Austin

LOG HILL MESA

PAST AND PRESENT

A LATE DEVELOPING SLICE OF AMERICANA

Jack and Barbara Rairden

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10. LOG HILL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The LHVFD on Log Hill Mesa (LHM) had its embryonic beginnings in April, 1976. A group of 20+ interested neighbors met to lay the foundation to form a non-profit corporation. Attendees taking leadership roles included: Wayne & Nellie Flowers, Jim & Shirley Johnnie, Gordon & Jeanne Logan, Hank & Bea Frenze, Fred Satariano, John & Marianne Pearson, Bob & Nancy Brown, Archie Yelek, and Lowell & Ruth Stanford.

Gordon Logan (Fig. 10-1) was elected Fire Chief and chaired the early meetings. Committee leaders included: Hank and Bea Frenze, Bob and Nancy Brown, Jimmy Johnnie, Fred Satariano and Archie Yelek. Of critical significance was the Frenze's lease to the Fire Department of one-acre of their property on CR#22 at the request of Gordon Logan and John Pierson. The lease was at the rate of $1.00/year for ten years at which time it would be deeded to the planned Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection District.

Fig, 10-1: Gordon Logan. ca. 1970s

The Directors of the Corporation were elected in June, 1976, as follows: Robert Brown, President; Gordon Logan, Vice-President; Nancy Wilson, Secretary; and Wayne Flowers, Kay Norman, Henry Frenze, Lowell Stanford, Members.

Since the Corporation would have no taxing authority, the money to operate the Corporation would have to come from donations and fund-raising events. The members of the Women's Auxiliary and the Fortuna Tierra Club made vital contributions to the successful fund-raising activities of the new organization.

This was an effort truly starting from scratch. The county roads were little more than two ruts with grass growing between them. There was no water except for springs or wells and a few stock ponds - domestic water was mostly hauled from Colona. There was no telephone service - communication was by CB radios. No attempt was made to keep County Road #1 open from north to south after the snow started to fly. Log Hill Village was still being platted.

The first LHVFD fire truck was a tanker on loan from the Forest Service (and under the direction of the County Sheriff) as shown in Fig. 10-2; it was on-hand in July, 1976. By that time the Fire House was under construction at the CR#22 site. (Figs. 10-3 and 10-4) The property was surveyed by Hank Frenze and Ken Peterson - they laid out the site for the fire-house, leveled it, put down a gravel base and prepared the forms for the cement floor. Most of the construction work was a volunteer effort by the members of the community - the primary construction people in addition to Hank were: Gordon Logan,

Fig. 10-2: The Colorado State Forest Services truck, "Mellow Yellow", on loan to the LHVFD. 1976

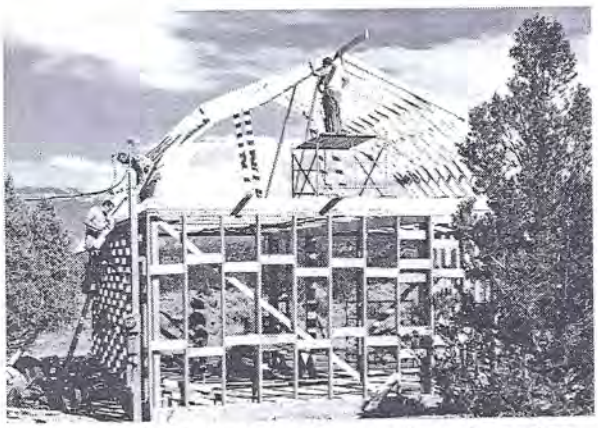

Fig. 10-3: Firehouse #1, west end, under construction. 1976

Fig. 10-4: Firehouse #1, east end under construction. 1976

Jimmy Johnnie, John Pierson and Lowell Stanford. The truck was moved to the fire house in October, 1976.

In December, 1976, the tax-exempt number was received from the Dept. of Revenue and the Corporation papers were approved and registered. $3,666.91 had been received from donations and fund-raising events. Equipment such as hoses, bunker gear, helmets, CB radios, pagers, tools, etc., were being begged, borrowed and, occasionally, bought. The Montrose Fire Dept. (MFD) was a major contributor to the LHVFD efforts and it remains so to this day! The Ridgway Fire Dept. (RFD) has been a valuable mutual aid partner since 1976!

