their home on Red River near Ky. 89 in Estill county.

Mrs. Pitts was brought to Mt. Sterling by Ansil Watkins of Estill county, and Pitts was arrested when he followed her to Mt. Sterling. Sheriff Wilson said Pitts had admitted the shooting. Wilson said he also received a report that Pitts shot at Puckett but had not been able to verify it.

Pitts and his wife are natives of Menifee county and have two small children.

84 Year Old Rowan Woman Dies Sunday

An 84-year-old woman, Mrs. Mary Delane Cornette, who has spent almost her entire life in Rowan County, died at her farm near Bangor Sunday. She was

Heart Attack Is Fatal To B. F. Waugh, 43

End Comes Sunday At Lexington; Illness Forced Retirement

A heart ailment cost the life of Bernard F. Waugh, 43, Fifth Street Sunday. The end came at the Good Samaritan hospital in Lexington where he was removed when his condition became critical.

Mr. Waugh was born in Rowan County and resided at Morehead until he was 16 years of age. At that time he started to work for the Guyan Machine Shops in West Virginia and later was connected with the Inland Creek Coal Company in that state, as a machinist.

Eighteen months ago ill health forced him to quit work and he returned to Morehead where he had made his home with his mother, Mrs. Sarah Waugh.

The end came 24 hours after he was taken to the Lexington hospital.

Besides his mother he leaves a brother, W. T. Waugh, Jr., and two sisters, Mrs. Olive Stevens and Mrs. Early M. Cooper.

He was a member of the Morehead Christian Church.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Elmore Ryle at the Lane Funeral Home Tuesday. Interment was in the family plot at Lee cemetery.

The casket bearers were: Hartley Battson, C. O. Leach, Leo Oppenheimer, Ernie Thompson, Arthur Blair, C. B. Daugherty, Earnest Flannery, Buell Hogge and Robert Bishop.

Fleming Co-Op To Meet On August 3, 4

The biggest and best annual meeting in the history of the Fleming-Mason R.E.C.C., according to C. J. Ross, manager, will be held on August 3rd and 4th.

Wreck Horrible Experience

RCN

July 13, 1950

Printed out that
two fully equipped
units will prove
more effective in
fighting increased
blazes.

Meanwhile the fire
dept has been in
touch with the
Key Accidents Bureau,
and it appears that
Marine Property Owner
will get a reduction in
insurance rates as
soon as the new
water system is
installed, and the
impounding reser-
voir at MSC
completed

Morehead Memories -

Fire-Water-and Firemen, Part II

11 By Jack D. Ellis
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Fire and flood deliver double "whammy"

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13 ed on his door to awaken him. Caskey and his family rushed out, and he called the fire department and started down the halls awakening the guests.

Night of fire and fear recalled

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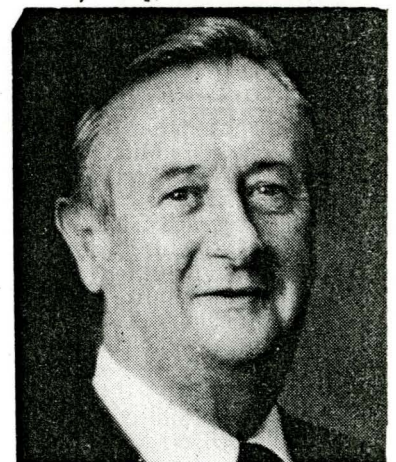
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Carnival workers crowd Morehead

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About the author

Dr. Jack D. Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library Director and a retired minister.

Morehead Memories — People and Places

Fire, water and firemen, part 1

By Jack Ellis

"We went through fire and through water, but you brought us out." (Psalm 66:12)

Every city and town across this great land of ours has had many major fires and valiant firefighters. Morehead is no exception, and throughout history has had a record of disastrous fires and courageous firemen. Morehead, just as in every community, has tried to make proper preparation to combat those fires when they occurred.

Early fires fought with buckets

During the late 1800s, most of the city's fire fighting was done by friends and neighbors as they formed bucket brigades. By the early 1900s, not much had changed in the city's ability to extinguish those fires as they occurred.

However, practically every fire was a lesson in fire fighting futility, because by the time help arrived, it was too late, and about all that could be saved was a few pieces of furniture and a few personal items.

The reasons for that was the buildings were made of highly combustible wood and the slow response time, as well as the shortage of available water.

Power plant fire prompts purchase of fire engine

Feb. 12, 1914, was a bitter cold night in Morehead. That was also the night that the new Morehead Power Plant was completely destroyed by fire.

After connecting the city power lines to the Maggard and Bradley private power line, the city council decided more was needed to be done to improve the local fire fighting capability.

It was then that city council voted to purchase a fire engine and establish a fire department to be manned by volunteers.

The city immediately ordered its first fire engine from the American La France Fire Engine Company (a company still in business today).

The new engine was a horse-drawn engine, (but could also be pulled by tractor), and had a hand pumper with a 300 gallon storage tank. The cost of that engine is unknown, but it took the city five years to pay for it. The last payment was made Aug. 1, 1919. The new engine was housed in a wooden shed in the alley just off Bishop Avenue,

behind the present Dixie Grill.

With the acquisition of the new fire engine, the local fire fighting success rate improved. But the volunteer firefighters consisted of those eager individuals who could get to the fire first after the alarm sounded. (Before the fire alarm was installed, the local church bells were used as a fire alarm). But those that responded had very little or no training. However, they were willing and eager to learn, but more organization and structure was needed.

