

1 (Landmarks)

2 **DESIGNATING THE FIREBOAT HOUSE, PIER 22 1/2, AS LANDMARK NO. 225 PURSUANT TO**
3 **ARTICLE 10, SECTIONS 1004 AND 1004.4, OF THE PLANNING CODE.**

4 Be it ordained by the people of the City and County of San Francisco:

5
6 Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that The Fireboat House at Pier 22 1/2,
7 on the east side of The Embarcadero on Lot 22 1/2 in Assessor's Block 9900, has a
8 special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and
9 that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the
10 standards set forth in Article 10 of the City Planning Code.

11
12 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, Chapter II, Part II of
13 the San Francisco Municipal Code, The Fireboat House at Pier 22 1/2, is hereby
14 designated as Landmark No. 225. This designation has been fully approved by Resolution
15 No. 14775 of the Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the
16 Board of Supervisors under File No. 990430 and which Resolution is incorporated
17 herein and made part hereof as though fully set forth.

18
19 (b) Required Data:

- 20
21 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site is Lot 22 1/2 in
22 Assessor's Block 9900.
- 23 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are
24 described and shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the
25 Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on November 18, 1998 and other



City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Tails Ordinance

File Number: 990430

Date Passed:

Ordinance designating the Fireboat House, Pier 22 1/2, as Landmark No. 225 pursuant to Article 10, Sections 1004 and 1004.4, of the Planning Code.

March 29, 1999 Board of Supervisors — PASSED, ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 11 - Newsom, Teng, Yaki, Yee, Ammiano, Becerril, Bierman, Brown, Katz, Kaufman, Leno

April 5, 1999 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Becerril, Bierman, Brown, Katz, Kaufman, Leno, Newsom, Teng, Yaki, Yee

January 28, 1999

File No. 98.912L
The Fireboat House, Pier 22 1/2
Lot 22 1/2 in Assessor's Block 9900

SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 14775

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate the Fireboat House property at Pier 22 1/2, on the east side of The Embarcadero on Lot 22 1/2 of Assessor's Block 9900, as Landmark No. 225 pursuant to the provisions of Article 10 of the Planning Code was made by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) on November 18, 1998;

WHEREAS, A draft Landmark Designation Report on the proposed Landmarks designation of the Fireboat House was prepared by architectural historian Anne Bloomfield was reviewed by the Landmarks Board at its Regular Meetings of November 18, 1998, and said documentation was considered as a Landmark Designation Report by the Landmarks Board at its Regular Meeting of November 18, 1998, attached as Exhibit "A"; and

WHEREAS, The Landmarks Board reviewed documents, photographs and correspondence from the public, representatives of the owners of the property and architects, regarding the history and condition of the Fireboat House, and received oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed Landmark designation, in a duly noticed Public Hearing on November 18, 1998; and

WHEREAS, The Landmarks Board in considering the potential Landmark designation of the Fireboat House utilized the 13 criteria of the Kalman Methodology, and after reviewing recommendations on the ratings for the various criteria from architectural historian Anne Bloomfield, and Planning Department staff, in its Public Hearing on November 18, 1998 made the following rating determinations: 7 criteria were rated "Excellent" -- the building's Construction, its Design, its Architectural Interior Arrangement, its relation in Historical Context to a Person or Persons, its relation to a Historic Event, its Visual Importance, and the Integrity of the building Alterations; 6 criteria were rated "Very Good" -- the building's Architectural Style, its Age, the Stature of the Architect, the building's relation to Historical Patterns, continuity of Physical Context, and the building's Physical Setting; and

WHEREAS, On November 18, 1998, the Landmarks Board recommended approval of the designation of the Fireboat House site on Pier 22 1/2 as Landmark No. 225; and

