

THE HAGUE CHRONICLE

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P.O. Box 10
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FIRE DEPARTMENT'S 25th BIRTHDAY

Prior to 1947, calls for help in case of fire or other emergency would be relayed to the Ticonderoga Fire Department. For each response a charge of \$50. was made. When word reached Hague that the charge was to be increased to \$100. a number of townspeople met with the town supervisor, the late R.J. Bolton, to consider the formation of a fire department for Hague. This culminated in a meeting in October 1947 at which the Hague Volunteer Fire Department was officially organized. A charter was granted by the Secretary of State early in 1948.

One of the leaders in organizing the department was Robert Hoyt who will celebrate his silver anniversary as chief this year. Mr. Hoyt and his wife Ada, came to Hague in March, 1947 to manage the supermarket which was purchased two years later by Mr. Hoyt. The Hoyt's have continuously operated the store.

Other first year officers were Harry Leach, 1st Ass't Chief; Robert Bolton, 2nd Ass't Chief; Elton Rising, Secretary; and Jack Henry, Treasurer. Other first year members who continue to be active are: Richard Bolton, William K. DeLarm, and Clifford Decker. Robert Denno has been active for 23 years; Harry May, 19 years; Martin Fitzgerald and Ernest Conlon, 16 years; Gordon May, Irving Bailey and Ernest Jordan, 15 years; and Arthur Beldon and Wallace Conlon, 14 years.

The first piece of equipment owned by the department was a 4-wheel Jeep with a 200 gallon box top tank. It was purchased in 1948. In 1955 a 4-wheel International was acquired and in 1971 the new International was added. All equipment except the Jeep is still in service.

The first fire department building was located alongside Mr. Hoyt's store. In 1953 the first floor of the present firehouse was constructed with Mr. Hoyt

says, "bliss, sweat and tears". In 1967 a second story was added. This is a delightful meeting room with fully equipped kitchen. The present building is estimated to be worth \$50,000. with the fire fighting equipment and ambulance worth another \$50,000.

When first organized the department was given an annual allowance of \$500. by the town. As more equipment was added the yearly allowance was increased. The current year's contract calls for payment of \$5000. by the town. Equipment is purchased on the installment plan and present principal and interest payments are about equal to the amount paid by the town. All other expenditures are paid for out of contributions and money raised through dinners and other activities of the fire department.

Shortly after the department was organized an ambulance service was instituted with a rebuilt Packard hearse serving as the ambulance. Since then there have been three more second-hand ambulances. Mr. Hoyt is hopeful that the next one will be a new one.

In 1971 the ambulance travelled 4000 miles taking patients to and from their homes and hospitals. There were 95 daytime calls and 23 nighttime calls with 522 man hours utilized. Most trips were made to the hospital at Ticonderoga although ten were made to Glens Falls, 11 to Burlington, and four to Albany. Twenty-eight members of the fire department are members of the ambulance squad.

Notable fires through the years have been at Beaconside Hotel, Nelson House, Trout House Garage and Hinck's cottages. Last year there was a spectacular fire at the home of the Silver Bay Association's superintendent. Fortunately no casualties or serious injuries have been suffered by members of the department while on duty. This enviable record is probably due in large part to the chief's creed - "I will not save a man whom I want go myself." Last year the firemen spent 509 man hours in

The Fire Department telephone number is 543-6601. When that number is called, phones in the fire-house, Mr. Hoyt's store, and in the homes of Joe Streeter and Bernard Fortune ring simultaneously. The phone in the fire-house sets off the siren. After the phone call, the first action is to call five "callers" (designated people who are generally home). Each of these, in turn, call five additional numbers. In this way the entire department is alerted.

Four firemen are qualified to drive and operate the new equipment. More are being trained. When the driver gets to the firehouse, he takes off immediately with whatever personnel has arrived; all others get to the fire in their own cars. The department is a member of a mutual aid system. In case of need, Ticonderoga is the first to respond; then Bolton; then Westerlo town.

