

A TRAVELLER'S TRIO

Report and photographs by Andy Daley

(1) A TASTE OF IRELAND ACROSS THE POND.....

Limerick Fire Department, Pennsylvania

Whilst surfing the internet in 2019 I came across some stunning green fire 'apparatus' which belonged to the aptly named Limerick Fire Department of Pennsylvania, United States.

Later that year I was fortunate enough to pay them a visit and photograph their fleet whilst on holiday in the area.

Limerick Township, Montgomery County

It was named for the hometown of early settler William Evans, whose family arrived in the area from Limerick, Ireland in 1698. The township is mentioned in Philadelphia court records in the 1710s, but was not formally established of record until March Sessions 1726 while Pennsylvania was still a British colony.

The village of Limerick, at Ridge and Swamp Creek Pikes, emerged in the mid-half of the eighteenth century, but never grew to more than a few dozen homes and businesses. Linfield, the township's other traditional centre, was founded as a river-crossing community in the eighteenth century. Located along the historic Pennsylvania Railroad with its own station for a time, Linfield grew to be the township's largest village in the mid-nineteenth century. Royersford Borough, originally part of the township, formed its own government in 1879. Outside of these small villages, the majority of the township has traditionally been rural with numerous farms.

With an area of roughly 22 square miles and a population approaching 19,000 residents, it is roughly the same size in area as the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

Limerick Fire Department

The Limerick Fire Company was organized in 1921 and chartered as a volunteer fire company in 1927. The company was chartered to service Limerick Township, Montgomery County. The fire company began with twenty-seven charter members. Today, membership exceeds 250 people with 40 active firefighters. In 1927, Limerick Township was a mostly rural, primarily agricultural, community. Today, the township is a major suburban hub with a mostly residential population of over 18,000 people in more than 7,000 households.

Through the years, the Limerick Fire Company – an all volunteer service – has kept pace with the changing needs

of the area through facilities, equipment, volunteers and training. These changes have been significant. The Limerick Nuclear Power Plant necessitates on-going specialized training for nuclear incidents. The construction of the Route 422 by-pass necessitated the addition of vehicle rescue services. The fire company began providing this service in 1996. This major transportation artery also brought incredible population growth.

In 2018 Linfield Volunteer Fire Company merged with Limerick Fire Company. Its name was changed to the Limerick Fire Department. Whilst both the Limerick Fire Company and Linfield Volunteer Fire Company have both merged and operate from two separate firehouses, each have maintained their individual liveries on their apparatus for the immediate future.

Station 51 at West Ridge Pike is a fairly new, 20,000 square foot station which was constructed in 2016. It consists of five large appliance bays a two storey building for administration, training, living, and recreation space. To encourage volunteers to spend time onsite, the new station contains a fitness room, day room, study areas, and four bunks.

At the time of visiting there were five frontline apparatus which were brought out for photography.

Engine 51 is a 2010 KME Predator Pumper. It has a 2000 US gpm pump and a 750 US gallon water tank.

Rescue 51 is a stunning 2012 KME Predator Heavy Rescue which also includes a 1500 US gpm pump and 500 US gallon water tank. Additionally it carries a 25kw Onan generator, a vast array of rescue tools including gas and electric powered cutters, spreaders, combi-tools, gas detection equipment, eight BA sets, eight spare BA cylinders, ropes, an array of ground ladders, heavy duty airbags, thermal imaging equipment plus much more. This really is a tool box on wheels.

Tower 51 is a 2018 E-One Cyclone II mid-mount with a 95ft Tower Ladder. All three of these apparatus are finished in a beautiful dark green and white livery with emerald and gold leaf signage which pays tribute to their twin town of Limerick, Ireland.

Tanker 51 is a 2007 International Workstar built by 4-Guys and finally Field 51 was a 2014 Ford F350 Pick Up converted to carry a hose reel and other ancillary equipment. It is primarily used for brush fires and off-road incidents. Tanker 51 is in a pale yellow livery, whilst Field 51 is in a white livery with green striping.



Limerick Fire Department's Tanker 51, a 2007 International Workstar built by 4-Guys



Also with Limerick Fire Department, Field 5, a 2014 Ford F350 Pick Up converted primarily for used for brush fires and off-road incidents.

Call numbers vary. In 2020 there were 647 responses and in 2019 626 responses were made.