WHEREAS, The Planning Commission has reviewed the case file (No. 98.912L) and considered the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board set forth in the Landmarks Board Resolution No. 510, and held a public hearing on the matter on January 28, 1999; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, That the Planning Commission does hereby concur with the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board and APPROVES the landmark designation of the Fireboat House site at Pier 22 1/2, on the east side of The Embarcadero on Lot 22 1/2 of Assessor's Block 9900, as Landmark No. 225;

Second, That the special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value of the landmark site is set forth in the photographs and other materials on file in the Planning Department Docket No. 98.912L, which is incorporated herein and made a part of thereof as though fully set forth;

PLANNING COMMISSION

File No. 98.912L
The Fireboat House, Pier 22 1/2
Lot 22 1/2 in Assessor's Block 9900
Resolution No. 14775
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Third, That the particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined necessary, are those generally described in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Board at its Regular Meeting of November 18, 1998, and attached to Landmarks Board Resolution No. 510 as Exhibit "A".

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the Landmark Designation Report, the photographs and other pertinent materials in the Case File No. 98.912L, and a copy of this Resolution of Approval to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission on January 28, 1999.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Theoharis, Mills, Antenore, Chinchilla, and Hills

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Joe and Martin

ADOPTED: January 28, 1999

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LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

November 18, 1998



HISTORIC BUILDING NAME: Fireboat House

OWNER: Port of San Francisco
Ferry Building
San Francisco, CA 94111

ADDRESS: Pier 22½, The Embarcadero

POPULAR BUILDING NAME: Fireboat House

BLOCK & LOT: 9900/22½

ORIGINAL USE: fire station for fireboat and an engine

ZONING: P

CURRENT USE: same

ARCHITECT: Alfred A. Pyle

STYLE: Renaissance Revival composition with
Mission Revival ornament

CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1915

NUMBER OF STORIES: two

LANDMARK NO: 225

EXTERIOR MATERIALS: cement plaster, Mission
tiles, wood sash

LPAB VOTE: 5-0

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: The Fireboat House is significant as San Francisco's only firehouse that serves the crews of her fireboats. It is a rare instance of cooperation between the Port and the Fire Department, because it is on Port "land" (actually the bulkhead of the great seawall and pilings east of it) but controlled and staffed by the SFFD. It is connected to the berths of the City's two fireboats, and *Phoenix* and the *Guardian*, and thus it displays one of the surviving working maritime activities along the Embarcadero, a reminder of San Francisco's important maritime history. Its design has elegant proportions and perfect symmetry. The interior displays a rare integrity of iron spiral staircase, working brass fire poles, and intact tongue-and-groove surfaces for walls and ceilings. The building looks exactly like its 1916 photograph.

CRITERIA

A. ARCHITECTURE:

1. Style:

Significance as an Example of a Particular Architectural Style or Convention

The Fireboat House can be seen as a Renaissance Revival structure for its elegant proportions and perfect axial symmetry (like that of the Agriculture Building next north along the Embarcadero) and for its appearance as a tightly contained cube with minimal wall ornament and window shapes different on the different floors. It has Mission Revival elements in the tile roof on closely spaced, curvilinear-profiled rafter tails. It looks exactly like its 1916 photograph. (VG)

2. Use/Type/Construction:

Significance as an Example of a Particular Occupancy Type or Use, Material or Method of Construction

This is the city's only fire station to combine crews for boats and a fire engine. It is the city's only fire station built on pilings. Directly alongside it are moored the two fireboats (E)

3. Date Built:

Significance as an Example of a Particular Period in San Francisco History

1915, during the Panama Pacific International Exposition (the PPIE) and in connection with construction of this section of the great seawall and the now-demolished neighboring piers 22 and 24. (VG)

4. Architect:

Designed or Built by an Architect or Builder Who Has Made a Significant Contribution to the Community, state or Nation

Alfred A. Pyle, who worked for the State Board of Harbor Commissioners and designed the National Register-listed Agriculture Building, and the bulkhead buildings of Piers 1½, 3, and 29. Earlier he had worked under Willis Polk in the San Francisco office of D. H. Burnham & Co. (VG)