From the get-go, the firehouse also was to be the Community Center - it was used extensively for that purpose through the mid-1980s. Work continued on the fire house construction in preparation for its dedication in August, 1977. Finishing work on the upstairs meeting room and kitchen continued well into the early 1980s. Fund-raisers by the Ladies Auxiliary (Figs. 10-5 and 10-6) were vital to this effort!

Fig. 10-5: Picnic in the firehouse. 1976

Fig. 10-6: Ruth Stanford and Shirley Johnnie serving food. 1976

In August, 1977, a used Dodge ambulance was obtained from Ouray County. There was thought that this vehicle might be converted into a fire truck. In February 1978 Fred Satariano made arrangements to obtain a 1953 Dodge army weapons carrier donated to the LHVFD by the Delta Vo-Tech School (it had been used there to train student mechanics). The old ambulance then was used as a source of spare parts. A 200-gallon water tank, donated by the Ridgway VFD was

mounted on the weapons carrier along with a pump and hose. By July, 1979, it was in operation as the "fast recovery" truck. (Fig.10-7)

The Board of Directors approved the purchase of a 1960 FWD pumper from the Montrose Fire District in June, 1978. (Fig. 10-8) The $6,000 cost was to be financed contingent upon the formation of the Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection District (LHMFPD) and thence, the availability of tax revenues.

Fig. 10-7: Fast recovery truck. 1979

A committee was formed in early 1978, to lay the groundwork for establishing the LHMFPD. Many hours were spent in defining the proposed district boundaries, obtaining resident petition signatures, and obtaining BOCC and Court approvals. An election in December 1978, led to the formation of the District on January 1, 1979; the vote was: 30 yeas; 2 nays; 1 abstention. The Board of Directors elected were: Nellie Flowers, Bob Brown, Hank Frenze, Gordon Logan and John Pearson.

Fig. 10-8: 1960 FWD pumper.

In June, 1979, Gordon Logan resigned as Fire Chief; Fred Sartariano (Fig. 10-9) was elected to be his replacement. Gordon Logan was elected as Chairman of the Board of Directors. In November, 1979, confirmation was received that the Fire District was approved by the State Office of Local Government.

Fig. 10-9: Asst. Chief Jimmy Johnnie and Chief Fred Satariano.

Housing construction in Log Hill Village (LHV) was underway by the late 1970s. Bob Draper, the managing partner in the ownership group Western Community Planners, recognized the need for fire protection in this newly formed, growing community. He tapped George Nelson to lead the effort to construct Fire House #2. George and his wife had recently bought the sixth house in LHV - he joined Mr. Draper in contacting the LHVFD and they reached an agreement with them to be included in the LHVFD. Beginning in September, 1980, George led the fund-raising effort, organized the volunteer building crew and oversaw the construction of the firehouse. The construction proceeded rapidly so that a truck could be station there; but it was late 1985 by the time it was totally completed. (Fig. 10-10):

LeRoy Ford told us of a fire call during the summer in the mid-1980s: "On Brown's Hill (Aster Lane) coming up from Colona, some fellow from Texas bought property up on top of the hill and he bulldozed down a bunch of pinon trees - he put it in a long, narrow windrow. I don't know how long this stack of pinon was, but being from Texas, he didn't know pinons, so he decided to light a fire at one

end and just let it slowly burn until it got to the other end. The windrow went east and west and he couldn't control it. The only truck we had was the old Forest Service truck. There were four of us: Geo. Nelson, Matt Orr, Bob Draper and I - our average age must have been 70 or so.

Fig. 10-10: FH #2. ca. 2005

"So two fellows got in the fire truck and I followed behind them with one of the fellows riding with me. But anyhow, that fire was really going and all we had was that 1,000 gal. of water. A fire truck from somewhere else came up - I don't know where it was from, but they didn't help us much. So, we had to have more than 1,000 gal. of water - so my job was to go down to Jim's BBQ and get all the quarters he had and go to the water station in Colona. I would be there when they drove the truck under - I inserted the quarters until they got loaded again and they would go back up. That was so funny - and I don't think the fire was put out until the next day. We must have gotten it under control - with four aged firefighters.

"When we decided to bring the truck back, we decided to go up the escarpment because CR #1 was so rough. It was loaded full of water so part of the way up, the truck wouldn't pull it with that load of water. So they had to empty it on the ground - then made it up the hill".