Notable risks in the area include the Limerick Nuclear Power Station, which is located next to the Schuylkill River, this being owned and operated by the Exelon Corporation. The Heritage Field Airport is also located within Limerick Township.

(2) LOS ANGELES COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT'S HEAVY RESCUE

The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) is responsible for the fire protection and emergency medical services for the lives and property of 4 million residents living in 1.23 million housing units in 60 cities and all unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

In addition, the LACoFD is responsible for USAR, Hazmat response, air and wildland and even lifeguard response.

This is achieved through around 3,000 paid personnel, 174 fire stations and around 171 frontline engines and around 140 other specialist vehicles including tiller trucks, quints, rescue squads, USAR vehicles, even a fleet of bulldozers, helicopters and two fire boats.

In 2019 the LACoFD responded close to 400,000 emergency calls, therefore, it is not surprising that the department is currently the fourth busiest fire department in the United States of America with only the Fire Department of New York

City, Chicago and Los Angeles City Fire Department ahead of them.

Presently there are two Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces within the LACoFD. Both strategically located to provide assistance when required to both the Los Angeles County area and neighbouring areas. In 2017 the department, in conjunction with USAR personnel, developed the specification for a new Heavy Rescue Unit to complement the fleet already used by USAR Task Forces. Input was received from a wide range of experts, including the departments engineering team, USAR specialists and senior department's officials. The result was probably one of the most technically advanced Heavy Rescue Units used by a fire department on the west coast of America when delivered in 2018.

Based on a heavy-duty Kenworth T880 chassis, the vehicle was fitted with an NRC Industries CSR65 sliding rotator boom. With a capacity to lift 65 tonnes and rotate a complete 360 degrees, a reach of a maximum of 30 feet, it also has a standard winch capable of lifting 50,000 lbs. In addition, the USAR Task Force has three other vehicles. Cutting equipment, shoring up gear, collapse rescue and other, more larger equipment is carried by a 2016 KME Severe Service XMF D Tractor with EVI trailer. A USAR Tender is also used, based on a 2013 Dodge Ram 3500HD.

The Heavy Rescue Unit is based with USAR Task Force, housed at Fire Station 103 in the Pico Rivera area of Los Angeles. An Engine Company is also housed here and when a USAR response is required, all four vehicles will travel in convoy.

Incidents such as major road accidents, railway incidents, mass-casualty incidents, high angle rescue, building collapse, trench rescue, water rescue and of course even earthquakes plus similar incidents are part of their initial attendance, also, any fire over a third alarm gets a full USAR Task Force response.

In 2019 whilst in Los Angeles I was fortunate enough to call by Fire Station 103 with my good friend Andrew Fenton where we were treated splendidly. Only months after our visit and whilst back in the UK the USAR 103 personnel and apparatus were seen by millions around the world when they were part of the attendance to the helicopter crash which killed basketball player Kobi Bryant and his family in Calabasas, California, around 30 miles from Downtown LA.



The line-up at Fire Station 103 - USAR Task Force - 2018 Kenworth T880 chassis, the vehicle is fitted with an NRC Industries CSR65 sliding rotator boom, 2016 KME Severe Service XMF D Tractor with EVI trailer, the resident Engine Company 103's KME Pumper and 2013 Dodge Ram 3500HD USAR Tender

(3) PORTUGUESE THORNYCROFT

A couple of short years ago I happened to be surfing the internet and came across a photograph of a Thornycroft Nubian fire appliance on a Portuguese website. Some detective work and translating led me to discover its location and, to my utter astonishment, find it was still operational. Thus my quest to photograph it began.

Back in 1976 the Policia de Seguranca Publica (National Police of Portugal) ordered 6 Riot Control Vehicles with water cannons. Chubb Fire & Security of Middlesex won the contract and six Thornycroft Nubian 6x6 chassis were converted before being shipped to Portugal.

For reasons unknown they didn't last long and in 1981 the Bombeiros Odivelas acquired one directly from the National Police. The appliance was fitted with a roof monitor and protected cabin on the roof made of reinforced Perspex plus a bumper monitor. When converted for fire fighting, the protective cabin on the roof was taken off, but the monitor remained.

The Thornycroft has since been repainted red and white and maintained excellently by the Odivelas volunteers. Carrying around 13,000 litres of water it is classified as a VTTF - Veículo Tanque Tático Florestal, literally translated as a Forest Tactical Tank Vehicle. National standards specify that a VTTF appliance carries up to 16,000 litres of water and has a vehicle with all-terrain chassis equipped with a pump and water tank, to support relief and / or assistance operations.

