

# CULTURAL MOMENT

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## THE HISTORY OF THE ARTHUR FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Life and Times in Arthur and Area piece, written by John Walsh, tells the history of not only Arthur's local story of the formation of a Fire Brigade but that of the events that contributed globally to the organizations of fire brigades and fire prevention education.

Locally, the late Rixon Rafter, former editor and owner of the Enterprise News, deserves much credit for the formation of the Arthur Fire Brigade. Between Christmas and New Years in 1925, a fire had demolished the Anglican Church on Tucker Street. In the tower of the church was a bell installed in 1900, which acted as the fire alarm for the village.

Within two months another fire raged through the business section of the community destroying two stores and threatening to wipe out the entire business area, as had happened a few years previously in the village of Clifford. The only firefighting equipment was a volunteer bucket brigade. Often the well would run dry and the firefighters would have to stand by and watch the building destroyed.

Mr. Rafter, in a series of editorials in his newspaper, urged the installation of water works in the village, as he knew this would lead to better firefighting equipment.

However, it wasn't until 1933, that the local fire brigade was organized.

The article continues outlining the important accomplishments made by the organization through the years and highlights the banner year in 2002 for the 27 members of the Arthur Fire Department when the ribbon was cut to officially open the new fire department headquarters, built on the location of the former hall, but to a larger scale, housing many sought after additions to the village's protective services.