Shirley and Jimmy Johnnie told us about a fire that the LHVFD responded to in the early 1980s: "We saved the place up there on Pinon Ridge - it was a cabin or a barn, but they had a trailer up there that was about to catch fire. We got up there and saved the trailer - the structure burned to the ground."

Another story was: " One day we were going into town and saw smoke coming from Fire Chief Fred Satariano's house on the corner of County Road #22 and County road #22A. So we went over there and told their children that the house is on fire - it was a chimney fire. The kids were in the house and they wouldn't come out - finally we did manage to get them out.

"They couldn't get the truck started at the fire house - something was wrong with it at that time. The real heroes were the Wilsons, Nancy and her husband Bill. Bill was a small guy and Nancy just picked him up and threw him on that porch. We handed him the garden hose and he put the fire out. It was pretty much smoke in there."

A GMC pumper truck was purchased from Carbondale in April, 1984, for $650 (the purchase had been approved two years before, but funding was lacking). The truck was on-hand by July 1984, but needed work and saw only very limited service.

In July 1985, $800 was authorized to buy used hard hats and bunker gear from the Rangley Fire Dept. These were stored at the firehouses and were used sparingly. Used pagers were obtained through the years - in 1986, the pagers were recrystalled so that the Colo. State Patrol Dispatch could be used; thereby replacing the old paging system.

The Pension Plan was transferred to FPPA effective the first of 1987 - funds were transferred from the money market account. LHVFD firefighters are awarded a very modest pension after 10 or more years of active service and after age 55. The State Law was amended in 1997 to allow fire depts. to permit retired firefighters to remain on the active roster, but with no increase in pension benefits.

Maintaining a membership of volunteer firefighters has always been a challenge. Younger people are often faced with a multitude of career and family responsibilities and have limited time. Older people are often retired and have the time, but are physically limited for the rigors of being a fully participating firefighter. As the population of LHM has grown, there have been more younger people that are willing to make the commitment of time and energy to be completely trained firefighters.

LHVFD RETIREES
George Nelson
***Ken Hansen**
***Don Dunham**
***John Petty**
***Bob Kindschi**
***Oscar Gerstung**
Ron Hoeksema
***Ed Bosworth**
Frank Starr
Jack Rairden
Ron Ringo
John Nelson
Bill Bennett
Steve Wolff
Tim Ahearn
Augie Dean
Fred McKnight
Randy Gregory
* deceased

By early 1988, Tri-County Water had extended lines to the northern end of LHM. A fire hydrant was purchased by the fire department for $1,600 and installed at FH#1. A 1959 FWD (Fig. 10-11) was purchased from the Montrose FD and training on the newly acquired truck was begun in July, 1988. Radios were installed in two trucks at a cost of $1,020 in July, 1988. A new fire hydrant was installed on CR #1C in 1989.

Fig. 10-11: 1959 FWD pumper.

Penny and Frank Starr told us of the first fire they remember fighting in the late 1980s. There were several others working on the fire. Penny was making a fire line with a shovel when one of the men came up and said: "Give me your shovel." I said: "No! - go get your own damn shovel! You should know enough to bring a shovel when you come to a fire". We brought our own tools, they weren't on the truck. In the National Park Service, Penny had years of experience as a wild land fire fighter. In spite of that she said: "I was resented by many of the male LHVFD firefighters".

Another story that Penny and Frank told us about happened in ~1990. They were eating dinner when neighbor Matt Orr called and said: "Would you call me back after you eat? - we have smoke coming out of our ceiling!" Penny said: "Matt, we won't finish eating, we will be there immediately". They paged out the Dept. and went over there and put the fire out using fire extinguishers

From 1990 to 1992, Dave Austin, Fire Chief of the Montrose Fire Dept. served as Training Officer for the LHVFD for a very modest stipend. Montrose was a much smaller, laid back city in those days.

A '72 Ford brush truck (Fig. 10-12) was purchased in Pennsylvania in January, 1990. In May, 1990, the old '53 Dodge army truck was sold to Arrowhead for $1,004. A fire hydrant was purchased and installed at the CR #1/CR #22 intersection in November 1990. A replacement water tank was fabricated and

installed in the Ford in Sept. 1991.