Odivelas is a city and a municipality in Lisbon metropolitan area, Portugal, in the Lisbon District and the historical and cultural Estremadura Province. The municipality is located 10 km northwest of Lisbon. The population in 2019 was roughly 150,000 residents in an area of 26.54 square kilometres.

The origin of the name Odivelas is caught up in a peculiar legend that developed from the reign of King Denis. In the legend, King Denis had a habit of travelling at night to the

area of Odivelas, in order to liaise with women. On one of these nights, the Queen (Elizabeth of Portugal) waited for her wandering husband, and confronted him with the nightly trips, asking him: "Ide vê-las senhor...?" (Going to see them sir?).

The Bombeiros Voluntários de Odivelas was formed in 1897 and presently have around 170 operational volunteers. They operate from a modern and spacious station with eight double bays and have a fleet of around 25 vehicles, although around 15 of these are emergency ambulances (EMS is provided by many Portuguese volunteer fire brigades).

During my visit to Odivelas we were offered the opportunity to take the appliance to a spacious area on a hillside with panoramic views across Lisbon. This involved riding onboard the Thornycroft through the congested streets of Odivelas with one of the senior Portuguese fire fighters at the wheel who was clearly a very experienced and able driver. An experience never to be forgotten on what is surely the only operational Thornycroft in Europe or even the world?



Inside of the cab of the Thornycroft



The Thornycroft delivering

GOSFORD STREET....

Motor City's Largest Peacetime Fire

By Stuart Brandrick

Coventry is the UK Capital of Culture for a twelve months period that spans part of 2021 and part of 2022. Due to the coronavirus pandemic the title has been held from May, 2021 until May, 2022 rather than for the whole of 2021 as was originally planned. By coincidence, 13 August, 2021 was the 160th anniversary of the formation of the Coventry Volunteer Fire Brigade. This was the forerunner of the professional City of Coventry Fire Brigade that existed until the formation of West Midlands Fire Service as part of local government reorganisation on 1 April, 1974. Coventry's yellow fire appliances introduced in 1966 by CFO Albert Leese have featured in previous issues of Fire Cover.

In the years after the Second World War Coventry developed to become 'Motor City' in the UK with many local manufacturers with historic names that included Jaguar, Daimler, Standard, Triumph, Hillman, Humber and Morris. As the motor industry developed the car factories posed one of the greatest risks for the city brigade. On 12 February, 1957 a fire destroyed part of Jaguar's Browns Lane plant. The fire was fought by crews using 15 pumps and three turntable ladders. Pumps came from Coventry (six), Warwick County Fire Brigade (four) and Birmingham Fire and Ambulance Service (six). The Jaguar works brigade also fought the fire: it was reported that fire spread rapidly across the roof of a large building, moving as fast as a person could walk and with the roof fire always ahead of the ground fire, often by as much as forty feet. Lessons learned from this fire concerned the fire resistance of large buildings that were being introduced for car production and the need for roof vents to allow dense smoke to be cleared.

Seven years later, in June 1964, a large fire occurred in Gosford Street, to the west of Coventry city centre. This has been described by the media as the city's largest peacetime fire. It involved a multi-storey building that at the time was occupied by the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance and was originally used by Morris Engines Limited, the engines division of Morris Motors. 1964 was during the Cold War period when tensions between western countries and Russia were high and civil defence was a priority. It was the time of the Auxiliary Fire Service and the Civil Defence Corps that were established for operations at a time of nuclear war. As part of the war preparations some of the upper floors in the Ministry building were being used for the storage of blankets, flattened cardboard coffins and blood plasma. The serious fire started on one of the upper floors. Several possible causes were suggested locally including the sun's rays being focused on a blanket by an empty bottle or spontaneous combustion caused by static electricity on blankets. The rear of the building adjoined Gulson Hospital, one of the city's main hospitals at the time and where the facilities included maternity and children's units. As the fire raged through the Ministry building a major evacuation of the hospital was carried out. The smoke plume from the fire was visible across a wide area of the city and the surrounding county of Warwickshire and many people were drawn to the spectacle. As a child of nine at the time, I was taken by my mother to see the fire in the early evening when on our way to a boys' organisation meeting. The meeting on that summer evening took the form of outdoor games in a park: my attention was split between the games and the pall of smoke, my mind wondering what was happening at the fire as time wore on. Apart from the size of the fire, my main memory of it is seeing the city brigade's BMC hose layer laying hose: something that I saw on only two occasions.



