

A Brief History of
Fayetteville's Central Fire Station
in honor of the
Fire Station 1
Groundbreaking Ceremony



Central Fire Station
155 Bow Street
Fayetteville, North Carolina

Groundbreaking Ceremony

Tuesday, November 19, 1996

11:30 a.m.

Presentation of Colors and Pledge of Allegiance

Chief Pete Piner

Welcome and introduction of special guests

J.L. Dawkins
Mayor

Remarks

Wilbur Clark
Former Alderman, Mayor and Chairman of the Fire Committee

Milo McBryde
Councilmember at Large

Chief Pete Piner
Fayetteville Fire Department

Presentation of Notices to Proceed

J.L. Dawkins
Mayor

Groundbreaking

Mayor, Councilmembers & Special Guests

*Adjournment to Central Fire Station, Bow Street for Pig Pickin'
Parking along street and in lot adjacent to Central Station*

Dedication

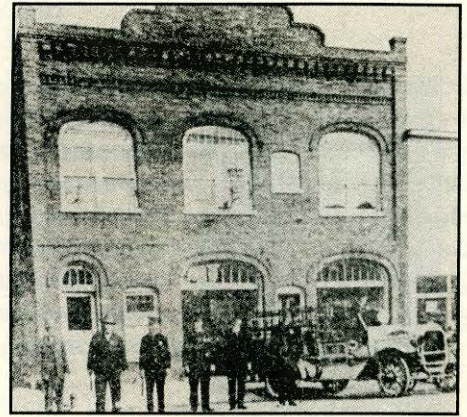
This brief history of the Central Fire Station is respectfully dedicated to those brave and heroic firefighters who have dedicated themselves to the protection of life and property in our City.

The Old Firehouse

The old firehouse located on Gillespie Street was built in 1908. It housed a horse-drawn rig for about six years. The first truck was purchased in 1914. In 1917, a second truck was purchased and the horse-drawn rig was retired.

The Fire Department shared their quarters with the Police Department and other City offices at the Gillespie Street Station until 1942, when the City Hall Building was completed at the corner of Green and Bow Streets.

After the Fire Department moved out of the old station in 1949, it was purchased by Stephen G. Worth, who renovated it for utilization as Worth Business College. The Old Firehouse was razed to make way for the Franklin Street Extension when the new Cumberland County Courthouse was built.



The Old Firehouse

A New Era In Fire Service

The year 1945 marked the end of the Second World War and the onset of the Cold War. It was also a period of modern progressive ideas, a new era. The Fayetteville Fire Department experienced rapid growth and change in those years immediately following the end of the Second World War. Until 1945, the Fayetteville Fire Department consisted largely of volunteers. There were, at this time, only five full-time men in the department.

In 1946, an ordinance was passed creating a Bureau of Fire Prevention in Fayetteville. During the same year, the Fayetteville Board of Aldermen passed an ordinance authorizing \$100,000 in Fire Station Bonds for erecting a new fire station and acquiring necessary land. This was the first step taken in the furtherance of the construction of Central Fire Station on Bow Street.

The following year, 1947, brought about further progressive changes in the Fayetteville Fire Department to include an all-paid department, firefighters being placed under the Civil Service Commission, the formation of a new Downtown Fire District, the authority to form ten fire companies and designate company officers.

The Board of Aldermen approved the following monthly pay schedule for the first all-paid fire department in the history of Fayetteville:

Chief	\$300.
Asst. Chief	\$250.
Captain	\$215.
Mechanic/Driver	\$210.
Company Officers	\$200.
New men, first 6 months	\$165.
Next six months	\$170.
After one year	\$185.

Planning

In the Summer of 1947, the City of Fayetteville purchased for \$15,000 the home of the late R.H. Buckingham on Bow Street near Liberty Point. This property was needed to provide an adequate site for the new Central Fire Station. The sum of \$100,000 in Fire Station Bonds had been approved by the citizens of Fayetteville at an election during the latter part of the previous year. The City of Fayetteville already owned a vacant lot immediately adjacent to the Buckingham property. The two properties combined would give the City an estimated 100 feet of frontage on Bow Street. The building being planned by the City was to become the principal fire station for Fayetteville. In discussions concerning the proposed new Central Fire Station, Chief George A. Brinkley is quoted as saying, "It will enable five vehicles to leave the building simultaneously."

Opposing Views

Differences of opinions and opposing views are nothing new in planning the construction of municipal buildings.

In February 1948, award of contracts for the proposed new Central Fire Station were disapproved by the Fayetteville Board of Audit and Finance on the grounds that "certain features involving sizable expenditures of money are not necessary."

