

Trivia Section II

Baraboo Fire Department

In the March 3, 1973 issue of the *Baraboo News-Republic* Mr. L. A. Nolan wrote regarding the formation of the Baraboo Fire department in 1884. The value of the department at that time was \$3,000. The annual expenses were \$700.

Mr. Arthur T. Johnson, who in 1932, had been secretary of the department for the prior 15 years, held the original book of minutes dating from the earlier date mentioned. J. Charles Seaman chaired that early meeting and the charter members were A. G. Buckley, F. S. Waterman, William Marriott Sr., E. Jones, J. H. Welch, Charles Seaman, R. G. Evenson, F. E. Brewer, Albert Pfannstiehl, W. B. Richards, Aden Pratt and H. W. Abbott. Mr. J. G. Doppler was the president and Seaman was the chief over the 30-member force.

Leather buckets were used, by what was known as the bucket brigade, before fire departments were formed. Harness makers in town made the buckets and the Ringling brothers' father, August, was known to have made some of the best.

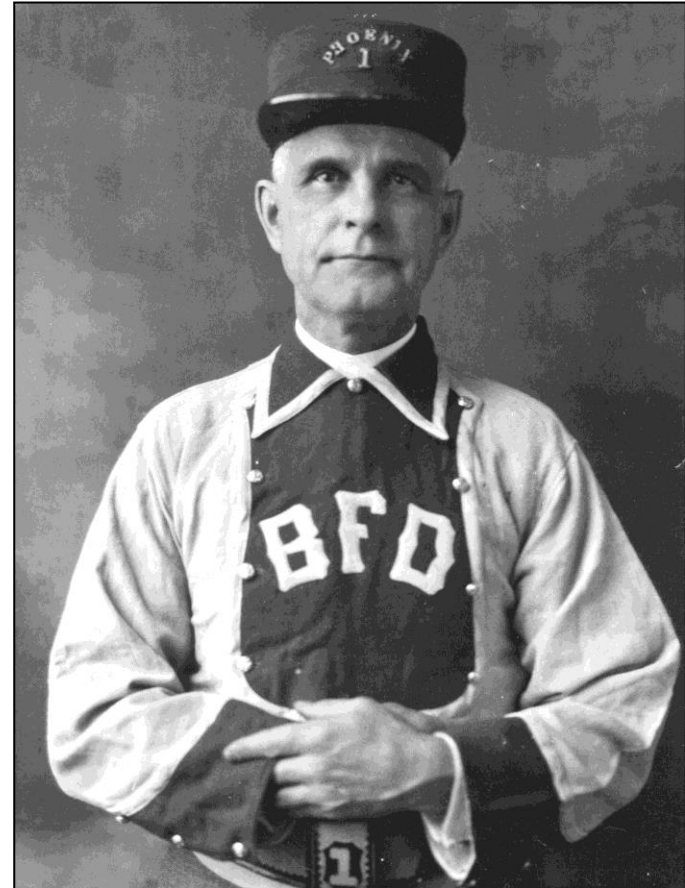
The Baraboo firemen were called to the station by a steam whistle. This was located on the roof of the Baraboo Electric company building. This building stood on Water Street, just north of the high bridge, which spanned the river at Oak Street. This whistle could be heard for 5 miles.

The fire wagons of the first fire company consisted of two hose carts, and a hook and ladder wagon. One of these carts was kept on the south side of town.

There is nothing in the records to substantiate the story about the first department having trouble from painters borrowing the ladders. There is no record either of the big hearted city official who loaned out the fire hose and never got it back.

Horses were used to pull the old fire wagons. The first man with a team to reach the station was paid \$5.00. The second one to arrive got \$2.50. With the first moan of the fire whistle, all rigs stopped, and were unhitched and the race was on. Tugs were dragging on the Street, horses galloping, and the driver on the run, trying to keep up with them. Sometimes there were a dozen

contestants. Some of these fellows had not run since they were discharged from the Union army; spirit took over where condition



Arthur T. Johnson

failed. There were cheering sections formed as the pedestrians lined the curb. Livery barns furnished the horses for the night calls.

Many men spent many years in the department. None gave more time than Arthur Johnson. He fought most of the large fires during the forty years that he was a member.

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Wm. Marriott was overcome by smoke in fighting the blaze at the M. F. Foley home in 1902 and died a week later from the effects.

Baraboo had a celebration; July 4, 1902. The fireworks were the best that anyone could remember. A spark from this display lit on Hoyt's flour and feed mill. It lay dormant until 1:00 the next morning. As the story was told, "All hell broke loose." The blaze could be seen for miles around. There was great danger of the city burning. The firemen eventually contained the fire.

The courthouse burned in 1904. That night the temperature registered thirty five degrees below zero. The firemen finally subdued the flame and guarded it for another twenty-four hours.

