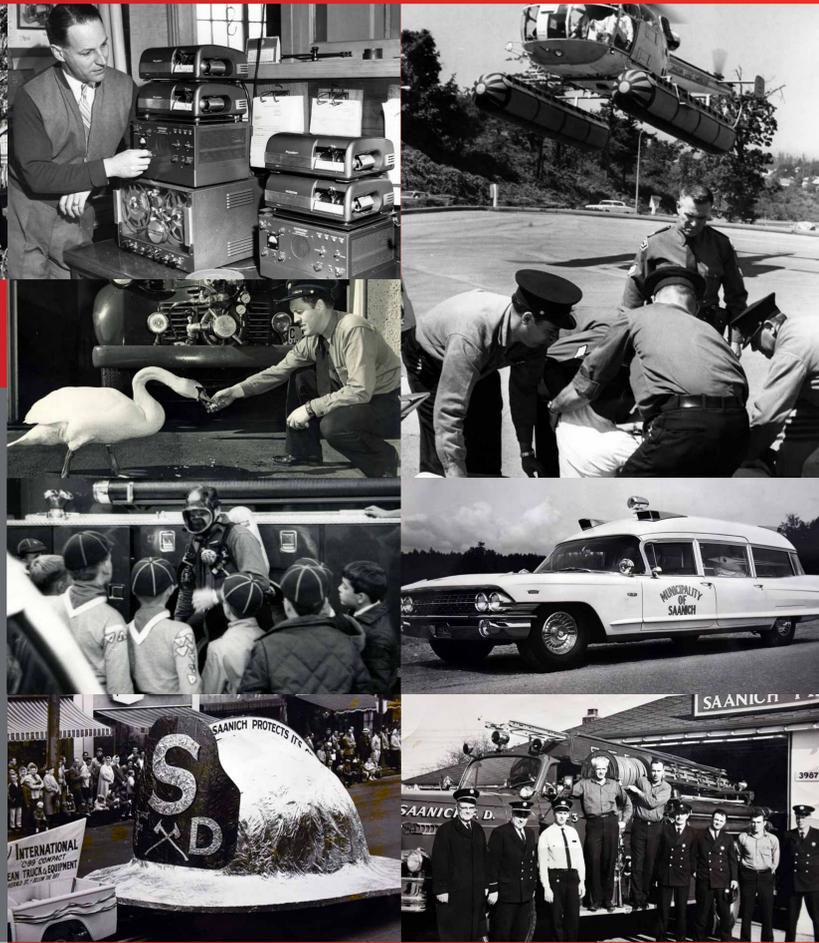


# SAANICH FIRE DEPARTMENT



## The early years

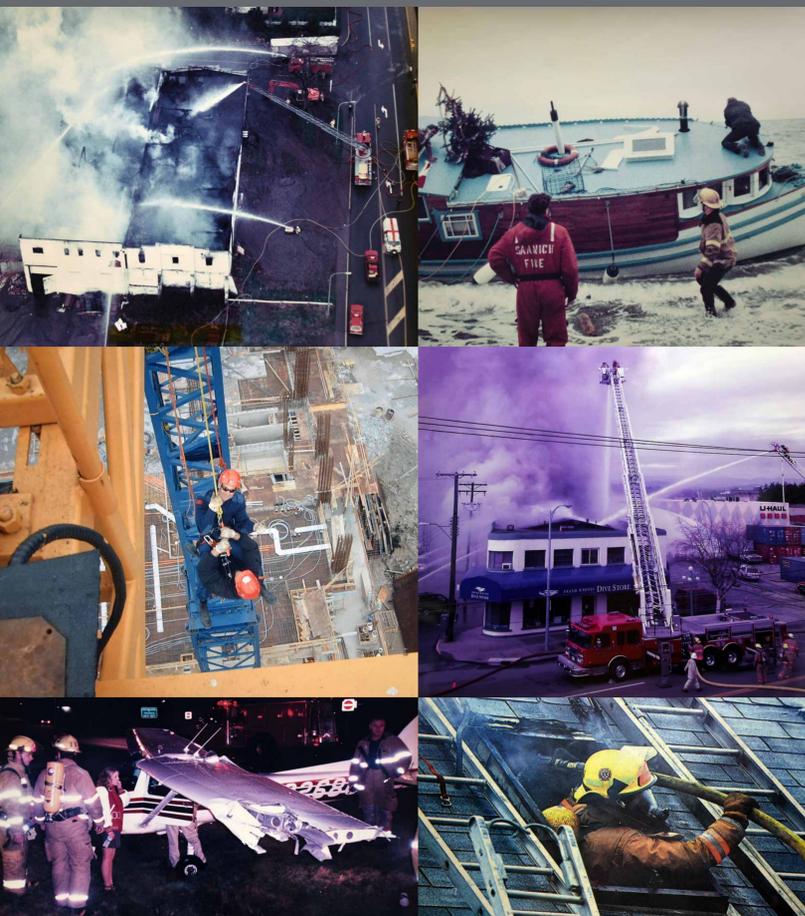
The District of Saanich was incorporated in 1906 and had a population of 6,000 residents. At that time, Saanich had an agreement with the City of Victoria to provide fire protection. In 1917, due to pressure from citizens to provide more localized fire services, Saanich Council rented a building for \$7.50 per month and bought 1,000 feet of fire hose. Although the building had no electricity, it was still considered adequate for Saanich's fire station. In 1919, the building was wired and inaugurated in March, with John G. Little appointed "Fireman in Charge." During this period, Saanich had 170 fire hydrants and one fire truck.



## Times of change

As Saanich continued to develop, more resources were needed to protect the growing community. In 1931, H.T. Lock was appointed the first fire chief of the District. Additional fire stations were built in Royal Oak and Gordon Head, culminating in three stations to serve the District.

Along with building growth, the fire service responded with new services. The ambulance service began in the 1960s and Saanich was recognized as the leading fire department in the ambulance and rescue field. It was the first department in Canada to administer drugs and incorporate special life support equipment. As well, Saanich introduced a Prevention and Inspection Division, dedicated training officer and water rescue program. Modern two-way radios were installed and street addressing was implemented. By 1970, the department was responding to almost 2,000 calls per year.



## Present day

Progressing into the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, Saanich continued to modernize suppression services and expand fire inspection and prevention programs in an effort to minimize life and property loss caused by fire.

From humble beginnings in 1919, we have grown to 123 uniformed members, seven support staff, three fire stations and respond to approximately 4,600 emergency incidents each year. We provide dispatch services to client municipalities in the Capital Regional District, carry out fire inspections, provide fire apparatus, mechanical and high angle rescue services, participate on the regional Hazardous Materials Response Team, deliver fire prevention and life safety programs, and support municipal efforts to prepare for, respond to, and recover from major emergencies and disasters.

The fire service has evolved significantly over the past 100 years and it will continue to evolve. In Saanich, we are proud of our past and are committed to excellence, innovation and service into the future.