Morehead's first firemen appointed

On Dec. 11, 1922, the city council recognized that more was needed for a volunteer fire department than to just sound the alarm and see who responded. Therefore, they appointed Isaac Blair as the first fire chief. (He was local residents' Don and Paul Blair's grandfather).

They also appointed the following men as the first members of the Morehead Volunteer Fire Department: V. Hunt, Leo Oppenheimer, Hartley Battson, Moody Alderman, Oliver Caudill, Earl Young, Tom Hogge, J.B. Calvert Sr., Melvin Hamm, Alf Caskey and D.C. Caudill.

Those men formed the first structured Morehead Volunteer Fire Department. They were required to attend some meetings and have some training. Therefore, after the city acquired the new fire engine, and men to operate it, it was about to do something even more dramatic to improve local fire fighting.

Water system voted overwhelmingly

On July 10, 1922, the city council proposed a referendum for a bond issue to establish a water system for Morehead. It was placed on the November 1922 ballot and the results were 298 for water and 3 against. With overwhelming majority for building the new water plant, the city moved rapidly. They immediately proposed for the sale of bonds to pay for the new system.

On April 5, 1924, \$25,000 in bonds were sold to Woody, Heimerdinger and Watts of Cincinnati, Ohio to pay for the new water filtration plant and water lines.

Then by Oct. 24, 1924, a local committee appointed by city council staked off the location for the new water filtration plant. That site was near the present dam on Triplett Creek near the Wendell Ford Bridge. The first water lines were laid in Morehead in 1925, which improved the local residents quality of life as well as the quality of fire fighting.

Second fire engine purchased

In 1925, even after the new city water system was installed, there was another major fire. But it seemed the main reason the business was not saved was the old American La France fire engine failed to function properly. It seemed Morehead was having a difficult time getting

the right mix of manpower, machines and water at the right time.

Following that fire, city council authorized a committee to make a recommendation for a new fire engine.

On Feb. 9, 1926, the search committee requested the city purchase a second fire engine. They recommended the vehicle be purchased from the Boyer Fire Apparatus Company of Logansport, Ind. The new fire engine was "state of the art" first line equipment and consisted of a fire engine mounted on a Ford chassis and engine. The total cost was \$2,700, which was expensive for that time.

Severe drought limits water to four hours a day

1930 was the year of one of the greatest droughts in this region. Like the summer of 1999, it rained very little in the spring and even less in the summer.

The drought was so severe that the city rationed water to its customers. Finally, the water shortage became so critical that the water was turned off 20 of the 24 hours each day.

If it had not been for the vision of the city fathers (and mothers) who made the decision in the 1960s to go to Licking River for Morehead's water supply, we would probably be at that state today.

In 1960, it became apparent that if Morehead was to ever grow, it must have more water. The city council consisted of George Hill, Paul J. Reynolds, Bobby Allen, Roger Caudill, Austin Riddle and Wilburn Crager. Eldon "Tic" Evans was the mayor. Several studies indicated that the city faced a severe water shortage in the near future. Also, in order to attract industry, for the college to grow, and to ever get a hospital, more water was needed.

City council voted new water system and pipeline

The city council agreed something must be done. They disagreed on what to do. The choice was between expanding the present treatment plant and using Eagle Lake as an additional source; or to lay a pipeline to Licking River.

The vote was tied. Mr. Hill, Reynolds and Allen voted to go to the lake, and the other three voted against it. Eldon Evans voted to go to the river. As a result of the vote, the water supply to Morehead was severely curtailed, creating a breach between the town and city.

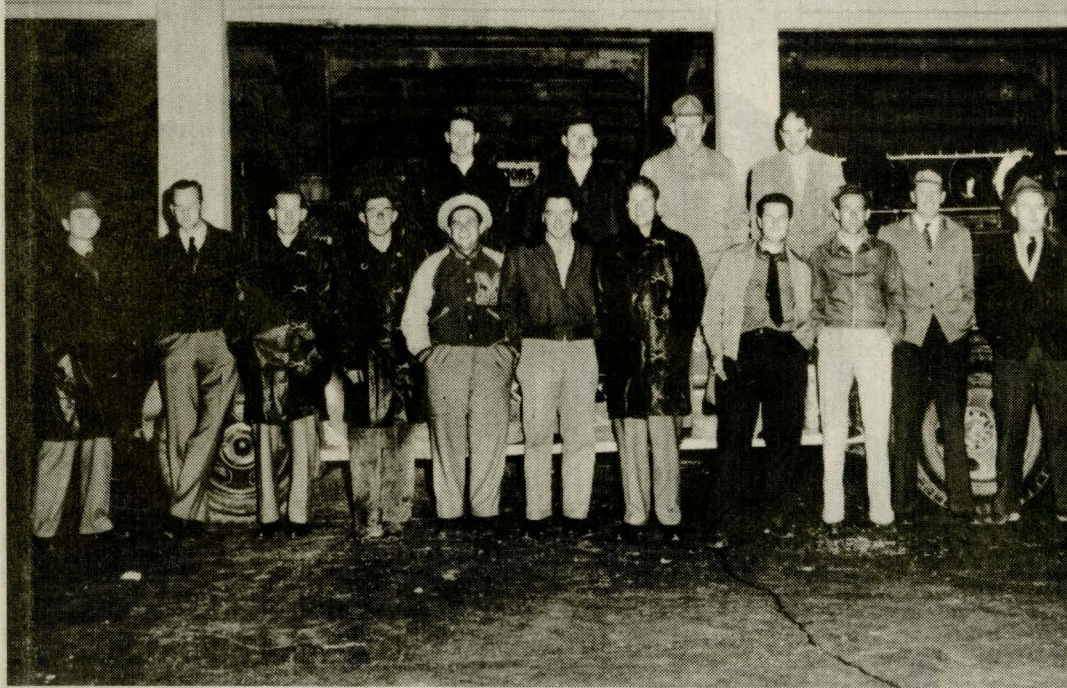
That made some women in Morehead mad. Lucille Evans, Mabel Reynolds, Agnes Williams, Jean Hill, Terry Caudill, Patty Smith, Lois Holley and many more women started an organization called "Women for Water."