Two hand-held radios and one truck radio were approved for purchase in Sept. 1992.

The La France pumper truck (Fig. 10-13) was purchased from Trenton, NJ, FD in Oct. 1992.

In 1992 a house on County Road #1C suffered severe fire, smoke and water damage due to an overheated electrical source. No one was home at the time - a next-door neighbor discovered the fire and reported it. With mutual aid support from the Montrose Fire Dept., the fire was extinguished and many of the household furnishings were saved. The house was subsequently restored.

A very controversial decision was made by the BOD to return the Forest Service tanker in Dec. 1992, because CSFS was going to require a $200 per year "maintenance fee" for it.

The transfer of title of the FH #1 acre from the Frenzes to the Fire District was finalized in late 1993.

In 1995 the International tanker truck (Fig. 10-14) was purchased from Alpine Apparatus for $21,000 less $2,000 trade-in for the '59 FWD. This truck carried 1,125 gal. of water and served as a replacement for the Forest Service truck.

A one-ton '84 GMC pick-up truck (Fig. 10-15) was purchased in early 1996, for $5,200 (including utility boxes valued at $700 donated by Ray Miles, Montrose). This truck was converted into a fast response/ brush truck. (Fig. 10-16) About $2,000 was spent to equip and paint the truck. The outfitting of this truck was completed using a tank/pump unit on loan from BLM. An upgraded tank/pump unit was obtained on loan from the BLM in 2000.

Fig. 10-12: 1972 Ford brush truck.

Fig. 10-13: LaFrance pumper truck.

Fig. 10-14: International tanker truck.

From the establishment of the LHMFPD in 1979, the District operated on "bare-bones" budgets. There had been significant opposition to the formation of a Fire District in the first place, and there was a community consensus that FD budgets should be lean to minimize the impact of taxes on the residents.

Budgeting for the District was further complicated in 1992 with the passage of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) by a vote of the taxpayers of Colorado.

Fig. 10-15: GMC farm truck.

Fig. 10-16: GMC fast response/brush truck.

This often is referred to as the "Bruce Amendment" because Douglas Bruce was the leader of this effort. TABOR limited the amount that taxes could be increased each year by a cost-of living formula which resulted in the tax mill levy for the LHMFPD to decrease from '94 to '98 as is shown in Fig. 10-17. In Nov. 1998, the BOD submitted a ballot issue to the voters to "De Bruce" the District - it was passed by an overwhelming majority. Therefore, the mill levy was stabilized at 1.548. In 1998, the BOD filed the necessary papers to obtain IRS tax status 501(c3) for the district which, among other things, authorizes purchases to be free of state sales tax. The tax-number was issued in Jan. 1999.

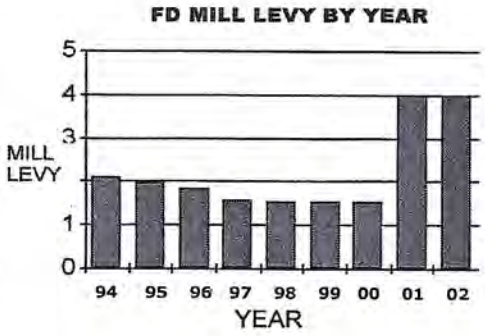

Fig. 10-17: Tax mill levy by years.

Frank Starr had replaced Don Dunham as Fire Chief in 1994. After Dunham retired from the Dept., Chief Starr sent a letter to residents of the District requesting cash donations to supplement our very modest tax income. About $5,000 was donated along with an additional $5,000 donation by Fairway Pines management.

In subsequent years Fairway Pines management donated the use of the golf course for Dept. fund raisers. BOD member Alan Stapleton organized and ran Marathon Golf Tournaments for the years 1995 - 1997 which resulted in ~$25,000 income for those years.

A house on Cactus Drive burned to the ground on Oct. 31, 1997. Hot fireplace ashes had been dumped near dry lumber stored beneath a second floor deck. The lumber caught fire which extended to the plastic propane gas line that entered the house. The heat melted the line, which resulted in a fire blast impinging on the log exterior of the house. By the time the first Fire Dept. units arrived on scene, the fire was completely out-of-control. With the mutual aid support of the Montrose Fire Dept. and the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Dept., the fire damage was limited to the house - there was no extension of the fire to surrounding buildings or other property. The house was subsequently rebuilt.

