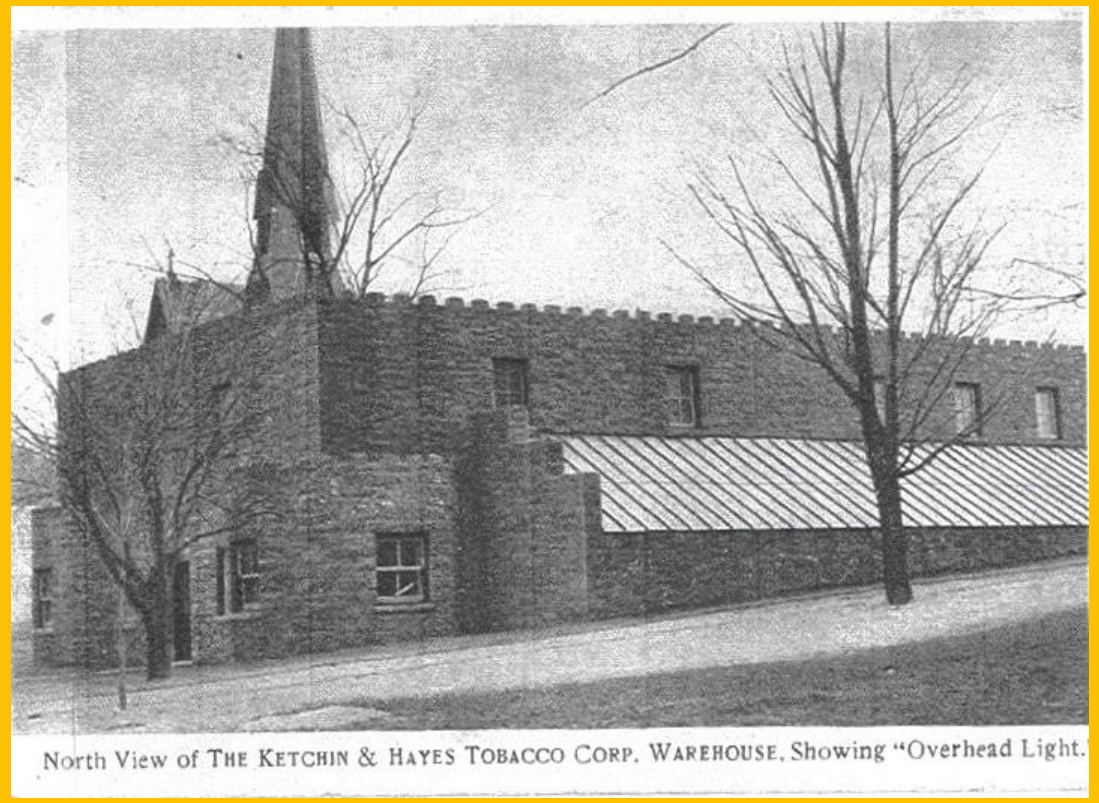


North View of THE KETCHIN & HAYES TOBACCO CORP. WAREHOUSE, Showing "Overhead Light.

KETCHIN & HAYES TOBACCO WAREHOUSE 1908

TARIFFVILLE FIRE HOUSE

~Formerly Ketchin & Hayes Tobacco Warehouse~

Extensively remodeled in

1991 - 1992

7 CHURCH STREET

Walter Banzhaf, author of this PPT presentation, gratefully acknowledges assistance from & materials provided by:

Tariffville Village Association, Simsbury Free Library, Simsbury Historical Society, John Nagy, Frank Haviland, Mary Jane Springman, Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company, Tariffville Volunteer Fire Company, SVFC Chief Baldis, Captain Mike Brown and others.

Why would anyone build a STONE Tobacco Warehouse? Keep watching !