5. Design:

Quality of Composition, Detailing and Ornament, Measured in Part in Originality, Urban Design, Craftsmanship or Uniqueness

This building is perfectly symmetrical. Its sides and rear are as carefully designed as its facade. The sizes and proportions of the windows and walls, along with the shadow cast by the overhanging roof, give it a serene beauty. It makes a sensitive transition between the Renaissance Revival bulkhead buildings (Ferry Building, and Agriculture Building) to the north along the waterfront, and the former Mission Revival bulkhead buildings to the south, of which Piers 26 and 28 survive. (E)

6. Interior:

Interior Arrangement, Finish, Craftsmanship, and/or Use Detail is/are Particularly Attractive or Unique.

The interior is 90% intact. It has a tight spiral staircase of iron, two working brass fire poles, stone-scored plaster finish in the fire engine garage, tongue-and-groove finish on all the other walls and ceilings, square Tuscan columns supporting a north-south beam upstairs, and quite a bit of historic cabinetry. Photographs and mementoes of fireboat history are exhibited in the rooms. (E)

B. HISTORIC CONTEXT

7. Persons

Associated with the Life or Activities of a Person, Group or Institution that Has Made a Significant Contribution to the Community, State or Nation

A special division of the San Francisco Fire Department, the fireboat crews have a much-honored place in San Francisco history (see "Events" below). They have operated their boats to spray happy plumes of water to honor special visitors and vessels to the city. Their role in fires has been sometimes to spray saltwater directly on a fire aboard ship or on nearby land, sometimes to pump saltwater into systems where the regular fire engines can use it. Fireboat service was inaugurated in San Francisco after the 1906 fire had demonstrated the need for an auxiliary water supply, and what better source than the sea water which nearly surrounds the city. The first fire boats, the *David Scannell* and the *Dennis T. Sullivan*, named after former fire chiefs, were launched in 1909 and berthed at then-existing piers. The Fireboat House was constructed to house the ever-ready boat crews next to the fireboat. (E)

8. Events:

Associated with Events that Have Made a Significant Contribution to the Community, State or Nation

In addition to the fireboats' ceremonial role, two spectacular fireboat services have been recorded on the nearest of the Port's poetry columns on Herb Caen Way:

"Flames soaked through creosote pilings beneath the entire 500 foot length of Pier 48 on April 13, 1939. On the land side, hose tenders ran hoses to connect directly to the salt water manifolds on the upper deck of the *Dennis T. Sullivan*. The powerful fireboat pumps forced unlimited quantities of bay water where it was most needed. *Dennis T. Sullivan* and *David Scannell* were retired in 1954 after 46 years of firefighting on the bay, replaced by the diesel powered *Phoenix*."

"For most San Franciscans, *Phoenix* played her most crucial role on the [Loma Prieta earthquake] night of October 18, 1989, when the Marina district was the scene of partly and completely collapsed buildings. The sickening odor of gas was overwhelming. As in 1906 the water mains were broken and hydrants were dry. It looked as if the Marina would burn.

"Engine 35 from the waterfront firehouse was off on a medical emergency, leaving Pilot Arvid Havneras, Engineer Nate Hardy, and Lt. Bob Branchero to man the *Phoenix*. 'We could see the smoke as we headed up the city front, so to save time we got our three pumps ready to go and we were underway.' Even as *Phoenix* headed north, the tide was beginning to ebb, and it was essential to get her into Marina harbor before the tide moved out. Pilot Havneras maneuvered *Phoenix* into the yacht harbor at the foot of Divisadero Street with only a few feet of water under the boat. Using portable fire hydrants and three inch hose, firemen completely encircled the blazing apartment buildings, pouring salt water on from all sides. The fireboat ran two pumps, maintaining over 6,000 gallons per minute for over sixteen hours. When the fire was finally out, *Phoenix* and her fast moving three-man crew had saved the Marina. Two grateful residents put up \$300,000 to buy San Francisco a surplus fireboat from Vancouver -- newly christened the *Guardian*. (E)