In 1998 a group of Fairway Pines residents led by Virgil Watters and Susan Watson suggested to the BOD that they would like to run a "real" golf tournament to benefit the FD. Golf tournaments were held most years from 1998 to 2006. They resulted in increasingly large incomes for the Dept. in the +$40,000 range.

Frank Starr resigned as Fire Chief in Dec. 1998 - he was succeeded by Bill Bennett in Jan. 1999. Bennett had been Asst. Chief and Training Officer during 1998. He also was Chairman of the Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC) for the BOD from 1996 - 1999.

In Aug. 1998, the LRPC recommended that 1st priority should be given to expanding FH #2 by two bays to accommodate a much needed tanker/pumper for the south mesa area. Second priority was to construct a new FH #3 at mid-mesa on the donated 3/4-acre lot that Bennett had negotiated with Henry and Lucy Woodruff. (Fig. 10-18) The addition of two bays to FH #1 was third priority. Also, a high priority was given to obtaining vitally needed personal protective gear and equipment for the safety of the firefighters.

Fig. 10-18: Ron Ringo, Frank Starr, Henry and Lucy Woodruff, Bill Bennett. 1998

Chief Bennett and the BOD undertook an ambitious effort to dramatically transform the LHVFD from an under-staffed, under-equipped and under-trained rural FD to an organization which could meet the safety needs of a rapidly growing community. One of his first decisions was to increase training from one three-hour session per month to two such sessions per month with a strong emphasis on "hands-on" exercises. He also spent many hours, even weeks, in contacting fire departments within a several hundred mile radius to obtain their surplus gear and equipment at low cost or no cost.

To implement the top priority recommendation of the LRPC of adding two bays to FH #2, architectural plans were drawn up and donated by Larry Kumpost - the plans included a meeting room above the bays along with several other amenities such as a bathroom and a shower. Tom Jones agreed to oversee the construction of the addition. Ron Ringo supervised the excavation at the north end of FH #2 which demonstrated that no blasting would be required for the addition.

Two obstacles to the proposed addition developed towards the end of 1999: 1. The approval of a larger leased area by land owner Ronn Mayer would be required; 2. Approval of the nearby homeowners would be required - an opposition group developed rapidly.

Bennett also began exploring for opportunities to obtain grants from a variety of agencies to augment the District income. He found that these agencies responded to his inquiries with a point-of-view that if our District didn't do more to tax themselves, it was unlikely that grants would be forthcoming.

A new planning committee chaired by BOD member Ed Hansen was formed to consider going to the voters for a tax increase and to reassess the priority list for how additional funds would be allocated. The new priorities established were: 1. International tender/pumper to be moved to FH #2; 2. New firehouse to be constructed at FH #1 site and a new tender/pumper to be purchased and located at FH #1; 3. A two-bay addition to be constructed at FH #2; 4. A new FH #3 to be constructed; 5. New trucks and equipment would be obtained in the period of 2005 to 2009.

In 1999 a house on Sage Brush suffered severe fire, smoke and water

damage due to an overheated electrical source. No one was home at the time - a nearby neighbor discovered the fire and reported it. With mutual aid support from the Montrose Fire Dept., the fire was extinguished and many of the household furnishings were saved. The house was subsequently restored.

After a concerted effort by Bennett and others, a tax increase to 3.980 mills was over-whelming approved in all areas of the District. This set the stage for expanding the capability of the Dept. to provide fire protection for the District.

The make-up of the BOD changed dramatically from 2000 to 2001. Jack Rairden resigned in Jan. 2000 and was replaced by John Nelson. Ron Ringo and Alan Stapleton chose not to run for reelection in May 2000 - they were replaced by Tim Ahearn and Fred McKnight. A few months later Steve Wolff resigned and was replaced by Bill Fugazzi. The next year Ed Hansen resigned and was replaced by Carol Ashley.

Chief Bennett was finding his duties to be increasingly burdensome. He recruited Greg Stith, a retired New Jersey State Patrol officer, to join the Dept. In a short time Stith completed his probationary requirements and was elected to be Asst. Chief in 1999. His major duties included working with Bennett to establish design specifications for a new pumper/tanker and for the new building at the FH #1 site.

