

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY NO.

HISTORIC NAME: Engine House #3, Truck #2
 LOCATION: 501 Observer Highway
 MUNICIPALITY: Hoboken
 USGS QUAD:
 OWNER/ADDRESS: City of Hoboken, N.J. 07030

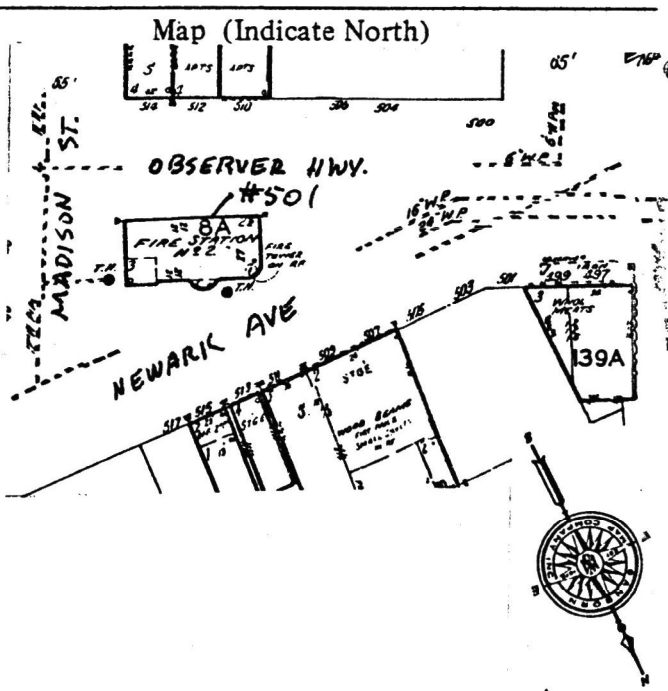
COMMON NAME: Engine Co. #1, Truck Co. #2
 BLOCK/LOT 8A/1
 COUNTY: Hudson
 UTM REFERENCES:
 Zone/Easting/Northing

DESCRIPTION

Construction Date: 1892
 Architect: Charles Fall
 Style: Romanesque Revival
 Number of Stories: 2, with tower
 Foundation: fieldstone
 Exterior Wall Fabric: brick with sandstone trim
 Fenestration: (var. on each facade): 1 over 1 on 1st floor; 1 over 1 on 2nd fl., with arched transoms.
 Roof/Chimneys: central pitched roof on east/west axis; chimneys at central
 Additional Architectural Description: parapets of each facade.

Source of Date: plaque on western facade
 Builder: M. Foley & Son, masons; A.W. Clayton, carpenter
 Form/Plan Type: rectangular

The rectangular firehouse is on a triangular site at a major intersection and has a rectangular fire tower at its southeast corner. The building is of an orange-brown brick with brownstone trim and a fieldstone foundation. Its four sides featured moulded brick, carved decorative bandings, and a pleasing variety of materials. The rectangular tower originally terminated in a pyramidal slate roof. The area between the third storey level and the roof was filled in with a Romanesque arcade to suggest a belvedere. The rounded southeast corner featured a conical roof which rose to third storey level and was also presumably of slate. Although it is a visually prominent building the exterior changes detract from its importance as an architectural achievement.



This firehouse is the southernmost one in the city, and is built on a triangular site at the intersection of Newark and Madison Sts.

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Urban Suburban Scattered Buildings
Open Space Woodland Residential Agricultural Village
Industrial Downtown Commercial Highway Commercial Other

SIGNIFICANCE:

As the only free-standing firehouse built by the city until the yr. 1898, Engine Co. #1 was the grandest and most impressively-scaled of the Hoboken firehouses. Designed by Hoboken architect Charles Fall, the building featured the use of rectangular and circular towers at the corners of its southern facade. The laterally-oriented engine area provided maximum accessibility to all locations in the city. Its prominent corner location, apart from its functional aspects, also underscores the importance of the firehouse--a symbol of security and municipal planning--placed at a gateway area of the city. The alterations described the the reverse side are major ones that detract and obliterate the original architectural intent of a richly-ornamented structure. The historical importance of the building, however, remains intact.

ORIGINAL USE: firehouse
PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Poor
REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes Possible No Part of District
THREATS TO SITE: Roads Development Zoning Deterioration
No Threat Other

PRESENT USE: same

COMMENTS. This building represents a tangible link to the fire-fighting history of the city, but alterations have severely compromised its architectural integrity. The finding of National Register eligibility for the structure would hold out the possibility of its future restoration, and would enhance the proposed Thematic Nomination of Hoboken firehouses by offering a developmental context within which to view the other houses.