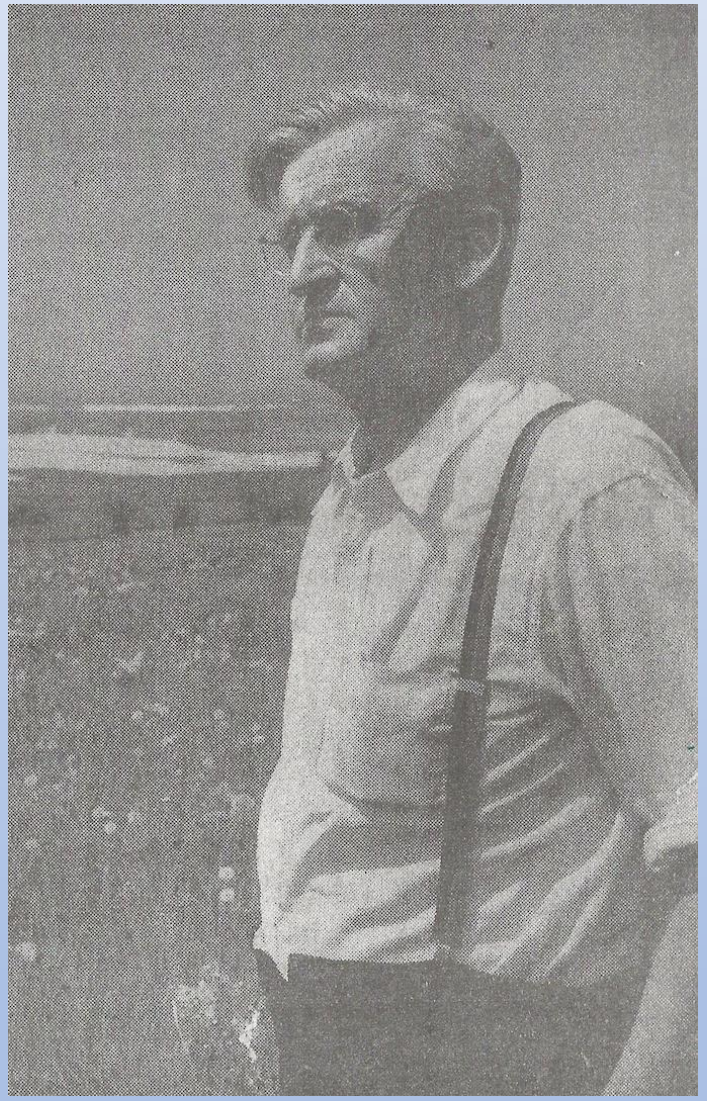
Who was William Ketchin? Who were William & Art Hayes?

Andrew Ketchin, 1848 - 1925
William Mansfield Ketchin, 1871 - 1959
Andrew & his son William built the building you are in today

William Hayes, 1863 - 1931
Arthur Hayes, 1896 – 1959
Arthur Hayes Jr., 1926 – 1980
Hayes Road in Tariffville is named after Arthur Hayes

Andrew Ketchin
1848 - 1925

William & Harriet
Ketchin



Arthur J. Hayes
1896 - 1959

William Ketchin

Businessman (builder) who lived in Tariffville

Employed stone masons to quarry local stone

Builder of sandstone buildings in Simsbury & Avon

Sandstone quarry on Quarry Road is called the

Ketchin Quarry

William & Art Hayes

Father & son businessmen who lived in Tariffville.

Grew *SHADE TOBACCO* in Simsbury & where Tville "Heights" is now located.

It was used primarily as the wrapper tobacco for cigars. It was a huge success ($$$).

Wm. Ketchin & Wm. Hayes became partners in growing shade tobacco.

But Ketchin had a big problem with his stone masons.

What Problem?

Stone masons then were experienced working with marble & granite, but not with Ketchin's kind of Connecticut sandstone.

It took a full building season to teach his masons to properly dress the stone in the Ketchin method.

At the end of the building season, the trained masons would be laid off and would leave to find other indoor work, often never to return.

