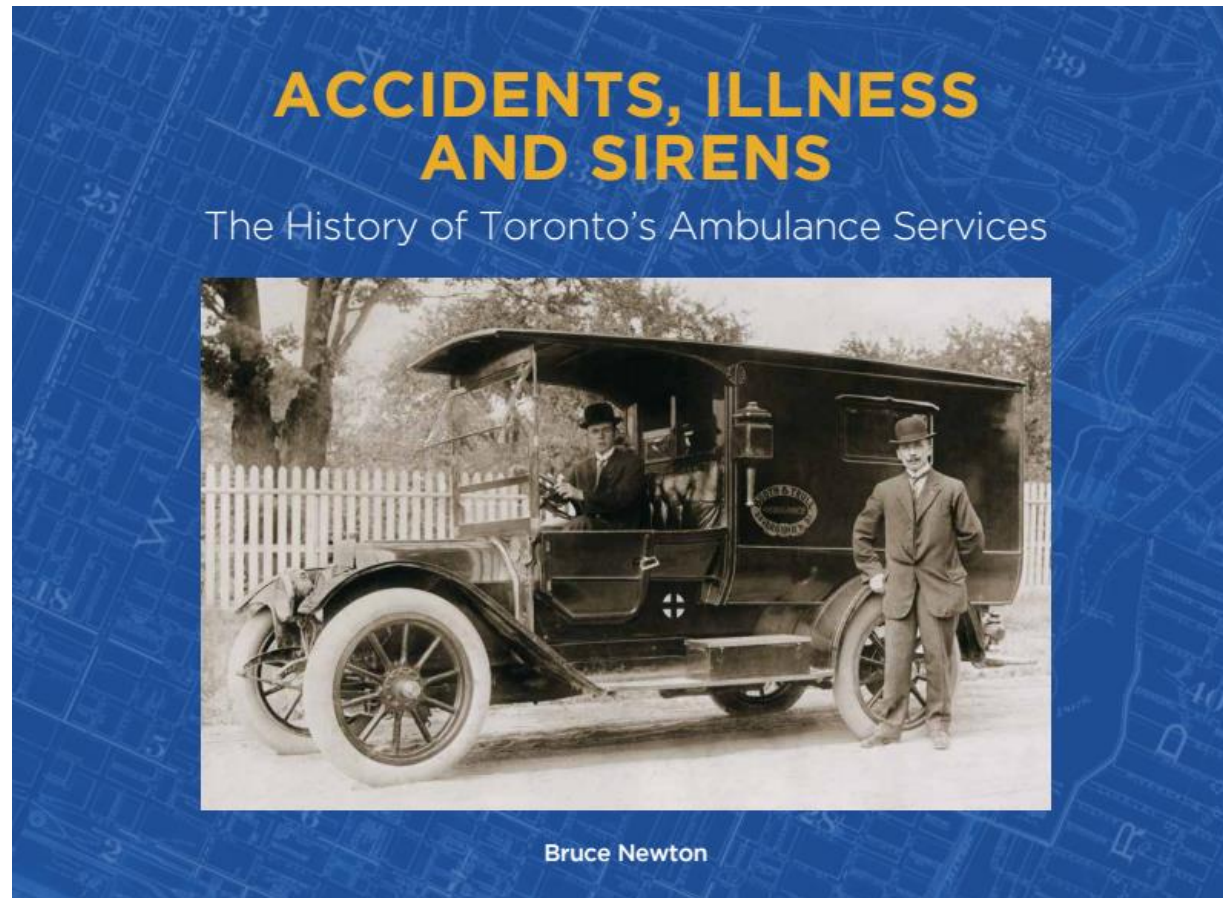


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TORONTO'S AMBULANCE HISTORY





Len Klinck picking up his new Cadillac Ambulance



1963 Corvair-Billington Oldsmobile's at Toronto Airport

In 1954 Len purchased the Ward Funeral Home ambulance that was located in the then Town of Weston and later bought out a few other services.

The types of calls that Len would service can be classified into two categories, emergency and non-emergency type of responses, or non-paying, and paying calls. Most emergency work that the Klinck Ambulance would service, "would get written off" since it was difficult collecting payment for those calls. This non-payment was very unsatisfactory for Klinck and in realizing that the business could not function on good faith alone, Klinck made some drastic business changes. He was able to contract local physicians and arranged that if a doctor was doing a house call and the patient required hospitalization, Klinck Ambulance would be called to transport the patient. This naturally led to inter-hospital transfers, which also were revenue generating calls.