9. Patterns:

Associated with or Illustrative of Broad Patterns of City's Cultural, Social, Political or Economic History or Development

The Fireboat House was constructed as soon as the seawall under it was completed, and about the same time as the neighboring piers 22 and 24 were built. The Mission Revival elements of its styling illustrate the relatively late date of seawall construction in this part of the waterfront. The building's provision of living, sleeping, and eating quarters for the firemen and boat crews illustrates the Fire Department's historic practice of having firemen on duty around the clock. The iron spiral staircase, the brass poles, and the tongue-and-groove walls and ceilings are typical interiors for early 20th century firehouses.

The building is a reminder of San Francisco' maritime history, and the only previous Landmarks with this important theme are the Ferry Building (#90), the Bellline Roundhouse (#114), quite a few warehouses, and some business and residential buildings connected with shipping magnates. The only previous Landmark on the seawall bulkhead is the Ferry Building. (VG)

C. PHYSICAL CONTEXT

10. Continuity:

Contributes to the Continuity or Character of the Street, Neighborhood or Area.

The Fireboat House defines the edge of the great seawall in this area. It makes a fine foreground and scale comparison for the Bay Bridge nearly overhead. (VG)

11. Setting:

Setting and/or Landscape Contributes to the Continuity or Character of the Street Neighborhood or Area

The Fireboat House's reason for existence is the two fireboats moored alongside, the *Phoenix* and the *Guardian*. With their red stacks they identify the building's purpose for all the many passers-by to understand. Together the Fireboat House and the fireboats illustrate the City's maritime history. (VG)

12. Visual Significance

Significant as a Visual Landmark to the Neighborhood, City, Region or Nation as a Whole

The Fireboat House stands alone on the waterfront south of the Ferry Building, because so many of the piers and bulkhead buildings there have been demolished. It and its fireboats stand out against the great expanse of water visible along the southern part of the Embarcadero. (VG)

D. INTEGRITY:

The Degree to Which the Property has Retained Original Materials from Which its Significance is Derived or Which Characterize its Period

The building looks exactly like its picture published in 1916 in the *Biennial Report, Board of State Harbor Commissioners*. The front and sides have no changes at all apart from security grills, a few small fittings, and the red signs "Engine 35" and "Fireboat 1." The interior's integrity is even more remarkable because it retains all the original wall and ceiling surfaces, plus the tightly spiralled iron staircase, the two brass fire poles, and some historic cabinetry; visible piping and wiring do not detract from the appreciation of these features. (E)

E. THREATS TO SITE: NONE () DEVELOPMENT () ZONING () VANDALISM ()
PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT (x) OTHER () UMB STATUS ()

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS:

CALIFORNIA STATE REGISTER:

HERE TODAY: No

HERITAGE SURVEYS: B

DCP 1976 SURVEY: No

DCP AREA PLANS: N/A

OTHER:

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Page, Charles Hall, & Associates. "Survey of Cultural Resources, Piers 14-22 1/2, The Agriculture Building and the Fire Boat House, The Port of San Francisco." San Francisco, for the Port Commission, November 14, 1977.