The objections were raised over a tile floor and a small room with a workshop bench in the rear. Mayor Charles G. Rose, Jr. estimated that withdrawal of these items would reduce the cost by about \$12,000. The Board of Aldermen had accepted low bids totaling \$110,669 subject to Board of Audit and Finance approval. V.P. Loftis was the low bidder on the general contract with a figure of \$92,000. Mayor Rose declared that there would be a meeting of the Board of Aldermen to decide whether to reduce the overall cost of the job by accepting alternate specifications or to override the action of the Board of Audit and Finance.



Mayor Rose

Bids were opened for a second time in March 1948 and Player Construction Company was the low bidder. Player's bid was \$85,900 for general construction which included the tile flooring, a controversial item in the first bid.

The Cost

On March 26, 1948, the Board of Aldermen awarded work to the following low bidders:

Player Construction	General Construction	\$85,900
Charles Overbeck	Heating Contract	\$ 8,100
J.L. Powers Company	Plumbing	\$ 6,020
B.W. Electrical Company	Electrical	\$ 2,250

The total of low bids was \$102,270.

The Move To Central Station

On September 9, 1949, the Fayetteville Fire department moved from the old Firehouse on Gillespie Street to the new Central Fire Station on Bow Street facing Liberty Point. It was reported that there were smiles on the faces of Chief George A. Brinkley and his staff as they moved equipment into the new station. Chief Brinkley commented, "While not the largest, it is one of the best arranged, and one of the most modern stations in the State." On the day that the Fire Department moved into Central Fire Station, Chief Brinkley optimistically declared that the new station would take care of the City's downtown needs for 50 years to come. Chief Brinkley's prediction was fairly accurate.

Chief Duke J. Piner was 12 years old when Central Fire Station was built. His father, Thomas J. Piner, was among the first firefighters to move into the new Central Fire Station.

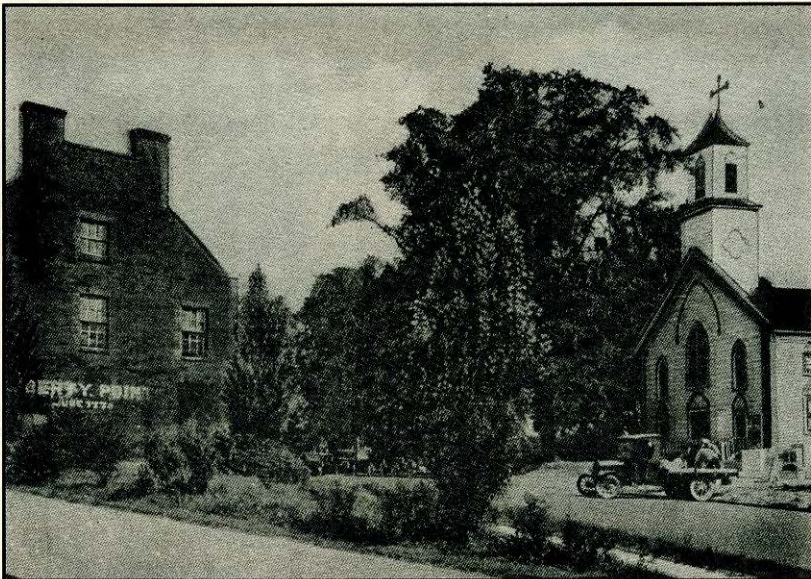
Two months prior to this move, Gilbert W. Ray was sworn into office as Fayetteville's first City Manager under the new form of government.



Chief Brinkley

Fire Chiefs

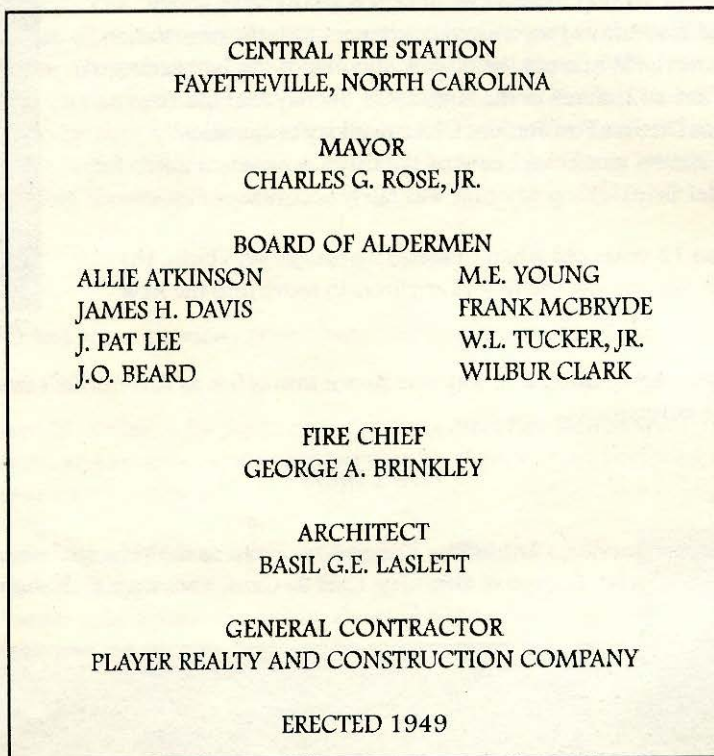
During almost fifty years of service, Central Fire Station has served as the principal station house under the leadership of five fire chiefs: George A. Brinkley, Carl A. Cain, Thurman C. Bishop, Wilbur Johnson, and Duke J. Piner.



