



# E Pūpukahi

By  
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» Firefighting equipment was upgraded after the Chinatown fires.

// Every day we are reminded of the real and ever-present threats in the world — both natural and man-made. Fortunately, there are those who swear an oath to defend us. When the howl of a siren causes you to pull over on the road, remember that these first responders are en route to uphold their civic duties of protecting and rescuing civilians.

Like all first responders, firefighters put their lives on the line without hesitation, ready at a moment's notice. Expecting the unexpected and preparing for the unimaginable is their norm.

Hawai'i's formal firefighting tradition dates back to December 27, 1850, when King Kamehameha III signed an ordinance creating the Honolulu Fire Department. Marshal W.C. Parke assumed control until O'ahu Governor Kekuanaoa tapped Alexander Cartwright to be the first official chief engineer in February 1851.

The only fire department in America established by a ruling monarch, HFD's engine company 4 was manned solely by Hawaiians; Kings Kamehameha III, Kamehameha IV, Kamehameha V and Kalākaua were all active members.

In the beginning, the rudimentary firefighting equipment consisted of buckets and portable water supplies. As Cartwright developed the department, it incorporated hand-drawn engines and a hook-and-ladder company.

In 1870, the highest point in Honolulu was the bell tower at the Central Fire Station on Union Street. Watchmen posted there sounded the alarm when smoke or a fire was spotted.

The firefighters were an all-volunteer force until two fires, in 1886 and 1900, destroyed most of Chinatown. The first displaced 8,000 residents and consumed all but two or three

buildings in the entire district. In late 1899, the presence of bubonic plague was confirmed in the neighborhood. Schools were closed, and 7,000 residents were placed under quarantine. After 13 people died, the Honolulu Board of Health ordered that buildings suspected of harboring the disease be burned. The controlled burn, overseen by the HFD, was successful at first. On January 20, however, the winds shifted and the fire surged out of control, razing the neighborhood again.

In response, the legislature funded salaries for city firefighters and secured teams of horses to pull the steam engines and carriages.



◀ Historical Honolulu Fire Department hoseman badge

▶ Fire wagon, circa 1900





More innovations were introduced in the early 1900s — motorized vehicles, a switchboard and radio communications. The Fire Alarm Bureau was formed in 1933.

On December 7, 1941, engine companies 1, 4, and 6 raced to Hickam Field to fight the fires caused by the Japanese bombers. Among the many casualties were Captain John Carreira, Captain Thomas S. Macy, and Hoseman Harry T.L. Pang. While battling the flames, Lieutenant Frederick Kealoha and Hosemen George Correa, John A. Gilman, Moses Kalilikane, Patrick J. McCabe, and Solomon H. Naauao Jr. were wounded. These six men later received awards for their bravery and were the only civilian firefighters to receive Purple Hearts in the United States' history. In 1984, Captain Carreira, Captain Macy and Hoseman Pang were awarded their Purple Hearts posthumously during a ceremony at the USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor.

Following the war, advancements and reforms in lifesaving and rescue equipment improved the ability of firefighters to succeed in their mission. At the time of statehood in 1959, the Honolulu Fire Department was under the leadership of William K. Blaisdell, father of the future mayor of Honolulu, Neal Blaisdell.

Notable recent innovations within the HFD include several NOTAR helicopters, which aid in mountain and ocean rescues and with wildland fires.

Our firefighters face dire situations head-on with unwavering resolve. What began as a group of volunteers passing buckets of water hand to hand, the Honolulu Fire Department now has a powerful, long-standing legacy that acts as a foundational inspiration for those in uniform today. //



