

Photo of the Month

Frank Jacobs (1899-1970)



Rogers Fire Chief Frank "Jake" Jacobs at his post, circa 1960. (Neg. #N008456)

From its earliest days Rogers' firefighting needs were served by the Rogers Hose Company, an all-volunteer brigade. In 1923, 42 years after the town was founded, the Rogers Fire Department (RFD) was organized. For the next 23 years Rogers had only one full-time paid firefighter.

Frank "Jake" Jacobs was born in St. James, Missouri, and moved to Rogers with his family in 1910. At age 24 Jacobs joined the newly formed Rogers Fire Department as the lone paid firefighter and truck driver, responsible for driving and maintaining the 1919 American La France pumper known as "Old Hulda," now housed in the Rogers Fire Station #1 (301 North First Street). For 23 years Jacobs was on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with hardly a day off. It wasn't until 1946 that a second full-time employee was hired, allowing Jacobs to alternate days on and off.

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During Jacobs' years Dr. George Love, one of Rogers' premier physicians, served as RFD's first fire chief until ill health left him unable to work. Jacobs was designated by the Rogers City Council as acting fire chief in early 1950 and, after Love's death in 1953, Jacobs served as fire chief through his retirement in 1966, ending a 43-year career with the City.

Jacobs was a lifetime member, and served as a vice president, of the Arkansas Fireman's Association. He also was a member of the Northwest Arkansas Fireman's Association and the International Firechief's Association. Along with his professional work, Jacobs was a longtime member of the Odd Fellows Lodge

in Springdale and a member of Rogers' First Baptist Church.

Jacobs and his wife Viola were parents to son James and daughter Lucy and grandparents to numerous grandchildren. He's buried in the Rogers Cemetery.

In June 1998 Rogers' Fire Station #1 was formally dedicated in memory of Jacobs and a plaque in his honor was placed on the wall near the building's entrance. With six of his grandchildren present, daughter Lucy Kehmeier was given a special certificate in his honor. Former Rogers fire chief Bob Whitley praised Jacobs for his leadership and commitment to the City, and for instilling a sense of pride in the department.

Rarely does a City owe so much to a man for his many long, hard, and dedicated years of service to its people.