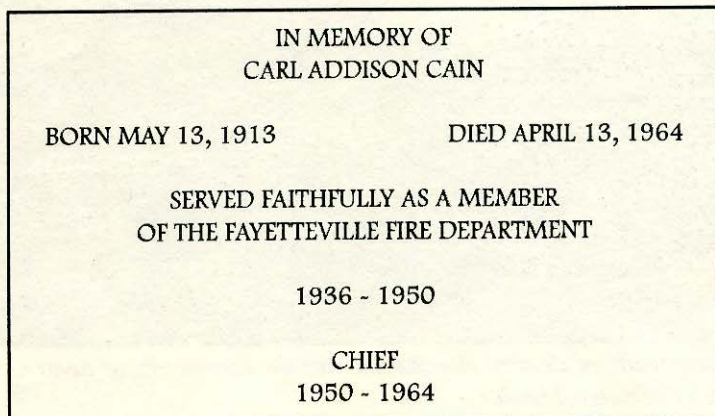
The present site of Central Fire Station was the former site of Saint Patrick's Catholic Church.

Dedication And Memorial Tablets

When you enter Central Fire Station from the far right front entrance, there is a bronze dedication tablet hanging on the wall, which reads as follows:



In the same room with the dedication tablet, there appears a bronze memorial tablet, which reads as follows:



Reflections

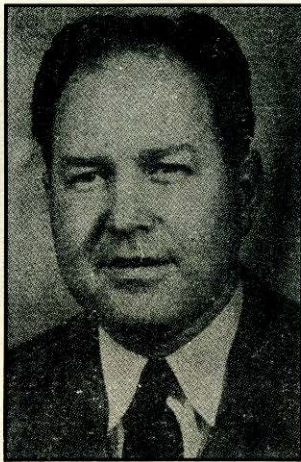
A page in the history of the Fayetteville Fire Department will end when they move from the Central Fire Station. Central Fire Station is the last station house in Fayetteville where firefighters still live in upstairs quarters and slide down the old brass pole to answer alarms. It will mark the end of a tradition.

But as always, it becomes necessary for the old to yield place to the new. The old Central Fire Station is no longer strategically located, and it suffers from peeling plaster, a wall that is pulling away from the building, cramped and outdated quarters and quirky plumbing.

Fayetteville Firefighters are looking forward to the modern conveniences of the new fire station, but will always remember with fond memories the old Central Fire Station.

In order to capture the traditions of the old Central Fire Station, Chief Piner has made provisions for the old fire pole to be placed in the new station. Also, the painting of the firefighters on the concrete slab above the entrance to the Central Fire Station will be incorporated into the new fire station. Chief Piner is working on creating an area in the new station for displaying Fayetteville's fire service memorabilia.

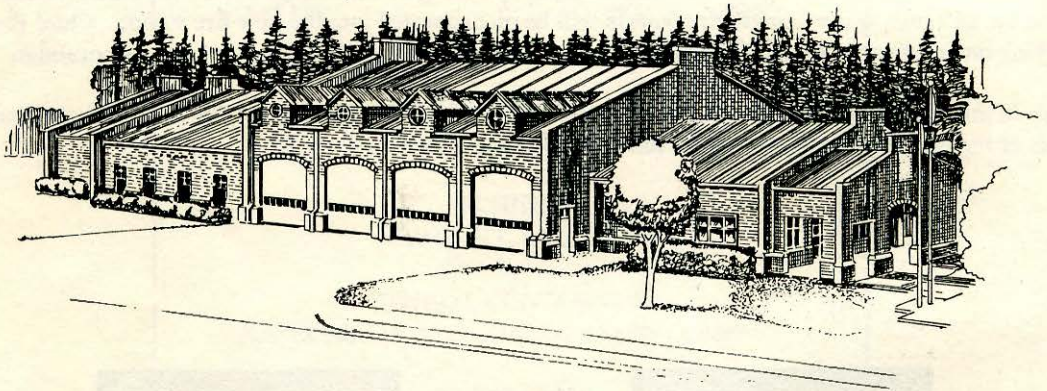
Space in this brief program will not allow for the full history of the old Central Fire Station or the heroic deeds of the dedicated firefighters who have been housed here for nearly 50 years.



*Wilbur Clark
Former Alderman,
Mayor and
Chairman of the Fire Committee*



*Frank McBryde
Former Alderman and Fire
Committee Member
Father of Milo McBryde*



*"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done:
and there is no new things under the sun."*

-Ecclesiastes 1:9