REFERENCES:

Hoboken Board of Trade, Bulletin, Vol. III, Nov. 1912, "Hoboken's Firefighters," pp. 91-95.
Hoboken Board of Trade, Bulletin, Vol. III, March 1913, "Hoboken's Progress," pp. 149.

RECORDED BY: Patricia Florio
ORGANIZATION: ---

DATE: February, 1983

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

2/16/84

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Hoboken Firehouses and Firemen's Monument Thematic Resources
State Hudson County, NEW JERSEY

Cover accept 3/30/84

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Assembly of Exempt Fireman Building

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

2. Engine Company No. 2

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

3. Engine Company No. 3

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

4. Engine Company No. 4

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

5. Firemen's Monument
(CHURCH SQUARE PARK)

Alternative Review

for Keeper Patrick Anders 10/30/80

Attest

6. Engine House No. 3, Truck No. 2

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

7. Engine Company No. 6

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

8. Engine Company No. 5

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Albina Byers 3/30/84

Attest

9.

Keeper

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Engine House No. 3, Truck No. 2 (Hoboken
Firehouses and Firemen's Monument TR)
Hudson County
NEW JERSEY

Working No. 2-76-84
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85
Date Due: 3/15/84 ~~4/1/84~~
Action: ACCEPT 3/30/84
~~RETURN~~
~~REJECT~~
Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in NR
National Register: _____
RETURN _____
REJECT _____

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition

Check one

Check one

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

- unaltered
- altered

- original site
- moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection



Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000492



CITY HALL
HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY

November 18, 1983

Mr. William Forwood,
Acting Administrator
Office of New Jersey Heritage
CN 402
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Mr. Forwood:

I am in receipt of your letter dated November 4, 1983 concerning the thematic nomination of Hoboken Firehouses and the Firemen's Monument to both the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places.

I am in agreement with the thematic nominations for the most part. I believe these treasures of our past must be protected, especially now, during this period of Hoboken's revitalization. However, I must make two observations relative to these nominations:

1. The firehouse, Engine Co. #1 and Truck Company #2 located at 501 Observer Highway (Block 8A, Lot 1) is in need of extensive repairs and will probably be closed as a firehouse within the next few years.
2. The firehouses at 212 Park Avenue and 412 Grand Street are now privately owned residences and no longer City owned property.

The firehouses of the City are not only architecturally unique, but are an integral part of our City's history. I urge approval of the nominations as a group but express my reservations about the firehouse located at 501 Observer Highway due to present structural condition.

Very truly yours,



Steve Cappiello,
Mayor

RESIGNED.

Lawrence Martin, Hoseman, October 1, 1900.

RETIRED.

Captain William C. Stanton, February 1, 1901.

DIED,

Walter Taylor, Stoker, October 31, 1900.

The year through which we have just passed will no doubt be a memorable one to our citizens from a fire standpoint, as it will be remembered that on the afternoon of June 30, one of the most destructive fires ever heard of in this country occurred in our city, when the piers and three of the ships belonging to the North German Lloyd Steamship Company, were destroyed, together with the loss of 143 lives, principally members of the crews of the different ships. The first alarm for this fire was received at one minute before 4 o'clock on the above date, and a second alarm sent in, followed by a third and special order for the spare engine. Notwithstanding the fact that the alarms were sent in promptly and the departments responded and getting to work quickly, we were unable to prevent the fire from spreading to the piers adjoining the one on which the fire broke out. The fire originated in some cotton that was stored at the southwest corner of the southerly pier, which was numbered 3. The flames ran with lightning rapidity over the surface of the cotton, caught on the partition and on the roof of the shed, and in an incredibly short time, driven by southwest wind, spread throughout the sheds to the north, and as they reached the head of the piers, our firemen were driven back to the street. Engine Company No. 1, the first due, stretched its hose under the shed at pier three, and was immediately driven back and compelled to disconnect their hose, which was destroyed where it lay. Engine Company No. 5, answering second alarm, took a position on Fourth street, between Hudson street and the river front was in the act of stretching its first line of hose under the sheds of the Shore Line Rail-

road in an effort to save the buildings of the Campbell stores, when the flames burst upon them, compelling the men to flee for their lives, leaving their horses, hose wagon and seven hundred feet of hose, which were totally destroyed. The railroad sheds burning set fire to the Campbell storehouses through the windows on the river side, the shutters being open at the time, and the fire traveling so quickly, made it impossible for the men who were at work there to close them. Our whole efforts were now directed toward saving the surrounding property, which consisted of the following: The docks of the Hamburg-American Steamship Company, which were saved by the use of our cellar pipes, with which we were able to cut off the flames running toward their property under the docks; the residence of the Superintendent of the North German Lloyd Company, the building of the Consolidated Iron Works, the large building known as the Hamburg and Bremen House, the Hoboken Store House, the block of three-story and basement brick houses on River street, between Third and Fourth streets, the Valencia Boat House and docks to the north of it. It was eight days before the fire could be considered entirely extinguished. During all this time it was necessary to keep a part of our department constantly at work.