For months, they lobbied local residents, Frankfort and Washington, D.C. They finally succeeded in getting a grant to help get the new pipeline and water plant for Morehead.

Women for Water should be commended

The vision of those city council members and the determination of those hard working women should be commended. Today, without the rich resource of water from the Licking River,

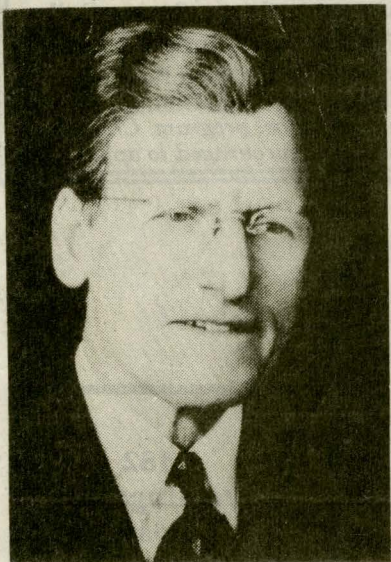
Continued on Page A-7



The 1948 members of the Morehead Fire Department stand in front of old Jayne on College Boulevard. Front, from left are: Cecil Landreth, Luther Jayne, Ed Dmy Williams, Robert Grey, Fred Bays, Curley Barker, Joe Mauk, unidentified, Calvert, Adrian Razor and Creed Patrick. Back row, from left are: Wallace Fannin, Bays, C.B. McCullough, chief, Prentiss Back and Ora Cline. (Photo courtesy of Bob)



Morehead citizens turned out in great numbers to see the laying of the first water pipeline in March 1925. (It sure helped the fire department). Included in this photo are: Prichard, Ches Poston, Leslie Cooper, Everette Jones, Emmitt Cassity, Roy H. Brown, George Barber, Clifton Morehouse, Newt Kissinger, Dan Fannin and water superintendent Davenport.



Melvin Hamm was one in Morehead's first group of volunteer firemen in 1922. He was also the second fire chief in 1931.

Local Trivia

Early History

■ Boyd and Greenup counties had developed a reputation as "Little Las Vegas" because couples from the north and east flocked to Kentucky for quickie marriages.

SECTION C

History

THE MOREHEAD NEWS, JULY 16, 2004

About the Author



Dr. Jack Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library director and a retired minister.

Morehead Memories:

People & Places

Reflections of 1948: Schools-Fire Departments-Marriage Mills

By JACK D. ELLIS
Special to The Morehead News

"Ask now of the days that are past." (De. 4:32)

In the post-WW II era of 1948, one of the major events in the Rowan County Schools was the annual Spelling Bee Championship. On Friday, February 6 of that year, the following contestants and their schools began the quest for the county spelling championship:

Lillian Kiser won Rowan

County Spelling Bee

Clinton Holbrook, Bull Fork; Juanita Butts, Seays Branch; Granville Moore, Three Lick; Wanda Lee Goodman, Wes Cox; Faye Ison, Elliottville; Anna Lucy Kelsey, Farmers; Medford Gregory, Lower Lick Fork; Clark McClurg, Ramey; Loretta Conn, Clearfield; Joy B. Turner, Little Perry; Stella Mitchell, Big Brushy; Charlie Jones, Dry Creek; Earl Stacy, Clark; Rudolph Lewis, Ditney; Ivetta Plank, Adams Davis;

Greta Holbrooks, Sharkey; Geraldine Littleton, Clearfork; June Littleton, Clearfork; Ada Waltz, Cranston; Bonnie Tackett, Haldeman; Marjorie Howard, Alfrey; Lorena McClurg, Moore; Murvil Crawford, Old House Creek; Franklin Sparks, Haldeman; Virginia Johnson, Morehead; and Lillian Kiser, Little Brushy.

Lillian Kiser of Little Brushy School won her second consecutive championship. She won \$20, a championship pin, a dictionary, and the right to represent Rowan County in the state spelling championship in Louisville. Second prize of \$5 was awarded to Franklin Sparks, of Haldeman, and a third prize of \$3 went to Virginia Johnson, Morehead. Silver dollars were awarded to all the other contestants. (Perhaps some still have those silver dollars.) Mrs. Beulah Williams was the pronouncer. The judges were Rev. B.H. Kazee, Rev. B.W. Moore, Rev. David Sagaser and Mrs. Mary Alice Jayne.