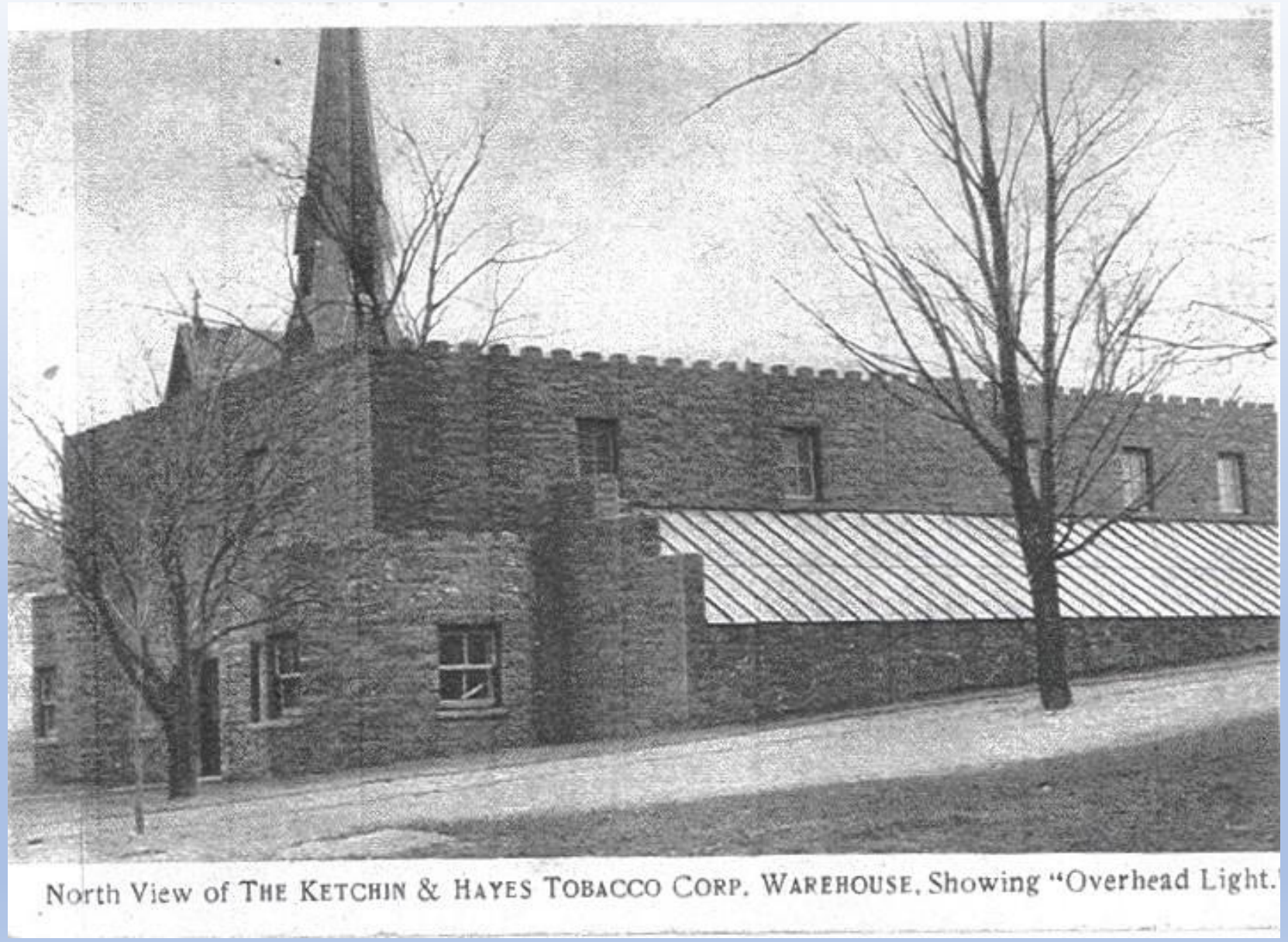
When the next building season started, Ketchin had to hire & train new masons. This was expensive and time consuming.