On the morning of July 3, at 2:24 o'clock, while still at work on the dock fire, an alarm was received for a fire at 125, 127, 129 and 131 Adams street, four three-story frame houses, two of which were totally destroyed and thirteen persons lost their lives, being five grown people and eight children. The fire spread rapidly through the roofs of these buildings, as there were no walls running through to the roof having a clear opening from one end of the building to the other. This locality being built up with large frame buildings and directly adjoining those of the Focht Iron Works, a third alarm, calling out the whole department with the exception of the spare engine, which was at work at the dock fire, was sent in, and it was with much difficulty that the fire was confined to the buildings in which it originated.

Newton to Honor Hoboken At Annual Fire Parade

Hoboken firemen who answered a call for help 78 years ago and made a 60-mile trip to Newton to help quell that town's greatest blaze, will return to the Sussex community on September 22 to receive a hero welcome and take part in the annual fire parade and inspection.

Hoboken will send a fire company to take part in the yearly observance, renewing the 78-year-old friendship between the fire departments of both communities that arose out of the smoldering ruins of Newton's most disastrous blaze on September 22, 1873.

Mayor Fred M. De Sapio and Public Safety Director Michael M. Borelli are expected to take part in the parade and Fire Chief George F. Bonin will head a company in the procession. The Hoboken delegation will be led by the band of the city's Department of Recreation.

The people of Newton give full credit to the Herculean efforts of the Hoboken firemen who received a request for aid 78 years ago and 10 minutes later had a new steamer with 25 men aboard a Newton-bound train.

The fire was first discovered at 2:30 o'clock in the morning on September 22. Minutes later church bells began to ring, lights appeared in windows and doors began to slam. Smoke filtered through the early morning air and appeared to be centered in Newton's shopping district.

And, where was the fire department?

Frankly, says an old account of the fire, —there wasn't any.

Available were two pitiful old hand engines which a half hour after the alarm had been sounded were still not in operation. But, there was another embarrassing delay.

Chief Crook, the only man with a key and a knowledge of where the equipment was kept, was out of town. Folks credited his interest in the engines with the fact that they even worked at all.

That was the situation when Hoboken's helmeted department members climbed aboard a flat car for the trip and a special Lackawanna engine was coupled. The road to Newton was a single track, then used by the Morris and Essex Railway Company. With a few telegraphers on hand to clear the way for the emergency run, Hoboken's firefighters spent as much time on sidings as they did in making the trip.

At 9:30 o'clock in the morning, however, after making the last 11 miles from Waterloo in 13 minutes, Hoboken Steamer Company 1 arrived at the scene.

Up Spring street in Newton came the 25 Hobokenites on the run, pulling the ropes to their gleaming

steamer. Smoke belched from the boiler as it rolled over the cobblestone streets.

Hooking up immediately, the Hoboken company went into action, playing a giant stream of water on the blaze. Local residents gasped as it tossed a stream right over a three-story building.

An hour and a half later it was over.

Grateful Newton residents banqueted the Hoboken firemen at the Cochrane House and the town committee picked up the check. By 1 o'clock in the afternoon, Hoboken firemen were on the tracks ready for the run back home.

When they arrived in Hoboken, they received some more good news. The railroad announced it wouldn't charge them for the trip.



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF PARKS AND FORESTRY

ONJH-B84-11

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY TO:
Office of the Director

CN 404

TRENTON, N. J. 08625

February 9, 1984

Ms. Carol Shull, Chief of
Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

I am pleased to forward the thematic nomination of Hoboken Firehouses and Firemen's Monument, City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey to the National Register.

This application has received majority approval from the New Jersey State Review Board. All procedures were followed in accord with the interim regulations published in the Federal Register on November 16, 1981 and your November 6, 1981 letter. The City of Hoboken, owner of five properties included in the nomination, favors registration. A copy of their written endorsement is enclosed.

Should you want any further information concerning this application, please feel free to contact William Forwood at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, CN 402, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, or telephone (609) 292-2028.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Russell W. Myers".

Russell W. Myers, Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer

RWM:SP:ijh

c: file