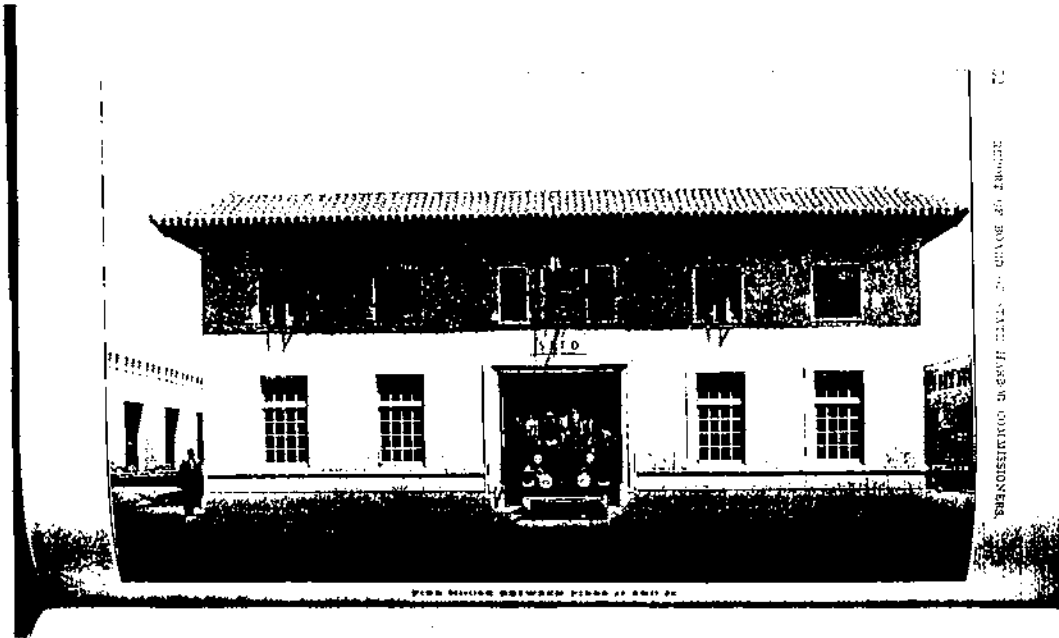
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San Francisco Heritage. File on Pier 22 1/2.

San Francisco Hook and Ladder Society. *San Francisco Fire Department, 1866-1974*. Dallas, TX, Taylor Publishing Co., 1975.

SUBMITTED TO LANDMARKS BOARD BY:

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DATE SUBMITTED: October 1998



Above: Historic photo, 1916
Board of State Harbor Commissioners'
Biennial Report, 1916 1914-1916.

Right: Engine door detail
Looking east.
3 March 1998 (AB370/28A)



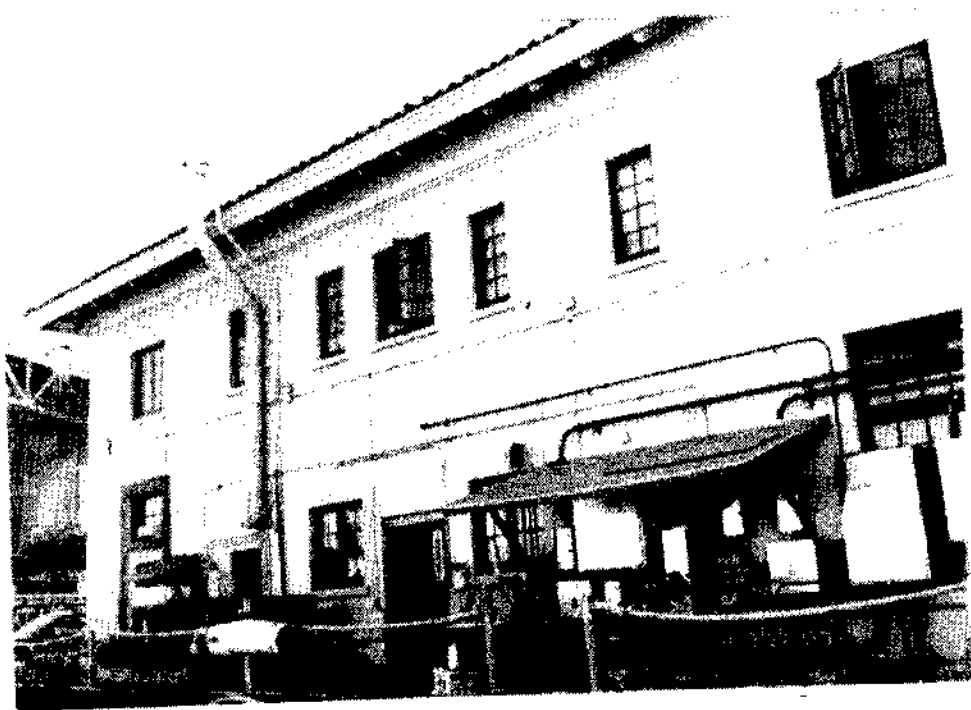


Above: South elevation, looking north.
3 March 1998 (AB340/2A)