Kentucky: Little Las Vegas Marriage Mills

In 1948 the Kentucky

General Assembly enacted legislation requiring a three-day waiting period for couples wanting to get married. This writer and his bride were victims (or beneficiaries) of the legislation the following November. We managed to wait the three days necessary to get a marriage license. But for years Kentucky had no required waiting period to get a marriage license. During that period, Boyd and Greenup counties had developed a reputation as "Little Las Vegas" because couples from the north and east flocked to Kentucky for quickie marriages. The new three-day waiting period changed all that.

In the 1980s the Kentucky General Assembly in their wisdom abolished the three-day waiting period and blood test requirements for marriage. The same states in the north and east still had their three-day waiting period requirement. Once again Boyd and Greenup counties became marriage mills. This writer was a Methodist Minister during much of that time and turned down many couples from out of state wanting to be married at the historical Goddard Church. But one of my colleagues in ministry at Catlettsburg said that during that period of time he was averaging four weddings a day, and it was not



KY Highway Patrol (Morehead District) 1948: From left, front, Ivan Reynolds, Murvel Caudill, Bobby Stamper (dispatcher), Osmond Botts, rear, Ernie McDaniels, Eddie Taylor, Paul J. Reynolds. Photo: Roger Barbour

uncommon for him to perform ten weddings in one day. That was at a period of time when people were choosing marriage instead of just cohabiting-even though none of these states have a 3 day waiting period.

State police busy ticketing delinquent drivers

In 1948 all vehicles in Kentucky were required to get

See REFLECTIONS on C-2

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By Jack D. Ellis

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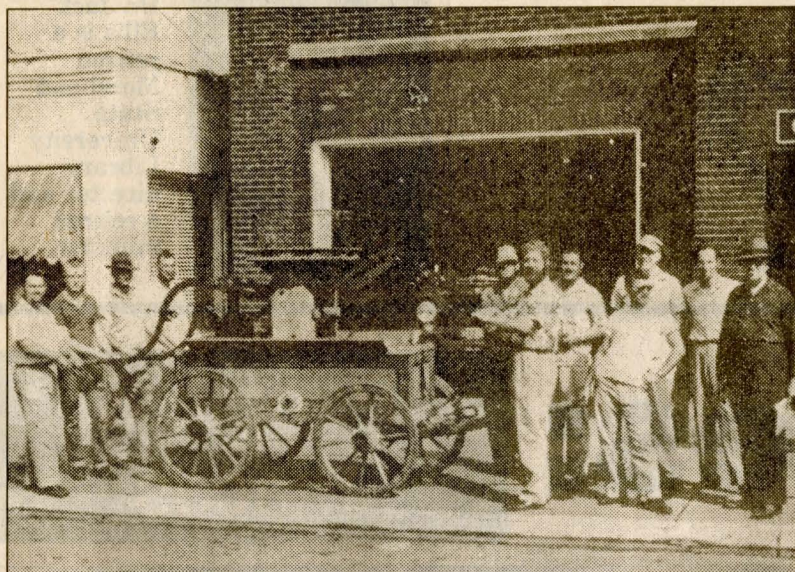
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Also available locally at the CoffeeTree Bookstore, MSU Bookstore, Folk Art Center, St. Claire Gift Shop, Mustard Seed, Occasions and Chris's Gifts.

Reflections From C-1



Morehead firemen demonstrate an old hand pumper. 1950s.

new license plates on January 1 every year. However, there was a grace period given each year until March 1. That was when the State Highway Patrol began to ticket the delinquent motorists.

Rowan County Court Clerk Bernard Day said of the 2,000 cars, trucks and commercial vehicles in Rowan County, only about 25 percent had purchased their license plates by February 20. That meant unless there was a sudden surge to purchase auto license tags, the State Highway Patrol would really be busy during

the month of March.

In February 1948, the Kentucky General Assembly came through with a 15 percent shortfall in Kentucky Teacher's salaries. Rowan County's 96 teachers received a total of \$18,211.31. Superintendent of Schools Ted L. Crosthwait stated that all regularly employed teachers who had taught one month or more during the present school year would be eligible to receive the back pay. The average back pay distributed to Rowan County teachers was \$22.23 for each month that



The Peoples Hotel, a three-story wooden structure owned by Ezra Proctor, was destroyed by fire in 1946. The small one-story in the foreground was Sam Allen's Grocery Store, located on First Street, next to the Big Store. This fire also badly damaged the Big Store which recently collapsed.

\$30,000 extra aid possible for flood-insured

Kentuckians who had flood insurance on buildings damaged by recent flooding may be eligible for up to \$30,000 in aid they often do not even know about.

That money can be used to make their home or business safe against future floods.

aged" or a "repetitive loss property". The policyholder is then required to rebuild it in a flood-safe way, which usually means raising or moving the structure. However, that is when the extra funds to pay for future risk reduction, for up to \$30,000, may also kick in.

called "Increased Cost of Coverage" coverage, because it is an increased cost of complying code. It is a part of the Flood Insurance Program

"This valuable source of mitigation money is sometimes overlooked," said Bolch. "We encourage policyholders who have substantial or repeated flood damage to contact their local building departments and ask if they may be eligible to file an ICC claim."

The ICC claim is filed separately from any insurance claim for flood damage, although it is part of the same policy and is filed with the same insurance company.