The department has a long and distinguished history of service to the community and the twenty-fifth anniversary is a fitting milestone during which we can show our appreciation. More on this later!

THE TOWN BOARD MEETS

Under the sponsorship of the New York Association of Towns, officials of the 911 towns in the state get together annually to discuss problems of mutual interest. This year the meetings were held at the New York Hilton and Americana Hotels on February 6 - 9. Messrs. Tom Smith and Daniel Belden represented Hague. For this reason the Town Board meeting scheduled for February 8 was postponed to February 15.

The supervisor read a letter from Clinton Frasier in which he resigned as assessor effective March 1. The resignation was accepted and Mr. Ralph McKee was appointed to serve until a new assessor is elected in November. Mr. Michael Fitzgerald has been appointed chairman of the Board of Assessors.

The supervisor announced that he was not yet ready to propose a slate of candidates for the Board of Review but would do so at the next meeting.

Mr. Smith is now established in an off-

ice county business. His telephone number is 543-6161. He feels it would be desirable to provide offices for the assessors and the town justices and the matter was referred to the Board's building committee. One of the problems associated with the use of the town hall is the inability to provide adequate heat during the cold weather. This will also be studied by the building committee.

Petitions filed last year by residents of the Sabbath Day Point and Forest Bay areas with respect to the need for road repairs and on which no action had been taken were discussed and the supervisor stated that this would have his personal attention and that hopefully a decision could be made at the next meeting.

Problems associated with the sanitary landfill were discussed in some detail. Apparently unauthorized persons are using the facility, raw sewage is being dumped, and on occasion the facility is left unattended. In the absence of a landfill committee, the Board itself will study the matter and recommendations will be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

A representative of the owners of the old St. Paul's property on Route 9N has asked for an opportunity to present proposals to subdivide the property and develop it for homes. The Board agreed to hear the presentation at its next meeting.

A number of town highway employees attended the meeting and expressed some dissatisfaction with current wages and working conditions. The supervisor announced that a study of wage rates paid by other towns was underway and when completed the subject would be discussed further. The supervisor also agreed to obtain a ruling on whether further increases in wages or fringe benefits could be awarded under the Phase II wage freeze.

The next meeting will be held at the regular time, March 4 at 7:30 P.M. and the April meeting will be delayed one week until April 15.

SCHOOL MEET

The Board met on February 14 with all members present except Martin Fitzgerald.

exists at the site of the addition to the school. Architects Barker and Honzy are trying to find a solution. Meanwhile a local contractor has been engaged to see what can be done to prevent possible water damage.

A request was made that the Board publish a report on the present status of the building project. Mr. McKee agreed that such a report would be forthcoming. Proposal to have an "open house" at the school when the work had been completed was discussed but no decision was reached.

The Board made it clear that no water well has been contracted for by school officials.

The possibility of selling property owned by the school district which lies adjacent to the town shed was discussed and was referred to the Board's attorney for an opinion.

The proposal to adopt and publish the official school board policy on various items was again tabled.

Retrospective pay (that part of the salaries frozen under last summer's wage and price freeze) was granted to the teachers.

After adjournment the Board went into executive session to consider impending negotiations between the Hague Teachers Association and the Board. As reported in our last issue, the Board's minutes of the January meeting state that the grievances have been resolved. The teachers contend that the issues have not been settled. Since the public is not privy to these negotiations we can only report what is in the minutes.

FLEISCHMANN COMMISSION REPORTS

The long-awaited report of the Fleischmann Commission which, since October, 1969 has been trying to get the answer to the question - How do we get a lot better education for a lot less money? - is beginning to emerge. The first three chapters of a planned fifteen chapter report were reviewed in some detail in the New York Times of January 30th.

With perhaps some over-simplification, the basic proposals are: First - the state will be responsible for all costs of education. Second - to pay these costs the state

will levy a uniform, state-wide property tax of \$2.04 per \$100. of full value; Third - school districts spending under \$1,037. per pupil will be allowed to increase expenditures by \$155. per year; outlay in districts spending more will be frozen until the rest catch up.