In another attempt to fit in with the community and to join forces with his competition, Len joined the Ambulance Association of Toronto. He was a member for ten years and became president for three years of its existence. All of the ambulance operators joined (with the exception of Watson Ambulance) and this became the means by which any increases in ambulance rates were accomplished. An appeal would be made to the association, and they would take their collective concerns to the City of Toronto's Licensing Commission, which decided whether an increase was warranted or not. Collectively, all operators servicing the community were rewarded and increases in rates began to be seen. Before the association, the representation could not budge the rates any higher, but one collective voice became harder to ignore.

Len Klinck worked diligently to achieve a good name in the community and soon work came in from the local police including the divisions from York, Weston, Forest Hill and North York. Once again, Len found that servicing this wider area was leading to other types of calls. The police calls kept the Klinck Ambulance fairly busy with the emergency work and now the public was recognizing the name – "Klinck...as quick as a wink" – so the public would call directly. As Len stated, "there were a lot of calls from the Police that did not require any transport but we could only tell that once we arrived on the scene. There was a new upstart ambulance company that was attempting to move into the work by listening to Police calls on radio scanners in their ambulances and then jump the call so that they could be first on the scene." This was a new crossroads in the Ambulance business, so Len contacted Mr. Bick, who was the reeve of the Town of Forest Hill, (Mr. Bick became the first chairman of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Commission) and convinced him to agree that if the police called for an ambulance, payment had to be forthcoming. When the negotiations were completed, the police began to pay 50% of incurred costs if no transportation was required, and also agreed to pay 100% for any non-paying emergency calls. This allowed Len to concentrate on expanding his business and keeping abreast of new companies.

That same year Len opened another station with one vehicle in the community of Weston at 38





Ambulance responding to a call past a line of streetcars on Queen St.



Number 8 then later 22 station on Empress Ave.

In order to set up an ambulance dispatch centre to be functional on January 1, 1967, four dispatchers were hired and commenced their training in December of 1966. Their salary rate was \$5,685 per annum each, based on a 40-hour week.

Report No. 58 of The Executive Committee, November 24, 1966 pg 2483

Thirty-two staff transferred from the Emergency Measures Organization, and forty-nine staff came over from the City of Toronto; however, no staff transferred over from the remaining municipalities as they were all firefighters.

In order to staff eleven ambulances 24 hours a day, 50 ambulance attendants were hired bringing the total to 93 attendants, plus one chief supervisor, two assistant supervisors, one dispatcher, one stores/equipment driver, and five clerks were hired.

Report No. 3 of The Executive Committee, January 16, 1967

The department budget for 1967 was \$1,581,237.

Three of the first promotions to take part in the new department were that of Mr. Leonard Klinck, promoted from dispatcher to chief supervisor; William Allan, supervisor; Fred Abel and William Goodyear, both promoted from dispatcher to assistant supervisor. Fred Abel eventually became supervisor of training and Bill Goodyear supervisor of communications.

Council Minutes, November 1967

In order to provide coverage in the south end of Etobicoke, arrangements were made to rent an abandoned fire station at 13 Superior Ave from the Borough of Etobicoke in March, 1967. This location was known as Number 9 Station, then later renumbered as Number 38 Station in 1976. The station was eventually moved to a converted gas station on Lakeshore Blvd. at Second Street, then later again relocated to Horner and Kipling Aves.

The projected call volume for ambulance calls during 1967 was 35,000; however, as the new service began to take root, it was soon realized that the projections were underestimated by 18%. As a result of the unexpected increase in demand, \$64,000 was allocated to the service to ensure that coverage was maintained and to allow for prompt response to these calls based on the level of response that had been in place since the beginning of the year.

APPENDIX 'C', 2031, Report No. 44 of The Executive Committee May 12, 1967

As the new service began to grow, so did the need to open new ambulance stations or make modifications to existing buildings. In order to ensure adequate coverage in the north central area of the region, an agreement was reached with the Borough of North York for the rental of the three-bay garage at the rear of 5151 Yonge Street. \$3,846 in renovations turned this facility into Ambulance Station Number 31, which was later given the name of Number 8 Station, then eventually Number 22 Station. - March 15, 1967 Report No. 15 of The Executive Committee



First Scott Ambulance



Wilfred Scott



Bob Scott



Scott's Ambulance at Pinetree Raceway



Scott's Ambulance



First Ford Van

1978

JUNE 26, 1978

On the morning of June 26, 1978, a Winnipeg bound Air Canada DC-9 developed mechanical problems in the process of taking off, after a piece of tire, was sucked into an engine. This caused the engine to shut down, and the resulting aborted takeoff caused the plane to run off the end of the runway, crashing 65 feet into a ravine. The plane veered to the left of the guide-in towers, narrowly missing them by 15 feet, and broke into three pieces. There were two fatalities, and 107 injured. The first ambulance arrived from Brampton and the first Toronto crew on the scene consisted of Norm Ferrier and Mike Pakkidis who were dispatched from 14 Station at the time of the crash.