The money can be used in combination with low-interest disaster loans.

they had taught. that represented an average of 15 percent increase in their pay. Neighboring counties received the following amounts: Carter County, \$31,065.83; Elliott County, \$13,266.92; Bath County, \$11,845.46; Fleming County, \$12,371.93; Morgan County, \$21,019.12; Menifee County, \$7,072.18; and Lewis County, \$16,969.72.

It was tough teaching school in Kentucky in those days. It's no wonder this writer (and many others) left Kentucky for other states. But we came back.

Morehead Volunteer Fire Dept. Busy?

Morehead's Fire Chief Boyd McCullough praised his Volunteer Fire Department and pointed out they had set a record for the Department by answering eleven calls in the past 50 days. Morehead's Fire Department classed as one of the best units in any town of its size in Kentucky, has answered eleven alarms since December 15. Pointing out that this was unusually heavy, Mr. McCullough said that defective flues were one of the

chief fire hazards. He urged home and business owners to be extremely careful and not to place too much fuel in stoves, furnaces or fire places.

The series of 11 alarms started on December 15, when the store room and offices of the Buildings and Grounds of Morehead College burned to the ground. Although they were handicapped by a shortage of water, the Morehead Department saved most of the West Lumber Company on the Flemingsburg Road after a blaze was discovered there on December 22. This was the largest fire call they answered during a 50 day period extending from December 15, 1947 through Feb. 8, 1948.

Today Morehead and Rowan County, with their many fire departments, still maintain a reputation for outstanding and dedicated firemen. But in 2003, Morehead's Volunteer Fire Department responded to 120 calls in that same period of time that the 1948 firemen answered eleven.

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people 7-16

MOREHEAD MEMORIES: PEOPLE AND PLACES
Kicker - REFLECTIONS OF 1948:
SCHOOLS - FIRE DEPARTMENTS - MARRIAGE MILLS

by

JACK D. ELLIS

" Ask now of the boys that are ~~past~~ past." (De. 4:3)

In the post-WW II era of 1948, one of the major events in the Rowan County Schools was the annual Spelling Bee Championship. On Friday, February 6 of that year, the following contestants and their schools began the quest for the county spelling championship:

LILLIAN KISER WON ROWAN COUNTY SPELLING BEE

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FIRE AND FIREMEN

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~~FLOODS FIRE WATER~~

**MOREHEAD MEMORIES
PEOPLE AND PLACES
~~FIRE-WATER AND FIREMEN, PART I~~**

~~by~~

~~Jack D. Ellis~~

~~WE WENT THROUGH FIRE AND THROUGH WATER, BUT
YOU BROUGHT US OUT. (Psalm 66:12)~~

Every city and town across this great land of ours has had many major fires and valiant firefighters. Morehead is no exception, and throughout its history has had a record of disastrous fires, and courageous firemen. Morehead, just as in every community, has tried to make proper preparation to combat those fires when they occurred.

~~EARLY FIRES FOUGHT WITH BUCKETS~~

During the late 1800s, most of the city's firefighting was done by friends and neighbors as they formed bucket brigades. By the early 1900s, not much had changed in the city's ability to extinguish those fires as they occurred. However, practically every fire was a lesson in fire fighting futility, because by the time help arrived, it was too late, and, about all that could be saved was a few pieces of furniture, and a few personal items. The reasons for that was the buildings were made of highly combustionable wood and the slow response time, as well as the shortage of available water.

~~POWER PLANT FIRE PROMPTS PURCHASE OF FIRE ENGINE~~

February 21, 1914, was a bitter cold night in Morehead. That was also the night that the new Morehead Power Plant was completely destroyed by fire. After connecting the city power lines to the Maggard and Bradley private power lines, the City Council decided more ^{was} needed to be done to improve the local firefighting capability. It was then the City Council voted to purchase a fire engine, and establish a fire department to be

manned by volunteers.

The city immediately ordered its first fire engine from the American La France Fire Engine Company. (A company still in business today.) The new engine was a horse drawn engine, (but could also be pulled by a tractor), and had a hand pumper with a 300 gallon storage tank. The cost of that engine is unknown, but it took the city five years to pay for it. The last payment was made August 1, 1919. The new engine was housed in a wooden shed in the alley just off of Bishop Avenue, behind the present Dixie Grill.

With the acquisition of the new fire engine, the local fire fighting success rate improved. But the volunteer firefighters consisted of those eager individuals who could get to the fire first after the alarm sounded. (Before the fire alarm was installed, the local church bells were used as a fire alarm.) But those that responded had very little or no training. However, they were willing and eager to learn, but more organization and structure was needed.

MOREHEAD'S FIRST FIREMEN APPOINTED

On December 11, 1922, the City Council recognized that more was needed for a volunteer fire department than to just sound the alarm and see who responds. Therefore, they appointed Isaac Blair as the first fire chief. (He was local residents Don and Paul Blair's grandfather.) They also appointed the following men as the first members of the Morehead Volunteer Fire Department: V. Hunt, Leo Oppenheimer, Hartley Battson, Moody Alderman, Oliver Caudill, Earl Young, Tom Hogge, J.B. Calvert Sr., Melvin Hamm, Alf Caskey, and D.C. Caudill. Those men formed the first structured Morehead

Volunteer Fire Department. They were required to attend some meetings and have some training. Therefore, after the city acquired the new fire engine, and men to operate it, it was about to do something even more dramatic to improve local fire fighting.