The present school tax rate is applied to the assessed valuation while the rate of \$2.04 proposed by the Fleischmann Commission is to be applied to full value. While full value means different things to different people, the State Board of Equalization and Assessment presently establishes full value of property for the purpose of determining amount of state aid each of the various school districts is entitled to. On February 6, 1971, this board determined on the basis of a sampling of 56 properties in Hague that all property taxable for town purposes had an assessed value of \$8,476,970 and that the average market value for the 1965-68 period was \$12,048,738. This established that the assessed value was 70.35% of market value and accordingly an equalization rate of 70% was fixed.

If the state were again to determine that the true value of property in the Hague District was \$12,050,000 total taxes based on the \$2.04 rate would be \$245,000. This should be compared with present taxes of \$276,000. which is currently being collected on the assessed value of \$8,500,000. with a rate of \$3.257. The proposed tax of some \$30,000. less than present tax would have the effect of reducing our present rate to about \$2.39 per \$100. of assessed value.

Our costs per pupil far exceed the \$1,037 proposed by the Commission and therefore would be frozen until the other districts catch up. Since our costs now are in the neighborhood of \$1,900. per pupil, they would remain at that figure for at least five years.

A word of caution! No one can predict what the future will bring in the area of education and taxes. No one knows what action, if any, the state legislature will take. The most that can be said now is that the Fleischmann Commission reports and the action taken by the legislature bear watching.

THE ASSESSORS ARE COMING

In December, 1970 Warren County assessed

the services of J. M. Clemenshaw Company of Cleveland, Ohio to determine the full value of each parcel of real estate in the county. The measuring and inspecting of buildings has now proceeded through the first year of the contract with appraisals completed in the towns of Queensbury, Lake George and Lake Luzerne. Work is now in progress through the Warrensburg and Bolton areas and the assessors will next move into the Roxton and Chastertown communities. It is expected that they will be coming to Hague in early spring and that most of the lakeshore property will be appraised in early summer.

Early in 1973 notices will be mailed to every property owner listing the value computed for his land and building and telling him when and where public hearings will be held in his town to review the appraisals of those who are dissatisfied.

A property record card is being prepared for each property with a scaled sketch of the building and all the detail about size, number of stories, type of basement, heating, etc. will be listed on this card. The method by which value was computed will also be shown. Depreciation for age and degree of maintenance will also be listed so that an individual can readily see the method used to establish the full value of his property. At the completion of the appraisals and after public hearings the detailed property record cards will be turned over to the local assessors. The values shown on these cards will be the values used in determining the 1973-74 tax rolls.

While the Clemenshaw Company is apprais-

ing each parcel at full value, it is believed that the Warren County Board of Supervisors will elect the percent of full value that will be used throughout the county as the assessed value on which the tax rate will be applied.

AROUND THE TOWN

Hague is now tied for second with Long Lake in the Marcy Conference Division basketball league with a record of six wins and four losses. The final game will be played against Long Lake on March 4. The winner will go into the sectional playoffs.

The Hague girls in grades 7 through 12 now have a basketball team. The first game will be at Minerva on March 4. Before the girls' game, Hague boys, grades 4 - 6, will play against the Minerva boys.

In the annual teachers vs seniors basketball game, reports are conflicting but it appears that the seniors won. At least we do know that the coach got pied. The big attraction was the cheerleaders - the women teachers vs the senior girls.

Members of the Hague Mother's club who meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month are making cancer dressings which are distributed where needed throughout the county by the American Cancer Society. In January 13 dozen were prepared and in February another 13 dozen were completed.

The meetings are held in the Baptist Church Annex. Mrs. Margaret Nielsen is president. Currently about a dozen women attend the meetings which are held from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M.

REMEMBER THE WINTER CARNIVAL - MARCH 3 - 5

Return to:
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Jim Morrison*