This photograph from the City of Coventry FB centenary booklet, published in 1961, shows the line up at Coventry's Hales Street with SWK 331, Dennis F12 / Dennis Pump, KDU 191, Dennis F7 Pump Escape and WKV 986, Dennis F27 / Dennis: Metz Turntable Ladder that would have been in service at the time of the Gosford Street fire in 1964. Photo with acknowledgement to City of Coventry FB centenary booklet

The city brigade had three stations in 1964: Station 1 Central or Headquarters in Hales Street in the city centre; Station 2 Canley just off the A45 by-pass in the south west of the city and Station 3 Foleshill in the north of the city. A further district station, Station 4 Binley, opened in the expanding east of the city in 1969. At the time of the Gosford Street fire communications technology was far less advanced than it is now. The city fire brigade shared a radio scheme with the city police which had the control call sign 'YN' (in full, M2YN). The shared frequency would have helped to share information about the fire with the police but would no doubt have resulted in a degree of congestion of the air waves. It was a few years before the brigade had its own radio scheme and call sign M2YD. There were no inter-force radio facilities between the city control room behind the bay window in the centre of the first floor frontage of the Central fire station and the control rooms of the brigades providing supporting appliances. The over the border appliances that came into the city would not have multi-channel radios and so would be unable to contact the Coventry control by radio. It is interesting to note from the incident log that many reinforcing appliances went first to the city's Central fire station to then be sent on to the fire, rather than being mobilised directly to the 'make up' as would be the case now. There was no computerised mobilising and command and control system. Pre-determined attendances were identified by control room operators by referring to cards in a card index system. Without GPS or even the range of street map books that were available some years later, route card ring binders for the use of crews were housed on shelves in the city stations' appliance rooms, near to displayed street maps of the city. I recall that the Pump Escape at 'Central' had a pocket-sized Wakelin's street guide which just gave street location indications – for example 'Hertford Street: Broadgate to Warwick Road' – hanging from a length of string in front of the Officer in Charge's seat. Incident details were recorded in the control room log book – literally a book of the bound ledger variety. As can occur at times with modern computerised systems, during the very busy time at the height of the Gosford Street fire not all messages and details were recorded. This has made it frustrating trying to work out all of the appliances and crews that attended since not all were recorded. As an example, the city brigade's Hose Layer seen at the fire is not recorded as being mobilised or booking in attendance. Some years after the Gosford Street job, Albert Leese kindly provided photocopies of the pages of the control log that record details of the fire. The main details are reproduced below, although some 'admin' details have been omitted. As an example of how more 'normal' operations were recorded, the details begin at the beginning of the photocopies. Words in italics in square brackets have been added by the author for explanation:

Monday, 15th June, 1964

11.22 From Station 3 Foleshill. P SubO Pearson OiC [Pump – 35 ft ladder - Sub Officer Pearson in Charge] returned to station from School House Lane and reports incident left in charge of PE SO Matthews [Pump Escape – 50ft wheeled escape – Station Officer Matthews in charge]

11.25 From Station 3 Foleshill. SubO Pearson reports PE returned to station from School House Lane and reports incident closed.

11.43 From Exchange Telephone. 999 caller reports from outside St Osburg's Church, Hill Street shed on fire, next to school. PE, P, TL SO Halliwell OiC sent, zone 1-2 [the brigade's map reference]. Police 'A' [A Division, city centre], DO Hollings [Divisional Officer] informed, DO Archer informed and proceeding.

11.45 From radio from SO Halliwell. PE, P, TL proceeding to Hill Street.

11.47 From radio from SO Halliwell. In attendance and Stop for shed fire, hose reel foam generator in use.

11.52 TL, Fm Aldcroft driver returned to station from Hill Street.

11.56 PE SO Halliwell OiC returned to station from Hill Street and reports incident in charge of SubO Keehan with P.

12.06 P SubO Keehan OiC returned to station from Hill Street and reports incident closed.

14.01 Change of Control Room personnel. Fm Smith logging clerk, Fwm Dearnaly switchboard operator, Fwm Hunt emergency operator.

15.29 By 999. Top floor old building Gosford Street Ministry of National Insurance. PE, P, TL SO Halliwell sent. Police 'A' informed. DO Archer informed and proceeding.