Ketchin decided to have his stone masons work grading and packing shade tobacco during the winter months.

Ketchin designed an innovative building that was constructed solely for the tobacco work during late fall & winter.

Ketchin’s tobacco warehouse kept 85 of his best masons employed all winter; they were ready in spring to begin building again.

Ketchin wanted his new warehouse to be fireproof, strong, and interesting to look at.



North View of THE KETCHIN & HAYES TOBACCO CORP. WAREHOUSE, Showing "Overhead Light.

Looking south from Winthrop St. Trinity Church Steeple is behind Warehouse.

Note the sloping glass "shed" roof on the side of the warehouse.

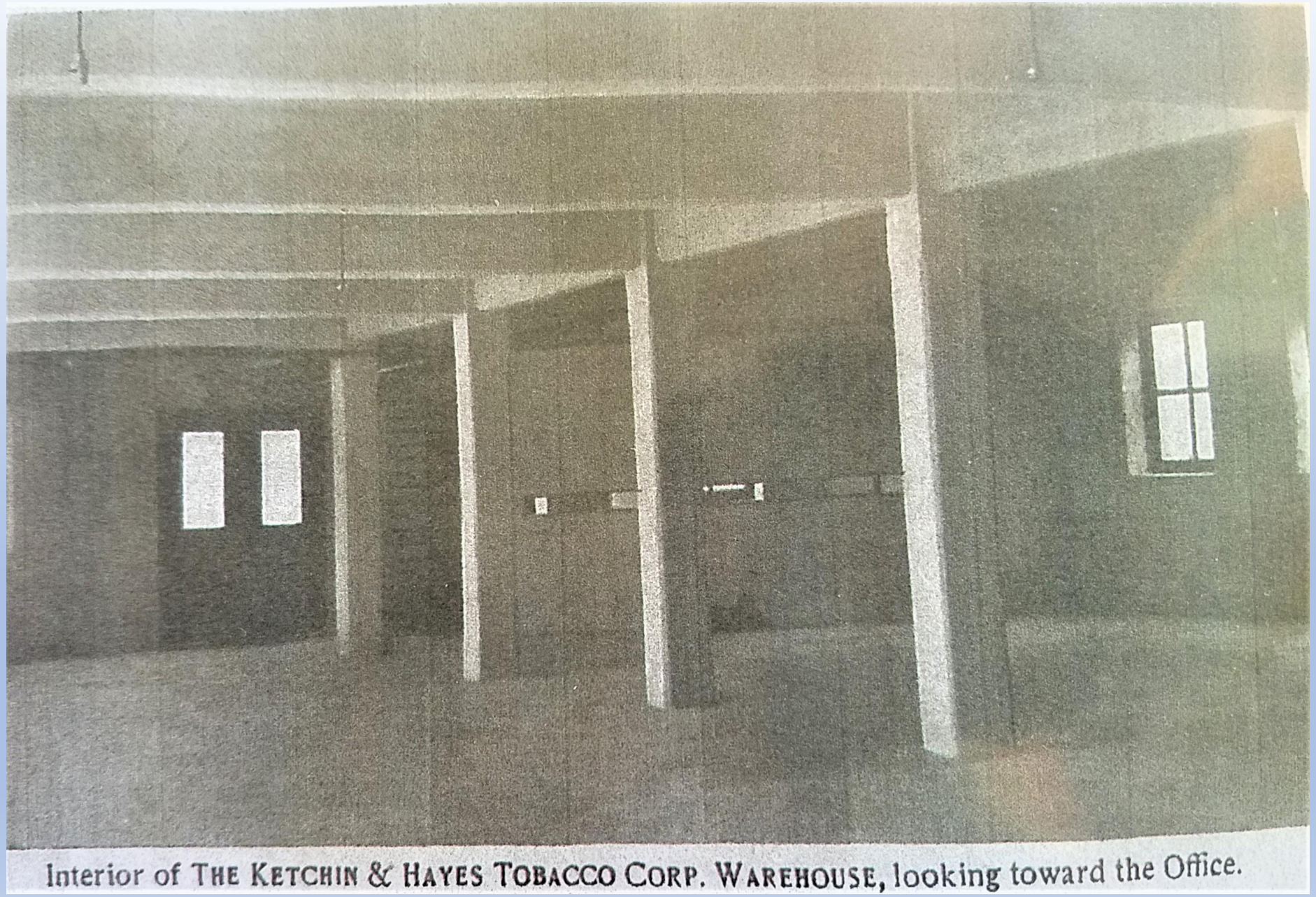
The sloping glass roof was designed to provide plenty of skylight (not sunlight) to those men grading tobacco in the room beneath it.

