

Aurora City and Volunteer Fire Departments

Collection Summary

Title: Aurora City and Volunteer Fire Departments

Collection Group: Fire

Dates: 1939-1995, mostly 1976-1985

Location: *Archives BK3*

Quantity: 2 clamshells

Abstract: The first local fire departments in Aurora and the surrounding areas were all-volunteer. Aurora received its first motorized fire truck in 1922 but did not organize professionally until 1955, under the leadership of long-time volunteer William "Bill" Hawkins. The suburb of Hoffman Heights had its own volunteer fire department that organized in 1952 and was eventually displaced when the town was annexed by Aurora in 1956. Fire Chief John Speed brought many changes to the department in the 1970s, including computer-assisted record-keeping, telemetry, National Fire Investigation Reporting Systems, and various long-term planning processes. In order to keep up with a rapidly growing population and demand for firefighters, Aurora implemented one of the country's first apprenticeship programs for both firefighters and emergency medical technicians in 1977, with standards registered at the state level. Departmental reports show the expansion of services through the 1980's from emergency response into prevention, inspection, hazardous waste disposal, disaster response, emergency medical transport, and public education.

Arrangement: Original order has been lost. This collection was reorganized in 2013 from various misplaced files.

Contents

Series and Subseries

Box 1 of 1

Series 1: Early Volunteer Departments

Folder 1: 1939 news clipping from the Aurora Trade Edition, "Aurora Welcomes New Fire Truck." *Donated by Billie Karr, sister of former volunteer Glenn Minnick.*

Folder 2: Dates: 1949-1954. Research notes and photocopied news clippings regarding the formation of the Hoffman Town (later Hoffman heights) volunteer fire department. Also contains information on Cottonwood Development Company. *This series donated in 1975 by Michael Dichter with the note "first project manager."*

Folder 3: 1961 Pamphlet with by-laws of the Aurora Volunteer Fire Department.

Folder 4: Dates: late 1980s. Contact info for Aurora Volunteer Fire Association volunteers.

Series 2: City of Aurora Fire Department reports

Folder 5: Dates: 1976-1980. Bound standards for the fireman and emergency medical technicians apprenticeship program. Of interest is a handwritten copy of the inaugural speech for the program, probably written by William "Bill" Hawkins, former volunteer and first city fire chief.

Folder 6: Dates: 1973-1979. Bound rules and regulations for the department, published every 3 years.

Folder 7: Dates: 1978-1982. Three different 20-year plans put together by the 20-year Plan Commission in 1978, 1980, and 1982.

Box 2 of 4

Series 2, Cont.

Folder 8: Dates: 1964-1995. Incomplete set of annual department reports, internal physical conditioning manuals, and equipment proposals. Contains one 8x10 print photo of the groundbreaking for Station 10 in 1981 and a photo negative from the early 1980's of station crew (unidentified). Also includes news clippings about a sexual harassment lawsuit and educational materials from the early 1990's.

Series 3: Histories

Folder 9: Photocopied histories of the department from the city website, Carl McFadden's *Early Aurora, Aurora Fire Department Pictorial History*, and a profile on Local 1290 by Clint Driscoll in "Colorado Professional Fire Fighter" that includes a photocopied hand-written history of the department by long-term volunteer and fire chief Bill Hawkins.

Boxes 3 and 4 of 4

Series 4: Fitzsimons Fire Department Daily Logs

Folder 10: Dates: Mainly 1984 to 1993, with two ledgers from late 1997 to early 1999. These 19 bound ledgers documents maintenance and in/out movement of engines and department personnel at the fire station at Fitzsimons Army base before it closed in January 1999.

Folder 11: Dated 1999. Computer print-outs of daily logs from January 1999 and paperwork handing over fire prevention and maintenance records to the City of Aurora Directorate of Public Works, Doris j. Franklin at the time of base closure.

Additional Fire Department materials in other collections:

Photos: Fire Prevention week at Buckingham Square mall, 2008.032 (14 photos) Archives C

Fireman posing with engine, 2012.046.0001 (1 photo) Archives C

Two small boys on first Hoffman Heights fire engine, P1991.7244 and P1991.7250
(2 photos) Archives C

Mayor Norma Walker on fire prevention campaign directed at homemakers,
P2004.17799 (1photo) Archives C

Mayor Norma Walker with fire engine, P2004.17881 (1 photo) Archives C

Scrapbook –Volunteer Fire Department, Archives B, BC6

Related Items in Aurora History Museum library

Aurora Fire Department Centennial Album, 1907-2007 MUS 352.3 Aur

Aurora Fire Department Pictorial History MUS 352.3 Aur