



The FIREMEN'S *Grapevine*

The FIREMEN'S Grapevine

Dedicated to the members of the Los Angeles Firemen's Relief Association and their dependents

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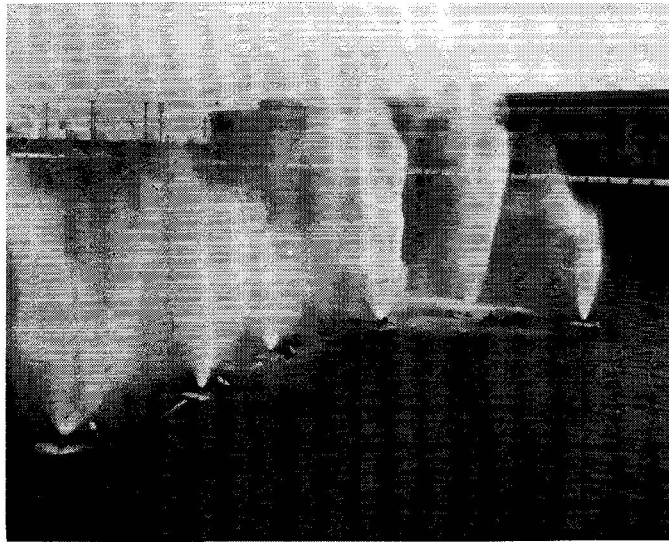
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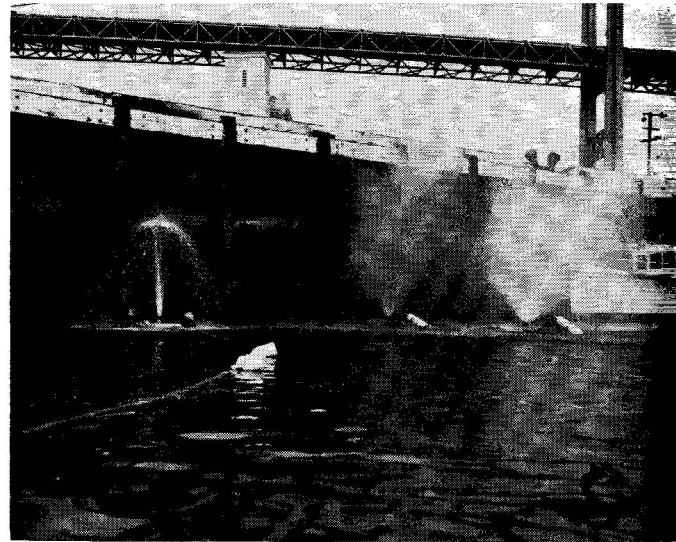
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FRONT COVER

Fireman Edward F. Weaver holds a model of the 1½ inch nozzle float that members of Fireboat 4, "A" Platoon, are currently experimenting with. The article, "A Look at Our New Underwharf Firefighting Equipment," that appears in this magazine, discusses some recent improvements in the Department's 2½-inch floating monitors.—Photo by Chuck Peterson



Straight copper pipe plumbing, that runs the entire length of the floats with 2½-inch fittings at each end, permits several floating monitors to be interconnected and supplied by a single 2½-inch hose.



Monitors can be used singly or in pairs for a direct attack on the fire. The empty one-gallon plastic clorox containers used as floats, are the result of a suggestion submitted by one of the members.

A LOOK AT OUR NEW UNDERWHARF FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT

By W. W. Johnston, Jr.

There have been dramatic changes in the design and construction of underwharf firefighting equipment used by the L.A.F.D. These changes have made the equipment lighter, more efficient, faster to place in operation, easier to slide over obstructions and easier to store.

The Department's first floating monitor, supplied by a 2½-inch hose line, was made of sheet metal and was propelled and steered by an underwater jet. Because of its weight, this unit required two men to remove it from the water. The underwater plumbing made it difficult to shove the unit over fender logs and other obstructions and sometimes damaged wooden decking on the Fire Boats.

The newest of three consecutively improved models is made of very dense polyurethane foam, covered with two layers of bright yellow fiber glass. It has no valves or moving parts and the underside is perfectly smooth. Two hand holds have been recessed into the sides. The fitting on top of the 2½-inch spray nozzle has also been recessed for easy stacking, and it is light enough for one man to handle.

Plumbing on the new model consists of a straight copper pipe running the entire length of the float, with a 2½-inch fitting at each end and a "T" connection leading up to the nozzle. This plumbing arrangement permits

several floating monitors to be inter-connected and supplied by a single 2½-inch hose.