15.30 PE, P, TL SO Halliwell proceeding to Gosford [Street]

15.31 Ambulance Department required to attend at Gosford Street.

15.31 By radio 4.0 [YN call sign] P SubO Pearson OiC proceeding to Gosford Street [from Station 3 Foleshill]

15.32 DO Archer informed of call and proceeding in NAY 507, also DO Natton informed and proceeding in 6370 RW.

15.32 By 999 6 repeat calls to the Ministry of National Insurance, Gosford Street.

15.33 By radio from SO Halliwell at Gosford Street, Make Pumps 6. Top storey of 6 storey building well alight.

15.35 Warwickshire County Fire Brigade requested to send 2 appliances to Headquarters [Station 1, Hales Street] for standby.

15.36 By 999, 5 repeat calls to Ministry of National Insurance.

15.36 By radio, SO Matthews OiC proceeding to Gosford Street. [PE Station 3 Foleshill]

15.37 By radio, SO Gracey OiC proceeding to Gosford Street. [PE Station 2 Canley]

15.38 By radio 3.8, SubO Denny OiC proceeding to Gosford Street. [P Station 2 Canley]

15.40 By exchange telephone 3878 Chief Officer informed of call and proceeding in YNR 649.

15.40 Repeat call to Gosford Street from Gulson Road Hospital. Can we send someone to rear of building as there is an inflammable stationery store by fire?

15.41 By radio 3.8. Shall we proceed to Gulson Road Hospital, rear of building? Reply yes proceed to rear of building.

15.49 From radio from DO Hollings at Gosford Street reports Make Pumps 10 and TLs 2.

15.50 To Station 2 [Canley], send TL to Gosford Street.

15.50 To Warwickshire County Fire Brigade requested for 2 further appliances

15.50 To Birmingham Fire Brigade requested for 2 further appliances

15.51 By radio from SubO Denny. Pump at rear of Gosford Street getting to work from hospital grounds, walls about to collapse, hospital being evacuated, getting short of water for a short while.

15.53 Water, gas and electricity departments informed of call.

16.00 P from Rugby and P from Leamington [Warwick County] on station [Central] and despatched to fireground.

16.08 Two County appliances on station and despatched to fireground.

16.21 P SubO Mason from Bordesley Green and P LFM Minnox from Erdington [both Birmingham] on station [Central] for standby. Birmingham Headquarters informed.

16.30 By radio 4.1 [Believed to be the Emergency Tender that acted as Control Unit at large incidents]. DO Natton to hospital for observation after injury to back, falling flight of stairs.

16.49 By radio 4.1. Make Pumps 15.

16.49 Two machines from Birmingham and sent to fireground. Birmingham informed.

16.50 To Warwickshire County Fire Brigade, 2 more machines requested also Birmingham requested to send 3 more machines.

16.55 SO Summerhayes on station and off to fireground with Fm Eaves with SP1 [Green Auxiliary Fire Service self-propelled pump]

17.08 P SubO Browett Warwickshire County Fire Brigade on station and off to fireground.

17.19 Three machines from Birmingham on station and 2 off to fireground. One remaining on station for standby. Birmingham informed.

17.23 Fm Paul on duty and off in own transport to fireground.

17.34 P from Warwickshire County Fire Brigade on station for standby.

17.49 DO Natton on station and off with 4200 RW [utility vehicle] with relief crew.

17.59 By 999 chimney fire at Gilbert Street, Hillfields, 1-2 [map reference]. P despatched LfM Rouse WCFB. Police 'A' informed.

18.00 Change of Control Room personnel. Fm Seal logging clerk, Fwm Coathup switchboard operator, Fm Warren emergency operator.

Between 18.10 and 18.20 three further Coventry night watch crews, each with a Station Officer in charge, booked mobile to the fireground, the crew from Station 3 Foleshill travelling in the BMC Foam Salvage Tender which only had two seats in the cab. The remainder of the crew would have travelled in the box body. Other crews used utility vehicles.

18.21 By radio from LfM Stephenson: SubO Keehan taken to Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital with rib injuries.

18.26 From Warwick County Fire Brigade by exchange telephone – from pump at Gilbert Street, Stop for chimney incident, hand pump in use.

18.27 By radio from Chief Fire Officer: Stop for Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance Building, two turntable ladders, 25 jets and 35 CA [compressed air BA] sets in use.

18.38 From Warwick County Fire Brigade Headquarters, SO Powell will relieve SO Shaw and relief crews are on the way for Leamington, Nuneaton and Rugby crews.