Thirty-eight ambulances from local services (including 26 from Toronto) responded to this incident, and within two hours the last patient had been removed. There was a single dirt road leading down to the ravine area where the plane came to rest. A heavy equipment operator working at the airport immediately responded to the area with his bulldozer and under the direction of the first Ambulance Supervisor on the scene, Brian Fallick, a large area was cleared and leveled to be used as a triage area. Six area hospitals also responded to the scene with medical site teams.



Triage site - Air Canada plane crash



View of crash site Air Canada plane crash site

patients requiring them. One was presented by Mr. J. Ross Robertson, and the other by the Manufacturers Accident Assurance Co. Both ambulances were kept at Headquarters (10 Court St.), ready night and day for any calls that may be sent in for them, and it is quite optional with the parties using them whether payment is made for the service rendered ... Upon reading the detailed statement of the work performed, I am sure you will agree with me that the city is to be congratulated upon the possession of such admirable appliances that the public spirited generosity has provided."

The first ambulance was referred to as "Ambulance A" with Police Constable Fyfe and P.C. Robert Geddes, (who eventually became Deputy Chief), staffing these vehicles. Each of these men worked twelve-hour shifts and between the two of them provided 24-hour coverage. The first month of service resulted in 58 runs and transportation of 52 patients.

"There were traffic problems on parts of King, Queen, and Yonge Streets, with carts, lumber wagons, drays, lorries, express vans etc. The problem revolves around very young children driving these wagons. They are incompetent to control their horses and are ignorant as well of the rules of the road, which indeed many of the elders entirely ignore also."

Ambulance statistics June 1 to December 30, 1888:

- 251 patients to hospital
- 105 to home
- 38 to convalescent hospitals
- 5 to homes for the incurable (palliative care)
- 7 to homes of providence (long term care)
- 9 to wharves or railway stations
- 4 to police stations
- 5 to jail
- 1 to the asylum
- 5 refused to move because they were deemed to be infectious
- 35 not required



Toronto Police Ambulance "X"

1968

On July 1, 1968 the Control Centre moved to a new location on the fifth floor of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) Building at 1900 Yonge St.

The Department also operated a backup Dispatch Centre "Main Control" located at 5145 Yonge St. and at the Disaster Operations Centre in Aurora, known as the Aurora Operations and Relocation Site. These two backup centres were predominately used for the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) disaster group and did not have direct involvement in the dispatch of ambulances. This system closed down in 1975. -1968 DES annual report

1969

The 1900 Yonge St. Communications Centre underwent numerous alterations and upgrades over the years. The Dispatch was expanded to five consoles with one supervisor, one senior dispatcher and 4 dispatchers on duty during a shift. The addition of the fifth console also saw a conveyor system installed, in order to move the written call information cards between the dispatchers. As a result of a drowning at Humberstone Collegiate, swimming pools located in 57 schools and recreation centres had direct lines to the communication centre installed. These dedicated lines were informally known as "Pool Lines".

The call volume for 1969 was 102,270 calls of which 35,701 were inter-facility transfers.

1970

All calls were time stamped and recorded on a 15-channel recorder, that could handle fifteen conversations simultaneously. Playback was available so call information could be rechecked if clarification of call information was required.

If required, ambulance crews could conference on their radio (over a phone line) into the emergency department to discuss the patient's condition with hospital staff.

1972

In 1972, a mechanical "Status Light Vehicle Position Indicator" was installed in the communication centre. This system consisted of a light status board located above the main map and at each desk. The board was designed to identify the status of each vehicle i.e., in station, on a call (emergency or transfer), at hospital or available. This system, which was driven by the time clock the dispatcher used to time stamp the status of the calls on a paper card, allowed all dispatchers to identify at a glance if a vehicle was available or on a call.



1900 Yonge St. D.E.S. Dispatch in 1974

The addition of the fifth console also saw a conveyor system installed, in order to move the written call information cards between the dispatchers



With the introduction of the one person emergency response units (ERU), Danny illustrated his vision of the ultimate vehicle.

During the late 1970's and into the 1980's the service began reviewing the ambulance call reports with the emphasis on more detailed recording of information.