Below: North elevation, looking south southeast.
3 March 1998 (AB340/30A)



Fireboat House - 8



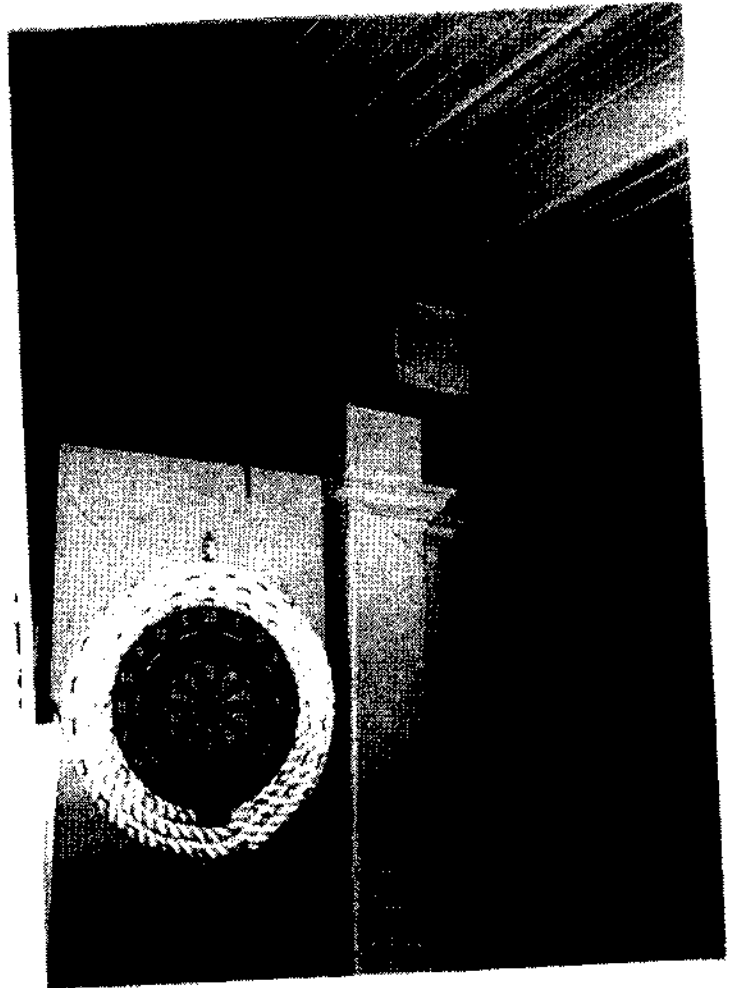
Above: East elevation
Looking southwest
3 March 1998 (AB340/4A)

Right: Interior: communal room with spiral staircase
Looking southwest.
3 March 1998 (AB340/8A)