The towers at the front & the crenellations at the wall & tower tops provided unique visual interest.

Details of the tobacco warehouse:

Cost $1,200. 55 feet wide by 80 feet deep.
Ground floor: sorting & packing
Second floor: receiving & forced sweating

The building was built with reinforced concrete floors, an innovative technology of the day.



Interior of THE KETCHIN & HAYES TOBACCO CORP. WAREHOUSE, looking toward the Office.

Note the massive reinforced concrete 2nd floor joists & columns in this circa 1908 photo.

Letter from Will Ketchin to Art Hayes
September 3, 1933

"My Dear Arthur: The Episcopal Church have made a very ridiculous offer for my warehouse. I designed & built the building as you know. It is 50 by 87 feet and thoroughly fire proof."

“We never had to pay for any insurance on it. There is not a stick of wood in it as big as a match. We never lost a case of tobacco in it and J.Cohn & Co. claimed that they saved $10,000 per year in shrinkage in the two years they were packing there.”

“Do you want to make an offer for it? or do you know of anyone who would care to make an offer on speculation? I am trying to settle some accounts and am going to sell the building. Sincerely yours, Will M. Ketchin”

In 1941 the tobacco warehouse was sold to the Tariffville Fire District for use as a firehouse.

This is the American LaFrance pumper, purchased new for $3,250. It was driven from Elmira NY to Tariffville in November, 1940, in a snow storm.

It was originally housed in Art Hayes's "barn" on Elm St. where the Willow Arms apartments are now. It is seen here in front of its new home, the Ketchin & Hayes tobacco warehouse converted to the Tariffville Volunteer Fire Co. stationhouse.

Will Ketchin builds a boat

Anticipating moving to Florida, he built a boat in the warehouse. When it was done, the boat was too high to pass through the garage door opening ! Ketchin paid Ed Kowalski to remove stone around the door and then replace it after the boat was removed.

Note the stone work around the garage door opening.

Original Tariffville firefighters in the Hayes barn on Elm St. This served as the first firehouse, before 7 Church St. was purchased by the Tariffville Fire District in 1941.
1st Chief Vincent Levandowski in white.

In the early days of the Tariffville Volunteer Fire Co., the 2nd floor of the firehouse was used for social purposes. Movies, concerts, plays & dances were held to raise funds for firefighting equipment, and to pay for the new fire truck.

Each fall a “chicken BBQ & clam bake” with corn, clams and a beverage was held on this lawn. All political candidates attended!

Local band "*Roomful of Blues*" in front of theTariffville fire engine, after performing upstairs. Circa 1977? Note the bicycle with a fire department plaque owned by firefighter Jim Vaitulevitch.

Tariffville Fire Station after the renovation of 1991-1992. This huge improvement added two apparatus bays, a roof, a large training room, and storage for firefighting equipment.

Thank you for visiting this repurposed “tobacco warehouse.”

Your questions are welcome.