

... in Service to the Village of Farmingdale



MEMORIAL DAY PARADE
1945 - Main Street just south
of Conklin Street

Farmingdale was a small hamlet surrounded by farmlands in the 1880s. It encompassed all of the present Farmingdale school district as well as contemporary Melville, Pinelawn, Plainview and Old Bethpage. The population in 1880 of this large area was just 524. Two historic fire companies were organized during that decade to serve the widely spread community.

Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 was organized on January 14, 1886. Its fire hall was located at the northeast corner of Conklin and Washington Streets for over forty years. In 1915, the company's name was changed to Hook, Ladder and Hose Company No. 1. The following year it acquired its first motorized apparatus.

On April 19, 1889 the Water Witch Engine Company No. 1 was formed. A fire house was erected on Rose Street later that year. Some years later the Water Witch Company moved to a larger building on Main Street, a short distance south of the present Village Hall/Firehouse. In 1893 the company purchased a used hand-pumper built in 1858. This historic piece of apparatus is still kept in excellent condition, and the company proudly bears its name, "Water Witch". The company's first motorized apparatus, a hose truck, was purchased in 1916.

Although they would not be housed in one building until forty years later, the two companies formally merged as the Farmingdale Fire Department in 1892, with one chief to direct joint operations. The need for an adequate and dependable water service was a major reason for the incorporation of the Village of Farmingdale in 1904. A private company had initiated water service in 1900, but the fire companies quickly found the water supply limited in area as well as inadequate in quantity. In a major sense, the fire companies took the lead in championing the formation of the Village in July 1904, whose population was then 1047. Their effort was rewarded with the completion of a village owned water system by 1909.



JOHN H. KUNZ, Fire Chief
1932



MEMORIAL DAY, 1946