Bennett and Stith were very actively assisting residents across Horsefly Canyon along Government Springs Road to establish the prospective Horsefly Fire Dept. (HFD) With the arrival of the Boardman pumper, the LHVFD donated the 1960 FWD pumper to the HFD.

In Nov. 2000, a Boardman pumper (Fig. 10-19) was donated to the LHVFD by benefactor Rob Dixon through the efforts of BOD member Fred McKnight. This truck had been obtained from the South Metro Fire District near Denver.

Fig. 10-19: Boardman pumper.

The tax mill levy increase approved by the voters in 2000 made possible the purchase of the District's first new truck. In June 2001, delivery was taken on the new custom designed General Safety pumper/ tanker truck. This is a Diesel-powered vehicle that carries 1,500 gallons of water and is suitable for response to structural fires, wild fires and wild land interface fires. It is shown in Fig. 10-20 along with some of the attendees at the dedication event.

Fig. 10-20: General pumper/tanker and attendees.

Also in June 2001, a nearly new Ford/ Mertz brush truck (Fig. 10-21) was purchased with funds donated by resident Ms. Victoria Hearst at the behest of Fred McKnight. This Diesel powered vehicle

carries 400 gallons of water and is highly versatile for the fire fighting requirements of the LHVFD.

Ms. Hearst was presented with a modest thank you award at an informal ceremony held at FH #1 in July 2001. (Fig. 10-22)

The year 2001 also marked the completion of the new three-bay metal building at the FH #1 site. (Fig. 10-23) The design and construction of the building was supervised by Asst. Chief Greg Stith. This structure was part of the promise made to voters when they approved the mill levy increase in 2000 to provide housing for the planned acquisition of new trucks.

Bill Bennett and Greg Stith resigned their officer positions in 2002. Larry Leeper (Fig. 10-24) of Ouray replaced Bennett as Chief in 2002 where he served for a little over a year. Shortly after resigning, Greg Stith was fatally injured in a motorcycle accident. He was honored for his service in 2003 by an inscribed memorial plaque that was presented to his wife Irene. (Fig. 10-25) The inscribed plaque memorial that she is holding was mounted on the dash board of the General pumper/tanker.

In 2003, John Rogers (Figs. 10-26 and 10-27) was appointed Fire Chief. Chief Rogers is a career firefighter with the rank of Captain in the Montrose Fire Dept. His challenge has been to bring organization and discipline to a Fire Dept. that was growing rapidly in the acquisition of facilities and equipment used to protect an expanding population and property valuations.

A house on Wisteria Drive burned to the ground on December 16/17, 2003. The source of the fire apparently was overheated electronic equipment in the basement. No one was home at the time - by the time it was discovered and called in, it was out-of-control. With mutual aid support of the Montrose Fire Dept. and The Ridgway Volunteer Fire Dept. the fire damage was limited to the house - there was no extension of the fire to surrounding buildings or other property. The house was subsequently rebuilt.

Since 2002, BOD Chairman Fred McKnight (Fig. 10-28) has led the effort to fully modernize the LHVFD. While he gives frequent credit to his fellow BOD members,

Fig. 10-21: Ford/Mertz brush truck.

Fig. 10-22: L to R - Greg Stith, Carol Ashley, Victoria Hearst, John Nelson, Bill Bennett.

Fig. 10-23: New FH #1 building.

Fig. 10-24: Chief Larry Leeper. 2003

Fig. 10-25: Irene Stith with the Greg Stith memorial plaque.

Fig. 10-26: Structural fire training - Asst. Chief Tom Austin (center) and Chief Rogers (right). 2007

Fig. 10-27: Water shuttle training - Chief Rogers & John Boughner. 2008

Dept. officers and other firefighters, many of the accomplishments are almost solely attributable to McKnight's tireless efforts in obtaining state-of-the-art firefighting vehicles (Figs. 10-29 to 10-31) and personal protective gear such as SCBAs and turn-out clothing. This has involved, in addition to District mill levies, obtaining support through fund-raisers, grants and donations.

A major challenge for the Fire District has been to construct a facility at the south end of LHM capable of housing the firefighting equipment needed to provide safety for the residents there. The unsuccessful attempt in 1999 to add two bays to FH #2 has already been discussed.

After obtaining the new General pumper/tanker and constructing the new building at FH #1, the next priority item was to expand or rebuild FH #2. The definitive history of this project would best be documented by Fred McKnight and his associates.