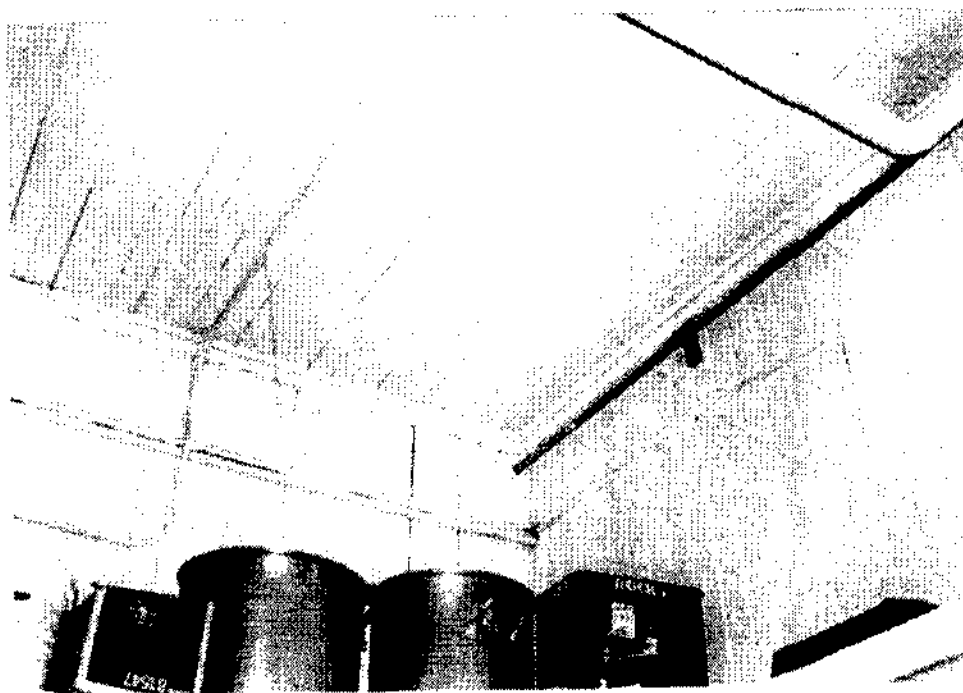


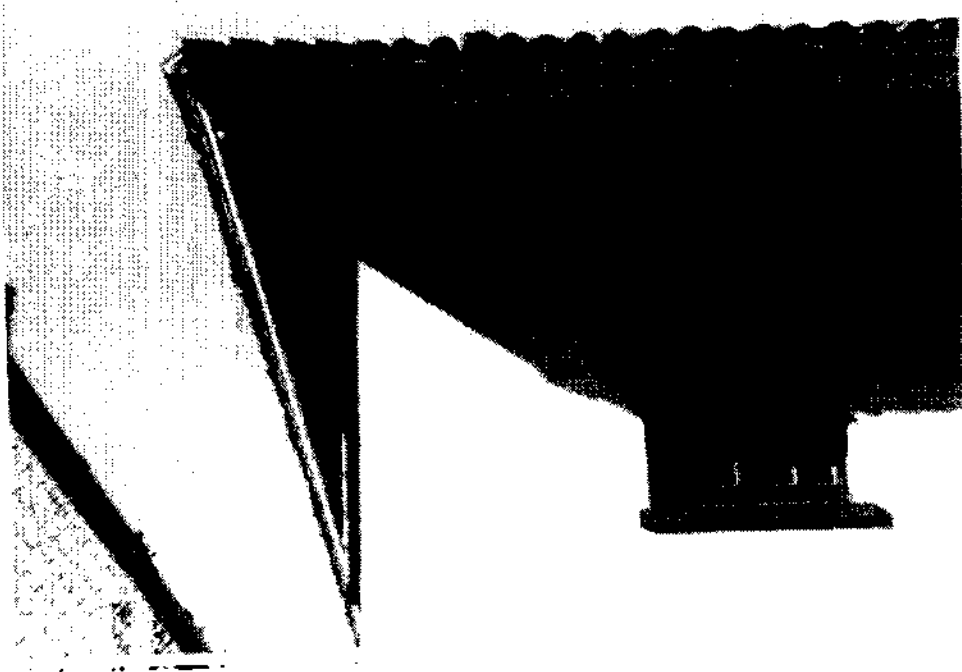
Fireboat House - 9

Right: Interior, second floor: column
Looking northeast.
3 March 1998 (AB340/15A)



Below: Tongue and groove in kitchen
Looking northwest.
3 March 1998 (AB340/12A)





Above: Eaves and window details
Southwest corner.
3 March 1998 (AB340/3A)

Right: Interior of garage space
With pole for sliding, and
Cabinet lined with 1909 lottery tickets.
3 March 1998 (AB340/35A)