18.40 Warwick County Fire Brigade pump LfM Rouse OiC returned from Gilbert Street and reports incident closed.

As the evening progressed, relief crews from Birmingham and Warwick County arrived in the city, again going first to the headquarters station before proceeding to the fireground. Operational and control room personnel from the city who should have finished their duty at 18.00 are recorded as booking off duty at various times up to the early hours of the following morning.

19.06 Mr Wainwright [workshop mechanic] off station to Gosford Street with P2. [Second pump from Station 1 Central, presumably after receiving attention in the Headquarters workshop.]

19.17 Fm Goodall and Fm Cunningham – AFS – report on duty.

20.07 By radio from Chief Fire Officer – amended Stop for Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance Building of seven floors, approximately 110 feet x 220 feet with single storey wing attached 200 feet x 130 feet used by Ministry of Works for storage of emergency household stocks. Whole of both buildings severely damaged. Floors fallen and collapse of north east end of main building. 200 patients from nearby hospital evacuated.

20.25 From Birmingham Fire Brigade Control – request fireground for information with regard relief crews. Fireground contacted by radio.

20.36 By radio from YN 4.1 - tell Birmingham Fire Brigade three relief crews are required. Four crews are to return at 22.00 hours.

The log gives an indication of the scale of the incident but the references to injuries only hint at the human aspect of the fire fighting. Excerpts from the 'Coventry Evening Telegraph' newspaper reproduced in Phil Consadine's booklet '94 Gosford Street' describe how Sub Officer Mick Keehan, the OiC of Central's Pump, and two Firemen became trapped for a while on the upper floors. They had reached the top floor and got a jet to work from a dry rising main when the rapidly developing fire forced them to leave their position, abandoning the hose and branch. They made their way out to an external fire escape but the floor below was alight, preventing them from making their way down to the ground. They went back into the building where flames were spreading 'at a terrific rate'. They

managed to make their way through thick smoke to some stairs which provided a successful route to the ground level. Station Officer Jack Halliwell, the OiC of Central's PE became trapped for a time on an upper floor. He had gone up through the building via a different staircase along with Station Officer Matthews from Foleshill and two Firemen. A man was sent downstairs every few minutes to check on possible fire spread. With their BA air supplies running out, SO Matthews was sent down to organise a relief crew: a few minutes later he shouted up from the floor below that the fire had spread below them. SO Halliwell attempted to go upwards to warn SubO Keehan but found himself in a situation where he could go neither up or down due to the spreading fire and with his air supply exhausted. Eventually, after battling through blinding smoke he met up with SO Matthews and they were able to smash a window and use a ladder to get down to the ground floor. Appliances also suffered from fighting the fire. At one point a Birmingham pump on the fireground ran out of petrol – a supply of fuel was being taken to the incident at the time by workshop personnel. It was reported that Central's Dennis F7 PE was taken to the workshop around 06.00 on the Tuesday morning after becoming defective. It did not feature again in operations for several days.

The log went on to record that overnight Birmingham and Warwick County crews continued to attend the incident as relief crews. Warwickshire appliances attended from various stations, including from one pump retained stations. AFS (Auxiliary Fire Service) crews from Coventry and Birmingham also attended. On the second day of the incident, Tuesday, the last Birmingham appliances left the fireground at around 09.00 but the last Warwickshire pump did not leave until about 18.30. The two city Turntable Ladders returned during the morning and the Emergency Tender closed down as the Control Unit at the incident at lunchtime.

During this time city crews rotated at the fireground. AFS pumps were crewed on stations at times to provide additional appliances and attended a number of incidents. Auxiliary pumps were also used for transport by some relief crews. Towards the end of the period a small number of firemen (as they were then termed) attended in utility vehicles and used light portable pumps for fire fighting. The incident was recorded as being closed and left in the charge of demolition contractors by a Divisional Officer just after lunch on Tuesday, 23 June. However, the following evening a call was received reporting smoke in the area of the fire-affected building. A fireman in a van was sent to investigate. Later in the evening multiple calls were received to the building and the PE and P from Headquarters were despatched: one jet was used on rubbish burning on the top floor. In the following days many further calls were received, sometimes after fire had broken out as demolition contractors uncovered smouldering material. From 1 July calls to fire or smoke issuing from the building were responded to by using the short wheelbase Land Rover: Carmichael pump that had been purchased for use in the pedestrian shopping precincts and multi-storey car parks in the city centre that had been redeveloped following the widespread damage from bombing during the November, 1940 Blitz during World War 2.