The Opera house burned in 1905. It was an old building in 1880, when the city started planning a new one. It was one of the hottest fires Baraboo had ever seen. Many firemen were burned. The heat was so intense that it melted the hose across the Street.

The high school was lost in 1906. This building stood where the red building, which housed the junior high stood for many years after. The highlight of that fire was when the tower, and the bell which it housed, fell across the street.

In 1912, Baraboo purchased its first fire truck. The name of the truck was "Wisconsin." It was purchased from Louis Helm, a local dealer. It had a chain drive and was somewhat faster than a horse. By 1918 Baraboo had a hook and ladder truck. The south side fire house also had a truck. This ended the use of "old Dobin".

Baraboo had some drivers who gained their driving experience during WWI in France. Their speed and daring upset the peaceful tranquility of Baraboo. Fewer people went to fires and the more timid would not leave their front porches.

South Side Hose Company

An article in a 1932 newspaper indicated that the Phoenix Hose Company's original secretary's book stated the south side or third ward Phoenix Hose Company No. 1 was formed when a group of men met on December 30, 1886 for that purpose. Some records

indicate the meeting was held on November 29, 1886, at Phil Bock's Barber Shop.

On motion of Alderman Richards the action of the council in accepting the organization of the "Alert" Hose Company on December 8, 1886, was rescinded.

In March of 1887, the city council authorized the Fire Committee to erect a building 18 X 24 and 12 feet high, cost not to exceed \$250.00, on Linn Street, opposite Effinger's Brewery, on land leased by J. Richards & Son. The building was to be used as a hose house, to hold business meetings of the Third Ward Hose Company and election polls. Dan Chamberlain and Russ Delap were the builders.

1846

First Store in Baraboo

The first general store in Baraboo was a small frame building located by the Manchester Dam at the foot of Potter's Path and conducted by Count Haraszthy.

1850

The Dead

Persons having friends buried in the old cemetery, in this village, are requested to remove them before the fifth day of November next, said cemetery being vacated by order of the Board of Supervisors of Sauk County at their last session. Burial lots can be obtained in the incorporated "Mt. Mercy Cemetery" adjoining this village, by applying to the secretary of the Board of Trustees, at the drug store in this village.

R. H. Davis, President.

S. P. Angle, Secretary

Adams, October 23rd., 1850

(*Sauk County Standard*, 10/31/1850)

It was reported in the 6/25/1936 *Baraboo Weekly News* that A. Ch. Reisz found a nameplate while digging in his grade at the former Ryan home. It was believed to be off a coffin or it may have been a grave marker. It was said that the first Baraboo cemetery was where the garden was on the west side of the house. Ryan's had a son

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buried there, in fact. The cemetery was later moved to Cheek's hill and later to its present location off East Street.

1927

Baraboo Auto Sales & Service Company

In September of 1927, **Tracy Bisch** and **Glen F. Bellows** were opening a new garage at the intersection of Eighth and Elizabeth Streets. The building would house the **Baraboo Auto Sales & Service Company**. The company had the agency for the Falcon-Knight automobile.

1936

Hulda's Grocery

Hulda's Grocery store opened in March of 1936 at the intersection of East and Tenth Streets. They announced that they would carry a complete line of groceries as well as fresh meat. Delivery was also available.

1950

National Guard Armory

A military construction bill passed by the house called for spending \$2,101,000 on Wisconsin National Guard installations. Allotments of \$171,000 each were earmarked for Army National Guard armories at Baraboo and Fort Atkinson. The remaining funds would go towards three Air National Guard projects.

1941

Baraboo Cash Store

Chet and Win Anstett opened the **Baraboo Cash Store** at 700 Lake Street about 1941, conducting business there until 1966. It was said that they were the first store to be open on Sundays and also the first grocery store in Baraboo to sell beer.

When Chet and Win opened the store, they lived in one side of the building, later building a connecting home.

1957

Art's bait Shop, Audrey's Bait Shop, Audrey's Hair Salon, New Image hair Salon

Art Schultz conducted **Art's Bait Shop** at 1010 West Street, possibly as early as 1957-1958, closing about 1966. The city directory shows **Art's Bait Company** at 1015 West Street in 1973. However, in 1972 Schultz had an office at 120 West Water Street with a bait company at 101 West Water Street.

Clifford (Dick) and Audrey Skaife opened **Audrey's Bait Shop** at 1010 West Street in 1966 and remained in business here as late as 1977. Clifford started in Spring Green where he made hand tooled leather wallets and actually had started the bait shop there.

Audrey's Beauty Salon was located here 1980 and 1982 and very possibly earlier and later. In 1989 **New Image Hair Design** was in business here.

1973

Ron's Bait Shop

Ronald (Ron) Markley conducted **Ron's Bait Shop** at 227 Third Avenue between 1973 and 1986.