WATER SYSTEM VOTED BY CITY IN 1922

On July 10, 1922, the City Council proposed a referendum for a bond issue to establish a water system for Morehead. It was placed on the November, 1922 ballot, and the results were 298 for water, and 3 against. With the overwhelming majority for building the new water plant, the city moved rapidly. They immediately proposed for the sale of bonds to pay for the new system.

On April 5, 1924, \$25,000 in bonds were sold to Woody, Heimerdinger, and Watts of Cincinnati, Ohio, to pay for the new water filtration plant, and waterlines. Then by October 24, 1924, a local committee appointed by the City Council, staked off the location for the new water filtration plant. That site was near the present dam on Triplett Creek near the Wendell ford Bridge. The first water lines were laid in Morehead in 1925, which improved the local residents quality of life, as well as the quality of fire fighting.

SECOND FIRE ENGINE PURCHASED

In 1925, even after the new city water system was installed, there was another major fire. The Morehead Main Street Motor Sales Company was destroyed by fire. But it seemed the main reason the business was not saved was the old American La France Fire Engine failed to function properly. It seemed Morehead has having difficulty getting the right mix of manpower, machines, and water at the right time. Following that fire, the city Council authorized a committee to make a recommendation for a new fire engine.

← On February 9, 1926, the search committee requested that the city purchase a second fire engine. They recommended the vehicle be purchased from the Boyer Fire Apparatus Company of Logansport, Indiana. The new fire engine was "state of the art" first line equipment, and consisted of a fire engine mounted on a Ford chassis and engine. The total cost was \$2,700, which was expensive for that time.

~~SEVERE CITY WATER RATIONING BY MORE A DAY DAY~~
1930 was the year of one of the greatest droughts in this region. Like the summer of 1999, it rained very little in the spring, and even less in the summer. The drought was so severe that the city rationed water to its customers. Finally, the water shortage became so critical that the water was turned off 20 of the 24 hours each day. If it had not been for the vision of the city fathers (and mothers) who made the decision in the 1960s to go to Licking River for Morehead's water supply, we would probably be at that stage today.

In 1960, it became apparent that if Morehead was to ever grow, it must have more water. The City Council consisted of George Hill, Paul J. Reynolds, Bobby Allen, Roger Caudill, Austin Riddle, and Wilburn Crager. Elden "Tic" Evans was the Mayor. Several studies indicated that the city faced a severe water shortage in the near future. Also, in order to attract industry, for the college to grow, and to ever get a hospital, more water was needed.

~~CITY COUNCIL AND VOWED FOR WATER OBTAINING~~
The City Council agreed something must be done. They disagreed on what to do. The choice was between expanding the present treatment plant, and using Eagle Lake as an additional source; or, to lay a pipeline to Licking river. The vote was tied. Mr. Hill,

Reynolds and Allen voted to go to the lake, and the other three voted against it. Eldon ^{Morehead} Evans ^{EVANS} ^{un-~~tried~~}

^{no vote, only} Evans voted to go to Licking River. Later Mr. Caudill changed his vote and voted to go

to the river. As a result of the vote, the water supply to Morehead was severely curtailed, ^{future} ^{assured if they could} creating a breach between the town and city. That made some women in Morehead mad.

^{get the money for the pipeline. Although the vote resulted in a breach between the town and the college, most citizens supported the vote. Many women in Morehead began to support the vote, and he got financing for the pipeline. They were called Women for Water, and}
^{included:} Lucille Evans, Mabel Reynolds, Agnes Williams, Jean Hill, Terry Caudill, Patty Smith,

^{been, therefore that} Lois Holley and many more women started an organization called, "Women for Water." ^{begon a concentrated effort to get funds for the pipeline to Licking River} For months, they lobbied local residents, Frankfort, and Washington, D.C. They finally

succeeded in getting a grant to help get the new pipeline and water plant for Morehead.

WOMEN FOR WATER SHOULD BE COMMENDED

The vision of those City Council members, and the determination of those hard working women should be commended. Today, without the rich resource of water from the Licking River, not only Rowan, but all of the surrounding counties would probably be in a severe water crisis.

The drought of 1930, and only four hours a day with water, caused many Moreheadians to uncover and clean out their wells. But by September most wells were dry, and every one was happy to have water four hours a day. During that drought, Lindsay and Myrtle Caudill (this writer's in-laws) lived in their home on East Second Street. They uncovered and cleaned out their well, and it never ran dry. During that drought, that spring-fed well supplied cool water for most of the neighborhood, and never failed. Since my wife still owns that old home place, and the well is still there, it may be necessary to open it up and clean it out again, should the drought of 1999 continue.

During that dreadful drought of 1930, there seemed to be some dissension develop within the volunteer fire department. Just as in any organization, especially in a group of volunteers, there were some dissidents and complainers. Most of the volunteers took their responsibility seriously, however, some did not. Therefore, the city Council once again decided some action should be taken to improve the morale and effectiveness of the firemen.

CITY COUNCIL VOTED NEW POLICIES FOR FIRE DEPT.

On October 27, 1931, the Council voted once again to establish a new volunteer Fire Department. Melvin Hamm was appointed Fire Chief and was instructed to select 11 men to serve as firemen. Those men were required to practice one night a week, (still a requirement), or they would be dropped from the group. Also, the firemen were to be paid \$1.00 for each working fire. (Still a requirement today—except they are paid \$10.00 for each fire). Most of the policies established for the training, improving the efficiency, and morale of the firemen, were initiated in 1931, and are still in effect today.