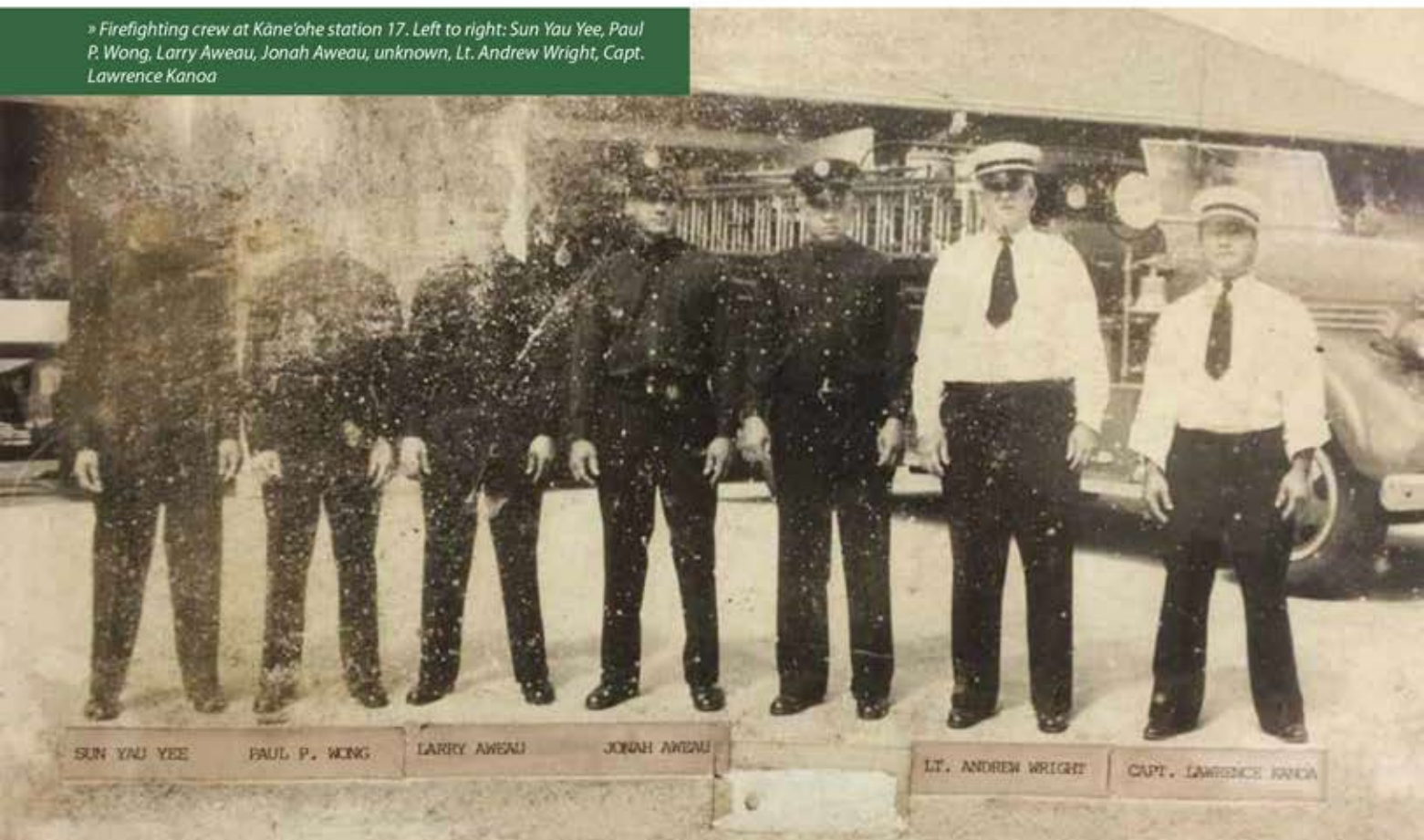
» Kāne'ōhe's American LaFrance fire engine in 1970s

**STATION 17- KĀNE'ŌHE STATISTICS**

Summary of 7/1/2020 to 6/30/212021

Fires		Emergencies	
Structure Fire	6	Medical	1,300
Wildland/Brush Fire	2	Motor Vehicle Collision with Pedestrian	5
Nuisance Fires*	4	Motor Vehicle Crash/Collision	51
* Include rubbish fires outside a structure or vehicle		Mountain Rescues	11
Cooking Fire	5	Ocean Rescues	2
		Hazmat Incidents	5
Alarms			
Activated Alarms (no fire)	58	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,449</b>

» Firefighting crew at Kāne'ōhe station 17. Left to right: Sun Yau Yee, Paul P. Wong, Larry Aweau, Jonah Aweau, unknown, Lt. Andrew Wright, Capt. Lawrence Kanao



SUN YAU YEE

PAUL P. WONG

LARRY AWEAU

JONAH AWEAU

LT. ANDREW WRIGHT

CAPT. LAWRENCE KANAŌ