Following is an outline of the major steps and milestones as we understand them:

1. Land was needed for the new building. The most logical location would be an expansion of the then leased area on which the existing FH #2 was located and was included in Log Hill Village Lot #1A. This is a 60-acre parcel dedicated to "Government Services" in the original plat for the Log Hill Village development. It was owned by Ronn Mayer, who was reluctant to lease a larger lot to the Fire District. McKnight finally made a

Fig. 10-28: Fred McKnight (left) being interviewed by Ridgway Sun reporter Rob Magley (right).

Fig. 10-29: International pumper/tanker - valuable for fighting wild-land/urban interface fires.

Fig. 10-30: 1,000 gal. water tank mounted on an old 6x6 military truck chassis. This tanker is particularly valuable for delivering water to hard-to-reach wild-land fires.

Fig. 10-31: This 3,000 gal. tanker is one of two nearly identical trucks in the Dept. One is stationed at FH #1 and the other at FH #2.

deal with him wherein the total Lot #1A was deeded to the LHMFPD.

2. McKnight conceived the idea of subdividing two 5-acre lots on Lot #1A to be sold to help finance the new building. However, the covenants for LHV required 100% authorization from the nearby residents - this proved to be a non-starter! He then went to State Representative Ray Rose and State Senator Jim Isgar for help in enacting legislation whereby a majority vote of the homeowners would be sufficient. Many weeks of procedural maneuvering with the County Commissioners and the homeowners finally resulted in a vote of the residents authorizing the sale of the lots. A little over one million dollars was received from this sale.

3. Many more weeks were spent designing the new building and identifying an acceptable location that would pass muster with the residents.

4. A ground-breaking ceremony (Fig. 10-32) for the new building was held in late Sept. 2007. Construction continued through the winter (Figs. 10-33 to 10-36) and was completed in the spring.

5. The building was dedicated at a ceremony in the new headquarters firehouse in April 2008. (Figs. 10-37 to 10-39) It

Fig. 10-32: L to R - John Rogers, Fred McKnight, John Boughner, Janet Pritchett, Carol Ashley, Bill Fugazzi.

Fig. 10-33: The foundation is poured. Early Dec. 2007.

Fig. 10-34: Steel erected. Late Dec. 2007

Fig 10-35: Building enclosed. Feb. 2008

Fig. 10-36: The new headquarters build-

Fig. 10-37: The dinner and presentations.

Fig. 10-38: The speeches.

Fig. 10-39: Fred and Jacque McKnight share in satisfaction of a successfully completed project.

was financed with the proceeds from the lot sales, a grant from DOLA and a donation from Divide Ranch and Club.

During the Mid-2000s, the old firehouse at Station #1 was upgraded with a new metal roof, new siding and a new sign as shown in Fig. 10-40. This

effort was lobbied for and supervised by John Nelson with the authorization of the BOD. The memorial plaques honoring the founders of the Fire Department and Fire District were mounted between the overhead doors.

Fig. 10-40: Old FH #1. 2008

Fig. 10-41: Plaque presentation by Fire Chief John Rogers. 2010

In January 2010, Assistant Fire Chief Tom Austin was honored for over five years of outstanding service in that position. The award was made by Chief John Rogers at a luncheon after fire training. (Fig. 10-41).

Firefighter Appreciation Dinners have been held in the fall for the past several years. Group photos of the firefighters have been taken at three of the dinners. (Figs. 10-42 to 10-44)

Fig. 10-42: LHVFD personnel. 2003

The LHVFD is exceptionally well equipped with firefighting apparatus and personal protective gear for the firefighters. The most recent additions are a ladder truck designated Truck 32 (Fig. 10-45) and new Pumper 32 (Fig. 10-46). Old Pumper 32 has been redesignated Pumper 31.

Fig. 10-43: LHVFD personnel. 2004

Through the years, as new trucks

Fig. 10-44: LHVFD personnel. 2007

Fig. 10-45: Ladder Truck 32.