FIRE TRUCK WOULD NOT START - HOUSE BURNED

In January 1932, this writer lived with his parents near the corner of Wilson Avenue and main Street, behind the post office. Melvin Hamm had asked my father, and he had agreed, to serve as one of the volunteer firemen. After attending a couple of training sessions, he got his first fire call one below-zero bitter cold February night. He jumped up, put on his clothes and ran to the fire station. But he returned in an hour sweating profusely. They were unable to get the old fire truck started. The men had pushed the truck down Bishop Avenue, and Railroad Street, but it never did start.

Unfortunately, the home of Mr. and Mrs. D.B. Cornett on Fifth Street burned to the ground. (My father was so disgusted that he ended his firefighting career before it was started.) Therefore, on May 12, 1932, the City of Morehead purchased their third truck in 18 years. But not before it was badly needed.

FIRE ^{AND} FLOOD DELIVERER DOUBLE "W HADAMMY"
Begin here

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~~MOREHEAD MEMORIES~~
~~PEOPLE AND PLACES~~
~~FIRE-WATER AND FIREMEN, PART II~~

by
~~[redacted]~~
Jack D. Ellis

~~HOW GREAT A MATTER A LITTLE FIRE KINDLES! (James 3:5)~~
FIRE AND FLOOD DELIVER DOUBLE "WHAMMY"

On July 4, 1939, Morehead suffered the worst fire in its history. But on July 5, (the next night) a flash flood devastated Morehead and Rowan County. The flood destroyed 200 homes and businesses throughout the community, and resulted in the loss of 25 lives. However, because of all the lives that were lost in that flood, very few people ever knew of the fire. It started almost exactly 24 hours prior to the flash flood, and gave Morehead a double disaster "whammy".

~~ALERTNESS~~ THE BLIND MAN SAVES HOTEL GUESTS

The City Hotel, owned by Mr. Alf Caskey was a three-story, 32 room brick structure, located in the heart of Morehead's main business district. (Where Arby's Restaurant is now located). The carnival was in town and all the rooms were packed to capacity. Jim Day, (whose name was later changed to Jillson Setters) was a partially blind itinerant ^{MUSICIAN} ~~musical~~ who was sleeping in the lobby that night. About 1:30 a.m., as smoke spread throughout the building, Jim's keen sense of smell awakened him. Alarmed, he "groped" his way to the owner Alf Caskey's apartment, and pounded on his door to awaken him. Mr. Caskey and his family rushed out, and he called the fire department and started down the halls awakening the guests.

NIGHT OF FIRE AND FEAR RECALLED

Ten year old Billie Jean Caskey recalled the horror of that night. She and her

father, Lester Caskey and step mother lived in an apartment on the second floor. "I was awakened by my grandfather (Alf Caskey) pounding on the door, and my father throwing a few items out the window. Then he grabbed my hand and we all ran from the burning inferno wearing only our night clothes. Later on that night, some of my family (Hubert and Beulah Pennington) came and took me home with them. It was a terrible night, but little did I realize that the next night would be even worse for so many people." (The Flood).

THE HOTEL FILLED WITH A CARNIVAL WORKERS

On that night of July 4, 1939, Morehead was preparing for a giant July 4th

celebration. The great J.F. Sparks Carnival was in town. The hotel was filled with carnival workers and probably had many more guests in the rooms than had registered. (They were known to do that). Because on one occasion, this writer's father-in-law rented his small cabin to two of the carnival workers. Then late one night, as he accidentally walked behind the cabin, he caught two people climbing through a window. He went around to the front door and returned their money and told them to leave. There were eight people that left. But fortunately, thanks to the keen sense of smell by Blind Jim Day, there was no loss of life in that hotel blaze. But most of the guests who escaped were only wearing their night clothes. However, no one complained because they were all alive.

FIREMEN RESPOND QUICKLY

Morehead's firemen responded quickly to that fire call. As they arrived the whole block seemed to be ablaze. People were standing around dazed, in their night clothes, not

knowing what to do. The firemen quickly moved the people back, and set up a barrier as they connected their hoses and started pouring water into the fiery inferno. Someone had called the Olive Hill Fire Department and soon they responded. Both fire crews valiantly battled the blaze until long after daylight, and at one time it appeared that the whole city block would burn.

Among those firemen who fought that major fire and flood on successive nights were: Chief Lionel Fanning, C.B. McCullough, Tag Calvert, Cecil Landreth, John Bays, Joe Mauk, Mason Jayne, Ernest Jayne, Luther Jayne, and many others. Those men helped to establish the high standard of courage and sacrifice for all of Morehead's future firefighters.

ALLEN FAMILY FOUGHT FIRE

On July 4, 1939, young Hubert Allen lived above their family-owned business almost directly across the street from the hotel. He vividly recalled being awakened that night about 2:00 a.m. by the sirens, as the fire truck came dashing down the street. He and his family got up and went downstairs and out on the street. Hubert recalled, "The heat was so intense we had to move away from our building, and it seemed certain that the whole block would burn." Hubert said his job was to get on top of their roof with a shovel, and as the burning embers landed on their roof, he would shovel them over the side. However, their windows were all broken anyway, but their building survived even though all the eyewitnesses thought the whole city block would be destroyed. Also, those spectators said, except for the herculean effort by Morehead's valiant volunteer fire

fighters, the whole block would have burned. Morehead Fire Chief Lionel Fannin said that the absence of any wind that night was the deciding factor in being able to contain the fire to one building and those businesses located in that building.