The final attendance to Gosford Street for this fire was made in the early evening on 13 July and the incident was finally closed at 18.38 on that date, three weeks to the day since it began. As a postscript, an eight pump fire occurred at the same location in the late evening on 19 May, 1966. This time the six Coventry front line pumps and all three of the city's turntable ladders attended, along with the Emergency Tender and Canley's Hose Layer. Two Warwick County pumps also attended and, in accordance with the normal procedure whenever all of the city pumps were committed, two Warwickshire pumps were mobilised to stand by at the Headquarters station in Hales Street.

There is a set of photographs of the Gosford Street building fire on the following website:

https://historicoventryforum.co.uk/gallery/display_image.php?id=2800



One of the most modern and progressive fire brigades in the country is the City of Coventry Brigade.

This picture was part of Godiva Fire Pumps promotional material and shows Canley's machines in the mid-Sixties after the arrival of the first yellow pumps. Apart from the F36, all vehicles in the picture attended the Gosford St fire - Canley F12 PE and F17 TL in the front row and BMC Hose Layer in the rear row plus, in the rear, ex Central F7 PE that had recently become a reserve. Photograph with acknowledgement to Godiva Fire Pumps Ltd

City of Coventry Fire Brigade Fleet in June, 1964

Station 1 Central/Headquarters – Hales Street

P	SWK 331	Dennis F12 / Dennis
PE	KDU 191	Dennis F7 / Dennis (chrome grille, 1950)
TL	WKV 986	Dennis F27 / Dennis: Metz
ET	VVC 898	Dennis F12 / Dennis
L4P	216 CWK	Land Rover 88 inch / Carmichael
P	ODU 777	Commer / Carmichael

Station 2 Canley – Sir Henry Parkes Road

P	TRW 796	Dennis F12 / Dennis
PE	SWK 330	Dennis F12 / Dennis
TL	SKV 899	Dennis F17 / Dennis: Metz
HL	20 CDU	BMC FF / Lewis Scott

Station 3 Foleshill – Foleshill Road

P	WWK 44	Dennis F12 / Dennis
PE	JRW 99	Dennis F7 / Dennis (black grille, first post-war appliance in 1949)
TL	EVC 919	Leyland / Merryweather (1941)
FST	5704 HP	BMC FH / Lewis Scott



94, Gosford Street, the building involved in the fire, has been the subject of a major refurbishment and is now Coventry University's Business School. Photographs by Stuart Brandrick

As a point of interest, between 1950 and 1958 the brigade operated ERH 946, a Pump based on a second-hand Leyland lorry chassis that was constructed by brigade personnel. It is thought that the chassis, originally registered in Kingston Upon Hull, dated from 1938. The styling of the appliance was similar to that of a Dennis F12. A photograph shows the pump operating from the Central station.

A new Dennis F37:Haydon / Magirus turntable ladder, CDU 293B, entered service during 1964. The CDU – B registration series was issued in June, 1964, the same month as the Gosford Street fire and so it appears that the fire would have been attended by the two older Dennis TLs detailed above. When the F37 appliance went on the run, the F27 was transferred from Central to Foleshill and the Leyland TL, the last of the city's open cabbed appliances, was disposed of. The F37 ended its operational days in West Midlands' fluorescent red livery running out of Birmingham's Central station. Sometime after the Gosford Street incident, pump SWK 331 from the Central fire station was written off after colliding with a tree on Kenilworth Road in the south of the city. The staff at the city's main newspaper were on strike at the time and so the collision was not recorded in the paper. The Commer pump acted as a replacement until the three yellow Dennis F36 appliances arrived in 1966 and one of them, KDU 997D, was put on the run at Central. One of the green Auxiliary Fire Service pumps allocated to the city was used as a reserve appliance when required while the Commer was in front-line use.



Another view of 94 Gosford St as it is today

ELECTRIC AVENUE UPDATE

Emergency One As you will see from the inside front cover colour and read in the FBS London News, London Fire Brigade have a E1 Volvo from Emergency One for operational evaluation.