Fig. 10-46: New Pumper 32.

have been added to the fleet, older and outdated trucks have been sold or donated to other organizations. Table I shows the equipment of the Log Hill VFD as of January 2011. The citizens of Log Hill Mesa should feel assured that they are being protected by well trained firefighters with outstanding equipment. That capability was impressively demonstrated in less than a two-month period late in 2009 when the LHVFD responded to three serious fires as follows:

Table I

LHVFD Fire Stations & Equipment

Source: Marian Austin, January 2011

Fire Station #1
3245 County Road 22
Pumper 31
"Urban interface" Structure & Wild land fires
750 Gallon Capacity/Foam capable
6x6 capable/ carries 2 firefighters
Carries 4 SCBA
Forest Service Type 3 engine
Purchased new in 2003
Boise Mobile Equip., Boise, ID

Brush 31
Wild land fires
350-Gallon Capacity/Foam Capable
4x4 capable/ carries 3 firefighters
Forest Service Type 6 Engine
Purchased new, 2002
Mertz Manufacturer, Ponca City, OK

Tender 31
3000-Gallon Capacity
Carries 2 firefighters/carries 4 SCBA
Equipped w. drop-down "Insta-chains" for adverse road conditions.
Purchased new 2005 (Award of FEMA grant)
Fouts Brothers Fire Trucks, Smyrna, GA

Tender 33
1,000-Gallon Capacity
10x10 capable/carries 2 firefighters
Donated in 1999 by Banning, California
Built, 1969 by Kaiser

ATV 31
80-Gallon Capacity
6x6 Off-road capable
Purchased new 2006 (Award of FEMA grant)

NOTE: Property on County Road 1 (donated by the Woodruffs) is available for development of another fire station once the population base in this area supports growth.

Fire Station #2
Headquarters 434 Ponderosa
Pumper 32
"Urban interface" Structure & Wild land fires
750 Gallon Capacity/Foam capable
6x6 capable/ carries 5 firefighters
Carries 8 SCBA
Forest Service Type 3 engine
Purchased new, 2010
Boise Mobile Equip., Boise, ID

Brush 32
Wild land fires
425-Gallon Capacity/Foam Capable
4x4 capable/ carries 3 firefighters
Forest Service Type 6 Engine
Purchased new, 2003
Boise Mobile Equip., Boise, ID

Tender 32
3000-Gallon Capacity
Carries 2 firefighters
Carries 4 SCBA
Equipped w. drop-down "Insta-chains" for adverse road conditions.
Purchased new 2005 (Award of DOLA grant)
Fouts Brothers Fire Trucks, Smyrna, GA

Truck 32
Structure fires/Roof access
400-Gallon Capacity/ carries 6 firefighters
Carries 4 SCBA
55 foot aerial ladder
Built 1993, by KME, Nesquehoning, PA
Purchased Used 2008/ Rebuilt 2010

ATV 32
50-Gallon Capacity
4x4 Off-road capable
Purchased new 2010

1. A house at mid-mesa on Molly's Way was extensively damaged by fire on November 3, 2009. The owner reported the emergency by a 911 call shortly before 5:00 am - no one else and no pets were at the house. The fire was out-of-control when firefighters from the Log Hill Volunteer Fire Dept., with the mutual aid support of the Montrose Fire Dept., arrived at the scene in about 15 to 20- min. Log Hill Fire Chief John Rogers was Incident Command. There was no extension of the fire to other buildings or other property. No injuries were reported.
2. A mobile home on County Road 22B was totally damaged by fire on November 25, 2009. The fire call went out at 2:41 am on a blustery cold morning with several inches of unplowed snow on the roads. On arrival at the scene, the structure was fully involved and a nearby truck was on fire. Fire personnel under the command of Asst. Chief Tom Austin controlled and extinguished the fire. No injuries were reported.

3. A house on County Road 1 near Ridgway suffered extensive fire and water damage due to a chimney fire on December 25, 2009. The fire call was paged at 2:34 pm. Log Hill Fire Chief John Rogers was Incident Command - Montrose FD and Ridgway FD provided valuable mutual aid support. Cold temperatures and a difficult access to the roof of the three-story home required over three hours to get the fire under control. The house is being rebuilt.

Fire Chiefs of the LHVFD

Gordon Logan: 1976 - 78
Fred Satariano: 1979 - 84
Bob Miller: 1986 - 89
Don Dunham: 1990 - 93
Frank Starr: 1994 - 98
Bill Bennett: 1999 - 2001
Larry Leeper: 2002
John Rogers: 2003 -

Headquarters Dedication plaque