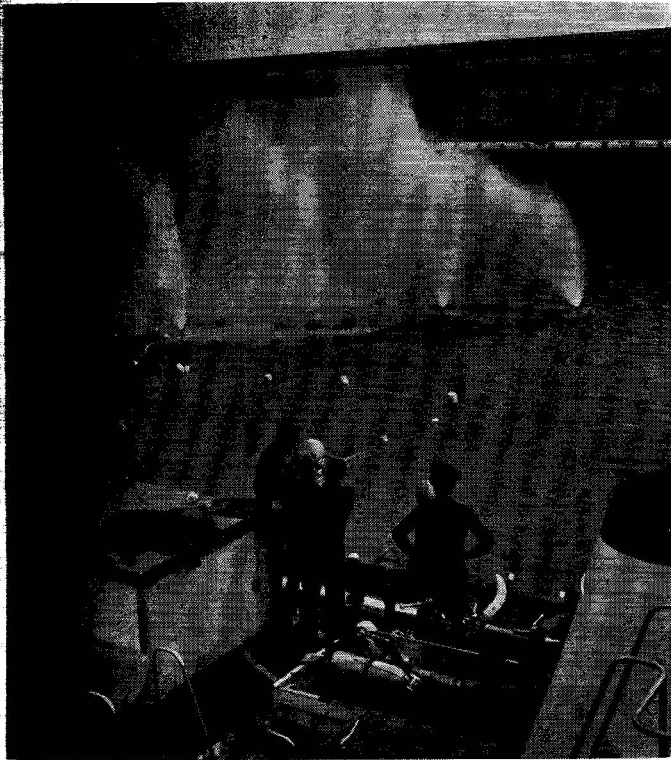
Chains of monitors can easily be propelled beneath a dock forming an impenetratable water curtain. They may also be used singly or in pairs for a direct attack on the fire.

Propulsion for the monitor is accomplished by using nozzle reaction force. To proceed in a forward direction, a diver depresses the back of the monitor float with his body weight, thus changing the angle of water discharge from the vertical. Similarly, propulsion in a reverse direction is accomplished by depressing the front end of the monitor, or propulsion sideways by tipping in the opposite direction of desired travel.

The speed at which these floating monitors can be placed in service was recently demonstrated. A team of two divers placed a pair of them in operation, spraying water beneath a wharf, one minute and fifteen seconds after entering the water from Fire Boat 3.

The department now has seven 2½-inch floating monitors of various models and is planning to build six more in the near future. At a fire, the supplying of water to such a large flotilla of monitors could be a difficult problem.

Recently a meeting of the Department's Waterfront Committee was held in the Harbor area to discuss this and other underwharf fire fighting problems. The Committee, composed of Battalions Chiefs Carter, Douglass

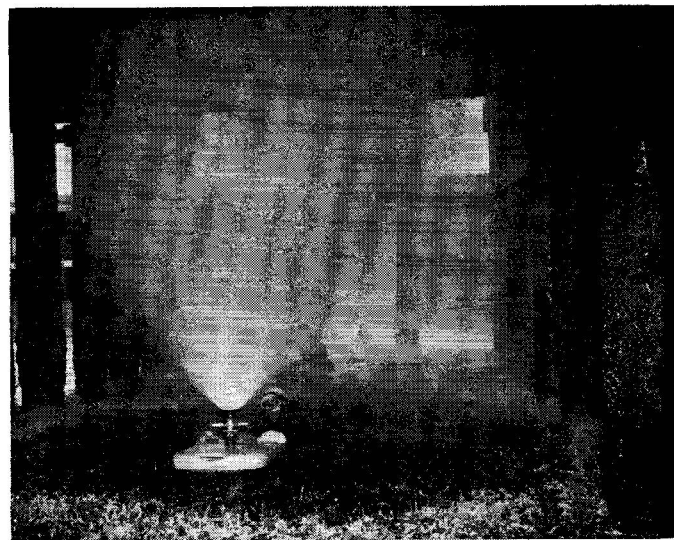


It is not necessary for a diver to man each monitor, one or two men can actually operate several interconnected monitors with complete control.

and Inlow, recommended that under proper conditions, a major fire boat should be tied up to supply water to SCUBA-diver-operated floating monitors. This recommendation received the unanimous concurrence of all members present. They felt that fire boats, like SCUBA equipment, are firemen's tools and should be used where they can accomplish the most good.

The story of the improvement and construction of these monitors is one of cooperation. Ideas were supplied by a number of Department members, materials were furnished by the Bureau of Supply and Maintenance, and the construction and fiber glassing was done by Captain Werner Lawrence and his crew at Fire Boat 2, "A" Platoon.

Members interested in the underwharf firefighting



Chains of monitors can easily be propelled beneath a dock, forming an impenetrable water curtain.

Photos by Peterson

program continue to make suggestions for improvement. One such suggestion recommended that empty one-gallon plastic clorox containers be attached to the brass couplings of 2½-inch hose to act as floats. This has proven to be very effective and costs the City nothing. Also, the members of Fire Boat 4, "A" Platoon, are currently experimenting in an effort to improve 1½-inch nozzle floats.

These are but a few examples of the willingness of officers and men of this Department to keep an open mind, to adopt new methods and ideas, to make suggestions for improvements, and to develop equipment to fit our particular needs. Such creative activity in this new method of firefighting is doing its bit to uphold the effectiveness and vitality of the Los Angeles Fire Department.

1965 TRAVEL PROGRAM

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