Rosenbauer Since mid-August 2021, Rosenbauer's 'Revolutionary Technology' series (RT) electric fire engine, with diesel engine range extender, has been on the road in Western and Central Europe with two vehicles demonstrating the reliability and robustness of this electric vehicle. A total of ten countries were visited by mid-December 2021 and more than 25,000 kilometres (15,534 miles) covered, which is roughly equivalent to the mileage of this type of vehicle over its entire service life in urban use.

Who is interested in the RT...The RT is designed as a firefighting vehicle for municipal use. Most interest is being shown by fire departments in large cities and metropolitan regions, because they want to, or in some cases have to, make a contribution to reducing the CO2 emissions of urban fleets with electrified emergency vehicles. The RT is already in regular use in Berlin and in Amsterdam training has started with their RT. Basel, Switzerland, has ordered the first fleet of four vehicles which will enter service in 2023.

As part of the European tour, the Rosenbauer team travelled to numerous metropolitan areas with the RT. First and foremost the C40 cities of Barcelona, Copenhagen, London, Madrid, Paris, Rome, and Warsaw. People also wanted to see

the vehicle in Aarhus and Roskilde (Denmark), Stuttgart and Cologne (Germany), Strasbourg and Lyon (France), Geneva and Lausanne (Switzerland), to name just a few of the stops. Last year, the fire departments in Oslo and Stockholm were already able to get a first-hand look of the advantages of the CFT concept vehicle. The RT is currently on a tour of several weeks through Germany and will be in the Benelux countries in spring of 2022.

In addition to municipal fire departments, plant and airport fire departments are also showing increasing interest in the RT. In Switzerland, Schutz & Rettung Zürich, the Zurich building insurance company, the CERN research centre In France, Aeroports de Paris, the operator of Charles de Gaulle, Orly and Le Bourget airports, have shown interest in the RT. Representatives from Airbus, the Spanish airport operator AENA and the civil protection organization UME (Unidad Militar de Emergencias) took part in a presentation and demonstration in Madrid. As part of the tour through Germany, the vehicle was demonstrated at Porsche in Stuttgart and further appearances are planned at VW in Wolfsburg, Audi in Neckarsulm, Tesla in Grünheide, Evonic in Worms, Pharmaserv in Marburg and at the Stuttgart, Cologne / Bonn, and Leipzig airports.

Several trade fair appearances were also on the agenda as part of the RT Europe Tour. For example, the vehicle was on display at the Danish fire service fair, Danske Beredskabers Årsmøde, at the end of August 2021, at the Emergency Service Show in Birmingham and Zivil Protect in Bolzano in September 2021 and at REAS in Montichiari, Italy, and at the Congrès National des Sapeurs-Pompiers de France in Marseilles in October 2021. The RT made special appearances at the "Green Future Poland & Austria" business forum in Warsaw, at a reception hosted by the Austrian ambassador in Madrid and at the "Innovative Mobility for Future" event at the Salzburgring.

All journeys and presentations, except for the sea transport to England and the Marseille - Madrid leg, were completed by the RT on its own. The overland distances were covered with the support of the range extender. The inner-city short trips and demonstrations were completed purely on battery power. Charging the batteries took between 30 and 45 minutes at various superchargers.

The RT also had to pass some special endurance tests on its European tour. Above all, the vehicle was put through its paces at the fire service training centres. Visits included the institute of the fire department of North Rhine-Westphalia, the largest fire service training centre in Germany, the Riedikon training centre in Switzerland, and the training centre of the Italian Ministry of the Interior in Montelibretti near Rome. The RT was challenged the most during an exercise in the Swiss mountains, as Rosenbauer employee Werner Wolfschluckner reports: "After a steep drive over several kilometres and a measured gradient of approximately 22%, extremely narrow roads with hairpin bends and construction sites, we completed a forest fire extinguishing exercise at 1,000 metres above sea level. Conclusion: driver and machine brought to the limit, but everything mastered with flying colours!"

In November 2021 Rosenbauer was awarded the prestigious Austrian State Award for Innovation for its RT electrified firefighting vehicle. Margarete Schramböck, Federal Minister for Digital and Economic Affairs, particularly emphasized the sustainability of the RT at the award ceremony: "A great project that really stood out in terms of sustainability. I could convince myself of it. With this vehicle, Rosenbauer consistently relies on new technologies and thus opens fire departments the way to digital future. The RT once again confirms the innovative strength of the Austrian world market leaders as the basis for economically sustainable models of success."

FIRELINKS4U - 'bitesize' A look around Amsterdam Brandweer's Rosenbauer RT

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_XIJG7doP8