

HISTORY AFR APPARATUS MAINTENANCE SHOP,GARAGE

June 4, 2020

Albuquerque took delivery of the first American La France 600 GPM motorized fire pumper in 1912. The first fire Chief's car was delivered during 1913. In 1914 the fire department received it's second motorized fire pumper, a 600 GPM American La France in 1914. The department did not have an official apparatus maintenance shop then. Vehicle repairs were performed by the fire chief or on duty firefighters who possessed mechanical skills at station one. By 1918 there were not too many people who could drive an automobile or fire trucks. W.A. Westerfeld, a World War I, U.S. Navy veteran and an automobile mechanic was hired by Chief Russell as the fire department mechanic and a fire truck driver. The next ten years he advanced through the firefighter ranks to Assistant Chief and served as the department mechanic as well. For the next few years there was no official fire department mechanic shop. Most fire apparatus repairs was performed by the chief or on duty firefighters at station one. Major repairs were contracted out to local repair shops. Some times for major engine and pump repairs the fire truck was sent back to the American La France factory in New York.

In 1936 firefighter Carl Macaluso was hired and worked as the department mechanic at station one, Second Street and Tijeras NW. In 1941, when the first station four was built in the Wells Park neighborhood, at 5th Street and Mountain Road NW fireman Macaluso was assigned there and served as a firefighter/mechanic for several years.

When Station one was built and relocated to Eighth Street and Silver Avenue SW a mechanic/maintenance shop was built in back of the apparatus room. On October 26, 1956 an official fire department mechanic, Marvin Wafer Sr. was hired and he served as the department mechanic for 24 years until his retirement during August, 1980.

In 1979 the City purchased the old Rust Tractor/Caterpillar repair maintenance shops on 4th street NW. After extensive renovations that facility became the fire department apparatus maintenance shop/garage. For over 41 years this facility served as the fire department apparatus maintenance facility. On June 4, 2020 Fire Chief Paul Dow dedicated and opened a new AFR maintenance shop/garage at 7601 Los Volcanes NW.

Herman Bishop

See File: AFR Opens New Fleet Services Facility