Hubert Allen's sister, Bess, went to bed early the next night after being up all night fighting to keep their building from catching fire. She said before retiring for the night, "I'm so tired it will sure take more than a fire to get me up tonight." It did. A flood got her up again to try and keep the water out of the store.

BUSSES, BUSINESSES, BOURBON DESTROYED

In addition to the hotel, there were seven other businesses located in that building that were destroyed in that fire. Those businesses were: Caskey Tire Company, Caskey Taxi Cab Company, Trail Barber Shop, Morehead Real Estate Company, Parkers Pool Room, W.P.A. Packhorse Library, seven school busses owned by Alf Caskey and leased to the county, and the Snell and Wendell (S&W) Liquor Store.

SOME BOURBON BOTTLES SALVAGED

In preparation for the 4th of July celebration, the S&W Liquor Store had just received a large shipment of bourbon and scotch whiskey. And all though the night as those bottles exploded by the intense heat, it sounded like gunfire. Also, that highly flammable alcohol added fuel to the flames. But the next day some of the local characters known for tipping the bottle, frantically searched through the blackened embers looking for an un-exploded bottle. Some were actually located un-exploded, under the fallen timbers.

Most of the surrounding buildings had some smoke and water damage, as well as

broken windows. The Eagles Nest suffered \$300.00 damage on the night of the fire, and \$500.00 the next night in the flood. Also, those displaced carnival people who barely escaped the fire with their life, would, the next night, barely escape the flash flood with their life. (I doubt if any of them ever returned to Morehead.) They had been hit with a double "whammy".

"RECORDS SURVIVE FIRE AND FLOOD"

Pucky Jayne Bradley, whose family was one family that was damaged by both the fire and the flood, recalled her experience the night of the fire. She recalled standing across the street, and watching the fire fighters as they tried to contain the blaze. She also recalled some of them praying for rain to help contain the blaze. (Little did they realize the flood would come the next night.) Her dad, W.L. Jayne had a garage in an adjoining building, but was in the process of moving to their new site on East main Street. (Present site of Larry Fannin Chevrolet). However, the customer accounts were still in the building, so her dad sent someone into the building to get those papers. She said, "They were afraid that the building would burn also." Pucky said, "All those papers were brought home, and the next night the flood came and they had to be moved upstairs since water was about 5 feet deep on the first floor." One could say those records were permanent since they withstood both flood and fire.

"LOSS OF PROPERTY - NO LOSS OF LIFE"

Mr. Alf Caskey's loss in the fire was estimated at \$75,000, none of which he said was covered by insurance. (\$75,000 in 1939 dollars would be probably \$1,000,000 today.) Most of the other businesses were covered by insurance. However, Mr. Caskey

rebuilt his business even without insurance.

Morehead had suffered a major fire to its downtown business section. But the volunteer firemen were due great praise for their heroic efforts. They succeeded in saving many buildings because of their hard work. But their efforts were overlooked because of the tragic flood that came 24 hours later with such tragic loss of life. Those firemen had been up almost all night fighting fire, and the next night they were up almost all night fighting for their homes and lives. The fire chief, Lionel Fanning, lost everything he had in the flood, as did some of the other firemen. They were also called ~~to~~ help rescue flood victims, and search for bodies.

FIRE AND FLOOD BROUGHT MATURITY TO VOLUNTEER FIREMEN

Morehead's volunteer firemen came of age on those two nights. Like a military unit trained for combat, and when the battle came, they met the test of fire. Thus, with those two major crises, they responded successfully to those crises! From that time on, the firemen knew that they could succeed under almost any conditions. It instilled confidence and pride in their unit. There were other major fires, Peoples Hotel on Railroad Street, "Lil Abner" Restaurant on East main Street, and the C. Roger Lewis business and home on Main Street and others. But in each case the Morehead Volunteer Fire Department has responded with great courage and success. Today, they are second to none in Volunteer Fire Departments. Many of these volunteers go on to become professional firefighters on municipal fire departments such as Ashland, Louisville, Lexington, Georgetown, as well as in the State Fire Marshall's Office.

Morehead's very capable full-time fire chief, Dale Adkins, says the department now has 40 volunteer firemen. They have four fire trucks, one pumper, one tanker, one ladder truck, two brush trucks, and one air-lighting truck. Last year, the fire department responded to 475 calls. Hopefully you will never need them, but when you do, they will be there quickly, and know what to do.

During the past 100 years, Morehead has had sixteen very capable fire chiefs.

Those men are:

- 1 Isaac C. Blair
- 2 Melvin Hamm
- 3 Norman Wells
- 4 Jack Cecil
- 5 Lionel Fannin
- 6 C.B. McCullough
- 7 Walter "Tag" Calvert
- 8 Joe Mauk
- 9 William Lee Helwig
- 10 Glenn Terrell
- 11 Harold Holbrook, Jr.
- 12 Raymond Adkins
- 13 William Hankinson
- 14 Ronnie Day
- 15 Randy Walker
- 16 Dale Adkins