

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

SQUAD A

ESTABLISHED 1909



THE ORIGINAL SQUAD A

Assistant Chief William Daley, in Command

Lieutenant John Totman,

Firefighter George Hall – Driver, Firefighters Frank Carr, Daniel Long,
James Murphy, Charles McCarthy, and Francis McNally

CITY OF BROCKTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Squad A of the Brockton Fire Department went into commission on November 10, 1909; it was the first motorized piece of fire apparatus the city had purchased. The Squad was to be a "Flying Squadron" and was ordered to respond to all "Bell Alarms" or alarms for a fire to assist the, then horse drawn steamer Engine Companies, and horse drawn Ladder Companies.

The vehicle, which cost \$4,000, weighed just over 2 tons and was powered by a 4 cylinder, 40 horsepower motor that propelled the truck to 35 miles per hour, a speed unheard of in 1909. It was equipped with a 35 gallon chemical tank, riding room for 10 men, an open cab with no windshield, a crank siren, 200' of small chemical hose, axes, a "bulb squeeze" horn, assorted small hand tools and acetylene headlights.

The body was painted a deep English Vermillion Red with black and gold stripes. The letters "B.F.D." were painted in white letters on the front radiator and "Squad A, Fire Department" was painted on the engine hood with the hood held closed by a leather belt and buckle.

Firefighter George Hall was selected to be the driver of the new auto-chemical Squad A and spent two (2) weeks at the Pope-Hartford factory learning all about operating and driving a gasoline powered fire truck. Horses were still the primary way of pulling hose wagons, chemical wagons, steamers, and ladder trucks in 1909

Squad A was driven from Hartford, Connecticut to Springfield, Massachusetts and then to Worcester. Those departments were very interested in seeing the motorized vehicle and the concept of a "Flying Squadron." A small group of Brockton officials including Chief Marston and 3 Aldermen traveled to Worcester to meet the new Squad A and traveled back to Brockton with Firefighter George Hall at the wheel. The ride home took 5 hours through a steady rain and the new truck was covered in mud when it arrived at Station 1.

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The new Squad A saw initial temporary service at the Brockton Fair beginning in October 5, 1909, during the time the crew was learning its operation.

The "Auto Chemical Squad A" officially went into service on November 10, 1909, at 0947 am at Station 1 and was assigned to respond to all Bell Alarms, a tradition and assignment continued to this day.

Upon arrival at a fire, the Squad was to conduct searches or rapidly advance a hose line to the seat of the fire or to the floor above to stop fire extension. This concept allowed a full company of firefighters the freedom of attacking the fire without stopping for the establishment of a water supply; this would continue to be the responsibility of the



responding Engine Companies. The rapid response of six Firefighters and 2 Fire Officers on a motorized fire apparatus that could immediately commence fire suppression activities greatly increased the effectiveness of the Brockton Fire Department. Today,

Squad A continues to respond in the same manner with a crew of four.

One hundred years later, Squad A has evolved into a modern Squad Company. In addition to its ability to act as an Engine Company



for fire suppression activities when needed, it has been tasked with all technical rescue responsibilities. Being the only company assigned citywide responsibilities, Squad A is provided with the latest in equipment, from self contained breathing apparatus to the

"Jaws of Life" to thermal imaging cameras.

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As the demand for more specialized services and equipment grew, so did Squad A. Since its first responsibility is that of a fire suppression, search and rescue unit, and the need for pumping apparatus on the fireground, it could not be equipped with a heavy rescue style apparatus. Except for the first 1909 unit, Squad A has regularly been assigned a fully equipped pumping apparatus and has recently been equipped with a 1,500 GPM Rescue Pumper that can carry much, but not all, of the assigned rescue equipment. Therefore, in 1997, the Squad Company received a second piece of apparatus which is designated as the "Tactical Support Unit."

The Tactical Support Unit, or the "TSU", is a 16' non walk-in Rescue Vehicle that is cross staffed by the members of Squad A. It is equipped with a full set of hydraulic rescue tools, high and medium



pressure air bags, cribbing, a 12,000 lb winch, griphoists, generator, telescoping, fixed and portable lights, an air cascade unit, spare SCBA bottles, confined space rescue equipment, HazMat equipment, atmospheric meters, radiological meters, ropes, chain saws,

circular saws, whizzer saw, sawzalls, torches, submersible pumps, pneumatic tools, stokes baskets, a 16' outboard motor boat on a trailer, medical equipment, and a wide variety of hand and powered tools.

Recently, an additional apparatus was assigned to Squad A to carry trench, collapse and foam equipment. The department shops converted a 1981 Mack CF Pumping Engine into a Special Operations Unit by removing the pump and tank and installing additional compartments. This apparatus is designated the "Special Operations Unit."

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CELEBRATING 100 YEARS



The Special Operations Unit is equipped with wood shoring, air shores, hand tools, foam eductors, foam nozzles and 210 gallons of AR-AFFF foam concentrate. The Special Operations Unit is housed with Squad A and Ladder Company 1 at Station 1.

Since the staffing and training required to address modern special operations requires more than that of one company, Squad A and Ladder Company 1 are fully cross trained. In the event of a technical rescue incident, Squad A and Ladder Company 1 respond with the Tactical Support Unit and the Special Operations Unit. This combination of Squad A and Ladder 1 provide the City of Brockton with an excellent combination of firefighting and special operations capability.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, the number of “Squad Companies” has greatly increased across the United States. Everything from major urban cities to small towns have embraced the Squad Company concept due to its unique fire suppression and technical rescue capabilities. Squad A of the Brockton Fire Department has proven that after 100 years the Squad Company concept makes sense. The “Flying Squad” concept lives on.





City of Brockton Fire Department



November 10, 2009

On this day we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Squad A. Let us all pause to remember the Squad members who served throughout the years, many of them, brothers we never knew. However, we share a common bond, a legacy that has been passed on through the Department's history. It is a sense of duty, pride and tradition.

For 100 years the basic concept and charge of Squad A has remained unchanged. Today, we find ourselves tasked with the training and preparation for modern technical challenges. Squad A members continue to meet these challenges with the same sense of duty, pride and tradition instilled by those Brothers who preceded us.

We would like to thank the current assigned officers and firefighters who keep Squad A a highly motivated Company and all Brockton Fire Department members who serve the citizens of this city and continue to carry out their assigned duties in the highest traditions of the Brockton Fire Department.

Chief Kenneth F. Galligan
Chief of Department

Captain Robert McGrann
Company Commander

Group 1

Captain Paul Cosgrove
Firefighters:
William Hill
Anthony Bowen
Michael Mahoney
Joseph Coleman
Timothy Murphy, Jr.



Group 2

Lieutenant John McDonald
Firefighters:
Paul Gedgudas
James Dubeau
Charles Morse
Paul Wisocky
Jeffrey Albanese
Daniel Foye



Group 3

Captain Robert McGrann
Firefighters:
George Eonas
Christopher Gallant
Richard Heenan
Christopher O'Reilly
Timothy Bamford (ICT)



Group 4

Lieutenant Jeffrey Marchetti
Firefighters:
William Maloney
Jeffrey Morrison
Eric Nardelli
Richard Gagne
Kevin Sullivan (ICT)



